

Arbeitspapiere des Osteuropa-Instituts:
Arbeitsbereich Soziologie

Claudia Eggart

The Minor End of History: Structural
Change and Individual Resilience in
Biographies of Female Traders in Russia

2/2019

Freie Universität Berlin

Arbeitspapiere 2/2019

Abteilung Soziologie am Osteuropa-Institut der Freien Universität Berlin

Claudia Eggart

The Minor End of History: Structural Change and Individual Resilience in Biographies of Female Traders in Russia

ISSN 1864-533X



Claudia Eggart (2019) The Minor End of History: Structural Change and Individual Resilience in Biographies of Female Traders in Russia. Arbeitspapiere des Osteuropa-Instituts (Abteilung Soziologie) 2/2019, Freie Universität Berlin 2019.

Impressum

© bei den AutorInnen

Arbeitspapiere des Osteuropa-Instituts, Freie Universität Berlin
Abteilung Soziologie

Garystraße 55
14195 Berlin

Internet:

<http://www.oei.fu-berlin.de/soziologie/index.html>

Redaktion: Julia Glathe

julia.glathe@fu-berlin.de

Lektorat: Aleksandr Lange

a.lange@fu-berlin.de

The Minor End of History: Structural Change and Individual Resilience in Biographies of Female Traders in Russia

Informationen zur Autorin:

Claudia Eggart
Master Osteuropastudien, Schwerpunkt Soziologie
Claudia.Eggart@gmx.de

Claudia Eggart hat im Zeitraum 2015 bis 2018 an der Freien Universität Berlin studiert und infolgedessen den Masterstudiengang Osteuropastudien im Fachbereich Soziologie erfolgreich abgeschlossen. Ihre thematischen Schwerpunkte lagen hierbei in der Gender- und Transformationsforschung im post-sowjetischen Russland, sowie in der Biographieforschung und Diskursanalyse.

Abstract:

Following life-stories of former women retailers in Russia, this research shows that the rapid emergence of petty entrepreneurship in the post-Soviet transformation period is a phenomenon with a strong moral, gender and class dimension. Tracing the experience of the so-called “shuttle traders” crystallizes how the trader’s agency is actively shaping and being shaped by the structural conditions of the social environment and significantly determined by emotions of shame and pride. The collection of biographical narrations demonstrates an impressive resilience of the protagonists, who creatively adapt, transforming themselves when facing external constraints, and simultaneously manipulating these constraints in order to make them more self-selected conditions. Going step by step from the induction of meaning given to their lives by the actors, I embed them in specific historical circumstances and analyze different vectors of power operating in the field of moral and gender regimes. In this way, on one hand, the interaction of social processes and corresponding modes of agency and resilience were identified. On the other hand, the analysis of life-stories revealed the social, economic and emotional struggles that came along with this commercial activity.

Keywords:

Post-Soviet Russia, Transformation, Market economy, Female entrepreneurship, Shuttle trade, Social history, Biographical narration, Gender

Table of Contents

Abstract:	iii
Table of Contents	iv
List of Figures	vi
1. Introduction	1
1.1 The emergence of “shuttle-trade”	1
1.2 State of the art	3
1.3 Research question	4
1.4 Methodology	5
1.5 Overview of the chapters	5
2. Fieldwork Reflections – Preparation, Practice and Ethical Concerns	7
2.1 Finding the protagonists	7
2.2 Meeting the protagonists	8
2.2 Data selection and introduction of the protagonists	10
2.2.1 Case 1: Tanja (49)	10
2.2.2 Case 2: Galina (81).....	11
2.2.3 Case 3: Larissa (57).....	11
2.2.4 Case 4: Liubov (62).....	12
2.2.5 Case 5: Anna (49).....	13
2.2.6 Case 6: Nadezhda (61)	13
2.2.7 Case 7: Elena (64)	14
2.2.8 Case 8: Sveta (57).....	14
2.3 Going to the market and talking to people – ethnographic practice	14
2.4 Positionality, self-reflection and ethical considerations of the research	16
3. Developing a Grounded Theory	19
3.1. Basic assumptions and distinctive features	19
3.1.2 Familiarization with the research topic and analytical refinement.....	22
2.1.3 Exploring the data collection and breaking up the material.....	23

2.1.4 Individual trajectories and social context – conceptualizing the material.....	27
2.1.5 The emotional dimensions of shame and pride – grounding a theory.....	33
2.1.5 Summary and outlook	36
4. Structural Context and Individual Experiences.....	38
4.1 Stratification during Soviet times and the emergence of class in post-socialism	38
4.2 The gender regime of Soviet labor conditions and the effects of the liberal market reforms in the 90's	45
4.3 Changing living conditions and the gender dimension of post-Soviet transformation	53
4.4 The stigmatization and the gender of the trading business.....	59
5. From Shame to Pride - Empirical analysis	65
5.1 Why and how getting involved.....	65
5.2 Consumer consciousness.....	72
5.3 Social relations.....	76
5.4 The gender of the trading business.....	80
5.5 Shame and pride – a non-linear trajectory.....	84
5.5.1 Case 1: Tanja (49)	85
5.5.2 Case 2: Galina (81).....	85
5.5.3 Case 3: Larissa (57).....	86
5.5.4 Case 4: Liubov (62).....	86
5.5.5 Case 5: Anna (49).....	87
5.5.6 Case 6: Nadezhda (61)	88
5.5.7 Case 7: Elena (64)	89
5.5.8 Case 8: Sveta (57).....	89
6. Conclusion	91
7. Appendix	94
8. Bibliography.....	98

List of Figures

Figure 1: Stimulation question.....	8
Figure 2: Parallelism of processes in the conduction of a Grounded Theory.	21
Figure 3: Example of the user face of the QDA Miner program.....	24
Figure 4: Qualitative data analysis - variables.....	25
Figure 5: Open-coding table	26
Figure 6: Axial coding matrix 1.....	28
Figure 7 Axial coding matrix 2.....	29
Figure 8: Axial-Coding matrix 3	30
Figure 9: Axial coding matrix 4.....	31
Figure 10: Axial coding - classification.....	31
Figure 11: Frequency of code distribution.....	32
Figure 12: Shame and Pride Theory	34
Figure 13: Dimensions of shame and pride	35
Figure 14: Class Composition in the Population of the USSR, %.....	41
Figure 15: Housework done by men and women in Russian cities, 1965-68 (hours and minutes per week).....	48
Figure 16: Average monthly wage (after tax), by job level.....	50
Figure 17: Responses of Women Workers in Soviet Job Satisfaction Surveys	51
Figure 18: Russia: Unemployment rates.....	56
Figure 19: Summary of why and how getting engaged?	72
Figure 20: Summary of consumer consciousness.....	76
Figure 21: Summary of social conflicts.....	79

1. Introduction

1.1 The emergence of “shuttle-trade”

“There was no stability. We lived from one day to another and we had no idea what tomorrow would bring. It was definitely a difficult time and the relations were very fraught. But I could not let the family break down, I think, it was close, and it would have happened if it was not for my patience and my diplomatic abilities”¹
(Liubov, 62, Pensioner)

I loved my profession, but when the 90’s came I said: Well, this is my time!²
(Sveta, 57, Businesswoman)

Some years ago, during my work-stay in a provincial Russian city, I had a conversation with a woman at a local market. When I answered her question about my profession, telling her that I was working as a language teacher, she immediately continued in fluent English and French, explaining that in another life back in Soviet times, she had been working at the philological department of a University and held a doctorate in French literature. Unfortunately, our talk was interrupted by crowding costumers, but the encounter was a fateful one; my initial surprise at such a highly educated person selling lingerie at a provincial open-air market has turned into a long-term research project.

As it turned out, this story was not an exception, but rather a representative example of a phenomenon that shaped public space and private interactions in the transformation period of the 90’s in most post-Soviet countries – open-air market retailing based on back-and-forth small-scale cross-border trade, and in short “shuttle-trade” (or *chelnoki* in Russian). Due to the economic, social and political reforms of *perestroika* and *glasnost* the day to day practices of the Soviet countries have changed tremendously. The collapse of the Soviet Union was the result of a multitude of factors. The devastating decline in living standards, the scarcity of essential supplies, and widespread unemployment were only some of the implications of the system’s dissolution (Shlapentokh 1993). In addition to the economic stagnation (Rutland 2009; Suny 1993) and the somewhat failed reforms under Gorbachev (Kenez 2016; Lovell 2009) it was also driven by a

¹ «Vot poetomu eto ochen' slozhnyy period. Ya govoryu otnosheniya byli deystvitel'no ochen' napryazhyonnyye. Sem'ya mogla, konechno, ne mogla razrushit'sya, ya shchitayu chto mogla razrushit'sya yesli by mozhetsya byt' ne moyo terpeniye, ne moy takoy diplomatichnyy podkhod.»

² «Da, ya lyubila svoyu professiyu, no kogda nastupili devyanostyye, ya skazala: Vot moyo vremya!»

fundamental cultural and ideological crisis (Schrader 2004). The centrally planned economy and the relative stability of the social and political provisions underwent a very sudden and, for most people, unexpected turndown (Shlapentokh 1993). What followed next, however, was an unprecedented clash of two formally juxtaposed systems: the socialist and the capitalist. The behavior and struggles of people in the transition period are as much influenced by the Soviet mentality (Shlapentokh and Woods 2007) as by the growing information about the living standards of people in the West which led to an ever-increasing consumer consciousness. Within this framework, the difficult economic situation in the early 90's in Russia in combination with Gorbachev's 'Law on Cooperatives' (1988) had a significant outcome: small scale free trade.

The so-called 'shuttle trading' is one of the most revealing, yet often forgotten phenomenon accompanying the social and economic transformation across all post-Soviet countries. The lifting of travel restrictions and the simplification of visa procedures, together with the distortions and inefficiencies in the supply system gave rise to a brisk traffic of goods, predominantly from China, Turkey and Poland to Russia and back (Billé, Delaplace, and Humphrey 2012; Mandel and Humphrey 2002; Morris 2013; Mukhina 2014). Small-scale cross-border trade rapidly became a mass practice and a major means of individual and societal supply of goods and hard currency with an estimated volume of 20 billion dollar in Russia in 1998 (Yakovlev and Eder 2003:4). The most intriguing social features of this business, however, are not the trading volume or the large number of people involved³, but its striking gender characteristics. Approximately 80% of the practitioners from Russia are women (Mukhina 2014:5).

The reasons for the significance of the gendered dimension of the shuttle trade are manifold and can't be understood without looking into the legacies of the Soviet regime and the social and economic policies of the post-Soviet market transformation. Unemployment, the dismantling of the welfare system and an ideologically loaded discreditation of the socialistic version of the woman laborer (Sperling 1999) all contributed to the deteriorating situation of women on the labor market. Critical voices of the neoliberal reforms have warned that the cutting of social protection and privatization of previously state-owned factories would lead to a raging poverty, especially among women (Katz 1997; Verdery 1996). And in fact, the rigorous social, political and economic transformation of the post-Soviet space had, indeed led to a serious humanitarian crisis, yet, the predicted female face of poverty did not prove entirely true.

³ The total number of people involved, however, is hard to estimate. Figures range from 10 million in 1994 (Yakovlev and Eder 2003:4) to 30 million at its peak in 1996 (Mukhina 2014:50) with numbers steadily growing from 1991-1998, and significantly declining after the financial crisis in 1998.

It has been shown that women, voluntarily or not, adapted to the new social and economic environment much better than men (Ashwin 2006; Chandler 2013; Sperling 1999). These studies, however, rarely point towards experienced hardship and the price of actual strategies paid by women. The aim of this study is to shed light on one of the most wide-spread adaptation strategies among women: small-scale cross-border trading. Taking a closer look at the life-stories of female shuttle traders may, on the one hand, provide insights into the long-term impact of this commercial activity, and on the other, help us to understand the challenges of adaptation, the obstacles women faced, and the price they paid to cope with the changing social and economic realities.

1.2 State of the art

The phenomenon of shuttle trade has not passed unnoticed in the scholarly work on the social and economic transformation in the post-socialist countries of Central Eastern Europe and Eurasia. Caroline Humphrey (2002) sought to answer, to what extent the extra-legal features of the Soviet system continued to determine the economic life in the 1990s. In the same vein Olga Sasunkevich (2015) has researched the phenomenon in the borderlands between Belarus and Lithuania and argued that cross-border trade is not only a result of scarce living conditions in the turmoil of the 90's, but also a consequence of informal economic activity as habitual practice of the everyday life in the Soviet Union (Sasunkevich 2015:12). In fact, barter arrangements and transactions in the grey and black economy and enterprise networks were well established practices in the Soviet times and always provided some flexibility to the economy (Bedzir, Chmouliar, and Wallace 1997; Paldam and Svendsen 2002). While the argument of a linear trajectory from black market activity to shuttle trade may hold regarding the specific context of the Belarussian borderlands, it is not applicable as a general rule for other regions of the post-Soviet space.

In Russia, for instance, traders didn't only cross borders to purchase or retail merchandise in a neighboring town, but regularly traveled long distances and developed business contacts on their own initiative, instead of relying on old workplace or kinship networks (Yakovlev and Eder 2003; Yüксеk 2006). People reacted to the challenges of changing realities innovatively and in direct response to the new market initiatives (Burawoy, Verdery 1999). This connection was highlighted by economical sociologists who researched on the border exchange and the semi-legal flow of goods and people in and out of post-soviet countries (Barsukova and Radaev 2012; Radaev 2001; Zabyelina 2012). Russian scholars, eventually, gathered the first data sets on the topic and uncovered the enormous volume of moving bodies, goods, and money within the trading networks (Il'ina and Il'in 1998; Klimova 2006; Yakovlev and Eder 2003). While tackling the configuration of macro- and micro-businesses, many researchers have been influenced by Polanyi's notion of the social embeddedness of economic relations (Polanyi, 1944). Claire Wallace (1999) took this

approach to show, in how far the small-scale trading business is socially mediated and driven by the actor's individual social capital.

The early 90's post-Soviet shuttle trade has been investigated with a focus on different countries and different aspects of the phenomenon. Researchers have studied the economic dimension of trade between Russia and Turkey (Yadova 2009; Yakovlev and Eder 2003; Yüksek 2004) and the traders as a particular "social group" (Yadova 2009). In Bulgaria Yulian Konstantinov (1996) scrutinized the so-called "trade tourism" of the Roma population, and Keith Sword (1999) analyzed the growing importance of the open-air markets in Warsaw, a central hub for retailers from all over the post-Soviet countries in the early 90's. All of these studies mention the dominance of women in the retailing business, but it was Irina Mukhina (2014) who wrote the first monograph on the gendered dimension of the trading sphere. She investigated the reasons for the female predominance, and highlighted the enormous impact of female petty entrepreneurship on the transformation of the "social space of the post-Soviet existence" (Mukhina 2014:8). Her and Alexia Bloch's work (Bloch 2011) also revealed some of the extra-economic sides of the trading practices, such as ideological, physical, social and emotional conflicts, with which, especially female shuttle traders often struggled.

1.3 Research question

None of these studies engaged with theorizing the professional transformation of women retailers in regard to the complex interaction of structural constraints and the dynamics of life trajectories and individual agency. In turn, I took the research material as the most important source for the analytical reflection. Thus, I derived the research question from the fundamental importance the actors themselves attributed to the contested moralities that came along with their commercial practices. As a result, my overarching analytical focus is on how the legacies of state socialism, the changing economic and social conditions in the transformation period and individual trajectories interact with the biographical meaning-making process. In other words, I am interested in the agency of the protagonists in the changing social world. More specifically, I want to analyze in how far the change of professional identity influenced the social status, gender roles and value patterns of the actors.

Keeping in mind the dangers of spurious generalizations, I venture to embed the findings from this study into the broader discourse of female adaptability in the post-Soviet transformation period. In this way, this study may substantially enhance our understanding of the larger implications and the gender dimensions of neoliberal reforms, such as privatization, de-regulation of prices and the dismantling of the welfare structure. These insights, eventually, concern not only the post-Soviet

space but can be seen as a symptomatic example of the flexible nature and the proliferation of capitalism as a global condition.

1.4 Methodology

In order to tackle this multidimensional question, I conducted biographical narrative interviews. I collected 10 interviews of which I selected 6 (two of them are group interviews) for the in-depth analysis. Learning from the research tradition introduced by Fritz Schütze (1976, 1984) and further developed by Gabriele Rosenthal (1993, 2004, 2006), I understand the individual case in relation to the social and historical context as a way to find the general in the particular (Rosenthal 2006).

Besides the interviews, I did a participant observation at the main market in Yekaterinburg. More specifically, I investigated this market with a focus on the gender, ethnicity and age distribution, as well as on the interactions of vendors and the social order at the market. During this ethnographic inquiry, I also engaged in spontaneous conversations with retailers to increase the scope of insights into individual experiences of female traders. For the structural analysis of the interview material and the field notes, I used the grounded theory approach (Glaser and Strauss 1967; Strauss and Corbin 1998). In order to close read and analyse the gathered material, I fully transcribed the interviews and coded, clustered and conceptualized it with the help of the qualitative data analysis software QDA Miner Lite.

1.5 Overview of the chapters

Having introduced the case and the analytical approach in the first chapter, which is introductory, I continue in the second chapter with a presentation of the methodological approach. This includes an account of the sampling and interviewing procedure, an introduction of the protagonists and a reflection on the ethical considerations of this research.

The third chapter covers the development of a grounded theory within my project. It ushers in the three stages of open, axial and selective coding, as applied to my material and traces the process of grounding a theory based on the analysis of the biographical narrations and the ethnographic fieldnotes.

In chapter four I contextualize some of the prevalent topics that emerged from the interview analysis. I start with the question of stratification and contrast examples from the interviews with the theoretical discussion of the social order in the Soviet and the post-Soviet times. In the second section, I scrutinize the changing working conditions in the post-Soviet period, with a special focus on the gendered dimensions of the labor market. From there I proceed to the social consequences of the system transformation and outline the relation between economic instability and emerging

petty entrepreneurship in the 1990's in Russia. In the last part of the contextual analysis, I show how the economic moralities of the Soviet system determined the stigmatization of the market place, and why it were mostly women, who worked there.

In chapter five I explore multiple dimensions of emotions, such as shame and pride that come with the retailing practice of shuttle trading. By relating them to questions, such as “Why and how getting involved in the trading business”, “Consumer consciousness”, the consequences of the trading business on “Social relations” and “The gender of trade”, I show how the structural conditions and the individual life trajectory impact on the emergence and the transformation of these emotions.

Finally, this research shows how individual trajectories and subjective agency of female traders is shaped by, but also actively shapes the social environment of post-Soviet Russia. By applying the analytical procedure of the Grounded Theory, I reveal the strong moral dimension, which derives from the Soviet past and the changing social and economic realities in the transformation period. These moralities, however, are not fixed values, but actively negotiated and, thus, both determined and empowered the ways women adapted to and shaped the realities of post-Soviet Russia.

2. Fieldwork Reflections – Preparation, Practice and Ethical Concerns

2.1 Finding the protagonists

The sampling for the interview was based on the criteria of self-identification as a retailer in the post-Soviet transformation period, gender, and the region, since I wanted to test for potential differences between center (Moscow), semi-periphery (Yekaterinburg) and periphery (Slataost). Yekaterinburg has turned into a core retail hub since the 1990's, due to its infrastructural and geographical position in central Russia. In order to find potential participants for the research, I went to the local Goethe-Institute. Having worked as a language teacher for the Goethe-Institute in another Russian city, I knew about the heterogeneity of people's background in those courses. Therefore, I visited different language courses in the Institute, introduced myself and the research project, and asked for help in finding potential informants. This inquiry usually led to a vivid discussion about the 90's, shuttle trading and the transformation time in Russia, which, eventually became a valuable source of information and an integral part of the fieldwork notes. While many people were skeptical about the project, others enthusiastically called relatives and friends and connected me with those women, whose stories are the main inspiration, the reason and the fundament of the discussion in this work.

As I was living in Moscow during the fieldwork period, one day, my Russian teacher with whom I had been preparing for the forthcoming interviews surprised me with the news that she had made a Facebook post, asking for people who had been working as shuttle traders in the 90's and would possibly like to talk to her German friend who is researching the topic. The forum was an open space for people living in Moscow, looking for anything, from Vietnamese language teachers to the second-hand volumes of Lenin's collected works. I don't use Facebook, so I didn't come up with the idea myself, thus, when my friend showed me the reactions to her inquiry, it was fascinating to see how the topic has taken on a life of its own. Let alone the significant number of answers to the post (around 35), the fact of a German woman being interested in the story of female shuttle traders, created a controversial discussion. Apart from some male respondents, who felt offended about the exclusive call for women and argued that the trading business has been equally challenging for them, there were female voices who expressed their doubts about "what a Western woman might make out of our stories".

The great majority of answers was thoroughly positive, and even when asked to get in touch via mail or call, the number of volunteers still exceeded my capacities to have a meeting with everyone. However, critical objections as they were expressed in the Facebook discussion, indeed

reflected my concerns about my role as a foreign researcher. I was anxious about the biases that might influence my interaction with the informants and consequently how to deal with each others positionality. I get back to this reflections and a description of my strategies to deal with the contingencies of live-history research in practice.

2.2 Meeting the protagonists

The decision to do biographical narrative interviews was inspired by my attempt to understand the ways women nowadays think about their activities as shuttle traders in the 90's and how they embed this experience in the broader social context.

The narrative interview method goes back to the sociologist Fritz Schütze, who developed it at the end of the 1970's. Since then, it lived a life of its own and developed further within a number of different disciplines (Rosenthal 2004:50). Gabriele Rosenthal formulated a set of assumptions from which I drew a strong inspiration for the reasoning during the conduct and the analysis of the narrative interviews. I consider it essential to reconstruct the 'genesis' of social phenomena, the subjective way of looking at it and the 'courses of action' and to embed the information given by an interviewee in his/her 'past', 'current life' and 'resulting present and future perspective' (Rosenthal 2004:49, 50).

Biographical narrations require a high level of openness and trust. Ideally, the researcher and the informant meet before the actual conduct of the interview, to diminish the anxieties that come along with an ad hoc question to narrate a life story. Unfortunately, this was not possible for the meetings I arranged, but I tried hard to arrange a quiet and undisturbed place for each interview. In the beginning of the meeting, I introduced the research project and responded to the questions of the interview partners, provided that there were any. Then I explained that I would like to listen to their life stories, as far as they agree to talk about them. Usually, we would have a bit of a talk and go through the declaration of consent. I didn't experience hesitation towards this requirement from any of the participants. Nonetheless, I emphasized that they can always tell me to turn off the recorder or ask me not to use specific parts of their narration for my work.

The recording started in a clearly defined fashion, where I repeated the reason for the interview and asked them to start talking about their biographies.

Figure 1: Stimulation question

Как я уже сказала, я интересуюсь биографией женщин, которые в 90-х годах занимались челночным бизнесом. А если я скажу биография, я на самом деле отношусь к целой жизни. Из-за этого	<i>As I told you, I would like to know more about the biographies of women who worked in the trading business in the 90's. And I really mean that I'm interested in everything you are willing to share about</i>
---	---

<p>я Вас попрошу рассказать не только о времени, когда Вы занимались челночеством, но и о чём, что происходило до этого и после этого в Вашей жизни.</p> <p>Вспомните, пожалуйста, время, когда Вы были маленькой и расскажите с самого начала. Я сдержусь и не буду Вас перебивать. Может быть, я сделаю заметки с вопросами, которые задам после вашего рассказа, но это не должно Вам мешать.</p> <p>Когда Мы с этим закончили, у меня есть ещё несколько вопросов, которые я Вам тогда задам. Но, в начале я хотела Вас выслушать, пожалуйста.</p> <p>Что бы Вы ни рассказывали, мне все интересно, даже когда Вам бы казалось лишним!</p>	<p><i>your life. In this sense, I ask you not only to tell me about your business activity but also about what had happened before you got engaged in the trading and what happened afterwards.</i></p> <p><i>For instances, remember your childhood and tell me your story from the beginning on. I won't interrupt you, and if I make some notes, please don't be irritated, those are just questions which I will ask you later.</i></p> <p><i>In the second part of the interview, I would like to ask you some more specific questions. But first, I'm listening to you.</i></p> <p><i>Please remember, there is nothing you say that could be too random or uninteresting for me!</i></p>
--	---

Generally, the interviews follow a threefold structure:⁴ first, the informants talk about their biographical background, a narration which is usually finished with a Coda, like “this is all I have to say about myself”, or similar. In the second part, I usually asked to clarify or get back to the things that remained unclear from the biographical narration or to elaborate more on specific parts of this account. The last part resembles a semi-structured interview. Here, I asked questions which were closer related to the research question to obtain information that could be related to relevant aspects from previous interviews. After that I recorded the sociodemographic data of the informant and turned off the recorder.

There was much of anxiety coming along with the ethnographic fieldwork. But those insecurities and critical self-reflections shaped my attitude during the interviews in a productive way, which facilitated the readiness of the informants to reveal more sensitive aspects of their experiences. I was positively surprised about the women’s willingness to reveal their life-stories, even if both, the interlocutors and I, were to some extent determined by a kind of ‘biographical illusion’.⁵ Life courses can’t be reduced to linear development and have to be seen as a situated reconstruction. Often those accounts touched upon emotionally difficult topics and not always I was sure if I had the right to provoke these memories. On the other hand, these interviews were saturated with joyful anecdotes and the clear feeling that my interlocutors didn’t only enjoy talking about their experience but were also perfectly aware about the relevance of their individual

⁴ The full script for the interview and the development of the interview questions is attached in the appendix

⁵ Bourdieu’s book “The Biographical Illusion” (1987) is most significant when it comes to a critical reflection on a life-story as a historical narration following a causal path, like a journey with a beginning, various stages, and an end. His work was an important inspiration to challenge my – largely unconscious – expectation of a biography to reflect a linear life-course.

experience in relation to the broader structural trajectories and the social implications of state transformation.

2.2 Data selection and introduction of the protagonists

All together I conducted 10 in-depth interviews in different Russian cities. Two of these meetings were group interviews, where I could speak with two befriended former traders, thus in total I interviewed 12 people, ten women and two men. Not all of those conversations were biographical narrative interviews, because, in one case, the male protagonist didn't want to reveal more information than talking about the trading practice as such, and the second man, didn't trade but worked in the early 90's as a security guard at the market in Yekaterinburg. For the analysis I mostly relied on six interviews, of which two were group interviews. By selecting these interviews. I aimed at providing the widest range of varieties of the phenomenon of post-Soviet retailers in Russia. While all interviews contained a wealth of information, I sorted out some, for reasons of comparability (one woman lived and traded in Ukraine at that time, which entailed very different conditions), lacking biography (the male trader refused to talk about himself), or the conditions in which the interview was conducted (in one case I talked to an elderly woman, while the entire family was sitting around us). I also didn't include the interview with the security guard in the analysis, albeit his account (which lasted for about five hours) supplemented (and sometimes contradicted) the contextual information I received from one of the actors of this research, Nadezhda, a woman who worked on the managerial level at the market in Yekaterinburg. Thanks to the insights he shared with me, I had a much better idea about the working conditions at the markets, the organization of crime (the vernacular called the city in the 90's a 'gangster city' (banditskiy gorod), the term was mentioned repeatedly in several interviews), and the hierarchical order of the market management.

In order to facilitate the orientation in the upcoming analysis, I will first introduce my informants by giving a very short, schematized overview of their biographical trajectories⁶.

2.2.1 Case 1: Tanja (49)

Tanja nowadays runs a tourist agency in Kazan with five permanent employees. After she finished university with a degree in aviation engineering, she first worked in a shoe boutique, but soon engaged in shuttle trading. Her trading destinations were mainly Poland, but also Indonesia, Turkey and the Emirates. She retailed at the local market while finishing her second degree as a translator. Her language skills later on enabled her to do all kinds of jobs, and enabled her to start

⁶ For reasons of anonymity all names are changed

a dating service, where she connected Russian women to European and American men. Afterwards she was employed in a tourist agency and in 2006 she established her own agency, which has been steadily growing since.

Her mother's side of the family was Jewish and fled from Ukraine during the Second World War. Tanja's grandfather was shot in the late Stalinist period, while her mother, a flight engineer, was a committed communist and a party member. Her father's family was deported to Uzbekistan, but he returned to Kazan and worked as a military engineer. Tanja is married to a car mechanic and has two teenage sons. She claims to be the breadwinner in the family.

2.2.2 Case 2: Galina (81)

Galina, now a pensioner from Kazan, once was a devoted party member and the head of the local women's council (zhensovet). When the Soviet Union collapsed, she didn't receive the anticipated pension wage and, thus got involved in trading business. After her husband lost his job and with an unemployed son at home, she had to provide for three generations of her family, including her ill step-father. She first traveled to Moscow, but later ventured to go to Poland, Greece and Turkey. Despite her age (she was officially retired in 1992), she opened a shop in her home town and at times she had two employees. In the beginning of the 2000's the business slowly subsided and she now lives off a tiny pension and the savings from the trading business.

For Galina the commitment to the Soviet ideology was an immanent part of her identity, however, the breakdown of the Soviet Union forced her to take measures which strongly contradicted her convictions. I have no information about her family background, but at the age of four she was evacuated from Volgograd and grew up at her aunt's place. With the returns from trading, she bought her son a flat, took care of her drinking husband and her ill step-father, while they were alive. Her son recently moved back in with her, and lives off occasional jobs.

2.2.3 Case 3: Larissa (57)

Larissa is 57 years old and lives in Moscow, where she moved at the age of 17. At this time, she had finished the commercial college and started working at Univermag. Later she worked at the Chamber of Commerce and Industry where she held the position of the manager of product distribution while completing a correspondence course in economic engineering. She started trading only in 1995, and in the following years travelled to Poland, Turkey, Pakistan and Indonesia to purchase merchandise. Initially, she retailed at the Lushniki-market⁷, but later started

⁷ The market closed 2011, but in the 90's it was one of the biggest and most contested wholesale and retail markets in Moscow

two small businesses in different shopping centers. She specialized in fur and leather-wear and had two employees from 1997-2000. After 1998 the sales steadily decreased and in 2001 she decided to give up the business. From 2001 until nowadays she has established herself as a textile designer and became a teacher in a municipal education center where she gives classes in sewing and textile design.

Larissa's father was an airplane engineer, who taught at the military academy. Her mother worked as a shop assistant. She has a younger brother (a manager) and a son (an IT-specialist), who was born in 1982 from her first husband. After the divorce in 1985 she never married again, but she had a stable relationship with her business partner, until he died three years ago. With the trading revenues she could pay for her son's higher education, a big apartment in Moscow and a new car every few years.

2.2.4 Case 4: Liubov (62)

Liubov grew up in a middle-sized town halfway between Moscow and Samara. After school she worked at a lamp factory and was enrolled in the evening program at the university to study accountancy and management. When she finished her diploma, she moved to Moscow and worked for Ministry of Internal Affairs in the Department of Construction as the chief accountant. She got engaged in the trading business in 1992 and travelled to Turkey and Italy. Her specialization was luxury products (leather bags and fur), but she mostly worked as a middleman, retailing her merchandise to a close network of friends (e.g. at GUM). During the 90's and early 2000's she was engaged in several businesses, including tea-trade and gourmet food. She also worked for a private transport company, as a sport coach while finishing a second university degree in management and economics. In 2010 she opened a jewelry store in a shopping mall in Moscow, but the growing rent and taxes, as well as the devaluation of the rubel made the business increasingly unprofitable and in 2016 she closed the shop and retired.

Liubov's parents have a working-class background, her father was a metalworker and her mother worked as a nurse. With her second husband she has a daughter (32), who works as a talent manager in a model agency. She and her husband live a modest live between Moscow and their country house in Saransk, where Liubov considers opening a tourist agency. The returns from the trading business predominantly paid back her debts (which she had as a result from a robbery), but it also allowed her to buy a bigger apartment in Moscow, pay for her daughter's education and renovate a historical country house in Saransk.

2.2.5 Case 5: Anna (49)

Anna is 49-year old woman from Yekaterinburg. In fact, she moved back to Russia a year ago, having spent the previous 18 years in France and the Netherlands. She took up trade while studying but never practiced her profession as a pediatrician. After her studies she began to import merchandise from the Emirates and sold it on a commission basis in local stores before she opened her own business. The business fared well, and she soon became the head of a trade company with around 11 employees, specialized in luxury textiles from the Emirates, which over the years remained her purchase destination. Having paid back all her debts and made “enough” money, she left the country at the end of the 90’s.

In France, where she moved first, and later in the Netherlands, she was engaged in the real estate business. Now, back in Russia she thinks about working with naturopathic and sport nutrition, however, this is rather a personal interest since she is financially independent through the rental income.

Anna is a single child, her mother worked as a physician and her father was employed at the geophysical institute; both parents were lecturers at the Ural State University. She has a daughter with her first husband who was born in 1991. The marriage was dissolved in 1996 and in 1999 she met her second husband, a Dutchman, with whom she went to France and engaged in the real estate business in the Netherlands.

