

# After the Reflexive Turn in Migration Studies: Towards the *Doing Migration* Approach

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## **Abstract**

What processes transform (im)mobile individuals into ‘migrants’ and geographic movements across political-territorial borders into ‘migration’? To address this question, the article develops the *doing migration* approach, which combines perspectives from social constructivism, praxeology and the sociologies of knowledge and culture. ‘Doing migration’ starts with the processes of social attribution that differentiate between ‘migrants’ and ‘non-migrants’. Embedded in institutional, organizational and interactional routines these attributions generate unique social orders of migration. By illustrating these conceptual ideas, the article provides insights into the elements of the contemporary European order of ‘migration’. Its institutional routines contribute to the emergence of a European migration regime that involves narratives of economization, securitization and humanitarization. The organizational routines of the European migration order involve surveillance and diversity management, which have disciplining effects on those defined as ‘migrants’. The routines of everyday face-to-face interactions produce various micro-forms of doing ‘migration’ through stigmatization and othering, but they also provide opportunities to resist a social attribution as ‘migrant’.

## **Bio Note**

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## **After the Reflexive Turn in Migration Studies: Towards the *Doing Migration Approach***

*Anna Amelina (Brandenburg University of Technology Cottbus-Senftenberg)*

### **On the Merits of the Reflexive Turn**

Recently, migration studies have been confronted with manifold reflections on their conceptual vocabulary. For example, criticism of the ethnic lens (Glick Schiller and Çağlar 2016) and ethnic groupism (Brubaker 2002) calls into question naturalized notions of ethnic solidarity. The related questioning of methodological nationalism suggests that the idea of (receiving) nation states be avoided as the main context of analysis (Amelina et al. 2012; Wimmer and Glick Schiller 2003). In addition, criticizing the androcentric language of (many writings in) migration studies, gender-sensitive research highlights the complexity of migrants' social positioning in terms of gender, class, ethnicity/race and other 'axes of inequality' (Anthias 2012; Lutz 2014; Amelina 2017). Furthermore, critical studies of migration governance (Tsianos and Karakayalı 2010; Walters 2016), the autonomy-of-migration approach (Bojadžijev and Karakayalı 2010; Scheel 2013) and a number of recent writings in the political sciences of migration (Nail 2015) have identified several lacunas in the vocabulary of migration research, thus calling into question the naturalization of borders, the epistemological privilege of structure over agency and of sedentarism over mobility. According to some scholars (e.g. Nieswand and Drotbohm 2014), this wave of epistemological and conceptual reflections has contributed to a paradigm shift and has stimulated a 'reflexive turn' in current migration research.

Regardless of whether we use the expression of 'turn' or not, the indications of a 'paradigm shift' need to be taken seriously, since they point at certain theoretic lacunas and call for novel conceptual vocabularies. However, the question is what theoretic consequences we can draw from the 'reflexive turn' identified above. The main argument of this article is that recent rounds of reflections make it possible to address a question that until recently was overlooked in the conventional migration studies, namely: How does the social practice of geographic movements from one locality to another become socially transformed into 'migration'? And how are (im)mobile individuals turned into 'migrants'?

The 'reflexive turn' allows us to pose these questions, because, by using the reflexive lens (i.e. a critical examination of the analytical potential of terms and definitions), we can

indicate several shortcomings, in particular within the two areas of migration studies – the research on migration policies and the studies of migrant integration/assimilation. While the research field of migration policies centres on causes and laws of international migration movements and related policies of (sending and receiving) states (with Ernst Ravenstein [1885] as its early advocate), the area of research on migrant integration/assimilation points to the social conditions under which immigrants adapt their social behaviour to that of the ‘majority society’ (with Georg Simmel [1971] being one of the prominent apologists of the sociology of the ‘Stranger’).

The goal of this article is not just to challenge all of the fundamental accounts of these two research areas; rather, it argues that both fields have failed in their attempts to analyse specific processes – namely, social processes that transform individuals’ geographic movements across borders into ‘migration’ and (im)mobile individuals into ‘migrants’. In this regard, the two fields share three conceptual shortcomings.

Their first shortcoming is that they conventionally tend to naturalize the concept of migration by regarding cross-border movements as processes of geographic mobility that occur in actually existing, objective spaces. In other words, such studies often approach a world as being crisscrossed by nation states and the states’ populations as being naturally divided into migrants and non-migrants (for criticism, see Wimmer 2008). This way of thinking not only ignores the historically specific quality of movements; it also denies that what we conventionally refer to as ‘migrations’ are *socially generated* ‘social facts’.

The second shortcoming of the two fields (i.e. the research on migration policies and integration/assimilation studies) is that they often fail to analyse the interplay between historically specific discursive knowledge (as articulated in specific narratives) and institutional configurations. Although scholars often provide profound analyses of the institutional frameworks of (immigration) states, they often fail to scrutinize ways in which specific configurations of discursive knowledge become inscribed in the organizational and institutional routines of migration and integration policies. With the exception of the areas of transnational (Amelina 2017), postcolonial (De Genova 2016) and migration/border regime studies (Tsianos and Karakayalı 2010), many studies of migration policies and migrant integration/assimilation provide analyses without examining the institutional definitions of ‘migration’ and ‘integration’ and the discursive knowledge they incorporate.

The third lacuna in the two research areas is that they have neglected analysis of the performativity of discursive knowledge (Butler 1993) that is incorporated in the relevant institutional, organizational and interactional routines. The power effects of categories such

as ‘migration’, ‘integration’ and others have rarely, if ever, been made the subject of analysis even though, in the reading of Pierre Bourdieu (1989), expressions such as ‘migration crisis’, ‘migration of the poor’ and ‘benefit tourism’ all generate ‘symbolic violence’.

In addressing the above questions of how the social practice of geographic movements becomes transformed into ‘migration’ and how (im)mobile individuals are turned into ‘migrants’, this article combines premises of social constructivism (Luhmann 1990), a Foucauldian-oriented sociology of culture and knowledge (Foucault 1970 [1966], 1972 [1969]) and praxeological notions (Reckwitz 2002). For this purpose, it introduces the concept of ‘doing migration’,<sup>1</sup> which suggests that the transformation of (im/mobile) individuals into ‘migrants’ is realized by a variety of routinized institutional, organizational and interactive (i.e. face-to-face) routines that incorporate discursive knowledge concerning distinctions between ‘Us’ and ‘Them’. Configurations of these various practices in turn generate historically specific and, therefore, changeable social order(s) of ‘migration’<sup>2</sup>. The arguments elaborated in the following sections provide evidence of how the ‘doing migration’ approach allows us to address the above analytical shortcomings in migration studies and to analyse the social production of ‘migration’. The next section provides an introduction to the main conceptual elements of the ‘doing migration’ approach, which is followed by a discussion of its analytical potential that builds on an analysis of contemporary European migration order(s).

### **The Conceptual Foundations: Elements of the ‘Doing Migration’ Approach**

This article uses the terms ‘doing migration’ and ‘social production of migration’ synonymously to emphasize the socially generated quality of all multifaceted phenomena conventionally approached as ‘migration’. In other words, ‘doing migration’ refers to all social practices that, being linked to specific categorizations and narratives of belonging (i.e. discursive knowledge), turn mobile subjects (and often also immobile subjects) into ‘migrants’. This ‘doing migration’ approach builds on five conceptual premises.

