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**GLOBAL CARE COMES FULL CIRCLE?-  
INTERNATIONAL VOLUNTEERS AND A SOCIAL PROGRAM  
FOR ÉMIGRÉS' CHILDREN IN ECUADOR**

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## CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Introduction, Research Questions and Chapter Outlines

The first time I went to Ecuador I volunteered at a foundation for plantation workers’ children. There I met Leticia, who was then 27 years old and arrived around the same time to start the volunteer work as me. She is originally from Spain, but has lived in Dublin, Ireland for more than 8 years and thus speaks fluent English. She has degrees in social work and addiction counseling, and has experience of various sectors within social work. At the foundation, while I worked in the primary school with children from seven to thirteen years old, Leticia worked in the center of early stimulation and education with around 50 children, divided in 3 groups. Those little ones were between 3 months to five years old. Her daily routines varied. At 7a.m., she would shower those children who suffered from poor hygiene conditions at home. During the day, she conducted all kinds of activities, including singing English songs and playing with the children. She fed the children lunch, wrote evaluations of the activities, and communicated with the parents when they collected their children. Her work would finish at around 3 p.m.

During that time in Ecuador, Leticia introduced me to an Ecuadorian woman, Paulina.

She was also 27 years old, and was studying to become a veterinarian. Paulina's mother, Nancy, emigrated to a town near Madrid, Spain 6 years ago to earn enough to support Paulina's living and studying expenses in Ecuador. Since emigrating to Spain, Nancy had never been back to Ecuador. She works as a cleaner in a local public health center and is employed through a private subcontracting company. Leticia had never met Paulina before volunteering but had heard of her because Leticia's mother was Nancy's supervisor in Spain. When Leticia decided that she wanted to have the experience of volunteering in Ecuador, the two mothers exchanged information so that Leticia could visit Paulina there.

About 2.5 million Ecuadorians left their country between 2003 and 2007 (EEAS 2007, 47). The total population of Ecuador was 12.8 million people in 2003 and 13.6 million people in 2007 (UNFPA 2011). The largest groups of Ecuadorian migrants are found in the United States (U.S.) and Spain.<sup>1</sup> As of 2009, it is estimated that there are some 700,000 Ecuadorians living in Spain (Kopanja 2009). A majority of these migrants have children and families in Ecuador, whom they visit rarely, if ever.<sup>2</sup> From 2000 to 2005, the Spanish government implemented the regularization and normalization process for irregular migrant workers, granting many Ecuadorians legal status to reside and work in Spain (Levinson 2005, see also

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<sup>1</sup> For the past two decades the U.S. and Spain have always been the two countries which receive the majority of Ecuadorian immigrants, with the number of migrants to Spain rising over that to the U.S. starting from roughly the second half of the 1990s. The country receiving the third largest amount of migrants from Ecuador is Italy (Camacho Zambrano 2009,70, see also EEAS 2007, 71).

<sup>2</sup> My own observation. It is especially difficult for Ecuadorian emigrants in the U.S. to visit Ecuador, since many of them enter the U.S. illegally and remain in the U.S. without legalized statuses.

Arango and Jachimowicz 2005). This has made it much easier for Ecuadorians to travel back to their country. However, migrant workers face other barriers to make the return trip home, the largest of which being the time and money required. Many migrants leaving their homes and dependents in Ecuador find low-income jobs as cleaners, care workers, domestics<sup>3</sup>, construction workers or farm workers. It is hard for them to take leave from these jobs or spend money for the travels between Spain and Ecuador.

Nancy, Paulina’s mother is one such example. During the course of my research, I have encountered many similar stories of work migration and transnational families when migrant parents and their children are in different countries. This phenomenon has been discussed in the academia, with many rich and critical analyses found in the global care chain literature. The analyses explore how people, primarily women from developing countries, suspend their caring activities at home in order that they may engage in remunerated caring activities in wealthier countries.<sup>4</sup> In contrast, the situation of Leticia, the daughter of Nancy’s supervisor, differs significantly to those of the migrant women from Ecuador. Although Leticia also went abroad to engage in highly feminized work, she did not travel because she felt compelled to for financial reasons. As a volunteer like me at that time, her work was not deskilled or

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<sup>3</sup> I use care workers to mean those who engage in care work. Domestic work in my definition is a part of care work, but it emphasizes on the characteristic of it to be situating within the domestic and private realms. See 1.2.2 for definitions and further discussions of care and care work.

<sup>4</sup> I give a generalized description of global care chain here. For a detailed and comprehensive review of global care chain literature see 1.2.2.

demeaning. She did not stay long or find it difficult to return home to her family and close ones. Moreover, she did not have to deal with the problems involved in immigration and an illegal status.

While one Spanish woman volunteers to travel to Ecuador to take care of impoverished local children, an Ecuadorian mother immigrates to Spain in order to financially support her family in Ecuador. The more I come to know about people and families in these two kinds of circuits, the more I feel that this story reveals not just differences of people on the move, but interconnections. Together, I see that the two circuits of people form a seeming circle on a global scale. The interconnections of the circuits that constitute the seeming circle have not yet been analyzed in a comprehensive way in the academia. My aim in this thesis is to do feminist research on such interconnections. For my definition of “feminist research”, I do not see it as a fixed type of research. I agree with scholars like Brigitte Young (2002) who announces that a feminist’s agenda in dealing with contemporary issues is to “make visible the new centers of structural and strategic disparities” (66). I also wish to apply a lens that integrates perspectives such as gender, ethnic, and class during the research. Ahmed (1998) has defined feminism in a way that also articulates my idea about feminist research: “feminism may privilege gender by recognising that gender itself is a privileged site of power differentiation. A feminist privileging of gender does not necessarily assume that privilege at the level of ontology” (111).



In order realize a feminist research to explore those interconnections of the two circuits of people, I have studied a social program in a rural canton Chunchi in Ecuador. The program, “Center of Integral Support and Virtual Communication for Migrant’s Children<sup>5</sup>”, is a social project established in 2006 that runs a range of activities for emigrants’ children. It involves international volunteers working together with the local municipality<sup>6</sup>. In a canton that has the highest rate of emigration in the whole province, an overwhelming number of these poor children in Chunchi have their parents working abroad, mostly in the U.S. and Spain. In the context of decentralization, international cooperation and international volunteerism, the municipality has come to coordinate the program in collaboration with the National Institute of Children and Family of Ecuador (INFA), the provincial government of Chimborazo, Ecuador Volunteer Foundation, the United Nation Population Fund (UNFPA), the UN-Volunteers, the EU project PASSE<sup>7</sup>, the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), among many other organizations.

This social project is a site where the two kinds of circuits I have outlined above and many institutions meet in the seeming circle of care. It yields encounters, particularly between the local government and other institutions, and between the two social groups that, in lieu of

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5 Centro de Apoyo Integral y Comunicación Virtual para Hijos de Migrantes. For the sake of the space, I frequently refer to it in my thesis as “the social program”, or “the Center of Integral Support”.

6 The local governmental administrative unit in Ecuador is called canton. The government that rules a canton is the local municipality. See 2.1.2 for more information.

7 Program of Support for the Health Sector in Ecuador (*Programa de Apoyo al Sector Salud en Ecuador*).

nuanced examination, I distinguish here as “emigrants’ families” and “international volunteers”. By moving the focus of scholarly discussion from sites of caring activities in Europe, the U.S. and other relatively well-off countries— including the hospitals, middle-class households, and kindergartens— to a program in a rural canton in Ecuador that allegedly suffers from emigration, I thereby come to ask the questions: What are the implications of the encounters of different actors at this specific site for the care and development of emigrants’ children? What do they reveal about unequal globalization and the possibilities that exist for transforming globalization?

To answer these questions, I have interviewed people involved in the social project, including international volunteers, coordinators and experts from the participating institutions, and primary carers of the children in the program. I have also gathered official documents, writings from volunteers’ blogs, and written exchanges of opinions and information with participants of my fieldwork. I focus on more specifically the following sub-questions when analyzing these interviews and materials: (1) How do different institutional and individual actors engage in the various activities of childcare during their encounters with each other in the program? Taking that as a basis, I ask (2) What are the implications of the emerging patterns of institutional practices in this program? And (3) What kind of intersubjective dynamics and subjectivities related to care and volunteering in Chunchi are produced? These three questions will guide my analysis of the encounters in the social program in terms of

uneven globalization and the possibilities for positive transformations.

In order to comprehensively analyze the social program I have chosen, my thesis will begin with situating this specific site for examination within the framework of uneven globalization and global care chains. It will be further developed by drawing the entangled lines of development, local governance, and grassroots organizing. To develop a methodology and enable my interpretation of the intersubjective dynamics that are produced through an interplay of factors, I also employ theories and approaches from feminist New Materialism, which is committed to an epistemology that connects the material and the symbolic, the natural and the social. It is also through thinking with the feminist New Materialist framework that I research on and connect both the institutional and the individual aspects of the social program in my thesis. On the other hand, since it is a case study on a significant local program in Ecuador within globalization, this thesis can also contribute to Latin American studies. It does so not simply by adding to empirical research on the phenomena of migration and development in Latin America, but also by further transforming the scope of the area of studies to link to globalization, gender, and welfare.

The thesis is assembled in five chapters. In the remainder of this first chapter, I will map out the theoretical dimensions in which I have been able to construct my research questions. This includes the discussion of uneven globalization and its counter-movements,

feminists' theorization of care and the social domain within globalization, as well as the premises and the mechanisms of power dynamics concretized in specific time-space on the material-symbolic level. Although I will elaborate on my theoretical framework in four separate sections, those dimensions merge, mutually support and co-constitute one another. Also included in the first chapter is a clarification of the methodology I employ, through which this thesis materializes. Here, I will explain my approaches to research and analysis. An account of using "encounter" as the guiding concept in treating the "materials" from the fieldwork as well as in understanding my role as a researcher is stated here.

The first part of the second chapter provides an overview of the contexts in Ecuador in terms of underdevelopment and migration. I then introduce canton Chunchi and the social program in detail. Also included in Chapter Two is a literature review on migration, transnational families, development, international cooperation and volunteering. Chapter Three will focus on four aspects of the institutional practices seen in the social program: a gendered social and institutional space, cross-border partnerships, local governmentality, and the market logic. In Chapters Four and Five, I will explore the intersubjective dynamics respectively from the perspectives of the international volunteers and of the émigrés' families in Chunchi.

## 1.2 Theoretical Framework

### 1.2.1 Theorizing global disparities and uneven development

In my thesis, I highlight the social program of childcare in Chunchi, Ecuador as a site within globalization. On this site, there are encounters of important and differentiated modalities of people’s transnational movements, work and childcare arrangements in accordance with transforming institutional practices. I consider the systematic and structural factors, which have enabled different actors’ activities at this site as well as the global hierarchies epitomized in such local encounters. Several theories of globalization have greatly informed this fundamental dimension of my theoretical framework, and in this section I will introduce these theories. During the last two decades, globalization research has been prolific and there is today an immense body of literature incorporating diverse range of perspectives from various disciplines. The most widely used definition of globalization is that it is a phenomenon whereby different people and places become increasingly connected across the globe. Within this vast domain of studies, it is particularly the focus on the increasingly and systematically uneven globalization that has informed my research project.

There are several transformations during the globalizing process that should be specified first before I dive into specific theories. Politico-economic globalization usually take as a basis for

its discussion “the organization of production and distribution on a world scale,” which has been enabled by the prevalence of capitalist regulations, new technologies, multinationals and grand bodies of financial institutions on the global level (Perrons 2004, 27). In the past two decades, globalization has witnessed the massive and systematic flexibilization and feminization of work, deregulation as well as polarizing income and resource distribution among and within developed, developing and underdeveloped countries (Held and McGrew 2000, Perrons 2004, Sassen 1998 and 2003, Young 2002). Within this context, it is not just commodities that are in circulation but people: migrant laborers, tourists, and refugees. The massive movement of people is a distinct feature of today’s globalized world and an embodiment of the social inequalities it has come to manifest.

The debate that has been referred to as “the demise of nation-states” opens up an important dimension of theorizing the institutions in globalization (see Part V in Lechner and Boli 2008). The relationship between the global and the national has been much discussed in the studies of international political economy, political theory and history (Ohmae 2008; Sassen 2000, 2006; Strange 2008).<sup>8</sup> Saskia Sassen asserts that the global and the national “significantly overlap and

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<sup>8</sup> On the other hand, another binary “global-local” is more discussed within cultural studies and anthropology. Freeman (2001) for example has challenged the binary thinking when it comes to the local and the global. She has explored how ethnography of local actors reveals important patterns of globalization and the agency of local people to intervene as well as participate in it. It forms an opinion different from scholars that have formulated global as the domination, the center, the prevalent, and the local as the resistance, the marginalized, the hidden (see for example Hall 1995). In my thesis, I have also adopted the former approach to see the global and the local as profoundly entangled and mutually influencing each other.

interact” while each is constituted by differentiated modalities of operation (2000, 215).<sup>9</sup>

Following her, I do not see the national and the global as a mere binary set. Consequently, I do not consider that there is a process of denationalization as such, in which the state as an uncomplicatedly homogeneous entity has seen the unequivocal diminishing of its own power in globalization. The global may partly operate through the national and the local, and in some cases they mutually articulate each other. Their relations are multivalent. However, it is fair to say that in globalization a national community is not capable in determining its own fate without influence from global structural constraints (Held and McGrew 2000, 34). The establishment of supra-national institutions such as the UN, IMF, WTO and the World Bank, as well as the decentralization of state governments on a broad scale that has been adopted since the 1970s and 1980s all add to the complexity and the significance of the institutional conditions in cases of globalization.<sup>10</sup>

There are three specific theorists who have attended critically to the formation of uneven globalization and the power dynamics that I choose to directly incorporate into my analysis. To start with, by studying globalization from a cultural anthropologist perspective, Arjun Appadurai

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9 An example given by Sassen (2000) on the interaction between the national and the global is that national legal and material infrastructure enables and constrains the global circulation of products and capital (218). At the same time, the geography of globalization’s operation can be both universal and diffused (in the case of consumption) and strategic and partial (in the case of the accumulation of capital), while the geography of the nation’s operation is institutionally constructed as unitary (219).

10 For more discussions on decentralization see for example Keese and Freire Argudo 2006 and Perrons 2004.

has given a framework to consider the radical disjunctive “-scapes” in globalization. He proposes examining, for instances, ethnoscapas, mediascapas and technoscapas, which are fluid and perspectival constructs that manifest parts of the “imagined worlds” of different actors (Appadurai 2008, 98).

Sassen (1998, 2002, 2003) has contributed to developing a feminist’s approach to study global disparities. She discloses the two-facedness, or the double movement, of global capitalism—the advanced postindustrial economy development embodied in the global cities being supported by the systematically downgraded and informalized labor of migrants at the bottom of the economic structure.<sup>11</sup> A very enlightening concept for me is the cross-border “circuits” Sassen has conceptualized to theorize the diverse and global links between sending countries and receiving countries of care work migration, human trafficking for sex industries and other types of transnational human movements that sustain hyper-growth in global cities. Sassen holds that larger scale structural factors are responsible for shaping and maintaining those cross-border circuits. Her use of the word “circuits” highlights the importance of systematic connections in studying cases within globalization: “As the term *circuits* indicates, there is a degree of institutionalization in these dynamics; that is to say, they are not simply aggregates of individual actions” (2003, 265, emphasis in the original).

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<sup>11</sup> Perrons has also given one such example by quoting Microsoft’s human resource manager, who boasts their concierge services at the workplace that ensure the highly valued professionals will work long hours. Not mentioned in his words is exactly those workers that are paid cheaply to fulfill the daily demeaning tasks for the professionals, those who are over-represented by women (2004, 103).



Aihwa Ong has also articulated on a specific aspect of disparities on a global scale: the “flexible citizenship” or “mutations in citizenship” (1999, 2006a, 2006b). With the dominance of neoliberal rationale, Ong sees theories’ urgency to capture and explain the multiplying hierarchies among people, ranging from highly professional and mobile subjects, common citizens within traditional nation-state bounds, to refugees and migrant workers struggling for “sheer life,” in relation to their citizenship-related statuses and entitlements.<sup>12</sup> Her approach as an anthropologist is a layered one and emphasizes on the power dynamics:

I argue that an anthropology of the present should analyze people’s everyday actions as a form of cultural politics embedded in specific power contexts. The regulatory effects of particular cultural institutions, projects, regimes, and market that shape people’s motivation, desire, and struggle and make them particular kinds of subjects in the world should be identified (Ong 1999, 5-6).

Theories that focus on disparities and hierarchies in global structures and systems provide the first dimension of my framework. In contrast to much work on globalization which has focused on the global cities as a “strategic site” to theorize the processes of globalization (Sassen 1998, 87-88) and the urban environments (Ong, 1999)<sup>13</sup>, this research will look beyond the metropolis. It will serve as an effort to shift theories’ preoccupation with urban cases and

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12 Citizenship studies yields another rich body of literature that my discussion here is not able to do justice to. There are however converging points in the researches of globalization and citizenship. For some articles discussing the growing complexity of citizenship in the contexts of globalization, massive migration and the development of, for example, the EU citizenship regimes, see Bosniak 2009, Dauvergne 2009 and Nanz 2009.

13 Ong for example derives her insights from looking at Hong Kong and Singapore.

demonstrate the potential as well as the importance of assembling global-local dynamics from even more heterogeneous localities.

### 1.2.2 The question of care work in the global social domain

In this thesis, I use the concept of care work to cover a diverse field of activities, “ranging from highly intimate social, health, and sexual care services of bathing, feeding, nursing and sexual acts to less intimate ones such as cooking cleaning, shopping and general maintenance work” (Yeates 2009, 5). Care work involves the caretakers, their own family members and the people they take care of outside of their family: children, the elderly, the sick and many other groups of people. It includes biological reproduction, daily life maintenance of individuals and the maintenance of social systems through education, social bonds and values. Joya Misra explains:

[C]are is not simply a natural and uncomplicated response to those in need, but actually hard physical, mental, and emotional work, which is often unequally distributed through society... [Moreover,] care tends to be economically devalued... (2007, 402).

When it comes to rapidly enlarging transnational care work sector for the past two decades, the spatiality of the private and the public, as well as the notions of reproductive and productive labor have been greatly transformed, and in some contexts merged. From a gender

perspective, it is thought that the global economy has provided more and better job opportunities for educated and professional women. Additionally, a substantial part of poor and/or migrant women around the world have become economically active through the agricultural and industrial sectors in formal or informal activities for wage labor. However, women still contribute around 70 percent of their unremunerated time for care work worldwide, the total value of which, if ever remunerated, would amount to an astronomical figure (Robinson and Tessitore 2009, Young 2002, 72). Furthermore, in the globalizing world, paid care work has been disproportionately taken up by poor and/or migrant women.<sup>14</sup> These women have very likely become the primary providers in their households albeit via a wire transfer, and their remittances have contributed to the propping up of their local and national economies (Enloe 1990, see also Keough 2006 and Salazar Parreñas 2005).

A global care chain was initially conceptualized by Arlie Russell Hochschild as “a series of personal links between people across the globe based on the paid or unpaid work of caring” (2002, 2003). Although not explicit in this given definition, the “classical” global care

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14 Here I do not intend to suggest that migrant women doing care work including domestic services is a “new” phenomenon that only happens in the era of globalization, which is recognized to have started in the late 20th century. For a historical perspective, Enloe (1990) and Sarti (2006) for examples have demonstrated that there have been flows of international migrant domestics since the colonial times. However, Sarti argues that the patterns of migration from the poorer to the richer countries began from the 19th century onwards. Also, the massive scale of today’s migrant domestic workers’ growth as well as the variety of nationalities involved have developed only since the 1980s onwards, articulating the discontinuities between the global flows of migrant domestic workers then and now.

Another thing to be noted, I would like to acknowledge that there is also a part of care work that has been done by male migrants, although the proportion is fairly tiny compared to that of the female migrants. For more on male migrant domestic workers, see for example Dávalos (2009).

chain scenario presents the distribution of care in the globalized world scene as a “one-way traffic” from the rural to the urban, from the poor country to the rich: a mother from a poor place migrates to a wealthier one to engage in paid domestic care work to support her family back home. The female care worker “leaves behind” the labor of caring for her children in the home society either to an older daughter of hers, to other female guardians from the extended family, or to another female domestic who comes from an even poorer place again suspending her caring tasks there. A chain of care is thus formed.

Hochschild employs economics language and conceptualizes care as in a value chain: The children in the sending country of the female care workers suffer from being separated from the care and love of their mothers. “Care drain” (2003, 17 and 27) or care deficit appears in this last segment of the care chain. Although describing a rather simplified scenario of care, her theory of transnational care chain is highly productive in that it is able to scrutinize not only globalized/globalizing work and economic inequalities but inequalities in the dimension of subjectivities, involving care, love and other emotions.<sup>15</sup>

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15 Hochschild’s approach facilitates a sharp observation of care drain, care deficits and care surplus in many cases; however, first of all and as Salazar Parreñas also recognizes in her analysis, care “going up the transnational chain” cannot be readily assumed as surplus (2003, 54). Importantly, Salazar Parreñas and Aguirre Vidal’s (2009) respective research both show that the absence of migrant mothers doesn’t necessarily create “care deficits” or “failed/broken family” as such at home. In addition, children left at home aren’t always another “care work burden” for the migrant working mothers. Aguirre Vidal points out that in some cases children take up independently (care)work themselves (23).

The key issue here is the complex interpersonal and reciprocal aspect care contains. An approach as Hochschild originally adopts to count “emotion” into the consideration of labor as more or less fixed, “non-renewable” resources ready to be extracted and exploited, thus needs to modify itself for even more discreet analyses. Escrivá points out that care chain analyses need to be “accompanied by deeper views on people’s lives, conceptions and sentiments in order to capture the diversity and complexity of the situations”

Building on Hochschild’s initiative, feminist scholars have claimed that different types of global care chains and the intricates of care work must be examined as well (Escrivá 2005; Escrivá and Skinner 2008; Fudge 2010; Herrera 2005; Yeates 2005a, 2005b, 2009)<sup>16</sup>. In Nicola Yeates’ theorization, global care chains represent not simply personal links but also links of economic, welfare and care systems across “countries of different levels of ‘development’ and their unequal positions in global and regional hierarchies of political economy” (2005b, 230 and 232). In her account, the multi-dimensional nature of care including educational, health, religious, sexual and social care, the differentiated skills and occupational levels, the related work requirements, the private and institutionalized state and non-state environments, the shades of illegality, the variety of family statuses of the migrant workers, and the networks facilitating the migrant work all have to be taken into consideration. All these different aspects related to care work are significant and demand discussion to enrich our understandings of the dynamics of global migration, care and welfare (2005a, 8 and 10). Taking her idea as a great insight, I have noticed that there has not been research on the recent phenomenon of international volunteers engaging in care work in underdeveloped

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(2005, 4). With this regard, I think it is appropriate to suggest that the term “care work” should always be simultaneously conceptualized as at least and essentially involving a distinctive and dynamic caring relation.

