Moving Masculinities:

Polish men’s migration experiences in Oslo

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Abstract

This thesis aims to explore the role of masculinities in the migration experiences of Polish male migrants in Norway. Research in migration studies that utilizes a gendered analysis primarily focuses on women's experiences, resulting in a development where research on men's gendered migration experiences has been less studied. Since Poland's accession to the EU in 2004 Polish migrants have grown to the largest immigrant population in Norway. While this migration has been well researched from a labour market perspective, qualitative research looking at Polish migration has been less prominent, with different topics that could be further studied. This thesis is a qualitative study, where I interviewed 10 male Polish migrants living in Norway, who mostly were young, unmarried, and without children, to explore the main research question of the study, *what role do masculinities play in the migration process?* This question is further explored at several levels, including how ideas of masculinity shape migration motivations and navigations of a new place, but also to understand how they expressed feeling marginalized in Norway and how they then responded to this. I employ a combined use of narrative and thematic analysis to analyze the data from my interviews and use several masculinity theories and concepts to interpret the data and understand the role of masculinities in my participants' migration processes. From my analysis I find that my participants draw upon different masculine ideals that influence their decision to migrate to Oslo, which touch on migrating as an adventure and also as a way to find a better work/life balance. Additionally, I find that my participants feel that there are different ideas around gender between Poland and Norway, which they then navigate around differently. This thesis thus aims to explore the way in which my participants felt that they, as Polish migrants, are seen in Norwegian society. My participants' descriptions show that they feel Polish migrants in Norway fall into a middle ground of assumptions including positive traits as hard workers, but negative traits as well such as lower class ascriptions. In response to these marginalizing assumptions, participants in my study engage in a variety of strategies to try and position themselves more positively in Norwegian society such as distancing themselves from these stereotypes, or by comparing themselves more favorably to Norwegians. My thesis highlights dynamic social processes unfolding with Polish migrants in Norway resulting in social hierarchies. This thesis also demonstrates the relevance of a gendered analysis in understanding male migrants' experiences and the variety of masculinities they engage with, challenging universalized assumptions of migrant men both in Norway and more broadly.

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1: Introduction

> Marcel: Maybe there is a lot of Norwegians thinking that Polish people just come here to get some easy money, just as a construction worker for example, to get the money to go back to Poland and spend it. But me and my friends, we want to be a part of this community you know. I really, really, enjoy to be here actually in Norway. So yeah, trying to fit in. Definitely.

Marcel, who is a 32-year-old male Polish migrant, has been living in Oslo for nearly 10 years, and is currently employed as a flight attendant, shared this reflection when I asked him how it is to live in Oslo. His comment touched upon a theme I was interested in, which was how do Polish men feel they are seen within Norwegian society? My initial interest in understanding Polish migrants' experiences living in Oslo developed from an experience I had the summer before I started my Master's. I was at a bar in Oslo waiting to order a drink, when a Norwegian woman in her 60's struck up a conversation with me. As we were talking and she learned I was a student, she offered that I could paint her house for some money. Off handedly she joked, "you're not Polish, but I'd still hire you." This comment was striking for a couple of reasons, but especially for how it seemed to be such a normalized assumption for her that if you're Polish in Norway, you paint houses or are employed in some other type of blue-collar work. I had also noticed other assumptions about Polish men that seemed fairly dominant in Norway relating to class and culture, and in light of this, I couldn't help but wonder, if I was a Polish male migrant in Norway, how might these stereotypes impact me?

As an American male migrant in Norway, and in particular one who is white and straight, I am quite aware that many of the privileges I had in the U.S. have also traveled with me across the Atlantic to Norway, including how Norwegians often have (mostly) positive views of Americans, and so my experience differs from many others who have migrated to Norway. It is from this perspective where I then wanted to explore further the way in which one's identity, and in particular gender, impact the migration process, including how you are seen in a new society. Why gender? First, as I outline in the next section, research on masculinities and migration is a topic which has received less attention despite its relevance in understanding migration. But gender was also of interest, because as I learned more about Polish migration in Norway, including that they are the largest immigrant population in Norway, it seemed that most people thought of Polish migrants in a limited view similar to the woman at the bar, as construction workers. This image of the Polish male migrant as a construction worker I felt summoned a particular idea about Polish men and their masculine identity. This being the largest immigrant population in Norway, I wanted to bring forward and explore the experiences of Polish male migrants in Norway, and hopefully challenge some of these assumptions that I felt existed while also showing the role that ideas of masculinity play in the migration process.

1.1 Purpose of study and research questions

Large scale Polish migration to Norway is both relatively recent, and also unprecedented in scale in Norway (Friberg, 2013, pp. 24-25). Prior to Poland's accession to the EU in 2004, which granted them free movement within the EEA with some restrictions in place, there were only about 11,000 Polish immigrants living in Norway, which by 2011 had already grown to 60,000 people (Godzimirski, 2011, p. 620). At the end of 2020, that number would be up to 101,000 immigrants, by far the largest immigrant population within Norway, and more than twice as much as the second largest, which is Lithuanians (Gulbrandsen et al., 2021, p. 36). Additionally, this migration has been largely made up of men since EU accession, and today around 2/3 of Polish migrants in Norway are men (Statistics Norway [SSB], 2021b). While this immigration and its impact on the Norwegian labour market has been well-documented, research on the gendered experiences and masculinities of Polish male migrants has come less into focus (Erdal & Pawlak, 2018).

Many researchers have made arguments about the importance of gender in understanding migration (Levitt & Schiller, 2004; Pessar & Mahler, 2003; Wojnicka & Pustułka, 2019). Yet the way in which a gendered analysis of Polish men's migration in Norway has been less prominent fits into trends that exist both within migration research and gender studies. Historically, migration research has been dominated by economic theories of migration (Castles & Miller, 2003; Massey et al., 2005), which resulted in both women's migration being overlooked (Wojnicka, 2019), and also men's migration being essentialized and seen as economically driven (Bell & Pustułka, 2017). As women's migration has come into focus, so has a gendered analysis of their migration experiences (George, 2005, pp. 4-5; Hibbins & Pease, 2009, pp. 4-5). Meanwhile, men and their gendered migration experiences have been less explored (Datta et al., 2009, p. 853), resulting in a development where, when using a gendered analysis, "the male migrant as study subject… [is] ignored almost to the same degree as the female migrant had previously" (Hibbins & Pease, 2009, p. 5). Additionally, within gender studies, research focusing on men and masculinities has grown in the last 20 years, but is still a relatively young and developing field (Haywood et al., 2018), further contributing to this general gap in research looking at migration and masculinities.

As Donaldson and Howson (2009) pointed out about this general gap in research looking at migration and masculinities, “there is little currently documented about how migrant men react to, negotiate with, and counter the demands imposed and changes required of them by the people and cultures they encounter during their migration and settlement” (p. 210). Since then there has been a growing interest in this topic, resulting in a conference dedicated to the topic as well as a special journal issue (Wojnicka & Pustułka, 2019). Despite this, there still exists a number of knowledge gaps on the topic, and the overall purpose of this thesis is to contribute to this knowledge gap by looking at Polish men’s migration experiences in Norway, and focus specifically on how gender, and gendered identities influence and shape their migration process. This has led to the development of the overall research question:

- *What role do masculinities play in the migration process?*

This question is complex, as there are many ways in which gender can play a role in the migration process, from hopes and motivations to the way an individual navigates a new society, and also the way in which they feel they are viewed by others in the place they have settled. To answer this broader research question, I ask four sub-questions that connect to this larger one:

- *How do ideas of masculinity influence my participants’ aspirations and hopes for migrating to Oslo?*
- *How do my participants navigate living in a new society, and how do ideas of gender and masculinity play a role in this?*
- *How do my participants feel they as Polish men are viewed and socially positioned within Norwegian society?*
- *In situations where my participants feel as though they are marginalized due to being Polish, how do they respond to this?*

It is important to outline how I use migration in my thesis, as it is a broad term, and there are many reasons people migrate, both forcibly and voluntarily (International Organization for Migration [IOM], 2019). In the context of this thesis, when I speak of migration and migrant men it generally refers to voluntary forms of migration, whether that is for employment or other motivations (Erdal & Oeppen, 2018). In moments where the research I am speaking of refers to something that is forced, such as refugees, this is acknowledged and highlighted.

1.2: Research approach and analysis

To answer my research questions, I conducted semi-structured interviews with 10 Polish migrant men living in Norway. For my analysis I conducted a combined thematic and narrative analysis (Shukla et al., 2014) which allowed me to both identify themes from the data (Clarke & Braun, 2016), and also to analyze how my participants framed their migration (Caddick, 2016). These men were primarily young (roughly between ages 20-35), and unmarried, although two who were older and married were included to counterbalance and explore the similarities and differences in experiences.

My main demographic was chosen for several reasons. Due to a variety of factors expanded upon in the next chapter, the initial wave of Polish male migrants who started coming after 2004 to Norway were older and married, and highly motivated by the opportunity to earn money in Norway and then spend it back in Poland on their families (Friberg, 2013, p. 25). There is some research that focuses on this demographic of Polish men, and especially those who are married, from a gendered angle in Norway (Pustułka et al., 2015), which highlights how gender plays a role in how they navigate their migration. However, there is evidence of a shift in which Polish migrants are coming to Norway, including those who are younger, better educated, and without children (Huang et al., 2016; SSB, 2021a). A goal of my thesis is to both bring into focus this more recent demographic of Polish migrants and their migration experiences, while also challenging an essentialized notion about men's migration as being driven by breadwinning notions and to highlight the existence of multiple masculinities (Bell & Pustułka, 2017) among Polish male migrants in Norway.

1.3: Structure of the thesis

The next chapter provides relevant historical contextualization of gender roles and relations in Poland, as well as an overview of Polish migration to Norway. Poland is currently quite divided politically, with ideas about gender playing an important role in this division (Graff & Korolczuk, 2017). After this I provide a brief overview of Polish migration to Norway, which provides information in understanding how my participants felt like they were seen in Norway as Polish migrants. In Chapter 3, I present my analytical framework. This is done in two parts, where I first outline relevant theories and concepts for my thesis. Following this, I present research and literature that focuses on masculinities and migration, and include relevant literature about Polish migration in Norway and the U.K. to outline what are the knowledge gaps to which my thesis contributes. For Chapter 4, I present the methodological decisions I have made for this thesis. This includes the qualitative research design I have chosen which involves both interviews as a method of data collection, and a combined use of thematic and narratives methods of analysis. An important departure point of my thesis is feminist critiques of the idea of "objective knowledge" (Hesse-Biber et al., 2004), and as a result of this I reflect in the methodology chapter on my own positionality as a researcher and the steps I have taken to be reflexive throughout the research process. In Chapter 5, I analyze the data from my interviews and divide the chapter into four separate themes. These themes relate to different parts of my participants' migration experiences, and include *Migration motivations, Navigating a new place, Social positions, and Social positioning.* In Chapter 6, I discuss my findings from the analysis, and look at what role do masculinities and gender play in shaping my participants' migration experiences which were presented in Chapter 5. I finish the thesis with a conclusion in Chapter 7, where I summarize my research findings, and discuss the implications of my research for the broader field of research looking at migration and masculinities.

2: Historical overview

For the purpose of this thesis, I focus on several dimensions of Polish history which are relevant for answering my research questions. I begin in 2.1 with describing the way in which ideas of gender and gender relations in Poland have developed since communist rule began in the late 1940's, up until today. Following this, I describe the different waves of Polish migration to Norway and what developments these have resulted in concerning how Polish migrants are seen within Norway today.

2.1: Gender and gender relations in Poland: A brief overview

To fully grasp gender relations and gender identities today in Poland, it is necessary to consider the legacy of communist rule in Poland and the transition to a neoliberal economy afterwards. Despite a rhetoric of support for gender equality in Poland under State socialist rule which lasted from the 1940's to 1989, gender inequality was persistent and dominant (Watson, 1993). While policies were created that helped bring more women into the workforce, maintaining the domestic sphere still largely fell upon women (Kenney, 1999, p. 405). As the Polish feminist Joanna Bator noted, "The main points of reference for those living in the [Polish People's Republic] were 'nation' and 'family'. The responsibility for the latter fell upon women. Matters of ‘nation’ belonged rather to the men” (Kenney, 1999, p. 406). The collapse of communism in 1989 would further play into these emphasized gender roles and differences.

As Poland transitioned from a socialist state to one that embraced neoliberal capitalism in the 90’s, men’s dominant role and masculinism would become “the primary characteristic of gender relations” (Watson, 1993, p. 71). Women’s political representation, which was already low under communist rule, decreased in the years after and during this transition (Mazierska, 2003, p. 30). Additionally, women’s participation in the workforce also fell (Watson, 1993, p. 78), as the public sphere became that which was associated with men (Erdal & Pawlak, 2018). As Datta (2009) highlighted, “While there used to be fundamental tensions between the socialist State and men’s empowerment, in the newly formed Polish republic the main point of reference has become the Polish nation with men as its main drivers” (p. 192). These gender roles were further supported and solidified by the Catholic Church within Poland, which plays an important role in Polish society and shaping Polish national identity (Bell & Pustułka, 2017).

However, a struggling economy would, and continues to create challenges for the maintenance of these traditional roles. Due to downsizing in several industries that men were heavily employed in, such as manufacturing, men’s unemployment rates increased (Datta, 2009, p. 194). This along with an economy where it is increasingly difficult to earn enough to provide for your family has created a paradox. “The Polish post-communist welfare in transition seems to be based on the two non-compliant norms: an economic necessity for dual-earner model, and a cultural superiority of traditional gender roles" (Pustułka & Ślusarczyk, 2016, p. 77). While these traditional gender roles are dominant within Polish society, it is clear that this is also contested and in transition within Polish society today.

Poland increasingly in the last 10 years has experienced social upheaval and unrest, which is centered around questions of national identity, and where “gender” has been made a central point of contention. A driver behind this unrest has been a pushback within Polish society towards neoliberal ideas seen as European values, which are supposedly deemed “proper” by the “West” and which Poland must live up to (Pawlak, 2015b, p. 254). However, as Garapich (2014) argues, this rhetoric around what and who is “proper” is reflective of larger social and class divides that exist within Poland, such as urban versus rural and education divisions (pp. 112-114.). This has resulted in a political and nationalistic backlash in Poland, similar to that occurring in many other parts of the world today (Gwiazda, 2020).

Key to this backlash has been an attack on gender and "gender ideology." As Graff (2014) points out, this is clearly shown in a statement made by the prominent Polish Catholic bishop, Tadeusz Pieronek, who in 2013 stated, "I would also like to add that gender ideology is worse than Communism and Nazism put together" (p. 432). The battle against "gender ideology" is broad, and includes resistance to gender equality legislation, limiting access to sexual and reproductive care, attacking LGBTQ+ rights, and even limiting the use of the term "gender" in "policy documents and public discourse" (Graff & Korolczuk, 2017, p. 175). This anti-gender ideology has resulted in a new right-wing mobilization, bringing together conservatives who feel threatened by liberalism imposed on them by the West, with Catholics who feel that family values are equally under attack (Graff & Korolczuk, 2017). This political mobilization, along with a number of factors including growing Euro-skepticism fueled by the refugee crisis of 2015 (Krzyżanowska & Krzyżanowski, 2018) contributed to the conservative political party, Law and Justice, winning the election in 2015. Since their election win they have enacted policies and legislation which support women's roles as mothers such as the "Family 500+ programme", while limiting gender equality in other ways such as access to contraception and support services for domestic violence (Gwiazda, 2020).

In the summer of 2020, Poland had another presidential election, which Duda and the Law and Justice party won by the narrowest election margin since the collapse of communism in 1989 ("Poland's Duda narrowly beats Trzaskowski", 2020). Duda's opposition candidate, Rafal Trzaskowski, the deputy leader of Poland's Civic Platform party ran on a platform to both strengthen gender and minority rights, and improve Poland's relationship to the EU, in contrast to the nationalist and conservative agenda Duda had overseen in the previous 5 years (Easton, 2020). The close election result showed divisions that exist within Poland today, with some of the clearest divisions including age difference, with younger voters overwhelmingly voting for Trzaskowski; an urban and rural divide where Duda heavily won in the countryside, especially in the Eastern part of Poland which is more rural (Hirsch, 2020); and finally education, with higher educated voters going more heavily towards Trzaskowski (CEC Group, 2020, p. 15).

Following the re-election of Duda social divisions and unrest have only grown in scale. Throughout the fall of 2020 and beginning of 2021, while this thesis has been written, there have been several massive protests in response to news rulings passed by the courts in Poland to ban nearly all forms of abortion procedures (Davies, 2020). These protests are the largest Poland has seen since communist rule, with the first wave occurring in October with the announcement of the court rulings to limit abortion access, and further protests in January when the court rulings were implemented (Noryskiewicz, 2021). These protests, dubbed "women's strikes," have been overwhelmingly female, with male supporters joining as well (Magdziarz & Santora, 2020). However, researchers have highlighted the generational divide taking place within these protests, in which most protesters are young and represent a growing dissatisfaction of younger Polish citizens with the current conservative and Catholic Church's values and emphasis of traditional gender roles (Taub, 2020). This, along with other studies (Krzaklewska et al., 2016), highlights that notions of gender, and gender relations are in flux and at a point of transition within Poland, possibly representing a shift away from the previously dominant notion of "masculinization" (Watson, 1993) which has existed in Poland in recent years (Graff, 2009).

This historical overview of gender roles and ideas of gender in Poland has been included for several reasons: 1) To provide some background for the development of gender roles and ideas of gender in Poland, including the currently politicized and polarized nature of gender in Poland today; and 2) To highlight the divides that exist in Poland, particularly the generational divide. This generational divide is key as most of my participants were younger and well-educated, and many of them expressed frustrations with the political situation back in Poland. Therefore, it is useful for my thesis to see how my participants' views fit into broader social trends within Poland as well.

2.2: Polish migration history

Poland has a long and significant history when it comes to both shifting borders and emigration (Zubrzycki, 1953). An especially dramatic time of Polish emigration was in the latter 19th and early 20th centuries when 3.5 million people migrated to escape poverty, as well as political and religious persecution (Iglicka, 2001, p. 32). This would only increase in the time period between WWI and WWII, where another two million left (Friberg, 2013, p. 17). Many of these Polish migrants went to the U.S., as was documented in the classic migration text *The Polish Peasant in Europe and America: Monograph of an immigrant group* (Thomas & Znaniecki, 1918), but Polish migrants also wound up settling in Canada, Australia, and Europe. While most of this migration was permanent, there was also cyclical migration taking place, with many Polish migrants going to Germany to work in mining or agriculture (White, 2011, p. 31). Under communist rule, there would be efforts made to limit migration, which were partially successful, but were unable to completely prevent outflows of migration. This picked up in the 1980's where it is estimated that around a million Polish citizens migrated, including a mix of both economically motivated, as well as members of the Solidarity movement seeking political refuge (Pleskot, 2015). Norway would receive several thousand Polish migrants/political refugees as well (Stormowska, 2015).

The years following the collapse of communist rule in Poland would be marked by economic chaos and impacted the migration trends and flows. Due to a variety of reasons, including bilateral agreements, and difficulty attaining visas, access to permanent settlement was limited and much of Polish migration in the 90's was short-term, cyclical, and irregular (Friberg, 2013, p. 18). Some researchers categorized these migration flows as "income-seeking travel" (Morawska, 2001) and "incomplete migration" (Okólski, 2001), especially as this migration became a livelihood strategy for Polish citizens, who likely wouldn't have engaged in this highly transient labour migration unless it was necessary.

Between 1990-2004 the Polish economy and employment rates would greatly fluctuate, but on the cusp of EU accession in 2004 it would be especially precarious. Unemployment was registered at 20.6%, and national opinion polls showed that for a majority of Polish citizens they felt their social standings either decreased or hadn't changed since 1994 (White, 2011, p. 27). These conditions set up what would become one of the most dramatic and unprecedented migration flows in "contemporary European history" (Kaczmarczyk & Okólski, 2008, p. 599) when Polish citizens gained access to a number of EEA countries with Poland's accession to the EU in 2004. It is estimated that over 2 million Polish people have migrated and resettled since 2004 in a number of European countries including the U.K., Germany, and Norway (Wojnicka, 2019, p. 287).

2.2.1: Polish migration to Norway

The context of Polish migration to Norway should be understood through three different waves, including political refugees and highly skilled workers in the 1980's, seasonal labour migration in the 90's, and finally what has occurred and is continuing to unfold with Poland's accession to the EU in 2004. During this first wave in the 1980's the primary emigration trend from Poland to Norway were those fleeing political persecution, and around 3,700 Polish citizens would arrive in Norway in this time period (Godzimirski, 2011, p. 619). For several different reasons, this first wave of Polish migration was generally viewed quite positively. The first was that within

Norway there was large support for the Solidarity movement, with some supporting the underground movement in Poland, political sanctions taken by the government against Poland, and also the Nobel Peace Prize was awarded in 1983 to Lech Wałęsa, the founder of the Solidarity movement (Guribye, 2018, p. 77). Additionally, this wave of Polish emigration was characterized by high education levels, and proportionally were more educated than the Norwegian population (Godzimirski, 2005, p. 100), which played into them being viewed positively. Finally, most Polish in this initial wave learned to speak Norwegian or English, making it easier to connect with Norwegians (Guribye et al., n.d., p. 4). These factors helped to build a positive image and reputation about the Polish community in Norway at this time (Slany, Ślusarczyk, et al., 2018, p. 25). However, this would begin to shift in the 90's.

Which Polish migrants came to Norway during the second and third waves was impacted both by instability in certain sectors of the Polish economy, as well as the immigration policies Norway had in place. The second wave of Polish migration to Norway which lasted from 1989-2004 was primarily made up of lesser-educated Polish migrants who worked in sectors that were restructured under neoliberalism in Poland such as agriculture or construction (Friberg, 2013, p. 19). While this migration characteristically was quite circular due to visa requirements put in place by Norway which primarily granted seasonal work, this wave also helped to establish networks and familiarity with Norway among Polish migrants which would play out dramatically with Poland's accession to the EU (Friberg, 2013, p. 18).

When Poland entered the EU in 2004, countries within the EEA were initially allowed to place varying restrictions for migration from 2004-2011. While countries like the U.K. completely opened their borders, Norway put in place a restriction for having a contract that showed full-time work to enter the country up until 2009 (Friberg, 2012, p. 1915). In 2004, there was large demand in the construction sector in Norway, and this often "male dominated" work resulted in men making up the majority of this migration from Poland (Gmaj & Iglicka, 2018, p. 158). This gender breakdown of Polish migration to Norway has been a persistent pattern since and today around 2/3 of Polish migrants in Norway are men (SSB, 2021b).

There are also other factors which have helped to shape the trends of this third wave of Polish migration. While the economic situation in Poland contributed to lesser educated trades workers coming to Norway (Guribye, 2018, p. 79), another shaping factor was that in 2007 the average hourly wage was 8 times higher in Norway than in Poland, resulting in a larger number of older men and fathers who came to work and save what they earned or to send it back home to families (Friberg, 2013, p. 25). Additionally, due to restructuring of the Norwegian labour market, there increasingly were temporary staffing agencies who would recruit workers to come and fill the labour needs in Norway. This created niche labour markets for immigrants which became less regulated and less protected than the rest of the Norwegian labour market, and resulted in a large numbers of Polish migrants being given short-term contracts or having irregular employment (Friberg et al., 2012), and where often they only worked alongside fellow Polish workers (Friberg, 2012, pp. 1915-1916). This dynamic made it easier for older Polish migrants, where Russian used to be the dominant language taught in Poland (Poszytek et al., 2005, p. 13), to come to Norway and work in sectors that didn't require them to speak Norwegian or English, such as construction, which differed from the migration trends in the U.K. or Ireland (Friberg, 2013, p. 26; White, 2011, p. 33).

These demographics and trends are important to highlight here, because often the stereotypes which my participants described about Polish migrants in Norway reflect some of these dynamics that occurred initially after Poland's accession to the EU. In some ways this initial wave appears fairly homogenous, but in reality there was a degree of heterogeneity present in terms of backgrounds, experiences and occupations among these Polish migrants in Norway. This may have been overlooked due to the way in which research about Polish migration in Norway was focused upon labour market impacts (Erdal & Pawlak, 2018, pp. 884-885). It is hard to fully capture the heterogeneity of this large scale migration, but as I will discuss now, recent data seems to show that trends with Polish migration more recently have been changing.

Polish migration to Norway has been dramatic and unprecedented in several ways. The first is that Polish migrants quickly rose from being a small migrant population within Norway, to the largest. From 2004-2011 the number of Polish migrants in Norway went from 11,000 to 60,000 (Godzimirski, 2011, p. 620). Today that number is currently over 101,000, which is over double the next largest immigrant population in Norway (Gulbrandsen et al., 2021, p. 36). It should also be highlighted that these numbers don't fully capture Polish migration to Norway, due to the fact that you have many who come for shorter time periods, and engage in irregular work which makes it difficult to measure Polish migration in Norway (Czapka, 2010, p. 10). However, these numbers mean that Polish migrants currently registered in Norway make up nearly 2% of the entire population in Norway (SSB, 2021c). An initial assumption about Polish migration both to Norway and other parts of Europe as well was that this was primarily short-term labour-based migration (White, 2016). However, as the years have passed it has become clear that while a portion of Polish migrants are still engaging in more circular migration, you see a steady number of migrants choosing to settle within Norway (Bygnes & Erdal, 2017; Friberg, 2013; Stormowska, 2015). As Stormowska (2015) highlights, you can see this both by the increased number of women and family reunifications occurring, as well as an increase in Polish migrants being hired on permanent contracts (p. 2).

Additionally, a shift appears to be unfolding when it comes to which migrants are coming to Norway. Some have argued that the most dynamic migration flow to Norway from Poland is younger and better educated migrants who increasingly have intentions to stay in Norway (Huang et al., 2016). This trend can also be found statistically. In 2009, around 20% of Polish migrants in Norway had a higher education, but by 2014 it was 30%, and it has stayed around that level ever since (SSB, 2021a). Also, what sectors of the economy that Polish migrants are employed in has changed. In 2008, about 70% of Polish migrants living in Norway were employed in construction and industry work and were underrepresented in most other sectors (Integrerings- og mangfoldsdirektoratet [IMDi], 2008, p. 20). However, in the most recent statistics in 2019, 39% of Polish male migrants were employed in construction and industry work (See Appendix A). This shows that while construction is still a large source of employment for Polish migrants, there are changes occurring with what type of work Polish migrants are employed in. Both the shift in demographics and also employment of Polish migration in Norway are important to highlight as most of my participants fit into these demographics of more recent trends of Polish migration. As highlighted earlier, with these shifting trends in Polish migration, so have the views of Polish migrants in Norwegian society shifted.

Godzimirski (2018) analyzed how Polish were portrayed in different Norwegian newspapers in 2014 versus 2004, ten years after EU Accession, to look at how Polish migrants are perceived here in Norway, and how that has changed. One positive trend was that in 2004, nearly 30% of articles about Polish migrants in Norway were written about Polish migrants and criminal activity, which dropped to 12.5 percent in 2014 (Godzimirski, 2018, p. 106). However, he found that the dominant portrayal both in 2004 and 2014 was that the Polish are still mainly described in the paper as a cheap labour force (Godzimirski, 2018, p. 101), showing ways in which negative perceptions have persisted.

2014 would also be the year that a large debate broke out in Norway about how Polish migrants are seen within Norwegian society with the airing of the Norwegian drama series, *Kampen for tilværelsen* (*Fight for survival)*. The series, which shows Polish people binge drinking, committing crimes, and other negative stereotypes, resulted in a public debate about Norwegian perceptions of Polish people in Norway, where even the Polish Ambassador to Norway commented on how the show portrayed negative and dated stereotypes (Czmur, 2014). Additionally, a project looking at social capital, which in the project referred to social factors that facilitate benefits for a community (Guribye et al., n.d., p. 2), found that the social capital of Polish migrants in Norway had decreased after EU accession in 2004 (Guribye et al., n.d., p. 5). However, in a project looking at Norwegian perceptions about immigrant communities in Norway, Bye et al. (2014) found that Polish migrants were viewed quite favorably by Norwegians when it came to working competence, and at a moderate level when it came to general views of them. This placed them in a middle ground of favorability, which was below Swedish migrants, but above other groups such as Somali, Iraqi, and Pakistani migrants. This "middle ground" status has been found elsewhere by other researchers as well (Friberg, 2012; van Riemsdijk, 2010).

Additionally, as this thesis has been written during the academic year of 2020-2021, COVID-19 has been ongoing. There have been several articles and reports in the Norwegian press about discrimination that Polish migrants are facing, in terms of how they feel blamed and stigmatized for spreading COVID-19 (Isaksen & Fallmyr, 2021). While this point is anecdotal, it does provide an interesting example about how Polish migrants might be viewed today in Norwegian society against the historical and social backdrop presented in this chapter.

What emerges from this section is the dynamic nature of Polish migration historically, including the more recent waves of Polish migration to Norway. Furthermore, Polish migration to Norway has been through several waves, where most recently younger and better educated Polish migrants are coming to Norway, which is important to highlight as it is this demographic with whom I have spoken. Finally, along with these shifts in which Polish migrants come to Norway, it would appear also that views of Polish migrants within Norwegian society have changed, are changing, and currently appear to be a blend of both positive and negative views. This blended view of Polish migrants is important to contextualize, as one of my research questions revolves around how my participants feel they are seen within Norway, and this backdrop helps to understand my participants' responses and reflections.

3: Analytical framework

This chapter aims to provide a framework of the theories and concepts that will be used in this thesis, along with an overview of relevant research that has looked at masculinities and migration both in Norway and elsewhere. In section 3.1, I define and identify the key theories and concepts that inform this research project, and outline why they were chosen and how they are relevant for answering my research questions. In section 3.2, I provide an overview of research and literature that looks at masculinities and migration. There are several areas of research which are relevant for answering my research questions, and because of this the section is broken into four thematic subsections which include: 1) Masculinities and migration motivations, 2) Negotiating masculinities in a new place, 3) Perceived migrant masculinities and marginalization in a host society, and 4) Men's navigations and strategies in response to marginalization. These sections lay a foundation for understanding what knowledge my thesis seeks to provide about Polish migrants' experiences in Norway, as well as its contribution to the larger field of research that looks at the intersection of masculinities and migration. I conclude the chapter with a synopsis where the main points are summarized and related back to the overall structure of this thesis.

3.1: Theories and concepts

In this section several theoretical understandings and ideas are introduced for gender and masculinities, including Messerschmidt's (2016) masculinities as structured action, hegemonic masculinity, new masculinities, and two frameworks which work in combination with understanding hegemonic masculinity and new masculinities. After this, concepts and theories which are relevant to migration and gender are outlined, including intersectionality, transnationalism, and racialization.

3.1.1: Gender and masculinities as social constructs and social constructionism

There are many ways of theorizing gender and these result in different epistemological strategies (Hesse-Biber et al., 2004). Each perspective has its own possibilities and limitations in terms of what they allow us to know and understand (Hesse-Biber & Yaiser, 2004). For this thesis I employ a social constructionist approach to gender and masculinities and will be examining how "masculinity is socially constructed within specific historical and cultural contexts of gender relations" (Hibbins & Pease, 2009, p. 1). A social constructionist approach to gender and masculinities investigates the role of structures, which may include many things such as governmental institutions down to social relations, and how this influences men's gendered practices (Connell, 2000). By focusing on how gendered practices are influenced by social expectations and norms, and how these have been historically and socially shaped, social constructionism demonstrates that gender rather than being an essentialized and static category, is instead something that we construct and "do" (Weber, 2004; West & Zimmerman, 1987).

This thesis focuses on men and their constructions and performances of gender. In some ways this can seem like it reinforces or essentializes men as a social category, and while this project can seem to be playing a role in this essentialization, the goal is the opposite. By focusing on men I hope to challenge and question the often-held assumptions and unmarked status that men often receive (Charsley & Wray, 2015; Edwards, 2006; Kimmel, 1994). I draw inspiration from Hearn (2015) who said:

> I am using 'men' as a social, non-essential category, including those categorized, called, or identifying as 'men'. I name the binary to interrogate and deconstruct it. To talk of men is to face material social realities, not to essentialize… what is important is how men are still not characteristically 'marked' as gendered. (p. 4)

Those who I spoke with identified as men, and by exploring how ideas of gender and masculinities shaped and influence their lives and migration experience, this thesis seeks to interrogate the way in which masculinities are socially constructed, negotiated, shifting, and to understand how some have acquired hegemonic meaning (Connell, 2000). I also recognize the important work done by queer scholars to question gender and masculinities further (Abelson, 2019; Halberstam, 1998), but in the scope of my thesis I focus on those identifying as men to provide further insight into how an individual's understanding of their sexed-self then shapes their relationship to gender (Messerschmidt, 2016, p. 42). To further understand the ways in which masculinity as a concept is shifting, and how men are influenced by and also influence masculinities, I turn to masculinities as structured action theory.

3.1.2: Masculinities as structured action theory

Messerschmidt, one of the key writers in the field of men and masculinities, explains why structured action theory provides important insights into the understanding of masculinities. "Sex, gender, and sexuality grow out of embodied social practices in specific social structural settings and serve to inform such practices in reciprocal relation" (Messerschmidt, 2016, p. 37). Structured action theory looks at how people's actions are shaped by structural ideas, and how their actions in return shape those structures. As a theoretical tool, structured action theory invites researchers to investigate how men's actions help to create ideals of masculinities, and also how those ideals are influencing men as well. "Agents draw upon social structures to engage in social action and in turn social structures are (usually) reproduced through that same embodied and accountable social action" (Messerschmidt, 2016, p. 47).

