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Migration, Multi-situated Inequalities and the World Economy

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According to estimates published by the United Nations, there were 272 million international migrants in 2019 compared to 51 million in 2010. Between 2010 and 2017, the global number of refugees and asylum seekers increased by about 13 million, nearly a quarter of the increase in international migrants. In 2019, one in seven international migrants was under 20 years old. According to UN sources, in 2017, there were 82 million North-South migrants and 82.3 million South-South migrants in the world, while 40 million migrants from Asian countries have left their native countries and are distributed around the world. The European Union remains an important immigration territory for various populations. Note that 2.3 million non-European migrants arrived in Europe in 2019. In 2016, 1.2 million people sought asylum in an EU country, twice as many as in 2014. In 2018, a total of 672,000 people received international protection in an EU country (refugee status, subsidiary protection or humanitarian visa).

In the context of these complex and multiplying international mobilities, we examine the relationship between migration, inequality and the world economy. In migratory circulations, migrants' social position is changed with each mobilization in the societies of departure and arrival. We approach the relationship between migration and economic inequalities from the point of view of discriminatory labor regimes and economic transnationalism “from above”, “from below” and

Inequalities in Geographical Space,

coordinated by Clémentine COTTINEAU and Julie VALLÉE. © ISTE Ltd 2022.

in-between, by showing how migratory careers participate in producing “partially nationalized” social classes (Sassen 2006). We look at how the effects of collision in migratory biographies raise the question of subjectivation by informing the processes of maintaining migrants’ identities.

We first outline the contours of a sociology of inequalities and migrations (section 3.1). We then deal with the conditions of migrant workers in subaltern situations in international cities, based on the ethnicization of labor markets, the globalization of care and platform capitalism (section 3.2). We show how inequalities in migratory paths accumulate, grow or are maintained in a multi-situated process, where migrants’ resource repertoires are constantly recomposed, giving rise to a cosmopolitization and a social differentiation of biographies (section 3.3). We discuss the grammars of social and moral recognition that migrants must learn in each place to “take their place” with their experiences, skills and qualifications (section 3.4). Then we show how the relationship between migration, inequality and the world economy are expressed in different forms of transnationalisms¹: transnationalism from above, transnationalism from below and transnationalism between countries (section 3.5). Finally, we show how “forced migrants” can be confronted with this extreme test of inequality, namely expulsion (section 3.6).

3.1. Toward a sociology of inequalities and migrations

Mobility has continued to accelerate and traffic has intensified over the last few years. More and more migrants are moving, circulating, returning and taking different migratory routes; they are acquiring experiences and are often challenged in terms of their social, ethnic and gender identities. These international mobilities reveal what Simon (2008, 2015) called transnational spaces under tension.

Today, migrants come from all over the world. In this context of globalization, many economically developed States have become immigration countries. Indeed, the migration and displacement of populations has increased, despite the numerous restrictions imposed by States. Transnational mobilities have been reconfigured in different ways according to different migration policies (Schmoll et al. 2015; Ambrosini et al. 2020); new categories of migrants in so-called old immigration countries, such as France, and new immigration countries, such as Spain (Ambrosini 2018), have appeared. In transnational traffic, people move in a variety of ways

1. Transnationalism, according to Glick-Schiller et al. (1992), is the process by which migrants construct social fields that link the country of origin and the country of arrival.

within the framework of multipolar, transnational and pendular migrations, which have progressively become intertwined.

In a context of economic globalization and the internationalization of labor markets, the question of inequality, discrimination and exclusion quickly arose. This was considered very early on by Roger Waldinger (1996), who showed how migrant workers, who were mostly in excluded segments of the labor market, occupied what he called “ethnic niches”. Ethnic niches were first seen as participating in the fragmentation and hierarchization of urban labor markets, and then as part of a process of de-multiplication of transnational spaces and the formation of multi-polar productive territories. Then, in the 1990s, Nina Glick-Schiller, Linda Bash and Cristina Szanton-Blanc introduced the theory of transnationalism as “the process by which migrants construct social fields that link the country of origin and their country of arrival” with the publication of *Towards a Transnational Perspective on Migration* (1992). In dialog with this theory, Portes et al. (1999) developed the concept of “globalization from below” with the emergence of transnational communities; they show that migrants develop economic activities by relying on dense, geographically extensive and supportive networks, which can give rise to transnational entrepreneurship “from below” for the least qualified, in the restaurant business, for example.

In the geo-economics of international migration, Sassen (2009) analyzes how labor migration has been built on unequal dynamics with the hyper-enrichment of labor-importing countries, the organized export – legal and illegal – of labor, and the ruling on the mobility and flexibility of high-level employees in advanced service companies. She speaks of an emerging class of transnational working poor, but also of a highly mobile transnational professional class, which integrates transnational elites to define partially denationalized classes in the context of economic globalization, where old inequalities are reinforced and new ones develop. Highly qualified migrants with international capital, that is, globalized top managers, highly qualified professions that produce immaterial and symbolic goods in legal, financial and other fields, circulate in the globalization from above (Wagner 1998). The new segmentations between these two global classes define new inequalities linked to advanced capitalisms.