16 Fudge has emphasized the importance of public policy and law to the formation of care chains. Escrivá and Skinner added the Spanish-Peruvian care chains and the role the elderly play in such chains, while Herrera has contemplated on the situation of Ecuadorian migrant women in care chains. Yeates on the other hand has not only discussed global care chain as a theory but also researched on chains involving professional nurses from the Philippines working abroad, as well as religious care chains that involve Irish nuns and their care institutions overseas.

countries. My thesis thus attempts to draw international volunteers into the discussion of global care chains, exploring care related activities arranged among institutions, volunteers, and emigrants' children and the significance this holds in the landscapes of global disparities.

Although I use the term “international volunteers,” I acknowledge that the term “international” has already been questioned and examined with post-colonial and post-imperialist lenses by many scholars. Sassen, for example, has noted that there are “distinctive historical and unequal conditions in which the notion of the ‘international’ was constructed” (1998, 102). Referring to Stuart Hall, she has recognized that “international migration” as addressed in contemporary discussions signifies demographic flows largely from former colonial and neo-colonial territories to colonial and neo-colonial centers (ibid). “International” volunteers present a reversed case, and it is based on this understanding I develop my analysis of the seeming circle of care.

Perrons comments that principally “[i]n the global context... the reproduction of the national population is less significant as labour can be drawn upon from anywhere” (2004, 276). This observation is made from the vantage point of “the West”<sup>17</sup>, where average citizens' welfare and social rights are no longer fundamental to sustaining the level of

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17 I am fully aware that by using the term “the West,” I am holding onto a problematic discursive construction that has been criticized from a postcolonial perspective. This “Western” vintage point has always to be deconstructed, and here by this usage I mean particularly from the viewpoint of the states in Europe and North America which have been historically influenced by the Keynesian welfare and economics.

consumption (also see Young 2002).<sup>18</sup> While policies and regulations of the welfare states lean towards a neoliberal logic of individualized, privatized demands for care and domestic services, a niche for migrant women in these more developed societies is found. At the same time, it is also crucial to analyze the institutional settings, the economic, social and cultural dynamics of the spaces of the “origin” of care chains, where the migrants leave and the situation of the care work for the locals complicates. The point Young raises about the importance to consider the problematic care issues in the globalizing economy— “[h]ow the reproductive issues will be resolved in this ‘borderless’ global economy is the million-dollar question” (2002, 66)— then, really applies to not only the most discussed Western societies but all localities across space.

To further facilitate my analysis of the spaces migrant workers leave behind and where some responsibility for childcare is handed to transnational organizations and volunteers, I have found it indispensable to rely on the theories about “the social”. “The social”, as Jacques Donzelot (1979) has first theorized, is a terrain mingling the domestic and the public, “both within and outside the family”, that is influenced by the interventions and the withdrawals of

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18 Young also reckons that the European cases show “reconciling the need to have a job and raise children at the same time is no longer an issue. From an economic standpoint, reproductive activities are made ‘invisible.’ Any demands for child-care or other social services are silenced” (2002, 63). I have found both Perrons’ and her statements generally pertinent. Nevertheless, even within the “Western” context, welfare provisions in each country vary on many levels and to distinct ends. For more specific analyses made state by state, see for example Lister et al. 2007, and Perrons et al eds. 2006. See also Esping-Andersen 1996.

transforming forms of governance (xxi). Discussions of the social domain by Donzelot (1979), Denise Riley (1988), and Gail Lewis (2000) all stress that the State is the primary organizing actor in dynamics with its population in this terrain, dealing with issues such as poverty and family problems. Michel Foucault's (1991, 2003) concept of governmentality has been drawn on to help theorize "the social". Governmentality is a process of turning human beings into "a mass of 'population'" and the objects of government (Lewis 2000, 25), and its aim is to improve the condition of the population (Foucault 1991, 100). This process also encompasses groups of the population as having gendered, classed and ethnicized traits that occupy "specific locations within the bio-politics of power" (Lewis 2000, 22 and 24). During the process of governmentality in the social domain, effects such as regulation of the mass population, discipline of individual bodies and the normalization of certain ways of living are reached.

Riley and Lewis have provided very detailed case studies on the feminized character of the social domain. Riley sharply points out that the social is a sphere where empathies and intervention of supposedly feminine and domestic characters pervade (1988, 46). She uses the case of late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century Europe to argue that women have become "both agents and objects" (1988, 51) of "the social". "The social" comes to be a sphere where poverty and family problems are addressed and it is with the advent of this sphere that feminists find "women" as a rallying-point for social reforms can be problematic (66). In a similar vein,



Lewis (2000) analyzed the gendered and racialized employment of black women in professional social work in the UK in the 1980s and the early 1990s. This has seen black women’s entrance into the social sphere in relation to the British government’s management of its racialized population.

For my analysis of a social project for childcare coordinated by the local municipality, I will apply this concept of “the social” in Chapter Three. There, I investigate the governing and organizing involved in the social program to facilitate the reflection on the municipality, international and transnational institutions<sup>19</sup> and NGOs in a social and institutional space emerged for childcare and development. I will consider how governmentality embodied in the social space of Chunchi can be interpreted. In the next section, I further extend the discussion on the entangled institutional and social space from the aspect of promoting cross-border collaboration as well as collective solidarity.

### 1.2.3 Transnational cooperation and mobilization for solidarity

Young (2002) has argued that globalization should not be conceived as only giving rise to global-scale disparities and oppression: “[g]lobalization cannot be viewed only as a

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<sup>19</sup> See footnote 44 for how I will distinguish these two types of institutions throughout my analysis of the social program.

nightmarish scenario. It is neither theoretically helpful nor does it promote political action” (70). Whilst Perrons argues that collective solidarity has been “endangered” by the highly hierarchical and neoliberal global structure<sup>20</sup>, many other scholars have also studied existing political and social mobilization for the cause of solidarity against global disparities. Whether addressed as “globalization-from-below”, “alternatives to globalization”, “counterhegemonic globalization”, or sometimes “anti-globalization”, it is stressed that with the advance of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs), the establishment of international conventions and declarations and the improvement of transportation, a transnational arena for activism, support and networking at the grassroots level has emerged (Evans 2008, Moghadam 2005, Sklair 2002).

Appadurai has taken the example of the Mumbai urban poor to appeal to the academia for research on the imaginations of disadvantaged groups (2002a, 2002b). These imaginations, he argues, can be an active force for social change “from below” and can lead trans-local and transnational political mobilization (2000, 2002a, 2002b). In my research, I incorporate this dimension of globalization to ask to what degree the small-scale project administered by Chunchi’s municipality can be seen as such a grassroots imagination, involving the local community residents and actors from civil society.

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<sup>20</sup> Perrons has seen that in global economy and the new patterns of work “conditions converge to undermine collective solidarities” (2004, 272). Similarly, Young in her analysis on globalization has noted the “transformation toward a pure market oriented economy, with its disregard for the values of collective solidarity and national belonging” (2002, 67).

It is important that questions about grassroots imagination and actors involved in local projects be critically approached. In the case of imagination of the disadvantaged, Appadurai sees that imaginations of marginalized groups can lead to a new political horizon for democracy, while influenced by the dominant discourses they may also be produced to be otherwise (2002b, 46). On the other hand, states, NGOs, local communities and international institutions interact in complex and fluid ways. Agents can be complicit with nation-state agendas and they are always situated in a nexus with political, economic and ethical relationships with other agents (Appadurai 2002a, Bond 2008, Ong 2006b).

Lastly, another important point to be taken into account: while some forms of political mobilization might have been made possible through globalization— for example by cooperation with UN organizations or by drawing on international volunteers, who come also as international tourists— the urgent need for grassroots organizing might also have been exacerbated by the mechanisms of globalization itself. As Perrons has pointed out, “globalization has expanded the range of choices for some people, although equally may have created the circumstances that mad these rather desperate choices necessary” (2004, 108).

#### 1.2.4 An analytic apparatus for power dynamics and subjectivities

As introduced in 1.1, one of my intentions is to examine at the site of the social program in Chunchi how intersubjective dynamics are socially and materially produced as individual actors encounter each other there. To achieve this, I will rely primarily on Foucault's idea of power relations and the subject, Sara Ahmed's encounters as the event of becoming subjects, and Karen Barad's conceptualization of material-symbolic intra-actions and power dynamics.

To start with, for the sake of clarity the usage of "subject" throughout my thesis is not more psychoanalytic than social. I rely on, among others, Ahmed's feminist conceptualization that the subject is situated in a dimension converging sociology and psychoanalysis. As she phrases: "the border between the psychic and the social as undecidable and yet determined... there is always something left out of the psyche or the social which constitutes the trace of the other or *each other*" (1998, 100, italics original).

Foucault posits that individuals are constantly situated within power relations (1983). Within this conceptualization, power does not exist as such, and cannot be revealed in groups, classes or institutions. Importantly, Foucault points out that there are mechanisms of domination and submission— not in a metaphysical, ontological or fatalistic sense but in the sense of historical events— that subject individuals to differentiated forms of subjectivity and identity in their immediate daily life. This understanding can open up the analyses of power to

“a whole field of responses, reactions, results, and possible inventions” of power relations (220). In other words, by looking at power as relations borne in particular contexts, the concrete conditions revealed can also expose what Foucault phrases “the source of ... [the] strength of fragility” of the power in action, leading to the articulation of the possibilities of other ways of acting (223). In fact, Foucault asserts that power relations exist only because subjects are acting within those relations and being capable of acting otherwise. Struggles and changes for different power relations are thus always possible and always in play.

In a similar vein, Ahmed puts even more emphasis on the moments of “encounters” and of identification, when subjects and power can be identified as such:

The constant negotiation of identifications temporarily assigns the subject to a fixed identity (both gendered, racialised, and classed) through a reading of the body. Such readings are open to contestation in the everyday encounters with the Law, family and others (1998, 117).

Connected to her social-psychoanalytical approach to “subject” that I mentioned earlier in this section, she articulates the intersubjective nature of power: “the event of becoming a subject involves a relationship with another... subject... [T]he constitution of the subject is predicated upon an (elided) inter-subjectivity” (114). Power in this sense is continuously negotiated and re-negotiated on an intersubjective level (117). Subjectivities as I will discuss in my analysis are embodied by subjects’ feelings, perceptions, imagination, and desires.

According to Ahmed, analyzing subjectivities will then involve exploring these feelings, perceptions, imaginations found within the intersubjective relations. This also means that the feelings, perceptions, and imaginations are not instituted solely “within” the individual. Rather, they are individual-collective in the sense that there is a “sociality” (Ahmed 2004a, 8) that underlies all of them.

I employ these notions related to subjects and power together with Barad’s framework of power dynamics (2001, 2003, 2007). In Barad’s opinion, power and the constitution of subjects/objects can only be understood in the contingent and contested processes of “intra-actions”. Barad elucidates that objects and subjects do not pre-exist transcendentally as such before the interpretation of the “intra-actions” (2001, 84 and 2003, 816), which produces the understanding of the power dynamics.<sup>21</sup> Material aspects such as time, space, and all physical factors, as well as symbolic identities such as gender, are all interrelated and mutually constitute each other during the intra-action (2001, 100 and 101). Analyses of power are thus always ongoing processes of applying certain apparatuses to identify power dynamics, taking into account certain factors and excluding the others. Categories of distinction such as race/ethnicity, gender, class, sexuality and nationality for Barad cannot be seen as separated and fixed axes that measure inherent, essential characteristics of individual subjects (91).

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21 For Ahmed, this “interpretation of the intra-actions” in Barad’s terms would happen at the moment of encounters, when she reckons that meanings are temporarily fixed.

Hence, identities do not “interact” with each other, as presumed to be already some well-formed, independent categories. These identity categories “intra-act” and are articulated at the very moment when power relations are temporarily fixed and understood as operating through those certain identities. Materiality is accounted for explicitly and rigorously as an active and generative factor which influences the constant constitution of subjects and subjectivities during identification (2001, 88).<sup>22</sup>

Having introduced a new materialist’s framework such as this of Barad’s, I will also particularly refer to a “more-than-human” approach within this framework when analyzing subjectivities and power dynamics. Subjectivity in this approach is similarly emphasized as “felt but not personal; visceral but not confined to an individuated body” (Whatmore 2006, 604) as I have noted in Ahmed’s theories above. It is through inquiring into the rich intra-actions of all human and non-human “social objects and forces” that subjectivities embedded in the socio-material worlds (ibid) can be understood. This “more-than-human” approach has been applied to research on volunteering in globalization by Lorimer (2010). In so doing, Lorimer has sought how macro-structural factors and local, micro-scale factors intra-act into producing certain human practices and claims of subjectivities, such as being the cosmopolitan citizen and the exertion of global environmental citizenship.

My analyses especially in Chapter Four and Five build on these insights. I take as a

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22 For my analyses, I have foregrounded a “new materialist” frame such as that theorized by Barad. Nevertheless, I am also deeply influenced by the concept of “intersectionality” as a potent metaphor to recast the conventional single-axis framework in understanding issues of discrimination (Acker 2000, 2006; Crenshaw 1989, 1994; Wekker 2002). Intersectionality has become a crucial tool that many scholars have used to inspect the simultaneous and ongoing workings of the many categories such as gender, “race”/ethnicity, sexuality, class and religion in discrimination, and it is definitely indispensable in the genealogy of analyzing inequalities. At the same time, I regard that the “newer” concepts such as intra-actions and material-symbolic encounters that stress on the material aspect are not “merely literary conceits”, as elucidated by Haraway (2008, 5), and will benefit my analysis more.

premise that social, political, cultural, economic, and material factors that are global in their influences are not external to the interpersonal dynamics and the configuration of subjectivities of the specific actors at the local site of Chunchi: the municipality, the families in the canton, the volunteers, the NGOs and various international or transnational institutions. In fact, “the global” socio-material, human and non-human forces can be understood only from the assemblage of the many moments of their materialization in different localities. Thus, through my examination I will also argue that detailing the local events by accounting for the encounters between these actors will contribute to a global cartography of “the politics of possibilities” (Barad 2001, 104). This will shed light on possible interventions in childcare and community development in the face of global inequalities.

### **1.3 Methodology**

#### 1.3.1 “Encounter” as the methodology: Approaching the fieldwork and materials

I use “encounter” as the navigating concept that helps to elaborate on the multi-layered research process. “Encounter” has been made a theoretical as well as a methodological framework by Ahmed, who suggests that it signifies “a meeting” of “surprise and conflict” and that it is only during the sedimentation of many encounters that the designation of



meanings and subjectivities is made (2000, 6-7).<sup>23</sup> Approaching the research with the concept of encounters allows consideration of the layered and embodied relations among different actors and the implications. These relations can be distinguished through multiple encounters at the site of the social program: between the municipality and the local families; between the municipality and the volunteers; between the municipality and the NGOs or transnational institutions; between the NGOs and the volunteers; among the volunteers and the local families; and so on and so forth.

In order to be in a position to analyze these encounters, I visited the municipality of Chunchi during the preparatory stages of my research. I collected a selection of reports on the social program in August, 2010. For the “fieldwork”, I stayed in Chunchi for five weeks in January and February 2011. During this time I was a participating observer in different activities of the Center of Integral Support.<sup>24</sup> In addition, I conducted a thorough search through Chunchi municipality’s archives for official documents and reports that relate to the program. These reports, which cover the last five years, were produced by the local

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23 As Ahmed defines: “The term encounter suggests a meeting, but a meeting which involves surprise and conflict... Identity itself is constituted in the ‘more than one’ of the encounter: the designation of an ‘I’ or ‘we’ requires an encounter with others... [T]he subject’s existence cannot be separated from the others who are encountered. As such, the encounter itself is ontologically prior to the question of ontology (the question of the being who encounters)” (2000, 6-7).

24 I regularly observed and assisted in the lunch canteen. Also, I attended classes given by the volunteer teachers and visited the social worker’s office and the clinic that belongs to the municipality.

government as well as various institutions that have been associated with the program.<sup>25</sup>

I conducted thirteen interviews as part of the research<sup>26</sup>: five in-depth, in person interviews with six women who are members of emigrants' families that have children enrolled in the program: Carmen, Gloria, Luz, Maribel, Pamela, and Rocío; one with Chunchi municipality's coordinator of the department of community development, Eduardo, who is also the coordinator of the program Center of Integral Support; one with Francisco, the director of the Ecuador Volunteer Foundation in Quito; and a further six via *Skype*, an internet based telephony software, with people who have previously participated in the Center of Integral Support as international volunteers: Beata, Carol, Patrycja, Raul, Thomas, and Verónica.<sup>27</sup>

For the thirteen interviews in total, I have reached the fourteen participants<sup>28</sup> through the snowball method, having the municipality staff, families and volunteers putting me into contacts with other families and volunteers. The interviews last between 45 minutes to 2 hours and 50 minutes. Two interviews were conducted in English, while the rest were in Spanish. All of the interviews were semi-structured with some key questions to facilitate and deepen

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25 All of the official documents have been provided by the department of community development of the municipal government of Chunchi for the use of this research.

26 Apart from these interviews, I have also had written correspondence with the consultant Pablo, who has worked with the municipality of Chunchi in the program on behalf of UNFPA and EU-PASSE project. I will come back to him in Chapter Three.

27 See the Appendix for a list of interview participants from the local families and of the volunteers.

28 Two participants, Carmen and Luz, from the local families participating in the social program were interviewed at the same time, and the rest were interviewed individually.

the conversations. Each interview was conducted in one sitting, except for one skype interview with a former volunteer, which was split over two different days.

Thinking with the concept of multiple encounters, I do not see that interview materials are “materials” as such, independent from my intervention and ready for my retrieval. “Fieldwork” is also not merely work “out there in the fields” separated from the works of reading and writing. Employing the methodological framework of “encounter” implies that, as a researcher, I am also in significant encounters with the events of other encounters and with the forces and actors in these events. Haraway writes: “Accounts of a ‘real’ world do not... depend on a logic of ‘discovery’, but on a power-charged social relation of ‘conversation’” (1991, 198). In this light, this “conversation” which my analysis draws on is created by my interactions with the environments as well as the people before, during and after the interviews and all of the activities in which I was present. On my part, the interactions are made possible only within the particular theoretical and methodological frameworks that I have come to inhabit. To a larger extent, the encounters “in the field” also reshape the frameworks and processes that I work on and within. As such, “encounter” reveals the fact that research is always partial and can be contested. Yet, it is also the “telling of stories that may otherwise not be told” that makes the research significant (Sultana 2007, 382).

### 1.3.2 Accountability: my positionality and reflexivity as a researcher

The methodology of “encounters” affirms that the researcher is an important and “not innocent” agent who actively participates in the production of knowledge. It is a methodology that emphasizes the accountability of the researcher/knowledge producer, her situatedness and her embodiment in the research process (Haraway 1991, also see Barad 2003 and Narayan 1993). Furthermore, encounters work “at the level of the personal, affective realm of embodied subjects” (Ahmed 1998, 64). For these reasons, I agree with anthropologist Kirin Narayan’s statement:

[T]here will inevitably be certain facets of self that join us up with the people we study, other facets that emphasize our difference... To acknowledge [this]... is to enrich the textures of our texts so they more closely approximate the complexities of lived interaction. At the same time, frankness about actual interactions means that an anthropologist cannot hide superficial understanding behind sweeping statements and is forced to present the grounds of understanding (680).

In the interests of analysis, I decided to interview and observe not only a single and “rather homogeneous” group of people but people who can be divided (albeit not unproblematically) into three categories: members of emigrants’ families, the personnel and officials, and former volunteers. A feature of this research project is that I have shifting relationships with the participants and become aware of how my positions and the power relations are constantly shifting in accordance with the very material and mundane conditions

of the encounters.

I speak Spanish with an Ecuadorian accent and know a fair amount about the region and the history of the country. My relative acquaintance with the culture, the society and the language as well as my physical appearance as a “little Asian girl”, who is not of such common presence in Ecuador as the *gringos*<sup>29</sup>, in some cases interests local people. I have found this has helped to facilitate my initial access to those who work for, or have their children in, the social program.<sup>30</sup> In my interactions with the two male coordinators representing respectively Chunchi municipality and the Ecuador Volunteer Foundation, I came to embody a young female student who they were kindly assisting with research. Since both interviews were conducted in offices during working hours, the power dynamics have been marked by their relative authority and my politeness and formal respect. In contrast, the former volunteers I interviewed know that I have also had a volunteer experience in Ecuador and am familiar with Chunchi. The interviews with them proceeded with the recognition that I shared, to a degree, many of their experiences.

Such complex positionality of a researcher among the groups of people studied is

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29 A colloquial word used by the locals to refer to the foreigners, especially North Americans, who have blond hair. *Gringos* implies that the persons are rich and come from a developed (North American) country.

30 For a more specific example, during my time as a participating observer in the canteen for children, I for a couple of times helped the communication as a translator between the *cocineras* (women as cooks in the canteen) and a Japanese volunteer nutritionist. This has somehow connected me with both the *cocineras* and the Japanese nutritionist, and given me the chance to enquire into their knowledge on the families in the program while they also enquired about my activities in Chunchi and my personal details.

subjected to many shifting material, cultural and social factors. As I have personally come to experience this during my fieldwork, I agree with the idea that in the fieldwork figuring “who is an insider and who is an outsider is secondary to the need for dismantling objective distance to acknowledge our shared presence [with the subjects we study] in the... worlds” (Narayan 1993, 680). Undoubtedly, it does not mean to overlook the subjective distance and boast a non-contextualized “communitas” (ibid). To further elaborate on this intricate aspect, I have felt very strongly about Farhana Sultana’s observation about the restraints in research concerning the local power dynamics:

Research in a particular location is..... often influenced and constrained by the politics of the place and the overall politics of development, which have to be acknowledged and respected in any research process” (2007, 381).

During the course of my research, I have gained a greater understanding of the thickness of the local power dynamics present in my encounters, particularly with the participants that are local residents of Chunchi. For example, comments have been made to me that many locals, particularly those who work in the fields, rarely interact with the government. This coupled with a low level of education makes any interaction with the social program, including the paperwork required to enroll the children on the program, very tiring and even at times intimidating. I observed interview participant Rocío, who is already in her fifties and who has worked in the fields for all her life, to be relatively reserved and a little

wary of talking to a stranger. This wariness was no doubt exacerbated by the digital voice recorder I brought with me and the fact that I appeared to be educated and in some way affiliated with the municipality.

On the other hand, with another interview participant, Carmen, the conversation in the formal interview opened up without hesitation. It is due to the fact that she works in the house where I lived and saw me daily in a rather intimate setting. However, the daily bodily encounters between she as a domestic worker for a well-off family and I as someone who became related to that family through personal networks marked the distance between us. Moreover, she has worked in places in *la Matriz*, the central and the only part of Chunchi that is slightly urban. She had experiences with foreigners who were generous in leaving tips, gifts or donations. This fact also led her to question me in the interview if my activities in general can bring any direct benefits to her and her family.

The subtle divisions and connections in the research encounters can be seen as what Haraway calls the very “mundane differences” that lead to consequences and require the recognition and response of the researchers (2008, 15). Intense personal experiences, which consist of “the pragmatic and inexhaustible meeting of the ethical demands and conflicts that saturate daily life”, are implicated in this (Ahmed 1998, 51). All of these dynamic relationships have come to configure my analysis. In providing accounts of these relationships

I have sought to demonstrate my embodied engagement with these encounters as part of my efforts towards an ethical research and knowledge production project.