What expectations might society have for men, and how might those expectations influence and shape their actions? This is an important question when considering the role of masculinities and gender and its impact on men and their actions, and relates to my research on the role of gender in Polish men's migration experiences. When considering why men might migrate in the first place, researchers have emphasized that gender is an important dimension to analyze for how it relates to migration aspirations and expectations (Howson, 2009). How might the goals of migration of different Polish men who live in Norway be influenced by gender, and how might masculinities in turn influence their experiences is one of the main dimensions that I explore in this thesis. However, another structural component that is relevant for looking at the role of gender in the experiences of men who migrate is, how might the receiving society imagine them as men with a specific masculine practice (Hearn & Howson, 2009; Herz, 2018)?

As Messerschmidt (2016) points out, masculinities as structured action theory seeks to investigate the way that individuals from their position in society experience the world and interact with others, and specifically how "social actors self-regulate their behavior and make specific reflexive choices in specific socially structured contexts" (p. 57). These questions and ideas outlined by Messerschmidt (2016) above aid my examination of the role of gender among the Polish men I interviewed. I will be looking at how the position of these Polish men in Norway informs their gender practices and what choices they make in the Norwegian context. One distinction to make here is the way in which masculinity and masculinities are referred to in structured action theory as well as in my thesis. Masculinities are referred to as the different structures and gender practices which are available to individuals to draw upon, whereas masculinity is referred to when describing an individual's gender practice as well as how their gendered identity and performance is read by others (Messerschmidt, 2016, p. 58-59). In the context of my thesis this means that I refer to masculinities as the different structures my participants draw upon or are influenced by, and use masculinity when referring to their own embodied gender practice as well as how others read their masculine identity. Structured action theory provides a useful framework for analyzing gender, and masculinities and migration, including how men encounter structures, including hegemonic masculinities.

3.1.3 Hegemonic masculinity

One of the theories that has been most foundational in the study of men and masculinities is Connell's (1995) "hegemonic masculinity". Connell, in her theoretical outlining of what is masculinity/masculinities, made several important points and insights. The first is that masculinity is a gender practice in which men's dominance over women is taken for granted and hegemonic (Connell, 1995, p. 77)**.** Connell (1995) also argued that there are multiple forms of masculinities which are arranged in relations of power to each other including hegemonic, complicit, subordinated, and marginalized masculinities. Drawing upon Antonio Gramsci's concept of "hegemony", Connell points out that hegemonic masculinity does not have to mean a physically dominating form of masculinity, but rather "it is the successful claim to authority, more than direct violence, that is the mark of hegemony" (Connell, 1995, p. 77). Connell's point here is that there is an assumed ideal and hegemonic form of masculinity, which men and other masculinities aspire towards or are subordinated by. Factors such as race, class, and sexuality are influential in where one's masculinity is placed in this hierarchy.

Hegemonic masculinity, since it was first developed, has been used widely, critiqued, and reconceptualized (Demetriou, 2001; Haywood et al., 2018; Hearn, 2015; Howson, 2009). As a result of this it was revisited and reformulated by Connell and Messerschmidt (2005). One of the main points that they address in this reformulation is that masculinities are not static formations, and are constantly changing both over time, and also depending on place. To help capture the fluid nature of masculinities, they argued that masculinities should be understood and analyzed at three different levels: local, regional, and global (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005, p. 849). This breakdown of the three different levels means that, depending on the situation and the social arena that men are engaging in, hegemonic masculinity will look different and men will be situated differently as well within the hierarchy. For example, a hegemonic masculine ideal to migrate and be a provider which exists at the local level in a village in Mexico (Broughton, 2008), might be a marginalized masculine practice in a different place (Fiałkowska, 2019). These three levels of local, regional, and global masculinities can interact with and influence each other, but this does not mean that global hegemonic masculinities always influence the local or regional levels (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005, p. 850). While this theory and its reformulation has provided many insights into researching men and masculinities, it also has its challenges.

Hegemonic masculinity has been critiqued for several main reasons. Those which are most relevant for my thesis are presented, and to help clarify how hegemonic masculinity will be used in my thesis. One of the main critiques that has been taken up is that it is unclear if hegemonic masculinity should be understood as the ideals of masculinity or as men's actual practices (Howson, 2009). This has led to a confusion and a "slippage" of how it has been used, and is further confused by the fact that Connell herself also is inconsistent in its usage (Beasley, 2008, pp. 88-89). Some have critiqued hegemonic masculinity for how it struggles to capture dynamics in the Nordic countries of gender egalitarian masculinities becoming culturally dominant (Christensen & Jensen, 2014, p. 66), whereas others have argued it is ambiguous whether new and emerging forms of masculinities should be interpreted as hegemonic or nonhegemonic (Lund et al., 2019). To address these critiques, I present two complementary frameworks that work with hegemonic masculinity while addressing some of these critiques.

3.1.4: Dominant, dominating, and hegemonic masculinity

Messerschmidt (2016) outlined a framework where one distinguishes between hegemonic masculinity, dominant masculinities, and dominating masculinities (p. 33). In doing this, he hoped to address two problems facing hegemonic masculinity, which were, 1) what if a dominant, celebrated, and widespread form of masculinity does not legitimate patriarchal relations, and thus is not hegemonic, and 2) to address the slippage where certain character traits such as being tough and other actions are essentialized as "hegemonic" instead. Dominant masculinities refer to "the most widespread types in the sense of being the most celebrated, common, or current forms of masculinity in a specific social setting" (Messerschmidt, 2016, p. 33). Dominating masculinities refer to those masculinities which are used to exercise "power and control over people and events" (Messerschmidt, 2016, p. 33), which can be based around physical strength or other sources of power and control. What is important to emphasize from this framework is that a form of masculinity can be dominant, or dominating, but not necessarily be hegemonic "if they fail culturally to legitimate patriarchal relations" (Messerschmidt, 2016, p. 33). Specifically, this framework helps to unravel these different forms of masculinity from one another, and also to help researchers identify nonhegemonic forms of masculinity which do not contribute to patriarchal relations. It also helps to unpack how some of these nonhegemonic forms of masculinity can become dominant, or how dominating masculinities can be marginalized. To fully understand this, it is helpful to look at recent literature on some of these nonhegemonic forms of masculinities, which some researchers term “new masculinities.”

3.1.5: “New masculinities” and internal and external hegemony

In the past decade, there has been an emergence in research and theory development of new forms of masculinity, which break away from previous trends and common masculine practices. This includes Elliot’s (2016) “caring masculinities” and Bridges and Pascoe’s (2014) “hybrid masculinities”. What all of these new theories point to and conceptualize are emerging patterns of masculine identities and practices which embrace more flexible masculine identities which are friendly towards gender equality, while rejecting more rigid and dominating masculine norms, and are seen as “new masculinities” (Lund et al., 2019; Messerschmidt & Messner, 2018). This notion of new masculinities is something that in the Norwegian context has been written of for some time (Holter & Aarseth, 1993), but as the concept has grown in its use, so have questions around the extent to with which these new masculinities are nonhegemonic. As Bridges and Pascoe (2018) noted when revisiting the concept, it is unclear if hybrid masculinities are “challenges to systems of power and inequality or simply shifts in the ways those systems are perpetuated” (p. 269), or as Lund et al. (2019) highlights, the relationship “between hegemonic and caring masculinity is not predetermined” (p. 1380). This is because often the groups of men who practice these new masculinities, especially in the Nordic context, are those who are middle to upper class, and therefore often occupy a hegemonic and privileged space in society due to class hegemony (Lund et al., 2019, p. 1379). Due to this sociocultural status, these men then feel as though they can engage in what has been often seen as a subordinated gender identity (Connell, 1995) and not face any consequences for it. Recognizing some of the ambiguities between hegemonic, dominant, and new masculinities in Scandinavia, Christensen and Jensen (2014) suggest an additional framework for hegemonic masculinity to help unravel further some of these tensions.

Christensen and Jensen (2014) argue that some of these tensions come from the fact that hegemonic masculinity as a theory is trying to deal with many complex dimensions. One of these dimensions they believe is that the theory, by trying to grapple with the construction of hierarchies both between men and women, and also among groups of men, leads to an oversimplification of what is unfolding (Christensen & Jensen, 2014, p. 70). This is a critique which Demetriou (2001) also raised where it was unclear if the theory should be used to understand gender relations between men and women or between groups of men (pp. 343-344). In light of this critique and to reconcile this, Christensen and Jensen (2014) suggest a separate analysis between external hegemony, which looks at relations between men and women, and internal hegemony, that looks at relations between groups of men separately (p. 71). This they argue can be helpful in understanding how there may be hierarchies between groups of men, which don't clearly link to patriarchal relations between men and women. In the Scandinavian context, this can help us to understand why masculine identities oriented around gender equality appear to be hegemonic, and those that are seen as "non-equality oriented" (Christensen & Jensen, 2014, p. 70) are thus marginalized within an internal framework. By using this separate analysis of internal and external hegemony it can help us to further understand the emergence of these new masculinities and how these might coincide or not with each other.

In the context of this thesis I utilize both of these frameworks outlined by Messerschmidt (2016) and Christensen and Jensen (2014) and what they add to our understanding of hegemonic masculinity. To reemphasize, hegemonic masculinity is not used to describe a specific group of men or specific actions, but rather hegemonic masculinity is understood as a set of ideals for men's gendered practices that influences what they do. This is because "hegemonic masculinity in particular, cannot be reduced to the materiality of practice but is always informed and must always refer to practice. In this way hegemonic masculinity expresses contextually what men 'should' do and what men 'should' be based on navigation" (Howson, 2009, p. 38). As my thesis focuses on masculinity and migration, I pay attention to the types of ideals and aspirations my participants engage with, and look at how some of these may or may not be hegemonic (Messerschmidt & Messner, 2018). Furthermore, I use Connell and Messerschmidt's (2005) outlining of a local, regional and global framework of hegemonic masculinity to understand the different hegemonic ideals my participants encounter and draw upon. In the context of my thesis, I use regional hegemonic masculinity to describe the different hegemonic masculine ideals that exist within Poland versus Norway. As my participants move to a new place with different gender hierarchies, I look at the interplay between dominant and hegemonic masculinity, as well as internal and external hegemony to understand the different types of hierarchies my participants navigate and move through in their migration process.

3.1.6: Intersectionality and class

Intersectionality puts a name to something that researchers have been aware of for a long time, but states it explicitly. Intersectionality is the idea that people are influenced by multiple factors including race, gender, ethnicity, nationality, class, sexuality, and other social categories (Weber, 2004). While the concept was originally coined by Kimberle Crenshaw (1989) to explore the discrimination that black women faced in the U.S., it has flourished since in its use (Jensen & Christensen, 2020), and is now used by scholars globally (Kofman, 2020). However, it is a concept that has been critiqued because of how open-ended it is and that it has become more a "buzzword" (Davis, 2008) than an analytical concept. In light of these critiques, I draw upon the recommendations and typology of uses of intersectionality that Choo and Ferree (2010) outline. In the context of my thesis, I use intersectionality in two ways, where first it is used to understand the intersecting social identities of my participants (Choo & Ferree, 2010, p. 132; Wojnicka & Nowicka, 2021, p. 5), and also to look at how social categories my participants are seen as belonging to are mutually constituting and interact in processes of marginalization (Choo & Ferree, 2010, p. 131; Jensen, 2010, p. 10).

Intersectionality is useful for this thesis because it demonstrates that not all men are entitled to the same privileges based solely on their gender and the need to analyze how different social categories interact with their social positioning in society (Wojnicka, 2019). Hegemonic masculinity and intersectionality pair well together, which is why Christensen and Jensen (2014) argue that an intersectional approach should be adopted when examining internal hegemonic hierarchies among groups of men (p. 68). A wide range of researchers looking at migration and masculinities have argued about the need to approach this topic with an intersectional lens (Charsley & Wray, 2015; Hearn, 2015; Hearn et al., 2013; Wojnicka, 2019). I use the recommendation of Jensen and Christensen (2020) to take a sensitizing approach when using intersectionality, where one must see how different social categories are at play in a situation rather than a deterministic approach of what social categories to focus on (p. 109).

In my thesis material, one factor which was both frequent and meaningful was that of class. Due to this, as well as the way in which class is an ambiguous term, I explain the scope and way in which it is utilized. Class in this thesis is considered both as a category of economic difference, but also social difference. I primarily focus on social class and am inspired by the work of many scholars (Bourdieu, 1984; Pawlak, 2015a; Skeggs, 1997) who have highlighted the way in which differently valued social and cultural practices also maintain class differences. What emerges from research on social class is also the way in which it is something that is both subjective, and based around individualized hierarchies (Cederberg, 2017, p. 153; Eade, 2007). Migration often involves a “class journey” (Christensen et al., 2017, pp. 172-173), where migrants might experience changes in social class positioning. This is relevant because sometimes an ethnic or national group of migrants might come to be seen as representative of a certain class in a society (Eriksen, 2010; Pawlak, 2015b; Williams, 1996). Within the scope of my thesis, I focus on how my participants feel that assumptions about Polish migrants come with negative classed associations, and how the social class of my participants and their own sociocultural values influence the way they respond to this and also shapes their overall migration process. While intersectionality helps us to understand the way in which class, gender, and other social categories intersect and play a role in the migration experience, it does not take into account the role of a migrant’s connection to home or their transnational ties during migration.

3.1.7: Transnationalism

Transnationalism is a broad concept and theory often used in migration studies to analyze and understand the way in which migrants situate themselves within multiple social locations which extend beyond a nation’s borders (Levitt & Schiller, 2004). Masculinity has not come into extensive focus in transnational research (Beasley, 2013, p. 30), but existing research shows the relevance of masculinities in understanding men’s migration experiences (Charsley, 2005; Farahani, 2013; Sinatti, 2014). A transnational lens is used in my thesis to understand the transnational “social field” (Levitt & Schiller, 2004, p. 1006) my participants exist within and how they navigate between different regional hierarchies of gender and masculinities (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005) in Poland versus Norway. Certain gender practices in one context might contribute to power and status in one place, and marginalization in another, and a transnational lens helps to understand the way in which challenges unfold as individuals try and negotiate and navigate between these different gender hierarchies (Fiałkowska, 2019, p. 115). Additionally, transnationalism invites researchers to look at the complexities and interwoven processes of how sending and receiving communities impact different migrants’ experiences (Hearn & Howson, 2009). Thus, transnationalism is also used to investigate what role the receiving community has for how my participants navigate living in Oslo.

3.1.8: Racialization and stereotyping

There are a number of concepts that a researcher can use to understand the way in which social hierarchies are created and maintained in a society, and which are relevant for understanding the experienced subordinate social position of a migrant population in a certain country. This includes concepts such as “othering” (Herz, 2018; Spivak, 1985), marginalization (Jensen, 2010), or racialization (Fox et al., 2012; Hall, 1980). Often these concepts can overlap and mutually support each other (Christensen et al., 2017). Racialization is utilized in my thesis rather than these concepts for the way in which it focuses on power relations and social hierarchies, and specifically the processes and mechanism through which that is achieved, which these other concepts partially touch on, but don’t elucidate to the same degree. To understand how racialization is used in my thesis, it is also important to understand how the concept of racialization has developed.

Race was originally developed as a concept to explain supposed biological and natural differences between groups which has long since been scientifically disproven (Mac an Ghaill, 1999; Miles, 1993). This has led to social scientists arguing that race as a concept should no longer be used, but others have critiqued this because it disregards the way in which groups and communities of people experience and suffer from racism in real and consequential ways (Barot & Bird, 2001). This has resulted instead in a conceptual turn away from the idea of race as a static category, and instead to racialization (Fanon, 1967; Fox et al., 2012; Miles, 1993; Murji & Solomos, 2005b), as a way to conceptualize and understand the way that racial meanings become attached to certain groups. What researchers argue is that in today’s society, the way in which racial hierarchies and meanings are created are based upon notions of cultural difference that are marked as inferior, and this is achieved through racialization (Hall, 1980; Hickman & Ryan, 2020; Murji & Solomos, 2005b). While many disagreements exist about how racialization should be defined, a general point of agreement is that the term is used as a “concept in the analysis of racial phenomena, particularly to signal the processes by which ideas about race are constructed, come to be regarded as meaningful, and are acted upon” (Murji & Solomos, 2005a, p. 1).

Race, racism, and racialization have been primarily viewed through a black and white binary, but with this cultural turn in how racialization is understood, racialization can be useful in understanding the discrimination of migrants and how “national groups become understood as racial groups” (Gonzalez-Sobrino & Goss, 2019, p. 508). This indeed has historical precedence as well. As historians and scholars have documented, white migrants such as the Irish in the United States and U.K. were racialized through cultural assumptions and stereotypes which then marked them as inferior, and then this view of the Irish over time changed (Pickering, 2001; van Riemsdijk, 2010). This example from history highlights how racialization is non-static, and the way in which a group is viewed can change (Meer, 2019, p. 284).

Racialization as a concept has also been used to look at the way in which migrants who are white are marked as different in predominantly white societies, and how that difference becomes a signifier of undesirability and establishes unequal power relations (Guðjónsdóttir & Loftsdóttir, 2017; van Riemsdijk, 2010). Often the way in which migrants are marked as different and are racialized is based upon many social categories in their life such as class and nationality, which is where an intersectional approach (Choo & Ferree, 2010) is useful in understanding how these social categories intersect resulting in marginalization. One of the key points about racialization is that it is a process that creates social hierarchies and uneven power relations (Gonzalez-Sobrino & Goss, 2019), and one of the mechanisms through which this process occurs is that of stereotypes.

Stereotypes are something that most people are familiar with, but it is helpful to analyze them further and look at the role they play in maintaining social hierarchies. In Pickering's (2001) work on stereotyping, he makes the case that stereotyping should be viewed as a process that reenforces inequality. This is because stereotyping "always occurs at a cost to those who are stereotyped, for they are then fixed into a marginal position or subordinate status and judged accordingly, regardless of the inaccuracies that are involved in the stereotypical description given to them" (Pickering, 2001, p. 5). There are two points to highlight from this. First is that stereotypes are a tool to mark a group as subordinate. Additionally, stereotypes often homogenize an entire group and lock them into a static position. This is done in a few ways, but often symbolically through language (Pickering, 2001, pp. 72-73; Riggins, 1997) and also through the narratives and ways in which a group are portrayed in the media (Lister, 2004, pp. 116-117). Within my own data I explore the types of stereotypes my participants felt existed about Polish migrants in Norway, and how these result in them feeling as though Polish migrants are looked down upon in Norway. To understand why these stereotypes are marginalizing, I utilize the concept of racialization to explore the process through which assumptions and ideas of Polish migrants in Norway create a social hierarchy where they are marginalized for a number of reasons linked to culture, class, nationality, and gender. As Murji and Solomos (2005a) explain about how racialization creates social boundaries, it is “the process by which racial meanings are attached to particular issues – often treated as social problems – and with the manner in which race appear to be the, or often the, key factor in the way they are defined and understood” (p. 3). In the context of Polish migrants in Norway, I explore how the stereotypes my participants feel exist are marginalizing through negative traits which are ascribed to them and seen to be as inherently Polish.

3.2: Literature review

In this section I provide an overview of relevant research that relates to migration and masculinities. This is a field of study that only in recent years has gained increased attention (Wojnicka & Pustułka, 2019), with research focusing on Polish masculinities and migration also only recently coming into focus (Wojnicka & Nowicka, 2021). To understand the knowledge gaps this thesis seeks to fill, I provide both research findings about masculinities and migration in a global setting, before exploring relevant findings about Polish masculinities in Norway or elsewhere in Europe. By doing this, I highlight what gaps exist and what needs to be further developed within the context of Polish men in Norway, which helps to frame the research agenda for my thesis. This section is broken into four themes which are relevant for answering my research questions. The themes are masculinities and migration motivations, navigations of a new gender regime in a new place, marginalization of migrant men, and migrant men’s navigations of marginalization and perceived lower social standing.

3.2.1 Masculinities and migration motivations

As highlighted in the introduction, much migration research has been influenced by economic theories and understandings, which have also influenced how research about Polish migration in Norway and migration motivations are understood. Within Norway, and the EU as well, Polish make up some of the largest migrant groups, and since Poland’s accession to the EU in 2004, more than 2 million Polish people have migrated within Europe and are mainly seen as labour migrants (Wojnicka, 2019, p. 287). Due to the fact that this migration has been mainly understood as labour-based migration, there is the assumption then that this migration and these men’s masculine identities can be seen as mainly influenced by breadwinning ideals (Wojnicka, 2019, pp. 287-288). This again fits into a larger trend on research about men and masculinities where the assumption is that migration is based primarily around improving their financial status and standing within the family (Souralová & Fialová, 2017). However, there are currently around 65,000 Polish men in Norway (SSB, 2021b), and while there may be many who have migrated to Norway for these economical reasons, this is a large group which requires an approach of recognizing the heterogeneity within it (Pawlak, 2015a; Wojnicka, 2019, p. 286).

Researchers studying men’s migration with a gendered lens have found evidence of men migrating for a number of reasons other than just economical which relate to ideas of masculinity. These include migration as a rite of passage (Sinatti, 2014), the role of sexuality including both heterosexual (Ahmad, 2011) and homosexual (Aguila, 2014) desires, migration as a way to accrue social and cultural capital (Datta et al., 2009, p. 861), and many others. One piece of research that analyzed the ways in which masculinities influenced the migration process was Broughton’s (2008) study of rural Mexican men’s migration to the U.S. In his research he found that men often adopted and aligned themselves with one of several different masculine strategies for migration. While one of these included migration as related to breadwinning pressures, there was also migration as an adventure. For “’adventurers’—the border offers a place not only to earn a better living but also to prove one’s manhood, seek thrills, and escape the rigidities of rural life” (Broughton, 2008, p. 574). This idea of migration as an adventure and an opportunity to prove one’s valor has also been found among other groups of migrant men in different places as well, including Polish men in the U.K. “For men like Bayzli, for example, a Polish construction worker… projected a particular vision of masculinity linked with youth and experiencing life first hand” (Datta et al., 2009, p. 861). These findings also fit into a larger picture of migration research highlighting how migration is seen as an exciting adventure (Favell, 2008), and even as a rite of passage (Monsutti, 2007; Ruehs, 2017).

Another type of migration motivation that is not always tied directly to economic motives is that of “lifestyle migration” (Benson & O'Reilly, 2009). Often lifestyle migration is based around several main criteria which include a better “work-life balance, quality of life, and freedom from prior constraints” (Benson & O'Reilly, 2009, p. 609). While there is less research that looks at the intersection of life-style migration and masculinity, it has come up in different parts of the world (Lafferty & Maher, 2020; Ono, 2015). This research has highlighted that these men often reject the hegemonic masculinities that are based upon having a good job and their ability to be a provider which exist in their homelands (Ono, 2015, p. 260). In the context of

Polish migration, there is not much research that looks at it through the lens of lifestyle migration, but other research has highlighted similar dynamics to lifestyle migration.

A theme which has emerged from a number of qualitative studies of Polish migration in Norway and Europe is migrating for a more “normal” life (Bygnes & Erdal, 2017; Galasińska & Kozłowska, 2009; Rodriguez, 2010). These researchers show that what constitutes a “normal” life is highly subjective, but includes everything from earning better wages, better working conditions with proper contracts (Baranowska-Rataj, 2011), and also a better work/life balance (Bygnes & Erdal, 2017, p. 113). There appear to be overlapping themes between lifestyle migration and a “normal life”, but also little dialogue between lifestyle migration and migration for a “normal life” in the context of Polish migration within Europe. One of the reasons for this might be the fact that lifestyle migration is conceptualized to understand the migration of “affluent individuals” (Benson & O'Reilly, 2009, p. 609).

This assumption, however, that lifestyle migration is relevant only for affluent individuals and hasn’t been applied to Polish migration highlights several possible forms of biased assumptions. The first is that motivations which are relevant in lifestyle migration aren’t as relevant for those who aren’t wealthy, which one could say is challenged by the findings of those exploring the ideas of migration for a “normal” life. Another type of bias it might reflect is assumptions that are made about Polish migrants, and that their migration is seen as primarily economically motivated and therefore other dimensions of their migration are then overlooked.

Those who have explored the ideas of a “normal life” have found through a “qualitative unpacking” (Bygnes & Erdal, 2017, p. 111) the many migration aspirations of Polish migrants. These findings help to show the multitude of migration aspirations of Polish migrants. While those who have explored narrations of a “normal” life of Polish migrants in Norway (Bygnes & Erdal, 2017) and elsewhere in Europe (Galasińska & Kozłowska, 2009; Rodriguez, 2010) haven’t explicitly focused on gender, we can consider how the findings of those looking at the intersection of lifestyle migration and masculinity elsewhere in the world (Lafferty & Maher, 2020; Ono, 2015) can possibly be relevant with Polish migration in Norway. Research looking at masculine identity and migration motivations among Polish male migrants outside of those for mainly labour reasons is a current gap in knowledge. However, exploring the masculine identity of male Polish migrants who describe their migration for a better life or a more “normal” life can also help to demonstrate the “multiple masculinities” (Bell & Pustułka, 2017) among Polish male migrants in regards to how masculinities shape migration motivations.

What is important to highlight from this section is that men migrate for a variety of different reasons and construct different ideas of masculinity that relate to this migration. Often this migration can be framed and understood as being solely economically motivated and being influenced by breadwinning notions of masculinity, but we can see that this does not apply for all men. These are important insights and contribute to challenging the notion of a single universal experience for men who migrate (Wojnicka & Pustułka, 2017). While this research reflects masculinities’ different roles in decision-making for migration, other researchers have highlighted the role of masculinities upon arrival in a place.

3.2.2: Negotiating masculinities in a new place

“Migration yields a shift in people’s roles, identities and perceptions of self” (Bell & Pustułka, 2017, p. 129). This shift or change that can come with migration can provide many challenges and opportunities to individuals, where often ideas and assumptions may change. In particular, ideas of gender, masculinities, and manhood are often questioned and renegotiated (Pease, 2009, p. 80). Men may face many challenges to their ideas of gender when migrating, from shifts in family dynamics (Charsley, 2005; Pease, 2009), deskilling in occupations (Datta et al., 2009; Hearn et al., 2013), to encountering a society that has more fluid ideas of masculinity (Wojnicka & Nowicka, 2021, p. 9).

To understand these shifts and changes, some researchers have found that hegemonic masculinity is a helpful theoretical tool. This was evident in Charsley’s (2005) research about Pakistani men who marry British-Pakistani women and move there to live with them. Often these men live in a house with their wife’s entire family, where their father-in-law is the dominant figure. In Charsley’s (2005) findings, some Pakistani men adapt and create new ideals for themselves which are available to them in their current situations, such as being dutiful sons rather than the heads of the household (p. 100). This type of negotiation can be understood as a strategy by these sons to occupy a complicit position within a hegemonic masculine framework, while helping to still maintain and support patriarchal relations within the household.

Similar dynamics and renegotiations of masculinities has come into focus with Polish men in Norway due to researchers looking at transnational family dynamics. Researchers using a transnational lens often have had the family as a central element of analysis, and as a result of this has been “particularly sensitive to calls inviting the incorporation of a gender dimension to analysis” (Sinatti, 2014, p. 217). This is relevant in the Norwegian context as well, where much of the research exploring transnationalism with Polish migration in Norway has had family as a main element of analysis (Bell & Erdal, 2015; Pustułka et al., 2015; Slany, Slusarczyk, et al., 2018). One of the main ideas that has emerged from this research is the way in which gendered relations are contested and reproduced due to migration. Some researchers have highlighted the ways in which fathers have to navigate and negotiate ideas of fatherhood from Poland in Norway (Pustułka et al., 2015). Men from Poland might be more familiar with common fathering practices in Poland based around a patriarchal role of providing for the family, which they feel is out of place in Norway (Pustułka et al., 2015, p. 126). While there are some fathers who do not change their style, others demonstrate new fathering habits and become more engaged with their children’s lives than they would have back in Poland (Pustułka et al., 2015, p. 131).

Other research has also highlighted how paternity leave in Norway helps to facilitate more engaged fathering from Polish fathers, resulting in a new gender practice (Żadkowska et al., 2018). These fathers, due to different structures in Norwegian and Polish societies, find themselves in settings where their fatherhood practices shift. For some men this is disorientating (Pustułka et al., 2015, p. 128), but for others, creates opportunities for them to shift their gendered practices (Erdal & Pawlak, 2018, p. 892). These findings underscore a larger point made by researchers. Migration, and the types of changes that come with it, impact ideas of gender and gender practices (Bell & Pustułka, 2017, p. 140) and gender plays an important role in shaping and influencing men’s experiences and actions when moving to a new place (Howson, 2009). The importance of gender and masculinities with reference to migration has also been presented through the ways in which migrant men’s masculinities are perceived in a host society.

3.2.3: Migrant men: Perceived migrant masculinities and marginalization in the host society

Much research looking at migration and masculinities has focused on the ways in which the masculinities of migrant men are constructed and perceived by a receiving country and community. It is important to highlight that this research has often looked at the dynamics between non-white immigrant communities in majority white countries in Europe, Australia, and the United States, and it is this relationship I am discussing here. Often these men are seen as being a threat to the public (Charsley & Wray, 2015, p. 404), where they are seen as having a highly sexualized and aggressive masculinity (Herz, 2018, p. 432; Wojnicka & Pustułka, 2019).

This process of portraying migrant and refugee men as having a dangerous masculinity is not a new phenomenon (Hearn & Blagojević, 2013, p. 15). However, it has risen in prominence in Europe in recent years with the refugee crisis and after a group of immigrant men sexually assaulted women in Germany on New Year's Eve in 2015 (Herz, 2018, p. 431). In the European context, much of this research has focused on men of middle eastern background who can be connected to Muslim "culture" (Herz, 2018, p. 432; Wojnicka & Nowicka, 2021, p. 2) or other highly visible non-white groups (Wojnicka & Pustułka, 2019). However, researchers in other parts of the world have also analyzed this process of how a minority's masculinity is portrayed and perceived in the public, including Lebanese men in Australia (Poynting et al., 2009), Latin American and Mexican men in the United States (Crossley & Pease, 2009), and refugee men from a variety of countries in Kenya (Jaji, 2009). This research has brought forward important insights regarding the way in which a migrant community is seen as different, and in particular how gender and their perceived masculinities play a role in that process.

There has been a growing amount of research looking both at how Polish migrants in general are viewed within Western Europe, as well as specifically Polish men and their perceived masculinities. In the context of the U.K., researchers there have made the case of using the concept of racialization to understand the processes through which Polish migrants are subordinated and socially excluded. As Fox et al. (2012) note about the treatment of Polish migrants as well as other Eastern European migrants in the U.K., despite the "shared whiteness between migrant and majority [this] has not exempted these current cohorts of migrants from the sorts of racialization found in other migrations" (p. 682). Additionally, Hickman and Ryan (2020) highlight the ways that Polish migrants are seen as cultural outsiders, and that the term "Polish" is seen as insulting, and they argue that this shows many parallels to the processes of racialization that Irish migrants have experienced in the U.K. (p. 106-107). This also fits into other research that highlights the way in which Eastern European countries are seen and imagined as backwards and inferior in comparison to Western European countries (Kulpa, 2011, 2014; Sullivan, 2006). However, other researchers have also highlighted that due to the fact that Polish migrants are seen as more culturally similar than other non-European migrants they are placed in a dynamic racial hierarchy which involves both inclusion and exclusion (Bell & Pustułka, 2017; van Riemsdijk, 2010; Wojnicka, 2019). This middle-ground is also relevant in how Polish men and their masculinities are viewed within Europe.

In research looking at the role of masculinities in Polish male migrants' experiences in Germany, Wojnicka and Nowicka (2021) highlighted the way in which German society's ideas of Polish masculinity situated their participants in certain social hierarchies. This unfolded in a way that their participants felt looked down upon in comparison to German migrants because of being associated with assumptions of being backwards, but more progressive than men of Muslim background (Wojnicka & Nowicka, 2021, pp. 13-14). In a similar dynamic, Fiałkowska (2019) highlighted how Polish men found it difficult to meet women in the U.K., and the way in which these men felt that ideas connected to Polish masculinity result in low social standing (p. 120-121). Polish masculinities have not come into focus in the same way in Norway, but we can look at other research that looks at experiences of Polish migrants in Norway to gain insight into how Polish migrants are viewed and socially positioned within Norway.

Friberg (2012) found that Polish men working in the construction sector in Norway experienced advantages and disadvantages because they were Polish. One advantage was that often the Norwegian employers viewed Polish as hard-working, and this made them desirable workers in comparison to workers of different ethnic backgrounds (Friberg, 2012, p. 1929). On the other hand, these employers saw Polish workers lacking traits that would be important to rising within the ranks of the construction site and the company. "For the jobs that require independent thinking, planning ahead, making autonomous decisions for the good of the company… Poles found themselves at the other end of the recruitment queue" (Friberg, 2012, p. 1925). Some of the more interesting insights that Friberg (2012) found was that often this differentiation was also based around understandings of cultural differences by the Norwegian employers between Polish and Norwegian workers, a finding he has found in other studies of Norwegian employers' perceptions of Polish migrants (Friberg & Midtbøen, 2018). These are similar to findings about the working experiences of Polish nurses in Norway as well.

van Riemsdijk (2010) found that the ways in which female Polish nurses were viewed and treated within the workplace in Norway was influenced by the cultural assumptions and stereotypes that exist about Polish workers in Norway. In similar ways to what Friberg (2012) found, stereotypes about Polish people could lead to some positive and negative outcomes for the Polish nurses. van Riemsdjik (2010) found that Polish nurses were often viewed as hard-working, and particularly adept at providing care (p. 128). However, these ideas and assumptions about what they were good at, based upon the fact they were Polish, could also lead them to not being given certain tasks, “leading to deskilling” (van Riemsdijk, 2010, p. 129). Additionally, those who van Riemsdjik (2010) interviewed spoke of experiences in which they were seen as backwards by their Norwegian coworkers and colleagues, including times when they were told how to use silverware (p. 130). While this can seem like a joking matter, van Riemsdjik (2010) argues that it reflects the larger narrative that exists in Norway about Poles as under-developed and backwards and she argues there is a process of racialization unfolding with Polish migrants in Norway (p. 132). We can see the ways in which the history of Polish migration to Norway led to a perception of uneducated labourers (Guribye, 2018), and might play a role in how these nurses are then seen in the workplace.