First, drawing on the socioconstructivist (Luhmann 1990) and Foucauldian perspectives (Foucault 1970 [1966], 1972 [1969]; Laclau and Mouffe 1985), I argue that the social

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<sup>1</sup> The term ‘doing migration approach’ has been inspired by the concept of ‘doing gender’, which was first developed by West and Zimmermann (1987). However, in contrast to West and Zimmermann, my conceptual proposal is based on praxeological rather than ethnomethodological notions (though it is connectable to the latter).

<sup>2</sup> Quotation marks will be avoided while using the expression *social order(s) of ‘migration’* in further paragraphs due to stylistic reasons.

production of ‘migration’ is initiated by *social categorization processes that draw a distinction between ‘migrants’ and ‘non-migrants’*. These processes incorporate social attributions that may refer (though not necessarily exclusively) to individuals’ language, appearance, place of birth or previous place of residence. It is also possible for individuals to be categorized as ‘migrants’ (and ‘non-migrants’) even if the attribution criteria used (e.g. concrete experiences of geographic mobility) do not apply to them at all. For example, media debates about ‘migrant youth’ and ‘second’ and ‘third (migrant) generation’ usually apply to those who have never moved from one country to another for purposes of long-term settlement. Conversely, specific categories of movers (e.g. ‘expatriates’) are often not classified as ‘migrants’ by public opinion, even though they have experiences of (long or short-term) geographic movement.

Second, we have to consider that specific *categorical differentiations* are made with reference to those who become assigned to the category of ‘migrant’.<sup>3</sup> While political institutions conventionally distinguish desirable migrants (e.g. the highly qualified) and undesirable migrants (e.g. the so-called low-skilled), in the context of urban neighbourhoods such differentiations vary according the degree of socially perceived proximity and/or class, gender, ethnicity/race, space and many other attributions (Çağlar 2006; Mulvey 2011; Vertovec and Nowicka 2014). This premise also combines the socioconstructivist and Foucauldian perspectives on the social,<sup>4</sup> which emphasize that specific ‘subjects’, ‘objects’ and ‘things’ become real – that is, socially articulated – through the nexus of ‘doings and sayings’. Thus, the discursive processes of categorization, which rely on a variety of classifications (e.g. male/female, us/them, skilled/unskilled, here/there) are the essential basis for the social articulation of ‘subjects’, ‘objects’ and ‘things’ (Amelina 2017).

Building on these two premises, the third argument to be introduced here is that all social practices that incorporate the distinction between ‘migrants’ and ‘non-migrants’ (usually embedded in notions of belonging and membership) should be approached as *routines of ‘doing migration’*, because they define and shape the predominant expectations regarding the appropriate behaviour of individuals as ‘migrants’ or ‘non-migrants’. Of particular importance are specific repetitive activities (e.g. provision of political membership, visa checks at borders, work permits, ways of being [im]polite in conversations) that concern both

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3 Conversely, specific categorical differentiations can be expected within the categorizations referring to ‘mobility’ and ‘immobility’.

4 However, it should be noted that Foucault’s poststructuralist thinking already involves elements of social constructivism.

mobile and immobile subjects. If we pay particular attention to the repetitive quality – and this is the praxeological notion used here (Reckwitz 2002) – we are able to consider the regular routinized quality of the social production of ‘migration’, and by differentiating institutional (macro), organisational (meso) and interactional/face-to-face (micro) levels of social routines.

Fourth, when viewed from this perspective, ‘migration’ must be understood as a result of specific routinized practices that occur *against the background of historically specific discursive knowledge* (Foucault 1972 [1969]; Yuval-Davis 2011). This discursive knowledge is usually articulated in narratives of belonging and membership, as expressed in such terms as ‘poverty migrant’, ‘economic refugee’ or ‘asylum seeker’, which rely on classifications with respect to gender (male/female/transgender), ethnicity/race (‘we’/‘other’), class (‘privileged’/‘subordinated’), space (‘mobile’/‘immobile’, ‘global’/‘local’/‘national’/‘transnational’, etc.) and other categories of inequality (Amelina 2017). Performativity is the essential quality of all narratives and also of narratives of belonging, in that they not only draw distinctions between ‘us’ and ‘them’ but also have concrete hierarchizing effects on individuals’ life opportunities. Routinized practices of ‘doing migration’ may occur in institutional contexts. The consideration of discursive power would then imply analysis of specific conditions under which the political regulation of ‘migration’ turns individuals into ‘migrants’ by referring to the dominant societal images of belonging (Scheibelhofer 2016). For example, the media reports about the sexual assaults in Cologne on New Year’s Eve 2016 have produced the figure of an oversexualized and dangerous refugee masculinity, which has contributed to the subsequent tightening of the German asylum law (Korteweg 2017). At the same time, analysis of routines of ‘doing migration’ vis-à-vis images of belonging must also be performed with respect to non-institutional contexts. For example, we can analyse whether and how (im)mobile subjects define their own practices of geographic movement/immobility as ‘migration’ or ‘non-migration’ and how these definitions become linked to various multiple images of belonging, such as in the context of notions of ‘homeland’, ‘diaspora’ or ‘return’. In other words, the discursive knowledge that can manifest in images of belonging locates concrete social practices (both in institutional and in non-institutional contexts) in a specific symbolic horizon that can have positive (e.g. solidarity-related) or negative (e.g. xenophobic) connotations.

Fifth, and most important, the nexus between routinized practices of ‘doing migration’ and discursive knowledge (e.g. narratives of belonging and membership) generate historically specific *social orders of migration* – that is, provisionally stabilized configurations of institutional and other types of social routines, involved narratives and related stratifications. The most peculiar feature of the current European migration order is for instance that it rests on a discursive dichotomy between ‘migration’ and ‘mobility’. Essentially, the historic-specific order of migration is articulated at three levels of social life – the institutional (macro) level, the organisational (meso) level and the interactional (micro) level. By recognizing these multiple levels, we are able to consider the specific social quality of each. For instance, the macro level of the social is conventionally understood as being organized into a number of institutional macro spheres, each of which follows specific institutional principles (Durkheim 1997 [1893]; Powell and DiMaggio 1991). The analysis of ‘doing migration’ *on the macro level* presupposes primarily a focus on institutional routines in various macro fields of the social. Of particular importance in this regard are the analysis of the political regulation of ‘migration’ and the identification of specific ‘migration’ regimes that should be understood as the nexus of institutional routines, the knowledge involved and their power effects, which manifest themselves in unequal life chances of [im]mobile subjects. Thus, particular attention must be paid to inequality-related outcomes of ‘migration’ regimes on the macro level of the social. Furthermore, *the meso level* of the social conventionally refers to the functioning of formal organizations (Weick, Sutcliffe and Obstfeld 2005),<sup>5</sup> issues of organizational membership (Luhmann 1964) and the linkages between formal organizations and their clienteles (non-members). In other words, analysing social practices of ‘doing migration’ in the context of organizations directs our attention to organizational routines and organizational knowledge (e.g. of foreign offices, schools, universities, hospitals, economic organizations), which generate the distinction between ‘migrants’ and ‘non-migrants’. In addition, *the micro level* of interactions refers to face-to-face encounters between social actors (Garfinkel 1967). The specificity of this level goes back to situations of mutual perceptions (e.g. conversations, gatherings, meetings [also through digital media]), which open opportunities for actors to position themselves socially by means of intentional performances towards their counterpart(s) (Goffman 1963). For this reason, analysis of ‘doing migration’ in the context of face-to-face interactions must focus on

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<sup>5</sup> Social networks must also be acknowledged as being located on the meso level of the social, but owing to space constraints, they are not the subject of this article.



everyday interactional routines, the specific framings and knowledge patterns they incorporate, and their consequences for subjectification processes. In other words, the specific configurations of routinized practices and discursive knowledge (e.g. narratives of belonging and membership) that are performed on the macro, meso and micro levels of the social can be considered as forming a distinct social order of ‘migration’ once they create the unique mode of transformation of individuals into ‘migrants’.