## CHAPTER TWO: CONTEXTUALIZING THE ENCOUNTER WITH THE SOCIAL PROGRAM

In this chapter my aim is twofold. Firstly, I will contextualize the social program of Chunchi, situating it in Ecuador with details on the geography and demographics of the country, as well as the economic and political, and migration situation. I then give an overview of canton<sup>31</sup> Chunchi and the social program of Chunchi, “the Center of Integral Support and Virtual Communication for Migrants’ Children”. I will expound the program’s content, and the organizations and institutions that have participated in it. Secondly, I will present existent studies related to my analysis of the social program of Chunchi. I will draw on research on migration, transnational families, local governance in underdeveloped Latin American countries, international cooperation and volunteering.

The methodology of “encounter” being the backbone of the thesis, this chapter does not intend to “truthfully report on” the background information as a whole ready-made package that is given upon purchase. This chapter strategically facilitates the readers’ engagement with the information and studies which are selected, highlighted, and accounted for by me, since I have found them vital for understanding the analyses I will make in the following chapters.

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31 See 2.1.2 for the explanation on the governmental structure and the administrative units “canton”.

## 2.1 Ecuador, Chunchi and the Center of Integral Support

### 2.1.1 Contextualization: the geography, demographics, politics, economics and migration of Ecuador

Ecuador is known for its geographic, ethnic, cultural and economic diversity.

Geographically, it is the smallest country in the Andean community<sup>32</sup> and it is bordered by Colombia to its north and Peru to its east and south. Ecuador comprises four regions: the mountainous Andean region, the Amazonian region, the Pacific coastal lowlands and the Galápagos archipelago. Demographically speaking, Ecuador has a population of 14.3 million (INEC Census 2010). As of 2005, around 64% of the population was distributed in urban areas, while 36% could be found in rural areas (EEAS 2002, 3). Political turbulence has been a major problem for the country's stability. Between 1997 and 2007, it saw seven different presidents. Since 2007, Rafael Correa has held office as the president. The country has also been through tremendous economic and social unrest. The Ecuadorian economy is primarily based on the exportation of petroleum, bananas, and tourism (UNDP 2011).

Following the economic crisis in 1998 and dollarization in 2000, Ecuador has seen 57% of its general population living in poverty, with 19% in extreme poverty in a context of highly unequal wealth distribution (EEAS 2007, 5). UNICEF estimated that, between 1995 and

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32 The Andean community includes four Latin American countries: Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador and Peru.

2000, Ecuador had the most rapid rate of impoverishment in Latin America (2007). The government’s budget on social expenditure has remained very low, notably due to the excessive burden of external debt services (EEAS 2002 and 2007; Keese and Freire Argudo 2006; UNICEF 2007).<sup>33</sup>

From a historical perspective, there have been flows of internal migration from the rural to the urban areas within the country, as well as external migration from Ecuador to other countries from as early as the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. However, the unprecedented scale of external migration was triggered in the late 1990s due primarily to the macro politico-social structural problems, the banking and financial crisis, the accompanying unemployment, dire poverty and socio-economic inequality (Camacho Zambrano 2009, 21). The country has since witnessed the highest rate of emigration among the Andean countries (Redrobán Herrera 2010, 11).<sup>34</sup> Most people migrate to the U.S. or Spain. The remittances sent by Ecuadorian workers abroad amount to the second largest source of income for the country, only after oil revenues (Camacho Zambrano 2009, 249; Olivíé et al. 2008). It has been noted that “Ecuador has, for the first time in its history,

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33 Though, in 2005, a piece of legislation was passed to readjust the uses of resources on debt repayment and governmental social spending (EEAS 2007, 14). Also, the government of incumbent president Correa since 2007 has made several major intents in defaulting on foreign debts and raising social spending. See for example archived news entries AlterNet 2008; BBC 2007, 2008.

34 It has been reported that, although the country has a very high birth rate, the total population ironically has not increased proportionally. While there are many newborns each year, Ecuador has also experienced depopulation in terms of massive emigration to other countries (EEAS 2007, 5).

become an exporter of people and an importer of remittances” (EEAS 2007, 47). Implied by this comment is that emigration has locked the country into the global socio-economic-political structure.

### 2.1.2 Canton Chunchi and the Center of Integral Support

Ecuador is divided into 221 cantons across 24 provinces. The canton is governed by the municipal local government, or municipality<sup>35</sup>. The municipality is represented by a mayor and a municipal council elected every four years. Chunchi is a rural canton located in the southern part of the province of Chimborazo in the Andean highlands. It is situated between 1,600 to 4,300 meters above sea level and consists of five *parroquias* (parishes/districts) which in turn consist of small communities. The center of the canton is in the urban *parroquia* called “*la Matriz*” and is bisected by the Pan-American highway that goes through the mainland of the Americas.

According to the municipality of canton Chunchi, the population of the canton is 12,205.<sup>36</sup> The majority of the population are *mestizo*, people of mixed indigenous and

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<sup>35</sup> *El municipio*. In order to be consistent with how the terms are locally used in Spanish, throughout the thesis I will refer to the local government of the canton “the municipality” and the authority/leader of the local government “the mayor”. When I refer to the area under the administration of the municipality, I use the term “canton”.

<sup>36</sup> Number according to the preliminary estimation of the census in 2010, provided by the coordinator of the community development department of the municipality.

European descent. 10 percent of the population is self-identified indigenous. 72.7% of the population resides in the rural areas of the canton. The traditional and primary economic activity of the population is subsistence farming, producing barley, corn, potato, and carrot among other crops as well as raising cattle for milk and meat. The poverty rate is around 78 percent, with the rate of people in extreme poverty reaching 54.9 percent. More than half of the canton’s population is under the age of 20. The malnutrition rate in children under six years old is 62 percent.<sup>37</sup>

Canton Chunchi has the highest emigration rate in Chimborazo province, and is one of the highest in the whole country.<sup>38</sup> By comparing the census of 1982 with that of 2010, it is seen that the population of Chunchi has declined by approximately 15 percent, primary due to emigration. A survey of school children in Chunchi indicates that more than 50 percent have at least one parent abroad. In this respect, emigration can be said to be a constituting part of life for many *Chuncheños*, people of Chunchi. As in other places in Ecuador, large scale emigration began in the 1990s and most migrants move to the U.S.<sup>39</sup> and Spain. More recently, some have chosen to go to England, France, and Italy. In

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37 Information provided by the municipality of Chunchi.

38 According to the municipality of Chunchi and Ecuador Volunteer Website.  
[http://www.ecuadorvolunteer.org/volunteer\\_projects\\_free/social\\_projects/social\\_project\\_03.html](http://www.ecuadorvolunteer.org/volunteer_projects_free/social_projects/social_project_03.html)

39 There is a very large Chuncheño community around New York. In fact, even in the documents from the municipality, it has been mentioned the locals make joke about it— “there are more Chuncheños in New Jersey than in Chunchi”. According to the Coordinator of the social program, there are more than 2,500 Chuncheño expatriates in Newark.

the destination societies, women often find jobs as domestic workers or cleaners, while men work in construction or as truck drivers. A lot of emigrants also find work in the agricultural sectors or in factories.

Ecuador's government began decentralization in the 1990s, and the goal has been to transfer resources and responsibilities from the central government to the provincial and municipal levels (IDB 2001). Along with this trend, the local municipal governments have come to present strategic plans for the development of each canton.<sup>40</sup> The municipality of Chunchi delivered its strategic plan in 2002, which, besides detailing the canton's history and demographic data, also reported on the phenomena of migration, school desertion, and social and health problems, including malnutrition in children. Since then, the municipality has received financial resources and technical support from the provincial government of Chimborazo and also from transnational organizations including UNFPA, and UNESCO (United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization), to continue investigating into the marginalized social groups.

It is within these circumstances that the program of "Center of Integral Support and Virtual Communication" for emigrants' children has grown. It was a joint initiative between the mayor's office and UNFPA. The department of community development of

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<sup>40</sup> Keese and Freire Argudo point out that by July 2003, such strategic developing plans to empower the decentralized local governments have been completed by 70 cantons in Ecuador (2006, 117-118).

the municipality produced reports in which emigration, lack of care for the family dependents, poverty, malnutrition, health and social and psychological problems, and high dropout rates were recognized as interrelated phenomena.<sup>41</sup> Children in the canton were recognized as a vulnerable social group. The department of community development states that the ambition of the program is to “improve the quality of life of the children and adolescents of canton Chunchi who are in a vulnerable situation” and to “support these emigrants’ children and young people socially and psychologically, strengthening their bonds with family”.<sup>42</sup>

The social program, the Center of Integral Support, for the children commenced at the beginning of 2006. Launched to attend to the specific problems outlined above, the program initially sketched out 5 elements in its aim for “integral support”: (1) lunch in a canteen for especially poor school children from the émigrés’ families; (2) daily after-school guidance and help with homework; (3) “adequate use of free time,” guidance to promote recreational activities, including holding extracurricular classes such as of art, dance and martial arts; (4) psychological or social counseling with a psychologist or a social worker; and (5) the “Lounge of Virtual Communication”, a computer room enabling online communication for children whose parents work abroad. The most central elements

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41 Sources provided by the municipality.

42 Ibid.

of the program have been the lunch for school children and the homework guidance, which were designed for approximately 200 children to attend on a daily basis. The municipality sets the requirements for admittance to the program and stipulates that a child should have at least one emigrant parent and be suffering from financial hardship. In some cases, exceptions are made: some children of non-emigrants parents from very poor families are also admitted. The children range from six to twelve years old, and in very few cases adolescents up to age fifteen are also registered in the program. All of them are required to present documents to the social worker and the municipality to be registered and enrolled in the program.

The number of the children attending each element of the program varies greatly. Most of the children go to the canteen for lunch. This is the most visible part of the program, because the canteen is located right next to the municipality buildings in the center of *la Matriz* and it is seen crowded with children, cooks and volunteers that help to coordinate the lunch every school day. The number of children enrolled for the lunch has been listed as 200 in the official documents. However, in the beginning of 2011 for example, there were in reality around 150 to 160 children that would attend the canteen on a daily basis. Most of these children also went to daily homework guidance in the school *María Auxiliadora*, one block from the canteen. Children who have been admitted to the program have stopped going to the canteen and homework guidance because of many



reasons. Some live very far away or live alone, suffering from health or family problems, or have to help the family with work. As one Polish volunteer social worker Beata<sup>43</sup> said in her interview:

[S]ome of them have really family problems, like one parent is alcoholic, or some of them...their parents are not there because they are in the [United] States. For example, there is one family that I knew that really needed this project, but they were living alone. It’s very difficult for them to be like, “we have to go to the school, we have to go everyday for the dinner and we can do the workshops”... And sometimes they had to work at home...

For the “adequate use of free time”, the extracurricular activities including taekwondo, football, art, dance, music classes, the amount of children attending also has constantly been changing. Taking the examples of two sets of statistics from the municipality dated respectively in 2008, sometimes there were 40 children in one class, but at other times there were less than 10. My interviews with the volunteers and the families also confirmed this information. Not only have these recreational activities been suspended from time to time due to the lack of teachers and volunteers, but also there are very few children who routinely attended the activities throughout the school year. As I was told in both informal chats and recorded interviews, the trend at the beginning of 2011 seemed to be that children had less time to attend these extracurricular activities. They

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43 See the Appendix. In the following of this section I will also introduce the volunteers with more details.

became daily and more steadily involved in the afternoon homework guidance than before, as quite a few local young people recently joined to help children with their homework.

Another thing about the varying number of children in the program is that, in some cases, children also emigrate after some time. Such personal emigration usually takes on a very individualistic characteristic, but it contributes to the uncertainty to the overall social project in which the individuals are included. Nijenhuis has pointed out in her studies of local projects in Bolivia that some of the organizations have “difficulties in finding sufficient numbers of young people to participate in their projects, and thus in achieving their aims... [D]uring project implementation, the target group that participates also migrates...” (2010, 76). In the case of Center of Integrate Support in Chunchi, there has not been a tremendous amount of children leaving. However, cases have been reported that some children dropped out because the family decided to send them to reunite with their parents or to stay with other relatives abroad.

As for the staff involved in the social program, the director of the department of community development has been the coordinator of the program. There has usually been one social worker employed by the municipality to do family interviews, selection and monitoring of the children in the program. The social worker is also responsible for arranging meetings for all the families, volunteers and municipality staff involved in the program. However, at the beginning of 2011, there was no social worker in place. Prior to

2011, there were six *cocineras* (female cooks) running the canteen but as of 2011, their numbers were reduced to four due to financial constraints. The social program also employs teachers to give guidance or classes such as music and martial arts for the adequate use of free time component of the program. Most of the time these teachers are not locals but travel from the closest city, Riobamba, which is three hours away by bus from Chunchi.

The decentralized municipal government is expected to take on the responsibility to develop projects such as the Center of Integral Support. Nevertheless, the municipality on its own is not able to support the program, either financially or technically. The collaboration between the municipality and other organizations in this case is essential, although the collaboration has been short and unstable in all the cases. There seems to be no long-term and systematic guarantee of the functioning of the program. With respect to the collaboration, many governmental and non-governmental institutions and organizations have joined forces in assisting the local municipal governments to develop and sustain the project. During the past five years, different institutional actors that have played a role in the program include (1) on the transnational<sup>44</sup> level, UNFPA<sup>45</sup>, the

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44 Throughout my thesis, when speaking about governmental institutions, agencies, and organizations, I sometimes distinguish them as being “international” or “transnational”. I use the term “international” when I mean principally those that work inter-governmentally on behalf of one country, such as JICA, the Japanese International Cooperation Agency. By “transnational” organizations, I refer to those such as the EU and UN.

UN-Volunteers<sup>46</sup>, and the EU project PASSE<sup>47</sup> in which the European Union has officially contributed 28 million Euros to the health sector in Ecuador; (2) on the international level, the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA)<sup>48</sup>; (3) on the national level, the National Institute of Children and Family of Ecuador (INFA)<sup>49</sup> and the National Secretariat for Migrants (SENAMI, *Secretaría Nacional del Migrante*)<sup>50</sup>; (4) Many Ecuadorian local groups and NGOs working on development or human mobility that have provided financial support, such as the Riobamba-based *Fundación Desarrollo Solidario* and ESQUEL Foundation<sup>51</sup>; (5) a group of *Chuncheño* expatriates who are not affiliated with other organizations but have donated the computers for the Lounge of Virtual Communication at the request of the mayor; and (6) an Ecuador-based foundation called

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They are formed by member states; however, they have been institutionalized beyond the framework of nation-state and their subsidiaries function independently. “Trans” here thus refers to the idea that it has somehow transformed the “nature” of the nation-state.

45 UNFPA has provided consulting to the municipality since 2005 in the planning and elaboration of the project.

46 Through the connection of UNFPA, the municipality acquired an UN-volunteer in 2006 to help with the local ICT (information and communication technologies) training for the Lounge of Virtual Communication between emigrants’ children and their parents abroad. See also next paragraph.

47 The PASSE (Program of Support for the Health Sector in Ecuador; Programa de Apoyo al Sector Salud en Ecuador) project mainly focused on the three provinces of Cotopaxi, Bolívar and Chimborazo.

48 Since 2010, JICA has established the agreement with the municipality in Chunchi and the provincial government of Chimborazo in sending volunteers to Chunchi to work in the areas of health, nutrition and education/recreational activities for the local children. The Japanese volunteers through JICA stay for a fixed length of 2 years. All JICA volunteers went through an official selection process before admitted to the program in Chunchi and have fixed term of volunteering in Chunchi which cannot be altered freely. See also <http://www.jica.go.jp/english/>.

49 INFA has been through several institutional changes. It was referred to as INNFA when the program in Chunchi first started. It was later included as an ancillary institute of Ministry of Economic and Social Inclusion (MIES) and is generally referred to as MIES-INFA.

50 SENAMI has funded the municipality with the office building in which the social work and the Adequate Use of Free Time activities are organized. Besides, it also funded the salary of a clinical psychologist for the municipality.

51 ESQUEL for example has funded the facilities in the Lounge of Virtual Communication. See [http://www.esquel.org.ec/index.php?til=impactos&id\\_imp=4](http://www.esquel.org.ec/index.php?til=impactos&id_imp=4).

Ecuador Volunteer that has been working with the municipality since 2006 to bring in international volunteers. The volunteers work mainly on social work, or giving classes of recreational activities designed for the children and young people for the component of the “adequate use of free time”. In the following, I dwell on the details of the financial assistance of the institutions/organizations and the volunteer foundation with its volunteers.

The funds or donations coming from governmental or non-governmental institutions are irregular. Usually, they come as one-off contributions or they happen on and off.

Organizations such as UNFPA only participated in the preparation stage of the program.

The EU project PASSE contributed in part to the development of the canton plan several years before the start of the program. The canton plan provided a basis for the social program. PASSE then came back in 2009-2010 to fund the element of “the adequate use of free time” of the program, providing instruments and equipments for some of the recreational activities for the children and the young people. As in the case with INFA, the National Institute of Children and Family, it has for some years paid for the municipality to employ a social worker. It has also paid for the student lunches, although at the end 2010 this was suspended. In February 2011, INFA resumed this cause, in addition to paying for four cooks of the canteen. However, this only lasted for a period of six months.

Another example is “the Lounge for Virtual Communication” between the children and their emigrant parents. It was initially made possible by the lobbying of the mayor to the *Chuncheño* residents in the U.S. to donate five computers. However, since, then, there has only been one UN-volunteer who officially worked for six months in 2006 to teach children and adults to use the computers and the internet. The municipality has had neither the budget nor the assistance from other institutions to provide for the necessary training of computer skills to the children or the adults.

In the case of the municipality’s collaboration with Ecuador Volunteer in bringing international volunteers, it has also been very insecure. Sometimes several volunteers come at the same time, while in other months there are no volunteers at all. To facilitate my analyses in the next three chapters, I will give a short presentation on Ecuador Volunteer Foundation here, and sketch out the profiles of the volunteers that Ecuador Volunteer have sent to the social program.

Ecuador Volunteer Foundation (hereafter EVF) is a non-governmental and non-profit Ecuadorian organization that works as an intermediary organization between international volunteers and local projects in Ecuador. It charges every volunteer a one-off fee of 200 dollars for personnel and other expenses to sustain the foundation. By the beginning of 2011, it had partnerships with more than 35 organizations to bring volunteers to different projects ranging from nature conservation to health and many social causes. As

an independent foundation, it was founded in 2005. However, its predecessor is a branch of a private Spanish language school which has been arranging volunteering activities since 2002 for young people coming from North America and Europe. In fact, EVF’s headquarter remains in the same building of the Spanish language school in the capital, Quito. In this very material aspect, the school and the foundation are also still very much affiliated to each other. The school saw that doing volunteer activities in the afternoons would be complementary to students’ Spanish language learning in the mornings and their desires to travel and know the country. Also, it would allow for the contribution on the part of these young Westerners to “a profound kind of social and cultural investment”<sup>52</sup> in Ecuador. It thus started contacting and collaborating with some local volunteer projects.

The director of EVT, Francisco, used to be a professional in market publicity while also managing part of the business of the language school. There was a major personal motive on the part of the director to found EVF, as he recounted to me during our encounter. He had negative experiences working in the highly profit-oriented companies and wanted to use his expertise of publicity for the social sector instead of the commercial sector. Also, Francisco described in the interview that the foundation came into being because the number of volunteers and the projects increased significantly since the first

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52 Quoting director Francisco from the interview.

year the school started it as one branch of its activities. In a very short time, this branch grew tremendously that it could no longer be contained in the language school. The internationals that came included many native Spanish-speaking people from Spain and Latin America that did not need Spanish classes. He thus decided to found an independent and legally recognized non-profit foundation.

Since the program commenced, EVF has sent seven volunteers to the social program Center of Integral Support. It has been the major channel through which international volunteers arrive in Chunchi. Most volunteers were twenty-something young people, and they came from the U.S. and Europe. The length of the time that they stayed in Chunchi ranged from two to ten months. They have included a male guitar teacher from the U.S., a female psychologist from Poland, a male psychologist from Spain, a female social worker from the U.S., a female photographer and social worker from Poland, and two female social workers from Belgium.<sup>53</sup> There have been six other volunteers that participated in the social program but through other organizations/institutions. As mentioned already in this section, a female Ecuadorian-Spanish volunteer was in Chunchi under the UN-volunteers' program in 2006. In addition, since 2010, three female volunteers have been sent by JICA. There were also two male volunteers respectively from Korea and France that did not come through an organization with any specific agreement with the

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53 Volunteers are mentioned in order of their time of arrival in Chunchi.



Center of Integral Support or the municipality. In the beginning of Chapter Four, I will come back to these volunteers, focusing on those six with whom I have conducted interviews.

## **2.2 An Encounter of Studies on Migration, Transnational Families, Development, International Cooperation and Volunteering**

From the content of the program Center for Integral Support, I think it is pertinent to say that this social program intends to link the theme of care and development<sup>54</sup> in the sense of “improving the quality of lives of local children”, quoted as the objective of the municipality in the last section. In this section, I further prepare for my analyses in the following chapters by introducing studies that have been done on migration and transnational families, development, local governance and international cooperation and volunteering. As the program of Chunchi reveals a critical nexus of care and development in the face of migration and global disparities that demands examination, I see it essential to bring together previous research from different areas of studies and the valid points of information that mutually complement each other.

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54 See 2.2.2 where I discuss more on “development”, the definition of it and research on it related to my analysis.

### 2.2.1 Ecuadorian emigration and transnational families

Qualitative research on Ecuadorian migrants has attended to a diverse range of issues connected to migration. Herrera (2005) has explored the feminization of Ecuadorian emigration and interviewed women in cross-border care chains. While emigrants are commonly inserted into the job markets filling the market needs of “3D jobs”<sup>55</sup> in Europe and the U.S., Wagner (2009) and Dávalos (2009) investigate female and male emigrants’ experiences of empowerment as well as discrimination along the lines of gender, ethnicity, nationality and class in the destination societies. Sanz Abad (2009) examined the motives for moving abroad, their subsequent return and use of wages/salaries and remittances.

In terms of the formation of transnational families while the migrants are in one country and their families another, ethnographer Gladis Aguirre Vidal (2009) has explored the dynamics of relationships between migrant parents and their children in Ecuador using life history narratives. Exploring the themes of mobility, care and discipline, she demonstrates the fluidity of the concept of “family” in the face of the dominant discourse of “family disintegration” caused by migration. On the other hand, Gloria Camacho Zambrano and Kattya Hernández Basante (2005), through analyzing workshops with migrants’ families, have called attention to the urgency of attending to the emotional and social needs of migrants

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55 Dirty, Dangerous and Deskillling.

and their transnational families.

Concerning local development in a society with a lot of emigration, Camacho Zambrano and Hernández Basante (2009) use a case study to reveal how the remittances sent back in a rush to buy houses and lands have pushed up prices, forming new local hierarchies between families receiving remittances and those not (187). Also, emigration and remittances have in practice helped the individualistic social atmosphere and broke some local organizing traditions (194-195). In a similar vein, sociologist Camacho Zambrano (2009) has furthermore examined human development of Ecuadorians in the frame of phenomenally large-scale migration. Her research stresses the alarming effect of underemployed Ecuadorian emigrants disproportionally providing labor for the lower-end jobs in Europe. Such situation limits emigrants’ own development, the general human development in local scenes in Ecuador, as well as the possibility of a healthy and stable Ecuadorian national economy (22-23).

