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BRINGING MOVEMENT INTO CLASS ANALYSIS: THE CASE OF YOUNG ITALIAN MIGRANTS IN BERLIN

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1. Introduction

In 2014, the year in which this research began, the Euro-crisis was far from over. The gap between the North and the South of Europe was widening, with economies such as Germany's one performing relatively well, and Southern countries stuck in dramatic unemployment rates, especially for the young (Hadjimichalis 2011; Lapavitsas et al. 2012). Today, the situation has not changed consistently. While new crises have sparked in the European public sphere, such as the crisis of migration management in 2015 (Bojadžijev/Mezzadra 2015) and the current one regarding the Brexit (Botterill et al. 2018), the divide between the North and the South has not reduced. Among many others, a major effect of the growing inequality at EU scale is the increase of migratory flows from countries stuck in economic stagnation to countries of the North. Young people looking for jobs have been strongly re-populating old migration routes from the South to the North (Lafleur/Stanek 2017; Pugliese 2018; King 2018).

The entry point of this research is the city of Berlin, increasingly targeted by the movement of young South Europeans. Between 2007 and 2017 the number of South Europeans (Spaniards, Italians, Greeks and Portuguese) registered in Berlin has grown by 87%, amounting to 79.808 in 2017.¹ This group is young: 41% of South Europeans registered in Berlin are between 25 and 35 years old. In particular, the official number of migrants with Italian citizenship living and registered in Berlin has more than doubled, passing from 14.446 in 2007 to 29.405 individuals in 2017. While further data about this group are not provided, it is known that the level of institutionalized cultural capital of young European citizens living in Berlin is high; in 2012, 52,3% of them possessed a university degree.²

Considering that the official number strongly underestimates the real migration phenomenon (see note 2), and that the topic of migration is currently on the top of the public and political discourse in the continent (if not globally), one could expect that much attention was

¹ Registration data are taken from the *Einwohnerregisterstatistik Berlin* and refer to the 31st December of each year. People have to register in Citizen Offices in order to do a number of things in Berlin (from renting a flat to opening a bank account). The data from this register are flawed for a series of reasons (see chapter 6), still they build the most reliable available source of demographic data for the city of Berlin. According to the Italian Embassy in Berlin, for instance, the number of Italians living in the city might amount to 70.000, twice their estimated number according to the register.

² Data are taken from the Mikrozensus (Amt für Statistik Berlin-Brandenburg), and based on ISCED 1997, a standardized scale for educational degrees. More recent data are not provided.

given to the study of these flows of migrants leaving Southern countries for Northern cities. While in the past couple of years some interest on the topic has eventually arisen in the sending countries (Castellani 2018; Pugliese 2018, Assirelli et al. 2018), the phenomenon has been given very limited room in public debates of the North. And yet, in cities like Berlin, walking through the neighborhoods where many of these newcomers are living (Animento 2016), you can easily hear young people speaking Italian, Spanish, English, as well as many other languages. Passing by at Italian cafés and Spanish tapas bars, the influence of these migratory inflows is tangible and is visible to long-term residents, city users, tourists (Novy 2013).

In Southern countries, the emigration of the young is narrated mainly as “brain drain”³ and centered on the economic loss for these countries (Lafleur/Stanek 2017), thereby neglecting the component of non-graduated young people who are nonetheless part of the migratory flows directed to the North (Prunetti 2018). Instead, in the North, the topic is nowadays almost absent from public debates, as intra-EU migration is considered mostly when talking about flows from the East to West-Europe. Similarly, in the UK, the discussions around Brexit have involved mostly flows coming from Eastern countries, although neither in that context is migration from EU countries limited to flows from the East (Anderson 2017). Rather, in the metropolis London, Italians passed from being the 16th largest migrant group in 2007 to being the sixth in 2017, with an estimated population number of more than 100.000 people, even larger than Irish migrants, and second only to Polish and Romanian migrants among groups from EU-countries.⁴

It seems therefore crucial to ask: what does the disregard both in research and in the public towards these migratory flows tell us? Why have these flows not produced (yet) fear or anger in the public sphere, as it has happened for other migrations? In fact, they are not even called “migration”, but “mobility”, as the official definition in EU policies and papers say (Lafleur/Stanek 2017). Following Anderson, then, it seems that, at least in the liberal democracies we are referring to, “migration signifies problematic mobility” (Anderson 2017: 1532). Regarding the debate in the UK, she states that while “the movement of German au pairs and Spanish waiters was not of particular concern”, suddenly after the enlargement of the EU regime of free mobility to Eastern countries, “claims that low waged EU “migrants”

³In Italy, the concept which established itself in popular media to describe the phenomenon is “*cervelli in fuga*” (Eng., fleeing brains).

⁴Data stem from the APS annual survey (95% confidence interval provided), “Population by Country of Birth”, for the years 2007-2017, (<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/internationalmigration> last accessed: 27.12.2018). As for Berliner data, it is impossible to capture the real number of EU migrants living in London, in particular those staying in the city for shorter periods of time.

were taking British jobs, moved to the tabloid center stage” (ebd.). Thus, it becomes clear that while some mobilities are considered as problematic, others are not, and as such they do not enter the public sphere (Bacchi 2009). Still, it remains obscure how such differences are to be understood from a sociological perspective.

This research starts from this question, the question about who counts as migrant and who does not, and why it is so. Mobility is about the creation of connections and paths from one to another and to many other places. The production of migration as a concept and phenomenon is connected to the regulation of mobility by an institution entitled with the power to decide about who is to be considered as a migrant and who is not. Thus, the study of mobility and migration is closely connected to the study of those institutions affecting its government at various scales. At the same time, in this research mobility and migration are understood as the enactment of movement undertaken by individuals or collectivities. To put it shortly, either more or less constrained, the research adopts a view on movement as always entailing autonomy (Moulier-Boutang 1993; Mezzadra 2006; Bojadžijev /Karakayali 2007; Scheel 2015; Nail 2015).

In the case of the movements of young people from the South to the North of Europe, then, it seems necessary to investigate on one side what is at stake in its regulation for the EU institutions and for the political project of the EU, for national states as well as for the local contexts affected by such movements. On the other side, the investigation should reproduce the perspective of the singular and collective efforts and achievements carried out by those creating mobility on their skin. This is what this research seeks to accomplish.

Speaking about the different scales involved into the management of intra-EU migration, it seems appropriate to start the investigation from the urban one. Migration research has for long time neglected the role of the local in mediating migration and mobility (Glick-Schiller/Caglar 2009). In the past few years, however, interest has arisen towards thinking of cities as places for welcoming newcomers of any kind (Nicholls/Uitermark 2016). On one side, political concepts such as “sanctuary cities” or “solidarity cities” represent the effort to overcome the national framework of governance of migration to highlight the relevance of the urban for politics of integration and diversity (Rigley 2008). On the other, the urban has been increasingly scrutinized as the site for the emergence of borders (Lebuhn 2013; Fauser 2017). When it comes to migration of EU citizens, however, the urban dimension is astonishingly absent both from official EU reports and academic research. While the book “Eurostars and

Eurocities” by Favell, concerning young EU movers living in several major cities of the EU, achieved wide recognition (Favell 2008), since then the focus on the urban for migration between EU countries seems to have been put aside.

In the present research, the entry point is the city of Berlin. By doing this, I intend to contribute to filling the gap in urban research as well as in migration research regarding the way how migrants within the EU regime of mobility interact with the cities of arrival. Finally, during interviews, several people told me that they did not migrate to Germany, but rather they migrated to Berlin. Taking this position seriously, the research acknowledges that the city has increasingly attracted people and capitals in the past decades for several reasons, and that it is required to look at these specificities to understand the encounter between mobile flows and the very concrete ground of localities touched by them. By doing this, I also aim to question the very assumption of “free” and frictionless mobility, by highlighting the very material borders which are erected formally and informally at local level.

The migration of young people to Berlin is indeed taking place at the same time as major processes of urban re-structuring in the city. Berlin’s population and economy have started again to grow, after over 20 years of stagnation. Interestingly, the larger increase of population, which since 2007 has grown at a pace of ca. 40.000 newcomers every year, is composed by people moving from abroad. In 2017, for instance, 85% of the net-inflows were coming from other countries (IBB 2018). Such dynamics add pressure on the housing market, which has become in any case a safe haven for financial funds after the global financial crisis of 2007-2008 (Fields/Uffer 2016). As a result of financialization and increasing demand, rent prices are rising quickly in the “poor but sexy” city.⁵ Between 2008 and 2018, they have increased by 104%⁶, with yearly rates reaching +11,4% in 2017 (IBB 2018). Real estate investors have bought more and more properties and land in the city, often converting entire blocks from rental to occupier-owned housing (Holm 2014b). If we consider that Berlin is a tenant city, with more than 85% of tenant residents,⁷ the dramatic explosions of living costs is affecting a large part of the population; there is large evidence of housing scarcity, displacement, increasing evictions and homelessness⁸ (Berner et al. 2015; Holm 2013; Helbrecht

⁵“Poor but sexy” was the unofficial slogan of the city, launched by the former mayor Klaus Wowereit (Colomb 2012).

⁶ <https://www.zeit.de/wirtschaft/2018-08/immobilienwirtschaft-deutschland-mieten-grossstaedte-mieterpreise-anstieg> (last accessed: 27.12.2018).

⁷<https://www.stadtentwicklung.berlin.de/wohnen/mieterfibel/> (last accessed: 27.12.2018).

⁸<https://mietenwahnsinn.info/demo-april-2018/2018/02/27/um-83-prozent-stieg-die-wohnungslosigkeit/> (last accessed: 27.12.2018).

2016). With such a tense competition over housing, thus, the debate on the housing crisis and gentrification in Berlin has long become mainstream (Holm 2013). At the same time, there is ever more protest around this issue (Holm 2014a; Vollmer 2019). While organized activist groups aim demands for affordable housing to landlords and policy-makers, at the street level young newcomers have been often targeted as gentrifiers and marked as "hipsters" or "yuppies" (Novy 2013). While financial funds and large companies have been increasingly targeted by tenant initiatives⁹, public debate about gentrification and displacement has been complex and contradictory (Füller/Michel 2014). Nonetheless, it reproduces some dynamics typical of upgrading neighborhoods, such as the process of identifying specific groups responsible for gentrification (Rose 1984).

The Berlin case is an interesting one with regard to such process. As explained above, while many young newcomers living in inner city districts mostly come from the so-called privileged Global North, a large part of them come from those countries dramatically hit by the crisis (Animento 2016). The term PIIGS was coined to refer to them and define the boundaries of the group of the losers of the European integration. One could call them the "South of the Global North".¹⁰ Thus, while on one side young migrants who have left these countries and headed North are often framed as "economic migrants and the "new guest workers" escaping the crisis and chasing the "German dream" (Becker 2013), on the other hand they are also seen as part of the "hipster" gentrifiers and "lifestyle migrants".

Against such different definitions of mobility and migration, often connotated with contrasting moral and political attributes, it seems necessary to question the political as well as analytical grounds of processes of categorization of human mobility by dissecting migration along the various ways in which it becomes a site and source of social inequality. As Conradson and Latham argued, "transnationalism is in fact characteristic of many more people than just the transnational elites and the developing-world migrants who have been the focus of so much transnational research" (Conradson/Latham 2005). They refer to "middling forms of transnationalism", implying that an increasingly large part of the middle classes is on the move. In her study on Polish and Lithuanian migrants in UK, Parutis asks more explicitly the question whether that migratory phenomenon should be considered as composed by economic migrants or middling transnationals (Parutis 2011). She describes how "high-skilled" migrants

⁹ <https://www.dwenteignen.de/> (last accessed: 27.12.2018).

¹⁰ By this term I do not mean the geographical category, but rather, in analogy with the concept of Global South, its contingent power-related connotation.

might be employed in low-wage and “low-skilled” labor conditions, however at the same time accumulating crucial skills such as learning the English language and describing their migration as motivated by the wish to “try life abroad”.

While the category of “economic migrants” reduces migration to the search for income, concepts such as “lifestyle migration” imply that middle-class people move in search of a “better way of life”, beyond any consideration for making a living (Benson/O’Reilly 2009a; 2009b). In recent times, however, the validity of the concept has been challenged by its same proponents, who argued against labeling and categorization of migrants. Instead, they pleaded for migration research highlighting “what migration means to those involved” and how it is related to processes of identity-making, thereby exploring lifestyle *in* migration (Benson/O’Reilly 2016). While I will pick up critically the concept of “lifestyle” in chapter 2, I suggest that the debate on lifestyle migration is set on similar analytical grounds as the conundrum mentioned above regarding young South Europeans in Berlin, who are on one side considered as economic migrants, on the other as gentrifiers seeking lifestyles á-la-Florida (Florida 2002).

Migration researcher Michael P. Smith, who has formulated the concept of “transnational urbanism”, argued that “contemporary transnational migration is highly differentiated by class, gender, generation, region, religion, and political economic circumstance of migration within the same migrating “nationality”, even within a single transnational city” (Smith 2005: 239). While transnationalism is not the focus of this research, the argument by Smith is illuminating, as it just points to opening up the concept of migration by complicating it with the internal variety which is in any case part and parcel of all social phenomena. Importantly, space and locality are as relevant as the other “usual” categories such as class and gender. Migration has been long studied as a social problem, with migrants considered as disadvantaged and deprived members of the communities of arrival. Thus, the focus of migration research has been for long time set on issues such as segregation, poverty, deviancy. As Castles and Miller have argued, however, major trends in contemporary migration include the globalization and differentiation of migration, “so that most countries of immigration have entrants from a broad spectrum of economic, social and cultural backgrounds” (Castles/Miller 2014: 16).

Against the background of diversifying migration patterns and mobility flows, the case study of this research offers the possibility to open up the nexus mobility-migration by intro-

ducing social class as a crucial intervening variable. Having described the contrasting narratives on South Europeans in Berlin, I seek to challenge the dichotomy lifestyle vs. economic migrants. To do so, I propose firstly to problematize the puzzle composed by the constellation of concepts related on one side to social class, such as work, production, exploitation, domination, control and autonomy, on the other side to social status, such as leisure, reproduction, lifestyle, life conduct and prestige. Secondly, the focus will be oriented towards the emergence of social class within migration, trying however also to highlight the interaction with other relevant components of social position such as gender and age.

The first research question of the research, thus, is the following:

How does the social class of migrants affect their mobility and the ways how it is governed and regimented into a migration regime?

The research further complicates the issue, by taking migration as relational and embedded in asymmetrical power geometries (Massey 1994). From this perspective, it is impossible to study those who have moved as a way out of a context stricken with crisis without making clear that many others have stayed. More precisely, it seems necessary to investigate the ways how “mobility, and control over mobility, both reflects and reinforces power”, as “the mobility and control of some groups can weaken the leverage of the already weak” (ibid.: 150). In the neoliberal context characterized by zero-sum competition over resources, facilitated by the joint action of state and market, mobility can be considered as a scarce resource, unevenly distributed across the population. This can be observed on several scales. On the urban scale, “mobility differentials” (Alberti 2014) are enmeshed in the problematic of gentrification, i.e. when the “right to stay put” of the poorer is endangered by the control and ownership of mobility of the richer (Newman/Wyly 2006). On the transnational scale (Amelina 2010), differentials of mobility emerge between those who have the resources to leave their home country for a place where they might find better ways to access resources and income to make a livelihood adequate to their aspirations and expectations, those who do not have these resources, and those who have been taught by society not to have aspirations and expectations for a better life through mobility (Willis 1977, MacLeod 1987).

While the present research is focused on those who have moved on a transnational scale, it will attempt to highlight how their trajectories are intertwined with those who have stayed in the home country. It will be explored how the accumulation of mobility by migrants fosters the social distance between them and those who have stayed. The exploration of differentials

of mobility, i.e. of the different access to power and control over the own fixity and mobility, is thus the analytical key to open up the black-box of mobility. This research investigates the assumption that in globalized and flexible capitalism, mobility has become an income-generating resource, and thus it constitutes not only a consequence, but also a source itself of social inequalities. If we witness the emergence of (new) lines of social inequality based on the tension between mobility and fixity, then, the second question to be tackled is a kind of reversal of the first one and asks about how the accumulation of mobility itself affects the social location of individuals and their relationship to one another:

How is mobility related to processes of class formation in contemporary capitalism?

The analysis of this research will oscillate between the two research questions, attempting to give an exhaustive answer to both. In the next section, I will briefly illustrate the structure of this thesis, highlighting the main hypotheses developed through the chapters.

1. Overview of the chapters

The main task when taking social class into the focus of the analysis has been that of re-composing the puzzle of research on social class and social status, in order then to be able to criticize it. Chapter 2 deals with such an enterprise. The hypothesis that I want to demonstrate is that the dichotomy between economic and lifestyle migrants rests on the flawed assumption that the main nexus to understand class is that one between production and consumption. According to such assumption, individuals can be considered as members of social classes according to the wage labor relationship they are embedded in, while they can be considered as members of status groups according to the lifestyle they pursue, and thus as consumers. This research seeks firstly to replace the division between production and consumption by that between production and reproduction. In chapter 2, it will be shown how this flaw has been caused by the long-lasting disregard of class analysis towards the role of domestic and unpaid labor for the reproduction of the labor force, as well as by the fixation on the wage relationship as the main form of income-generation and exploitation in capitalism. Secondly, the research seeks to challenge the very opposition between production and reproduction, by showing how in flexible, contemporary capitalism, both have increasingly melt together, so that it becomes increasingly impossible to consider them in isolation from one another. Such a restructuring necessarily affects the analysis of gender relations, too. Focusing on the relation-

ship between social class and social status, then, the final part of the chapter delivers a critique of the concept of lifestyle, arguing for the re-discovering of the Weberian concept of life conduct (*Lebensführung*), as a more appropriate one to investigate how production and reproduction are held together in people's everyday lives by the shared construction of a set of values informing their actions.

Chapter 3 deals with the choice of the case study and with the research design and methods. While the research' strives for illuminating dynamics and patterns regarding the movement of young people from the South to the North of Europe, its focus is set on the group of Italian migrants living in Berlin due to several reasons declared in the chapter. The methodological tools applied in the research, i.e. a web survey and semi-structured interviews, are further illustrated, highlighting the logic behind the mixed-methods approach chosen.

Chapter 4 inaugurates the analysis of the empirical material by introducing briefly how intra-EU migration is regulated and how migration is conceptually understood in this research. Further, the analysis revolves around the concept of symbolic boundaries as developed by Lamont and Molnar (2002). The question contained in the chapter is about the self-perception of migrants and their narratives about the own biography of mobility. The chapter highlights how, to narrate themselves, they refer to their co-national peers in Berlin, drawing boundaries between deserving and undeserving migrants, and to their co-nationals in Italy, depicting them as unable to take their lives in their hands and move as they did. Thus, the contours of a life conduct predicated on mobility and mobilization of the own time into labor time start getting delineated.

Chapter 5 adopts the Bourdieusian concept of habitus to explore how the migrants object of the study have developed practices of social reproduction entailing mobility, either in continuity or rupture with their families of origin. Thereby, class and status of the families are considered as a crucial background to understand what migration means for young people. While the chapter shows how are part of the development of a mobile habitus is connected to aspirations to make a livelihood through work, it also shows the relevance of migration for challenging and reshaping the own relationship to gender roles, especially for women. The final part of the chapter investigates the consequences of the development of a mobile habitus for arrangements of production and reproduction.

Chapter 6 is about the social infrastructure of arrival and the mediation between mobility and migration by the two national states involved in the movement of young people from Italy

to Berlin. How do migrants access the first resources which they need to fix themselves to the city of Berlin, i.e. labor and housing? What institutional processes intervene in the access and how do they work? Through which processes of selection and differentiation does mobility get tamed and categorized? Italian migrants in Berlin are treated by the state and by institutions as EU citizens and thus hold a series of rights and benefits which places them close to German citizens in terms of accessing welfare and the labor market. However, while it might seem that through EU integration barriers to access have been removed on paper, this does not necessarily happen on the ground.

Chapter 7 interrogates the data of the research about the value and the income created by migrants, once they access the labor market. How does mobility become a value and who appropriates this value? The chapter provides tentative answers by giving an overview of the migrant composition in the Berliner labor market. In particular, it focuses on two case studies, the gastronomy sector and call centers in the digital economy. Migrants working in these fields are valorized *as* migrants, and thereby fixed to that category. Further, the chapter investigates how for migrants, who often followed individualized trajectories to the city of Berlin, leaving behind social networks providing emotional support, work can become the site of relationships of reproduction and care, thereby binding them even more to work notwithstanding hyper-exploitation and monotony.

2. Development, Crisis and Renaissance: A Critical Analysis of the Class Concept

2.1. A Genealogy of the Main Approaches to Class and of their Blind Spots

With the diffusion of industrialization in the modern era, class has become a key concept for the understanding and analysis of social inequality, one of the major concerns of sociology since ever (Crompton 1998: 5). In order to understand the sources of inequality in societies, we need a theoretical framework able to explain why certain individuals and groups have are more or less educated or occupy more or less privileged positions in the labor market. Such a framework should be able to tell us also how and why certain individuals and groups are able to pursue upward social mobility and thus improve their situation, while others do not. To this scope social researchers have developed concepts such as social structure, social stratification and of course social class. These concepts, and in particular social class, has deeply differentiated since its creation and cover today a number of meanings and perspectives. In the following I will explain the main strands of research on social class as well as the main problems which these approaches have met over the last decades. In order to face these problems, I will try then to develop a new perspective which will be deployed in the present research.

2.1.1. Gradational vs. Categorical Approaches to Class

The first division between approaches to class analysis points to the process of categorizing classes, which can be gradational or categorical. This division corresponds to the type of methods employed to study class. Both ways refer to quantitative methods, although the first one deploys ordinal variables, while the second one deploys categorical ones.

Firstly, gradational approaches refer to theories of class structure which view society as if it was a ladder. Individuals occupy different positions along the ladder according to several criteria, such as levels of education, income, occupation, etc. From this perspective class is a quantitative expression of social inequality: individuals can be deductively and singularly allocated to one or the other class according to their individual attributes. Different classes co-

exist, there is no analytical need to put them in relation to each other, as non-relational variables explain them. This perspective, which Neo-Durkheimian authors usually adopt, has been widely criticized for being blind to the structural causes of social inequality. Moreover, it has often fueled explanations of inequality in which individuals located in the lower classes are blamed for their situation. The theory does not account for dynamics and causal effects situated at the meso- and macro-level, such as discrimination, mechanisms of exclusion, opportunity hoarding, etc.

Nonetheless, gradational analyses can be strategically used in order to explore quantitative relationships between variables. Although they are not suited to explain the reason for such relationships, they still can be employed when investigating new or emerging class-related attributes. Conversely, categorical approaches consider classes not as mere groups of individuals which share similar volumes of resources of various type, but rather state that being part of a class has an effect upon the way how people interact with one another, how they hoard resources, etc. Thus, classes are not only quantitatively but also qualitatively different. Classes are seen as groups who have common interests and thus are potentially able to act collectively. Still, categorical approaches attempt to objectify classes on the basis of individual attributes, mostly adopting quantitative methods.

An interesting example of such an approach is the one developed by Savage and colleagues in the last Great British Class Survey (Savage et al. 2013; Savage 2015a). The survey is based on a huge sample (ca. 150.000 respondents), grouped according to the volumes of different forms of capital (economic, cultural, social) owned by the respondents. While the research project is based upon the theoretical framework developed by Bourdieu, who considered class from a relational perspective (to be explained below), the methodology deployed to analyze such a huge set of data does not enable the authors to go beyond grouping individuals according to their individual attributes, as some critique pointed out (Skeggs 2015). The result of the survey is a typology of seven classes: elite, established middle class, technical middle class, new affluent workers, traditional working class, emergent service workers, precariat (Savage 2013). While a detailed critique of the survey will be formulated later, I will now highlight some specific aspects of the critique which shall be used in the dialectic towards a more comprehensive definition of class.

Skeggs has critically re-defined the GBCS as the Great British Stratification Survey (Skeggs 2015). While Savage and colleagues aimed to show the class structure of the contem-

porary British society, they actually provide a social map made of categories of classes not interacting with one another. Bradley calls the analysis a “scale of possession”, pointing to the essentially gradational approach of the authors. The critique to the GBCS highlights a central aspect of research on social class, namely the distinction between class/class structure, and status/stratification. Both bundles of concepts view society as a vertical structure, composed by those who own more, and those who own less. While theories differ then on the number of classes or strata as well as on their definition and thus the boundaries between them, they all share the view that inequality is postulated and experienced across hierarchies.

However, social stratification theorists (Crompton 1998) consider society as composed by juxtaposed but separated strata of people. On the contrary, those authors focusing on a more relational concept of class tend to deploy the concept of class structure in order to stress the interconnectedness of different classes, linked by conflictual dynamics, such as exploitation, domination, control, etc. In other words, class structure, rather than being the sum of social positions, as in the stratification approach, refers to the “sum total of the class relations in a given unit of analysis” (Wright 2005: 19). The mentioned critique gives some hints to the shift from a categorical/gradational to the relational dimension of class analysis, i.e. the first theoretical step in order to reach more elaborated concepts of class, which not only consider classes as qualitative objects, but also define classes themselves according to their relationship to other classes.

2.1.2 Relational Approaches to Class: Marx and Weber

The first relational accounts of social class date back to Weber and Marx. Over the course of the 20th century, and in particular after WWII, the Weberian and the Marxist strands of social class analysis became dominant and concurrent. Scholars tended to adopt partisan views on which one of the two perspectives should be sustained, thus highlighting the differences between them and considering them as incompatible and mutually excluding. The ideological battle on academic ground reflected the geopolitical conflict between the Eastern and Western block (Wright 2016). Indeed, the most disputed issue about class regarded the most politically loaded matter of class consciousness and class struggle. While Weberian scholars pointed to Weber’s argument that social groups united by common interests do not automatically coalesce into collective social agents, Marxist sociologists reaffirmed the Marxist dogma about class as the social actor par excellence and the motor of history.

While the differences between the two approaches have been widely debated, there is a lack of research on their similarities, as Wright points out (Wright 2015). From his perspective, the search for similarities between Marx and Weber's approaches to class points to overcome the exclusiveness of one or the other framework when analyzing class. Contrarily to what has happened to class analysis since the 1970es, when "taking part" within the Marx-Weber opposition was necessary in order to be able to have a voice in the academic international arena, in more recent contributions attempts can be found which integrate different views and connect Marx and Weber in fruitful ways. The present work embraces this perspective, as it will be shown later. In one of his latest works, Wright examines closely the convergences between the two approaches (ebd.). Firstly, both support a relational perspective on society: Marx and Weber agree that classes are qualitative nominal categories, not quantitative gradational ones. In other words, for them social inequality is not a matter of purely quantitative indicators, such as income or wealth, but rather is constructed upon unequal relations between more or less well-delimited social groups. Further, for both the central mechanism through which class locations influence social action is the actualization of interests. Such an interest-based approach is of course shared by Marx, who considered material, class-related interests as coming out of the relationship of individuals to the means of production. Inequality is explained by both Marx and Weber mainly as a consequence of different access to property ownership (ebd.: 34).

The centrality of material interests and of property ownership can be traced back to the process of economic rationalization which for both Marx and Weber was inherent in the development of capitalism. Through the dismantling of private, familistic and traditional production relations, the advent of capitalism turned labor into a marketable commodity, and labor relations into market exchanges. This process of rationalization of production separated laborers from capitalists through a new clear cut. The classes which emerged out of this sustained necessarily contrasting and antagonistic interests. The main convergence between Weber and Marx thus consists in their common relational approach, one of the most convincing perspectives for the operationalization and analysis of class schemes. In the relational approach, classes are not constituted by aggregates of individuals, but rather by social (antagonistic) relations. From this viewpoint, the aim of sociologists is that of exploring the relations between classes rather than classes as such (Stark 1980).

While both approaches are relational, the main distinction between them lies in the site in

which the source of class inequalities are located. The Marxist vision on class stresses the structural constraints of the modes of production upon individual lives, separating them between the owners of the production means and those who only have their labor to sell in order to integrate in society. As Mezzadra sums up, “the ‘bearer’ of money has his or her ‘social power’ in his or her own pocket ... and his or her relationship with the world (his or her ‘habitation of the world’) is going to be mediated by this social power. The ‘bearer’ of labor power is on the contrary compelled to depend on human potency ... ‘the sum of all physical and intellectual attitudes contained by a living body’ (Marx 1988 [1867]: 181, cit. in Mezzadra 2011)”. In a nutshell, the integration of individuals into capitalistic relations (*Vergesellschaftung*) produces them as either capitalists or as workers. More specifically, for Marx the central issue is “how class determines both life chances and exploitation” (Wright 2015: 42). Marx stresses labor exploitation as the form of relation which separates people between oppressed and oppressors, slave and masters, laborers and capitalists. Moreover, highlighting exploitation means bringing to the focus the extraction of surplus from labor as the mechanism through which the dominant class not only produces, but also preserves, guarantees and reproduces its status. Marx thus does not exclude markets and exchange from the analysis, but rather adds to them the moment of production and value-creation as the *sine-qua-non*-condition for class formation.

The Weberian vision of class, on the contrary, while still focusing on property of the means of production as a key issue, highlights the market positions of individuals, which in turn affects their life chances. For Weber “the pivotal issue is how classes determine the life chances of people within highly rationalized forms of economic transactions – markets” (ebd.: 42). In the words of Weber, “class situation is, in this sense, market situation” (Weber 1968 [1922]: 927-8). For him, outside the rationalized market there cannot be any form of class. One more important distinction operated by Weber is then the one distinguishing class from status, which is associated with prestige and social honor rather than with the relationship to production. Status can thus be seen as the “socially perceived, and in some degree accepted, social superiority, equality and inferiority among individuals” (Chang/Goldthorpe 2007: 514). Members of the same status group share common lifestyles, consumption patterns and the degree of their societal acceptance. On the one hand, he criticizes the coercion and domination inherent in the capitalist system of organizing production, stating that only through the imposition of a work ethic through a “long and arduous process of education” workers can be con-

vinced to participate in a system which relegates them systematically into the location of the dominated. Labor must be performed as it were an absolute end in itself, a calling” (Weber 2001 [1905]: 25), otherwise workers would resist such a system and refuse work. On the other hand, Weber classifies workers resistance as a pre-capitalist social expression, one which prevents production of wealth. He considers the transformation of labor into a commodity as a way to make it more efficient. Thus, capitalism is still the “best” way to produce goods in a society, and workers resistance a historical force which aims to put a halt to societal progress. The main contrast between Marx and Weber becomes thus evident, as Marx sees workers’ agency as the motor of history and progress.

2.1.3. Classical Classifications and the Difficulty to Measure Exploitation

Notwithstanding all differences, the theories developed by Marx and Weber have both given the way to elaborations of class structure (or social stratification) in the form of occupational schemes. Occupation has been identified as the key site for studying class in societies in which a growing number of individuals were dependent on paid employment, i.e. in which the main source of income originated from work (Crompton 1998: 14-15). The most used schemes are the (mostly considered as) neo-Weberian one developed by the English sociologist John Goldthorpe and the Marxist one developed by the US-American Eric Olin Wright. Both have been elaborated since the 1970es.

The occupational scheme by Goldthorpe initially allocated occupations to classes according to their respective work and market situation (Goldthorpe et al. 1987). Occupations were put in the same class if their members are comparable, “on the one hand, in terms of their sources and levels of income and other conditions of employment, in their degree of economic security and in their chances of economic advancement; and on the other hand, in their location within the system of authority and control governing the processes of production in which they are engaged” (Goldthorpe et al. 1987: 40). However, the scheme has been further developed in the 1990es, when Goldthorpe and his American colleague Erikson published the book “The Constant Flux: A Study of Class Mobilities in Industrial Societies” (Goldthorpe/Erikson 1993). The organizing principle of the latest version of the scheme is the type of employment relations, meaning that the bundle of reciprocal obligations and opportunities between employer and employee makes the difference in explaining the class location of both. We can see that the scheme is thus strongly relational: class is defined by the employ-

ment status, and the status is defined by the type of social relation through which it is engaged.

The two main types of relations found by Erikson and Goldthorpe are the labor contract relationship and the service relationship. While the first entails “a relatively short-term and specific exchange of money for effort”, service contracts are directed to workers who “exercise delegated or specialized knowledge and expertise in the interest of the employing organization” (Erikson/Goldthorpe 1993: 41). The distinction is directed towards accounting for different degrees of autonomy and control, authority and dependency in employment relations. It is easy to recognize that the labor contract relationship refers to the industrial working classes, or blue collars, while the service relationship describes the middle classes, or white collars, a group which had heavily expanded since the 1950es. The labor contract exerts a stronger degree of control and imposition on the worker, who is “simply” asked to carry out a task or a set of tasks within a given amount of time. On the other side, the service relationship enables the worker to enter a career ladder. Moreover, conferring the worker with more authority, and integrating him/her into a flexible system of rewards, the service relationship is meant to describe a blurring of the sharp distinction between exploited and exploiter (Wright 2004: 20). The service worker is thus integrated into the logic of the employer, as s/he can contribute as an individual to the returns of the company and thus to his/her own income.

Wright, while recognizing that the principles detected by Erikson and Goldthorpe are valuable, argues that the issue of exploitation is blended out in their account of the middle classes (ebd). On one side, he takes a similar approach to Erikson and Goldthorpe’s one and highlights that class is primarily a social relation, while occupations refer to technical relations (Wright 1980: 177-178). The two must remain analytically strictly distinguished in class studies, which should in his own words aim to “decoding the social relations of production” (ebd.). Wright’s first attempt to develop a systematic class scheme upon these premises took place in the 1980es (Wright 1985). In the first scheme, social relations of production are categorized as either social relations of control over money capital, over physical capital or over labor (control and supervision of other workers and subordinates). While capitalists and workers are the opposite extremes of the scheme (the first ones being on top of the three scales, the other ones being at their bottoms, several intermediate categories lie in between, expressing “contradictory locations”, i.e. managers and supervisors, small employers, petty bourgeoisie and semi-autonomous wage earners (1980: 182). The focus on questions of autonomy and au-

thority (being class defined by the control over different sorts of capital), however, will lead Wright to criticize the first version of the scheme for considering mostly domination relations while neglecting the material relations of exploitation.

According to him, the relation of exploitation can be described as the simultaneous occurring of three principles: “the inverse interdependent welfare principle”, “the exclusion principle” and the “appropriation principle”. In other words, exploitation between two groups or individuals takes place when the exploiters are able to enlarge their welfare by extracting it through the system of wage labor from the exploited. By engaging in the wage relation, the exploited ones at the same time experience a reduction of their welfare and are excluded from enjoying the wealth extracted from them by the exploiters (Wright 2015: 84). While control and authority enable domination, the relation of exploitation also entails the “acquisition of economic benefits from the labor of those who are dominated” (Wright 2009: 107). The second class scheme developed by Wright aimed at overcoming such limitation of the first one and reformulated the criteria for locating occupations into classes into the triad (ownership of) property, authority and skills (Wright 2004). The new classification points to making the exploitative relations visible. For instance, the authority conferred by bosses to managers point to making managers able to increase the profit of the company. The manager receives a “loyalty rent” for his/her contribution to the attainment of surplus value, which translates into higher wages. By helping the company to get as much surplus value as possible from the labor force, they become part of the “exploitation machine” and be rewarded by getting a sort of “rent” due to their position in the company. Similarly, those who own skills which are rare to find on the labor market receive a sort of “skill rent”: owning these skills drives up the exchange value of their labor and make them harder to control by the bosses. In both cases, workers possessing authority and skills are able to receive a wage which is higher than the “exploitation”-wage-level, i.e. they are paid above the cost of reproducing their labor power (Wright 1998: 146-147).

An author who has tried to develop a theory which could explain class and reproduction of inequalities, although never aiming to the elaboration of a systematic occupational scheme similar to those by Wright and Erikson and Goldthorpe, is Pierre Bourdieu. He has been one of the most prominent scholar dealing with the reproduction of social inequality since the 1980es at least (Bourdieu 1982, 1984, 1986, 1987). Many scholars of the social stratification field have drawn their own accounts of class upon Bourdieu’s theoretical framework (Devine

et al. 2004). Bourdieu cannot be considered as strictly Weberian or Marxist, rather he mixed up and “borrowed as needed from the sociological canon” (Weininger 2005: 82), more precisely adopting the Marxian concept of capital to a Weber-oriented approach to class.

Bourdieu deployed three key concepts, i.e. capital, habitus and field, to describe and explain the ways how individuals are located and at the same time locate themselves in social space (ibid.: 13). According to him, class position is the result of the specific composition of different volumes of the sorts of capital possessed by an individual as well as by the evolution in time of the volume and composition, i.e. trajectory in social space followed by her/him (Bourdieu 1987: 4). The key process by which different sorts of capital affect people’s location in social space is the process of legitimation, through which certain lifestyles and dispositions are attributed power and prestige. Through this operational definition, which links class belonging to the economic, cultural, social and symbolic forms of capital, one can include in class analysis both the more economic perspective stemming from Marxist and Weberian approaches and more recent culturalist and consumption-based accounts (Bridge 2001).

Bourdieu’s work has been crucial to identify before unacknowledged ways how individuals and groups maintain and reinforce inequalities. As Wacquant says, the work of Bourdieu has aimed to provide a “mapping of the invisible structure of social space within which class emerge (or not)” (Wacquant 2013: 281). However, also in his work we find the problematic issue of distinguishing domination from exploitation relations. Bourdieu included in his analysis the Marxist concept of capital, translating it from the domain of critical political economy into the sociological one. Such dynamic has triggered the establishing of the so called “extension model”: on one side the concept of capital has been extended into other domains than the economic one, on the other side it has been “split” into different types, such as the cultural, social, symbolic, etc. (Swartz 1997: 66). Desan argues that the premises of such arguments are flawed since the Marxian concept of capital has not been taken seriously enough by Bourdieu. His focus on the volume and composition of capital leads one to think that capital might be a thing, while capital in a Marxian sense is of course a social relation (Desan 2013). Marxian capital is social in two senses: as a social relation of exploitation and as the “totality of social relations that reproduce this fundamental relation’s condition of possibility” (ibid: 322). Instead, Bourdieu defines capital as the “set of actually usable resources and powers” (Bourdieu 1984: 114). Division of labor according to him takes place according to the distribution of capital (Desan 2013). It becomes clear that, although Bourdieu’s concept of capital does not

refer only to material resources, but also to symbolic and immaterial ones, it still risks treating capital as an object. Thus, by adopting a quantitative and objectifying perspective to the concept of capital, but nonetheless locating it at the center of its “general theory of the economy of practices”, Bourdieu succeeds more in explaining domination (physical and symbolic) and distribution, closely to Tilly’s notion of opportunity hoarding, rather than exploitation (Tilly 1999). Desan argues that what Bourdieu’s theory lacks is “an idea of exploitation as a particular operation of power” (ibid.: 332). I will come back to the use of the concept of capital by Bourdieu later, showing how it must be placed into the analysis of mechanisms of social reproduction carried out by the French thinker.

2.1.4. Feminist Class Analysis: The Role of Reproductive Work and the Gender Division of Labor

The concepts of class and the classifications mentioned in the previous sections, while differing sometimes with regard to the main mechanisms underlying the production of classes, all share a crucial element: class is seen as the outcome of relations originating from the labor field. Such argument was most prominently brought by Marx, who believed the proletariat, i.e. the (male) free wage-laborers, to be the social agent of history. Indeed, Marx conceived wage labor as the source of all value, as Ferguson notes while recalling a quote by Marx and Engels: “Men must be in a position to live in order to be able to “make history”. But life involves before everything else eating and drinking, a habitation, clothing and many other things. The first historical act is thus the production of the means to satisfy these needs, the production of material itself” (Marx 1977, cit. in Ferguson 2015: 44-45).

Given that the mentioned theories have been written since the end of the 19th century up to the 1990es, it is possible to connect the focus on paid employment as main or even exclusive basis either for inequalities, social distinction and collective agency, to the process of development of capitalism (Crompton 1998). The establishing of the family (i.e. household with a male breadwinner) as the entity charged with the reproduction of labor force is also related to the development of capitalist relations as the basis for the production of wealth and the consequent gendered division of labor, with the male working in the factory or becoming a capitalist and the female remaining home to take care of reproductive work (Federici 2009: 97). In other words, focusing on how wage labor structures the position of individuals in society and brings them into bounded unities, has led to the identification of labor and work as the key

site for all types of classification which have become dominant at least in Western societies. It is perhaps no coincidence that all or almost all the classical theorists of class have been (mostly white) men.

Since the 1970es, however, such argument has been challenged by several streams of research, beginning most importantly with feminist critiques stemming both from the academy and social movements. In particular, autonomist Marxist feminists, socialist feminists and black feminists began bringing to light that the focus on production and exchange had for long time obscured a sphere crucial to the survival of capitalistic relations, namely the sphere of reproduction. These authors have engaged in exploring the relationship between capitalist production and domestic reproduction (Weeks 2007). To do so, many of them have deployed the Marxist concept of primitive accumulation as it was reworked by Rosa Luxemburg. The Polish thinker and politician showed that capital is able to regenerate itself by colonizing new spheres of life and turning them into “accumulation machines”. While the non-capitalist spheres are indispensable for accumulation of capital, the latter inevitably “proceeds, at the cost of this medium nevertheless, by eating it up” (Luxemburg 2003 [1913]: 363). While the concept of primitive accumulation has been applied also to other fields of capital accumulation, as it will be showed in the next section, it has been considered by feminist accounts as a starting point to analyze the meaning and role of reproductive labor within capitalism.

Silvia Federici (2004) investigated in her book “Caliban and the Witch” the transition from feudalism to capitalism through a Marxist feminist lens, focusing on how the transition to capitalism in Europe via primitive accumulation, took place not only through the body of the male waged proletariat (the privileged standpoint used by Marx) but also and most importantly through the “transformation of the body into a work-machine, and the subjugation of women to the reproduction of the work-force” (ebd.: 63). Primitive accumulation did not only imply the “accumulation and concentration of exploitable workers and capital”, but also “an accumulation of differences and divisions within the working class, whereby hierarchies built upon gender, as well as “race” and age, became constitutive of class rule and the formation of the modern proletariat” (Federici 2009: 63). In this sense, women have played the role of “inner colony” for Western capitalism, as their unpaid labor can be paralleled to slave labor in the colonies during imperialism (Mies et al. 1988). In other words, women’s unpaid labor in the home has been “the pillar upon which the exploitation of the waged workers, “wage slavery”, has been built, and the secret of its productivity” (ebd.: Preface). Women as the produc-

ers and reproducers of the labor force have been indispensable to the development of capitalism (James/Dalla Costa 1972).

The fact that women's domestic work did not fit into the established class schemes developed since the 1970es, had already been discussed in those times. Among others, Wright tackled this problem by arguing that, while "housewives obviously work and produce things in the home ... the amalgamation of class and gender undercuts the explanatory specific of both class and gender" (Wright 2004: 22). Similarly, Goldthorpe faced the critique of "intellectual sexism" in an article published in 1983, however defending an approach to class analysis based on formal employment (Goldthorpe 1983), as I explain in more detail later.

However, the acknowledgement that occupational schemes had remarkable limitations with regard to accounting for domestic labor and generally people not located within wage relations did not activate a reformulation of the principle upon which those schemes were based. These has important consequences not only in analytical terms, but also in terms of struggles. As Disch observes, recalling the French materialist feminist Delphy (who however was talking here about feminists who replicated the approach of traditional Marxist class analysis) "by attributing to them the class of their husbands, the wives of the bourgeoisie [men]... are made to look like enemies" by the wives of working class men, "when they might rather be rallied to the struggle against [gender] oppression". (Delphy 1984, cit. in Disch 2015). The presented occupational schemes, in other words, completely fail the challenge of going beyond wage labor when talking about class and to include in their work-based class analysis a huge amount of work carried out by unpaid housewives.

Rather, this task was carried out by feminist scholars, although with different approaches and outcomes (Fuchs 2017; Weeks 2007). The task of integrating unpaid domestic labor into a Marxist analysis led to two main lines of thought conflicting on the issue whether domestic labor ought to be considered as productive or unproductive for capitalism. According to the first standpoint, domestic labor is to be thought as integral part of capitalism, as an "inside", which thus should be made visible through the claim to become proper paid wage labor, as claimed by collectives such as "Wages for Housework" since the 1970es (Toupin 2018). On the other side, other feminists stated that domestic labor should be conceived as an outside to capitalism, from whose standpoint it was easier to organize resistance (Rose 2004; Scholz 2000; Endnotes Collective 2013). Most notably, the black feminist and activist Angela Davis supported the second position and stated that domestic unpaid labor was a form of slavery build-

ing up the “outside” premise for the development of capitalist relations and that it therefore was not comparable to wage labor (Davis 1983).

While the issue whether domestic labor is productive or unproductive in a Marxian sense has once again important consequences about how to relate feminist strategies of political action to other struggles such as those led by working class organizations (Weeks 2007: 235), the question becomes secondary once we acknowledge that unpaid labor has grown and multiplied in the last decades, becoming increasingly loosened from gender relations. In the contemporary post-Fordist context, the dichotomy production vs. reproduction, wage vs. non-wage labor, needs a reformulation, as it extends itself beyond the boundaries of gender, or rather expands gendered relations to a point proximate to the dissolution of gender itself. Thus, the debates led by feminists in the 1970es, 1980es and 1990es become crucial for the understanding of contemporary labor relations which increasingly entail unpaid and immaterial labor (Hardt/Negri 2000; Berardi 2009; Standing 2013).

Most importantly, the work by those feminists was already pointing to a peculiar type of development of capitalism which ought to become dominant over the next decades. The distinction between productive and unproductive labor was predicated upon the industrial variety of capitalism, which is based on production of material commodities. However, as Weeks shows in her analysis of the work by Charles W. Mills (1951) and Arlie R. Hochschild (1983), the same practices (which Hochschild, for instance, terms “emotional labor”) “deemed unproductive in one site directly produce value in another and thus this simple distinction between what is inside or outside the circuits of capitalist valorization becomes increasingly untenable” (Weeks 2007: 238). In other words, while in Fordism it could be still doubted about this, in Post-Fordism practices of domestic and unpaid labor, such as caring activities, but also “smiling at clients”, have been largely subsumed within capitalist relations, as they constitute the core activities of an increasing number of jobs.

The feminist critique can help us dissecting two main work-related processes which have been observed since the rise of Post-Fordism: the diffusion of forms of labor that produce “immaterial commodities” (Berardi 2009) and the precarization of labor (Castel/Dörre 2013, Standing 2011, Bourdieu 1999). More specifically, the mentioned debates within feminism give us a method to disclose hidden relations between human activities not yet considered as proper “work” and activities traditionally considered as productive. The goal is thus to make unpaid work visible and to strengthen our understanding of precarity as an inherently funda-

mental part of contemporary capitalist relations. Moreover, by focusing on emotional and affective labor, on reproductive labor, in other words on labor aimed at producing and reproducing life, we can better grasp the peculiarities of that part of work which does not deal with the production of material commodities, which is becoming increasingly dominant.

Many concepts and theories have been developed to describe the “immaterialization” or “tertiarization” (Hardt/Negri 2000; Standing 2009) of work which has taken place with the shift from Fordism to Post-Fordism, from Taylorism to Toyotism and “just-in-time production”, from the work in fabric to work in the social fabric, etc. I am aware about the different conceptualizations of digital labor, informational labor, cognitive labor, immaterial labor, emotional and affective labor, and that no concept has established itself in the debate. Rather, the proliferation of concepts might reflect the multiplication of labor which has taken place in the last three decades (Mezzadra/Neilson 2013).

While the debate over the most appropriate concept is not relevant for this research, yet it seems necessary to delve into this issue in more detail. It is not possible to give an exhaustive overview here, however in the following I will briefly sketch some of the most promising approaches towards the explanation of the shift to immaterial labor and to the multiplication of labor. One of the first approaches to explore the expansion of work beyond the fabric was delivered by Charles Wright Mills in 1951. He conducted a research on clerks, professionals, lawyers, professors and business managers and defined them as white-collar workers, i.e. those workers “who do not manipulate things, but rather symbols and people” (Mills 1951: 65). The ability to “manipulate symbols and people” refers to a central component of capitalism since the second half of the 20th Century: knowledge. The focus on the latter as one main “principle of partition” (Delphy 1984) for social inequalities has led to many theorizations, from Bell’s concept of “post-industrial society” (Bell 1976) to Castells’ concepts of “informationalism” and “network society” (Castells 2000), from Bourdieu’s focus on cultural capital (Bourdieu 1979) to Hardt and Negri’s first theorizations of “immaterial labor” (Hardt/Negri 2000), from Moulner Boutang’s concept of “cognitive capitalism” (Moulner-Boutang 2011) to the notion of “informational capitalism” developed by Fuchs more recently (Fuchs 2010). Most crucially, the expansion of digital technologies has radically transformed the way of understanding the production of immaterial goods. Fuchs, for instance, defines information as entailing mainly processes of cognition, communication and cooperation (Fuchs 2010: 180).

What is common to all these theories is the acknowledged difficulty in drawing bound-

aries between what is properly productive work and what is not, i.e. between work and life. This leads to a central issue already tackled by Marx in his elaboration on alienated labor, namely that “in the first place labor, life-activity, productive life itself, appears to man merely as a means of satisfying ... the need to maintain the physical existence. Yet the productive life is the life of the species. It is life-engendering life. The whole character of a species — its species character — is contained in the character of its life activity; and free conscious activity is man’s species character. Life itself appears only as a means to life” (Marx 2007: 75). When talking about labor involving production of immaterial goods, we face the original contradiction of capitalism in its entirety, namely that while what characterizes humans is exactly their cognitive ability to work and develop a complex and integrated system of production, in the very moment of expressing this ability, in other words of expressing life, they are robbed of their product, thus becoming a “dead” commodity, the labor commodity. In contemporary capitalism, forms of labor which are oriented to produce immaterial things rely on the very capacity of the human brain to think and imagine (or to understand, to analyze, to communicate, to cooperate). The mediation operated by new immaterial means of production, such as algorithms, takes different forms than those we know from industrial production. Through the spread of digitalization, automation and informalization of economic activities, we face the problematic issue of work colonizing life in a more pervasive way. The distinction between work and life becomes increasingly hard to recognize, it is increasingly difficult to draw a line between the cognitive activities directed towards production and those towards the non-economic, the cultural, symbolic and social spheres of life, i.e. towards the reproduction of human beings.

The crucial issue then becomes that of understanding the multifarious ways through which the very capacity of human beings to think is turned into a marketized value. While knowledge and information are considered as commons, in Marxian words, the “general intellect”, there must be a process of enclosure to make them productive in a capitalist sense of the term (that enable them to create surplus value). This has led to a sort of colonization of life by work, a kind of primitive accumulation of the spheres of knowledge and information, in which “social life itself becomes productive” (Fuchs 2010: 192). The “multiplication of labor” we experience today (Mezzadra/Neilson 2013) tells us that there is much to be explored to understand the new modalities of enclosure of human activity into productive labor. In other words, empirical work is needed to reformulate both the concept of class and the occupational

schemes mentioned before, which remained stuck in an industrial mode of production, failing to see these major transformations of work occurring since the second half of the 20th century.

2.1.5. Free Labor or Free to Be a Slave? Including Unpaid Labor into the Analysis of Class

The second process I want to analyze here is the proliferation of unpaid and unrecognized work, which is also related to the just mentioned intrusion of work into spheres previously considered as private and unproductive. While the occupational schemes and the traditional approaches to class do not go beyond formal labor relations, we need new tools to understand how and why unpaid labor has actually never ceased to exist in capitalism. Once again, it seems useful here to borrow the feminist approach to unpaid labor and aim to highlighting the structural and materialist relations between forms of unpaid (invisible, unacknowledged) and paid (wage or self-employed) work. The work done by Guy Standing, who has become widely known in the last decade for his conceptualization of the precariat, is of particular interest here. In an article published in 2013 in *Public Culture*, Standing seeks to categorize types of work which are not considered as labor but which are most often necessary premises to enter a labor relation, similarly to how domestic labor is necessary, although often taken-for-granted, to reproduce wage laborers (Standing 2013).

Starting point of that analysis is that time constitutes a “key asset” in a tertiary society, i.e. in a society “in that what we do is largely covered by “services”” (ibid.: 5). While we do not need here to linger on the choice of the concept of tertiary society, what is interesting is the departing point of the argumentation, namely that “time is distributed unequally and inequitably”. This leads to the claim that looking at the unequal distribution of time can enlighten us about present class divisions.