Tarrius (2002, 2006) poses the question of the formation of global classes in another mode in postcolonial and post-Fordist migration; he introduces the class of “transmigrants”, key figures in the diffusion of low-end products on a vast international market, who develop commercial strategies of the poor-to-poor, that is, the sale of products to populations deemed insolvent. These are, for example, Afghan migrants who come to the Black Sea to load up on electronic products

manufactured in South-East Asia, passing through Dubai or Kuwait City, on their way to the ports of Bulgaria. Alongside these poor transmigrants, another category of *qualified and graduated* transmigrants appears, such as the Egyptian doctors who care for them and accompany them on *migratory territories* where nomads of globalization circulate like ants from below on the poor-to-poor markets and in the world economy (Tarrus and Missaoui 2000; Tarrus 2015). These trans-migrants may be involved in trafficking drugs and women in criminal environments. The construction of inequalities is considered here from the point of view of hierarchies between transnational economic networks, between new cosmopolitanisms internal to migrations, not entirely “communitarian” or “ethnic” but linked to cross-border sociabilities.

In addition to these approaches, it should be noted that the question of inequalities has also been addressed within the framework of a sociology of immigration and migration, influenced by structuralist or Bourdieusian thinking that focuses on the determinisms and reproduction of social inequalities (Wagner 2007; Réa and Tripier 2008; Morice and Potot 2010; Kergoat et al. 2011). The need to articulate social, class and interethnic relations has gained increasing consensus in the sociology of migration when thinking about the processes of economic and moral domination in labor markets. The intersectionality of economic inequalities in the migratory experience is weakened in numerous works around the triptych of class, gender and race, according to different theoretical modalities (Cossée et al. 2013).

Subsequently, in order to consider migrations and economic inequalities together, the sociologist has increasingly placed himself in a multi-dimensional space in order to understand how spatialities are hierarchized, as well as how these hierarchies are regularly shaken up, how individuals are more or less forced into multi-affiliations, and how transnational networks are formed above nation-states by creating social, economic and symbolic assemblages. Migrants are more and more recognized for their experiences, their mobilization, action and reflexivity skills, inscribed in a plurality of situations, spaces, societal and unequal contexts (Rouilleau-Berger 2007, 2010). Migrants’ perspectives on who they are and what they do are increasingly taken into account, based on the diversity of their objectives and symbolic resources and their subjectivity in migratory careers. Mobilities help to reduce or increase fragmentation and gaps in identities, between social/personal identities and identities for oneself (Goffman 1975), and between social/personal identities and “imagined” identities. The plurality of selves is permanently linked to the diversity of spaces, temporalities and situations, and we can also see how individual mobilities and work situations participate, at each spatial and temporal change, in reconfiguring selves in the permanent work of identities being made,

unmade and remade. In this perspective, Schmoll (2020) has also put forward a geography of new migratory forms in the Euro-Mediterranean space, attentive to gender inequalities and migrant political subjectivities.

Finally, a sociology of migrations and inequalities is emerging today in which the problem of emotions arises with regard to the agency between space and subjectivity with a view to understanding how migratory careers are prioritized in local economies and globalized worlds of production (Bastide 2015). For example, Beatrice Zani (2019) has shown how, based on the follow-up of migratory careers of young Chinese women in China, then between China and Taiwan, and between Taiwan and China, economic geographies are constructed from social practices, aspirations, social and family ties and shared emotions in the production of digital worlds structured by online and offline networks.

These different approaches agree on the idea of the production of new inequalities, new social hierarchies, new centralities and new economic and political peripheries between which transnational, diasporic, ethnic but also intracontinental networks are woven. In this theoretical movement, the plurality and intersectionality of inequalities are not thought of in a static way, but in a dynamic way. Inequalities are defined as intersectional, but also multi-situated, spatialized and temporalized.

In this chapter, we approach the question of migrations and inequalities from a sociological perspective of mobility and moral sociology focused on local and globalized work. Indeed, in the migratory experience, individuals, especially the least qualified ones, are increasingly faced with situations of precariousness, discrimination and subalternity, which reveal multiple and intertwined inequalities. The geographical and professional mobility of migrants also reveals these multi-situated inequalities in migratory careers organized around biographical bifurcations. The rhythm of bifurcations in migrants' paths produces social differentiation and inequalities, a process that informs the moral careers of migrants, who are unequally confronted with the loss of themselves, self-shame and humiliation. Individuals then develop strategies of social and public recognition and of reclaiming themselves, which differ according to the nature and volume of their social, economic and moral resources. If local societies produce regimes of situated inequalities, these inequalities become multi-situated in the migration paths on a transnational scale where economic cosmopolitanisms are produced which, in turn, stratify and increase the power of regimes of situated inequalities, linked to hierarchical transnationalisms. We conclude by asking the question of the construction of extreme inequalities from downgrading situations, and more broadly from the expulsions experienced by migrants under duress.