2.2.6 Case 6: Nadezhda (61)

Nadezhda was born in a small town down the Volga river and moved to Yekaterinburg (back then Sverdlovsk) for a teaching job in a kindergarten in 1981. In 1986 she abandoned her position and worked on the construction side in order to receive better housing facilities and in 1991 she started shuttle trading. Initially she went to Turkey and retailed on the streets. Later she mostly travelled to Poland and professionalized her business at the newly built market in Yekaterinburg. Due to earlier contacts she got to know the group of people that established the new market and soon enjoyed the privileges of close kin relations with the management. At the end of the 90’s she ceased trading and got engaged on the management level herself. She retired from this position in 2017, due to health reasons.

Nadezhda’s father was a military official but her parents divorced when she was seven and she lived with her mother at her parents’ place. Most of her relatives, including her mother were teachers. She has two daughters: the older (38) works as a lawyer for the Russian railway and the younger (35) is a finance director in a company. She divorced her husband in 1999 and nowadays lives together with her younger daughter in a country house close to Yekaterinburg. The revenues from the business allowed her to buy two flats and build a big country house as well

as to pay for her daughters' education at private universities and general financial support for relatives and friends.

2.2.7 Case 7: Elena (64)

Elena retired in 2008. Until then she ran a garment shop in a local shopping mall. In Soviet times she was a factory worker with a university degree in engineering. She held the position of a shift supervisor but left the factory in the early 1990's due to permanently unpaid wages. Her business developed differently to others, since she didn't travel abroad to purchase merchandize. Together with her husband she used to borrow money from affluent acquaintances and with this money they bought large amounts of all possible products (pet's food, fur coats, beer or groceries) and retailed them to local stores. At the market she worked only sporadically and soon she opened her own store in a shopping center. Her husband and she organized the business cooperatively. She sold out the business, soon after his death and just before the financial crisis in 2008, which hit her fellow traders badly.

Elena didn't talk about her family background, but from her sister (who is a teacher at the Goethe-Institute in Yekaterinburg) I know that they belong to the intelligentsia. Elena has two adult children, both have a university degree and are "well off", according to her.

2.2.8 Case 8: Sveta (57)

Sveta is the single person I met who still actively trades on a small-scale level. She regularly travels to Moscow, where she purchases garments and takes them back to Zlatoust by plane, but she also used to travel abroad (i.e. Turkey), earlier. In Soviet times she was employed in a sewing factory, but as soon as the 1990's started she gave up tailoring and started trading. She had worked at an open-air market for the longest time among the informants and only rented an indoor store in 2002. Her business developed slowly, but steadily until the financial crisis in 2008 and 2014, though, since then the returns have been declining. Sveta's father was absent in the talk, but her mother worked in a factory and they lived together till she died. Sveta was married twice and has a daughter and a son from the first marriage. Her second husband supported her in the business and, eventually even gave up his own job. Sveta managed to buy a flat and a car from the proceeds, financed her children's education and lent money to friends. Both her children hold university degrees; her son works for an urban development company and her daughter as a lawyer.

2.3 Going to the market and talking to people – ethnographic practice

Apart of the interviews, I also conducted a participant observation in Yekaterinburg. During my first visit in April 2018, I spent approximately one week at the market and one week in the local

Goethe-Institute. I consider both localities equally important elements of the ethnographic inquiry. The discussions in the language school provided insights into the perceptions of the market traders from the outside, while shedding light on the broader discourse of post-Soviet social and economic transformation. The topic seemed heated and the majority of people (up from a certain age) actively participated in the conversations. The discussions immediately revealed the gendered dimensions of the topic with men claiming that women are “snoopy by nature” (*lyubopytnyy po nature*) and that these female shuttle traders “just wanted to have fun” (*oni tol'ko khoteli gulyat'*). Especially the elderly women in the group furiously countered, that it was them who provided for the families while “men were drunk” (*muzhchiny byli p'yany*).

These stereotypical categorizations gave an interesting account of the relevance of the topic and the unresolved mutual prejudices and suspicions. In the end it was the reaction to these discussions that made some people decide to get back to me because of their own experiences with trading, or to put me in contact with former practitioners. In this way, I could arrange a set of interviews in and around Yekaterinburg, which I conducted during my second visit in the beginning of June 2018.

The market was the second site of ethnographic inquiry and I spent much time there during my two visits in the city. This place is not just like any other market in Russia. It is a central hub for wholesale and retail, which originates from the convergence of the main trading routes. Accordingly, the market-place as such is extremely large and it turned out impossible to find interview participants at the market (mostly due to the busy surrounding and the reluctance of the vendors to meet outside of the market). Nonetheless, the opportunity to do a participant observation at the market and to engage in spontaneous conversations gave important contextual and on-the-ground insights. In the course of the market fieldwork, I formulated a set of questions which guided my observations and inquiries on the spot.

- Have the vendors been involved in the business already since the early 90's or have they joined the trade later?
- What is the age and sex ratio among the sellers, which nationalities are represented?
- Why did they get involved in the trading business?
- Did they have another profession in Soviet times or before working at the market?
- Do they regret having engaged in trading and if yes, why didn't they return to their previous work?
- How do/did women combine working and traveling with their family lives?
- Has the practice of trading changed or do they still use suitcases?
- How are their businesses organized?
- What is the level of satisfaction with the economic situation?
- Why, in their opinion, were the majority of shuttle traders women?

Getting into conversations with the people at the market without being introduced by a reliable person from within the group was a challenge. Often, they would be either suspicious or for any other reason reluctant to talk to me. On the other hand, once we started talking, it was unavoidable to discuss issues that emerged due to my nationality and a great preoccupation with and interest in the present German political and public situation (this mostly referred to the so-called “refugee crisis”). Nonetheless, some of the conversations were very insightful and especially if other vendors joined, the interactions would lead to a vivid discussion with many anecdotes and emotional memories. I experienced an unexpected and quite unanimous reaction towards the question of female dominance: according to the market-traders it was uncontested that only women had the necessary fashion sense to set up and run a profitable business. Since textiles were the main merchandise, it seemed natural that this sector belonged to them. From these talks, I also heard a lot about the development and the particularities of the market in Yekaterinburg, such as the local hierarchies (related to work experience, ethnicity and networks) and the dubious syndicate of owners. The number of traders, who have been working there since the 1990’s was relatively small, however they have the best spots (as they claimed). I also learnt that many stalls belonged to those who engaged in the business in the transformation times but who wouldn’t sell at the market any more. The majority of market vendors were from China, Vietnam, the Caucasus Republics, and the Central Asian countries with an approximately equal share in male and female sellers. On the customers side, there was a significant amount of women purchasing merchandise in the wholesale section of the market and carrying the products in their own small trolleys to their stores, either in the city center, or to much more remote places in the Russian South-East or far East. These women, just like Sveta, one of my protagonists, prove that shuttle trading has not died out yet in Russia, even if it has declined in scope, outreach and eventfulness (in terms of public presence).

2.4 Positionality, self-reflection and ethical considerations of the research

When I conceptualized the research, I felt prepared to do a research on, for instance, the changing labor conditions of women during the transformation period in the 90’s. But I had never performed ethnographic fieldwork, nor did I have experience with biographical narrative interviews. To be honest, I was scared. Years of diligent studies of Russian language and culture and several long-term stays in the country seemed insignificant. I was afraid that the interview partners wouldn’t respect me because of my limited language skills and that I wouldn’t be able to create a trustful relation, because of being too young for the timescope of the research topic, maybe

too Western to understand the Soviet legacies, and too ‘liberal-minded’ for the taste of the potential informants.

In this sense, I hadn’t approached the research unbiased, and the hesitations about my capacity to do a research of this kind didn’t entirely vanish in the course of the fieldwork process. In fact, I clearly experienced the impossibility of scientific objectivity during the conversations. I had to acknowledge that the “researcher’s positionality and biography directly affect fieldwork and that fieldwork is a dialogical process which is structured by the researcher and the participants” (England 1994:80). Naturally, not only my positionality, but also the very process of interaction in the conversation and the positionality of my interlocutor strongly influences the development and the content of the interview. A life-story in a narrative interview usually isn’t a ready-made story that people just deliver offhand, but it is created through interaction. This doesn’t necessarily diminish the quality of the material, but it significantly influences its production and analysis. The talk as such might be a ‘pseudo-conversation’ (Goode and Hutt, 1952, cited from Oakley 2005:181) but despite its alleged artificiality, it is a highly complicated multilayered interaction with relations to an entire universe of experiences, learned categories, performative acts, unconscious and conscious biases, revelations and retentions. Thus, I follow Michael Burawoy’s (1998) suggestion to “take context as point of departure but not point of conclusion” and, include the “context effects” (Burawoy 1998; Suchman and Jordan 1990)⁸ of sociological inquiry as a productive, rather than a disqualifying element of the research.

As for the analytical process, I didn’t follow any preliminary assumption in regard to the topic but step-by-step developed the theoretical foundations and the contextualization, as it is suggested for life history research (Küsters 2006:87). In this sense, the analysis and the emerging theorization are a result of analytical decisions made on the basis of my contextual knowledge, careful choice of scholarly references and the respect towards the sensitivity of the material on one hand. On the other hand, the interview experience as a form of direct interaction also significantly shaped my interpretation of the narrative material. The resulting subjectivity of this kind of research procedure provokes ongoing and contested debates in the social sciences community.

Feminist and post-colonial scholars have also taken on the topic and strongly promoted the necessity of a more self-reflective and a less hierarchical research practice (Abu-Lughod 2008;

⁸ These can be summarized to four major effects, which affect the research to a significant degree (for more details, see Burawoy 1998:13,14):

- 1) interview-effect (e.g. race, gender, schedule, etc. affect responses)
- 2) respondent effects (ambiguity of the meanings of questions)
- 3) field effects (interviews are not independent from the political, social and economic contexts)
- 4) situation effects (interaction between the researcher and the participant)

Borland 1998; Sangster 1994). Nonetheless, considering the nature of qualitative research, I have to agree that the feminist stance of “letting the subjects speak for themselves” as a means to prevent undue interpretation is an illusion (Borland 1998:322). As the author of this work I also hold the ultimate interpretative power over the narrations. My interpretative lens, however, doesn’t necessarily comply with the way the informants would like it to be framed. One way of actively counteracting this interpretative hierarchy is through the compliance with the highest standards of transparency, positionality and reflexivity about the form and content of knowledge production. In some cases, it is possible or necessary to consult the transcripts and the interpretation of meaning with the informants themselves. However, none of my informants was interested in reading the interview transcripts and for reasons of time and language (the interview partners usually didn’t speak English) it was not possible to consult the final interpretation and, thus, to obtain the approval of the informants regarding the way I processed the interview material. Still, all of them have been clearly informed about the aim of the research, and I openly responded to the questions that appeared during our interaction, as long as they didn’t violate my own limits. The reproduction of the material requires a sensitive and relational procedure. Since I don’t want to just repeat what I was told in the interviews but embed the narrations in a broader discourse, I run the risk to unduly manipulate the information for my own needs. It is a tricky enterprise and I think the best way to prevent the misuse of narrative insights is to clearly inform about the person speaking. My own interpretations and opinions are a constitutive part of this analysis, but instead of using the narrations to underpin my own assumptions, I aimed at engaging into a dialogue with the life-stories as they were given by the informants.

3. Developing a Grounded Theory

3.1. Basic assumptions and distinctive features

Grounded theory⁹ was originally introduced by the Chicago sociologist Anselm Strauss and Barney Glaser from Columbia University. It experienced ongoing revision and further development since the publication of “The Discovery of Grounded Theory” in 1967 and is nowadays one of the most widespread methodologies in qualitative and interpretative social sciences (Strübing 2014:1). Irrespective of all the varieties of GT by Glaser and Strauss themselves, as much as by later theorists, such as the “situational analysis of analytical maps” by Clarke (2003) or the “constructivist grounded theory” by Charmaz (2006, 2014), the original principle of structural openness remained unchanged.

The introduction of the GTM heralded a breakthrough in qualitative methods and can be seen as a reaction to the hypothesis-testing and validation of existing theories in quantitative methods dominant in the social sciences until the 1960's. The major turn was to replace the imposition of pre-existing assumptions with the generation of a new theory which should be “stimulated through – and “grounded” by empirical research” (Seale 2004:80). The GTM is closely related to the conceptual orientation of symbolic interactionism (Chamberlain-Salaun, Mills, and Usher 2013; Strauss and Corbin 1998; Strübing 2014) which goes back to the Chicago sociologist and philosopher Herbert Mead (Blumer 1986). On the basis of Mead's reflection on social interaction, Blumer expanded the perspective into a methodological framework to analyze the interaction between individuals and social context. This concept is built around three central premises. The first is that “human beings act towards things on the basis of the meaning the things have for them”. Secondly, “the meaning of such things is derived from, or arises out of, the social interaction one has with one's fellows”. These meanings are then “handled in, and modified through, an interpretative process, used by the person in dealing with the things he encounters” (Blumer 1986:2). Social reality in this approach is not considered static, but procedural and constantly transformed through communicative interaction (Flick, Kardoff, and Steinke 2004; Hopf 2016; Küsters 2006). Using the combination of narrative interviews and GT is particularly apt for this project, because it is a way to look at an individual case in relation to the social and historical context.

While I won't strictly follow the symbolic interactionist focus on the productions of meaning, or rely on concepts of “identity formation” or “role-choice behavior” (Stryker 2001:211), I find the stress on the interplay of power, reflexivity, and social constructionism useful (Callero

⁹ In the following it will be referred to as GT, or respectively GTM (grounded theory method)

2003). This focus provides a good basis for thinking about interaction as an ongoing process of value negotiation, which helps to unfold the agency of actors amidst changing ideological, social and economic structures.

The introduction of symbolic interactionism with GT as a method of social science entailed heated discussions about the compliance of basic scientific quality criteria like reliability, validity and representativeness (Strübing 2014:6). But not least since the ‘interpretative turn’, when the assumption that the “objective observation of pure data is impossible” (Mottier 2005:1), the method has been receiving increasing attention and recognition. The ongoing revisions and modifications of the original method have led to a heuristic disagreement between the two founders and, eventually, they followed different pathways.

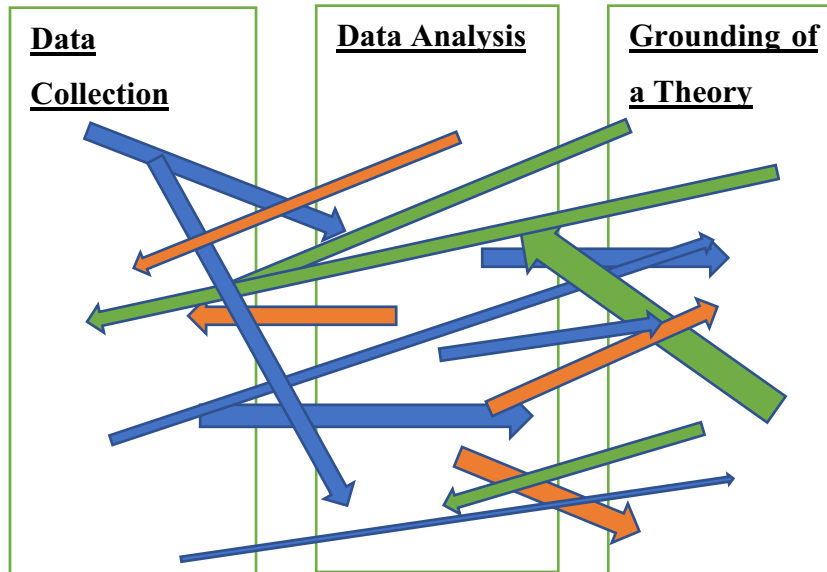
Pleading for an integrative research process Strauss, in cooperation with Corbin developed a version of GT, which is more open to contextual and theoretical knowledge, and induced concepts would critically engage with existing theories. Glaser, however, argues that these theoretical assumptions rather disturb the creation of a theory and should be ignored. His approach is more rigorous and refuses any form of literature review or predefined research question.¹⁰ But despite the discrepancies in the epistemological grounding of the method, the actual practice still shares that “the theory emerge[s] from the data” (Strauss and Corbin 1998:12).

The application of GTM in the next chapter based on the data on female shuttle traders will more roughly follow the methodology as developed by Strauss and Corbin. They suggest using a conceptual integration of inductive and deductive derivations, which, for this research, provided the most appropriate analytical toolbox. The structural openness in combination with a clearly defined methodological procedure allows to analyze the material while staying close to the empirical findings and simultaneously relating it to the broader social structures.

The authors of the method discuss three following processes: first, data collection, then data analysis and grounding of a theory. As the picture indicates, these processes occur parallelly and reciprocally.

¹⁰ Quoted from the Website of Grounded Theory Institute by Barney Glaser, <http://www.groundedtheory.com/what-is-gt.aspx>, latest access, 13.01.2019

Figure 2: Parallelism of processes in the conduction of a Grounded Theory.



(Strauss 1991, from Strübing 2014:12), Design and translation by the author

Contrary to the sampling in classical social studies, the data collection in the GTM rather seeks to capture as many variations and differences of a research phenomenon as possible. While it aims at the highest saturation possible, also a small group of cases can cover a wide range of properties (Strauss and Corbin 1998). Theoretical sampling, as suggested by GTM, involves two complementary strategies, first “minimizing the differences between cases to highlight basic properties of a particular category”, and secondly “maximizing the differences between cases in order to increase the density of the properties relating to core categories, to integrate categories and to delimit the scope of the theory” (Hammersley and Atkinson 1983:43). Nonetheless, the moment when information extracting is depleted can never be considered final. This is foremost due to the selective choice and external conditions of the research process and is at the same time related to the innumerable possible interpretations of words, sentences and passages. As Strauss and Corbin point to endless instances of subjective decision-making for example, the type of interviews, the place and amount of sampling, the researcher’s conceptualization, but also the skills and knowledge a researcher brings into the study (Strauss and Corbin 1998). The intention to build a grounded theory, thus, cannot be a proof of the impeccability of the findings and yet it allows to transmit the analytical process and describe the way of reasoning and conceptualization within the framework of an integrated theory.

In the following section I trace the process of theory formation. However, I do not claim to offer the ultimate elaboration of theory-building, but intend to transmit the analytical logic of the researcher, tracing back the interactive process between data gathering, data analyzing and final abstraction.

3.1.2 Familiarization with the research topic and analytical refinement

Contrary to the version of grounded theory by Barney Glaser, it is an inherent part of Strauss' methodological process to initially get an overview of discussion of the research topic in academic and public media in order, to "stimulate thinking about properties and for asking conceptual questions" (Strauss and Corbin 1998:47). Thus, the first step was to engage with different narratives about the 1990's in Russia, where the phenomenon of shuttle trading and street markets actually received a significant attention in mass media with a variety of articles¹¹, blogs¹², a couple of documentaries¹³, a television series¹⁴ and even songs¹⁵. The wide range of the topic reveals the importance of the phenomenon in the Russian discourse. Interestingly, the TV series about shuttle traders, was only produced in 2014 and found a strong resonance with the viewers, including online forums and (as I found out later) heated discussions in private. In fact, the material on the marketization of the public space turned out to be very rich and provided a valuable first impression of the multi-dimensional reception of the topic in Russia. All those productions draw a vivid picture of the severe economic conditions of the 1990's, the high crime rate, the scarcity of goods on one hand and the growing consumer consciousness on the other, as well as the predominance of women in the business. Generally, these dimensions were visualized with a clear gender division (the criminal structure of the market, the officials and drunkards were men, while shuttle traders, market vendors and others who struggled to adapt to the harsh economic conditions were women), and during my inquiry I found it remarkable, how much those divisions seemed to be taken for granted.

Thus, the mass media products, together with scholarly work on the social and economic transformation provided some initial insights into the central features and the perceptions of the phenomenon. The participant observation and the conversations I had at the market further enriched the sensitivity for the phenomenon. These multiple perspectives subsequently inspired the questions in the narrative interviews.

¹¹<https://shkolazhizni.ru/prozazhizni/articles/68283/>

<https://shkolazhizni.ru/prozazhizni/articles/68245/>

¹²https://pikabu.ru/story/quotchelnochnyiequot_istorii_3988035

¹³<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FubwahtY0Z0>

¹⁴<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ezvrc6LHc2U&t=3s>

¹⁵<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g7QNDiquYkA&index=15&list=RDg7QNDiquYkA>

For these conversations I developed a set of standardized questions for the semi-structured part of the interviews. This set, however, underwent a constant process of modification and refinement¹⁶. It is a core element of the GTM that the researcher relates new aspects to the information received in the antecedent interactions with informants (Strauss and Corbin 1998:51). As the amount of collected data grows, the questions posed in the interviews and those used to confront and compare the material start to differ. The analysis of the data aims at discovering, comparing, relating and conceptualizing the information gathered from the data, whereas the interviews serve to get as much insights into an individual's interaction with the broader social context. Some interview questions are more productive, leading to complex and rich answers, others may unconsciously touch upon too sensitive topics and discourage the interviewee from answering at all. It is, therefore, fundamental for the research process to deal with the interactions in a highly sensitive way. Finally, all these interactions are very contingent and, despite the attempt to live up with the requirements of scientific research, they will always entail a set of contextual effects (ambiguity of the meanings of questions, biases, physical condition, temporal constraints, etc., see (Burawoy 1998, 2009).

2.1.3 Exploring the data collection and breaking up the material

Questioning and critically reflecting on the material is a crucial analytical tool that should guide the entire process of GTM. Simultaneously, the theory-building process is accompanied by a threefold coding procedure. In the beginning the open coding breaks down the data analytically, thus trying to crystallize the meaning behind events, objects and action/interaction which are consequently related to the corresponding categories (Strauss and Corbin, 1998). The categories stand for phenomena that represent central ideas. By labeling and grouping phenomena, concepts are created. They comprise “common characteristics or related meanings [that] enables them to be grouped” (Strauss and Corbin 1998:103).

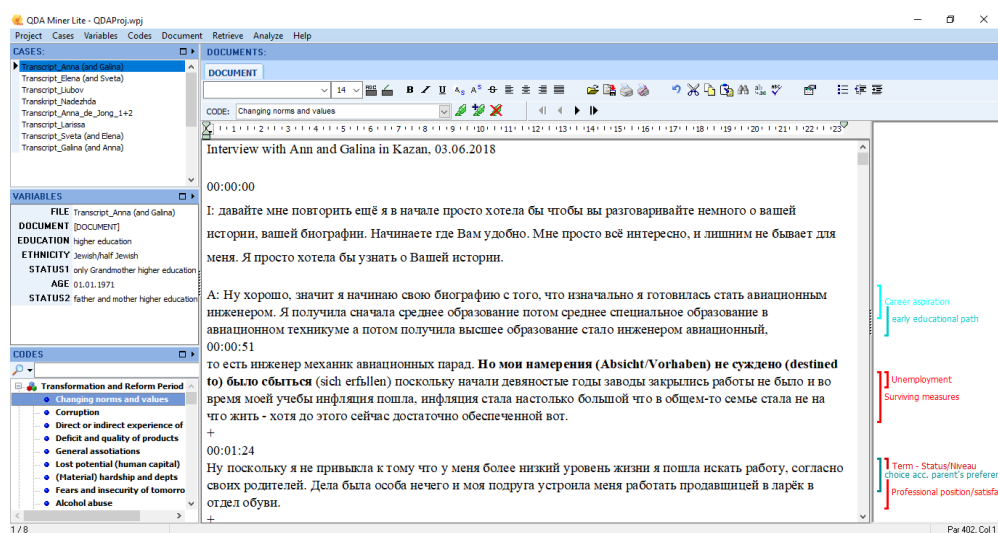
The main challenge of the analytical process is to select comparative aspects without reducing the multilayered notions acquired from the interviews. While the desirable prerequisite of “not speaking for our participants but rather [...] enabling them to speak in voices that are clearly understood and representative” (Strauss and Corbin 1998:56) seems contingent, it still gives an idea of how the theory is supposed to derive from the data. To some extent, this is also confirmed by the theorists themselves, when they say that the researcher can only “try to be as

¹⁶ The interview questions are attached to the appendix

objective as possible, in a practical sense, this is not entirely possible” (Strauss and Corbin 1998:58).

For the coding and the definition of variables I used the freeware of QDA Miner Lite, a qualitative data analysis software. Much like when working with a pen and paper, it is possible to highlight text passages and assign them a code, a variable or a short note. The main advantage of using QDA software is that the codes will automatically be recorded into a code system, which can be sorted, systemized, and summarized later in the analytical process. The codes remain linked to the individual text passages so that it allows to jump back and forth between the analysis and the actual data on which it is based. Comments, theoretical aspects, and ideas regarding the different dimensions of the codes can be recorded in the form of code memos. They mainly contain detailed descriptions of categories and written records of the developing theory, but they can also be used as a notebook for all sorts of ideas in regard to the research. These reflections on emerging connections aim at increasing the theoretical sensitivity and getting an analytical distance from the data. They combine insights derived from deductive and inductive reasoning in regard to possibly relevant categories, their relations and potential validation.

Figure 3: Example of the user face of the QDA Miner program



In the left upper corner, there is the list of cases that were used for the project. In the middle left part, there is the list of variables for each case and in the bottom left corner is the list of codes. With the free version of the program codes can be retrieved to facilitate the cross-case comparison.

Figure 4: Qualitative data analysis - variables

Education											
Secondary		Semi-finished high and specialized secondary		Higher education with university degree		Further education alongside work					
Social Status in Soviet times											
Peasant family		Worker family		Mother worker, Father intelligentsia		Father and Mother intelligentsia		Grandparents intelligentsia (both or half)			
Family Status											
Married			Divorced			Children					
Age											
> 45		> 50		> 55		> 60		> 65		> 70	

The variables I defined helped to oversee the biographical data and organize the information about the social background of the informants.

The following table (figure 6) shows the labels I attached to the interview transcripts during the open coding process. At this stage it is all about “making comparisons along the level of properties and dimensions and in ways that allow the analyst to break the data apart and reconstruct them to form an interpretive scheme” (Strauss and Corbin 1998:65). In short, this means to understand what is *in the material* and look for possible classifications

Those fields highlighted in green indicate either what the informants put most emphasis on, or what featured a great diversity of properties. The orange fields were marked in the second step and were used for those labels that seemed to be important in terms of meaning-making and the interaction between individual agency and social context. In the following the attached codes require a constant comparison between the cases and a critical interrogation if they allude/point to more general patterns.

Figure 5: Open-coding table

Family (social status)	Family (emotions and relations)	Education & Profession in Soviet times	Transformation and Reform Period	Facts and Figures around Trading	Trading Experiences	Norms, Values and Specific Terms	Gender	After Trading/ Other
Grandparents profession	Childhood	Early education path	Changing norms and values	Destination	Border crossing	Pride	Children and occupation	Occupation after trading
Parents profession	Grandparents	Career aspiration and realization	Corruption	Starting year	Business development	Shame	Conflicts about occupation	Occupation nowadays
Husband/partner profession	Parents relation	Choice according to parent's preferences/or not	Direct and indirect experience with criminality	Ending year	Early successes	Materialism	Financial issues	Material consequences of trading
Marriage	Husband/partner relation	Evaluation of education	Deficit and quality of products	Merchandise	Fun vs hard work	Term: Chelnoki	Gender-roles (conflicts)	Transformation of social and cultural capital in economic capital
Children		Further education	Surviving measures	Place(s) of distribution	Strategies and Social Capital	Term: Speculant	Self-description as a professional	Savings
Social status		Place of work, Professional position	Lost potential	Taxes and inspections	Fellow traders	Turning point	Self-description as a woman	Pension schemes
Children's education		Work satisfaction	(Material) hardship and debts	Financial crisis 1998	Why getting involved	Personal values (Soviet and post-Soviet times)	Women and the market	Anecdotes
Emergence of class		Wages	Fears and general insecurity about the future	Higher education	Why ceasing			
			Alcohol abuse		Other cultures/ nationalities			
			Unemployment					

2.1.4 Individual trajectories and social context – conceptualizing the material

The initial structuring of the data is organized around the notions (problems, issues, or events) that appear to be significant for the informants. In the following section these categories are related to their properties and dimensions and compared across the cases (Strauss and Corbin 1998:124). In this way the particularities of different categories can eventually be subsumed under broader concepts. To structure and challenge potential categorizations in the initial phase, I mainly worked with tables and matrices. In practice this meant using different codes (see the highlighted fields in the table), retrieving them in the coding program, looking at the properties and dimensions of comments in the transcripts and, thus, comparing the different aspects of the codes. These reflections support the conceptual development by „thinking abstractly and more generally, thus moving from the particular to the general.” (Strauss and Corbin 1998:83). The memos I wrote in the course of the analysis, served as the basis for the conceptualization of the material.

2.1.4.1 Comparison of individual trajectories

First, I structured the gathered material along the social trajectories. Getting back to the open-coding table which I introduced in the previous sections, I compared different aspects across the cases, first by closely-reading the labeled passages and then through attempts to structure the differences and commonalities of the information. I began with the trajectories of life stories in terms of social status. The idea was to organize the cases according to class belonging in Soviet times and to see, whether this status changed during the transformation period due to their activity as small-scale traders. I therefore compared the social background of at least three generations, if available four, in order to find out about the level of continuity and class-mobility in Soviet times.

Figure 6: Axial coding matrix 1

Social Status and upward mobility in Soviet times

Profession Before the 1990's	Peasant family	Worker family	Mother worker, Father intelligentsia	Father and Mother intelligentsia	Grandparents intelligentsia (both or half) uk: unknown
Anna (49): Student/trader				X	X
Tanja (49): Student/shop assistant				X	X
Galina (81) Lead worker		X			uk
Liubov (62): Economist/ Accountant			X		uk
Sveta (54): Sewer		X			uk
Elena (64): Engineer				X	uk
Nadezhda (61): Teacher/con- struction worker			X		X
Larissa (57): Engineer			X		uk

In the comparison I couldn't see upward mobility as an important aspect in the life-stories of the traders. Actually, the continuity of the social status is a feature most of them share. Liubov and Larissa underwent a slight social mobility, as they acquired a university degree, while only one parental part in their families had received higher education. What the table makes visible is that the participants have very different class backgrounds and occupations. In the generation of their children, however, there is a significant amount of mobility. While some women from the sample belonged to the working class in Soviet times, all of those who had children that grew up in the 1990's (7 out of 8), paid for them to be educated privately., so that they hold university degrees today. This comparison, moreover, revealed the necessity to analyze the stratification in the Soviet society in order to understand the social position of traders within the reshuffling of class system in the transformation period (see Chapter 3.1). Only in this way is it possible to draw conclusions about the impact the change of social status had on my informants and how this might have influenced their way of negotiating the social status of a trader in the post-Soviet time.

Another analytical step was to structure the long-term professional trajectories of the women informants. I organized these sequences according to the external circumstances that appeared relevant to their professional transformations.

Figure 7 Axial coding matrix 2

Example of a table alongside sequences:

Name	Occupation until 1991	1991-1998 (I. financial crises)	1998-2008 (II. financial crises)	2008 until today
Anna (49)	Studying (Medicine) Yekaterinburg	Trader, business women (Emirates) Yekaterinburg	Real Estate Speculator France, Netherlands	Real Estate Manager, Netherlands, Yekaterinburg
Tanja (49)	Studying (Flight engineering) Kazan	Shuttle trader, translator, tourist agency (Poland, Turkey, Indonesia) Kazan	Dating service, translator, tourist agency (owner) Kazan	Tourist agency (owner, three employees) Kazan
Galina (81)	Factory employee Kazan region	Pensioner, shuttle trader, shop owner (Poland, Turkey, Greece, Moscow) Kazan region	Shop owner, Pensioner (2005) Kazan region	Pensioner Kazan region
Nadezhda (61)	Kindergarten teacher, construction worker Yekaterinburg	Shuttle trader (Turkey, Poland, Moscow) Yekaterinburg	Market management Yekaterinburg	Pensioner (2018) Yekaterinburg region
Sveta (54)	Sewer Zlatoust	Shuttle trader (Turkey, Poland, Moscow) Zlatoust	Shop owner, shuttle trader (Turkey, Moscow) Zlatoust	Shop owner, Business women, (Moscow) Zlatoust
Elena (64)	Office worker, Manager Zlatoust	Trader, Shop owner (Turkey, Russia) Zlatoust	Show owner Pensioner (2008) Zlatoust	Pensioner Zlatoust
Liubov (62)	Economist, Manager Moscow	Trader, manager, economist (Italy, Turkey) Moscow	Economist, Manager Moscow	Shop owner, Pensioner (2017) Moscow
Larissa (57)	Manager, Engineer Moscow	Shuttle trader (Poland, Turkey, Pakistan, Emirates) Moscow	Shuttle trader, Shop owner (Turkey) Moscow	Interior designer, teacher, Moscow

This table shows that none of the informants returned to their previous occupations (if they had one). Six out of eight opened their own businesses, while all benefited from the trading experience, in terms of economic and social capital (by which I don't want to suggest that these returns came easy). Interestingly, contrary to the official statistics on the flow and profitability of trade, the financial crisis in 1998 wasn't described as a very destructive event. In contradiction with the examples given in Irina Mukhina's study on shuttle traders (2014), my informants either profited from the crisis or survived it without suffering significant damage. However, my sample is very small and it's highly probable that the women I met ran their businesses more successfully than others, also because they deliberately approached me to share their stories. If I had the chance to talk to a randomly selected group of ex-traders, the results might have been different. This

conclusion is based on the stories of my interview partners, who often contrasted their luck with the misfortune of other shuttle traders in regard to, e.g. destructive speculation, excessive lifestyle, alcohol abuse, criminality and fires at the market place, or simply lacking the sense for business.