However, it soon becomes clear that we cannot look at time as a “block” of minutes, hours or days, if contemporary work activities are increasingly hard to distinguish from other types of activities, as we have seen before. Standing rightly mentions the diffusion of the concept of “multitasking” as a prove for this (ibid.: 10). I would add that multi-tasking displays the multiplication of time (and of labor) and bring us beyond any attempt to understand the relationship between time and labor exclusively within a chronological framework. Snyder (2016) offers a brilliant analysis of how the social construction of time, and thus how time af-

fects the meaning which people give to work and labor, are changing in contemporary capitalism (which he defines “flexible”). He distinguishes between time as Chronos, i.e. quantitative and measurable time, time in Fordism, from time as Kairos, “the god of good timing, improvisation and strategic advantage”, symbolizing a “more qualitative conception of time” which “rules over newer post-industrial forms of flexible production” (Snyder 2016: 2). Thus, Snyder argues that the latter becomes increasingly relevant in contemporary labor patterns, taking three groups (financial brokers, truck drivers and middle class post-crisis unemployed) as quintessential examples of this trend.

With the restructuring of time, it becomes clear that work cannot be defined anymore neither by a delimited space in which it should be carried out neither. As Standing rightly points out, “increasingly people take their labor to home” as well as “perform labor in several workplaces” (Standing 2013: 7). We experience thus a disconnection of work with fixed time and fixed space, which challenges classical approaches to study work.

The strategy followed by Standing is that of classifying all activities which do relate to wage labor directly or indirectly, but which are not recognized as such. Rather than a systematic typology, however, he develops a loose list of these types. The most crucial ones in quantitative terms seem to be work-for-labor and training-for-labor, which taken together comprehend all activities directed towards finding a job, or in Standing’s words to “enhance employability”. This type of work can also be considered from a Weberian perspective as the acquisition of assets, skills, cultural and social capital to gain a possibly favorable position on the labor market. Therefore, this work is to be placed in the sphere of exchange rather than in that of production. Such work is increasingly pursued by individuals in a progressive detachment from the state. Examples are the proliferation as well as differentiation of increasingly privatized education and training paths. Concepts such as “life-long learning” reflect the fact that while the total amount of “official” working hours is declining¹¹, time spent in work-for-labor is growing.

Even when the state appears as giver of benefits and support (usually in order to bring human beings to a state of “expendability”), there seems to be a range of increasingly time-consuming work to be done for people in order to become suitable beneficiaries. This “work-for-state” becomes visible in the long queues of people standing in the corridors of job centers filling up papers, migrants spending time in order to translate forms to their mother tongue

¹¹<https://data.oecd.org/emp/hours-worked.htm> (last accessed: 03.01.2019).

language etc. As many scholars from critical migration research have underlined, queuing is increasingly used as a governing dispositive by the state, for instance in order to discourage those willing to access circuits of welfare.

However, “work-in-waiting” (Standing 2013: 7) entails not only the relationship with the state but also with the market. Temporary unemployment can be seen also as a “forced” waiting-time whose imposition is mediated by the anarchoid highs and peaks of increasingly globalized labor markets as well as by their needs for “just-in-time” production. Nonetheless, with the shift from welfare to workfare in the industrialized countries facing higher unemployment and recurring crisis, also the state is aligning towards forcing citizens into specific statuses. One example is that of forced work measures (Germ., *Massnahmen*) brought by job centers, which challenge the very idea of capitalism as the regime of establishment of “free labor” against the previous regime of government of labor based on slavery.

The idea that wage labor in capitalism shall be defined as “free” was developed by Marx to distinguish the proletariat, who owns nothing but its body, its mind and thus its labor force, from slaves, who were not free in the sense that they did not own anything, neither their bodies and minds nor their children (Neilson/Mezzadra 2013). While this conception of freedom expressed as the ownership of the self has become the basis for the development of modern thought in the West, and is ultimately part of the foundation for the Western ideals of equality and democracy, critical scholars, and in particular black thinkers such as Du Bois, Fanon and Hall, have shown how it has been predicated upon the denial of such right in the colonies since the age of European imperialism, in a dialectical movement oriented towards repressing the voice of black otherness (Bröck/Junker 2014; Foster 2007). While it is not possible to offer here an overview of these rich lines of thought, what is fundamental is to underline that, as for the feminist thought which accompanied the struggles in the 1970es for the material liberation of women from the kitchen sink, black thinkers have contributed to the liberation of black people and sparked the movement for civil rights in USA in the 1960es. Their struggles for equality before the law as well as the theories developed by black thinkers, postcolonial thinkers in those years and afterwards, can constitute a fertile source of analytical support for contemporary analysis of forms of labor which exceed the classification as “free” wage labor.

The idea that in capitalism there is no place for slavery has been indeed challenged in light of the developments of labor relations in the past decades, especially in the Global South (Mezzadra/Neilson 2013). Rather, it seems that different forms of labor have co-existed

within capitalism, and that in particular “forms of servile, enslaved or indentured labor are far from representing mere archaisms” (Barchiesi 2003). Some scholars went further and argued that slavery and wage labor are just “two extremes along the spectrum of labor relations” (Van den Linden 2008: 18). Slavery has become to be considered an ontological aspect of blackness, while it stays a historical event for whites. Yet, it is true that the analysis of contemporary forms of precarious, forced, unpaid work can be better pursued using (also) the lens of blackness.

AbdouMalik Simone talks about “generic blackness”, or as the “generic aspect of blackness”, to highlight the conundrum where “the blackness of specific lives and histories offers a way into thinking about all of the imperceptible practices at work in urban life but is not limited to these histories” (Simone 2016). Although Simone previously underlined that the use of the concept of blackness is not directed at “sociological explanation” (Simone 2010), he suggests that the concept forces one to be creative and ask new questions, and functions as a device to “navigate through the entanglement of possibility and precariousness in urban life” (ibid.: 183). One example might be that of trying to learn as much as possible about contemporary forced work using black theories. For instance, applying concepts developed to investigate the devices of control and surveillance used during slavery to preserve and protect the master-slave relationship, might help to make visible the regime of surveillance and transparency increasingly imposed to digital and service workers thanks to informational technologies (Dark Matters, Simone Browne). The goal here, then, is that of overcoming the view that the diffusion of unpaid, insecure and precarious work is a novum, a new condition inherently linked to the specific historical form of contemporary capitalism and accept the view that it constitutes rather the norm (Neilson/Rossiter 2005; 2008).

However, what is specific to our times are the historical modalities and materialities of super-exploitation via the specific forms of unpaid, unrecognized, and insecure labor which have become dominant after les trente glorieuses, which finished around the 1970s. Precarization of labor needs thus to be explored in particular from this historically and geographically widened perspective according to which the Keynesian and Fordist ideal of capitalist stability has represented a bare exception from the capitalist rule.

The idea that precarity is “normal” actually contradicts the widespread and common-sense view on precarity as deviation from a socially recognized standard (Castel/Dörre 2013). The latter refers to precarious work as relationally and negatively linked to socially legitimate

ideas of decent work. Neilson and Rossiter enlist the main forms of precarious labor: illegalized, seasonal and temporary employment to homework, flex- and temp-work to subcontractors, freelancers or so-called self-employed persons (Neilson/Rossiter 2005; 2008). Precarious labor is thus all those labor which is not the employment with a permanent contract and full access to social and health assistance. This “deficit” approach towards precarity (precarity as the lack of, precarity as the scarcity of), while of course being linked to political struggles for betterment of work and life conditions, is perhaps misplaced in light of the previously mentioned premise. Nonetheless, its strength lies in approaching precarity relationally, as it speaks out the subjectivities behind it: that precarity is seen as a deterioration of conditions means thus that those perceiving it as such have a (socially shared) background of social betterment. Some scholars argue that these are traditionally the middle classes, whose foundation is indeed constituted by (the promise of) betterment (De Angelis 2010). Precarity appears here then as the state of emergency, the state of exception of the middle classes, and as a fundamental crack in the mechanism for reproduction of capitalism.

While dominant accounts (in the public discourses, in speech of politicians, in media, but also in academic accounts) insist on precarity as a bummer, and on young generations as the unlucky ones, often it is forgotten that precarity in labor reflects precarity of capital and capital reproduction in present times (Rossiter/Neilson 2005). While this issue will be further explored later, what we need to do here is to point out a last crucial aspect of the contemporary regime of work.

2.1.6. Self-Employment as a Way of Life or: Why Do People Work for Free?

Against the background of spread of insecure and unpaid work it seems helpful to investigate the system of legitimation within which indeed so many people and in particular young people accept such conditions, which should be actually socially perceived as “deviant” from the norm, according to common accounts in social research. In fact, while some jobs today might look like slavery with respect to labor conditions and pay, they are - mostly - not imposed with legal authority or violence to people. Indeed, there is not a great amount of research on the mechanisms for legitimation of precarious work. Weber would maybe argue that laborers in capitalism accept their condition of exploitation by means of a response to a call, a compulsion to work, which sparks from the protestant ethic of salvation through sacrifice (Weber 2001 [1905]). While this still may apply today for specific contexts, I would argue

that we need to find a more historically informed answer in the shift from Keynesian and Fordist regimes of labor to more flexible regimes, which include nowadays multiple modes of production simultaneously. These have been read by many scholars as the own capital's response to claims from the social movements of the 1970es such as the refusal of "jobs for life" (Neilson/Rossiter 2005) and the request for more autonomy, diversity, freedom, authenticity and creativity in work, i.e. the so called "artistic critique" (Boltanski/Chiapello 2006).

This line of thought, which depicts many of the claims of the 1968 movement as the "trojan horse of neoliberalism" (Lazzarato 2007), draws a boundary between those who have profited and those who have lost from the liberalization of labor markets and from the shifting of profit-making from industrial to knowledge production. While it may be true, and it is indeed an argument of this research, that new lines of social inequality have arisen out of these transformations, the distinction and contraposition between the artistic and social critique (which claims solidarity, equality and security instead of autonomy, freedom and authenticity) proposed by Boltanski and Chiapello seems misplaced. In other words, it is based on the premise that worker subjectivities can claim either the former or the latter. This is due to a misinterpretation of industrial and knowledge sectors as two opposing classes, while myriads of studies have showed that also in the knowledge sectors we find multifarious forms of exploitation which affect workers in different ways and put them in different class locations (Lazzarato 2007).

With self-employment as a way of life I mean that the quest for autonomy and freedom in labor relations has been followed by the displacement of labor from the sphere of employment and to the disconnection of work and labor. This can be seen in the expansion of self-employment as a main characteristic of contemporary labor, in particular in cultural and creative economies. In self-employment, the relation of exploitation stops being a dialectical one between the manager and the laborer and collapses into the body and mind of the worker. This is a problem for the production of a class subject, as antagonism, which needs to be accepted as intrinsic to the relations of production for the formation of a "traditional" working class subject (Thompson 1963: 203), is not anymore recognized as in dialectical movement from the self to the external world, but becomes part and parcel of the own self. The problem of exploitation is thus to be set anew, if I cannot distinguish the two separate *dramatis personae* who are the exploited and the exploiter. This aspect has become central to critical analysis such as Foucault's one on "human capital" (Foucault 2008) and on the formation of the "en-

trepreneurial subject” (Bröckling 2007).

Notwithstanding, it remains the need to explore the systems of legitimation of un(der)paid work. To do this it is fundamental on one side to avoid considering the various forms of knowledge labor carried out by more or less educated cultural workers (engaged in activities such as writing, editing, drawing, imagining) as essentially different from other forms of exploitation which affect over-proportionally migrants and women performing activities not usually recognized as creative, such as cleaning, caring or nurturing (Neilson/Rossiter 2005; Mezzadra/Neilson 2013). On the other side, it also seems necessary to avoid the trap of pointing at the collusion of workers with their own exploitation. The tendency of many scholars to analyze workers’ behaviors through the lenses of Marxist orthodoxy and arbitrarily attribute false class consciousness from behind the academic desks has led to major problems in class analysis. Instead, I propose exploring the conditions under which people engage in un(der)paid labor by taking into account that labor cannot be reduced to the provision of money and income.

While orthodox Marxists focus on material interests as the only drivers of human agency, thus considering money as the only commodity capable of working as currency and falling into adopting a rational choice view typical of classical political economy, it is necessary to broaden the focus and look at forms of rewards attached to precarious labor which do not appear in the paycheck (when there is one to be looked at). Weber’s concept of interest becomes relevant here, as he distinguished between ideal and material interests, but stating that they both “play the role of motivators of action”, as they both require the “consummation or satisfaction of a desire” (Lizardo/Stoltz 2018). While material interests are for Weber somehow ahistorical, as the need for physical survival is a constant of humanity, he stresses ideal interests as being historically shaped. In other words, he states that the concrete ways in which individuals of a society pursue honor, prestige and freedom are always connected to the specific historical situation of that society. From this perspective, the stress on creativity, self-realization, and valorization of the own ideas is perhaps to be connected to the increased economic relevance of creative work in contemporary capitalism. If individuals today tend to be more oriented by these ideal interests, then the reason might be found in the transformations of production and the shift to new modes of accumulation not anymore based on production of material goods. Being able to produce immaterial goods and get honor and prestige as a reward of intellectual labor is today seen as a higher ideal interest than becoming rich. In such a sys-

tem, it becomes more difficult to disentangle mechanisms of (material) exploitation involved in labor relations. Nonetheless, as self-employed labor expands, and labor relations become more rarefied, the central question remains about who has the power to decide about the economic value of the product of human creativity.

2.1.7. Bringing space into class analysis

While the issue of exploitation has been dominant in class research for many decades, the contribution by Rosa Luxemburg to the first debates on class shall be briefly mentioned here, as it has been long overlooked, although recently reconsidered to explain forms of domination and extraction of value which do not take place within labor relations. As the geographer David Harvey recalls in his writings about “new imperialism” (Harvey 2004), Luxemburg talks about two forms of capitalist accumulation. The first one is exploitation, already described in the previous section, which she calls a “purely economic process, with its most important phase a transaction between the capitalist and the wage laborer”. The second one refers to what Marx called “original” or “primitive accumulation”, which concerns in the words of Luxemburg “the relations between capitalism and the non-capitalist mode of production”. Luxemburg was talking here about the historical moment of imperialism, expressed through the methods of “colonial policy, an international loan system - a policy of spheres of interest - and war” (Luxemburg 2003: 432).

Harvey uses this concept, turning it into “accumulation by dispossession”, in order to explain more modern forms of accumulation of capital such as financialization, commodification of intellectual property rights and of cultural forms, as well as processes of depletion of environmental resources, such as land grabbing (which have been mostly studied as “extractivist capitalism”). In a nutshell, accumulation by dispossession refers to processes of enclosure, of commodification of material and immaterial goods which were previously not convertible into money. To do so, markets are also created to enable the exchange of the newly-formed commodities. As Harvey and many other authors assert, we assist today to the “continuous role and persistence of the predatory practices” or primitive accumulation (Harvey 2004: 74). Mezzadra and Neilson talk with respect to this of the “expansion of new frontiers of capital”, of new enclosures (2013: 241). These contemporary dynamics do not actualize that much as a chronologically linear transition from non-capitalist to capitalist modes of production, but rather tend to be “repetitive and ongoing” (Tilley et al 2017: 2). These new enclo-

sures “crisscross knowledge and life, operate in dismantling welfare systems, and take abstract shape in the working of financial devices”, as Mezzadra and Neilson put it (2013: 241), recalling the recent work by Saskia Sassen on expulsions (Sassen 2014).

While there is dispute among Marxist authors about the applicability of Harvey’s concept of accumulation by dispossession to such a variety of fields (Mellino 2014) as well as about the issue that the focus on dispossession tend to obscure resistance and struggles (Tilley 2017), what interests us for the present research is the acknowledgment of the multifarious and simultaneous modalities of capital accumulation. Such variety is interpreted by many as being triggered by the capitalist crises which have repeatedly occurred since the end of Fordism and the beginning of a proliferation of labor, leaking out of the factory (Hardt/Negri 2004). The key issue is that looking at modes of accumulation which are alternative to exploitation, but nonetheless shape the experience of individuals as well as their subjectivation and resistance, can provide us with an analytical framework able to dissect class relations taking place outside of labor relations.

In particular, the concept of accumulation by dispossession is very useful to understand processes of value extraction intertwined within the production of the urban fabric, which has been seen as a key site for the reproduction of capitalism at least since Lefebvre (1991). The huge expansion of the production of built environment, especially of that major part of built environment which constitutes cities worldwide is to be connected according to Harvey to crises of *sovra*-accumulation on the primary circuit of capital, i.e. surpluses of capital and labor power. The processes of financialization have become more dominant after the neoliberalization of capital markets which was carried out during the 1980es as a reaction to the oil crisis of 1973 (Harvey 2004). Financialization of housing markets has nonetheless itself provoked the global financial crisis of 2008, sparked from the outburst of the subprime mortgage bubble in the US. Such crises led to the expansion of the so-called secondary circuit of capital, which is exactly concerning the production of built environment (Christophers 2011).

Here, capital flows into commodities able to function as a storage of value over time and space, i.e. housing, infrastructures, etc. The spatial-temporal fix provided by housing to capital troubling in seeking safe and consistent profit returns creates modes of integration of individuals into the capitalist “axiomatic” which are different than those provided by labor relations. Forms of accumulation taking place in urban economies, such as gentrification, constitute a spatialization of the mentioned frontiers of capital, as Neil Smith put in this work on the

revanchist cities (Smith 1996). Urbanites are thus embedded into such processes of valorization through dynamics which are different although not autonomous from the ones taking place on urban labor markets (Allen/Hamnett 1991).

Such forms of accumulation thus not only occur on the structural level, but also on the individual one. Individuals are embedded into the secondary circuit via their need for shelter and housing, which confront them with the necessity to take decisions about where to live and how to live. A vast bulk of literature shows how residential and housing choices are not accidental, but rather are predicated upon the class and status location of individuals, their access to assets and resources as well as their lifestyles and consumption patterns. As Aalbers and Christophers put it, “social relations and their dissonance are ... writ large in the physical landscape of housing” (Aalbers/Christophers 2013). To this regard, housing tenure constitutes a major axis dividing urbanites into homeowners or tenants. Although scholars have shown that much diversity is to be found also within the two tenure forms (Forrest/Murie 2001), the distinction between homeowners and tenants has been often considered as a main axis relevant also for understanding class location.

The first debate around this issue dates back to the time of birth of the class debate. With his essay “The Housing Question” published in 1872, Engels opened the issue whether home ownership could be assimilated to ownership of means of production in dividing society between proletarians and capitalists, promptly demonstrating that this was not the case (Engels 1887). Since then, scholars have been debating this question, with Marxists and Weberians again taking the lead of the discussion and polarizing around it. While the former contended that social class determines housing position, the latter insisted that the Marxist view underplayed the relevance of housing in shaping social relations (Aalbers/Christophers 2014). During the 1970es then, Rex and Moore importantly introduced the issue of race, largely ignored in the debate, as a crucial axis of inequality intervening in the housing situation of individuals (Rex/Moore 1967). Finally, Aalbers and Christophers mention the appeasing compromise found by Murie and Forrest (2001), who stated that housing position is dependent on labor market position, while at the same time housing itself also influences class division. Class belonging affects the residential choices of individuals because of several reasons. Firstly, the uneven distribution of the land and housing price structures and eventually limits the possibility of access to residential areas in the city according to the individual economic resources. Secondly, people might decide to live in a particular place because it is close to their work-

place and social life. Finally, from the perspective of sociology of consumption, living in a particular area might be more or less desirable according to the prestige which society accords to it (Barbagli/Pisati 2012: 14 ff.). In a nutshell, housing allocation processes are "drenched in class and therefore implicated in the production of class divisions" (Allen 2008: 25). This assumption implies that the organization of the urban space constitutes the physical expression and reproduction of social inequality and hierarchies, which are made visible in the city (Barbagli/Pisati 2012: 15).

This research embraces the view of housing as the physical site for as well as the source of economic and social relations. While it is less interesting to decide upon the supremacy of housing or labor relations in shaping class and status, as well as a very complex question to be answered, I argue that we should look at the intertwining between these two spheres of social and economic life, in order to understand how class and status are to be redefined according to the expressions of contemporary capitalism. The multiplicity of housing is what is of interest here. Housing is relevant both for class formation (via its quality as value storage as source of income whose returns are mediated through both ownership and rent contract) and for status, as it is a display of taste, lifestyle, consumption. More specifically, it is not only relevant as such, but also its spatial location is crucial to define the status of an individual. The rural/urban divide, as well as the central/gentrified vis a vis peripheral/marginal speak to the life of people through the materiality of housing. Summing up, housing is central for social reproduction.

The question about how people relate to housing involves thus several factors at different levels. Following the theoretical framework of Polanyi, the state, the market and family are fundamental institutions in the provision of housing. As Kurz and Blossfeld show in their comparative research across Europe, different welfare systems and the level of marketization of the housing provision affect the strategies developed by people in order to lower economic risk with regard to their housing (Kurz/Blossfeld 2004). For instance, in North European countries, housing is largely provided by the state through subsidies and construction of public housing for a generalized audience (Kurz 2004). We find therefore high percentages of tenancy among the population. Instead, in Southern European countries, the provision of housing has been traditionally left to the private initiative, leading to a predominance of home ownership (Baldini 2013). Donnison and Ungerson use a similar argument, adding that in resource-rich countries the housing field is recognized as fundamental for economic development and

represents therefore one of the sectors where the state invests more money (Donnison/Unger-son 1982).

Moreover, the development of the modes of accumulation mentioned above reminds us that housing is not a “common” commodity which can be consumed and produced as many others, but rather is one which generates rent. This means that its ownership can potentially constitute a source of income. Piketty has included housing property into the stunningly comprehensive account for wealth distribution and inequalities he developed in “Capital of the 21st Century” (Piketty 2014). In the book, he tries to integrate all income generating assets into one category, of which housing stock is one part. Wright is right in criticizing Piketty for ignoring that labor relations generate profit through radically different social processes from those involved in housing investments (Wright 2015: 137). Housing ownership has indeed a totally different social meaning for different groups, for instance private households and institutional investors. However, at a time when housing value is strictly connected to financial markets, it also represents a return to capital. The proposition applies not only to large-scale investments carried out by fictional personas such as international financial funds, but also for “real” homeowners, in the moment when they start treating their housing asset, and engaging in economic transactions, not purely for its use value, but also for its exchange value.

However, with the wide-spreading and world-wide financialization of housing, this source of income has progressively become unstable, flexibilized, as it depends very much on the arbitrary oscillations of anarchoid global financial markets. Thus, the capacity for people today to “gain” with a certain degree of certainty from owning the asset home depend strongly from their class position, thus their access of course to income (as you need it in order to purchase a home or even take a mortgage) but also to their access to knowledge about markets (which depends then from the type and volume of cultural and social capital of which people are bearers). Moreover, the required ability to act as an investor on the housing market means that individuals need to embody the Charaktermaske of the homo oeconomicus in order to carry out successful and rewarding investments.

Finally, a further distinction is required, in order to question the opposition between ownership and rental tenure. Aalbers and Christophers rightly argue that private property rental can also be exploitative, and that rent is a “contractual social relation” (Aalbers/Christophers 2014). One could say that renting means giving partial rights of ownership to the tenant. Exchange value of housing thus, does not only appear in the final moment of the purchase, rather

it emerges also in “partial” purchases, that is for instance through subletting, when subletting involves the extraction of a surplus from the new tenants. This also applies for subletting through digital platforms such as AirBnB. The latter differ from traditional subletting only in that the surplus is divided and appropriated by both the one subletting the flat and by the platform itself. As I will show in the chapter on housing, the concept of homeownership has itself faced simultaneously fragmentation and multiplication, similarly to what has been happening to labor. In that chapter, I will apply this analysis to the multifarious facettes of homeownership taking place currently in Berlin.

2.2. The Crisis of the Class Concept: Five Problems in Class Analysis

2.2.1. The “End of Class” Debate

A general concern has spread in Western sociology about the helpfulness and correctness of the concept of social class as we knew it. Some scholars have embraced the view that society was undergoing changes which would bring it to the total dissolution of classes, to the end of class society (Beck 1986; Waters/Pakulsky 1996; Bauman 2000).

Although also the present research mostly deals with social inequalities span across different countries of the so-called Global North, it is necessary to clarify that the class debate has been strongly marked by Euro- and Western centrism. As much as class theorists, also the critics to class research are settled in European or anglophone countries of the Global North. Consequently, the argument of the end of class needs to be viewed within the framework of generalized upwardly social mobility, which involved many Western societies since WWII (Bagnasco 2016). The end of class debate is also closely linked to the end of work one (Rifkin, 1995; Gorz 1982), which nonetheless has been rejected by many scholars. On the contrary, many state that we witness today the multiplication and fragmentation of labor (Neilson/Mezzadra 2013): work has not ended, while of course it has been heavily transformed and differentiated. Industrial production and extensive rural economies in the Global South now coexist with service, technology and knowledge economies in the North as well as in the global cities across the globe (Sassen 2001). Analogously, in contemporary capitalism class inequalities have not disappeared, but have rather been reworked, both within the North and the South, in distinct but not separate ways.

Today, it is not possible anymore to justify assumptions that societies, either in the North or in the South, are deemed to become more equal and convergent. On the contrary, with the rise of neoliberalism, the hollowing out of welfare provisions and the roll out of state institutions aimed to embed market logics, social inequalities have spread enormously (Piketty 2014; Savage 2015). As some authors have stated recently, even the “end of class” debate state has been influenced by a class of academic intellectuals who participated in the construction of a hegemonic discourse affected by the rise of neoliberalism (Paton 2014). What we need, therefore, are analytical tools to explore new and old lines of inequalities as well as the connections between them and to develop wide-range theories which can account for the major changes occurred in class structure. Indeed, in the last decade we have seen a renaissance of class research as a response to the increased challenges posed by the recurring of global-wide economic crises. Nonetheless, also the proponents of class analysis have contested the adequacy of the class concept as we know it within a changing context, marked by decreasing relevance of work-based organization, diffusion of mass unemployment and growing individualization (Beck 1986). Many scholars, in particular in the Anglo-Saxon area, have pled for a renewal of the concept of class (Devine/Savage 2000) and the development of a more encompassing definition, in which the connections between class and status, between the economic and the cultural aspects of social inequalities shall emerge (Bottero 2004). In particular, culture, taste, lifestyle and consumption patterns in general have acquired an increasingly central role in class analysis (Crompton et al. 2000). According to this perspective, which has been heavily influenced by Pierre Bourdieu’s work, culture and class are however not separate spheres, but rather “inextricably bound together in specific material practices” (Devine/Savage 2000). Class research should then explore the classed nature of cultural dispositions, of social and cultural practices, as they are employed to enforce social inequalities via modes of exclusion and domination (Skeggs 2015).

Wright proposes to substitute the word “dissolution” with that of “complexity” regarding current class relations and argues that inconsistencies of class analysis should be treated as “contradictory locations within class relations” (Wright 2016: 155-156). Earlier, he listed the main dynamics through which these contradictory locations come to exist in contemporary capitalism (Wright 2005). I will briefly mention them here, as they can serve as a good starting point to unravel the main shortcomings in recent class research. Firstly, the fact that individuals can hold two or more jobs at the same time implies that they might occupy different

class locations at one time, for instance if one person is a worker for a company and at the same time carries on other income-generating activities as a self-employed. Further, as I shown in the previous paragraph, the very location of self-employed people is a contradictory one, as the subjectivities of the employer and of the worker are collapsed into one. Secondly, as Wright argues, some jobs might be part of career trajectories. Thus, “both interests and experiences of people in such jobs are significantly affected by the likely future tied to their job” (Wright 2005: 17). Accordingly, the disadvantages of being in a low-paid, low-status employment relationship might be tempered by the perspective of betterment on the medium /long term. This type of contradiction, based on the temporality of work relations, is increasingly relevant today for precarious jobs, which might reveal themselves as “stepping stones” or “dead ends” (Booth et al. 2002), as “bridges” or “traps” (Gash 2008). The effect of the uncertainty inextricably connected to these types of employment on workers’ strategies and perceptions, however, is difficult to grasp both theoretically and empirically. The third type of contradictory location identified by Wright relies upon the differentiation along power, skills, control and resources which individuals sharing the same class location might experience. This crucial point should become much more attention than the one provided by Wright, as it is at the core of the complex relationship between class and status and has become a major difficulty for recent occupational schemes which have tried to overcome the traditional criteria developed by Wright, Erikson and Goldthorpe. I will go into the depth of this aspect in the next section. The last point mentioned by Wright, finally, concerns the contradictions which might emerge within families and households in general. The mediating role of the family is of course a major issue which has been often neglected in class analysis. On one side, households can be composed by people who are individually located in different class locations, but who nonetheless share to some extent their resources, so that a redistributive mechanism comes to exist which is difficult to understand through class analysis focusing only on the individual level. Further, the class position of children, elderly people, or other people who are directly dependent on other members of their household, is an obscure matter. On the other side, a major problem occurs here. As I demonstrated in the previous paragraph, this has to do with the fixation of class research on the male bread-winner as the exclusive social actor worthy of being studied when trying to understand class relations (Crompton 1989). While this argument is deeply rooted in the classical historical materialistic view that class is “more important” than other lines of inequality, such as gender (Wright 1997: 115), it has been also explic-

itly elaborated by Goldthorpe in an article entitled “Women and Class Analysis: in Defence of the Conventional View” (1984). While Wright has taken different positions, highlighting the sorting and mediating role that gender operates to class relations (1997: 118), there has not been yet a systematic reconceptualization of how class relations could include domestic, emotional and reproductive labor carried out by women. Crompton argues that such theoretical shortcoming has contributed to the decline of empirical class analysis (Crompton 1989), an argument which will be further expanded.

While Wright includes mediation through gender and family, however, he does not list one other crucial aspect which necessarily affect and mediates the social position of individuals, i.e. citizenship, which is key to the access to social rights and to redistributive measures which necessarily affect class relations (Crompton 1987). If we wish to enlist contradictory class locations to be found in Western societies today, it should not be forgotten that the relationship between citizenship and class location is more and more crucial in light of the rise of mass unemployment since the 1970es, which has made an increasing large group of individuals and households dependent on (shrinking) welfare benefits. This makes the identification of their class location more complex: as Rosemary Crompton was asking already in 1987: “What is the “class situation” of an individual without an occupation?”. Evidently, the classical schemes, which bind class relations inescapably to employment relations, cannot answer for such a question. Moreover, the analysis of the differential access to social rights according to citizenship status should be included here.

While I have shown that the attempt developed by Wright to enlist the main contradictory class locations is flawed, as it misses crucial aspects, it should be also noticed that Wright’s argument itself, while seeking to reinforce his class theory, actually tends to tautology. In a word, if the contradictory class locations are expanding and differentiating so much, that they become closer to the norm rather than the exception, then maybe the theories which they are part of might just not be apt anymore to explain contemporary class relations. Rather, it is useful to tie in with the contradictory class locations listed by Wright in order to reconstruct the fallacies of the most widely adopted theories on class.

2.2.2. First Problem: Can Class Consciousness be False?

One first problem to be tackled here is that of class consciousness. The issue of class consciousness has indeed constituted a main axis of disputation between different families of

thought about social class. According to Marx, processes of subjectivation are influenced and mediated by the way how individuals enter the social world. Subjectivation occurs through the commodification of human activities, which are turned into labor as they are made convertible into the abstract and universal form of money. Members of the same class share objective interests (class in itself). When members of one class are able to envision also a common sense of the world, entering thus a process of collective subjectivation, they become a class for itself, a class able to act collectively in order to pursue their shared material interests. The latter is one of the Marxist axioms most contested by Weber, who saw class action as not automatically occurring out of a group sharing interests and world visions (Weber 1946). Moreover, Weber did not believe the identification of class to be “the primary source of differentiation in complex societies” (Crompton 1998: 34). “Klassen sind keine Gemeinschaften” („a class does not in itself constitute a group“), Weber argues in „Economy and Society“ (1968 [1922]: 930). Class action is thus only one specific form of collective agency. While Marxist and Weberian scholars have long struggled on this issue, it must be said that both Weber and Marx shared a crucial understanding of class action, i.e. that it rested on objective interests.

However, Weberian scholars have dedicated less attention to the issue of class consciousness, which has traditionally constituted a Marxist topic. The question about how to identify objective interests has been answered by Marxist authors through a historical-material perspective which has led many to adopt a game theory approach (see Wright for instance). This viewpoint does not move that much away from classical political economic accounts. However, over the decades, many times intellectuals have faced the problematic issue of having to account for groups behaving differently if not oppositely to what the dictates of class consciousness would have predicted on the basis of the analysis of the objective interests. In particular, the decline of the linkage between employment status and voting behavior has awakened bad moods within class research (Crompton 1998) and has become a more evident problematic in recent years, with the progressive consensus found by populist right-wing parties among the working classes throughout the Global North (Nachtwey 2016). While this issue is too complex to be tackled here in a detailed way, there are a few points which should be highlighted that will reveal to be useful for the present research.

Firstly, academic accusations to the working classes of acting contra their interests have been criticized for taking economic rationality as the only lens to analyze (working) class

agency (Crompton 1998: 90). The fixation with economic rationality and thus with the identification of clear-cut objective interests is connected to the widespread but not proved argument that the working-class people are driven by material interests while the upper classes by ideal ones. In their pivotal however less acknowledged book “The Hidden Injuries of Class”, Richard Sennett and Jonathan Cobb explain this argument by referring to a leading leftist intellectual of that time, Jean-Paul Sartre, who was pleading for a “working-class revolt based principally on material deprivation” (Sennett/Cobb 1973: 5). The two authors show how such argument is actually a conservative one and it indeed reinforces a view of the working classes as linked to nature and of upper classes to culture, a typical dichotomy which tends essentializes social inequalities and thus stabilizes them.

This leads us to the second relevant point, which consists in the partiality of academic accounts on class consciousness. What is interesting is that debates on false class consciousness usually identifies contradictions only within the working classes and between working and middle classes. It is very rare to find accounts of members of the upper classes acting contrarily to the pursuit of their interests. The view that the working class was starting to act not correspondingly to their interests has its origins at the beginning of the 20th Century and was initially developed by Marxist intellectuals. The so-called “embourgeoisement thesis” rests on the idea that once the proletariat becomes richer and can afford more commodities, it will stop acting as a collectivity and enter a process of individualization. This recalls the previous point. In particular, such thesis spread during the Fordist 1950es and 1960es, when it was corroborated by research on the new “white collars” (Mills 1951), on the “blackcoated worker” (Lockwood 1958) and the “affluent worker” (Goldthorpe et al. 1968). The end-station of this stream of analysis is represented by the Marxist author André Gorz, who in “Farewell to the working classes” prefigures that with the changes in work and labor, the working classes had definitely lost their role as motor of history and agents of historical change (Gorz 1982).

However, empirical work has not yet truly confirmed the embourgeoisement thesis. Even in the decades when it became so diffused, the thesis was proved to be counter-empirical. In particular, Goldthorpe and Lockwood conducted a wide analysis on male workers in car, engineering and chemical industries of Luton in Great Britain, finding out that there was evidence of “independent convergence between the “new” working class and the “new” middle class, rather than the merging of the one into the other” (Devine 2016). Thus, more than embourgeoisement we have a convergence of lower middle classes and upper working classes, which

many authors also call the “petty bourgeoisie” (Wright 1980). We will come back later on this issue, as the challenge posed by the “new middle classes” to class research is a serious one, which deserves more in-depth analysis.

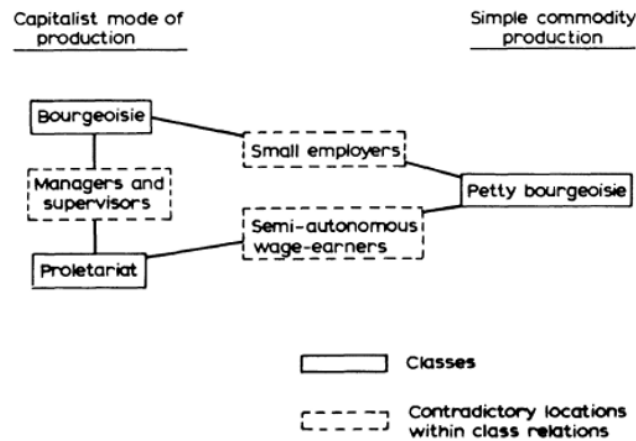


Figure 1: "The basic class relations in capitalist society" (Source: Wright 1980: 181).

The third point regarding the analytical troubles around class consciousness aims to stress that class consciousness, far from being an automatic mechanism, or even a taken-for-granted of historical processes, should be rather analyzed in its making, as a process, and more importantly as a social and historical one. As Thompson wrote, while “class experience is largely determined by the productive relations into which men are born – or enter involuntarily, class consciousness is the way in which these experiences are handled in cultural terms: embodied in traditions, value systems, ideas and institutional forms” (Thompson 1963). The important aspect of this argument is the agency, the action, which actors and institutions have carried out, more or less voluntarily and consciously, to develop and construct a system of meaning, values, ideas, etc. which could sustain the development of a new class consciousness. The crucial issues become then, instead of why some groups do not develop a class consciousness on the basis of their common values, interests and world-images, rather how, the dynamics through which the latter get constructed at all.

The formulation of ideal interests, of ideologies, of world-images has been traditionally thought by Marxists as the outcome of struggles and organization. Thompson shows in his brilliant historical reconstruction on the “Making of the English working class” how the sense of belonging to the working class was arduously constructed by tens of years of political organization, which thought did not develop in a linear and coherent way, but rather absorbed a

variety of different influences, from religious elements to claims which did not originate directly from the industrial proletariat (Thompson 1963). When contemporary accounts on class tend to ascribe false consciousness when talking about oppressed groups which do not organize collectively or do not express in a formal way their resistance against oppression, they tend to disregard the complexity and conflicts lying within the process of building a collective sense of belonging.

Recent research has focused on these processes, demonstrating that there is a big gap to be filled regarding the ways how working-class people today locate themselves in social space and how they reflect on their social situation (Allen 2008; Paton 2014). As Paton shows in her study on the British working class under threat of displacement because of gentrification, working class identity has been restructured rather than dissolved (Paton 2014). According to the author, with the transformation of capitalism towards flexible forms of capital accumulation, the processes of working class identification have undergone changes neglected by sociology, which preferred to turn the attention to the transformations occurring in the middle classes, seen as a crucial social site for understanding current capitalism. This has led to a narrow focus on narratives of individualization, which correlate with the rise of neoliberalism (Paton 2014: 67).

On the other side, these studies witnessed that especially young people with a working-class background tend to reject the category of class for their identification. This is particularly strong in countries where processes of neoliberalization have been accompanied by a violent stigmatization of the working classes, accused of being idle and parasitic to the welfare system, such as UK and countries with a conservative welfare system (ibid.). As the GSSC has shown, in general people tend to identify themselves as middle classes, thus pairing the watered conceptual clarity in sociology about where the boundaries between middle classes and working classes should be put (Savage et al. 2013).

Thus, the structural importance of class to the lives of people appears to be not recognized by the people themselves (Savage 2000: 40). Savage suggests that the invisibility of structural class inequality is part of the capitalist ideology of subjugation because otherwise people on the lower ends of the social ladder would react and counter-act the class-based system of domination. It is precisely in the always recurring dynamic of getting legitimized, made invisible and becoming naturalized that the reproduction of class inequalities lies. In other words, “dis-identification does not undermine class theory, because dis-identification

are the result of class processes” (Bottero 2004): the discursive absence of class is a hint that class inequalities are indeed more present than ever.

2.2.3. Second Problem: In the Middle of Society

In paragraph 2.1.4. I showed how “traditional“ employment aggregate classifications of class, like Wright’s and Erikson/Goldthorpe’s ones are unsuited to account for contemporary trends in labor markets, such as flexibilization of the labor markets, precarization of labor and the growth of sectors such as IT, communication and services, in which labor is organized differently than previously (Devine et al. 2005). Moreover, they fail to recognize the relevance of unpaid work and invisible work. Recently, definitions of new social classes such as the "precariat" (Standing 2011) and the "emerging cultural workers" (Savage et al. 2013) have been developed to describe those people who are most affected by these transformations.

My contribution does not point to validate or dismantle such concepts, but rather to tie in with current debates about the contemporary transformations concerning social class, in order to question more broadly the method which has been used until now to detect class entities. I argue that it is not possible anymore to adopt well-oiled but now obsolete concepts and theories of class structure and social class. I will make some brief examples about how these recent studies on class reproduce the pitfalls that we can find in research on social class which was produced decades ago, just before the decline of class research.

The analysis of the pitfalls of class analysis as a classificatory enterprise should start here from the classes which, since the decline of studies on working class, has constituted the main problem for class theories, making the main contradictions in them visible, namely the middle class(es).

The wider context within the transformation of the middle classes should be located, is characterized by the major socio-economic transition from Fordist to flexible, post-Fordist and variegated forms of capitalism, by macro-economic trends towards increased globalization and world-wide circulation of commodities, money, knowledge, and people. These changes go in parallel with how work has been organized and displaced firstly from the fabric to the office, then from the office to a multiplicity of spaces and times, which cannot be any more considered as bounded entities. Also, the turn from Taylorism to the New Management which spread in the Global North together with neoliberalism carried out the restructuring of Human Resources departments, the diffusion of the concept of human capital vis-a-vis the

more traditional concepts of skills and competencies, the surge of the human as a category apt to commodification, to be fully put to work. These transformations of the world of work have accompanied generalized processes of upward social mobility and the enlargement of the middle classes, or rather the petty bourgeoisie. Many studies have documented that the enlargement of this social stratum also brought to its internal differentiation, in particular along lines of cultural, social and economic capital. The differentiation within the middle class (which brings some authors to speak about the middle classes, such as in Bagnasco 2016) has been theorized at its origins by Charles Wright Mills. In his book “White collar: The American Middle Classes” (1951), he explored the rise of new class subjectivities. White collar workers, i.e. the service and office workers, however, did not represent for him a new elite, but rather a composite group of workers, in which the lowest stratum, the “lumpen-bourgeoisie”, is very different in terms of social prestige, authority, skills and also income, from the highest stratum of the managers. The petty bourgeoisie is an in-between entity, being exposed to the market and thus brought onto an (ontologically) insecure social location, but nonetheless very different and superior from a perspective of social legitimation to the formally uneducated working classes. However, this group is also denied the access to the respectability which the working classes have claimed as specific to their social position (Willis 1977; Skeggs 2012). The service classes, those who are not involved in the production of material commodities, need a different way of subjectivation, as there is no material product that they can claim to be the producers of. The middle classes are thus between or beyond both proletariat and bourgeoisie, to look them as such is “an attempt to grasp these new developments of social structure and human character” (Mills 1951: XX).

The enlargement and the differentiation of the middle classes posed crucial challenges to the Marxist schematic class structure engendering capitalists vis-a-vis workers. These processes seemed to falsify the Marxian argument that capitalist development will lead to a more polarized and clear-cut class structure. However, we need to place the embourgeoisement thesis within its temporal and geographical context (Bagnasco 2016). While it was never really confirmed by strong empirical work (see Goldthorpe and Lockwood), as previously noted, it nonetheless spread in a phase of generalized social mobility, which, as we saw, represented rather the exception than the norm within the history of capitalism.

However, since the 1970s we acknowledge the re-emerging of old class lines and the spreading of new lines of inequalities. Already Braverman highlighted in 1974 the transforma-

tions of the value of skills linked to the “scientific-technical revolution” brought by Taylorism and the increase of automation in production processes. His seminal work “Labor and Monopoly Capital: The Degradation of Work in the Twentieth Century” (Braverman 1974) introduced into a broader audience the idea that qualitative deskilling of labor was going in parallel with quantitative expansion of skills needed to command machines and manage labor processes. However, the deskilling process affects not only material production, but also intellectual labor. Clerical work was becoming already in those years highly routinized. While clerks and low-level managers did profit more than manual workers from the growth of the company, they also were employees. In fact, with the rationalization of production (Taylorism) “almost all of the population has been transformed into employees of capital” (Braverman 1974: 279). This has two important consequences, which do not necessarily fit together. Firstly, the middle classes exist as “layers with varying degrees of capitalist and working-class qualities” . They take its characteristics from both sides (Braverman 281-282). Secondly, in monopoly capital, if almost all the population has been transformed into employees of capital, those who are at the top of companies, rentiers and managers, as well as those who possess the scarcest technical skills needed for the command of high-end technological processes, do occupy the most privileged and exclusive positions.

While the middle classes seem to experience internal differentiation in terms of autonomy of labor, prestige and class subjectivity, since the end of Fordism many scholars have started to talk of trends of polarization. Far from expelling human labor from production processes, as some authors have apocalyptically foreseen (Frey/Osborne 2017), with digitalization and automation of production processes a generalized deskilling has impacted on the distribution of valued skills. This dynamic is contributing to expanding polarization within the labor markets (Rinner/Zimmermann 2016).

The discourse on polarization is connected to that on the fragmentation of labor markets, and in particular on the progressive formation of dual labor markets, in which high-end and low-end jobs co-exist (and mutually reproduce each other) (Hirsch-Kreinsen 2016). With high-end jobs scholars mean very well-paid occupations in expanding sectors such as IT, finance, high-price services, which are usually formalized in employment relations characterized by high flexibility and autonomy, full social rights, extra-bonuses etc. On the contrary, low-end jobs are defined as low-paid occupations in routinized occupations which do not require formal qualifications, expressed in employment relations characterized by flexibility and

precarity, absent or decreasing access to social rights, lack of security (Kalleberg 2011).

However, the polarization thesis is still highly disputed in social sciences. In particular, many authors have shown how the two extremities also share some patterns, which can be considered as part of wider and more encompassing transformation of the world of work, such as the increase of the number of work hours, the expansion of work beyond the official work hours and the workplace, but also the transformation of time as the measure of work (from linear and chronological to more complex temporalities, see Snyder 2016). In any case, it seems clear that more research is needed to understand such changes. In particular, comparative research on different fields of work appears as a useful direction in order to understand the macro-dynamics taking place (Mezzadra/Neilson 2013).

The mentioned macro-trends have important implications for contemporary class analysis as well for the reformulation of occupational schemes. While fine-grained class analyses are able to capture a number of different micro-classes (Grusky/Galescu 2005), macro-analyses such as the one conducted by Piketty rather point to a class structure which resembles much more the 99% against the 1% anticipated by the Occupy movement back in 2011. However, such broad definitions often lose their empirical value as they vanish into the “multitude” which is all or nothing (Hardt/Negri 2004), or in newly elaborated concepts such as the (urban) “majority” proposed by Simone, which however is exactly thought to be not legible neither by state and market nor by sociologists (Simone 2016).

2.2.4. Third problem: Shortcomings on the Relationship between Age and Class

A further problem has emerged in contemporary accounts, namely the relationship between class and age, which stems from the fact that the mentioned transformations in the modes of production affect different age groups in different ways. In particular, young people experiencing access to the labor market today are in a very peculiar situation, as they are the first ones to face the restructuring of the labor markets. This has of course to do also with the mediation of the state, which through labor policies can differently load the social burdens of precarization and outsourcing of production onto various social groups.

From this perspective, we can see that although in the EU context there is a general trend towards letting the younger generations experience the heaviest costs, there are also differences between different areas. In Southern Europe, for instance, recent reforms of labor law have increased the inequalities between the adult and the young cohorts of labor force, dis-

mantling in particular labor and social rights for those who have entered the labor market after the latest economic crisis. In North Europe, we witness a more differentiated picture, in which both incentives to access labor and precarization and flexibilization for the youngest take place (Blossfeld et al. 2005).

The rising inequalities along generation lines have led some contemporary authors to talk about age and life course in terms of class (Woodmann/Wyn 2014)). Such discourse has spread in particular within authors who embrace the “generation” approach, who often tie in with Mannheim’s elaborations on this concept (Mannheim 1964). However, also more classical class analysts have adopted such view. For instance, the classification elaborated by the GSSC research group led by Mike Savage has identified the “emerging service workers” as a newly emerged class, composed by young people (average 32 years old, Savage et al. 2013: 174). According to the previous paragraph, however, it is easy to see how these analyses are able to operate a replacement of class with youth mainly because they do not take into serious account what class means in sociological terms. While of course the perspective on life course and generation is a useful take to make emerging lines of social inequality visible, it must not be forgotten that generations do not follow each other within a socio-economic vacuum. Rather, empirical findings on inequality along age lines should be embedded into broader accounts about how the socio-economic context is changing, in order to understand why young laborers today face more difficulties in finding resources to sustain themselves and in particular why they seem to share similarities regard their class relation which is difficult to explain through “traditional” variables, such as their class background.

I argue that if we want to avoid reproducing these same pitfalls, the main issue to be acknowledged is that of boundaries between classes. I argue that there have not been any systematic accounts of this, as age is still considered as a lateral and less relevant variable in class research. While the example of the GSSC is a good example for this pitfall in the English-speaking sociology, also in other countries there is evidence of confusion about the relationship between age and class. I argue that such fuzziness can tell us more about how to re-conceptualize class in order to make the concept useful for theoretical advancement. For instance, the recent classification operated by the Italian Institute of Statistics (ISTAT 2017) reproduces such flaw. The report ties in with the debate on the end of class and gives up the traditional approach developed by Goldthorpe and colleagues, seeking to formulate a new classification of social groups, a broader (and unclear) term which substitutes the term “class”, and should

include also other components such as location on the labor market, cultural consumption and social participation (ISTAT 2017: 53). The analysis operated by ISTAT is a nonparametric regression with an initial classification tree based on household income (dependent variable). Successively, other “explicative” variables (independent) are included into the analysis: age, sex, formal education, occupational status, number of household members, citizenship status of household members (non-/Italian) and size and type of city of residence) (ibid.: 58). Finally, illustrative variables (as in multiple correspondence analyses) are included to verify internal and external heterogeneity.

This type of analysis can be considered as a sort of “inductive” or data-driven quantitative one, which is not based on hypotheses generated a priori. This sounds as a refreshing approach, trying to overcome the flaws of traditional occupational schemes and can be considered as a parallel attempt to the one by Savage and colleagues, who although operated a more traditional correspondence analysis. However, the results obtained are unfortunately even more unclear and contradictory than those by the GSSC, as social stratification theorists Barbagli, Schizzerotto and Saraceno have pointed out (2017). This becomes clear when looking at the typology developed by ISTAT, based on nine social groups: low-income migrant households (lit. families); low-income Italian households; elderly women living alone and (It. mine) young unemployed; young blue-collar workers; traditional province households; retired working-class households; clerical households; retired high-income households; managerial class. A number of common sense sociological contradictions stand out already at a first sight (Barone 2017) Many of them have to do exactly with the age variable, in particular the allocation of elderly women living alone and young unemployed into one social group. Moreover, the average age of the group of young blue-collars is 45 years (ISTAT 2017).

The study by ISTAT highlights once again the crisis of class research: it acknowledges that other variables than occupational ones should be integrated in the study of class, but it makes the analytical mistake of reversing causes and effects, ending up by considering the outcomes of social inequalities as their sources (Barbagli et al. 2017). Thus, once the attempt is made to carry out a systematic classification which shall include not only strictly economic factors but also cultural and social ones, the contradictory class locations identified by Wright emerge in all their strength. In this case, age, among others, emerges in particular. The result is a class scheme which quite evidently compares pears (location within the life course) with apples (class location). The goal of making social structure easier to read through classifica-

tion remains completely unmet, on the contrary the scheme seems to give a picture of society which is even less legible than traditional class accounts. In a tautological move, the study neglects class as the crucial component in social inequality and ends up with a classification in which class does not emerge at all (Barbagli et al. 2017).

2.2.5. Fourth problem: A New Class Composition?

While the approach developed by the ISTAT has strong impacts, as it is the classification which shall be used for future social policies by the Italian state, it might be argued that this is a disparate case, with no similarities in established literature. However, if we take into account the widely-known work by Guy Standing, who has spent the past decade in developing a new analysis of precarization and of the way how this affects class structure, we witness a similar confusion. In his most famous book “The Precariat: The new dangerous class” (2011), as well as in following publications (e.g. Standing 2014a), Standing argues that a new exploited class has born out of the transformation of the world of work, which is going to substitute the working class in terms of collective agency, i.e. the precariat. However, according to his analysis this class is marked by fragmentation and heterogeneity and includes three quite different social groups, firstly the so-called “atavists”, those “who have fallen out of manual proletarian communities”, in other words, the formally not educated children of the industrial dispossessed working class; secondly the so-called “nostalgics”, i.e. the “ultimate denizens, migrants and minorities, who feel deprived by having no sense of the present, no sense of home”, thirdly the so-called “progressives”, “highly, educated, mostly young, who were led to believe that in following tertiary schooling they would be enabled to have a career, a trajectory of labor security and social mobility” (2014: 971-72). Standing argues that the main characteristics of this third group is that of “status frustration” (2014), i.e. the disconnection between their middle class social status (which also entails their perspectives in terms of social mobility) and their class location. Somewhere else, Standing talks about “truncated status”, as the condition of those whose “structure of “social income” does not map neatly onto old notions of class or occupation” (Standing 2011: 8). This “truncation” is similar to what other scholars have referred to as “status incongruity”, often connected to patterns of downward social mobility (Newman 1989). Atkinson has recently applied the Bourdieusian term “hysteresis” to this phenomenon (Bourdieu 1977: 78), defining it as the “disjunction between the objectively possible and the subjectively desired induced by rapidly changing social conditions”

(Atkinson 2013:28).