This overview of the main elements of the ‘doing migration’ approach indicates its theoretical foundations in social constructivism, which is complemented the Foucauldian sociology of culture and knowledge and elements of the sociology of practice. To elaborate the main advantages of the proposed concept, the next sections will illustrate its benefits for analyses of the contemporary European migration order on the macro, meso and micro levels of the social.

### **Doing the Contemporary European Migration Order: The Power Effects of Institutional, Organizational and Interactional Routines**

The categories of ‘migration’ and ‘mobility’ are essential for the emergence of the contemporary European migration order. The distinction between ‘migration’ and ‘mobility’ is rooted in the discursive figure of European belonging, which is based on a juxtaposition between the shifting and maintenance of identitarian boundaries. One element of this dialectical juxtaposition – the shifting of boundaries of EU-European belonging – manifests in the universally oriented discourse of cosmopolitanism, the main tenet of which is that Europe must include everyone and acknowledge the various differences (Beck 2007; Rumford 2008). This resonates with the motto of the EU: ‘United in diversity’, which “signifies how Europeans have come together, in the form of the EU, to work for peace and prosperity, while at the same time being enriched by the continent’s many different cultures, traditions and languages” (European Union 2000). In essence, together with the categories of ‘freedom’ and ‘prosperity’ ‘mobility’ has become a key element of these cosmopolitan notions (Rumford 2008): EU citizens’ geographic movements within the EU are, thus, officially labelled as ‘mobility’. Through the principle of ‘freedom of movement’ (Reg. 492/11) the semantics of mobility became institutionalized into the figure of EU citizenship.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> However, the right to free movement is not unconditional, and its exercise is regulated by the EU’s highly complex social security coordination system (Carmel, Sojka, and Papiez 2016). Also, as the current revival of right-wing populist movements in Europe shows, the notion of cross-border (welfare) solidarity implied in the EU citizenship is highly contentious. National media debates in many EU states try to re-signify movements from the new to the old EU states as ‘migration’ by using

However, there is also another side to cosmopolitanism (or its Other) – namely, the primarily particularistic pressure to maintain the boundaries of European belonging; that is, to define a separate identity that differs from the identity of those who are outside the EU. Thus, the category of ‘migration’ is used by the EU institutions to refer to geographic movements from non-EU countries, which make these particular movers under the EU’s governance of ‘migration’ (Amelina 2017: 112). This dialectic between EU-European belonging and its Other is a result of the discursive negotiations regarding the enlargements of the EU (Edwards 2012: 133): whereas before the enlargements, the distinction between ‘West’ and ‘East’ was the main dividing line that defined the identitarian boundaries of EU Europe, today that distinction has been replaced by the distinction between the ‘EU’ and ‘non-EU’.

One result of this dialectic between a cosmopolitan inclusion of EU citizens and a particularistic exclusion of non-EU citizens is that geographic movements within the EU are to a great extent becoming *normalized as ‘mobility’*, whereas movements from non-EU countries (in particular, from the EU’s neighbourhood countries) to the EU have been *problematized as ‘migration’*. The normalization of ‘mobility’ is linked to the principle of freedom of movement as the fundamental right of every ‘economically active’ EU citizen (Carmel, Sojka, and Papiez 2016). Although the notions of employment and ‘self-sufficiency’ are the central conditions for enjoying this right, it is nevertheless *the* fundamental principle of EU cross-border citizenship. At the same time, the geographic movements of individuals from non-EU countries are officially regarded as ‘migration’. While the signification of ‘migration’ is also linked to the language of the ‘competitive Europe’, in contrast to the signification of intra-EU ‘mobility’ (as I will show later), it is also closely connected to narratives of securitization, which contribute to the problematization of movements from non-EU neighbourhoods.

In the next sections, I will show how this dialectic of European belonging generates a symbolic horizon that contributes to the generation of the European migration order by informing social routines of doing ‘migration’ on the institutional (macro), organizational (meso) and interactional (micro) levels of the social.

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semantics of ‘benefit tourism’ and ‘poverty migration’ (Amelina, Markova and Fingarova 2016).

***Doing ‘Migration’ by Means of Institutional Routines: How Does the ‘Migration’ Regime Contribute to the Emergence of the European System of ‘Migration’ and ‘Mobility’***

The distinction between ‘migration’ and ‘mobility’ (which goes back to the juxtaposition of the shifting and maintenance of EU-European boundaries of belonging) becomes a key dichotomy in the governance of geographic movements and in the transformation of some of geographic movements into ‘mobility’ and of others into ‘migration’. When analysing processes of ‘doing migration’ by means of institutional routines and when considering how these routines contribute to the emergence of the European migration order, one must first take a closer look at the field of politics. The EU’s political regulation of ‘migration’ targets movements from non-EU countries to the EU, not intra-EU ‘mobility’ of EU citizens. This particular form of regulation can be addressed by using the concept of ‘migration’ regime, which allows us to understand the emergence of the asymmetrically structured European system of ‘migration’ and ‘mobility’.

**ACTORS AND REGULATIONS INVOLVED IN THE EUROPEAN MIGRATION REGIME: MOVING BORDERS OUTSIDE THE EU**

The geographic movements from the neighbouring non-EU countries are not only problematized as ‘migration’, they have also become the subject of a hybrid ‘migration’ regime.<sup>7</sup> The basic tenet of this regime (understood here as a series of institutional routines that incorporate specific narratives and that have [inequality-generating] power effects on [im]mobile subjects) is a biopolitical mission of defining the population to be governed (Walters 2016). Thus, the notion of ‘hybridity’ refers to the fact that the political regulation of geographic movements from non-EU countries combines elements of national and supranational politics (with the nation states no longer being the only actors in this process). Christina Boswell and Andrew Geddes have observed the emergence of what they call ‘intensive transgovernmentalism’, which they understand as a “series of interactions between national governments and the EU” (Boswell and Geddes 2011: 54). Three types of institutional actors are involved in the political regulation of ‘migration’ from non-EU states: (i) the EU, (ii) the EU member states and (iii) a number of non-EU member states.

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<sup>7</sup> In contrast to the theory of border regime, the concept of migration regime refers to linkages between the social production of ‘migration’ and the social production of borders, whereas the notion of border regime refers primarily to the social constitution of (various types of) borders and their power effects and tends to overlook the social construction of ‘migration’.