2.1.4.2 Contextualizing individual trajectories

From the individual trajectories, I proceeded to analyze the social context. In this stage of the analysis I already had an overview of the main commonalities and differences between the cases and I started to develop a more focused comparative framework. However, it is indispensable to consequently compare, reframe, and change perspectives when analyzing the material to prevent manipulation of the data. To this end, I step-by-step related the open codes to more general concepts of structural conditions and qualified features of stratification, labor, changing social and economic conditions and the moral dimension of market retailing, as guiding categories.

Figure 8: *Axial-Coding matrix 3*

Subsuming codes to structural conditions

1) Stratification in the Soviet Union and the reformation of classes since the beginning of the 1990's	2) The gender regime of Soviet labor and the effects of economic reforms in the 1990's on the labor market	3) Changing living conditions and the economic and social challenges of the transformation period	4) The integration of the Russian economy into global capitalism and the stigmatization and gender of the market
Social status	Professional position in the Soviet Union	Changing norms and values	Deficit and second economy
Education	Work satisfaction	Criminality/Corruption	Speculation
Living conditions before and after 1991	Self-description of working morals	Decline of living-standards	Gender segregation at the market
Consumer consciousness	Gender roles at the workplace and at home	Fears and insecurities about the future	Why getting involved
Lost potential	Wages	Alcohol abuse	Business strategies
	Career aspirations	Unemployment	

I defined the four heading categories as main context references, since they provide the necessary space to relate individual life-stories to the changing economic and social situation. A comparison between those categories reveals a lot of relations and intersections, but also a wide range of variegations. Through a repeated reading and comparing of the text-passages, I found several underlying causes that seemed to motivate the informant's strategies and meaning making processes, and also the ways they frame the transformation time and their engagement in trade today.

One of the crucial questions was, why women started to engage in the trading business

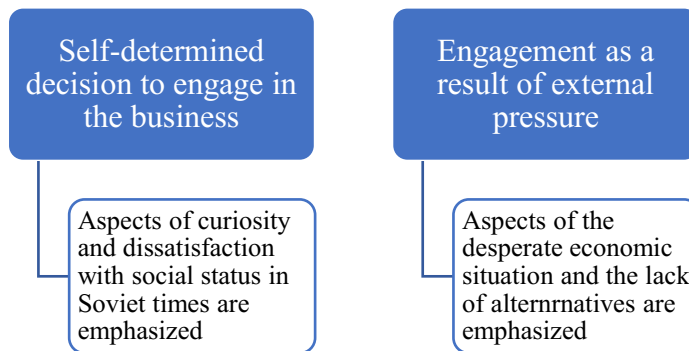
Figure 9: Axial coding matrix 4

Why engage in the trading business?

Motivation to act			
	Curiosity	Dissatisfaction	Despair
Reason	No chance to travel abroad before	Work-place or type of occupation in the Soviet system was unfulfilling	Unemployment Unpaid wages No perspective in the job
		Rejection of the Soviet system as such	
Expectation	Travel and see different countries Freedom of consumption	New start Self-realization Freedom of consumption	Feed the family Pay debts, education of children, ... Freedom of consumption

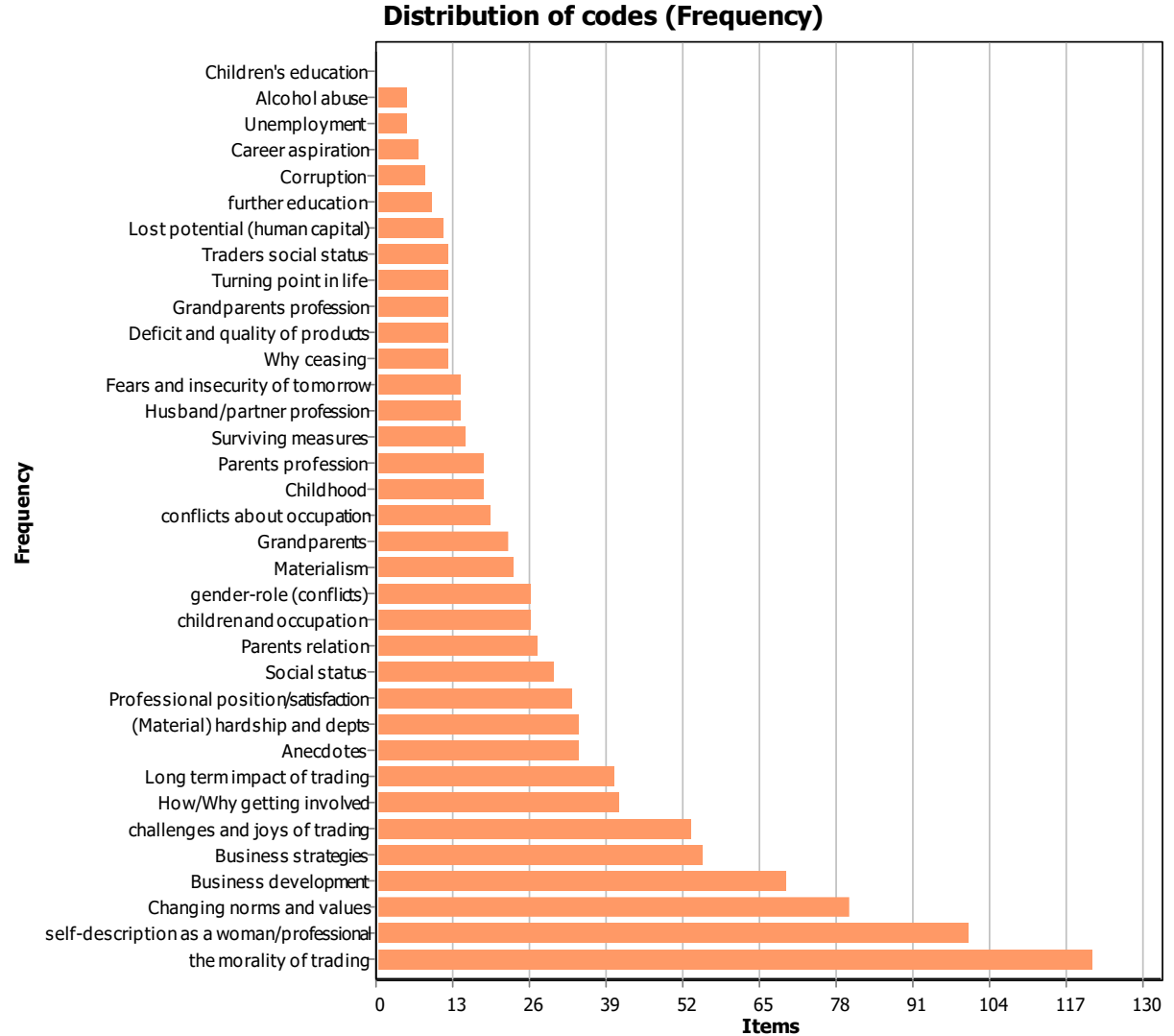
Apart from the common expression of a greater freedom of consumption, the motivations to act usually contained bits of every category. Nonetheless this table hints at two more general types of motivation.

Figure 10: Axial coding - classification



This differentiation appeared to be significant in two dimensions. On the one hand, it relates to the social context that influenced the women's life-trajectories in the transformation years, and on the other, it matters for a better understanding of the ways they emotionally dealt with their changing professional identities. While I outlined the most relevant contextual dimensions in the axial-coding matrix 3 (subsuming codes to structural conditions), I considered the notions of changing norms and values to be central for the understanding of the emotional dimension.

Figure 11: Frequency of code distribution



The frequency of codes also shows that “norms and values”, “self-description as a women/professional” and above all, “the morality of trading” have the highest frequency. Comparing different properties and dimensions of these codes reveals that they are very emotionally loaded. Further analysis of these emotions shows that they can usually be related to feelings of *shame and pride*. I therefore decided to test if these emotional components could define the core categories, and thus, build a framework to conceptualize a grounded theory.

2.1.5 The emotional dimensions of shame and pride – grounding a theory

Moving from gathering material to devising a theory requires first of all some understanding of what constitutes theory. Strauss and Corbin frame these preconditions as twofold: at first it is necessary “to be able to differentiate among description, conceptual ordering, and theorizing”, and secondly to “realize that these forms of data analysis build on one another, with the theory incorporating aspects of both.” Thus, a theory does not simply tell a story or describe details of a particular set of data, it should “enable[...] users to explain and predict events, thereby providing guides to action” (Strauss and Corbin 1998:25). Central to the process of theory-building is the interplay of induction (from the particular to the general) and deductions (looking at the particular from the general) and the constant comparisons between the gathered material, to identify, develop and relate concepts (Strübing 2014).

Working hypotheses:

1. Shuttle traders experienced a transformation of professional identity in the context of emotions of *shame and pride*.
2. The emotions of *shame and pride* point towards a process of ongoing negotiating between self-evaluation and the judgement by others/the other in the experience of the self.
3. These emotional dynamics significantly influenced the performance of the shuttle traders in the business and the ways they frame this experience today.

In the development of a grounded theory, the recourse to existing theories for the deductive validation of empirical data is an important analytical step (Strauss and Corbin 1998). On the basis of the inductively extracted working hypotheses I include a reflection on the emotions of shame and pride against the backdrop of identity theories in psychological and philosophical scholarly work.

The philosophers Alba Montes Sánchez and Alessandro Salice developed a relational concept of shame and pride, which is the main inspiration for the following reflection. According to them, “the most paradigmatic scenarios of shame and pride induced by others can be accommodated by taking seriously the consideration that, in such cases, the subject “‘group-identifies’ with the other” (Salice and Montes Sánchez 2016:1). In other words, the subject usually considers him or herself a part of several groups, and the experiences of shame and pride are related to the extent to which the individual considers him or herself belonging to or being marginalized within these groups. The notion of belonging requires special attention because of its inherent

dynamic. It can be “an act of self-identification or identification by others in a stable, contested or transient way” (Yuval-Davis 2006:199), but it is not a reified characteristic.

This psychological lens on group identification implies a notion of mutuality, which means that not only the interaction of the individual and the group, but also the structure of shame and guilt are “virtually symmetrical” (Salice and Montes Sánchez 2016:2). A constitutive aspect of this parallelism is that both emotions appear with regard to imagined or real others. Shame and pride result from a process of self-evaluation, and while in shame one usually wants to hide, in pride the opposite happens, i.e. “one feels an expansion of the self, a swelling, and a desire to share the good news” (Salice and Montes Sánchez 2016:3). Another important feature is that both emotions usually involve evaluation and appraisal, which subsequently has an impact on the agency of the subjects (Prinz 2004).

Without going further into the complexity of the theory, I will just, summarize its most important features (Salice and Montes Sánchez 2016:3–6) and then introduce the way in which I adapted the theory to the analysis of my own case.

Figure 12: *Shame and Pride Theory*

Original theory	Modification	Examples
<p>“Self-conscious emotions”</p> <p>Shame and pride are “self-conscious emotions”, involving evaluation or appraisal (p. 3)</p>	<p>Evaluation or appraisal of the self and the consciousness of others is not only influenced by interaction, but also by structural constraints.</p>	<p>The traders behaved in a way that contradicted norms and values of different groups, but their actions can be related to structural constraints. The subsequent self-evaluation goes beyond the “self-conscious emotions” as determined by we-groups*</p>
<p>“Feeling exposed”</p> <p>Shame and pride don’t primarily result from the assessment of others, but are characterized by the particular self-experience of “feeling exposed” (p. 4)</p>	<p>Not always other people’s attention leads to strong emotions, but sometimes even the projected expectations of how others might think about us can create feelings of shame and pride</p>	<p>From the accounts of the traders I induce that shame and pride was closely related to the “we-groups”, such as friends, acquaintances, family members, but also in a broader sense of a spatial, ideological or professional identification. These we-groups influence the norms and values and the self-esteem of traders as they feel exposed to their judgement.</p>
<p>“Hetero-induced”</p> <p>Shame and pride are determined by “hetero-induced” emotions, provoked by a feeling of belonging and, thus following the group’s consideration of what is shameful or admirable (p. 4)</p>	<p>The feeling of belonging, which determines the perception of self-conscious emotions is not a static concept, but an ongoing process.</p>	<p>For the traders the professional “we-groups” changed in the cause of time. This required a renegotiation of identification and belonging and made them more vulnerable in regard to shame and pride. However, this situation also led towards a contestation of the moralities of previous “we-groups”.</p>
<p>“Self-categorization”</p> <p>The connection between the self and a group can be based on a</p>	<p>The identification of communalities and differences does not necessarily lead towards a feeling of belonging, especially, if other “we-groups” are</p>	<p>The social and economic changes in the 1990’s in Russia brought e.g. highly educated people to work at the market. Self-identification with</p>

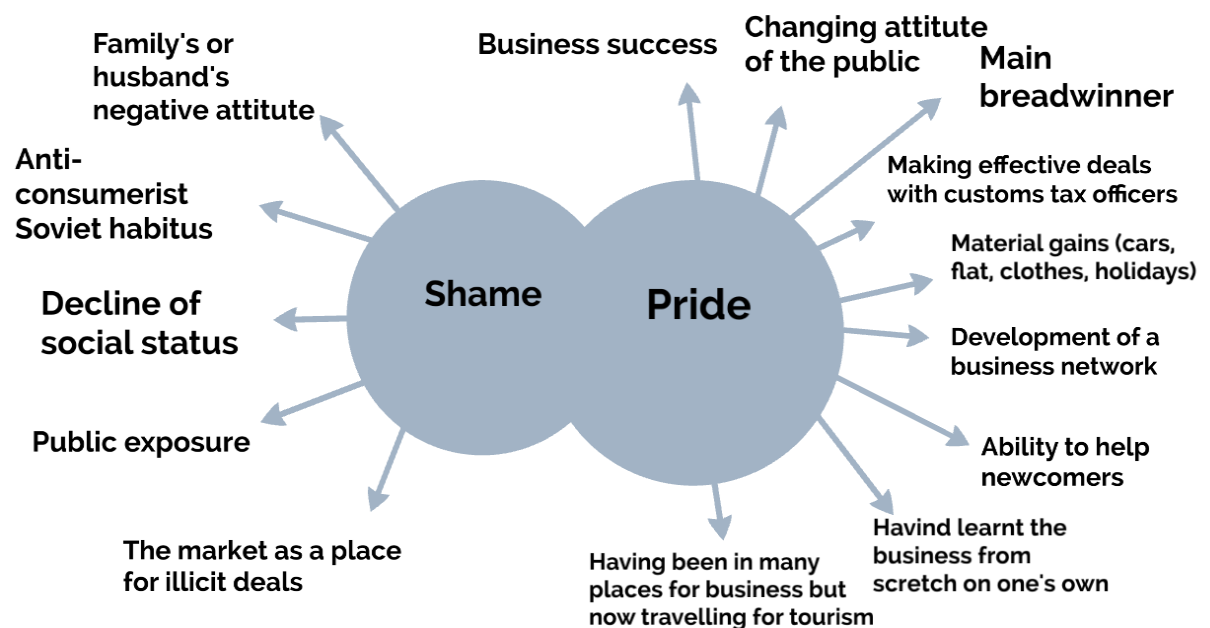
process of “self-categorization” (sharing certain properties with others), and once established, one has acquired a social-self. (p. 6)	not compatible. The selection can be related to gender, race and class backgrounds	this occupation was often prevented by the stigmatization of trading in the Soviet era. On the other hand, once they traded they lost their status as, e.g. teachers in the eye of the previous we-group of pedagogues.
---	--	---

* with we-group I mean those groups an individual identifies with (e.g. national, professional, social identities)

The expansion of the theory of shame and pride, as developed by Sánchez and Salice, provides a good starting point to reflect on the different conditions for the emergence of these reflexive emotions in the case of the female retailers. The theory provides a toolbox to investigate the process of individual identity transformation against the background of structural changes and is especially helpful for analyzing the conflicts and challenges that come along with these transformations.

Inspired by this theory, I got back to my material and searched for properties and dimensions of shame and pride in the narrations. The characteristics of (1) Evaluation and appraisal; (2) Exposure (direct or indirect); (3) Belonging (and its redefinition); and (4) Acquisition and loss of a social self were helpful to, on the one hand, conceptualize shame and pride also if not directly named like this, while on the other hand, prevented to arbitrarily subsume all kinds of emotions under the theory.

Figure 13: Dimensions of shame and pride



Some of these dimensions are imposed by social norms, for example shame resulting from the anti-consumerist attitude, while others are self-generated, like the pride of having learnt to do

business from scratch. Yet these features ultimately emerge from the interaction between individual agency and social structure. The meaning my informants attributed to the different dimensions of shame and prides differed, just as their backgrounds and their practices did. It is important to take into consideration that seemingly contradictory references could sometimes coincide (e.g. decline of social status – being the breadwinner), or they represented a causal relationship (e.g. public exposure – changing attitude of the public) or they might also replace one another (e.g. anti-consumerist Soviet habitus – material gains). Finally, thanks to those ambiguous statements the research of life courses of female traders in post-Soviet Russia is such a rich source for salient social phenomena emerging from the contingent transformation period.

2.1.5 Summary and outlook

In the previous chapter I demonstrated the development of the grounded theory for the case of woman shuttle traders in the context of social and economic transformation after the dissolution of the Soviet Union. I outlined the three steps of theory generation from open coding, to axial coding and the final stage of selected coding. Based on the assumption of the interrelation of structure and agency, I developed categories, which seemed relevant to understanding how these are mutually constitutive aspects of the social world. On the structural level, I focused on the four following categories:

Stratification in the Soviet Union and the reformation of classes since the beginning of the 1990's	The gender regime of Soviet labor and the effects of economic reforms in the 1990's on the labor market	Changing living conditions and the economic and social challenges of the transformation period	The integration of the Russian economy into global capitalism and the stigmatization and gender of the market
---	---	--	---

In the following chapter I will discuss the selected contextual background and how it can be related to the broader debate on the following issues:

4.1 Stratification during Soviet times and the emergence of class in post-socialism

4.2 The gender regime of Soviet labor conditions and the effects of the liberal market reforms in the 90's

4.3 Changing living conditions and the gender dimension of post-Soviet transformation

4.4 The stigmatization and the gender of the market

These structural conditions are the backdrop against which individual agency is exercised. However, they don't provide a linear explanatory scheme, as they are themselves full of inner contradictions and account for different evaluations and appraisals in the life-stories of the interviewed traders. To capture the multiple meanings the actors attribute to their changing life

courses, I developed a procedural framework that covers the variegation of self-conscious emotions, such as the transformation from shame to pride. The conceptualization of the two terms is saturated with a wider range of emotions, categorized under the labels from the open coding, such as “norms and values”, “self-description as a women/professional”, and “the morality of trading”. The explanatory and generalizable features, the individual transformatory processes and the limits and inert contradictions of this concept will be further explored and discussed in the second part of this work.

4. Structural Context and Individual Experiences

The following chapter focuses on the structural dimensions that shaped the shuttle traders' experience of professional transformation and the ways they negotiate its meanings. I will, first, elaborate on social statuses and class formation in the Soviet and post-Soviet time. Next, I proceed to the question of work satisfaction, which strongly influenced the emotions arising along with changes in professional status. The third section focuses on the reasons for engagement into the trading business and the stigmatization which came along with this commercial activity. Finally, I outline the decline of living standards in the transformation period and analyze the changing norms and values as exemplified by the symbolism of mushrooming open-air markets in the public space. Each of these structural analyses is informed by references to the underlying gender regimes.

4.1 Stratification during Soviet times and the emergence of class in post-socialism

The ideology of the Soviet Union proclaimed the legal equality of all Soviet citizens, the principle that was incorporated into the Stalin Constitution of 1936 (Matthews 2011). In the official discourse, all "social distinctions are disappearing, as society moves steadily towards the classlessness of full communism" (Matthews 2011:17). Various leaders of the Soviet Union, however, promoted unequal access to services, goods and education, instead of diminishing social differentiation and class privileges. According to Mervyn Matthews' study on elite life-styles under communism, it was especially in the Brezhnev years when social stratification proliferated. This development had a strong impact on the post-Soviet transformation period and loomed large in the life-stories of the traders. My informants either belonging to the group of the intelligentsia or of high-skilled workers, however, the described living standard and the level of self-identification with a particular social status differed significantly. In the following section, I will introduce some of the dimensions of status descriptions from the interviews and subsequently include them in the analysis of social structure in the Soviet era and the emergence of class in the transformation period.

Anna, a businesswoman from Yekaterinburg told me,

Previously, it was - you could not work in this business (private entrepreneurship) among Russians. The Russians – how to say this – well, ... before, practically everyone had been equal. And then there appeared the rich

and naturally right away, there also emerged these classes followed by hatred.¹⁷ (Anna, 49)

Her social background is one of impoverished merchant and intelligentsia family, who had been expropriated by the Bolsheviks. She was an active opponent of the socialist system and immediately started to trade after the dissolution of the Soviet Union. However, she clearly rejected the term ‘chelnoki’ to be applied to her business. Not so much because she actually traded in a slightly different way, but mainly because

Well, how to say this, these shuttle traders - I have never been a shuttle trader - it's just that somehow, among people with higher education it was considered embarrassing. It is a shame to stand on the market to sell something. It was just the ultimate degradation. That is, people did not do this!¹⁸ (Anna, 49)

Her social status strongly influenced the way she interpreted the world around. Her conviction that people with higher education wouldn't trade is not only inaccurate,¹⁹ but also reveals that her experience of the transformation times was one of economic successes. She became part of the emerging capitalist class and admitted that,

Only about two years ago I realized that in fact, life in Russia in the nineties was not that good, (back then) when I heard the wild 90's, I have seen nothing of this.²⁰ (Anna, 49)

While her view on the socialist time and the transformation is unique, the initial statement that under state socialism everybody was equal, is shared by other women. Tanja, for instance, claimed,

We were brought up knowing that if you work in a factory, you will have a very good salary as a fitter or something similar. You have a better salary than that of an engineer; you have an excellent source of income. You work. Well done! If you work, - if you don't work, you are not well done. As long as you work, it doesn't matter what kind of work you do. That is, either you are in the business or you are a seller, or you are someone else, or you are the owner of the company, as long as you work. In any case, at that time, there was no stratification due to different wages. Everyone was at about the same level.²¹ (Tanja, 49)

¹⁷ «Ran'she eto byla - ty ne mog rabotat' v etom biznese sredi russkikh. U russkikh kak eto skazat' u nikh vot... vse ran'she byli ravny prakticheski. A potom poyavilis' bogatyie i yavilos' yestestvenno srazu zhe vot eto vot klassy i nenavist'.» (Anna, 49, real estate manager 00:34:06)

¹⁸ «No vot kak govoryat vot eti chelnochniki, - ya nikogda ne byla chelnochnika - prosto eto, kak-to skazat', eto vseгда sredi lyudey s vysshim obrazovaniyem eto schitalos' stydno. Stydno stoyat' na rynke chto-to prodavat', eto byl prosto posledniy pozor. To yest' lyudi etogo ne delali!» (Anna, 49, 00:05:18)

¹⁹ Yakovlev and Eder (2003) conducted a survey which reflects what have been said by many qualitative researches on shuttle traders (most obvious in (Il'ina and Il'in 1998)), including the information I got in the interviews, namely, the extraordinarily high amount of traders with university degrees.

²⁰ «I tol'ko navernoye goda dva nazad ya ponyala chto na samom dele zhizn' v Rossii byla v devyanostyye ne ochen khoroshiy, kogda ya uslyshala dikiye 90-ye ya etogo ne videla i nichego.» (Anna, 49, 00:11:54)

²¹ «Nas vospityvali, da yeslity rabotayesh' na zavode, prekrasno tebya zarplata tam poluchis' kak slesar' vot ili chto-to. U tebya zarplata bol'she chem u inzhenera prekrasno ty imeyesh' istochnik dokhoda, ty rabotayesh', ty molodets!

A comparison of the life-styles of the interview partners reveals, however, that, on the contrary, the differences were immense. Nadezhda, who worked as a kindergarten teacher explained that for her

It was very difficult there was nothing to buy and it was all very hard! Well, and the apartment, well, we, we ... we lived in a hostel (obshchezhitie) from the factory. This means that the four of us lived in one room.²² (Nadezhda, 61)

Whilst another woman describes that,

I was a financial director in Soviet times, I had my own driver, I lived in the center of Moscow. My company rented an apartment for me that was for managers of the post-office and had 160 m². I was a highly esteemed person. Then, perestroika came, and it happened that I was nobody.²³ (Liubov, 62)

The Soviet system proclaimed to be a class-free society with equal living standards for working people. The informants' accounts, however, reveal that this promise didn't match reality. Against this backdrop, I will analyze the power distribution and the stratification of the allegedly "class-free" society, to provide a better understanding for the different accounts of social reality revealed in the interviews and, thus, embed the personal narrations in the broader social context.

Officially, Soviet society was divided along a tripartite model. The social structure in the Soviet Union consisted of the "working class (to whom the vanguard role in constructing the new social order was ascribed), the peasantry, and the intelligentsia, the latter included white collar workers. Formally, all citizens of the Soviet Union were equal. However, ideological criteria often prevailed over the achieved status and membership in the party into which "admission was allowed according to quotas, with workers and latter peasants, obviously preferred" (Boutenko 1997:103). The working class made a majority of the population (68,8% in 1989), and qualifications among workers constantly increased, due to educational opportunities and rising upward mobility.

Yesli ty rabotayesh' - vot yesli ne rabotayesh' ty ne molodets. A yesli ty rabotayesh' eto sovershenno ne vazhno kem. To yes' libo ty v biznese libo ty prodavets libo ty tam yeshche kto-to da libo ty tam khozyain predpriyatiya poka ty rabotayesh'. Vo vsyakom sluchaye po tem vremenam tochno nikakogo rassloyeniya po zarabotkam ne byl. Togda vse okazalis' primerno na odnom urovne.» (Tanja, 46, tourist agency 01:18:06)

²² «Bylo ochen' slozhno vo pervykh nichego nel'zya bylo kupit', bylo vsyo ochen' tyazhelo! Vot, i k... kvartira, nu zhzh.. zhili v obshchezhitie ot zavoda komnata byla to yes' my zhili chetverom v komnate.» (Nadezhda, 61, pensioner, 00:03:46)

²³ «Ya byla finansovym direktorom v sovetskoye vremya. Za mnoy mashina priyeezhala. Ya zhila v tsentre Moskvyy, mne firmy snimala kvartiru byvshego nachal'nika pochta tam 160 kvadratnykh metra. Ya byla uvazhayemym chelovekom. Potom eto perestroyka vsyo tak sdelala chto ya byla nikem.» (Liubov, 62, pensioner, 00:15:40)

Figure 14: Class Composition in the Population of the USSR, %

Social Groups	1939	1959	1975
Workers	33.5	49.5	60.9
Employees	16.7	18.8	22.0
Peasants	48.8	31.7	17.1

(Source: *The Economics of USSR*, 1975:38, quoted in Golenkova and Gorshkov 2013:22)

However, the manifest power-holder in the Soviet Union was the nomenklatura (Party and Komsomol functionaries). In a society organized around a centrally redistributed social product, monetary income is not the most important measurement for social inequality. Hence, the remuneration founding the power of the party elite usually didn't take place in the monetary form, but through an increase in power and social status (Boutenko 1997). This situation may be referred to the main theories of social stratification. In questions of the emergence and reproduction of status and class Marx and Weber have long been the major theorists for European societies. Revisiting this debate is useful for understanding the social structure of the Soviet society and the stratification process in the 1990's as it was experienced and narrated by my informants.

Both forefathers of stratification theory based their analysis on criteria such as wealth or income inequality, prestige and power. Inequalities stem from social differentiation, which Marx relates to class, and Weber to status groups. Classes for Marx, "are constituted by the relationship of groupings of individuals to the ownership of private property in the means of production" (Giddens 1979:37). According to him the capitalist society rests upon a dichotomous class relationship: "the haves" (bourgeoisie) and "the have-nots" (proletariat). But whereas Marx' theory is narrowed down to the "opposition between exploiter and exploited grounded in the social relations of production" (Outhwaite 2005:36), Weber argues that social differentiation is based on three constitutive features, which are life chances, economic interests, and market conditions (Weber, Mills, and Gerth 1977:181). Weber built on this theory but diversified it and developed a multidimensional model of social structure where social position is determined by, and relates in various ways, to class, status and power (Weber, Roth, and Wittich 1978). Social positioning in this system, is not solely based on economic capital, but determined by "a specific, positive or negative, social estimation of honor" (Max Weber quoted in Hamilton 1991:48). I will follow Weber's concept of status groups, which includes the dimension of "status honor", and "a sense of dignity" (ibid 1991:49) due to the fact that the dichotomy between the propertied and the non-propertied class is not the most relevant category for social stratification in the Soviet Union

Status groups preserve a particular life-style and are “bearers of conventions”. This concept is closely related to what Bourdieu will later name *habitus*. For Bourdieu, *habitus* is the “ensemble of schemata of perception, thinking, feeling, evaluating, speaking and acting, [...] that produces practices in accordance with the schemes engendered by history” (Walther 2014:12). In this regard *habitus* is the expression and the verification of belonging to a social group and thus, the most important feature of the reproduction of class and stratification. Hence, Bourdieu’s concept is also instructive to understand status formation and reproduction in a non-capitalist society, where economic capital is not the main marker of class/group position. Various studies have shown that the application of a Bourdieu-inspired differentiation to the economic, social and cultural capital is a helpful tool for analysing the perpetuation and rupture of structural legacies in relation to power distribution and hierarchy of the Soviet social structure and post-Soviet social transformation (Eyal, Szelenyi, and Townsley 1998; Marody 1997; Miller, Humphrey, and Zavyalova 2002; Mrozowski 2011).

The resources which determine the social position in the Bourdieusian logic are the interplay of economic, cultural and social capital. Cultural capital is obtained through family and education and refers to the knowledge and skills that can be incorporated (during the process of education), objectivized (in forms of books, paintings, etc.) or institutionalized (an officially recognized certificate or academic qualification). Social capital results from one’s “possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition” (Bourdieu 2011:86). The value of this capital depends on the range and quality of the networks. So, how does such a conceptual framework refer to the post-socialist society?

These Weberian and Bourdieusian tools are helpful to understand the structure of a non-capitalist society, where economic capital is not the main marker of class position. The socialist system overcame the prerevolutionary social order composed of a small elite (royalty, nobility and clergy) and predominantly peasant popular classes (workers were still a minor group). In fact, the soviet system effectively fostered social mobility, through massive industrialization and an ideologically motivated appreciation of peasants and workers. Nonetheless, the end of conspicuous class discrimination did not lead to an equal distribution of power or capital. As predicted by Weber, the socialist leveling of economic and social differences led to a lacuna of power that, eventually, produced a highly influential bureaucratic stratum (Weber et al. 1977). Indeed, in Soviet times social differentiation was largely determined by the appraisal of one’s position and the conformity with ideologically valued behavior.

Nevertheless, the ascribed status derived from such inborn characteristics as ethnicity or inherited class background mattered, albeit to a lesser degree than in other (mostly capitalist)

systems, since it was a constitutive part of the socialist project to boost social mobility (Erikson and Goldthorpe 1992). Despite the privileges upper classes enjoyed (such as better housing facilities, higher quality of holiday resorts, easier access to scarce goods, etc.), the actual wage differentiation was a rather minor issue. This changed abruptly after the demise of the Soviet system, but while wage differentials can grow fast, the status stratification is a more resilient determinant.

The post-Soviet transition can be seen as a “powerful exogenous shock that reshuffles social structure thereby temporarily leading to more chaotic and unpredictable social transitions” (Yasterbov 2016:6). According to Weber, in moments of major social ruptures social groups can cross class boundaries. “Every technological repercussion and economic transformation threatens stratification by status and pushes the class situation into the foreground” (Weber quoted in Hamilton 1991:50). Weber comments that “for all practical purposes, stratification by status goes hand in hand with a monopolization of ideal and material goods or opportunities” (Weber 1999:91). Despite class not being a likely category for characterizing the social structure in state socialism, the notion helps us understand how the stratification based on capitals influenced the social order in the course of class-formation during the post-socialist transformation.