Another finding that van Riemsdjik describes that is similar to Friberg is how Polish people, while viewed negatively, are also seen positively in reference to other migrant populations and nationalities. “Hilde considers the Polish nurses ‘one of us’ in this particular situation, in opposition to healthcare workers whom she considers more different in terms of appearance and cultural background” (van Riemsdjik, 2010, p. 132). This further reinforces the point that many researchers have argued and which I have highlighted as well. The circumstances around how Polish are perceived and treated within Norway and Europe are dynamic, complex, and present an interesting case of how a group can experience both inclusion and exclusion. The research carried out by Friberg (2012) and van Riemsdijk (2010) focuses on ways in which Polish people are treated in the workplace based upon stereotypes about them. In the next section, I bring into focus what research has shown about how men respond to negative perceptions, before bringing in research that looks at how Polish people respond to the previously described assumptions and stereotypes they encounter, and what are the specific strategies that they employ as well.

3.2.4: Migrant men’s responses to and navigations of a lower social position

Another development in research on migration and masculinities has been the ways in which these men respond to the receiving communities’ perception of their masculinities. Researchers have identified a number of gendered strategies, including “self-valorization” (Donaldson & Howson, 2009). This occurs when men try to “displace their marginal status” (Kukreja, 2021, p. 12) by focusing on their own positive masculine traits to try and posture themselves as superior to men in the new society they are living within. Hegemonic masculinity has also been used often to analyze these men's different strategies and actions in response to the discrimination they receive.

As Connell & Messerschmidt (2005) highlight, groups of migrant men, or other marginalized groups, will take up a "protest masculinity" to try and reestablish power (pp. 847-848). This can be achieved through a number of different strategies, but it often takes shape as a marginalized group of men embracing an identity of a dangerous masculinity. In regards to the protest masculinity that young Lebanese men took up in Australia, "these men sought a degree of recognition or respect through a strong sense of ethnic identity and through a hypermasculine performance which was designed to intimidate outsiders" (Poynting et al., 2009, p. 149). This hypermasculine performance has also been linked to the ways in which Latin American men embody the supposed "machismo" narrative, not because of cultural heritage, but because of their marginalized place in society (Herz, 2018, p. 434).

Polish men's masculinities have received more attention within the U.K., and researchers there have also used hegemonic masculinity. Fiałkowska (2019) highlights the ways in which Polish men, when confronting Polish people's lesser status in British society, see this as a reason for why they are unable to meet women. In response to this, Fiałkowska (2019) identified two strategies taken by these men to navigate this. The first was that these men would focus on how they actually preferred Polish women to British women, shifting the focus away from possibly being rejected, and which allowed them to maintain a sense of pride in light of this perceived discrimination (Fiałkowska, 2019, pp. 120-121). The other strategy that these men would take is to shift their gender practice to one that is seen as more egalitarian, and this was a way to distance themselves from gender practices seen as more backwards and patriarchal in the U.K. (Fiałkowska, 2019, pp. 121-122).

Similar strategies have been found among Polish male migrants in Germany. As Wojnicka and Nowicka (2021) found, Polish men in Germany navigated a new social position which they felt was marginalized due to assumptions of backwardness associated with Poland (p. 15). What they found was a complex navigation, where the men would emphasize themselves as more progressive and gender-equality oriented than Muslim migrants who they saw were discriminated against, while also finding German masculinity to be deficient. But due to the higher social standing of German men that was associated with an upper class standing, "Polish migrant masculinity is repelled by it [German masculinity] but also attracted, distancing from it but also aspiring to it" (Wojnicka & Nowicka, 2021, p. 14). Here we see again how masculine negotiations are made as a way to boost men's social standing, but that these negotiations also create tensions between improving their social standing and also maintaining patriarchal power relations resulting in a masculine practice which is a "hybrid" (Wojnicka & Nowicka, 2021, p. 14).

Fiałkowska (2019), also recognizing this tension and negotiations men make to be more gender equal, highlights the way in which this could be understood within an external and internal hegemonic model (Christensen & Jensen, 2014). These men, by positioning themselves as more gender equal, boost their standing within the internal hegemonic model (Fiałkowska, 2019, p. 122). Although Wojnicka and Nowicka (2021) do not consider their negotiations within an external and internal model, we can see how this framework could also be relevant and helpful in understanding men's negotiations of gender identity. Other studies in the U.K. have focused on how Polish men on construction sites emphasize their skills as better workers in comparison to British men and other ethnic groups as a way to boost their masculine status in light of their marginalized status (Datta, 2009; Datta & Brickell, 2009; Datta et al., 2009). Although these studies from construction sites don't employ theories connected to masculinity to understand this strategy, they are helpful in providing further examples of the way in which Polish men navigate a marginalized social position, and how masculinities are playing a role in this strategy.

Research looking at Polish migrants' negotiations of a marginalized status has come less into focus through a gendered analysis in Norway, but themes of marginalization have been explored by the anthropologist Marek Pawlak. In carrying out ethnographic fieldwork among Polish migrants living in Oslo, Pawlak (2015a, 2015b) observed different migration strategies that then influenced experiences in Norway. Observing these differences, he made a distinction between "Polakkene" and "Cosmopolitans". Often Polakkene, which in Norwegian means "the Polish", were men employed in construction whose migration was often economically driven and who didn't interact often with Norwegian society. This differed from Cosmopolitans who worked in a variety of fields including architecture and healthcare, saw themselves as higher social class, and made efforts to engage with Norwegian society (Pawlak, 2015a, pp. 30-31). This distinction, and in particular those described as the Polakkene can be seen as representing characteristics of initial Polish migration after Polish EU accession outlined in the historical overview chapter.

Pawlak (2015a, 2015b) found that the Cosmopolitans see the Polakkene's actions as embarrassing and shameful, and as a result of this would try and distance themselves from them. To understand this, Pawlak (2015b) introduces the concept of "cultural intimacy", which is used to describe "known and recognizable traits that not only define insiderhood but are also felt to be disapproved by powerful outsiders" (Herzfeld, 2005, as cited in Pawlak, 2015b, p. 251). This, Pawlak (2015b) argues, is connected to larger social and cultural ideas about the East-West divide in Europe and which essentializes Polishness as backwards, and which the Cosmopolitans see the Polakkene as embodying and then they try to distance themselves from (253-255). Pawlak's findings also fit into findings about Polish migration in the U.K., with feelings of embarrassment about co-nationals (Garapich, 2012, p. 36; Ryan, 2010, p. 365), and also strategies of differentiation and "boundary construction" (Garapich, 2008).

One of the key points Pawlak (2015b) highlights is the need to look at the ways in which factors such as class differences exist within migrant groups (p. 244). This connects to a larger theme about the need of recognizing heterogeneity within immigrant communities, rather than the often perceived-to-be homogenous groups that host societies see them to be (Anthias, 2011). As highlighted throughout this thesis, there are many stereotypes and assumptions about Polish immigrants living in Norway. While there is research that shows the ways in which Polish people encounter and experience this in Norway, Pawlak (2015a, 2015b) makes a contribution highlighting the different strategies that are then taken by Polish immigrants in Norway.

So far I have presented a backdrop of the research about masculinities and Polish migration in Norway. By presenting previous research on Polish migration in other parts of Europe, along with relevant research on migration and masculinities globally, I have highlighted some of the main knowledge gaps that exist about Polish masculinities and migration within Norway. It is a complex picture, but the key takeaways can be understood as:

1) Polish men's migration in Norway, and men's migration globally, has often been framed through an economic lens where gender is ignored.

2) Transnational research has explored masculinities of Polish men in Norway, but mainly in family contexts, leaving a large gap about masculinities and migration with other groups of men.

> 3) Other researchers have highlighted that there are many motivations for migration among groups of men outside of assumed breadwinning ideals.
>
> 4) Polish migrants are often framed negatively within Western European countries, and this has many impacts on how they are treated and viewed.
>
> 5) Polish migrants adopt a variety of strategies while navigating these stereotypes and negative receptions in their new host societies.

This previous research was important and foundational in developing the design of my thesis. In light of these findings and identified gaps, I aim to contribute with knowledge and insights in several different ways through this thesis. First, to explore the ways in which gender shapes the migration experiences of Polish men in Norway, other than just married men in family dynamics. Second, this project seeks to challenge the assumed homogeneity of Polish men in Norway, and instead focus on groups of men who might be overlooked, yet still are important in understanding Polish migration within Norway. Finally, my research seeks to explore how Polish people, and Polish men in particular, feel they are viewed within Norwegian society, and how this also impacts and influences the migration process of this group. While research has looked at some of these different dimensions independently, I wish to bring these all together to provide new knowledge about masculinities, migration, and Polish men's experiences in Norway.

3.3: Chapter synopsis

This chapter has presented the main theoretical ideas and conceptual tools which are used in this thesis to understand gendered dynamics of Polish men's migration in Norway. The reviewed literature demonstrates that a gendered analysis of Polish men's migration in Norway has been largely limited. Research from other migration contexts has demonstrated that gender is an important dimension of understanding men's migration, due to the many challenges and changes which are encountered in the migration process. I have also presented research that demonstrates the ways in which the Polish population is viewed and marginalized within Norway, and different ways that Polish people have navigated and responded to this. Finally, I have brought together some of these different research findings to make the case for a gendered analysis of Polish men's migration experiences in Norway, and how might they experience marginalization in Norway and respond to this. The next chapter focuses on the methodological choices and framework I employed to bring this research gap into focus.

4: Methodology

The purpose of this chapter is both to outline the methodological choices made for this project and also demonstrate how these choices fit within the overall research design. First I begin with describing how a qualitative-based approach was identified as best suited for exploring the processes that my research questions dealt with (Winchester & Rofe, 2016). In the second section I outline the strengths and weaknesses of interviewing as a research method. In the third section I describe who my participants were and how they were selected, and in the fourth section I describe the interview process. In the fifth section I explain the methods of analysis utilized in my project. The sixth section focuses on research ethics, which includes steps taken to ensure data protection rights, reflections upon my own positionality, and the different steps I took to ensure rigour in my project. Following this I provide some reflections on the impact of COVID-19 on the research process. The chapter is then concluded with a synopsis where I highlight the main points from this chapter and present how all of these choices fit and work together in supporting the methodological design of my project.

4.1: Research design: Why qualitative methods

When thinking about the design of my research project it was important to reflect upon what are my research aims because “research aims affect research design” (Stratford & Bradshaw, 2016, p. 119). While considering what my research aims and objectives were and the specific research questions I had chosen to investigate, it became clear that a qualitative methods approach would offer many strengths. Qualitative methods are often used “in elucidating human experiences, environments, and processes… to explore human values, meanings, and experiences” (Winchester & Rofe, 2016, p. 26). My research project focuses on exploring Polish men’s migration experiences, and how their own different values and the different social structures they encountered might influence that experience; therefore, qualitative methods were situated to assist me with this research inquiry. Another important factor to consider was how the different methods I would choose for both data collection and analysis would fit together.

4.2: Semi-structured in-depth interviews

Patton (2002) provides an argument about the usefulness of interviews for a qualitative research project.

> We cannot observe feelings, thoughts, and intentions. We cannot observe behaviours that took place at some previous point in time. We cannot observe situations that preclude the presence of an observer. We cannot observe how people have organized

> the world and the meanings they attach to what goes on in the world. We have to ask people questions about those things. (p. 341)

Patton’s summary speaks to many of the factors that led me to choose interviewing as a method of data collection. Many of my questions were concerned with the past experiences, values, and ideals of my participants. By conducting interviews with my participants I was able to explore some of these different themes and topics in a way which would have been difficult to do with a survey. However, there are many different forms of interviewing techniques and formats. Each one offers its own strengths and weaknesses for the interviewer, and this was considered when choosing the design of my interview.

While there are various interview formats that could be chosen, the semi-structured in-depth interview format presented several advantages for this project. Different forms of interview techniques can range from being more open-ended conversational, to predetermined questions which are always asked in the same order and format (Patton, 2002, p. 342). The semi-structured in-depth interview falls somewhere in between this spectrum of interview formats. It “has some degree of predetermined order but maintains flexibility in the way issues are addressed by the informant” (Dunn, 2016, p. 150). This flexibility within a predetermined order was helpful in regard to my goals for the format of the interviews. One advantage was that a semi-structured interview helps to create a more conversational dynamic between the interviewer and participant. As Morris (2015) points out, there is still some probing from the interviewer so that important topics and themes are covered, but the participant is still “able to express themselves in any way they desire” (p. 3).

The semi-structured interview can also create challenges for the interviewer, where they have to find a balance of keeping the interview on track while also not intervening too much (Dunn, 2016, p. 158). This was a difficult balance to strike, and while my style leaned towards a less interventionist approach, a more experienced interviewer most likely would have been able to keep the interview more on track at times. A further advantage for semi-structured in-depth interviews is that they can allow for more even power relations between the interviewer and participant. The significance of having less hierarchy between me and interviewee as well as the steps I took to achieve this is discussed in further detail throughout the chapter.

Interviewing as a research method faces challenges and limitations due to some of the premises and dynamics it is often based upon. Often the interviewer and interviewee have never met, and yet there is the expectation that the interviewee will be completely open and divulge personal and private information (Morris, 2015). It is impossible to know if they are giving truthful responses, or instead ones which they think you as the interviewer are most interested in. These dynamics and challenges were considered extensively, and the design of my interview guide was influenced by these considerations, which is explained further in the chapter when I discuss the structure of my interview guide. Despite these different challenges I have highlighted in this section about interviewing, as a research method it is still able to provide rich and meaningful data and insights. It is well suited as a method for exploring an interviewee's "reflections, motives, experiences, memories… and the perceptions of the topic under consideration" (Morris, 2015, p. 5). By conducting interviews I was able to discuss and engage with the interviewees' experiences, hopes, and values, and also see how these ideas connected and overlapped with each other in a dynamic way, which also fit well with my research objectives.

4.2.1: Interviewing and standpoint theory as a methodological approach

As this thesis is influenced by feminist researchers' insights on epistemological approaches to research, I was inspired by standpoint theory and what it contributes to how we understand the way in which knowledge can be produced. Standpoint theory has two main starting points: 1) The voices of those who have power and are seen as the center of a society are given more focus, and 2) those who are marginalized and oppressed in a society whose voices are less heard should be starting points for conducting research on relationships and social relations within a society (Harding, 2004, p. 43). Additionally, as Hesse-Biber et al. (2004) argue about using standpoint theory to understand social relations, "complex human relations can become visible when research is started at the bottom of the social hierarchy. Starting at the top of the hierarchy… can actually hide some of the daily processes, events and experiences that occur" (p. 16). In my interviews I explored the ways in which my participants felt they were seen in Norwegian society as Polish migrants, and experiences in which they felt marginalized. It is impossible for me to know what unfolded in the situations they experienced, but for me what was of interest was how they interpreted moments of marginalization, and what this tells us about how they understand the way in which Polish migrants are seen in Norway. Drawing upon the arguments made by feminist scholars (Harding, 2004; Hesse-Biber et al., 2004), my participants' experiences can provide relevant and interesting knowledge for understanding social processes unfolding with Polish migrants in Norwegian society, and how these contribute to social hierarchies. Interviewing as a research method was able to help me explore and generate further data about these social processes.

4.3 The participants

When it comes to participant selection and the decisions that a researcher must make, including who specifically to interview, how many participants, etc., it is important that the researcher think about some key factors and objectives of their research project. These factors are influenced by the "scope, nature, and intent of the research and… the expectations of your research communities" (Mcguirk & O'Neill, 2016, p. 260). While some research projects, and often quantitative ones, are focused upon factors such as generalizability, and replicability (Mcguirk & O'Neill, 2016, p. 260), these were not the primary objectives of my own research project, and thus played a lesser role in deciding how many participants I included in my project.

As Stratford and Bradshaw (2016) explain, "There are few if any rules in qualitative inquiry related to sample size, and it depends on what is needed in the way of knowledge, on the purpose of the research… and on logistics and resources" (p. 125). Since the purpose of my research was to explore the concepts and topics I had identified, instead of representativeness, I interviewed 10 participants. This number was decided upon based upon several factors: a recommendation to have at least six interviews for a thematic analysis (Clarke & Braun, 2016); conversations with those in my interpretative community; and also when considering what was a realistic and feasible number of interviews for a MA level research project. Time and resources were factors to consider, especially when it came to transcribing and analyzing the interviews. Most of my interviews were at least 90 minutes, with several being over two hours, which in the end left me with about 20 hours of audio to transcribe and analyze. While I recognize that having more interviews would have provided more data to work with, it could have possibly led to a shallower analysis of all the interviews. Generalizability was not the goal of my thesis, instead it was to explore a topic which has not received much attention so far.

As highlighted throughout this thesis thus far, scholars have acknowledged the importance of bringing gender, and in particular masculinities, into focus when studying migration (Kimmel, 2009; Pessar & Mahler, 2003; Wojnicka & Nowicka, 2021). In the context of Polish migration in Norway this has mainly focused on a small demographic, which is married men (Erdal & Pawlak, 2018; Pustułka et al., 2015; Slany, Slusarczyk, et al., 2018). Furthermore, as highlighted in Chapter 2, the demographics of Polish migration also appear to be shifting where we see more younger and better-educated Polish people migrating to Norway (Huang, Krzaklewska, & Pustułka, 2016; SSB, 2021a). This led to my decision of using "purposive sampling" (Punch, 2014), where I tried to select men who were under the age of 40, unmarried, and also without children. This demographic was chosen in light of this research gap on masculinities in the context of unmarried Polish men in Norway, but also because of other research which has identified how masculinities, migration, and sexual desires might overlap with each other (Ahmad, 2011). Additionally, as other research has highlighted (Fiałkowska, 2019), Polish men who date women in the U.K. have interpreted dating rejections as being tied to the way these men are marginalized in that society. By trying to speak with those in Norway who were single it provided another arena in which to explore the way my participants might feel marginalized, and this was dating life. It is important to acknowledge that two of my participants did not fit into this demographic of young, unmarried, and without children. However, these two who were older and married provided an interesting counterbalance to then explore what was similar and different about their experiences in light of my research questions.

There are many elements and factors about a person's identity that can have an impact on their migration process, including length of time in Norway, job occupation, education, social class, and others as well. It is important to be sensitive to these factors and how they might be influencing my participants' migration process and intersect with their gender practice, something which is discussed further in the analysis and discussion chapters. Appendix B includes a table that covers the main biographic information of my participants, but I have included some of the main trends here as well. My participants came from a variety of different educational and working backgrounds, were employed in different sectors, and also had lived in Norway for varying amounts of time, among other factors. Seven of my participants were well educated in a variety of subjects, including engineering, anthropology, law and other degrees as well. Three of my participants were employed in the service sector in the restaurant industry as either bartenders or cooks. However, there was also one who worked as a stage technician at a theater, two in IT, and one as a flight attendant as well. As for religious position, most of my participants were not religious and were opposed to the actions of the Catholic Church in Poland. As well, they did not support the current ruling political party/current government in Poland. Three of my participants had been living in Norway for less than a year, while the others had been living in Norway for at least three years. Most of the participants were uncertain about future plans, and whether that included staying in Norway for good or returning to Poland or traveling elsewhere. While some of those who seemed more invested in staying in Norway had learned Norwegian, there were also those who believed they wouldn't stay in Norway who learned the language, and those who seemed like they would stay in Norway who had not learned Norwegian reflecting the uncertainty and openness of my participants' future plans.

Different methods and strategies were used to recruit participants for my project. This included recruiting from friends and contacts that I already had within the Polish community. From these initial contacts and first interviews I used the technique of "snowballing" (Cloke et al., 2004) to find other interview participants as well. However, in an effort to try and get participants from different social backgrounds and networks, I also posted in several Polish community groups on Facebook, from which I received multiple participants as well. Additionally, I went to one of the bars in Oslo which is known for being popular among the Polish community and was able to recruit a participant from there as well. The evening I spent recruiting participants at the bar provided further reflections for my project, and this is discussed more fully in the ethical considerations section of the chapter.

It is important here to acknowledge the language barriers that existed and presented a challenge and limitation for who could be included in the project. Since I do not speak Polish myself, and not all Polish people living in Norway speak English or Norwegian, this limited who I could speak with. However, in a report from 2010 on Polish labour migration in Norway, it was found that 29% of Polish immigrants in Norway did not speak English (Czapka, 2010, p. 28). Additionally, in a report on foreign language teaching in Poland conducted by the Ministry of Education, 97.1% of students in Poland were learning English in school in the early 2000's (Poszytek et al., 2005, p. 17), which is when most of my participants would have been in school. While both of these statistics highlight that there exists a proportion of Polish migrants in Oslo who cannot speak English, it still meant that there were many participants with whom I could speak. However, it does mean that language barriers impacted those who I was able to speak with. Being aware of how my participants would be speaking in their non-native language, language and cultural considerations were taken when designing the interview guide (Patton, 2002, p. 392). I discussed my interview guide with several contacts I had who were Polish to check the clarity of my questions and if any needed to be changed. Additionally, during the interview I told the participants to always let me know if they were uncertain of the meaning of a question, and if this happened, I would then explain the question in another way. I also told them that if ever they wanted to answer a question in Polish they were welcome to do this, and I would find a way to translate it. While this was offered, all of my participants spoke only in English, finding that they were able to express themselves and answer the questions in a way that satisfied them. While language barriers certainly played a role in my research, I was still able to interview the number of participants I aimed for, and collect interesting and meaningful data. The goal and objective of this research was to contribute to the literature and research that exists about gendered identities and experiences of Polish migrant men, and this in itself is significant due to the way in which this topic has not come into extensive focus (Wojnicka & Nowicka, 2021).

4.4: Conducting the interview

When conducting an interview, there are many considerations that a researcher must deliberate about. This includes the order and types of questions, meeting location, use of recording equipment, and many other logistics as well (Patton, 2002). Due to the nature of my topic, I knew that the questions I asked, and the order of these questions was important to think about and could potentially impact the responses that I received (See Appendix C for Interview Guide). I started each interview with asking questions that would help to establish a good rapport and dynamic early on. These questions included asking the interviewee to describe current and recent experiences including what they did in Norway now, about the process of moving to Norway, and others as well. These types of questions, as Patton (2002) notes, are hopefully easier to understand, and can then be used to ask further questions about their opinions and feelings about specific themes and topics (p. 352**).**

Questions that can be personal and sensitive for participants were important to ask for my thesis project. This included talking with participants about their own ideas of masculinity, and also asking them about experiences of discrimination. These types of questions were placed further into the interview for this reason. Additionally, masculinity/masculinities is an abstract topic (Edwards, 2006), and I found inspiration for questions to ask to elicit responses from a variety of other research projects on masculinities (Ahmad, 2011; Broughton, 2008; Kimmel, 2008; Pringle & Whitinui, 2009). Some of these questions included participants' personal interests, relationships with their fathers and role models / inspiring figures, and these questions often provided interesting responses relating to the participants' values and notions of masculinity. Since my interviews were semi-structured this offered me flexibility to ask the questions in a different order dependent on how the participant responded, and also to follow up on different and interesting comments that they made.

One of my goals in my interviews was to try and remove the elements of hierarchy that can exist between the interviewer and interviewee, and my choice of location was considered with this in mind. Most of my interviews took place in different cemeteries throughout Oslo. I saw this as a place that offered privacy and less distraction than a coffee shop, or a park, as well as providing a space to ensure social distance for COVID-19 regulations. While most of my interviewees jokingly acknowledged that it was weird, they also commented on how it was peaceful and how they enjoyed the location as well. Both when coordinating the interview, and also when arriving at the cemetery I always asked the participant if they had any locations or benches they would prefer to meet on so that they felt included in the decision-making process. Additionally I would see the time before the interview started as a "warm-up period" (Dunn, 2016, p. 164) in which I would ask friendly questions to help establish a good rapport. All of these steps were intentionally considered, and played a role in creating a more friendly and open atmosphere during my interviews.

I recorded all of my interviews using an approved app from the Norwegian Centre for Research Data [NSD] that encrypted all of my interviews, which all of my informants were aware of. I placed the phone in a location where it would not distract the participant, and this was intentionally done to create more of a conversational dynamic between myself and the participant. Recording offered several advantages compared to notetaking, including that you are able to focus more on the interviewee's responses (Dunn, 2016), as well as being able to encrypt the recordings for safe data handling. Ethics and safe data handling is returned to in the final section of this chapter.

4.5: Method of analysis

When it comes to methods of analysis there are many tools in the qualitative researcher's toolbox from which they can choose. What is most important is that the method of analysis fits logically with the questions a researcher is trying to answer, and also with the data that they have collected (Nygaard, 2017, p. 146)**.** In light of this, I employed a combination of thematic and narrative analysis as my method for analyzing the data that I collected from my interviews. A combined use of thematic and narrative analysis has been praised by researchers for the way in which these two methods complement each other (Andrews, 2019; Shukla et al., 2014). This is because "thematic analysis is better suited than narrative analysis to providing broad overview of a dataset, while narrative approaches allow an extended focus on particularities, including particular cases" (Shukla et al., 2014, p. 5). This complementary relationship between these two methods of analysis would also be relevant when analyzing my own data.

"Thematic analysis is a technique or method for identifying and interpreting patterns of meaning (or 'themes') in qualitative data (Clarke & Braun, 2016, p. 84). As a method of analysis, thematic analysis is a flexible approach and can be used for both larger quantitative studies, but also smaller more qualitative studies (Cope, 2016). In the case of my own project and my research questions, thematic analysis offered several strengths. As scholars have highlighted, thematic analysis can be helpful when looking at qualitative data that focuses on participants' "experiences" and "understandings and perceptions" (Clarke & Braun, 2016, p. 88) as well as participants' "strategies" in response to something (Cope, 2016, p. 384). My project was concerned with understanding the role of gender and masculinities in the migration process, as well as my participants' understanding of Polish migrants' social position in Norway. Therefore a thematic analysis fit within the framework of my overall research design. However, a narrative analysis also offered some strengths for analyzing my participants' experiences.

A narrative analysis means looking at the responses given in interviews as stories because "When narrators tell a story, they give narrative form to experience" (Bamberg, 2012, p. 77). This means that when a researcher uses narrative analysis they not only look at the interviewee's response as simply a response, but as fitting into a story or narrative that the interviewee is telling and how it relates to the experiences they are describing. This is significant because both stories and narratives are "the primary way by which human experience is made meaningful" (Polkinghorne, 1988 as cited in Wibben, 2011, p. 43). To look at these stories and narratives and the meaning my interviewees attached to the experiences they discussed, offered some advantages for exploring the gendered dimensions of Polish men's migration experiences and processes in Norway.

There is no way for you as a researcher to have seen or been there for what the interviewee explains, and instead you only have their stories and narratives for learning about your inquiry. As a result of this, you are reliant upon the interpretations of the interviewees' experiences that they are recalling (Wibben, 2011, p. 44). To recognize that the interviewees' responses are interpretations is significant when we also consider that "experience is an integrated construction, produced by the realm of meaning, which interpretatively links recollections, perceptions, and expectations" (Polkinghorne, 1988 as cited in Wibben, 2011, p. 44). A narrative analysis approach allowed me to explore the narratives of my interviewees, and also to analyze how they constructed experiences when recalling certain memories. As is pointed out by Polkinghorne in the previous quote, these constructions are influenced by perceptions and expectations, which was very relevant for my research interests. I was able to not only analyze the narratives that my interviewees gave, but also how gendered expectations and ideals factored into these narratives as well. This meant that a narrative analysis was not only well-suited for analyzing the data that I had obtained in my interviews in certain cases, but also that it provided important advantages for exploring my research questions.

When analyzing my data, I began with employing the six step process of a thematic analysis which Clarke and Braun (2016) recommend. These six steps include "(1) data familiarization; (2) coding; (3) searching for themes; (4) reviewing themes; (5) defining and naming themes; and (6) writing up" (Clarke & Braun, 2016, p. 84). Data familiarization would be something that I actively began to do already as I was transcribing, as well as after completing transcribing when I did two rounds of general read-throughs of my transcripts. In this step I was beginning to make general observations, but kept in mind that I should not rush into coding too early so as to avoid developing "proto-themes" (Terry, 2016, p. 107). In the next step of coding there were several important things for me to keep in mind. One was that coding is not about discovering or uncovering hidden meanings in the text, but rather "creating meaning at the intersection between data set and the interpretive resources that you bring to the data set" (Terry, 2016, p. 108). Often in the case of qualitative research this requires a degree of subjective interpretation as a researcher, as well as a mix of working inductively and deductively. In the case of my own coding I would generate codes from my data both through inductive and deductive means. This was carried out by using codes that were both more surface level "semantic" codes which summarized a statement or quote, and deeper "latent" codes that require interpretation on the researcher's part (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 84). Latent codes were often developed in light of previous reading I had done and based upon concepts I had identified as relevant for my project. I initially wound up creating over 500 codes, which gave me a large amount of data to then try and sort through, and create themes from.

I used the coding program Nvivo to help with my initial coding, which many researchers have highlighted for its usefulness for coding (Clarke & Braun, 2016; Cope, 2016). However, I found that to work in an inductive manner best for myself, I would print out all of these codes and begin to create a thematic map (Clarke & Braun, 2016, p. 95). This gave me a chance to cluster my codes under potential themes, and also see the way in which my themes were related and connected to each other. “While a code relates typically to a very specific aspect of the data, a theme identifies a general patterning of meaning” (Clarke & Braun, 2016, p. 93). This transition from what is a code to a theme can be a tricky process, and to navigate this challenge I followed the recommendations of Clarke and Braun (2016), and had three guiding questions in mind when identifying themes. These included: 1) is the theme relevant and helpful in answering my research question; 2) is the theme found across several interviews (although frequency shouldn’t be a main qualifier or disqualifier in qualitative analysis); and 3) is there a clear and core concept to your theme (Clarke & Braun, 2016, p. 93). These questions helped me to move through steps 3-5 of a thematic analysis that Clarke and Braun (2016) recommend, which are searching for themes, reviewing themes, and defining and naming themes (p. 84).

As I highlighted, this process is subjective and involves a mix of inductive and deductive reasoning when moving through the data. A discussion of my own positionality and how it impacted my analysis is discussed further in the next section of this chapter. While there were certain preconceived themes that I had in mind which were based upon different theories and concepts I wanted to use, there were also new themes that emerged from my coding. An example of a new theme that emerged, which is discussed in the next chapter, was “migrating for work/life balance” and how this theme was also related to ideas of gender that my participants held. This type of theme had not come up much in my background reading and development of the interview guide, but after following the steps of thematic analysis that I have outlined, it would emerge as a theme from my data and was relevant and helpful when answering my research question. However, at times a thematic analysis didn’t capture all of the ideas and processes that seemed to be unfolding in the data, and in these situations a narrative analysis was utilized.

Narrative analysis is a broad umbrella term which captures many different strategies for conducting a narrative analysis (Bamberg, 2012). I specifically employed a dialogical narrative analysis, which has its focus on “what is told in the story and how, and what stories do – what happens as a result of telling that story (its effects)" (Smith, 2016, p. 208). While a narrative analysis is typically employed in life-story interviews, a narrative analysis can also be utilized in interviews that have more back and forth such as mine did, and where the whole interview is viewed as a story (Caddick, 2016; Shukla et al., 2014). This type of narrative analysis is also less concerned with the specific language used, which was important for me since my participants were not speaking in their native language, and still allowed for meaningful analysis to be conducted on the stories they told (Shukla et al., 2014, pp. 10-11). My interview guide was structured in a way so that they could tell stories, but also to allow for them to narrate their overall migration process, allowing me to then employ a dialogical narrative analysis.

A narrative analysis was not employed on every interview. I took the recommendation of Shukla et al. (2014), and employed a narrative analysis to help shed further light on particular cases. I followed the guide that Smith (2016) outlines for conducting a narrative analysis, with the first step to be identifying what is a story, which often contains characters, a plot, a point of view, as well as other elements (p. 215). Following this, I would then ask dialogical questions to further understand what was going on within the stories I identified. These types of questions include identity questions, resource questions, and affiliation questions (Caddick, 2016). Identity questions, which "help us understand the ways in which people's identities develop according to the stories they tell about themselves" (Caddick, 2016, p. 230), were helpful when looking at my participants' gendered identity, and how this fit into how they framed events in their stories and how they portrayed themselves within the story. After going through and asking dialogical questions of the stories I analyzed, it then became important for me to see what type of narrative themes and structures emerged from the participants' stories (Smith, 2016, p. 217). Identifying the themes helped me to see the way in which their stories are put together and structured overall in how they make meaning of their migration process in Oslo.

Using a narrative analysis to explore my participants' experiences provided further insights because "stories are our crucial equipment for making sense of, organizing, rewriting and communicating our past, present and possible futures" (Smith, 2016, p. 210). As my participants reflected upon their overall migration experience, the stories they told fit into the narratives they constructed around their lives thus far, and also what might their future plans look like. Additionally, as Datta et al. (2009) explain in their choice of narrative analysis for analyzing the role of gender in men's migration experiences in London, a narrative analysis was a useful tool to help them understand how interviewees structured and framed events and how that related to gender with their participants (p. 858). This was also the case in my own analysis, where I was able to explore how their gendered identities then intersected with and impacted the stories they told about their migration process.

It is important to highlight the limitations of using thematic and narrative analysis. A common critique more broadly of qualitative research is that there exists an "anything goes" mentality (Clarke & Braun, 2016, p. 99). While these types of criticism often are uninformed, it is important to highlight the degree of subjectivity and personal interpretation that occurs with these methods of analysis. There are many directions that the data I collected from my interviews could go, and other researchers might interpret statements that I have analyzed in a different way. Building off this point, it is important to recognize that there is no one right way to analyze the data that I have collected. However, as I have highlighted throughout this chapter, and as I will discuss more fully in the next section, there were specific steps and strategies I took throughout the research process to address these types of criticism and limitations that exist with qualitative methods. Transparency is key, and it is for this reason that my analysis process has been outlined in this section, and why I also highlighted how these steps come from other researchers to ensure quality in the research process (Caddick, 2016; Clarke & Braun, 2016; Smith, 2016; Terry, 2016). Additionally, I approached my analysis having done an extensive literature review to further justify my findings among those of previous researchers (Stratford & Bradshaw, 2016). A further reflection upon these steps and others like it to ensure rigour in my thesis is more fully discussed in the next section.