The insights into children in emigrants’ families, the power relations in which the emigrants are situated, and local development in the face of a vast outflow of human resources and the concomitant incoming of remittances are particularly relevant for my research. They are part of the landscape in which my examination of the Center of Integral Support for Emigrants’ Children in Chunchi is situated. However, these studies alone do not

sketch out the panorama, in which not only migrants and their families but also institutions and international volunteers interact in the name of care and development. For this reason, I shall also look at other studies that address development, local governance, international cooperation and volunteering.

### 2.2.2 Development and local governance

The European Commission's report "Ecuador: Country Strategy Paper 2007-2013" evaluates

Ecuador's socio-economic situation in connection with migration and claims that:

The country's considerable population movements... pose further challenges in terms of family breakdown, brain drain and other problems. However, in some respects external migration has also acted as a safety valve reducing social and political pressures which might otherwise become unmanageable in the absence of far-reaching political changes (EEAS 2007, 12-13).

As also mentioned in the end of 2.2.1, migration poses great challenges to local political and social action. Though the use of the metaphor "safety valve" is suggestive of appeasement towards social-political problems, this quote above serves to highlight the problematic nexus of migration, governance and development.<sup>56</sup> Little research addresses this nexus, however.

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<sup>56</sup> For the concept of "development", I follow Francis Adams' definition of: "[s]imply providing nutrition, health care, and education, while certainly important, should not be equated with development. Rather, ... development should be associated with 'empowerment.' The poor should be able to obtain the knowledge, skills, and resources needed to provide for themselves and their families on a long-term basis. Emphasis thus shifted to

Scholar Gery Nijenhuis (2010) also has noted that there is a vacuum in the research which manages to examine migration together with local development issues from a local governance perspective (77).

Nijenhuis herself has conducted research on this nexus. She studied municipalities in Bolivia, a country that highly resembles Ecuador in witnessing a dramatic emigration of its population in the past couple of decades. She sheds lights on how twelve Bolivian municipalities deal with emigration and development. One important conclusion from her essay is that local governments and other local stakeholders such as NGOs are crucial players in the context of decentralization. Despite that, she suggests that these local actors in Bolivia have insufficient capacities (67 and 77-78). Research carried out by James Keese and Marco Freire Argudo (2006) looks at three case studies of NGO-municipal collaboration in three cantons in Ecuador. They locate their cases also in the context of decentralization, when municipalities are gaining more responsibilities from the central government. Like Nijenhuis, they also identified that assistance from other institutions or organizations has been decisive for the projects of the municipalities, as they many times face serious financial constraints and a lack of human resources. The central government appears to actively encourage NGOs to

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capacity development, self-reliance, and the ability of all people to achieve their full potential” (2010, 2). Also according to Adams, sustainability is often added as a fundamental condition of development, which “signifies meeting present needs without jeopardizing the needs of future generations” (2010, 3).

step in to assist (124). The opinion they hold is that, under the circumstances, an “institutional space” has emerged for the partnership between municipalities and NGOs.<sup>57</sup> There is a great potential for strategies and structures to be developed to enhance the results of the local projects even though it can be highly challenging (115 and 125).

### 2.2.3 Transnational/international cooperation and volunteering

The studies I have mentioned which address local development and emigration illustrate the difficulties local institutions face with a lack of resources and capacities while working on local projects. On this basis, collaboration of the local actors with international/transnational actors becomes indispensable. Many studies have focused on diverse forms of cross-border collaboration. For instances, a study by Caroline Moser and Peter Sollis (1991) focuses on the evaluation of a communal development project promoted by UNICEF (The United Nations Children’s Fund) and the Ecuadorian Ministry of Health. They argue that evaluation of development projects as such should take into account the perception of different actors and recognize, in the long run, the contribution towards local capacity building even if the project “fails” in its formal objectives during its official course. Lilly Nicholls (1999) has looked

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<sup>57</sup> For my analysis in Chapter Three, I will come back to their study and use their idea of the “institutional space” to look at the collaboration of the municipality of Chunchi and other institutions and organizations.

critically at UNDP’s (The United Nations Development Program) efforts on “sustainable human development” in Uganda. She emphasizes the importance of having concrete and practical programs that enable the local actors to take responsibilities while transnational institutions/organizations contribute resources (405-406). In addition, she regards it necessary to recognize different actors’ interests during the implementation process of the projects (405).

The crucial dimension of studies still to be incorporated is on the increasing participation of international volunteers in local projects. Over the last decade, international volunteering involving young people from the “North” traveling to “the global South” to do volunteer work has increased dramatically. These people go through non-governmental, either non-profit or for profit agencies to work in projects on a diversity of topics, such as natural conservation, local education, and health care. The program Center of Integral Support, as I introduced previously in 2.1.2, has drawn many international volunteers from UN-Volunteers, agency JICA for intergovernmental cooperation, and EVF. However, there is still a lack of integral and critical analyses of volunteers, especially those through non-governmental organizations, working on care and development projects in countries such as Ecuador that experience large-scale emigration.

Extant studies and articles on volunteering tend to be limited in the sense that they

focus mainly on the personal reasons for volunteering, the effects on the volunteers or benefits it brings them. Walter Rehberg (2005) for example provides a typology of motives demonstrated by Swiss volunteers working abroad for the references of organizations that plan to work with volunteers. Miles et al. (1998) study the satisfactions the volunteers experienced in ecological restoration projects in the U.S. Similarly, Yashima (2010) discusses the factors influencing volunteers' achievement in intercultural competence with their volunteering experiences. Other articles center on the positive bonding between the volunteers and the locals, affirming that volunteerism boosts transnational solidarity (Werna and Schneider 2003; Keher 2006). Important as they are, seldom do these studies question the macro structural constraints and the complex interpersonal power dynamics international volunteering involves.

Recent research by political geographer Jamie Lorimer (2010), however, provides an example of exploring such dimensions of international volunteering. Lorimer studies UK volunteers going through market-led agencies to do environmental projects in developing countries. He critiques the current dichotomized opinions in academic discussion about international volunteering. According to him, there is a tendency in the academia to either view international volunteering as a positive act of engagement with the "cosmopolitan global citizenship", or as a neoliberal and neocolonial exercise of the volunteers within mainstream global environmentalism (312). Suggesting a reconsideration of such an anthropocentric



analytical approach, Lorimer stresses on examining phenomena such as the uneven geographical distribution of the volunteers in certain countries/continents and the political economy of “affect” behind volunteers’ preference of certain animal preservation projects (316-318). As also mentioned in 1.2.4, his research has been very informative to this thesis, and I will return to his work in Chapter Four.

In this chapter, I have located Chunchi’s social program Center of Integral Support within Ecuador and canton Chunchi’s geographic, demographic, political and economic contexts. I then illustrated the governmental setting and the functional history of the program, the participation of the children, volunteers and funding organizations and institutions. In the second part of the chapter, I mapped out existent literatures from several areas of studies relevant to this topic. This includes research on migration and transnational families, local governance, development, international cooperation and international volunteering. I dwelled on a few significant studies in each of them, while intending to show that they respectively cover only a part of the comprehensive discussion I wish to hold in the following three chapters. Through encountering them actively and assembling them in this chapter, I have thus laid the foundation for diving into my analysis in Chapter Three where the focal point will be on the institutional practices of the social program and their implications.

## CHAPTER THREE: THE INSTITUTIONAL PRACTICES AND THEIR IMPLICATIONS IN THE

### CENTER OF INTEGRAL SUPPORT

This chapter consists of four sections. Each will discuss an aspect of the institutional practices seen in the social program. I first offer an analysis of how the program can be seen to have facilitated the creation of an institutional space and a gendered social domain. The second section explores the implications of the transnational and international collaboration between the municipality of Chunchi and other institutions and organizations in the program. The third section sees the discussion shift back to the social domain where I use the concept of “governmentality” to analyze how the emergence of such a domain has ambivalent effects on the local *Chuncheños*. In the final section, I argue that the partnership between the municipality of Chunchi and international volunteer organizations such as EVF has led to a subtle mingling of market logic with the social program.

### 3.1 The Making of an Institutional Space and the Gendered Social Domain

In Chapter Two, I highlighted the high instability of the incoming resources and the number of participants taking part in the social program either in a giving or receiving capacity. The Center of Integral Support’s situation can be seen as very precarious. I will argue that it is important that all stakeholders— the municipality, the locals, institutions and organizations— work towards sustaining the program for the benefit of local welfare and development. One of the main reasons for sustaining the program is that it has contributed towards the creation of both a physical and a symbolic space where institutions and individuals meet. In this space, issues of “the social” are recognized by the government and civil society and in turn approached with public and institutionalized efforts. In what follows, I demonstrate this point with reference to interviews and my encounters with different facts regarding the Center of Integral Support.

During the interviews conducted as part of my fieldwork, the participants and I encountered each other and actively contributed to the content of the interviews. I constantly confronted the interviewees by inserting and highlighting questions that lead them to explicitly shape and reshape their opinions. For instance, I challenged them in relation to their perception of the emergence of the program and the institutionalization of it. Most of the

volunteers, local families and officers of the organizations working for the social programs have associated the beginning of the program with the initiative and the goodwill of the mayor of canton Chunchi, Walter Narváez Mancero. Correspondingly, the coordinator of the social program, Eduardo, also narrated the progress of the overall social sector in Chunchi as the vision and effort of the mayor:

Thanks to the mayor we have the agreements with UNESCO. The mayor was an educator... and he saw the importance to seek connections with foreign organizations to develop the education sectors...

the administration of canton Chunchi principally owes to the political will of the mayor... [H]e saw the prevalence of migration... and he had a daughter as a migrant in Spain, so surely he knows how the pain is, and what the problems are that affect [the migrant families]... So he prioritized this ambition [to deal with the problems of migration]. We see that in other cantons, it is also in accordance with the political will [of the local leader] that... they prioritize the infrastructure for tourism... which sometimes leads to competitive tourism rather than one that contributes to the social [welfare]... So there are different processes, and we have seen that in other cantons there does not exist such a social project as in canton Chunchi...

However, after relaying the story of the idiosyncratic goodwill of this local political leader, the coordinator also made very critical comments about the importance of transforming the program from under such political idiosyncrasy towards its institutionalization. While I encouraged him to focus on the sustainability of the program and the possibility of creating similar programs in other cantons, coordinator Eduardo reflected that:

What is intended here now is that the project stay in the municipality. That is to say, to

make it no longer dependent on the will of the mayor, but [that it] last permanently... We have the goal of elaborating a public politics in which it is declared through bylaws that... migration be considered in canton Chunchi and... [there be] an exclusive budget for the attention on migrants’ children... [We expect] that the [local] government uses its financial resources to sustain permanently the project without exception, no matter if it is agreed or not by whichever mayor or authority to come, or if it is... attended by the national government, whose scarce allocation of money towards Chunchi is not able to let the municipality maintain the project anyways.

This passage articulates the efforts of actors within the social program Center of Integral Support to establish it as a specific site to manage social and family issues. It transforms the history of the local social politics that previously relied on the personal decisions of the local authority instead of institutionalized and systematic practices. This can be analyzed through the concept of “the social”: a terrain mingling the private and the public, at once “within and outside the family” (Donzelot 1979, xxi). “The social” in the discussion of Donzelot (1979), Riley (1988) and Lewis (2000) has been referred to as a sphere on the State’s level which includes a population within a nation as the subject of State’s management. Taking this as a starting point and modifying it to suit the discussion on the decentralized municipal government of Chunchi, I interpret the formation of the Center of Integral Support as the making of a social domain. This domain did not exist in canton Chunchi until the emergence of the social program in 2006. “The social” constructed by the Center of Integral Support is a new sphere for the governance of the local municipal government vis-à-vis its population. With the presence of this program, the situation of migrants, their families and children is

officially regarded to be public concern and addressed in the governmental agenda.<sup>58</sup>

What is also noteworthy is that the feminized character of care has been brought to the forefront when it comes to this newly created social domain. As I discussed in 1.2.2 with Riley (1988) and Lewis' (2000) work, scholars have pointed out that the social domain is gendered. I have also detected in the case of the program that the municipality affirms and reaffirms the role of women in the "basic tasks" of cooking, caring and guiding children in the social program. For instance, the municipality submitted a document as part of their nomination for the award of "Best Administration Practices of Social Politics"<sup>59</sup> among other municipal governments in 2008. Stated in this document in the item of achieving social equity was that the Center of Integral Support "values women's contribution and their important role within the social sector". However, the "contribution" of women means in practice the *Chuncheñas*<sup>60</sup> employed in the canteen as cooks, as the mothers bringing their children to the appointment with the psychologist<sup>61</sup>, and as the local young women playing with the children and assisting them with homework in the afternoon. On the other hand, managerial and coordinator level positions are primarily occupied by men. These include the coordinator of

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58 Also see my formulation of theories of "the social" in Chapter One in the section on the global social domain, 1.2.2.

59 "Premio a Las Mejores Prácticas de la Gestión de Políticas Sociales"

60 Women of Chunchi.

61 Volunteer and psychologist Raul for example has thus commented: "Normally it's always the mothers that are worried about their children. When the child did not do well... the mother took the child to me even if it was only for a private and preliminary diagnosis. Children don't come alone... they don't know who a psychologist is. It's the mothers who are worried about their kids that bring them to me."

the social program, the consultant coming from UNFPA, and the directors of various NGOs working with the municipality.<sup>62</sup>

However, it is the public participation of these women in “the social” that empowers them in a symbolic *and* material sense. Compared to other work settings, the local women in Chunchi engage themselves in a relatively more secure and public environment when they work for the Center of Integral Support. Remuneration, if employed by this social program, is guaranteed, which is different from their work at home or in other private settings. In addition, they have the opportunity to develop within their professions. For example, the female cooks learn about hygiene because the hygienic standards in the canteen/kitchen are stricter than at home. This further yields the possibility for them as a collective body to wield influence in the social realm of Chunchi on health and hygiene issues. As Riley writes:

The ‘social’ does not merely admit women to it; something more constructive than a matter of entry or access is going on; it is as if ‘women’ become established as a new kind of sociological collectivity. ‘Women’ both come under and direct the public gaze... (1988, 50).

In the meantime, the planning and functioning of the program have required an “institutional space” as used in Keese and Freire Argudo’s studies of NGO-municipality

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<sup>62</sup> My encounter with volunteer Verónica’s personal blog has helped me to shape this point of analysis. Verónica has in an entry of her blog shared her observation on the gender-imbalance seen among the employees in the program.

collaboration (2006, 115). Due to the local municipality's scarce resources<sup>63</sup>, drawing help from different institutions and organizations has been necessary for survival. The fact that these institutions meet and work together for this social program proves the possibility of creating an institutional space and expanding it for the cause of local development and welfare in Chunchi.

One thing to be noted is that I see the formation of the institutional space and the gendered social domain in this program not only as limited to the geopolitical area of canton Chunchi. The program does not simply address the local problems of social/human development and welfare in canton Chunchi but it is simultaneously creating a precedent. It is a point of reference for institutions and other local governments in similar situations. In this sense, the program also serves to promote the formation of such a space beyond the canton. It reveals the possibility of transforming the "institutional inertia" (Tejerina Silva et al., 226) in the face of local underdevelopment and the lack of welfare in Ecuador.

To further illustrate this aspect, the program in Chunchi won the "Best Administration Practices of Social Politics" award in 2008. The award given by the Association of Ecuadorian Municipalities (AME) is bestowed annually at the municipality fair and symposium in Ecuador in which municipal governments participate and discuss public

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63 Keese and Freire Argudo: "For reasons that are economic and political, Ecuador's central government has been unable to meet its obligations to its citizens. Municipalities are taking on more responsibilities, but frequently without adequate transfers of funds" (2006, 124).



administration and local governance matters. Winning this award is an acknowledgement of the efforts as well as the effects of the program among the local governments in Ecuador. It is also significant in that migration as a theme is recognized as an issue for local social politics to work on in an institutional space. Two other municipalities have visited canton Chunchi to learn more about the program since it was awarded the prize in 2008.

Another example comes from my encounter through written correspondence with consultant Pablo, who has worked with the municipality on behalf of both UNFPA and the EU project PASSE. He stated that: “the phenomenon of migration is one of the fundamental variables that have a bearing on the structure of the population in Chunchi, and consequently the capacities and/or the potential of the canton”. In fact, transnational organizations and institutions working with Chunchi show that it is an important issue not only for one single canton to deal with. The program of Chunchi has been viewed by UNFPA and UNESCO offices in Ecuador as a pilot project. They seek to strengthen their collaboration with local governments to tackle problems exactly related to emigration and the children impacted by it.

Overall, the encounters I have had during the research stage reveal that the institutional practices in Chunchi’s program are different from the kind of practices indicated in Nijenhuis’ (2010) studies on Bolivian municipalities. Nijenhuis notes that “migration is an intrinsic characteristic of the region and, as such, not specifically referred to in policy documents”

(74)<sup>64</sup>. When it comes to Chunchi, institutions foreground migration and related problems in their policies and statements of collaboration for intervention. Thus it suffices to say that the advance of the social program in Chunchi is indeed a sign of the making of the institutional space and the social domain, in Chunchi and beyond. It is simultaneously the normalization of a gendered hierarchy: the “frontline” actors: cooks, teachers and carers are overwhelmingly women, whereas the staff at the managerial and coordinator level are predominantly men.

### **3.2 International and Transnational partnerships: A Win-win Situation for Everyone?**

The multi-scaled encounters between institutions and the municipality in the municipality-coordinated program Center of Integral Support are very significant in terms of creating a domain to address social issues on the local level and beyond. In this section, however, I shift my attention to the underlying global-local structural constraints which directly or indirectly contribute to the kind of cross-border and inter-institutional collaboration seen in this social program. I agree with scholars like Appadurai (2000, 2002a, 2002b) and Moghadam (2005), whom I mentioned in 1.2.3, that many more possibilities have emerged in a globalized world for cross-border collaboration. However, it is due to the unequal structures

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64 Nijenhuis: “Although all five-year municipal development plans pay some attention to migration, the analysis is almost always limited to an account of the number of migrants and the reasons for their leaving” (2010, 74).

of the globalized political economy that some people experience situations so desperate as to require cross-border aid and cooperation for their very “local” problems.

During the interview with Eduardo, the coordinator of the social program who is also the head of the department of community development in the municipality, I several times let the “conversation” dwell on the cooperation between the municipality and the transnational/international institutions. During the encounter I urged the coordinator to reflect on whether the project is dependent on the collaborating transnational/international institutions and, if so, how. Coordinator Eduardo related such cooperation and dependence to the lack of financial, and related technical and political resources:

Canton Chunchi is a small canton of the province... and of the country... The factor that holds us back the most is the economic one, since the budget is only enough for us to cover the basic and vital necessities despite the huge social problems we have. We don't have economic support from the Ministry of Finance, which transfers the resources. Hence, there is an urgency to establish a politics of migration and of the vulnerable group of children of chronic malnutrition... Our dependence on international organizations for support, like that of the United Nations, lies in that, not mentioning the economic resources, we count on the favor they make with respect to technical assistance as well as political support [of the project]. But our limitation is practically an economic one...

For decades, neoliberal policies such as those of the IMF and the World Bank towards underdeveloped countries like Ecuador have greatly limited both the use of national resources and the ability of different levels of government to fully function in the social sector. As Keese and Freire Argudo point out, there is a “global dimension” shaping the practices of

Ecuadorian municipalities and the central government (2006, 123). Structural adjustment, external debts, political turbulences and the international trend of decentralization have since the 1980s greatly influenced the development of local municipal governments (ibid). As I consider the point made by Eduardo in this passage above, in the case of a shortage of resources allocated by the central government and the dependence of the local municipal governments on external resources, the Ecuadorian case differs from that of the European welfare states. Nevertheless, they are systematically connected. Within contemporary European welfare states, neoliberalism has seen a weaker acknowledgement among citizens of the role of the State in managing social welfare:

the traditional functions of the state in terms of supplying public goods and ensuring living standards are no longer guaranteed. [P]eople... no longer see the value of collective action and expenditure through the state” (Perrons 2004, 270).

The predominant neoliberal macro-structure has also limited the ability of the different levels of the Ecuadorian government to dedicate attention and funds to social welfare and development. The massive emigration of its population towards Europe and the U.S. as a “private” solution of the problems of the households in this context also demonstrates the neoliberal rationale at play.

In the sense that the local municipal governments are still very inexperienced in administration and lack the resources to advance their agendas, the situation in Ecuador is

similar to that found in Bolivia where local municipal governments have difficulties working on issues related to emigration. As Nijenhuis observes in Bolivia, “the majority of local governments... simply do not know how to deal with international migration as a topic in policies and planning” (2010, 77). These municipal governments “have limited or no knowledge... and do not know where to start” (ibid). It is exactly within this context that the international and transnational partnerships and assistance become indispensable in local municipal projects such as the one at Chunchi. Pablo worked as a consultant on behalf of UNFPA with the municipality of Chunchi from 2004 to 2008, and then for the EU project PASSE with Chunchi in 2009. In my written correspondence with him, he told me how “[the organizations/institutions] have provided a small municipality (in budget terms) to develop big ideas and to demonstrate firmly that with will, it is possible to achieve what is proposed.”

Notwithstanding, it is still necessary to critically consider the implications of the phenomenon that sees governmental or supra-governmental institutions such as the JICA, EU and UN working with and influencing municipal projects in Ecuador. In the case of the EU, for instance, it is a political and economic entity that establishes itself within uneven global political-economic development. The EU in the first place depends upon the economic contribution of immigrants from countries like Ecuador (EU-CAN Summit Joint Communiqué, 2010). Secondly, it highly controls, and at times expels, these same immigrants

(Dauvergne 2009, Morice and Rodier. 2010). Thirdly, it has deepening trade relations with the Andean Community, including Ecuador (Kanner Arias 2008). Along these lines, it also has an external action agency with aid projects in Ecuador and other countries. It is not to be denied that immigration, trading and external aid are related to different operational branches of the EU and the varying interests, goals and strategies of each of these branches does not necessarily coincide. Nevertheless, the macro implication of the EU working with the rural municipality of Chunchi, which does not even function self-sufficiently, is ironic. The transfer of “aid” from the EU to the vulnerable group of emigrants’ children in Chunchi would not have been necessary if the underdevelopment in Chunchi were not exacerbated by the outflow of people and resources to countries in the E.U.

Even if the macro implications of the international and transnational partnerships were put aside from the discussion, the question about whether the local program is dependent on international and transnational assistance remains. I confronted Pablo, the consultant from UNFPA and EU projects, with this question. He commented that:

The success (of the program) is guaranteed when the actors of the local development are the ones that are responsible for their own initiatives and promote the improvement of the quality of lives of their children, their siblings and their parents...

All the organizations that support development from below play a supporting role... Probably [the institutions and organizations] accelerate a little bit the achievement of the objectives [of the program], contributing with financial resources and technical assistance to the strengthening of local capacities. However, I do not think that there is dependency. It is

better framed as good training for local knowledge and support for the communities to be the actors of their own development.