As an agreement-based supranational formation, the EU articulates its responsibility in the area of ‘migration’ regulation in a number of international agreements (the Maastricht Treaty of 1993, the Treaty of Amsterdam of 1999, the Treaty of Nice of 2003 and the Treaty of Lisbon of 2009). These treaties contribute to an EU-nization of ‘migration’ governance, which implies the generation of common political-territorial borders of the Union and collective decision-making of EU members in the areas of ‘migration’ and ‘asylum’ (Hadj Abdou 2016). Other relevant treaties are the Prüm Convention on stricter EU border controls, the Dublin regulations on asylum<sup>8</sup> and the Schengen Agreement.<sup>9</sup> The latter provides for freedom of travel within the EU and the unification of border controls at the common external EU borders.

Besides the supranational scale, one must also consider the (different degrees of) involvement of the individual member states in the political regulation of ‘migration’. EU programmes and directives concerning EU-external movements do not apply equally to each member state. In many cases, there are exceptions (e.g. for the United Kingdom, Ireland and Denmark),<sup>10</sup> and new EU member (EU 10+2+1) states have been involved in different ways and to different degrees than the ‘old’ members states, particularly in the context of enlargements (Carmel 2014; Hadj Abdou 2016). For example, Romania and Bulgaria are not part of the Schengen Area (Zbinden, Dahinden and Efendic 2016). Furthermore, national differences in the ways EU programmes of ‘migration’ governance are implemented are best articulated in the issue of the ‘fair’ distribution of asylum seekers among member states (Holtug 2016). Differences and variations in the national implementations of EU programmes and directives not only contribute to the heterogeneity of national routines of migration governance, they also stabilize the distinction between the ‘old’ and the ‘new’ EU member states (which has emerged in the context of the EU enlargements), thereby creating power asymmetries within the EU.

The EU has also concluded a number of *asymmetrical agreements with various non-EU borderland countries* (i.e. ‘migration’-sending countries) that require close cooperation in the

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<sup>8</sup> The Dublin Regulations are an element of the institutional framework called ‘Common Area of European Asylum System’ (European Commission 2014). It is based on the principle that the first country of arrival in the EU is responsible for reviewing applications lodged by asylum seekers (see [https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/asylum/examination-of-applicants\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/asylum/examination-of-applicants_en), accessed May 29, 2017).

<sup>9</sup> However, the reform of the Schengen Agreement in 2013 allows for temporary border controls within the EU (Reg. 562/2006).

<sup>10</sup> Ireland and the UK are not part of the Schengen Area (which requires border controls); Denmark has reintroduced border controls to prevent the arrival of potential asylum seekers.

policy areas of ‘migration’ and security governance. These agreements are asymmetrical in that the EU has the power to define their content.<sup>11</sup> The first type of these agreements refers to the European Neighbourhood Policy (which includes the *Eastern Partnership*<sup>12</sup> and agreements with a number of Mediterranean countries as part of the *Southern Neighbourhood programme*<sup>13</sup>) and the Association and Stabilization Agreements (in particular, with *countries of Western Balkans*<sup>14</sup>). The second type of agreements are the so-called Mobility Partnerships between the EU and (neighbouring) non-EU countries, the aim of which is to facilitate temporary labour programmes (Triandafyllidou 2013). The rationale behind these partnerships is the expectation that temporary labour movements from the neighbouring non-EU countries to EU member states have a number of positive effects, in that that a) they benefit the labour markets of the EU member states, that b) mobile individuals can achieve higher incomes and that c) the sending countries benefit as well because the temporary labour ‘migrants’ reinvest the financial resources they obtain in the EU in the economic development of their country of origin. However, in contrast to the official rhetoric, the main outcome of these programmes is an *enforced temporariness* of stay and work in the EU for those who are subject to these programmes (Horvath 2014). The third type of agreements are the special readmission agreements the EU has concluded in order to ‘combat irregular migration’; as of 2017, the EU had concluded readmission agreements with 17 countries (European Commission 2017c). These agreements are based on the principle of ‘safe third countries’, which became relevant as long ago as 1992 and which make it possible to deport ‘irregular immigrants’ to the last country from which they migrated to an EU member state. Countries regarded as safe are those that have signed and/or ratified the 1951 Geneva Convention. The principle of safe third countries allows for the deportation of ‘irregular

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11 These agreements (partly) incorporate the premises of ‘migration management’, the main tenet of which is the introduction of market-based principles of selection of ‘migrants’ and implementation of these principles by non-governmental private organization which become responsible for border control (Geiger 2016).

12 Eastern Partnership includes, besides the EU-countries, six countries Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova, Ukraine (European Neighbourhood Policy [ENP] (see [https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/neighbourhood/southern-neighbourhood\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/neighbourhood/southern-neighbourhood_en), accessed May 29, 2017).

13 The non-EU countries, involved in the Southern Neighbourhood programme include Algeria, Morocco, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, the Palestinian territories, Syria, Tunisia. (European Neighbourhood Policy [ENP], [https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/neighbourhood/southern-neighbourhood\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/neighbourhood/southern-neighbourhood_en), accessed May 29, 2017).

14 These countries of Western Balkans as official EU candidates include Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, Albania; potential EU applicants are Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, see [https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/countries/check-current-status\\_en#pc](https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/countries/check-current-status_en#pc)/[https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/policy/glossary/terms/potential-candidate-countries\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/policy/glossary/terms/potential-candidate-countries_en)

immigrants' without the need of a case-by-case review, the argument in favour of this policy being that the principle of non-refoulement enshrined in the Geneva Convention is not violated. In essence, these three types of asymmetric agreements and programmes shift the EU borders and the associated border controls to the territories of non-EU member states.

The various actors involved in the regulation of movements both within the EU and from the non-EU countries contribute to the network of regulatory institutional routines. Resting on the specific definitions of border and membership outlined above, these routines realize the biopolitical regulation of selectivity of entry to and departure from the EU. As the next section will elaborate in detail, these (repetitive) institutional routines incorporate three narratives – economization, securitization and humanitarization.

#### NARRATIVES OF ECONOMIZATION, SECURITIZATION AND HUMANITARIZATION IN THE EUROPEAN MIGRATION REGIME AND THE STRATIFICATION EFFECTS INVOLVED

Regulatory frameworks, programmes and directives deploy their power vis-à-vis (im)mobile subjects not only through the repetitive quality of the relevant regulatory routines but also as a result of the performativity of the discursive utterances they incorporate. The European regime of 'migration' can be understood as a nexus of institutional routines, the discursive knowledge they involve (which includes a variety of classifications) and the related power effects on (im)mobile subjects, which generate unequal life opportunities.<sup>15</sup> The discourse of European belonging outlined above, which is based on a juxtaposition of the shifting and maintenance of identitarian boundaries, produces a symbolic horizon that links the political regulation of 'migration', as applied to movements from non-EU countries, to three specific narratives – namely, the narratives of economization, securitization and humanitarization. An indicator of what I regard as the *economization of 'migration'* from non-EU countries is the fact that 'migration' is seen mainly as an economic issue that requires regulation by means of an economic logic on the basis of cost–benefit analysis (Amelina 2017: 113). Codified by references to 'skills', the narrative of economization contains references to class-specific knowledge and positions of (im)mobile subjects. In addition, economization has become one

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15 There are also similarities between the concept of dispositive (Foucault 1990 [1976]) and the notion of 'migration' regime: Both concepts approach forms of governance as a nexus of knowledge and power, which includes heterogeneous elements and has a strategic nature (Amelina 2017: 92). Furthermore, the discursive knowledge that 'migration' regime(s) entail(s) often link(s) institutional criteria for decision-making (e.g. whether or not to grant labour permits) with gender, ethnicity/race, class, space and other inequality-related classifications. 'Migration' regime(s) can be regarded as 'regime(s) of intersection', because they relate various 'axes of difference' with one another.

of the major aspects by means of which the EU and member state governments are trying to strike a balance between demographic and economic challenges (Carmel 2014).