Analyzing the post-socialist stratification in Bourdiesian terms, Iván Szelényi points out that the increasing relevance of cultural capital in post-Stalinist times narrowed the distance between cultural elites (intelligentsia) and political elites (bureaucratic strata). The reform period and the relaxation of economic regulations in the late 80’s, however, gave rise to a rapidly growing group of “social entrepreneurs” (Szelényi 1995:18). The subsequent collapse of the Soviet Union gave space to a reshuffling of the social order, both from above and from below.

In the post-Soviet space these were mostly party members and the managerial class that turned rich, in some cases virtually overnight. An estimated 60-65 percent of Russia’s richest people either sold out the state-owned companies they managed before the system collapsed or privatized them (Elliott 1994). The special feature of the post-Soviet class (trans-) formation (here in the Marxian sense of division between haves and have-nots) is the dramatic change from the “Soviet logic of social differentiation to the logic of global neoliberal consumer capitalism” (Salmenniemi 2012:2). The social gap widened rapidly and the level of poverty and scope of dispossession among workers and members of the intelligentsia was tremendous. Many lost their right to housing facilities and the privatization process often implied months of wageless working or the loss of employment.

However, those that found themselves deprived of their habitual living standards often had a high level of social and cultural capital. The disregard of these human resources in post-Soviet Russia had two major effects: the first was large-scale emigration of skilled workforce and the second “outflow of skilled labor into survival activities” (Soboleva 2017:253). Among the latter are those who engaged in the shuttle trading business, a group of often highly skilled people with academic degrees (Mukhina 2014; Yadova 2009; Yakovlev and Eder 2003). The changing professional status of the women traders from pre-transitional to post-transitional times came along with an occupational downgrading and, thus the initial lowering of social status. The interviewees confirmed and regularly referred to the immense loss of skilled labor in the transformation period.

The nineties united in our country people who could have contributed to the country's growth and prosperity, – in a more useful way than in market trading. For example, only 4 people from my cohort remained in aeronautics, yes, but we were 100.²⁴ (Tanja, 49)

Tanja, a flight engineer, also hints to exactly this point. Her frustration about the loss of cultural capital runs in the same vein as another woman's statement that

These were the experts who had all disappeared somehow.²⁵ (Liubov, 62)

While highly qualified people in Russia became much poorer in the transformation years, others turned sensationally rich. The emergence of a propertied class brings Marx's analysis of social stratification to the front again. At the same time, the conspicuous/lavish appearance of the *nouveau rich* was often considered repulsive by those who had a high level of cultural capital (but often enough also with a twinge of envy); this reaction can be related to the phenomenon of a status groups crossing class boundaries. Anna from Yekaterinburg explained the level of decadence of the new capitalist class (to which she assigned herself) by a kind of intoxication with money.

It was like the first time in our lives that we had money. Well, until the nineties, people did not have this money. They could not buy these expensive things. People from the nineties, well, you could say that I belong to these people.... yeah, my father also asked me, “why do you need a Mercedes?” But I just love Mercedes.²⁶ (Anna, 49)

Her father belongs to the older generation of Soviet intelligentsia. He had lost his job and, eventually, joined the business of his daughter. This example shows, how people from the same

²⁴ «Devyanostyye gody ob'yedinili nashu stranu na lyudey kotoryye mogli by dat' dlya promyshlennosti dlya razvitiya strany dostatochno bol'shego, to yest' ne uyti v torgovle. Naprimer vot iz moyego vypuska tol'ko 4 cheloveka ostalas' v aviatsii, da a chelovek eto bylo 100.» (Tanja, 49, 00:15:20)

²⁵ «Imenno spetsialisty vot kuda-to vse podevalis'.» (Liubov, 62, 00:14:50)

²⁶ «Eto bylo, kak v pervyi raz u nas v zhizni bylo den'gi. Nu primerno do devyanostykh ne bylo vot etikh deneg u lyudey. Oni ne mogli pokupat' eti dorogiye veshchi. Lyudi iz devyanostykh vot - ya chek iz devyanostykh tak skazhim. Nu da, papa mne tozhe skazal, zachem tebe Mercedes? No ya prosto lyublyu Mercedes.» (Anna, 49, 00:42:00)

social group can traverse class boundaries in times of social and economic change. It also reveals, how changing consumption practices may effect a person's habitus.

The breakdown of the Soviet order deprived many people of their previously inhabited social status. The group of successful traders eventually, became a kind of propertied class, and, thus underwent a double transformation in terms of stratification. While their initial engagement for many meant a loss of status, they soon had a chance to "upgrade" their social position, thanks to the dominant role of economic capital in post-Soviet Russia. In this sense, the group of traders fulfills some of the characteristics that Marx ascribed to the Lumpenproletariat²⁷ (they come from all possible backgrounds and find themselves at the low(est) strata of society), however, they lack the feature of being devoid of their class background. Quite the contrary, as I will show in the empirical analysis, class consciousness strongly determined the attitude towards the trading business among the women I talked to.

All in all, the process of class formation in post-socialist Russia is characterized by "spontaneity, formlessness, and uncertainty" (Golenkova and Gorshkov 2012:23), but it is, nonetheless, deeply rooted in the structure of the Soviet society. The structural particularity of the social system in the Soviet Union explains why, while there was relative equality on the economic level, other forms of capitals determined access to privileges, such as housing, holidays and luxury goods. However, the sudden nature of the social and economic changes and the deep ideological contradictions of the Soviet and post-Soviet times determined the contingent reconstruction of classes and shaped many conflicts on the private and public level. The fact that in the 1990's some people could transform those immaterial resources into economic capital, while others with the same or a higher stock of capital became poorer, continues to shape social cleavages in Russia until today.

4.2 The gender regime of Soviet labor conditions and the effects of the liberal market reforms in the 90's

Marxist theory might not be the most instructive explanatory scheme for class and stratification in the Soviet society, but it provides other insights which are highly relevant to the analysis of social transformation from a socialist into a capitalist society. Sociologists of labor in the Soviet Union usually referred to the ideological drumbeat of Marxism-Leninism, which

²⁷ The term identifies the class of "outcast, degenerated and submerged elements that make up a section of the population of industrial centers". Quoted from <https://www.marxists.org/glossary/terms/l/u.htm>, last access, 22.01.2019

proclaimed that all social and economic exploitation had been overcome with the victory of the October Revolution 1917 (Pereira and Pereira 2003:62). But even if studies based on this intellectual heritage have been very predictable, they used the concept of alienated labor and acknowledged a level of remaining alienation among Soviet workers (Yanowitch 1985). Alienation in the Marxian sense means “the forced labour of the labourer for the capitalist, the appropriation by the capitalist of the product of a worker’s labour and the separation of the labourer from the means of production” (Marx 1964:8). In this sense, the crucial problem of alienation lays in the commodification of labor and ultimately, of the laborers themselves. To overcome “powerlessness and self-estrangement”, it is fundamental that the working process is a “inherently rewarding and self-fulfilling activity” (Yanowitch 1985:18). During the real existing socialism, however, this ideal version of work-satisfaction was rare. Due to the discrepancy between the high quality of education and the relatively low level of technological advancement in the industrial production, many high skilled workers were overqualified for the work they did (Yanowitch 1985). Furthermore, especially in the late Brezhnev era the work ethics decreased with the growing frustration with the inefficiencies of the Soviet system.

The Russian vernacular has generated an abundance of proverbs and jokes that provide a vivid image of work ethics under state socialism. In one such joke, a dentist, a shop assistant and a repairman leave their workplaces during the shift to go to the hairdresser where they meet coincidentally. However, the barbers are not there. One has left to the dentist, one to the shop and the last for repairs. Another popular joke from a later period depicts the somewhat notorious working ethics even more vividly, “they pretend to pay us, and we pretend to work”. Bruce Adams’ collection of Soviet and Russian Jokes (2005) is a rich repertory for the wide spread popular sarcasm, which by nature provides invaluable insights into cultural particularities and hints on the paradoxes of the social structure.

There is an interesting aspect to reflect upon: if ever there is an ardent worker in a Soviet joke about working attitude, it’s a woman. For example, the chairman of a kolkhoz is speaking at a meeting about how much Soviet power has been given to simple people: “Look at Marya Petrovna. She was a simple peasant. Now she runs the village club. Look at Pelageia Fedorovna. She was a simple peasant too, and now she is in charge of the library. Look at Stepan Mitrofanich. He was the biggest of fools, and now he is secretary of the Party organization” (Adams 2005:19).

These jokes give a vivid account of the discrepancies between official rhetoric and the everyday socialism. But while I do not aim at analysing how it was possible that the ideology of Marxism-Leninism could stray that far from its promises, it is obvious that the vanguard role of the working class has largely remained a utopian promise from the text books.

Soviet sociology didn't touch upon class issues since the regime feared that the results might reveal a much higher level of inequality than the constructed image of a class-free society suggested (Morris 2017). But even if the proletariat didn't play the vanguard role in state socialism and the previously outlined anecdotes reveal a rather ambiguous working ethos, being employed mattered. The Russian sociologist Sergei Alashev, who studied Russian factories in the late Soviet Union and the early transformation period, observing labor quality and conditions and talking to workers, even stated that many of them 'lived to work' (Alashev 1995:74–75). According to him the workplace, for both men and women, often meant respite from tiny flats or disagreeable neighbors in the kommunalka. My interview partners to some extent confirm this argument. However, what seems much more important is the aspect of belonging to and even identification with the work they were doing. Almost all the women I met confirmed that they would have liked to stay in their Soviet workplaces. The reasons varied, starting with the pleasure of work as such:

*For a very long time, and even today I sometimes dream about the work in the kindergarten. How I take care of children, how we go for walks. No, I really remember this. We were a very good team there. Generally, if you work in a kindergarten, you do all kinds of work.*²⁸ (Nadezhda, 61)

Ranging to a kind of unquestioned working habit.

*Well, if things had remained stable, naturally, I wouldn't have left. I would have stayed in the factory until retirement.*²⁹ (Elena, 64)

*You know, we, - how to say, we were put in a situation without choice, [...] the production closed, the plant was closed, too. And what could we do? If I knew that I would still have a chance to work there, I would have flout everything else - do you understand?*³⁰ (Tanja, 49)

Those women who had children also highlighted the fact that they wouldn't have to worry about the reconcilability of family and work in Soviet times. In this way, they wouldn't have to sacrifice their professional ambitions for childcare and, thus, eventually find a higher level of satisfaction and identification with their work.

I was hired by a plant in the quality department. The factory produced a lot of different products, so we had more than enough to do. The system was built

²⁸ «Ya ochen' dolgo ya do sikh por inogda vo sne vizhu v detskiy sad kak ya zanimayus' det'mi. Kak na progulki khozhu... Net ya ochen' dazhe etot vspominayu etu svoyu rabotu ... mne ochen' nravilas' nas kollektiv tam byl khorosho kak v printsipe rabota v odnom detskom sadu vsyo i prorabotala.» (Nadezhda, 61, 01:08:00)

²⁹ «Da, yesli by tak vsyo ostalos' stabil'no, ya by, yestestvenno, ne ushla. Ya by ostalas' na zavode, tak na pensiyu poshla by s zavoda.» (Elena, 64, pensioner, 01:29:13)

³⁰ «Znayete, my, kak skazat', my byli postavleny situatsiyu bez vybora [...] izdeliye tozhe tozhe zakryvayet, zavod zakryvalsya. I chto tam delat'? Yesli byla by ya znala chto ya mogu eshcho tam rabotat', ya by naplevala na vsyo ostalos' by – ponimayete?» (Tanja, 49, 01:13:13)

very well in this small industrial city and there was a lot of work. That is, life was interesting [...] Well, in 1983 I moved to Moscow. There I also worked in the construction management. I was taken by the company because I had a higher education, but then I became the chief accountant of this department. And since I was a specialist with an economic education, I was invited everywhere, but I stayed (at this company) until 89 until the times of perestroika.³¹ (Liubov, 62)

The elderly women with whom I talked raised their children in the late Brezhnev era, a time when the Soviet welfare system had reached its most developed state. At the beginning of the 1980's the high female participation in the labor force and study programs reached 85 per cent among women aged between 16-48 (Lapidus 1989:41). The promotion of female participation in the labor force had strong ideological, but also pragmatic dimensions. While Lenin spoke about the need to free women from "domestic slavery" (Marx 1951:56) in order to achieve equality and social justice in a socialist society, later on the 'woman question' was reduced to the successful incorporation of women into the labor force. This simplified version of emancipation from traditional gender roles was "somehow positing that women's freedom was something that could be granted to them without changing men's social roles and duties" (Ghodsee 2006:35). This situation finally led to, what has often been called the double or even triple burden of work, chores, and active community participation, which almost exclusively lay on women's shoulders (Ghodsee 2006; Temkina and Zdravomyslova 2003). One of the many examples of the reproductive labor done by women is the difference in time spent on housework between men and women.

Figure 15: Housework done by men and women in Russian cities, 1965-68 (hours and minutes per week)

	Women	Men
Unmarried youths	17,07	5,40
Young spouses	24,25	12,10
Couple with minor children	32,40	12,10
Parents in extended family	30,50	12,15
Single parents	26,15	n.a.
Elderly people	29,15	18,00

Source: Gordon and Klopov 1975 (in Katz 2001:106)

³¹ «Mne peremanili na zavody otdel otdel kachestva kak raz zanimalis' otsenki kachestva produktsii i produktsii na zavode bylo ochen' mnogo poetomu tam rabota khvatata. Sistema byla postroyena ochen' khorosho gorod byl nebol'shoy promyshlennyy predpriyatiy ochen' mnogo. To yest' zhit' bylo interesnoye [...] Nu i 1983 godu ya pereyekhala v Moskvu. Tam ya tozhe rabotala v stroitel'nom upravlenii. U menya prinili kak by ya byla s vyshim obrazovaniyem, no potom ya stala glavnym bukhgalterom etogo upravlenii. A tak kak po stepeni bylo spetsialisty s ekonomicheskim obrazovaniyem menya vezde predlashali, no ya tam ostalas' do 89 godu kogda bylo perestroyka...» (Liubov, 62, 00:03:52)

The position of women in the Soviet Union has been of particular interest to many scholars, and a lot of research has been done on female workers (Danilova 1968; Sacks and Pankhurst 1988), the challenge to combine work and chores (Lapidus 1989; Yanowitch 1985) and the demographic situation (Lutz, Scherbov, and Volkov 2002; Michele Rivkin-Fish 2010; Volkov 1985). In these works, the scholars also highlight that throughout the existence of the Soviet Union the gender segregation in the working sphere was organized according to the needs of the paternalistic socialist government. Women were to identify as ‘mothers, wives and workers’ while the role of men was reduced to the worker (Borenstein 2000). The gender-specific division of labor remained largely unchanged and, just as in many other countries, women were occupied predominantly in the sphere of education, health-care, public service and light manufacturing industry, while the workers in heavy industry, military and management positions were mostly male (Katz 1997). Despite the fact that, especially in the late period of the Soviet Union it was women who often had better education, held equally high position as men and did just the same job, a significant gender pay gap remained. The differences in earnings display the vertical structure of the world of labor. The higher the prestige and the authority, the smaller the number of women who were found among the personnel. Katz (2001) shows in her extended research on Soviet wage schemes, non-monetary benefits and access to scarce consumer goods that the actual and symbolic remuneration of work points to the assigned value for different kinds of labor.

Figure 16: Average monthly wage (after tax), by job level

	1 Unskilled manual	2 Skilled manual	3 Skilled, partly manual	4 Non- manual	5 Management position	6 Highly qualified & creative
Total	145 59.9 (129)	216 80.7 (279)	194 69.7 (157)	181 70.9 (329)	275 103.4 (18)	250 102.2 (12)
Men	193 67.3 (33)	247 81.7 (165)	238 69.7 (68)	234 89.2 (99)	331 107 (10)	299 116.9 (5)
Women	129 48.5 (96)	172 54.8 (114)	161 47.8 (89)	158 45.2 (230)	205 32.2 (8)	214 80.6 (7)

Standard deviations in italics and number of observations in brackets. All respondents reporting a non-zero wage the preceding month.

Source: Nar. Khoz. 1989 g. Pp 76-7 (in Katz 2001:113)³²

On the other hand, mothers were entitled to some social services to compensate for the gender pay gap (that reached up to 30%) and the additional burden they had to carry. They received coupons for some basic goods, education, medical treatment, kindergarten, holiday and much more was provided by the state-owned factories.

Studies have shown that women in the Soviet Union would have preferred to work less (most of the women worked full time, which meant 10-30 hours per week). Even though the state was organized in a system based on the redistribution of goods and services, women's contribution to the household income played an existential role for a family's financial survival. The many tasks women were obliged to fulfill, on the one hand, often led to a feeling of exhaustion. On the other hand, the professional status was a source of self-esteem and enabled women to construct an identity that went beyond the prescribed roles of the mother and the wife.

Surveys from within the Soviet Union (Yanowitch 1985), but also in migrant communities (Millar 1987) reveal a high level of job satisfaction, with women ranked even higher than men.

³² "Note: The survey in Taganrog was done in spring 1989 and should be somewhere 'in between' the yearly averages for 1988 and 1989." (Katz 2001:113)

Figure 17: Responses of Women Workers in Soviet Job Satisfaction Surveys

Year and coverage of study	Fully satisfied	More satisfied than not	More dissatisfied than satisfied	Dis-Satisfied	Indif-ferent	Don't know
1966, Moscow confectionary factory, Penza watch factory, Leningrad industrial enterprises (N = 427)*	68.8	9.3	10.1	7.6		4.2
1966, Leningrad textile, tobacco, electrical equipment and machinery plants (N = 540)	44.0	28.5	18.1	9.4		
1968, Kostroma textile plants (N = 480)	55.1	23.5	11.9	9.5		
1969-70, Voronezh textile and machine-building plants	6.2	(58)**	(16)**	9.5	(10)**	
1972, Semipalatinsk Meat-Packing Combine***	62.4		11.8		21.6	4.2
1973, Uzbekistan building materials plants****	62.8		10.4			10
1978, Taganrog industrial enterprises (quoted from Yanowitch 1985:51) ³³	80		10			10

However, these figures don't necessarily allow for weighty conclusions. They matter in so far as the rates of job satisfaction are of approximately the same as those observed for men and women combined. Several studies on women workers conducted in the Soviet Union between the 60's-80's suggest that women's job evaluation is mainly influenced by the "socio-emotional" climate of the job, proximity of the workplace to their homes, availability of child-care facilities, comfort aspects (sanitary-hygienic conditions) and the opportunity to work convenient shifts (Yanowitch 1985). These stereotypical conclusions ignored the fact that unpaid housework and child-care undoubtedly remained a female obligation. The option to propose an equal role of

³³ Moscow and Penza: Osipov and Shchepanskii, p. 422

Leningrad and Kostroma: A. G. Kharchev and S. I. Golod, *Professional'naia rabota zhenshchin I sem'ia*, Leningrad, 1971, p. 45

Voronezh: N. V. Nastavshev. "Attitude toward Work and Some Characteristics of the Personality," in V. S. Rakhmanin et al., eds., *Lichnost' i problem kommunisticheskogo vospitaniia*, Voronezh, 1973, p. 89

Semipalatinsk: Akademiia nauk Kazakhskoi SSR, Institut ekonomiki, *Upravlenie sotsial'nym razvitiem proizvodstvennykh kollektivov*, Alma-Ata, 1975, p. 154

Uzbekistan: V. I. Soldatova and A. S. Chamkin, *Proizvodstvennyi kollektiv I voprosy kommunisticheskogo vospitaniia*, Tashkent, 1979, p. 131

Tagarog: E. B. Gruzdeva and E. S. Chertikhina, "Soviet Women: Problems of Work and Everyday Life," *Rabochii klass I sovremennyi mir*, 1982, No. 6, p. 113

* About 7% of this sample included engineering-technical personnel and nonmanual employees

** These figures were read from a graph and should be regarded as rough estimates.

*** These figures refer to attitudes toward "occupation" rather than to "job".

**** Engineering-technical personell and employees are included here along with workers

parents in the domestic sphere was ideologically inconceivable (Zakharova, Posadskaya, and Rimashevskaya 1989). Once claimed that the 'woman question' was solved by the early Bolshevik government, no discourse on gender roles or string for gender equality found its way into the public debates. There was no impactful feminist movement to provoke a public discussion on the unbalanced 'double burden' until the beginning of perestroika and glasnost (Posadskaya 1994). When talking about this issue with my informants the reaction was unison; they clearly confirmed that men considered the chores a women's business.

He did not look after (the children), nor did he help with anything else. In the morning he went to work in the evening came to take his bike, in the winter skis and left. The children were left on their own. (While she was away for work)³⁴ (Nadezhda, 61)

But not all of them accepted this situation and Liubov, a pensioner who reveals that, thanks to her patient insistence, nowadays her husband doesn't care to contribute to the housework

But it was very hard to knock out of him what he had been used to for years. That is, kind of he considered washing dishes is not a man's business or washing floors is not a man's business.³⁵ (Liubov, 62)

These complaints, however, did not affect their evaluation of the principle of female work obligation in state socialism. Quite the contrary, most of the women rarely talked about the challenges of having to simultaneously deal with multiple tasks, while they emphatically repeated their commitments to the professional position held in Soviet times. In the process of market transformation social identities and structures underwent a fundamental change. The often-required redefinition of professional status was strongly influenced by the rapid stratification in post-Soviet societies. As Ursula Huws points out "[t]he basic building block of class identity has traditionally been the occupation, normally a stable identity acquired slowly either by inheritance or through a training process intended to equip the student or apprentice with skills for life", however, "the unprecedented movements of people and jobs around the world have coincided with a breakdown of many traditional occupational identities". (Huws 2006:35) This definition exactly fits the situation of shuttle traders in Russia. Not only that they had to manage to comply with the requirements of the harsh market and trading realities, they also had to reframe their incorporated professional expectations and identities.

From this analysis it becomes clear that the level of alienated labor has been relatively low among the women in my sample. But despite the fact that after leaving the university they were

³⁴ «On nichego, nichego ne smotrel nichego on ne pomogal. On utrom khodil na rabotu vecherom prikhodil bral sebya velosiped, zimoy lyzhi i ukhodil. Deti oni sami sebe byli predostavleny.» (Nadezhda, 61, 00:13:20, II. part)

³⁵ «No ochen' tyazhelo bylo vybit' iz nego vot eto vot godami priobretonnyye. To yest' tipa on schital posudu myt', eto ne muzhskoye delo poly myt', eto ne muzhskoye delo.» (Liubov, 62, 01:09:00)

mostly forced out of their professional positions due to unpaid salaries, closed factories or job deficit, they managed to negotiate new professional identities. The public discourse about the role of women in post-communist Russia shows a strong discrepancy between the normative prescriptions of the ideal Russian woman and the everyday practices, such as shuttle trading. Given these circumstances, the resilience of female traders and their achievement to generate a new livelihood in the harsh conditions of the post-Soviet transformation deserves even more acknowledgement.

4.3 Changing living conditions and the gender dimension of post-Soviet transformation

The adaptation of women to the new social and economic realities at the beginning of the 90's was not a result of self-selected circumstances. The predominant argument for getting engaged in trading among the people I talked to can be summarized as a reaction to the lack of alternatives and the necessity to take means of survival.

I retired and my husband's salary – he worked at the same plant, he was the head of the workshop at the plant, he didn't receive his salary anymore. They stopped giving anything, and from there everything went awry. Then [...] they stopped even giving parts of the salary, and then they ceased paying my retirement pension – this was in 92. The girls who had worked with me said "Come with us!", And I "WHAT are you saying, girls, as if I would trade, I have never traded in my life". In socialism everything was free, we all worked hard for these guarantees – and there I went.³⁶ (Galina, 81)

Another woman told me that she had lost all her money during a robbery and was therefore deeply indebted, which forced her into the trading business.

I probably would not have gone if it wasn't unavoidable (because of huge debts) I mean, if it would have been enough, – I never wanted to make any big money. It had always been enough for me what I earned in my profession (in Soviet times). But the circumstances were set in such a way that I needed a large amount of money which I could get anywhere else, except from shuttle trading. The traders earned very well, back then it was a golden time for them therefore ...³⁷ (Liubov, 62)

³⁶ «Vyshla na pensiyu i zarplatu muzh - tozhe rabotal na etom zavode nachal'nikom tsekha - zarplatu ne poluchayet im perestali davat' nichego to poshlo vso naperekosyak. Potom [...] perestali dazhe chastyami davat' a potom moyu pensiyu perestali davat' - tut kak raz v 92 godom. Devchonki moi zhe narabotniki kotoryye govoryat «Poyekhali s nami!», i ya «VY CHTO, devchonki, ya poydu torgovat', v zhizni ne torgovala» Vso besplatno pri sotsializm byl, no za eto my rabotali vse eti nagruzki byli chtoby besplatnom byl - i ya tut poshli.» (Galina, 81, pensioner, 02:05:00)

³⁷ «Ya navernoye ne yezdila by potomu mne ne bylo neobkhodimosti. YA govoryu kak by khvatalo - YA nikogda ne rvalas' zarabatyvat' na kakikh-to bol'shikh deneg dlya menya vseгда dostatochno bylo to chto ya zarabatyval svoey professii. A vot obstayatel'stva postavili tak, chto mne neobkhodimo bylo krupnyuyu summu deneg kotoruyu ya ne

In the provinces the situation was even harder as there was no work left after the factories closed down.

It was all very difficult, and we were just surviving. We had the choice, either to follow the river's current, or to change something in your life. We didn't have, here, this "I need an apartment for myself," or, I didn't even have an apartment, I lived with my parents. No, it was not necessary. The most important thing is to survive. Even elementary – to eat. Because my mother was very sick, I needed a lot of money for medicines. There was no money. I always remember how I bought sausage by centimeter. I came, the girl said: "How much?". I say: "5 cm." Or I bought two oranges: one orange for my daughter and another orange for my mother.³⁸(Sveta, 57)

These accounts represent how the dismantling of the Soviet Union had influenced the lives of people of all possible backgrounds, ages and places. The first quote is given by a pensioner who had worked as a skilled laborer, but was deprived of her rent, soon after the collapse. The second quote is from a highly skilled economic expert who – calculating the exchange rate profits – planned to exchange a large amount of rubles into dollars, but was robbed at the entry to the exchange office. Thanks to her high social capital she could make use of personal networks, which allowed her to trade on a “different level”, as she repeated several times. In her case this means that she purchased and retailed luxury goods via second-hand shops, instead of standing at the market herself. The quote from the retired working-class woman depicts the situation in the provinces. She was probably the most outspoken about her ambition to engage in trading as a chance to improve her precarious economic situation. She started from the lowest social position of all informants, including a drinking husband from whom she was financially dependent. For her trading was the only way to escape from this situation and build a new life. All these examples reveal different dimensions of the interaction between structural changes and individual agency, but what they have in common is the economic hardship that forced women to engage in the business.

mogla ni gde vzyat' krome tak kak chelnok. Oni chelnoki togda zarabotali ochen' khorosho togda bylo zolotoye vremya dlya nikh potomu ...» (Liubov, 62, 00:52:00)

³⁸ *«Bylo ochen' slozhno i my prosto vyzhivali. U nas byl vybor ili, vot, plyt' po techeniyu kak poluchitsya, ili prosto chto-to pomenyat' v svoey zhizni. U nas ne bylo, vot, etogo "mne nado kvartiru sebe", ili, tam, u menya dazhe kvartiry ne bylo, ya zhila s roditelyami. Net, ne nuzhno bylo. Samoye glavnoye - vyzhit'. Dazhe, elementarno, - pitat'sya. Potomu chto mama sil'no bolela, nuzhno bylo ochen' mnogo deneg na lekarstva. Deneg ne bylo. YA vseгда pomnyu, kak ya pokupala kolbasu santimetrami. YA prikhodila, devochka govorit: "Skol'ko?". YA govoryu: "5 sm". Ili ya pokupala dva apel'sina: apel'sin docheri i apel'sin mame.» (Sveta, 54, petty entrepreneur, 00:45:00)*

The collapse of the Soviet socialist system caused a serious decline in living standards and strained people's social relations. At the same time, it provided a space for action, especially for those who were not satisfied with their lives in Soviet times. For many, however, the transformation did not mean a liberation from structural constraints, but a severe breakup of what had been taken for granted. This change of the everyday reality went far beyond the economic situation; it fundamentally modified all social spheres such as "politics, property, culture and power" (Golenkova and Gorshkov 2012:22). In fact, the figures surrounding the neo-liberal transformation in Russia reveal the destructive dimension of the socio-cultural changes, and show how deeply the rampant economic crisis decreased the quality of life in Russia.

In 1995 premature death in Russia reached the number of 3.4 million children (Rosefielde 2001, 1159), male life expectancy declined from 64.2 in 1989, to 57.5 in 1994 (Goskomstat 2002, 105) and after a short period of recovery, fell back to 58.4 in 2002 (Goskomstat 2003, 117). Female life expectancy declined, too, however the change from 74.4 in 1998 to 72 in 2002 (Goskomstat 2002, 105) is less dramatic³⁹. The GDP declined by 44.1 % between 1989-1998, and real wages in 1998 reached only half the amount of 1985, while the level of inequality constantly increased⁴⁰. Only the numbers unemployment didn't increase to the predicted amount. However, the fact of being employed was not necessarily connected with a stable and sufficient salary. In fact, at many factories, in the state sector, and equally in private enterprises, the salaries were not paid for months or even years. But since the workplace came with housing, and welfare provision, people frequently remained officially employed.

Apart from the decline in life expectancy, GDP and employment rates, also the social role of women in post-Soviet Russia changed. As a matter of fact, once the reform period began many scholars from different disciplines, both in Russia and in the west, suggested that women would lose out most in the process of the market transformation. The emerging discourse about the role of women in post-communist Russia was highly biased and largely dominated by male politicians and economists. The economic, demographic and social situation in the post-Soviet transition period aggressively stifled the emerging discussion on real emancipation and gender equality which took place in the years of perestroika and glasnost (Posadskaya 1994). Generally, Russia's transformation from a socialist system to a liberal market economy was full of gender polemics with the predominant notion that women should return to 'their purely womanly mission'⁴¹, or, as

³⁹ Those figures are quoted from Ashwin, Sarah (2006). *Adapting to Russia's New Labour Market: Gender and Employment Behaviour* / Ed. By Sarah Ashwin. London [u.a.]: Routledge, p. 2-3

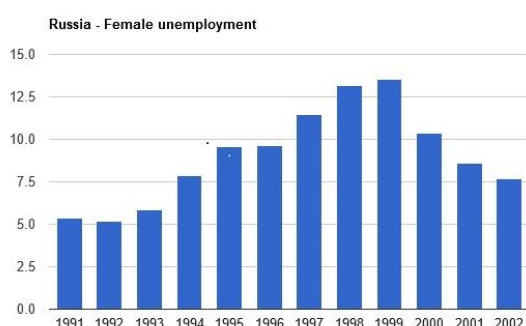
⁴⁰ The Gini coefficient increased from 0.26 in 1991 to 0.5 in 1993. See Clarke, Simone, *New Forms of Employment and Household Survival Strategies in Russia*, Coventry and Moscow: ISITO/CCLS. 1999a, p.122

⁴¹ Mikhail Gorbachev wrote in his book "Perestroika" about his visions to solve the 'woman problem'

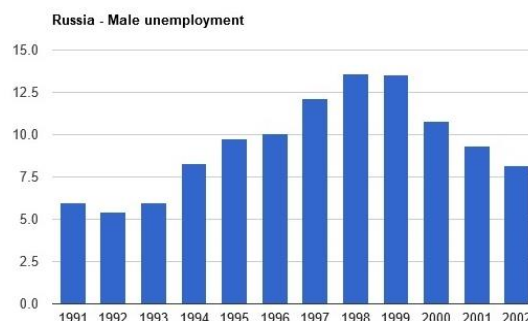
it was put by Ruslan Khasbulatov, a politician in Yel'tsin's parliament, being stopped from preventing that 'the man feel[s] himself the head of the family'⁴².

The initial attempt to lighten the double burden women had to carry throughout the Soviet period had turned into a neo-traditional conception of gender relation that was supposed to re-empower men in the public sphere, while pushing women back into the domestic realm. Nevertheless, the predictions that women would voluntarily leave the labor market and stay home didn't prove right (Ashwin 2006). In fact, taking into account the gender polemics and the official consent to favor men over women in terms of employment, the apparent low difference in unemployment figures is remarkable.