Here again, we see that different social groups, also identified along the age variable, are considered as factions of the same class through a deductive analytical movement, whose starting assumption is that the precarization of life and labor power is the main angle from which to look at contemporary class structures. While the analysis is challenging and indeed intriguing, it remains unclear why only the precariat should be able to engage in a process of class making, as well as why Standing deprives other classes he also quite arbitrarily identifies, such as the permanent unemployed, “a lumpen-precariat, mired in long-term unemployment or dying miserably in the streets, detached from society altogether” (Standing 2014a: 969) from the ability to organize and pursue collective agency. Standing seems here to reproduce a “reloaded” Marxian class structure (proletariat and lumpen-proletariat), but he does not provide a consequent analysis of why such class structure is emerging.

Nonetheless, his contribution is crucial as he broadens the Marxist focus on relations of production, introducing the concepts of relations of distribution (that is the composition of different sources of income individuals have access to according to their social position, including non-wage income) and the relations to the state. To this regard, the precariat is marked by precariousness (within relations of production), vulnerability (within relations of distribution) and marginality (within relations to the state) (Standing 2014b). While the three criteria could represent a good starting point to conduct exploratory research, nonetheless it is not clear on which basis Standing chooses them, and, most of all, he lacks empirical findings. In other words, he has never proved empirically whether the class structure he envisions really exists in reality, and most of all, his quest for the precariat to become a class-for-itself seems a quite naive call for unity between socially distant groups (he himself states that the precariat is a class at war with itself).

The concept of class fragmentation implies that different groups have common experiences in terms of class but have nonetheless distinctive characteristics regarding their status (in cultural, legal and social terms). These differences prevent them from interacting with each other. It is thus unclear how the interaction necessary to collectively pursue agency should stem from. Perhaps a suitable concept to understand the linkages between different social groups experiencing analogous class situations is the Marxist concept of class composition, which was examined in more depth by the Italian workerists in the 1960s and 1970s who were carrying out workers’ inquiries in the main factories of the Italian mechanic indus-

try, FIAT and Olivetti (Wright 2002). Their findings highlighted the heterogeneity of the workers about both their relation to technology and production, their skills, their autonomy, and their subjectivity, i.e. the way how they perceived themselves in relation to the factory and to their work. The workerists adopted the concept of class composition to highlight such dual heterogeneity, expressed as technical composition and political composition (Cominu 2014), which can be considered as the re-definition of the Marxian distinction between class-in-itself and class-for-itself (Mezzadra/Neilson 2013). I argue that the concept of class composition can help us understanding how social groups, even if “socially distant”, might develop common subjective narratives of their selves via their (yet very differentiated) participation in the capitalist system. The rising mass of unemployed people is not separated from the process of precarization which affects young educated people, which in turn is not separated from the increase of global flows of migrants seeking their fortune in another country. The task of exploring the political-economic links between the forms of exploitation and domination, as well as non-compliance and insubordination, experienced and developed by these groups is still largely to be made. Interesting paths of research, however, seem to be unfolding, for instance regarding the ways how migration structures labor markets (Bauder 2006), or how the matching on labor markets between skills owned by labor force and skills demanded is becoming increasingly randomized (Parutis 2011; Novicka 2014).

There is then a further task, which encompasses both the analysis of the technical and the political class composition, and the relationships between the two. Such task means going beyond the alleged division between objective and subjective class making and seeking to “work through the gap between what the young Marx called class “in itself” and class “for itself” (Mezzadra/Neilson 2013: 98). This can occur starting from the assumption that the everyday life of people, the different activities they carry out to sustain themselves, affects their world visions, set of desires and expectations. Standing’s analysis also shares this approach but is evidently not able to bring the task to the end, it is situated within the realm of critical political economy, however it remains on the surface of it and does not account for why income-generating activities have changed in the last decades.

2.2.6. Fifth Problem: From the Shortcomings in Class Analysis to the Shortcomings in Gentrification Research

The concept of social class constitutes one of the theoretical pillars of sociology. While

the concept was undergoing a theoretical crisis, as I explained in the previous paragraphs, scholars of other sociological fields did not stop adopting it, as it seems quite impossible to talk about structural social inequalities in general without having the necessity to use social class as a crucial analytical tool. This paragraph focuses on one particular research field, in which the studied phenomenon is indeed defined according to class (Benson/Jackson 2018), but whose scholars nonetheless have largely eschewed from facing the crisis of the class concept, thus ending often into flawed analyses which have watered our understanding of the phenomenon itself. The research field is that of gentrification, a phenomenon at the nexus between social and spatial mobility, social and spatial inequality and also a highly politicized topic at the nexus between analysis and praxis, research and policies. The aim of this paragraph is that of bringing the crisis of class, as well as the contradictions and problems I identified (such as class consciousness, new middle classes, age & class, class composition) into gentrification research. The main argument of this paragraph is to demonstrate that gentrification research has lacked a concept of (both spatial and social) mobility, due to an outdated understanding of the class concept. Such theoretical gesture should enable a tentative understanding of gentrification as a key site and source of processes of class formation in contemporary capitalism (Bridge 1995). Moreover, it could help to successfully tackle the troubled relationship between research and policy-making when it comes to gentrification, which has led many authors to criticize gentrification research for presuming to be politically neutral while on the other side adopting the point of view of one specific class in their studies (Slater 2006; Allen 2008; Paton 2014).

The study of the inscription of social space in the spatial structures of the city as well as in the mental structures of people, i.e. the production and re-production of stable patterns of inequality is a major concern for urban sociologists. Such processes have been investigated and defined often for the purposes of policy-making. Main processes of the uneven distribution of classes within the urban context are segregation and concentration as well as the unequal settlement along the center-periphery axis, as for instance in gentrification or in suburbanization (ebd.). The first two processes have been widely explored in urban sociology and in particular starting with the Chicago School of the 1920es, whose main scholars developed the social ecology approach by exploring how migrant groups concentrated and segregated in the city (Volkman 2012). The Chicago School contributed to shape the discourse on classes in the city as an ethnicized one (and viceversa). For instance, this school diffused the concepts

of ghetto and underclass, which became hegemonic in depicting segregation along ethnic lines (Duneier 2017). While a bulk of literature has been spent on the concentration of poor migrants, only later on scholars have focused on the (voluntary) concentration of the rich in "gated communities" or in general upper-class neighborhoods (Volkmann 2012). The downplaying of class in favour of ethnicity held by the Chicago School and in general U.S. urban sociology of the XXth Century, was challenged by some seminal works, for instance by Gans (1965) and Young and Wilmott (1962). These began to deploy the term working class neighborhood and community for districts previously named as slums or ghettos (Topalov 2003). The working-class district is in fact an older concept which stemmed from the early phases of industrialization, when it was though depicted as crowded, dirty and morally deprived, as many historical accounts report, like the one on Manchester "cottonopolis" of the end of the XIX Century offered by Friedrich Engels (1965).

In his other essay "The Housing Question", Engels anticipated also other issues which have been of major concern until today in the urban sociology field like the processes of social mixing and gentrification. He mentioned for instance the "Haussmann method", which stood for the regeneration policy lead by the Parisian prefect Haussmann in the mid-XIX Century, which consisted in demolishing densely inhabited working-class neighborhoods in order to build wide commercial and residential boulevards for the bourgeoisie (Engels 1872). The issue of renewing working-class districts by making them suitable for higher classes has resisted until today under the label of social mixing (Slater 2013). As some scholars suggest, mixing policies' goal is rather state-led gentrification, i.e. the revalorization of decayed areas by attracting the gentry to settle there (Hackworth/Smith 2001; Lees 2012). Others argue that social mixing is rather only a transitional, sometimes quite durable stage in gentrifying neighborhoods (Bridge et al. 2014).

While many disputes have evolved around it, it is widely accepted that the process of gentrification is a matter of class and in particular of class distribution in the city (Bridge 1995, Smith 1996; Slater 2013). Gentrification expresses the upscaling of an inner-city neighborhood in the social (as well as property) ladder. The main classes traditionally involved in the process are the middle class, as the incoming and "colonizing" social group, and the working class as the dominated and sometimes resisting displaced one (Smith 1996). The so called "Urban Renaissance" in Western inner cities, which started in the 1960es and overcame the Fordist spread of sub-urban ways of life, represents the spatial and temporal context of this

phenomenon. While Ruth Glass was writing about gentrification for the first time in 1964, the earlier mentioned authors were introducing the concept of working class community in sociology (Topalov 2003), while social stratification theorists were starting to acknowledge the lowering of social inequality and the “embourgeoisement” of the working class (Goldthorpe et al. 1968).

From its very beginnings, thus, gentrification has represented a class phenomenon situated in the context of fast changes in class structure. Consequently, gentrification research should evolve according to social stratification research and acknowledge the deep restructurings occurred in the labor market as well as in Western societies in general in the past three decades. This has been not always the case (Bridge 1995). While on one side urban sociologists have included the “consumption turn” of class analysts in their theorization of gentrification (some prominent examples are Jager 1986; Hamnett 1991; Ley 2003; Zukin 1988; 2011), on the other side, the crisis of the class concept which has occurred since the 1970es has not generated automatically a crisis in the gentrification concept. Following the shift of focus to consumption patterns as key determinants for class formation, gentrification scholars have investigated more and more the “new” middle-classes and their habitus and tastes. In other words, gentrification scholars often mean “social status” when they talk of class: they refer mostly to income status, lifestyle and consumption of urban inhabitants. Their relationship to means of production, or more broadly speaking to “income-generating resources” (Wright), is rather neglected. Attempts to develop a renewed class scheme on occupational aggregate basis have been conducted by theorists of the so-called “creative class” (Florida 2002), building however their class definitions on very slippery theoretical grounds (Markusen 2006). Finally, a wide gap about the contemporary working class is acknowledged by many authors, analogously to what happens in class analysis research (Bridge 1995, Slater 2006, Allen 2008, Paton 2014). Consumption patterns, class belonging as well as the updating of the very definition of the working class, have been almost ignored by recent gentrification literature (Watt 2008).

From the Marxist viewpoint, by many considered as the most important contribution to production-side analyses, gentrification appears as a strategy to revitalize the profit rate in the secondary capital circuit, which inserts into the class structure, escalating class conflicts in urban spaces (Smith 1996). Smith argues that the analysis of costs and benefits of gentrification illustrate winners and losers of this process. The former are developers, financial institutions,

individual landlords and owner occupiers, who profit economically from the re-valorization of the inner-city areas where they invest their money. At the same time, also the in-movers middle classes gain from gentrification, as they acquire symbolic capital and prestige by living there (Smith 1996; Marcuse 1995). The losers of gentrification are of course the displaced, low income people who cannot afford the living costs in the gentrified areas. While in his view gentrification appears primarily as a movement back to the city by capital and not by people, Smith recognizes though that there are social groups who are not directly involved in the strategy of surplus creation but who nevertheless benefit from it by consuming housing. The class conflict seems to involve more than just two classes, i.e. the capitalists and the workers, while its pattern appears embedded in both housing production and consumption (Benson/Jackson 2018).

In the last years, several scholars acknowledge that the question whether gentrification is driven by the demand of inner-city housing by specific groups, i.e. classes, or by capital flowing into the renewal of these areas represents a false dichotomy: both explanations are intertwined and not to be separated analytically. Following what Crompton argued about the juxtaposition between Marxist and Weberian perspectives on class analysis, it is all about which definition of gentrification is applied as well as the aspects of it which scholars seek to focus on (Crompton 1998).

However, instead of differentiating it as a response to changing contexts and to growing complexity in social structure, gentrification research seems to have expanded the concept, which now encompasses very different phenomena, from new building renewal to social mixing to regeneration of public housing, as well as disparate geographical settings (Sassen 1991: 225, Lees et al. 2010, Maloutsas 2011). At the same time, the reference to the gentrification process analyzed by Ruth Glass presupposes a class structure which seems to be stuck in the 1960es London and is still commonly taken for granted (Benson/Jackson 2018). Thus, the opposition between gentrifying middle classes and displaced working classes is mostly seen in an essentialist way. Such stark division has been also criticized by authors who have dealt with the “dual city” debate in the 1990es. In particular, the question of how the gentrification process affects class formation dynamics and vice-versa remains largely unsolved (Bridge 1995). In other words, it is not just about why people and which people tend to integrate into gentrification processes as they come to constitute the necessary demand for higher-class commodities, housing, lifestyle and cultural consumption offered by investors, landlords, pro-

social mixing policy-makers in areas to be gentrified. More importantly, it seems necessary to study the effect of the contingent materiality of gentrification on the class structure, and on the class location of individuals. It is thus crucial to focus on the transitive property of gentrification, on the processes of “gentrifying people”, not only places (Paton 2014).

As Paton has discovered in her ethnographic study on the working class in Partick, a neighborhood of Glasgow under threat of displacement via the public-led redevelopment of the adjacent area, also working-class residents often find themselves in contradictory locations (Paton 2014). They experience a sort of “bulimic situation” (Young 2007, cit. in Paton 2014: 5), as their sets of aspirations and desires also entails the wish to carry out onward social mobility through their participation in the gentrification process. Nonetheless, different access to means do matter, and emerge in the moment of a possible displacement. If we intend to tackle the alleged binarity of gentrification, then, it might be useful to explore dynamics of production of gentrifiers (Rose 1984) and gentrified people, refusing to look at these identity as essences, and rather searching the ways and dynamics of their formation, the social agents involved in such processes, and possibly the counter-dynamics which people put in place to resist them.

One proposal to start such an analytical process consists in considering both class-making and gentrification as processes which take place at different levels at the same time. In this paragraph I will present some aspects which might help to differentiate the two processes, in order to better analyze their intersections. Gary Bridge has also dealt with such an enterprise in his article “The Space for Class?”, written in 1995. He adopts there the Marxist class scheme elaborated by Wright, in which class is observed through different levels of abstraction (from the most to the less abstract), i.e. mode of production, social formation and conjuncture (Wright 1985). Gentrification research focusing on consumption often remains on the third one, which is the most contingent (the everyday life level). On the contrary, the re-adaptation of Wright’s scheme conducted by Bridge shows how gentrification works as a form of “latent class structuration” (Bridge 2001).

At the mode of (housing) production level, in which land use is negotiated, the opposition is between capitalists vis-a-vis residents (who might encompass thus both middle and working classes). Besides, the state plays a major role on this level, as it can promote gentrification and social mixing through renewal policies or protect the working-class residents’ right to stay, for instance by capping the rent prices, as shown by Bernt for the cases of Berlin and New York

(Bernt 2012). The level of social formation, instead, is more relevant in neighborhoods where property is diffused, and petit-bourgeoisie speculative strategies might be pursued by both middle and working class. Here, housing is relevant to class formation both in its exchange and use value. It is on this level that the categories of production and consumption merge in structuring classes. Finally, at the conjunctural level, once gentrification has occurred, class divisions could arise out of displacement, and working-class individuals might align against land and housing owners as well as against middle class gentrifiers. However, taste and habitus, Bridge argues, develop basically before and outside of the gentrification process, that is through family background, education, at the workplace and so on (Bridge 2001). Looking only at the resistance of the displaced might deliver an oversimplified picture of the phenomenon.

Two main conclusions can be drawn from this fruitful contribution: firstly, that individuals hold “multiple and often contradictory class locations” during the gentrification process (ibid.); secondly, that in order to explore these class locations, research should look at other places and other temporalities than those proper to the very contingency of the gentrification process.

With regard to the first issue, I will now present some recent developments in social stratification theory, in which research deals with “multiple and overlapping social positions” (Devine/Savage 2005: 18). In fact, in the last years, scholars have paid more attention to other lines of social divisions: while class’ foundation is economic, gender and ethnicity are cultural constructs which though strongly affect people’s socialization. Theorists of intersectionality, for instance, argue that individuals experience the social world not as members of a class or as belonging to one gender or ethnicity, but with all these attributes together and at the same time (Anthias 2005). From their viewpoint, research should explore the specific spatial and temporal contexts where individuals experience inequality and in particular focus on contradictory locations where dominant and subordinate ones intersect (Wright 1985). This approach might be helpful if applied to gentrification analysis, in order to investigate how individuals hold different positions during the process, as argued in the previous paragraph. In fact, much research has been conducted to investigate how gender, ethnicity, religion etc. intersect with class in the phenomenon of gentrification (Rose 1984; Bondi 1991). However, an analytical perspective is required in which individuals’ belongings are considered as multiple not only because of the various lines of divisions in which they are embedded, but also be-

cause they can hold different positions along the same line, for instance class (Anthias 2005). Thus, a home owner member of the working class can mobilize its blue-collar identity in some circumstances and its being-in-society as home owner in others. To consider class identities as not univocal, instrumental and potentially temporary, can finally take into account the diversification internal to traditional classes and resulted from socio-economic transformations as well as the homogenization brought by the dismissal of antithetical class positions (Maloutsas 2011).

Searching for cases of gentrification in which contradictions and incoherencies have been discovered, such as in Damarise Rose' (1984) study on the "marginal gentrifiers", might be also helpful. In her pivotal article "Rethinking gentrification beyond uneven development" (1984), Rose explored the contradictory locations of those individuals who do not "fit" into the two traditional categories of social groups involved in gentrification (see also Watt 2008). She refers mostly to individuals with high cultural capital (in form of educational title, but also of symbolic and embodied cultural capital) and low economic capital (because of a precarious employment relationship, for instance, or the need to nurture children within a single household). The category of the "marginal gentrifiers", otherwise called "pioneers", "bohemians", as well as the more contemporary term of "hipsters", have been widely deployed in the cycle model of gentrification, which is based on the division of gentrification into different phases (see Clay 1979, Gale 1979). This model has been criticized for several reasons (Shaw 2008): it is incomplete, as the developments in major cities in the past decades have shown that the gentrification cycle does not end with gentrification, but it can go on with further re-developments and super or hyper-gentrification (Lees 2003; Lees et al. 2016). Secondly, the stage model seems to imply that gentrification is a "natural" cycle of cities, thus precluding the possibility to agency of social actors within the city trying to resist it. I would add that, thirdly, the stage model conflates social and spatial mobility, and thus the (alleged) cycle of the city with the life cycle of city inhabitants: the stage model seems to display a "typical" path of upward social mobility of the citizen in advanced capitalism, the standardized path towards "economic success". Such archetype resonates also in the discourses promoting policies of social mixing (Slater 2013).

However, the "marginal gentrifiers", "pioneers", "bohemian", etc., still seem to constitute an unsolved analytical node in gentrification research. I argue that the "chaos" identified by Rose more than thirty years ago has not been met by an adequate advancement in the under-

standing of the relationship between social and spatial mobility within and to the city. The contradictions and complexities related to the role of class in gentrification research have not been made fruitful for class research itself. In fact, (mostly British) gentrification research has delivered a plenty of analysis on the “new” middle classes, focusing especially on their sense of spatial belonging, on their patterns of residential mobility as well as their different relationship to different types of city (provincial, metropolis, global city, etc.), different housing markets and different housing tenures (for instance Butler/Savage 1995; Butler/Robson 2003; Savage et al. 2005; Watt 2009; Jackson/Benson 2017). Less researched, however, is how the relationships of the “new” urban middle classes to other social classes play out from a critical political economic perspective. The focus on the middle classes appears as having obscured class relations outside of them. Since class formation happens only exceptionally within the gentrification process, it is then worthy to question where and when it happens (Bridge 2001b). Bridge’s contribution points exactly to the temporal and spatial dimensions of individual experiences of gentrification. In particular, because gentrification relies on the mobility also of people, not only of capital, it is important to ask where those people, who come to be produced as gentrifiers in a particular neighborhood or in a particular city, come from (Bondi 1999). The physical dimension of mobility is here not a concern for itself, but should be rather observed as dialectical with the social one: what does the gentrifying area as residential context represent for both middle and working class in terms of their trajectory in social space as well as in their life course? While Bondi focuses on the gender component, assuming that residential moves often coincide with the creation of new households (Bondi 1998: 170), it is possible to apply this perspective also to the class aspect, investigating what the residential settlement in gentrified area means in terms of social mobility, and explore thus the relationship between spatial and social mobility with regard to the housing and residential issue.

Here, the issue of scaling becomes increasingly relevant. In the “classical” definition of gentrification, the influx of city residents who are prone to spend more for housing than the long-staying ones enables the revitalization of the profit rate and thus the fulfillment of a rent gap in the neighborhood. However, recent patterns of spatial mobility, in junction with converging strategies by both the state and capital aimed at reshaping inner cities according to the consumer citizens, have given way to new forms of gentrification. In particular, a recent debate has spread around the concept of transnational gentrification, in which the agents of neighborhood changes are a “transnational gentry whose locational mobility creates new pos-

sibilities for profitable housing reinvestment in geographically disparate markets where such possibilities would have not otherwise existed” (Sieglar/Wachsmuth 2016). Transnational gentrification can be considered as an outcome of globalization, the result of the increase of global flows of knowledge, communication, commodities, capital and people, and of the connections between places, pathways along which “gentrification processes propagate, connecting local capital to transnational consumer demand” (ebd). However, as Sieglar and Wachsmuth argue, it is more correct to state that gentrification is not simply an outcome, but rather a tool through which globalization unfolds, a vehicle of lifestyles, modes of consumption, ideals, desires, and, of course, capital.

As this tool has become more and more common in urban settings of the so-called Global North as well as South, transnational gentrification and touristification have established also as increasingly relevant issues in Urban Studies (Cocola Gant 2018 Hayes 2015). Transnational gentrification is often studied in relationship with so-called lifestyle migration (Hayes/Pérez-Ganan 2018;) or with studentification via international students (Malet Calvo 2017). Lifestyle migration is a concept which has itself also established in the past decade, and, while still being object of various definitions, can be considered as “a form of international migration which involves affluent migrants, much as traditional, colonial migrations have, but which is distinct in terms of motivations and objective conditions”, “growth as a result ... of globalization, increased mobility, and increased relative wealth” (Benson/O’Reilly 2009a: 620). Studies on the relationship between lifestyle migration and urban dynamics of gentrification can be considered as a “consumption side” explanation of transnational gentrification, in which habitus, lifestyle, social status rather than social class are the object of analysis (ebd.). In the next sections, which will be more specifically focused on spatial mobility and migration, the concept will be deployed in more depth.

To this regard, these kinds of explanations of transnational gentrification have contributed to a growing body of research on the formation of a transnational dominant class. Rofo started the debate questioning whether we are witnessing the rise of a “global elite class community” (Rofo 2003), followed by Bridge, who however was skeptical of the emergence of a social group which can be properly defined as the global gentrifier class, arguing that the group identified by Rofo is too differentiated internally to be called a class (Bridge 2007). On the other side, Davidson (2007) pleads for a focus on the production side, i.e. on how transnational corporate strategies leverage profit on local housing markets. Similarly, Sklair (2001)

who developed the term of the “transnational capitalist class”, meaning those who are producers, rather than consumers, of urban restructuring via corporate agency.

While this is not the place to elaborate more on this debate, it has been shown that the intersections between gentrification research and class analysis keep on re-emerging, currently also on the analysis of the transnational scale of gentrification. However, there is still a lack of systematic analyses of this relationship. Nonetheless, the mentioned debate teaches us that it is required to face the issue of socio-geographical scales in order to disentangle the complex relationship between spatial and social mobility. This analytical enterprise joins the quest made by Holm, starting from the case of Berlin, for “detaching gentrification research from neighborhood studies” and widening its focus to the urban and intra-urban scales (Holm 2013: 184). In the city of Berlin, the co-occurrence of wide incoming flows of migrants from Western countries, in particular EU countries over the last 10 years (excluding the specificity of the influx of refugees mainly due to the Syrian civil war) and the concentration of investments by financial capital into the local underpriced housing market with a following explosion of the rent prices, seems to suggest that dynamics of transnational gentrification might be emerging. This would imply that processes on the global level (the global financial crisis), on the EU level (influx of, mostly young, EU migrants), on the national level (the German economy as a guarantee for the stability of investments as well as a pulling force for migrants), on the urban level (Berlin’s housing markets as a profitable settings for investments) and on the neighborhood level (those districts with a higher rent gap to be filled) co-interact to bring about processes of gentrification which largely exceed the urban and neighborhood frame. The concept of transnational gentrification might be deployed in order to help disentangling the several socio-spatial scales involved.

2.3. The Reproduction of Class and Status

2.3.1. Status and Class in Marx and Weber: An Introduction

In this chapter I will focus on a major issue of class analysis, namely the relationship between class and status. I argue that we need to better understand this relationship, as that its re-conceptualization might contribute to develop a renewed understanding of class tout court. The relationship between class and status has obtained a new attention since 2000, especially

by theorists of social mobility (Chang/Goldthorpe 2007; Chang 2010; Ridgeway 2013). However, the theoretical relevance of this relationship for the sociological understanding of social inequalities was already faced by social scientists interested in a wide range of issues much before.

Firstly, challenging established modes to understand the relationship between class and status was one the goals of a most influential work on the reproduction of inequalities, i.e. “Distinction” by Pierre Bourdieu (1984). In the preface to the English edition, the authors states that the work is based on “an endeavor to rethink Max Weber’s opposition between class and stand”. Although stemming from a different academic background, and more focused on the intertwining of class, nationhood and race, also the pathbreaking book by Balibar and Wallerstein “Race, Nation and Class” (1988) highlights the relationship between class and status as crucial for the understanding of emerging lines of division in contemporary societies. Finally, Derek Sayer’s argument is similar in his work “Capitalism and Modernity” (2001), in which he analyzes the expansion of capitalism as strictly related to modernity. The relationship between class and status, there, is understood as a dynamic dialectic between pre-modern and modern forms of social and economic relations.

In this section, therefore, I tie in with recent developments in the analysis of class and status, while at the same I will go back to the original definitions of the concepts by the authors who first developed them to find out definitional problems and flaws and eventually to fix them.

2.3.2. Status Groups and Classes in Time and Space

The relationship between status groups and classes is a long debated one. Both Marx and Weber, although using partially different terminologies, considered this relationship to be dialectical, although none of them showed unequivocal clarity toward this issue. As the two authors deliver several and only partly overlapping definitions of the concepts, it is not easy to detect the boundaries between status and class. Here I will select those definitions and attributes which helps the understanding, leaving aside the presumption to provide a definite and ultimate view on the issue.

Notwithstanding the lack of univocal definitions of the concepts, we need to keep always in mind that the categories of class elaborated for the first time in such an organic way by Marx and Weber came out from a historicist (both Marx and Weber) and materialistic (Marx)

perspective. The two authors placed the analysis of the formation of classes within the development of capitalism. In other words, class and status were not elaborated as ahistorical and essentialist categories. Both Marx and Weber argued that class is relevant for explaining inequality and structuration of societies through the expansion of capitalism, and more generally through the application of economic rationality, book-keeping and accounting to more and more spheres of life, starting of course from production and labor (Sayer 1991). The concept of status, on the contrary, was developed by Weber to define pre-capitalistic affinities and grouping mainly based on birth, blood, inheritance. Marx also sporadically referred to “estates” (see for instance *German Ideology*), although he did not develop a more elaborate definition of the concept as Weber did.

The essay of Weber *Klassen, Stände und Parteien* (“Class, status, party”) elucidates the emergence of classes and their relationship to status groups. It is the becoming dominant of economic markets as impersonal mediators of the allocation of resources which enables the grouping of individuals according to their chances when entering these markets. The emergence of labor markets is a condition *sine qua non* for the emergence of classes (Weber 1946), as individuals from that moment on acquire a position in society via their relationship to the means of production, and more generally speaking, to “income-generating resources”.

Thus, the availability of a free labor force, i.e. of individuals “free” to sell their labor power on a market, is the key point in the historical formation of classes and objective class interests (Weber 1950 [1923]). The rationalization of the economy which took place along with the development of capitalism enabled people “to carry their social power in their pocket” (Marx 1858, cit. in Sayer 2001: 43). It enabled people to become socially powerful via possession of money, acquired thanks to their integration in labor markets, either as capitalists or as laborers. The criterion for the formation of status groups, on the contrary, was according to Weber social honor, which does not depend directly on the chances of people when entering labor markets and on the monetization of their time, but rather on belonging to kinships, related to blood and birth. Taking a historicist perspective on the emergence of classes, and more widely speaking, of modernity (Sayer 2001), means that we cannot translate the categories of class and status to the present situation without considering the deep transformations which capitalism has undergone in the last two centuries. This is a central point that we cannot forget.

It is almost obvious to say that capitalism has not lost relevance in contemporary Western

societies compared to the time when Marx and Weber were writing. The expansion of markets seems today, about 40 years after the fall of the Soviet Union, almost totalitarian. And still, our analyses on class seem to be challenged more and more by reality, as I have shown in the previous paragraphs. My aim here is therefore that of updating the analytical categories of class and status, re-working them in a way that they can face in a better way the transformations of capitalism of the last decades. The scope of this research is however not that of recounting all the changes within capitalism, as of course this enterprise would overflow the capacities of this work. Rather, grounding my research on the empirical work conducted on Italian migrants in Berlin in the 2010es, I would like to focus on a much shorter period, going approximately from the 1970es to today, trying to highlight some changes in the mechanisms of reproduction of status and pointing to the possible emergence of the formation of new classes.

Moreover, this investigation tries to highlight phenomena which intersect different scales, as well as to focus on different levels of analysis. Although not neglecting fragments of macro-analysis (development of capitalism on a macro-regional scale) and of micro-analysis (focusing on individual agency), the main focus will be put on a meso-level, namely on those meanings, social relations and forms of sociality in general, symbolic and cultural artefacts and circuits of capital valorization which are constructed by and contribute to construct transnational groups, whose boundaries are shaped by processes of categorization based on class and status. The focus will be put on young migrants as the cohorts who experience these changes in the capitalistic way of organizing society and react to these by developing practices of mobility.

2.3.3. The Relationship Between Class and Status in Contemporary Capitalism

As Eric Olin Wright argues, recalling two crucial excerpts of their work, while the Weberian category of status groups explains how individuals do or do not share resources with others in times of stability of regime of accumulation, the category of class seems for both to be more relevant in times of transition from one regime to the other (Wright 2015: 40). On the one hand, as Weber writes in *Economy and Society*: “When the bases of the acquisition and distribution of goods are relatively stable, stratification by status is favored” (Weber 1968 [1922]: 938). From this perspective, status embodies the crystallization, the “frozen-like” structure of social relations in a society. Social stratification becomes thus a sort of snapshot, a section perspective of society at a given time. Similarly, Stavenhagen defines status groups as

the “fossils of classes” (Stavenhagen 1962, cit. in Wallerstein 1998: 195). On the other hand, classes emerge more or less abruptly when the bases for acquisition and distribution of goods start to sway, i.e. to enter a crisis. Crises happen in capitalism when the accumulation of capital under the given conditions becomes more difficult, and circulation of capital slows down (Wallerstein 2012). As Weber continues, “every technological repercussion and economic transformation threatens stratification by status and pushes the class situation into the foreground. Epochs and countries in which the naked class situation is of predominant significance are regularly the periods of technical and economic transformations” (ebd.). This quote reminds a similar argument made by Marx and Engels in the Communist Manifesto of 1848: “Constant revolutionizing of production, uninterrupted disturbance of all social conditions, everlasting uncertainty and agitation distinguish the bourgeois epoch from all earlier ones. All fixed, fast-frozen relations, with their train of ancient and venerable prejudices and opinions, are swept away” (Marx/Engels 1977 [1848]: 248). Although Marx does not talk about status explicitly, the “ancient and venerable prejudiced and opinions” evokes categorizations similar to those mentioned by Weber with regard to status.

As Derek Sayer showed in “Capitalism and Modernity”, published some years before Wright’s contribution on the same topic, the two classical authors, often portrayed and used as opposed standpoints to the reading of capitalism, indeed put forward very similar analyses (Sayer 1991: 69). They both argued that class refers to change, movement, mobility, instability of capitalism, while status refers to consolidation, stabilization, fixation of a system or regime of accumulation. My aim here is to tie in with this argument, highlighting the substantial similarities between two approaches to social class and status, often considered as antithetical and employing them productively for a theoretical advancement of the two concepts.

As both Marx and Weber suggest, in a moment of transformation of work, of the modes of reproduction of an economic system and of the ways how individuals relate to sources of income, the focus on the dialectic between class and status suggests looking at the nexus of reproduction of status and at possible “sweeping away” of consolidated mechanisms of reproduction. This should enable to understand how the “next” snapshot, the emergent pattern of social stratification as well as the next system of relations between classes (class structure) might look like.

Correspondingly, the “sweeping away” of well-oiled systems of reproduction of status groups (often referred to as the reproduction of middle classes, thus abusing the term of class)

asks for turning our analytical gaze to the conflicts and incoherencies and or ears to the creaking points in well-oiled theories of class and status. These controversies, which I called “problems of class analysis”, hint to the formation of new ways of grouping together in society, to the contentious spaces opened by the succession of ever disruptive crises, for the emergence of new class relations, which might then become stabilized by a new class compromise following the failed Fordist one.

Capitalism has historically reacted to crises, to speeding down and halting of capital flows by searching for new regimes of accumulation, for instance through technological development (thus creating new markets or finding ways to increase productivity), expanding in space (from a historical perspective through imperialism), in time (the more recent processes of financialization), or through a combination of both (through the creation of spatial-temporal fixes) (Harvey 2004: 64). The concept of regime of accumulation has been developed within the so-called “regulation theory framework”, a “political economy approach to the restructuring of capital” which has been “particularly influential in studies of the decline of Fordism and the ascendancy of Post-Fordism in its many variants” (Peck/Tickell 1992: 191).

Although the concept is not univocally defined, we can adopt the explanation given by two most prominent scholars of this field: “an accumulation system is a production-consumption relationship which ensures that the individual decisions of capitalists to invest are met by demand for “their” products, the value of which is realized on the market” (ebd.). For a regime of accumulation to be realized, some procedures must be developed to guarantee its reproduction; “these procedures consist of habits, customs, social norms and enforceable laws” (ebd.). In other words, regimes of accumulation point to a totality of relations of production and consumption which enables capitalism in its current appearance to be reproduced.

Crises are often signs of a decline in the functioning of a regime of accumulation. Peck and Tickell provide a categorization of crises, from the more contingent to more systemic ones: while micro-crises affect only small fragments of capital, and conjunctural crises express a “cyclical downturn in the economy”, “structural” crises occur as the regime of accumulation is not able anymore to reproduce itself, due to structural changes in the mode of social regulation. The global crisis started in 2007 has been defined as part of a structural crisis which has begun during the 1960es and 1970es (Wallerstein 2012). Many authors share such an argument although focusing on different aspects (Streeck 2013 on the crisis of democracy within capitalism; Piketty 2014 on the rise of inequalities; Mason 2016 on informational capi-

talism). Other authors have focused on the cultural and social aspects of the shift occurred from the 1970es. While this is not the place to systematically review these arguments, it appears opportune to highlight how they overlap partially with the arguments about the relationship between status and class as Marx and Weber developed it.

Crises have been a characteristic and recurring trait of capitalism, although it has been highlighted that since the 1970es, crises have become almost paradigmatic, as a series of formation of bubbles and bursts have followed on an accelerating pace and with increasingly global resonance (Wallerstein 2012; Mason 2016). At the same time, social scientists have described the dismissal of the Bretton Woods agreements in 1971 as the watershed between the Fordist and the Post-Fordist era, signaling a historical shift in the modes of organization of capitalism. While these categories have been criticized by their own authors (Jessop 1992), it remains undisputed that in the last four decades capitalism has undergone crucial transformations. These have challenged the so-called Fordist compromise in Western countries, based on family-supporting wages, job stability, and welfare provision to reinforce the reproduction of the labor force. With increasing mass unemployment and falling growth, the rise of neoliberalism and the progressive cutting of public spending and hollowing out of social services, market logic has invested spheres of social life previously arranged by public institutions. The state, as the mediating instance who was tipping the balance in the Fordist mode between capital and labor, drains back with neoliberalism, delegating part of its services to private market institutions and public-private partnerships and showing its failure as intermediary of class relations, both in sphere of production (cuts in public service jobs) and in the sphere of reproduction (cuts in social services).

Furthermore, the Marxian observation that within capitalism “every limit appears as a barrier to be overcome” (Marx 1973 [1858]: 408) has been used to frame various lines of transformations involving Post-1970es capitalism, e.g. the incorporation into the labor market and commodification of the so called “artist critique” from the 1970es, i.e. the demand for autonomy, creativity and freedom (Boltanski/Chiapello 2006). At the same time, to face the volatility of economic highs and peaks, labor has been flexibilized and further rationalized. The diffusion of informatization and digital technology, then, has accelerated the process of robotization and mechanization within production, thus leading on one side to the disappearance of many unskilled jobs, and at the same time contributing to polarize the labor force on emergent skills (Hirsch-Kreinsen 2016).

While we are witnessing the multiplication of forms of labor and of creation of value (Wallerstein/Balibar 1988; Mezzadra/Neilson 2013), Taylorist organization of work has expanded into the digital economy (Altenried 2017). Process of proletarianization invest those middle status groups whose relationship to income-generating resources was originally based on service relationships and undetermined contracts (Sassatelli et al. 2015). Automation has entered also service relationships, breaking them into many pieces. The Taylorization of clerical work via informatization, called digital Taylorism signals that the process of deskilling of clerical work, already acknowledged in the late 1950es by authors such as Lockwood (1957), has gone further. Consequently, the distinction between wage and salary, industrial and service relationship appears increasingly challenged. Further, care work has increasingly been commodified and delegated to labor supplies offered by care work global chains, as the gendered division of labor has cracked, with families needing both parents at work to satisfy their needs (Fraser 2016). Financialization (thus the creation of markets based on previsions of future economic transactions) and the extraction of urban rents (also through the financialization of housing) are two further mechanisms to generate wealth, in which labor does not figure as the main character.

Finally, the crisis of the Fordist compromise seems to be undermining the basis of social reproduction on a structural level. According to the explanations of the dynamic relationship between status and class, then, also the class structure is reconfigured under these new conditions, while the search for a new compromise between antagonistic classes seems to be still on the way. If labor power is the time and energy of people (Skeggs 2011), then, it seems necessary today to investigate “how time and energy are re-allocated today by virtue of class divisions” (Latimer/Munro 2015). The questions to be answered are: who profits of the time and energy of individuals and groups? Who decides about the allocation of time and energy?

While it is impossible to tackle such reconfigurations in their entirety, the present work intends setting the focus on a specific social group, which is particularly affected by the only briefly mentioned transformations, namely youth. Young people, as several scholars have pointed out, face the restructuring of labor markets and the transformations of labor most dramatically. The recent crisis started in 2008 has affected youth with a generalized increase in youth unemployment in Europe (with few exceptions). Especially in Southern Europe, young people are the ones most affected by unemployment, underemployment and precarious work contracts (Lafleur/Stanek 2017).

Against this background, including the impossibility to replicate the parental choice as conditions have changed, young people have to reconfigure new ways for reproducing themselves. Procrastination of formation of households, of economic independence and of leaving the familiar nest are reactions taken by the young to face increasing difficulty in maintaining their livelihoods. The imposition of flexibility in work requires adaptation tactics such as refusing at all to look for a stable place. Other reactions entail various practices of spatial mobility at several scales, from moving to another neighborhood, to another city, to another country. Migration can be seen as a reaction to the crisis of reproduction, as young people mostly move to those centers of production which might be able to absorb their labor force (Hansen/Zechner 2017).

The focus of this research is therefore put on young migrants and on their practices of spatial mobility, understood as in relation with social mobility. As King argues, youth migration is a “doubly liminal condition”, in which transition to adulthood and transition to a new place converge, thereby requiring people to develop innovative practices of survival and reproduction (King 2018: 9).

If the arguments which consider contemporary capitalism as structured on emerging modes of social regulation and the crisis of 2007 as part of a structural transformation of the regime of accumulation are true, then we should conclude that today’s youth face new forms of class relations and the decline of relevance of previous status groups. Their parent’s class location, in other words, correspond to a class structure, i.e. a system of class relations, which is increasingly inappropriate to explain their own social location. The emerging class relations seem to be still under construction, or at least so is the theory developed to understand them.

Moreover, in a context of declining relevance of the nation state as the main social formation able to mediate class relations, focusing on young migrants allows us to highlight transnational modes of regulation of class relations, in which social welfares and national systems of rights are analyzed not as closed containers and well-defined scales, but as open systems in interaction with other states and with the different institutions placed at smaller (urban) and bigger (macro-regional and continental) scales.

From such a perspective, migration would represent also the choice of another context, different from the context of origin, where to negotiate the own relationship to income-generating resources. Migrating to the North of Europe, South European youngsters approach systems of redistribution of resources with different characteristics than the ones they left in the

country of origin. The reproduction of their status is sought through spatial mobility, as if the latter could represent a sort of “spatial fix” from below to the crisis of reproduction experienced at home (Harvey 2004).

From this viewpoint, some questions arise also about the role of spatial mobility in contemporary capitalism. How is spatial mobility to be conceived against the changing background of the contemporary regime of accumulation? What kind of value can be extracted from mobility, by whom and for whom? Can spatial mobility be considered as a new class compromise, developed, contrarily to the Fordist one, individually and from below, and spanning on a transnational scale?

However, one premise must be made about the impossibility to consider any reaction towards capitalistic processes of valorization and de-valorization as complete or definite. As already Sennett and Cobb noted in 1972 talking about European migrants in US cities in the 1930es, while in the places of destination migrants seek to “re-ignite some feeling of common custom and culture that had been disintegrating at home” (status groups), the very existence of such customs and culture at home is already irremediably challenged. “In the desert of America”, a Russian Jew remarked in the 1920es, it is easier to remain Russian in the old ways than among the Iron mills in the Urals”. (Sennett/Cobb 1972: 11). In other words, the analysis of the role of spatial mobility in the changing of regime of accumulation will point not to take as granted narratives of easy adjusting and of rational developing of strategies to face economic and social difficulties. As King reminds us, the view on migration as a rational-choice-reaction to economic imbalances aimed at counterweighting them, which constitutes the logic underlying the development of neoliberal programs of mobility, is not able to account for the “failure” of such rational strategies, expressed as deskilling, unemployment, reinforcing of inequalities (King et al. 2018). Rather, the analysis will focus on contradictions and overflows, on failed predictions and surprising solidarities. Migration of the youth will be seriously considered as a “doubly liminal condition”, on which verge new formations of social divisions might emerge.

2.3.4. Where Do Young People Come From: Actual Class and “Class Background”

Capitalism has changed, and with it the structure of class relations it sustains, I have argued in the last section. To account for this transformation, I claim now that we first need to break down class, as individuals experience it, into two components: the so-called class back-

ground and their (actual) class situation. Indeed, in sociology there is often a fuzzy use of the two concepts, as I will show in the following.

Class background is usually adopted to encompass class-related resources, assets, capitals which people inherit by their birth. In this sense, then, it is more correct to talk about “inherited” status instead of class background, as status is the category whose source is usually located in the fortunes or misfortunes of birth. From this perspective, one might say that children have no class location, as they are economically dependent upon their parents (or better said, upon those who are put in charge by the state of their education), and more precisely upon the relationship of their parents to the means of production, or, more generally speaking, to income-generating resources. From a Weberian perspective, entering a class location on one’s own, i.e. becoming member of a class, is a process which invests individuals from the moment when they are entering the labor market, or other markets which might be relevant for the generation of income, such as the housing market. Focusing on youth, then, we need to look at those processes through which young people become economic subjects on their own, breaking the path of economic dependency from their parents, and entering markets relevant for the allocation of resources, thereby accessing class locations.

Even if plenty of studies have demonstrated that the relationship between the class locations of the family of origin of individuals and their own class location is strictly correlated, it must be noted that the relationship is far from being deterministic or linear but is rather subject to change. In particular, it is necessary to remind that as capitalism changes also the value which is given to the inherited status-related resources might change (Bourdieu 1984).

Further, the reproduction of class is multidimensional, i.e. cannot be explained solely by economic variables. Several authors have put a stronger focus on the cultural aspects of the reproduction of social inequality (Willis 1978; Wilson 2010; Small et al. 2010; Lareau 2003, 2015; Ridgeway 2013). The work of Bourdieu, especially his conceptualization of forms of capital and of habitus, constitute the most important theoretical point of reference for these studies.

The reproduction of social position according to Bourdieu takes place via the inheritance of several types of assets, resources, capitals. The processes of inheriting are multifarious and take different forms according to the involved matter of inheritance. For instance, wealthy parents will provide their children with a given amount of money which gives them social power in the form of the universal means of exchange, whose value can change according to

the market laws of exchange of course but is at least “easier” to read. Money as a universal capital can be easily converted into commodities, money (via financialization), housing, etc. On the contrary, other class-related resources, from the other forms of capital (cultural, social, etc.), to those less tangible and quantifiable classed and embodied resources such as habitus, dispositions etc., might be subjected to the transformation of their values according to 1) the different markets/fields where they are to be converted, and 2) to the transformations within the fields/markets, including the possible disappearing of extant fields/markets and emergence of new ones (see Bourdieu 1986).

Only by taking account of this we can do justice to the use of the concept of capital by Bourdieu, and to the distinction he makes between “initial capital” and “present capital” (Distinction 1984: 109), namely that capital is not a thing but a relation, as Marx initially told introducing the concept of capital into sociology. This relation is not a purely economic one, but is rather mediated by culture, sociality, symbols. The realization of capital into profit presupposes predictability, stability of the regime of accumulation and trust into the mode of conversion: without these, the mechanism for conversion can get blocked, and the system of reproduction of class and status spoiled.

In this case of changing ratios of conversion, the generational perspective can be useful to dissect the process of transformation of class relations across generations and thus to look closer at it. From this viewpoint, the parental class should be analyzed separately from the actual class location, with a focus on the discontinuities between the two, thus challenging the idea that social mobility is a linear process binding together two class locations considered as ordinal categories. Rather, the actual and parental class locations should be seen as discontinuous entities, linked by dynamics which are neither self-evident nor deterministically predictable.

Usually, the category of class background is adopted in studies about social mobility. To this regard, Laurison and Friedman adopt the term “class origin” in a recent analysis of social mobility in the UK (Laurison/Friedman 2016). There, they detect a “class gap” effect operating along the trajectories of social mobility from lower classes to the upper class (NS-SEC 1 in the British employment aggregate scheme developed by Erikson and Goldthorpe). Their use of the term “class origin” appears more correct as it corresponds to the occupational location of the parents of the individuals whose trajectories of social mobility were analyzed. Coherently, this was considered by using the standard occupational aggregate scheme (NS-SEC).

However, as the authors themselves admit, they limit themselves to take the class and status of origin and the present one, to understand the reproduction of inequalities based on class. I argue that it is much more important to analyze the mechanisms which operate to reproduce these inequalities, the dynamics connecting both positions, in order to understand how income-generating resources are transmitted from parents to children.

The concept of status helps indeed to tackle this issue, as the reproduction of class is based on mechanisms of status reproduction, that is with life conduct and world-images, which under advanced capitalism often happen to be expressed socially via lifestyles, consumption patterns, educational and residential choices. Therefore, I argue that the category of class background should be substituted by an analytically more correct term, such as status of origin, or parental class (Bukodi/Goldthorpe 2013), and not according to the usual language until now used (working class background, middle class background, and so on).

Secondly, there is no reason to believe that parents should share the same class location (Wright). The normative as well as methodological limits of assigning to households the class location of the father, as well as the sociological category of the bread-winner have been previously criticized. Further, the focus on the cultural aspects of status and class reproduction points to highlighting the role of parental “contradictory class locations” as a complex dis-homogenous “background”. Children with such a background might have a more complex set of resources to employ in their own path of social trajectory (Tolonen 2005: 349). This requires more detailed analysis of the mechanisms of reproduction.

Thirdly, the parental class location is neither to be thought as a temporal background located chronologically in the past, but rather as something which affects individuals’ lives even when they enter on their own new class locations. Even after young people become economically independent from their families, the class and status situation of their parents keep on being present in their lives, in indirect and direct forms of safety nets and support or, on the contrary, in the negative form of indebtedness and need for support. These resources can remain more or less silent as if they were on the background but can nonetheless be mobilized in case of need.

The parental class, transformed into habitus and classed dispositions, becomes embodied by the individual, and thus affects potentially every act of its economic and social life. Therefore, we can talk about a certain “resilience” of class, a sort of class echoing, or a class excess, overflow, a reverberation, which might never fade out completely. This has been studied

within research on social mobility focusing either on the objective or the subjective aspects of such class overflow.

As mentioned before, Friedman and Laurison have demonstrated that professionals and managers with working and class parents tend to earn less than their colleagues with upper class parents. In other words, there is an inverse proportional relationship between current income of professionals and managers and the class of their parents, which they term “class gap”, borrowing the feminist concept of “gender pay gap” (Petersen/Morgan 1995). These results are important, as they show that the parental class does not only affect the actual class location of people, but it objectively affects the material outcomes of paths of social mobility even when upwardly occupational social mobility has already taken place.

The subjective aspects are better expressed in terms of how types of life conduct, lifestyle, value orientation etc. are transferred between generations. In *Learning to Labor* (1977), Paul Willis documented how the reproduction of the working class in the 1970es UK used to take place already during childhood through the diffused and overlapping effect of institutional and familiar education. Working class children were provided with a horizon of possibilities for their life which led directly to the factory as their “natural” workplace. Their community of destiny was quite linear since their early years and was transmitted via the education to a working-class life, permeated by working-class values and life conduct.

While “*Learning to labor*” is about the reproduction of class locations as a path based on continuity and fixation, other studies have focused on the relevance of the subjective components of the parental class for paths of social mobility, either in downward or upward direction. Concepts such as “*habitus clivé*” (Bourdieu 2007; Bennett 2007; Friedman 2016), “*cleft habitus*” and status hysteresis have been developed to explain the disorientation produced by social mobility, as borders between class locations are crossed. Such disorientation is part of the “*emotional imprint of social mobility*”, as Friedman defines it (2016).

The subjective aspects of downward mobility have been better explored in combination with narrations which price economic success and progress and stigmatize pauperization as a marker of individual failure (Newman 1988). On the contrary, upward mobility has been usually depicted as the achievement of a widespread and recognized societal goal, and thus as an almost univocally positive social phenomenon (Friedman 2016). Some authors, however, have focused on the dark sides of upward social mobility, usually silenced by most prominent researchers of social mobility, such as Goldthorpe (Lawler 1999; Reay et al. 2009; Barwick

2016). In these studies, the “price of the ticket” for upward social mobility consists of a “cultural homelessness” which permeates social life within the status group of destination (Friedman2014). Lahire has stated that socially mobile people face “two contradictory matrices of socialization” and that this contradictory and disorienting experience can threaten their “mental coherency” (Lahire 2011). Barwick has shown how upward socially mobility is often coupled with residential mobility within the city, which can also provoke a sense of spatial disorientation and the loss of support through social networks of origin (Barwick 2016). From this perspective, also upward social mobility can be considered a form of voluntary displacement or socio-spatial self-relocation.

The focus on the subjective as well as objective components involved in the reproduction of class and status opens new horizons in the study of class and status analysis and of the inter-generational transfer of resources. In particular, it reveals a complexity hidden behind the perspective of social mobility as linear trajectory from A to B (or social fixity as the immobility of an individual within a fixed A). More specifically, the category of trajectory itself is challenged, once we acknowledge with Bourdieu that trajectories of social mobility can have external and internal, individual and collective effects (Bourdieu 1984: 109 ff.), since the class structure itself changes over time.

In other words, the study of reproduction of status and class at individual level must take into account the context of major social and economic transformations, which has been described previously as the shift of the Fordist regime of accumulation to a regime characterized by variety of modes of accumulation and by the proliferation of labor. Changes and transformations, and a situation of permanent instability and uncertainty put young people in the condition of knowing where they come from but not knowing where they will land. This “leap into the unknowingness” could require an ability to predict and to adapt to changing contexts, in a word to a life conduct marked by malleability, mobility and flexibility. One goal will be that of elucidating the structural conditions under which this ability can be expanded, and those under which this ability is impeded and blocked. In both cases, structural constraints take place, which nonetheless can be framed in very different ways according to the social recognition given to them.

2.3.5. The Reproduction of Class and Status: the CARS Approach

In the previous section I mentioned that there are different forms of class-related re-

sources which can be transferred from parents to their children. To tackle the process of inheritance, I argue that we should deconstruct the category of status by analyzing the different types of inheritable resources which do play a role for the class situation of children once they enter on their own markets such as the labor and the housing one. These resources can be those relevant for the reproduction and enhancement of economic, social and cultural capital. They are very diverse both according to their sources, their form and the type of conversion into economic advantage in which they can be engaged.