Because the EU regards as essential the market-based principle of competitiveness (which is related to the notion of European prosperity mentioned earlier), it follows, at the same time, an opposite strategy to compensate for the negative effects of economic freedom by referring to the narrative of security. Thus, the notion of economization is directly linked to the narrative of securitization. Security-related considerations become interrelated with the politics of belonging, in that immigration from non-EU countries is often identified as a risk to ‘cultural identity’. Using language of ‘cultural similarity’, security-related considerations contain classifications related to ethnicity/race and gender, if related to issues of family reunification. According to Jef Huysmans (2006), during the last few years the notion of securitization has become articulated by the use of exceptional security measures in the context of the rhetoric of counter-terrorism and in the subsequent transfer of these measures to the field of ‘migration’ governance. In addition, Didier Bigo (2002, 2014) emphasizes that professional standards of security experts have been diffusing into the organizations responsible for ‘migration control’.

Moreover, the two narratives are complemented by the notion of humanitarianism, which constitutes suffering mobile subjects, particularly in the context of political regulations and institutional routines of asylum. The entry of the latter to the EU is considered lawful only under specific conditions that imply the implementation of the 1951 Refugee Convention into the supranational and national regulations (Boswell and Geddes 2011). The humanitarization of ‘migration’ turns movers into ‘victims’ and produces mobile subjects who are, by definition, unable to contribute to the economic prosperity of EU Europe. The narrative of humanitarianism also implies gendered references to ‘women-and-children’ who need to be saved (Malkki 1996), thus generating a gendered image of ‘victims’ of violence as opposed to ‘dangerous’ ‘migrant’/‘refugee’ masculinity. The absence of reference to utility in the figure of the ‘asylum seeker’ links the humanitarian and security considerations. This interplay between humanitarian and security-related narratives generates a basis for further differentiation between victimized asylum seekers and illegitimate ‘irregular migrants’, one example being the European Agenda on Migration, which was formulated in response to new ‘refugee movements’ (European Commission 2015).

Most important, the interplay of these narratives *within the institutional regulatory routines* is conducive to stratification(s) according to categories of legal status that build on the distinction between ‘mobility’ and ‘migration’. This emerging stratification is illustrated in a

study by Emma Carmel and Regine Paul (2013), two political sociologists who have examined the extent to which the legal-status categories specified in the EU regulations contribute to an unequal provision of civic (e.g. entry conditions, movement conditions), economic (e.g. access to the labour market) and social rights (e.g. access to social protection and welfare) for (im)mobile subjects. These authors' analysis reveals a significant difference between the formal scope of rights available to EU citizens and non-EU citizens respectively. While the legal-status categories of EU citizens include two main subcategories (EU citizens and posted workers), the non-EU 'migrants' are differentiated into four subcategories (long-term residents, family members, temporary workers<sup>16</sup> and those under international protection<sup>17</sup>). While mobile EU citizens have nearly full access to a wide variety of these types of rights (with some limitations for posted workers), the scope of rights formally available to non-EU citizens varies according to the respective category of legal status. In particular, individuals with the status of 'international protection' are confronted with the most severe constraints on the scope of rights available to them. To illustrate this point, I would like to briefly outline the EU regulations concerning the conditions of movement, which Carmel and Paul define as an element of civic/political rights.

While the EU citizens are free to move to any other EU member state without having to obtain a visa (though for stays longer than three months, regular employment or self-sufficiency are required), this is not the case for non-EU citizens, for whom these regulations are different. *Long-term residents* may visit another member state without an additional permission for the first three months. The conditions of movement for *temporary workers* vary according to their expected contribution to the economic prosperity of the receiving country. *Intra-corporate transferees* as a subcategory of 'temporary workers', for instance, are relatively privileged compared with 'highly skilled workers', 'researchers', 'students' or 'seasonal workers': they can easily change their place of residence within the EU depending on the location of the branch office of a multinational corporation for which they work, while for *highly skilled workers* and *researchers* (two other subcategories of 'temporary workers') the freedom of movement is limited by the specific conditions under which they work and, in the case of the researchers, by the restrictions imposed by fixed-term employment. *Seasonal workers*, who represent yet another subgroup in the category of 'temporary workers', are

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16 The legal category of temporary worker includes four additional categories: 'highly skilled worker', 'researcher', 'student/pupil volunteer', 'intra-corporate transferee' and 'seasonal worker'.

17 The subcategory of 'international protection' includes three types of legal status: 'asylum seeker', 'person under subsidiary protection' and 'recognized refugee'.



faced with explicit restrictions on movement, both within their receiving country and within the EU. Looking at the category of legal status of *international protection*, we can see that the subcategory of ‘asylum seekers’ is subject to important restrictions on the freedom of movement both within their receiving country and the EU. Unlike in the case of seasonal workers, however, internment is officially permissible because it may be necessary “to ensure that public order is maintained”<sup>18</sup>. These limitations illustrate the stratification effects linked to the interplay of economization, securitization and humanitarianism. Similar stratification effects on the scope of rights available can be observed when it comes to other civic, economic and social rights. Thus, the legal-status category of ‘international protection’ must be placed at the lower end of the rights-related stratification.

Summing up, the European migration regime (which rests on the distinction between ‘mobility’ and ‘migration’) links institutional routines of political regulation of ‘migration’, narratives of belonging and a stratification of rights and organizes the selective entry to and departure from the EU.

#### THE EMERGENCE OF THE EUROPEAN SYSTEM OF MIGRATION AND MOBILITY: CENTRE, SEMI-PERIPHERIES AND PERIPHERIES

However, the hybrid ‘migration’ regime that channels specific institutional routines not only transforms (some) (im)mobile individuals into ‘migrants’ but also contributes to the emergence and (temporary) stabilization of the European system of ‘migration’ and ‘mobility’. Building heuristically on the concept of migration system (Kritz, Lim, and Zlotnik 1992)<sup>19</sup>, I argue that the current European migration order is characterized by the emergence of a new European system of ‘migration’ and ‘mobility’ that in turn is the outcome of enlargement processes.<sup>20</sup> This system is differentiated into a centre (‘receiving’ states), semi-peripheries (‘sending’ states whose citizens have relatively privileged opportunities for geographic movements) and peripheries (‘sending’ states whose citizens are underprivileged in terms of chances to move). This system must be approached as a configuration that potentially generates unequal movement opportunities, in that it channels *who may reside in*

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18 For details, see the “Council Directive 2003/9/EC of 27 January 2003 laying down minimum procedures for the reception of asylum seekers” and the “UNHCR Comments on the European Commission’s amended recast proposal for a Directive of the European Parliament and the Council laying down standards for the reception of asylum-seekers” (COM (2011) 320 final) (UNHCR 2011).

<sup>19</sup> While the theory of migration systems follows a rather naturalized notion of ‘migration’, this article reformulates some of its using the socioconstructivist lens.

<sup>20</sup> In my other writings on the emergence of the European migration system, I have also used the concept of assemblage (Amelina 2017).