As outlined in this section, both thematic and narrative analyses were utilized while analyzing my data, and I have also discussed what the analysis process looked like. The choice of using both thematic and narrative analysis, and how these fit well with my data and entire research design is one of many things that I did to try and produce a quality research project. However, there are other important decisions and considerations that a researcher makes when it comes to methodology, including ethics, rigour, and reflexivity. The next section of this chapter discusses these topics and how they were considered and practiced in my thesis.

4.6: Research ethics and positionality

Ethical considerations are some of the most important details for the researcher. A broad definition of research ethics can be defined as "the conduct of researchers and their responsibilities and obligations to those involved in the research, including sponsors, the general public, and most importantly, the subjects of the research" (O'Connell-Davidson and Layder 1994, as cited in Dowling, 2016, p. 30-31). These ethics are not only important for the research community as a whole, but are also something that I personally value and believe in. There were many things that I took into consideration when it came to the research ethics for my project, and among the most important was the handling of private and personal information of my participants in a secure manner.

To ensure the proper and secure handling of my participants' data I used the TSD data storage locker that is available to students and staff affiliated with the University of Oslo. This data system is recognized by the NSD in Norway as being secure enough to handle highly sensitive and classified data (University of Oslo [UiO], 2018). Additionally, I was able to use a recording app on my phone which encrypted the recordings automatically, and sent it directly to my TSD storage account, ensuring that the recordings were safely handled throughout the whole process. I was able to transcribe all of my interviews within my TSD account, and made sure to edit and change any identifiable information before using it in my thesis. All of this was done to ensure one of the key and important aspects of research projects that involve people, and that is ensuring their confidentiality (Ryen, 2016). Each participant was given a consent form (See Appendix D) to review prior to the interview which informed them of their rights as a participant. Throughout the recruitment process I made it clear that it was a voluntary process which they could opt out of if they wished. Additionally, at the beginning of the interview we discussed the form to see if they had any questions, and to be certain that they were giving their informed consent to be a participant in the research project. Any communication that was used to arrange and set up the interviews, for example emails, was deleted after it was no longer needed. While the handling of data is an important aspect of research ethics, there are also many other dynamics to consider, including that of the impact and influence that a researcher has on the project.

Another consideration for a researcher is their own personal identity and how it fits into the research. Some fields of social science stress the importance of objectivity, and keeping the researcher separate from the subject, believing that this will produce less biased knowledge. However, one of the contributions by feminist researchers to the social sciences is critiquing the very idea that research and researchers can even be "objective" (Hesse-Biber, Leavy, & Yaiser, 2004, p. 7). Rather than striving to be objective, instead I focused on the way in which my personal subjectivity played a role throughout the production of this thesis. By being conscious of this and taking it into account, this improved the strength of my project rather than weakening it. However, key to understanding the role of personal subjectivity in the research is an awareness of a researcher's "positionality" (Winchester & Rofe, 2016, p. 19).

Recognizing my positionality is important for understanding the power and privilege that I hold in society, and the implications this has had for different aspects of my research. One concern was based around the different social positions in society that me and my participants most likely occupy and what this means as I try and research and understand their experiences. This raises an important question in gender studies and social science research more broadly, which Alcoff (1991) raises succinctly by asking "is it ever valid to speak for others who are unlike me or who are less privileged than me?" (p. 7). There can be real harm done by researchers who have reenforced or unintentionally upheld the social hierarchies they are researching and studying. Recognizing the way in which Poland is portrayed as inferior and backwards to Western Europe (Kulpa, 2014), I have been aware of how I might also unintentionally reenforce negative social ideas about Polish migrants despite a goal of challenging these very ideas and assumptions in my thesis.

Considering my positionality has also been important as I reflect upon using the concept of racialization to investigate processes of social exclusion of Polish migrants, and ways in which this can possibly undermine the experiences of racism that non-white individuals face in Norway and elsewhere in the world (Murji & Solomos, 2005b). Perhaps my positionality makes it easier for me to see the applicability of racialization in this situation as I myself do not experience the effects of everyday racism that many in Norway and elsewhere in the world do? These are both larger questions and debates, and ones which are not easily answered. Rather than shying away from these questions, instead I choose to critically engage and reflect upon them. As Alcoff (1991) notes there are ways in which we can ally ourselves with those who we wish to speak for, and this involves interrogating and reflecting upon power dynamics and the discursive impact of our words and writing (p. 24-27). This type of awareness is something which I have tried to engage with during my thesis by being reflexive.

Being reflexive is an important part of the research process when employing qualitative methods. This is because a reflexive researcher will "draw attention to the complex relationship between processes of knowledge production… as well as the involvement of the knowledge producer" (Alvesson & Sköldberg, 2018, p. 10). As a researcher I reflected upon how my findings were generated and influenced by many factors, including myself. This required not only that I reflected on my findings and how I proceeded with my research throughout the whole process, but that I also analyzed myself as if I was something that I was studying (Dowling, 2016, p. 34). As Dowling (2016) points out, reflexivity and "critical reflexivity" are important for the researcher when considering power dynamics and subjectivity in their research (p. 35). One of the ways I attempted to do this was through the use of memos, which can be a helpful tool for reflexivity and achieving a higher degree of rigour in a research project (Cope, 2016, p. 375). Throughout my project I kept memos so that I could later look back and reflect on them, and see how my thoughts developed throughout the project. This was helpful for me when it came to remembering how I felt after interviews or in certain moments. Keeping memos helped me reflect upon one of my first clear encounters with the power dynamics of my topic, and to be more aware of my own privileges and how that might relate to my research.

Shortly after I received approval from the NSD for my thesis project I began recruiting and looking for participants. As mentioned, one of my participants was recruited from a popular bar within the Polish community here in Oslo, and this was an interesting, exciting and nerve-racking experience in many regards. Being a researcher can often be an experience that is filled with insecurity due to the fact that you have to make requests of others, especially when it comes to recruiting participants (Sæther, 2006). I wrote a memo before leaving for the bar stating:

> "I hope that I am able to find a few people who I can interview for my project. I spent some time learning Polish phrases earlier today, to show that there is some attempt on my end to connect, and not take it for granted that they speak English." (K. Fisher, personal communication, June 19, 2020)

This demonstrates some of the reflections I had going into this research, in particular when it came to my positionality as an American and a native English speaker, and the privileges that came with that status (Kunz, 2016). Shortly after arriving at the bar I was sitting outside and noticed a few women at the table beside me who appeared to be speaking in Polish, or another Slavic family-based language. I decided to ask these women at the table next to me if I could borrow their lighter, and did this in English. While one of the women handed me the lighter, it appeared as though they were upset, and this would eventually play out in an interesting way.

After I returned the lighter the woman told me that they spoke Norwegian, and were frustrated because they felt that if people hear them speaking Polish, they assume they can't speak Norwegian and often speak with them in English instead. I quickly tried to explain to them that I was an American, and while I spoke some Norwegian, I asked in English because that is my preferred language, not because I heard them speaking Polish. While the women seemed to understand this, I could still tell they were upset, and they left shortly after. Later that evening I wrote another memo reflecting on what happened. "As someone who comes from Eastern Europe, she is probably quite used to the fact that people don't expect that she can speak Norwegian, and experiences othering in this way" (K. Fisher, personal communication, June 19, 2020).

This was an interesting thing to have occur while out recruiting participants, and underscored some of the ideas and assumptions that I had about potential ways that Polish people feel marginalized in Norway. Reflecting upon this even now as I write my thesis, all of my participants spoke about language, and the ways in which Norwegians assume they don't speak the language, even though several of my participants were fluent. What I had not realized at the time when I was at the Polish bar, was the impact that me speaking English might have, and how that might be interpreted by some of the Polish people with whom I was speaking. It was an insightful experience to have early on in the research project, and one that helped me to think further about the power dynamics that were at play in my research topic (Dowling, 2016). It also provided an early experience with considering the way in which I as an American was perceived by my participants (Carling et al., 2014), a theme which is returned to throughout this thesis. This type of awareness and reflections were also useful for achieving rigour in my research.

"Ensuring rigour in qualitative research means establishing the trustworthiness of our work" (Stratford & Bradshaw, 2016, p. 126). To achieve this trustworthiness and "validity" (Nygaard, 2017, p. 147) of our work there are certain steps and considerations that a researcher must take. Some of these have been mentioned throughout this chapter as well, including checking my ideas and findings with my interpretive community (Stratford & Bradshaw, 2016). Whether I was considering possible research questions, creating the interview guide, or discussing some of the thoughts on my findings, I reached out to those in my interpretive community. This included my supervisors and fellow students, but I also made efforts to connect with researchers who had written on topics similar to what I was interested in. I also connected with staff at the organizations Promundo and REFORM, which are both organizations that conduct research and work with men on topics surrounding masculinity and manhood. This often helped me to reflect further on some of my ideas, and also to think more critically about the aims of my research. Achieving rigour is also about checking with your participant community about your work and findings as well (Stratford & Bradshaw, 2016, p. 127). From the beginning of the formulation of my project, I spoke with a few of my Polish friends to hear their thoughts on this topic. Additionally, I asked each participant who I interviewed if they would like to read some of my final drafts and see if they agreed with my analysis and representation of the findings in my data. Combining this with an extensive review of different theories, and also looking at the findings of other research projects (Bell & Pustułka, 2017; Broughton, 2008; Charsley, 2005; Datta et al., 2009; Donaldson & Howson, 2009; Friberg, 2012; Jensen, 2010; Pringle & Whitinui, 2009), I strove to have a certain degree of triangulation (Nygaard, 2017, p. 147) in order to improve the level of rigour in my research project.

4.7: Producing a thesis during COVID-19

This thesis was written with COVID-19 ongoing in the background, a time in which our world was going through unprecedented disruptions in our society. In this section I hope to outline some of the ways in which COVID-19 has impacted my research process. While the world we live in has become normalized in certain ways, it has also been a year filled with unique and challenging circumstances. One of those considerations were the types of precautions I had to take when holding interviews. Everything from finding interview locations that allowed for social distancing, me trying to avoid having multiple interviews close to each other so that I wouldn’t unintentionally spread COVID-19 to other people if I was sick, to the fact that when one of my participants started coughing during an interview, he quickly assured me he had been tested the day before. All of these highlight the dark and uncertain days we were living in as I was carrying out my data collection, but I also acknowledge that I am lucky that my data collection didn’t require travel and wasn’t horribly disrupted. Although there were some interviewees who cancelled because they felt uncertain due to COVID-19, overall I was able to carry out my interviews without much hindrance.

There are also many other ways in which COVID-19 has impacted the thesis writing process. Overall, I have been privileged that I have been able to smoothly make an adjustment to working almost completely from home, something that not all students have been able to manage. However, it is a testament to the strange times we live in when I have only met with my supervisors in person once this year, have rarely seen my fellow classmates, and due to lockdown measures, have been unable to access a printer for long time periods, and a list which could easily continue. It is certainly possible to call classmates, but there is something to be said for losing out on the type of insights and discussions that can arise informally over a coffee, or while taking a lunch break. Stress was a constant factor, and as I write this section right now, I await another COVID-19 test result. These points are made because these types of factors have had impacts on most people in society, and it is important to acknowledge that the impacts have also been felt in the context of writing this thesis. Indeed this was one of the last sections I wrote for this thesis due to the way in which COVID has continued to impact our lives over one year into the lockdown, and where I still feel as though I am processing the implications and impact of our current reality a day at a time.

4.8: Chapter synopsis

In this chapter I have outlined the methodological choices that I made for my thesis. This has included a discussion of how a qualitative methods approach was best suited for my research design and specific research questions. The use of semi-structured in-depth interviewing allowed me to explore themes I was interested in while providing a degree of flexibility to explore themes that emerged during the interview. Additionally, this interviewing technique allowed me as a researcher to achieve a more equal dynamic in the interview. I have also discussed how in light of my project's research aims, I came to the decision of interviewing 10 Polish men who for the most part fit the characteristics of being young, unmarried, and without children. This demographic was chosen in response to a gap in research on this demographic at the intersection of gender and migration research. Included in this section about participants was an analysis of how, since I cannot speak Polish, this might have impacted my work, and the ways I tried to address this. I have also included a discussion of the way in which my interviews were carried out, and the types of decisions and steps I took to further support my project's research aims. This includes the types of questions I asked to explore the role of masculinities in the migration process, as well as my efforts to eliminate unequal power relations between me and my participants. Following this I presented my strategy of a combined thematic and narrative analysis, and the strengths and weaknesses these methods present when exploring the gendered migration experiences of my participants. Finally, I have presented how ethical considerations, reflexivity, and rigour were accounted for in my thesis, and how these helped to strengthen the trustworthiness and quality of my research project, as well as considering some of the impacts that COVID-19 has had on my thesis process.

5: Analysis

My analytical approach as described in the methodology chapter used a combined thematic and narrative approach, and in this chapter, I draw upon the interview excerpts to show through my participants own words the main themes that emerged from my analysis. The analysis is organized into four sections which are relevant for my research questions. I begin with *Migration motivations,* where I present some of the motivations my participants had for coming to Oslo. The following section, *Navigating a new place,* looks at some of the differences my participants observed about their lives in Oslo opposed to Poland. The third section, *Social positions* explores how my participants felt they as Polish migrants were viewed within Norwegian society. In the fourth and final theme, *Social positioning,* I present ways in which my participants tried to better position their social standing within Norway. I conclude the chapter with a summary of the main points presented, before turning to Chapter 6 where my analysis is discussed across the different sections and what it can tell us about the intersection of migration and masculinities.

5.1: Migration motivations

This section examines why my participants chose to migrate and I present two themes from my interviews, which are: Migration as an adventure, and Migration for a better work/life balance. These two themes emerged both due to their prevalence in the data and also their relevance to answering my research questions (Clarke & Braun, 2016). This section also nuances a common assumption about men’s migration being driven by breadwinning ideals (Wojnicka, 2019), which was presented in Chapter 3.

5.1.1 Migration as an adventure

When I asked my participants why they left Poland and came to Oslo, some would describe their migration, although in different ways, as being an adventure and challenging. One of the participants was Jan, who had been living in Oslo for about 6 months when I spoke with him. He had graduated a little over a year before with a bachelor’s degree in mechanical engineering in Poland, and one of the main reasons he came to Norway was because his girlfriend had received a job opportunity here. As Jan would share with me, he was at a time in his life where he “could do whatever he wants", and this came up when describing that he actually turned down a good job opportunity in Poland for an internship at an engineering firm in Norway.

> **Jan:** But I also got some nice offer of work in my field, like power systems company in Poland, and that was big decision for me, because I quit it, I didn't start. From professional point of view, maybe it wasn't the best decision, but in a general whole life point of view, it was better.

Why exactly was it better for him to turn down the job? The answer came up as Jan explained why he thinks it's important to travel.

> **Jan:** I just wanted to get to know something new. This is typical for travel I think. New food, try a new language, just to play around with some new words and sentences and try some small talk with travelers, learning some dance, I could never expect that I would like to dance, but in Ecuador I was learning salsa, and now I am completely into salsa. I think experience more things like this, and when I am abroad I realize I like something, and then I wanted to keep learning this, or keep learning more deeply about some specific topic.

Here Jan establishes both his enjoyment of, but also his ability to venture into the world and experience new things and learn from them. In a similar way Michal — who was 31, had gone to law school back in Poland, been in Norway for around 6 years, and was working as a cook — described his desire for migration to Oslo so that he could see the world and experience something new.

> **Michal:** I have a big family, and most of my siblings, they went through the same period of living abroad. I am the only one in Norway, most were in the UK, so for me it was like, now it is my time to go somewhere.

For some, migration can be seen as a rite of passage to experience the world (Datta et al., 2009), and Michal highlights that this was the case for him. Additionally, Michal would also describe migration to Oslo as something which was challenging and involving risks, which underscored for him the adventurous nature of his migration. Although Michal had been to Norway previously for seasonal work, when talking about moving to Oslo more permanently he described it as something that provided risks and uncertainties.

> **Michal:** and when I came back from the first trip to Norway I was like ready, gonna go to Oslo, and whatever happens, happens. The second time, it was me and my other friend, so yeah, we went here, we didn't know anybody, we didn't have a place to stay. We just had a car, a little bit of money, that ran out pretty fast, and then we were on our toes. What is the next move, are we going back, or gonna risk it, and in the end the risk paid off.

Through telling this story of his moving, Michal creates a narrative for his migration where he was challenged, and had to test himself to see if he would succeed. However, Michal would not be alone in describing his move to Oslo as challenging.

Alek was 35 years old and had been living in Norway for almost six years when I spoke with him. He had gone to school in Poland and worked as a pharmacist for several years there as well. In Norway he had primarily worked in the service industry, having worked in a few different restaurants before landing his current job as a bartender, where he has been now for nearly five years. While his initial motivations for migrating developed as a result of his frustration with working conditions and life generally in Poland, we can also see elements of how his migration to Oslo was challenging, and an adventure for him.

> **Alek:** Yeah, actually, I was afraid about everything, am I gonna manage to find a job, find a place to live, because basically I came here with a friend, we just packed stuff in the car and yeah, came here with no, no place to stay, just spontaneous.
> **K:** So a bit of excitement, nervousness?
> **Alek:** but I was like, oh my god what is the word, but I was really into it, and I'm gonna make it, how do you say that?
> **K:** Determined?
> **Alek:** Yeah determined (laughs)

By sharing that he was determined to make it despite the challenge presented, Alek portrays this migration as being a test which he has to overcome (Ruehs, 2017, p. 372). For Alek, migration was also about doing something different from the expectations he felt existed for him back in Poland as a man.

> **Alek:** You should have wife, kids, house, car, regular stuff, but you should be average joe which I didn't like, but now I understand I don't want this, or I don't need this, and maybe I don't know I am not saying I won't have this in a couple of years because everything might change in a few years, but at the moment, no, no.

Here the role of life-phase emerges in Alek's description about the expectations he felt existed for him in Poland, and how at this point in life he would rather do something different. Migration as a way to resist perceived expectations for men in Poland would also come up with Jan.

> **Jan:** In Poland there is a folk saying, that to be a man, you have to put the tree to the ground, and then you have to have a son, and you have to build a house, these are the three things. For me, it's like it could be really nice to do this, to do these three things, but it is like following some funnel. It could be nice, but I could do some other things like, happy family, and stuff around this I think is more valuable for me or I don't know spending some free time, yeah. According to these three things it is really important for me to do something uncommon, to maybe put less effort on I don't know some ordinary activities, like doing something at home which is stereotypical thing. I am repeating myself, but it is about something new and doing something from where I could be inspired. Yeah, I like to write, some I don't know if reports, but something describing of my experience from travels.

Here Jan shares that while he thinks there are aspects of this expectation for him as a man that are pleasant, he would rather do something different from this "funnel" which he feels comes with some rigidity of what he can do (Broughton, 2008, p. 574). As he highlights, he wants to do something “uncommon” which echoes Alek’s comment about not wanting to be the “average Joe”. Seeing migration as an adventure or a challenge and how it relates to masculine identity and what it shows about the types of ideals my participants ascribed to because of how they saw themselves as men is returned to in Chapter 6.

5.1.2 “Live, not like trying to survive”: Migration for a better life and work/life balance.

Currently and in recent years it has been a difficult job market in Poland for finding good employment. The unemployment rate for young workers in Poland in 2014 was about 24%, where 53.5% of those employed young workers are on temporary work contracts which are usually poorly paid (Huang et al., 2016, p. 64). I cite the statistics here from 2014 because for the specific interviewees who I will discuss here, it was around this time that they migrated to Oslo. Those who I present in this section were certainly motivated to migrate due to economic reasons, but it also became clear that this motivation was about having an improved quality of life which was connected to having a better work/life balance in Norway.

Mateusz was 31 and had been living in Norway for about five years when we spoke with each other. While he had received an MA in Anthropology in Poland, he worked as a bartender after finishing school and before migrating to Norway. When describing the working conditions that he was faced with in Poland compared to those in Norway, he described the unstable and temporary nature that many young workers face in Poland.

> **Mateusz:** It was nice to have a contract. Proper contract of a job, that was always nice. That's not always the case in Poland all the time. For example, you work in the bar, and every month you are getting the same contract for working in a bar, and there's like no security, no insurance.

The improper contract that Mateusz describes is something that researchers have also called “junk contracts” (Baranowska-Rataj, 2011), which in research has been shown to influence why some Polish migrants leave Poland (Bygnes & Erdal, 2017). This instability would influence Mateusz to migrate, which came up as he described his motivations and hopes for migrating.

> **Mateusz:** But yeah, I was also expecting that I can live here, just live. Cause in Poland, even when I was working 5 days a week, I was spending most of my money for the rent, and I wasn't living by myself, I was living with other people. So working in a bar there wasn't an option to just live, live. It was like okay, I'm just from 1st to 1st of month, from one payment to another. But here I can work in a bar, and earn enough to live, to spare some money if I want to do something, go for some vacation. It's just comfort of life, I was also expecting that. So yeah, I am going to be able to just live, by working in the bar, doing any job you can just live. Not like trying to survive.

Mateusz's hopes for coming to Oslo are certainly connected to a better job, but it also has to do with the fact that he feels as though he can have a better overall "comfort of life" and "just live". This theme of being able to live a better life in Oslo would also come up with Stefan.

Stefan was 34 and had been living in Oslo for about three years, but had been coming to Norway for many summers and doing a variety of summer and seasonal jobs in the construction sector before moving more permanently. Since moving to Norway more permanently he had worked primarily with festival and concert productions as a stage technician, and was currently employed on a temporary contract by one of the theatres in Oslo. His education from Poland was an MA in Land Management, a field where, as he explained, he had hoped to find a job in Poland.

> **Stefan:** When I was on the studies, I thought that I am going to do this job in the future. So I had like big expectation after that. I also did some exec course on the side. I also studied some computer programs, how to do some projects. I also had an unpaid internship. So I did that as well, even though it was unpaid, I wanted to get experience. So the only thing, that stopped me from it, was like, oh, it's so hard to get the job.

In Stefan's description we can see a different form of uncertainty in the job market than that Matuesz describes, but one that also clearly creates a challenge for him finding a job. This would influence him to migrate, and when explaining why Oslo, he shared:

> **Stefan:** Mainly things were economical. I didn't have any perspective for getting such work in Poland at that time. So economical reasons, and another was like okay, we are busy with sports, climbing, outdoor activities like skiing, mountain hiking. We have been really happy to stay here because the nature is really accessible to explore. So that is another reason, and clear and not polluted environment. Good water, air quality, many reasons.

Stefan has also been involved in a long-term relationship with a woman from Poland, and they both moved here together, which is who he refers to when saying "we". While his motivation is initially economical, it is also related to opportunities in Norway which give him a better quality of life such as access to nature and less pollution. As I have presented above, both Mateusz and Stefan were motivated to move to Oslo for better working conditions, but there were other motivations which they saw as being connected to having a better quality of life. As they described what exactly a good quality of life meant for them, they highlighted the importance of having a work/life balance and not investing everything in the job. This came up when I asked Stefan what a successful life looked like for him:

> **Stefan:** Hm, my personal point of view is like, have time, is what I really appreciate. And I am really happy to have that [in Oslo]. To not be like occupied all my week, or all my life doing job

> and stuff. Yeah, so being in a situation where you have got your time, and you have economical level to live comfortable is what I like, that is what I want actually.

Similar comments were shared by Mateusz when he explained why he wanted to stay in Oslo:

> **Mateusz:** I would rather stay in Oslo. Yeah I decided that as long as I did the job that's not horrible to me, like one that maybe does not fulfill my dreams, but it doesn't bother me, I can just do other things outside of work that I can fulfill my life with. So I don't have to like invest everything in a job.

Both Mateusz and Stefan share that in their relationship to work, they prefer to work to live, rather than live to work (Emslie & Hunt, 2009). Researchers have found that often men see work as something important for how they see themselves and measure themselves as men (Berdahl et al., 2018; Collinson & Hearn, 1996; Connell, 2000; Cornwall et al., 2016), which does not appear to be the case with Mateusz and Stefan. They would both provide other comments throughout the interview further highlighting this point. For Stefan, he sees it as important that both men and women work.

> **Stefan:** And women work as well, and men work the same. I appreciate it a lot when I arrive here, that it can be like that. It doesn't have to be like this husmor (housewife), that was here like some decades ago, maybe you heard about this husmor. It was kind of like a job to be taking care of kids and home. I don't like it.

In the case of Mateusz, this would come up when I asked him to describe expectations he felt existed for men generally.

> **K:** and if you heard the statement "he was a successful man" what would you assume someone would mean by that.
> **Mateusz:** I would assume man in like a suit, with a lot of money. Like, it's not like what my opinion is for success, but in a general language I think that's what people mean.

Throughout this section I have shown that Mateusz and Stefan's migrations to Oslo were both connected to job opportunities, but also for a better work/life balance. This desire is further understood with these comments I have just presented showing how as men they don't see it as necessary to build their lives around the work they do (Ono, 2015). The relationship between masculine identity, work, and migration is returned to and discussed further in Chapter 6.

5.2: Navigating a new place: Participant reflections about differences in Oslo

In this section I present three themes that emerged from my participants about differences they observed and adaptations they made to their life after arriving in Oslo. This includes a sense of safety, new workplace dynamics, and new gender roles and relations. Each theme in its own way is connected to participants' perceived differences of expectations that exist for men in Poland as opposed to Norway or the way in which my participants' own expectations for themselves as men felt out of place in Norwegian society. It is important to highlight that some of the comments my participants make about gendered expectations between Poland and Norway at times were stereotypical, and in reality are more nuanced. In moments where that occurs in this section, I present findings or research that shows a more mixed picture, and in the discussion section I reflect upon further the role of these perceptions and interpretations among my participants for understanding their own migration experiences.

5.2.1: Sense of safety

Some of my interviewees, when discussing some of the biggest differences and changes they faced in Oslo, stated that they generally felt much safer in Norway than in Poland. This came up in a variety of different ways in the interviews, from what changes they made to their daily routines, to what cultural differences they noticed between Poland and Norway. But for a few, the way in which they noticed that they felt safer in Oslo was that they no longer worried about where they were walking in Oslo, which was different than in Poland.

> **Marcel:** And you know, sometimes there was some parts that you don't feel safe in Poland. I was in a club, in the big city, and the friend I told you about, I took him to the club. We were just standing outside, literally just standing outside and hanging with some girls. This guy came out of nowhere just came and hit him. He had the glasses and his glasses were on the floor and the girls were like what are you doing, what is your problem. Because yeah, you want to feel safe in your country, and this is just like ridiculous, sometimes you just swing by a street and you don't what is going to happen to you. I mean it is not that dramatic, but it feels, but it might, you know happen. It might, and here, I feel like I am very safe. I am super safe.

Marcel was 32 and had been living in Norway for nearly 10 years when we spoke. He initially only planned to come to Oslo for a summer, but wound up never leaving. There were many reasons why he decided to stay in Oslo, but of significance was that Marcel was the only participant I spoke with who identified as gay. His sexuality played a key role in why he decided to stay in Norway as he felt due to the political climate within Poland, he wouldn’t feel safe living there. This is an important factor to keep in mind as well in understanding Marcel’s sense of safety, and is returned to further in Chapter 6. However, Marcel was not alone in describing this sense of improved safety in Oslo. Both Alek and Mateusz shared this as well:

> **Alek:** It seems like you can trust like random person in the street when you meet them somehow. But, which I think is good, I’m not afraid of not locking the doors to my house, I feel really safe here, and yeah even in the city, when at night, it’s safe. Norwegians are not aggressive, these are like the good things, because for example if you go in Krakow to some bad neighborhood, you could be beaten for any reason, because you have too short shorts, or too pink shirt, or whatever.
> **Mateusz:** As a person with piercings and stuff like that, even, yeah I always felt safe here in Oslo.

These quotes come from different interviews, and significantly both Alek and Mateusz's comments connect threat of violence in Poland to physical appearances. As they describe, wearing pink clothes or having piercings, which can be seen as something more feminine, can be a reason for being beaten up. Where exactly this threat came from was something Alek addressed when he was describing differences he felt existed between Norwegian and Polish men.

> **Alek:** In general the people here are more calm, when you walk in Poland in the city, and you know some of the guys are like alpha males. There is a lot of them. Here you don't have that, men are like, I don't know how to say, more civilized. I think it is a bad word to describe it, but like it, you don't feel this, you know pressure. Like I said, you can go to the wrong place in a big city, even a small city, and you meet this kind of group of men and then you have a problem, because you looked, or didn't look, there is always a reason, and you don't have that here.

While describing some of those guys "that are like alpha males", Alek also slightly puffed himself out, to emphasize the point that these alpha males are often large and muscular guys. He felt that there is a "pressure" and expectation to be this larger muscular guy, something he shared he had felt as he grew up because of the fact that he himself was skinny.

> **Alek:** I have a heard a million times why are you so skinny, so probably this is like their expectations, their expectation that I should be, I don't know, I should be, how to say, be
> **K:** be more muscular?
> **Alek:** yeah muscular, something like that, and yeah when you are a kid, or a teenager, it hits you when you hear something many times, and you start to think maybe they are right.

While Alek's description here shows the physical expectations he felt existed for him and men in general in Poland, he felt there existed other traits such as being aggressive and appearing threatening as well. This was something that Marcel also commented on when he shared: "Well you know, the way that men are, they are very protective, very even, like aggressive way. I just didn't feel like that was the right way to be." Alek would go on to describe this expectation and pressure for men to be tough and aggressive, and specific moments where this occurred in Poland and resulted in him feeling unsafe.

> **Alek:** And I don't know, I think that in Poland now it is very popular, all this contact sports, MMA [mixed martial arts] and stuff. It is like everywhere, even really small towns have a few clubs. I don't see this here, and I am not sure actually, but I think it was illegal until some point to have boxing, professional boxing, and all this, so maybe a bit more testosterone in Polish men, but maybe it is just a bit more frustration. I don't know the reason, but there is this tension. They want to prove themselves, or show to other people, or something, to show they are men.
> **K:** did you feel that at all in Poland?
> **Alek**: yeah, yes, because when I moved to Krakow I was living in, this housing block, and I think it was the biggest one, probably tens of thousands of people living in a small area, and when you go, blocks of like 15 floors, some of them are really huge, a lot of people living in a small area. And nothing to do, so yeah, the main thing to do for younger guys is to sit on a bench in front of

> block, and when you like are walking through the area, you always feel this, this tension. And will anything happen today or not? Will I be safe going home? So yeah these were the moments where I was feeling, how to call it, pressure. And I'm like easy target, because I am skinny.
> **K:** Very Interesting
> **Alek:** There is a like lots of group of these young kids who try to look dangerous, but I notice it is the same on the East side, there is like a lot of immigrants, and it is the same, it is the same. So maybe it is like, maybe they feel like I don't know actually, I'm not a sociologist, because when I was a kid, a teenager, I was living in a block of flats, and this was our main thing to do, sit on the bench and do nothing, sometimes we would like break into some old buildings to just destroy what is inside. You know because there was nothing to do, and I think we felt like, excluded, so maybe they feel like excluded, excluded is the right word.

In this long excerpt there are several elements to pull out. The first is that Alek feels that there exists a pressure for men in Poland to prove they are physically strong and aggressive, which due to Alek's skinniness results in him feeling unsafe. However, Alek's comments reveal that he feels there is a relationship between men who feel socially marginalized and then as a result try and posture themselves as more threatening. In his description of the housing area, the groups of men he describes can be seen as those who are lower class and economically marginalized, whereas Alek commented specifically that in Oslo immigrant groups might feel excluded and then try and appear "dangerous". These types of observations are especially significant with theoretical insights about masculinities and why and how certain groups of men who feel marginalized might respond in this way (Connell, 1995). However, Alek was not alone in feeling as though economic security contributed to ways in which Polish men and Norwegian men might try and present themselves differently.

> **Jan:** But maybe it is also correlated with having enough money to have something here in Norway. Maybe that is why it is less effort to just live? Mmm, yeah, the most important thing I'm still learning here is when you are happy, you are maybe calmer during your relations with others in general. Then also maybe you have more time to focus on something because you are not worried, because if you are worried about something, it is consuming your time more, instead of spending this time for something nice. The social system is better here, so that is why you don't have to be focused on showing to people, I am a man, I have to be more indecent… and I know that there are some people in Poland who do feel like this, who have some opinion like this.

We see again how there is a feeling that there is a relationship between social status and men acting or trying to portray themselves in a more aggressive, or as Jan says "indecent" way.

In this section I have presented how for Marcel, Alek, and Mateusz, they felt safer in Oslo as opposed to Poland. For them, this safety was specifically linked to the way in which they felt there existed different social expectations and pressures for men in Poland to be aggressive and threatening than there were in Norway. Finally, a perceived causal relationship between this type of aggressive behaviour and social and class standing was highlighted as well. The idea of safety, and its relationship to my participants' perceived differences between masculine practices and ideals that existed in Norway versus Poland is returned to in Chapter 6.

5.2.2: Encounters with a "flat structure"

Norway is a country which is often ranked as one of the highest in the world when it comes to work/life balance (Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development [OECD], n.d.). Although the Norwegian workplace is one that is seen to value equality and having a "flat structure" (Ellis, 2017), there is evidence that this isn't always an actual reality (Brandth et al., 2017). Oskar felt there existed in his workplace a flat structure, which he would find challenging.