Savage and colleagues attempt to categorize them through the so-called CARS model, i.e. capitals, assets and resources (Savage et al. 2005). In the article, the authors highlight the analytical confusion in class research regarding these concepts. However, I intend to maintain this threefold classification and contribute to clarify it by making visible the links between the three. I argue that these concepts can potentially apply to the same material or symbolic commodity, what makes the difference here is the temporal stage, or the specific use that people make out of them in a period of time. Let me explain briefly in the next paragraphs how this distinction can become fruitful for the understanding of social reproduction, by applying a perspective inspired by critical political economy.

The concept of “resources” is widely used in sociology, especially in studies on social inequality. Goldthorpe has employed the term for his analysis of social stratification, using it in contrast to the Marxist concept of capital (Savage et al. 2005). However, it still seems difficult to tie this term to a clear definition. I propose to understand resources in relation to the concept of primitive accumulation, as it has been recently reworked in studies on extractivism, especially in Latin America (Mezzadra/Gago 2018). According to these, resources can be considered as bare nature, uncommodified social relations and goods (i.e. not mediated through a market). In the literature on extractivism, usually resources are goods such as water, mines, raw materials, which then are forcefully embedded into capitalistic relations which entail their exploitation. However, recent literature has attempted to expand the notion of extractivism to other fields, such as logistics and finance (Mezzadra/Neilson 2017).

Here I am trying to use the term to consider all that can be relevant for livelihoods in its non-commodified and not quantifiable form; in other words, all which can constitute a use value for people. To become capital, then, a resource must firstly be acknowledged as such, secondly mobilized for its use, thirdly its value must become quantifiable, so that it can be converted, accumulated and treated properly as a capital. Anthias proposes a similar view fo-

cusing on the transformation of ethnic ties into social capital via their mobilization aimed at partaking advantage (Anthias 2007). The mobilizability, which is essential for this transformation, conflates both individual agency and structural conditions. Through the mobilization, latent resources become actual ones. The mobilization, then, occurs at the borders between economic and non-economic realms: once value is recognized, the door is open for its exchange with other commodities. Fraser define “boundary struggles” those conflicts which arise at the borders of commodification (Fraser 2014), or, in the words of Mezzadra and Nielson, “frontiers of valorization”.

Capital as a concept to explain the social relation through which wealth is unequally distributed has been used in multifarious ways after Marx, most prominently by Bourdieu, whose definition is that “capital is accumulated labor (in its materialized form or its ‘incorporated,’ embodied form) which, when appropriated on a private, i.e., exclusive, basis by agents or groups of agents, enables them to appropriate social energy in the form of reified or living labor” (Bourdieu 1986). The stress on labor as the building core of capital tells us that this definition is a closely Marxist one, but Bourdieu has the merit to formulate it in a way which enables an expansion of the term beyond the economic. While the sine qua non condition for capital according to Bourdieu is that it must bring economic advantages to individuals (ebd.), also cultural and social capital do the purpose of enabling individuals to “appropriate social energy in the form of reified or living labor”.

The concepts developed by Bourdieu, and particularly cultural capital, have been enormously successful in the sociology of the last two decades, sociologists from all subdisciplines have adopted them. However, I argue that we must pay great attention to their use, as it seems that the proliferation of forms of capital (cosmopolitan, political, etc.) have greatly watered their analytical usefulness. The Bourdieusian concepts assume that the forms of capital can be exchanged and converted within and across fields according to the respective rules. This perspective reveals Bourdieu’s own tendency to use a rational choice approach to explain human actions (Skeggs 2004), even if he has a more refined way than strictly neoclassical approaches. Indeed, Bourdieu’s theorization of the forms of capital even seems to resemble the attempt by the Right to apply neoclassical economics to spheres which have not been considered until now as strictly economic (Sayer 1999). Bourdieu’s concept of capital is centered on dynamics of conversions and circulation. In other words, as Sayer powerfully arguments, his theory is “overwhelmingly concerned with exchange and exchange-value” (Sayer 1999, 408).

Thus, the theoretical move of Bourdieu is related to the expansion of the economic into more and more spheres of life, a process which seem to point, as some authors have argued (Bröckling et al. 2000), at the so called subsumption of life into the economy, and a process whose speed has increased considering the development of digital and financial capitalism. Primitive accumulation takes place today not as a transition to, but within capitalism (Mezadra/Gago 2017: 585). As Skeggs argues, in his attempt of rejecting the economic as an autonomous domain, Bourdieu ends up applying economic rationalities to all spheres of life (Skeggs 2004: 16). This can be connected to other theories which have spread since the 1960es, most notably the human capital theory: everything which is human becomes rationalized and accountable as exchange-value (Becker 1964) and can be analyzed as such to understand why some individuals get better life chances than others. In particular, Foucault has developed a powerful critique of the concept of human capital (Foucault 2008).

While Foucault's approach to this will not constitute the main theoretical framework of this work (most obviously because Foucault did not engage in class research), his critique of the concept of human capital reminds us once again that we cannot give for granted the realization of advantages via acquisition of qualifications and skills as such, but rather that we always must remember that these qualifications are there to sustain not only the individual reproduction, but also the reproduction of the integrated system which is capitalism. If a certain type of qualification loses its relevance for production and capital accumulation, for instance because the labor activity to which the qualification should prepare is under a reconstruction due to automation and digitalization, that qualification will lose its potentiality to generate cultural capital. The human capital of the individual owning that qualification will thus decrease, that very human being will lose its value in the contemporary capitalistic system. Thus, the relationship to income generating resources means not only that dominant classes should be able to possess those resources and make a monopoly out of them, but also that they will have a higher degree to determine, to master, or at least to understand, the ways how capitalism develops towards the possibly largest realization of the resources they own. Thus, they will be able to sustain at their maximum their human capital, their value as social actors.

Capital, as the ability to appropriate social energy, cannot be equated with an educational degree, nor with the ownership or consumption of specific goods as such. Rather, a potential source of income such as an educational degree is at first a thing as such, a "piece of paper": only when it is mobilized, used, implemented for instance to gets a job, it becomes capital,

which enables one to accumulate resources of all types, and eventually money, and thus acquire social power (Serre/Wagner 2015). In other words, capital, to be such, must entail the possibility of realization. Only in the moment of its realization it becomes a tool aimed at accumulation, at the formation of a monopoly, at concentration of resources. From this point of view, a devalued qualification, on the contrary, could be seen rather as a trap than a capital: a failed investment, a tool for indebtedment.

I argue therefore that the realization of capital is a fundamental moment to be analyzed, if we are to understand how resources and assets inherited by the family of origin affect the actual class location of individuals. In other words, the transmission of resources from one generation to the next one is mediated by the transmission of the practical knowledge about how to employ these resources. In the case of deep transformations of the dominant ways of converting resources into capitals, such as in the shift from Fordist to Post-Fordist capitalism, the last type of transmission becomes more problematic, as the family of origin has more difficulties in transferring knowledge about a context which is exposed to rapid change. In other words, processes such as digitalization of production and precarization of labor have put families' and individuals' strategies of status reproduction under challenge. Young people face the need of mobilizing resources for their livelihoods, but such mobilization can be understood as a bet on the future, which according to the degree of realization could lead to the accumulation of assets or to indebtedment. To understand the social conditions according to which bets are formulated and practiced, the analysis will focus on the node of intra-generational realization of capital.

Finally, the third concept involved in the discussion on the CARS model, i.e. assets, is mostly used by Marxist authors such as Wright, who indicates that the most relevant assets are property, organization and skills (Wright 1985). These, however, are strictly related to the employment status: focusing only on the position of individuals in the labor market, however, is a very limited take on social class, as we have seen previously, and does not help to distinguish class from status. I rather propose to conceive of assets as the "storage" form of exchange value, which can generate a rent due to the investment of capital into a commodity or social relations able to store value. For instance, buying real estate for the purpose of storing economic capital is an asset which produces wealth for the owner. The concept of rent within class analysis has been developed by Sorensen (2000), who has focused on mechanisms of reproduction on inequality based not on exploitation of living labor, but on the exploitation of

rents.

Once a conceptual construction has been fixed to understand how resources can be mobilized to become capital, and capital can be invested in such a way to produce a rent and thus stabilize accumulation of capital, the reproduction of class and status can be analyzed more systematically. From this standpoint, the analytical procedure is that of exploring which specific resources get mobilized in the context of spatial mobility, and of course how they get mobilized. Which ones are more or less strategically employed and combined to acquire forms of capital? And how do these strategies and practices of mobilization look like? Why do certain resources produce rent and why other ones do not? I argue that the empirical exploration of these questions can tell us much about where value emerges today, where and how it is recognized, and which conflicts and reviews people undergone when they are called to mobilize resources. In other words, the empirical analysis will identify those “frontiers of valorization” (Mezzadra/Neilson 2013), where the access to a market for the acquisition of goods requires people to mobilize what they have, or what they recognize that they have in terms of more or less latent resources, forms of capital, and assets.

2.3.6. Status and *Lebensführung*: A Critique of the Life Style Concept

Bourdieu, who tried to combine Marx and Weber’s sociology of inequality (Weininger 2005), relates status to class when he states in *Distinction* that “any change in either the instruments of reproduction or the state of the capital to be reproduced ... leads to a restructuring of the system of reproduction strategies” (Bourdieu 1984: 131). For him, these changes are to be analyzed through a focus on how conversion strategies between different forms of capital and different fields are elaborated and employed by individuals.

It should be noticed here that class and status are often considered as relating respectively to production and to reproduction. As Goldthorpe asserts in an interview with the Observer (30 November 2014) quoted by Skeggs (2015: 212), “class relates to the way in which people make their living in the labor market, and status relates more to the way they then spend those earnings, their patterns of consumption and their lifestyles and social intimates”. The dialectic relationship between class and status mentioned here is not predicated upon time as in the historicist approaches of Weber and Marx, but rather expresses itself as the synchronic dynamic of capitalism at a given time. Nonetheless, also from this perspective status seems to come “after” class, since it serves for the reproduction of a specific regime of accumulation based

on a specific mode of production, i.e. of creation of value.

At the structural level, consumption fuels the reproduction of class locations. However, scholars have pointed out that status does not merely display the tastes for consumption of individuals (Latimer/Munro 2015). Skeggs makes a similar argument introducing the symbolic dimension: “It is only if status is used to legitimate difference through symbolic mechanisms that uphold class power that status relates to class” (ebd.). Status expresses from this perspective the symbolic component of class (Chang/Goldthorpe: 2007).

Weininger (2005) specifies this aspect further, by looking more closely at Bourdieu’s work on social class, and in particular at how the French sociologist commented on the relationship between class and status (1984). There, he indicates that while “everything seems to indicate that Weber opposes class and status group as two types of real unities which would come together more or less frequently according to the type of society ... it is necessary to see them instead as nominal unities...which are always the result of a choice to accent the economic aspect or the symbolic aspect — aspects which always coexist in the same reality... (Bourdieu 1984, cit. in Weininger 2005: 85). Weininger accentuates that for Bourdieu class and status are categorical distinctions operated by social scientists, while they actually exist simultaneously as dialectical components of one’s social position. In this sense, status and class should be considered relationally and dynamically, a statement which this research sustains and seeks to demonstrate.

However, I argue that there is a problem in Bourdieu’s reasoning. To better explain the concept of symbolic power in his theorization of status, Bourdieu introduces the concept of symbolic capital, a central category for his explanation tout court of the reproduction of inequalities. Considering the different definitions of symbolic capital by Bourdieu (ref.) and of the critical literature which has dealt with this concept (Pellandini-Simányi 2014), I argue that symbolic capital becomes more a tautology than an analytically useful concept. On one side, it is described as a form of capital next to the other ones which Bourdieu theorizes (economic, social and cultural): „symbolic capital is nothing other than economic or cultural capital when it is known and recognized, when it is known through the categories of perception which it imposes“ (Bourdieu 1986). On the other side, symbolic capital’s specificity lies in being able to legitimate all other forms of capital. But exactly for this reason, it seems difficult to name it as just another form of capital. It rather seems to be a resource located at a conceptual “higher level”.

However, the analysis of the source of symbolic capital remains largely unchallenged and therefore the concept is deemed to circularity (Pellandini-Simànyi 2014). Bourdieu explicitly refers to symbolic capital as related to the Weberian concept of social honor. Indeed, in one of the definitions he gives to this concept, he states that symbolic capital is “commonly called prestige, reputation, fame, etc., which is the form assumed by these different forms of capital when they are perceived and recognized as legitimate” (Bourdieu 1991). In other words, symbolic capital is the honor, i.e. the principle for the formation of status groups according to Weber. But social honor, in Weberian terms, is not a magic, it rather refers to the hidden and underlying processes of valuation which on the one hand make society work and reproduce itself, and on the other hand can be analyzed to reveal the system of domination, the power structures which underlay society.

This should be the goal of status analysis, especially in contemporary capitalism, which is characterized by changes in regimes of accumulation and modes of production, as well as by transformations investing labor relations since the decline of the Fordist model as the dominant mode. In other words, the aim is that of exploring the values and ethics which sustain contemporary structures of prestige and honor as well as their function in reproducing the existing matrix of power relations.

I argue that to decipher the mechanisms through which honor and prestige are attached to specific patterns of behaviors, sets of values and consumption of commodities, we might turn back to the concept of status by Weber and to the ways how it has been translated and quoted afterwards (see Tribe for a critique of the work of translation of Weber to English, Tribe Translating Weber).

The term “life conduct” goes back to the German word *Lebensführung*, which Weber used to define status (Weber 1946, 1968). Tying in with an article by Abel and Cockerman (1993), I argue that the translation into English operated by Mills in “From Max Weber” as “lifestyles” (1946: 180 ff.), and then adopted by almost all following sociologists (see for instance Schwedberg 2005), is misleading.¹²

While the term “lifestyle” might be useful as it is a more “contemporary” word than life conduct, I suggest that it cannot account for the Weberian view of status, which is related with

¹² Weber also uses the term „*Stilisierung des Lebens*“ (stylization of life) in “Economy and Society”. Nonetheless, he does not deploy it as a synonym of “*Lebensführung*”, but rather as a specification, an outcome of it and as a process (“*Stilisierung*”), not as an object. (“*Denn die maßgebende Rolle der »Lebensführung« für die ständische »Ehre« bringt es mit sich, daß die »Stände« die spezifischen Träger aller »Konventionen« sind: alle »Stilisierung« des Lebens, in welchen Aeüßerungen es auch sei, ist entweder ständischen Ursprungs oder wird doch ständisch konserviert*”) (Weber 1972: 537).

ethics and the types of ideal and material interests and values which status groups do share.

The latter cannot be reduced only to consumption patterns, which the lifestyle concept seems to evoke. Much more, *Lebensführung* evokes the direction, the orientation of actions of individuals, their goal so to speak. The types of rationality which Weber identified (*zwecksrational, wertrational, affective, traditional*) change according to the status groups. While consumption is related to these, it does not subsume them. Weber uses a language of possibility and conditionality when talking about the relationship between economic condition and status belonging of subjects: “*Denn die Möglichkeit ständischer Lebensführung pflegt naturgemäß ökonomisch mitbedingt zu sein*” (1972: 537). This is an important argument which enables to work with the status concept in a more useful analytical way.

Firstly, the German word *Lebensführung* (from “*führen*”) evokes command, governing, guidance, leading: status groups have internal ethics which guide their actions. While the choice and following of these ethics cannot be explained as pure voluntary acts nor as deterministic mechanisms, it is fundamental to explore the potentially multifarious subjective dynamics through which individuals become members of status groups via adopting specific trait of life conduct.

Secondly, the concept of *Lebensführung* helps us to understand the difference between class and status. Significantly, Weber writes, “*die Klassenlage eines Offiziers, Beamten, Studenten, bestimmt durch sein Vermögen, kann ungemein verschieden sein, ohne die ständische Lage zu differenzieren, da die Art der durch Erziehung geschaffenen Lebensführung in den ständisch entscheidenden Punkte die gleiche ist*” (Weber 1972: 177). In this passage, Weber makes clear that status refers to all sorts of components which is bound to bring individuals to share a common destiny. Thus, even though individuals can occupy very different class locations, they might be still bound by the same type of life conduct, which corresponds to a specific and predictable path of social mobility, according to which they act and collectively construct their shared systems of values and ethics.

Accordingly, in contemporary times, marked by crisis and change, i.e. by uncertainty and precarization, *Lebensführung* can also be understood as a tension to direction and to orientation, to be distinguished from immediate and dis-embedded improvisation, but also from definite plans for action or strategies. *Lebensführung* can be thus understood as a tactic, able to change and to adapt, but still giving a hint to the next action to be undertaken. Tactic, tension, direction, orientation are soft concepts, they can be declined as the claim for a value, the claim

for an object or commodity, or the claim for the right to belong to a status group. Nevertheless, they should not be seen as fixed, static, as a “once for all” claim.

Human beings, far from being rational choice actors, the actors of constantly „unintended consequences“, or the “innocent” actors which pursue constantly their interests either explicitly or by disguising them through the display of disinterestedness (see Bourdieu and the critique to his concept of disinterestedness), seem rather to adjust their orientations to the contexts and situations they are living. They seem to make different uses of different types of rationalities, to adopt different logics, including apparently irrational rationalities or illogical logics, according to different contexts and situations.

Status analysis should therefore point to disclose the different rationalities which individuals adopt to explain their recent past, present, and proximate future actions, challenging the self-evidence of those rationalities and logics which are less explainable from a commonsense point of view, and looking for explanation of those who seem to be irrational and guided by impulse. The reason to do this is exactly that of unraveling types of life conduct and the emerging status groups emerging out of them, thereby helping us to reveal how the contemporary mode of production and regime of accumulation contribute to create new patterns of social divisions.

2.3.7. Values and Symbolic Boundaries: Suggestions for Status and Class Analysis

The class- and status relevant questions which the focus on types of life conduct lets emerge are the following: How are different life conducts valued in contemporary capitalism? Which ones are rewarded by society, which ones are less rewarded, or punished, and why? By which mechanisms does the individual’s life conduct enhance his and her degree of recognition by society?

I suggest that the methodological questions about of class and status are of the same kind: as in both status and class, the main issue is about how people see themselves as placed in society, how they relate to income-generating resources, and how the social construction of categorizations might legitimate or challenge the mechanisms which reproduce relations to income-generating resources.

Bourdieu focused again on the question in his essay “What makes a social class? On the theoretical and practical existence of groups” (1987). There, he states that “any theory of the social world must include the representations that agents have of the social world and, more

precisely, the contribution they make to the construction of the vision of that world, and, consequently, to the very construction of that world. It must take into account the symbolic work of fabrication of groups, of group-making". From this perspective, classes are seen as "real" social entities, which though are not taken for granted but rather continuously subject to change. In the words of Bourdieu, „in social reality...there are no more clear cuts“, „the boundaries between theoretical classes...are similar...to the boundaries of a cloud or a forest“, and finally, "one of the major stakes ... is the definition of boundaries which, by asserting and manifesting themselves as such, can become political forces capable of imposing their own vision of divisions, and thus capable of ensuring the triumphing of such dispositions and interests as are associated with their position in social space" (Bourdieu 1987: 3). We see that, linking the subjectivist and objectivist view on class, Bourdieu manages to tackle the structure-action issue and explain it by taking the capacity to political action as linkage between the two.

I propose to tackle these questions by introducing the concept of boundary-making, as well as that of categorical communities, as Lamont and Molnar conceived them in their crucial article "The Study of Boundaries in Social Science" (Lamont/Molnar 2002). Tying in with their argument, I suggest exploring the subjective emergence of classes and status groups by looking at ordinary and everyday life processes of boundary-making developed by people, both in their discourses (symbolic boundaries) and in their agency (social boundaries).

As Lamont and Molnar argue, symbolic boundaries are "conceptual distinctions made by social actors to categorize objects, people, practices, and even time and space" as well as "tools by which individuals and groups struggle over and come to agree upon definitions of reality". The act of categorizing is thus to be considered as an act of reality making, as symbolic boundaries are "an essential medium through which people acquire status and monopolize resources" (ebd.: 168). In other words, the construction of "categorical communities" deliver people with social maps which they use to make decisions about those they share and do not share resources with. Social boundaries, then, emerge according to the authors when "symbolic boundaries are wide agreed upon" (ebd.), and are expressed as "unequal access to and unequal distribution of resources (material and non-material) and social opportunities". Here, Lamont and Molnar are implicitly mentioning precisely the definition of status groups which I have discussed before. Status groups emerge when classifications and valuations are largely agreed in society and become a legitimate criterion for the allocation of resources. The

discussion of the symbolic component of class here takes an interesting turn, as it is explained via discursive and practical agency developed by individuals and groups.

To follow back the inductive procedure which people engage in when they value others' life conduct, then, becomes "the most effective form of class analysis", as Skeggs considers it (2015: 218), as it is "not concerned with undertaking classification per se, but rather with exposing and critiquing the consequences of classification". Here, Skeggs conflates class and status, as, following Bourdieu, she considers every act of classification a classed act, that is an act informed by the class location of people. While the sections above have explained how class and status are to be distinguished on a theoretical level, it is true that classifications and the construction of boundaries reveals the subjective component of both status and class.

Upon this premise, we can reach a conclusion on the analysis of the relationship between the two. Class and status are to be distinguished according to their source, their *Bestimmungsgrund*, their principle of partition (Delphy 1984), which is located for class within relationships of production and exchange relationships in the market, and within relationships of reproduction for status. Class emerges with the process of becoming embedded into capitalistic relations, status is linked to birth, blood, constructions of a shared past. Class is to be understood via a political economic analysis of the everyday life while status is to be understood via the analysis of life conducts, values, as well as of the "values" given by individuals and groups to values.

Class and status, until now, have been depicted as linked by dialectic and relationality. They are not to be considered as ontologically separate things, rather they are both the outcome of processes of classification, of shared constructions of symbolic and social boundaries. Boundaries, or borders (in more recent terminology linked to the spread of "border studies" in social sciences) are to be thought of as social divisions.

Then, the issue becomes that of understanding the conditions under which certain boundaries become more relevant than others in the life of people, i.e. in the words of Wallerstein "the questions shifts from Weber's one of the conditions under which stratification by status takes precedence over class consciousness to the conditions under which a stratum embodies itself as a class, as a status-group or as a party" (Wallerstein/Balibar 1988: 195). He confutes the idea common to both Marx and Weber (though he only mentions Weber) that class and status are linked by a dynamic relationship along which class identification is pushed forward in times of capitalistic transformation and is "the correlate of progress and social change",

while status groups emerge as backward forces as deterministic and falsified by history. He claims rather that status groups are “blurred collective representations of classes”. More interestingly, however, he highlights one aspect of the Weberian concept of status, which is ultimately very helpful, namely that identification and boundary-making processes around issues of birth, life conduct, values, i.e. around status, are rather to be thought as competing with those ones developing around class. Classifications based on class and those based on status can coexist, amalgamate and overlap more or less partially, but they are also possibly in competition with one another.

Weber was clear on this: „Jede Art von Klassenlage, als vor allem auf der Macht des Besitzes rein als solchen ruhend, kommt am reinsten dann zur Wirksamkeit, wenn alle anderen Bestimmungsgründe der gegenseitigen Beziehungen in ihrer Bedeutung möglichst ausgeschaltet sind ... Zu den Hemmnissen einer konsequenten Durchführung des nackten Marktprinzips gehören nun die „Stände“¹³ (Weber 1972: 534). Weber employs the term *Bestimmungsgrund*, i.e. the ground, the physical and theoretical basis for definition, classification, fixation. Here it becomes clear that the crucial issue both of class and status is that they constitute different principles of partitioning, different bases for classification of society.

Bourdieu also considered them along this line, stating that “the principles of vision and division of the social world at work in the construction of theoretical classes have to compete, in reality, with other principles, ethnic, racial or national, and more concretely still, with principles imposed by the ordinary experience of occupational, communal and local divisions and rivalries” (Bourdieu 1987: 7). Boundary-making processes and classifications along ethnic, racial and national lines, thus, are to be considered as classifications based on status. Indeed, also Weber used ethnicity and race to explain the emergence of status groups (Weber 1968). This point is crucial, and has been expanded by many scholars, who have talked about the inter-connectedness of class and race. Notably, the book by Wallerstein and Balibar “Race, Class and Nation” (1988) is considered as a milestone on this broad issue.

In one essay of the book, Wallerstein explicitly argues that the nation fits the definition of status group in an excellent way, as a *Bestimmungsgrund* which concurs with that of class in the construction of categorical communities as it delivers a ground for claims “to a solidarity overriding those defined in class or ideological terms”. I will come back later on this issue,

13 „Each kind of class situation, and above all when it rests upon the power of property *per se*, will become most clearly efficacious when all other determinants of reciprocal relations are, as far as possible, eliminated in their significance“ (Weber 1968: 930).

which will reveal as fundamental for the understanding of how class and status interact with migration processes.

The question arising from the conclusion that status and class identifications are possibly in competition with one another leads us to consider the Marxist point of view on status groups, as it has been developed by Wallerstein and Balibar. The authors posit status groups such as national, ethnic and race communities as a sort of “alienation” from class consciousness. One of their functions is that of “concealing the reality of class differentials” (1988: 198). This recalls the conditions set by Weber for class consciousness to arise, and for classes to become communities. Indeed, beside the intellectual and cultural work to be done to create class consciousness and the degree of social conflict, he stated that the connections between the grounds and the consequences of class locations must be “transparent”, so that they can be easily recognized. However, he did not consider the function of status groups that of alienating individuals from their class consciousness. It is true that the development of capitalism within the West or Global North has led in the last decades to the progressive decline of class identification as a *Bestimmungsgrund* for large parts of society, as we have seen in the section on class consciousness. Thus, it is interesting to analyze the decline of class as it has been mentioned as an outcome of competing *Bestimmungsgründe*. Nonetheless, the term “function” refers to much criticized intentionality and determinism as a viewpoint on capitalistic relations, and it should be therefore avoided. Rather, it is necessary to question how it comes to be that certain shared processes of boundary-making emerge on specific principles, without assuming that these processes have a specific “function” but looking at their formation to challenge ideas of homogeneity and linearity in human agency. In other words, we need to act inductively, and explore the boundary making developed by people, searching for their *Bestimmungsgründe*.

3. The Methodological Choices of the Research: Multiplying Methods and Access to the Field

3.1 Choice of the Case Study: Italian Migrants in Berlin

This research focuses on Italian migrants for two main reasons of equal importance. The first reason has to do with the subjectivity of the researcher, while the second is related to the population of the study, as I will show briefly in the next paragraphs.

Having moved from Italy to Berlin in 2007, I consider myself as closely connected to the topic of the research and to the Italian-speaking community residing in Berlin. Of course, having an insider perspective of the phenomenon under study is far from representing a pure advantage (Morosanu 2015; Nowicka/Ryan 2015; Ryan 2015; Pillow 2010). Rather, the very concept of “insiderness” is to be questioned at all, as I will explain in more detail later. Nonetheless, my familiarity with the topic as well as everyday lived experience have facilitated access to the field. Further, by choosing to investigate the mobility trajectories of Italian migrants, I could avoid language hurdles and mediation between me and the people whom interviewed. Being a migrant myself and having struggled to learn a foreign language such as the German one, I have experienced on my skin how speaking the own mother tongue gives the possibility to express the own feelings and thoughts in a much wider and deeper way than by speaking a language of which one has acquired proficiency over time. By opting for studying Italian-speaking migrants I could ensure that all interviewees and me were sharing the same level of proficiency in the language used to communicate for the research, notwithstanding all socially relevant differences in the way how people use their mother languages (Bourdieu 1992).¹⁴

The second reason for choosing the case study is connected with the characteristics of past and contemporary migration from Italy to Germany, and to Berlin in particular. Italians

¹⁴Of course, I am aware that the issue of translation still matters for the process of divulging this research in other languages than Italian. The process of converting what people have said into other languages runs the risks of upsetting the content of what has been said and flattening and twisting the linguistic multiplicity inherent in the ways how different people speak (Temple/Koterba 2009). This risk, however, seems inevitable in an academic world dominated by the use of the English language as *lingua franca*.

are the largest national group among South Europeans living in Berlin, as well as the third largest group of migrants (of more 1st, 2nd and 3rd generation) in Germany (Prontera 2017). There is a long history of migration from Italy to Germany. After World War II, migration from Italy as well as other Southern countries was promoted and institutionally sanctioned through the agreements on seasonal recruitment stipulated in the 1950es and 1960es, which gave rise to the *Gastarbeiter* (guest workers) era (Herbert 1986; Prontera 2017). The first bilateral agreement of this kind was signed by Germany and Italy in 1955. Even though these agreements were revoked in 1973 with the so called *Anwerbestopp* (end of recruitment), they have strongly shaped patterns of migration chains to Germany until today. While the flows of guest workers from Italy involved mainly male workers without educational degrees, the flows of young people who left the country in the past ten years, targeting mostly the UK and Germany, have complicated established ideas about who migrates and why, as the figure below illustrates.

The majority of young people leaving Italy since about ten years is between 18 and 34 years old (Pugliese 2018: 51). The propensity to migrate is higher among graduated young people (Gabrielli 2016); 30% of Italian citizens leaving Italy in 2016 possessed a university or post-university degree. Further, the gender component of migration has significantly changed too, with 40% women of all migrants in 2016 (ISTAT 2018). In a nutshell, it can be said that young people leaving Italy today have much greater internal variety in terms of education, background and gender than in the past (Pugliese 2018), and therefore they constitute a great case study to investigate the relationship between mobility and social class, as this research intends to do.

While the research seeks to challenge methodological nationalism (Wimmer/Glick-Schiller 2002), as it will be shown in the chapters to follow, it might seem awkward that the object of the study is exactly a national group. However, from the entry point of Italian migrants in Berlin, the research proceeds just to unravel the alleged homogeneity of the group under study and points to highlighting the internal differences, mostly along class, status and gender.

3.2. The Research Design: The Logic for Mixing Methods

The present research is based on a mix of methods, which have allowed to collect and

produce various forms of data. The research could be therefore considered as relying on a mixed method approach (Brannen 1992), in particular as it combined different qualitative methods with a quantitative tool such as a web survey. However, the analysis has been centered on the interview material, using then the other produced data as lateral contributions to the argumentation. The latter has been mostly structured on the interview data.

Therefore, it seems useful to accept the suggestions developed by Cresswell about what research based on mixed-methods is and what it is not (Cresswell 2013). The author identifies three main ways of proceeding when adopting such an approach. In the first one, quantitative and qualitative methods are employed simultaneously, while their results are compared, in order to find either convergence or divergence, thereby stimulating a dialectical discussion. Further, different methods can be deployed in a sequential approach, with the research split into phases of qualitative and quantitative data collection. This means that the results of one phase affect the implementation of the next one, thereby creating a methodological dialectic on a diachronic dimension. As Cresswell argues, when quantitative research is followed and integrated by qualitative data collection, it is usually to deepen the understanding and interpretation of quantitative results, such as quantitative correlations or causalities. Instead, quantitative data collection usually follows a qualitative phase to expand and generalize the arguments developed through exploratory qualitative analysis (ibid.). Considering the typology developed by Cresswell, the present research does not fit exactly in none of the mentioned forms of mixed methods, but rather configures itself a “mixed” type, as I will briefly sketch in the following.

The research process started with a quantitative phase, followed by the use of qualitative tools. However, the survey could not provide a database for analyses to be considered as reliable for justifying a second phase of qualitative research closely connected to them, as the explanatory sequential design by Cresswell would have it. First of all, the online survey is a quite fragile method, stuck at the nexus between more established offline surveys and Big Data analysis. Surveys are usually submitted to randomized and stratified samples. In analyses based on Big Data, instead, data are usually obtained online and thus could reproduce the same bias of a web survey as for the (decreasing) digital divide involved. However, the bias is countered by the bulk of information mobilized, which is hard to be compared quantitatively with any other contemporary way of collecting quantitatively information on social phenomena (Savage/Burrows 2007; Couper 2013). The web survey of this research, with its sample of

ca. 150 respondents, could not dare to provide representative inference of the population under study, composed by around 27.000 individuals.¹⁵ Secondly, the survey was accessible publicly; respondents had to access it, nor the other way around. This further jeopardizes the validity of the analysis to be conducted on the data base. Coming back to Cresswell's categorization of mixed-methods research, thus, the logic behind the choice of the methods did not correspond to the goal of explaining quantitative results produced in the first phase, via qualitative understanding of the matter. Rather, the sequential methodology of the research responded to a different rationale, which shall be briefly illustrated.

Indeed, the rationale for choosing different methods and borrowing their logics both from qualitative and quantitative research has been firstly that of expanding the sources of data to allow a multiplication of points of access to the research by respondents. In other words, being the interest of the research that of understanding class and its variations, the goal of the choice of the methods was that of proliferating the accessibility to the investigation, opening it possibly to a sample of respondents in a wide variety of class situations. Such a logic, oriented to finding unexpected results and data, is of exploratory nature and more related to a qualitative way of investigating social life (Becker 1996).

The search for variety and the unexpected as the initial starting point of the research, then, is closely related to its theoretical move, which has been that of challenging established views on social class, as well as existing occupational schemes. Such approach has been informed also by the critiques moved to the Great Survey on Social Class (GSSC), a major study on social class conducted by Savage and colleagues in 2011 in UK (Savage et al. 2013; Savage 2015a; Savage 2015b). The research was carried out in collaboration with the broadcaster BBC, which enabled to spread and advertise the web survey through its channels. This has led to an astonishing sample of 325.000 respondents who completed the survey between 2011 and 2013 (Savage 2015b). However, as recognized by the research team, "the survey suffered from a strong selection bias, with respondents being predominantly drawn from the well-educated social groups", possibly related to the BBC audience, itself composed largely by people endowed with high cultural and economic capital (ibid.: 6). While the database could then be quoted by comparing it with a nationally representative survey delivered by the GfK, a marketing company – however, this point has provoked critiques too (Mills 2014) – the selection bias remains a crucial methodological issue.

¹⁵See chapter 6 for a discussion of the numbers of Italian migrants living in Berlin.

As Skeggs and other social researchers have highlighted (Skeggs 2015), the GSSC has attracted well-off respondents, so that Savage and colleagues could focus their analysis on the British elites, for two reasons. While on one side the bias has been produced by the mentioned fact that the BBC audience is largely middle- and upper-class, on the other side the critiques have pointed to the way how the survey was structured and presented, itself related to the theoretical imprinting of the research. Indeed, in the GSSC, social classes were defined *ex ante* through the “possession of different forms and degrees of types of capital: social, cultural and economic” (Bradley 2014). According to Skeggs and colleagues, the conceptualization of class as possession of capital centers the analysis more on consumption, implying capacity for consumption and thus automatically devaluing and neglecting class experiences of those endowed with small cultural, social or economic capital. To make it short, the latter groups are defined as classes in terms of lack and deficit.¹⁶ Finally, as recent studies have reported (including the GSSC and earlier work by Savage), self-identification with specific classes has become less relevant, as people tend to depict themselves as ordinary, belonging to the middle class as an aggregator for lack of distinction (Savage et al. 2001); at the same time, being working class has become increasingly connotated with shame, at least in the UK context (Bradley 2014; Tyler 2014). The critiques moved to the GSSC, considered the large debate it sparked, has thus constituted the background from which the methodology of the present research has been developed. The main approach has thus been that of adopting a multiplicity of ways to make the group under study reach the survey and the research in general. This also explains the rationale for the adoption of different methods, borrowed both from quantitative and from qualitative methodological areas. Further, as the section on reflexivity will show, the choice of methods has been closely connected with my need as researcher to go beyond my own social networks and increase my own externality to the respondents.

Trying to avoid categorizations and the risks connected to selection biases, I opted for using firstly a survey to reach a more elevated number of respondents and avoid snowball sampling. The latter tends to several forms of selection bias, such as over-estimating embeddedness in social networks or under-estimating individuals not connected to networks tapped by the researcher (Atkinson/Flint 2001). As the sample to be attracted to the research was composed by people of age between 25 and 35, the internet has been considered as the correct pooling arena of respondents to start with. Subsequently, the survey had the double function

¹⁶Moreover, such approach, focusing more on consumption than on orientation to consume, is not able to unravel relations of domination and exploitation.

of providing a draft data base with various information on the group studied and of delivering access to interviewees. Respondents who completed the survey could leave their contact data at the end of it. I attempted to contact all interviewees who left their traces, however making sure to obtain interviews with migrants with different class backgrounds and occupational as well as educational status, so that variety could be maintained in the sample of interviewees. Moreover, the whole research has been accompanied by several participant observations, in which I took more or less active roles, such as accompanying young migrants to offices, taking part in public events targeting the Italian-speaking community in Berlin, attending restaurants and café own and led by Italian migrants in different parts of the city.¹⁷ The next sections will analyze in detail both methods deployed for the research. Further, I will put under focus my role as researcher in the field to bring self-reflexivity in the foreground and question the dichotomy of internality-externality to the field.

3.3 The Web Survey

As already mentioned, the first methodological tool deployed in the present research was a web survey with public access. This was chosen as the starting point to reach out to the wide Italian-speaking community of migrants arrived in the city of Berlin between 2007 and 2014, the year of beginning of the research. The survey, thus, should serve to give a general overview on the topics to be tackled qualitatively, without presumption of statistical representativeness. By deploying the survey, moreover, I could avoid using personal contacts and thus the risk of limiting from the beginning on the focus of the research process to restricted social networks. Further, by starting the phase of data collection with a standardized survey submitted online, I could establish a first barrier of anonymity towards the studied population. This was helpful to create social distance between the researcher and the population under study (Toureangeau 2013: 149).

The survey, entitled “*Giovani italiani/e a Berlino: la migrazione, la casa, il lavoro*” (Young Italians in Berlin: migration, housing and work”), was submitted through the platform

¹⁷After the interview phase, three focus groups were carried out in three different neighborhoods of the city, all marked by a relatively high concentration of Italian migrant residents, i.e. the area between Kreuzberg and Neukölln, the so-called Schiller-Kiez in Neukölln, and Wedding. Two of these focus groups were advertised publicly, via Facebook and flyers, while the latter took place in the my house and was advertised through snowballing to a group of friends. I gained contact with one of these one day, while bringing flyers into an Italian restaurant in Wedding. The focus groups, however, have not been systematically analyzed for this thesis, therefore they will not be considered in detail in this chapter.

Limesurvey, supported by the University of Milan-Bicocca. The URL of the survey, thus, included the university name, while the homepage contained its official logo, thus increasing the credibility of the survey. As the research, the survey addressed individuals aged between 25 and 35, holding Italian citizenship or having spent most of their life in Italy, and having lived in Berlin for one year at least. After it was closed in June 2016, then, data provided by respondents were double checked to ensure that their socio-demographic status corresponded to the mentioned criteria. Nonetheless, maintaining a qualitative perspective, also a few limit cases were contacted for interviews, such as two respondents with age of 37, one student and three interviewees who were living in Berlin since less than one year (although more than three months).

When compared with other types, web surveys have several distinctive features. These should be now briefly sketched, to make some considerations about the validity and reliability of the survey of the present research. Regarding coverage and selection errors, as Tourangeau and colleagues argue, web surveys tend to “over-represent younger and more educated persons, as compared to the mail survey” (Tourangeau et al. 2013: 129). Considering that the group studied in the research was composed by young migrants, it could be assumed that, at least regarding age, the large majority of them could have access to the survey. As official data on educational characteristics of Italian migrants living in Berlin are not available, not much can be said about how the distribution of education in the sample corresponds to the real population.

Against the fragility of this methodological tool, however, Tourangeau highlights several advantages brought by web surveys, such as their interactivity (ibid: 149). This give flexibility to the survey, allowing different degrees of complexity according to the respondent’s answers. The survey of the research was programmed as to include many skips, branching or routing, meaning the “delivery of questions ... based on answers given in a previous question” (Couper 2008: 29). This enabled tailoring the survey to the respondents, such as in the section regarding the housing trajectories or the mobility trajectories of migrants who had already lived in several places. Designing a web survey, thus, entails taking the perspective of the on-line user and trying to anticipate possible issues when interacting with the screen interface (Vehovar/Monfreda 2015). While issues such as the reduction of the length of the survey to reduce breakoffs or careful wording are components to be found also when constructing traditional surveys (Lenzner/Manhold 2008), the design of web surveys is more specifically tai-

lored for online experience. For instance, including a bar showing the progress in compiling the survey, as it was adopted in the present one, might encourage the respondent to complete it, however only as far the survey does not exceed the average length of attention by internet users. The survey was programmed to be compiled in a time between ten and twenty minutes. Following Couper (2008: 17), I opted for a paging design instead of a scrolling one, to meet the complexity of the skips structure and provide a clearer and more immediate design.

3.3.1. The Content of the Survey

The survey included several sections, with a wide range of items, from multiple choices to drop boxes to open boxes. As it was intended to collect a variety of data on several issues related to the interaction of spatial and social mobility, the survey's items concerned both the context of origin and the context of arrival in Berlin. The focus was set on spatial trajectories on one side, and work and housing situation on the other. Moreover, the survey required information about the family of origin as well as other sources of economic support. The survey did not contain the word "class" for the reasons mentioned above.

The issues covered shall be briefly outlined in the following table.¹⁸

Sections	Macro-Topic	Subtopics
A	Origin	City of birth; Age of nest leaving; City left for; Year of arrival in Berlin; reason for moving to Berlin
B	Arrival in Berlin and translocality	Parents support for moving decision; support social networks at the arrival; first accommodation; how often do you go to Italy and why
C-G	Housing trajectories	Neighborhood and street of residency; period of time; housing search; rent price; type of household
H	Current housing situation I	Current neighborhood and street of residency; period of time; housing search; housing characteristics; household
I	Current housing situation II and economic capital	Rental vs. ownership; further housing and household characteristics; type of housing contract
J	Cultural capital and occupational situation	Language skills; education and area of study; employment status; occupation; type of work contract; income; economic support by social networks; welfare benefits; other sources of income
K	Parental class	Parental education; parental employment status; parental occupations; tenants vs. homeowners
L	Socio-demographic data	Age; gender; civil and relationship status; children
M-N	Previous cities of residence	City; time; reason to moving to the city
O	Contacts	E-Mail address; telephone number; FB; other

Table 1: The web survey: thematic sections and structure.

¹⁸See APPENDIX for the entire questionnaire.

While class was not a self-evident issue in the survey, many sections were dedicated to portraying the socio-economic position of respondents as well as that of their parents. Acknowledging the critique to established ways of investigating social class mentioned in the previous chapter, in the survey there were two approaches to collecting data on social class, the one regarding the social class of parents, the other regarding the respondents. In other words, considering the major changes which have concerned labor markets in countries of the Global North since the 1960s and 1970s, which can be summarized in the shift from Fordism to Post-Fordism (see chapter 2), it is assumed that, while the occupational structure of the parents of the respondents, possibly belonging to the baby boomers generation (i.e. born between the mid-1940s to the mid-1960s). To investigate the socio-economic status of parents, established classifications regarding employment and occupational status were deployed (section K). Respondents were asked first about the highest educational degree obtained by their parents as well as about the parental occupational status as the respondents were fourteen, following the ISTAT formulation (ISTAT 2001; ITANES 2011). In the item “Which of the following occupational categories does describe at best the job your father/mother was doing when you were fourteen?”, then, respondents could choose among the categories from the ISCO08 occupational scheme, as it is deployed by the Italian Institute for Statistics (ISTAT 2013). The scheme has been adopted by the national statistical institutes of most of the EU countries, following a regulation by the European Commission in 2009. The categorization is based on the criteria of skill level, i.e. the vertical hierarchization based on training and education, and captured by analyzing the degree of complexity involved in the work activities, and skill specialization, i.e. the horizontal dimension of work fields, implying the concept of economic activity (ISTAT 2013). As critiques have highlighted, the problem with such classification is that it might put on the same skill level and thus make quantitatively comparable quite different occupations, as for instance “disk jockeys and Porsche factories mechanics” (Bergman/Joye 2001). To avoid this pitfall as well as to double-check the answers provided by the respondents, the latter were asked to specify the job in their own words. Further, to understand the class of their parents, they were asked whether in their parental home they were living on rent or in ownership. In Italy, the rate of home ownership is much higher than in Germany, with investments in housing constituting the most common form of investment of private savings.

The sections I and J, instead, focus on the social positioning of migrants themselves. Fol-

lowing the approach of the research, meant to challenge such occupational schemes as analytical lenses for the understanding of social class in contemporary capitalism, these sections were differently structured and more detailed. In particular, the items were tailored as to explore those access to resources which are at the nexus between social and spatial mobility, such as foreign language skills or the spatial trajectories across cities as well as the motivation for the move. Questions about the migrants' translocal and transnational behavior were borrowed from the EIMSS questionnaire deployed in the PIONEUR research, carried out by Favell and Recchi (Recchi/Favell 2009). Regarding work, respondents were first asked about their employment status with a most used question in nation-wide surveys by ISTAT. The next questions revolved around the job carried out at the moment, if any (unemployed were asked about the last job they had had). Here, open boxes enabled the respondents to answer the questions with their own words. Asked about their work contract with a multiple-choice-question, several forms of atypical work relationships, including informal ones, were included. In any case, the option "other" with a compulsory open answer was always included in most of the sections. In order to highlight the social income to which the respondents have access or can potentially mobilize (Standing 2011), they were asked about what kind of economic help they could count on in case of need, including their parents, family, friends and love relationships, as well as about access to welfare both in Italy and Germany. Finally, their housing situation was investigated closely, as questions concerned whether they are tenants or home-owners, which type of contract they have, and the household they live in. In case of living in a shared flat or with a partner, they were asked about the educational degrees of their room-mates or of the partner.

As a last issue, it must be noted that the questionnaire, developed with the goal of portraying the situation of young migrants living quite mobile lives, needed to tackle their multiple relationships to different national frameworks of regulation. Throughout the questionnaire, thus, the formulation of items and multiple choices included categories corresponding at least to the Italian and German framework. Thus, when asking about access to welfare benefits of various kinds, the choices includes Italian and German benefits. When referring to the educational status, the choice was among Italian categories only up to high school, while the various types of contract and apprenticeships referred to both Italian and German systems. Similarly, for housing the Berliner situation was considered, with the various stratifications of *Hauptmieter* and *Untermieter*, fixed-term and open-ended contracts, as they were considered

as relevant for the social situation of migrants, in particular regarding housing precarity.

Thus, the survey is also an attempt to overcome the idea that questionnaires about migrants or in general mobile people can and should be developed as if only one scale and one spatial unit could be a sufficient framework (Amelina 2012). Rather, in order to account for the relationality of migration as well as for its exceeding of closed boundaries, researchers need to consider and include carefully the contexts of origin and of destination of migrants, as well as their multiple belongings and the in-between, their translocality as well as the disposable ways of accessing resources in both places.

3.3.2. Testing and Launching the Survey

Once completed the phase of programming the questionnaire on the Lime Survey platform, I asked and obtained the authorization by the ethical committee of the University of Milan-Bicocca to submit the survey. After this formal step, a pre-test was carried out with 22 volunteers recruited among the researcher's social networks, responding to the criteria required for the participation in the survey. The pretest, conducted between November 2015 and December 2015, was less oriented towards verifying or challenging the analytical approach of the survey, and more towards testing the methodological validity and reliability of the survey. Nonetheless, some items, wording issues, as well as the sequence of questions were changed after the test, as a consequence of comments left by and conversations held with the respondents. As Lenzner and colleagues have argued, cognitive pretesting serves firstly to verify whether the items are understandable and acceptable by respondents (Lenzner et al. 2015). Further, pretests are helpful to anticipate how long compiling them take on average, and thus, potentially signaling the need to shorten it in order to reduce breakoffs. Facing several comments provided by the pretest, the survey was slightly shortened, and its structure adjusted to facilitate the compilation. Last but not least, pretest was used to verify the functioning of the programming logic and design of the survey. Crucially, as one single typo when programming the survey might damage the whole functioning, pretesting in web survey is necessary to avoid major measurement errors.

After the testing and adjusting phase, the survey could finally be launched on 15th December 2015. Web surveys typically have a very low response rate, in comparison to other types of surveys (Tourangeau et al. 2013: 36). There are two types of non-response in surveys: item non-response, occurring when some questions are left unanswered by the respondent, and unit

non-response, when the whole questionnaire is left empty (Bethlehem/Biffignandi 2012). While item non-response was faced by setting all items as compulsory to continue the survey (however potentially increasing the breakoff rate), unit nonresponse is a large issue in unrestricted self-selected surveys. To increase the response rate, and of course also to increase the internal variation of the sample, as argued in the previous section, thus, the survey was launched and diffused through a variety of channel, large and differentiated as much as possible. Moreover, the survey was left online for one year, to enable continuous increase of the N of the sample.

The choice about the channels to be used to spread the survey was taken before the launch. However, the list of channels increased over time.

As the table below illustrates, the information about the survey and call for action to participate was spread in three different ways: in digital media, in physical spaces, and via snowball taking place both online and offline, via emails, re-posting or orally. While I actively managed the first two ways, snowball took place mostly beyond my control and account. The following paragraphs will go more in detail about the three ways, however focusing on online diffusion, as it revealed quite pragmatically as the best suited way for the circulation of an online survey.

Online channels were themselves very differentiated. The social network Facebook certainly revealed as a very efficient medium to reach a large number of Italian migrants living in Berlin, otherwise hard to reach to build a quantitative sample, because of lack of data and registers, as similar studies have already shown (Baltar/Brunet 2012). More specifically, research was carried out to find relevant Facebook pages and forums for the exchange of information and contacts in Italian and about Italian migrants in Berlin. Online magazines targeting explicitly the Italian community in Berlin, such as “il Mitte” and “Berlino Cacio e Pepe”, published articles advertising the research and including the link to the survey.¹⁹ Further, several announcements were posted in various forums, some of which counted at the time of the survey more than 20.000 members. Many forums have been defined as “generic”, as they do not have a specific topic other than being oriented towards Italian-speaking Facebook users living in Berlin, or otherwise interested in the city of Berlin. Others have specific focuses. Interestingly, announcements were posted in various neighborhood-wide forums, thereby aiming to activate Italian migrants living in and experiencing different parts of the city, from the hipper

¹⁹<https://www.ilmitte.com/2015/12/trovare-casa-a-berlino-indagine-sociologica-italiani-a-berlino/>;
<https://www.lindro.it/la-giungla-degli-affitti-di-berlino/>;

ones such as Neukölln and Wedding, with high concentrations of young EU migrants, to neighborhood less involved by recent inflows of young migrants, such as Steglitz-Zehlendorf.

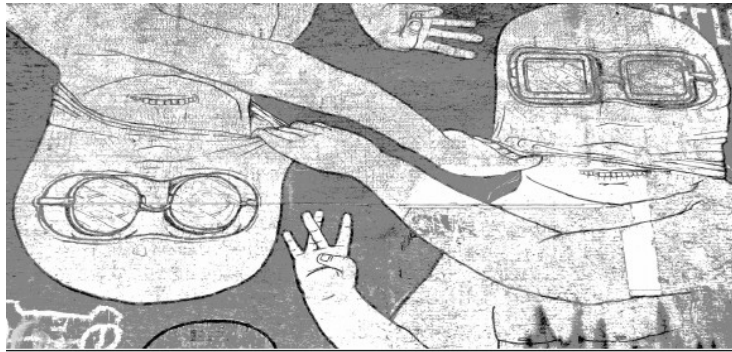
The posts were carried out by my private Facebook profile. During the phase of data collection, the profile was modified to provide information about the research and to provide a narration of the self focused on the research work and on public events related to the topic of the research. As during ethnographic offline research, in which the researcher's appearance, gestures, habitus, are modified to facilitate access into the field (Berg 2009; Lisiak 2015), in "digital ethnography" (Murthy 2008), the private account of the researcher can be molded to increase credibility, build a relationship of trust and facilitate contact and disclosure of information. Moreover, to increase the response rate, in the posts I offered help to face bureaucratic issues and provide information about housing and work issues and about living in the city. In other words, the experience which I have accumulated as member of the same group of Italian-speaking migrants living in Berlin was offered as a kind of horizontal reward to the participation in the survey. This also took place in several ways during the interviews.

Name	Type of channel	Target	Type of communication
Digital media			
Il Mitte	Online magazine: website; FB profile	Generic	Article; Post
Berlino Cacio e Pepe	Online magazine: website; FB profile	Generic	Article; Post
Il Deutsch Italia	Online magazine: website; FB profile	Generic	Article; Post
Forum: Italiani a Berlino	FB group (open)	Generic	Post
Official Forum: Italiani a Berlino	FB group (with membership)	Generic	Post
Italiani a Berlino – L' Arena	FB group (with membership)	Generic	Post
Beauty in Berlin	FB group (with membership)	Cosmetic and body care	Post
Case in Condivisione a Berlino	FB group (with membership)	Housing	Post
Comites	FB profile	Official	Post
Berlin Italy	FB profile	Freelancers	Post
Agenzia per Italiani a Berlino	FB profile	Small Entrepreneurs	Post
Bambini a Berlino	FB group (with membership)	Parents	Post
Il Made in Italy a Berlino	FB group (with membership)	Handcraft	Post
Neu in Berlin	FB group (with membership)	Newcomers	Post
Italiani a Wedding	FB group (with membership)	Neighborhood	Post
Italiani a Friedrichshain e Prenzlauer Berg	FB group (with membership)	Neighborhood	Post
Italiani a Steglitz-Zehlendorf	FB group (with membership)	Neighborhood	Post
Italiani a Neukölln	FB group (with membership)	Neighborhood	Post
Physical spaces			
Italian bars/cafés	Commercial public space		Flyers; visit

			cards
Italian restaurants/pizzerias	Commercial public space		Flyers; visit cards
Public libraries	Public space (public access)		Flyers; visit cards
Job Centers	Offices/institutions		Flyers; visit cards
Language Schools	Offices/institutions		Flyers; visit cards
	Snowball		
Friendships / acquaintances of 1st order	FB profiles; Email addresses		Re-Posts; Emails
2nd, 3rd, etc. order	FB profiles; Email addresses		Re-Posts; Emails

Table 2: Channels used to spread the web survey.