3.2. International cities and migrant workers

In international cities, the processes of economic globalization produce diffraction effects on labor markets; they reveal and stimulate the formation of a diversity of work spaces, visible and invisible, singular and globalized, such as care work or digital labor, where migrant workers are particularly present. Examining the relationship between migration and economic inequalities also invites us to talk about the forms of subalternity linked to the precariat, the ethnicization of labor markets and racism at work. In Europe, for the last 15 years, with the massive arrival of new migrant workers, labor markets have been producing extreme inequalities. They are organized on the basis of the commodification of bodies and the imposition of a consent to social and economic disqualification (Burawoy 1979).

3.2.1. Subalternity and the ethnicization of labor markets

In the late 2000s, the occupation of foreign workers in Europe shifted from industry towards services, notably agriculture, horticulture, construction, hospitality, catering and garment manufacturing, and services account for sectors where migrant workers are highly represented (Ambrosini 2007; Réa and Tripier 2008). It is clear that migrants are massively represented in menial jobs, above all migrants from African and Maghreb countries, followed by Turkish and Portuguese migrants. In Western Europe, so-called “3D jobs” (dirty, dangerous and demeaning) are largely occupied by new, low-skilled migrant workers.

In most European cities, a dual process of employment and ethnicization of labor markets has contributed to the pulverization of labor contract conditions, due to the plurality and flexibility of transitional jobs and specific forms of work in “gray” or “black” areas, especially in ethnic niches (Roulleau-Berger 2013; Ambrosini 2018). The Mediterranean model of immigration, based on tertiarization, flexibility and informal work, still remains active in a context where new migrants are kept in irregular or precarious situations in forms of “internal relocation” (Réa 2013). The ethnicization of labor relations relies on the disqualification of migrant workers, particularly in temporary employment, or even through transnational service provision (Jounin 2009). This process clearly reflects the development of an underemployment market, at the heart of which is the figure of the migrant forced by the global labor market. It delineates the inequalities between native workers and foreign workers or workers of foreign origin, divisions that participate in the overvisibility/stigmatization of an ethnic belonging and the invisibilization/devaluation of qualifications and professional experience acquired in the country of origin or during the migratory journey (Roulleau-Berger 2012). Over the past 30 years, the hierarchies established between the different forms of atypical work

contracts – fixed-term contracts, part-time work, temporary work, seasonal work and even day work, zero-hour work, self-employment, etc. – have reinforced the processes by which migrants are overexposed, labeled and stigmatized. The lower the educational levels, the more migrants are exposed to contracts with little legitimacy whenever they have access to these contracts. Cultural context, combined with social origin, gender and generational position, plays an active role in defining forms of differentiated and unequal access to labor markets.

In international cities, migrants in subaltern situations usually work without a contract, in working conditions based on principles of indecency and of contempt for individuals confronted with situations of tyranny at work, in labor markets where they are forced into situations of high productivity, competitiveness and strong moral alienation. We can speak here of hegemonic work regimes, which are based on three types of denials of recognition (Honneth 2000): the invisibility of migrants, the depreciatory recognition of their activity and work, and the lack of recognition and social contempt for the professional experience and knowledge acquired in their country of origin and during their migratory journeys.

3.2.2. Racism at work

The process of access to work for migrants is based on systemic (De Rudder et al. 2000), institutional but also situational discrimination. This is reflected in downgrading, precariousness, disqualification from status and employment, and situations of racism at work, despite education, qualifications and experience comparable to or even superior to those of non-migrants; migrants are generally hired under unfavorable conditions for equal qualifications, most often on precarious contracts, while the possibilities for promotion and professional mobility remain limited and working conditions are difficult.

The process of discrimination on the part of employers can take many forms, and it is not always declared as such. Thus, migrants may experience three forms of racism in labor markets: political racism, cultural racism and institutional racism (Bataille 1997).

With political racism, migrants are openly rejected from labor markets because of their cultural background; employers display their racist positions by refusing to hire them or by asking them to change their first names, for example. Hajjat and Mohammed (2013) have shown how Islamophobia constructs stigmatizing discourse, discriminatory practices or physical aggression, which have become the weapon of a more or less visible racism. In fact, it is the migrants from the Maghreb

and sub-Saharan Africa that are subjected to racism at work in scenes of contempt and insults.

Cultural racism appears when employers talk about migrants as potentially having difficulties integrating into certain work cultures. For example, the wearing of the headscarf has become a discriminating factor in access to employment for women of the Muslim faith. Cultural racism is also expressed through disguised forms of racism, innuendos and jokes, or indeed floating forms of racism, characterized by silences, unspoken words, whispers, murmurs or ignorance within work environments (Giraud-Baujeu 2020).

Institutional racism is the product of a general system that covers the conduct of individual actors, accepting not their racist intention but the banality of their act and behavior; institutional racism can take different forms: humiliation, suspicion, a kind of internal colonialism and symbolic or even physical violence against migrants.