Oskar was 25 years old and had been living in Norway for just around a year. Although he did not attend university, he worked as a computer programmer, and had worked in the IT sector in both Germany and Austria before moving to Oslo. As a teenager he had learned about Norway and Norwegian culture, and he became interested in the idea of moving there one day, and he even took language courses in high school. When a job opportunity emerged for him to work in IT in Oslo, he was excited about the opportunity. He highlighted that the company he worked within was about 400-500 people, where he believed he was one of the few non-Norwegian people there. Despite Norway being a place he was interested in for several different reasons, some of the expectations he had for moving there fell short in actuality. One of those would come up when talking about his working experiences.

> **Oskar:** Yeah I have expected a work/life balance, like a really good work/life balance. But in the end I'm kind of like a workaholic, so I don't really feel good, having it this way. The thing that really struck me in Norway, was that there is this Janteloven, so everything is about equality and so. I mean, it's, I just found it to be very hard to progress there. So, basically you get a job, you get a salary, you get a work life balance, but it's a bit like, what next? Like I found that, and
> **K:** So you found the work life balance not as interesting because you felt like you couldn't progress?
> **Oskar:** I mean I didn't really feel like they appreciate it. It was really, I mean, in all the other countries if you do some more work, you get more work, but at the same time they appreciate it and you can expect to get some benefits. In Norway it's like you work more, and you don't get any benefits, and they just look at you like, why, why do you do it to yourself?

Here as Oskar explains, he was hopeful for a good work/life balance in Norway, but he also seemed to be at odds within Norway's workplace culture, and it be would be something that challenged Oskar. He sees this as being linked to Janteloven, which is an idea in Scandinavian culture that "one should never try to be more, try to be different, or consider oneself as more valuable than others" (Bromgard et al., 2014, p. 375). To understand why Oskar felt challenged by not being recognized for extra work, it is helpful to bring in another part of our conversation where we talked about his family. One of the things that came up was the importance of work for the men in his family, where his father was not around often because he worked so much. This would then influence how Oskar saw work, and judged others around him.

> **Oskar:** I also dislike people who are lazy. But, this kind of comes from my, from how I was raised up I think, because in my family there is this praise of work. So basically, my whole family, disrespects people who don't want to work. So, my grandpa, like the work is the highest, so this kind of applies to me as well.

This quote highlights the importance of work for Oskar, and in particular for the men in his family. As he himself said, as a “workaholic” with a distaste for laziness, he felt at odds with a culture in Norway that he felt emphasized work/life balance instead, and which he thought made it challenging for him to rise up within the ranks in the workplace.

His frustrations about Norwegian working culture would also come up when talking about the “flat structure” he perceived exists in Norwegian working culture.

> **Oskar:** I mean at the very beginning, it was, it was fine. But after some time it became a bit boring for me. I really missed this, because there is this word, Deutsche Ordnung, this like German order that they have everything so well organized, I have kind of missed that in Norway. Like, they have a very flat structure, and all the decisions take very long time usually. So for me, coming from those like German speaking countries it was very frustrating. When it was just about meetings, meetings, meetings, meetings. So I just felt like they were throwing money away, and that they could be really more efficient, if they only wanted to.

Oskar finds the lack of hierarchy both frustrating and inefficient, whereas other participants found the Norwegian working environment with an emphasis on a flat structure as a welcoming and refreshing change. Alek would share this about his current working situation working as a bartender:

> **Alek:** Now I’m working with really cool people, who are my friends so, I have nothing to complain about and I’m still there. My boss is a really cool guy, Norwegian, and my age, so we can really understand each other.

Marcel, who when we spoke with each other was currently a flight attendant, but previously had worked in the service and restaurant industry in Oslo, commented on how he had quite enjoyed workplace dynamics in Oslo.

> **Marcel:** I really like the conditions you have at work. Like nobody stands behind you saying what you have to do. No one is shouting at you, it is completely different world than what I got to know when I was living in Poland.

These three previous comments from Oskar, Alek, and Marcel show how their working experiences in Oslo have either been positive or negative due to workplace hierarchy. For both

Alek and Marcel they appear to enjoy that there is less distance between them and their managers, whereas for Oskar it is a source of tension. Here I find this tension has to do with how Oskar views work as an important part of his masculine identity and this is challenged in Norway, which I shall return to in Chapter 6.

5.2.3: New gender roles in Oslo.

As Donaldson and Howson (2009) point out about men who migrate, they “do not arrive in their new homeland bereft of notions about their own manliness. To the contrary, they usually bring with them firm beliefs and well-established practices about manhood and gender relations” (p. 210). My participants’ comments show that they felt as though there was a different set of gender roles in Norway versus Poland, which in certain situations was welcome and resulted in changing their own ideas about gender roles, while for others it resulted in them feeling challenged and uncertain. To understand how they encountered and navigated these changes, it is helpful to revisit the different contexts of gender relations that exist between Poland and Norway.

As discussed in the historical overview chapter, there is an emergence of different ideas about men’s role in society and views of gender equality within Poland. This is more common among younger generations (Krzaklewska et al., 2016), and researchers have highlighted there exists a widespread and dominant notion that men should be the providers of the family and women the caregivers (Bell & Pustułka, 2017). However, in Norway and the Nordic states, an emphasis on a dual-earner income model and generous paternity leave policies have contributed to the development at a larger societal level in Norway which encourages shared family and working responsibilities (Cederström, 2019; Lund et al., 2019). However, there is also much evidence showing men’s ambivalence and complicated relationship with these models of gender relations in Norway (Holter, 2011, 2017). This is highlighted because throughout this section I present the often stereotypical notions my participants had about ways of being a man in Poland versus Norway. At times this results in Polish men being portrayed as patriarchal figures, and Norwegian men as gender equality champions, which doesn’t address nuances that exist. This is acknowledged so as not to reenforce these stereotypes, and throughout this section I highlight these stereotypical ideas my participants had in light of statistics showing a more realistic image.

For Mateusz, he reflected on some of the differences he felt existed between Norway and Poland in regards to gender relations when he was discussing some of the differences that he noticed between what is expected of a man in Poland versus Norway and examples of this he noticed in Norwegian society.

> **Mateusz:** Yeah I mean in like Poland it’s more like the traditional picture. The man has to work, bring money to the family, but he’s also the head of the family. And like he’s not staying with kids, the woman is staying with kids. And yeah I think that's the expectation in Poland to be like the head of the family. To be strong, and maybe be like distant, and be respected, but not like in a human being respect, but honor maybe way. And in Norway, I feel like it’s more like progressive let’s say. I think there is expectation for the man to take off for paternity leave, and like taking care of the kid while wife is working, or chilling. And yeah in Poland it’s almost like impossible to be a kindergarten teacher for a man. Because it’s like not male thing to do. Like my younger brother he used to work, in the kindergartens, but like outside company, he was like making the physical exercises for the kids, but to be like the every day kindergarten teacher is like not for men. Here in Norway, it was like surprising for me in Norway, that was one thing where I was like that's cool, because it’s important for kids to have also a male at school, because some kids don't have fathers at home, so they need someone to take example of from the kindergarten.

Here Mateusz shares that he feels gendered expectations are more limiting in Poland than in Norway, which is highlighted by having more male kindergarten teachers in Norway. Interestingly, kindergarten teaching is a highly gendered occupation within Norway, with 90% of kindergarten teachers being female (SSB, 2020), which is something the Norwegian government would like to see as more balanced. Yet this is still a better ratio than in Poland where 97.8% of kindergarten teachers are female (OECD, 2018). However, these comments establish that Mateusz feels that he is encountering two different sets of gendered expectations for men, which is something that Jan would also highlight when considering social expectations for men.

> **Jan:** Okay, my opinion in Poland was a bit different than it is here. Typical order in Polish family, is like man is earning more money to keep running family and to give possibility for woman to just take care about kids, but yeah but I think it is too much, and yeah it is too easy and too often in Poland men then forget to care about kids at the same time. They are still about earning money or something and they are missing something about education of their kids, something like this, and what I like here in the system, is that when you have the child and then you have some period where you can take some time off and it can be divided between the woman and man and they have to decide who is taking this. That is something that is supporting, I think this, my opinion about how it should look, like father should care more about kids. In Poland it was like I thought maybe I should earn a lot of money or something to be independent, I still think the same, but it’s not about, it’s not like., mm it is not my honor to be doing this.

Jan discusses some of the differences he feels exist between expectations of how a man should be in Poland versus Norway, and where both he and Mateusz highlight the role that paternity leave plays in facilitating this difference. This echoes a theme found in research focusing on Polish families living in Norway (Erdal & Pawlak, 2018; Pustułka et al., 2015). Another point from this excerpt is that both at the beginning and end Jan highlights how his own ideas and opinions about what a man should do have changed. This is returned to and discussed more fully in Chapter 6 for what it can show us about how men's gender practice can shift and change depending on what types of gender ideals and structures are available for them to draw upon and engage with (Messerschmidt, 2016).

While Jan and Mateusz were open and positive about these perceived changes, Oskar found them to be confusing and causing uncertainty. This came up as Oskar described his perception around the different expectations that exist for men in Norway versus Poland.

> **Oskar:** I think those rules, like men, women, in Norway are much more, I don't want to say blended, but they are much more confusing, and in Poland, it's changing, and it's changing very rapidly, but it is still more traditional. And it has its pros and cons, just like everything I guess. I think in Poland the pressure is higher, but on the other hand, also it's more, like you have your, you have some expectations defined. So you have some path defined, especially in more traditional families, and more traditional regions. So the expectations are higher, but at the same time it is more clear for you, what you as a man you should do, and what is expected for you.

As he shares, these roles which he believes are more blended are also confusing, and he would go into more depth both about what those expectations exactly were in Poland, and also how his confusion about gender roles in Norway made him uncertain when asking Norwegian girls on dates.

> **Oskar:** At least from my part, I don't really know how to approach girls in Norway for example. So I recall being kind of afraid, I mean like, like in Poland it is quite clear, you just ask a girl on a date, and you know it's kind of old schoolish usually, like you know flowers, and some gifts and so. So like it's very, you basically know what you are doing. And in Norway I actually have no idea. I just, so I actually start the game, but I don't know how, does it work, I don't know the rules. And I have a feeling that everything I know from Poland that would work would be perceived as like, you know the patriarchy and lack of respect in Norway. Like you know, just simply, like just simply opening the door for her, it is something that is obvious in Poland, and it's, and it's like basic respect, but in Norway everything has to be equal, so it can be offensive but you actually don't know if she would consider it offensive.

These comments from Oskar were different from how Michal felt about the different gender roles in Norway when it came to approaching girls or having girls approach you in Norway.

> **Michal:** You go to a bar or a club and some girl is talking with you, because this is actually a nice thing about Norway that women are active and they approach you. In Poland it doesn't happen, you have to be active, if you want to meet somebody you have to start talking.

Oskar's confusion about approaching girls in Norway is tied to the fact that he is concerned about how he thinks everything has to be equal. This is reflective of the fact that he is more comfortable with having an unequal dynamic between himself and his partner, which he spoke more about later in the interview. Oskar was a unique interview, because unlike everyone else who I spoke with, he was at the time not living in Norway. We got in contact about one week after he had moved from Norway, and when we spoke he had been back and living in Poland for two weeks. Despite having been back in Poland for only two weeks, he had started dating someone already upon his return. The relationship he had back in Poland, he reflects, was more representative of the type of relationship he was more familiar with, and he also preferred:

> **Oskar:** So, yeah as I think about it now, I think I have replicated it (laughs) in my life, like this more traditional model after coming back to Poland. Because right now, my girlfriend she cooks, and she cleans up a lot. Here we kind of split this, and she is quite happy with it. That I am just sitting and making money. But yeah, I just kind of copied, you know the template. But yeah, here, what is significant is actually she expects me to act like that as well. She often refers to other men as being like, not like faggots, but pussies. That they are weak, and that they don't act enough like a man. That they don't take, enough responsibilities, or that they cannot really take care of their own girlfriends. And I actually find myself better in this relationship than in other ones that I have had. Because other ones were more partnerish, but that also made me more confused because I didn't really know how to act, and here I already have this role prepared in a way.

These comments would be quite contrasting once again to how Michal felt about the type of relationship dynamics he likes:

> **Michal:** Yeah, and Norwegian girls are like independent a lot, a lot of them and I really appreciate it. Like no guy in Poland wants, basically to finance a girl who cannot support herself, like you know what I mean. It is really nice that we share expenses. Everything is shared, women are strong, and they don't allow you to put them in a subservient position.

Here we can see contrasting views about the role of men when it comes to providing or not providing for their partner and girlfriend between Oskar and Michal. Both of them perceive that in Norway there is more of an equal dynamic between men and women, which for Michal is a positive thing, and for Oskar a source of challenge. Oskar also highlights that his girlfriend validates his own view of this, which is brought further into focus in the discussion section. In Chapter 6 I will discuss what the comments from this section and the rest of 5.2 show about my participants' own masculine identities, and how those were changed and challenged in what they saw was a place with different gender relations, in Norway.

5.3: Social positions of Polish migrants in Norway

The migration process leads to changes in social standing and status, which often includes downward movement for migrant men (Christensen et al., 2017). However, as researchers have highlighted, Polish migrants often fall into a dynamic middle ground of inclusion and exclusion in western Europe (Bell & Pustułka, 2017). In this section I present how my participants understood their social position within Norwegian society as Polish migrants. I begin with a presentation of the most common stereotype which my participants described, which was the Polish migrant as a hard-working construction worker, which they either were personally subjected to, or felt generally existed. Following this I will present other assumptions and stereotypes that my participants perceived as negative. In the final section I will present how my participants, in narrating their experiences of being marginalized, often pointed towards these negative assumptions and stereotypes.

5.3.1: The hard-working construction worker

As described in the historical overview, initial waves of Polish migration after EU accession were dominated by men who were employed in the construction sector, and today about 39% of Polish men in Norway are employed in construction (See Appendix A). While this is certainly a significant amount, it also highlights that you have many Polish men living here in Norway employed in other sectors. As Marcel, Alek, and Oskar would share though, when people learned they were Polish, people would then assume that they were employed in construction work. These three excerpts are from separate interviews, but presented together to show their similarities.

> **Marcel:** For me it’s like, usually, I think that people think, Norwegians think that when you’re Polish, you are working in construction. That's not the way you should actually think about it. People have totally different jobs, they have totally different educations you know. But you know, this is stereotypical.
> **Alek:** Yeah, but I mean no one said it straight, but when I say I am a bartender, or photographer, they get this look of “ahh so you aren’t working in construction” and you can read it in their faces. I mean I don’t look like I could work on construction, but it is still like that, and I had some conversation with, because working in a bar you talk with people, and so I have heard many times that most of us, Polish people are builders, like.
> **Oskar:** I mean there are some stereotypes. Like when I am in Norway and I say I am Polish, they mostly assume that I work in construction, so it is very hard. So it is somehow hard for them to comprehend that there are Polish people working somewhere else, not only in construction.

As these comments show, these three feel that there is a strong and often inflexible assumption (Pickering, 2001) between being Polish and working in construction in Norway, which they have personally encountered. However, another common stereotype my participants felt existed about Polish migrants in Norway was a strong work ethic. Antoni, who was 26, had been living in Norway for about six months and had worked a variety of jobs in Norway but was currently working remotely for an IT company based in Poland, would comment on this stereotype.

> **Antoni:** What I heard from Norwegian people also is that Polish people are really hard-working, but more with physical stuff.

This description of being viewed as hard-working echoes the findings of other research looking at Norwegian employers’ views of Polish workers as well as how Polish migrants thought of themselves within Norway (Friberg, 2012). This stereotype played out in different ways for some of the participants, where for some it was favorable, and for others it was negative.

Bruno was 57 when we spoke with each other and had been living in Norway for three years as a construction worker. He had lived a life of varied experiences, where he primarily had spent his career as a teacher, and then a headmaster of a school in Poland. He had also spent some time working in construction in the U.S. and Germany when he was younger. His motivations for coming to Norway were primarily financial, where he was hoping to work long enough in Norway to earn a pension before moving back to Poland to retire fully. Bruno was proud of the reputation that Polish workers have in Norway as being hard-working, which came up a few times in our interview, and here it is presented when talking about his work experiences.

> **Bruno:** You see sometimes Norwegian wants only to have Polish people to work. In my company they want only Polish workers. I know some older people we worked with before, the old lady didn't want any other guy other than Polish, they wanted only Polish.

Bruno sees a clear advantage linked to the reputation of Polish workers as hard-working and which provides him an advantage in the labour market. A similar dynamic is found in the study by Datta et al. (2009) of ethnic groups' strategies in the labour market. The benefit of this stereotype came up for Stefan as well, but in a different way. As he saw it, being hard-working at your job was a shared value that Norwegians and Polish both had.

> **Stefan:** I think they have a positive approach. Because they see, okay we have this attitude, I mean Norwegians have this attitude that work is important in their life. Many Norwegians they have an attitude about work being important in the life. Norwegians want to do well in their job, and I think Polish people, or kind of when they come here, they want to be bright in their job. They want to do a good job, or they are happy they got it, so they work hard. So I think it is like, that is my opinion, about what the Norwegian opinion is about Polish.

This shared value and Norwegian perceptions of Polish migrants as hard workers results in Stefan feeling like Polish migrants are seen positively in Norway. However, he would also have experiences where this stereotype resulted in negative situations for him.

While discussing stereotypes, Stefan would generally portray them as something minor, with few impacts on his stay in Norway. Stefan shared he had many Norwegian friends, and colleagues, and as he would state about Polish stereotypes "in like a private relationship, I don't think it really matters too much." However, as he would later explain, these stereotypes do have impacts in the working and business world.

> **Stefan:** I think it has this impact when it comes to the business, to the working conditions, and stuff. I think it is easy to, and I asked some Norwegians about it, and they think okay, we want to have like a bunch of Polish to do that job. And I think it is stereotyping. I have been working for a while in a company that do these jobs where you can see people everywhere, like hanging on the ropes, and doing like this rope access job. Cause of my climbing interest, I have been involved by my climbing friends in it. And we had a project to put some solar panels on the roof in Oslo and around, and they said like straight, the bosses, the head from the company, they said they want to have Polish do it. And I thought from beginning this is so weird, why Polish, and because they want to have it done quickly, and I was like ahhh, what? Very weird sometimes.

While this assumption about being hard-working is positive because it results in more employment opportunities, Stefan also finds it weird that there is an assumption that because he is Polish he will work faster. Alek would have a similar experience as well in the workplace.

When I asked Alek about the assumptions that Norwegians have about Polish people here in Norway, he began by talking about the construction worker stereotypes. However, he would also go into how there are other assumptions that are tied to the stereotype of the Polish construction worker, and this was something he had experienced personally in previous jobs.

> **Alek**: When I moved here, I noticed, or I want to say that people who hired me, were expecting that I was going to be working harder than other people. What they [Norwegians] think is that they have us as a hard-working people, which is good, but the thing is that some of them are trying to use it, it took me a while to just relax while at work, because you know I said before in Poland when I was working in Poland the working environment was really bad, and there was all this pressure, you have to do things faster, and I moved here with the same attitude. So yeah, my coworkers they were saying just relax, and the management, they were the opposite.
> **K:** Was this the bar or the restaurant?
> **Alek:** Restaurant
> **K:** The management was?
> **Alek:** Yeah they were like, they were trying to use it, like squeeze everything, because they know, they saw that I am working like hard. So my point was they probably think that we are hardworking people but the bad thing is that from my experience they are trying to use it.

Alek describes how he felt like his management's assumption that Polish people are hard-working, results in them trying to exploit this and overwork him. There appears to be a cycle unfolding, where Polish workers themselves are aware of this stereotype, and try to live up to it, but also that management and others try and exploit this which also further perpetuates the cycle. A similar dynamic was found by Friberg (2012) in his research.

In this section I have presented how my participants feel there is a dominant stereotype of Polish migrants being construction workers with a certain work ethic in Norway, which has both positive and negative consequences in certain situations. What my participants' comments can tell us about processes of social differentiation and hierarchy that appear to be unfolding with my participants' experiences as Polish migrants is returned to in Chapter 6.

5.3.2: “Shit country”, “Not well educated”, “Drinking a lot”: Negative assumptions about being Polish in Norway

For Michal this feeling that Norwegians had negative views about Polish migrants would come up when describing a personal encounter he had.

> **Michal:** This guy approached me, and we started talking he was like where you from and I said Poland and he was like can I be truthful and honest? Let me tell you what Norwegians really think about Polish people: they think you are from a shit country. And I was like ahhhh, okay, I want to listen more to this guy, cause in a way I take some perverse pleasure from masochism, but at the same time I was like should I punch him in the face, I really want to punch him, but I will let him talk. But that guy was a straight up asshole, but at the same time, at the same bar that I worked, I had Norwegian friends and I told them what he said, and they were like what the fuck is his problem. But I also think there is this unspoken, not necessarily animosity, but unspoken resentment or something, I don't know, and it is natural right, because Norwegians aren't going to Poland to work. The group of people that come to you for work are naturally in the hierarchy of society, they are like looked down upon, even though they [Norwegians] are like good job, pat on the back, but that is like, and I don't want to generalize it on the whole of the society. Because I know [Polish] guys that are like working for Norwegian companies who are highly regarded, as not only like the workforce, and part of the workforce, but personality wise also.

Michal here highlights that while this guy is an “asshole” and that many Norwegians do view Polish workers highly, he also feels there is a widespread resentment that exists towards Polish migrants in Norway. While other participants didn’t describe such confrontational moments, they would explain other more negative associations they felt went with this stereotypical figure of the Polish construction worker and Polish migrants generally in Norway.

> **Antoni:** But yeah, I think they [Norwegians] see some Polish people as loud, not well educated, drinking vodka, because this is kind of true, the people who are coming here, especially the first wave, people who were really not educated with this old Polish mentality, drinking a lot, and physical workers. If someone had better job they would have stayed in Poland, but here you can paint a house, say that you will work some more hours, do some shady things, and you will have money. Complaining about how vodka is expensive or taking some cigarettes in your car, and this was the first wave I think, but now I think it is changing, because more and more people who are educated are here not because they don’t have another choice, but because they just choose to be here, but I still think there is view on Polish people, yeah cheap, physical labour force.

Antoni’s comments reflect that he feels that assumptions around Polish migrants in Norway revolve around negative ideas attached to education, class, and engaging in inappropriate and illegal behavior. This would be similar to what Mateusz would describe as well about what assumptions he felt were attached to Polish construction workers and Polish migrants generally in Norway.

> **Mateusz:** But also the landlord here, because I have a couple of friends who are living in this building as well, and we are all a little bit punky and from the punk scene. And I met him the other day, and he said, yeah because I'm mixing all of you all of the time, because you are not like typical Polish workers, the construction workers, you're all a little bit different here. Okay so,

> probably this is like another thing. The construction worker, the big guy in the tracksuit, and yeah. That live like seven people in one apartment, so that would be another stereotype.

Mateusz, who identified himself as a member of the punk scene in Oslo and had many piercings and tattoos makes the point that his landlord is confused by him and his other "punky" Polish friends in the apartment because they "aren't" the typical Polish construction workers. What exactly is the typical construction worker according to Mateusz? As he states it would be this bigger guy in a tracksuit, who lives with a bunch of other people in an apartment. These assumptions, which contain both a gendered and classed element, would be further expanded upon by Mateusz when I asked him what stereotypes he thinks Norwegians have about Polish migrants in Norway.

> **Mateusz:** The worker, the construction worker, probably like a big tough guy, who probably smokes a lot, who says kurwa [Polish swear word] a lot, and drinks a lot when he has time off. But yeah I think that's like the most popular stereotype, but I know that many Norwegians work with many Polish people in offices and restaurants, and they know it's like bullshit, it's not true. But I think that's the idea, and big construction worker, works 200 hours a week, lives with 7 other people in a room, but it's like view from beginning of 2000's. There was also Norwegian TV series, one was called Fight for survival, and I haven't seen it, but it's about a Polish guy coming to Norway who was a linguist and was looking for his father or something. And it's like comedy, but in Poland it was like very huge topic, because they are making fun of Polish people, but they were making fun of Norwegian people also, and it's a comedy. There was also a documentary about Polish people who are living in barracks that they are building for the construction workers when they're building, and there was like three episodes, documentary about people living in those barracks and they are Polish. They are like, yeah, that's a little bit stereotypical.

While reflecting upon these stereotypes, Mateusz highlights two different television programs which he sees as portraying these stereotypes. This also includes the TV drama series described earlier in the historical overview chapter, *Kampen for tilværelsen (Fight for survival)*, which the Polish ambassador to Norway criticized for portraying dated and negative stereotypes about the Polish community in Norway (Godzimirski, 2018). Similar to Antoni though, we see how Mateusz feels that assumptions that go with the construction worker also contain stereotypes of engaging in inappropriate behaviour, and contain classed assumptions as well. One last quote from Oskar is helpful in understanding one more layer of assumptions that go with being a construction worker from Poland in Norway.

> **Oskar:** So a few assumptions about me as a Polish is that I'm probably fascist, catholic, I work in construction, and that I don't like Muslims. So that would be a few things that would come out quite a lot.

Here Oskar establishes that he feels as though because he is Polish, he is assumed to have more conservative views. This would have an impact on Oskar as presented in the next section where he would be aware of this stacking of assumed characteristics that existed about Polish migrants in Norway, and how this might impact how his actions are read by Norwegians.

In some of these comments presented, it isn’t always clear to what extent these assumptions are ones my participants know exist about Polish migrants, or are ones they *think* exist. This is a point returned to in Chapter 6, where the concept of “cultural intimacy” (Herzfeld, 2005) can be useful in understanding where some of my participants’ ideas come from. Additionally, it wasn’t always clear “which” Norwegians my participants felt might harbor these negative views. My participants would make several different comments that often indicated that when they spoke about Norwegians who viewed the Polish community negatively, they portrayed an image of a more upper middle-class Norwegian, or as Alek would specifically say: “posh”. It is important to highlight this point, that not all Norwegians feel this way about Polish migrants, and my participants didn’t think this either as is shown in some of these previous comments. However, they seemed to believe there existed dominant views and stereotypes of Polish migrants in Norway which were negative, and this belief would serve to inform their encounters with Norwegians, especially in particular moments in which they felt like they were being marginalized or discriminated against because they were Polish. This is what I turn to next.

5.3.3: Dating Experiences: Feelings of rejection connected to stereotypes of Polish migrants in Norway.

When I asked Antoni how he thought that stereotypes that exist about Polish men in Norway impacted him, he would go straight into dating experiences as what stood out the most to him.

> **Antoni:** Well the interesting thing is that I have never had so many problems with girls on Tinder as I have here in Norway.
> **K:** Really?
> **Antoni:** Yeah, really. Like with Asian girls in Norway, it is not a problem. But when it comes to Norwegian girls and Polish guys, I think if I asked someone, they would say it’s not a problem, but statistically, I mean I have never had so many problems with meeting girls. I see how some Polish girls treat some people from Ukraine in Poland, because they [Ukrainians] are like cheap labour in Poland now. So this is a funny thing to observe.

While Antoni explains his experiences on Tinder, Michal would bring up situations at the bar.

> **Michal:** But usually the conversation is like oh nice, something, something, where are you from, and when you say you are from Poland, the conversation dies immediately, so that's like, and it doesn't always happen, but ah, it happened to me many times.
> **K**: In particular with Norwegian women at the bar?
> Michal: Yeah, happened many times, and to my friends, many, many times

These feelings of rejection would also come up with Oskar. Oskar was one of the last people I interviewed, and by the time I interviewed him I had already had interesting conversations with Antoni and Michal about dating experiences and feeling rejected. When I asked Oskar if he experienced rejection when Norwegian women learned he was Polish, he responded by saying:

> **Oskar**: Yeah, yeah, yeah. This happened to me as well, quite a lot.
> **K**: So could you tell me about that?
> **Oskar:** But I don't really know why it happened.
> **K**: Could you tell a story about one time it happened or something?
> **Oskar:** I mean this would happen to me in clubs as well. So I would just approach a girl in a club and then I would speak Norwegian and then obviously they would ask me where I am from because that is what they do a lot. Like Germans and Austrians they didn't really care. In Norway, if you speak Norwegian, but with a foreign accent it happens a lot that they would just ask you straight away where I'm from. Especially if you have strong accent, and yeah we tend to have strong accents with Anglo-Saxon languages, so she would just instantly become more distant.
> **K**: And anything like specifically where when they learned you were Polish? Whether that was at the bar, or on Tinder even? Any moments where you can remember this?
> **Oskar:** Actually no, Tinder in Norway was a disaster for me. I didn't really, I don't know why. I kind of like connected this, my bicycle trip to Poland with tindering, so it was like, I was doing it with my friend by the way, so it was bicycle plus Tinder. In Norway, I never got any matches, as soon as I would get to Denmark, I would get some, in Germany more, and then in Poland it would be like match match match. So I don't know, I feel like, my perception is that this is kind of like related to the economical perception, so I think that they assume that if you are Polish you are basically poor and there is nothing that you can really offer them. So that's how I explained it to myself. I didn't really think that much about that.

Here Oskar attaches his rejection to assumptions he felt existed about Polish migrants in Norway, and in particular assumptions about class status. Michal and Antoni would also express similar thoughts:

> **K:** Why do you think it is when they hear you are from Poland, they are not interested in talking?
> **Michal:** It is the same association. Blue-collar workers, and ahhh you know that straight up makes you less desirable. It [being Polish] has an anchoring point for all other assumptions that you can make. Many times it is correct.

As shown in the earlier quote from Antoni, he sees parallels between Polish migrants in Norway and Ukrainians in Poland. Here he expands on that point further:

> **Antoni:** But I have never experienced this problem ever in matches on tinder. Generally when I match with people it is not Norwegian girls. And if the Norwegian girls are a little bit like they are in Poland, if you are from Ukraine, or Germany, Germany is better. I don’t know, it is a mix of stereotypes, subconscious, xenophobic, and experiences with the older generation of Polish people. I don’t know. This was surprising, because in Finland, it is different, but it wasn’t a problem, in Norway it was a problem.

As Antoni reflects, perhaps the situation in Norway is similar to that in Poland, where he thinks there exists a hierarchy of status among migrants depending on where they are from. This hierarchy then affects attractiveness, which he believes is the case with German and Ukrainian migrants in Poland. His awareness of where Polish migrants fall in a hierarchy of desirability came up when he commented upon how I as an American probably didn't face the same challenges.

> **K:** Hm very interesting, and I would actually like to circle back to something that you said earlier about Tinder, since you said in Norway you had more trouble matching, because this is something I have heard from other guys
> **Antoni:** Polish people?
> **K**: Yeah Polish guys, and this played a role in my topic.
> **Antoni:** Probably like when you are from the United States, they are like "oh you are from the United States"
> **K**: huh?
> **Antoni:** Like you are from the United States
> **K:** In some ways, I'll acknowledge that there is totally different circumstances around how Americans and Polish are seen in Norway.

I have specifically put quotes around when Antoni says "oh you are from the United States" because of the emphasis Antoni himself had when saying this. As he said this, Antoni would take on a tone of one that implied attraction, implying that when Norwegian women learn that I am American, it works to my advantage. This for him serves to underscore his point that in Norway there exists a hierarchy of desirability for migrants in Norway, and where he establishes that as a Polish man he is low on the hierarchy, as opposed to myself as an American. While these previous comments focus on perceptions of desirability that my participants felt revolved around class, I would like to revisit an earlier quote from Oskar that shows how he felt other dynamics impacted his desirability in Norway.

As shown earlier, Oskar felt there were many stereotypes that came with being a Polish migrant in Norway, including having more conservative views. With this in mind, I present a section of an earlier quote from Oskar, which can be reconsidered with this perception Oskar had of being more conservative in Norway.

> **Oskar:** I don't really know how to approach girls in Norway for example. So I recall being kind of afraid, I mean like, like in Poland it is quite clear, you just ask a girl on a date, and you know it's kind of old schoolish usually, like you know flowers, and some gifts and so. So like it's very, you basically know what you are doing. And in Norway I actually have no idea. I just, so I actually start the game, but I don't know how does it work, I don't know the rules. And I have a feeling that everything I know from Poland that would work would be perceived as like, you know the patriarchy and lack of respect in Norway.

As we can see here Oskar comments that he is concerned that his actions approaching girls might be interpreted as patriarchal. How this fits into the other stereotypes he feels exist about Polish migrants being more conservative is returned to in the discussion section, as well as what it shows about how Oskar and my other participants feel socially differentiated and looked down upon within Norwegian society.

5.4: Social positioning

In the previous section I explored the ways in which my participants reflected upon their social positioning within Norway as Polish migrants. As I presented through my participants' encounters with stereotypes and perceived experiences of marginalization, it would appear that some of my participants feel as though Polish migrants are looked down upon in Norway. In this section I show comments and stories from my participants which can be seen as ways in which they tried to boost their social standing within Norwegian society.

5.4.1: Distancing themselves from other Polish migrants

In different ways, some of my participants tried to differentiate themselves from other groups of Polish migrants in Norway. In particular, they tried to position themselves as different from those who came to Norway often as construction workers just to earn money, and then returned back to Poland later. My participants would explain this in a few different ways.

> **Alek:** Maybe it is because most of the people who are here, they are just, they are not here with the plan to stay. So they're not like, ahhhh into like replicating, how to say like, this environment around you, you just go to work, earn money, build a house in Poland and go back. Yeah I would say there are two groups of Polish immigrants here. Those who live here, and those who know, who just have work here, who go back and forth, and probably the bigger group is the second one. The people who just want to, you know, earn some money, and go back.

Jan would also comment upon this theme of people traveling back and forth and not really settling within Norway in a similar way.

> **Jan:** It is pretty common that those people are coming for 4 weeks, and what they are offered and then going back to Poland, and then they are not moving here really, they are feeling here in job, but this job it takes much longer because it is also taking their free time. They can't move here mentally, they are able only to work here.

What you see in these different excerpts of interviews is the way in which my participants acknowledge that you have a group of Polish migrants who they see as not really living in Norway, but instead just coming here to earn money and then return back to Poland. In the process of this acknowledgement, they also establish themselves as different from those groups, by referring to them as "those" or "they" as Alek and Jan do. Others would similarly describe themselves as different from this group of Polish migrants in construction work, but highlighted how this group was either negative or embarrassing.