The survey was spread also in physical places, via the distribution of leaflets and visit cards. To increase the accessibility of the survey, they contained a QR code directly linking to the survey. Moreover, a blog was opened on the platform Wordpress, www.migrantcityberlin.wordpress.com, in order to present the survey via a description and information about the researcher. The blog served also as a platform to divulgate my academic and non-academic articles, in many of which I was promoting the web survey. Finally, information about the survey was diffused via snowball. Reposting has revealed as an easy and less time-consuming way to multiply the radio of the survey across Facebook friends and real life social networks. Finally, at the end of the survey, respondents were invited to share the link of the survey via Facebook and Twitter by simply clicking a button.



SENTIRSI A CASA A BERLINO

un'indagine sociologica su migrazione, casa e lavoro

Hai tra i 24 e i 35 anni, non studi a tempo pieno e
vivi a Berlino da almeno un anno?

Partecipa all'indagine!

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Vai sul sito o scannerizza il codice QR che trovi sotto

L'indagine ti richiederà appena 15 minuti!

Per maggiori informazioni scrivi a:

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Se ti va, lascia il tuo contatto e verrai intervistato/a su questo tema



L'indagine fa parte di un progetto di ricerca finanziato dall'Università di Milano Bicocca sulla migrazione di giovani ragazze e ragazzi italiani/e a Berlino dal 2008 in poi. Il progetto di ricerca intende fornire informazioni più dettagliate sulle possibilità e le speranze, ma anche le difficoltà e gli ostacoli vissuti da chi decide di trasferirsi all'estero.



Figure 2: The flyer distributed in physical places to spread the web survey.

3.3.3. Overview about the Relevance of the Survey for the Research

The survey was initiated by exactly 250 respondents, who accessed it between the 15th of December 2015 and the 19th September 2016. However, a consistent part of them did not finish the survey, ending up in a break-off. During the process of data cleansing, it was decided to take out all uncompleted responses, not to lose information collected in the last sections involving the socio-economic condition of migrants, and thus class. The resulting sample consists in 154 complete responses.

Considering the efforts spent in the survey as well as the meticulous work involved in it, the resulting database could be considered as less than satisfying. However, it must be underlined once more that the survey was not intended primarily to deliver representativeness, nei-

ther was its primary function that of providing reliable data for conducting statistical analyses. Rather, the survey provided the set up for the research.

Apart from the already mentioned advantages provided by the survey to favor the next steps of the research, by programming the quite complex structure of the questionnaire, I had to deal with the occupational and class schemes currently deployed in Italy, Germany and at the EU scale. Although the research keeps a qualitative stance, thus, carrying out the survey has allowed me to “see” social classes as it has been done in quantitative approaches, mostly with the aim of producing categorizations. Further, surveys usually are meant to test hypotheses, and therefore are usually constructed as to channel data collection by deploying quite strict definitions and ways of operationalizing variables. In other words, questions must be asked in a way already connected to the analysis which will be done on the database. Instead, in the present research the survey constitutes an exploratory gesture. This has implied the strong presence of open boxes and less linear ways of compiling the survey, thereby widening the duration of compilation and potentially discouraging users from completing it. From an analytical point of view, definitions of concepts were still open as the survey started, due to the very nature of a PhD research. This was on one side connected to the wish to get unexpected data, on the other side to the fact that the aim was to get an overview, a data base onto which to develop some tentative descriptive analyses. Eventually, this goal was reached, as the next sections will show.

Moreover, the database will be further deployed for future research and analyses still under planning. The spatial trajectories of the migrants who participated in the survey, both within Berlin and across cities for instance, might be mapped, to show the geographical dimension of spatial mobility of young EU migrants. Further, the survey could be replicated in other German and non-German cities, as well as with other migrant groups. The methodological reflections required to carry out the survey for the present research, in other words, have informed also the implementation of the other methods, to be illustrated in the next sections.

3.4. The Interviews

The interview phase started in February 2016, two months after the launch of the survey. Contacts were collected as soon as the respondents submitted them. I carried out 40 interviews with young Italian migrants living in Berlin at the time of the interview. At the same

time, several interviews were conducted with real estate agents renting out or selling flats mostly to Italian clients, as it will be shown in detail in chapter 5. Nonetheless, the analysis has focused on the interviews with migrants, while the other sets of interviews have been used mostly as lateral information and will be analyzed more closely in future research. Correspondingly, this section will be dedicated to illustrating how the interviews with migrants came about, how they were structured as well as unraveling issues connected to the interview situations and the relationship between the researcher and the researched.

The purpose of the interviews was that of reconstructing the biographies of mobility of the interviewees, focusing mostly on the social and spatial contexts they originated from, on their housing and work situation in Berlin, as well as on their perspectives on future moves. The questionnaire was constructed as to develop semi-structured interviews, with a set of main questions and sub-questions. The sections of the questionnaire are contained in the following table (see APPENDIX for the entire questionnaire):

Strategies of migration	• Could you describe the moment when you started to think of moving to another city? • To which kind of places did you want to move? • What did you plan before moving to Berlin? • How did your family react to your desire to move?
Knowledge about Berlin	• What did you know about the city before moving? • Did you look for further information about the city before moving? How and where did you look for it? • Which neighborhoods did you know if any and what did you know about them?
The search for home	• How well-informed were you about how to look for home in Berlin? • Could you describe me how the search for your first home was? How did it go?
Neighborhood choice	• In which neighborhoods did you want to live at the beginning? • Why did you want to live there?
Practices of housing	• Which kind of housing situation did you expect to experience when you came to Berlin? • In which type of household did you want to live? • Could you describe the experience of your first accommodation in Berlin?
Employment, education, future expectations	• Have you been on training since you are in Berlin? • Could you tell me about the jobs you had in Berlin, if you had any? • How would you describe your current employment situation? • Which kind of jobs have you done in Italy and/or in other cities where you lived? • Which kind of jobs have you been searching in Berlin? • How was it for you to look for a job in Berlin, if you did? • Would you consider yourself satisfied with your employment situation in Berlin and why? • How satisfied are you with your work hours? How could it be-

	come better? • Do you need to be in Berlin to work on your job? • Do you think you belong to a social class? If yes, which one, and why? How important is for you to stay in Berlin to get a good job in your sector?
Feeling at home and future perspectives	• Do you feel at home in Berlin now? • In which places of Berlin do you feel at home most? • Can you imagine yourself in 5 months? If no, why? • If yes, where do you see yourself in 5 months? And in 5 years? • Has the meaning of Berlin changed for you over time?

Table 3: Interview questionnaire: sections and main questions.

3.4.1. Choosing the sample

For the sampling of interviewees, the main criterion applied was that of keeping variety regarding the educational qualifications of parents and the education of migrants themselves. Therefore, no clear-cut preliminary categorization occurred. While some of the interviewee's families could be ascribed in a more straightforward way to the working class, as in the case of the son of a FIAT worker and a nurse, or in the case of the daughter of a brick-layer and an industrial laundry worker, in many other cases the educational qualifications and occupations of the two parents of the interviewees were located in different parts of social space. Rejecting the assumption that the occupation of the father should be taken as the relevant one to categorize a household into classes, the sampling took place in such a way to multiply backgrounds and different combinations of parental backgrounds. Thus, the majority of the interviewees could be considered as having a middle-class background, with parents employed in occupations ranging from public servants to teachers to small business owners. Indeed, these characteristics recall the wide process of expansion of the Italian middle-class until the 1970es, brought forward by the increase in clerical and retail workers (Sylos-Labini 1974). As the table below shows, many parents employed in these occupations do not have university degrees, reflecting the general low rate of education in Italy, especially until the 1970es. As Sylos-Labini wrote in 1974, 70% of the Italian labor force at that time had an elementary level of schooling (ibid.: 187).

Regarding the migrants themselves, different levels of education, from high school to university degrees to post-university degrees, were included. Migrants with university degrees are over-represented in comparison with the socio-demographic characteristics of young people leaving Italy in the last years. Thus, the sampling included 9 people with high school de-

gree, 7 with a Bachelor's degree, 17 with a Master's degree and 7 with post-graduate degrees such as PhD or further specialization qualifications. While the sample, thus, is strongly marked by overrepresentation of the highly educated, it is interesting to note that it shows opposite patterns than the parental generation. Migrants are highly educated but often employed in routine or semi-routine occupations such as call centers, gastronomy, web editing or sales manager for startups. Finally, while more women than men left their contacts for an interview, the sampling was intended to balance gender and age. Nonetheless, in the final sample women are slightly over-represented (24 women and 16 men). The average age of the sample is 29,3 years. While three interviewees had children, the issue of parenting has been analyzed in relation to the parents of migrants.

Name	G	A	In Berlin since	Educa-tion	Occu-pation	Income (last year)	Work contract	Previous Mobility	Occup. Mother	Occup. Father
Alberto	M	31	2011	MA Philosophy	Web content editor	18.000-24.000	Fixed Term	Uni in Perugia, Florence, Rome, Work in Munich	Housewife Vocational high school	Surveyor High School
Alessandra	F	28	2012	MA Political Science	Call center / Team supervisor	18.000-24.000	Fixed Term	Erasmus in Berlin	Sales clerk, High school	Surveyor Vocational high school
Alessio	M	26	2014	BA Engineering	Web-developer In E-commerce	24.000-30.000	Fixed Term	University in London, Work in Switzerland	Educator, High school	Engineer, High School
Amelia	F	30	2015	Post-MA Foreign Languages	Translator / Web content editor	18.000-24.000	Open-ended	Erasmus and Uni in Spain, Work in Spain, Work in London	Secretary High-school	Clerk High-school
Antonia	F	32	2014	BA Sports	Babysitter	Less than 6.000	Minijob	University in Ferrara	Housewife, Elementary school	Manual worker at public company, Elementary school
Armando	M	30	2015	Vocational High School	Waiter in Gastronomy	Less than 6.000	Fixed Term Minijob	Work in Warendorf	-	-

Azzurra	F	28	2015	BA Foreign Languages	Waitress in Gastronomy	6.000-9.000	Minijob	Work in Switzerland	Housewife, Elementary school	Body shop mechanic, Vocational high school
Barbara	F	28	2007	High school	Cook help / cleaner	Less than 6.000	Minijob	Work in Palermo, Catania, Rome	Housewife, Elementary school	Barkeeper, high school
Carla	F	33	2010	Post-MA Foreign Languages	Translator in startup	9.000-12.000	Free-lance	University in Forli, Lecce, Macerata, Erasmus in Bremen, Stage in Ireland, Work in Brazil	Housewife, vocational high school	Skilled worker in beverage industry, High School
Caterina	F	30	2009	MA Foreign Languages	Call center Agent	18.000-24.000	Fixed Term	Work in Liverpool	Public service clerk, High School	Informatic programmer, High School
Elisa	F	29	2012	MA Humanities	Assistant at theater company	6.000-9.000	Free-lance	University in Padova	Hospital manager, Post-University	-
Elisabetta	F	25	2010	High School Arts	Call center agent	18.000-24.000	Open-ended	Work in Frankfurt	Educator High School	Body shop mechanic, Elementary
Emanuel	M	30	2015	MA Philosophy	Sales Manager	15.000-18.000	Fixed Term	Uni in Rome	-	-
Emilia	F	25	2015	High School	Waitress in Gastronomy	Less than 6.000	Fixed Term Minijob	Work in Burgau and Warendorf	Manual worker in industrial laundry, High School	Brick Layer, Vocational High School
Federico	M	30	2015	BA Technologies for Medicine	Steward of low cost company	15.000-18.000	Fixed Term	University in L'Aquila, Work in Bologna, Trapani, Australia	Housewife, vocational High school	Manual worker in glass industry, vocational high school
Gabriele	M	28	2013	High school	Cook	12.000-15.000	Open-ended		Patissier, elementary school	Housewife, vocational high school

Giacomo	M	32	2014	MA Political Science	Sales manager	18.000-24.000	Fixed Term	Uni in Bologna, Work in London and Bruxelles	Teacher, University	Teacher, University
Giampiero	M	27	2013	MA Communication	Web content editor	18.000-24.000	Fixed Term	Uni in London, Work in Spain	Supermarket supervisor, Vocational High School	Manual worker in textile industry, Elementary School
Giorgia	F	28	2008	MA Architecture	Architect	18.000-24.000	Open-ended	International high school; School Year in USA	Housewife high-school	Clerk High-school
Giovanni	M	28	2014	High School	Cook	Less than 6.000	Minijob	Work in Florence, Fano, Bologna	Nurse, High school	Manual worker in automobile industry, High school
Giulia	F	26	2012	BA Arts	Waitress in Gastronomy	Less than 6.000	Open-ended Minijob		-	-
Giulio	M	33	2010	Post-MA Humanities	SEO in startup	18.000-24.000	Freelance	Uni in Venice (IT), Work in USA, Erasmus in Spain	High-School	High School
Leonardo	M	27	2012	High school	IT security manager	More than 30.000	Open-ended	Work in Como	Clerk at notary office, High school	Newspaper retail, vocational high school
Lorella	F	34	2012	MA Arts	Web designer	18.000-24.000	Fixed Term	University in Bologna, London, Shanghai	Retail self-employed, Vocational high school	Retail self-employed, High school
Lorenzo	M	26	2013	Post-MA Foreign Languages	Translator	18.000-24.000	Fixed Term	Uni in Genua, Erasmus in Hamburg	Retail High-school	Small entrepreneur scuolaguida
Lucia	F	30	2008	Post-MA Social Sciences	Manager in social work	18.000-24.000	Open-ended	High school year in Germany, University in Padova and Turin, Erasmus in Portugal,	Teacher, University	Public service officer, University

								Stage in Ham- burg		
Luciana	F	30	2013	BA Theater	Cleaner	6.000-9.000	Open-ended Midijob	Uni in Rome, Venice, Work in Milan, Rovereto	Elementary school teacher, High school	Public service manager, High school
Marco	M	26	2015	BA Humanities	Touristic operator	Less than 6.000	Minijob	International high school, Erasmus in Jena	Social service operator, University	Self-employer marketing agency, University
Maria	F	28	2014	MA Statistics	Analyst in Investment Bank	More than 30.000	Open-ended	Work in Rome	Receptionist High School	-
Marta	F	30	2013	MA Physics	Quality insurance in startup / data science analyst	24.000-30.000	Open-ended	University in Bologna	High school teacher, University	Technician in Telecommunication, High school
Martina	F	31	2009	PhD Biology	Researcher	12.000-15.000	Fixed Term	Erasmus in Ulm	Public service clerk Vocational school	Croupier Vocational high school
Michela	F	35	2013	MA History of Art	Waitress in Gastronomy	6.000-9.000	Minijob	Stay in London	Medium school teacher, University	Banking executive, University
Michele	M	37	2015	PhD Sociology	Web content editor	15.000-18.000	Fixed Term	Uni in UK, Work in Brasil	Elementary school teacher High School	University teacher, University
Miriana	F	29	2012	High School	Call center agent	Less than 6.000	Fixed Term	Work in London, Amsterdam, Torgau	Supermarket supervisor	Unionist, High School
Nora	F	37	2008	MA History	Small entrepr. in Gastronomy	15.000-18.000	Free-Lance	Uni in Israel and Poland, Work in Milan,	Doctor, Post-University	Teacher, Post-University
Paola	F	28	2012	MA Foreign Lan-	Translator	-	Minijob	University in Venice, Erasmus in Berlin	Housewife, Element-	Butcher self-employed,

				guages					tary school	High School
Raffaella	F	32	2013	MA Biology	Phar-macist	24.000-30.000	Open-ended	Highschool year in Canada	Quality Insurance Manager University	Clerk University
Sandro	M	29	2013	High School	Waiter in Gas-tronomy	12.000-15.000	Open-ended Midijob		Retail, High school	Mechanical maintenance technician, Vocational high school
Stefano	M	28	2014	MA Architecture	Architect	12.000-15.000	Free-lance	Uni in Naples	High school teacher University	Medium school teacher University
Teresa	F	28	2013	MA Foreign Languages / High School of Music	Opera singer / Language teacher	Less than 6.000	Free-lance		Housewife, University	Technical consultant, University

Tabelle 4: Sample of the research (interviews). Selected information on parental class, current work situation, educational attainment and demographic characteristics of respondents.

3.4.2. The interview situation

The potential interviewees were contacted via email, phone or Facebook and asked about arranging an appointment for an interview. In the communication, I already informed them about the generic content of the questions and about the fact that the interview might be recorded and asked if they would agree with this. All respondents agreed in letting me record the interview. In order to create a comfortable atmosphere (Berg 2009), then, they were asked about their preferred place and time of the interviews. Interviews took place mostly in cafés, bars and pubs, or at the interviewees' homes. In three cases I met the respondents at their workplace (only one of them was not working in gastronomy), in two cases at public parks. When we met, I asked the respondents about their informed consent, formally guaranteeing them that the interviews would be anonymized.

Of course, anonymization is a more complex issue than just changing names of participants (Clarke 2006; Mannay 2015). For this research, I tried to make visible and mobilize

only those information about the respondents which is necessary for letting the reader follow the reasoning and for backing the assumptions and arguments contained in the thesis. In this thesis, I avoided using the fictional name of the interviewees in several cases, using at their place the indication “Interviewee”.

The length of the interviews varies from one hour to two and half hours. Interviews were mostly recorded in their entirety. However, several times, as the interview finished, and the recorder was stopped, the conversation with the interviewee started again informally. In many cases, I switched the recorder again on an on-modus, in some others I did not, as I could not predict whether this would have prevented the interviewee from touching a specific topic. Sometimes, very interesting conversations occurred with the recorder turned off. Once I left the interviewee, I took notes of these parts of the interview. Once, unfortunately, the recorder stopped to work after 20 minutes without me noticing it. The content of the rest of interview was written down by memory in field notes straight after the end of the interview.

The question about why respondents decided to participate in the interview is of course a crucial one, in such a research. What led the interviewees to accept to talk with me about their private biographies, sometimes touching topics which are widely considered as pertaining to the personal and intimate sphere, such as love relationship, traumas, or events perceived by them as failures? What did the interview conversation mean to them? In order to attempt to make some clarity on these issues, during the coding process I included the macro-code “Interview meta-codes”, containing sub-codes such as “feedback about the interview”, “feedback about the survey”, “interviewer offering help” and “interviewees offering help”. While I could not analyze systematically the codes related to this topic for this thesis, I intend carrying out a more structural methodological analysis of the interviews in further research. However, on the basis of these codes, I can tentatively argue that some interviewees appreciated the fact of being given the chance to talk in length about their experiences in Berlin. Two interviewees, at the end of the conversations, mentioned the fact that they felt as “having been at the psychologist”. While their statements were characterized by some irony as well as might be connected to their sense of acknowledging that they had given indeed very private information about themselves, I perceived them as sincere. These were case in which I felt that I could establish a sort of relationship of trust between me and the interviewees. I have maintained acquaintances and in one case a relationship which I consider of friendship with some of them. One interviewee asked me explicitly to send her the recording of the interview, stating that she

would like to keep it for the future as a sort of personal diary about her life in Berlin. Of course, the presented cases are just a selection from the many interviews conducted. I am aware that in many other cases, interviewees might have developed different attitudes towards the interview. Some of them asked me for information about bureaucratic procedures, for instance regarding the registration (*Anmeldung*, see chapter 6). In other cases, they asked me about the preliminary results of the research, as they were interested in knowing more about a phenomenon which they felt part of as individuals.

Finally, in one case the request for an interview was rejected not by simply not answering the email of contact which I usually sent, but through a specific explanation. While I am not going to explain in detail the reasons brought by the potential respondent for reasons of anonymity, the answer provided was illuminating and a great help for my access to the field. The potential respondent, indeed, told me that she preferred not to give information about her life in Berlin, as this could imply reconsidering her situation in the city, and maybe challenging her desires and aspirations to stay in the city notwithstanding the daily troubles which she had experienced. Her contribution helped me to understand that the interviewees might have accepted to participate in the research to confirm and establish coherent narratives of their selves. While this is of course an issue pertaining to qualitative biographic migration research in general, this refusal made me aware that the stories contained in this research can never represent the topic in its entirety. This research, of course, does not have the aspiration to deliver a picture of all the multifarious and specific stories of migration from Italy to Berlin. However, through a selection of stories and analyses, I intend to offer an exploration of some of the main recurring themes, troubles and experiences produced by the group of migrants who are protagonists of this research.

A further issue related to my role as researcher, as well as to the relationship created at the encounter with interviewees is that of my perceived identity as Italian migrant in Berlin. When I met the interviewees, I usually knew already quite some information about their lives, as they had already provided them in the survey. On the contrary, they had received fewer personal information about me, as in the contacting phase I usually wrote them information mainly related to the research, including the fact that I also was living in Berlin since some years and had thus not only academic, but also personal interest in the matter. During the interviews, thus, many of them asked me about my personal experience in Berlin. Trying to be aware of the power and knowledge asymmetry involved in the relationship between re-

searcher and researched, I provided true information about me, attempting however not to take much time. Mostly, I used the time before and after the interviews to answer to these questions, with the intention of providing transparency while still maintaining awareness of the risks of using the interview as “a project of self-discovery for the researcher, rather than enhancing understanding of wider social issues” (Ryan 2015: 6).

Following the call by Pillow (2010) for bringing forward “reflexivities of discomfort”, I tried to question the assumption about my internality to the group studied. Not lastly thanks to the rejection which I mentioned above, I became aware that it is necessary taking for granted the dichotomy between being an insider or an outsider to the field (Nowicka/Ryan 2015; Ryan 2015). Rather, the relationship with the researched might be rather characterized by different “degrees of proximity” according to the topic of the conversation or the specific situation of encounter (Ganga/Scott 2006). Further, “migrant communities are divided by social fissure of class, generation and gender” (Ganga/Scott 2006, cit. in Ryan 2015). While I have not used the concept of “migrant community” in a consistent way in this research, I noticed during the interview that I shared many experiences with the interviewees, when talking about their lives in Berlin. At the same time, I also acknowledged several times a sense of social distance in both senses, i.e. of being somehow in a less powerful social position, as well as being in a more powerful social position than the interviewees. In both cases, I used emotions such as empathy, uneasiness or discomfort, to explore the nexus of insider-ness/outsider-ness and interrogate my theoretical knowledge on class through the lived experience of the interview situation.

3.4.3. The Coding Process

The interview recordings were transcribed with the free software Easytranscript. The long and meticulous work of transcribing already represented a first step of analysis, as by transcribing I could experience again the interview situations, this time with a more distanced perspective. During this phase, I started writing memos on paper. Once all interviews were transcribed, the text material was then coded with the software MAXQDA. The coding process took place in several phases. Firstly, the interviews were roughly coded according to the qualitative content analysis by Mayring (2010), pointing to categorizing the material along the different topics and macro-themes of the interviews (such as “housing relations”, “spatial mobility”, “arrival in Berlin”, “education”, etc.). During the second phase, then, a more detailed

analysis of the interview material took place, mostly guided by open coding, along the method of grounded theory (Corbin/Strauss 1990).

Open coding usually constitutes the beginning of the analysis, is based on extensive and sequential analysis and aims to the formulation of concepts, thereby building the analytical basis for theorization (Wohlrab-Sahr/Pryziborski 2009: 211). This phase served to construct the main concepts which would be developed over the course of the research and writing phase. In the following phase, the concepts were specified and put in relation to one another. For instance, the relationship between the concepts of “burned” and “successful” migration was explored more in detail. Further, the dichotomic relationship between mobility and fixity was further elaborated by adding several sub-codes. This phase could be defined as “axial coding” (Corbin/Strauss 1990). Once the analytical structure became clearer, a last phase of “selective coding” was conducted to integrate the theories built in the previous phases by re-coding some of the material. For instance, the macro-code “boundary making” was given a more systematic structure and divided in the sub-codes “national”, “transnational” and “urban scale”; further, the macro-code “social status” was re-structured as to entail the sub-codes “self” and “reproduction”. Finally, the code structure reached great complexity, due to the several phases of coding. While it is not possible to discuss it in length here, the code book can be found in the APPENDIX.

4. Symbolic boundaries on mobility and fixity: unraveling migrant subjectivities

4.1. The analysis of symbolic boundaries and migration

The analysis has started by identifying narratives of identity and othering (“we” and “they”) developed by the interviewees. These narratives are related to processes of boundary-making produced by the young migrants in their everyday life. The aim of this paragraph is that of exploring these narratives to find out which symbolic resources migrants mobilize (Lamont and Molnar talk about “conceptual distinctions, interpretive strategies, cultural traditions”) in “creating, maintaining, contesting, or even dissolving institutionalized cultural differences (e.g. class, gender, race, territorial inequality)” (Lamont/Molnar 2002: 168).

Starting inductively with the exploration of symbolic boundaries highlights the subjective experience in constructing groups; this boundary-work has consequences on the practices by which migrants close, hoard and share or not resources. It thus affects their relationship to resources, i.e. their class situation, as it is defined in this research. Moreover, it is assumed that migrants, having crossed national boundaries by definition, might “transport symbolic boundaries from one national context to the other” (ibid.: 175). In other words, their boundary-work might include the mobilization of symbolic resources which span on a transnational scale, thus challenging the national framework as a container for processes of boundary-making.

The experience of migration constitutes a watershed for migrants’ life, as well as a “partitioning principle” (Delphy 1984) which enables us to call them migrants. Indeed, the category of migrant is defined by the trajectory of spatial mobility: migrants left their place of origin and headed towards a new place. They have entered a process of re-formation of subjectivity via their physical re-location.

4.1.1. Mobilities and the nation-state: the case of intra-European migration

The geographic scale of the trajectory (inter-national, inter-regional, etc.), as well as the main motivation for migration are mainly used by social scientists to discretize different types

of migrants (economic migrants, refugees, expats, etc.). The citizenship of migrants (when provided) and the reasons to migrate are thus the variables considered for the national management of migration, according to which the decision is taken whether a migrant should be called and treated as legal or not. While these categories are often taken for granted in media and policies, several migration scholars are engaged in deconstructing them and demonstrating that not only they do not represent the social reality (De Genova et al. 2014), but they also do not contribute in making it simpler (Carling 2018).

A large corpus of literature has been produced since the beginning of the 2000s on one side to deconstruct the concept of migration as a linear and coherent spatial process from A to B (Nail 2015; Zhang 2017), on the other to push forward the concept of mobilities to draw attention to the multi-scalar, multi-dimensional and relational components of migration processes (Sheller/Urry 2006; Amelina 2010; 2012). The “mobility turn” aimed to undermine the sociological assumption that mobility is a social exception and to build new theories on the conceptual foundation that mobility *is* the basis for social life (Cresswell 2001). Movement of people within cities (transportation mobility) and inter-continental migrations should thus be considered as phenomena with huge internal variety but nonetheless a common foundation on movement as essential to their emergence.

From this perspective, migration has been distinguished from mobilities in general as the act of crossing boundaries between more or less effective nation-states, thus implying the existence of nation-states as the preliminary condition for the emergence of migration. The fixation on the state as a container and regulating instance for migration processes has been criticized for reproducing “methodological nationalism” (Wimmer/Glick-Schiller 2002; Wimmer 2007; Sager 2014). In the contemporary highly globalized world, the state should not be considered as a vessel for social processes. The latter span across several geo-social scales, constantly exceeding and re-working national borders. As a conundrum, the expansion of international migration since the 1990es (UN DESA 2017) challenges the ability of nation-states to manage and control migration flows, thus asking for their re-configuration or dissolution, in the very moment that it needs them in order to exist as a category. It is no coincidence that migration flows of people within the European Union are labelled in official policies as “mobilities”, as the attempt to discretize it in contrast to inter-national migration.

From this point of view, the introduction of the Schengen free mobility regime within the European Union can be considered a socio-spatial fix for countering internal rising inequalit-

ies within the European space and beyond the national scale as well as a regulation meant to govern via differentiation also migration flows from the outside of the European Union (Avalone/Torre 2018). The free mobility regime is therefore to be understood relationally, as a frame for regulating internally the flows of those who should be mobilized across EU member countries, and externally of those who should be deterred from moving to the EU, or rather “differentially included” (Mezzadra/Neilson 2013). In other words, the European integration, understood as an attempt of governance of mobility, aims to re-configure the role of nation states in the management of migration in interaction with a supra-national entity. It develops a way to face globalization, coupled with a win-win maximizing strategy of letting move only those people who can actively play a role in the accumulation of capital (King et al. 2018).

The act of dissolving national boundaries for the management of migration (thus turning it into mobility in policy papers), however, does not imply the disappearance of social boundaries and inequalities connected to these spatial processes. Language barriers, translation and recognition of educational titles and qualifications, deskilling on the labor market and of course the denied access to political rights signal that intra-EU mobility maintains the main qualities of migration processes in which nationality plays a major role in filtering the access of migrants to resources in the place of arrival (King/Williams 2018). Moreover, the recent political developments marked by rise of populisms and discourses pushing for more national sovereignty, as shown in the Brexit case, demonstrate that the process of European integration, far from being an inherently progressive one, is exposed to the possibility of reversibility (Barbulescu 2017). In a not so far future, intra-European mobilities might be turned again into migrations also in national and local policies, official documents and border regimes.

4.1.2. Migration as a relational and unequal process of fixity and mobility

From the perspective of the mobility turn, migration has been defined as “a specific form of mobility”, characterized by the “implication of permanent settlement” (Amelina/Vasilache 2014: 114). Such implication, however, is not necessarily an ex-ante decision, but rather it gets developed over time. Recent studies have criticized the concept of “migration decision” as well as approaches to migration which highlight agency as individual and situated in a specific time and place; migration decisions are better understood as processes, impossible to be reduced to the physical act of leaving (Zhang 2017). People might be thinking of migrating for a long time, before they consider that the current situation is the appropriate moment for

them to materially leave. Carling talks about the migration act as the combination of aspirations and abilities to move: only when both coincide, migration becomes a lived experience. Aspiring migrants, for instance, might wait until they see an institutional and political opportunity, such as the release of Visa or forthcoming legal restrictions of movement (Carling 2018). Further, the decision to migrate goes with people along years, even after they have migrated. The possibility to return, or to move on, is usually implicated in migration processes, especially in the case of EU-citizens, who have no formal barriers to moving from one EU-country to another one.

Eade and colleagues conducted a research on Poles in England, according to which four categories were developed on the basis of the temporality of migration and its relationship to social mobility. On one side, the authors identified “storks and hamsters”, characterized by a shorter duration of migration aimed at one-off processes of raising capital and resources to be deployed in the country of origin. On the other side, they identified “searchers and stayers”, characterized by longer periods of stay abroad with the implication of stable settlement. The latter were also linked to skilled migratory paths and stronger aspirations to durable economic betterment (Eade 2007). From the perspective of circularity and multiplicity of ways of migrating, migrants can settle permanently and stay put, while others might stay “fixed in mobility” and maintaining doors open for next moves (Morokvasic 2004).

The regime of “free mobility” allows migrants to develop individual paths of migration, giving migratory flows of EU-migrants the characteristic of “liquidity” (Bauman 2000). Further, as individuals are left “free” with the decision about when, where, how and for how long to move, their trajectories can differentiate much according to their different abilities to move, their “savoir se mouvoir” or “know-how-to-move” (Tarrius 1992, cit. in Morokvasic 2004). Such trajectories entail a variety of ways of keeping one foot in the country of origin and one foot in the new country, of embedding and dis-embedding themselves into national networks of welfare and income provision. Morokvasic, analyzing the transnational moves of Polish women in several EU countries, witnessed that mobility can sometimes expand horizons for social mobility, but can also end up in a trap, for instance when mobile women are forced to enter transnational networks of traffic and prostitution. The crucial issue is the different ability of migrants to acquire and maintain control over the own mobility and to use it as a resource from which to benefit (ebd.: 11 ff.).

There are relatively few disputes about the fact that spatial mobility can constitute an in-

come-generating resource, and often a crucial one. However, a systematic appraisal of how and under which conditions mobility concretely becomes a resource which generates income in a more or less durable way are still on the way to come. Further, migration is often studied in connection with class, gender, race and other variables (for instance, recent research has increasingly targeted age: Benson/O'Reilly 2009; Cairns 2014; Cairns et al. 2017). While migration is often studied as a dependent variable linked through mechanisms of correlation, and sometimes causality, to independent variables such as class, gender, race, in other cases it is considered as an intervening variable also for processes of class or gender formation (Morokvasic 2004; Kelly/Lusis 2006; McDowell 2013). For instance, research with a focus on the relational aspect of migration usually argues that migrants from various class backgrounds experience differential accesses to resources in the place of destination. Thereby, they get re-located in the class structure both there and in the place of origin (Erel 2010; Kelly/Lusis 2006). However, there is still a missing theoretical gap about the role of mobility not only as an intervening, but as a constitutive variable of class relations. In other words, it is still to be analyzed whether and how mobility can inform and transform class relations.

As the Marxist and feminist geographer Massey argued, the different ability of people to move is a matter of power: “differential mobility can weaken the leverage of the already weak” (Massey 1994)). It is therefore necessary to think of mobility as a resource which can become the source of class relations. The issue becomes then that about the ownership, control and definition over mobility, as well as about the material and narrative contestations about the legitimacy and distribution of mobility. Indeed, mobility is inextricably connected to fixity. However, by mobility we always mean social and spatial mobility at the same time.

To understand mobility, therefore, we need to think in terms of class, although this is necessary but not enough. To understand the complex ways how mobility might become a source generating value and income which can potentially trigger the emergence of class relations, we cannot avoid taking also the relational principles of race and gender into account. Mobility in social and physical space is regulated by a multiplicity of institutions, which try to govern both the processes of production and reproduction into which people are embedded while they move or stay. On the one hand, the analysis of gender relations helps us to understand the relationship between mobility and reproduction. Moreover, to understand the wider implications of the feminization of migration, we cannot escape investigating the gender relations mobilized along the process of mobility. On the other, the analysis of relations of race

and ethnicity inform our understanding of how mobility becomes hierarchized and made discrete along with the segmentation of labor markets and the re-distribution of labor force according to difference in legal and race status. Finally, both race and gender are produced inherently in spaces, from the kitchen sink as a symbol for the specificities of Fordist gender relations to the modern ghetto, in which black people are segregated and construct alternatives to the white domination by capitalizing on their skin color. Thereby, a spatial analysis of the relationship between mobility and class relations cannot neglect the way how classed space is co-produced also by gender and race relations.

4.1.3. Analysis of mobility in two steps: the “who” and “how” of migration

I suggest that the first step to embed the analysis of mobility within the analysis of class structure might be that of considering mobility as not only a simple resource for people to cope with rising uneven spatial development, but as a meta-resource, which functions as a mediating instance between individuals and the resources they can access to. In other words, mobility is a means to income, a means to survival and livelihood, whose ownership and control require a series of abilities which are yet to be discovered empirically. Moreover, mobility must be seen as relational and co-existing with immobility or fixity. In this sense, we need to formulate empirical statements starting from a “radically different idea of migration as a distributed event” which also includes the act of staying (Halfacree/Rivera 2012: 93). Only in this way, we can also consider the negative face of mobility, its necessary counterpart. In other words, by focusing on those who have moved, we need also to make visible the opposite trajectories of those who have stayed, whose migration is perhaps impeded by the mobility of others. Thus, mobility and immobility should both be looked as processes which possibly stay in relation to one another. A brief example from this research is the case of migrants who have siblings who stay at home with the parents. In their views, leaving parents alone at home did not require any re-configurations of their familiar care relations. Thus, the immobility of their siblings set their mobility free, mobilizing specific relations of care as well as a specific division of labor within the family. Further, what is the focus of the analysis beside the fact of moving or not is that “savoir se mouvoir”, that ability to develop a sense of how to manage the own mobility in a way that enables to get benefit and avoid traps. This ability of “practically knowing” mobility should not be thought as a fixed and stable resource, but as a process of learning too, which requires on its part the capacity to adapt and modify ways of approach-

ing the new contexts along the migration process. At the same time, the very process of “learning mobility” is a classed one, as it has to do with the capacity to develop a habitus and a life conduct in which mobility becomes an automatized strategy for livelihood. Nonetheless, while class, gender and race locations in the place of origin do play a substantial role, it must not be forgotten that migration entails a rupture, which in any case changes the cards on the table. Also, it can be figured as a curve during the life course, which is often configured in a way which hides from the sight what is taking place after the turn. Asked about their expectations before leaving, the migrants could not tell much: it seemed rather that what actually occurred after arrival compromised their ability to remind their previous expectations. The distance between imagined and lived migration seems to be hidden by the curve. Finally, it is an empirical question that of disentangling existing class relations from those to come, as well what the development of a “savoir se mouvoir” has to do with class.

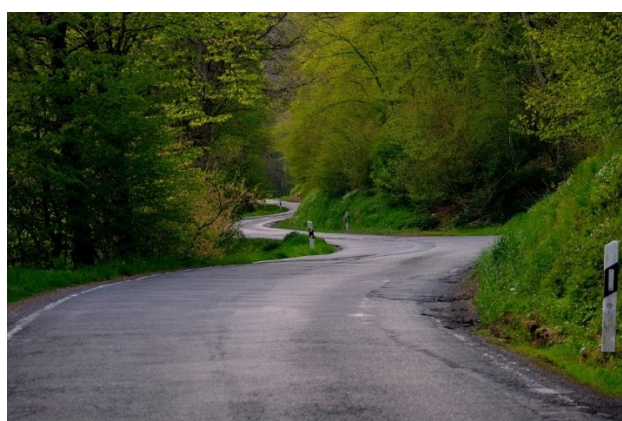


Figure 1: Migration as a series of curves.

4.1.4. The European Union as an unequal space of migration

Johnston et al. have further expanded the typology developed by Eade (2007) (storks, hamsters, searchers and stayers) thanks to a comparative research on West (EU15) and East (EU10) European migrants in the UK, finding out that the former tends to fall within the categories of searchers/stayers, while the latter rather in the storks/hamsters ones (Johnston et al. 2015). EU15 migrants are usually endowed with better recognized cultural capital (qualifications, language skills, etc.) than EU10 ones, and even if this is not the case, they tend nonetheless to get better jobs in a shorter time (ebd.). Here we acknowledge that intra-European migrations can have an effect which, far from equalizing, reinforce inequalities and pre-existing

European patterns of uneven development (King/Williams 2018).

Following on the path of ethnic differentiation and labor market stratification then, it must be added that within West European migrants, specificities regarding motivations and outcomes of migration are differentiated along the North/South axis, particularly after the crisis started in 2007/2008, with a relative increase of out-migrations from Southern countries to Northern ones. Germany is a key receiving country within the European space of migration both for East and for Southern Europeans. It is the second destination for Italian migrants, whose stock has increased in 2013 at its fastest rate since the 1970es (Tintori/Romei 2017: 55). The new flows differ from previous ones (such as the *Gastarbeiter* movements) in that migrants come increasingly from the richer regions of North Italy and are increasingly educated compared to the Italian average: over 80% of Italians living in Germany in 2012 had a secondary education (ebd.). The socio-demographic characteristics of the Italian migrants are analogous to their Southern European peers who moved to countries of Northern Europe.

The fact that those who can mobilize more resources on the labor market are more exposed to migration to another European country might point to selection mechanisms which penalize the less skilled and fix them to the country of origin. Stayers might have more difficulties in leaving their places of origin, but why is it so? While for individuals with European passports it is not an issue of formal borders, several other elements might play a role. While the research has not focused on the stayers directly, the movers mobilized in the interviews strong and repeated classifications of those who stay. These narratives are analyzed to understand the stake of im/mobility, considering both abilities, resources and aspirations as factors which constitute class and are themselves affected by the status of origin of people.

4.2. Symbolic boundaries on fixity: stayers from the viewpoint of movers

4.2.1. Stayers from the perspective of the “self-made” youth

A less researched issue when talking about migration is the re-articulation of subjectivity which migrants engage with during the whole migration process. Confronting new geographies, a new language, as well as the material needs linked to re-settlement, lets newcomers enter a process of re-definition of the self, in which both their past life as well as their current situation relationally acquire new locations. Just as Marco Polo always has Venice in his mind

when describing to Kublai Khan the cities of his empire (Calvino 1972), the place of origin, even though geographically distant, is always present in the migrants' minds as a social and spatial reference, as they find their own ways into the new place and start learning the new city. The struggle to understand the new context, as well as their position in the new context, is accompanied by processes of categorizations, through which they make sense of their new social reality. Thus, the place of origin, and in particular the localized social ties which they are usually still embedded in, must be re-thought during the search of a constant re-confirmation of the migration decision. As already suggested in the earlier sections, the analysis of the interview material lets a crucial boundary emerge, namely spatial mobility, as a key principle of partitioning for the interviewees. The act of moving constitutes a watershed in the process of formation of their selves, inevitably leading to the reconfiguration of their relevant others who did not move.

There is no common term developed by the migrants to name those who stayed in Italy, but still their narratives entail an almost constant reference to their friends, colleagues, peers, siblings who have not moved abroad. Here, the reference is not limited to those who did not follow their own path to Berlin, but in general to those who are still living in the same place of origin or more broadly speaking in Italy. Sometimes, interviewees qualified mobility within Italy as analogous to moving abroad, sometimes to staying. In other words, mobility within the nation-state emerged in a more blurred way in the analysis of processes of boundary-making, contrarily to the findings of similar research (Rogaly 2015).

Some examples:

M: Well, yes, y friends who, ehm, found something to do in life, those who have an idea, a project, even a crazy one, ehm, they moved to *Rome, Paris, Bruxelles, Cambridge*, for different reasons. [Marco]

M: Cristiana, she tried the same career [teacher], in Milan, she keeps doing teaching substitutions! For next to nothing! I mean, look at the difference! [with herself] [Marta]

The “stayers”, as I will call them for reasons of brevity, represent a kind of negative for the “movers”, who mobilized such “ghosts” not only when directly asked about (for instance with the question “what are your friends in Italy doing now?”), but also when asked about their own current situation in Berlin.

Giovanni is on his own definition a very hardworking guy, he is a cook. His father was a

worker at the automobile plant of Fiat Torino, his mother a nurse; the two are divorced. He had to learn very early to become economically independent:

G: Life was that, with few money, there was not much earning, so also for me it was always [from his parents]: “do what we can do, don’t do more”. Always like this! And I left home at 20 because I couldn’t make it anymore, well, and instead since then everything changed, because now I can do what I want, and a world opened itself in front of me. [Giovanni]

The new world entailed for Giovanni a series of jobs spanning from bartender to assistant in a designer studio, to becoming a sales agent, from waiter to working in a car breaker, until he finally found what he considers his dream job, being a cook. He is used to work 13 hours per shift, and he reported of having no problems in doing this, as he likes working much and is used to it. This strong ethos of hard work, also connected to claims of respectability and autonomy which have been often reconducted to the Fordist working class subjectivity (Skeggs 2012), is best explained when he sets it in contrast with the what he defines a weak ethos of work of those who, facing a similar situation, have decided to stay in Italy.

S: Let’s imagine this: tomorrow Berlin will become like Bologna [the city where he unsuccessfully looked for a job before moving to Berlin], and suddenly there is no restaurant anymore where you can work. I know this is unlikely, but what would you do in this case, would you move on?

G: Yes, I would carry out a research, to see where I can go to do my stuff, and if I don’t find anything, well I would adapt to do anything, even working in agriculture, I would do it, no problems! Well, you have to do it, right, I have done a thousand jobs ... Well, this thing, in my opinion, is that which distinguishes Italians in Italy from those abroad. I mean, those abroad are much more open to changes, are much more open to adapt to situations. Well, I’d complain if I have to work in a call center, I wouldn’t go, if it wasn’t the only choice. But if there is really no other way, and it is the only work I can find, you do it, I might complain, it would bother me, because it is not what I want to do, but, you know, if there is nothing else! While in Italy it is always like, “hay, well, no, I am not going to work as a bricklayer”, I mean, these low-level jobs, brick-layers, carpenters, cobblers, young people are not open anymore to do these things, because obviously it doesn’t correspond to the lifestyle they expect. And so, they lose years, they lose energy trying to do something which they will never be able to do, and meanwhile they deny other realit-

ies. [Giovanni]

Failing work ethos and unwillingness to do unskilled jobs are also mentioned by Azzurra, a 29-years old woman who at the moment of the interview was about to leave her job as a waitress to get a new job as receptionist in a hotel in West Berlin, hoping to open her own café in the future. Both her parents had working-class jobs. During the interview she also demonstrated to value hard work as a fundamental human quality, connected to honesty and obligation, expressing the idea that “you have to do what you have to do”, i.e. the obligation to coherence between the expectations from the family and the own actions.

A: Anyway, I am a very active person, you know, sitting all day is not something for me. (...) Because I could not allow myself to stay home, because my parents had no money for me. Just saying, no? And thus, well, I never lacked a hot dish at home, uh, I never lacked anything! But anyway, you realize that if you need to help, well you help, you have to do it. And stop. “I don’t want to” doesn’t exist, well, there is no “I don’t want to”, you have to do it, stop (...) I NEVER missed work, even though I might also have gone to parties, but I always stood up at the alarm, and I always went to work, do you understand? Or, well, the truth, last summer I was sick for three days. The first time, the first time! Otherwise I NEVER, I always went to work! Always, always! [Azzurra]

When Azzurra is talking about her peers in Berlin who have not enough money to buy tickets to visit their parents in Italy, she employs a process of classification based on the analogy with her unemployed friends in Sardinia, the island where she comes from:

A: I am not like those who come here from Italy, and they go back every two or three years because they don’t have the money to buy a ticket. This cannot be possible in my opinion, because for me, in every part of the world, for me if you want to work, you work, there is no “here there is no work”, what they say when they arrive here, and they go to the Job Center because there is no work, because they are exploited, because of this, because of that, because this is aaall nonsense [Quatsch, orig. in Germ.], as they say here, true! For me this doesn’t exist, so I go back home, at least three or four time a year, yes, when I want to go I go.

S: And so, you were saying that these guys come here and do not have enough money?

A: For me they are like, I don’t know, also in Sardinia it is the same, when I go there, back home, most of my friends are all unemployed, no one works, they all live at home

with their parents, I mean, I have always worked, always! And still it's not liiiiike, like I am who knows what! I mean. Unfortunately, many people are lazy and don't want to bend their back, do you understand?

In this quote, the peers of Azzurra who live in Berlin and are not economically independent or at least less successful than her in sparing money enough, are fixed to Berlin. On the contrary, she can decide to spend her holidays in Italy: she has more control on her own mobility. At the same time, she compares them to those who stay fixed to the parental home, because of what she considers an unwillingness to work. Here, both migrants and stayers are considered as fixed to one place, as they do not have the resources to move.

Accepting the logic of hard work seems for both Azzurra and Giovanni the only way to acquire the economic resources needed. The life conduct of hard work, the vocation to spend thirteen hours a day in the kitchen, or to go to work even if you are sick, is for them the key to escape a background of economic scarcity and fixity. Moreover, both Giovanni and Azzurra are angry about the difference they see between their peers and themselves. The others do not accept to lower their expectations, they reject their de-valorization on the labor market and prefer not to work rather than engaging in economic transactions in which only the location of the dominated is available to them. Azzurra and Giovanni did not experience a de-valorization of their expectations, as they spent their childhood in working-class families: in other words, their expectations were already set by society as low. Thanks to their spatial mobilization, they achieved economic independence and betterment: their story is a story of success in their eyes, based on hard work. Therefore, they consider refusal of work as the immoral stand of the privileged. Interestingly, the classification of others as lazy and dependent either from the state or from the family enacts a sense of power, but at same time a sense of being the under-privileged. The "system", and the way how it is working, are not legitimated in the eyes of both, and therefore causes anger and emotional excitement. Both these two interviewees and many others talk about the stayers as privileged people, who can allow themselves to stay with their parents and use their parental resources to maintain a lifestyle according to their expectations. Armando mobilized similar descriptions of his peers in Italy.

S: What about your friends? Have they stayed home?

A: They do nothing. They still live with their parents, and don't, apart from working like that, occasionally, during the summer, well at least my friends do nothing. [Armando]

Their “doing nothing” is hard to accept for the interviewees, as it is read as the unworthy inheritance of economic privilege which they value negatively and which the quoted interviewees could not join anyway, due to their lower status of origin. Antonia, 30 years old, graduated in sports and working as a babysitter and getting some benefits from the Job Center, her father a worker at ENI (public energy company in Italy) and her mother a housewife, is able to place the situation of the stayers within a broader generation classification, in which privilege is connected to generational proximity to the years of the so-called Italian “economic boom” (approximately dated by historians between the years 1958-1963).

S: And your friends in Ferrara [A. comes originally from South Italy, but she moved to Ferrara in the North to study, where she spent many years, started to work, and built many durable social ties], those who stayed in Ferrara, what do they do, how are they going?

A: [laughs] Well, let's say that two of them have an own activity, a restaurant, a trattoria. Another one, others are stiiiill studying, but most of them are Ferrarese, so they stay home with their parents, or maybe they do some jobs, like that, while they keep on studying. ... Let's say, yes, only one of them has, uh, how do you say, has a permanent job [*posto fisso, orig.*], he won last year a public call [*concorso pubblico, orig.*], and is now working at the municipality. Well but yes, he is the white fly! [laughs]

S: Ok, so, it is not that easy for them?

A: Well, yes, of course they all have situations like this, but, let's say that the generation born in the 1980es has the luck of having parents, who lived in, well, they made some money during the economic boom. [Antonia]

The stayers relevant for Antonia's boundary-work are precarious and have unstable jobs, but still they are privileged because of their fixity to place, they come from Ferrara and live there – differently from her, who came to Ferrara from a small town in Apulia, lying almost 800 km away. Thus, they can join all the benefits which derive from living close and together with their parents, a generation who was lucky enough to benefit from the “economic boom”. In other words, she refers here to mechanisms of renting and inheriting wealth. There are no new sources of income, rather staying fixed geographically entails the possibility to tap wealth from accumulation of resources and capital in the past. In other words, staying enable the access to assets. The regulation of the access to these assets is not dealt with in a formal-

ized way but is embedded within relationships of family reproduction. Antonia, however, was in a different situation and had to leave. Very interestingly, she also puts into play also regional differences between Southern and Northern Italy to explain the different abilities between her and her friends from Ferrara to accumulate resources to stay.

A: Yes, but surely, anyway, I don't know, already when I arrived in Ferrara, I noticed a different level of school education too. I mean, my education, uh, at high school level, even if I attended "*ragioneria*" [vocational school for accounting], another Ferrarese who attended "*ragioneria*" there, of my age, he will anyway have another type of education! I mean, there had been different experiences [between me and them]! Experiences abroad, learning languages, so well, I mean there is still a quite neat divide between North and South Italy! And you can imagine between South Italy and here! [laughs] [Antonia]

Antonia acknowledged her disadvantaged position already by moving from the South to the North Italy, and because of that she had to move on, while at same time keeping strong social ties with people from Ferrara, as she is also sharing a flat in Berlin with people she knows from there. Relationship to mobility as income-generating resource is expressed here as the ability to move until one can fix the own self to a place which is host of stable income-generating resources in a multiplicity of ways, either because of differentials of value accrued to the self, or due to plenty of resources to be tapped and extracted. This mechanism, however, seems to apply for now only to young people who could not count on economic support from their families, and developed a life conduct based on hard work aimed to reach autonomy from their origins.

4.2.2. Stayers from the perspective of youth with middle-class families

The cases presented until now all refer to young migrants who are themselves in low-income jobs and share a working-class status background. However, similar narratives about the "stayers" are also produced by migrants with middle-class parents. Here I will try to highlight similarities and differences.

Stefano, 28 years old, working as a freelancer architect, his parents were both teachers, talks about some of his friends in Naples, his home town, who accept to work for free because of their family safety nets:

SA: And those who work for free, how do they do that?