Given my observations during the fieldwork and engaging with his reply, I however assess the situation differently. Since the start of the program in 2006, the municipality has continuously faced a large financial deficit alongside an urgency to maintain the program. Under these circumstances, it is difficult for the municipality to make full use of human resources and technical assistance, for the very short time they are provided, in training local people to better sustain the program themselves. The way the municipality has allocated work to some of the volunteers coming through the international volunteers organizations is an indication that the municipality has not worked fully towards developing the local capacity in sustaining the program. During their very short stay in Chunchi, these volunteers were often busy with tasks that were not necessarily aimed at raising the local capacities. This casts doubt on the likelihood of Chunchi becoming more self-sufficient through its transnational connections as they are currently structured.

For example, a senior nutritionist came as a volunteer on behalf of JICA in the beginning 2011. During my fieldwork in Chunchi, I observed that she spent time designing the daily menu for the lunch in the canteen with the municipality’s instruction that it should specifically raise the weight of children in the program. This relatively mundane task, as she described it, does not contribute entirely to her primary mission of enabling local capacities to

tackle malnutrition. Her original mission was to design a nutrition education plan for the canton and to improve the information relating to malnutrition for children from emigrants' families. Likewise, volunteers who have been in Chunchi to teach using ICTs, the Information and Communication Technologies, to do social work or to provide psychological counseling for several months have not directly contributed to the long term ICT abilities or secured social and health services for the local people. With the absence of a systematic coordination due to either administration problems and/or the lack of resources, this kind of "aid" can be seen, at most, as a temporary solution or experiment. Patrycja, who was a volunteer psychologist in Chunchi told me: "I think this is a very good cause for Chunchi and for the volunteers. It's a win-win situation... Not only did Chunchi gain something but also I gained something". On what grounds is it a win-win situation that individual actors in the program come to assume, then?

The structural limitation and the dependency seen in the inter-institutional cooperation of the social program should be critically approached by all the participating actors and people who wish to analyze the Center of Integral Support: Various institutions and organizations working in Chunchi should rigorously and strategically assist and empower the local-based program to develop its long-term self-sustainability, while also making an effort to meet the urgent demand of people doing certain tasks for the locals. This challenge should be recognized and dealt with by the institutions and the individual actors representing them. It



should be dealt with as an ongoing struggle, as Beata, a former volunteer social worker in Chunchi remarked:

It’s like an everyday struggle, like you don’t want that... [the municipality and the people] would depend on you, but you also want to do something. You’re trying to do something so that they will not depend on you...

The last point I would like to make is that, although I have been concentrating on the local government and the transnational and international institutions, the role of the state and its national institutions in local programs is also central. Even if the Center of Integral Support is a case of local governance with significant transnational and international funding and volunteers, the function of the State should still and constantly be emphasized. Keese and Freire Argudo (2006) have pointed out that the central government is capable of establishing macro-policies and a legal environment for the decentralized provincial and municipal government to work within. They write that: “The ministries still have the capacity to regulate and set standards, and given [that]... funds come from the central government, they will maintain a significant oversight role” (123). This aspect is particularly enlightening in the case of Chunchi, where there are complex “intra-actions” among transnational institutions, inter-governmental agencies and local NGOs bringing in international volunteers.<sup>65</sup>

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<sup>65</sup> I choose to use Barad’s term “intra-actions” here to highlight the idea that the various institutional actors significant for the social program should not be taken for granted as always there and always significant for the Center of Integral Support. As I have shown in Chapter Two, collaboration of the municipality with each

International volunteer organizations for example should be included in some form of governmental administration and regulation framed by the central government to recognize their increasing presence in local projects across the country. However, as the director of EVF, Francisco, admits, “there is still no law for volunteering. A set of regulation on volunteering in our country is being worked on, but a well defined law on volunteering does not exist yet.” It appears that the mission of the state in its structuration and systemization of international and transnational collaboration with the local governments remains. It will have to be addressed urgently but also consistently to satisfy the genuine needs of many local projects like the Center of Integral Support in Chunchi.

In this section, I discussed the ironic implication of the transnational and international partnership formed between the municipality of Chunchi and other institutions and organizations in the social program. I have also observed the dependency of the program on external assistance and the ways that it reduced the long-term self-sustainability of the program. Furthermore, I stress on the responsibility of the Ecuadorian state and the role its ministries should take in local government-administered programs to encourage and ensure well-functioning transnational/international collaboration. Whatever forms of partnership and whichever institutional actors have been drawn together to work on the Center of Integral

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institution or organization is very unstable. It only generates influences on the Center and implications in a very specific space-time. See 1.2.4 where I discuss Barad’s concept of “intra-actions”.

Support, the question remains as to whether it will bring genuine and long term benefits to the children of Chunchi, who are caught in the midst of social and economic instability.

### 3.3 Double-edged Local Governmentality

I initiated this chapter by mapping out the “social domain” brought forth by the Center of Integral Support. In this section, I will proffer a more profound analysis of this social domain. In particular I turn to Foucault’s (1991, 2003) conceptualization of governmentality, and Lewis’ (2000) formulation of the normalization of the family by governments. With the help of these insights, I explore the implications of the municipality’s governance on the *Chuncheño* population, which is principally composed of emigrants’ families.

Within the social terrain that came into being along with the Center of Integral Support, the social-family issues related to emigration, poverty, malnutrition, psychological and social behavioral problems are now “a field of intervention... and an objective of governmental techniques” for the government (Foucault 1991, 102). As Foucault sees, a goal of the government is to improve the welfare of the population (100).<sup>66</sup> In order to improve the

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66 What Foucault discusses originally is the central government of the nation-state and its related governmentality with regards to the national population. As I have modified the scholarly discussion on “the social” in 3.1, I will also appropriate Foucault’s idea on governmentality of the nation state for my discussion on the local municipal government of Chunchi.

welfare condition of the *Chuncheños*, the municipality has chosen to strengthen its influence and control over the emigrants' families. It intervenes in the domestic realm from different aspects articulated by the five different components of the program: The lunch canteen intervenes into the issues of (mal)nutrition, eating habits and eating environments of the children. The homework guidance as well as municipality-organized recreational activities for the "adequate use" of time have intervened to fill a void left by (absent) parents' ideas and efforts towards school performance and leisure time. The Lounge for Virtual Communication intervenes and even invents the communication between migrants and their children, while social workers and psychologists intervene into issues such as families neglecting to send their children to school, domestic violence and abuse.

With such local governance in the realm of "the social", I have detected that the implication of the governmentality here is double-edged. On the one hand, governmentality signifies discipline and regulation of the population represented by emigrants' families as well as the normalization of specific ways of living and managing the families. The process of governmentality in the case of the municipality of Chunchi also produces inclusion and exclusion among the local families, as I will illustrate. On the other hand, governmentality at the very local municipal level is a force "from below" that actively experiments with the local subjects. It encourages them to organize and mobilize themselves politically and socially towards their own development and welfare. In the following paragraphs, I elaborate on this

issue of the double-edged nature of governmentality as seen in the social program.

To start with, governing through the Center of Integral Support has its tangible disciplinary and regulatory effects on the population that participate in the program. As Foucault explains, the disciplinary effect centers on the individual body while the regulatory effect centers on “a living mass”, the population (2003, 249). Both of these effects can be seen through the municipality’s announcements, promotions and controls on what is “adequate” for every child enrolled in the program, in terms of their lunch time, the eating habits, their weights, their free time after school, and their communication with their emigrant parents. In addition, there is also the process of normalization, in which the local government “inculcate[s] specific norms of living... in relation to... parental responsibilities” (Lewis 2000, 30). In the minutes that I have gathered of the reunions in 2010 of all the participants in the program, it was emphasized time and again by the social worker and staff of the municipality to the adult family members that they should take on more responsibility in disciplining the children. The guardians and family representatives were asked to urge the children to go to the canteen every day as well as to attend homework guidance and other classes. They were warned that their children may face exclusion from the program if they failed to do so.

Governmentality in the social domain created by the Center of Integral Support leads to new inclusions and exclusions. The children who are allowed to register in the program

should be the ones that can regularly attend the components of the program. On this basis, the volunteer software analyst Verónica<sup>67</sup> shared with me her observation that some needy children from the emigrants' family were not able to be included by the program because they lived in extremely rural and remote places from the small center of the canton *la Matriz*. There are no means of transportation to their homes and it would take these children two hours to walk to the center. Similarly Beata, a volunteer social worker, noted that in the many encounters she had with the local children she found that those who had difficulties in attending the program everyday unfortunately faced exclusion from the program:

I saw how difficult it is to get those kids that really need the meals. Sometimes it works like... she (the social worker) wanted to have... two hundred kids at the beginning, and she had to have two hundred kids at the end of the project. [T]hey want it to continue... [I]t will be about two hundred kids and they will finish with two hundred. But you have to see that those kids that really need the help... They are not so easy. And they wouldn't be [there] every, every time...

[the children] weren't there twice, three times. And they (people in charge) said, "no, you can't go anymore, because... you didn't arrive, so you can't come anymore". And those kids wouldn't be there every time, because... they have a lot of problems! But I know that... to do it better, they need more people, because one social worker is not enough, and the social worker couldn't see everyone, couldn't be going along the streets looking for those kids who really need [the assistance]... So that was the main problem of this project, that they are using the "easier" kids, not every "easy" kid, but you know... those really need it are far away from the project.

Considering this aspect, the emerging governmentality combined with the material factors

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<sup>67</sup> The UN-volunteer mainly working on Information and Communication Technologies for "the Lounge of Virtual Communication" in 2006.

influencing its practices has marked out new a boundary of inclusion and exclusion in the local community. This boundary represents their access or denial of access to the services of the program.

During my interviews with members of families involved in the Center of Integral Support, I enquired about their sense of this process of governmentality through questions relating to the detailed requirements for the children to be in the program. Several female adult members noticeably formed and reformed their opinions upon my questioning. The interviews revealed that the adult family members that attend the meetings are very aware of the emerging normalization attempts and the control being exerted by the local government through the social program. Maribel, a cook in the canteen and also aunt to a four-year-old girl admitted to the lunch canteen exchanged her opinion with me:

Maribel: [In the reunions] the children were asked to always go to the canteen, to be there for the retake of the classes and guidance, and to fulfill always what is required by the Center of Integral Support. Then when they (the children) are with low grades, [the guardian family members] deal with the children [to find out] why they are with low grades. And the same if they are underweight... [And the same] when they are behaving badly, when they don't go to the guidance and retake sessions.

Trista: and what do you think of these reunions?

Maribel: That they are to oblige [us] to carry out what needs to be carried out. Well, ok, *the people* say that from now on we (the family members) have to manage our children, to correct and to look after them so that they would not be like before...

Nevertheless, besides its discipline and exclusion/inclusion effects, I have also seen that

local governmentality in the emerging social domain of Chunchi yields possibilities for grassroots organizing and political mobilization. It is noteworthy that in the excerpt above Sophia used a general term to refer to “the people”<sup>68</sup> rather than specifying the municipality or the social worker who single-handedly dictates what the families should do. “The people” suggests not only officers from the municipality and the social workers, but parents and family members who are active in the reunions. This term does not distinctly mark the boundaries between the authorities and the governed subjects. It indicates thus that local families and the local government have come to share and build some kind of consensus on the importance of childcare during their encounters in “the social” domain. As such, governmentality is formed on a very local level, involving the local families themselves, who see the meaning of cooperating with the local government, national and transnational institutions in the social program for their childcare.

Another point to support the implications of local governmentality has to do with the notion of surveillance. I use this notion as is used in Appadurai’s sense of the strategy of “self-enumeration and self-surveying” for the organization of governmentality from below (2002a, 35). The functioning of the program has been accompanied by surveys assessing family practices in the canton. Additionally, every applicant child for the program is required to submit updated documents and participate in health checks and different types of

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68 *La gente*.



evaluations of the program. These forms of surveillance, however, are crucial in helping the locals themselves and the municipality to gain more information about their own society and population. It also enables them to present the program to institutions and funding projects and to continuously negotiate for financial or technical assistance. In this sense, surveillance does not stand out as a repressive force of the government on its population, but as a mechanism that can work for the population’s self-governance and participation in the social domain.

Actors in the program have seen moments of grassroots mobilizing for communal solidarity. One example is the regular reunions that the family members attend to receive information on the progress/suspension of the activities, and discuss practical matters such as electing new contact people among the parents. In addition to this, one very special mobilizing moment happened in January 2011 after the canteen ran out of funding and was suspended. With the coordination of the municipality, all the families signed a petition to be presented to the National Institute of Children and Family (INFA) for new funding. This petition was delivered by parent representatives together with the mayor and officers in the municipality in charge of the program. When I deliberately dwelled on the question of how adult family members take part in the program for their children, Luz talked about participating in this petition and attending the regular reunions of the program:

I went like three weeks ago to Riobamba to have the meeting with the director of INFA that funds the municipality... They said that they were going to have new personnel [to work with the program]... We (the representatives) were like, I think, 10 or 12 that went together... We went because they said that the canteen was to be closed down...

We do attend the organizing meetings... It is for gathering the maintenance fee<sup>69</sup> or collaborating in whatever [activities]. There is an acknowledgement of having responsibility towards our children, towards handing in the maintenance fee to support [the program]... towards caring about these things... one always pays attention to and is ready to do things for our children.

Luz came to affirm local families' willingness to organize around childcare issues. When I spoke with the coordinator of the program, Eduardo, I also explicitly opened up the topic of local organizing for him to express his opinions. He gave an elaborate account of how the program had transformed the traditional social and political inertia in the canton towards a politics of citizen participation:

Especially for the population of canton Chunchi, one of the principal problems that were presented in the elaboration of the [development] plan in 2002 was the weak communal organization... [People] simply seek to satisfy their main necessities as a family... rather than work in the social sphere... The process of organization that has existed in canton Chunchi has been [further] impeded... There is not even a group in the canton dealing with the problematic of migration, say, a coordination committee for the politics of migration... It is because [people] generally opt for immediate solutions.

One of the elements of the Center of Integral Support is the organization of parents of the families... We saw that in the beginning... [families were] a bit unwilling to participate... With the years passed by, we saw that more people were coming... The new year of 2011 was a year of danger that the project was being closed down due to lack of economic

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<sup>69</sup> For each child in the program, the family has to pay one dollar a month, and this is mainly used for the maintenance of the lunch canteen.

resources. And we saw that, ok, the parents of the families mobilized and... we managed to elaborate a petition on the provincial level, and we also managed a public hearing. The parents traveled to Riobamba to demand their rights. So, we see that this project has contributed to the process of organization... It was a slow process but the culture of citizen participation is being cultivated through the project.

From these exchanges with different actors of the program, I think the institutional practices of the social program in Chunchi promote the potential of what Appadurai calls “grassroots globalization”. Appadurai sees that grassroots globalization allows for governmentality from below to emerge and for the establishment of “deep democracy” among disadvantaged people in a globalized world (2002, 35 see also Appadurai 2000). The social program administered by the municipality of Chunchi has drawn on the resources and assistance of UN organizations and the EU and the grassroots networking with international volunteers provided by organizations such as EVF. It also provides chances to mobilize the participating families to actively encounter with their local government, national and transnational institutions and international volunteers and demand resources for communal and child welfare and development. As I have expounded in this section with many examples, the local governmentality seen in this program has its disciplining effects and risks of creating inclusion/exclusions; however at the same time, it also has the very significant aspect of promoting grassroots organizing and solidarity.

### 3.4 Institutionalized International Volunteering Entangled with Market Logic

In this section, I explore the implication of institutionalized volunteering seen in the program Center of Integral Support in Chunchi, with a focus on the patterns and content of the voluntary work presented by EVF and two international volunteers I interviewed. I will highlight how, with the institutionalized practice of seeking international volunteers for the local projects, EVF, the municipality of Chunchi, the locals as well as the volunteers/tourists in Ecuador increasingly open themselves up towards a form of volunteering that has been tied to capitalism and international tourism.

As I outlined in Chapter Two, EVF has its material history entangled with international tourism in Ecuador and Spanish language learning for foreigners from the developed countries. I regard it as highly significant that the administrator of the social program in Chunchi and the local municipal government is in official collaboration with an NGO such as EVF. When asked about why some local governments choose to work with EVF, Francisco, the director of the Foundation, recounted that usually some small municipalities in rural cantons are open to their volunteers. He explained that it is because those municipalities are the ones that genuinely lack the resources:

[I]t is because those are the ones that need development... [I]f you go to the municipality of Quito, [saying that] “we have some volunteers that can help you”, they would say: “Then

send a letter, and in some six or seven months I’ll respond to you”. However in a small municipality, in a small canton, and a rural area, if [the foundation] sends them the volunteers that have some specific knowledge in some fields, it is always a profit [for the municipality].

Looking at the volunteers that have been in Chunchi helping with different parts of the program Center of Integral Support, it is not to be denied that these volunteers have been very welcomed by the municipality and all of them have helped in some activity or another during their stay in Chunchi. In Chapter Two I gave examples of the kind of work volunteers have engaged with: short periods of social work, guitar classes, psychological counseling, photography workshops, etc. Besides these, what Francisco meant by the “profit” that these volunteers bring to the municipality can also be interpreted as the networking and further funding opportunities these internationals have provided during their stays in the canton.

For example, Beata, a former volunteer social worker from Poland set up a project “Kids in Action”<sup>70</sup> to exhibit photos taken by children in Chunchi. She arranged for children in a number of schools in Germany to communicate with children in Chunchi through photos, letters, and skype meetings, and raised funds for the children in the program through auctioning the photos. The transforming institutional practice of the EVF working with the municipality thus allows for cultural exchanges and transnational solidarity.<sup>71</sup>

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70 See <http://photographicproject.blogspot.com/>.

71 To be sure, the evaluation of these practices has to still take into account the precarious aspect and the tendency of dependence of the municipality on these incoming help that I have developed in the previous

However, by engaging in international volunteering, the municipality and EVF also orient themselves and the local communities towards the logic of the market, international tourism and capitalism. I have come to this assertion through my interview encounter with the director of EVF and my talks with the volunteers. First of all, director Francisco surprised me with the rationale he came to adopt after his own multiple encounters with the market, the local Ecuadorian communities, and the language-learning volunteers/tourists. EVF, as he presented it, is overtly agile and ambitious in the world “market” of international volunteers:

We started to see great potential in international volunteering. The tendency of the world market now is a little bit more towards humanitarianism, or at least with a main humanitarian concern. So, sustainable tourism is gradually gaining terrain...

We care more about our international competence, because a person that comes to Ecuador is a person that could also go to Peru, Bolivia, Argentina, Costa Rica... He can go to Africa... He can go to whichever country in the world! He does not necessarily have to come to Ecuador! He sees it only as one of the options of volunteering... There can be a hundred, a thousand options for volunteering in the world! So who do we have to confront...? ... Local competition does not matter to us. International competition for the market matters! ... Our fight is with organizations in other countries, to tell the volunteers, ‘hey, there is a small country called Ecuador that needs a lot of help from you.

At the same time, he emphasized that EVF is highly capable of ensuring that the volunteers contribute (albeit in a short period of time) to the local communities they are situated in, especially in the sense of developing viable tourism:

All the communities want to develop tourism... but not every one of them can succeed... Volunteers do not come as tourists, but they think like the tourists. They think as all the foreigners think. ... Foreigners help to improve [the natural conservation, health or the social sector] but more importantly [they] teach the locals to understand the things that they (the foreigners) want and to boost the possibility for tourism...

From there every sector has to decide on what its advantage is that makes it competitive... how it differentiates itself from the others, so that people will go to this place, but also go to other places.

Chunchi is not a tourist destination, but the moment Chunchi started to... receive different types of volunteers, the recognition and the perception of development towards tourism grew little by little...

In this context, as one of the most well-known foundations acting as an intermediary for many projects in Ecuador, EVF appears to be promoting emerging international volunteer patterns and their entanglement with international tourism and commercialized Spanish-learning in Latin America. The targets of these activities are relatively well-off, mobile, young and educated North Americans and Europeans. The municipality of Chunchi, by working officially with EVF, has allowed a transformation of the municipal projects: it has institutionalized the practice of seeking international volunteers and it further opens up the communities to the mentality of pursuing tourism as Francisco has articulated with his words.

My encounters respectively with volunteers Carol and Thomas also have helped in shaping this point of analysis. Thomas arrived in Chunchi to assist another NGO on an

educational project not related to the Center of Integral Support. When his plan with that NGO did not work out fully, he had an agreement with the municipality to participate in the social program and taught French for a while. The classes were open to all the locals including children from the Center of Integral Support. However, he remembered having only three people who steadily attended his classes throughout, two of whom were oriented towards tourism and wanted to know some French words to work with French tourists. Similarly, Carol taught English in the capital of Ecuador before she participated in the Center of Integral Support. While doing social work and helping in the lunch canteen, she also gave English classes for the children in the program. She thus remarked:

Our main role in Chunchi was not to teach English... [however,] Ecuador is becoming more and more a tourist country, and learning English allows the market to open up. So it's a good thing [for the locals] to learn English... [although] learning a second language in itself is also very important...

One problem of the institutionalization of using international volunteers in local projects might be that it further intensifies the susceptibility of projects like the Center of Integral Support in Chunchi to global capitalism. The comment of the director Francisco in our interview has prompted me to contemplate this point. He asserted that:

The past year (2010) was not a good year. I think the economic crisis on the world level influenced it so that fewer volunteers came. We hope that this year will be better. However, the year 2009 was excellent. So we hope in 2011 the volunteer sector is activated again.



Since people are less able to afford traveling and doing volunteer work when the economy is in recession, local social programs relying on international volunteers can be hit doubly hard with their constant lack of resources plus the disappearance of volunteers in the face of economic crisis.

To sum up, the institutional practice in the Center of Integral Support in introducing and depending on the international volunteers adds to the susceptibility of the local communities to the global capitalist and tourist market logic. While I have also analyzed in the beginning of this chapter that the Center of Integral Support shapes a social domain for the cause of local welfare and development, this section has further revealed that this social domain is supported partly by the interlocking market of international volunteering, Spanish-learning, and tourism in Ecuador . The use of international volunteers under these circumstances leads to the further opening up of the local communities to tourism. On the other hand, as introduced in 1.2.3, scholars such as Appadurai (2002a) and Ong (2006b) caution that NGOs in social movements or local projects for development have their own agendas and interests. In this section, I have also shown how NGOs collaborating with the Center of Integral Support bring their own rationales, interests and agendas into that social domain. EVF with its understanding of market forces and openness to market logic has been a good example of this.

In conclusion, I have argued in this chapter that the advent of the Center of Integral Support in the past five years has transformed the local political and social atmosphere in Chunchi. The center has created a space to facilitate institutional collaboration for the social cause of children's welfare and development in Chunchi and beyond. I then suggested that the macro-structural factors cannot be overlooked because they both contribute to and limit the formation of the social program, and the problem of the municipality's dependency on international and transnational assistance. I continued by examining in detail, making reference to my fieldwork interviews, how with the construction of the social domain, local governmentality comes into being. I considered the double-edged effects of governmentality, including on the one hand the discipline, control, and exclusion of the population and on the other hand the promotion of collective solidarity and grassroots mobilization around social causes. With all the aspects I have explored in this chapter, it is clear that the institutional practices of the Center of Integral Support contain very complex and ambivalent meanings that my analysis so far has intended to capture. In the next two chapters, I will turn to the interpersonal level to look at the power dynamics and subjectivities appearing at the site of the social program.