*the EU when and for how long.*

In this system, *the 'old' EU member states* (the EU-15)<sup>21</sup> represent the centre, which attracts movements both from the 'new' EU member states and from non-EU countries (Zaiceva and Zimmermann 2008). While movers from the EU8 and the EU2 represented 1.22 per cent of the EU15 population in 2009 (Kahanec et al. 2013: 38), non-EU citizens made up 4.5 per cent of the EU15 population in 2007 (Kahanec, Zaiceva, and Zimmermann 2010: 10). Labelled as 'mobility', geographic movements within the 'core' – that is, the EU15 states – are being sometimes addressed as a 'challenge' to European welfare solidarity.

The *'new' EU member states* (the EU-10+2+1)<sup>22</sup> can be regarded as (diverse) semi-peripheries, because these countries are sending individuals to the 'old' EU member states (the 'centre') while also receiving movers from neighbouring non-EU member states (Zaiceva and Zimmermann 2008; Kahanec et al. 2013). The multiplicity of semi-periphery goes back not only to the diverse histories of enlargement but also to different ways in which 'new' member states are involved in the governance of 'migration' and 'mobility'; Romania and Bulgaria, for instance, as mentioned above, are not the part of the Schengen Area (Zbinden, Dahinden and Efendic 2016). Although geographic movements from 'new' to 'old' member states are also regarded as 'mobility' in official EU language, media discourses in some of the 'old' EU states frame them by the semantics of 'benefit tourism' (Giulletti et al. 2011). Nevertheless, as indicated earlier, in the context of the principle of free movement and the premises of non-discrimination of EU citizens in terms of both labour market access (Reg. 492/11) and social security rights (Reg. 883/2004), the scope of the civic/political, economic and social rights that are formally available to these movers is (nearly) the same as for EU-15 citizens (Carmel and Paul 2013).

Finally, the neighbouring non-EU countries can be regarded as multiple 'peripheries' (at least, from the EU's point of view) that send mobile individuals, primarily to the 'old' EU member states (Kahanec, Zaiceva, and Zimmermann 2010: 10). As noted earlier, the sending countries here are those states that are tied to the EU by asymmetric agreements, mentioned earlier, such as the framework of the European Neighbourhood Policy (i.e. *European Partnership* and the *Southern Neighbourhood Programme*), the Stabilisation and Association Agreement (with *a country group in the Western Balkans*), Mobility Partnerships and

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21 The EU-15 countries are Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, Sweden and the United Kingdom (until May 2004).

22 EU10 states include Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, Slovenia, Malta and Cyprus), the EU2 – Bulgaria and Rumania, and EU1 – Croatia.

readmission agreements. The diverse formats of these agreements, which include regulations in respect to ‘migration’ and ‘security’, allow us to speak of multiple ‘peripheries’. While these movements are officially referred to as ‘migration’, the scope of the civic/political, economic and social rights available to movers from states neighbouring the EU is stratified according to economic, security and humanitarian considerations, and while the cross-border linkages of EU citizens are rather problematized, non-EU citizens’ transnationalized connections are often addressed as constraints to ‘integration’ in the receiving contexts.

In other words, the main assumption of the theory of migration systems, which was developed in the 1980s (Kritz, Lim, and Zlotnik 1992) and which is used heuristically here, is that the organization of geographic movements across borders is channelled by the historically specific long-term economic and political relationships between two or more countries. Country pairs such as Mexico–United States or Turkey–Germany are conventionally given as examples of migration systems that were initiated in the historical contexts of guest worker programmes (de Haas 2010). The main distinction between the push–pull theories and the notion of migration system is that the latter requires consideration of the institutional sites of sending and receiving states/localities as essential for the organization of geographic movements, settlement and movers’ cross-border linkages. Using these notions, this article argues that since the EU enlargements of 2004, 2007 and 2014, the EU has been providing both the political and the economic frameworks for the emergence of a new kind of system. The relationships between the countries of the ‘centre’ and countries of the ‘semi-peripheries’ are linked by conditions such as i) the principle of free movement, which is inscribed in the notion of the EU’s supranational citizenship, ii) the emergence of transnationalized labour markets in EU Europe and the premise of non-discrimination against mobile Europeans on the labour markets vis-à-vis immobile citizens, iii) increased isomorphism of tertiary education in the EU, which was initiated by the Bologna Process, and iv) the emergence of the European social security coordination system, which, with the exception of social assistance, is designed to allow for access to and the conversion of various types of social security rights (Carmel, Sojka, and Papiez 2016). The countries of the ‘peripheries’ are linked both to the ‘centre’ and the ‘semi-peripheries’ by various asymmetric agreements cited above. Most important, the European system of ‘migration’ and ‘mobility’ is not limited to linkages within country pairs or country triads; rather, it is organized around the relationships between the three above-mentioned categories of states according to their role in the enlargement-processes – that is, the ‘old’ EU states, the ‘new’ EU states and the

states neighbouring the EU.

The analysis provided in this section centred on ‘doing migration’ in the context of political regulation and the related institutional routines, because their stratification effects (as a result of the specifics of the different categories of legal status involved) have immediate effects in other institutional frameworks as well.<sup>23</sup> the legal-status category attributed to (im)mobile subjects determines the degree of their access to the labour market, education, welfare, and so on. However, ‘migration’ is produced not only by institutional but also by organizational routines; for example, the dynamics of the European system of ‘migration’ and ‘mobility’ identified above cannot be imagined without the practice of discipline and control exercised by specific organizations.

### ***Doing ‘Migration’ by Organizational Routines: The Social Production of Borders and Disciplining Techniques***

What organizational routines transform individuals’ geographic movements across political-territorial borders into ‘migration’? And how do these routines contribute to the formation of the European migration order? Of particular interest here are specific organizational practices directed at (im)mobile subjects, such as practices of organizations that are responsible for border control and the provision of integration classes, as well as specific practices of dealing with members of organizations, as in the case of diversity programmes.

In considering organizational routines directed at clients of organizations, we can think not only of the consulates of the sending and receiving states or cities’ offices for ‘multicultural affairs’, but also of the foreign national offices that issue residence permits according to specific criteria decision-making (Fuglerud 2004). Other organizational routines that should be mentioned in this regard include those of border security agencies such as the Federal Police in Germany and Frontex for the EU, whose day-to-day routines of border surveillance and control (re)produce political-territorial borders (Léonard 2010). According to Didier Bigo (2014), three types of EU border surveillance experts work in organizations of border control: i) experts specializing in the control of everyday border-crossing, ii) experts who focus

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<sup>23</sup> While this section focused primarily on institutional routines that differentiate between ‘mobility’ (within the EU) and ‘migration’ (from non-EU countries) and indicated discursive narratives incorporated into these routines, the social production of ‘migration’ and ‘migrants’ can also be analysed in the context of other institutional frameworks – namely, by considering institutional routines that generate ‘migration’, such as routines of law, the economy, science, sports, and so on. The media play a particularly important role in this context, because their selectivity criteria (e.g. scandalization, dramatization, quantification and personalization) create a specific media reality of ‘migration’ that functions as a self-evident symbolic horizon for the recipients.

primarily on digital border surveillance and iii) military/navy staff who are involved in military operations. The decision-making criteria these organizations build on include specific classifications of ‘migrants’ that range on a continuum from ‘beneficial for the economy’ to ‘security risk’ (Scheel 2017).