S: Well, they do it because they have a family on their back, they say “I will make an experience, and tomorrow we’ll see, maybe I’ll need it, maybe like this”, and they make a living, make a living, in the end, but they keep on staying always there! [laughs]
[Stefano]

Marco, 26 years old, his mother a social worker, his father the owner of a marketing agency, is a student in Berlin and has a mini-job in the touristic sector. He started studying German and other languages at an international high school in Turin and received economic as well as emotional support by his parents to move to Berlin. He is puzzled about why his friends have decided to stay in Turin:

M: Ha, I see this thing very much, even though many of my friends, exactly because of the school we attended and so on, they are anyway people who didn’t lack anything, I don’t think they wouldn’t have the possibilities [to leave]. I mean, I don’t think that they lack parents like mine, who would tell them “if you want to move, move, I’ll help you”, as they did with me. [Marco]

Marco refers here to a privilege, a resource, which his peers are somehow not able to deploy, differently than how he did, thereby clearly classifying their choice as a conundrum, which has implications more on a material than a moral level. By staying, his friends in Turin are prevented from fully enjoying their position of advantage.

Michele, son of a university professor and of an elementary teacher, was raised in Rome and is now working as web-content editor in a Berliner startup. He has a wife and a small child, they moved to Berlin after living in Brazil for some years. From his perspective of a more-times and many-years mover, he talks about a kind of alienation from real problems for his peers from middle-class families.

M: But they are, either persons who for one reasons or for the other had the luck to build themselves a work situation, which is, I wouldn’t dare to say, happy, but at least sustainable, possible. Or they are persons who hide to themselves that they have been VERY MUCH helped by their families, and thus they leave in a kind of limbo, in which the usual problems are somehow tarnished. [Michele]

Privilege, thus, turns into a disadvantage, something which makes the stayers live in a less conscious way. Reflexivity has been identified as a marker for the middle-class self (Skeggs 2004). Being unable to reflect on the own situation, being alienated from the capacity

to reflect oneself, is considered a sign of domination, even within a context of economic privilege.

M: Well, I don't know, I repeat myself, in my opinion *in Italy you live things from a completely distorted perspective*. ... To people who tell me "hey, you were so bold to move away!" [he spent 10 years in Brazil before moving to Berlin], I am answering "well, you are the bold ones to stay!", because I never took decisions, well, the decisions I took always seemed the most obvious one to me, for that precise moment. I didn't have anything to lose, let's say.

S: You just moved on?

M: Exactly. [Michele]

Michele seems to suggest that the pre-condition for being able to reflect on the own situation and avoid alienation of the self is that of moving away. In a sort of negative reflection, thinking about those who stayed, observing them from the "outside", enables one to properly locate the own mobility. Significantly, in his eyes, staying in Italy is to be praised as a strong decision against naturally prevailing kinetic forces. Again, for him such decision has to do with the comforts of economic privilege. Further, he seems to suggest that parental safety nets are not enough to be able to leave, if parents exchange their economic support for the right to keep their offspring spatially close to them.

M: As I was saying, even if I am a lonely child, I come from a family in which I always enjoyed many freedoms and a great support. Maybe in many situations, other persons might be more exposed to conditionings by their parents. [Michele]

Alberto comes from a 4.000 inhabitants town in Central Italy and is working in the same startup as Michele. He reminds a scene happened in public in his home town some time ago, when he and his friends, who also migrated abroad, were observing the local youth, classifying them as an unknowing youth who does not even recognize its no-future condition. He believes he managed to escape unknowingness and unconsciousness by leaving the town, first to go to study in Florence, and then moving to Germany.

A: Well, when I go back to my village in Italy, once I went out on Friday night, and I met again other people, and there were these younger generations ... we were saying with my friends, look at these youngsters, they have, they have no future! I mean, it is a mix

of, they are still enjoying it, because anyway they have their parents behind their backs, ah, and a couldn't-care-less attitude about what's really going on in the world, and they feel they are the coolest, but actually you are narrowed down in a 4.000 inhabitants village. I mean, this was really too narrow for me. [Alberto]

The ambivalence regarding privilege is worked out by the interviewees who joined the benefits of being economically supported by their parents in a different way from their peers who did not. They see it as a trap more than a comfort zone. Further, they do not mobilize ideas of laziness, but rather of exploitation, when referring to their peers' working conditions in Italy. Instead of blaming them for refusing to accept low-income jobs, they rather stress how the acceptance of exploiting working conditions is dis-humanizing and a shame.

E: Well, a friend of mine remained to work there [in the theatre where B. was working during university]. And she, what the hell, she is working too much! For 500 euro a month, that's not human. I mean, she is doing it with dedication and passion, but love for theater does not mean dying by doing administrative tasks, not really! And so, I am not willing to do that. [Elisa]

G: Nobody gets to more than 1000 euro a month. This is a bit depressing, you know. [Giorgia]

A: My professor from Padova, who was my relator for the Master thesis, she came to visit me in Berlin, and she, herself, who is working at the university, told us "there is fucking nothing! NOTHING!"

S: How do you mean this?

A: That there is no way, it is a very difficult career, and she told us "I am very happy to see that you have a career here [at Booking as an office manager] than being at home", she said, "doing a traineeship after the other, you can't do it for so long, you get crazy". And she is almost getting 1000 euro less than me, and she is a researcher with a PhD! And of course, I don't care, you know, but I am 12 years younger than her, and still have a more stable career than her! ... Well, you know, I didn't want to be maintained by my parents for my whole life long. [Alessandra]

Finally, both migrants who developed their paths of mobility with or without the economic help of their parents draw symbolic boundaries between themselves and the stayers.

The first ones, those with middle-class parents, are more focused on the issue of unconsciousness and on the exploitation at work experienced by their peers in Italy. For them it is less a question of hard work and more a question of consciousness and reflexivity. Instead, for the latter, those with working-class parents, the emergence of such boundaries is based on conformity to the ethic of hard work and recalls a subjectivity based on respectability and autonomy.

4.2.3. Stuck in the roundabout, fixed in waiting

In this paragraph I am turning to the similarities observed in the boundary-work towards stayers developed by interviewees living in a variety of social positions. A recurring theme in the narratives mobilized by them evoked a sense of repetition, of being stuck and blocked, of circularity without the possibility to escape, when talking about the life of the young in Italy. The sense of stasis was often connected to a state of depression. Such narratives were common to interviewees with different backgrounds regarding their current situation, the class of their parents, and their educational level.

S: And what do you think, why do they stay there?

M: Depression ... I don't know, depression. I haven't solved this question myself, and I am really sorry because really, every time I go down there, you know, when you ask your friends "how is it going? What did happen? Any new born, any new dead, I mean, who broke up with whom?". And nothing ever happened, nothing ever changed, I am not necessarily for an ethic of change at any cost, but really, I have the impression that they really are *doing the same things all the time*. And, I mean, it's ok, because Turin is, anyway, is the Berlin of Italy, I don't want to be arrogant ... Turin has its attractiveness, so if you open yourself a bit, if you take the blinkers out, you can find many new things to do, new circles, and so on. But, apart from a couple of friends who *managed to renew themselves* a bit from their twenties, I don't, I see this continuous cycle of gigs, I study a bit, then I am unemployed, and so on... [Marco]

Here, the management of the self towards renewal, meaning searching for access to new social networks and ways of experiencing the city is considered as an option to stay mobile and be apt to change even within spatial immobility. Renewal of the self, however, is difficult to be practiced within a social context perceived as static and circular.

M: You are immobile, I mean, you're spinning, you're moving, but actually you are immobile, you are playing the hamster, you think you are going up, but in the truth, you are moving in circle. [Marco]

Emilia comes originally from a small village in the Southern island of Sicily. She, daughter to a bricklayer and to an industrial laundry worker, has moved to Berlin with her boyfriend Armando, who also comes from Sicily. They are both gastronomy workers and met in a small village in Bavaria, where they were working under very harsh conditions in a local Italian restaurant. Emilia talks in a similar way than Giorgio about her peers back home.

E: But it is always the same thing, I go back every year, but the situation is always the same, after two years, it is identical, nothing ever changes. [Emilia]

Giovanni stresses out how the everyday life for his peers in Turin is repetitive, by mobilizing the "round-about" metaphor.

G: it is like driving your car in a round-about, and you never take an exit, and then you complain because there is no exit. The problem of Italians is this one. And then they tell you "well it's too easy to leave!", no! it's not easy at all, you need a lot of courage to leave. [Giovanni]

Repetition and circularity fix the young to a place. The symbolic boundaries drawn to identify immobility as repetition acquire a specific materiality in the memory of Stefano, when he identifies during the interview the specific event which made his decision to move become concrete.

S: And then you know what pushed me, to say, "now I have to leave!" it was that, there were all sorts of courses [for architects], free courses, organized by the province [of Naples] and others [institutions], for instance about energy performance certificates, worksites safety, and so on. ... Well I had nothing to do, and I started attending one of these courses. ... and there I found many guys who had graduated before me! [laughs] Indeed, I did not even finish the course, I said no!

S: Were they all at the course?

S: Yes, because for sure they weren't finding any job, they attended courses, they did the first one, the second one, the third one, but then it was over. ... The course I was taking, well, they told us there that there weren't even standards for that thing.

S: What year was that?

S: 2014. [Stefano]

Stefano identified how a specific institutional arrangement, the promotion of training courses for architects by local institutions, was fixing young people to a condition of “work for labor” (Standing 2014), without giving them any perspective for finding a secure source of income. He identified the loop while he was entering it and developed this consciousness by observing how his older colleagues were stuck into it. This moment of reflexivity gave him the impulse to transform his fantasies about leaving Naples into reality and move for good.

Recent analyses have illustrated how young people, parked into useless training courses, are often fixed through an “economy of promise” to spatial immobility and eventually downward social mobility (Bascetta 2014). Participating in public calls to become workers of the public service sector in Italy seems also to replicate the pattern of endlessly unmet promises for income. Federico tried to stay in Italy by attempting to become a laboratory technician in hospitals, the occupation he had successfully studied for. However, after winning public calls without getting a job afterwards, he left Italy to move to Berlin as a steward for a low-cost airline company.

F: I participated in a public call to work in Genoa, where I would have liked to move, but then they call me to work after six years! They called me last year, and then they called me again six weeks ago. I mean, six years are really many years, within six years I need to look for something else you know! S-: Well I understand you! [he laughs] F: And also, you know, they didn’t offer me a real job, otherwise I would have thought about accepting it, but no, it was just a three months contract! AFTER SIX YEARS, do you understand?! If I had just graduated, I would have gone, I mean three months, all right if I have nothing else to do I would go. I asked them “but what’s gonna happen after the three months?” “After three months it’s over” “Really over?” “Yes”. Hey, well, then I had to refuse it, unfortunately. [Federico]

Both stories recalled by Stefano and Federico illustrate how public institutions are co-responsible for creating loops into which young people are easy to fall, appealed by promises for the future which in the presented cases did not get corresponded. In particular, Alberto’s story about attending training in order to fill time in unemployment refers to a whole series of policies undertaken by public institutions and meant to favor the integration of young people

into the labor market. While local institutions such as employment offices and the like are those charged with practically implementing these policies, a wider framework for regulation on this matter can be found at the EU level. In particular, the EU has focused on youth policies after the last economic crisis, which has affected dramatically the economic situation of young people. These policies, however, are meant both to fix some young people to their country of origin, on the other to mobilize others towards other national labor markets. The way how the selection between the former and the latter takes place shall be the object of chapter 3. Here, however, we can take a look into the main European policy for the mobilization of young labor force.

S: How do your friends over there take such an impasse?

G: Well, badly! I mean, everyone thinks “ok, I’ll move”.

S: Do you think they will all move abroad?

G: Yes, yes. Told you, this friend of mine is moving here next February. ... Also, another friend of mine, he is coming. His contract will expire in April, you know, this Youth Guarantee [Garanzia Giovani, orig.], which I think, I don’t know exactly how it works, but, I don’t think that once it is finished, they can renovate it, obviously. [Giorgia]

The Youth Guarantee is a “commitment by all EU member states to ensure that all young people under the age of 25 years receive a good quality offer of employment, continued education, apprenticeship, traineeship within a period of four months of becoming unemployed or leaving formal education”, enforced through a Council Recommendation in 2013.²⁰ The goal of the commitment, which should be accomplished by the member states, aims to covering the totality of youth not in employment nor in education, i.e. the so called Neets, as “investing in the human capital of young Europeans ... [should] deliver long-term benefits and contribute to sustainable and inclusive economic growth ... avoiding the costs of having ... [Neets] currently put at 1,2% of GDP”, as the Recommendation says. After five years from its implementation, the program has provided offers on average for ca. 3,5 M. young people each year since 2014 (see note). However, the outcomes vary greatly from country to country (see Figure 3). The latest available data for Italy suggest that more than half of those who left the program in 2015 were unemployed again only after 12 to 18 months (EU Commission 2017: 8).

²⁰<http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1079&langId=en> (last accessed: 05.01.2019).

Moreover, the data reveal that, while a high number of young people have participated in the program, there is “a progressive accumulation of young people that are not getting offers on time” (ebd.: 9) (see Figures 3 and 4). In other words, not only are the measures undertaken unable to deliver a sustainable and long-term exit out of unemployment, but they also might forcibly push young people into procedures of waiting for accessing the program. Time filled with waiting for a turn gets thereby indefinitely prolonged, either when waiting for a public-sector job, for the national or local labor market to recover from crisis or stagnation, or for getting access to programs of integration into labor. In the meanwhile, youth unemployment in Italy does not recede substantially, while the number of the so-called Neets remains stable on dramatically high levels in comparison to the EU average.

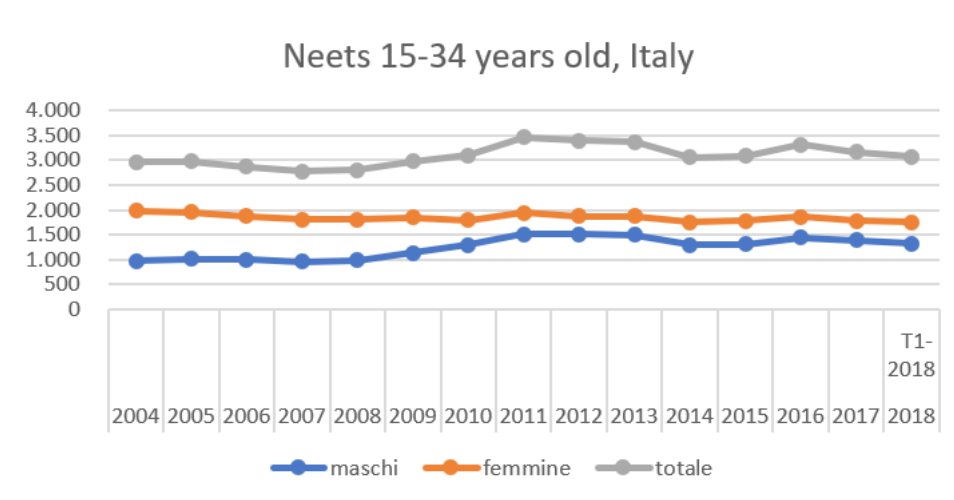


Figure 3: Young NEETS in Italy. Source: Istat (author's calculation).

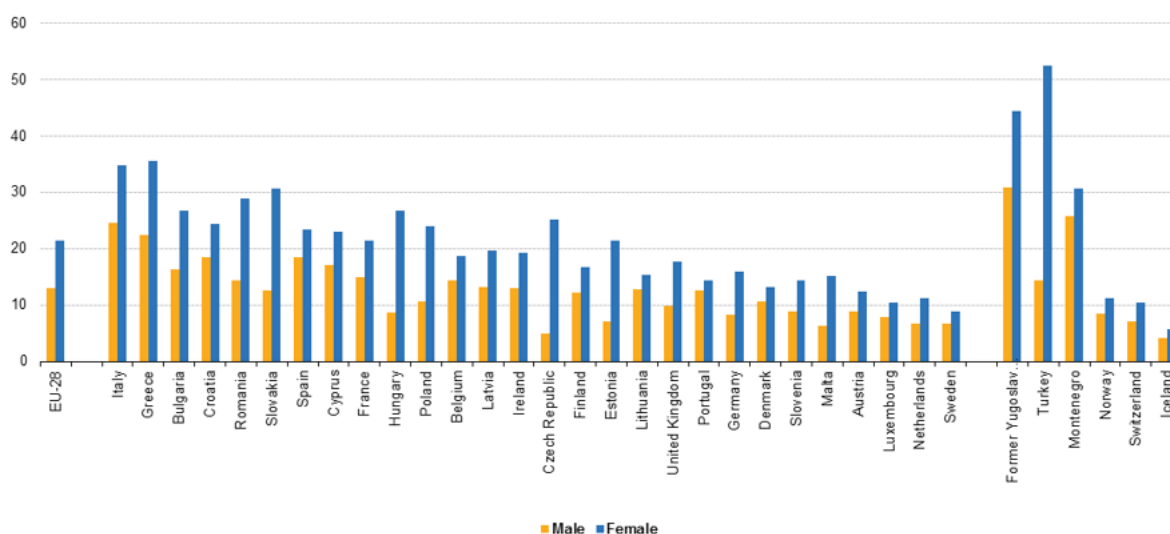


Figure 4: Young people (aged 20-34) neither in employment nor in training and education, by sex, 2017. Source: Eurostat.

Practices of waiting, or “time pass” have been studied mostly in relation to post-colonial or Global South settings (Jeffrey 2010). However, as we have seen in the analysis, similar patterns are to be found also in the very Global North. In particular, dynamics of uneven development within it further accelerated by the crisis put young people from economically weaker EU countries in a condition of prolonged uncertainty and waiting. Such time can then be filled up by adhering to the diktat of “lifelong learning”, for instance by attending courses after courses or accumulating stages and internships. This attempt of accumulation, however, seems to fail the goal of hoarding capital of various forms, at least from the viewpoint of those who moved. Increasing mobility of young people is another goal of the Youth Guarantee framework. In other words, the goal of activating young people should be reached either by offering them jobs and training in their country of origin or by mobilizing them to move abroad into labor markets more apt to integrate them. While in this section we have heard about those who stayed from the viewpoint of those who moved, in the next section we will deal with the self-perception of the movers. Their narratives of mobilization and activation relate to the belief spread among them about having recognized and avoided falling into the deadlock of staying in Italy. These narratives will be the object of analysis and critique in the next section.

4.3. Symbolic boundaries on mobility: knowing how to move

The previous section showed how migrants perceive their peers staying in Italy as blocked into a loop from which they are not able to get out. For migrants engaged in these processes, migration can be considered the exit option, which opens the way to the development of new practices of livelihood and of a new everyday life arrangement. Taking an exit from the round-about, however, does not mean necessarily undertaking the ideal road. As I will explore in the following paragraphs, migrants are constantly engaged in processes of boundary-making which they use to divide themselves and their practices between mobility and fixity from the ones of relevant others located in Berlin and, generally speaking, abroad.

Since 2007 youth emigration to Germany from Italy has started again to increase dramatically (ISTAT 2018: 176). Media, politics and social networks have contributed to develop several narratives on these recent flows of migration. Especially before the beginning of the last economic crisis, the dominant view considered them as “new mobilities” of privileged,

high-skilled and highly mobile youth moving between European metropolises to gain experience, cultural capital and social mobility (Favell 2009; Del Pra/Tirabassi 2014). After the crisis, the main narrative sees the migration of the young as a “brain flight”, in analogy to the “brain drain” discourse. In this narrative construction, young Italians are forced to leave Italy because of failing job opportunities and closure within the labor market (Tintori/Romei 2017). In some cases, out-migration is explained in chauvinistic terms, via the correlation with in-migration from African and East European countries (ebd.). The aim of this paragraph is that of highlighting narratives developed by the migrants about themselves and their peers abroad. The emerging picture is much more differentiated than the one established in public discourse. More importantly, the interviews show that new social divisions emerge within the migration process, which need to be read from a class perspective to make sense of them. The analysis aims to demonstrate how these symbolic and social boundaries contribute to produce normative prescriptions about the “proper” migrant. Deviant practices are marked with the inevitability of failure and a shared destiny of returning to Italy.

4.3.1. The arrival: any job and then what?

The analysis of the boundaries drawn to classify other migrants shows that co-national migrants do not view themselves as part of a coherent community, but rather construct a multiplicity of divisions, in which the others are differently put in relation to the own migrant experience according to the issue at stake, such as work, status, life conduct. In other words, relational partitioning principles emerge which are related to class and status of the migrants and of their relevant others. The relationship to mobility as an increasingly relevant income-generating resource is not a dualistic one, dividing people into those who move and who stay. Rather, the interviewees identify various modes of relating to the experience of mobility. In analogy with what Savage has stressed out regarding the use of emergent cultural capital (Savage 2015: 118), the interviews seem to suggest that the “*how*” of migration, i.e. the way how migrants relate to mobility, becomes increasingly differentiated and unequal along with expanding access to mobility. In other words, as more people have the possibility to move (because of the removal of formal barriers), the way *how* to move (the *savoir se mouvoir*, Tarrow 1992) also becomes the site of contestations. The ability of “discernment” toward mobility becomes crucial.

As several studies have demonstrated, spatial mobility of EU-citizens within the

European Union is not a guarantee for upward social mobility (King/Williams 2018.). Rather, migrants face many difficulties in finding jobs and ways to income to secure their livelihood. Using the metaphor by Giovanni, taking the exit does not mean entering an upright process of social mobility or automatically getting better jobs. In general, spatial mobility can also be connected to social immobility as well as downward mobility in relation to the situation of origin.

Nonetheless, moving to a more cosmopolitan and globalized city than the place of origin entails the possibility to access previously unreachable social networks, learning paths and the ability to inhabit multicultural and diverse social environments. Some interviewees pointed to aspects of migration not directly linked to the provision of income, but still fundamental to enable the self to develop a new approach to resources. These aspects were highlighted by stressing differences both with their friends in Italy and with other movers.

M: Ehm, the ones who stayed, in the end, what they do, it is not that different from what I do, that is working in tourism, as a waiter, etc. But there you have no way out, you know, that air intake which gives you, I don't know, something like "I am studying what I like", "I am meeting nice people", "I am in a new environment", well what I tell myself to convince myself that, well, everything is going well. Yes, that which pushes me, that anyway pushes you to do something out of your life. There I see much depression, from the outside perspective, of course. (...) And instead, others who moved and maybe are leading the same shitty life, but maybe they are freelancing in PARIS, I mean! [laughs]
[Marco]

Marco's quote points to the resourcefulness of the place of destination, which is not a strictly economic one. He develops this argument by mobilizing psychological well-being as a key factor for enabling social change. He can accept doing "shitty" jobs, because the context surrounding him provides him with meaningful experiences. In his words, this makes the difference, at his stage of life, between staying in Italy and moving abroad. While many studies have focused on processes of de-skilling which affect migrants, recent work has highlighted that migrants with educational degrees might accept low-skilled jobs in the place of destination with the perspective of quitting them as far as they have acquired enough social and cultural capital, thereby following a path of any job-better job-dream job. (Parutis 2010). The categories developed by Eade of "searchers" and "explorers" identify the ability of waiting for betterment, by filling time with experiences, expanding the own social life into the new place,

and acquiring fundamental skills such as the local language (Eade 2007). A “shitty” job can be suited to finance their everyday life without requiring much attachment nor loyalty, but still enabling to use the time freed from labor to explore the social fabric of the city.

Michela is a 35-years old woman from Naples. She has a degree in history of art, has studied for long time theatre and stems from an upper-middle class family. She came to Berlin to work as an intern in an art gallery run by friends she knows from Naples but has since then left the art business and is now working in a small family-run café in Wedding. In the interview she praises her work and describe her migration experiences as a process of liberation and of self-realization. She explains the practice of waiting and letting time play its role, by refusing a view of migration as an instrumental move to get a better job.

M: You also need to be able to work on yourself, in my opinion, simultaneously, because otherwise, I mean, if you come here only to work, you won't get much back. If you, how to say it, if you keep living your life with the same parameters as you were living it before, you also won't get much back. Instead, your occupational, professional path must be backed by a personal path, your path, because otherwise, in my opinion, you won't reach a lot. Since I have started this thing with myself, I have also started reaching more, you have, well, to change a bit, you must adapt, be more flexible, more fluid, otherwise you'll keep staying like a wall, a rigid wall. [Michela]

Michela seems to refuse migration as an instrumental strategy for accumulating capital and resources. In the quote, she rejects migratory projects “restricted” to finding a job and saving money, i.e. the type of migrants identified by Eade as storks or hamsters. Here, again, we can see a type of boundary-work along class differences. These are made explicit here as different motivations to migrate as well as a different approach to the context of destination. Michela refuses to act instrumentally and aim straightforwardly to the accumulation of resources, but at the same time she does so because she expects long-term benefits by investing time and energy in working on herself. Waiting, here, becomes a form of renewing the self before material gains are ripe to be collected. While from a strictly socio-economic perspective Michela is experiencing a similar situation of labor relations and exploitation than the “stay-ers” we read about in the last section, the two experiences are told in strikingly different terms.

M: Time is a fundamental factor ... you must give yourself the time to make things settle down [sedimentare, orig.], let them spill out, if you have less time, there will be less

chance to let this happen.

S: Are you referring to work?

M: I am referring to all! I mean, I feel I am changing in such a fast way, well, maybe if I had come back to Italy one year ago ... and instead, in the last year I have learned so many things, I put myself to test on so many other things, yes you must give yourself the time to put yourself to test. [Michela]

Michela mobilizes a notion of time which entails progress and incrementing the ability to recognize the right opportunity: time must be used to construct a new self, a flexible and fluid self, i.e. a mobile self. Migration can be read through her words as a sort of *Bildungsroman*, in which the wanderer grows up and becomes more conscious about the own situation and about the goals s/he can reach. Again, economic discourses seem to hide behind the narratives of maturing and opening the self. Non-instrumentality does not replace a mentality of aiming to betterment, but rather is considered as the appropriate approach to achieve goals. Of course, both quotes are expressed by positions of relative advantage, as both Michela and Marco have families behind their backs.

Migrants might differ in their ability of waiting and learning, according to their safety nets (the possibility of doing work for free because of economic support by the parents, for instance) and to their capacity to enter social networks via habitus. Thus, the ability to dwell low-income positions has to do with the amount of accumulated resources to be tapped. In other cases, working in a low-income and low-skilled job could be valued not only as a way to sustain financially the personal path, but also because it represents an accessible bridge to get in contact with status groups which migrants aspire to belong to. Giulia is a young woman coming from a provincial town in Tuscany. Her passion is photography (she also studied art in Rome), but since she arrived in Berlin, she didn't really manage to apply herself in training or working in the field. In the meanwhile, she has done many jobs in the city, and is now working as a waitress in a fancy café in the central district of Mitte.

G: Well, and I am convinced that in life, it is good for one to do all sorts of experience, I mean, I don't regret having worked as a cleaner, as a dog-sitter, I mean it all counts as experience. With different type of people, the most different people! This café allowed me to know a lot of people! Famous people, musicians, writers, photographs... [Giulia 323-326]

As she states later, Giulia would like to learn German, improve her situation and try to find an occupation in the artistic sphere. Still, she feels that she does not have the resources and competencies to achieve this yet. At the time of the interview, she talks about having to spend much time to find a new room, as she already dwelled in many different places in almost all districts of Berlin but could never succeed securing a home with an indeterminate contract. While she is occupied in dealing with these issues, such as finding a place and looking for a good German school, working at the café helps her to feel that despite everything she is on the right way. At the café, she meets artists and famous people, she engages in jokes with them. From these interactions she gets a sense of being able to fulfil her expectations.

G: Some time ago I met a guy here, because he had headphones I liked very much, I chatted him up. And the guy is now like super-famous, eeh, he's a dj, he plays everywhere, he played at Berghain, at Panorama, he played in Tel Aviv, and Milan and in America, do you understand? I mean. (...)

G: A lot of people comes here, and they look like normal people, but actually they are all ... important people! A woman, a blond one, was sitting here a couple of hours ago, next time I'm gonna chase her, she works at [famous Berlin gallery]. ... She's often here, she smiles at me! Before I did a joke, she was the only one laughing, oooh! [Giulia]

Movers who are doing jobs which correspond to their qualifications have usually pursued a career made of long working hours and made it through several barriers, such as learning the German language and overcoming cultural barriers. In the interviews, they stressed that working in another field and being de-skilled, would represent a failure of the migration project. Boundaries are drawn on the process of valuation that they and other migrants are exposed to once they enter labor relationships.

R: Here I have friends with a degree, who end up working as waiters. Which, for god's sake, it's ok, there is nothing bad in it, but if your goal was another one, and after three years you are still there doing the same thing, that means either that you didn't pursue that goal, or that you didn't achieve it. [Raffaella]

Raffaella is 33, she lives in a single flat in the calm and gentrified district of Prenzlauer Berg and works as a pharmacist in a pharmacy close to Kottbusser Tor, a central square known for being a node of drug dealing, night life and political protests. During the interviews, she often refers to other Italian migrants living in Berlin, mobilizing ideas of failing

work ethics and lacking availability to integrate. Moreover, she directly addresses other movers who haven't managed to find a job for which they studied for. She uses a language of achievements, plans and goals, thereby implicating the concept of failure and of life as a path based on hoarding resources to secure the future.

R: Because here in Berlin, in the end, you survive. I mean, it's possible to get by, I mean, you mess around, get to the age of 28, 25, 30, then you are 40, and you like your life, you like the environment here, but afterwards, you don't have anything, anymore, neither here, nor there [in Italy] what will you be thinking with 50? [Raffaella]

Raffaella's point of view on long-term de-skilling as a failure is shared by many other interviewees.

L: This is a problem, because maybe they studied something else. I am a translator, I didn't study biology to end up then translating instructions of who-knows-what, to fall back on that. This is important because my bosses recognize that translating is not an easy task. Ehm, I like doing what I do, I do it with passion and I also think I can do it well. I am an extremely flexible person, and I was lucky, for sure. S: What do you mean by flexible?

L: I didn't have to be a translator at any cost, during the whole first summer in Berlin, I worked as a waiter. [Lorenzo]

Lorenzo, who graduated in a specialized university for translators and interpreters, is working in Berlin as a translator, a job which provides him with gratification and money and makes him feel lucky. Many of his closest friends are waiters in the gastronomy branch or work occasionally as drug dealers within the clubbing scene to chip into the money they get from their parents. Lorenzo's achievements, in his own view, are connected to his flexibility and readiness to accept low-skilled jobs after the arrival in Berlin. Here again, we witness how the transition any job – better job – dream job works for some and not for others. For Lorenzo, these different conditions are due to the tendency of his friends to be satisfied with their precarious situations in exchange for the possibility to live in the city of Berlin, whose social inequalities seem to be not visible to the eyes of young newcomers.

L: And some people are satisfied with that to the point that they really don't do anything else, because that's enough for them, enough. This is the city in which there are no social classifications, where the worker lives together with the business man, you under-

stand? in the same building. [Lorenzo]

As Giulia told about the social environment of the bar where she works, also Lorenzo mobilizes an idea of social mixing and classlessness which enables contact between different status groups, and lower shame and unease towards the fact that expectations might not be met in a short time.

4.3.2. Boundaries on how to move: developing reflexivity in migration

Migrants often talked about their migrant peers with a sort of analogous but negative narrative to the stayers, thereby constructing a category of movers marked by unconsciousness about the own mobility. The ability to reflect about the own migration decision and path, to become conscious of the own chances on foreign labor markets as well as about what the role of language is and how to deal with bureaucracy, are all ways to secure the own future and settlement. In other words, the issue of consciousness and reflexivity was raised by many interviewees, especially those who have settled and consider themselves to have achieved a certain stability in Berlin.

Martina is working as a researcher at a Berliner university. During the interview, she reminds her experience as a scrutineer at the Italian embassy during the last European political elections, when she had the chance to approach a large number of Italian citizens living in Berlin. The voters (only people registered in AIRE have the right to do so) were disparately different according to age, duration of stay in Berlin, profession.

M: They were all passing through the Embassy. So, there was the post-war wave, people who maybe had never voted, because you could see these old people tearing up at the vote. Then yes, the wave from the 1970es, all those manual workers who had been recruited. And the wave from the end of the 1980es, beginning of 1990es, the fall of the wall, who were according to me mostly artists, creatives, for the city, yes. And now this last wave, from the 2000s, which, well, since the crisis, you could really see it from their papers. [Martina]

During this occasion, Martina had the possibility to get an insight into the various waves of migration from Italy, as well as the different motivations and modes of mobility which drove people to the city over the past decades. She recognizes very easily the recent pattern of migration, which she calls as the “desperate” ones, those who moved in the aftermath of the crisis.

M: And then, well, it was full of young people, people of our age, who have arrived desperately, and so on. Yes, many people, I don't know, I happened to come to Germany, by chance, some other people did it a bit in a more conscious way, but also unconscious, because they came to Berlin, because it was cool to do so, without understanding that this is actually not the city with the jobs. It's maybe the most beautiful city, but it doesn't have jobs. [Martina]

Among the many voters, Martina recognizes her peers, young migrants who arrived in Berlin in the same years as she did. However, she notices great differences: she did not come to Berlin because of Berlin, she came to the city to take a highly-skilled job and continue her academic career in a well-established research institute. From her viewpoint, other migrants came to Berlin out of desperation, not knowing what they were going to face, deceived by wrong ideals. The moment of acknowledgement of the distance between expectations and reality produces the failure of predictions, triggers desperation.

According to several interviewees, Berlin appears to the youngsters willing to move as something else than what it is. Indeed, the city is often depicted as having now the global reputation of "the place to be" (Griffiths/Maile 2014). While most migrants referred to a long list of positive elements regarding Berlin and their choice to move here (see later the chapter on Berlin), many were dismissive about the hype which Berlin has gained among youngsters. They tended to regard it as "fashion", thereby giving to the concept a negative connotation, to be opposed by the idea of moving to Berlin "by chance", and "before" the hype would start (see Giulia), neglecting of course that Berlin has been attracting young people because of its prolific ground for counter-cultures and "alternative" forms of life at least since the past four decades.

S: When you arrived here, were you aware about this Berlin hype, had you already heard about it?

R: Noo, no. I really stumbled on it, I told you, I don't follow fashions! [Raffaella]

Young migrants in Berlin happen to engage in de-valuation processes regarding other co-national migrants living in Berlin who share many of their socio-demographic characteristics, as well as life conduct and style. Such discourse was often mobilized regarding again to work condition and competition on the labor market.

R: Well, it depends, I suggest moving to Berlin to those who are willing to learn. To

the one who is saying “I want to come to Berlin to become an artist”, I am answering “well, you better think again about this, don’t you?”. Because, I know about people, about many flies who have splattered against the window! A friend of my sister has studied art history, and she told me “I am coming to Berlin, the city has 70 museums!”, and me answering “honey, these 70 museums are not going to wait for you! You can barely speak four words in German, you barely speak English, you should strengthen your bases first if you want to come here and work in a museum!” [Raffaella]

Raffaella’s words are characterized by a certain disenchantment and cynicism: she expresses contempt towards the “fooled” aspiring migrants who are not able to predict the harshness of competition on a labor market filled by young labor force aiming at self-realization. Raffaella’s words are hard and let emerge a modality of the self which I will provisionally call the “hardened self”, following the work of Silva (2013), who developed the concept, however, in relation to the US-American working-class youth. Access to the labor market, an everyday life marked by hard work, and a constant process of learning and acquiring skills, seem to produce a hardened subject, inclined toward derision of the unconscious and innocent (the young girl who has the dream of working in a museum in Berlin, perceived as the European creative core). Here, however, Raffaella speaks from a non-working-class position, rather from the position of the “proper migrant”, the integrated migrant, successfully embedded within the local labor market, able to master the local language and to reflect on the own social position in the new context.

Reflexivity about the migration process, the right information about the place of destination, are all keys to using mobility in the proper way, in the successful way. This goes along with taking the own life in the hands, and not “delegating” to others, as Berta suggests about mastering the German language.

R: Because if you come here to raise money, that’s fine for me, but thereafter for me it is a problem if you come here and cannot speak German. [Raffaella]

Elisa is 28, she gets financial support from her parents and since she has moved to Berlin, she has spent many efforts and time in learning German, for which she recently reached the C1 proficiency level. However, she is still the target of jokes by her German colleagues who consider the way how she writes emails “funny”. Nonetheless, during the interview, she repeats many times how lucky she is: her family is a wealthy one, with both high economic and cultural capital, her siblings have not left the parental nest (so that she does not have to care

for her parents) and she feels quite free to develop her passion for theatre without having to worry for her own economic sustainment. While she reflects about her own privileged class position, she talks about the efforts to learn German as “her” individual achievement. When she draws boundaries towards her migrant peers, the line is drawn upon those who are struggling with learning German, and those who are not engaged in this struggle. She considers them as “delegating” their own integration to others, as not taking into their hands their own situation. Again, an issue of consciousness and of reflexivity is mobilized to divide the proper and the non-proper migrants, the “right” and the “wrong” modus of migrating.

E: For me it can't be, I mean, you cannot live in a place without even trying to understand, and above all you cannot delegate your comprehension of the world to third persons, I mean, to Mitte?! [an Italian online magazine whose reader target are Italians living in Berlin] [Elisa]

In her view, the ability of being able to process information about Berlin by oneself depends on the knowledge of German language as well as on the capacity to access the “right” knowledge via the “right” social networks. According to Elisa, the online media produced by and for the “Italian community” in Berlin, are rather to be avoided. They were mentioned by many interviewees, who consider them as aligned to the dominant and standardized discourses about Berlin. Therefore, they were criticized for leading migrants to take inappropriate decisions, and to relate to mobility to Berlin in a privileged way, without considering the own condition and the own resources. They appear to the “reflexive” migrants as propagating an idea of migration which is the mobility of the privileged (thereby stressing only the positive experiences), thus offering to the less privileged a trap, an illusion.

M: That's why I cannot read BerlinCacioePepe²¹ anymore, because they always publish things like: “Berlin is beautiful! Oh, there is no better place in the world, much better than Rome!” and all that blablabla!

These guys are creating a devastating imaginary regarding what happens in Berlin. ... I mean, people really think that here you can find Eldorado here! [Martina]

Both Elisa and Martina attack the imaginary produced by these media, thereby denying the reality of migration as a frictionless move between cities and across linguistic and cultural

²¹An online magazine in Italian language which explicitly targets the community of Italian-speaking migrants in Berlin.

barriers, as well as the idea that Berlin is the right place to host such type of mobility. Even the migrants with quite privileged backgrounds and working conditions, such as Elisa and Martina, reported about having faced discriminations, having encountered difficulties and having gone through hard moments, in which the decision about where to live was constantly under challenge (see interview with Paola later on). This seems to suggest that such fluid and frictionless subject does not find correspondence with the process of construction of the selves of young migrants. Those communication managers of the Italian community are seen to contribute to publicly establish narratives about new mobilities which have the power to influence migratory trajectories of young people, in particular of those who have few alternatives to get information in a less mediated way.

4.3.3. Getting burned: the vortex of hedonism and the failure of migration

Wrong expectations about what the own mobility might entail impact dramatically the life of migrants, which eventually might end up in their return to the country of origin, often framed by the migrants themselves as the failure of the migration project. The period which spans from the physical arrival to the return is experienced by many interviewees as a trial, a way of challenging the own ability to adapt, to mold themselves to the context as to acquire the resources which are necessary for staying in the first place.

Alessio has lived in Berlin for four years: he found work in several startups, but after having been fired several times, he is thinking about taking unemployment benefits and starting learning German more seriously. He comes from a small village in Northern Italy, close to the Swiss border. Some friends he knows from his place of origin have followed his migratory path. However, as he admits with a certain melancholy, they are all slowly going back to Italy.

S: Why is it like that?

A: Because, because probably they had wrong expectations regarding the city, regarding Berlin, regarding living abroad, they have no familiarity with the language, and probably they are also worried about their future, about being too far away from home. Some are getting wasted, some are doing no good.

S: What do you mean by wasted?

A: I mean thaaaat they are doing a lot of party, let's say. So, I wish that some of them

can go back home and stay a bit safer there.

S: So, you would say that Berlin is a dangerous city?

A: Well yes, in my opinion it is quite easy to get lost, to pay no mind to the fact that you're taking really bad habits, in a regular and fast way.

S: Mmh, you mean going to dance in the clubs in the weekend, staying awake all the weekend?

A: Yes, exactly, that's what I mean. [Alessio]

Excessive hedonism came into play very often during the interviews. The clubbing culture, one of the characteristics of the city which has made it famous on a global level (Bader/Scharemborg 2010), plays a relevant role for the life of young newcomers. While not all of them are actively and practically involved in club life, almost all the interviewees referred to clubbing as a significant part of the city and the social life they live in, and positioned themselves towards it, such as Carla did.

S: What about going out, where do you go out in Berlin, how do you live the city?

C: Mmh, well we are not the classical Italians who come here to Berlin for the night life. We live a quite quiet life. [Carla]

Leisure activities are considered as constitutive features of status groups, accessed via consumption and embedded as fundamental elements into the social construction of distinctive "life styles" (Featherstone 2007). Along Bourdieu, the shift from a bourgeois life conduct based on "abstinence, sobriety, saving and calculation" has been long substituted by a "hedonistic morality of consumption, based on credit, spending and enjoyment" (Bourdieu 1984: 310). In other words, an economy based on mass consumption demands individuals to increasingly spend to sustain the regime of accumulation and to discipline their patterns of consumption as much as their capacity of production. Processes of subjectification occur both in the sphere of production and consumption: accordingly, boundary-work involves increasingly the way how people spend their money and their "life-style".

While research has often contrasted asceticism and hedonism as two opposing sets of values corresponding to different social locations (Savage et al. 2005), recent work has stressed

that in contemporary Western culture, rather than choosing between them, the strategy of dominant groups consists in experiencing the “right” balance of the two. Again, it is not the “what”, the object of consumption, which displays prestige and symbolic capital, but rather the “how”, the modus of consumption (Savage 2015). Sassatelli has defined this search for balance as “tamed hedonism” (2001), following Featherstone who already wrote about “calculating hedonism”, a concept previously developed by Jacobi (1980). Within this life conduct, the boundary is not drawn between those “who party” and those who lead a “quiet life”. Rather, people are distinguished as and distinguish the others between those who are able to manage engagement in clubbing in a “moderate” way, i.e. those who are able to control their need for leisure and get rewards of various type from it (emotional, social but also economic), and those who get dominated by it, and by engaging in an excessive consumption of club life, drugs, unhealthy activities, put into serious danger their work life, their mental stability, and eventually their migration project.

A: Yes, yes, yes. No problems, I can go, but I do not go like, like some colleagues of mine, who have arrived in Berlin since not so long, and they go every Saturday evening to Berghain. Well, in my opinion, they are going to hate Berlin in one year, like, they won't stand it anymore.

S: Why do you think so?

A: Well, a girl, from Sicily, she has just arrived, started quite straightforward with Berlin, “it's beautiful!” [he quotes the girl] She arrived during summer, and, well, yes, I mean, *blablabla* [I interpreted this as an allusion to drug consume], and she is now fixed to Berghain [orig. “fissa” = permanently located, irremovable, stuck, continuously attending something], and her passion for Berlin, I mean, I see that she is really...

S: Yes?

A: Yes, because in my opinion she has done everything, everything all together, really, got burned, really [he laughs, I laugh]. So, for me, well, I don't really see her staying in Berlin for a long time.

S: Ok.

A: And I see many people who get tired of Berlin in this way. Then, there are also of course those who, everyone has it in its own way, you know, like the way how I ["I" stressed out] live it, I stay in a, a situation like, I enjoy always everything, a lot, but I never exaggerate, so, I mean I could do like this forever! [he laughs, I laugh]. [Alberto]

According to the interview material, it seems that the specific type of urban leisure activity which is clubbing has a constitutive role in producing social divisions among the communities of young migrants living in Berlin, in a more decisive way than simply enabling display of taste. Rather than merely representing the outcome of inequalities, expressed via the development of competing tastes and the classification of one pattern of taste as inferior, clubbing appears to exceed the definition of "leisure activity". It becomes a principle of life, upon which to base the categorization of a whole group of young people, whose total social life navigates around the prolongation of the weekend, thereby reconfiguring work time and relocating it from the core of everyday life organization to a residual part of it.

E: If I had to go to television and answer, in an interview, if someone asked me "tell me about Berlin", you know, on prime time, those programs who families and grannies look at, right? You know this imaginary of Germany, they all work a lot, they all are precise, I would say to them "they are all on drugs!".

S: [I laugh] Both Germans and Italians living here?

E: ALL, in this city all people are on drugs! Only you have here a system which enables you to manage it in a better way ... here they manage to have that timetable, that ordered working plan, in which you also have the disordered weekend. They have this outlet, this *up and down* [sic], from Monday to Friday I work like a dog, but on Friday night don't break my balls. Then, on Monday you go back, and don't neither need to look at your face. I mean, they know this! They know this, and it's tolerated. So, they have no awe, no frustration. [Emanuele]

Work ethics, in this sense, gets also reconfigured, with the praise of hard work getting challenged, but not completely dismissed. More precisely, it gets reconfigured in a way which exceeds the boundaries of the work place and enters the sphere of reproduction, of "free" time, and of sociality out of production. Ethics of efficiency and productivity are perceived to enter the sphere of leisure and "free" time. Again, the narrative about the hedonistic vortex becomes a tool to re-define common discourses about the city of Berlin and stereotypes diffused

in Italy about the Germans as a people.

The city seems to produce winners and losers; the latter are those who appear to belong to the fate of destiny of the returners, the burned ones. Some interviewees mobilized again the metaphor of a vortex, of centripetal movement, when talking about clubbing life style as a trap. During a focus group conducted in a bar in the Schiller Kiez, a hip neighborhood of the district of Neukölln, two of the participants, friends, males aged 30 and 32 years, engaged in a well-tuned conversation about their friends and peers who have remained stuck into the vortex of clubbing.

E: That class of Italians, there is plenty of them, Italians, Spaniards, who come to Berlin for the music and for the parties, and

G: And they get burned.

E: They get burned! After 6 months, they get burned, they MUST go back home!

S: What do you mean by burned?

E: Because this is a city which can very easily sucks you into this vortex made of music and parties, because every fucking day there is something to do, there is a DEVASTATING quantity of drugs passing through it.

G: There WAS [so much drug], I am not sure if there still is.

E: I think you say so because we have distanced ourselves from it!

G: Yes, this is true, it's ourselves who moved away from it.

S: Why do you say that you moved away?

E: Yes, after a bit, after three and half years, you know where to go, you know what to do, but maybe you already did it, and then you say "ok, fine with that".

G: Yes, you have already done that, but above all, ordinary life [sic] comes in, the work routine.

E: The responsibility! [ironical].

G: So, you have that responsibility, which is that simple thing that you have to get up every morning, the responsibility towards work, and thus towards yourself.
[Emanuele, Giacomo]

A metaphor is just a metaphor. However, it is striking how similar metaphors have been mobilized in describing the situation of both the stayers and the movers. An idea of life as a linear process of working on the self, and of linearly expanding projects, seems to be common among the interviewed migrants.

L: Because, anyway, Berlin allows you to do a lot, really a lot, and to be free you know. Aand, my vision is that if you, if you get carried away, and maybe you have no linear vision of what you wanna do, you really lose yourself in this city. [Lorenzo]

The search for linearity might be related to the so-called “de-standardization” of life course for young people, who are faced for the first time in late capitalism with the collapse of institutionalized transitions from youth to adulthood via a socially recognizable path such as studying – entering the labor market – marriage – founding a new household (Walther 2006). Thus, getting embedded into looping circuits, into a maelstrom, is seen as a real danger in the midst of navigating with no radars. As the interviewees mentioned, entering the vortex can be very easy for newcomers in Berlin willing to make new experiences. It does not require strong decision-making, as the infrastructure of arrival for these young migrants is mainly based on spending leisure time together, especially when there is still no job to wake up for every morning. However, getting out of the vortex is much more difficult, and oft requires clear-cut decisions, through which migrants regiment themselves, developing rationalities which, more than aiming at maximizing advantage and benefit, rather point to finding a balance upon which new life can be constructed.

A: I also did it for SOME time, but now I am really, I am not doing it anymore since some months, I don't go dancing any more. I smoked joints, now I am not interested neither in smoking joints. I realized that if I don't quit, if I don't quit even only with smoking joints, I won't be able to conclude anything good. I see, I really saw it as a personal problem, and I decided to cut. (...) These are things I am really setting up for myself (...) I really saw it [smoking joints] as a problem for myself, of not having time, of not being productive enough. (...) And it was slowing me down, too much, above all be-

cause, well, I consider myself to be quite brilliant, and I have noticed that when I smoke all that brilliance [fades away], I don't like it. [Alessio]

Giulia also tells a similar story of conversion from clubbing as life conduct, using thereby a language of "growing up" and becoming an adult.

G: I got distracted! I was a teenager! What I was telling you before, for two years I have played the teenager, I woke up in my third year [in Berlin], and I am like "I am 26 and I don't know at all what I should do in my life!" ... Berlin is the city of perdition, stop. I mean, if you are mentally ok, well, it's fine. If you are strong. If you are a bit weak, it's less fine. Because it is within everyone's reach ... You can steal everything, small thefts, drugs everywhere. You go dancing in a place, someone will ask you "do you want to do a line?" "alright!", another friend will join and ask, "do you wanna another one?" "alright!". And you do three lines like that, do you understand? You enter, you enter the circuit. Well, then it depends on, I saw many people I know, who had to go back, because they were conducting a life made of taking ketamine and sleeping. ... And Berlin has helped me to understand that, no matter how I might feel incompetent, in reality I am much more adult than the ones I have lived together with. [Giulia]

Waking up one day and realizing that the past months or years mean nothing, no accumulation, nothing to hold upon, no securing. Awakening from a trip, awakening to real life, becoming adult. First phase in Berlin as the hole into which throwing your teenage. Entering a phase of *metanoia* appears as the only way to exit the vortex, a complete refusal of the previous habits and systems of value followed, the praise of work and of maximization of the self in order to conquer stability and predictability.



Figure 4: Navigating in radar-less time (<https://thornews.com/2013/01/15/moskstraumen-maelstrom-where-captain-nemo-and-the-nautilus-disappeared/>, last accessed: 05.01.2019).

5. Constructing mobile selves

M: I have always been one who moved a lot, I have an independent character, so they [her parents] would expect it [that she would move abroad], let's say!
[Martina]

S: Ok, and what about you, have you ever thought you wanted to move away?

A: Yes, I mean I always loved to go around. I have always been quite independent, for my character. So, when the opportunity came to go to Padova [the city where she studied] I took it, immediately. [Alessandra]

G: But if tomorrow I want to move away, I am free to do it. ... As you might have understood, I am very free, independent. [Giovanni]

The previous chapter has illustrated how migrants draw lines between them and relevant others; the analysis focused on the foundation of such boundaries. Mobility appeared to be the key-resource which makes the difference, and which lets differences emerge in boundaries and practices. In this chapter, I will inductively start by disclosing some narratives of mobility deployed by migrants when describing themselves. As the quotes at the beginning show, the imaginary produced by such narratives is that spatial mobility is inherently linked to freedom, independence, and connected to the possibility of actively shaping of the own destiny. The sentence "I have always been an independent person" recurred many times in the words of the interviewees. It seems as if their life could not end up but in moving away.

G: Ehm, yes, I was already thinking about not staying in Naples, but in the meanwhile I had anyway started to work there, and I started seeing how that situation was, what kind of bad offers they had for me, and I didn't want to stay in Naples, earn few money, and stay at home with my parents. I said "well, I'm gonna move out to get my independence". And among the various options, I chose Berlin. [Giorgia]

While sentiments of "elective belonging" to the city were often mobilized (Savage et al. 2005), the place of arrival appeared less important than the enactment of moving as such.

While most of the them declared to be very satisfied with Berlin as an arrival place, many were ready to declare that, if they could decide, they would not stay in the city “forever”. Freedom and seeking independence seemed potentially linked to endless spatial mobility. Moreover, the life conduct of mobility was also projected into the past. The interviewees often spoke about their act of migration as a decision they were longing to since much time. In many cases, a sense of “calling”, a “vocation” to move is present in their narratives. Spatial mobility perceived as the only suitable path to achieve independence.

C: I think, I have always had this very banal idea, that we are a family of migrants, in relation to the historical moment and to chances, meaning that my grandfather from my father’s side ... he was born in '33, so at the beginning of the 1950es, well he was already 15, 16 years old, he took his stuff like that, and moved from Catania to Palermo, more precisely from the Sicilian backcountry to Palermo [city in Sicily], I mean, it was SOME-THING! My father is from Palermo, with 24 he came to Florence. Me, from Florence, I came to Berlin, I mean, in proportion with the historical moment, of course, I mean, possibilities, the world getting bigger, globalization, Easyjet. Thus, I think that there is this thing in my family, that of not being attached to a place. [Caterina]

“Nothing is more misleading than the illusion created by hindsight in which all the traces of a life, such as the work of an artists or the events at a biography, appear as the realization of an essence that seems to pre-exist them” (Bourdieu 1990: 55). In the explanation of the concept of habitus in “The Logic of Practice”, Bourdieu tackles the relationship between past, present and future, as linked by habitus. The social conditions of the past generated habitus, which nonetheless inevitably must be implemented under the social conditions of the present. Past or present alone, therefore, are not sufficient to explain how individual and shared fates of destiny develop over time at the nexus of structural and individual agency. The work of social scientists, then, is that of “performing the interrelationship of these two states of the social worlds” (Bourdieu ebd.: 56). In this section, I will try to relate the narratives of independence and free mobility to the conditions which enabled their generation, meaning the mechanisms of social reproduction which are expressed in the formation of the mobile habitus.