Migrants in a subordinate situation, who may be less gifted at school or in poverty, are discriminated against like young French people of North African origin, in particular of Algerian origin, who experience great difficulty in accessing employment; this situation cannot only be explained by a particularly low level of education, but rather by phenomena of discrimination in hiring. More qualified migrants work in conditions disrupted by forms of covert discrimination, which result in mistrust and suspicion towards them. For example, young qualified Chinese migrants and graduates of prestigious Chinese universities or the French *Grandes Écoles* (business schools, for example) might reach the status of senior executives in companies in France or Europe and find themselves confronted with discriminatory practices that produce, at a given moment, situations that block professional mobility opportunities (Rouilleau-Berger 2013; Rouilleau-Berger and Yan 2017; Yong 2020). These qualified migrants come up against a glass ceiling, and hierarchical career progression is prevented by invisible barriers – the barriers of latent and very active racism which expresses the inhumanity of ethnic inequalities.

3.2.3. *The globalization of care*

In addition, international migration has become more feminized, and women's work has been organized into three urban markets in particular: domestic work, care work and sex work. Today, most women from poor countries are forced to do domestic work, relegated to demeaning jobs where they often work without being declared. These unequal situations cannot be dissociated from the process of globalization. The disqualifications and humiliations suffered by migrant women are particularly clear with the expansion of the global market for domesticity. Care work

shows how gender, ethnicity and global social stratification can be combined in a “negative” way, distributing women over transnational spaces by giving them access to invisible forms of work. Care work shows how economies are dematerialized and how migrant women play a central role in this process where the exploitation of material resources is coupled with the exploitation of the *emotions of care workers* (Ehrenreich and Hoschschild 2004; Mozère 2004). In international cities, care work accounts for forms of inequality that result from the combination of processes of economic globalization, ethnicization of labor markets and the subalternization of the labor market. It unfolds in the invisibility of work, where service relationships and bonds of intimacy merge and where social identities constructed in other spaces are blurred. While domesticity can evolve into sex work, Lieber and Lévy (2009) have shown, for example, that in European cities, faced with the closure of European labor markets and highly unequal situations, Chinese women, both young and old, came to perceive their bodies and their sexuality as migratory resources within the framework of economic-sexual arrangements in different ways. Indeed, the international trafficking of women for the sex industry has increased significantly over the past decade, both within and outside Asia and the former Soviet Union.

3.2.4. Migration and platform capitalism

In Asian megacities and European cities, more and more young, low-skilled migrants are working on digital platforms for e-commerce, express delivery, group buying, food delivery and cab services, which have grown rapidly in recent years. Young migrants, both male and female, are joining microwork platforms without the employment status associated with professional activity and become “click slaves” (Casilli 2019), performing unskilled tasks at home for poverty wages.

Forms of piecework are re-emerging through micro-employment platforms and primarily involve migrant workers. The crowdsourcing of micro-tasks was launched by the American web giant Amazon and is now practiced by the Chinese giant Alibaba Group. Underpaid workers are now drawing attention to their struggles: their time is exploited, the time needed to complete the task is underestimated, unpaid tasks are numerous and the minimum wage is not respected (Barraud De Lagerie and Sigalo Santos 2018).

In European cities such as France, the activity of migrant workers on platforms and in uberization is largely participating in the expansion of platform capitalism. Zani (2020) has shown that between China and Taiwan, young low-skilled Chinese migrants, in transnational migration, bring into existence a material and emotional kind of “small capitalism” through e-commerce.

In the context of increasing international migration, hyper-capitalization and rising inequalities, we see a diversification of forms of work according to their degree of commodification, legitimacy and visibility. Forms of work are multiplying and hierarchizing differently according to the cultural, economic and political histories of European, Asian, African, Eastern, Middle Eastern and Latin American cities. They are integrated into market and non-market, monetary and non-monetary, abundance and “survival”, competitive and underground economies. This plurality of economies denotes spaces of competition and legitimization that make labor markets appear increasingly multipolar, and political powers and modes of legitimization increasingly polycentric.

3.3. Multi-situated inequalities and biographical bifurcations

The experiences of migrants in different workspaces produce biographies punctuated by bifurcations linked to changes of place. Migrants move from place to place at each stage in society, spaces and places that are stratified differently according to the political, social and economic histories of the country they are in. In the passage from one context to another, more or less strong gaps are built between social positions that vary according to societal contexts and migrants’ routes. Inequalities either accumulate, or they are weakened by the effect of differentiation between weak positions in one societal context and strong positions in another, or they are maintained.

3.3.1. Migration and multi-situated inequalities

Today, in the context of globalization, the migrant passes from one societal regime to another several times. The figure of the migrant is constructed in two or more contexts – of departure, arrival and transit – all of which produce different inequalities. At each stage of migration, individuals place themselves or are placed in a social space governed by orders of recognition constructed differently according to societal contexts. In migratory movements, the effects of collision produce violence, domination and inequalities that are constructed through differentiated access to social, economic and symbolic resources, as well as to knowledge, abilities and skills.

However, depending on the economic, cultural or political differences between the different societal contexts, inequalities can increase or decrease during the migration process. For example, when the contexts of departure are less economically developed than the contexts of arrival, migrants from the middle or working classes are more likely to follow paths of upward social mobility in the

societies of arrival, and the inequalities experienced in the society of departure are then likely to diminish; but when migrants occupied a “high” social position in the society of departure, they often find themselves in situations of social decline in the society of arrival. The amplification or reduction of social inequalities appears to be a multidimensional, discontinuous, reversible process, in the sense that each migratory stage imposes a re-composition of the repertoire of economic, social, and ethnic resources of migrants, whose social position varies according to the contexts and the routes followed. We have spoken of *multi-situated inequalities* in this regard (Rouleau-Berger 2010).