> **Michal:** It is not like the creme of the creme of Polish society that comes to Norway. It is

> absolutely not. I have my personal reasons to be here, and ahhh these guys are like working for money. They are like professionals in whatever construction. But they are not necessarily like people who you want to associate with as well. So that is how I am looking at it, because it's like a lot of people who are not really worth knowing, so I cannot hold against Norwegians that they don't want to know, and you know what I mean.

Along similar lines, Marcel would focus more on how this group was embarrassing.

> **Marcel:** Abusing alcohol you know, every second word is the bad word that we use in Poland. And you know, it's just not so nice to hear that you know. Like what kind of picture are you sending to other people you know. A lot of people don't want to also, don't want to learn Norwegian for example. A lot of Polish people I've met so many people who are here, 10, 15 years, they cannot even speak Norwegian language, basically, not even English sometimes.

Marcel would not be alone in describing the actions of this group as embarrassing, and Jan would also highlight similar themes that Marcel brought up:

> **Jan:** They feel like they can behave awful somehow, they are drinking a lot, it is also affecting long term activities like this, it is affecting their life, that is what I don't like definitely, and people, like Norwegians, or other people can notice this behaviors, and they are talking loud in the bus without needing to be so loud. It is not about culture, but it is about feeling so free or something, and they have no rules here, and they are like doing some things, and swearing, and everything. Like when I really notice it is on public transit, like for other nations, it's just some guy who is talking loud and it is normal because people do this, but for me it is like oh no there are some Polish here again on the bus. I don't like it, because it is not nice, and every person like this is representing his country, and I am trying to show others that I am normal, I am behaving somehow, and I am representing my country this way, and why are others destroying this?

Jan shares he is ashamed by the actions and behaviors of other Polish migrants who are in Norway, which he sees as especially problematic on public transit. Embarrassment expressed by Polish migrants about other Polish migrants speaking loudly on public transit is a theme other researchers have found (Garapich, 2012; Ryan, 2010). This embarrassment would at times directly influence the actions of Jan when out in public.

> **Jan:** Once I felt some situation, like there was some Polish people on this line number 1 actually, and they were talking, and they were commenting on everything, so we decided, I was with a group of other Polish with me, and we were just tired or something and weren't talking much, but when we realized they are close to us and Polish and that they are also able to hear us, it was something unspoken that we will just keep quiet, although the travel wasn't too long, and just wait until the time we get off, and that was it.

Here Jan's embarrassment and shame about the actions of other Polish migrants leads him and his friends to remain silent while on public transit. As he highlights, he and his other friends who were also Polish don't even have to verbally agree on this, it is something they all know that they should do. This action is taken to not only distance themselves from other Polish migrants, but to avoid even being seen as Polish.

In this section I have presented comments which show ways that my participants try and differentiate themselves from other groups of Polish migrants, highlighting the heterogenous nature of Polish migrants in Norway (Pawlak, 2015a). In Chapter 6 I return to these comments to discuss what this shows about who my participants are, and what steps they take to try and boost their social standing in light of what they feel are negative assumptions about Polish migrants in Norway (Garapich, 2008).

5.4.2: Superior to Norwegians

Alek, Antoni, and Oskar would describe Norwegians in negative terms while highlighting their own positive characteristics. This came up with Alek when describing what he sees as a lazy work ethic among younger Norwegians.

> **Alek:** I think they are pretty bad workers. They are really lazy, it is not only my experience. You know friends, not only Polish friends, so yeah, even Spanish people are saying that they hate to have shifts together with the Norwegians because they have to do their [Norwegians] work, and, but the young people, they are just spoiled and lazy, I don't know where it comes from, but in my country it is different. The young people is the generation of people who are, who want to do something, you can feel that, this energy, this motivation.

Alek establishes in this excerpt both that he sees Norwegians as lazy, but also by comparison he is a good worker. While others would also highlight that they saw Norwegians as lazy, Oskar and Antoni would both highlight that they saw Norwegian men as irresponsible. This came up with Oskar when I asked him what traits are important for men to have, and he quickly began to critique Norwegian men:

> **Oskar:** I think yeah, taking some responsibility, I found Norwegians to be a bit, yeah childish in many areas, and I feel like they kind of grow up slowly.

At first Oskar says it is important that men should take responsibility, which by calling Norwegians childish, he emphasizes they do not. Antoni, when describing Norwegian men, would make similar comments.

> **Antoni:** Like, they are concentrated on stuff, and fun, and not responsible, many things that people said, they have had too easy life to handle problems, so it is actually kind of true, that they have very easy life.

Antoni would later share a story which highlighted how Norwegian men are not responsible enough.

> **Antoni:** But men, I have heard stories, for example, from this girl the one from Netherlands, visited her uncle in mountains, and she was with another Dutch girl, and she needed help, and there were a few guys and girls. And she asked for help, and in Poland, everyone would be like YEAH (said with enthusiasm) you poor girl with the twisted ankle, and instead the girl helped her, and they [the men] were big or something, and I kind of like these traditional roles.

> Obviously guys are physically stronger, this is fact, on average, and it also gives them some more power to help someone, and I think they were concentrated more on themselves, and I hear that girls are disappointed because they heard like Vikings or something, and they told me that they are pussies, and I should say not pussies in the sense like "they cry or something", because you can cry, you can show weakness, but still they are like kids.

Antoni's account here is a bit confusing, and I will provide some of the main points here. Antoni is recounting a story told to him by his current girlfriend who is Dutch, where his girlfriend was with a friend who injured herself in the mountains. While there were both Norwegian men and Norwegian women around who could have helped, none of the men did anything and instead it was the women who helped the injured girl. What this story shows about the role that Antoni believes men should have in society, and how being "responsible" is telling of the types of masculine ideals that Antoni aligns with, is returned to in Chapter 6. Finally, a comment that is especially insightful is Antoni's comment about how women are disappointed by men because they aren't "Vikings", which is something he reemphasized again in the interview.

> **Antoni:** But really girls here I hear are disappointed, so they wanted Vikings, and instead they got fancy rich kids who care about themselves.

These comments indicate the role that women can play in supporting certain masculine identities and uneven power relations between men and women (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005; Hearn, 2004), something that is discussed further in Chapter 6.

5.4.3: Shifting the blame

The final strategy that I will present here is the way in which my participants tried to reinterpret situations in which they felt rejected by Norwegian women. Often this was done by shifting the blame of what had happened onto other factors. Michal, when reflecting on the rejections he had experienced in a bar, would comment:

> **Michal:** It is just like a bar is a bar, it is not exactly the best spot to meet people. Sometimes you have a good conversation, but like to have oh I met this girl in a bar and we are having a relationship right now, it is not really the place. Better to go to the library.

Here Michal tries to shift the problem away from the Norwegian women having negative assumptions about him because he is Polish, and instead blame it on the fact that bars are bad places to meet people. Oskar would also employ a strategy to shift the problem away from how Norwegian women viewed him.

> **Oskar:** And actually I have never considered Norwegian girls to be as attractive as Polish girls. I mean they are very beautiful usually, it is my type, like height, blond hair and so on. But they were not enough feminine very often so to say. Because, yeah expectations about men in Poland are one thing, and expectations about women are another thing. In terms of some long-term

> relationships, this type of more eastern type Polish girls, maybe a bit less Ukrainian and Russian girls, very feminine was always more attractive to me. Because I think it is a bit like you are looking, you are not looking for a partner material, but you are looking for a wife material, in some sense.

Here Oskar makes sense of this rejection by flipping it around and saying that he actually prefers Polish women to Norwegian women, which is a similar strategy to what Fiałkowska (2019) found with Polish men who felt rejected by British women in England. In section 5.4 I have highlighted some of the different ways that my participants try to socially position themselves more positively within Norwegian society as Polish migrants. What this shows about how they feel Polish migrants are seen within Norwegian society, and the role of masculinities in how they then respond to this, is discussed further in the next chapter.

5.5: Chapter synopsis

This chapter has presented 4 main themes from my analysis that deal with the overall migration process and experiences my participants have had in Norway. In the first section I found that my participants migrated to Oslo for a number of reasons, and have shown how for some, their migration motivations are connected to their thoughts on what a man's role in society is. Following this I explored the differences and changes my participants observed about life in Oslo, and unpacked the way in which these changes connected to different gendered expectations they felt existed between Poland and Norway, and how their own ideas about a man's role in society played a role in how they navigated these changes. Section 5.3 explored the ways in which my participants understood the social position of Polish migrants in Norway, and I have found that my participants feel that Polish migrants sit in a middle ground between both positive and negative assumptions. Finally, I showed some of the ways my participants then tried to reposition themselves more favorably in Norway. What I have found in my analysis is that ideas of gender play a role in migration motivations, navigating a new place, as well as how my participants feel they are seen within Norway and how they then respond to this. In the next chapter I discuss these findings and what it shows us about the role of masculine identities and gender hierarchies in shaping the migration process of my participants.

6: Discussion

In Chapter 5, I presented the data from my interviews under the four categories of *Migration motivations*, *Navigating a new place*, *Social positions*, and *Social positioning.* For Chapter 6, I will show the relevance of gender in understanding my participants' comments and their overall migration process to Oslo. By bringing in a gendered analysis and gendered theories, I argue that ideas of masculinity play a role both in how they navigate life in Oslo, and also how they feel they are viewed within Norwegian society. I begin with discussing migration motivations, and show how the different masculine ideals my participants have shape their aspirations for moving to Oslo. Second, I explore how my participants encounter and navigate new gender structures between Poland and Norway, which for some was welcome, and others challenging. Following this I show in the third section how my participants feel as though they as Polish men are placed within the social hierarchy of Norwegian society, and argue that my participants feel marginalized in Norway due to stereotypes that are racializing. In the fourth section I show the ways in which my participants respond to this sense of being marginalized, and what strategies they take to try to reposition themselves and their masculine identity away from a marginalized position in Norway. The chapter concludes with a summary of my main findings.

6.1: Multiple migration motivations, multiple masculinities

In Section 5.1, I presented two themes in regards to migration motivations, which were migration as an adventure, and migration in the hopes for a better quality of life. These themes nuance a common assumption about men's migration being driven by economic reasons and breadwinning ideals (Wojnicka, 2019), which was discussed in Chapter 3. While hegemonic masculinity is important in men and masculinities research, it can also at times result in an assumed masculine identity being connected to breadwinning (Urdea, 2020), rather than recognizing the fluidity of masculine identities (Broughton, 2008). In this section I nuance this assumption of breadwinning, and discuss how these two themes and motivations are driven and influenced by different types of masculine ideals that my participants draw upon.

6.1.1: Adventurer masculinities

What emerges from those presented in section 5.1.1, for whom migration is an adventure, is that while financial incentives played a role in migration motivations, it was not a main driving factor. Instead, migrating to Oslo was seen as something that was primarily exciting, a way to challenge oneself, or even to escape pressures and frustrations connected to life back in Poland. I see these motivations being influenced by adventurer masculine ideals that they draw upon (Broughton, 2008). For Michal and Jan it is an opportunity to experience the world and seek new thrills. Additionally, in the narratives of Alek and Michal, who described their migrations to Oslo as challenging and filled with many uncertainties, I would argue these stories demonstrate the ways in which these two saw migration as a test for themselves that they had to overcome and manage, which connects to adventurer masculine ideals as well (Ruehs, 2017). As Michal shared, there were many risks, but "the risk paid off". Is being an adventurer something inherently masculine and only men can do? Certainly not (Bredeloup, 2013), however, as Jan and Alek describe, this migration is also seen by them as an opportunity to escape from certain expectations that they felt existed for them as men back in Poland. By explaining why they migrated, they also reveal how they embrace different ideals of masculinity.

In Poland, researchers have argued, there exists at the regional level (Poland as a nation) hegemonic masculine ideals which are built around more clear gender roles, and where men play an important role as a breadwinner (Fiałkowska, 2019; Mazierska, 2003; Wojnicka, 2011). As analyzed in 5.1.1 both Jan and Alek highlight that they felt these pressures to fill this expected gender role, and I interpret that as them being aware of this dominant hegemonic form of masculinity back in Poland (Messerschmidt, 2016). However, while they acknowledge the existence of these masculine ideals, I would argue that they both reflexively distance themselves from this particular hegemonic masculine structure, and instead embrace different ideals of masculinity as an adventurer. Again, we see a parallel to Broughton's (2008) findings, where migration is an opportunity for the adventurers to escape from the rigid expectations they feel exist for them as men and instead engage with a new gender practice (p. 574). Jan felt there is a "funnel" for what men should do in Poland, and Alek doesn't want to be the "average joe." Both appear to see their migration as a way to escape these pressures, and instead reflexively engage with a different masculine gender practice based around being adventurous. Michal would not as explicitly connect his migration to his masculine identity, however his comments shown in 5.1.1 share many parallels to those of Alek and Jan, and therefore have been presented and discussed as well with the adventurers.

It is also useful to look at the intersectional identity of these participants to see how different social factors influence their gender practice. One important factor to highlight would be class. As highlighted in the analytical framework, class can be both something more financial based, and also based upon more subjective and relational notions related to social class (Bourdieu, 1984; Lund et al., 2019). In this case I would say both are present with Jan, who specifically highlighted how financial motives were not the most important factors that brought him to Oslo, and instead sees his migration primarily as an opportunity to explore and experience the world. Seeing and experiencing the world would also come up with Michal, as previously shown, which I see as being connected to sociocultural notions of class for both of them of what is “valuable in life” (Lund et al., 2019, p. 1381). By contrast, Alek and Michal spoke about economic motives while also framing their migration as an adventure. As Broughton (2008) highlights, the adventurer is one who is driven by economic motives, but also “to test one’s courage and virility, and to escape the tedium and tighter moral codes” (p. 578), and is also one who is usually free of familial and provider obligations. Having freedom from this type of financial obligation to provide and earn money can be seen as relating to class, but it also connects to age and life-phase, which I would argue is relevant for how my participants view themselves and draw upon adventurer masculine ideals.

All except for two of my participants are young, and this impacts how they view themselves and the ideals they draw upon. Alek specifically highlighted how one day he might want to be a father and have an apartment, but at this point in his life it wasn’t appealing. Life-phase and young age being a characteristic of the adventurer was also something Broughton (2008) highlighted but has been highlighted by other research (Datta et al., 2009). This also reflects a broader point that scholars have made about masculinities and age, and that “age categories can provide useful analogies for thinking about gender more flexibly” (Gardiner, 2002, p. 94). Thinking about how age and life-phase intersects with how men view themselves and the types of gender practice they engage with underscores further the way in which gender is something that is fluid and socially constructed (Donaldson et al., 2009). An important question which I have not yet fully addressed is whether or not men who embrace adventurer masculine ideals should be interpreted as engaging with masculinities which are hegemonic or nonhegemonic (Messerschmidt, 2016). This is a point I consider further in section 6.1.3 after discussing those who I presented as migrating for a “better life”.

6.1.2: Lifestyle migration, normalcy, and masculinities

While both Mateusz and Stefan initially describe their migration motivations as being tied to finding better work in Norway as shown in 5.1.2, I will discuss how there are many other layers to their migration motivations which I interpret as “lifestyle migration” (Benson & O'Reilly, 2009) and the pursuit of a “normal” life (Bygnes & Erdal, 2017). Indeed, as Bygnes and Erdal (2017) write about descriptions of a normal life from their own research of Polish migrants in Norway, it appears “at first glance [to be] very much about money. However, these economic considerations are significantly intertwined with key social and emotional factors, which emerge through a qualitative unpacking" (p. 111). As pointed out earlier in Chapter 3, a more "normal" life is highly subjective, but in the case of Mateusz and Stefan, normalcy, I argue, manifests in the shape of having a better quality of life which is linked to a more stable work/life balance. By sharing how they were motivated to come to Norway so that they could have a life where they can invest in things other than work, they paralleled the descriptions of lifestyle migration (Benson & O'Reilly, 2009).

While researchers have shown the linkage between masculine identity and work (Berdahl et al., 2018; Collinson & Hearn, 1996; Kimmel & Messner, 1995), I would argue that Mateusz and Stefan build a masculine identity around a work/life balance instead (Emslie & Hunt, 2009). Mateusz stated he is happy to have a life where he doesn't invest everything in the job, and for Stefan a successful life is one where he has the time and isn't "occupied" always with work. These comments underscore the way in which they do not see work as a central part of their masculine identity. Furthermore, as Emslie and Hunt (2009) write about men who construct masculine identities around working to live, they are also open to more egalitarian dynamics between men and women, which is something that Stefan mentioned he appreciated about life in Norway in comparison to Poland. As Mateusz shared what he thought being a "successful man" meant, he rejected this notion of the man in the suit who earns lots of money, which is helpful to analyze within the framework of hegemonic masculinity.

As researchers have noted about the regional hegemonic masculinity in Poland, power and economic status are "central to the masculine ideal" (Fiałkowska, 2019, p. 114). Mateusz, in 5.1.2, shares how he feels society's definition of a "successful man" is the man in a "suit", which can be seen as his awareness of these traits being associated with hegemonic masculine ideals in Poland. Mateusz, however, appears to distance himself from this form of hegemonic masculinity when he comments that he has different ideas and definitions of success. Yet it is unclear if he rejects this masculine ideal due to the fact that he is unable to live up to it, or if it is because he genuinely values other masculine ideals and draws upon those instead. What is clear, I would argue, is that he seems to embrace masculine ideals which do not frame his masculinity as being dependent on earning money and being a provider, which results in him distancing himself from the regional hegemonic masculinity in Poland. Other research looking at the intersection of masculinities and lifestyle migration has highlighted that men representative of lifestyle migration often reject the hegemonic masculine ideals that are based upon having a good job and their ability to be a provider which exist in their homelands (Ono, 2015, pp. 254-255).

While a common assumption exists about men's migration motivations being influenced by breadwinning aspirations, this does not appear to be the case with Mateusz and Stefan's migration. Rather, their comments, I argue, show that they engage with masculine ideals which are built around more work/life balance (Emslie & Hunt, 2009). This masculinity which relates to work/life balance in turn seems to connect to their migration motivations, which appear to fall into the category of lifestyle migration and the pursuit of a more normal life. "The search for the good life as a comparative project is a consistent theme in lifestyle migration" (Benson & O'Reilly, 2009, p. 609). It is helpful to also highlight the role of classed aspirations in Mateusz and Stefan's motivations, especially as the pursuit for a "'good life'" (Lund et al., 2019, p. 1381) is a common trait of middle-class aspirations in capitalist societies. Rather than making a case that these motivations are more class-based versus masculine aspirations, instead I would emphasize the way that class and masculine identity intersect with each other (Lund et al., 2019; Wojnicka, 2019). How Mateusz and Stefan reflected on what it means to be a man and how this related to what is a good life, I believe can be further understood when looking at this through an intersectional lens (Wojnicka, 2019) and considering how might masculine and classed aspirations my participants draw upon and engage with influence their migration motivations.

6.1.3: Hegemonic masculinity and migration motivations: A critique

We can also question whether these masculine ideals that are connected to an adventurer or lifestyle type migration are based around hegemonic or nonhegemonic masculinities. As Broughton (2008) wrote about the adventurer, migrating is a way "to satisfy gendered aims including attaining independence, a sense of individual achievement and material and social advancement, and a new and exciting life away from the limitations of a neglected and declining rural Mexico" (p. 585). These findings by Broughton (2008) about the adventurer certainly can be seen as hegemonic in that the adventurer seeks to boost their social status and standing, which could help to maintain patriarchal relations. However, Messerchmidt (2016) argues that masculinities researchers need to be more attentive to distinguishing what is hegemonic or nonhegemonic forms of masculinities, and uses Broughton's (2008) adventurer as an example of a nonhegemonic form of masculinity.

> [Researchers] must distinguish masculinities that legitimate a hierarchical relationship between men and women, between masculinity and femininity, and among masculinities from those that do not… making this distinction unambiguous will enable scholars to recognize and research various forms of mundane, run-of-the-mill, nonhegemonic masculinities… [such] as risky and daring types of masculinities, such as the adventurer masculinity discussed by Broughton. (Messerschmidt, 2016, p. 33)

As presented in my analysis and discussion, those who I defined as adventurers also framed their migration as an opportunity to do something new, exciting, and also to challenge themselves, which was connected to masculine ideals they drew upon for themselves as men. While these motivations most likely connected to ways in which they saw being adventurous as a boost to their social standing, and a rite of passage even, it is not clear to what extent migration was relevant to my participants as a way to legitimate hierarchical relationships to women. I agree with Messerschmidt (2016) about the need to be more aware of what we label as hegemonic versus nonhegemonic, and in the case of my participants, it is not clear that being an adventurer was seen as a way to "legitimate an unequal relation between men and women" (p. 34).

By labeling the adventurer masculinity my participants draw upon as a hegemonic ideal, it becomes unclear what can and should be defined as nonhegemonic forms of masculinity. This then creates challenges for identifying and building out knowledge on those forms of masculinities which are nonhegemonic. However, it is still important to highlight the way in which gender hierarchies may influence those who are privileged enough to see migration as a way to experience the world. My data doesn't allow for me to speak to the different opportunities that men and women from Poland have to migrate. Yet it should be considered how being an adventurer can be seen as an expression of unequal gender relations in regards to who has the opportunity to seek out a better life or to try and escape rigid gendered expectations (for more on this in regards to use of free time, see Walle, 2010, p. 140). This question and consideration about hegemonic versus nonhegemonic masculinities is also important to consider when looking at my participants who represent lifestyle migration.

What emerged from my participants who I identify as embodying lifestyle migration, was that their motivations were based around having a more "normal" life (Bygnes & Erdal, 2017) with a better work/life balance. As Mateusz stated, he wanted to "live, not like trying to survive." What I would like to consider here is how do ideas of "normalcy" and a good life possibly relate to masculine ideals which are hegemonic. Migration for a "normal life" could be seen as a strategy to migrate and try and live up to regional hegemonic masculine ideals around being a breadwinner back in Poland, a role that some individuals feel that they are unable to live up to.

Possibly this is the case with Mateusz, who felt like in Poland he was only living month to month, as opposed to Norway, where he has a higher quality of life and earns enough to even take vacations. This could represent how he feels that he is now more able to live up to regional hegemonic masculinities in Poland (Fiałkowska, 2019), which is a part of a "normal" life. The extent to which Mateusz's ideas of normalcy and his migration to Norway is influenced by regional hegemonic masculine ideals in Poland is unclear in my data. He does appear in some ways to distance himself from a masculine ideal based around being a provider as discussed in section 6.1.2. In the case of Stefan, he does mention that he appreciates that within Norway you don't have gendered expectations of the types of work that men and women should do, nor that women should stay home with the kids. This is indicative of the fact that Stefan is more open to an egalitarian dynamic between men and women which isn't based around patriarchal and hierarchical relations, and where the types of masculine ideals he draws upon are nonhegemonic. A "normal" life is highly subjective, but a consideration of participants' gender ideals could provide further insights into understanding more precisely what is meant by normalcy.

The question of whether or not to understand adventurer and lifestyle migration masculine ideals as hegemonic versus nonhegemonic represents a limitation about the theory of hegemonic masculinity. When using hegemonic masculinity for analyzing men's decisions to migrate, it can potentially lead to a deterministic and prescriptive reading of men's motivations. This can lead to what appears to be an erasure of these men's agency in the structural aspects of hegemonic masculinity, a critique which has been raised by other researchers as well (Whitehead, 2002, pp. 93-94). For example, men's choice to migrate can often be simplified to an action taken to boost their ability as a "breadwinner". While it is true in our era of globalization that much migration is for labour reasons, this focus on migrating to be a "breadwinner" can ignore other potential motivations for migrating. Additionally, when the research agenda focuses on analyzing these "breadwinning" motivations, it can potentially lead to a narrative that in turn influences the research to overlook the existence of "multiple masculinities" (Bell & Pustułka, 2017) that exist among migrant men and which are not related to simply being a breadwinner. This critique is relevant and a reminder that there might be many other motivations and influences attached to migration, which hegemonic masculinity might struggle to capture.

However, including a distinction between hegemonic and nonhegemonic masculinities is also problematic as there isn't always a clear dichotomous division between the two as we have seen thus far in my discussion. While Connell and Messerschmidt (2005) argue that hegemonic masculinity allows room for the agent of analysis to not be lost in the structural aspect of the theory (p. 843), it would appear it is challenging to do this while using the theory. These critiques are raised here to show the challenges with this theory. However, rather than abandoning the theory, which would also be problematic due to its ingrained nature in masculinities research (Christensen & Jensen, 2014, p. 72), I draw attention to them to both show my awareness of them and the way I then try to be sensitive to these challenges as I continue to use the theory in the duration of my discussion.

6.2: New place: New gender regimes

Gender is constructed and influenced by many factors, including space and place (Massey, 1994; Pessar & Mahler, 2003). In section 5.2, I presented how my participants reflected on the differences they noticed between life in Poland versus Norway including sense of safety, workplace dynamics, and gender roles. Here, I discuss how these changes were driven by perceived differences in gender regimes, and how my participants' own masculine identities influenced the way they navigated these perceived changes in Oslo. In particular, I look at how differences between regional dominant and hegemonic masculinities (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005; Messerschmidt, 2016) play a role in these navigations.

6.2.1: Sense of safety: Embodied experiences of less dominating masculinities

For Alek, Marcel, and Mateusz, one of the notable differences about their life in Oslo was an increased sense of feeling safe in comparison to their life in Poland. What I will discuss here is that this sense of safety was connected to perceived differences of dominant masculine ideals between Poland and Norway, and how they felt their own bodies, and therefore masculinities were read differently in these two places. As Messerschmidt (2016) outlines, there is a need to distinguish between hegemonic, dominant, and dominating forms of masculinities, and also a need to analyze hegemonic masculinities at a local, regional, and global level (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005, p. 849). Based upon what other researchers have highlighted about regional hegemonic masculine ideals in Poland, these can revolve around aggression and physical dominance (Fiałkowska, 2019, p. 114). Within Messerschmidt's (2016) framework, I would argue that my participants' sense of feeling unsafe in Poland shown in 5.2.1 was connected to the fact that they felt there existed dominant masculine practices which revolved around embodying a dominating form of masculinity. From Marcel's story of his friend being punched in the face, to Alek's comment about groups of large alpha males wandering around, it appears as though their sense of not being safe was directly connected to groups of men embodying these types of masculine practices.

However, my participants' own bodies appear to be playing a role in how they felt less safe in Poland as opposed to Norway. As much research has pointed out, the body is an important arena for how men situate their own gender identity and practice as well as for how others read their masculine identity (Connell, 2000; Kimmel & Messner, 1995; Messerschmidt, 2016; Mosse, 1996). Physically appearing in a certain way is linked to feeling less safe, which appears with Alek as he discusses his skinniness, and Mateusz about all his piercings. These comments, I argue, reflect the way in which they are aware of how their "embodied appearance and practice is categorized by others as 'failed'" (Messerschmidt, 2016, p. 59), which leads to an increased sense of being unsafe. They also both speak about how appearing in ways which could be seen as feminine and gay (pink clothing, piercings), and by association are then marginalized (Cheng, 1999, p. 299; Kimmel, 1994, p. 126; Messerschmidt, 2016, p. 71), can also result in violence from these groups of men who are seen as embodying aggressive and dominating forms of masculinity. An association with femininity and homosexuality, I would like to highlight, can be seen as connecting to why Marcel feels unsafe. Marcel, who was gay, was aware of the hostile environment that existed around being gay in Poland as opposed to Norway. This results in him being aware of the fact that he embodies a subordinated form of masculinity in Poland (Connell, 1995), which then plays a role in him feeling unsafe. However, it is possible that these groups of men who my participants feel frightened by should be viewed through the concept of "protest masculinities" (Connell, 1995).

Researchers have highlighted that men who feel marginalized may engage in "protest masculinities" as a strategy to portray themselves as more aggressive, dangerous, and dominating to boost their masculine status (Poynting et al., 2009). As Alek describes his experiences with groups of men who try to appear threatening in massive housing areas outside of Krakow, I interpret that he sees these men as belonging to the lower-class and who feel socially excluded.

He further connects this dynamic of feeling excluded and trying to appear dangerous when he comments upon how this also occurs in Norway with kids of immigrant background on the east side of Oslo. Perhaps Alek's increased sense of safety in Oslo is connected to the fact that he feels there exists fewer groups of men who are engaging in this strategy of protest masculinities, although researchers have highlighted similar dynamics of marginalized groups trying to portray themselves as dangerous in Oslo (Sandberg, 2008).

However, Jan also shared that he felt as though pressures that existed for men in Poland versus Norway to act in a certain way were also connected to their sense of financial security. As Jan described, because there is a better social system in Norway, you don't have men feeling as though they have to prove to others in different ways that they are a man by being "indecent". Between Alek and Jan's comments, it appears that they feel as though within Poland, due to challenging economic situations or other factors that lead to men feeling excluded, they engage in more aggressive forms of masculinity to possibly boost their masculine status. This is an important detail from my data, as it nuances an idea that you have dominant hegemonic masculine ideals in Poland which are based around being tough and dominating (Fiałkowska, 2019). Instead, it would appear that some of these men who engage in dominating masculine practices are doing this as a form of protest masculinity to try to boost their social standing as men.

Finally, how might the migration motivations and masculine identities discussed in 6.1 help us understand these participants' comments? Alek was presented as embracing adventurer ideals due to the way in which he framed his migration as a challenge he had to overcome, rather than seeing Oslo as an exciting place to experience something new. He had also shared that he wanted to leave Poland due to frustrations he felt about his work, but also due to what he felt was an overall negative environment around him in Poland. These comments appear to be relevant in understanding his sense of safety as he was motivated to get away from Poland, and this might be connected to these descriptions of feeling unsafe. Furthermore, Mateusz, who I discussed was motivated to pursue a better quality of life, and this motivation for him appeared to be connected to feeling safe as well. To be in a place where he felt safe despite his physical appearance would certainly connect to his hopes for a better life. Marcel's comments of his migration motivations were quite fluid where he appeared to engage with both adventurer and lifestyle migration aspirations. While he stated his sexuality did not play a role in his decision to initially migrate, he shared it did play a role in why he chose to stay in Oslo as he felt being gay was more accepted there. This insight can help us to further understand the way in which he felt Oslo was safer and the intersecting role of masculinity and sexuality in this. Additionally, the fluidity of Marcel's migration motivations connects to a larger theme around the challenging nature of trying to label migrants as belonging to a certain migration category, and one which I return to in my concluding chapter.

6.2.2: Lack of hierarchy in the workplace as a challenge to masculine identity

As shown by the interview excerpts in 5.2.2, Oskar found the working environment, which he perceived as being focused on work/life balance, challenging. When this is considered in light of the comments he made about the importance of work for the men in his family, I interpret this as Oskar drawing upon masculine ideals which are built around the work he does and his ability to prove himself in the workplace (Berdahl et al., 2018; Collinson & Hearn, 1996). For him, personal success is measured by rising up within the ranks, which he had often been able to do in other countries by putting in extra time at work. However, he feels this doesn't benefit him in Norway, and for him it poses a challenge to his gendered identity. Additionally, Oskar is frustrated by what he feels is a "flat structure" in the workplace, which is connected to how his own gender practice comes into conflict with a "feminized" (Adkins & Jokinen, 2008) workplace.

While earlier research highlighted the gendered and often masculinized organizational structures in workplaces (Acker, 1990), recent research has argued that today we see a "feminization of labour" (Morini, 2007). In many workplaces, that which was often ascribed as feminine and thus less valuable, such as the ability to communicate and collaborate well with other colleagues is instead seen as valuable today (Adkins & Jokinen, 2008, pp. 139-140; Lund et al., 2019, p. 1379). Oskar, however, as shown in his comments throughout a number of sections in Chapter 5 and discussed further later in this chapter, draws upon hegemonic masculine ideals which seek to legitimate hierarchical relations of power (Messerschmidt, 2016). For him, these "feminized" workplace dynamics such as "Janteloven" or "flat structure" are confusing. Additionally, it could be that because what he sees as valuable in the workplace — hierarchies, working long hours — serve as a marker that he lacks the right "skills" (Friberg & Midtbøen, 2018, p. 1472-1473), and as a result of this doesn't move up in the workplace either.

It is important to emphasize that while this is Oskar's experience of the workplace environment in Norway, there is plenty of evidence that Norwegian working environments can have poor work/life balance and inegalitarian dynamics (Brandth et al., 2017; Lyng, 2010). Yet it appears that Oskar's masculine identity, influenced by Poland's regional hegemonic masculine ideals (Fiałkowska, 2019), is not only shaping his own working performance, but also how he values and dislikes the Norwegian workplace dynamics. Possibly his masculine identity even plays a role in how he is seen and judged within the Norwegian workplace as well. However, the Norwegian "no hierarchy" workplace can also be experienced as comfortable as is shown in Alek and Marcel's accounts in 5.2.2. These examples highlight another way in which masculine identity influences the migration process when arriving and making sense of a new place.

6.2.3: Navigating new gender roles and gender relations

My participants described in a variety of ways how they felt there was a different set of gender roles for men and women in Norway as opposed to back in Poland. Taken from the perspective of structured action theory, and that masculinities "are influenced by the social structural constraints and enablements we experience in particular social situations" (Messerschmidt, 2016, p. 47), I argue that my participants' comments show the way in which they feel as though they are engaging with new masculine ideals and structures within Norway. These encounters with new gender structures and hierarchies of hegemonic masculinity (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005) played out in a variety of different ways for my participants, from being welcome to challenging, or even leading to changes in their gender practice.