Can mobility be understood as a principle underlying the formation of a life conduct, a calling to move, specific to the constraints and opportunities of contemporary capitalism? What kind of asceticism permeates mobile contemporary life? The analysis will try to explore how values are embedded into the everyday life by means of a calling to mobility which, be-

cause of being perceived as natural, is to be understood as even more socially co-created and sustained.

As the analysis will show, such narratives of freedom and independence are articulated in different ways. More specifically, they are often constructed as either in continuity with the past, like a natural and frictionless unrolling of biographies, or marked by rupture, by deviation from the norm and articulation of an individual way to face future. How and why are they located within the axis whose poles are continuity and rupture in social reproduction? And how do they reinforce or rather re-configure existing inequalities? Such questions will be tackled by mobilizing both the past and present temporalities invoked by the migrants.

Families of origin play a decisive role for the development of a mobile habitus. However, there are no clear-cut distinctions between upper and lower-class families, as they might both push their children out of the parental home and into globalized circuits of social capital, information, and labor valorization. Rather, distinctions emerge once again about the *how* of mobility, the *how-to-move*, which is also connected to the different types of support to mobility provided by family and social networks. Moreover, ideas of freedom, independence and autonomy will be investigated in their dialectic with the process of migration and of capitalist subjectification of migrants. These seem to embed themselves into dynamics which set their resources and capitals free from national bonds, via spatial mobility within the EU regime of free mobility. This process enables them to perceive themselves often for the first time as economic and social subjects, who can individually decide about their future. They might not be able to determine their location within labor markets, but they can determine their location in space, the narrative suggests. But once they are set free or set themselves free from certain bonds and mechanisms, into which new mechanisms and bonds are they integrated, either if they recognize this or not? Of which sorts of gears have they become the irreplaceable oil?

E: I had understood that the access to the work world in Rome was not that, probably, the right for me, so I was supporting myself with shitty jobs, I was riding my Vespa through the city to distribute flyers for a club, ... I have been a pizza boy for three days, because I really felt the need.

S: Were you paying much [for rent]? E: I paid a lot, that year I was paying really a lot ... 600 euro per month. I was fed up with asking my parents for money, not being independent, therefore some months before moving, I started saying “ok, now you have to leave because, here, it is not working any more” [orig. “funziona”]. [Emanuele]

The urban scale plays a role, as moving to a relatively cheaper city enables them for instance to settle in central parts of the city, thereby getting access to a “middle-class” way of consuming the city, from which they were otherwise excluded in the cities they were leaving before. Also, they might have it easier to enter relatively exclusive transnational circuits of cultural capital within the city, because of their spatial concentration enabled by relatively inclusive gentrification. In other words, the self is set free through migration. Through migration, the migrants acquire the status of “persona”, they enter a process of co-determination of the self, while in Italy they perceived to be totally other-directed. By embodying mobile life conduct, they seem to arm themselves with the tools to keep pace with the capitalist rhythm of peaks and bursts (Cairns et al. 2017). As I will show, via migrating they feel they can “construct” their self in a more autonomous way. Developing a life conduct in which mobility is praised and practiced as a way of life, however, is not an individual fact. In the next paragraph I will try to relate it to the families of origin of the interviewees.

5.1. Mobility as Continuity: Mobile Habitus and the Cultivation of Cosmopolitanism



Figure 6: Previous mobility of respondents of the web survey.

The interviewees belong to the group of frequently moving Italian young people. The table below shows the number of places where participants in the survey, including the interviewees, already lived before moving to Berlin. Among 154 participants in the survey, 118 had already moved to at least another city before Berlin and stayed there for almost three

months. Moreover, around 52% of these movers had already stayed abroad, either in Germany or in other countries. For most of the interviewees, the move to Berlin was not the first one (for only 21%), most of them had already lived in many cities before it.

Research has investigated on how within a context of increasing globalization of markets, in particular labor markets, we witness a diversification of the individual abilities to develop an “awareness of the current global socio-cultural condition” as well as an open “mode of orientation to the world”, and to relate to internationalization of education as a social reproduction strategy (Weenink 2008). Cosmopolitanism is the concept often adopted to relate to these dynamics (Hannerz 2000, Beck/Sznajders 2006); since the 1990es, it has become the focus of attention of social scientists along with a widespread production of research on the decline of nation states, the rise of the mobility turn, and in general with globalization becoming a crucial element for analyses of contemporary social life.

Cosmopolitanism has been tackled from various angles, including the normative one, according to which the development of abilities to interact with diversity is a desirable phenomenon, as it helps countering racism and nationalism (Hannerz 2000; Beck/Sznajder 2006; Mewes/Mau 2013). At the same time, the capacity to “stand outside one’s own national frame of reference” is not only an “important cultural marker” (Priour/Savage 2013), but also a key-resource in the process of valorization of the own labor force beyond national labor markets. In other words, cosmopolitanism is also a “new source of power in the age of globalization” (Igarashi/Saito 2014). Understood broadly as “the intellectual and aesthetic stance of openness toward divergent cultural experiences, as well as the personal ability to make one’s way into other cultures” (Hannerz 1990: 239, cit. in Igarashi/Saito 2014), it constitutes an unequally distributed resource. The normative stance to cosmopolitanism, therefore, in order to maintain its intents, cannot escape accounting also for the economic value of cosmopolitanism, and is finally required to be radically egalitarian not only in regard to redistribution of ethics but also of material resources connected to the relationship to mobility as an income-generating resource.

Weenink (2008) has elaborated on the concept of “cosmopolitan capital”, grounded on a Bourdieusian understanding of power and inequalities. Thus, cosmopolitan capital is a “source of social power, and therefore a form of social and cultural capital” (ibid.: 1092). This form of capital can be accumulated in several ways: from living abroad to visiting and hosting friends from different nationalities and attending international meetings, from learning foreign

languages to accessing information produced or spread via international circuits of knowledge (of course with internet playing now a leading role in such diffusion) (ebd.). Here, however, I am also interested in investigating how the development of a practical knowledge about “how to move” takes place. In other words, I am more interested in understanding if the familiarity with mobility and the propensity to develop cosmopolitan views has to do with strategies of social reproduction, which might be expressed through education located within the family and schooling institutions, as well as in other contexts of social life, such as friendships or work. How were the young interviewees structurally brought closer to the experience of migration?

M: I attended a [international] school, it was public, but newly founded, and in my class, I had one French girl, one Polish guy, it was all a mix, so I started speaking English as a child, because my friends would speak English ... Well, yes, I learned English, then I always travelled a lot, with my parents, I started German at the junior high school [scuole medie, Gesamtschule], and at the gymnasium. ... During the gymnasium my mother tried to send me almost every year, for two or three times at least, I went to a German school to study, for one month. [Marco]

One first example drawn from the interviews suggests that young people, such as Marco, might be pushed by parents to learn languages and travel since their early childhood. In a study conducted in Denmark and based on a survey and interviews with parents whose children attended an international school, Weenink identifies two types of cosmopolitan attitude among the parents, i.e. what he calls the “dedicated” and the “pragmatic” cosmopolitans (Weenink 2008). The former category is marked by teaching children to “look beyond borders”. Parents with this attitude usually travel a lot with their children, inculcate in them values of openness towards diversity, and explain them the world as “something to explore”.

A: My parents were putting me under stress to learn another language. (...) And in the end, I said “ok, I can’t stand you any more, I’ll do Erasmus!” (...) my parents always urged me, I have been lucky, they let me have a princess life until I wanted, I also travelled as much as I wanted (...) They haven’t studied at university, so they don’t have that feeling, you know, like we have, as we both come from university, but still they are very open, they have a very open mentality. [Alessandra]

Alessandra’s mobile lifestyle was supported also economically by her parents, who have both lower middle-class jobs, but low cultural capital. In her quote, she applies a classed per-

spective on her own parents, stressing out that they are “open”, notwithstanding the fact that they have not studied. Here, again, the ascription of cosmopolitan attitudes to education signals its preclusion for the uneducated, who are structurally prevented from developing cosmopolitanism. Thus, parents, who have been the source of material and emotional support for Alessandra, are recipients of positive evaluation and gratefulness, exactly for their being surprisingly open towards the Other. In other cases, economic support was not possible, but still education was oriented towards dedicated cosmopolitanism.

S: Earlier, you were telling me this thing that you always thought about living in at least five or six different cities, when did this idea come about?

L: Well, the idea is that I always loved travelling, and anyway my parents always instilled in me that thing “moving around is important, moving around is beautiful”, that’s it.

S: And did they also travel a lot?

L: They travelled a lot. They were anyway hippies [“figli dei fiori”, orig.] ... so I spent much time at demonstrations around the world, so yes I travelled a lot, mainly by car, so we would live with few money, we travelled with few money, we slept in the car, but we travelled a lot. [Leonardo]

Leonardo did not grow up in an upper and middle-class environment. He attended a vocational school in the periphery of Milan. Nonetheless, he was raised to develop an attitude of exploration of the world, which might have helped him to leave Milan for Lugano, then move to London, and then to Berlin. As we will see later, this anti-conformist education emerges very often in his biography, which has been shaped by a cultivation of dedicated cosmopolitanism and of refusal of institutional paths to education.

According to the categories developed by Weenink (2008), instead, pragmatic cosmopolitans push their children to acquire transnational skills, such as learning foreign languages and spending time abroad, but openly motivate their choices economically: they restrict cosmopolitanism to the acquisition of those resources which they think can easily be turned into economic advantage. Giulio has moved for the first time with 18 from a 30.000 inhabitant city in the North East of Italy to go to attend university in Venice. Since then, he has moved to the US for work and to Spain to study. In Berlin since 2010, he’s working as a SEO-manager for

a start-up in the gig-economy. He talks about his friends in Italy, who also moved abroad for a certain time, but then came back.

G: Most of them have stayed working in Italy, some are working for their families' companies, some for other companies, they stayed, maybe to stay with their Italian girl-friend.

S: Where do you think is the difference between you and them?

G: I think it is a matter of personality, that of wanting to live abroad, work abroad. And my friends, well, maybe they did a stage abroad, they did Erasmus, but they saw their future, their work future in Italy. While for me, it was abroad.

S: And could you imagine staying there?

G: I never considered this option, maybe, well I could come back, not saying I would never come back, it depends from the conditions, if the conditions are same there and here, I'd prefer to stay here. [Giulio]

The distinction drawn by Giulio seems to resonate Weenink's one: Giulio's friends appear to have been moved by a pragmatic approach, with the goal of coming back to work for the family's company (medium and small-sized family-based companies are a typical trait of the economic texture in the North-East of Italy). On the contrary, Giulio could not imagine going back to live in the small city. Both his work and his life-style (he lives with his girl-friend in a self-owned flat in a hip part of the city) seem to suggest that through mobility he acquired the status of a creative working in an emerging sector of economy, the frontier of valorization involving communication, knowledge and informatics, living in a cosmopolitan environment. His trajectory links an origin within a provincial entrepreneurial class with low cultural prestige and high economic capital to a present belonging to the contemporary urban middle-class status group. Giulio, grown up within strategies of the "old" middle classes and develops himself to becoming a member of the "new" middle classes (Igarashi/Sairo 2014).

In other cases, the mobile habitus develops out of a mixture of activities, social contexts and opportunities offered to youth. Martina is a child of a lower middle-class family: her mother worked as a secretary at Enel, the public energy company, her father as a casino

croupier. While Martina has lived only in another city other than Berlin and her city of origin Padova, she has developed since her childhood an everyday life marked by travelling.

S: Did your parents agree with your decision to move abroad?

M: To Erasmus? Yes, they could not really contrast my choice very much, actually [laughs]

S: Didn't you ask them first?

M: No, well they would expect that, they expected it, I mean, my character, I practiced fencing for nine years of my life, and I was always going around, in the weekends, to have matches here or there, almost all weekends. ... I kept on moving around. Also, because my mom worked for Enel [public energy company] and at Enel they organized travels for the children of the workers, and so I went to Cuba, I went to Perú, I went around. And I used to visit my friends who anyway came from all over Italy. So, yes, I have always been one who moves a lot, I have an independent character, so they would expect this!

S: And did they always support you in this will of moving?

M: Yes, yes, of course. Also, because my dad traveled a lot when he was young, my mother less, but she would have liked to. [Martina]

On one side, her parents supported her disposition to moving and travels, letting their passion for travel (lived by the father, imagined by the mother) getting transferred to their child. On the other side, as a worker in the public sector, characterized in Italy by a large range of benefits for workers and their families (Santoro 2014), her mother could support this inclination. Martina believes her inclination to be connected to her character, her "personality", as many other respondents asserted. The more the habitus appears as natural, the more it displays the embodiment of history and the sedimentation of class and status dispositions.

Giampiero's story is a bit different. His parents were, at first, contrary to his decision to move to London to study at the university. They, the mother a supervisor in a supermarket, the father a specialized worker in a textile industry, could not support him economically, but he managed nonetheless to get help from his grandmother. However, over time, Giampiero's parents changed their mind, as the economic situation in Italy was worsening.

G: Well, when I moved the first time it was 2007, so there wasn't that heavy crisis yet, which started then in 2008. In 2007, people who were moving were doing it still, because they had money, or because they wanted to have something more. So, my mother did not agree. ... But, after, in 2008 2009, they started saying "look Giampiero, we will do what we can, we'll help you". [Giampiero]

The approach of Giampiero's parents illustrate a third type of parental propensity to push their children away, which approaches mobility as the "forced" reaction to economic stagnation, decline of job opportunities in the place of origin, transformation of the economic fabric. Acknowledging that those strategies of social reproduction which themselves had deployed to make a living and found a household are disappearing, parents accept their children's mobility as a matter of necessity, not as a choice. From this viewpoint, mobility is primarily a practice aimed at providing a source of income, not at hoarding transnational skills. This approach is more visible in the mechanisms of social reproduction of working-class families. Both families of Emilia and Armando are happy that they decided to leave, and supported this decision economically, emotionally and with practical help in finding jobs in Germany.

S: What did your parents think about your decision to move away?

E: Very happy, yes, they are happy that I moved, because now I can build a future, because they know it very well, that there are difficulties in building a future down where I come from. (...)

A: Mine are happy too, my mother and my father had always told me "we have made our life, if you don't see opportunity here, move away". [Emilia, Armando]

Not only their parents approved the decision to migrate, but they were also able to provide them with jobs in Germany. Indeed, they mobilized kinship networks to help the young prole to get a source of income. Italy has been one of the major sending countries to Germany from 1955 to 1973, when thanks to the *Gastarbeiter* agreement (*Anwerbeabkommen*) more than 750.000 Italians moved to get a job in Germany. Once the demand for labor force in the industrial sector started to slow down, and the *Anwerbestopp* of 1973 put an end to that cycle of seasonal labor migration, many of the migrants who remained in Germany over the years and managed to get their family in the country have become active in the field of gastronomy (Pichler 1997). Both Emilia and Armando found their first jobs in Italian res-

taurants in Germany thanks to family networks who went back to those years.

E: The first job, I found it because my mother knows the owner's father. So, I was counting on this support.

S: And how did you find your second job, was it through online agencies?

A: No, through connections, because ehm, a man from my village who let's say made his fortune here, and has lived here for 20 years, he opened this restaurant. And at the beginning this should be, a fall-back for me.

E: Me, I found it because the cousin of my cousin went there to work, and he proposed me, why don't you come here, it is surely better than the place you are working now. Indeed, it was! [Emilia, Armando]

Emilia and Armando's stories about how they came to decide to move to Germany and how they found jobs there are not connected to an education to cosmopolitanism as a value-in-itself or as a value to deploy instrumentally in order to better the own economic chances on labor markets. Rather, labor mobility seems to belong to their social life as a more mundane fact, it is inscribed in the history of their families and of their acquaintances. Werbner has worked on the concept of cosmopolitanism from a class perspective, and in particular of the working classes. She states that as "migration is a class-related phenomenon", also "notions of transnationalism or cosmopolitanism are class related" (Werbner 1999: 23).

Emilia and Armando now live in Neu-Hohenschönhausen, a neighborhood located in the peripheral district of Marzahn-Hellersdorf, in East Berlin. The two interviewees talked about their neighborhood in a different way, stating that they feel safe there, while they consider other neighborhoods, such as the more central and gentrifying Kreuzberg and Neukölln as unsafe, loud and too chaotic. In the latter, a high concentration of Italian and in general EU15 migrants is to be found, as the figure below shows.

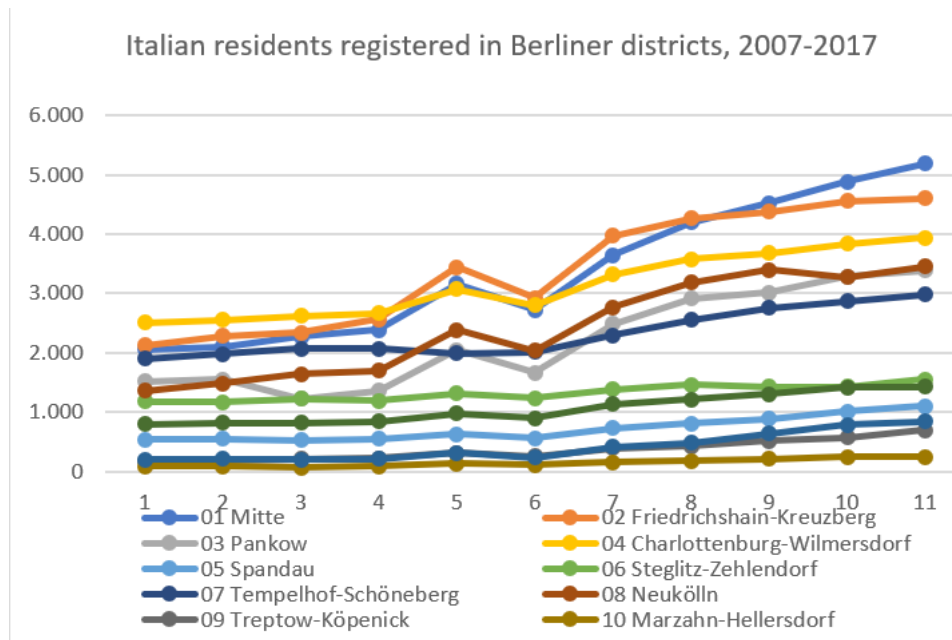


Figure 7: Italian residents registered in Berliner districts, 2007-2017. Source: Amt für Statistik Berlin-Brandenburg, author's calculation.

Emilia and Armando, thus, have followed a spatial trajectory within the city of Berlin which is quite different from many of their co-national peers. The concept of elective belonging has been deployed until now mostly to middle class households feeling at home in middle-class or gentrifying neighborhoods. The concept defines the way how “individuals attach their own biography to their “chosen” residential location, so that they tell stories that indicate how their arrival and subsequent settlement is appropriate to their sense of themselves” (Savage et al. 2005: 29). In her study on working class neighborhoods, Paton has talked of elective fixity to describe the attachment to place of contemporary working classes threatened by displacement within neoliberal urbanism in the UK (Paton 2014). However, I would add that elective belonging as such, as the ability to “relate the own area of residence against other possible areas”, is not restricted to middle-class habitus. Emilia and Armando talk about the respectability of the place where they live and turn it against the non-respectability of places like Kreuzberg or Neukölln. In other words, they keep continuity with their working-class habitus as they see themselves located at best in the place they recognize as their own, despising other neighborhoods to which the majority of their peers struggle to access. The ability displayed by Emilia and Armando to feel at home in the periphery of Berlin, where the community of Italian residents is very small, cannot be defined other than as cosmopolitanism, as a willingness and ability to engage with the Other. However, this is a type of cosmopolitanism which is

not sustained by the moral rhetoric of diversity and openness to other cultures, but rather experienced as a matter of fact, which goes along with labor mobility.

A similar case is displayed by the spatial trajectory of Elisabetta, who left the provincial town of Grosseto, in Tuscany, to move to a small village near Frankfurt to work in a call center, a job she had found online from home. After spending a couple of months there, unsatisfied with her everyday life, she moved to Berlin, settling down in Spandau, a cheap and peripheral district located on the Western outskirts of the city. However, she did not happen to be in Spandau out of economic necessity, rather she feels a strong belonging to this place, due to its peripheral and provincial character, which for her relates to feeling at home.

E: I always loved living here, because, me, I don't come from a big city. I don't know if you know Grosseto, but it is, really, very small. (...) No, therefore no, I could not live in the center, or anyway in a place which is too animated [movimentato, orig.], instead Spandau always seemed to me as an environment, more appropriate [adatto, orig.], TO ME, I mean, for me! [Elisabetta]

The sense of *her* place developed by Elisabetta, a young call center worker with no university degree and working-class parents, is as clear as in the narratives developed by the middle-class households investigated by Savage et al. (2005). It seems important to distinguish between processes of accumulation of capital via development of a mobile and cosmopolitan habitus, and processes of mobility through which openness to diversity is developed as a kind of side effect to the practices of provision of income, but still practiced in no less distinctive ways. Werbner criticizes the “Eurocentric perspective to transnationalism”, according to which only the mobility of the transnational elite can be understood as connected to the development of a cosmopolitan attitude (Werbner 1999). However, such a view cannot account neither for intra-European mobilities, in particular after the recent crisis and the process of enlargement of the regime of free mobility towards the East has contributed to diversify the migratory flows in terms of class.

The development of the ability to cope with cultural and national difference can take place at school or elsewhere. While working class strategies of social reproduction usually are denied the access to dominant forms of cultural capital in schooling institutions, they can reach side-doors to the acquirement of key-resources by getting access via peer networks, in this case transnational ones. Emilia and Armando have managed to get to the “place to be”, but do not need to distinguish themselves discursively from those who move to Berlin “for

fashion”, as such a fact is not comprised among their options, among the practices available to them and mediated by their habitus. For Elisabetta, Spandau is the natural “place to be”, in spite of dominant narrations spread among the community of Italian migrants which she somehow belongs to.

5.1.1. Learning to Mobility at School: The Institutional Educational Path

The study of the internationalization of higher education is now a well-established field in social research (Brooks/Waters 2011). Along with globalization processes, educational national systems have entered in the past decades wide processes of standardization of degrees, especially within special economic zones. In the EU, the Bologna process, started in 1999, has targeted the “harmonization of the structural features of European higher education systems”, with the goal of increasing their compatibility and comparability as well as the employability of European graduates (Wächter 2004: 265). In other words, higher education is considered as a crucial field for the internationalization of labor force and labor markets. Mobility of students within the EU is another goal of the Bologna process: as degrees increasingly get standardized, students can move more easily between countries (Cairns et al. 2017). Research has widely tackled the relationship of European integration and student mobility, as we will see more in detail later. In general, social scientists converge in declaring that periods of study abroad increase chances of developing an international career, as well as that learning foreign languages has a positive effect on income (Gerhard et al 2014).

However, there is still a lack of interest in social sciences towards the mobility within education before university (Gerhard/Hans 2013), as well as a lack of data regarding the numbers of pupils attending school exchanges in different countries. Nonetheless, international mobility during school seems to acquire increasing relevance along with early learning of foreign languages. Sending a child to spend a school year abroad can cost up to 30.000 euro: these costs must be usually covered by the child’s family. This high economic barrier to the access to this service inevitably leads to the exclusion of a large part of children from less wealthy families. In this paragraph, I will briefly sketch some selection mechanisms regarding the school year abroad. Indeed, a small part of the interviewees has spent a school year abroad, usually through private agencies which function as a connection between the student and the hosting family. Lucia spent her fourth year in Munich and during the interview reminds this experience, which was for her almost traumatic.

L: Awful, I stayed with an ugly family, and at that age, I don't know if I would let my children do it, because you are very young, 17, you are still underage, so young, still in puberty let's say, and it's difficult, it was a hard and awful year. [Lucia]

Despite her negative memories of that period, Lucia admits that it was fundamental for the acquisition of the German language, which has enabled her later on to keep moving to Germany for stages, such as Leonardo and another internship organized by the Italian embassy. She is now the director of a youth center at the periphery of Berlin, and is thinking about starting to study again, to become officially a social worker.

L: In my opinion, the only good thing of being in Munich at 17 years was that I was young, I was YOUNGER, so it was easier to learn, and for one whole year I really didn't have any contact with Italian language, internet wasn't yet that developed, so no WhatsApp, and my family [hosting family] was so strict, they didn't want me to call my parents. Thus, for one year I really had a complete immersion in the German language, and I also was going to school and attending an intensive German course, therefore that has been my main basis. (...)

Well actually I have always been pushed A BIT by my parents, since we come from Trentino, I think that their idea was like, let's let her learn German, so that she can go to work in Alto Adige [German speaking region close to Austria], where you can earn very well. And thus, they always pushed me like "ok, you would like to have your fourth year abroad, then you're gonna have it in Germany!" "ah, you say you wanna go Erasmus? Well, we will help you, but it's gonna be in Germany!" [laughs] And I wanted to go rather than not go, but I have never had particularly liked Germany or Berlin! [Lucia]

Raffaella, who spent one year in Canada during high school, also refers to this experience as the watershed, after which she knew she would keep on moving.

R: Yes, I spent my fourth year in Canada [16-17 age]. ... It was an exchange, I went to a family ... one year.

S: And did you want to go abroad?

R: Both my mother and my uncle did the same exchange, when they were young. So, for me it has always been the MOST NATURAL thing in life, I always took it for granted. And then of course, when you move to the other side of the world with 16, you get your

perspectives changed, so, after that I, it's like if I had lived my whole life waiting to, to move again (...)

R: I have always been independent, I mean, I wanted, not because at home they [her parents] would take anything away from me, eh, for heaven's sake, but when you find yourself living alone at 16 for one year, after that you won't go back home anymore.
[Raffaella]

Gerhard and Hans have conducted a quantitative research on German pupils, studying the relationship between attendance of a school year abroad and other variables, such as parental resources, type of school attended, and the opportunity structure, meaning the local infrastructure of international exchange associations (Gerhard/Hans 2013). The research shows that pupils attending the year abroad usually stem from families endowed with high economic capital, which is not surprising considering the costs of these programs. While the institution of a school year abroad is recognized as an important experience which lays the path for professional development and for the development of the ability to move, its access is widely unequal, and can work as an accelerator for diverging paths among youngsters which takes place in an earlier stage than later mobility programs, such as the EU ones.

Giorgia, who spent one high school year in the USA, compares that experience with the Erasmus project, which she carried out in Berlin.

G: I went at 16 for one year to the US.

S: Wow!

G: It was beautiful, completely different from Erasmus! Because there you were thrown into a family, you live 100% the local reality. (...) Relatively to Erasmus, it is different, because, in Erasmus you always live in a comfort zone, right, because you have to do with a lot of other foreigners, and maybe also people who comes from your university, you get to know many Italians, you go out with a much young group of people. There, ... you have more to do with reality, you get to know the problems, you have more to do with adults. And therefore, according to me, you really live a much deeper experience than Erasmus. And, of course, you are also much younger, and get more inputs, and you learn the language much faster. Here at the university you could also present, talk in Eng-

lish, and you don't have to be there every day, while at school you have to write, talk every day, it's completely different. [Giorgia]

Like Lucia, Giorgia talks about the year school abroad as a tough experience, but she stresses even more than Lucia that exactly this hardness was crucial to let her integrate and develop abilities to understand the new context, culture and language. The year abroad appears as a proof of strength, an initiation to mobility, which will produce long-lasting benefits. Programs such as Erasmus appear from this viewpoint as “comfort zones”, experiences which per se are not enough to push these abilities forward, thereby sketching a hierarchy of the profitability of “experiences” abroad. In the next section, the analysis will turn its focus on European programs for youth mobility, in order to illustrate more in detail if and how they can work as a “comfort zone” for movers.

5.1.2. Learning (to) Mobility with the EU

Since the European integration process has started, a plethora of programs and interventions have been deployed to promote mobility of students and young workers within the EU. Such interventions are located along different crucial nodes of the institutional educational path and at the access to labor market: from Erasmus for university students (since 1987) to Leonardo programs to carry out stages abroad (since 1995). The promotion of mobility was also included in the Agenda 2020, the 10-year strategy proposed in 2010 by the European Commission to promote “smart, sustainable, inclusive growth” (EU Commission 2010). In 2011, the European Platform on Learning Mobility was created with the aim of connecting practitioners, researcher and policy-makers to develop strategies for enhancing mobility. Finally, since 2014 the EU program “Erasmus Plus” has been launched, collecting the different programs like Erasmus and Leonardo into one major policy.

The analysis of these policies suggests that periods at universities and stages abroad are not only valued for their contingent relevance in letting students broaden their academic curriculum, or helping young workers to enter the labor market, but also for the cultivation of a meta-resource, which could be termed cosmopolitan capital following Weenink's Bourdieusian approach, transnational human capital (Gerhard/Hans 2013), transnational cultural capital (Carlson et al. 2017), intercultural capital (Pöllmann 2013), or “transnational non-formal learning experiences” (Lejeune 2013: 27). In particular, Cairns and colleagues stress how they are meant to enhance employability, which they define as a “form of labor market reflexiv-

ity”, to “make jobseekers think about the nature of work and become aware of the mechanisms that lead to employment, including the role played by social networks” (Cairns et al. 2017: 22). Employability is also connected to the ability to understand where one can be more employable, which they term “reflexive mobility”, i.e. considering “how living in a different place will shape one’s being in terms of social relationships and personal development” (ibid.: 19). Enhancing employability is a key target for EU mobility programs.

In other words, mobility is increasingly seen as a key-resource to providing income and integrating into national labor markets via the development of a reflexivity spanning on a supra-national level. From this point of view, programs included into the Erasmus Plus umbrella, as well as school years abroad, can be considered as stages, a type of “work for labor” (Standing 2014), aimed at “learning mobility” as a skill for itself, a lab experiment helping to prepare youth to a life in mobility.

The relevant issue, then, becomes that of the unequal distribution of the access to these resources. Beerkens and colleagues has researched the barriers to international mobility within the Erasmus program and found out that home ties, lack of interest and, to a lesser extent, language barriers are the main components in letting students decide not to participate in the program. While a quantitative study cannot account for what hides behind “lack of interest”, their results point to the positive or negative evaluation of the mobility experience as the dividing line between students deciding to move or not, more than financial constraints or language skills (Beerkens et al. 2015). While some students see in Erasmus a chance to be taken to improve their skills, or to make an experience (which we have seen are considered as one and the same thing), others might not get access to sufficient knowledge about the program, not have enough money to add to the monthly Erasmus fee, or not consider Erasmus as a worthy experience. As the interviews have demonstrated, the development of a mobile habitus takes place within parental education: those who do not move might simply not have been socialized to a life marked by travels and mobility, and thereby consider Erasmus a waste of their time located between university and finding a job; it can be therefore considered as a hindrance to becoming economically independent, a postponement of independence. Many interviewees and survey respondents have participated in one or more of the EU mobility programs, spending some months in another European country, either to pursue their university path, or to absolve internships in private companies and NGOs. Alberto, among the interviewees, have lost the chance of doing Erasmus, while Paola also doubted a bit about it,

but then opted for Erasmus. Both have anyway found their way out of Italy. Alberto arrived in Berlin to start an intensive course of German; Paola, who studied Linguistics, used the opportunity of the Erasmus in Berlin to absolve a thesis on a German author, thereby setting the basis for a consequent study at a Berliner university.

A: I would have liked to go on Erasmus, but if I had done it, I would have lost some months. And I said “no, I want to go out of university now, because it’s the time to do so”. And I was 26, but, anyway, it was the time to finish it. [Alberto]

P: I was doing the second year of Bachelor, and so I got the idea that I could go on Erasmus, and I have to say that at that time there were few people from my faculty doing Erasmus, because they said that in this way you would lose a year, they had this kind of excuse. So, I was a bit scared, but on the other side I have always been attracted by this thing, I mean by going out and see things from another point of view. [Paola]

Beyond evaluations related to the university career, young people might decide also by considering other factors related to the place of destination. In other words, young people might take advantage of EU programs to carry out mobility which they had already planned. This is for instance the case of Giacomo, who decided first to move to Berlin, and then started looking for an easier way to accomplish his project. From this perspective, EU programs can constitute an expedient, a way to narrate the own mobility project in an instrumental and rational way.

G: And I was here in holiday in 2010, and I told myself “well, should I have the occasion”, but it was still an incognito. And then the occasion came. [telling about how he started to be attracted from the city of Berlin]

S: Did you let it happen?

G: Yes, well let’s say I needed an excuse, so I took, as an excuse, this internship, which was associated with my faculty, in which I had just graduated. I found the internship on the university website. And well, I took it as an excuse, hoping to find after that, or maybe also before, a scholarship, which I then never really got. ... And this internship then gave me the possibility to know the first persons here, even if I was working for free. It was winter, then spring came, and spring is something completely different in Berlin, you start looking at the city, and I decided, to stay here, but I needed a job to stay, and

that's when I found my first job here. [Giacomo]

Here again it becomes clear how Eu mobility programs do work as a comfort zone, providing access to networks and to the exploration of the city, as well as possibly an external opportunity to make the own mobility project concrete and material. However, studies have highlighted how the increase in student mobility, a sort of “massification of exchange”, have also led to a differentiation of the programs regarding academic supervision, duration, financing and compatibility of credits (Courtois 2017). Within this context marked by increased differentiation and complexity, those students from less privileged backgrounds tend to access less structured programs, which might end up in mobility for “mobility's sake”, as in the case of Giacomo, who participated in the Leonardo program more as a way to move to Berlin than of engaging in an internship meaningful for its career. Also, information and knowledge are provided in different ways to movers. Giulio was lucky, as he states, as he got additional preparation for his Leonardo which helped him overcome local barriers to integration.

G: Leonardo was a very positive thing, both from a logistic point of view, and for the financing, at that time in 2010 scholarships were very good. Because one part was paid by the Leonardo program, one part from the University of Padua, courses were paid. In addition, we got a psychological preparation, before leaving, it was called Eurocultura, the seat is in Vicenza. And we got kind of integration courses, basically.

S: And what did they explain you there?

G: Well, they gave us a lot of links, there was a brochure, for instance about the fact that you have to get an *Anmeldung*, the health insurance, all things I was completely not informed about, because, I have to say, I left almost by chance. And therefore, this information has been very helpful, I read all these brochures, and I found a lot of useful resources. Anyway, I had already worked abroad, because I had done Erasmus, so I was used to living abroad, but still that was very helpful. [Giulio]

Finally, mobility programs can be considered at the same time as enabling democratization of mobility, as they increase the access to mobility, and drawing the line between those who are able to move and those who do not. While access to higher education is necessary to enter these programs, the type of program can vary widely according to the institution providing it. Moreover, the background of students affects largely their propensity to move and par-

ticipate in such programs. As a study conducted by Ballatore and Ferede documented, Erasmus participants are more likely to have been engaged in travels with their families, have undertaken more language-study abroad, are more open in engaging in post-graduate mobility and stem from families with higher economic and cultural capital (Ballatore/Ferede 2013). Eu mobility programs, in other words, seem to reinforce inequalities among youngsters, rather than mitigating them. The chance to develop of a mobile habitus appears structurally embedded into patterns of social inequalities. Openness to other cultures, to diversity and to mobility seem to emerge as a new form of distinction (Courtois 2017), while working-class youngsters recur to familiar and social networks to access mobility, being excluded from more institutional ways.

Nonetheless, the EU regime of free mobility opens the doors to a number of national labor markets to European citizens, thereby producing a multiplication of the options and choices for those who want to move. As I will show in the next chapters, however, the abolition of barriers between nation states has been accompanied by the rise of new, more or less formal, barriers at local level. For now, we need to keep our focus on the relationship between class and mobility as a central node for the distribution of mobility as a key-resource in contemporary capitalism. In particular, in the next section I will focus on those migrants who did not attend university, thereby skipping the access to mobility via the programs which have been the focus of this section. While migrants who have been moving students seemed to follow a path of continuity within the well-oiled mechanism of social reproduction based on the acquisition of cultural capital, non-student migrants have developed alternative paths to mobility usually marked by rupture, either with their families or with past decisions. Being excluded from institutional paths, they had to invent new forms of accessing mobility, relying on different types of social ties and developing a different life conduct of mobility. Their exclusion from institutions did not always result into material disadvantages and failing provision of income. This conundrum will be then the center of the discussion.

5.2. Mobility as Subtraction: Mobile habitus and Ruptures in Social Reproduction

While the previous sections have dealt with stories of (attempted) continuity of social reproduction, highlighting those mechanisms through which mobility has been elevated to the

status of a key-resource to access income and power, by the interaction of parental strategies of social reproduction and neoliberal strategies within the EU aimed at increasing employability of young workers. The section showed how both middle-class and working-class families might be prone to support their children's mobility to another country, however with different ethics and different modes of evaluating mobility as such. Cosmopolitanism relying on familiar and private networks and mutuality can be distinguished by cosmopolitanism relying upon institutions and aimed at developing an attitude to better govern globalizing labor markets. In the following section, we will go through examples of construction of mechanism for social reproduction which were built upon opposition and rupture towards the family of origin or the educational system. "Learning by one self" is the motive running through the interviewees' stories, and the concept to deconstruct in order to make visible the dynamics underlying the production of new ways to social reproduction.

5.2.1. Rejecting University: On Habitus and Hysteresis

Those who do not have a middle-class habitus, like Giovanni and Leonardo, express a sense of liberation from categories, and are indeed projected into betterment via experiencing freedom of movement. They appear as released from middle-class strategies of social reproduction, they chose not to study at the university, considered university as a trap, at least for those "like themselves". On one side, Giovanni, the son of a FIAT worker and a nurse, born and bred in the periphery of an industrial core city, rejected the study of engineering, opposing his father, who wanted his son to study to get a better job than what he had to do his lifelong.

G: The same thing with my father, he PUSHED me a lot to go to university, because he didn't have the chance to do it, and he clearly told me "I don't want you to go to work in the factory as I did". And when I left the university, it was very hard for him, and I had to fight with him for this reason, and he didn't understand that this wasn't something for me, and that what I wanted to do instead was working in the kitchen and become a cook.
[Giovanni]

Giovanni, as a working-class kid, has learnt that that model of betterment through acquisition of institutionalized cultural capital would be a trap for those like him. As we have seen in the previous chapter, he regards his friends in Turin as trapped into the loop of precarious gig-jobs, the educational loop of eternal studying and the comfort-zone loop of staying in the parental home. On one side, reproduction for them appears as guaranteed seemingly forever

thanks to parental support exchanged for proximity, on the other the impediment of living their own life (founding families, marrying, going to live with their girlfriends) is seen as a failure. Finally, eternal studying, in the eyes of Giovanni, is also a failure. He quitted university, moved away from home and based his everyday life on work as a mean to release, liberation and redemption. This is how he recognized the moment when it became clear to him that university was not “done” for him, as he was not going to pass the selection mechanisms within the educational infrastructure, meant to work for those with more resources and a middle-class habitus.

G: [At the university] you have to be ready to stay on books 24 hours on 24. I mean, I worked at night, I worked in a wrecking yard over night from 4 to 8 am, then I went to university until 2 pm, and then I taught children, so after a while, I left the wrecking yard, so that I could work during summer. With 20 I left home, my mother’s home, and went to live by myself in Turin. So, I had to work to pay rent and bills, after a while I said to myself “ok, I am wasting my time, I study and do the impossible, I go to lessons every day to pass the exams, *I am not stupid*, so if it’s not working it means that something is not right, amen”. And so, I asked myself “what am I good at?” I choose the options and I said, cooking is the best thing I can do, so that’s what I choose. [Giovanni]

Giovanni learns how to distinguish himself from those endowed with institutionalized cultural capital not only in his encounter with university, but also while practicing his passion for music during time outside of labor. He learnt to produce electronic music by himself, as an autodidact. When composing music together with friends who studied at *Conservatorio* (the Italian educational high institution for music), he noticed differences between him and them.

G: It is important, you have to grow old physically, not mentally, this is something which gives you the chance to see everything in a very different way, not to stay enclosed within labels, within clichés ... You know, working with people who studied at *Conservatorio*, they are technically perfect, but when you ask them “try to do like this, or like this”, they are not able, because, obviously, creativity, the will to experiment new things, they don’t have it.

S: Have they stayed channeled within that way of doing music?

G: Yes, they are. While what I feel, is that I can do whatever I want, something good will come out of it anyway, something new above all. [Giovanni]

Leonardo, also born and bred in the periphery of the industrial core center of Milan, spent his childhood with his mother and his brother, few moneys to spend, and a network of friends who started having children at the age of 17. He attended only one and half year of university, after which he quitted. Before this, he had failed one year at the high school: “my teachers did not understand me”, as he states. His parents loved travelling, no matter how small the budget was. As Leonardo explains, digging in his childhood memories, they were part of the antagonist movements of the 1970es. These years were marked all over the West by the so-called transition from Fordism to Post-Fordism. In particular in Italy, with the rise of workerism , social movements were at the forefront of a re-configuration of work and life, demanding autonomy, leisure, flexibility and a life to spend outside of the factory (Wright 2002). While his parents were engaged in political activities, Leonardo spent his childhood in front of his computer, experimenting hacking and learning as an autodidact all the tricks of programming. Now, he sees that many of his friends are just concluding their studies, while he already has 10 years of work experience on his back and is working at the high floors of a leading company within the knowledge economy, where the interview took place.

L: I have a very self-taught background. When I finished high-school I was already working in this field, (...) and I never attended university or management school, which is, let's say, that stream from which many managers stem. Thus, let's say that I learnt all on the field, I am a very technical person.

S: And how did it go, did you go to school in Milan?

L: I did, I attended a *Itis Informatico* [vocational school for informatics], well the famous five years, it took seven years to me, but I then caught up on one, so it took six years to me, but it was very confused, I mean I liked informatics and didn't like anything else, I was not being understood, so it took a bit longer. And, in the meanwhile, I found an internship in Milan, for this company I worked for until 2010, and they told me “during the morning go to school, you'll work in the afternoon”. And everything started like this, that company is a very big one, which gave me a lot of visibility, and it easy to find other jobs, which were anyway good for my CV. [Leonardo]

With 28, Leonardo was now in the midst of a brilliant carrier within digital economy and is now increasingly asked to deliver managerial functions. In other words, his non-conformist

path was praised by the labor market, contrarily to widespread assumptions according to which educational capital constitutes the key-mechanism to pursue upward social mobility. While Giovanni, as a cook, has a much lower income than Leonardo, he also thinks about opening his own restaurant. While we cannot know if this project will be realized or not, it is certain that the narrative of the self-developed by both Leonardo and Giovanni are similarly marked by satisfaction regarding their own choices. Moreover, they reinforce narratives of their selves constructed against their peers who have followed the “normal” path, and thereby failed.

As we have seen before, Elisabetta is a 25-years-old woman coming from a small town in Central Italy. The interview took place in the one-family house in Spandau where she lives with her husband, their three children and a dog. Elisabetta works in a call center but is thinking about applying for a job as secretary or similar, now that she has learnt German and doesn't have any more to work in Italian or English. Her parents did not go to university, and have working class jobs (he a mechanic, she an educator). Elisabetta attended an artistic high school, and once finished, she started studying Law. However, the choice of studying occurred more as a reaction to parental constraint: she quitted after three months, leaving subsequently for Frankfurt to get a job in a call center. As she did not like Frankfurt, she moved after a couple of months to Berlin, where she finally settled and founded a new family.

S: So, you stayed here in Berlin. But, ehm, did you want to quit Law for good, or you just took a pause from studying and then decided not to come back?

E: Well, in reality, I mean, I had begun to study because that was a period, in which EVERYONE had to go to university, and I was THE ONLY ONE who did not want, and thus I has said “ok, I'll try it”, but then it didn't work! [laughs].

S: Ok, and where did you go to study= Florence?

E: Noo, Grosseto, just right there! Yes, it's a small university, one or two courses. Well, yes, I didn't really started, I went to three or four lessons [laughs] well no, not really...

S: Was it boring? Did you see it as something which...

E: Noo, well, I mean, I had studied art, you know, a completely different thing from

Law [laughs]! But, I knew that anyway this was something I was doing just to let my parents see that, that it would not work, so I thought “ok, it doesn’t make sense to rent a flat somewhere, let them pay even more, I mean, I start this, they will understand that this is not for me, and they will let it go!” [laughs] [Elisabetta]

Elisabetta did not really want to study Law, but she knew that her parents wanted her to go to university. At the same time, studying could mean having to move to a bigger city, rent a room, ask her parents for more money. Therefore, she decided to start the study of Law, not because of interest in the topic or in a career as lawyer, but because in this way she could stay in Grosseto, her home town. In Italy, since the 1990es, many universities have opened so called “decentralized” seats in peripheral towns to face expanding demand for higher education. This trend followed the criterion of territorial autonomy, which was preferred by policymakers against the options of introducing non-university tertiary education or of neo-liberalization of the educational sector via privatization (Bratti et al. 2008). University seats opened in medium and small-scale cities also to enable students with less economic resources to stay at home with their parents and avoid paying rent somewhere else. Indeed, the expansion of supply of higher education has been followed by a dramatic increase of enrolled students, in particular from low and middle-class backgrounds. However, research has shown that this expansion in the number of enrolled students has not been coupled by an expansion of graduations: young people from lower backgrounds have increasingly enrolled in the universities but are much more likely to drop out (ebd.).

The stories told by Elisabetta, Giovanni and Leonardo, young people from lower backgrounds who started studying but quit before graduating, seem to support these findings. Elisabetta enrolled in a decentralized seat precisely to avoid moving to another city. However, her move was a tactical one: she only wanted to show her parents that university was “not for her”.

S: What did they prefer you to do? Did they prefer you to stay in Grosseto?

E: Well, yes, I mean, or at least [they preferred] me to do something more, more normal, maybe doing university, and then settling down there, you know. [Elisabetta]

Studying for study’s sake, Elisabetta managed to get enough support by her parents, proving them that their projection onto their child could not be realized. Once she hoarded such support, she left and started a new life in Germany. Thanks to their “sense of one’s place”,

Elisabetta, Giovanni and Leonardo understood that the university was not what they wanted to pursue and bet on the possibility to learn “by themselves”. They “decided” not to study and re-located themselves into a position which enabled them more freedom in what they wanted to do. They didn’t opt for the usual path, the established and well-oiled mechanisms for social reproduction, but rather explored and experimented un-institutionalized ways of appropriating knowledge. They are less hampered; their paths are more unfettered. While Giovanni and Elisabetta had to impose their decision against the authority of their parents, and in particular of their fathers, Leonardo is more concerned with the opposition faced within school. Both sources of authority were first recognized as such and secondly challenged with determination and instrumental actions, including dodging such as starting to study to make the failure of certain strategies of social reproduction visible. This challenge of the past order imposed onto the present seems to have released the construction of a habitus of novelty, non-conformism and escape, based on processes of learning by oneself. Mobility is inscribed into this habitus as the fundamental weapon to subtract oneself to fixed paths.

5.2.2. Opposition to Parents: Exiting the Class Container Through Mobility

For the interviewed migrants, rupture regarding the educational path is also linked to rupture regarding their own spatial location. As we have seen with Elisabetta, her decision to move was linked to her refusal to university. She had no clear plan about where to go, neither did she know what kind of job she wanted to start.

E: Well, it’s true that after having studied art for five years, who knows what you can do without a degree, well, without university. But, I really didn’t know what to do! ...

S: How did you get to the idea of leaving?

E: Well, to make a test, you know? To see something else, something different, I didn’t want to leave for Germany, actually, I just found a job there, so I left to get there, but had I found it in France, that would have been the same. It’s not that I came to Berlin because I wanted to, it was chance. [Elisabetta]

Elisabetta moved to Frankfurt, and then to Berlin, to make a test and see what could happen once out of her home country. She found a job in Frankfurt through a website, but soon discovered that she really didn’t like it, and thus decided to move to Berlin, thanks to people her mother knew, who, as a young woman, had already lived in Germany for some time be-

fore the fall of the wall. Once again, for the working classes it seems that mobility as the search for better job opportunities is inscribed into biographies and ready to be mobilized again. Elisabetta worked at first in an Italian restaurant as a dishwasher, and finally found a job as customer agent. While her mother never opposed her decision to move to Germany, as she was herself emotionally attached to this country, Elisabetta's father needed some time to accept the move.

E: My father didn't agree, I mean, he let me go because of course you cannot, you cannot simply say "no, you are going to stay here". But well, leaving as such, for adventure, it wasn't really something...but now it is of course! [Elisabetta]

The rupture accomplished by Elisabetta needed time and determination to be proven as a meaningful move. Thanks to her marriage with a German educator and their children, social reproduction was re-adjusted to a regime of continuity with her past. Her parents now visit her from time to time, and she and her new family spend vacations in summer in Italy with her family of origin. Through her spatial move, she was able to create a fix that could combine both her need to work and her desire to have a family. Federico, a 30 years old man originating from a small coast town in Abruzzo, had similar issues with his parents, his father a worker in a glass factory, his mother a housewife. After having completed a Bachelor in the neighboring city of L'Aquila to become a lab technician, facing the impossibility to find a job other than in a local factory, where he worked one year long, he went to Australia for one year with a work-holiday visa. After that, he started working for a low-cost airline and decided to settle in Berlin.

S: Were your parents ok with your decision to leave for Berlin, I mean, did you decide yourself?

F: Well, when I moved to Australia, that was a bit a drama, as I was moving alone, for the first time away from home, I was still living in Abruzzo back then. Since I have moved in Berlin, they have understood it.

S: And are they happy that you found this job?

F: Well, my father says: "You could stay at the factory, you could stay and work there, stay at home, and avoid spending so much money for rent for ten years, eh, and you could put money aside for buying a home". But then he also understood, I mean he also accep-

ted the fact that I have always put myself on the line, and that no one ever helped me, you know. No one ever helped me, so. And then they also visited me here, they were happy.
[Federico]

The option of working in a factory like his father, for Federico, was not a feasible one, because he perceived the job as too repetitive for him. Moreover, he found his town “a bit too narrow”. He would think about going back in case the opportunity for the job he likes should appear, although he has not figured out yet what his ideal job could be. In any case, Federico had to construct his path against the strategy of continuity suggested by his father, i.e. working in the factory. According to him, what convinced his father that he was doing good, was exactly the fact that he was carrying out his project by himself, with no help from anyone. The habitus of achieving goals alone, not having to thank anyone for the own accumulation of capital, experience, resources, knowledge, mobilizes the working-class pride and claim for autonomy.

While Federico’s father would have preferred him to stay in the home town and work in the factory, Alberto’s parents, a surveyor and a housewife, wanted their son to stay in the central Italy village where they also live, and work as an insurance agent. Both stories, albeit located in slightly different spaces of the social structure (working-class and lower middle-class), illuminate the clash of parental projections of inter-generational continuity against refusal of the prole coupled with practices of time-taking, dodging, blurring decisions and melting them with actions of waiting. For Alberto, the development of an alternative path, with a shift from a strategy of social reproduction aimed at accumulating primarily economic capital to one other prioritizing cultural capital, began during high school.

A: Well, basically, I went to geometry [vocational school for surveyors], but since I was in the second year, I knew that I would study philosophy. [laughs] Because anyway, I liked humanities, I took the surveyor school because my father is a surveyor, and since in that period I didn’t know very well what I wanted to do, I said to myself “ok, I’ll do that”. But this was the mistake, well, a mistake. And so, since my second year, I knew I would study philosophy, and then I met a guy who also was studying philosophy, and he gave me some books. And I didn’t understand anything of them! [laughs] but it really seemed to me like “wow, fantastic! One day I will understand them”. [Alberto]

By studying first in Perugia, and then in Florence, Alberto started to learn how to live in bigger cities, meeting different lifestyles than the ones his peers have in his home town. He

was the first one of his friends to move abroad, others have followed his path later. He describes his biography of mobility to always bigger and farer cities as a process of liberation from the pettiness which he considers the mark of the society and place he originates from.

A: Probably because I liked philosophy, well, maybe I started having different tastes, also because I played music and I wanted to have a band, and I kind of unbound myself from talking only about football, alcohol, women, and, and wild boars, because there, in Umbria [mountain central region of Italy], there are a lot of boars, you know. So, I liked other stuff, and I have always been tempted to go out, so I started with Perugia. [Alberto]

Later, he will leave Perugia to carry out a Master's in Political Philosophy in Florence. The city is twice as far from his village than Perugia. Even though he will still be supported economically by his parents, he learns there how to sustain himself with reproduction work, which he was not aware of before.