3.3.2. Inequalities and biographical bifurcations

At each stage of migration, individual resource repertoires are reordered and bring into play the effects of biographical discontinuity. The wider the repertoire of resources, the more ordered they are, and the more individuals can manage the effects of biographical discontinuity. Multi-situated inequalities, due to migrants’ repeated mobilities, result in discontinuous and hierarchical access to labor markets in different societal contexts. Migrants mobilize repertoires of social, educational, economic, symbolic and even religious resources, mobilized through sequences of relatively predictable actions.

Our research required us to use the notions of bifurcation (Grossetti 2004), event, transition and rupture to understand how multi-situated inequalities are constructed (Rouleau-Berger 2010). The biographical bifurcations of migrants are formed when professional and geographical mobilities come together, and their multiplication varies according to educational qualifications, social and economic resources, and employment opportunities. In the diversity of low-skilled migrants’ careers, identity resources are mobilized in a discontinuous mode, and mobilities produce both resources and constraints; economic, political and societal contexts have different effects on the processes of accessing increasingly differentiated and hierarchical labor markets. At each stage, the repertoires of individual resources are rearranged, and status, place and social identity are redefined on the basis of individual and collective capacities for action. Migrants mobilize their resources in these changing biographical sequences, where individuals move from one space to another, from one economic regime to another.

The frequency of bifurcations in migrants’ lives constitutes a principle of differentiation and inequality that accounts for the discontinuity of work experiences; a rapid frequency means there is discontinuity between experiences in very different jobs. A short obligatory presence in a job, whether formal or informal, does not leave time to find a place for oneself and to capitalize on new social and

symbolic resources; migrants are then forced into horizontal mobilities. Close bifurcations arise from professional discontinuities and spatial discontinuities, producing migratory careers that take place in spaces of low economic legitimacy, and may force migrants to return to their region of origin.

These bifurcations also express the capacities for action and reflexivity of these mid-level managers, who leave a job when they can no longer stand it and look for another. The less qualified tend to move along horizontal network lines, while those with more personal and social resources tend to move along vertical network lines. And the amplification or reduction of social, ethnic and gender inequalities imposes a recomposition of the repertoire of personal resources at each migratory stage.

In migration careers, there is also the question of the intentionality of individuals, often translated into the notion of a migration project. Each time migrants move, a new biographical crossroads appears, open to a wide spectrum of possible choices, giving rise to uncertainties. Individuals construct their migration careers from a multiplicity of roles and affiliations linked to heterogeneous socialization spaces. Beck (2006) spoke of the cosmopolitization of biographies to express how globalization affects the ways in which migrants' biographies are constructed, and we have spoken of *individuation that is both situated and globalized* to define migrants' plural identities, which are both situated and global (Rouleau-Berger 2007).

3.4. Moral careers and the struggle for recognition

If biographical bifurcations punctuate migrants' careers in their objective dimension, their moral dimension also constantly informs the way in which mobilities follow one another. Migrants leave societies where, in most cases, they had a place that made them appear "small" or "big" (Tarrus and Missaoui 2000). In each migratory experience, in each biographical moment, migrants never achieve the same recognition; they are confronted with different norms and must place themselves in a relationship of adherence to these norms in order to achieve a position in the society of arrival. The least qualified migrants become increasingly "small" in short networks and are often confronted with the experience of losing know-how, skills and qualifications. They most often go through a succession of spaces of low legitimacy, where identities ascribed by others produce a negative devaluation of what they do or think they do.

In the cosmopolitanization of these biographies, the question of ownership and loss of self becomes crucial. The more migrants circulate between economic and social spaces that are contrasted by their degree of legitimacy, the more they are

confronted with different normative orders; they are then sometimes recognized, sometimes not, sometimes misunderstood. In the construction of multi-situated inequalities, identity switches between recognition and social contempt, between mistrust and confidence in the “other”, between self-esteem and shame.

It is around social and moral goods, confidence in the “other” and in oneself, social respect and self-respect, social esteem and self-esteem, that social and ethnic competition and inequality are reorganized in a blurred manner. This phenomenon then actively gives rise to risks of social exclusion by producing phenomena of alteration of the self. Confronted with identity reshuffles, readjustments and conflicts, migrants find it increasingly difficult to adjust their different selves, to keep face. They oscillate between social esteem and contempt, between self-esteem and self-shame, depending on the roles they play in different social and economic spaces (Roulleau-Berger 1999). Self-esteem and shame appear to be reversible and dynamic aspects of identity. But the phenomena of repeating and intensifying situations of disqualification and humiliation can make these feelings of shame irreversible.