Figure 18: Russia: Unemployment rates



Source: TheGlobalEconomy.com, The World Bank



Source: TheGlobalEconomy.com, The World Bank

Source: TheGlobalEconomy⁴³

A long-term survey (1996-2011) about the gender pay gap in the Russian Federation reveals the ongoing precarization of female occupation. Women are at the bottom of the earning distribution, irrespective of their education or professional position. As outlined in the previous chapter, the gender specific division of work (professional and domestic) and income has been a wide-spread practice in the paternalistic system of state socialism as well. However, the post-Soviet labor market in Russia did not only produce a huge cleavage between poor and rich, but also a clearly gendered pattern of segregation. The system change affected women more negatively, because of the drastic cuts in the welfare system and the emergence of a highly gendered low-wage sector with precarious and unstable working conditions. In the words of Anna Pollert, "Capitalist transition not only failed to maximize the female human resources legacy left by communist regimes but damaged it." (Pollert 2003:336). Due to the breakdown of industrial

⁴² Quoted from Lynne Attwood's article "The post-Soviet woman in the move to the market", p. 259, in: *Women in Russia and Ukraine*, ed. by Marsh Rosalind, Cambridge University Press, 1996

⁴³ https://www.theglobaleconomy.com/Russia/Female_unemployment/ latest access: 10/19/2018

production, scarcity of the most essential goods, deteriorating quality of health care, social safety net and living standards, severe cuts in the social welfare and housing system, corruption and a general uncertainty about the future, the Russian society experienced a deep identity crisis (Miller et al. 2002). Generations of Russians had been brought up within the ideological value system that suddenly proved obsolete. The unmasking of the real state of the Soviet economy and the predatory principles of the liberal market economy had a devastating effect on people's morale. The reasons for the mortality crisis (Shkolnikov et al. 1998) and the correlation between alcohol consumption and gender specific adaptation patterns were investigated in several studies (Ashwin 2006; Bobak et al. 1999; Zohoori 1998) and confirmed by my interview partners.

People didn't drink out of pleasure, but because of hopelessness. So many people, especially in the villages where they had nothing. I have a friend and her sister died from alcohol when her husband brought this so-called "Spiri 'Royal'". Generally, it was all very bad... those times were really bad.⁴⁴
(Liubov, 61)

Many more examples from the interviews could be given for what has often been called the *katastroika* and what scholars of post-Soviet transition imputed to a "state of confusion, uncertainty and calamity, [...] experienced in the face of dramatic changes in the labor market" (Ashwin, 2006:2). This is, without doubt, an important dimension but the scale of systemic transformation has an even greater influence on all domains of private and public life. As was shown before, the destructive alcohol consumption, skyrocketing criminal and violence rates largely contributed to the rise in mortality among men. Several cinematic productions captured the atmosphere of the 90's and movies like "Brother" (Брат) and the series "Brigada" (Бригада) have long reached a cult status, despite or because of being criticized for too explicit demonstrations of violence. As pointed out by Yukiya Zabyelina (2012) and as I was told innumerable times during my interviews, it was on the streets, where battles between petty criminals as well as gunfights between mafia-style gangsters were fought and it was on the street markets where they would meet for dirty businesses.

In all the accounts of my informants, incidents of criminal assaults and the appearance of violent gangs in the public space were described vividly.

⁴⁴ «Ni ot soglasiya no ot bezyskhodnosti, mnogo, mnogo osobenno v derevnyakh tam netu u nego sestra ona umerla ot alkogolya kogda u muzha i u nikh tam poluchilos' v etot spirt «Royal» kakoy-to poyavilsya, ... v obshchem vse ochen' strashno bylo.» (Liubov, 62, 00:07:00)

Swindlers of course crept out. The perestroika swindlers appeared, thieves and gangsters and who not. And how many skimmers! They threw the dollars in the air.⁴⁵ (Galina, 81)

We had a terrible gangster city. The youngsters dispersed on the streets. It was impossible to come from one district to another - you never knew if you come alive you will not come alive, it was a single story of fights. All my peers, my peers all the people went to the gym to be able to strike back, - I myself went to the gym at that time so that I could run faster, so that I could strike back. I even practiced karate, so I could stuff someone's mouth.⁴⁶ (Tanja, 49)

As it turned out, some women managed to work and travel safer, because they stood under the protection of a group of respected bandits.

I have a friend, she has a son sitting in prison and she came, she prepared this all, - he was a good man, though. And visited him and, he says, "if they come to you, just say there is money and that, say that you are from 'Limona'. Don't say anything more!"⁴⁷ (Galina, 81)

Well, and then once when I came back to Yekaterinburg a guy came to the market, we started talking with him and he says, "Listen, I saw you in Warsaw." I say "yes", and he says "I have my guys there, they work as gangsters. If someone comes up..." And he told me a password.⁴⁸ (Nadezhda, 61)

But not only street gangs and racketeers threatened the life of the traders, also the conduct of public servants was unpredictable, and corruption was rampant.

Well, the nineties. I remember these "mask shows" they came all masked, with machine guns. The tax inspectorate, along with the riot police arrived. They performed a real battue; a natural battue is what they did.⁴⁹ (Elena, 64)

The Russian border guards requested money. We said: "Too much, we will not give you so much, we will wait for another shift." When another shift came, they requested two times more.⁵⁰ (Sveta, 57)

⁴⁵ «Zhulikov konechno podnyalis' perestroyku podnyalas' zhuliki, vory i bandity i kogo tol'ko ne bylo. A skol'ko aferistov, da aferisty dollarov podbrasyvali pal'chikami.» (Galina, 81, 01:52:10)

⁴⁶ «U nas byl strashnyy banditskiy gorod. U nas delili molodezh' delili molodozhi po ulitsam. U nas nevozmozno bylo s odnogo rayona v drugoy priyti - pridet zhiv'yom ne pridosh' zhiv'yom, eto byl otdel'nyy rasskaz dralis' vot. Zato vsekh nu moi rovesniki, moy rovesniki vse narod khodil v sportzal a zanimalasya tak chto mog by mog dat' komu-nibud' zadat', - ya sama khodila po tem vremenam sportzal, chtoby mozno bylo bystre bezhat', chtoby mozno bylo dat' sdachi. YA dazhe karate zanimalas' tam mozno bylo nabit' mordu komu-nibud'!» (Tanja, 49, 01:31:00)

⁴⁷ «U menya plemynantsa, u neye syn sidel v tyur'me i prishol ona zhe podgotovila etot vse, khoroshiy vrode muzhik to takoye vso. I my poshli, on govorit «yesli k vam podoydut skazhet tam den'gi i chto, skazhite chto vy ot Limona. Bol'she nechto ne govorite!» (Galina, 81, 01:37:00)

⁴⁸ «Vot, a potom odin raz ya kogda priyekhala syuda etot v Yekaterinburg i paren' prishel na rynok my chto-to razgovorilis' on govorit, «Slushay ya tebya v Varshave videl.» YA govoryu «da» i on govorit, «u menya tam eto rebyata rabotayut banditami vot yesli kto-to podoydot...» on mne skazal parol'» (Nadezhda, 61, 00:13:28)

⁴⁹ «Vot, eti devyanostyye. YA vspomnyu, sovsem eti "maski shou" prikhodili vse v maskakh, s avtomatami. Vot nalogovaya inspektsiya vmeste s OMONom prikhodila, pryamo oblavy delali. Oblavy natural'nyye.» (Elena, 64, 00:58:50)

⁵⁰ «Rossiyskaya granitsa zaprosila den'gi. My skazali: "Slishkom mnogo, my vam ne dadim, my podozhdom druguyu smenu". Kogda prishla na rabotu drugaya smena, oni zaprosili v 2 raza bol'she.» (Sveta, 54, 00:04:00)

With the mushrooming markets in the beginning of the 90's criminality, corruption and market competition became part of the everyday life. But these markets were much more than places for gang wars and illicit arms-trafficking, it was the symbol of the decline of the socialist world-order and the emergence of a new ideological system.

4.4 The stigmatization and the gender of the trading business

The strong symbolism of open-air markets in the post-Soviet context became manifest in the interviews, not so much because of the criminal structure of the grey market, which had existed ever before and throughout the Soviet Union, but in the fact that the market was at odds with all principles of the socialist ideology. In the Soviet context, private commercial enterprise was considered an economic crime (Sik and Wallace 1999) and was ideologically delegitimated. Within the official discourse, market competition and individual pursuit of self-enrichment were diametrically opposed to the image of working for the common good and the central redistribution of products. Soviet people's habitus towards "private business and resale in particular was negative [...] as most people who lived during the Soviet times were brought up feeling that trading was something akin to cheating or stealing or an act of extreme desperation similar to begging." (Mukhina, 2014: 46). The changing realities required a redefinition of the stereotypically negative branding of retailers as profiteers (*spekulyanty*), from both sides, those who started to buy their daily products at the markets, and the market sellers themselves. In the popular discourse markets were considered places "where profit-making was combined with criminal activity such as speculation, pickpocketing, or the reselling of smuggled and stolen property" (Sik and Wallace 1999:697).

In media debates and academic journals from within the post-Soviet space, as well as in the West, it has often been expressed that "the general public in the Soviet Union is not prepared to accept the development of markets because of concerns about fair prices and income inequality, resistance to exchange of money, lack of appreciation for incentives, and hostility towards business." (Shiller, Boycko, and Korobov 1990:1). This allegation goes along a similar line with Józef Tischner's (2005) negative branding of the term *homo sovieticus*. According to the Polish priest, philosopher and writer, it was state socialism, which enslaved people and deprived them of the ability to make decisions and take responsibility for their actions. He characterized the *homo sovieticus* as a syndrome of people who were socialized within socialist ideology and therefore

“are continually looking for some force which would define the framework for his activity, organize his life, give it meaning and put it in order” (Tyszka 2009:510).

This denial of people’s capacity to exercise/develop agency is stunningly ignorant considering the bustling activity of millions of small-scale entrepreneurs who were trying to make their ends meet, when state support ceased to function. Looking at the massive engagement in commercial activities of people all over the post-Soviet space, the insinuation of passivity and incapacity to take responsibility, as stated by Tischner, is hardly comprehensible. The interviews with previous traders reveal the high degree of initiative, creativity and courage raised by the practitioners.

Since there were no goods people bought a lot, and the trading went well. Then we opened a pet kiosk. We were the first to take this pet food to the city. This kind of food was not available, so, we took it from Chelyabinsk from the wholesale base.⁵¹ (Elena, 64)

Different descriptions of how they maintained in the business against all odds reveal the resilience of the traders and the development of a sense for business.

I had all sorts of schemes and many of my friends asked me: "Teach me how to save." I taught them all. I did the following: I arrived, this means, we went every 10 days, so, I arrived and the first days I traded, I had to strictly set aside \$ 200. This is now stable, I cleaned \$ 200, and the rest I took for the next trip. That's how I calculated, and in this way, I bought myself an apartment.⁵² (Sveta, 57)

But not only did they have to struggle with the general economic and emotional hardship, also the government regulations required constant adaptation and adjustment of economic strategies. During the reform period in the 1990’s “new laws keep appearing, taxation policy continually shifting, inflation makes long-term calculation difficult, and fluctuating interest rates make investment risky” (Burawoy 2000:2). Many traders confirmed this arbitrariness and told me about the irksome controls of customs officers.

At that time, people already understood that - these customs officers - that we were flying, and they began to meet us here, this is what we had to pay for every kilogram. It began again, that is, it was necessary to weigh everything,

⁵¹ «Vot ne bylo tovara, poetomu brali khorosho, my khorosho torgovali. Potom otkryli kiosk zoo-tovarov. To yest' my vot pervyye v gorode zavezli vot eti korma dlya zhivotnykh. U nas ne bylo etikh kormov, my vozili iz Chelyabinska s optovoy bazy.» (Elena, 64, 00:52:50)

⁵² «U menya mnogo bylo vsyakikh skhem i vse moi podruzhki vseгда govorili mne: "Nauchi kopit". I ya im nauchila. YA delala tak: ya priyeezhala, vot kogda my yezdili kazhdye 10 dney, ya priyeezhala i pervyye dni ya torgovala i ya dolzhna byla strogo otlozhit' 200 dollarov. Eto vot stabil'no, ya ubirala 200 dollarov, ostal'nyye ya opyat' nabirala na poyezdku. Vot tak ya nabirala, ya kupila sebe tak kvartiru. Ya nakopila dollary i kogda proizoshel defolt, u menya ne bylo rubley nisko!ko.» (Sveta, 54, 00:26:30)

*well, we somehow, that is, that is ... difficulties were everywhere.*⁵³ (Nadezhda, 61)

These appeals are especially comprehensible, considering the fact that they often felt as if the government had left them in the lurch while they were struggling to make their ends meet.

*It was very hard, and the state's support became minimal, which means, in general, the state had practically ceased to support us. That is, on the contrary, the tax, the trade fee in Moscow steadily grew, until it became an unbearable financial burden. In addition, the proprietors every year they increased their rent in dollars in dollars they charged us. It was an 'anchor' trading structure, they just captured everything.*⁵⁴ (Liubov, 62)

*It was very difficult to clear the goods and all that - you were constantly afraid. Well, that someone will come to you, that you will be taken away, that you will be robbed there, all this was happening, it might be that your business would be outlawed, that the tax officers show up and - you will look at someone not the way he wants or someone doesn't like you and they just take your business, they will come and check your accounts and that's it, all this we had. It was all very difficult. You were constantly afraid, it was a constant stress. So, finally I decided to give up this business.*⁵⁵ (Anna, 49)

The number of people involved in this form of trade rapidly grew at the beginning of 1990's. A couple of years later the engagement already ranges from 10 million (Yakovlev and Eder 2003) to 30 million people who in 1995 imported about 75% of all consumer goods into the Russian market (Leontiev quoted in Mukhina 2009:341). Informal business became one of the most important economic factors in the post-Soviet era.

However, barter arrangements and transactions in the grey and black economy and enterprise networks were well established practices already in Soviet times and have always provided some flexibility to the economy. They were tolerated as long as they didn't go too far and were even considered necessary for the system (Paldam and Svendsen 2002; Sik and Wallace 1999). But not only the informal dimension of trading was institutionalized despite the official

⁵³ «V tu poru kak by lyudi uzhe ponyali chto - eti tamozhenniki - chto my letayem nas nachali vstrechat' zdes' to eto yest' za kazhdyi kilogramm nuzhno bylo platit'. Opyat' nachalos' to yest' nuzhno bylo vso vzveshivat' vot nu my kak-to tak eto to yest' ... slozhnosti byli voobshche...» (Nadezhda, 61, 00:16:00)

⁵⁴ «Ochen', ochen' tyazhelo i podderzhka gosudarstva stalo minimal'naya to yest' v obshchem-to gosudarstvo prakticheski perestala nas podderzhivat'. To yest', naoborot nalog, togovyy sbor v Moskve stali vseгда povyshe i do togo, chto takaya finansovaya nagruzka prosto stala nevmogotu. I potom arendodateli oni kazhdyi god uvelichivali arenda u nikh u nikh v dollarakh dollarakh pochitat' i v obshchem-to bylo yakornaya togovaya struktura, oni zakhvatili vse.» (Liubov, 62, 00:23:00)

⁵⁵ «Eto bylo ochen' trudno rastamozhili eto vso eto, eto -- ty postoyanno boyalsya. Nu, chto k tebe kto-to pridot chto tebya eto zaberut chto tebya tam ograbit eto bylo vso eto bylo eto bylo chto tebya zapretyat, chto tam nalogovyy kontroli pridot k tebe tam nachnot u tebya - ty na kogo-to ne tak posmotrish' komu-to ty ne ponravilas' kto-to zakhochet zabrat' svoj biznes i k tebe pridut na schot proveryat' eto bylo vso u nas eto vso bylo eto, eto bylo ochen' vse slozhno. Ty postoyanno boyalsya, eto byl postoyannyi stress. Poetomu ya reshil eto vse prekratit'.» (Anna, 49, 00:25:15)

proscription, also provincial food and vegetable markets continued existing throughout all decades of the Soviet power, even if they were considered as “remnants of an outdated and unnecessary form of commerce or as a dangerous challenge to the socialized retail sector” (Sik and Wallace 1999:697). Yet, the proliferation of shuttle trade in the post-Soviet time shouldn’t be framed as a mere continuation of previously existing practices.

The changes are manifest in terms of spatial, social and economic dimensions. Despite the expansion of previous kolkhoz markets and trading places which moved to empty spaces, such as stadiums or abandoned production sites, it was also an absolute novelty that traders traveled abroad, instead of retailing home-grown merchandise. The sheer number of people involved in the business and the increasing demand for consumer goods made the markets a kind of gravitate zone of post-Soviet transformation. The Russian historian Viktor Innokent'yevich Dyatlov (2017) even claims that it was the markets where post-Soviet stratification took place. Finally, the markets in the post-Soviet time have a very different character and meaning to those existing during state socialism. The condemnation of shuttle traders as profiteers can therefore be also seen as “[a] ‘moral outcry’ [that] becomes specifically loud when existing practices suddenly takes place in a different (and therefore often inappropriate) social space” (Hohnen 2003:3). The normalization of market trading required a long endurance and high resilience of traders to deal with the negative public attitude they had to face.

As highlighted before, different labor sectors followed a traditional scheme of gender segregation, also in the Soviet Union. Apart from being employed in predominantly caring and white-collar fields, women have always been a majority in the still existing food-markets in rural areas (Humphrey et al. 2002). If before retailers were either allegedly smugglers of stolen property or elderly women selling privately grown food, the range of people engaged in this commercial activity not only increased in number but also in the variety of social groups. One of the most salient dimensions of shuttle trading is the high number of women and the generally high level of education among the practitioners (Bedzir et al. 1997; Egbert 2006; Hann and Hann 1992; Mandel and Humphrey 2002; Mukhina 2009; Sasunkevich 2015; Yadova 2009; Yakovlev and Eder 2003). It would be fundamentally wrong to assume that women who engaged in this commercial activity had already gained experience in the shadow economy or kolkhoz market trading. So, what are the reasons for such an overwhelming majority of women with higher education involved in the stigmatized trading business?

Although most scholars who studied the topic of shuttle trading in the post-Soviet countries mentioned the fact in passing, only very few scrutinized the gender dimension of trading. It was Irina Mukhina who first dedicated a monograph to the gender aspect of shuttle trading. In her

research, she asks for the reasons for the female predominance in the field and concludes that “the question might never be satisfactorily answered.” (Mukhina 2014:40). In the large number of interviews she conducted, her informants referred to the following reasons: economic hardship, gender stereotypical arguments, such as a sense for fashion, better rhetoric skills or advantages in negotiations with the police and customs officers, or genuine interest in traveling. Other studies highlight the structural side of gender segregation in the informal economy, claiming that women traditionally take over tasks on the “cash-in-hand” basis as it is typical for care and household work (Williams 2004:89). Olga Sasunkevich follows this suggestion and argues that the predominance of female traders goes back to the broader social structure, and “women’s responsibilities for daily provision and family consumption”(2015:154) within the gender segregation of reproductive work.

In my study I didn’t receive very clear answers when asking for the potential reasons for prevalence of women in the business. While basically all women confirmed the fact of female predominance, they reacted to my inquiry as if I posed a rhetorical and commonsensical question.

Our business is, of course, mainly for women. Yes, yes, women. And even if a man is involved with us, with some kind of women’s product, for example, pantyhose. He would get a nickname - "Nylon maker" (Chulochnik), or something⁵⁶. (Sveta, 57)

Another woman frames the different gender roles in business within traditionalist discourse:

Mostly women were there (at the markets). If the husband came there in the evening, he just helped to load the cars or take things somewhere to the storage chamber or take their places, so that they could run to the toilet. Even today there are mostly women, because it is a kind of patriarchy but on the neck it’s a matriarchy; I would put it that way.⁵⁷ (Larisa, 57)

Liubov also mentions the continuation of chores and housework as a reason for female dominance

The reason why women and not men - well, probably a woman is still the keeper of the hearth. [...] There is a gene for trading inside women— well, of course, not all of them, but the active women. But there are only few active men. The case that the husband of a wife would go (trading), - I don’t know, I probably didn’t come across with this in my practice.⁵⁸ (Liubov, 62)

⁵⁶ «Biznesom u nas, v osnovnom, konechno, zanimayutsya zhenshchiny. Da-da, zhenshchiny. I dazhe, yesli u nas zanimayetsya muzhchina, to kak-to, dazhe, oni, kak-to, zanimayutsya, dazhe, kakim-to tovarom takim zhenskim, naprimer, kolgotkami. U nego dazhe klichka byla - "Chulochnik", chto li.» (Sveta, 57, 00:52:20)

⁵⁷ «Na rynkakh stoyali v osnovnom zhenshchiny byli. Yesli tam muzh priyechal vecherom pomogal tam mashiny v mashinu zagruzit' ili kuda-to tam veshchi snesti v kameru khraneniya libo khotya by pomenyat' chtoby ona tam v tualet sbegala, v osnovnom v osnovnom zhenshchiny byli - oni i seychas zhenshchiny potomu chto poluchayetsya vrode kak vrode kak patriarkhat, no na sheye matriarkhata ya by tak skazala.» (Larissa, 57, 01:37:20)

⁵⁸ «A, prichina pochemu zhenshchiny i ne muzhchiny - nu na veroye zhenshchina vso-taki khranitel'nitsa ochaga. [...] u neyo gen trgovli vntri zhenshchiny - nu ne vse konechno pogolovno, a aktivnyye zhenshchiny. No malo

These biological explanations were quite common. It seemed that women still take this gender segregation for granted, which would confirm the assumption of other scholars who look at trade as a form of care work.

To conclude, the feminization of the market-seller has a long tradition and was not an unprecedented phenomenon before the economic reforms in post-Soviet Russia. There are several reasons why the emergence of gigantic bazaars in the 90's attracted so many women, and I provide an in-depth analysis of what motivated the women with whom I talked will in the following chapter (5.1). Since the attitude towards the field of small-scale private trading has always been somewhat ambiguous, the transformation of large parts of the public space into open-air markets in the early 90's is a phenomenon that exposes innumerable features of the social, political and economic realities. The discussion about the reasons for female predominance in the contested field of trading can't be resolved, but it seems that the similarities between domestic work and market trading, which is an ongoing reproduced female realm of labor, are an important aspect of it. Thus, neither the markets nor the female presence as market vendors were new phenomena, but it was unprecedented that people participated in global trading practices reaching from Berlin-Friedrichshain to Vladivostok and from Saint Petersburg to Tashkent, with popular trading destinations covering half the globe.

aktivnykh muzhchin no vot chtoby muzh zhenoy yezdili, - no ya ne znayu, mne navernoye ne popadalos' v moyey praktike.» (Liubov, 62, 00:19:20)

5. From Shame to Pride - Empirical analysis

So far, I have outlined the framework of the fieldwork practice, (chapter 2), the development of the grounded theory (chapter 3) and the most relevant contextual categories from the interviews. In the following chapter, I build on this background and connect it to the analysis of the biographical narrative interviews. I claim that the life-stories of the female traders in my sample can be framed as a transformation from the state of shame to that of pride. As mentioned above, this theorization of the material shouldn't be mistaken for a unidirectional pattern which all life-stories followed, quite the contrary. Some women clearly denied that they ever felt ashamed about trading, yet they also denied the classification of their commercial activity as shuttle trading. Instead of reducing the personal struggles and changing identities to the structural constraints, I aim at showing the multiple dimensions of changing value patterns, habitus transformation and ultimately, how these shaped the agency of the individual trader in the light of their particular social context. Agency here should not be confused with notions of 'rational-choice', 'liberation' or 'autonomy'. The understanding of agency follows the suggestion of Olga Sasunkevich, who defines agency as being "part of people's everyday practices based on manipulations with events in order to turn them into advantages" (2015:158). Relying on the study on female agency in India, she concludes that agency is not only determined by "personal resources of self-satisfaction", but also by "the mutual recognition and respect" (Hill 2010, 116, quoted in Sasunkevich 2015:158) which a community is able to provide. In the same vein, I will focus on descriptions of acknowledgement in the public and the private sphere, on the one hand, and notions of conflicts and struggles to justify and survive in their businesses, on the other. In this way, I can show how women developed strategies to deal with their new occupation on a practical and an emotional level and how they aimed to transform the environment within which they acted into more favorable circumstances.

5.1 Why and how getting involved

Traders⁵⁹ defined the beginning of the 1990's as "golden years", nonetheless, some people strictly rejected trading as a potential source of income. As outlined in the previous chapters, small-scale economic activity was seen as a rather inappropriate occupation, conflicting with the moral regime of the socialist system. However, the changing economic and social environment in the transformation period after the collapse of state socialism challenged this attitude and it was up to

⁵⁹ It is worth mentioning that my interview partners probably thought that they would have to explain some aspects of the Soviet system to me as an outsider. While they might not be so expressive about e.g. their social status to people they consider insiders, for me this part of the open biographical narration is important in terms of life trajectories. However, I don't argue that this expressiveness hints towards an overestimation of personal status, nor will I value other forms of overexplicitness in other ways than explanatory means.

the citizens to renegotiate their value system. The conflation of the ideological imprint with severe economic circumstances is present in different ways of people's engagement in the business. In the following I therefore want to compare the stated reasons for engaging in (shuttle) trading, based on my conversations with female petty entrepreneurs. The different ways women frame the reasons for involvement are a fruitful starting point for the empirical analysis, and I will show how they reveal a variety of structural, but also subjective features.

At the beginning of the nineties the factories were closed; there was no work and during my studies the inflation was rampant and became so high that in general, the family had nothing to live from - although before we were fairly well-off.

Well, since I was not used to the fact that I have a lower standard of living, I went to look for work, with the approval of my parents. The job was nothing special, my friend arranged for me to work as a saleswoman in the stall of a shoe department. [...] So, when I was standing behind the counter, one of my acquaintances, Alexander, came up to me and said "you have such a chicken business here, now everyone travels to Poland. Just collect any kind of goods we have here in Russia and sell them in Poland, it's very profitably. And from there we bring clothes, mainly Chinese or Polish production, and sell them in Kazan. In this way we get double revenue, and everyone lives well"⁶⁰ (Tanja, 49)

The girls who had worked with me said "Come with us!", And I answered, "WHAT you think girls, as if I would trade, I did not trade anything in my life". In socialism everything was free, we all worked hard for these guarantees – and there I went."⁶¹ (Galina, 81)

Generally, I started to do financial analytics, but these perestroika times – superfluous as they were - but when, - well I don't even know how to explain it, but in general, my friend worked at TsUM and the salary was good at first then everything began to fall apart. These firms began to fall apart, and she offered to go, actually to go to Turkey for the merchandise.⁶² (Liubov, 62)

And my friend tells me - they already traveled to Poland, that is, they still worked as before, but they also went there - I still had my work and I didn't go trading, because, - well and as all this became less and less, I just started to

⁶⁰ «Nu poskol'ku ya ne privykla k tomu chto u menya boleye nizkiy uroven' zhizni ya poshla iskat' rabotu, soglasno svoikh roditeley. Dela byla osoba nechego i moya podrugа ustroila menya rabotat' prodavshchitsey v larok v otdel. Vot i kogda ya stoyala za prilavkom ko mne podoshol odin moy znakomyy Aleksandr i skazala chto «u tebya tut za biznes takoy kurinyy, seychas vse yezdyat v Pol'shu v Pol'she yezdit' ochen' vygodno sobirayemyy znachit kakoy u nas tut yest' tovar po Rossii vezom v Pol'shu, iz Pol'shi my privozim razlichnyye odezhdu v osnovnom Kitayskogo libo Pol'skogo zhe proizvodstva privozit' syuda, prodayom v Kazane, poluchayetsya dvoynaya vyruchka i vse zhivem khorosho» (Tanja, 49, 00:02:18)

⁶¹ «Devchonki moi zhe narabotniki kotoryye govoryat «Poyekhali s nami!», i ya «Vy CHTO, devchonki, ya poydu trgovat', v zhizni ne torgovala» Vso besplatno pri sotsializm byl, no za eto my rabotali vse eti nagruzki byli chtoby besplatnom byl - i ya tut poshli.» (Galina, 81, 02:05:00)

⁶² «Vot i v obshchem-to ya nachala zanimat'sya finansovoy analitikoy, no vot eti perestroyechnyye vremena takiye lishnimi byli prishlos' no kogda, ya dazhe ne znayu kak eto ob'yasnit' no v obshchem, podrugа u menya rabotala v TSUMe i zarplata snachala byla khoroshaya a potom stali vso razvalivat'sya vot eti firmy stali razvalivat'sya i ona predlozhila yezdit', vot kak raz v Turtsiyu za tovarom.» (Liubov, 62, 00:06:00)

think [...] Well, then a friend of mine, this means we worked together in the chamber, she had already traveled to Turkey several times, to Istanbul, this means, she told me then “let’s go”, meaning, that I should follow her, in the sense of going with her.⁶³ (Larissa, 57)

I had a friend with whom we worked there at the plant, her neighbor worked in trade. In the sense of still under the Soviet regime he worked in trade. He was selling draft beer, that is, he had money, so to speak.⁶⁴ (Elena, 64)

These quotes share the statement that the starting impulse to actively engage in trading resulted from the invitation of friends or acquaintances. This convergence indicates the wide-spread practice of the commercial activity, but it could also suggest that the informants didn’t want to take full responsibility for their decision. Here, only Elena puts it in a way that allows for a more self-selected interpretation. She had left the factory, because she saw a possibility to get involved in the retailing business with the seed money she planned to borrow from a remote acquaintance. On the other hand, she repeatedly mentions that she just met the right people at the right moment, and everything worked out because of „a well-developed intuition” (khorosho razvitya intuitsiya). In this way, she downplays her personal ambitions and refuses to think about herself as a rationally calculating business actor. (The informants’ tendency to seek justification, rather than highlighting their achievements is investigated in-depth in section 3.3.3.4 The gender of trade).

The general argument for engagement in the business was the economic hardship in the early 1990’s. However, the readiness to leave the previous life behind differed significantly.

*Again, the **adventure inspired me** this whole business not so much probably at the expense of profits, but rather at the expense of adventures, because **we were young and charming and in general, we wanted to travel.**⁶⁵ (Tanja, 49)*

Similarly, Sveta argues that it was her age that encouraged the decision.

⁶³ «Vot i v obshchem-to ya nachala zanimat'sya finansovoy analitikoy, no vot eti perestroyechnyye vremena takiye lishnimi byli prishlos' no kogda, ya dazhe ne znayu kak eto ob"yasnit' no v obshchem, podrug a menya rabotala v TSUMe i zarplata snachala byla khoroshaya a potom stali vso razvalivat'sya vot eti firmy stali razvalivat'sya i ona predlozhila yezdit', vot kak raz v Turtsiyu za tovarom.» (Larissa, 57, interior designer, teacher, 00:16:00)

⁶⁴ «A u menya byla podruzhka, s kotoroy my rabotali tam zhe na zavode, u neyo sosed v trgovle rabotal. V smysle yeshcho pri sovetskoy vlasti rabotal v trgovle. On torgoval razlivnym pivom, to yest' den'gi u nego byli, tak skazhem.» (Elena, 64, 00:17:40)

⁶⁵ «Opyat' zhe prikladyeniye mne eto vso delo vdokhnovilo ne stol'ko navernoye za schet pribyli, a skol'ko za schot prikladyeniya, potomu chto my byli molodaya obayatel'na i khotelos' v obshchem poputeshestvovat'.» (Tanja, 49, 00:03:00)

*It seems to me that if I was at that time as old as I am now, I would never have dared. But I was just 30 years old, I was a young woman who **wanted to live better** than we did, ... I don't know.⁶⁶ (Sveta, 54)*

The ambition to afford a higher living standard also motivated Nadezhda to work at the market

It was very bad with the phone - to get a phone at home you had to pay money you had to pay, and well, I received very little at the construction site and so I sort of went to the market. We had a central market and I went there to trade at the weekend I went Saturday-Sunday.⁶⁷ (Nadezhda, 61)

Apart of these ambitions, the three women agree that, the fundamental reason for engagement was the social and economic crisis. The difference between them lies in their attitude towards shuttle trading. While Tanja mostly highlights her excitement to travel, Sveta's motivation is primarily driven by her genuine interest in the trading business, which, in turn, is derived from a certain dissatisfaction with her profession before the transformation period.

*Yes, I loved to sew, but when the nineties came, I said: "**This is my time.**" Tired of standing in front of customers, wondering whether they like how I sewed a dress. **I did not want to have this small position anymore** and that is why I started to do business.⁶⁸ (Sveta, 54)*

Sveta's motivation and ambition didn't decrease in the course of the years. She is the only woman in my sample who stayed in the business over all those years and proudly says about herself "now, I'm an entrepreneur" (Seychas ya - predprinimatel'). Neither Tanja, nor Sveta mentioned any moral struggle to engage in shuttle trading. For them the reasonable or even positive sides of being involved in the business outweighed the potential biases against the occupation. The emotional conflicts Nadezhda expressed are analyzed in the upcoming sections, but in general she seems to have very ambiguous feelings about her engagement until today. In contrast Galina, who is almost double as old as of some of the other women, had spent her working life in the Soviet system and had been a committed party member. She had finished her working duty and was looking forward to retiring. However, when the time came the social security of the Soviet system was being dismantled and the anticipated pension turned out to be a struggle for surviving.