Of particular interest for the analysis of the European migration order are the activities of the EU border agency Frontex, which is responsible for coordinating cooperation among EU member states in their efforts to secure the EU’s external borders. For this purpose, Frontex provides the national border guards of the EU member states with training and with ‘risk analyses’ of potential ‘irregular’ border crossings (Frontex 2015, 2016; Léonard 2010). While there is no obligation for the member states to use any of the coordination mechanisms offered by Frontex, the deployment of the Rapid Border Intervention Teams (RABIT) to prevent unexpected growth of what has been called ‘irregular migration’<sup>24</sup> is mandatory. Frontex also has a department that supports the EU member states in deporting undesirable movers to their sending countries. Thus, Frontex’ activities contribute to the permanent irregularization of border-crossings that are perceived as illegitimate.

However, organizational routines contribute much more to the social production of ‘migration’ than just ‘doing borders’ by ensuring border surveillance and control of specific populations for whom they are responsible: once individuals’ movement from one locality to another is concluded, organizational routines transform practices of settlement into a ‘process of integration’. Of particular interest here are those organizations that offer ‘integration classes’ in the receiving countries and implement diversity programmes.

The significant role of integration classes in the social production of ‘migration’ lies in the (re)production of a distinction between the ‘majority society’ and ‘immigrant minorities’ (Amelina 2010). Indeed, the EU’s official rhetoric of integration is directed at non-EU citizens, while mobile Europeans are not subject to ‘integration’ efforts (European Commission 2017b). Being transformed into subjects of ‘integration’, non-EU citizens become equipped with repertoires of ‘integration knowledge’ that include a combination of ethnicized/racialized, gendered and sexuality-related images, which reproduce gendered orders of belonging of the receiving contexts (Scheibelhofer 2016).<sup>25</sup> The following passage from a test currently used for naturalization procedures in Germany illustrates this point:

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24 For a detailed analysis of the construction of the legal category of ‘irregular migration’ in EU migration governance, see Vollmer (2011).

25 Exceptions to these regulations exist for specific legal-status categories of migrants, such as the ‘highly skilled’.

**Table 1. Multiple Choice Question from a Naturalization Test**

**Q. 244: Who is not allowed to live in Germany as a couple?**

Hans (20 years old) and Marie (19 years old)

Tom (20 years old) and Klaus (45 years old)

Sofie (35 years old) and Lisa (40 years old)

Anne (13 years old) and Tim (25 years old)

Source: German Federal Office for Migration and Refugees, accessed May 29, 2017

Similar types of gendered notions of belonging and membership are reproduced in other EU countries (see Korteweg 2017). We can see that specific organizations implement integration policies that build on a categorical distinction between a ‘We’ and an ‘Other’ (or ‘Others’); in the context of EU member states as receiving countries, the notion of ‘the Other’ is usually used with reference to non-EU citizens (Kmak 2015). Furthermore, while mobile EU citizens’ ways of maintaining linkages to their sending countries is usually not a subject of public debates,<sup>26</sup> this is different for non-EU citizens, whose cross-border contacts appear in the media debates as an obstacle to ‘integration’. Thus, the distinction between ‘We’ and ‘Other(s)’ not only serves as a fundamental principle of organizational decision-making aimed at ‘integration’, but this distinction in itself appears as the main result of integrational efforts – which make it the main contribution to the (re)production of the European migration order.

While (state-organized) integration courses reproduce gendered semantics of an ethnicized/racialized ‘national order of things’, the organizational diversity programmes, to mention another type of relevant organizational routine, employ a variety of classifications to create a ‘migrant stranger’. They are organizational tools of decision-making used not only by public institutions such as schools, universities and hospitals but also by companies that attempt to reduce the social disadvantages that might emerge from specific social categorizations linked to gender, ethnicity/race, class, sexual orientation, age/generation, health/disability and space (e.g. ‘im/mobility’) and many others (Burke and Banks 2012; Iverson 2012; Emmerich and Hormel 2013). Diversity programmes might be directed at formal members of organizations involved in the decision-making (e.g. equal opportunities programmes for teachers at schools) or clients of organizations who are not their formal

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<sup>26</sup>Public debates around intra-EU mobility usually focus primarily on the figure of ‘benefit tourism’.

members (e.g. diversity workshop programmes for students at universities). Although we can differentiate between various types of diversity programmes – those aiming at equal opportunities for members/clients, those promoting ‘cultural diversity’ and those targeting the activation of their members and clientele (Groeneveld, Tjens, and van Buuren 2012: 355) – the main goal of these programmes is to make social distinctions among members or clients of organizations manageable. Such programmes often assume that individual experiences of geographic movements across borders contribute to unequal life opportunities of the respective members/clients of organizations and should be the focus of diversity measures, as considered in their interplay with other dimensions of inequality.

What is worth noting is that such programmes employ the premise of *active* reduction of inequalities and disadvantages through organizational routines. At the same time, the categorical distinctions and classifications involved in these programmes (e.g. those referring to ‘migration background’, also in its interplay with others) are attributed as inequality-producing. This attribution has performative effects: defining specific subjects as needy of support contributes to the stabilization of the meaning of the respective classifications’ (e.g. ‘gender’, ‘migration background’) as generating inequality (Amelina 2017: 98). Thus, these diversity programmes function as a specific social technique that employs semantics of inequality reduction while actually reproducing the inequality-generating effects of the respective classifications<sup>27</sup>, and as a result, these programmes’ contribute to the European migration order by producing a ‘migrant other’ with a variety of potential disadvantages.

The powerful role of the above-cited organizational routines in the social production of ‘migration’ derives primarily from the fact that the social techniques they involve discipline the ‘migrant stranger’, and these disciplining effects resonate even beyond the immediate sphere of organizations (Walters 2016). In other words, organizations combine certain performative migration-producing categorizations with regulations, statistics, measures and programmes, which they then direct at predefined ‘populations’ of ([im]mobile) subjects.

At this point, I would like to briefly mention the ambivalent contribution of diasporic organizations’ social routines to processes of ‘doing migration’. On the one hand, some of these organization form organizational networks to speak ‘in the name of migrants’ to the

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27 This reading goes back to the socioconstructivist and cultural-sociological interpretation of intersectional theories, the main argument of which is that classifications (linked to gender, ethnicity/race, class, sexuality, age/generation, health/disability and space) become inequality-producing when they are linked to hierarchizing categorizations. In this regard, we can also approach diversity programmes as ‘regimes of intersection’, which bring together various of the classifications already mentioned, signify them as inequality-generating and make them – through this signification – inequality-producing (Amelina 2017: 98).

state authorities of receiving countries (e.g. the German Islam Conference), and therefore stabilize the figure of the ‘migrant Other’ (Amelina and Faist 2008). On the other hand, by maintaining transnationalized linkages to the sending countries, some these organizations and associations question ‘the national order of things’ and the dominant images of ‘migrants’ as individuals in need of integration (Pries and Sezgin 2012). Their activities open a space for articulation of (im)mobilie subjects’ agency beyond (and sometimes against) the dominant relations of European migration order (Mezzadra 2011). The effects of disciplining techniques and of their contestations by some diasporic organizations evolve in face-to-face interactions, which are based on the principle of mutual perception of presence by social actors.