The question of ownership and loss of self in the migratory experience is thus regularly raised. The higher the degree of legitimacy of the spaces crossed during the migratory experiences, the more the forms of social recognition accumulate to give rise to public recognition. The more the migrants cross spaces of socialization where the identities attributed by others produce positive recognition, the more we can speak of a reduction in the gaps between different orders of recognition and the opening of spaces where subjects capable of being actors and producing experiences are built.

Holding up, keeping going, is a major moral issue for migrants (Tcholakova 2016), which can be partially ensured by digital economies. These economies ensure that migrants, in tension between several spaces and several temporalities, are not cut off from their families, and thus remain connected, to use the words of Diminescu (2014). Indeed, information and communication technologies (ICTs) are now part of the daily life of individuals on the move. They represent a means of producing new opportunities for exchange and communication with friends and family back home. Smartphones, online applications and digital platforms ensure the simultaneous maintenance of links with the society of origin and the production of transnational links. From now on, migrants are no longer confronted with a “double absence” (Sayad 1999), but rather inscribed in a “connected presence” composed of different forms of potential and actualized presences (Diminescu 2019). The maintenance of self through emotions and feelings is thus partially ensured by digital resources, which come to combine with social, economic and moral resources.

Ownership, maintenance and loss of self show how regimes of otherness (Abélès 2008) are complex and multiplying, producing forms of unequally legitimized recognition. We speak of *regimes of weak otherness* when migrants with few resources and little protection from collective systems are the object of social, economic and ethnic inequalities in social worlds with little legitimacy, which distribute little social and public recognition and little social esteem. We speak of *regimes of strong otherness* when migrants who are well equipped with resources and protected by collective systems are engaged in processes of social, economic and cultural affiliation in legitimized institutions that distribute social and public recognition and social esteem. We speak of *regimes of partially autonomous otherness* when migrants, poorly equipped in terms of resources and designated as having weakly recognized social competences, develop capacities of collective and individual mobilization, social creativity and even resistance (Roulleau-Berger 2014).

3.5. The plurality and hierarchy of transnationalisms

If the relationship between migration and economic inequalities can be understood from the condition of subaltern and the social inequalities, ethnic discriminations and racism at work, they also appear very clearly in a diversity of economic transnationalisms and hierarchies between them. We make the following distinction between:

- transnationalism from above, with the formation of economic elites or transnational upper classes;
- transnationalism and bazaar economies;
- transnationalism via international trade.

3.5.1. Transnationalism “from above” and cosmopolitan spirit

Since the end of the 1980s, world trade, foreign investments and the circulation of capital have accelerated, and the dynamics of migration have continued to multiply and diversify. The migration of economic, scientific and technical elites expresses the forms of renewal of these mobilities. Globalization “from above” shows how a fraction of today’s new cosmopolitan bourgeoisie is being formed, partly residing in Europe (Wagner and Gérard 2015) and made up of highly qualified, highly skilled transmigrants from continental China, Central and Eastern Europe, the Maghreb and the Middle East. A new cosmopolitan bourgeoisie is thus

emerging, engaged in transnational mobilities that build new transnational productive territories and contribute to the development of multipolar economies.

In European cities, young qualified Chinese executives have arrived to work in import-export companies, in the banking sector, in engineering offices, in international trade, in food processing companies, in household appliances, etc. These young, qualified Chinese migrants produce globalized work in China and Europe. They have all developed strong geographical and professional mobility by accumulating social and spatial capital. They also have the idea of wanting international lives in common, displaying “a cosmopolitan spirit” (Ciccelli 2012). In the fashion, cosmetics, luxury goods, international tourism and art sectors, highly skilled migrants from the Maghreb, Central Europe, Eastern Europe and China produce globalized work in transnational mobilities whereby new arrangements are formed in global market sectors, by combining local and international dimensions from these plural arrangements in the development of material and immaterial labor economies, for example, in the computer or multimedia sectors. Migratory skills here rely on high international social capital and strong spatial capital (Rouilleau-Berger and Yan 2017). Global labor can also be expressed through new commercial centralities, as with middle-class Japanese migrants who work in gastronomy, the art market, etc. (Dubucs 2014).

These migrants actively participate in the definition of multi-situated, productive territories between different international cities as places where goods, products and values circulate and accumulate. Transnational careers are organized in the layering of differentiated economies and cultures, highlighting new forms of international capital accumulation. Interests and identities are constantly being redefined in these migratory circulations which are structured around access to social prestige.

3.5.2. Transnationalism “from below” and bazaar economies

Ethnic and multi-ethnic neighborhoods exist in every international city and are always linked to other ethnic spaces in other international cities. For residents, these neighborhoods may appear as urban enclaves, while for migrants, they are a place of economic production and international exchange. Within these transnational spaces, transnational *bazaar economies* (Geertz 1979) emerge. Locality, trade and ethnicity construct assemblies between multipolar economies. For example, in the bazaars of La Guillotière in Lyon (Battegay 2003), Via Padova in Milan, Château-Rouge in Paris, and Belsunce in Marseille, African, North African, Indian and Chinese traders and entrepreneurs, among others, sell clothes, belts, scarves, bags, bracelets, calculators, watches, toys, mobiles, etc., sourcing from global markets in China. When we speak of ethnic enclaves in France, we think of Chinese migrants, but also