I retired and my husband's salary – he worked at the same plant, he was the head of the coal mine, and he didn't receive his salary anymore. They stopped

⁶⁶ «Mne kazhetsya, yesli by mne v to vremya bylo stol'ko let, skol'ko mne seychas, ya by nikogda ne reshilas'. Prosto mne bylo 30 let, ya byla molodaya zhenshchina, kotoraya khotela, naverno, poluchshe zhit' chem poluchalos', ... ne znayu.» (Sveta, 54, 00:02:00)

⁶⁷ «U nas ochen' plokho bylo s telefonom - chtoby doma postavit' telefon nuzhno bylo zaplatit' den'gi nuzhno bylo zaplatit' nu, nu malo ochen' poluchala na stroyki i ya kak by togda poshla na rynok. U nas byl tsentral'nyy rynok i ya tuda poshla torgovat' vykhodnyye khodila subbotu-voskresen'ye.» (Nadezhda, 61, 00:05:00)

⁶⁸ «Da, ya lyubila shit', no kogda nastupili devyanostyye, ya skazala: «Vot moyo vremya». Nadoyelo pered kliyentami stoyat', smotret' nravitsya li im, kak ya sshila plat'ye. Ne khochu bol'she za etu stoyechku i vot nachala zanimat'sya biznesom.» (Sveta, 54, 01:16:10)

giving anything, and from there everything went awry. Then [...] they stopped even giving pieces (of the production), and then they ceased paying my retirement pension – this was in 1992.⁶⁹ (Galina, 81)

For her the idea of trading was deeply repulsive but living in a provincial region with virtually no available work, she didn't have a choice. Elena shared a similar story:

My husband retired and left the factory as a military retiree. And I left, too, because it had become difficult with the salary and so on. We started from scratch and we had no money at all, nothing. I did not have a penny at all.⁷⁰ (Elena, 64)

However, as was emphasized above, her decision was based on the lucrative opportunity, which convinced her to leave the factory, even though she could have stayed employed there. She told me that her mother and former colleagues question her decision until today.

"Why did you leave the factory?" And I say: "So what about this factory? Would I have been able to afford the same on my own – back then I could afford a lot. I could do, what others couldn't afford." We always ate well. We always dressed well. Well, it was worth it, my kids never needed anything.⁷¹

Other two women – one of them strongly identified with her intelligentsia background and the ministerial position she held in Soviet times – framed their decision in a very different way. The first, Anna, explicitly distanced herself from the traders, because in her opinion shuttle trading was inappropriate for people with higher education and her background.

*In 1991 I graduated from the institute and then it was possible to buy and sell something, well in this respect I was like (...). Well, anyway, the salaries were very small. I already back then began, for example, somewhere you could buy something cheaper and resell more expensive. Well, how to say this, these shuttle traders - I have never been a shuttle trader - it's just that somehow, among people with higher education it was considered embarrassing. It is a shame to stand on the market to sell something. It was just the ultimate degradation. That is, **people did not do this!** [...] This means if you graduated from university and you cannot do just any simple work.⁷² (Anna, 49)*

⁶⁹ «Vyshla na pensiyu i zarplatu muzh - tozhe rabotal na etom zavode nachal'nikom tsekha - zarplatu ne poluchayet im perestali davat' nichego to poshlo vso naperekosyak. Potom [...] perestali dazhe chastyami davat' a potom moyu pensiyu perestali davat' - tut kak raz v 92 godom.» (Galina, 81, 02:04:20)

⁷⁰ «Muzh poshol na pensiyu, kak voyenny pensioner, ushol s zavoda. I ya ushla. Potomu chto tam s zarplatoy stalo slozhno i vso takoye. Nachinali s nulya. Tozhe, deneg voobshche ne bylo, voobshche. U menya voobshche ne bylo ni kopeyki deneg.» (Elena, 64, 00:17:20)

⁷¹ «Vot zachem ty ushla s zavoda?» YA govoryu: «Nu chto na etom zavode? YA khot' chto-to tam vot eto samoye mogla sebe - ya v svoye vremya ochen' mnogo mogla pozvolit'. YA mogla, to, chto drugiye ne mogli sebe pozvolit'. My vseгда khorosho kushali. My vseгда khorosho odevalis'. Nu eto stoilo togo, u menya deti nikogda ne nuzhdalis' ni v chom.» (Elena, 64, 00:24:20)

⁷² «1991 god ya zakonchil institut i togda uzhe vso ravno kakoy-to mozno bylo chto-to kupit' mozno bylo chto-to pereprodat' tak kak ya v etom otnoshenii vseгда byla nu kak by (...) Nu vot i zarplaty byli sovsem malen'kimi. YA uzhe togda nachala nachinala vso ravno, naprimer gde-to mozno chto-to kupit' podeshevle i pereprodat'

Anna and Liubov didn't trade at the markets but sold the merchandise via commission shops. This is how they maintained a sense of difference from the "real" traders. Liubov explains that she engaged in the business because,

*... the circumstances were set in such a way that I needed a large amount of money which I could not get anywhere, except as a shuttle trader. **They** earned very well back then, it was a golden time for **them**, therefore.*⁷³ (Liubov, 62)

Liubov explained me that she fell victim of a robbery and lost all her saving. This incident "forced" her into the shuttle trading business. But, despite the fact that she is vehemently distancing herself from the other traders, she acknowledges that people of all possible backgrounds traded and that there was a kind of common ethos among the traders,

*... because - I don't know, somehow people had something in common. Well, of course, **the shuttle traders** [...], naturally, there were different people, some were engaged in fraud [...] **People** began to do this probably because of hopelessness because of the fact that they had no alternatives (here she means trading, not the fraud). That is, **people, even engineers** with such high education, having lost their jobs they took such extreme measures – this is of course a sad thing.*⁷⁴ (Liubov, 62)

But, just like Anna, Liubov clearly accentuates that she hadn't been a part of "these people" and throughout her narration she repeatedly underlines the high status of the people that surrounded her.

*I was there with a friend, whom I met through her husband, he was the financial director and traveled with this astronaut. His father was the minister of heavy industry.*⁷⁵ (Liubov, 62)

podorozhe. No vot kak govoryat vot eti chelnochniki, - ya nikogda ne byla chelnochnika - prosto eto kak-to skazat' eto vseгда sredi lyudey s vysshim obrazovaniyem eto schitalos' stydno. Stydno stoyat' na rynke chto-to prodavat' Eto byl prosto posledniy pozor. To yest' lyudi etogo ne delali! Yesli ty zakonchila universitet ne mozhes' delat' kakuyu-to prostuyu rabotu.» (Anna, 49, 00:05:18)

⁷³ *«A vot obstayatel'stva postavili tak, chto mne neobkhodimo bylo krupnyuyu summu deneg kotoruyu ya ne mogla ni gde vzyat' krome tak kak chelnok. Oni chelnoki togda zarabotali ochen' khorosho togda bylo zolotoye vremya dlya nikh potomu.»* (Liubov, 62, 00:52:14)

⁷⁴ *«Potomu chto dazhe - ya ne znayu vse kak-to drug drugu odnosilis' potom vso sravnyalos'. Nu yestestvenno chelnoki [...] Nu byli konechno raznyye lyudi kotoryye makhinatsiyami zanimalis' [...] kto-to ot bezyskhodnosti konechno vot ya govoryu lyudi stali etim zanimat'sya navernoye ot bezyskhodnosti a ni iz-za togo chto im khotelos'. To yest' lyudi dazhe vot inzhenera tam s takimi s vyzhim obrazovaniyem ochen' mnogiye poteryav rabotu konechno takiye krayniye mery – eto konechno grustno.»* (Liubov, 62, 00:53: 30)

⁷⁵ *«My byli tam kak s podrugoy, poznakomilis' cherez yeyo muzh on byl finansovym direktorom i yezdil vmeste s etim kosmonavtom. Otets u nego byl ministr tyazhologo mashinostroyenii.»* (Liubov, 62, 00:22:30)

This comment also hints towards the social composition of traders. While she is the only one who mentions the criminal involvement of market vendors, almost all others also refer to the high number of shuttle traders with higher education.

At these bazaars, people there were intelligent/cultured, basically, that is, the contingent who traveled, these were people with higher education, people, in principle, who were already settled somewhere in life, yes. This means, in principle, people who were planning to work in other professions in their lives, no one was going to engage in the shuttle business in commerce or elsewhere. It was an exclusively necessary measure! (Tanja, 49)⁷⁶

Everybody shuttle-traded, [you can't imagine] how many engineers there were! Yes, and doctors and teachers, well and if there was a PhD (kandidat nauk) then he would definitely also end up there. People were cultured, with a good education.⁷⁷ (Larissa, 57)

The reasons for the high share of people with higher education in the trading business could never be satisfactorily fathomed. But some of the prevalent arguments are that the salaries of people (mostly women) working in the educational and care sector were either too low or not paid at all, while factory workers were better off if the production continued to run. The informants emphasized that the contingent of highly educated people was too large for the economic conditions of the collapsing socialist system, which is the reason that they were forced into alternative means of subsistence.

From these variegating notions of how and why people engaged in the retail business I induce the following dimensions:

⁷⁶ «V etikh bazarakh, lyudi tam byli intelligentnyye, v osnovnom to yest' kontingent kto yezdil, eto byli lyudi s vysshim obrazovaniyem, lyudi v printsipe do etogo ustroivshis' uzhe gde-to v zhizni tak ili inache, da. To yest' v printsipe lyudi kotoryye sobiralis' v zhizni rabotat' na drugikh professiyakh nikto ne sobiralsya zanimat'sya chelnochnyy biznes v torgovle ili yeshcho kuda-to. Eto bylo isklyuchitel'no vynuzhdennaya mera!» (Tanja, 49, 00:07:00)

⁷⁷ «Chelnochili vse, nu i skol'ko tam byli inzhenerov! Da ya mogu skazat' chto i vrachi i uchitelya vot vot tak vot tam yesli raz kandidat nauk, to tochno popadalsya vot tam. Lyudi byli intelligentnyye s khoroshem obrazovaniyem.» (Larissa, 57, 00:48:00)

Figure 19: Summary of why and how getting engaged?

Rather self-determined	Rather forced
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Desire to travel abroad and see other countries - Wish to travel and discover other countries - Weariness with the occupational status - Desire to improve the standard of living - New perspectives and opportunities as lived by other traders - Wish to provide a better future for the children 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Loss of any form of income (either salary or pension) - Necessity to pay back debts - Lack of alternatives - Unemployment - Provide a livelihood for the family - Necessity to pay for children's education

5.2 Consumer consciousness

In the 1990's in Russia the consumer consciousness steadily grew. I hereby refer to the desire to obtain things, that were not available in Soviet times and that suddenly became accessible, provided one had enough money. In the early 1990's people suddenly had a chance not only to buy all kinds of imported products but also to become private owners of flats and shops. From the informants I heard that one of the reasons to respond to these incentives, was the experience of the general unpredictability of the future. My interviews reveal the sensed necessity to transform money into consumption products as soon as possible. The rapid devaluation of the rouble caused by the rampant inflation as well as the logic of the trading business where capital should always be circulating on the market, where the mentioned reasons therefore.

Money should not lie in the bag as you can imagine. If I could say I can keep it in the bank, so that it (the money) lies there, but we didn't have this, and I think that my pennies in the bank there would not bring any profit, no interest rates, nothing. [...] Trading was constant stress, to achieve something you had to do business, business, business. Also, you needed to have some amount of money so that you could pay for the children's education and buy them something.⁷⁸ (Nadezhda, 61)

Despite the physical and emotional pressure of the commercial activity, she enjoys the possibility of consumption.

I also have an ill leg, but for that, I didn't spend it [the money], I bought her (the mother) a mink hat. I remember Mom's bright eyes [but then] she said, "I will not wear it". Well and my husband, he was against all this. But if I did not

⁷⁸ «Den'gi ne dolzhny lezhat' v meshke ty zhe predstavlyayesh' sebya. Yesli ya dopustim mogla by v banke, tak chtoby oni v banke tam no u nas ne bylo takogo ya i dumayu chto moi kopeyke v banke tam byl pribyli nikakoy byli protsenty nikakoy byli pribyli. [...] Torgovlya, eto bylo postoyannyy stress, chtoby chtoby chtoby krutit'sya, krutit'sya, krutit'sya, chtoby ty uzhe tebya chtoby chtoby kakaya-to kakaya-to summa byla chtoby mozno bylo chto-to - znachit nuzhno zaplatit' za uchebu za detey chto-to im kupit'». (Nadezhda, 61, 00:16:30)

*work in the market I could not afford this. And I really wanted my mother to look good, because she didn't see anything good in her life.*⁷⁹ (Nadezhda, 61)

From her comments it seems that she wants to put her mode of consumption in a light of selflessness and pragmatism, which at some points conflicts with the pleasure she gains from affording expensive items. Nadezhda repeatedly shows how she invested all her money to provide a good living standard for her family, while being parsimonious with herself.

However, she bought some household items, to make her life more comfortable. A confession that lingers somewhere between the pride of being able to afford these things and justification against a longstanding accusation of wastefulness.

*For the first time I could allow myself to buy a microwave in a shop because I had money. [...] well, not everyone could afford them, when the fridges came in, well, this Frost (brand of a fridge), that's the one — yes, I could buy a good fridge; a washing machine. That is, you don't need to stand next to machine to keep it going. Before you had to squeeze, it and to rinse it all with your hands — that is, I didn't have to care about the laundry and the children didn't have to hang it anymore. This was already a necessity, wasn't it? Here we got a car, there a microwave, it came, it can warm up stuff or defrost something somehow, and that it was necessary NOT JUST TO COLLECT RANDOM THINGS, but to save some money in order to buy a car and some good furniture.*⁸⁰ (Nadezhda, 61)

The mode of justification was further emphasized by her rising or fastening voice (and during our interview, I sometimes felt as if she was carrying out an old dispute with her now divorced husband, instead of talking to me).

*When my daughter graduated from the University, we went for holiday to Bulgaria - oh, no, to Spain. I bought tickets, we went for holidays to Spain with her. And the younger daughter and her friends went to Greece. I mean, their father could offer them anything like this.*⁸¹ (Nadezhda, 61)

It was obvious that she still struggles with conflicting memories and the negotiation of changing norms and values from the socialist to the post-socialist moralities. Yet, it is not up to

⁷⁹ «Takiye teplen'kiye u menya tozhe bol'nyye nogi na takovoye nado ne nado ya kupila yey norkovuyu shapku. Ya pomnyu Maminy na glaza i ona takaya govorila «ya ne odenu». Vot-vot muzh protiv etogo vsego byl. A yesli ya ne rabotala na rynke ya by ne mogla pozvolit'. A mne ochen' khotelos' chtoby u menya mama khorosho vyglyadit khotya ona nichego v zhizni khoroshego ne videla.» (Nadezhda, 61, 00:11:35)

⁸⁰ «Ya togda v pervyy raz mogla priyti i pozvolit' sebe v magazine kupit' mikrovolnovku potomu chto u menya poyavilis' den'gi. [...] V magazine, da, nu ne kazhdomu priyti poyavilis' togda kholodil'nik nu Frost, vot kotoryy v etot sama - da ya mogla sebe kupit' khoroshiy kholodil'nik stiral'nyuyu mashinu avtomat - to yest' eto tozhe prishla zapustila bel'ye. Deti potom dostali razvesili. To yest' eto ne nado tam etot sama eto mashina kotoraya zapuskali tam stoish' kogda-to vyzhimat' nado bylo rukami vso eto poloskat' a tut uzhe kupil avtomat zapustila deti povესili tam i vso, eto bylo uzhe neobkhodimost'. Vot eto mashina, vot eto mikrovolnovka, prishol razogrel chto-to razmorozil chto-to kak-to eto da nado bylo prosto-naprosto NE PROSTO CHTOBY KAKOY-TO NAKOPITEL'STVO, no imenno chto zarabotat' na zhizn' chtoby, vot etu vot uzhe mashinu kupit' khoroshuyu mebel' kupit'.» (Nadezhda, 61, 00:19:40)

⁸¹ «Doch' kogda zakonchila institut my poyekhali otdykhat' v Bolgariyu — oy, net, v Ispaniyu. YA kupila putevki my poyekhali otdykhat' v Ispaniyu s ney a mladshaya doch' s druz'yami poyekhala v Gretsiyu. To yest' papa eto ni mog im eto dat'.» (Nadezhda, 61, 00:17:00)

me to judge, whether the women I met had a developed consumer consciousness. Yet, it is very revealing how the ability of consumption is almost always combined with a notion of justification. Only Anna didn't seem to have these moral troubles. In her narration she clearly reveals that she associated communism with scarcity and deprivation, things she learnt to despise. Consumption in her case could even be seen as a sort of revenge on the system.

I graduated from the institute in 91, this is precisely how we say, I studied during perestroika, and since the majority of students had an active position, and I, naturally, also participated in these meetings. We had this, what was the name of the movement? So, let's call it the anti-communist movement because everyone naturally wanted the Communists no longer to be there, because there was simply nothing to eat all of our childhood we spent in queues. That is, the queue for milk - our city was closed, we were not in Moscow where it was possible to come to the store and buy everything. Here it was necessary if you want milk, you stand in a queue in a queue for milk, you need sour cream, you stand in a separate queue, and another one to get a ticket for the subway. I have never seen meat in stores until I was 22 years, it has just never been available.⁸²(Anna, 49)

Once she started trading with luxury goods from the Emirates she understood that

... it was possible to earn good money for this. So good for example, that at the age of 24 I could afford a brand-new Mercedes.⁸³(Anna, 49)

Her success, however, came along with suspicion and envy from her surroundings.

These Mercedes were few, there were very few of them there. You don't remember them, but usually here the Mercedes c-class is around. And I still had the even more impressive 600. And I realized that not only women are jealous of me, but men, too. I have already become, - I realized that I need to do something to ward off this negative energy. Now I know that I can buy whatever I want for myself, but I no longer need to show it.⁸⁴(Anna, 49)

She left the country in the late 1990's and moved to the Netherlands. Living abroad for more than 20 years have made her a different person, as she tells me. Nowadays she doesn't hesitate to take

⁸² «Vot ya zakonchila institut devyanosto pervom godu eto uzhe kak raz kak skazhi, ya uchilsya vo vremya perestroyki i tak kak u nas vse studenty bol'shinstvo imeli kakuyu-to aktivnuyu pozitsiyu, i ya, yestestvenno, uchastvovala v etikh vstrechakh. U nas takoye, kak zhe nazvalos' u nas dvizheniye? Ochen' tak skazhem antikommunisticheskoye dvizheniye potomu chto vse yestestvenno khoteli chtoby kommunisty bol'she ne bylo potomu chto bylo poprostu nechego yest' vso detstvo bylo provedeno v ocheredyakh. To yest' ochered' za molokom - u nas gorod byl zakrytym eto bylo ne Moskva gde mozno bylo priyti v magazin i vso kupit'. Zdes' nuzhno bylo yesli ty khochesh' moloka ty stoish' v ocheredi v ocheredi za molokom tebe nuzhna smetana ty stoish' otdel'naya ochered' za metro. Myaso do 22 let v magazinakh ya ne videla nikogda, yego prosto ne bylo prosto nikogda ne bylo.» (Anna, 49, 00:03:14)

⁸³ «Na eto mozno bylo zarabatyvat' neplokhie den'gi. Nastol'ko neplokhie naprimer, chto s 24 goda u menya poyavilsya noven'kiy Mercedes.» (Anna, 49, 00:06:10)

⁸⁴ «Etikh Mersedes malo bylo ikh malo ochen' malo tam ikh ne pomnish' obychno zdes' Mercedes c-class on kak by obychnyy. A u menya yeshcho byl yeshche bol'she gromadnyy takoy 600. A ya ponyala chto mne uzhe ne tol'ko zhenshchiny zaviduyut a muzhchina tozhe. YA stala uzhe, ya ponyala chto mne nado chto-to sdelat', chtoby eto negativnoy energii ne poluchat'. Seychas ya znayu chto ya mogu sebe kupit' voobshche vso chto ugodno, no mne bol'she ne nuzhno eto pokazat'.» (Anna, 49, 00:38:24)

the public transportation anymore. The necessity to show her affluence is gone and she enjoys working in the garden house and living a simple life now.

Larissa, on the other side, recalled the list of things she could afford, thanks to the shuttle trading to stress that it was worth the effort.

We went to Turkey for vacation and to the Emirates we went for vacation, and I don't know to Greece and to Thailand etc. I have always had new cars, I didn't use one car for more than 3 years. At first, there were domestic cars, then foreign brands. Then my son studied at Moscow State University and the tutor cost a lot too [...] I lived here with my parents and then bought a flat [...] I remember how I met my former boss from the Chamber of Commerce and he says, "So what, did you buy a car in the Soviet Union? And I say, of course not and I even bought an apartment. Back then everyone lived in a shared flat (v kommunalke)"⁸⁵ (Larissa, 57)

But while the returns were significant in terms of material gains and the acquisition of entrepreneurial skills (more about this in section 3.3.3.4), the informants strongly emphasized the physical and emotional price they paid.

Sveta: You know, what kind of people we are, for us the 8th of March didn't exist, New Year, Birthday, no! In the nineties there was no such thing as bad weather: to us without a difference, -30°C — we went outside. Dressed warmly. [...] Can you imagine how much clothes I was wearing? On my birthday, I would come home from work, my mother set the table, and my friends came. But after 2 hours I'm already asleep, I'm tired. We did not even have a weekend, nothing.

I: Not at all?

Sveta: Never. No vacations, nothing, in general.

I: But did you earn good money with this business?

Sveta: For those times, yes, very well. You know, I think we didn't really understand how well the work was going. But we were very ambitious. We had a goal. We wanted to make money, as long as there was work, as long as trading went well ...⁸⁶

⁸⁵ «V Turtsiyu yezdili otdykhat' i v Emiraty yezdili otdykhat' tam nu ya ne znayu tam i Gretsii v Tailande i tak daleye. U menya vseгда byli novyye mashiny, ya bol'she 3 let na mashine ne yezdila. Snachala tam otechestvennyye mashiny byli, potom inomarki byli u menya syn uchilsya v MGU repetitor nemalo stoilo tozhe [...] ya zdes' zhila s roditelyami i togda kupila kvartiruy [...] pomnyu kogda-to vstretila svoego byvshego nachal'nika s trgovno-promyshlennaya palata on govorit, «I chto, pri Sovetskom Soyuze ty kupila mashinu?» I ya govoryu, «konechno net vot i kvartiru i kupila.» Togda vse zhili v kommunalke». (Larissa, 57, 01:02:21)

⁸⁶

0:31:51

SVETA: Znayete, my kakiye lyudi, dlya nas ne sushchestvovalo 8 marta, Novogo goda, Dnya rozhdeniya. Net, takogo ponyatiya. V devyanostyye ne bylo takogo ponyatiya, plokhaya pogoda - nam bez raznitsy, -30 — my shli na ulitsu. Odevalis' teplo. Predstavlyayete, skol'ko na mne bylo odezhdy? Yesli u menya byl den' rozhdeniya v etot den', ya

Well, when I came back, I was deeply frustrated. I came back and my hands where all ripped from this tape (they packed the merchandise in plastic bags that had to be wrapped with tape). Well, all this all this - I hid my hands I was ashamed. I couldn't have a manicure or anything, because it was useless to do. It was all very difficult.⁸⁷ (Nadezhda, 61)

Consumer consciousness is a complex and multi-layered category. Many emotions were expressed in relation to the material side of trading and the quotes here can only give a small overview of the many aspects of the attitude towards consumption as referred to by my informants. In the table below, I summarize these and add some more dimensions. In this juxtaposition it also appears obvious that positive and negative features of consumption are often closely related to each other.

Figure 20: Summary of consumer consciousness

Pleasures of consumption	Negative aspects of consumption
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Possibility to afford higher quality goods and vacations for the family (especially the children) - Combining work and holidays - Being able to afford more than "the average" - Being envied by others - Empowering feeling of being able to earn a living on one's own 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To make money required hard and tedious work that led to physical and emotional discomfort - Conflicts with others (parents, husbands, friends) about different attitudes towards consumption - Exposure to the envy of others

5.3 Social relations

The group of shuttle traders didn't have a common social status, but the Soviet morality of economic practices influenced the evaluation of this commercial activity in the transformation period. Thus, it is not far-fetched to say that in regard to social prestige, shuttle trading and market retailing didn't score very high. The comments of my interview partners made clear that these conflicting morals significantly shaped their social relations. Especially the partner/husband relationships were influenced by this form of petty entrepreneurship.

prikhodila s raboty, mama nakroyet stol, devochki ko mne, podruzhki, pridut. A ya 2 chasa sizhu i ya uzhe splyu, ya ustala. U nas ne bylo vykhodnykh, voobshche-voobshche net.

I: Voobshche net?

SVETA: Nikogda. Ni otpuskov, nichego, voobshche, ne bylo.

I: A Zarabatyvali li Vy khorosho s etim biznesom?

SVETA: Po tem vremenam - da, ochen' khorosho. Vy znayete, mne kazhetsya, my ne ochen' ponimali, kak khorosho shla rabota. No prosto kakiye-to, vot, byli, vot, tselestremennyye. U nas byla tsel'. Khoteli zarabotat', no, poka byla rabota poka trgovlya shla... (Sveta and I, 00:30:30 – 00:32:00)

⁸⁷ «Vot, ya priyekhala u menya vot-vot eto ostroye razocharovaniye bylo. YA priyeezhala voobshche ruki vse izodrannyye etim skotchom etim vsem eto vso - ya ruki pryatala mne stydno bylo. nikogo ne manikyura nichego potomu chto eto bespolezno byt'. Vot eto vso ochen' tyazhelo bylo.» (Nadezhda, 61, 00:14:20)

Liubov had probably conflicts with her partner because of her occupation. Her partner was a construction engineer on the managerial level, and he played the role of the family patriarch. When Liubov started to trade, he got furious out of jealousy and fear of losing control over her.

I: Has your professional life influenced in some way your relationship with your husband?

Liubov: Well, yes, it was some kind of, you know, he was the head of a large company, of course not every man likes the leadership of women, that is, he often made my pulse rising. There were all these scenes of jealousy, that is, he had these - now he perfectly understands that this is nonsense, of course, well, over the years... I didn't give up for family. If there were no results... but I took small steps and I went forward.⁸⁸

Liubov: There were moments when he blocked my way. He did this, because he wanted a normal routine life: eating, sleeping, that's it. But I still, I broke through this wall, I don't even know how I overcame it, because it really was very hard for him - like these struggles - and what quarrelling we had! Now, it's been 10 or maybe 20 years that he perfectly understands that this was not necessary. But in the beginning, it required a lot of strength to cope with it. He has a pretty strong personality, [...] there were some scandals naturally. I don't even know (...) Well, there were no threats. [...]

I: And what did he blame you for?

Liubov: Well, like, "why are you doing this work? No one doesn't, well, ... you don't go there! ..." ⁸⁹

I didn't get to know how far these quarrels went, but she decided to stay with him and committed herself to the salvation of this relationship.

I think that it could have collapsed if it was not for my patience, and not for my diplomatic approach, because, how to say, he has a harsh nature and strong expressions, there was some rudeness. But I think that my patience and probably my love it might be for my love that saved our relationship.⁹⁰ (Liubov, 62)

⁸⁸ «Nu da, bylo kakoy-to, nu vy znayete on byl rukovoditelem krupno, yestestvenno ne kazhdomu muzhchine nrazilos' liderstvu zhenshchin to yest' yestestvenno on ochen' mnogo mne vydal krovi. Vot u nego vot eti stseny revnosti to yest' u nego byli vot etikh - seychas on prekrasno ponimayet chto eto glupost', konechno, nu eto s godami. Poetomu tol'ko dlya sem'ya. Yesli by rezul'tatov ne bylo ... no a ya postepenno melkimi shazhkami poshla vpered.» (Liubov, 62, 01:05:00)

⁸⁹ Liubov: Byli momenty kogda on pregradil put'. Delal takogo, potomu chto khotel normal'naya rutinnaya zhizn': poyeli, pospali, poshli. A ya vso kak vot etu stenu, ya proryvala, ya dazhe ne znayu kak ya preodolela potomu chto deystvitel'no bylo ochen' tyazhelo yemu- vot tak kakiye ssory u tak byli! Seychas vot ya govoryu uzhe let 10 tam mozhet byt' 20 prekrasno ponimayet chto ne nuzhno bylo eto delat'. A v nachale vot pryamo sila (...) kak spravilas'. I lichnost' on dovol'no-taki takaya sil'naya, [...] kakiye-to byli skandaly yestestvenno byli. Dazhe ne znayu (...) Nu ugroz nikakikh ne bylo.

I: A na kogo on vam imenno penyal?

Liubov: Nu tak vot, tipa togo, «chto ty vopolnyayesh' etu rabotu? eto vot nikto eto ne ... vot ty ni tuda idesh'! ...

⁹⁰ «Ya schitayu chto mogla razrushit'sya yesli by mozhet byt' ne moyo terpeniye ne moy takoy diplomatichnyy podkhod potomu chto kak by zhestkiy kharakter i rezkiye vyskazyvaniya, byli truby grubosti kakiye-to. No ya schitayu chto moyo terpeniye navernoye moya lyubov' mozhet byt' lyubov' spasla vot tak nashe otnosheniye.» (Liubov, 62, 01:15:00)

For Nadezhda the commercial activity also provoked severe conflicts with her husband, who obviously refused to acknowledge the changing economic realities.

I: You said that your husband called you a speculator. What exactly does that mean?

Nadezhda: (sighing) He believed that, (...) he had a negative attitude. Therefore, probably this was why our relationship dissolved. I KNEW that I needed to make money. I needed to provide my children with clothes and shoes so that they were all fed, so that they always went to school in good clothes, so that, [...]

I: And did he understand about the changes that were going on [in the country]?

Nadezhda: EXACTLY, he opened the fridge, in the fridge there was sausage, and meat was in the freezer, everything. [...]

I: Did he help somehow? Looking after the children, or doing the house work when you weren't at home?

*Nadezhda: Nothing, he didn't look after anything, nothing he cared of.*⁹¹

These comments are important revelations as they show the changing dynamics within families and between partners. These women made incredible sacrifices on behalf of their families and it is hard to imagine the personal emotions provoked by the experienced disrespect or even despise of their husbands. For them it wasn't for pleasure but out of necessity and the desire to provide a better life for their children which the patriarch of the family wasn't able to offer.

However, there are also examples when husbands joined the business, like in Elena's and Sveta's case, yet, it is very clear, who had the say in this cooperation.

Yes, he joined the business. My husband and I worked together, but after all I was the boss. I took care about the documents, everything was on me. My

⁹¹ 00:07:30

I: Vy skazali, chto muzh Vam nazval spekul'yantka. Chto eto tochno znachit?

Nadezhda: (vzdokhnut') On schital chto, (...) u nego bylo otritsatel'no otnosheniya. Poetomu mozhet byt' u nas i ne vso etot razladilis' otnosheniya YA-TO ZNALA, chto mne nuzhno zarabotat' Mne nuzhno detey odet' obut' chtob oni vse byli syty chtoby oni v shkolu khodili vsegda v khoroshey odezhde chtoby [...]

00:12:40

I: A on ponyl kakiye izmeneniya proiskhodili togda?

Nadezhda: PRAVIL'NO, on otkryval kholodil'nik, v kholodil'nike kolbasa, myaso v morozilke, vso.

00:13:20

I: A on gde-to pomogal, smotrel za detey, ili domashnyaya rabota, kogda Vy ne Byli doma?

Nadezhda: Nichego, nichego ne smotrel, nichego on prikhodil.

*words were decisive and when it came to choosing, - I was also the main one. This is for sure.*⁹²(Sveta, 57)

*My husband has always subordinated to my intuition 100%. If I said, we don't carry this anymore, we take something else now, he always agreed because I always had a feeling for the (right) moment.*⁹³(Elena, 62)

In many situations the women were the ones who called themselves the breadwinner. In some cases, however, they didn't only support themselves and their children, but their parents as well. This dependency often led to a change in the attitude of their parents towards the commercial activity of their children. Tanja describes that her parents first dismissed her engagement in the trading business but soon realized that they were dependent on it, too.

*In the beginning it was terrible! How does our princess - meaning our daughter our wonderful girl, suddenly go somewhere to trade in a box? Well, then when I began to bring money that provided them the former standard of living they changed their attitude. The money corrected their previous opinion.*⁹⁴ (Tanja, 49)

The social relations of my informants, especially their husbands and partners, often changed in the course of the 1990's. These changes had multiple causes and thus can't be reduced to their commercial activity. However, in many situations it played a significant role. I will conclude this section with a summary of the most relevant reasons for problems they described having with their husbands and partners.

Figure 21: Summary of social conflicts

Social conflicts emerging from the retail business
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Conflicting norms and values, especially "Soviet values" vs "shuttle trading" - Jealousy (women traveling on their own are not "controllable") - Inferiority complexes (woman as the main breadwinners and alleged profiteers from the new social and economic conditions) - Estrangement because of diverging experiences (women travel to different countries, see other people's ways of living, everyday struggles at the market, etc.)