### ***Doing ‘Migration’ by Stigmatization and Othering: The Significance of Interactional Routines***

Under what conditions is cross-border geographic mobility transformed into ‘migration’ in situations of face-to-face presence, which corresponds to the micro level of social life? I argue that it is not so much the interactive everyday practice of travelling as such that is of relevance here, but mainly the face-to-face routines in a wide variety of social contexts such as border controls, neighbourhoods, workplaces or households. In such contexts, experiences of social proximity and distance are produced according to articulations of belonging and membership (i.e. patterns of discursive knowledge incorporated into the routines) that combine space-related classifications (e.g. references to geographic movements or immobility) with ethnicized/racialized, gendered and class-related classifications, among others. In other words, the subjectification as ‘migrant’ or ‘non-migrant’ is linked to interactive routines (and related attributions) that build on repertoires that include gestures, facial expressions and questions. The question ‘Where are you from?’ is a key element of such a repertoire of everyday interactions (Raj 2003). If these everyday attributions connect to the dominant discursive figures of integration and assimilation, they generate stigmatizing effects. Erving Goffman defined stigma as a relationally constituted difference that simultaneously attracts, repulses and dehumanizes those ‘bearing it’:



“By definition, of course, we believe the person with a stigma is not quite human. On this assumption we exercise varieties of discrimination, through which we effectively, if often unthinkingly, reduce his life chances. We construct a stigma-theory, an ideology to explain his inferiority and account for the danger he represents, sometimes rationalizing an animosity based on other differences“ (Goffman 1963: 5).

Besides the stigmatizing outcomes, the interactive production of ‘migration’ can contribute to the formation of hybrid and fragmented forms of membership in the contexts of neighbourhoods, diaspora associations and families. For example, recent analyses of urban neighbourhoods indicate that in some urban areas boundary-making between ‘migrant’ and ‘non-migrant’ is of lower significance than expected in media debates (Vertovec and Nowicka 2014). Other studies indicate positive (self-)perceptions of ‘migrant’ images in contexts of diasporic networks (Zirh 2012), while yet others emphasize that the meaning of ‘being a migrant’ varies in the context of families and family-networks, because family members not only draw a distinction between those who have left and those who have remained but often connect these distinctions to emotional proximity among family members (Barglowski, Amelina, and Bilecen 2017). Finally, as the scenes of movers from Syria and Afghanistan being welcomed at Munich Central Station during the ‘long summer of 2015’ show, face-to-face interactions can be connoted with heroic imagines of ‘migration’ and ‘migrants’ that open opportunities for a change in the predominant migration order.

In sum, analysis of ‘doing migration’ through interactional routines equips us with tools to understand various micro-forms and meanings of the social (re)production of ‘migration’ and the potential for the contestation of dominant migration orders. In the context of some emancipatory movements, the everyday contestation of these orders by self-organized ‘migrant’ protests may even contribute to processes of ‘un-doing migration’ (Oliveri 2016).

### **Concluding Remarks**

This article identified some elements of the contemporary European migration order that transform some (im)mobile subjects into ‘migrants’ and some geographic movements across political-territorial borders into ‘migration’. The term ‘migration order’ denotes social configurations that bring together social routines, discursive knowledge and related power effects, which become articulated at three levels of the social. First, on the macro level of institutions, we can examine how the institutional routines of political ‘migration’ regulation

contribute to the channelling of the direction and ‘size’ of geographic movements both within the EU and from non-EU countries to EU Europe. This focus enables us to trace the (re)production of the inequality-generating European system of ‘migration’ and ‘mobility’. The respective institutional routines are not only tied to the normalization of ‘mobility’ within the EU and the problematization of ‘migration’ from the non-EU neighbouring countries, they also incorporate notions of belonging related to gender, ethnicity/race, class and space, which are inscribed into narratives of economization, securitization and humanitarianization. Second, organizational decision-making routines of surveillance, integration and diversity management have disciplining effects that support the everyday production of the envisaged European system of ‘migration’ and ‘mobility’. However, these organizational routines are not uncontested by definition, they may be transformed, not least through the routines of (some) diasporic organizations and the counter-agency against the dominant migration order. Third, on the level of face-to-face interactions, everyday experiences of social distance are produced in situations in which participants in everyday conversations make use of predominant integration and assimilation narratives. At the same time, however, face-to-face interactions open greater opportunities for (im)mobile subjects’ agency to avoid or undermine organizational techniques that are used to discipline them. At this level of social life, the potential to resist or change the predominant migration order has a better chance of being articulated, particularly in comparison with the level of institutional routines. On the other hand, this does not mean that ‘migration’ is by definition ‘undone’ by routines of face-to-face interactions; rather, the attention given to this level of social life allows us to identify a variety of ‘doing migration’ processes in face-to-face interactions, as well as forms of questioning-cum-resisting social attributions as a ‘migrant’.

In concluding this article, I would like to emphasize the main benefits of synthesizing social constructivism, the praxeological approach and the perspective of the Foucauldian sociology of culture and knowledge. The ‘doing migration’ approach makes it possible to address ‘migration’ as socially generated by concrete doings such as interactive, organizational and institutional routines. ‘Social production’ as used here should not be mistaken for a subjective imagination or a process that does not have social consequences. On the contrary, this approach focuses on very concrete ‘doings’ and ‘sayings’ in relation to ‘migration’, paying particular attention to discursive knowledge (e.g. narratives of belonging and membership) inscribed in social routines (this is the socioconstructivist element of the proposed concept). This lens allows us to avoid the naturalization of ‘migration’ and to focus instead on social

techniques that turn some mobile and immobile<sup>28</sup> subjects into ‘migrants’. In addition, the ‘doing migration’ approach allows us to pay attention to the interplay of institutions, power and knowledge, meaning that ‘migration’ is not a result of the geographic movements of individuals as such, but rather of interactive, organizational and institutional repetitive practices and routines (the praxeological element of the proposed concept). Finally, the approach presented here also draws attention to the power effects of (temporarily) stabilized (institutional and organizational) definitions of migration (and integration), highlighting their performativity. These definitions combine classifications related to gender, ethnicity/race and class, among others, with spatial classifications (e.g. ‘here’, ‘there’, ‘distant’, ‘close’ etc.), and they develop into narratives of belonging that contribute to what Janine Dahinden (2016) calls the ‘migrantization’ of social reality. Thus, the stabilization of certain definitions of ‘migration’ (and ‘integration’) and their inscription into political regulations and social routines have power effects on both mobile and immobile individuals (these are the elements from the sociology of culture and the sociology of knowledge in the proposed concept). Thus, the ‘doing migration’ approach focuses on intersubjectively shared orders of knowledge about ‘migration’ that are incorporated into and guide social practice.<sup>29</sup> Building on the reflexive turn in migration studies, this article proposes to moving beyond the analysis of ‘the Stranger’ as conceived by Georg Simmel and to examine, instead, the social production of the ‘migrant’ by paying attention to the knowledge, routines and power effects involved.

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28 It should not be forgotten that the transformation of an individual into a ‘migrant’ starts with the process of social attribution: not every individual who has experienced geographic movements is regarded as a migrant, and some individuals who do not have experienced geographic movements may be regarded as a ‘migrant’, as is evident in the debates about ‘second’ and ‘third’ ‘migrant generations’).

29 In doing so, the approach proposed follows the strong version of cultural sociology as it was formulated by Jeffrey Alexander and Smith (2001), who in analysing the relationship between the ‘culture’ and the ‘structure’ understands ‘culture’ as the explanatory variable for dynamics in social structuration.

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