of migrants of North African or African origin hired by North African or African employers. On the other hand, migrants from Central and Eastern Europe are less visible in ethnic enclaves. The least qualified migrants are more likely to be found in the restaurant, food, small-scale distribution and garment sectors. Places of origin and situations of linguistic security or insecurity play a role in the distribution and allocation of places in ethnic enclaves. For low-skilled migrants in situations of linguistic insecurity, whatever the societal context, the ethnic enclave appears as a first step in the process of economic insertion. These ethnic enclaves arise from transnational networks that are obviously based on highly structured forms of economic organization, where certain economic, ethnic and social dominations can be exercised through assignments to socially devalued places, and the imposition of horizontal mobilities on disqualified and disqualifying market segments. With the intensification of international migration, traditional ethnic enclaves are becoming saturated and urban enclaves are becoming more and more multi-ethnic.

Ethnic enclaves contain ethnic entrepreneurship in the catering, mainstream clothing and hairdressing sectors, among others. More qualified migrants, for example young Chinese migrants, create travel agencies, computer companies and luxury clothing brands, which also contribute to the creation of an intermediate economic transnationalism. We can see how spatial movements are embedded in social relations specific to the society of departure and to the societies crossed, and how migrants rely on resources acquired or inherited in their society of origin, by manipulating spatial capital that will allow them to integrate into transnational networks. The conditions for successful forms of entrepreneurship depend on situations of strong or weak solidarity, which do not always appear to guarantee economic success; situations of limited solidarity provide competitive advantages because of the trusting relationships within the group, while limiting the obligations of solidarity (Steiner 1999).

3.5.3. *Intermediate transnationalism and international trade*

Finally, it is worth mentioning the forms of intermediary transnationalism that are developing in international marketplaces, such as Yiwu in China, a global city in the province of Zhejiang, which is one of the largest wholesale markets in the world, located at the origin of the “New Silk Roads”, supplying much of the global market with small commodities. Yiwu, a multi-million-dollar city, hosts 4,300,000 m² of markets, with over 400,000 types of products offered by over 100,000 suppliers.

Yiwu was a small city in 1970; gradually, Chinese traders and entrepreneurs developed internal economic networks in China with other local markets. The city subsequently attracted more and more entrepreneurs and traders from different Arab

countries, India, Pakistan, Syria, Turkey, Egypt, Yemen, different African and Maghreb countries, Central and Eastern Europe, etc. Thus, a multi-ethnic urban co-presence was produced, organized around the manufacture of an economic cosmopolitanism, partly Muslim, and both global and local. Yiwu is thus as a *non-Western global city*.

Yiwu appears to be a privileged place of economic globalization, relatively discreet (Choplin and Pliez 2018), implying a global division of labor, spatial reorganization of production, planetary industrial restructuring, development of digital economies and informalization of labor. Economic life in Yiwu demonstrates that we are witnessing a reorientation of migratory movements, notably between China, the Middle East, India, Pakistan, Iraq, Syria, Africa, and Central and Eastern Europe, and a multiplication of migratory circulations, which actively contribute to the displacement and redefinition of the borders of new transnational productive territories. In Yiwu, local and transnational markets are being developed from the establishment of agreements and economic exchanges based on international relations between Chinese merchants and entrepreneurs and others from other countries mentioned above. Yiwu is linked to other Chinese and international cities by social, economic and religious networks. These “non-Western” global markets are fed by local economic networks, for example small-scale global production sites located in the surrounding villages and towns, connected to transnational spaces.

How are these non-hegemonic cosmopolitanisms constructed? Economies of hospitality and trust, produced by Chinese and international entrepreneurs and traders, are arranged in transnational spaces, codified by shared conventions and norms. These cosmopolitanisms link Chinese cities such as Keqiao, Qingdao, Yongan, Shenzhen and Ningbo, and create links between African, Indian, Middle Eastern, Central European and Eastern European cities. The migratory paths of transnational entrepreneurs and traders allow us to see the routes of these non-Western economic networks, both material and digital, where economic, social, religious and moral resources circulate, which are constantly being mobilized, transformed and increased with each change of place and country.

In Yiwu, as in other non-Western cities, Chinese Muslim migrants and other Muslim communities (Indian, Pakistani, Yemeni, Jordanian, African) produce *circulatory territories* (Tarrus and Missaoui 2000) that interact with each other, but also with Western spaces. These migrations of Muslim traders and entrepreneurs from China, India, Africa and the Middle East reveal forms of economic mobilization that counter the inequalities imposed by authoritarian capitalisms.

3.6. Forced migration, downgrading and expulsions

Karen Akoka, Olivier Clochard and Albena Tcholakova, in a 2017 issue of the *Revue européenne des migrations internationales*, entitled *Reconnu-e-s réfugié-e-s et après ?* (Granted refugee status – but what next?), have shown that since 1990, refugee studies and forced migration studies have emerged as new fields of social science research, developing alongside the field of international migration. Indeed, more and more people are fleeing wars, persecution and ethnic and religious violence across the world to seek asylum in “peaceful” countries, especially within the European Union. These new migrants will primarily be asylum seekers, and some of them will be able to obtain refugee status.