## CHAPTER FOUR: ON THE INTERNATIONAL VOLUNTEERS

I announced in the introduction that part of my aim in this thesis is to answer my primary research questions: “What are the implications of the encounters of different actors at the site of the program?” and “What do they reveal about unequal globalization and the possibilities that exist for transforming globalization?” Having explored the institutional aspect of the encounters at the site of the program, in the remainder of the thesis, I turn to examine the power dynamics and subjectivities at the site where émigrés’ families, international volunteers, institutional personnel and other local *Chuncheños* encounter one another since the emergence of the program in 2006.

Chapters Four and Five will be organized around the two groups of subjects that embody two interconnected circuits in the seeming circle of care. As I distinguished in the introductory chapter: On the one hand, there are families of the Ecuadorian émigrés who leave their children to take caring or 3D jobs at the low-end of the employment market in developed countries. On the other hand, there are volunteers from developed countries that come for non-remunerated caring activities for émigrés’ children in Chunchi. I focus on international volunteers in this chapter, while my focus in Chapter Five will be on the *Chuncheño* émigrés’

families. These two chapters, however, will go into study these subjects with the socio-material details involved. I will show that their positions and subjectivities are complex and heterogeneous within the social, economic, and political systems. I will also discuss what their perceptions are towards the care works and the workers in the global care circle, and what significance these perceptions hold.

Chapter Four is divided into three sections. Firstly, an investigation of international volunteers as caring and volunteering subjects will be carried out. I will then study the “more-than-human” dimension of volunteerism-related subjectivities, and I shall base the analysis on my interviews with volunteers and other individuals linked to the program. In the last section of the chapter I will explore volunteers’ perceptions of care work in communities like Chunchi in comparison with the kinds of care work done by the (female) emigrants. Altogether, my analysis in this chapter will allow for the reflection on volunteerism and care within the global circle of care, and it will complement my discussion of the *Chuncheño* émigrés’ families in the next chapter.

#### 4.1 “We Are All *Gringos*”?— Reconfiguring the International Volunteers in Power

##### Dynamics

A look at the list of the volunteers that have been in Chunchi since 2006 reveals that there have been more women than men.<sup>72</sup> The majority are twenty-something professionals/college graduates, and they originate from developed or relatively well-off countries from Europe, the U.S. and Japan.<sup>73</sup> Nevertheless, international volunteers in Chunchi cannot be approached as a homogeneous group that has some stable semiotic or physical boundaries. From my encounters with individual actors at the site of the program, I observe that volunteers have had many distinct personal motives for volunteering. They position themselves and are perceived by each other differently, at times even hierarchically.

I have interviewed via skype six volunteers, Verónica (Ecuadorian-Spanish), Patrycja (Polish), Carol (U.S.), Thomas (French), Beata (Polish), Raul (Spanish).<sup>74</sup> Verónica came through a project of the UN-Volunteers Organization, while Thomas initially came to Chunchi through an NGO called CENAISE.<sup>75</sup> The rest were channeled to Chunchi by the EVF. Their

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72 Only four volunteers are men. See 2.1.2 where I also mentioned about the volunteers. I have interviewed two of them, Raul and Thomas, whom will be mentioned later in this chapter.

73 I have partly mentioned the profiles of these volunteers in Chapter Two. See the Appendix for a list of the six volunteers that participated in skype interviews with me.

74 Names appear according to the order of time that they arrived in Chunchi.

75 The specific volunteer project Verónica participated was facilitated by UNITEs (United Nations Information Technology Services) affiliated with the UN-Volunteers. CENAISE is the National Center of Social

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stays varied from six to ten months, and four of them have come back to Chunchi at least once after their volunteer work. During their time volunteering for the Center of Integral Support, all of the six people helped in the lunch canteen to look after children when they were eating. Besides that, depending on their educational training or interests, they did various activities: assisting the general coordination of the program, social work, psychological counseling, language classes, computer class, music sessions, or accompanying and playing with the children.

Each of the six volunteers became engaged with the Center of Integral Support in Chunchi in very different although sometimes comparable contexts and trajectories, driven by multiple personal motives. For example, Carol from the U.S. was previously a residential care worker for adolescents and a primary school teacher before going to Ecuador. She went to the capital of Ecuador, Quito, to teach English while taking Spanish lessons in 2007. Later on, though EVF, she decided to volunteer for the project with children in Chunchi which would help her improve her Spanish and could provide food and lodgings during her stay. Raul, a Spanish graduate in psychology, worked with the Red Cross for immigrants in Spain and then traveled to Ireland. He said:

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and Educational Research of Ecuador (El Centro Nacional de Investigaciones Sociales y Educativas del Ecuador). This NGO has its own project in Chunchi and does not work directly with the municipality on Center of Integral Support. It has its counterparts in several other Latin American countries and it works with UNESCO. See <http://www.cenaise.org.ec/index.html>.

Upon returning to my country (Spain in 2009), as there was the crisis, it was very, very difficult to find a job... I came to know different projects in Latin American and this (project with EVF) caught my attention. So, well... They (EVF) replied to my request, and I thought it was a good idea, so I went to Chunchi.

Polish volunteer Beata studied sociology, and her parents are emigrants living in New York. I saw her description to me during the interview as an entanglement of experiences of migration, (constrained) mobility, and an interest in Spanish language and Latin American culture(s):

I was familiar [with migration] because my master work (thesis), was about... the Polish migration to Italy. And also I was working in the United States, I was working in a foundation, in the international center of New York... which is working with immigrants.

[M]y visa... [for] the United States was finished after six months... [and] that’s why I was thinking to go back to Poland, or to go to South America. So I decided to go to South America, and... do this voluntary work there...

[T]he history with Spanish started a little bit earlier, because I wanted to go to Spain... Spanish was always in my head... but I am thinking... [about] my experiences in the United States, where I was meeting a lot of immigrants from South America... So I was thinking that this language will... help me to communicate. Also I want to know more about the culture.. So, that’s why I was curious about this language...

Partly revealed by these examples, before volunteering, three of them had had experiences working with immigrants in the realms of social work or psychology. Three volunteers had personal experiences of migration and they themselves or close family members have been

migrant workers. Two had done care work with the elderly or adolescents. Also, both Beata and Carol stated that their interest in learning Spanish had played a role in choosing to volunteer in Ecuador.

Upon introducing themselves and their volunteering trajectories, these volunteers also identified the divisions and connections not only among themselves encountering each other, but also with regards to the *Chuncheños*, the émigrés' communities and local personnel working for Center of Integral Support.<sup>76</sup> These divisions and connections imply power dynamics, and they emerge according to the “inter-(re)workings of identity categories” (Barad 2001, 78) in the multiple encounters.<sup>77</sup> There are several passages I am employing here that illustrate well such interpersonal divisive or connective dynamics. The first part I took from the interview with Beata:

Trista: I was curious to know, for example, when they (the *Chuncheños*) saw you and the other volunteers... do they see... differences? ...

Beata: Ahuh, so we were all “*gringos*”! Even if we were from different countries—

Trista: And Junko... she’s also a “*gringo*”?

Beata: ... Junko, “China”, yeah? (Laughed.) Junko is “China” and all the others are *gringos*!<sup>78</sup> ... [I]t was a funny situation because we were always saying: “No we are not

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<sup>76</sup> To be sure, these identifications were made within the frame of encounters between the volunteers themselves and me at the particular space-time of the skype interviews. See the methodology section in Chapter One for more reflection on my positionality as an interviewer and the implications of me intra-acting with the multiple encounters the interview participants have had previously.

<sup>77</sup> See also my discussion of Ahmed and Barad’s ideas on the subjects, identities and power dynamics in Chapter One.

<sup>78</sup> Junko is a Japanese volunteer sent by JICA. She has art classes with children and teenagers in the Center of Integral Support, and Beata knew Junko from the second time that she volunteered in Chunchi in the summer of 2010.



‘gringo’, we are from Poland, from...” But [they said], “No, you’re all *gringos!*” ...

Trista: What does that mean, “gringo”? What do you think that means?

Beata: It means somebody from a different country? Umm... first, it was like... people were feeling that you’re from the “better” (hands bracketing) countries, from the rich, or richer countries.<sup>79</sup> ... But for example... my parents, they are migrants to the states... and that was... the situation that was putting me in common with many families in Chunchi.

When I used to explaining them that my family is also... the immigrants because they were looking for a job and they had to go over there... they tried to understand like “wow, it’s almost the same situation.”... I know that the case of Carol, that she is from the States, was very different, because the people were... asking her and also knew that she is the resident of the states. ... [S]he has this better... situation, and a lot of them wanted to marry her, yeah? (Laughed again.)

Beata: [I]n New York, I was... working for money. I was working in the restaurants. ... I can’t work in New York... (Chuckled.) because of the visa permission for working... [S]o, I’m like one of the illegal immigrants *when I’m over there*, but I was always doing the voluntary jobs also. For example I was... [working] for the young mothers, and for kids, and also for this International Center of New York... and also in the theater... I was there [in New York] many times I want to say, it wasn’t just once...

Beata’s account reveals how intersubjective boundaries are constantly in process. It is as Ahmed reckons that “the boundaries of bodies and communities, including communities of living (dwelling and travel), as well as epistemic communities” are constituted by the process “of inclusion and exclusion, or incorporation and expulsion” (2000, 6). The boundaries shift according to the particular “intra-actions” (Barad 2001, 2003) of nationality, ethnicity, gender, status of (il)legality, mobility, and financial capital. All of these have entangled connotations

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79 In another part of the interview, Beata also said: “the first, impression... [T]hey are thinking that “ah, you must be a *gringo* that has money— *Gringo* means having money, and... traveling, just traveling to spend his or her time by travel.”

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with the global economic, social and cultural structures. The white “*gringo*” volunteer group does not include the Asian-looking Junko, who is Japanese but identified by the *Chuncheños* as Chinese. While Beata in some moments is recognized as a white, rich, mobile Westerner/North American, she also shares the subject positions of being the illegitimate, needy immigrant. On this ground, she senses connections with the Ecuadorian migrant groups and self-distinguishes from Carol as a U.S. citizen.<sup>80</sup> It is however to be noted that she still implied in the end that she was very mobile (having been in and out of New York many times) and engaging, benevolent, motivated, or caring (having many volunteer jobs) in comparison with illegal migrant workers in developed countries.

Another passage is extracted from my interview with Verónica, who presents an intriguing case of an émigré turning into a volunteer. Verónica, originally from Ecuador, emigrated with her parents to Madrid, Spain when she was eleven years old. She considers herself nowadays either a *Madridleña*, a Madrilenian woman, or from both countries of Ecuador and Spain, “depending on the contexts” as she put. Although a European/Spanish legal resident and a tech-savvy software analyst working for UN-Volunteers, Verónica mentioned her unpleasant confrontation “as an Ecuadorian” with the local *Chuncheños* and

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80 Carol, when asked in her interview with me, did not recall as Beata described that some locals wanted to marry a U.S. citizen like her. However, Beata’s account well-articulates her part of perception and (inter)subjectivity in dynamics with the *Chuncheños* that intend to obtain legal statuses in the U.S. and a fellow volunteer who is a U.S. citizen.

one volunteer. It reveals the complex local-global exclusion and inclusion dynamics:

Verónica: It was challenging also in Chunchi working as an Ecuadorian, because they were... accustomed to work with... also they were... maybe waiting for... a stranger, a Spaniard, or an American.<sup>81</sup> ... I realized that, to me it was kind of difficult somehow, because I was *young, a woman, and an Ecuadorian*... Their behavior for me was like... ‘she’s not going to contribute’, or ‘we are waiting for another person’ you know... for a Spanish! ... I thought it would be easier because I was an Ecuadorian but it was not ...  
Trista: ... Can you remember now maybe one or two examples that you felt... really challenged, or you felt the difficulty... Were there moments—

Verónica: I found [it] difficult... the way that people treated me. ... OK, I’m going to give you an example. When I was there, there was another volunteer. He was *an American*, he was *tall, blond, a man*... When he arrived, it was like everybody was expecting what he’s going to say, what he’s going to do... and I thought: ‘My God...’ (Chuckled.) To me, it was kind of unfair... really... And, that was in the beginning, so I thought it was maybe because I was an Ecuadorian, because I [am] a woman, because I was young... or because of what? I didn’t understand that behavior. ... In general, the *alcalde*<sup>82</sup> and Eduardo were quite nice to me... [T]hey took care of me, they heard me (out). ... They were quite interested in what I was doing, but other people... were not nice...”

Verónica’s account here shows how symbolic and material forms of agency intra-act at the moment of the encounter. They together contributed towards her perception at that moment, that she has been rendered inferior and less capable than the volunteer from the U.S. To be clear, the physicality of all the volunteers and the locals being together in one particular time-space is a potent factor enabling that power relation to come into being. Any of the four

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81 Right before this passage Verónica told me that she has consciously showed herself to the local Chunchiños “as an Ecuadorian” during her volunteer work. I will return to analyze on this in 5.2. Also, Verónica later specified in our interview upon my inquiry that the “they” here as she referred to mean the local municipality staff connected to the program Center of Integral Support.

82 The mayor.

identity categories: age, ethnicity, gender and nationality, as Verónica specifically distinguished here, did not matter as such prior to this material setting. They came to matter the very moment she recognized that she had been situated in an inferior position within the hierarchy that was jointly defined by those four identities.

Also, the symbolic identities named by Verónica here are themselves entangled with other socio-material determinants. For example, a hierarchy involving different nationalities can only be established (and contested) when each nationality gains meaning from its nation's respective material resources and infrastructures, living environments, international political powers, and the mobility of its citizens entailed by the passports. This encounter and the power dynamics involved may seem very local and micro level. However, it is simultaneously "global" in the sense that power at other localities around the globe has been interpreted reiteratively as establishing themselves through the comparable age, ethnicity, gender and nationality hierarchies.

Enloe has eloquently said: "The international establishment has needed many women in Third World countries to feel more at ease with women from Europe or North America than with women living in a shanty town a mile from their front door" (1990, 199) She mainly addresses how the international/global politico-economic hierarchies work with feelings and subjectivities. It applies to what Verónica observed, that the local *Chuncheños* are somehow

more comfortable “waiting for the favor of *the stranger*”— a person from the U.S.— rather than her. In spite of this, the dynamics I am analyzing here are even trickier than what Enloe conveys in this quote. Firstly, gender and ethnic hierarchies are emphatically at play here. Secondly, volunteers in the global circle of care, such as Verónica, have challenged the sharp boundaries between Europe-North America and the “Third World”. Depending on the social and material contexts, Verónica perceives herself and can be perceived to be an empowered professional European, or a rather marginalized young female Ecuadorian subject. It is within such complex power dynamics that other volunteers are also constantly located. International volunteers cannot be assessed as a homogenous group of subjects.

#### **4.2 The More-than-human Dimension of Volunteerism-related Subjectivities**

In this section, I look at the subjectivities embodied and constructed by the perceptions and feelings related to volunteerism on the part of the volunteers. My examination here builds on my argument in the last section: I came to assert that volunteers are heterogeneous subjects constantly (re)defined in intersubjective, material-symbolic dynamics. From here, I will further analyze how volunteerism-related subjectivities emerge at the site of Chunchi. I set out a “more-than-human” (Lorimer 2010; Whatmore 2006), new materialist frame to understand

subjectivities in Chapter One, and in this section I will employ the “more-than-human” approach to inquire into the “specific materialities and multiplicities of subjectivity and agency” (Whatmore 2006, 604). As I explained in 1.2.4, subjectivities are not “within” *the* individual subject. They are embedded in a complex “social-material assemblage” (603), influenced by human and non-human factors. There is a social and collective dimension to them, and they are constantly fabricated locally and globally. In the following an emphasis will be given to the socio-materiality contributing and constraining the formation of such subjectivities.

During the multiple encounters with the volunteers, I saw a diversity of feelings and perceptions about international volunteering. These involved self-motivation, voluntariness, activeness, satisfaction, hopefulness, thankfulness, and the feelings of being humane, and caring. These perceptions and feelings embody what I address as the subjectivities related to volunteerism. Many of the volunteers said that working with emigrants’ children in the Center of Integral Support has been a very “gratifying” and important experience for them. Almost all of them mentioned that they were very motivated, despite and perhaps because their activities in Chunchi were not remunerated.<sup>83</sup> They thought that local people in the program really needed

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83 Beata: “I was showing them (the Chunchefios.), that even if I don’t have money, it’s very important for me... because I don’t get the money but I have the experience. ‘I also learn from you.’ I said: ‘I learn from your Spanish, and it’s something for me like the money.’”

Carol: “It was interesting because... it was not as if I was expecting something... I was volunteering... and it made it different than... for example working for hourly wage. ... I would do a project or spend as much time... it took for it to get done. ... In that sense it was gratifying, and I really loved the work... in comparison to... some jobs where I would be counting the time that I had to spend to do something...”

and appreciated their engagement. Some said that they felt they learned a lot in Chunchi, receiving more than they contributed. Some also said that the intimacy they formed with the children “gave inner strength”. These claims of “life-changing” volunteer experiences coincide with common testimonies that private international volunteer organizations usually have in their brochures or on their websites for promotional and recruitment purposes.<sup>84</sup> However, these volunteerism related subjectivities have been emphasized as if they were out of “aggregates of individual actions” (Sassen 2003, 265) based on humanitarian decisions and “sensitivity” (Haskell 1985a, 1985b). As Lorimer (2010) contends, the common circulation and amplification of such feelings and perceptions related to volunteerism “does not reflect the actual scope, politics and ethics” (319) of international volunteering.

Many socio-material factors actually facilitate as well as limit the very act of coming to volunteer in Chunchi, and the formation of the subjectivities I have just illustrated above. The geographical character of Chunchi makes it much more accessible than many other rural places for foreigners new to the country. This is due primarily to the Pan-American Highway which passes right by the center of the canton, *la Matriz*. Chunchi is an underdeveloped rural area high in the Andes, having a very cold and foggy climate. In the case of volunteer Thomas, it has been

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84 On its website, Ecuador Volunteer Foundation has the caption “Changing Lives” right under its logo. Volunteer Verónica also mentioned in the interview with me that the volunteer experience “really changed her life”. See also volunteers’ stories and testimonies on Ecuador Volunteers’ website at <http://www.ecuadorvolunteer.org/en/resources/stories.html>.

an advantage for him. Having worked in the capital of Chile, Santiago, with UNESCO before arriving in Chunchi, he said he “had enough of the big city” and wanted to work in a more isolated Andean community. He recalled his first impressions of Chunchi: “It was all foggy, and you couldn’t see anything... there was not a single person on the street... I was really, astonished... but it was something that I looked for, that I could feel a bit ‘immersed’...”

Interestingly, the coordinator of Center of Integral Support told me according to his encounters with other volunteers that they find the climate of Chunchi a huge disadvantage:

Among all, volunteers least like the climate of canton Chunchi. They find it very cloudy, foggy, and sometimes it annoys people and it causes respiratory problems. They get a cold... So they prefer not to come in winter time. In the summer the weather is totally spring-like. It’s very, very pleasant.

The director of EVF, Francisco, also mentioned that international volunteers with a more urbanized lifestyle also find the rural nature of Chunchi unattractive:

One thing that the volunteers found a little bit taken aback is the fact of living in a locality that is extremely small. So they said: “I love my job, but [during] the free time [it] is a little bit boring.” It is because... there you don’t have anything to do! At 6 p.m. you are already sleeping... because you don’t have pastimes. With most of the volunteers coming from developed countries, they are already accustomed to another living style... that is much more active... going out to bars at night, going out to restaurants... three different restaurants... one hour for the theater... All these you can’t find in this locality.... So this has been one of the hardest aspects that hold the volunteers back from participation...

Besides the socio-geographic agency at play, I found that Francisco also has remarked on



the temporal element of the volunteering act. It is exactly because of the short length of time volunteers come that it prompts the volunteer subjects to find the experience of encountering the locals and the communities particularly impressive, rewarding, fruitful and “life-changing”:

The projects need 5 or more years to stabilize themselves and to make changes, and the sporadic volunteering is not going to generate changes... whereas... the change for a volunteer is immediate. The moment a volunteer arrives in the project, he already senses a different atmosphere, a totally distinctive perspective... while living together daily. They either go on loving it or hating it... the culture, the country, the people. ... So, the difference is very palpable. You can see the change for the volunteer right at this moment, as an experience of personal changes... For the communities, it can be the same. ... but if we go with the objective of generating a substantial change, what all the volunteers say, “I come to change the world”, is not going to happen, not in a long time! But many of them have had changed their own lives...

Many volunteers came with family problems... they came and see the local problems and this have made them... see life from another perspective. ‘I need to change myself’... So, they didn’t change the communities. Who’s been changed? They themselves have changed! In how long time? In only 3 months!”

International volunteers that have been in Chunchi usually spend two to ten months there.<sup>85</sup>

One among many of the reasons for feeling that their time in Chunchi has been eventful, fruitful and life-changing is exactly the temporality of the experience, as Francisco implied here. While sparing a relatively very short time out of their professional careers for volunteer work, their volunteer experience involves knowing a different locality and people. The contrast of how they

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<sup>85</sup> If not counting the JICA volunteers, the volunteers whom I did not interview stayed for a shorter time in Chunchi than those whom I did interview.

experience the time they volunteered and that of their “normal lives” in Europe and the U.S. contributes to the particular impressiveness of the experience.

There is also a more-than-individual, structural conditioning of the volunteering act related to job markets and the economic crises. To be sure, job markets and economic crises are not individual factors, but they play a role in deciding when and why people choose to go volunteering. Consequently, it plays a role in the formation of subjectivities related to volunteerism. Patrycja and Raul, both psychologists, decided to volunteer abroad because of low job market demands for psychologists in their own countries in Poland and Spain. This is also more generally influenced by the global economic crisis.<sup>86</sup> I have quoted Raul in the last section when he said that during the time of crisis around 2009, it was very hard to find jobs in Spain, and that is why he was motivated to seek overseas projects. He also commented:

I have some friends that studied the same subject as me that went to other countries like Colombia or Guatemala. People had gone and come back, and [they are] going again... As the situation now in Spain is very bad... with the labor market, people are going out for volunteering or searching outside [of the country].

There are associations that have jobs which are remunerated, that they do social projects in other countries... and there are volunteer works that are not remunerated... People go to stay for some time... and then there they also have the chance to search for jobs.

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<sup>86</sup> The two volunteers' experiences here differ from what I mentioned in Chapter Two. In the last section of Chapter Two, I used a quote from the director of Ecuador Volunteer in which he explained that in general there are fewer international volunteers coming to Ecuador when there is the financial crisis.