Jan is an example of the way in which these social structures can enable new gender practices. As he describes in 5.2.3 the way in which he feels expectations for being a man are different in Poland versus Norway, and how in Norway his own ideas have changed, I interpret this as him reflexively engaging with these new gender structures. This reflexive interaction results in him renegotiating the ideals he has for himself as a man. Here an intersectional perspective is helpful to also look at the ways in which he engages with new masculinities (Messerschmidt & Messner, 2018) in Norway. Jan is well-educated with a degree in mechanical engineering, and with plans for a Master's degree soon. Finances do not appear to be an issue for him, which fits with what researchers have highlighted about which groups of men are most likely to embrace forms of new masculinities (Lund et al., 2019, p. 1377). However, as highlighted in the analytical framework, we should be ambiguous about whether or not new masculinities should be seen as different from hegemonic masculinities or rather adaptations, and this is a point I return to in section 6.5 more fully. Both Mateusz and Jan, in 5.2.3, demonstrate positive ideas and views about these different gender relations which they encounter in Norway, where both highlight the importance of the state in facilitating these gender relations (Pustułka et al., 2015). This is an example of how when men encounter new and different social structures, it can enable new gender practices. Furthermore, we can see how what migration aspirations they had and how that intersected with masculine ideals — with Mateusz hoping for a better quality of life, and Jan to experience new things as an adventurer — further contributes to their openness and embracing of these new gender regimes. However, encounters with new gender structures would emerge as something challenging for Oskar.

Oskar's comments highlight how he found gender roles in Norway confusing, which resulted in moments of tension for him in Norway. As researchers have highlighted, there exists a widespread hegemonic masculine ideal of being a provider in Poland (Bell & Pustułka, 2017; Fiałkowska, 2019). In Oskar's interview excerpts we can see he is influenced by this ideal, and draws upon it for his own masculine practice. As he reflects on differences between Norway and Poland, he states the fact that everything has to be "equal" in Norway, and that this creates tension for how he feels about his own gender practice and ideals he draws upon. To further understand this tension he is feeling, a transnational lens can be helpful. Oskar, in his negotiations of masculinities when it comes to dating, demonstrates the ways in which he struggles to navigate "gendered geographies of power" (Mahler & Pessar, 2001, p. 447). This struggle comes from the fact that he feels caught in between gender practices and dynamics that exist in Poland and Norway which are based around different hierarchies of power between men and women. I would argue that his confusion around the more "blended" roles in Norway comes from his internalization of gender roles that exist in Poland, creating challenges for how he adapts and tries to fit in within Norwegian society (Trąbka & Wojnicka, 2017, p. 151).

It is also important to highlight here the way in which Oskar feels like his girlfriend supports this type of gender practice and masculine ideal based around Poland's regional hegemonic masculinity. This point draws parallels to the concept of "emphasized femininity" within the framework of hegemonic masculinity, which as Connell and Messerschmidt (2005) write, "women are central in many of the processes constructing masculinities" (p. 848). As analyzed in 5.2.3, Oskar describes that his current girlfriend comments on how other men are "pussies" who can't take care of their girlfriends, which affirms and reinforces his own masculine practice of being more dominant and being a provider. As he shares, he prefers this type of relationship because it is clear to him what his role is. In previous relationships where things are more "partnerish" and equal he finds this to be confusing, reflecting the tension he spoke about in section 5.2.3 when trying to approach girls in Norway.

Oskar's comments become even more interesting when we consider that he is back in Poland while reflecting on his time in Norway, and where he didn't seem to plan to return to Norway either. Perhaps because of this he is more willing to acknowledge the challenges he faced with what he thought was a different set of gendered expectations and is less willing to make negotiations since he has returned back to Poland. Additionally, some of his discomfort shown throughout section 5.2 about the Norwegian workplace and also dating could be connected to ways in which he feels as though his masculinity is marginalized within Norway's regional hegemonic masculinity. As Christensen and Jensen (2014) point out in the Scandinavian context, masculinities which are seen as non-equality oriented are "relegated to the position of hegemonic masculinity's other" (p. 70). Perhaps the tensions Oskar experiences come from the way in which he feels that his masculine practice, which helped to maintain a superior position in Poland, is instead marginalized within Norway. This is a larger point of discussion, and is raised here, but returned to more fully in section 6.5.

Oskar provides an interesting case of how thoughts about the future also shape how someone reflects on their experiences. While it is impossible to know for certain, possibly Oskar's comments would have been different and he would have presented himself as less confused or challenged within Norway if he thought that he might continue to live there. His comments now that he is back in Poland underscore that for him he prefers gender relations he feels exist in Poland versus Norway, and how the types of masculine ideals he draws upon play a role in this. What emerges from the comments of both Oskar and the others presented throughout this section is how my participants felt they encountered new gendered structures in Oslo in the form of gender roles and relations between men and women, and this plays a role in how they navigate life in a new place.

6.3: Processes of social differentiation from participants' experiences and comments

In Chapter 5, I presented a number of stereotypes my participants felt existed or they personally encountered about Polish migrants in Norway. While some of these stereotypes my participants thought had positive impacts, others emphasized more negative assumptions, which they then drew upon in situations to make sense of moments when they felt marginalized and rejected by Norwegian women. For Chapter 6 I discuss how, through a process of racialization, my participants feel marginalized due to negative stereotypes which they felt existed about them relating to nationality, gender, class, and culture and which are seen as inherently Polish.

6.3.1: Stereotypes and their essentializing nature

My participants felt as though there was a strong stereotype about Polish men living in Norway, which is that they are employed in construction. However, their stories also highlight the way in which stereotypes can essentialize and homogenize a group (Lister, 2004; Mosse, 1996; Pickering, 2001). As Oskar stated, he felt it is "hard for them to comprehend that there are Polish people working somewhere else." These comments, I argue, show the way in which my participants feel that by being Polish in Norway, they are locked into this stereotype and assumed to be construction workers. This stereotype was seen by some as positive, while for others it was negative, a theme which is discussed throughout the rest of section 6.3.

One positive trait that my participants felt was associated with Polish migrants in Norway was that they are hard-working. It is helpful to look at my participants' migration strategies to understand why some of them in particular aligned themselves with this stereotype. While some of my participants disliked being stereotyped as a construction worker and the assumptions they felt that came with it, which is a point returned to in section 6.4.1, Bruno, who was the sole construction worker I spoke with, did not mind this. Bruno, whose migration was primarily pragmatic and to build up his pension, saw this stereotype as advantageous in the labour market, and therefore saw it as positive. Friberg (2012) similarly found that Polish migrants employed in construction embraced this stereotype due to its advantageous nature in seeking employment.

Stefan also found this stereotype to be positive, but I would argue for different reasons. While the future plans of most of my participants were still quite up in the air, Stefan did seem more committed to long term plans in Norway. In his description of Polish migrants being hard-working, Stefan attempts to portray Norwegians and Polish migrants as culturally similar with a shared valuation of being hard-working. I interpret this as him attempting to position himself as closer to Norwegians, which makes sense in light of his migration strategy to stay in Norway. This echoes the findings of Pawlak (2015a) of Polish migrants' strategies to present themselves as similar to Norwegians. However, there are also moments that both Stefan and Alek would describe in which this stereotype of being hard-working had negative consequences. This, along with the many other reflections and experiences my participants had that informed how they felt Polish migrants were seen in Norwegian society, is what I turn to next.

6.3.2: Negative stereotypes through the prism of racialization

What emerges from my participants' comments in sections 5.3.2 and 5.3.3 is that they feel there are a number of negative stereotypes about Polish migrants in Norway, which results in them feeling looked down upon and I see as marking them "backwards". Here I will discuss the way in which these stereotypes result in my participants feeling marginalized, and that this marginalization is the result of subordinating and racializing stereotypes that intersectionally revolve around notions of class, nationality, and culture. As discussed earlier in the analytical framework, I use racialization as a concept to analyze the mechanisms and processes that result in my participants feeling excluded and placed lower in a social hierarchy due to supposed and inherent traits of Polishness which are marked as inferior. Racialization as a concept has been critiqued and heavily debated (Meer et al., 2015; Murji & Solomos, 2005a), especially in regards to its use with white migrants (Botterill & Burrell, 2019), which is important to acknowledge and these critiques are taken into consideration in this discussion.

The first racializing stereotype I would highlight that my participants reflected upon is how assumptions about Polish migrants were connected to ideas of being "morally deficient, [and] culturally backward" (Hickman & Ryan, 2020, p. 107). Antoni, Mateusz, and Oskar's descriptions in 5.3.2 of stereotypes of Polish migrants connected to everything from being less educated, drinking and swearing in public, to being seen as a fascist who dislikes Muslims. All of these stereotypes revolve around notions of Polish migrants representing "backwardness" (Pawlak, 2015b), which results in "uneven social relations" (Fox et al., 2012, p. 691). It is important to highlight that some of these stereotypes come from personal experiences, but others came from my participants' own general reflections. To understand this, I turn to the concept "cultural intimacy" and how it can be used to describe "known and recognizable traits that not only define insiderhood but are also felt to be disapproved by powerful outsiders" (Herzfeld, 2005, p. 132).

As Pawlak (2015b) points out in his use of cultural intimacy, due to cultural and imagined notions of Eastern Europeans being "inferior" to the West, his participants felt as though by being Polish they were associated with "backwardness" (p. 255) in Norway. The concept of cultural intimacy and Pawlak's (2015b) findings can be insightful in understanding how some of my participants' comments, such as Antoni's, appear to be reflective of an insider understanding of how Polish migrants are seen and act in Norway rather than based on personal experience. While Pawlak (2015a, 2015b) didn't use racialization as a concept to understand the experiences of his participants, these negative stereotypes my participants saw connected to Polish migrants draw parallels to processes of racialization that Hickman and Ryan (2020) highlight about Polish migrants in the U.K. (p. 107).

Another process of racialization is through stereotypes and classed assumptions that are used as social markers for ethnic and national groups. As Williams (1996) succinctly wrote: "In contemporary nation-states, where race is class stratified, and the symbolics of class status are racially hierarchicalized, we must explore gender developments in relation to racioethnic-based constructions" (p. 129). My participants described how assumptions of Polish migrants are closely interlinked with class. Michal said to be Polish in Norway is an "anchoring point" for assumptions such as being a blue-collar worker, showing how in this situation nationality and class intersect with each other and result in marginalization (Christensen et al., 2017). This association of being lower class results in my participants, especially those who felt rejected by Norwegian women, feeling as though that by being Polish and the class markers that go with it, they are placed lower in the Norwegian social hierarchy. On that point, being seen as lower class as negative is telling of how my participants viewed themselves, which is discussed more fully in section 6.4. As Guðjónsdóttir and Loftsdóttir (2017) also highlighted about racialization of Polish migrants in Norway, classed assumptions play an important role in creating racialized hierarchies among white migrants. In the case of my thesis, I would argue this process of racialization can be helpful in understanding how my participants felt that class symbolics around Polishness served as a negative identity marker (Hickman & Ryan, 2020).

Next I would like to examine how my participants described experiencing stereotypes and assumptions from Norwegians that they have a specific work ethic and skillset through the prism of racialization. As Gallo and Scrinzi (2016) write about processes of racialization with labour migrants in the EU, racialization "naturalizes, thus producing it, the cultural difference assigned to the racialized Other" (p. 88). In the case of Stefan and Alek, as presented in 5.3.1 they both encounter a stereotype attached to the fact that they are Polish, which is that they are able to work harder and faster. However, I want to consider how this experience not only highlights assumptions of a certain work ethic, but also how through racialization they are ascribed certain inherent traits as Polish men which impacts the type of work they are seen as capable of. In several studies looking at Norwegian employers' views of Polish migrants, researchers have found that Norwegians often see Polish migrants as hard manual workers, but lacking critical thinking "skills" and this disqualifies them from moving up in the labour market (Friberg, 2012; Friberg & Midtbøen, 2018). While these researchers did not use the concept of racialization, other researchers have pointed to how racialization can result in a group being stereotyped to be seen as inherently lacking the necessary skills to move up in the labour market (Felbo-Kolding et al., 2019; Mora & Undurraga, 2013). Here I would like to bring together my own findings with those of Norwegian researchers (Friberg, 2012; Friberg & Midtbøen, 2018) in light of the arguments that scholars have made about how racialization is a process that attaches significance to certain traits or values to then mark a community as different and socially other (Murji & Solomos, 2005b). This appears to be unfolding in how Alek and Stefan experience being marked as having a specific work ethic and set of skills that is essentialized upon them.

The final stereotype contributing to notions of social hierarchies that I would like to consider is that of gendered processes of racialization. As many gender scholars have highlighted, racism is often closely attached to gendered ideas (Connell, 2000; Crenshaw, 1989; Hesse-Biber & Yaiser, 2004; hooks, 2000; Mosse, 1996). This gendered process of racialization can unfold in different ways, including in the U.S. context the attribution of hyper-masculine traits to men of color (Jensen, 2010), or feminine traits to Asian men (Chen, 1999). Here I want to focus on how a community is racialized through the attribution of gender relation models "which are deemed inferior to those which are considered to be characteristic of the dominant group" (Gallo & Scrinzi, 2016, p. 91), and which appears to be relevant in the case of Oskar. As presented in 5.2.3, he feels that due to cultural assumptions that exist about him within Norway as a Polish man, his actions are more likely to be perceived as "patriarchal" which creates challenges for him when approaching Norwegian women. As Fiałkowska (2019) said about her participants who navigated a similar dynamic in the U.K., "Polish men representing Eastern masculinities which were, as some assume, perceived as barbaric in the West may, therefore, feel marginalized (p. 121). In light of these comments from Oskar and Fiałkowska's (2019) findings, it would appear that racialized stereotypes of inferior gender relation practices (Gallo & Scrinzi, 2016) contribute further to notions of Polish backwardness revolving around masculinity and sexuality (Wojnicka & Nowicka, 2021) and result further in a sense of social exclusion in the case of Oskar.

As scholars have highlighted, within the Nordic states exists a reluctance and lack of engagement with topics around race, racism, and racialization (Guðjónsdóttir & Loftsdóttir, 2017; Keskinen et al., 2009; McIntosh, 2015). In the wake of summer 2020 after the protests of the murder of George Floyd, where large protests took place outside of Norway's Parliament building and across the country about racial inequality (Barstad et al., 2020), this most likely is changing. However, despite this, it still leaves an important question of why to use racialization as a concept to understand the experiences of white Polish male migrants within Norwegian society. Especially as I consider my own positionality, and how I as a white man am making the argument that a group of people who is white is being racialized, and what might someone who is non-white make of that. But it is the very category of "whiteness" (Meer, 2019) which I am attempting to interrogate here, and deconstruct the way in which it is used as a way to create and maintain uneven social hierarchies. By using the concept of racialization with Polish migrants in Norway, I believe it further reveals the hollowness of whiteness as something that is not just attached to skin color, but rather to political and cultural notions of power and status (Dankertsen, 2019). I believe it helps to explain the way in which, once someone recognizes that I am from the U.S. and one of my participants is from Poland, the number of different stereotypes and assumptions that are then made about us and result in different social positions within Norway. As Oksar shared in 5.3.3, he felt that even when he spoke Norwegian to girls at the bar, once they identified his accent and learned he was Polish, they would "just instantly become more distant", highlighting the number of ways in which individuals can feel marked as different and socially excluded aside from skin color, including language (Tankosić & Dovchin, 2021).

Throughout this thesis I have highlighted the dynamic and dramatic increases in Polish migrants coming to Norway, and how some have argued that this has resulted in changing views of social positioning of Polish migrants in Norway (Godzimirski, 2018; Guribye, 2018). This spike in Polish migration has occurred in other parts of Europe as well, including the U.K., and in the U.K. there also exists more academic discussions about the racialization of Polish migrants (Botterill & Burrell, 2019; Hickman & Ryan, 2020; Rzepnikowska, 2019) and other white Eastern European migrants as well (Böröcz & Sarkar, 2017; Fox et al., 2012). While racialization as a concept has been applied to Polish migrants within Norway (van Riemsdijk, 2010) and other white migrant populations (Guðjónsdóttir & Loftsdóttir, 2017), it is still a concept which is developing in use within Norway. The hopes of bringing racialization into this discussion are twofold: 1) As a concept it provides strengths for understanding how my participants understood their social positioning within Norway as a result of certain stereotypes and traits which they felt were attributed to them; and 2) To contribute to conversations in Norway about how power dynamics, social differentiation, and racial meanings are socially constructed and "invented" (Fox et al., 2012, p. 681), and through what processes and mechanisms these occur and unfold.

6.4: Social positioning strategies

For this section I consider the final data I presented in Chapter 5 where my participants tried to reposition themselves more positively. I argue here that my participants' comments can be understood as gendered strategies to navigate and respond to being marginalized and, in response, engage in a variety of strategies to try and boost their social standing as Polish men in Norway.

6.4.1: Boundary construction

In this section I will consider the data analyzed in 5.4.1 where my participants made a series of comments to try and portray themselves as different from other groups of Polish migrants in Norway in light of my points from section 6.3 about how my participants feel marginalized. I would argue these comments are reflective of strategies to construct boundaries between them and other Polish migrants. Boundary construction within migrant and ethnic groups can occur and "is visible in extreme cases where there is a threat of losing an important asset for any ethnic minority—reputation in the eyes of the host society" (Garapich, 2008, p. 134). As my participants found stereotypes about Polish migrants resulting in a negative reputation, I interpret their comments from 5.4 as them engaging in boundary construction to differentiate themselves from other Polish migrants who they see as representing these stereotypes.

As highlighted and critiqued by Anthias (2011), a common trend in migration studies is to see ethnic and national groups as homogenous instead of heterogenous. However, when researchers focus on the heterogeneous nature of migrant groups, we can see the differences and varied power relations that exist within them (Pawlak, 2015a). This recognition of difference and heterogeneity can help us understand the types of boundary construction that might occur within migrant groups and in my data as well. Once again I would draw a connection in my data to the findings of Pawlak (2015a, 2015b), and in particular his findings about different migration strategies of the “Cosmopolitans” and “Polakkene.”

As presented in Chapter 3, Pawlak (2015a, 2015b) argued that Cosmopolitans sought to differentiate themselves from the Polakkene and this connected both to ideas of social class and larger social and cultural ideas connected to the East-West. I would argue that my data represents a similar dynamic to that which Pawlak (2015a) describes, and my participants share many traits to those he describes as Cosmopolitans in regards to social class. As highlighted in the analytical framework, social class in my thesis is seen as something subjective and based around individualized hierarchies (Bourdieu, 1984; Cederberg, 2017). For my participants, social class was connected to a variety of factors: the reason they gave for migrating to Oslo to experience new things and how this is seen as of “value”, as in the case of Jan; the type of job they had, in the case of Marcel; or the education and family background they had, which is the case with Michal and Mateusz. For the rest of this section, I will continue to use the term Polakkene to describe the groups which my participants attempted to differentiate themselves from. This is because the ways in which my participants tried to portray themselves as different from other groups of Polish migrants, I interpret as being connected to ideas of social class and notions of “proper” and “improper” behaviors connected to hierarchical relations of values between Eastern and Western Europe (Pawlak, 2015a, 2015b).

This sense of being higher class, and then looking down on the Polakkene as representing backwardness was clear in Michal’s description of how those in construction work in Norway aren’t exactly the “crème of the crème.” I would once again bring in the concept of cultural intimacy to help capture these sentiments from Michal, since cultural intimacy is “above all, familiarity with perceived social flaws that offer culturally persuasive explanations of apparent deviations from the public interest” (Herzfeld, 2005, p. 9). From Michal’s comments I interpret the ways in which he sees the Polakkene as representing social flaws within society, and his comments highlight that he portrays himself as different and being of higher social class (Bourdieu, 1984). However, Michal and also Marcel’s comments in 5.4.1 reflect not only a process of differentiation, but also a degree of portraying the Polakkene as negative.

I would argue that Michal and Marcel engage in “defensive othering” where their comments underscore how they seek to “deflect the stigma they experience as members of a subordinate group” (Schwalbe et al., 2000, p. 425). As Schwalbe et al. (2000) further explained about this process, it “involves accepting the legitimacy of a devalued identity imposed by the dominant group, but then saying, in effect, ‘there are indeed Others to who this applies, but it does not apply to me’” (p. 425). Michal and Marcel both highlight negative stereotypes and ideas that exist about Polish migrants in Norway and seem to accept its legitimacy while also making it clear that it doesn’t apply to themselves. One other strategy of boundary construction emerged from Jan’s interview.

Garapich (2012), in his research about how Polish migrants in the UK interact with each other, identified several strategies of boundary construction. One was the way in which participants would express hostility towards other Polish migrants, but this hostility would also be wrapped up in feelings of shame and embarrassment. Jan, who described the way in which he saw other Polish migrants as especially embarrassing on public transit, a theme found by other researchers as well (Garapich, 2012; Ryan, 2010), appears to be engaging in this strategy of boundary construction that Garapich (2012) outlined. Additionally, Jan’s embarrassment results in him even trying to disguise that he is Polish on the metro when he sees another group of Polish migrants acting in a way which he sees as embarrassing. As Garapich (2012) highlighted, “Interviewees often expressed that they felt ‘ashamed’ and sometimes they would hide or disguise their Polish identity when witnessing or hearing of an example of norms breaking by their co-ethnics” (p. 36), which appears to be a similar dynamic unfolding in Jan’s situation. But I would argue that this shame is wrapped up in something larger than just what Jan sees as inappropriate actions on public transit. As Pawlak (2015a) argued about the struggle of Cosmopolitan type migrants in Norway, group identity and notions of what is culturally “Polish” in the international context serve “as a constant reminder of the interplay between inferiority and superiority in the realm of global imaginaries and representations” (Pawlak, 2015a, p. 36). It would appear that this perception of East-West divide is wrapped up in Jan’s statements of shame and effort to distance himself as well. Thus far the comments from 5.4.1 I have discussed as boundary construction strategies, but here I would also like to consider them as gendered strategies within the framework of hegemonic masculinity (Connell, 1995).

Looking at the negotiations and strategies of boundary construction my participants engage in as gendered strategies through the framework of hegemonic masculinity provides insights into how gendered identities intersect with how my participants understand, and then respond to, their social positioning within Norwegian society. If we take into account the points that I have made that my participants feel that the figure of the Polakkene is one that is marginalized within Norwegian society, then by being associated with it also results in marginalization. I would argue that their engaging in boundary construction to mark themselves as different from the Polakkene is a strategy taken by my participants to move away from a marginalized masculinity within Norwegian society. As hegemonic masculinity helps us understand how different forms of masculinity are arranged through relations of power, differentiating themselves from these marginalized attributes moves them instead to embodying a complicit masculinity, and this is done through reflexive actions and navigations (Messerschmidt, 2016). However, other participants took different strategies to navigate this marginalizing narrative they felt existed, which is what I turn to in the next section.

6.4.2: Self-valorization of masculinity

As shown in section 5.4.2, Alek compared himself more favorably to Norwegians by emphasizing he is a hard worker and Norwegians are lazy. Researchers in the U.K. have highlighted how migrant men in the construction sector seek to boost their status by stressing "how hard people in their own communities worked compared to other ethnic and national groups" (Datta et al., 2009, p. 867). Similarly, Datta and Brickell (2009) found that Polish men would present themselves as better workers compared to U.K. workers, and this was a strategy to boost their status where participants' ideas of masculinity also played a role. As highlighted in the analytical framework, neither of these articles about migrant men in London employed theories of masculinity to understand this strategy, but I believe the concept of "self-valorizing" (Donaldson & Howson, 2009; Kukreja, 2021) masculinity provides further insight into how ideas of masculinity are relevant to their findings, as well as my own.

Self-valorizing is employed by men who "seek to rewrite, on their own terms, masculine expectations and norms by self-valorizing their masculine selves. Self-valorization should be understood as a compensatory masculine strategy to fend off their presumed failed masculine tag" (Kukreja, 2021, p. 15). As shown in other sections, Alek was aware of the way in which Polish migrants were marginalized within Norwegian society, having experienced this himself. Although Alek doesn't bring up specifically Norwegian men or Polish men, I would argue that his awareness of being socially marginalized also impacts the way in which he sees himself as a man occupying a marginalized form of masculinity (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005). In light of this, his comments can be seen as him trying to boost his identity in Norwegian society by focusing specifically on performance in the workplace. Self-valorizing helps to capture this strategy of Alek and provide insight into the findings of the papers presented from London. Self -valorizing masculinity is also relevant in understanding the way that Antoni and Oskar compare themselves more favorably to Norwegians, but in particular Norwegian men.

As both Antoni and Oskar highlight, Norwegian men aren't responsible enough, or are too passive to take action in certain situations. I would argue that this reveals that the hegemonic masculine ideals they both draw upon are also based around being dominating, where as men they see it as important that they "call the shots" (Messerschmidt, 2016, p. 33). Being responsible should be understood for them as being about showing power, and having an ability to control a situation, which they self-valorize about themselves in comparison to Norwegian men. This is evident in Antoni's story from 5.4.2 where he says as a man it is important to help out in situations due to the natural physical strength that men have.

Antoni perceives that Norwegian men don't abide by traditional gender roles and are too passive and are representative of failed masculinities when compared to his own self-valorized masculinity. What is important here is that Antoni perceives in Norway there are less traditional gender roles due to a more egalitarian dynamic between men and women. For him he is able to create a self-valorized masculinity then in response to this where he reemphasizes that "traditional" gender roles are good, and since he embodies a more traditional masculine gender role, his social standing is boosted. Furthermore, Antoni also affirms his own masculine practice by commenting on how women he meets in Norway are disappointed by Norwegian men since they aren't the "Vikings" they had expected. This comment, along with the fact that the story that Antoni tells about the passive men in the mountains is one that was recounted for him by his girlfriend, emphasizes the importance of examining the role of women in upholding his sense of masculine identity.

As Connell and Messerschmidt (2005) note, the concept of emphasized femininity has received less focus, despite the way that "practices of women [aid] in the construction of gender among men" (p. 848). This is something that other masculinities scholars have also emphasized needs more attention (Hearn, 2004), and which is relevant in the situation with Antoni. As Antoni refers to women being disappointed by not getting the Vikings they expected, it results in him feeling supported and affirmed by the type of masculine ideals he embodies and idealizes. Also, as the story is told by his girlfriend, it is also supporting his masculine practice. By her highlighting that these Norwegian men didn't do anything, it might result in Antoni feeling as though she is subordinating the gender practices of these Norwegian men, and feeling affirmed about his own. For Antoni, women's affirmation of his own gender practice further supports his strategy of self-valorizing his masculine identity, and I would argue should be seen as a strategy he engages in to boost his social standing in Oslo. The negotiations that Antoni and Oskar partake in are also interesting examples for looking at the interplay between dominant, dominating, and hegemonic forms of masculinities outlined by Messerschmidt (2016), but in a context of male migrants who appear to situate their gendered identity in a transnational context (Fiałkowska, 2019). I return to this dynamic more fully in 6.5. Finally, there would be one last gendered negotiation and strategy my participants engaged in to try and reinterpret situations in which they had felt rejected by Norwegian women.

6.4.3: Shifting the blame as a gendered strategy

As was shown in section 5.4.3, both Oskar and Michal would try and shift the blame of being rejected by Norwegian women on to other factors. While Michal would do this by saying bars are bad places to meet people, Oskar makes sense of this rejection by flipping it around and saying that he actually prefers Polish women to Norwegian women. Oskar's negotiation is quite similar to that which Fiałkowska (2019) found with Polish men who felt rejected by British women in England. "While Adam starts by building on a West vs. East binary as the reason for his lack of success with Western women, he then rationalizes this as a matter of cultural differences and that it is he who, after all, makes a decision and chooses the Polish women" (Fiałkowska, 2019, p. 121). Oskar, having experienced rejection which he saw as attributed to how he was perceived both from a classed dimension and also within a hierarchy of cultural status between East and West Europe (Pawlak, 2015b), makes sense of this by focusing on his own preference for Polish and Eastern European women. This, along with the comments shown by Michal, can be seen as strategies taken by both of them to shift the blame of rejection away from how they are perceived, and instead connect it to other factors. To fully understand this, it is helpful to look at this specifically through a gendered analysis.

In the face of denigration and discrimination, researchers have documented the different gendered strategies that men take to try and maintain their status and sense of masculine selves (Archer, 2001; Chen, 1999; Donaldson & Howson, 2009). Michal, by commenting that bars are poor places to meet people, infers that this rejection is less about him, but instead about the environment and also the types of people that you meet at a bar. Using a different strategy, Oskar comments that he prefers Polish women, which allows him to negotiate that this situation is just as much about his own agency and choice as it is about the way in which he thinks he is marginalized and rejected by Norwegian women. Within the framework of hegemonic masculinity (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005), this should be understood as these men making "hegemonic bargains" (Chen, 1999) to reinterpret these situations to "achieve 'unblushing' manhood" (p. 600). These reinterpretations allow for them to reframe these situations as not being personally connected to them, which would result in them acknowledging that they embody a marginalized masculinity which they feel is looked down upon by Norwegian women, and instead point to other problems. This hegemonic bargain allows for them to imagine they embody non-marginalized forms of masculinity instead.

Additionally, Oskar concludes that not only are Polish women more attractive, but he finds them to be better wife material. For him, better wife material means one who supports his masculine practice which is based around hegemonic masculine ideals of uneven power relations between men and women and where he is able to gain "patriarchal dividends" (Connell, 1995). This is another negotiation Oskar goes through, where he feels his gender practice is marginalized in Norway due to this perception of more egalitarian style relations that exist in Norway. By also saying that he prefers Polish women, he believes that his gender practice which is more based around uneven power relations with a girlfriend will not be challenged either, allowing him to keep his gender practice in line with hegemonic ideals of masculinity in Poland (Bell & Pustułka, 2017). By examining these comments through a gendered analysis, we can see how my participants' masculine identities influence their strategies for navigating marginalization.

6.5: The interplay of hegemonic, nonhegemonic, dominant, and new masculinities

As stated in the analytical framework, hegemonic masculinity, while it has been an important theory in advancing men and masculinities research, is also one that has been critiqued from several different angles. Researchers, in recognition of these flaws, have then proposed complementary frameworks that address these challenges, whether that is Christensen and Jensen's (2014) suggestion of internal and external hegemonic hierarchies, or that of Messerchmidt's (2016) outlining of the difference between hegemonic, dominating, and dominant masculinities. Further adding to some of the complications with this theory is the emergence of and tension that exists between what researchers have termed new masculinities (Elliott, 2016; Lund et al., 2019; Messerschmidt & Messner, 2018)**,** such as those that embrace more positive and caring values that appear to support gender equality. Whether these new caring masculinities are truly different, or rather new forms of masculinity which have become hegemonic in which they further contribute to uneven power relations between men and women is uncertain. This is something that masculinities researchers are discussing and debating, and here I want to bring my own findings into these debates and discuss what tensions and contestations appear to be occurring.

As discussed before in section 6.2.3, Jan appears to reflexively distance himself from a regional hegemonic form of masculinity in Poland where he felt his "honor" is tied to being a provider, and instead embrace masculine ideals similar to those of new masculinities (Messerschmidt & Messner, 2018). The question I would like to raise here is whether this move should be considered him shifting away from regional hegemonic forms of masculinity in Poland to nonhegemonic, or is there something else at play? As researchers have highlighted in Norway, a dominant form of masculinity appears to be emerging which is in line with new masculinities, but it is unclear if these new masculinities are hegemonic or not (Christensen & Jensen, 2014). However, as Lund et al. (2019) points out, the border between the two is ambivalent, and often those who embrace new masculinities are privileged men of middle to upper class standing and due to "middle-class hegemony" (p. 1379) have power and status in society. Additionally, as Wojnicka and Nowicka (2021) found with masculine negotiations of Polish men in Germany, some Polish men embraced values of gender equality as a way to position themselves closer to the class hegemonic position German men occupied and to also resist discourses about Polish migrants as backwards (p. 14).

Is Jan's shift similar and then a response to try and position himself more in line with new masculinities and sharing the "values" of middle to upper class men in Norwegian society? If yes, is this a move to try and align with hegemonic forms of masculinity by being associated with power and status? Looking at this negotiation through the framework of internal and external hegemonic models (Christensen & Jensen, 2014) can provide clarification. Within an internal hegemonic model this negotiation can be seen as Jan embracing gender equality values, thus aligning him with values associated with men of social and class privilege. This then would move him away from the backwardness of being non-gender equal due to its association with working class men and ethnic minority men in the Scandinavian context (Christensen & Jensen, 2014, p. 70). Another situation in which we see an interplay and tensions between internal and external hegemonic masculinities as well as dominant forms of masculinity is in the strategies of Antoni and Oskar.

Antoni and Oskar employ a strategy of self-valorizing their masculinity (Kukreja, 2021) in response to ways in which they feel marginalized in Norwegian society as Polish men. What is interesting here is the way in which their self-valorization is based around how they see the dominant form of masculinity in Norway as being more "passive" and aligned with new masculinities. They then try and position their own gender practice as superior in comparison to this more passive masculinity. To further solidify their masculine practice, they use the fact that women seem to support their masculine identity as affirmation of the hegemonic masculine ideals they draw upon. By doing this, they try and portray Norwegian men as embodying a form of masculinity that is marginalized in comparison to themselves. This marginalization, however, is based around an external hegemonic model (Christensen & Jensen, 2014). Antoni and Oskar's practice maintains hierarchical relations of power between men and women, whereas Norwegian men who are perceived as practicing new masculinities are marginalized in comparison because women think they are weak. However, as just discussed in the situation with Jan, he makes a negotiation away from this non-egalitarian gender practice as a way to align with hegemonic forms of masculinity within an internal hegemonic masculinity framework. Here, there is a tension and a critique I will outline with the internal and external hegemonic framework.

While Christensen and Jensen (2014) make many good points about the need for an internal and external model, they do little to explain how internal and external hegemonic masculinities align or even work in opposition to each other. Antoni and Oskar's gender practices draw upon external hegemonic masculine ideals as it supports patriarchal relations, yet these same practices can be seen as marginalized within an internal framework due to associations with backwardness in Scandinavia. The challenge here is that what is seen as hegemonic in the internal framework is associated with social power, and it is necessary to ask if men who embrace new masculinities are doing this as a way to associate with social power, which then in itself helps to maintain uneven power relations between men and women? This is something that Christensen and Jensen (2014) do not address fully, and I would argue is something in need of further development. Men in the Scandinavian context who embrace new masculinities are often those in positions of social power and privilege, and men who shift their gender practice to be oriented towards new masculinities could be doing this as a way to also align themselves with those in power.