If social inequalities seem to disappear at certain moments in the migratory ordeal, they reappear very quickly during the waiting period for migrants in fear, who must take up a position, seize opportunities to mobilize inherited resources and convert the social and professional experience acquired before “arriving”. The careers of migrants under constraint are constructed in the exacerbated intersectionality of social relations related to the social position of origin, gender and ethnicity. Social mobilities can only be understood from the different experiences and situations of employment and work in different contexts.

The experience of downgrading is at the heart of the trajectories of forced migrants, especially the most qualified. The higher the position of the individuals in their country of departure – or if they had developed upward social mobility in their country of origin – the more they will experience professional de-qualification, and the stronger their feeling of disqualification. The ordeal of social downgrading is central to the pathways of migrants under threat who experience social, status and salary downgrades as though forced migration implied owing a debt to the societies of arrival (Roulleau-Berger 2017). It always involves losses of social, economic and moral resources. The conception of the self is profoundly altered when individuals have been abused, mistreated, tortured in their home countries and during the migratory journey. While migrants are often downgraded upon arrival in an immigration country, some manage to repurpose their resources in the medium to long term (Bidet 2018).

Asylum seekers and refugees are forced into a model of resignation, given that they are unable to legitimize the qualifications and professional experience gained in their home country and during their migratory journey. The imposition of disqualifying forms of work reveals violent forms of economic domination based on ethnic differentiation and distinction. The majority is forced to mourn their past and future aspirations. Finally, the violence of symbolic dominations is expressed in

some cases by the imposition of situations of inactivity, where the know-how and skills acquired in the contexts of origin and on the migration routes are erased. The maintenance of the capital of experience in migratory routes appears rather as an exception. The ordeal of social decline imposes the reinvention of oneself, being confronted with the obligation to rewrite one's own history in a society that is foreign to oneself.

While the diversity of the biographies of forced migrants from the upper or middle classes was built on professional experiences consistent with their initial training, the biographies of migrants from the working or farming classes were instead organized in forms of polyactivity or pluriactivity, which create situations of precarity and resignation to unpredictability. Most migrants under duress have first had to develop, in spite of themselves, adaptive capacities in their societies of origin where they have experienced dramas and traumas. They have then had to develop resistance skills and survival strategies in threatening situations. In contexts of great violence, practical skills have been produced in emergency situations; they will be partially transferred and activated in other emergency situations in the societies of arrival.

On the roads of forced migration, men and women are constantly hunted down by the police of different countries, experience prison and sometimes torture, especially in Libyan prisons and life in various camps. Violence, expulsions and indecency are all part of the journey of these migrants. States, whether it be through border controls, migration management, route orientation, or even expulsions and deportations, deploy via their police forces forms of exacerbated brutality in the treatment of migrants (Lardeux 2015; Agier et al. 2018). Asylum seekers have no right to singularity or justice for who they are, identified as "illegitimate" (Sayad 1999), condemned to live in fear and shame. Indeed, asylum seekers and refugees, excluded from civil rights and the "legal" labor market, find themselves caught between a denial of existence and an attempt to gain status.

Rejected asylum seekers become "expelled from the world": the expulsion process exacerbates social, economic, ethnic and gender inequalities to an extreme degree. Although inequalities develop in this process of expulsion from the world society, migrants can be middle or upper class, peasant or working class. These migrants are forced into a denial of existence, into "wasted lives" made up of situations of great moral and material insecurity, finding themselves lost and cut off from their families, wives, husbands and children. Those expelled from the world find their place nowhere. Forced to remain silent while enduring irregularities, threats of deportation to various countries, living in fear of being hunted down and

described as undesirable, these migrants write the narrative of a global society of expelled people, condemned to “wasted lives” (Bauman 2006).

3.7. Conclusion

We have shown how thinking about the complexity and plasticity of the relationships between migrations and inequalities in local and global contexts invites the sociologist to adopt a constructivist reading of geographical mobilities in order to grasp both the structures in process – the relationships of domination, competition and subordination in the migratory space – the social interactions of migrants in geographical spaces, their skills of action and mobilization, and their subjectivities. The staging of the plurality of local and transnational spaces inhabited by migrants, located on different scales and hierarchized between them, has highlighted the relationships of exchange, conflict, complicity and competition between them. This relationship between migration and inequalities makes it possible to understand how differentiated migratory spaces fit together to produce unequal cosmopolitanisms. This approach invites us more broadly to hear the voices of all migrants around the world, and to recognize their struggles for dignity and respect; it is based, in fact, on a methodological cosmopolitanism to move toward a non-hegemonic sociology, which opens up new perspectives on migration and inequalities based on a non-Western-centric approach. In conclusion, the scientific challenge involved in developing a theory of inequalities and migrations today also requires the international recognition of non-Western knowledge to advance with a view to producing new knowledge in the field of the sociology of inequalities, in line with a post-Western sociology (Rouleau-Berger 2016; Xie and Rouleau-Berger 2017; Rouleau-Berger and Peilin 2018).

3.8. References

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