Similarly, when Patrycja finished her studies, she found it hard to work in Poland as a psychologist. She did a lot of non-remunerated practices and then decided to save money by doing elderly home-care in Germany, in order to travel for some volunteer experiences. There are many other “more-than-human”, material, social, cultural, and political factors influencing the questions of who become a volunteer in Chunchi, when, how, and what volunteerism-related subjectivities are consequentially assembled. They include the desire to learn or improve their Spanish language, international mobility entailed by different national passports and citizenship, internet technologies, and volunteer project costs.<sup>87</sup> Upon my inquiry, volunteers coming through EVF usually noted that Foundation’s online presence and its availability via electronic communication led to their choice for the program in Chunchi while still being a continent away.<sup>88</sup> In addition, the municipality of Chunchi offers food and accommodation for the volunteers of Center of Integral Support. EVF also highlights on their website low-costs and free volunteering projects. The low costs brought certain volunteers to decide on working in Chunchi with EVF and the municipality.<sup>89</sup>

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87 The formulation here to pay attention to citizenship is first and foremost inspired by Ong’s (2006a) articulation of the mutated citizenship status- and its related entitlements including mobility- among subjects of different nation-states in unequal social-political globalization. See also my discussion in 1.2.1 and Ong (1999, 2006b).

88 For example, Beata said: “I was researching [on] different programs on the internet, by internet... I put... immigrant... and voluntary like two words, voluntary and immigrant and I found this project”

89 Patrycja in the interview: “I was also looking at the costs. I wanted to go for one year, and for many programs it was required to pay like 200 or 250 dollars... It was for me... too much... So, this project in Chunchi was perfect for me. It was free. (Laughed.)”

I have illuminated with the few paragraphs above how international volunteers' assertions of certain subjectivities, feelings and perceptions are not influenced solely by their own individual choices and conducts, or humanitarianism. Rather, the act of volunteering and the particular feelings and perceptions volunteers obtain are facilitated and constrained by many more-than-human determinants. Such an analysis diverges from the research preoccupation on international volunteers that I mentioned in 2.2.3. As I noted in that section, the question of individual benefits or effects the volunteers obtained has predominated literatures on international volunteering. My analysis here allows for more a comprehensive and accountable understanding of international volunteering. Based on this understanding, further studies on international volunteering can then focus on different questions of, for example, how the internet and communication technologies and job market trends in Europe have implications for the formation of caring and voluntary subjectivities circulated in underdeveloped countries like Ecuador.

### **4.3 Differential Care Work**

I began this thesis with a personal story about a Spanish girl who volunteered to take care of disadvantaged Ecuadorian children while an Ecuadorian mother left her daughter to do

cleaning jobs in Spain. I proposed with this epitome to investigate the implications of the encounters of two circuits of people at the site of Center of Integral Support. In this section, I study how a kind of **differential care work** is being perceived by the volunteers. I will demonstrate how it is intertwined with the hierarchical and gendered subjectivities related to care, work, and volunteering.

I adopt a broad definition for care workers, which include a substantial amount of *Chuncheño* émigrés, especially women, engage in various care work as cleaners, elderly carers, child carers and domestic workers in the U.S. and Spain. Others working as truck drivers, construction and agricultural workers are also all associated with downgraded and flexibilized low-wage jobs in what Sassen (2003) calls the “survival circuits”.<sup>90</sup> At the same time, as I discussed in Chapter Three, Chunchi is an underdeveloped rural area lacking socio-material infrastructures. Childcare in Chunchi involves not only companionship, affection, education and good recreation for children, but also the provision of nutritious food, a hygienic environment, and technologies for communication for the transnational families. Institutionalized childcare as practiced by the municipality draws external assistance to compensate its own lack of resources. It is within this frame that volunteers from Japan, Europe and the U.S. enter the Center of Integral Support to engage with local welfare and

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<sup>90</sup> See also my discussion in 1.2.1 about the globalization of capitalism and the proliferation of hierarchies of work.

development activities for emigrants' children.

During my “fieldwork” in Ecuador and subsequently via skype with the interview participants, I deliberately encountered them with questions on their perceptions of the work *Chuncheño* émigrés do in comparison with the work volunteers do in Chunchi. I also asked their perceptions on the phenomenon that sees volunteers “take care of” the local children in Chunchi whose parents are away. Francisco, the director of EVF had the opinion that there are relatively more women volunteering because “the majority of them have more patience”. He said: “Girls are more interested in working with children... A woman has the maternal part, [and] is more sensitive...” Whereas this comment flattens working with children as a general and gendered/feminized phenomenon, volunteers themselves have very differentiated and sometimes ambivalent perceptions towards working with children as they did in Chunchi and working with children as migrant women do in developed countries. For example, Patrycja initially reflected that:

I think my work there can be thought of as taking care of the local children. I think that it is because I was there only for them at that time. ... The parents were mostly working and drunk, or they were working in the U.S. ... I didn't work so much in the sense of psychotherapy with them, but *I was there for them*. This kind of care was something really practical. For example, sometimes I went to the hospital with them to see what was happening and what kind of medication they were getting, or I helped with their homework, with math assignments. Things like these, very basic. I didn't do “great things” there. All these things were just fundamental, basic.

While acknowledging that some of the care work she performed in Chunchi was very basic and general, Patrycja the Polish psychologist continued to distinguish her volunteer care work in Chunchi and the paid care work with the elderly in Germany, with that of the emigrants’:

Of course there is a difference between my care work... and the work of Ecuadorian migrant women in the U.S. or in Spain. When I was working in Germany I knew where I was going to, I knew the language, and I knew that they would pay me. ... I chose my work to take care of the elderly and to take care of the children there in Chunchi... and this is for volunteering. This is my decision. [It’s] not like if I go to another country and don’t know what I can do... Another thing is also about the motivation. The “why” is very important. ...

[I]n the case of some problems, I could defend myself. But the migrant women that go abroad are in a less comfortable situation. Firstly they have debts, because the *coyoteros*<sup>91</sup> normally expect people to pay the money for the journey. ... So these women take any kind of jobs they can find, they can’t choose. In these jobs, there is no security. ... They don’t know English, [and] are not educated. [They] don’t know their rights. They do very harsh work, and are paid nothing. They can’t argue. They are like imprisoned. ... I have heard of stories of people going out of Chunchi like this.

As seen, Patrycja discriminates care work on the grounds of the caring/working subjects’ knowledge of the language, the working and living environments, the freedom in choosing the work, motivation for the work, the secure and legal work environments, and workers’ rights. As she herself noted in the very first quote, during her volunteer work, she did not always work as a psychologist. In fact, observing in general the volunteering contents, volunteers I have known spent a very significant amount of time in Chunchi serving and keeping children

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91 The human traffickers.

in order in the canteen, playing, talking, accompanying children, and visiting poor families informally. Also, as it will be mentioned later in Beata and Carol's case, some helped children with their domestic chores. While the actual contents of the care work in some occasions might not be substantially different, material and socio-political contexts influencing the care worker or volunteer and the work environments contribute substantially to the differentiation of care works in the cross-border circuits. The volunteer work in Chunchi was not paid. In addition, Patrycja perceived that her own care work in Chunchi was more informal than formal,<sup>92</sup> which is commonly analyzed as a factor that disempowers migrant workers and/or female care workers. However, the material and socio-political factors together with the sense of volunteerism that I discussed in 4.2 contribute to her feelings of being in control and empowered while suggesting that migrant women doing other kinds of care work experience the contrary.<sup>93</sup>

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92 Patrycja: "I think it was... to a degree because of me, that I thought that it was a volunteer work and not a formal job... and that it was only for a certain period of time, not for a long term. I will only be there from this day to this day, and that's it. Also, it was a job that was not paid. ... I didn't have any obligation .... The fact that it was not some work really concrete [also] troubled me a little bit. I did some talks, I helped with things like the evacuation, but it was not like everything was well planned for me to do this, to do that. So that also added to my feeling that it was not a formal work."

93 Patrycja in the interview has further expressed that she thought her work was "very nice and very important", and that the experience will "stay with her for all her life". My point here has been to explore which factors and how they influence the differentiations of care works made by the international volunteers. While this is the case, I do acknowledge that even in a more precarious working and living context, many migrant women perceive their work as important and empowering experiences for them too. The many Ecuadorian migrant women with whom I have spoken to shared this opinion. However, the fact that migrant women also endear their care work has to be considered and examined together with the specific factors that facilitate them to do so. Those factors are different from the ones that enable the volunteers to view their care work very worthwhile and important. See England and Stiell 1997 for an example of how competitions for certain niches of care work influence care workers of particular ethnic and cultural backgrounds to uphold their own care work experiences and their caring capabilities.



It is seen in the multiple encounters Patrycja has had that there is a kind of **differential care work** in the seeming circle of care embodied by the perceptions of the actors involved. I will further point out that a hierarchical way of perceiving care work also takes a gendered and professionalized form. When I provoked on the subject of care in our interview, the sociologist and social worker Beata initially refused to view herself as a caring subject with her volunteer work in Chunchi:

Trista: I was curious to know, like, do you think what you did in Chunchi can be viewed as taking care of the local people, or taking care of the children in Chunchi?

Beata: No.

Trista: Why don't you think so, or in what ways?

Beata: Because I'm treating this work like professional...? And taking care is something like more the... *I am the mother and the mother is taking care of the kids*. And but I didn't feel like this.

Trista: And how would you describe the work, or the relations, between you and the people there...?

Beata: ... I tried to be more professional...? But I see that sometimes it was more... personal... but in this kind of work it's really hard to say whether it's professional and whether it's like the personal.

Here, Beata connected automatically taking care as something gendered, that it is maternal or motherly. While regarding the first time of her volunteering in Chunchi as mainly in the realm of social work,<sup>94</sup> she distanced herself from being a caring subject, and instead wished to

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94 Beata has been volunteering in Chunchi for the Center of Integral Support twice. In another moment of the interview she mentioned: “[T]he first time I was working more with the (locally employed) social worker, and ... I was feeling like it was also like professional work. ... When I went this (second) time I was doing like different

identify herself as a professional subject. However, later in the interview she told me:

[W]hen you asked me if I feel if I was taking care of the kids over there, I said no, I felt I was more professional. But when I am thinking [about] my stories, like my first time there... especially one family that I told you before... Poor kids. They were living alone and the parents were living abroad. We were going there with Carol [for] many times, because we knew that they were... in very bad situation... They (the parents in the U.S.) didn't have the jobs during that time, so they couldn't send the money... And also, they were staying with their grandfathers, but they were arguing a lot. So, it was the situation that the kids stay alone, and they didn't have food. So *we were like, "the mothers"* (hands bracketing) that would go there, helping with the laundry, helping to get the food and all the stuff.

I know that the help like this is very... not good... to be there all the time. ... [T]hey have to struggle alone when you're leaving. So, I arrived the second time and I knew that I didn't want to visit them... frequently, because... it wouldn't be good for them. So... that's the question that you brought me: you were taking care of the kids, and some of their parents are taking care of the kids abroad. So, yeah... it's very, it's really like, it's really difficult...

In the case of Chunchi, because of underdevelopment and emigration, the realm of childcare transforms from the private level of parents and other family members being there, providing resources, attention and affection to the children, to include the social level of social workers, nutritionists, nurses, psychologists and teachers professionally dealing with émigrés' children as clients, patients and students. Notably, it is in such a context that a caring/volunteering

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kinds of workshops... like the cinema... I don't know that if they feel like this is professional. For me, it was like ... because I really liked to do that, I don't feel like [it's] really professional work. ... I don't see the difference between my work and my free time."

subject like Beata proceeds to evaluate forms of care work differentially. She felt compelled to position herself as a professional, skilled, and socially motivated volunteer social worker or a workshop instructor. This was constructed as contrary to the position of a deskilled motherly caring subject.

Enloe’s (1990) suggestion that “a person who hires a woman to clean or mind her children is never in simply a personal relationship with that woman: her discretion is conditioned by the government’s immigration regulations and its bureaucracy’s way of administering those rulings” (190). Building on her thought, I think it is pertinent to say that in the scenario of Chunchi, the volunteer subjects are not in simple personal relationships with the children in the Center of Integral Support. As I have shown in this chapter through a layered analysis, there are many factors at play, and the questions have been: what kinds of intra-actions of global-scale historical, material, economic, political and social factors have transformed perceptions of childcare in diverse localities, which are related to different systems of welfare and statuses of development or underdevelopment? How has this helped define volunteerism-related subjectivities in communities like Chunchi and beyond? In the global care circle, what kinds of dynamics have emerged to engender, empower and disempower the caring and working subjects, including a diversity of volunteers, emigrants and people who

embody both? In the next chapter, I will continue to investigate these questions from the perspective of the *Chuncheño* émigrés' families.

## CHAPTER FIVE: ON THE *CHUNCHEÑO* ÉMIGRÉS’ FAMILIES

With the advent of the Center of Integral Support in 2006, there has been a transformation of the social and interpersonal dynamics in Chunchi. In this chapter I will point out that its existence has in some cases added to or in others symbolized the proliferating hierarchies expressed by diverging feelings, identities and perceptions of other locals. Simultaneously and relevant to the formation of “the social” that I discussed in Chapter Three, I also see that there have been more possibilities for some families to make their political and social demands. Moreover, the social program allows them to formulate a defense that they are not irresponsible towards their children’s welfare and development. *Chuncheño* émigrés’ families are situated in such transforming power dynamics, which is divisive and repressive and at the same time generative and empowering. In the meanwhile, I will also analyze how the female family members of children in the Center of Integral Support evaluate the care works done by the international volunteers. With their evaluations, I will argue that the social program as a site within the emerging global circle of care enables people who study global disparities to see how these women come to perceive and imagine the unevenly developed world in which they and those internationals cohabit. I will further analyze the political implication of these

imaginations and perceptions.

In the first section of this chapter, I will sketch out the situation of the émigrés' families in Chunchi as I have partly described them in Chapter Two. I will then illuminate with details two intermingling aspects of the transforming dynamics. In the second section, I will turn to focus on how volunteers' works in the social program are evaluated by female members of the émigrés' families who are themselves care workers at the bottom of the global hierarchies of work. Methodologically, I again refer to the insights that I have obtained from archive materials and from my interviews with the locals and the volunteers. Theoretically, I will rely particularly on Ahmed and Foucault's conceptualization of power relations and subject, Ahmed's theory on emotions, the concept of "globality" (Ahmed 2004b; Sassen 2006) and Appadurai's (2008) concept of "imagined worlds" to make my analysis.

### **5.1 Proliferating Hierarchies and Resistance**

Many times I was told the popular Chunchi expression: "For every *Chuncheño* family, there is at least one family member who is an émigré." Most households in Chunchi are not formed by nuclear families but by extended family members. Every household can relate to and be situated within the context of emigration and transnational families through experiencing

some of their children, parents, siblings, cousins, aunts and uncles going abroad. Some return, and some stay. A majority of the emigrants range from ages 20 to 50 and have left their children in Chunchi when seeking work abroad.<sup>95</sup> According to the informal and formal interviews that I have conducted, there is a diversity of factors that cause families and individuals to emigrate, including personal motives for life experiences and education, as well as the social networks in the destination societies. Most of the locals, however, reckon that underdevelopment in the canton is the main cause for emigration. From my observation, a prime cause of emigration is that the families live on subsistence agriculture outside of *la Matriz* in extremely marginalized rural areas.<sup>96</sup>

Some of the émigrés have been able to establish a life abroad and have improved the situations of their families that stay in Chunchi. Despite this, many migrants that hold 3D jobs in the U.S. or Spain have not been able to significantly change the persistent poverty that their families in Chunchi face. This might be due to the difficulties of living abroad, their debts caused by the travel expenses and the payments made to traffickers, and the precarious work

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<sup>95</sup> See Chapter Two for more information on the demographics of the Canton and numbers with regards to the emigration.

<sup>96</sup> For instance, Pamela told me that she and the family of her two young cousins (who she takes care of) used to live in the rural communities. Nowadays they live in *la Matriz* in a big house that is still in construction. The house was bought by the parents of the young cousins who work in the U.S. She said that, together with the fact that now the emigrant parents are able to afford an education for the two children in *la Matriz*, emigration has allowed them to change their difficult living environment: “When they lived [in the rural communities] they had a very small house, actually a house of adobe, made with earth... There was no electricity and no water... Now that they have emigrated and work there, and because of that they have this house”. Similar cases were accounted by Carmen and Rocío. Both mentioned their lives back in the much poorer rural communities before some family members emigrated. The money earned by the families abroad had allowed them to buy small parcels of lands and houses in *la Matriz* that they consequently moved to.

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and wages that they have, especially when they are illegal workers in the U.S.

When the parents leave the country, many children and teenagers are left with their grandmothers, aunts, cousins, sisters, other relatives or neighbors, or live alone. As I have mentioned in the earlier chapters, phenomena related to the children such as the lack of family attention, domestic maltreatment, and their social behavioral, health and psychological problems have been identified. The materials I have gathered indicate that these problems are widely discussed among the locals and officially recognized by the municipality and reported and even sensationalized by the national and regional media.<sup>97</sup> It is within this frame that there is an individual as well as collective perception in Chunchi that generalizes émigrés' families and their children as problematic, and the émigré parents as selfish, irresponsible, greedy, uncaring, and of abandoning their children in order to live and earn money abroad.

Having delineated the circumstances, there are two new incidents and patterns of divisions and hierarchies related to the social program that I will discuss here. To begin with, some children and families distinguish themselves from those that need the social help of the program, and some are in disagreement with the program. During my fieldwork, several local people from relatively wealthy families told me informally that “our government is giving

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<sup>97</sup> For a news report see for example Muñoz 2006, a newspaper article about the Center of Integral Support. With regards to the sensationalized media coverage, there was an article in 2010 in an Ecuadorian entertainment magazine on the situation of the émigrés' families and the cases of child suicides in Chunchi, titled “Chunchi, the Town of Children Suicides (Chunchi, el Pueblo de los Niños Suicidas)” (Noriega 2010).



money away to the poor for nothing” and that “those emigrants were doing ok here but still they leave their kids behind for more money”. The comments spell out the context of some circulated disapprovals of the program and the participating families.

Gloria, the former leader of parent representatives of the Center of Integral Support is herself a domestic worker in Chunchi. She told me that she had been paid to cook for a teenage boy whose mother works in Spain: He dropped out from the program and didn’t want to go. ... He told me that... it was also out of shame, because his parents had left him alone”. Gloria also observed that “there are many children like this... Sometimes it is also because of their pride... because ‘only those starved to death go to the canteen’. Two things to be noted here: Firstly, children’s feelings of shame or loss of pride out of needing food or being left alone explain the discrimination and the hierarchical world that they come to sense among the differential émigrés’ families. As Ahmed perceptively notes, “emotions are not simply ‘within’ or ‘without’[.]... [T]hey define the contours of the multiple worlds that are inhabited by different subjects” (2004b, 25). Secondly, as I mentioned in 2.1.2, the canteen is located in the center of *la Matriz*, and children can be seen waiting and eating there every day. The Center of Integral Support represented by its most visible and well-functioning element, the canteen, has in some contexts become a symbol of the desperateness of the “undeserving” poor children and the “abandonment” by their emigrant parents. This stopped the children

from going there and being associated with the negative subjectivities of being desperate or abandoned.

Another hierarchy is shown by an incident involving the international volunteers from the developed countries, who have been brought in to the Canton because of the social program. Volunteer Thomas shared with me his perception of how some relatively well-off and established *Chuncheño* emigrants encountered him in the presence of other locals:

The... situation I am going to show you is related to Chunchi's festival. It takes place in June and it's a two-week partying and getting drunk, wildly! ... This is the time that people in the U.S. take chance to come back to visit Chunchi, to visit their own town. Hence, they make the most out of it to show off, to demonstrate the distance they have created between themselves and the local *Chuncheños*... For example, to me, they always wanted to speak English! I am French and I couldn't care less about speaking English. English didn't appeal to me. So I've always replied in Spanish, right? But they wanted to show off, especially in public, that there had been a difference between them and the local *Chuncheños* that they now spoke another language... the language of "the First World", that is, English. Well, they didn't have the luck because I hate English! ... but they actually wanted to show that they and I were *in the same part of the world*, that we had the same interests...

Instead of feelings, this encounter recounted by Thomas highlights how languages for the returning *Chuncheño* emigrants registers the differentiated worlds, one in which they share one with the "First World" people like Thomas and detach themselves from the one of their townfolk.<sup>98</sup>

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<sup>98</sup> It is not to be overlooked that Thomas also strived in his narration to distance himself from the

As implied here, the Center of Integral Support has provided a chance that did not previously exist for *Chuncheños* to interact with foreign people who mostly come from Europe and the U.S. In this case, it has also facilitated a manifestation of the “superior” subjectivities that some *Chuncheño* émigrés have come to assert vis-à-vis on the one hand their fellows in Chunchi and on the other those “First World” subjects whom they aspire to “become with” (Haraway 2008, 3). Through this encounter, I argue that there is a “linguistic articulation” of the “globality” (Ahmed 2004b; Sassen 2006) on the part of those *Chuncheño* émigrés: they define the uneven world and people, including themselves within that world, by the ability to speak English. They perceive that there is now a cross-border connection between themselves and all the English-speaking people, and together they belong to the superior side of the world. This “globality” unlike in the situation that Sassen (2006, 203) envisages, contributes not to the transnational activist awareness but to the affirmation of the hierarchical divisions of the world featured by a superior global class of English-speaking persons.<sup>99</sup> By so doing, the *Chuncheño* émigrés produce and reaffirm the global-local hierarchies defined by the English language and many other socio-material statuses it connects to— for example, knowing English implies having lived and worked in “the First

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“English-speaking” group and distinguished his identity as “French” rather than just one presumed “First World” by those *Chuncheño* émigrés.

<sup>99</sup> I will return to the conceptualization of “globality” in the next section.

World” and thus having had more mobility (to be able to travel to work) and more economic capital.

I have named two patterns of division and hierarchies among the *Chuncheño* émigrés and their families which are connected to the Center of Integral Support and the international actors it has drawn to Chunchi. Now, I want to emphasize that the Center of Integral Support on the other hand directly contributes to the knowledge and the collective resistance among the families participating in the program. My argument here links to that of 3.3 about the governmentality from below and by and for the families in the program. This concerns not only themselves vis-à-vis the contents of the program: the meals, the recreational activities, and the social work, etc. It also concerns the very time and space that the program has created for the families to meet each other, the personnel from the municipality and other institutions and the volunteers. This physical aspect of the program symbolizes a collective and public recognition and knowledge of their situation and the commitment to organize for changes to those situations.

All of the female guardians of the children I have talked to or officially interviewed show positive opinions about how the program has borne portions of their financial, physical and emotional burdens. In the most basic sense the program helps the adults and particularly the women to take care of the children, their meals and their homework while they work

abroad, work long hours in the remote fields or in *la Matriz*. Building on this point, as I was arguing, comments such as those from the grandmother Rocío who used to live in the isolated countryside made clear that they come to the knowledge of the similar stories of the many other poor émigrés’ families only when their children joined the Center and they regularly attended the meetings of the program. Also, I have intended to explore and found that in my interviews, as the clients and participants of the municipality-administered program, some of the émigrés’ families became more engaged and empowered.

I mean this firstly in the sense that they come to be able to express their user’s opinions of the program and to further articulate their demands and imagination, upon encouragement. Take for example the element of social work and psychological help of the Center, I have asked my interview participants about their experiences and opinions. While several shared with me incidents which occurred when they used these services<sup>100</sup>, Carmen further stated her opinion that she thought the government could organize more permanent social and psychological assistance:

I think here there is a need for more help to the poor people, to the children... psychological help... maybe with several professionals... And especially for the children some social workers, because here we still don’t have some permanent forms of assistance from the government, from the authorities...