⁹² «Da, on togda tozhe zanimalysya. My s muzhem vmeste zanimalis', no vso-taki ya byla glavnaya. Eto na mne byli dokumenty, vso na mne bylo. Moi slova byli reshayushchimi i pri vybore - tozhe ya byla glavnoy. Vso eto tochno.» (Sveta, 57, 00:53:30)

⁹³ «U menya muzh vseгда podchinyalsya moyey intuitsii 100%. Yesli ya skazala, my eto bol'she ne vozim, my vozim teper' vot eto, on vseгда soglasyalsya potomu chto ya vseгда chuvstvoval vot etot moment» (Elena, 62, 00:05:00, II. part)

⁹⁴ «V nachale eto byl v uzhas! Kak zhe nasha znachit printsessa nasha dochen'ka nasha znachit zamechatel'noy devochkoy vdrug poydot kuda-to trgovat' v larok. Nu potom kogda ya stala prinosit' deneg kotoryye obespechivali im prezheniy uroven' zhizni. den'gi primerili ikh v obshchem sozdavshegosya mnenii.» (Tanja, 49, 01:15:00)

5.4 The gender of the trading business

The reason why women seemed to better adapt to the changing social and economic environment in the transformation period has often been traced back to the many-sided obligations women learnt to cope with in Soviet times (housework, childcare, voluntary and full-time work⁹⁵). In the interviews these gendered trajectories are reflected on different levels, but the story is more complex. Women also actively engaged with and, thus, shaped the circumstances in which they lived. Adaptation is not a passive process of submission, but a series of significant decisions, consciously made or not. In this section I want to focus on the agential dimensions in the narrations and elaborate on the aspects of (re-)construction of the self and self-reflexive statements related to professionalization and long-term consequences.

I have outlined the reasons why and how my informants engaged in the retail business, but with time, economic necessity stopped being the sole reason for staying in the business. The traders with whom I talked have turned into successful business women. They usually run several shops simultaneously:

Well, that's I was there at the Luzhniki Stadium. Yes, I was in the Luzhniki at first, but then there was already a place at Konkovo; there, it was not difficult. Then I bought yet another place at Pokrovka there was a place, too; I bought all those places.⁹⁶ (Larissa, 57)

They have established stable business networks and they had managed to massively invest in the education of their children:

Yes, I've taught my children. Both my children have a higher education, generally, they are well settled. Even pretty well, what can I say. But, in principle, I believe that I, too, left for a good reason⁹⁷ (Elena, 62)

They afforded real estate property, cars, leisure time, etc. or to put differently, they were able to significantly add to their already existing social, cultural and economic capital. But despite all this success, they would usually downplay their achievements, and frame them as if it was not their accomplishment, but miraculously happened *to them*.

⁹⁵ More in-depth investigation of the so-called 'double burden' can be found in Sarah, Ashwin, *Gender, State, and Society in Soviet and Post-Soviet Russia*, (New York, Routledge 2000), and Mary Buckley, *Post-Soviet Women*, (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press 1997)

⁹⁶ «Nu ty vot kogda ya tam byla v Luzhnikakh. da ya v Luzhniki bylo ponachalu, a v Kon'kovo tam uzhe bylo mesto tam ne trudno bylo. Togda yeshcho pokupalas' na Pokrovke tam tozhe bylo mesto, ya vse eti mesta pokupalas'.» (Larissa, 57, 00:52:34)

⁹⁷ «Da, ya vot vyuchila detey. U menya oba rebenka s vysshim obrazovaniyem, v printsipe khorosho ustroyeny. Dazhe dovol'no-taki, chto ya mogu skazat'. No, v printsipe, ya schitayu, chto ya ne zrya tozhe ushla.» (Elena, 62, 00:24:04)

Sveta: I continue to ride the train (She still carries the merchandise by train from Moscow). Here, the only thing is that if earlier we were trading on the street, in the open air, so to speak, at minus 30°C, now, of course, we are selling everything very nicely, warmly. I have my own shop, I have a large department here. That is, everything is somehow very calm. I do not sell on my own (anymore), I have shop assistants now.

I: And how did you set this business?

*Sveta: I can't even say, **somehow it settled on its own**.⁹⁸*

*...well, I probably **just appeared** to be better suited.⁹⁹ (Tanja, 49)*

*People were very jealous because of the fact that I'm working here with the guys, they were very jealous. Well, **I don't know why they chose me**, - maybe because of my character, or for the fact that I never took someone else's things, I have never stolen anything from anyone.¹⁰⁰ (Nadezhda, 61)*

Nadezhda made a great career from being a weekend assistant vendor and a construction worker to getting to the managerial level of the market. From her I heard a lot about the solidarity among what she calls her “guys” (rebyata), which ultimately was a group of local gangsters (I had the chance to also interview the person who connected me with Nadezhda. He was a security guy on the market in the 1990's and told me about the ongoing infightings among the bosses who were all Afghanistan veterans and not shy to use their weapons). For Nadezhda they were a kind of family, and she assumed the role of the caretaker. But despite the fact that she was working very hard and was able to build a highly successful business network, she claims that she must have been chosen *by them*, because of luck and character.

Anna's business has been spectacularly successful, as well (Mercedes at 24 and financially set for life at about 30) and I asked her

I: Where do you think your talent or ability for business comes from? You did not study this, no one explained you what to do. Did you start, and things just happened by themselves?

⁹⁸ SVETA: Ya prodolzhayu yezdit' na poyezde. Vot, yedinstvennoye chto - yesli ran'she my torgovali na ulitse, na svezhem vozdukhe, tak skazat', v minus 30, to seychas, konechno, realizuyem vso ochen' krasivo, teplo. U menya svoj magazin, u menya zdes' otdel bol'shoy. To yest' vso kak-to ochen' spokojno. Uzhe sama ne torguyu, u menya torguyut prodavtsy.

I: A kak vy postavili etot biznes?

SVETA: YA dazhe ne znayu, kak-to sam vstal. (Sveta and I, 00:12:35-00:13:06)

⁹⁹ «Nu navernoye prosto ya okazalas' boleye prisposoblenna» (Tanja, 49, 01:17:05)

¹⁰⁰ «Lyudi ochen' zavidovali tem chto ya rabotayu vot s rebyatami, ochen' zavidovali potomu chto - Nu ne znayu pochemu oni menya vybrali, - mozhet byt' za kharaktera, za to chto ya nikogda chuzhogo ne vzyala, nikogda nichego ni u kogo ne ukrala!» (Nadezhda, 61, 00:17:00)

Anna: I do not even know how to explain it, you simply, - well, it was just interesting to me. I like to make money; I like to make money out of money; this is my only interest that I can (...), well, this is what I'm interested in.¹⁰¹

She doesn't talk much about strategies, and business plans (which she did make) as reasons for her success but puts in terms of a rather *given* interest.

On the other hand, there are also clear notions of agency in the narrations, and of self-determined decision-making, even if forced by the circumstances.

I: And what do you think enabled you to be successful in this business?

Liubov: Well, what can I say, do not praise yourself, I'm a hardworking person I never expected someone to bring me something I just did it, I did it and I did it myself!¹⁰² (Liubov, 62)

It was very difficult, and we just survived. We had a choice, either you behold and go with the flow as it will, or you just change something in your life.¹⁰³ (Sveta, 57)

All the women with whom I talked went through the economic crisis in 1998 rather unharmed. In the course of business professionalization, they relied used the dollar and, thus, in some cases even profited from the devaluation of the ruble, like Nadezhda, who bought an apartment for her husband.

Nadezhda: I bought him an apartment so that he left us [...]

I: So, for you the crisis was an opportunity to get rid of your husband?

Nadezhda: He didn't want to leave us for a very long time, he didn't want (...), so well, now, it's easy to talk about all this and what you achieved, but (back then) you were actually sitting there with hair standing on end, without knowing what to do.¹⁰⁴

¹⁰¹ *I: Otkuda, Vy dumayete, u Vas yest' takoye talante, ili sposobnost' za biznesa? Vy eto ne uchilis', nekogo Vam ne ob'yaznil chto i kak. Vy nachali i vse, prosta tak prikhodil?*

Anna: YA dazhe ne znayu kak eto ob'yasnit' to ty prosto. Nu i ona ko mne prosto bylo eto interesno YA lyublyu delat' den'gi ya lyublyu iz deneg delat' den'gi u menya eto yedinstvennyy interes kotoryye ya mogu (...), nu, mne eto interesno. (00:21:10)

¹⁰² *I: A chto Vy dumayete sposobstvoval Vam, byt' uspešnym v etom biznese?*

Liubov: Nu chto ya mogu skazat' ne khvali sebya, ya chelovek trudolyubivyy, ya nikogda ne zhdala chto menya kto-to chto-to prineset ya eto delala ya eto delala i delala sama! (Liubov and I, 01:10:50)

¹⁰³ *«Bylo ochen' slozhno i my prosto vyzhivali. U nas byl vybor ili, vot, plyt' po techeniyu kak poluchitsya, ili prosto chto-to pomenyat' v svoey zhizni.» (Sveta, 57, 00:44:00)*

¹⁰⁴ *Nadezhda: YA yemu kupila kvartiru chtoby on ot nas uyekhal [...]*

I: Znachit, dlya Vas krizis byla vozmozhnost' osvobodit'sya ot muzha.

Nadezhda: On ochen' dolgo ne khotel ot nas uyezzhat', ochen' ne khotel (...), tak chto vot nu vso ravno eto vot eto seychas ya kak by legko eto govoryu chto vot tak poluchilos' a na samom-to dele sidish' volosy vot tak vot vstayut ne znayesh' chto delat'. (Nadezhda and I, 00:55:30 - 00:56:20)

A last commonality I would like to highlight is the fact that all my informants emphasized that, on one hand, they wouldn't have engaged in the trading business, if it was not for necessity.

If I knew that tomorrow would be just the same as today, I wouldn't have gone for trading¹⁰⁵ (Galina, 81)

I probably would not have gone if it wasn't unavoidable¹⁰⁶ (Liubov, 62)

It seems to me that if I were at that time as old as I am now, I would never have dared.¹⁰⁷ (Sveta, 57)

Well, if things had remained stable, naturally, I wouldn't have left. I would have stayed in the factory until I would retire.¹⁰⁸ (Elena, 64)

Well, if I started now, I probably would not go any longer¹⁰⁹

On the other hand, they often mentioned that the shuttle trading experience has been a good entrepreneurial school

The lesson in life was good, that's for sure ... the bags, probably they were the very moment, the bags and the selection of goods ... well, in general, people treated it as an adventure. Although for those who settled more seriously and started from there, they received their hardening.¹¹⁰ (Tanja, 49)

We have seen a lot and we have learned to communicate. I was a more reserved person, I learned to communicate.¹¹¹ (Sveta, 57)

I'd, if I hadn't gone through the shuttle business, I probably wouldn't have opened my own business. I had it from 2010 to 2016, 6 years, I just recently closed, and it was quite successful, because of my, experience.¹¹² (Liubov, 62)

This ambiguous evaluation reveals that the majority of my informants didn't identify with the shuttle trading business. This, however, doesn't prevent them from acknowledging the skills and experiences they obtained through this occupation. In the end, it provided a platform from where they drew a lot of self-confidence and creativity for future professional steps. Thus, I make the careful claim that it was not only the stigmatization of trade which precluded identification,

¹⁰⁵ «Yesli by ya znala chto zavtrashniy den' budet takoy zhe kak segodnyashniy ya po chelnokom ne poshla.» (Galina, 81, 02:03:00)

¹⁰⁶ «Ya navernoye ne yezdila by potomu mne ne bylo neobkhodimosti.» (Liubov, 62, 00:52:00)

¹⁰⁷ «Mne kazhetsya, yesli by mne v to vremya bylo stol'ko let, skol'ko mne seychas, ya by nikogda ne reshilas'.» (Sveta, 57, 00:02:08)

¹⁰⁸ «Da, yesli by tak vso ostalos' stabil'no, ya by, yestestvenno, ne ushla.» (Elena, 64, 01:29:13)

¹⁰⁹ «Nu yesli vot ya seychas nachala ya by navernoye ne poshla uzhe.» (Nadezhda, 61, 01:40:00)

¹¹⁰ «Urok v zhizni khorosho byl, eto tochno, ... sumki navernoye eto byl samoy takoy moment. Sumki i vopros zakupki tovarov... nu, po bol'shomu schotu tak lyudi k etomu odnosilis' kak priklyucheniye. Khotya kto v dal'neyshem ser'yeznyye sostoyaniye sdelal kto nachinal s etim poluchila svoyu zakalku.» (Tanja, 49, 01:06:10)

¹¹¹ «My mnogo povidali i my nauchilis' obshchat'sya. YA vot bylo boleye zamknuty chelovek, ya nauchilas' obshchat'sya.» (Sveta, 57, 01:29:50)

¹¹² «Ya by navernoye yesli ne proshla vot chelnochnyy biznes mozhet byt' so vremenem ya i ne otkryla by svoye predpriyatiye. ono u menya byla s 10 goda po shestnadsatyy 6 let, to ya bukvallyo nedavno zakryla i on dovol'no-taki uspešno potomu, opyt yestestvennaya opyt.» (Liubov, 62, 00:44:00)

but the ‘necessity-driven’ engagement, which didn’t provide for self-esteem, even if the business ran well. However, from the moment when the existential needs were secured, a space for self-determined decision-making opened. Some stayed in the business and traded in shopping malls, others followed different pathways, but in this second part of the post-Soviet professionalization, they achieved a sense of independence and self-sufficiency, which allowed for self-recognition, even if the economic stability did not last long.

5.5 Shame and pride – a non-linear trajectory

Concluding, I want to get back to the individual cases and show, how the application of the theory varies depending on the structural conditions, life trajectories and individual agency of the protagonists. As I have shown, the life-stories, and in particular the description of the trading experience, are full of emotional evaluations that can be subsumed to shame and pride. Without claiming that female shuttle traders generally transferred their feelings towards the trading business directly from shame to pride, I still argue that the constant reference to these emotions are the most revealing communality between the traders. This does not mean that shame and pride had the same meaning and played the same role for all the protagonists. The real value of this analytical lens is that it allows to identify the different vectors of the moral and gender regime of both, the Soviet and the post-Soviet system, and scrutinize how these influenced the protagonist’s evaluations in their biographical storytelling. The massive presence of traders in the 1990’s in Russia had significantly influenced the public opinion regarding petty entrepreneurship. Incomes high enough to provide for one’s family, business professionalization and the changing public attitude towards traders played a major role in the increase of self-esteem for some of the respondents. Other retailers, however, did not express shame for their own practices while considering shuttle trading a shameful activity. They didn’t associate their own commercial activities of equally low standard, which shows that for them the difference lays in the mode of trading. Yet, others described their engagement as the outcome of their own decision, but they still struggled with justifying this step to significant others (mainly family and friends, who condemned this commercial activity).

In this final part I will relate the emotions and evaluations back to the actors of this study and show, that the (shuttle) trading is not a closed chapter in their lives, but an experience of ongoing negotiation with a multiplicity of long-term effects.

5.5.1 Case 1: Tanja (49)

Tanja just left university when the Soviet Union collapsed. She had understood that reality often contradicts ideology and ironically answered my question about the negative public attitude towards the so-called “speculators”

Yes, yes, yes, of cause, we were all scared of the speculators (haha). Well, I don't know about you, but my mother bought my jeans only from speculators. [...] Yes, well, maybe we were speculators. My husband still believes that we have done something wrong [...] Well, how to say (...) I earn more than he (hahahaha), so he can say, whatever he wants, right?¹¹³

For her shuttle trade was an adventure with friends. Her life was ahead of times, despite all the hardship, seemed exciting and full of promises. But she also actively built on her future, obtained several diplomas (aircraft engineering, translator, business management) and nowadays runs her own tourist agency and has two children. She is proud of her achievements, yet she developed a very negative attitude towards people who do not take a similarly active position indetermining their own life trajectories.

5.5.2 Case 2: Galina (81)

Galina has almost twice the age of Tanja, nonetheless, they are very close friends, as they told me during our group interview. Contrary to her younger colleague, Galina was all but excited about engaging in the retail business. Besides, she was a committed communist and trading contradicted her convictions. She says she did not have a choice: her husband lost his job and she didn't receive her pension. On the other hand, she also admitted how much she appreciated the social aspects of travel, being with her mates and encounters with different people in various countries. She bought her son an apartment and opened a small shop in her hometown, where temporarily employed two shop assistants. The recognition and the money she received changed her mind and, in our interview, she concluded that

After all, everything went well, even excellent it went, despite my husband, it was even fun.¹¹⁴

Her husband became an alcoholic and gave her a hard time.

Her husband died, and her son followed the footsteps of his father becoming a trouble. In the light of these circumstances, her mode of remembering the trading years was rather nostalgic.

¹¹³ «Da, da, da, nu, my vse polsavalis' ispugami spekulyantov (khakha). YA ne znayu kak vy a mne mama pokupala dzhinsy isklyuchitel'no spekulyantov. [...] Da, da mozhet byt' my byli spekulyanty. Moy muzh do sikh por schitayet, chto my chto-to ne to delali [...] Nu kak skazat' (...) Ya zarabatyvayu bol'she chem on (khakhakhakha), poetomu, on mozhet sebya govorit', vse chto khochet, pravil'no?» (Tanja, 49, 01:19:00)

¹¹⁴ «Nu v obshchem-to khorosho shlo, dazhe zoloto shlo dlya menya, krome moyego muzha, vse bylo dazhe vesela.» (Galina, 81, 00:05:03)

Living in a small village, quite far from the city where we met, she does not have many opportunities to meet with the people she used to trade with.

5.5.3 Case 3: Larissa (57)

I met Larissa in a park in Moscow and where she came just after her class. Nowadays she teaches interior design in a private school. Her story is one of upward mobility and starting to trade for her felt a bit like “going back”.

For me, well, it was a kind of psychological turning point. In general, my parents were not rich. I had a good intelligent family. Therefore, for me it was difficult, I worked in the chamber of commerce, I walked on my heels with a nicely painted handbag. And when I started, I went to the market with jeans sneakers, jacket, and hat. It was disgusting for me to look at myself, and not everyone could overcome one's blockades, and it was necessary to overstep them, yes, yes, not everyone could, far from everyone could. As I say, you really needed to outgrow yourself. But there was nothing to do and you can't wear insults (live from self-reproaches). Well, of course, you can as well just lie down and die.¹¹⁵

She felt ashamed and as many others, she was hiding behind the stalls in the early times of trading. But she was able to support her family financially, pay for her son's education and afford a big flat in Moscow, cars (a new every three years), and vacations. The material affluence partly compensated for the humiliation experienced by exposing herself on the market and falling back to a “lower status”. She ceased trading at the beginning of the 2000's because it was not profitable anymore. The unsold textiles were the raw material for her subsequent sewing career. From there she gradually built on her profession as an interior designer. In the light of the current economic crises (2008, 2014 and ongoing) in Russia, she says she was lucky for what she could secure from the trading business. In order to buy a flat in Moscow today, you would rather have to be the owner of a shopping mall, and not run a small box at an open-air market, she concludes.

5.5.4 Case 4: Liubov (62)

When I analyzed Liubov's narrative, I was struck by the frequency of status references. Her social decline after the demise of the Soviet Union was probably the strongest in my sample. According to her description, she lost her well-respected position as a manager and accountant and shortly after felt victim of a robbery, which left her completely without money. The repeated notion

¹¹⁵ «Da da da eto vot u menya vot takoy vot i psikhologicheskoye vot voobshche perelom proizoshel ya v obshchem-to u menya roditeli byli ne bogatyie. U nas bylo khorosheye intelligentnaya sem'ya. To yest', da poetomu poetomu dlya menya eto bylo trudno rabotat' v palate ya khodila na kablukakh nakrashennaya sumochkoy. A kogda ya nachala ya chem khodila na rynok: dzhinsy krossovki, kurtka, shapka. Mne samoy na sebya bylo protivno smotret', no eto eto tozhe ne vse mogli cherez sebya perestupit' eto nuzhno bylo cherez sebya perestupit', da da ne vse mogli ne vse daleko ne vse mogli eto tozhe bylo. Vot ya govoryu pryamo nuzhno bylo nastupit' na sebya. No delat' bylo nechego odet' obizhat' nel'zya. No vot vot vot vot khot' lozhis' i umiray.» (Larissa, 57, 01:47:10)

about the “different level” within which she moves emphasized the distance she felt towards “ordinary shuttle traders”

This is another level; this is not the market level [...] That means, we went to Venice, and San Marino, and Milano. This is, a completely different level. [...]. I mean, the market was still considered a place for pensioners and the less affluent strata of society – this is the market. And I was already above that.¹¹⁶

That is, I was not just someone who was a salesman there or someone I was already at the management level and therefore in this shuttle trading you lose your respect, and recognition, and other things, - I don't know, you just serve and serve...

I say I still came out of this funnel, I swam again, somehow gradually my experience and my education became – well, somehow the intellect has been stimulated¹¹⁷

The last passage highlights a feeling of success of overcoming and of achievement. For her a sense of pride appears in the notion of leaving behind the level of bazaar trading and stabilizing financially. After years of struggling (also with her patriarchal husband), she managed to open her own jewelry shop in a shopping mall in Moscow. The business was not as successful as she hoped but this time she fully identified with her occupation and blamed the government and the lessors for the failure. She told me that she made peace with her convoluted past and that after all she has seen and gone through, she just wants to live a quiet life in the countryside, even if her pension is ridiculously small.

5.5.5 Case 5: Anna (49)

Anna was the most outspoken about the inappropriateness of market trading for a person like her. She understood that trading for some people was an existential necessity, but this did not influence her opinion that for people with a certain status it was shameful to fall so deeply. She expressed a clear value pattern, where trading in commission boutiques or later in her own shop was for her a respectful and profitable business, while market trading was just the “ultimate degradation” (posledniy pozor) and “people did not do this” (lyudi etogo ne delali!). In her narration she often contradicts herself.

¹¹⁶ «Eto uzhe drugoy uroven' eto uzhe ne rynochnyy uroven' [...] To yest', tam yezdili, i v Venetsiyu, i San Marino, i Milano. To yest' uzhe sovershenno drugoy uroven', to yest' uzhe uroven' sovsem drugoy byl ne prosto rynochnoy takoy, to yest' rynek on byl vse ravno rasschityvanno na pensionerov i takoy ne sovsem obespecheniye sloy obshchestva - na rynek. A u menya uzhe povyshe [...]» (Liubov, 62, 00:58:00)

¹¹⁷ «To yest', ne prosto ya kem-to byla tam prodavitsom ili kem-to ya uzhe na urovne rukovodstva i poetomu kogda ty teryayesh' vot v etikh chelnochnykh otnoshenii uvazheniye, priznaniye, yeshcho chto-to, ty uzhe kak-to vot, ya ne znayu, podayesh' i podayesh'. YA govoryu ya vso-taki vyshla iz etogo voronki, vyplyla opyat' kak-to stalo postepenno svoy opyt, svoye obrazovaniye tut vot kak-to intellekt uzhe vot tak-to prodvigat'.» (Liubov, 62, 00:49:00-00:50:00)

Just like Russia as a country. I think that often we have pride, some form of Russian pride (gordynya) or Russian pride (gordost'), and often we behave like showing the world our pride. This is bad. This is the same story for Russians. They are always the same, just as it has always been shameful to trade, for example at the market; well, and shameful it was.¹¹⁸

On one hand, she says that there is something wrong with this “Russian pride” (gordynya), while on the other, it is her own pride that dismisses market trading as something shameful. These value categories seem to be deeply incorporated, however they are not grounded in any form of ideological commitment. She clearly despised the communist system and promotes capitalist values, such as deregulation, privatization and competition. In her case the value categories of pride and shame were based on her class identity; the feeling of belonging did not seem troubled by her transition to the capitalist class, though.

5.5.6 Case 6: Nadezhda (61)

Nadezhda’s narration reveals perhaps the most unresolved story. Even if she made a spectacular career, her account is full of inner conflicts. Shame and pride here are closely related to the many expressions of justification, especially in regard to the negative public attitude, but also because of her husband’s dismissive behavior.

Well, when I started with the business - when I went, they showed pointed fingers at me. Torgashka (torgashka) they called me (pejorative term for market trader) when they saw me at the market here (....) they all pointed with their fingers at me.[...] At first, at first, I was offended, but wasn't it obvious that I didn't steal, but earned the money for my family!¹¹⁹

In the school, for example, they would say, “your mother is a speculator” and the father also behaved like this.¹²⁰

During our talk she still argued with these accusations.

IF I HADN NOT, If I hadn't started working at the market, I don't know how we would have survived. It was all very difficult.

¹¹⁸ «Takzhe kak Rossiya kak strana. YA schitayu chto chasto u nas yest' gordynya kakoy-to tam rossiyskuyu gordost' ili russkuyu gordost' a chasto my sebya vedem pokazyvayu miru svoye gordeniye. Eto plokho. Vot i takaya zhe istoriya u russkikh. Oni vseгда tak zhe kak i vseгда stydna torgovat' naprimer na rynke bylo nu stydna eto bylo.» (Anna, 49, 00:50:20)

¹¹⁹ «Nu togda nachali zanimat'sya, na menya pokazyvali pal'tsem. Torgashka kogda menya videli na rynke vot (....) na menya pokazyvali vse pal'tsy. [...] YA snachala mne, snachala bylo obidno, vrode by za chto ya ved' potom ya ved' ne voruyu ya so svoey sem'yoy den'gi zarabatyvayu!» (Nadezhda, 61, 01:09:00)

¹²⁰ «V shkole vo-pervykh takoye otnosheniye bylo «u vas mat' spekulyantka» i otets k nim takzhe odnosilsya vot.» (Nadezhda, 61, 00:08:36)

*My husband did not understand this, he believed that happiness was not in money. I understand, but it FROM SOMETHING YOU HAVE TO LIVE, DON'T YOU? If we did not depend on money, it would be quite different.*¹²¹

There is a sense of pride in her comments, which, again is related to the material returns and the living standard she could provide for her children. But she didn't express self-respect in regard to the professionalization of her business, while her close relationship with the market managers seemed the most important source of self-esteem.

5.5.7 Case 7: Elena (64)

With Elena and Sveta, I met in a fast-food bistro during Sveta's lunch break and because of the time limitations, especially Sveta talked a lot and very fast (even though we ended up talking for more than two hours). However, from Elena I understood that for her the trading business was not very troublesome emotionally. Her decisions seem very pragmatic, while she calls herself an "intuitive person". An important difference, compared to other cases is that, from the beginning on she worked together with her husband. They had a car and used to go to production sites in the region in order to purchase large amounts of goods, e.g. fur, pet food, etc. which they sold directly out of the car. Besides, she had decided on her own to leave the factory, she didn't engage because of unemployment, but because she felt that there were easier and faster ways to make money and enjoy a better life with her family. Against this background, I assume that the rather self-selected mode of engagement and the fact that she had the practical and emotional support of her husband provided a much better starting ground. She could feel like a self-determined actor, relying on her own decisions

5.5.8 Case 8: Sveta (57)

Sveta's narration was the major inspiration for the generation of the theory. Her explicit description of a transformation from shame to pride stimulated the sensitivity for these dimensions and turned out to be a very revealing perspective.

*You know, in the 90s, before the shuttle trading, we were, I was working in an atelier. I worked with women, knew a lot of people and when we started trading, it was so embarrassing. We hid under the counter. I knew a lot of people. We were just hiding.*¹²²

My friend was standing, and she was trading - I was hiding. Then, here, something has changed. Apparently, people's attitudes towards us have

¹²¹ «YESLI BY YA, yesli by ya ne nachala rabotat' na rynke ya ne znayu kak by my zhili. Bylo vse ochen' slozhno. Muzh etogo ne ponimal on schital chto ne v den'gakh schast'ye. YA ponimayu, no NADA ZHE NA CHTO-TO ZHIT'. yesli my ne zaviseli ot deneg eto byl sovsem bylo drugoye.» (Nadezhda, 61, 00:12:00)

¹²² «Znayete, v 90-ye, vot do chelnochnogo dvizheniya, my byli, ya rabotala v atel'ye. YA rabotala s zhenshchinami, znala ochen' mnogo lyudey i, kogda my nachali torgovat', eto bylo tak stydno. My pryatalis' pod prilavok. YA znala ochen' mnogo lyudey. My prosto pryatalas'.» (Sveta, 57, 01:00:40)

*changed. This has already become, apparently, whether they realized that they have nowhere else to dress (only with us). People suddenly approached us with respect.*¹²³

Sveta: Yes, in the early nineties it was. The attitude is - speculation. And this is also how we thought about ourselves. By and large - it was.

Elena: Buy there and sell here...

*Sveta: We still try very hard that people have no reasons to talk bad about us. You know, we are not doing bad things, we try to be decent people. I want to think that I'm doing the right thing, for not feeling ashamed. But now it is not, now it is already a serious profession. There is already a need to calculate. And then, I do not think this is it ... Well, now we are entrepreneurs. We are engaged in commercial activities now. Yes, I just, you know, like, now I am also into handmade, yes, at exhibitions. And when a buyer comes to me, he says: "How beautiful, how well done, Svetlana." I say: "Well, in this I found myself." Well, I sit in my own business. People would pass by and ask: "How, have you been keeping the business for so many years? You are doing so well." And it seems to me - this is already the elementary. Well, just elementary.*¹²⁴

*Before, we were ashamed of this kind of work. But now we are proud of it!*¹²⁵

Sveta says that she found herself in this entrepreneurial profession. The reasons she gives for the transition from shame to pride, however, are strongly related to the public attitude towards her personally and traders in general. It is the growing respect with which people were meeting her, that boosted her self-esteem and the feeling of rightfulness in what she was doing. Despite this development, her comment shows that, till today, she feels a necessity to be even more correct, decent and well educated than the average, in order to prevent the old stigmatization of the market retailers.

¹²³ «Da, podruzhka stoyala i ona torgovala - ya pryatalas'. Potom, vot, chto-to pomenyalos'. Vidimo, otnosheniye lyudey k nam pomenyalos'. Eto uzhe stalo, vidimo, to li oni ponyali, chto im negde bol'she odevat'sya. K nam stali vdrug vse s uvazheniyem.» (Sveta, 57, 01:01:10)

¹²⁴ Sveta: Da, v nachale devyanostykh tak i bylo. Otnosheniye takoye - spekulyatsii. I my sami sebya schitali. Po bol'shomu schotu - tak i bylo.

Elena: Kupit' tam i prodal' zdes'.

Sveta: my vso ravno ochen' starayemsya, chtoby pro nas ne govorili plokho. Znayete, ne delayem plokkikh del, starayemsya byt' poryadochnymi lyud'mi. YA tak khochu dumat', chto ya tak delayu pravil'no, chtob ne stydno bylo. A seychas net, seychas eto uzhe professiya, ser'yozno. Tut uzhe nuzhno proschityvat'. I potom, ya ne schitayu, chto eto vot... Da, seychas my - predprinimateli. My zanimayemsya kommercheskoy deyatel'nost'yu seychas. Da, ya prosto, znayete, kak, seychas ya zanimayus' khendmeydom, da, na vystavkakh. I kogda ko mne prikhodit pokupatel', govorit: "Kak krasivo, kakaya molodets, Svetlana". YA govoryu: "Nu vot, v etom ya sebya nashla". Nu a sama sizhu v magazine u sebya. Na chto ona govorit: "Kak, chto, vy stol'ko let derzhite biznes? Vy takaya molodets". A mne kazhetsya - eto uzhe tak elementarno. Nu prosto vot elementarno. (Sveta and Elena 01:03:08)

¹²⁵ «Ran'she, my stesnyalis' takoy raboty. Teper' my stali yey gordit'sya.» (Sveta, 57, 01:02:00)

6. Conclusion

The shuttle trade business has not only fundamentally impacted the lives of those who engaged in this commercial activity, but also significantly shaped the economic and social realities in post-Soviet Russia. In this study I have developed an analytical lens that went beyond the trading practice and the entrepreneurial strategies of female retailers. The insights from biographical storytelling were used as a way to understand how women retailers coped with their changing professional identity and the many-sided everyday struggles, emotional challenges, and individual agency that this business entailed in the context of the convoluted social and economic conditions of the 1990's in Russia. In order to tackle these dimensions, I have used a grounded theory method. It is a useful tool to trace back how meaning is based on interaction and how the experience of social hierarchies shapes the sense of norms and values. The application of GTM was motivated by the attempt to comprehend "the complex world of lived experience from the point of view of those who lived in it" (Schwandt 2006:40). However, I explicitly added to this rather passive notion of "experiencing" the more active mode of shaping.