Antoni and Oskar, however, choose to draw upon regional hegemonic masculine ideals from Poland which they are familiar with. While Bell and Pustułka (2017) write that Polish men who migrate to Norway might shift their gender practice due to "the perceivably greater gender equality of the destination societies" (p. 129), I would argue my case shows something different. Instead, this example highlights how tensions between dominant forms of masculinity which are perceived as less hierarchical, challenge and also serve as a resource for men who draw upon hegemonic masculine ideals as a way to portray men practicing new masculinities as weak. This also highlights the relevance of a transnational perspective, and the way that tensions can arise as men try and navigate gendered expectations between different "social spaces" (Fiałkowska, 2019, p. 115). However, this strategy, while allowing Antoni and Oskar to self-valorize their masculinity, doesn't change the social power and standing they occupy in Norwegian society, which Jan instead tries to align himself with by embracing these gender practices. These examples show the nature in which masculinities are constantly contested and subject to change (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005), and how men who migrate in particular face new dynamics which they must navigate and possibly then also negotiate their own gender practice (Donaldson & Howson, 2009).

6.6: Chapter synopsis

In this chapter I have discussed the role of masculinities in understanding my participants' migration experiences to and living in Oslo. Through four different themes, I have shown how the multiple masculine identities my participants engage with play a role in how they navigate moving to and settling in Oslo. First, I have explored the multiple masculinities among my participants and how the different masculine ideals they draw upon impact their reasons and expectations for coming to Oslo. Second, I discussed how my participants experienced living in a place which they perceived as having different gendered expectations, and the way in which their own masculine identities played a role in how they responded to these changes. In the third section I explored how stereotypes which my participants felt existed about Polish men in Norway resulted in them feeling that their masculinities were marginalized due to the racializing nature of these stereotypes. Finally, I examined how in the face of this perceived marginalization, my participants engaged in a variety of gendered strategies to then try and boost their social standing and own masculine identity. I now turn to the conclusion, where I consider these findings in regards to my research questions, and their implications for the broader field of masculinities and migration research.

7: Conclusion

The purpose of this study has been to investigate the intersection of masculinities and migration through the case of my participants who were primarily young and unmarried Polish men who had migrated to Norway. Specifically, I asked the following four research questions:

- *How do ideas of masculinity influence my participants' aspirations and hopes for migrating to Oslo?*
- *How do my participants navigate living in a new society, and how do ideas of gender and masculinity play a role in this?*
- *How do my participants feel they as Polish men are viewed and socially positioned within Norwegian society?*
- *In situations where my participants feel as though they are marginalized due to being Polish, how do they respond to this?*

I begin with providing a summary of my main findings and what I have found in regards to these questions. After this I outline limitations of my study and suggestions for future research, and then conclude with considering the theoretical and social implications of my findings.

7.1: Summary of the study

I have found that masculinities play a role in shaping my participants' migration process. As highlighted throughout this thesis, a gendered analysis of men's migration is a topic which is still rare and often overlooked (Charsley & Wray, 2015). When gender is considered, there is often a universalized assumption that men are economically driven and embody breadwinning masculine ideals (Wojnicka, 2019). By contrast, my research findings highlight that in the case of my participants, there are a number of different motivations for migrating to Oslo, as well as multiple masculine ideals that influence their decision to migrate. In the case of those who I deemed as adventurers, their migration was framed as an exciting opportunity and a way to test themselves. My findings suggest that important to understanding those who draw upon adventurer ideals is an intersectional analysis which takes into account the way in which life-phase and class intersect with masculine identity for shaping their migrations to motivate.

Furthermore, in the case of those who I deemed lifestyle migrants, while initially their migrations seem economically driven, as was explored, it is also about finding a better quality of life which is framed around work/life balance. I have shown the way in which their masculine identity, which is not built around workplace performance, but instead a work/life balance can add further meaning and understanding to this type of migration motivation. Once again an intersectional analysis is relevant to look at how ideas of class intersect with masculine identity to shape these aspirations. These findings in the case of my own group of participants suggest the heterogeneity that exists among Polish male migrants, and the need that then exists to recognize that as well in terms of heterogenous masculine identities that exist among male migrants.

The relevance of masculinities in understanding my participants' migration extends beyond their initial motivations, but also to the ways in which they navigate living in a new place. What emerges while trying to answer my second research question is how the masculine identities of my participants plays a role in how they encounter a society which they see as socially and culturally different. As several participants shared, they felt safer in Oslo due to the fact that they thought they encountered fewer men with dominating masculine gender practices. As highlighted, this perception from some of my participants is also connected to how they felt that due to a higher overall level of wellbeing in Norway, there were fewer men engaging in this dominating type of masculine practice, and this can be connected to Connell's (1995) outlining of "protest masculinities". Furthermore, my participants reflected upon the different gendered expectations and gender relations they felt existed in Norway. My findings highlight the way in which gender practices can both change, and also be challenged. As Jan reflected, the pressure he felt connected to being a man and playing a provider role was less in Norway than in Poland and resulted in him shifting his own ideas of masculinity. However, in the case of Oskar, whose gender practice was also based around regional ideals in Poland of being a provider and uneven power relations instead felt challenged and confused by these new forms of gender relations. These two examples also underscore the reflexivity of men and their gendered identity, and how one might, or might not, shift their gender practice when encountering new gender structures.

In regards to my third research question about the social position of Polish migrants in Norway, my participants' comments reflect a mixed picture. My participants felt that a dominant stereotype of Polish migrants being construction workers existed in Norway, which for some participants had positive attributes, and for others was more marginalizing. What emerged from the way in which my participants described negative stereotypes either from personal reflections or direct experiences is how they felt that Polish migrants are positioned below Norwegians in social hierarchies and power relations. To understand how these social hierarchies are constructed and appear to impact my participants, I employed the concept of racialization. This is because the stereotypes which my participants described revolved around assumptions seen as inherently Polish and connected to nationality, gender, class, culture, and often the ways in which these interrelate with one another to portray Polish migrants as backwards in comparison to Norwegians. The way in which my participants were aware of this process of social differentiation was clear in how my participants felt like rejections from Norwegian women were connected to these negative stereotypes. As discussed, for me it is less important to know what these women might have thought, but rather what do these narrations from my participants tell us about how they feel like they are seen within Norwegian society, and in particular as Polish men. By connecting these rejections to these negative stereotypes I have discussed how this then shows the way in which my participants feel marginalized due to these assumptions and which impacts how they feel they as men and their masculine identities are viewed as well.

This perception of negative assumptions about Polish migrants in Norway was something that my participants would then in turn respond to. My findings in regards to my fourth and final research question show the variety of ways in which my participants tried to navigate their marginalized position and what strategies they took to embody less marginalized forms of masculinity. This unfolded in three main strategies I found. The first was the way in which my participants tried to socially differentiate themselves and construct boundaries between themselves and other Polish migrants in Norway who they saw as representative of these marginalized stereotypes. The second strategy was based around trying to compare themselves more favorably to Norwegians through a process of self-valorizing their masculinity. These findings provide examples of the way in which men can shift and renegotiate the masculine ideals they draw upon to try and better navigate a marginalized position in Norwegian society. Finally, the third strategy I discussed was how some participants reinterpret moments in which they felt rejected to be related to other factors other than themselves. This I have argued allows for my participants to reinterpret the situation so that they can feel as though they do not embody marginalized forms of masculinity.

In section 6.5 I discussed some of the theoretical tensions that exist in men and masculinities research, and how my findings fit within these challenges. This final section of 6.5, along with my other findings from my thesis offer both important social and theoretical implications for the intersection of migration and masculinities research in the case of Polish migration to Norway, and more broadly as well, which I conclude the thesis with in 7.3.

7.2: Limitations and suggestions for future research

While my study has its limitations, it also provides some insights and directions for future research in the field of migration and masculinities research. One of those themes is the way in which participants shift gender practices when moving from one place to another. Jan would be the only participant who commented on how his ideas of manhood had shifted due to living in Norway. While others commented on the difference in gender roles as either welcome or challenging, most said their ideas of gender didn't really change. Due to limitations with interviewing I can only work with their own words which may not fully capture ways in which their gender practice changes between Poland and Norway. This would be a theme worth exploring further, with the possibility of a more longitudinal project that included interviews and participant observation both prior to migration, as well as later after they had arrived and settled.

This above suggestion would also help to bring into focus how men from Poland who embody more liberal and progressive ideas about gender roles and gender relations are even drawn to Norway in the first place as they see it as a place which better aligns with their values. As was outlined in Chapter 2, Poland is currently quite polarized politically, and in particular around ideas of gender and LGBTQ+ rights. Most of my participants, who primarily are young and had lived in urban areas in Poland, commented on how they disagreed with the politics of the current ruling conservative party, which is reflective of current divides that exist within Poland among generational divisions as well as urban versus rural ones. While none of my participants described the political situation as their primary motivation for migrating, a few did comment on how it did play some role. This highlights a possible area of future research and exploration: how do liberal and more progressive ideas about gender roles, which can also be seen as connected to upper and middle class values, transcend national boundaries, and then influence individuals to migrate to places where they feel these values are supported rather than attacked.

Additionally, a theme which emerged from my project was the intersecting role of life-phase and masculine identity. While I can only draw a comparison between my findings, and that which exists with other research that looks at masculinities and migration of men in older life-phases (Bell & Pustułka, 2017; Broughton, 2008), it would appear that age and life-phase play an important role in shaping masculine ideals and gender practices. Research that more explicitly looked at this theme by speaking with men from a variety of ages and life-phases would be better able to analyze the differences and similarities of migrant men and the masculine ideals they draw upon. This would also contribute further to unpacking and nuancing the idea of a universalized and singular "male migrant experience" (Wojnicka & Nowicka, 2021, p. 3).

In my own project the role of religion in shaping participants' migration experiences has been minimal, and where many of them were no longer members of the Catholic Church in Poland. However, other researchers have found religion to be an important factor in shaping Polish men's migration experiences, and how this further intersects with masculine identities (Fiałkowska, 2020). Future research looking at masculinities and migration, and migration more broadly with Polish migrants in Norway could look further into the way in which religion plays a role in migration and how this intersects with masculinity. This includes topics from how participants socially position themselves in a new society, to religion's role in shaping transnational processes.

Finally, my project explored the way in which my participants felt there existed stereotypes about Polish migrants in Norway, and what impacts this had on them. As emerged, stereotypical notions about Polish migrants as construction workers, and other assumptions connected to this stereotype were ones that my participants felt were negative. However, aside from Bruno, none of my participants were construction workers, and this presents a limitation in understanding how exactly does this stereotype impact other groups of male Polish migrants. Due to a variety of challenges, including some connected to COVID-19, I was unable to include more men in the construction sector in my interviews. Further research could include a more diverse example to see how do these stereotypes impact, or not impact the experiences of lives of other Polish migrants in Norway. Additionally, surveys conducted that look at Norwegian views and perceptions of Polish migrants and how this fits with the reflections of my participants would also be another interesting area for future research.

7.3: Masculinities and migration: Implications

There are several important takeaways that come from my findings. The first is that my study shows the way in which stereotypes about a group in society, in this case Polish migrant men, can lead to essentialized notions about the individuals who are affiliated with this stereotype. The implications of this when it comes to how migrant men and their masculinity are viewed is that it can often result in generalized assumptions about them (Charsley & Wray, 2015). Through a qualitative "unpacking" (Bygnes & Erdal, 2017), we can also see the nuances and plurality of identities and experiences that occur with men who migrate and how masculinities intersect. This is especially important because the demographic of participants who I spoke with, primarily younger, and unmarried men, would appear to have very different migration motivations and goals than those who are older, married, and have children (Bell & Pustułka, 2017; Pustułka et al., 2015). As Polish make up the largest immigrant group in Norway by far, and as more come with clear plans to settle down, it is important that policy makers recognize that not all Polish migrant men coming to Norway are coming to earn lots of money before returning to Poland. While this might be the case with some Polish migrants in Norway, several of my participants, when they arrived, immediately enrolled in language courses, and made many efforts to establish roots and connect themselves to a new society they were calling home.

In regards to theoretical implications, my thesis has highlighted some of the challenges and theoretical tensions that exist with using different theories connected to understanding men and masculinities. One challenge is the way in which Messerschmidt and Messner (2018) outline hegemonic and nonhegemonic masculinities, but my thesis shows that a division between the two isn't always certain. The suggestion by Christensen and Jensen (2014) to differentiate between internal and external hegemonic frameworks presents only a partial solution to this challenge. It is unclear how these two frameworks relate to each other, and this raises a question about gender practice shifts when an internal hegemonic masculine ideal is based around new masculinities and supporting gender equality. Is this also a shift by an individual to align themselves with neoliberal social and cultural notions of power related to class (Lund et al., 2019)?

Overall, I agree with Messerschmidt's (2016) point about the need to identify nonhegemonic forms of masculinity which are not clear in how they relate to patriarchal relations (p. 33). This is relevant in regards to migration and masculinities research to avoid prescriptive and deterministic readings of how masculinities are influencing men's migration aspirations and decisions. However, in the context of my thesis, the way in which men shift their gender practice away from hegemonic notions of being a breadwinner to patterns of new masculinities should not just be seen as a move from a gender practice based upon hegemonic ideals to then nonhegemonic ideals. This is of relevance in the Nordic states where notions of gender equality are connected to men in positions of social power and status. Shifts in gender practices by migrant men should be potentially considered as moves to try and distance themselves from notions of backwardness attached to being a patriarchal figure, and instead to position themselves as men who are gender equal and thus representative of ideals connected to middle and upper-class values. I would argue it is more complex than simply saying this only deals with hegemonic masculinity in an internal framework as Christensen and Jensen (2014) suggest, and believe their framework would be further improved with considerations of how internal and external frameworks of hegemonic masculinity support and align with each other.

Further implications also include the way that power and privilege intersect with how we define and categorize people who move from one place to another depending on where they are from. Other researchers have highlighted this theme, for example, when it comes to who is labeled a labour migrant, skilled migrant, or an expat (Lundström, 2014). Often these labels don't fully capture the complexities and nuances that exist among migrants, and by trying to place individuals within neat categories, it can lead to oversimplifying and overlooking their experiences and migration aspirations. On this note I see it as important to think about my own positionality and how by many I am seen as an expat. Even though many of the things my participants said resonated with me and my own motivations for migration, we are most likely viewed quite differently as migrants. This reflects the privileges that come with being an American in Norway versus someone from Poland.

As highlighted in the introduction, I became interested in this topic after I became aware of what seemed to be widespread stereotypes about Polish migrants in Norway. I wondered how might these stereotypes impact Polish men who live here, and in the case of my participants, these stereotypes do impact and influence their experience of living here in Norway. While I can only speak to the experiences of my participants, it raises a concern about how might other Polish migrants in Norway, or children born to Polish migrants in Norway encounter and experience negative stereotypes and assumptions about Polish migrants in Norway. My findings, which point toward processes that create social hierarchies, feed into larger conversations that exist in Norwegian society, but also globally, around who are those that "belong" in a society, and who is seen as "us" versus "them." As Godzimirski (2018) reflected on how Polish migrants are covered in the Norwegian media, he argued that it did not yet appear that Polish migrants are seen as a normalized and an accepted part of the Norwegian social fabric. As I read Godzimirki's (2018) findings I couldn't help but draw parallels to the ways in which Polish migrants have experienced discrimination and marginalization during COVID-19 and been blamed for spreading the sickness (Isaksen & Fallmyr, 2021). My study in light of some of these other dynamics underscore the interesting and fluid position that Polish migrants appear to occupy within Norwegian society, and one where it still remains unclear what that position will look like in five, ten, or fifty years from now.

On a final note, and speaking from personal experience as well, migrating is often a dynamic experience, filled with different feelings, challenges, and uncertainties. As individuals move from one place to another, they encounter new people, new cultures, and often, new ideas of gender. "While men may move themselves with relative ease across the globe, shifting their own masculinities proves rather more difficult" (Donaldson & Howson, 2009, p. 216). The title of my thesis, *Moving masculinities* speaks to the point made in this quote, both to how men who migrate might take their ideas of gender with them, but also how their own masculine identities may shift throughout this process.

However, the shifting nature of masculinities not only reveals itself when we look at men who migrate. I have highlighted throughout this thesis that masculinity/masculinities have never been static, and instead are constantly changing. This becomes clear when looking at the way that the field of men and masculinities research has grown in recent years, and how new theories and concepts continue to develop and emerge while trying to capture the way in which ideas of gender, and gender relations are changing. My study helps to capture some of the dynamics and questions which fall at the intersection of migration studies and gender studies. This thesis and my research questions which fall at this intersection, underscore the dynamic nature of masculinities, both as people physically cross borders, and as societies' ideas of gender continue to change as well.

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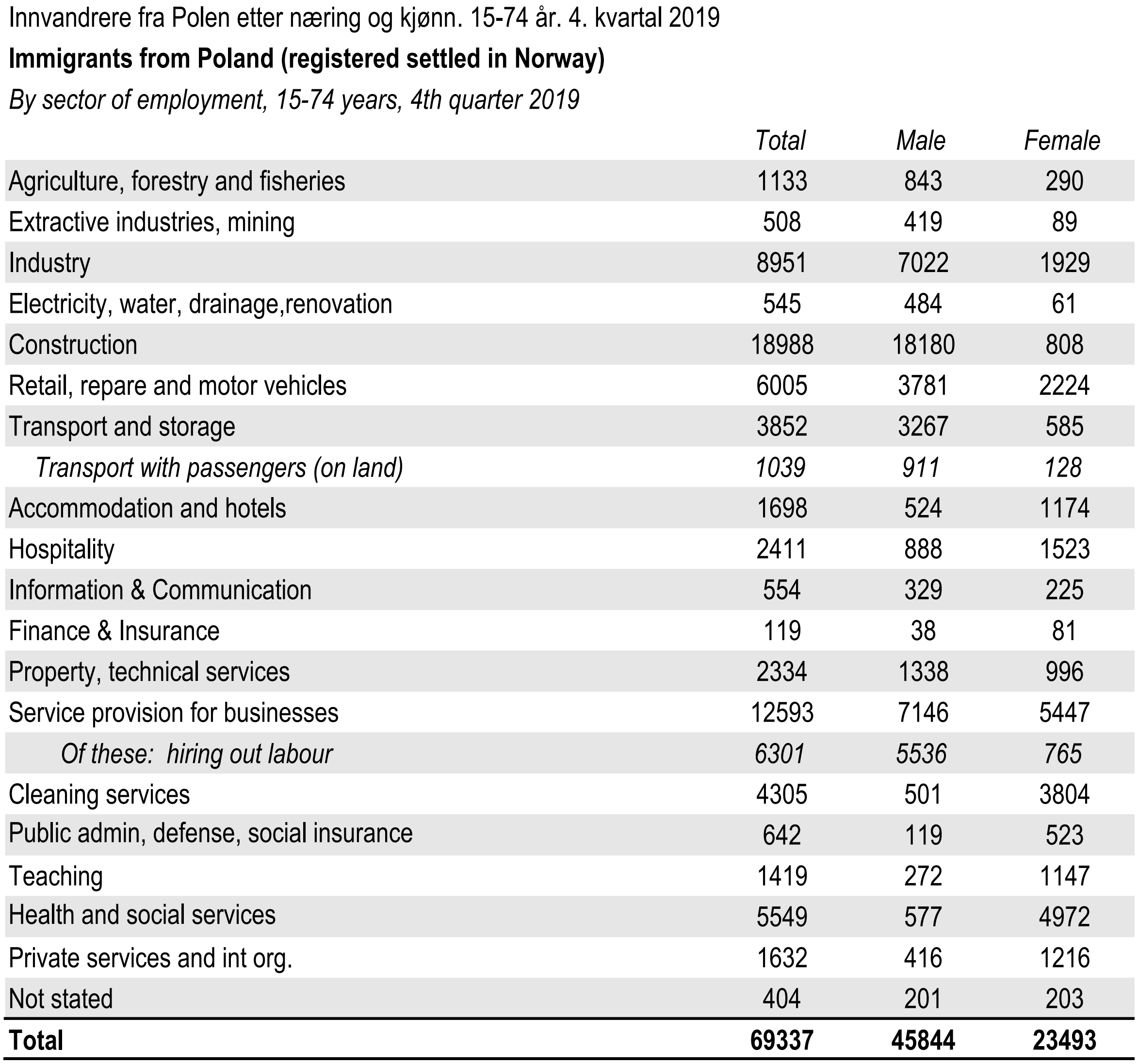
Appendixes

Appendix A

Source: Statistics Norway*



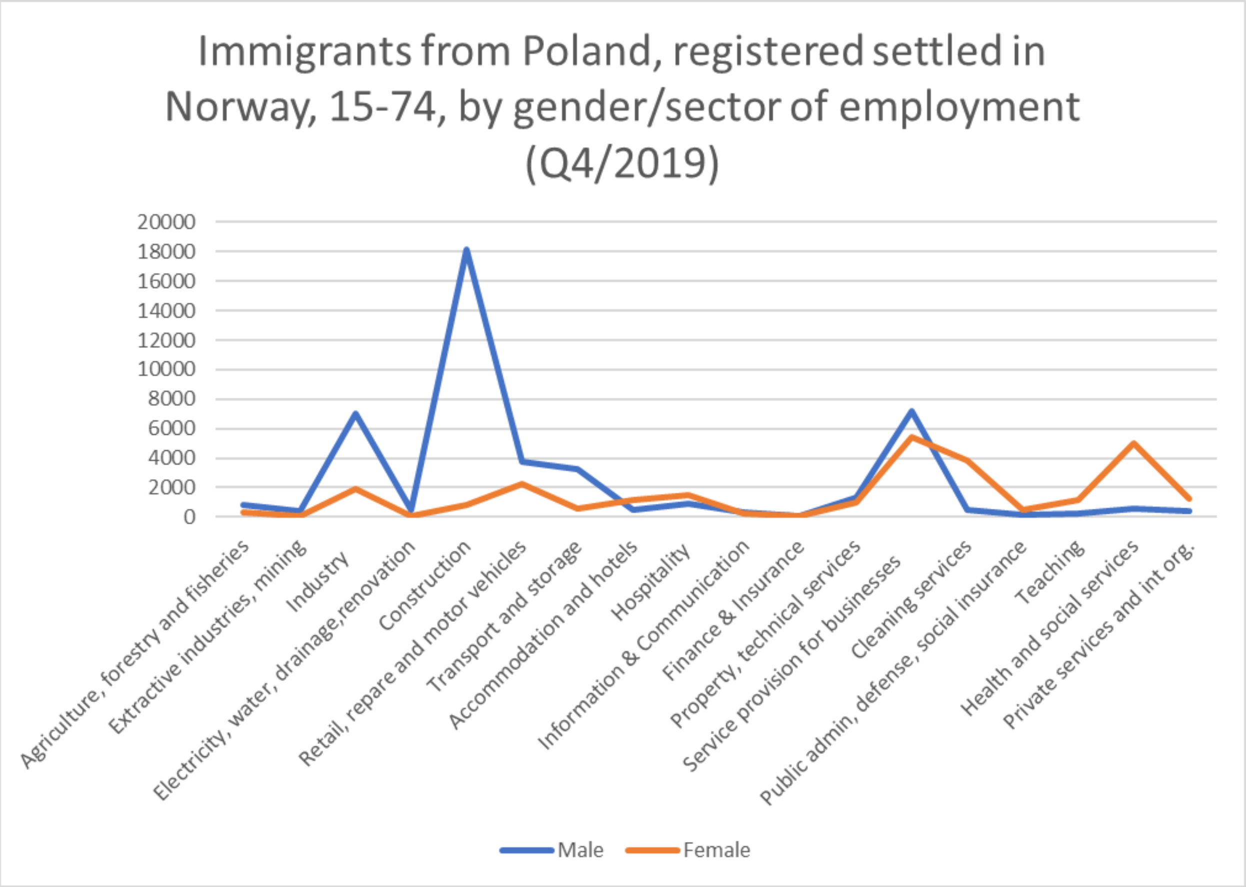
Innvandrere fra Polen etter næring og kjønn. 15-74 år. 4. kvartal 2019

Immigrants from Poland (registered settled in Norway)

By sector of employment, 15-74 years, 4th quarter 2019

	Total	*Male*	*Female*
Agriculture, forestry and fisheries	1133	843	290
Extractive industries, mining	508	419	89
Industry	8951	7022	1929
Electricity, water, drainage,renovation	545	484	61
Construction	18988	18180	808
Retail, repare and motor vehicles	6005	3781	2224
Transport and storage	3852	3267	585
Transport with passengers (on land)	*1039*	*911*	*128*
Accommodation and hotels	1698	524	1174
Hospitality	2411	888	1523
Information & Communication	554	329	225
Finance & Insurance	119	38	81
Property, technical services	2334	1338	996
Service provision for businesses	12593	7146	5447
Of these: hiring out labour	*6301*	*5536*	*765*
Cleaning services	4305	501	3804
Public admin, defense, social insurance	642	119	523
Teaching	1419	272	1147
Health and social services	5549	577	4972
Private services and int org.	1632	416	1216
Not stated	404	201	203
Total	**69337**	**45844**	**23493**

*It is not an option to combine the different criteria of gender, working occupation, and national background on Statistics Norway's website. This table comes from information that an employee at Statistics Norway sent to me via email after I requested it. The table was used to find out what percentage of Polish men registered as residents in Norway are construction workers, which is 39%. This percentage is based upon how many Polish men are construction workers, which is 18180, and then divided by the total number of Polish men in Norway, 45844. This is how I arrived at the answer of 39%. This should be viewed as an approximation, rather than an exact percentage. This is due to the fact that other sectors can also include construction workers within them, and it is important to acknowledge that.



Above is a visual line chart showing the same information from the table. This is included to help visualize the gender breakdown of these occupations, including both construction, as well as cleaning.

Appendix B

Participant Overview

Name	Age	Relationship Status	Time in Norway	Hometown in Poland	Previous Job	Current Job	Education	Religon	Political View
Jakub	38	Girlfriend with 5 year old daughter	8 years	Katowice	n/a	Mcdonalds / runs a business renting cars	High school	n/a	Opposed, doesn't pay attention
Antoni	26	Girlfriend	6 months	Warsaw	Python Developer	Python developer, other small jobs	High school	n/a	Opposed
Jan	24	Girlfriend	6 months	Poznań	Student	Intern with engineering firm	BA	n/a	Opposed
Alek	35	Single	5 years	Kraków	Pharmacist	Bar tender	Pharmacist	n/a	Opposed, doesn't pay attention
Michal	31	Single	6 years	Lublin	Law student	Cook	Law degree	n/a	Opposed
Marcel	32	Single	10 years	Small town in SE Poland	Student	Airline attendant	High school	n/a	Opposed, but tries to avoid it
Mateusz	31	Single	5 years	Tarnow	Bar tender	Server	MA	Atheist	Opposed Strongly
Oskar	25	Girlfriend	1 year	Near Kraków	IT	IT	High school	Catholic	Conservative, opposed to party
Bruno	57	Girlfriend	3 years	Small town near Wrocław	Teacher	Construction worker	Teaching degree	Catholic	Opposed
Stefan	34	Dating	3 years	Poznań	Student	Stage technician	MA	Atheist	Opposed Strongly

Appendix C

Migration process and Masculinities

- Tell me a bit about your story of moving to Norway? What were some of your motives for moving? How long have you been here?
- Tell me a bit about yourself? What's your name, age, where do you live, and where do you work, why were you interested in the project?
- Could you tell me about where are you from?
- What are some of the reasons you moved to Norway? Any specific reasons?
- Growing up in the U.S., didn't really think about being American, until I moved away, and people said I was American. Oh you are Polish. What do you think it means to be Polish?
- How do you think being Polish has impacted your time in Norway so far?
- What expectations did you have for migration to Norway? (reminder to try and find other expectations, other than just working ones)
- What has your experience been of living in Norway so far?
  - What was it like when you first arrived?
  - Was it what you expected, or was it different?
  - Was it difficult, rewarding, exciting?

More on experiences of living in Norway, exploring possible experiences of being marginalized

- How was it for you to find a job when moving here? Do you like your job? Have you tried finding other jobs? Would you want to work elsewhere?
- How have you adapted to living here? What have you had to do / changes have you made?
- Have you joined any community clubs, groups, or organizations since moving to Norway?
- What are some of your personal interests? Sports, photography, etc.
- How do you like to spend your free time? Are there certain places you like to go to? How come you enjoy those places?
- Who are the people you spend most of your free time with? Are there any people or groups that you have become closer with here in Norway? Have you been on any dates or met any romantic partners?

Masculinities and marginalization

- Who are some people that inspire you? Why do you look up to them?
- What goals and ideas did you have for yourself growing up? Were these personal, or were some from external and social pressures?
- Who were some important people for you growing up?
- Were you close with your father?
- How would you describe being successful?
- How would you describe a successful man?
- What does an ideal man look like?
- What expectations does society have for men?
- What do you think is important for a man to be like?
- Has your views on that changed at all since migrating?
- What do you perceive Norwegians?
- What do you think of men here in Norway?
- How do you think Norwegians perceive Polish migrants and Polish men

  - Have you noticed this?
- Have you noticed ways in which people talk about Polish men here?
- Have you noticed any moments where you might have been treated differently because of your background?
- Have you had any experiences of feeling unwelcomed as a Polish immigrant?
- Have you experienced this yourself? Can you describe it?
- How do you feel about the current political situation in Poland? Do you feel as though ways people view Poland affects how you are viewed?
- Without providing any information that might identify them, do you know of anyone who has?
- How do you feel about this?
  - Is this something you embrace, or do you try and distance yourself from these stereotypes?
- Does this change how you act and experience things?
  - In what ways does this affect your everyday life?
  - Are there any things that you do to try and blend in?

Ease out questions

- If you had advice you would give yourself if you were to migrate to Norway again, what might that be? If you were to give advice to another man who was coming here?
- Is there anything you would like to add that has not been asked?
- What could have made this better, what could have made this positive, what could have made this ideal?

Appendix D

Are you interested in taking part in the research project ”Moving Masculinities: Polish Men's Migration Experiences in Norway”?

This is an inquiry about participation in a research project where the main purpose is to learn about how Polish men navigate the process of migration, and what role masculinity plays in that process. In this letter we will give you information about the purpose of the project and what your participation will involve.

Purpose of the project

The goal of this project is to explore further the experiences of men when they migrate. The main objectives and research inquiries focus on Polish men's migration process in Norway and the project specifically seeks to look at several factors that may impact and influence that process. This includes participants expectations prior to migration, how they have navigated living in Norway, and if relevant, if they have encountered any discrimination, and how this may impact or influence their migration experience. With all of these research questions, I will be looking at how masculinity may play a role in these different migration processes and this is a research project that is being conducted for my master's thesis in Gender Studies.

Who is responsible for the research project?

University of Oslo is the institution responsible for the project.

Why are you being asked to participate?

The people selected have been chosen because they fit with the characteristics that have been identified as relevant to the research (gender, nationality, age, length of time in Norway, marriage status). The selected participants will be asked to speak of their personal experiences about migration. I will be interviewing 10 people total for this project.

What does participation involve for you?

The research data will be collected via interviews. Participation includes an in-depth and private interview lasting between 1-2 hours. The interview will focus on the role of different motivations, hopes and beliefs of the participant for migrating, and what their experiences have been like during this migration. The interview will focus on a couple different themes including: reasons for migration, expectations, experiences, and personal ideals and values. The interview will be recorded with an audio recording device, and I will be taking some notes in a notebook as well. In some special cases, the interview might be held over the online call platform, Zoom. In these situations the interview will only be recorded with the diktafon app, and not with Zoom.

Participation is voluntary
Participation in the project is voluntary. If you chose to participate, you can withdraw your consent at any time without giving a reason. All information about you will then be made anonymous. There will be no negative consequences for you if you chose not to participate or later decide to withdraw.

Your personal privacy – how we will store and use your personal data

We will only use your personal data for the purpose(s) specified in this information letter. We will process your personal data confidentially and in accordance with data protection legislation (the General Data Protection Regulation and Personal Data Act). Only my supervisor, Thomas Walle, and myself, will have access to your personal information and data from the interview. There will be many steps that will be taken to ensure that all information and from the data interview is protected and kept private. This includes replacing your name and contacts details with a code, editing and omitting details that would make a participant identifiable, and storing all the data in a secure online data storage system.

What will happen to your personal data at the end of the research project?

The project is scheduled to end in June 2021. Upon completion of the project all data and information collected will be deleted, and not used for any other purpose or study.

Your rights
So long as you can be identified in the collected data, you have the right to:
- access the personal data that is being processed about you
- request that your personal data is deleted
- request that incorrect personal data about you is corrected/rectified
- receive a copy of your personal data (data portability), and
- send a complaint to the Data Protection Officer or The Norwegian Data Protection Authority regarding the processing of your personal data

What gives us the right to process your personal data?
We will process your personal data based on your consent.

Based on an agreement with University of Oslo, NSD – The Norwegian Centre for Research Data AS has assessed that the processing of personal data in this project is in accordance with data protection legislation.

Where can I find out more?
If you have questions about the project, or want to exercise your rights, contact:

- Kelly Fisher by email: kjfisher@uio.no and Thomas Walle by email: Thomas.Walle@misf.museum.no
- Our Data Protection Officer: Roger Markgraf-Bye, by email: personvernombud@uio.no
- NSD – The Norwegian Centre for Research Data AS, by email: (personverntjenester@nsd.no) or by telephone: +47 55 58 21 17.

Yours sincerely,

Project Leader: Thomas Walle

Student: Kelly Fisher

Consent form

I have received and understood information about the project "*Moving Masculinities: Polish Men's Migration Experiences in Norway"* and have been given the opportunity to ask questions. I give consent:

☐ to participate in an interview

I give consent for my personal data to be processed until the end date of the project, approx. June 2021

(Signed by participant, date)