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100 Rocío for example remembered that: “I have been to the psychologists and know about it... It was more than one year ago that I felt quite depressed like I was suffering... They helped me with the counseling and there was a female psychologist that was not from here... Those were good advices that they gave me...”

It is noteworthy that before the appearance of the Center of Integral Support, it was much more difficult for the disadvantaged émigrés' families to get access to a social worker or a psychologist in a rural canton like Chunchi. By voicing the needs of the locals and the way that these social and health services can be organized, participants in the program can be said to have the potential of developing the agency that can actively transform the events which have been shaping their own lives such as family separation, poverty, social and psychological problems.<sup>101</sup>

Secondly, families become more engaged and empowered in the sense that they also demonstrate collectively that they care about and are committed to their children in terms of their nutrition, education, and social behaviors. They make claims of their commitment for the children by signing petitions, contributing towards the maintenance fee of the canteen and participating in the meetings. Through these actions, they counter dominant perceptions, proving that they themselves and their family members are not the people who “abandoned” the children, and that emigration of a parent need not have a destructive impact on their families and children.<sup>102</sup> For example, Rocío, the widowed grandmother, when confirming

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101 This is probably a very micro level of the practice of the “participatory democracy” that Perrons foresees which will allow for an increase of “the influence that people have over the events shaping their lives” (2004, 238).

102 Though, it is also true that most of my interview participants like Carmen, Maribel and Pamela still

her participation in the Center, also clarified the motives for emigration of two of her daughters and the situation of the grandchildren that live with her:

They (her daughters) have left because of poverty. They hadn’t gone abroad to abandon their sons nor to abandon their mom! They left to a place where they can survive... because to rob is bad! They had to search for a place to survive... I am a poor mother and I don’t have anything... for them to advance their lives. I wish they could study or stay here, those ones that are away...

[My grandchildren] live in calmness. They feel that there is a mom here in the house... All of them call me “mami!” Well, they don’t have a problem living without a father, because the little girl and Eric are raised [by me] ever since they were born... So they are used to it... We have to make sure the little ones have peace in mind...

As Foucault (1983) sees, in the immediate daily life, power signifies repressive mechanisms of domination and submission, but it is always simultaneously constituted by reactions and resistance immanent to those mechanisms.<sup>103</sup> Rocío’s voice here reveals the resistance against the circulated power mechanism that subjugates poor emigrants’ families like hers to the identity of being problematic and broken families. Her struggle to claim to be a responsible, decent mothering subject and her defense for her children and grandchildren is supported by the Center of Integral Support, which has become a generative site of a power

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render the affections and companionship of the “real” parents, the biological parents of the children incomparably more authentic and important than those of the other adult family members who come to substitute the “real” parents for their parenting role.

103 As Foucault phrases: “It would not be possible for power relations to exist without points of insubordination” (1983, 225) and “to live in society is to live in such a way that action upon other actions is possible— and in fact ongoing” (222).

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dynamics that “operate[s] positively to constitute subjects and their access to linguistic and technological competence” (Ahmed 1998, 51).

To be sure, the same struggle for some families participating in the program also consists of again dividing themselves from those really “mal-functioning poor émigrés’ families”. I will top off my analysis in this section with this final argument supported by an example from Carmen. During my interview with Carmen, she more than once criticized the many cases in Chunchi of deserted children and teenagers’ social and family problems. In the meantime, she proclaimed her attention and her love towards her own children. In so doing, she labeled and exercised the power of judgement towards those families. Nevertheless, her consideration to emigrate herself soon to be able to support her children reveals how ambiguous and shifting the relations between her and those “truly mal-functioning” families are:

They (children) really need the parents... Many parent think about sending, sending, and sending the money and satisfying what the children want and that they are doing good, but it’s a big lie because money at best damages one person. It is because of this I haven’t gone, because my little sons are the only ones that I have... and with all the challenges and necessities they are the only good thing in my life... . . . But now I do want to go because the situation is getting worse and worse, much harsher with more and more school expenses... Sometimes I have nothing to cook for my sons... I can’t get any money... to pay for the electricity and the water...

People like Carmen whose children enroll in the Center of Integral Support still think about emigrating themselves. It is uncertain, once Carmen leaves, whether some other adult family



members will ensure her children’s participation in the Center, and the overall welfare and good use of remittances for her children. In this sense, I see that this passage of Carmen’s illustrates the overall complexity and instability of the hierarchies among the *Chuncheño* émigrés’ families.

With its ways of providing social services, drawing assistance from transnational volunteers and organizing around the participant families, the Center of Integral Support has simultaneously contributed to the proliferating divisions, domination and collective empowerment seen among the émigrés’ families. These families are heterogeneous subjects that actively claim or are marked by different judgement, feelings, desires, and perceptions. As I have demonstrated this point with multiple examples, I will now turn to my last analytical attempt: to again explore the question of care work in the global circuits, this time focusing on the perspectives of the *Chuncheño* émigrés’ families.

## **5.2 Their Good Conduct from “Another World”: Imaginations in the Global Circuits**

In the last section of Chapter Four, I have elaborated that care works in the global circle are perceived to be differential from the perspective of the international volunteers. I pointed out that it is due to aspects such as the various social-political work and migration contexts; the

distinction between private, motherly care and professional care; and the volunteerism involved that is constrained by many socio-material forces. Now in the last section on the *Chuncheño émigrés*' families, I will highlight how the *Chuncheñas* who are themselves domestics, cooks, caretakers and housewives evaluate and feel about the care work done by the international volunteers while encountering them in the Center of Integral Support. Their perceptions and evaluations as I will interpret, can be seen as interlocked with their imaginations and recognition of the "globality" in their "imagined worlds". I will further analyze the political significances manifested by such imaginations born during the encounters at the site of the social program.

By and large, the *Chuncheñas* that I interviewed and their female emigrant family members form a part of the low-end care workers in the global circle of care. Maribel was a cook in the Center of Integral Support during my field work in Chunchi. Carmen claimed that she has worked all her life as a domestic worker in Chunchi and elsewhere in Ecuador, while Gloria and Pamela both have had the experience of being a domestic worker in Ecuador. Also, both the sister of Carmen and Luz and the sister of Maribel have been identified as long-term domestic and care workers in Spain, while others have done multiple cleaning and caring jobs. Their opinions of working in Ecuador as care workers, cooks and domestics are mainly that

these jobs are not valued.<sup>104</sup> On top of that, they share the feelings that they cannot save money even if they work all they can, as I will also mention in one of Luz’s passages below. When they emigrate abroad, as in the case of their sisters, their “niche” of works in the destination society again is restricted to the deskilled and devalued care work due to their education, language skills, and illegal statuses.<sup>105</sup>

All the six female guardians of the émigrés’ children in the program approved of volunteers’ care activities in Chunchi as very helpful and valuable. Most of them were able to recall some specific volunteers that they came to know, and that at different times these volunteers have done a wide range of caring activities, including helping with children’s homework, organizing recreational and semi-educational activities, passing plates in the lunch canteen and keeping the children in order, organizing family meetings on the program, and psychological counseling. When I probed into their conception of why people come from Europe and the U.S. to engage in such activities, they named a few reasons, including cultural and living experiences in another country, and to travel and know the places. Luz has reflected on the differences between the motives of the international volunteers and the

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104 Carmen for example thus commented on her and her sisters’ experiences of being domestic workers: “All jobs are valid when they are thought of as valued. One always works so hard and feels like working hard, but so many times our work is just not appreciated.”

105 Maribel remembered what her sister told her about working as a private elderly care worker in Murcia, Spain: “It’s very hard, very difficult and very sad. Much sacrifice there. ... The people treat her bad. They are really rude to her and her work is very tiring.”

motives of the emigrants in going abroad:

The volunteers come to look around, to know the places of another country and to know another environment... but they do not come to work. They come to travel as tourists... On the other hand, the Ecuadorians do not go for traveling. Some do but those are the rich people... Most people [go] for work, out of necessity, because here *in Ecuador for all you can work decently day and night you are not gonna own anything*... so instead people go there to work for the children for having a house having a piece of land, and so this is the difference...

In the case of Pamela, she reckoned that it is because the international volunteers “like to help”. Maribel as a cook in the lunch canteen used the example of the Japanese nutritionist to say that:

“It’s about teaching from their experience... in another country. ... Yayoi comes to learn about us but also to teach what we should do, that we should leave everything clean all the time in the canteen, that the children do not make a lot of noise, and that we should make more variety of food... and it’s because they like to do that”

In a similar vein, Carmen has further attributed the motives of the volunteers to be both because of their good-will and conduct and that they come from “*the world different than Ecuador*”. She especially reflected on this as how the volunteers can be differentiated from the Ecuadorian social workers and teachers that have also been in Chunchi for the social program.

They are both very good people... but yes there is a difference that those come from the other... (laughed) from *the other world*... they come like more... humanitarian and like more understanding, reaching to the bottom of the problem... They are more dedicated,

more determined to work a lot... They don’t care about work schedule... because they are just like this there they are accustomed [to that] in their own land, and they can’t change that.

As seen, Carmen explicitly stated that the discrepancy lies in that the humanitarian, hard-working and engaging characters of “those people” are connected to the point that they are from “another world”, which implies Europe and the U.S. In “another land”, those are the common ways of behaviors of the people. That is why those volunteers work differently (read: better) from the Ecuadorian social workers and teachers when they come to Chunchi. Here, I want to bring in again my analysis in 5.1 about the “globality” some *Chuncheños* come to recognize. Carmen shows recognition of a kind of globality that encompasses people and places in hierarchies. Europe and the U.S. are conceived to be the lands where people are better in terms of having good behavior and character. This kind of conception of the “globality” is enabled by encounters within the global circle of care. It undeniably overlooks the very material and structural factors that significantly contribute to the self-motivated and engaging characters seen in volunteers coming from “another world” to do the volunteer care work in underdeveloped country of Ecuador.

In this sense, such recognition of “globality” can also work to reinforce the very mechanisms of economic and political subordination which necessitate volunteers’ care work for the local *Chuncheños* in the first place. Carmen and Luz were interviewed together.

Having heard Carmen making this comment, Luz later related the volunteering to a previous privately run charity program in Chunchi. This is a program in which each “*gringo*” from the U.S. became the “distance *padrino*”<sup>106</sup> of a school kid in Chunchi. The *padrino* donated money each semester for the child’s tuition, uniforms and text books and received photos and thank-you cards in return. Luz said:

It was great! For the same reason because in the U.S. there are *gringos* that are really so incredibly rich, so the same they were asked to help, to see the case and they decided to help, to support. So, right, it was wonderful because a lot of people here... really truly we are in need. It is one possibility that the *gringos* gave us scholarships for the sons to study...

A perception of the “globality” like this groups the rich *gringos* from the U.S. with the international volunteers together as both have good-will and resources to help poor émigrés’ children in Chunchi. It erases the question of unevenly distributed wealth and educational resources as well as the differences between appeasing, charitable programs and some that can more actively empower the locals to demand and organize socially and politically.

I think there is a way to reflect more comprehensively about the implications of people’s imaginations born during their encounters within the global circle of care: the perceptions of “globality”, such as these *Chuncheñas* perceiving that international volunteers are with good conduct and “like to help”, should be situated in the uneven landscapes of

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106 Patron; godfather.

peoples’ “imagined worlds” (Appadurai 2008). As Appadurai defines, “imagined worlds” are “the multiple worlds which are constituted by the historically situated imaginations of persons and groups spread around the globe” (98). He further adds that “many persons on the globe live in such imagined ‘worlds’ and not just in imagined communities” (ibid). The *Chuncheñas* are not the only ones that have drawn their imagined worlds ever since the Center of Integral Support started to facilitate the meetings between the “internationals” and the locals in Chunchi. While they form their perceptions of the people in the U.S. or Europe like the volunteers, volunteers like Verónica also draw their imagined worlds by including, categorizing and judging the female or male *Chuncheños* who mostly migrate to do low-end care work or other precarious jobs.

During our encounter, Verónica told me that she deliberately identified herself “as an Ecuadorian” during her work in Chunchi.<sup>107</sup> She said it is to demonstrate to the young *Chuncheños* that they can work hard “towards success” and for the locals instead of only wishing to migrate illegally to the U.S.:

I want that they realize that I am an Ecuadorian, and that I was working as an Ecuadorian... I wanted to demonstrate somehow that, as an Ecuadorian, you can work hard, you can help your people and you can work with your people, that working hard is absolutely a good way to... success, and not only to migrate, because... at the end what young people there think

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107 In 4.1 I have mentioned this case of Verónica, who is both an emigrant and a volunteer. I situated it in the context of analyzing the power relations between her, the local *Chuncheños* and a white, blond volunteer from the U.S.

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is that: ‘Ok, I am going to finish my high school, and I’m going to migrate.’ And that was something that I want them to realize and see in me...

Verónica perceived that the young *Chuncheños* only think about emigrating, and this is judged not as desirable as “working hard” and “working with your people” as implied by her passage. Her perception, judgement and the consequent suggestion that the young *Chuncheños* should learn from her again placed emphasis on the individual will and decisions as the *Chuncheñas*— Carmen, Luz, Maribel, and Pamela— did when referring to the international volunteers. It evades the tricky social, economic, and political contexts around the fact that Verónica already “emigrated” and has received a much higher professional education in Spain than most *Chuncheños* could ever access.

With this last example of Verónica’s, I have now proceeded to the end of this section. In the previous paragraphs, I noted that the *Chuncheña* guardians of the children participating in the program all appreciate and value the volunteer work done in the Center of Integral Support. Simultaneously, during the encounters between the *Chuncheñas* and the international volunteers, the local women perceive the volunteers from their own imagined worlds that the volunteers are fond of helping and caring, and possess good working attitudes. I then supplemented an example from Verónica to give a fuller picture of the imagined worlds. Upon doing this, it is evident that there are disjunctures among the imaginations and perceptions



that heterogeneous caring subjects have towards each other. These imaginations and perceptions are saturated with judgement and evaluations towards differentiated groups of people. Also, some of them are stripped of a consideration of complex material and structural factors at play in uneven globalization. As such, the encounters of different circuits of people enabled by the Center of Integral Support reveal a dubious political picture. Together with the analyses in Chapters Three, Four and Five, this understanding allows me to reach the final reflection in my conclusion.

### CONCLUDING REMARKS

In this thesis, I have identified the Center for Integral Support as an emerging site for exploring issues of childcare, welfare and development in a globalized world. I situated this site in the rural and underdeveloped part of a seeming circle of care. From there, I discussed encounters among institutional and individual actors at this site in Chapter Three, Four and Five. Diverse and ambivalent implications have been manifested through my analysis, which I will try to summarize here:

The transforming global structures of capitalism, the logic of the market, and international politics for the past two decades have been constantly at play in the Center of Integral Support since its birth in 2006. They not only enable but also highly constrain the forms of volunteering, funding, and organizing seen in the social program. Under these circumstances, a space is seen emerging which enables institutional, collective and transnational actions and a sense of solidarity in improving the welfare and care for children in Chunchi. The program has also provided the émigrés' families with more capacity to counter and resist the perceptions that subjectivize them as broken families and abandoned children. Simultaneously, the same transforming global structures and market logic together

with many entangled socio-material forces such as the prevalence of English, the differences between urbanized and rural areas and the illegal statuses of emigrants from underdeveloped countries contribute to various complex intersubjective divisions. They have a significant role in how hierarchies of care works and the caring subjects are perceived by individuals including the *Chuncheños* and the international volunteers at this site.

As revealed by the multiple encounters at the site of the social program, the gendered conception of care and work operates together with other material-symbolic factors among care workers, including a heterogeneity of volunteering or remunerated, professional or low-end workers. I have pointed out the emerging gendered structure of the personnel in the municipality-administered social program for childcare. Also with examples from the international volunteers’ cases, I investigated the perception that devalues, deskills and feminizes care in the domestic and private realms. This perception as I noted has to be located in the transforming context of underdevelopment and emigration in Chunchi and in Ecuador in general. Domestic forms of care in this context are distinguished from public, professionalized, and governmentally organized social services that involve volunteers from developed countries while these services are themselves necessitated by the lack of local resources. It is, however, not to interpret the gendering phenomena in seeming circle of care as only restricting and repressive. As I have pointed out, many rural, marginalized women

with a low-level of professional training and education participate in the social domain created by the program. The participation in “the social” in the rural and underdeveloped part of the global circle of care has allowed for these women’s professional and personal empowerment.

Having formulated my findings with this research, on the theoretical level, I want to stress two things: Firstly, globalization in the past two decades has facilitated the emergence of different forms of grassroots movements, social and institutional domains with changing gendered structures that are linked with the increasingly frequent cross-border “intra-actions” of volunteers, transnational and international institutions. These emerging movements, domains and structures did not exist before and there is a necessity to capture and analyze them in feminist research on global disparities. Secondly and following the first point, this thesis is an example of how rural and underdeveloped localities across the globe are important locations for scholars to be working in, theorizing about and analyzing in order to discuss care, work and welfare issues in globalization. Studying these localities will add to the systematic understanding of the interconnections among levels of welfare or non-welfare, different institutional settings as well as groups of individuals on the move.

With regards to conducting the research itself, I have established principally with Ahmed’s insights the methodology of “encounter”. I have found it very fruitful to work with

this methodology, and it greatly enables the accountability of the researcher and the research. It is also by working with encounter as a methodology that I continue to realize that there are fewer clear-cuts between doing research, living and participating in activism than I previously imagined. In many moments during participant observation, interviews and informal interactions, the local *Chuncheña* women and the volunteers have prompted me into understanding more profoundly many aspects of the theories I employed here. While on the other hand, my questions also urged the local *Chuncheña* women, the international volunteers and personnel from the municipality and from EVF to consider the volunteering and migrant workers from another angle. I have received feedback especially from the volunteers with regards to this issue.

For future research, I see it as a priority to interconnect theories and studies from different disciplines. Also, I see international volunteering, especially in social and caring projects in underdeveloped countries, as an under-researched theme. Empirical research on this with a feminist approach will greatly enhance our critical knowledge and actions in the contemporary uneven landscape of welfare and care.

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**APPENDIX**

Interview participants from the *Chuncheño* émigrés' families and the volunteers  
(All names listed below are pseudonyms)

In Chunchi (January and February 2011):

Carmen (32): A domestic worker and a widowed woman of four children. Three of the children are in the Center of Integral Support. Carmen's late husband worked in New Jersey for four years and then was deported back to Ecuador. He died in an accident in Nicaragua in 2005 while on his way to re-enter the U.S. Carmen lives together with two nieces from a sister of hers who is an émigré in Spain and with the family of another sister Luz (see below) in a compound.

Gloria (47): A domestic worker and a single mother of one daughter (14) who is in the program. Gloria is the former leader of the parent representatives of the Center of Integral Support. She has also been working to take care of a teenage boy (16) whose single mother works in Spain and who dropped out from the Center.

Luz (38): A vendor in the market in Chunchi and a single mother of four children. She is a sister of interview participant Carmen. Her four children are all in the Center of Integral Support. Luz and Carmen have five out of their thirteen siblings in total working either in Spain or in the U.S. Their father was also an émigré for some time in Spain.

Maribel (23): A cook in the canteen of the program. Maribel lives with her husband, her son, a younger sister, and a little daughter (4) from an older sister of hers. Both of the parents of the little girl work in Spain. She goes to the lunch canteen because Maribel works there during the day and cannot take care of her lunch. I interviewed Maribel two days before she saw the little girl emigrate to Spain to reunite with her parents.

Pamela (22): A student in the academy in Chunchi. Pamela lives with her husband, a newborn of theirs, her youngest sister, and two young cousins of hers whose parents work in the U.S. The two young cousins (13, 11) are in the program. Their parents have

emigrated for the past ten years. They lived first with the grandmother from the mother’s side, then with the grandmother from the father’s side, and then moved together with Pamela to *la Matriz* about three to four years ago.

Rocío (56): A peasant woman and a widowed grandmother. Rocío now lives with five grandchildren from two daughters of hers. All of the five children are in the Center. For the past ten years, she has been raising two of them (13, 10) from a daughter who emigrated with her husband to the U.S. Rocío recently started to live with the other three granddaughters (12, 11, 7) from another daughter of hers. The mother of those three girls had followed the husband to move to the U.S. three years ago and left them to a son and a daughter-in-law of Rocío’s. In the beginning of 2011, the son and the daughter-in-law also intended to enter the U.S. and they left the three girls to Rocío.

Via Skype (March 2011):

Beata (28): From Poland. She volunteered twice in Chunchi: the first time through EVF for 3 months in 2009, and then the second time for another 3 months in summer 2010. She has a master’s degree in sociology. She is familiar with migration issues because she wrote her master’s thesis on Polish immigrants in Italy and her parents are emigrants living in New York. She has been several times visiting them and work there for some months. Her activities in Chunchi included doing social work, assisting in the lunch canteen, holding different workshops and activities for the children including photography and film discussions, accompanying and playing with the children. She has been working on a project “Kids in Action” in Chunchi, New York and a few other places in Germany to encourage children to learn about photography and share their ideas of their lives with people from other countries.

Carol (31): From the U.S. She volunteered in Chunchi between 2008 and 2009 for 8 months through EVF. She did her undergraduate studies in psychology. Before going to Ecuador she had two year experiences in residential care work and was a primary school teacher for three years. She taught English in a private language school in Quito for one year before volunteering in Chunchi. Her activities in Chunchi included social work with the children, teaching English classes, and accompanying children in various other activities. Originally planning to stay in Chunchi only for 3 months, she in the end extended her stay to 8 months. She is now studying for a master’s degree in social work.

Patrycja (32): From Poland. She volunteered in Chunchi between October 2007 and August 2008 through EVF. Patrycja has a master's degree in psychology, with a special focus on clinic psychology. Before going to Ecuador, she had done several internships in different branches of psychology in Poland and Germany. She was also an elderly carer in a private house in Germany. In Chunchi she provided psychological counseling in the clinic in *la Matriz* and also visited from family to family in the more rural areas of the canton. She also assisted with different activities the municipality held. She has been back to Chunchi once in 2009 for a few days to visit.

Raul (26): From Spain. He volunteered in Chunchi between August 2009 and July 2010 through EVF. Raul also has a master's degree in psychology. Before going on volunteering, he worked for two years with Red Cross especially dealing with immigrants in Spain in high-risk situations. In Chunchi he mainly provided psychological counseling and assisting the municipality in its administration of the Center of Integral Support.

Thomas (25): From France. He volunteered in Chunchi in 2009 for 7 months. He has a master's degree in political science. Originally went to Chunchi for another educational project with an Ecuador-based NGO, he later had an agreement with the municipality of Chunchi and worked in the social program. His main activities there included teaching French classes and jugglery to the children, assisting in the lunch canteen and helping children with their homework in the afternoon. He is now planning on a writing workshop for children in Chunchi as well as a "Hip-Hop in the Andes" cultural exchange project.

Verónica (28): Originally from Ecuador and emigrated with her parents to Madrid, Spain in 1995. As a software analyst, she volunteered in Chunchi in 2006 for six months through a UNITEs program coordinated by UN-Volunteers. Her main job was to give ICT (information and communication technologies) training to the locals to help "the Lounge of Virtual Communication" to function. Her other activities included giving other ICT workshops to the locals, assisting in the lunch canteen, helping the children with their homework, accompanying them and playing with them.