The aim was to explore how the traders used the change of professional identity to negotiate their social status, gender roles and value patterns. From there, I draw broader conclusions about the social impact of shuttle trade on post-Soviet Russia. While I could demonstrate that shuttle trading fundamentally shaped these three dimensions, the life stories made clear, that the mode of influence and the subsequent ways of acting were closely linked to the set of capitals and the social status acquired already in socialist times. Especially the moral and emotional regimes co-determined the meaning women attributed to the practice of trading. The economic crisis and the dismantling of the welfare structure challenged these moralities on a level of survival. This clash of ideologies, the loss of status, and the moralized public gaze were the main reasons for the feeling of shame or shamefulness in regard to shuttle trade. Moreover, female predominance in the field can be seen as a continuation of the women's self-image of the care-worker, thus a common way to evaluate their success in the business was to highlight their capacity to provide for the well-being of the family and children's education.

It is important to acknowledge the difference between those who feel ashamed and those who determine what is shameful. It reveals the tacit hierarchy and the practical power of emotions. While, for instances, it was not considered shameful to avoid taxes or customs, irrespective of the type of business, social background or contemporary professional position, there were clear distinctions regarding the mode of economic activity. Women who worked as shuttle traders and retailed at the market experienced a feeling of shame, stemming from the 'exposure' of their

activity to the public, negative attitudes from the side of family and friends and inner conflicts caused by a personal commitment to the socialist ideology. However, some protagonists distanced themselves from shuttle traders, while still being engaged in similar forms of commercial activity. This helped them to avoid shame. Nonetheless, or perhaps just because of the need for such a relative reference, they still tended to consider shuttle trading as shameful. In these cases, the evaluation was closely connected with the social status and professional position the protagonists had held in Soviet times. The difference shows, how the material practice of trading is bound to value patterns. These patterns stem from and in the same time reproduce social hierarchies that ultimately also influenced the stratification process in the transformation time.

The relation of social status and shame reveals that emotion regimes are class-dependent and induced by changing forms of rationality. The social hierarchies that determine emotional regimes don't simply vanish due to a changing power structure. The space for renegotiation of class, gender and emotion regimes became more open, but the level of openness was dependent on the place already occupied within this hierarchy. The shifting forms of self-image and professional identification of female traders account for the flexibility of these concepts. Material returns, and the professionalization of the business stimulated more positive emotions and, eventually led to a sense of pride in regard to these achievements. In addition, the public attitude towards market traders changed and this form of petty entrepreneurship started to be normalized.

By paying attention to the emotion of shame and pride, I found three important aspects that can enhance our understanding of female adaptability to the economic and social constraints of the transformation period in Russia. First, these self-conscious emotions are related to the level of identification with the professional activity and the social status in Soviet times. As a consequence, the professional transformation often deprived the protagonists of the sense of belonging. Second, the necessity-driven engagement in trading entailed a compulsion for justification. Third, at the end of the 1990's shuttle trade, for those who stayed, has turned into a self-selected profession and the mode of business and simultaneously the self-image of traders has changed massively.

Focusing on the emotional dimension of post-Soviet female retailers provided a rich analytical prism to understand the transition of social status, gender roles and value patterns. However, there are certainly many other approaches to the topic, and the material that could provide equally important aspects of the shuttle trade phenomenon. Besides, even if I tried my best to cover the dimensions, I deemed most relevant, there are many aspects I had to ignore, despite their obvious importance for the informants. The limitations of this work are such, that I had to abandon a lot of interesting issues that came up in these interviews, such as questions of nationalism, identity politics and business strategies. In addition, looking at the material from

another theoretical and methodological angle would certainly open up new perspectives that might further enhance our understanding of the individual consequences of the liberal market transformation in post-Soviet Russia. For instance, an analysis of life stories centering on habitus and changing social statuses could reveal important structural conditions. Also, an in-depth text analysis of the narrative interviews, spotlighting the individual narrations of life-stories as a whole, could be a significant contribution to the field of biography studies. Yet, had I followed a predefined theoretical assumption, I wouldn't have been able to perform the closest reading possible and the most accurate extraction of what is in the material.

Finally, I would like to conclude this research borrowing from a famous Marxian quote¹²⁶, claiming that: *Female post-Soviet traders made their own history, but they did not make it under self-selected circumstances.*

¹²⁶ <https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1852/18th-brumaire/ch01.htm> latest access: 02.02.2019

7. Appendix

Initial interview questions (April 2018)	Interview questions towards the end of the fieldwork (June 2018) (the changes are highlighted in grey)
<p>1) Professional pathway in the Soviet times</p> <p><i>How did you choose your profession?</i></p> <p><i>What hindered/enabled you to learn the profession you wanted to do?</i></p> <p><i>Did you like your work/study?</i></p> <p><i>Did you earn enough to sustain your life?</i></p> <p><i>How did you experience the often-quoted double burden of women?</i></p>	<p>1) Professional pathway in the Soviet times</p> <p><i>How did you choose your profession?</i></p> <p><i>What hindered/enabled you to learn the profession you wanted to do?</i></p> <p><i>Did you like your work/study?</i></p> <p><i>Did you earn enough to sustain your life?</i></p> <p><i>How did you experience the often-quoted double burden of women?</i></p>
<p>2) Impact and evaluation of the system transformation</p> <p><i>What are your associations with the perestroika and glasnost?</i></p> <p><i>In how far did the transformation change the situation of your family?</i></p> <p><i>How was living situation back then (working position/studies/dreams)</i></p> <p><i>What were the difficulties?</i></p>	<p>2) Impact and evaluation of the system transformation</p> <p><i>Do you remember what you thought about the system change at the beginning of the reforms?</i></p> <p><i>Did your opinion change in the cause of the 90's?</i></p> <p><i>How do you think about this time nowadays?</i></p> <p><i>In how far did the transformation period influence your live?</i></p>
<p>3) Decision to get engaged in the trading business</p> <p><i>How did you know about this type of activity?</i></p> <p><i>Did any of your friends or relatives work as shuttle traders, as well?</i></p> <p><i>Did anyone convince you to give it a try?</i></p> <p><i>How did you manage to start (money, visa)?</i></p> <p><i>What spoke in favor and what against starting to trade?</i></p> <p><i>Generally, do you think it was a risky thing to do? If yes, why?</i></p> <p><i>What did the everyday risks look like?</i></p>	<p>3) Decision to get engaged in the trading business</p> <p><i>What convinced you to get engaged in the risky activity of shuttle trading?</i></p> <p><i>What spoke in favor and what against starting to trade?</i></p> <p><i>Did any of your friends or relatives work as shuttle traders, as well?</i></p> <p><i>How did you manage to start (money, visa)?</i></p>
<p>4) Organization of the shuttle trading</p> <p><i>Did you travel with a group or alone?</i></p> <p><i>When you traveled in a group, how was this organized? Did any form of role allocation take place? If there was a group leader, what tasks did she have, and did you usually agree with her instructions?</i></p> <p><i>Did you trust one another?</i></p> <p><i>What kind of goods did you purchase, how was it organized, how did the vendors, the buyers and your business partners behave?</i></p> <p><i>What were the problems you confronted?</i></p>	<p>4) Organization of the shuttle trade</p> <p><i>To which countries did you travel for to buy goods?</i></p> <p><i>Can you describe how such a trip would look like?</i></p> <p><i>What were the challenges, but maybe also the pleasures coming along with these business trips?</i></p> <p><i>Did you enjoy traveling to different countries, even if it was for business?</i></p>
	<p>5) The process of retailing</p> <p><i>Where did you sell your merchandise?</i></p> <p><i>Was the market a dangerous place?</i></p> <p><i>Can you describe how your business developed in the cause of the years?</i></p>

	<i>What was the most profitable time for you and to what extent did the trading pay back?</i>
5) Gendered aspects of the trading business <i>According to statistics, the majority of traders were women. Does this conform to your experience? What might be the reasons for this? Do you remember if you talked about this phenomenon among your fellow traders?</i>	6) Gendered aspects of the trading business <i>I have often heard that the majority of traders were women. Does this conform to your experience? What might be the reasons for this? Do you remember if you talked about this phenomenon among your fellow traders?</i>
6) Impact of the trading activity on family relations <i>How did your husband react to your work? Did he support you with childcare and household? Have you been the main breadwinner back then? And if, did this lead to conflicts? Did your family relations change in the cause of your trading business? How did your friends and parents think about your activity? Did your relation change in the 90's?</i>	7) Impact of the trading activity on family relations <i>How did your husband react to your work? Did he support you with childcare and household? Could you talk to your husband about the trips (challenges, experiences, joys)? Have you been the main breadwinner back then? And if yes, did this lead to conflicts? Did your family relations change in the cause of your trading business? How did your friends and parents think about your activity? Did your relation change in the 90's?</i>
	8) How to cope with changing status, disappointment and the changing values in post-Soviet Russia <i>Sometimes women told me that they felt ashamed to sell at the markets. What do you think about this and did you feel something similar? What has changed that you became more confident in your new profession? Did you think about going back to your previous profession one day? Now, with all your experience, would you do the same again?</i>
6) How did you move on, after you gave up the trading business?	9) How did you move on, after you gave up the trading business?
7) Which moments in your life would you call turning points?	10) Which moments in your life would you call turning points?
8) How do you look back at these times now?	11) How do you look back at these times now?

Russian translation of the first column of questions:

1) Давайте поговорим о времени, когда фактически перестал существовать Союз.

- с чем у Вас ассоциируется период самого начала реформ?
- А после распада, какая в это время была ваша семья?
- Какие были трудности?
- Где и кем Вы тогда работали (или учились)?
- Устраивала ли Вас Ваша работа? (доход, перспективы)

2) Расскажите, пожалуйста, как Вы пришли к решению заняться торговлей?

- Откуда Вы узнали об таком виде деятельности?
- Кто-то из Ваших знакомых уже работал челноком?
- Кто-то Вас позвал попробовать?
- Как Вам удалось собрать средства?

3) В целом, Вы считаете свой шаг рискованным, или нет?

- почему?
- Какие были повседневные риски?
- Какие были «за» , и «против», чтобы начать торговать?

Расскажите, пожалуйста, о какойнибудь поездке. О первой, или такой, которая Вы больше всего запомнилась.

- Что закупали, как организовывали сбыт, как вели себя поставщики, покупатели, партнеры?
- С какими проблемами Вы столкнулись? Что было неприятно?
- был ли у Вас торговый коллектив или ездили Вы сами?
- Как был организован Ваш коллектив? Было у Вас иерархическое строение?

5) Существовало кое-то распределение ролей? Кто-то был/а главным в коллективе и если да, какие у неё/него были задачи?

- Челноки доверяли друг другу?

- По-статистике, большинство челноков были женщины. Савпадает это с Вашим впечатлением?

- Какие для этого могут быть причины?

6) Расскажите, пожалуйста, какая у Вас в семье тогда была обстановка?

- Как Ваш муж относился к Вашей работе?

- Как у Вас в семье роли были распределённые?

- Были ли Вы тогда основная кормилица? Если да, это вело к конфликтной ситуации?

- И знал ли Ваш муж о трудности Ваших поездок?

- изменилось ли отношение к Вашему мужу в течение Вашей челночной деятельности?

- Как ваши друзья относились к Вашей работе? Изменилось ли отношение к Вашим друзьям в течение вашей деятельности?

7) Когда Вы закончились челночным бизнесом, как Вы продолжали?

8) Как вы сегодня смотрите на это время?

9) Что Вы думаете, изменилось ли Вас Ваше челночное деятельности? Если да, насколько?

10) Какие моменты вашей жизни вы можете назвать переломными?

8. Bibliography

- Abu-Lughod, Lila. 2008. “Writing against Culture”. Pp. 62–71 in *The Cultural Geography Reader*, edited by T. Oakes and P. L. Price. Routledge.
- Adams, Bruce. 2005. *Tiny Revolutions in Russia: Twentieth Century Soviet and Russian History in Anecdotes and Jokes*. 2nd ed. Routledge.
- Alasheev, Sergej. 1995. ‘On a Particular Kind of Love and the Specificity of Soviet Production’. Pp. 71–105 in *Management and Industry in Russia: Formal and Informal Relations in the Period of Transition*, edited by S. Clarke. Aldershot: Edward Elgar Publishing Limited.
- Ashwin, Sarah. 2000. *Gender, State, and Society in Soviet and Post-Soviet Russia*. New York: Routledge.
- Ashwin, Sarah. 2006. *Adapting to Russia’s New Labour Market Gender and Employment Strategy (Routledgecurzon History of Russia and Eastern Europe)*. 1st ed.
- Barsukova, Svetlana and Vadim Radaev. 2012. ‘Informal Economy in Russia: A Brief Overview’. *Journal of Economic Sociology* 13(2):99–111.
- Bedzir, Vasil, Oksana Chmouliar, and Claire Wallace. 1997. ‘Spending, Saving or Investing Social Capital: The Case of Shuttle Traders in Post-Communist Central Europe’. *Institute for Advanced Studies* 751–70.
- Billé, Franck, Grégory Delaplace, and Caroline Humphrey. 2012. *Frontier Encounters: Knowledge and Practice at the Russian, Chinese and Mongolian Border*. Cambridge: Open Book Publishers.
- Bloch, Alexia. 2011. ‘Emotion Work, Shame, and Post-Soviet Women Entrepreneurs: Negotiating Ideals of Gender and Labor in a Global Economy’. *Identities* 18(4):317–51.
- Blumer, Herbert. 1986. *Symbolic Interactionism: Perspective and Method*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Bobak, Martin, Martin Mckee, Richard Rose, and Michael Marmot. 1999. ‘Alcohol Consumption in a National Sample of the Russian Population’. *Addiction* 94(6):857–66.
- Borenstein, Eliot. 2000. *Men Without Women: Masculinity and Revolution in Russian Fiction, 1917-1929*. Durham and London: Duke University Press.
- Borland, Katherine. 1998. ‘That’s Not What I Said’. Pp. 320–32 in *Oral History Reader*, edited by R. Perks and T. Alistair. London : Routledge.
- Bourdieu, Pierre. 1987. ‘The Biographical Illusion, Translated by Yves Winkin and Wendy Leeds-Hurwitz’. 14:69–72.
- Bourdieu, Pierre. 2011. ‘The Forms of Capital’. Pp. 81–93 in *Cultural Theory: An Anthology*, edited by I. Szeman and T. Kaposy. John Wiley & Sons.
- Boutenko, I. 1997. *Recent Social Trends in Russia 1960-1995*. Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press.

- Buckley, Mary. 1997. 'Victims and Agents: Gender in Post-Soviet States'. Pp. 3–16 in *Post-Soviet Women*, edited by M. Buckley. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Burawoy, Michael. 1998. 'The Extended Case Method'. *Sociological Theory* 16(1):4–33.
- Burawoy, Michael. 2000. *Uncertain Transition: Ethnographies of Change in the Postsocialist World*. Boston: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.
- Burawoy, Michael. 2009. *The Extended Case Method. Four Countries, Four Decades, Four Great Transformations, and One Theoretical Tradition*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Callero, Peter L. 2003. 'The Sociology of the Self'. *Annual Review of Sociology* 29(1):115–33.
- Chamberlain-Salaun, Jennifer, Jane Mills, and Kim Usher. 2013. 'Linking Symbolic Interactionism and Grounded Theory Methods in a Research Design: From Corbin and Strauss' Assumptions to Action'. *SAGE Open* 3(3):215824401350575.
- Chandler, Andrea. 2013. *Democracy, Gender, and Social Policy in Russia: A Wayward Society*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Charmaz, Kathy. 2006. *Constructing Grounded Theory*. London ; Thousand Oaks, Calif: Sage Publications.
- Charmaz, Kathy. 2014. 'Grounded Theory in Global Perspective: Reviews by International Researchers'. *Qualitative Inquiry* 20(9):1074–84.
- Clarke, Adele E. 2003. 'Situational Analyses: Grounded Theory Mapping After the Postmodern Turn'. *Symbolic Interaction* 26(4):553–76.
- Danilova, Ekaterina Zakharovna. 1968. *Sotsial'nye Problemy Truda Zhenshchiny-Rabotnitsy*. Moscow: Mysl'.
- Dyatlov, Viktor Innokent'yevich. 2017. 'Postsovetskiye rynki pod otkrytyim nebom: novyy fenomen ili prodolzheniye traditsii?' *Sibirskiye istoricheskiye issledovaniya* 1.
- Egbert, Henrik. 2006. 'Cross-Border Small-Scale Trading in South-Eastern Europe: Do Embeddedness and Social Capital Explain Enough?' *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 30(2):346–61.
- Elliott, Dorinda. 1994. 'Lifestyles of Russia's Filthy New Rich'. *Newsweek* 124(25):42.
- England, Kim V. L. 1994. 'Getting Personal: Reflexivity, Positionality, and Feminist Research*'. *The Professional Geographer* 46(1):80–89.
- Erikson, Robert and John H. Goldthorpe. 1992. *The Constant Flux: A Study of Class Mobility in Industrial Societies*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Eyal, Gil, Iván Szélenyi, and Eleanor Townsley, eds. 1998. *Making Capitalism without Capitalists: Class Formation and Elite Struggles in Post-Communist Central Europe*. 1. publ. London: Verso.
- Flick, Uwe, Ernst von Kardoff, and Ines Steinke. 2004. *A Companion to Qualitative Research*. London: SAGE.

- Ghodsee, Kristen. 2006. 'Red Nostalgia? Communism, Women's Emancipation, and Economic Transformation in Bulgaria'. in *Women's Movements: Networks and Debates in Post-communist Countries in the 19th and 20th Centuries*, edited by E. Saurer, M. Lanzinger, and E. Frysak. Köln: Böhlau Verlag.
- Giddens, Anthony. 1979. *Capitalism and Modern Social Theory: An Analysis of the Writings of Marx, Durkheim and Max Weber*. Reprint. Cambridge: Cambridge UnivPress.
- Glaser, Barney G. and Anselm L. Strauss. 1967. *The Discovery of Grounded Theory : Strategies for Qualitative Research*. Hawthorne, N.Y. : Aldine de Gruyter,.
- Golenkova, Z. T. and M. K. Gorshkov. 2012. 'Changes in the Social Structure of Russian Society Within a Period of Transformation'. Pp. 21–35 in *Handbook on Social Stratification in the BRIC Countries*. WORLD SCIENTIFIC.
- Golenkova, Z. T. and M. K. Gorshkov. 2013. 'Changes in the Social Structure of Russian Society Within a Period of Transformation'. Pp. 21–35 in *Handbook on Social Stratification in the BRIC Countries*. WORLD SCIENTIFIC.
- Hamilton, Peter. 1991. *Max Weber: Critical Assessments 2*. Taylor & Francis.
- Hammersley, Martyn and Paul Atkinson. 1983. *Ethnography: Principles in Practice*. 1. publ. London: Tavistock.
- Hann, Chris and Ildiko Hann. 1992. 'Samovars and Sex on Turkey's Russian Markets'. *Anthropology Today* 8(4):3.
- Hohnen, Pernille. 2003. *A Market Out of Place?: Remaking Economic, Social, and Symbolic Boundaries in Post-Communist Lithuania*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Hopf, Christel. 2016. *Schriften zu Methodologie und Methoden qualitativer Sozialforschung*. Wiesbaden: Springer Fachmedien Wiesbaden.
- Huws, Ursula. 2006. 'Fixed, Footloose, or Fractured: Work, Identity, and the Spatial Division of Labor in the Twenty-First Century City - ProQuest'. *Monthly Review* 57(10):34–44.
- Il'ina, M. A. and V. I. Il'in. 1998. 'Torgovtsy Gorodskogo Rynka: Shtrikhi k Sotsialnomu Portretu'. *EKO*, № 5.
- Katz, K. 1997. 'Gender, Wages and Discrimination in the USSR: A Study of a Russian Industrial Town'. *Cambridge Journal of Economics* 21(4):431–52.
- Katz, K. 2001. *Gender, Work and Wages in the Soviet Union: A Legacy of Discrimination*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Kenez, Peter. 2016. *A History of the Soviet Union From the Beginning to Its Legacy*. Cambridge University Press.
- Klimova, Svetlana. 2006. 'Chelnoki: Begstvo Ot Nuzhdy Ili Pogonia Za Shansom [Shuttles: Escape from Poverty, or the Pursuit of Opportunity]'. *Sotsial'naiia Real'nost'*[*Social Reality*] 2:26–41.

- Konstantinov, Yulian. 1996. 'Patterns of Reinterpretation: Trader-tourism in the Balkans (Bulgaria) as a Picaresque Metaphorical Enactment of Post-totalitarianism'. *American Ethnologist* 23(4):762–82.
- Küstners, Ivonne. 2006. *Narrative Interviews: Grundlagen und Anwendungen*. 1. Aufl. Wiesbaden: VS, Verl. für Sozialwiss.
- Lapidus, Gail Warshofsky. 1989. 'Interaction of Women's Work and Family Roles in the USSR'. *Canadian Woman Studies* 10(4).
- Lovell, Stephen. 2009. *The Soviet Union: A Very Short Introduction*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Lutz, Wolfgang, Sergei Scherbov, and Andrei Volkov. 2002. *Demographic Trends and Patterns in the Soviet Union Before 1991*. New York: Routledge.
- Mandel, Ruth Ellen and Caroline Humphrey, eds. 2002. *Markets and Moralities: Ethnographies of Postsocialism*. Oxford, UK ; New York: Berg.
- Marody, Mira. 1997. 'Post-Transitology or Is There Any Life After Transition?' *Polish Sociological Review* (117):13–21.
- Marx, Karl. 1951. *The Woman Question; Selections from the Writings of Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, V.I. Lenin; Joseph Stalin*. New York: International Publishers.
- Marx, Karl. 1964. *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844*. New York: Prometheus Books.
- Matthews, Mervyn. 2011. *Privilege in the Soviet Union: A Study of Elite Life-Styles Under Communism*. New York: Routledge.
- Michele Rivkin-Fish. 2010. 'Pronatalism, Gender Politics, and the Renewal of Family Support in Russia: Toward a Feminist Anthropology of "Maternity Capital"'. *Slavic Review* 69(3):701–24.
- Millar, James R. 1987. *Politics, Work, and Daily Life in the USSR: A Survey of Former Soviet Citizens*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Miller, Robert, Caroline Humphrey, and Elena K. Zavyalova. 2002. *Biographical Research in Eastern Europe Altered Lives and Broken Biographies*. London: Routledge.
- Morris, Jeremy. 2013. *The Informal Post-Socialist Economy: Embedded Practices and Livelihoods*. London: Routledge.
- Morris, Jeremy. 2017. 'An Agenda for Research on Work and Class in the Postsocialist World'. *Sociology Compass* 11(5):e12476.
- Mottier, Véronique. 2005. 'The Interpretive Turn: History, Memory, and Storage in Qualitative Research'. *Forum Qualitative Sozialforschung / Forum: Qualitative Social Research* 6(2).
- Mrozowicki, Adam. 2011. *Coping with Social Change: Life Strategies of Workers in Poland's New Capitalism*. Leuven: University Press.

- Mukhina, Irina. 2009. 'New Losses, New Opportunities: (Soviet) Women in the Shuttle Trade, 1987-1998'. *Journal of Social History* 43(2):341–59.
- Mukhina, Irina. 2014. *Women and the Birth of Russian Capitalism: A History of the Shuttle Trade*. DeKalb, IL: NIU Press.
- Oakley, Ann. 2005. *The Ann Oakley Reader: Gender, Women and Social Science*. Bristol: Policy Press.
- Outhwaite, William. 2005. *Social Theory and Postcommunism*. 1. publ. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Paldam, Martin and Gert Tinggaard Svendsen. 2002. 'Missing Social Capital and the Transition in Eastern Europe'. *Journal of Institutional Innovation, Development and Transition* 5:21–34.
- Pereira, N. G. O. and Linda H. Pereira. 2003. 'Work Ethics and the Collapse of the Soviet System'. *Canadian Slavonic Papers* 45(1–2):61–94.
- Pollert, Anna. 2003. 'Women, Work and Equal Opportunities in Post-Communist Transition'. *Work, Employment & Society* 17(2):331–357.
- Posadskaya, Anastasia. 1994. *Women in Russia: A New Era in Russian Feminism*. London: Verso.
- Prinz, Jesse J. 2004. *Gut Reactions: A Perceptual Theory of Emotion*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Radaev, Vadim. 2001. *The Development of Small Entrepreneurship in Russia*. 2001/135. WIDER Discussion Papers//World Institute for Development Economics (UNU-WIDER).
- Rosenthal, Gabriele. 1993. 'Reconstruction of Life Stories: Principles of Selection in Generating Stories for Narrative Biographical Interviews'. *The Narrative Study of Lives* 1(1):59–91.
- Rosenthal, Gabriele. 2004. 'Biographical Research'. Pp. 48–64 in *Qualitative Research Practice*, edited by C. Seale, G. Giampietro, J. F. Gubrium, and D. Silverman. London: Sage.
- Rosenthal, Gabriele. 2006. 'The Narrated Life Story: On the Interrelation Between Experience, Memory and Narration'. Pp. 1–16 in *Narrative, Memory & Knowledge: Representations, Aesthetics, Contexts*, edited by K. Milnes, G. Rosenthal, C. Horrock, N. Kelly, B. Roberts, and D. Robinson. Huddersfield: University of Huddersfield.
- Rutland, Peter. 2009. *The Politics of Economic Stagnation in the Soviet Union: The Role of Local Party Organs in Economic Management*. Cambridge University Press.
- Sacks, Michael Paul and Jerry G. Pankhurst. 1988. *Understanding Soviet Society*. London: Routledge.
- Salice, Alessandro and Alba Montes Sánchez. 2016. 'Pride, Shame, and Group Identification'. *Frontiers in Psychology* 7(557).
- Salmenniemi, Suvi. 2012. *Rethinking Class in Russia*. Farnham, Surrey [u.a.]: Ashgate.
- Sangster, Joan. 1994. 'Telling Our Stories: Feminist Debates and the Use of Oral History'. *Women's History Review* 3(1):5–28.

- Sasunkevich, Olga. 2015. *Informal Trade, Gender and the Border Experience: From Political Borders to Social Boundaries*. Burlington: Ashgate.
- Schrader, Heiko. 2004. 'Social Capital and Social Transformation in Russia'. *Journal of East European Management Studies* 9(4):392–411.
- Schütze, Fritz. 1976. 'Zur Hervorlockung und Analyse von Erzählungen thematisch relevanter Geschichten im Rahmen soziologischer Feldforschung: dargestellt an einem Projekt zur Erforschung von kommunalen Machtstrukturen'. Pp. 159–260 in *Kommunikative Sozialforschung: Alltagswissen und Alltagshandeln, Gemeindemachtforschung, Polizei, politische Erwachsenenbildung*, edited by A. Weymann. München: Fink.
- Schütze, Fritz. 1984. 'Kognitive Figuren des autobiographischen Stegreiferzählens'. Pp. 78–117 in *Biographie und soziale Wirklichkeit*, edited by M. Kohli and G. Robert. Stuttgart: J.B. Metzler.
- Schwandt, Thomas. 2006. 'Constructivist, Interpretist Approaches to Human Inquiry'. in *The Production of Reality: Essays and Readings on Social Interaction*, edited by J. O'Brien. London: Pine Forge Press.
- Seale, Clive. 2004. *Qualitative Research Practice*. London: SAGE.
- Shiller, Robert, Maxim Boycko, and Vladimir Korobov. 1990. *Popular Attitudes Towards Free Markets: The Soviet Union and the United States Compared*. Report Nr. 3453. Cambridge: National Bureau of Economic Research.
- Shkolnikov, Vladimir M., Giovanni A. Cornia, David A. Leon, and France Meslé. 1998. 'Causes of the Russian Mortality Crisis: Evidence and Interpretations'. *World Development* 26(11).
- Shlapentokh, Vladimir. 1993. *The Last Years of the Soviet Empire: Snapshots from 1985 - 1991*. 1. publ. Westport, Conn.: Praeger.
- Shlapentokh, Vladimir and Joshau Woods. 2007. *Contemporary Russia as a Feudal Society: A New Perspective on the Post-Soviet Era*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Sik, Endre and Claire Wallace. 1999. 'The Development of Open-Air Markets in East-Central Europe'. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 23(4):697–714.
- Soboleva, Irina. 2017. 'Patterns of Human Capital Development in Russia: Meeting the Challenge of Market Reforms and Globalization'. *Institutions and Economies* 235–57.
- Sperling, Valerie. 1999. *Organizing Women in Contemporary Russia Engendering Transition / Valerie Sperling*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Strauss, Anselm L. and Juliet M. Corbin. 1998. *Basics of Qualitative Research: Techniques and Procedures for Developing Grounded Theory*. 2nd ed. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.
- Strübing, Jörg. 2014. *Grounded Theory: zur sozialtheoretischen und epistemologischen Fundierung eines pragmatistischen Forschungsstils*. Wiesbaden: Springer VS.
- Stryker, Sheldon. 2001. 'Traditional Symbolic Interactionism, Role Theory, and Structural Symbolic Interactionism: The Road to Identity Theory'. Pp. 211–31 in *Handbook of Sociological Theory, Handbooks of Sociology and Social Research*, edited by J. H. Turner. Boston, MA: Springer US.

- Suchman, Lucy and Brigitte Jordan. 1990. 'Interactional Troubles in Face-to-Face Survey Interviews'. *Journal of the American Statistical Association* 85(409):232–41.
- Suny, Ronald. 1993. *The Revenge of the Past: Nationalism, Revolution, and the Collapse of the Soviet Union*. Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press.
- Sword, Keith. 1999. 'Cross-Border "Suitcase Trade" and the Role of Foreigners in Polish Informal Markets'. Pp. 145–67 in *The Challenge of East-West Migration for Poland*, edited by K. Iglicka and K. Sword. London: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Szelényi, Iván. 1995. 'The Rise of Managerialism: The "New Class" after the Fall of Communism'. *Collegium Budapest/Institute for Advanced Study* 32.
- Temkina, Anna and Elena Zdravomyslova. 2003. 'Gender Studies in Post-Soviet Society: Western Frames and Cultural Differences'. *Studies in East European Thought* 55(1):51–61.
- Tischner, Jozef. 2005. *Etyka Solidarnosci Oraz Homo Sovieticus*.
- Tyszka, Krzysztof. 2009. "'Homo Sovieticus" Two Decades Later'. *Polish Sociological Review* (168):507–22.
- Verdery, Katherine. 1996. *What Was Socialism, and What Comes Next?* Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Volkov, Andrei. 1985. *Poisk vedut demografy*. Moskva: Mysl'.
- Wallace, Claire and Vasil Bedzir. 1999. 'Investing in Social Capital: The Case of Small-Scale, Cross-Border Traders in Post-Communist Central Europe' edited by O. Shmulyar. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 23(4):751–70.
- Walther, Matthias. 2014. 'Bourdieu's Theory of Practice as Theoretical Framework'. Pp. 7–23 in *Repatriation to France and Germany: A Comparative Study Based on Bourdieu's Theory of Practice, mir-Edition*, edited by M. Walther. Wiesbaden: Springer Fachmedien Wiesbaden.
- Weber, Max. 1999. *Essays in Economic Sociology*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Weber, Max, C. Wright Mills, and H. H. Gerth. 1977. *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.
- Weber, Max, Guenther Roth, and Claus Wittich. 1978. *Economy and Society: An Outline of Interpretive Sociology*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Williams, C. 2004. *Cash-in-Hand Work: The Underground Sector and the Hidden Economy of Favours*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Yadova, Yekaterina. 2009. 'Chelnochestvo Kak Social'nyj Resurs Transformacionnogo Perioda'. Institute sociologii RAN, Moscow.
- Yakovlev, Andrei and Mine Eder. 2003. 'The Suitcase Trade between Turkey and Russia: Microeconomics and Institutional Structure'. *Working Paper WP4/2003/07* (Moscow: State University—Higher School of Economic):17.

- Yanowitch, Murray. 1985. *Work in the Soviet Union: Attitudes and Issues*. New York: M.E. Sharpe.
- Yasterboy, Gordey A. 2016. *Intergenerational Social Mobility in Soviet and Post-Soviet Russia. Working Paper*. BRP 69 / SOC /2016. Moscow: Higher School of Economics.
- Yükseker, Deniz. 2004. 'Trust and Gender in a Transnational Market: The Public Culture of Laleli, Istanbul'. *Public Culture* 16(1):47–65.
- Yükseker, Deniz. 2006. 'Business Relations into/from Gendered Social Relations: Exchange in the Transnational Suitcase Trade Market of Laleli'. *New Perspectives on Turkey* 27:77–106.
- Yuval-Davis, Nira. 2006. 'Belonging and the Politics of Belonging'. *Patterns of Prejudice* 40(3):197–214.
- Zabyelina, Yuliya. 2012. 'Costs and Benefits of Informal Economy: Shuttle Trade and Crime at Cherkizovsky Market'. *Global Crime* 13(2):95–108.
- Zakharova, Natalia, Anastasia Posadskaya, and Natalia Rimashevskaya. 1989. 'Kak My Reshaem Zhenskii Vopros'. *Kommunist* 4:56–65.
- Zohoori, Namvar. 1998. 'Monitoring the Economic Transition in the Russian Federation and Its Implications for the Demographic Crisis--The Russian Longitudinal Monitoring Survey'. *World Development* 26(11):1977–93.