A: Since then, once in Florence, I have changed hugely, I mean, I have ripened a lot, because well, when I arrived in Florence I could barely use a washing machine, things like this. Once you start having this freedom, then it is hard to go back. [Alberto]

Young migrants undergo fundamental shifts regarding the reproduction regimes they get embedded into through migration. These changes have gender-specific patterns, which I will analyze more in detail. Here, we can observe how spatial separation from the parental nest also implies a re-configuration of the relationship to reproductive work, turned into a proof of autonomy. Alberto progressively distanced himself from the provincial petit bourgeoisie status group to which he belonged by virtue of his familiar origin and started getting closer to a more cosmopolitan and cultural-capital-oriented milieu, thereby slowly acquiring economic independence. Once he moved to Berlin to study German and then to Munich for an internship, he fully convinced himself that he should get back to Berlin and try to make a living there. However, his parents intruded in his plans, and tried to take him back to the trail he had derailed by separating himself spatially from them.

A: Well, I was in Munich, without a job, and was trying to understand what I wanted to do. My parents, in the meantime, had found a job for me over there, because through a client of my father, an insurance agent, they found me a job at XY assurance²², and they wanted to send me there. And, I would have worked as an insurance broker, door to door

²²Name was anonymized by the author.

you know, I was so disappointed.

S: Was it in Città di Castello [the small town he comes from]?

A: Yes, yes. I mean, I would have got back to my town, to be an insurance agent, I mean I have nothing against insurance agents, but I can't really see myself to become one! And so, we had a big quarrel, I think it was one of the few times I really had a fight with my parents, we hung up on each other in Skype, something that my mother you know, would call me again on Skype in every occasion, but that time she didn't. And well, without saying anything, I took the bus to Berlin. ... I gave myself two weeks of time to find something, otherwise I would have got back to Italy. [Alberto]

Having escaped the possibility to become an insurance agent, Alberto is now working as a web content editor for a Berliner startup, a job for which he is actually over-qualified. His work situation does not seem to worry him, he feels happy of living in Berlin, a city which he would not like to leave, as he stated during the interview. More importantly, he cannot imagine going back in the future to his home town, as he argues that he could not reconcile anymore with the mentality of the people living there, which is "too narrow" for him. His words resound Federico's ones as he described his home town. The idea of narrowness mobilized by both, as well as by several other interviewees, appears as multidimensional, as it involves the scale of the places of origin (small cities, towns and villages), the "mentality" of the people living there, as well as the perceived options for social mobility available to the interviewees, in case they would have not moved.

As for the scale of place, Alberto locates enclosure, narrowness and backwardness in the province, just as he places the development of a cosmopolitan attitude in the big city. His move from the village to the metropolis, thus, signals also a trajectory in social space marked more by accumulation of cultural capital, rather than economic one. The kinetic forces attracting Alberto in a such a strong way to lead him to cheat his parents and open a contrast with those who have sustained him economically (and might still do this in case of need) can be understood as the acknowledgment that the city is "being refined as a fundamental crucible in which emerging cultural capital is being forged", as Savage et al. put it (2018: 138). There, the authors suggest that urban cores have become central nodes for production, consumption and circulation of urban cultural capital, whose circuits are traveled and fueled mostly by young educated people. Emerging cultural capital is marked by omnivorous cultural con-

sumption, knowingness and reflexivity, which can be hoarded at best via accumulation of urban experience. Dwelling in the big city, then, allows young migrants such as Alberto to secure their access to that type of culture. By gaining this access, they increase the social distance between them and their provincial place of origin, thereby ratifying their process of upwardly social mobility. Urbanity as a resource becomes here strictly intertwined to mobility, as the process to become “urban” is inherently connected to spatial movement for those who are not urban “by birth”.

For both Federico and Alberto, mobility has constituted a feasible option for them to leave their original social locations. For Federico, this was marked by a Fordist working class regime of production, from which he has subtracted himself to enter labor relations marked by flexibility and mobility. As we will see in the chapter on labor relations, he has become a steward of an airline, thereby entering a service relationship with a company which has fueled the very mobility patterns in which he is embedded. Alberto, for his part, has opted for moving abroad as a way to exit social relations in the periphery, which he considered as too static and predestined. While their migration cannot be considered as a real exit from their social location tout court, as Federico is working as an unskilled laborer with a low pay, and Alberto is practicing routine office work, far from his ideal of becoming a philosopher and a “pure” creative worker, they have unbound themselves from the national framework of regulation of class relations. In other words, by virtue of their status as EU citizens, and thereby affected by the EU regime of free mobility, they have re-located themselves into another class structure, regulated through the combined action of a super-national entity such as the European Union and the national states comprised within it.

Feelings of narrowness express such movement of “liberation” from a class identity which these young people do not feel any more to belong. Once asked if he considers himself to belong to a class, Giovanni makes this argument in the most explicit ways among the interviewees.

S: Do you feel to be in a social class, to belong to a group of people who live life in a similar way than you?

G: Right now, no. Before, when I was living with my parents, yes. Because basically, you know, my parents are separated, so I lived alone with my father, my father was on unemployment benefits [“cassa integrazione”, orig.], so there wasn’t much, and anyway it was hard, on the 15th of the month we had already no more money, so you had to adapt, so

you were closed into that thing, you could not allow yourself a mobile phone, so, you were closed into that situation, I mean that of the factory worker on unemployment benefits, like MANY others in Turin. Then, once I went out of that mentality, I started being, with 18 I started working, having my money, I bought MY mobile phone, I started having MY luxury, and there I started building MY life, and having everything I wanted, within the limits of the money I had, without asking my parents anything, I mean. Now I don't feel myself closed into any social class, now I can be myself, and do what I want, without problems. [Giovanni]

Giovanni connects his process of becoming autonomous from his parents to his process of formation as economic subject, able to enter market transactions via spending his own amount of money. By becoming a cook in Berlin, he has the possibility to re-configure his self out of the reference of the Fordist factory. Nonetheless, the basis for acquisition of an autonomous status is still hard work: while he configures his trajectory as one marked by rupture, exit and re-configuration, there is much more continuity in his path than he admits. Still, the sense of freedom which is spread all over the interview, has to do with a process of unbounding of the self from a structured web of relations into a new one which he does not define other than “being what I want to be”, or rather “being what I can buy”.

In the following chapters, I will explore more in detail how spatial mobility can be seen as the re-location of the self within different class relations. While in this section I focused more on labor relations, thereby highlighting how the relationship between strategies of social reproduction and mobility rework the “classic” aspect of class, i.e. wage labor, in the next section I will focus on aspects of class which have been put to the foreground by feminist research, i.e. reproduction work.

5.2.3. Setting the Self Free from Gender Relations: Exiting the Gender Container Through Mobility

Processes of unbinding the self through subtraction from relations which are perceived as too static and constraining do not emerge only in relation to labor relations, but also to gender relations. During the interviews, this narrative on mobility involved mostly, though not exclusively, women, as I will show in this section. Many respondents told their mobility as a process of becoming autonomous in re-making their relationship to gender. The very decision to migrate was often intertwined with struggles around their gender identity. This emerged particularly with reference to social ties which bounded them to the place of origin and pre-

vented them to take a definite decision. To many young heterosexual women, this happened with reference to a love relationship with their boyfriend who had been left behind in Italy.

Elder has developed the concept of linked lives, which refers to the “interaction between individual’s social worlds over the life span”, involving ties between friends, family members and co-workers (Elder 1994: 6). Applied to migration research, the concept is helpful to locate migration decisions in the context of “partnerships, households and kinship ties” (Zhang 2017: 4). Studies have documented how the way how partners trade the decision to migrate is embedded within unequal relations, with gendered outcomes about who and how in the household or couple should migrate (Silvey 2004; Hoang 2011). The concept of “tied movers”, for instance, defines those people whose trajectory of spatial mobility is not developed autonomously, but rather as a follow-up of their partner’s mobility. Clerge et al. have elaborated different types of tied movers, overcoming the traditional take on households in migration, typically consisting of the bread-winner male moving first to find sources of income, and of the woman and children coming after, once the man has settled the bases for survival and sustainment of the family (Clerge et al. 2015). According to Clerge and colleagues, who carried out a research on movers tied to graduated partners moving to get a job abroad, young couples pushed to take a decision by the job opportunity, often take a “leap of faith” or step up to a more stable phase of their relationship to avoid distance. Also, in case their relationship is already connected to a long-term project of mutual care, they relate to the migration decision not individually, but as a collective decision to be taken via consensus. This is the case of Carla, for instance, who moved to Berlin together with her boyfriend, a Brazilian young man whom she got to know in the small Italian city where she attended university. They decided to move together to Germany, as in Italy they both had few opportunities to find income.

C: We wanted to stay in Italy, but there wasn’t much, for me, and EVEN LESS for him, because well yes, I am graduated, he too, but his Brazilian degree is not recognized in Italy. So where could we go? [Carla]

Carla and his boyfriend, a capoeira teacher, had to reflect in a double way about where and how to move, as they were looking for a place in which the local labor market could fit both their divergent needs. Berlin, in the end, emerged as the city where she could find good opportunities for translations from German, the language she is expert in, and he could easily find interested clients in capoeira lessons. This concerted decision signals a quite balanced di-

vision about who and how should move and to earn what, probably also influenced by their different citizenship status, as the European citizenship owned by Carla enables her to overcome more easily national barriers within the EU than the extra-European status of her boyfriend. Thus, in the case of Carla, the migration project has been connected since the beginning to the project of founding a new household, which has also influenced heavily the way how she reflects on her mobility, as she argues.

C: The thing of coming here with my boyfriend, I think it really changed A LOT the way I live this city, how I have lived this experience here. I think I would have had a completely different path alone, totally different. [Carla]

Other interviewed migrants, instead, have experienced their desire to migrate as a risk for the preservation of their love relationship. For some of them, cutting off the relationship was perceived as the only way to put themselves in the condition to decide autonomously about their migration. Paola, a 27 years old woman who works as a translator for a start-up while waiting to start her PhD in Linguistics, explains how she slowly progressed towards the decision of permanently settling in Berlin while struggling to understand if she wanted to maintain a long-lasting love relationship or not.

P: “For the first year, two years, I had my boyfriend, my ex-boyfriend, in Italy, and thus it has been so heavy, yes, because ... because he, a musician, had all his bounds to Friuli [region of origin] so he would never ever move from there, he is very bound to his region, speaks the local dialect, he never left it, he’s really bound. Even if he is very open regarding other things, open-minded. And so, I found myself at a crossroads, I mean I had to choose either for my experience abroad, or for this relationship with him, basically. And of course, I choose [laughs], well, as you see, I choose the second thing, but it wasn’t easy! Because for a certain time we had a relationship at distance, and so it was, really difficult, because in Berlin I was feeling in a way, in Italy in another way. In Berlin I would miss my boyfriend, and in Italy I would miss Berlin. Well, I didn’t know what to do, where to go. So, it has been very hard, eh, for that reason, exactly.

S: And what happened when you left him, did this insecurity about where to be also stay with you after that?

P: Well, I’d say that when it was over, I felt a bit released, I mean I had understood that I was following a bit what I wanted to do. So, it was a, a lighter thing, yes, in which I

was feeling less a double, so to speak. And so, yes, after that let's say that it started to be better. [Paola]

Breaking a love relationship, which also could mean renouncing to the project of founding a new household, a family, and thus becoming adult in a way, represented a big challenge, which also put in danger Paola's own ability to locate herself spatially, and to develop a coherent narrative of the self, based on causality ("I moved there because", "I stayed there because"). Being blocked in front of a crossroads, for her, evoked a sense of double-ness, which kept her from sensing that she was taking decisions for *her own* life. With the decision to leave her boyfriend, she felt unleashed to develop her own path. A similar story was told by Caterina, who was also struggling for several years with a love relationship which made her feel oppressed and unhappy. As in the case of Paola, Caterina says that the possibility to move together with her boyfriend to Berlin and settle with him was impossible, due to his social life, fixed to the place of origin.

S: Did he come to live here for a while?

C: Yes, he lived here, a bad story, I mean when he came, it went very bad, very bad ... when it was over between us, he went back, because fundamentally I think that he never managed to build something here ... and Florence [his home town] is a small city, and he is a small celebrity there, well, he is a political personality there, and he has a role there. (...) So, he didn't find himself very well here, and got back. [Caterina]

Caterina talks about the decision to leave him for good, and not to come back anymore to Florence, as a moment of liberation, an impulsive decision taken against rational reasoning.

C: And we were about to be together again, and so he was like „you have to come back to Florence, because if you stay in Berlin... you know I can't be there" (...) and well, instead of packing my things, I bought a new book shelf, I was still in my old apartment, and I started to tidy up my room, and well, I did exactly the opposite [than what he told me to do]. And I start again looking for a job, well, through the job-fair for bilingual persons. [Caterina]

This search will lead her to find a new and more stable job as a customer agent at the online company Booking.com, where she is still working currently. The decision to leave her boyfriend, once again, was coupled by actions which enabled her to permanently settle in Berlin.

Of course, love relationships are not the only type of social tie connected to the decision to move. Azzurra, for instance, started moving quite early, as she began working as a seasonal waitress in the Switzerland. Her parents accepted her move to Berlin as they were already used to have her only for short times at home. Nonetheless, she describes her move as a process of liberation from the control exercised indirectly and diffusely both by her parents and by the neighbors of the small city in Sardinia where she comes from.

A: With 17 I was allowed to come back home at any hour, I could go out from home and come back at the time I preferred to. But then it's your consciousness, you know, the moral, which blocks you! I mean, you cannot go back home at 10 in the morning, completely wasted! [laughs] And maybe your father is having breakfast, on Sunday morning, he won't take it well! Especially because as a woman, I come from South Italy, you know? Maybe in the North it's different, but, I mean, a woman, alone, coming back home at that hour, of course they won't talk very well about you, the neighbors, so it's better they don't see what I do! [Azzurra]

The fabric of gendered control in the place of origin is perceived as stricter and relying on tacit consensus about which behaviours are proper or not for a young single woman. Spatial mobility enables young women to loosen themselves from sets of relationships perceived as enclosing them into fixed categories, in this case that of the "Southern woman", the object of concerted control by family and neighbours. However, similar discourses are mobilized also by young women coming from the North, albeit still from small villages. During the interview, Alessandra lingered in detail about the crises recurring in her life, during which she constantly calls into question her migration and her fixity to Berlin. These crises, which, following the etymological interpretation, can be understood as moments of discernment, judgment and valuation, have to do with her re-location within relations of reproduction. The latter are inextricably intertwined with her spatial re-location. Her understanding of gender is informed by her studies in Political Science, during which she focused on Gender Studies. Her "sociological" reflexivity did not prevent crises to occur again, though it helped her to provide an explanation and a confirmation of her past decisions.

S: If you look back, do you think you made the right choice by moving here?

A: Yes, even if sometimes I get some crises, ... I came to the reflection that, after all my gender studies, ... society tells you that women have to be mothers, wives, but at the

same time career women, you know, and we need to acquire a series of rights which we didn't have before, you know. So, we have that focus, they tell you "either you choose career, or you need to choose the relationship". And in the end, I say, I look at my girlfriends from the elementary school, and maybe they are all already married, and, indeed it is true, having focused less on career, and being pleased with what you have, you feel better, they feel better you know, you feel better. I had a bit of this crisis, but in the end I said, "why the hell should I do this!", I mean, I go wherever I want, I travel wherever I want, I go around, if I want to go back home at six in the morning, I'll do it. If I want to go out, I have a salary which enables me to go out every evening, you know! No, no, I am happy with this, it's not motherhood which I am looking for, it's not marriage! But sometimes, for me, I get these crises, because, anyway, I come from a small village, there you have this myth like "ok, if you don't marry, you're gonna be a spinster [orig. *zitella*]. [Anna]

The "spinster" myth, or rather the spinster stigma, is to be understood in relation with a regime of reproduction in which the marker of failure for women is the lack of marriage as a way to reproduce, just as much as the marker of failure for men is the lack of a job as a way to produce income. Notwithstanding societal changes, Alessandra's words suggest that it is still far from being a residual in contemporary societies, according to literature on the topic (Simpson 2006). As I will show in the chapter on reproduction, contestations on new adjustments for reproduction illustrate how a new Post-Fordist compromise for reproduction is still on its way to be closed, especially in peripheral areas and small-scale cities and towns. Importantly, being reproduction adjustments based on relations *between* gender, it does not affect only women, as Alberto's view on his home village expresses.

A: And my friends, you know, they didn't move that much. The idea is that of the village, you find a girl from your village, and so, I escaped! Yes, this was a bit their idea.

S: And how do you get along with them?

A: Well, I mean, well and less well, because, for instance there is one who constantly asks, when we hear from each other, "and so, did you find a girl?" [laughs, I laugh too] "isn't it the time that you finally find a girl?". Jesus Christ! I answer "well, yes, no, I still need some time!". And this is the village's mentality, which is not even that wrong you know, but still... [Alberto]

For Alberto, the issue is present but is more the source of a laugh, while the interviews suggest that the stigma is more serious and threatening for women. Overcoming it, for Alessandra, can be done only by staying in Berlin. She needs to be fixed to the urban cosmopolitan city, in order to stabilize her decisions about career and motherhood. For her, release from bounds which embed young women into a regime of reproduction based on traditional gendered division of labor (man at production, woman at reproduction) are connected to the display of a lifestyle marked by freedom and choice of consumption. Lifestyle consumption becomes a point of reference, of distinction from Alessandra's childhood friends who are now embedded in family relations which Alessandra perceives as less emancipated.

S: So, you think you have followed the career?

A: Yes, mainly, NOW I am focused on my career. Because I live very well, I mean, I do not want motherhood at all, I do not want at all to have kids, marry, things like this trend [sic]. Absolutely! [sighing]

S: And what do you think could have happened if you stayed there?

A: Well, I am sure that I could not have done what I do now, I know it is a materialist discourse, but I mean, having a job, which gives me a salary, and for which I know that I can LIVE WELL, you know, I don't think I would have got this in Italy, because there are no jobs there! [Alessandra]

In 2017, nearly half of the women population in Italy is inactive on the labor market: only 52,5% of women are working, against a rate of 75,2% for German women..²³ While Alessandra could count on a supportive middle-class family, a degree and experiences of mobility and foreign languages, her references to Italy underline backwardness regarding the gender division of labor. Indeed, she mentions later in the interview that she is the only girl with a university degree in the whole village close to Padova where she comes from. Again, the urban-rural divide emerges as an axis of reference and difference. While many variables intervened to let her decide to move to Berlin, gender-making has played a crucial role, and can be defined as a "collaborative agent to migration" (Zhang 2017), a lateral process of re-working her understanding of her identity as a woman, which has sustained her desire to migrate. Hav-

²³Source <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/tgm/refreshTableAction.dotab=table&plugin=1&pcode=tesem010&language=en> (last accessed: 05.01.2019).

ing migrated to Berlin, and more importantly having found a job with a permanent work contract, she has the sense that she managed to escape gender relations of subjugation and oppression. She experiences her access into the labor market as an emancipation from being a dependent woman, either as mother or as housewife. In a similar way as Giovanni talks about his escape from a fixed class container, she claims her identity as a woman with income security and possibility to consume and spend time freed from reproduction labor. Her disconnection from reproduction relations is accompanied by a sense of freedom, but also of disorientation, as her reference to crises suggest. Having rejected a regime of reproduction which is dominant in the place where she comes from, it seems that a new regime is still to be found or experimented, in order to guarantee security also with regard to reproduction arrangements.

Emancipation through wage labor is a recurring theme in the interviews with female migrants. Michela, who is working as mini-jobber in a café, also refers to her mobility as a necessary move she had to take in order to be finally master of her own self. During our dialogue, she stresses out that her migration has being accompanied by a process of psychological work on her self, orientated towards understanding her desires, freed from parental projections upon her.

M: It's a bit like a puzzle, you only have to make the pieces match well, and also have the pieces, you know, time, patience, and at a certain point everything will start taking its shape, if this shape corresponds to what you are, even better! Because, from life I want anything but being the projection of what someone else then me wants me to be! This is basically the reason why I left Naples, because I did not want to be forced to be what my parents would have liked, maybe it was also nice what they wanted, butt, no.

S: Did they want you to stay there?

M: Well, you know, a stable job, a profession, but, nothing of this happened, and I stopped condemning and punishing myself because I did not correspond the desires of others, I correspond only mine, and they are these ones, they correspond to me, how I have made myself, in the past years, little by little. [Michela]

Her family of origin is quite wealthy, acculturated and supportive, Michela can count on their economic and emotional help in case of need. Embedded into relations of care which prevented her to become autonomous, Michela had to physically separate herself from her family, leaving Naples, in order to have space to construct a new identity based on hard work,

commitment and experimentation.

S: What were you doing before moving to Berlin?

M: Well, in Naples I was very embittered by life, I was tired of doing only theatre, because, of course, theatre is nice, but, you also want to have, you know, some money in your pocket. Because I had moved to live alone, but then, when I left a job, I had no money anymore, and I came back to my parents, but this was being deadly heavy. (...) But nothing is really definitive, or fixed, but, you have to give yourself something to do, and this thing, I understood it only when I came here, that if you don't give yourself something to do, nothing will happen.

S: Why is it that you understood this only here?

M: Because, anyway, in Naples I had a much more protected situation, Naples is a city which is beautiful if you have nothing to do, if you have time to spend, and so on. But it doesn't trigger in you that, that lust in making an effort, with work, you know. Instead, here I am a perfect stranger, every day I wake up and I say, ok, I have to conquer my day, because no one binds your mind here, no one. [Michela]

For young women with a middle-class origin and supportive parents, the achievement of autonomy and emancipation appear often as inherently paradoxical. In the contemporary context of crisis and precarization of sources of income, young people have to rely on their families more than in the past, either to provide housing or to finance their living standard in general (Hochstenbach/Boterman 2017; Heath/Calvert 2013; Spilerman/Wolff 2012). If parental background becomes increasingly relevant for the livelihood of young adults, class inequalities originating from past redistribution of resources also play a major role for contemporary redistribution of resources. Many interviewed young women's wish to acquire independency both from class and gender fixed identities seems to clash with their need for economic support from their parents. Even if at distance from their parents, the bound of financial help which they receive, is cause of irritation, which nonetheless is difficult to be tamed. On one side, economic support is welcomed to maintain a standard of living set on middle-class values, on the other, it is despised for preventing them to achieve "real" independence. Elisa, while pursuing her passion for theatre and working occasionally for a theatre company, is financed by her parents for rent and living. She expresses reflexivity about her privileges, but

still accounts for an uncompleted independence, as she never got the chance to really risk something in her life.

E: Well, I really have everything, I really cannot complain, but I would like to get one day to that satisfaction of saying “fuck, I do my job, I earn my money, and I live it, right”. And this thing cannot happen in Italy, because, for god’s sake, my grannis are dead, I could live in their house, but, well

S: Wouldn’t it mean to be independent?

E: It wouldn’t be something I have built myself, like “these are my choices, I risk, I take my risks, I do my project” and so on. It would be a compromise, you know, I know that to say so it is stupid, because compromises are everywhere and all the time... [Elisa]

Teresa, on her part, is trying to establish herself as opera singer while working as a language teacher and giving singing lessons. She has a full work week and has started only recently to give herself some time to go out, “to relax a bit”, but still has to get her flight tickets paid by her parents to get back home from time to time.

T: They pay me tickets to go to Turin, they are always ready to help, always on my side, but well I, I try to detach myself a bit.

S: Has this to do with independence?

T: Yes, exactly, I mean, now I am 28, it’s the time I [laughs]

S: Do you feel, I mean, do you think there is an age when you should become independent?

T: It’s not necessarily an age, but, as years pass I have realized, for instance, that a lot of my girlfriends have married, that one is having a child, and so on, I mean I am not saying that I can’t do it, well a part from the fact that I do not have a boyfriend! [laughs] I mean, also economically at the moment I still don’t know when I could have a child, I mean, I am working, it’s going better and better, but I am not ready yet, so I also feel, I mean I wouldn’t say the pressure, the judgement of others, absolutely. But seeing what happens, also in parallel, around you, makes you understand that maybe, some things still are to be developed. [Teresa]

For Teresa, “parallel” comparison with other female peers is a way to understand the own current location within her life course. Main points of reference are, as for Alessandra, having a child, getting married. Internally, she has to struggle to accept her “deviancy” from the norm; the acknowledgement that she has taken another path still leaves her agitated and unsettled. For migrants in a relationship, instead, the “problem” of deciding about reproduction and founding a household appears as less threatening, time passing as a lighter issue. Giulio, who lives together with his girlfriend, stresses the positive aspects of living in the core of a contemporary and young metropolis.

G: Well, it seems almost that living in Berlin keeps you younger in comparison to what’s happening in Italy. I see friends starting a family, and thighs like this, they get marry. Instead, here, I don’t know, even if I have a girlfriend, we are not planning these things. (...) in our circle of friends here, more or less they are all around thirty, no one HERE is thinking about starting a family. They live since several years as if it was a continuous transition period. They say “yes, but well in the meantime, well, I’ll stay in Berlin”. And they don’t plan like maybe my friends in Italy are doing (...) Here in Berlin you have a bit the Peter pan syndrome, but in a positive way, I mean, it is a positive thing.

S: And with your girlfriend, for now you are not planning for instance, to have children?

G: No, for the moment no, absolutely (...) Of course, we plan to stay together, we are happy about our choices, but maybe in comparison with our parents, we talk much more about this. We ponder all our choices, and the choice not to have children is well-pondered too. We prefer to enjoy life now, what life is offering to us (...) we are conscious about time passing, that we are getting older, and that there will be less and less time to have children, but in case we should not have them, we do not make a problem out of this, we do not have necessarily to have them. [Giulio]

This section has started by evoking the concept of linked lives, and how it helps to understand migration as a process which affects not only the individual moving but also the way how she is able to carry her ties through migration. In particular, migration decisions are intertwined into close relationships, and in particular those relationships which belong to the sphere of reproduction, such as parental ties and love partnerships. The interviewed women often happened to cut their love relationships in order to release themselves from fixed

classed and gendered identities. Migration appears also as an emancipation from such categorizations. Thus, de-linked lives are also an outcome of mobility processes. At the same time, it is still unclear if and what kind of new linking processes are going to take place after physical subtraction from the place of origin. Ties of support from parents seem to be the more difficult to be cut, as they enable migrants, at least those with wealthier backgrounds, to experience their mobile life conduct still maintain a high degree of choice and self-determination. Thus, paradoxes of spatial mobility and social immobility must be lived in the everyday life, with reflexivity and psychological work-out of the self as the main weapons to face precarity. Regarding love relationships, while relatively stable couples seem to be better prepared to formulate and experiment new regimes of reproduction, those who perceive themselves as “singles” still have open questions, which sometimes unsettle them, challenging again and again the decision to settle as migrants. In the next section I will show that, while answers are still open, and mobility seems to be now inscribed in the selves as an endless possibility to relocation, it also becomes clear that there is no coming back to the original situation. There is no past to be returned to, and new ways of fixity must necessarily be created, as comparison and reference-taking can now only take place in parallel.

5.2.4. The Emergence of a Cleft Habitus Based on Mobility

The relationship between migration and mobility: mobile as a life conduct, free mobility as an ideal also entails the fact that migrants perceive themselves as frictionless bodies, which can easily re-locate from one country to the other, in a way which should not impact their sense of physical and psychological integrity, their capacity to understand themselves within a context. Instead, the interviewed persons do experience everyday moments of exclusion which makes migrants out of them. They sense everyday encounters with multifarious barriers; from the perspective of critical border studies, these barriers are maybe better explained as borders, as they are largely relational and by that differently permeable (Mezzadra/Neilson 2013). Indeed, they do not work in the same way for all, but rather filtrate, distort those who access and exclude others, who often remain in front of them and often enter those vortexes aimed at passing time while the door will be opened. Such process of differential inclusion (De Genova et al. 2015) leaves the respondents of my study into a limbo between migration and mobility, between gravity and free-floating, between being an underclass and an “overclass” at the same time. While it is true that the very access to mobility already represents a

marker of belonging to the dominant part of a globalized society, it is also a matter of fact that, never mind which class they belonged to before, migrants are now in a situation in which they are structurally exposed to downward wind. It is in this moment that they are called to mobilize resources, and, as they are differently endowed with them (either that we and they are aware of this or not) new class lines based on their ability to move emerge. Thus, while migrants in a context still dominated by the nation as the entity which gives rights, rules and structures class relations and everyday life (through language, education, labor regulation, etc.) are necessarily exposed to entering an underclass by the very fact of crossing national boundaries and settling beyond them, the differences among them do not simply disappear, but rather are re-configured in different ways.

In this section I will try to explore the nexus underclass-overclass in which migrants find themselves. To understand this, I will deploy the concept of cleft habitus, developed by Bourdieu (1984, 1990), and look for it in the dissonances, discontinuities and anxieties, which emerged in the narrative biographies of the interviewees. By exploring them, I will look for new forms of inequality which we might be witnessing in the era of late neoliberalism.

The concept of cleft habitus, or “habitus clivé” has been developed by Bourdieu to tackle social mobility and change, i.e. to adjust the concept of habitus, usually adopted to explain continuities and adjustment in small-range social mobility, for those who pursued a long-range trajectory of social mobility. As Bourdieu himself explains in his work “Sketch for a Self-Analysis” (Bourdieu 2004), experiencing an intense path of upwardly social mobility produces fragmentations of the self which are cause of big anxieties, sense of guilt, disorientation. Friedman picks up the concept of cleft habitus to challenge ultra-positive takes on upward social mobility, which represents since decades an indisputable myth within discourses about economic progress and crisis, welfare and well-being (Friedman 2016). In other words, the possibility to pursue upwardly social mobility, which in the US has given way to the ideal of the “American dream”, has been the target of policies since the 1950es, and has been a major argument to sustain capitalism and neoliberalism as good and right systems to organize and allocate resources within society (Friedman 2016). Through a research conducted in the UK, Friedman stresses how individuals who have been highly upwardly mobile, also experience “hidden emotional injuries” (Sennett/Cobb 1972), i.e. the “emotional imprinting of social mobility” (Friedman 2016): through the process of detachment and attachment, class “transfuges” end up in a situation of “double isolation both from their origin and destination

class” (ebd.: 132).

In this section, I tie in with this argument and apply it to spatial mobility, thereby stressing how through migration the double isolation becomes “doubled” itself, as it involves not only class displacement, but also spatial displacement, thereby letting migrants mobilize categories of reference which have to do with class and gender, but also with ethnicity and nationality. Moreover, in the context of the post-crisis migration flows, the country of origin is perceived as indefinitely in crisis, and the social condition of those who have stayed, doomed to “sink” together with the national economy. From this perspective, migrants feel the impossibility of going back as a bitter acknowledgement, which contributes to further spoiling their relationship with stayers. During her interview, Paola talks about her feelings of unease when she goes back to Italy and meets her friends there. She experiences these rendezvous differently than before migration: she is now deemed to play the snobbish one, the one who has reached many things in a not legitimate way, by going abroad, thereby choosing an easy escape.

P: It happened to me that now, going back for Easter or Christmas, that, maybe, sometimes I even, do not want to tell some things which happened to me, because maybe I see my friends having difficulties, for instance, in finding a home, like leaving their parental home, and, well, going to live by themselves, finding a job. And so, stupidly, but well, it was for me like, I don’t know, I live with my boyfriend, we have a home which doesn’t cost much, I have a part-time job, I mean sometimes it takes its toll, it seemed to me mmh, as if I was inflicting them a wrongdoing. I don’t know if this is the right expression, but I didn’t want to...

S: You felt like you were bragging?

P: Yees, like playing the one who goes abroad, who has everything, because of course, what I have now is part of a path, I mean it’s not that it was easy for me, on the contrary, I have done many things which have not been that easy. But obviously, when I go back, ehm, I am the one, you know, who has gone, and now has an easy life, you know? Because I, yes, I cannot share certain things with them, because they never experienced them, well, yes, they never experimented them. [Paola]

The fact that Paola put a break in her life by migrating to Berlin has inevitably made her different from her peers, who constituted her relevant Others before her move. Such a similar

break is felt also by Teresa, who experiences a radical break in the ties to her childhood friends in Turin.

S: And what about your friends in Turin, what do they do, did they move too?

T: Not really, not really. Not saying that this disappointed me! But ... I felt the need to move, in an absolute way, and this thing distinguished me a bit from them, it torn me apart from them. They needed to stay, and I needed to go, so it was a parallel need, and we drastically separated from one another. [Teresa]

By realizing the differences which have emerged over time between themselves and their peers in Italy, the two women acknowledge a sense of privilege, of having made the right choice which enabled them to get to a better position, but at the same time feel sad and lost as they cannot count anymore like in the past on those networks of friendship, crucial to get emotional support and social validation. Alessandra, for instance, could maintain her friendships in Italy, and feels lucky for this.

A: Anyway, I have been lucky, I have a lot of relationships at home, I am not like so many people who move and then cuts away, break everything and say: “when I get back home I have no one anymore”, no, this is not true for me! I have a lot of friends ... This is great, because in the end they are my friends for life, they know me since ages. [Alessandra]

While I have focused until now on economic support provided mostly by parents, the mentioned quotes underline how emotional support seems to be as well fundamental to feel stable and settle in the new place of origin. While research has suggested the relevance of cultural brokers for migrants, which help them to decipher the new context and find support within the ethnic community, it seems that “emotional brokers” are necessary too, both in the home country and in the new place, to help overcome the “emotional imprinting” of spatial and social mobility, whose consequences at this point become much more difficult to disentangle from one another. When Paola discovers that by chance her neighbor in the new flat comes from her same small village, life in Berlin becomes easier.

P: With XY²⁴ it is beautiful ... it was important to meet her because, well, we talk about the same places, I mean we come from the same village, from the same micro-vil-

²⁴Name was made anonymous by the author.

lage. So, we know the same people, even if we did not know each other before. And when I go up to visit her, we chat and gossip on Pordenone, it is the moment, you know, in which I truly feel home! ... what made me feel home the most, it covered this small thing that I could not talk of my places with anyone, I mean I could talk about them but then people would not know what I was talking about, right. [Paola]

In the context of fading ties with the stayers, settling new ties of friendship with someone who can function as a bridge to the home place, enables Paola to better accept the distance rising between her and her old friends back home. For Marta, instead, the line of continuity and rupture between her relationship with her friends back home and the Italian peers in Berlin emerges around her problems at the workplace.

P: Well I noticed that, this is not always true, but especially with Italians, probably because in Italy the concept of work, especially at the moment, is very different from here, and I mean, if you have a job you are very lucky, and you have to hold it on. When I talk with my friends about things like “I want to change job, because, I don’t know”, it seems that my problems, like my frustration, my gastritis, etc., for them they mean nothing. They look at me as if I was an alien, they tell me “you’re stupid, you already have a job, consider yourself lucky!” [Paola]

Paola prefers “censoring” herself and not talking at all about her personal issues, in order to “hide” her privilege, so that her friends will keep considering her as their peer. Instead, Marta is wounded by the fact that her friends do not recognize her problems and pains. While for Paola the issue is that she is perceived as now belonging to a higher class, and she thus tries to make this invisible by omitting stories about her life in Berlin, for Marta the problem is that her friends consider her as privileged for having a good job, but do not recognize her everyday struggles with difficulties and barriers. She underlines this connection when she continues saying, in the interview:

M: Unfortunately, this thing ends up that Italians, when they move abroad, I saw many, also read it in online forums, or working with them in companies, etc. In reality, they also lower down the standards for Germans within companies. My boyfriend XY²⁵ told me, they [Germans] are used to, for them private life is important. They work 8 hours, and then go home. Overtime is usually paid. Startups, instead, exploit a lot of workers who come from abroad. In my company 20% are Germans, maybe less. They ex-

25Name was made anonymous by the author.

plait this because we, Italians, accept less money, they don't know how the situation is, or maybe are also desperate, I don't know. They are those who work 10 hours! Because they think "I have to hold on to this job, I have to make the pleasure of my boss", and so on, even if they actually don't care at all for their job! And this is something I noticed, and they are mistaken! [Marta]

For Marta, the idea of work as something to hold on, is the cause of both her sufferance not being acknowledged by her friends in Italy, and of the exploitation of other Italian migrants in Berlin. Because of the shared evaluation of work as the highest ideal, she is in a situation of prestige if compared to people of her age living in Italy, and in a situation of exploitation as Italian migrant in a condition of "underclass", if compared to Germans. It becomes clear that with migration, class subjectification enters processes of fragmentation which do not diminish the relevance of class as a source of identity, but rather complicate it, as multiple references co-exist.

While class has been mostly analyzed within a bounded national or local scale, the analysis of the class of migrants urges research to look for other scales and spaces onto which class is projected and regulated (Kelly 2012). The national scale, useful to understand how migrants are embedded in class relations in the country of origin and of destination, cannot account for all the diverse interactions between categories such as class, ethnicity and nationality: migrants are *simultaneously* and *relationally* embedded within both class relations. Their complex embeddedness takes place on a trans-national scale, as they construct boundaries in which migrant and non-migrant peers, peers from the same or different classes get mobilized intermittently. The fluidity of class and status, in other words, become more visible analyzing migrants, as they have at their availability a multiplicity of scales to draw upon to express belonging and to adopt as frameworks for their processes of boundary-making. For instance, national and urban scales play both a crucial role, as we have seen for those boundaries drawn around hedonism and asceticism, strictly connected to the participation in the clubbing scene in Berlin. Moreover, they have "multiple organized memberships", in virtue of which "they can command scarce resources in ways non available to non-migrants", thereby opening the possibility to more flexible processes of self-positioning (Novicka 2013).

5.3. The Permanent Mobilization of the Self: Doomed to Mobility?

This chapter has shown how young migrants moving within the European regime of free mobility tend to develop a habitus which, either marked by continuity or rupture with the past, is predicated upon the possibility of mobility as both a practical and imagined characteristic of life. While analyzing the different reactions developed by migration to the capitalist appellation to circulate within a context of globalization and crisis, the chapter is also intended to deliver some arguments about the possible implications of such a life conduct. Mobility appears as a way to release the self from bounds which are perceived to impede its valorization and the formulation of new identities. However, we were asking at the beginning: “once migrants are set free or set themselves free from certain bonds and mechanisms, into which new mechanisms and bonds are they integrated, either if they recognize this or not? Of which sorts of gears do they become the irreplaceable oil?”. In other words, in the moment they produce a rupture or a re-molding of habitus, thereby abandoning established but outdated strategies of reproduction, which new patterns of social reproduction are they constructing? While reflexivity and consciousness have been keywords of the way how migrants defined their decision to move as well as their choices and self-positioning, when talking about their future they were often lingering on uncertainty and not knowingness, however not as a sign of negativity and pessimism, but rather evoking a positive sense of openness. In this section I will try to analyze these responses and let them interact with processes taking place on macro-level regarding the organization of production and reproduction.

S: What about the future, how do you see it?

G: Aaah, are you asking me, how do I see myself in 5 years! [ironic]

S: [laughing] Yes, or maybe can you see yourself in 5 years at all?

G: I have no clue! [Giampiero]

The interview questionnaire of the research contained the item “Where do you see yourself in five years? And in five months?”. However, as the quoted dialogue with Giampiero highlights, these questions were often spotted as quite irrelevant and indeed funny. The gesture of predicting the future, already challenged by the flexibilization and temporalization of work, housing, and in general of the mechanisms to access resources, seemed to be further

blocked by migration. The young migrants laughed on the possibility to state now, where they are going to be and what they are going to do in some years. Their answers suggest at first sight that future, just because of its impenetrability, seems to be less worrying. Ontological security seems to be better guaranteed than by drawing plans which could be contradicted within a short span of time. Moreover, the possibility to escape again, to take once more the exit-option seems to be always available. With regard to intra-European migration, Engbersen talks about the development of a “migratory habitus”, marked by “intentional unpredictability” (Drinkwater et al. 2009), which should correspond to the “ideal-type of liquid migration” (Engbersen 2018). Intentional unpredictability is defined as keeping options open, taking a “wait and see” approach (Drinkwater et al. 2006: 7). To keep options open, means also being able to maintain ties with friends, relatives and relevant others in the home country (Friberg 2013). It becomes crucial to find the right balance between distance and proximity, the ability to use digital media to communicate at distance, the possibility to go visit friends from time to time and let them visit you. All these practices are those who might enable migrants in a close or remote future to return, move on, or strengthen their settlement in Berlin without having the feeling they are losing their connections to their social past.

In this section I will make critical use of the concept, in particular questioning the assumption that migrants possess the power to decide about whether they want to predict future or not. Also, the idea of liquid migration, inspired by Bauman’s work on liquidity in modernity (1999), can be useful to understand how contemporary migration takes place within profound transformations of regimes of production and reproduction marked by a re-orientation towards flexibility and mobility. Nonetheless, the concept of liquidity should be challenged as itself part of the ideological hummus proliferating from the process of European integration, according to which frictions between nations as references for social life are doomed to disappear. Migrants have bodies and social life which, far from being liquid, require space, territories, boundaries, to be made as subjects in society. Class, gender, ethnicity are principles of partitioning which still need the regulating instance of nations and other spatial fixes to exist and produce divisions.

Against an approach to intra-European migration as per se liquid and dis-embedded, Bygnes and Erdal (2017), have recently explored the intentions of settlement of young European migrants in Norway. In their research, young migrants seem to long for settlement, especially against a background of indefinitely prolonged crisis or low living standards in

their home countries (Spain and Poland). It seems difficult to extrapolate clear patterns about how long intra-EU migrants will stay in the emigration country, also because of the fallacy of the concept of strategy, which does not account for the adaptive and corrective practices that migrants undertake over time (Drinkwater/Garapich 2015).

Temporality, then, and in particular duration of time, plays a fundamental role for understanding why and how migrants adjust their views on future, as Friberg rightly demonstrates (Friberg 2013). Beside sheer amount of time, or *chronos*, Friberg mobilizes the notion of dual labor markets to explain why some migrants stay more or less longer. In other words, the temporality of labor activities and contracts, or *kairos*²⁶, is fundamental to understand the temporalities of migration, as migrants usually depend on sources of income to finance their stay over time (Snyder 2016). The way how they fix themselves to a new place, then, depends also on the structure of the local labor market, which might be more or less able to host migrants as a profitable labor force, while at the same time it holds true that migrants have historically constituted a labor force generally needed to supply the lowest levels of labor markets.

By focusing on Polish migrants in Norway, Friberg distinguishes three stages of migration: during the first stage of arrival, migrants have little control over the duration of their stay, as it depends from their job's conditions, speed in learning the language, capacity of the ethnic community to provide support (Friberg 2013). In other words, they are confronted with a series of incognita which they can impact only to a small degree. In my sample, for instance, Emilia and Armando, who had arrived since the shortest period of time at the moment of the interview, answered, when asked about the future, and in particular about where they would have liked to buy a home.

A: Well, now you are flooring me, cause I've never thought about this. [laughs] I have no clue! I don't know, because I'd like to have children, so I'd be for buying a home for a family, but I don't know how this place is good to have a family, or to raise a child.

S: You have never thought of this, then.

A: No, honestly not.

E: For now, we are set on the present! Then, maybe, later, we'll see.

[Armando, Emilia]

Following Friberg's typology, if migrants manage to stay, they usually enter then a period of "permanent temporariness", during which they often commute between home and destination place (ebd: 1602). These "transnational commuters" might still end returning permanently to the home country, but, as Friberg remarks, the degree of choice about this identifies their return as "failure or success" (ebd.). Finally, when household is founded or moved to the place of migration, settlement usually becomes durable and possibly definitive. In a context of free mobility, then, time and labor are crucial for separating the migrant who comes today and goes tomorrow from the one who comes today and stays tomorrow. The categories defined more than a century ago by Simmel (1908) seem to be still relevant for understanding how settlement and mobility are contingent and relational. As I will show in the next chapters, the case of intra-EU migratory flows to contemporary Berlin is an interesting example for analyzing how dynamics of valorization and exploitation interact with the settlement orientation of migrants. Moreover, I will analyze how similar dynamics emerge also in the field of housing, usually neglected or considered as secondary when studying labor migration.

In any case, for now I will focus on the migrants' orientation to future from the perspective of habitus and life conduct. Migrants responded in a heterogeneous way to questions about the proximate future, often corresponding to the stages identified by Friberg (2013). As the interviewees had arrived in Berlin at least since more than one, but less than ten years (between 2007 and 2015), most of them can be included in the category of the transnational commuters. Indeed, the majority was inclined to intentional unpredictability, motivating it for instance with the lack of fixed relationships (as for Raffaella), or with external or rather lateral temporalities, such as having first to finish university, as for Paola and her partner.

S: Do you think are you staying here in Berlin?

R: For now, I don't see why not. Well, now looking for the next ten years I do not see reasons for going away. Twenty years, for life, I don't know. I can't really think for more than one year, two years, I don't have a partner, don't have children, I am alone, so, well, I do what I want! [Raffaella]

S: If you look into the future, where do you see yourself, like, in five years?

P: you know, I don't know! [laughs] I mean, for now, for now I'm fine here. I think it

depends a bit on, on what we are going to do together. Because he is studying now and will need at least two more years. Maybe we'll decide according to where it will be easier to find a job, or what we are going to do, if I will keep on studying or not, for instance. Exactly. Yes, soo, we don't really know! [laughs] [Paola]

Azzurra, instead, when asked about her future, asserts that she would like to go back to Sardinia at one point in life. As she is convinced that due to the economic situation she will not get a pension from the Italian state, she is saving money for that via a private pension fund. She is sure that "soon or later I'll go back to live in my land, for sure". However, in the next sentence, she unfolds the possibility of moving to Peru, where she went to visit her brother.

A: Also, who knows, I have been to Peru, for instance, right. See, traveling opens your mind a lot, right, so maybe there are things you never thought of before, and then they come to your mind, right, when you do them [starts describing her experience in Perú, visiting her brother who lives there]. (...) But I mean, you see, I would not displease to have a life there, right! I don't know, it is stiill very far, yes it's far. But in the end, when you do it, it's not that far! [Azzurra]

Pragmatic projections are juxtaposed to imaginary ones. Getting back, or moving on, are weighted on the two plates of one single scale. Future, of course, opens the way to dreams and idealization, as in imagining future young people can leave materialities and constraints aside. Azzurra dreams of Perú, but still she is aware of the problems which her move to a such a far country might imply, in particular regarding her role as future care-giver of her aging parents.

A: I mean, 12 hours of flight, wow! But in the end, it's not that exaggerated. Only, maybe, who knows, my parents are elderly, right. If something happens, [sighs] in two hours I'll be at home, right! It already happened, in two hours I was home. And there, to Peru it's a 1.000 Euro ticket, I mean. [Azzurra]

When talking about *habitus*, it must be acknowledged that beliefs and practices are not necessarily linked by any linearity or correspondence (Nowicka 2015). On this basis, I am largely aware that practices may or even will not be conform to the statements about future moves delivered by the migrants. My intention therefore, is that of disentangling their beliefs about the future from their practices of settlement and mobility. However, I analyze such statements of intentional unpredictability or cultivated uncertainty as a way of coping with the

lack of a structuring instance in their life, such as the constitution of a new family household or the entry into a linear career. In other words, what matters sociologically is not so much *what* they predict for their future, but more crucially *if* and *how* they are willing to draw plans, figure the future out, undertake self-made soothsaying as a way to forestall randomness in their lives. The fact that migrants find the question about their situation in 5 years funny does not mean that they are not developing dreams and ideals about the future, but rather that they acknowledge that the number of incognito variables is too high for them to sketch out some predictions, as Giorgia's quote reminds.

S: How is it over time, are you still convinced that you will stay here?

G: In the future?

S: Yes.

G: Weell, if I think of it, I get anxiety! Hence, I think, I hope! [laughs], I mean, if I try to understand what to do I get crazy, I mean, because anyway and obviously I would like to go back to Italy, but surely this is not the right moment, and probably neither will it be next year, or in two years. I mean, on the work level.

S: You mean because of the crisis?

G: Yes. Hence, I don't know. Now I'm here and I'm fine, this is what matters, then I'll see. [Giorgia]

As the story about Perú told by Azzurra showed, a further issue connected to intentional unpredictability has to do with the sedimentation of past mobility experiences. This does not only mean that migrants who have visited or dwelled in other places in the past might decide to settle there as a next move. Of course, this is an important aspect, as many interviewees have chosen Berlin itself as a place to settle after they had visited it for holiday, with the school class, or during shorter periods of stay. However, what matters mostly is the fact that many migrants talked about themselves as having been shaped so strongly by their past experience of mobility, that they have lost the capacity to imagine a future in settlement. Giampiero has lived in London for three years, and in Madrid for two, before moving to Berlin. Asked about why he cannot predict where he is going to live in the next years, he states:

G: First of all, I don't know because I have always stayed for no more than 3 years in a city, maximum. Apart from the village where I grew up. So, if I think of me staying five more years in Berlin, I am bit scared, because then I say "well, there is so much to be seen in the world, why staying in Berlin?!" [Giampiero]

If Giampiero investigates his recent past, he sees mobility. As *habitus* is the product of history, accumulated experiences and choices, the development of a mobile *habitus* within contemporary globalized capitalism seems to hide from his eyes the possibilities and the material conditions for settlement. The young interviewed migrants had often difficulties in finding out if their future will be similar or different from their proximate past. Boredom, getting used to things, getting "saturated", are part of the fears of these young people, who are waiting for their anxiety to calm down and let them fix themselves to a place, as Lorenzo's words suggest.

L: The fact that I am a dynamic person depends from the fact that I constantly look for, I constantly need new incentives, and to assemble new information, I really need to live in a context which is always NEW to me, and which is always on update. [Lorenzo]

When asked if he intends to stay in Berlin, Lorenzo mentions dynamism and saturation of experience, and says:

L: I don't know, I am very, extremely, too dynamic. S: Why too much? S: Because I really move TOO MUCH! I realize that, in comparison to my boyfriend, I move TOO MUCH, I want TOO MUCH, I want to work, do, go out, see things, in the end, I speak fluently four, five languages, I am learning the sixth one (...) I am extremely social, going out, taking the metro, riding the bike, I like it a lot. Ehm, and I am afraid that this will lead me one day to be a bit tired of Berlin. [Lorenzo]

Berlin figures here as a city to be explored, experienced, saturated, in other words as a commodity which can be consumed. Endless mobilization points to endless desires and needs to be satisfied through consumption of places. While this seems to suggest that migrants, once they get loosened from thick bounds, can free float in search for the next "place to be", also those ones embedded in thick ties are not alien to endless mobilization.

5.3.1. Upturning Don Quijote: Mobility as Change of Habitus

Maria is a 28 years old woman who has been raised in a small town in Tuscany. Her roots

are in Ecuador, the country which her family left many years ago. In her home town in Italy she has many relatives, whom she defines as “different” and not “that integrated”. She studied Statistics and managed through her own effort and hard work to acquire crucial skills. She is now waiting for her husband to end up his work by contract in their home town in Toscana and move to Berlin into the flat she is renting since some months. She has started a high-skilled and well-rewarded job as consultant at a big German bank. In other words, her situation might be considered now as quite stable regarding both work, housing, and household, the outcome of the development of a life imperative of effort, hard work, determination (“if I have to work, I work!”), against missing citizenship and institutional discrimination. Before this move, she was working in Rome. When asked about her future intentions, however, she delivers a much more nuanced picture.

M: Well, for now I don't intend to move, first of all, well, sometimes I happen to think about this, because I am a bit like, after two years, after three years, I start getting tired. I mean I am like, sometimes it seems to me I fight against windmills, but after some time I have enough of it, and I go away, I mean, I'm a bit like that. But, considering that I am asking my husband to move here, and he's much more calm than me, and he has more difficulties in adapting, he needs more time, I don't think I will ask him again to move, except I get such a good job offer like “well, let's go”, but I don't think so, for the moment I don't think so. [Maria]

Maria has learnt over time that her reaction to a new context is often that of fighting what she doesn't like, and subsequently leaving for a place which presents better conditions and in which she does not feel constant urge for fighting. For her, these problematic situations occurred for instance when she started looking for a job as a consultant in the Italian bank sector. Having found a good position in Rome, she faced a context in which “there was no meritocracy”, which she defines as “an environment where you say, ok, I'll make an effort, but then I know I will get something back”. She found barriers to the development of her path of social mobility in Italy: while she managed to master her own education and acquisition of skills, she found herself in a work environment in which efforts were not praised in the way she needs in order to secure her livelihood. Predicting that fighting against personalisms and lack of efficiency would lead her to become a Don Quijote, Maria left for better fields. Antonia, who studied to become a sport teacher and left Italy after 8 years of precarious work in the field, made a similar argument about the relationship between lack of meritocracy, protest-

ing, and spatial mobility.

A: Well, surely, I don't want to play the revolutionary. [laughs] I mean, I can play it for myself, if I have to, and hence, I said "well, goodbye".

S: You mean revolutionary in the sense of staying there and trying to change things?

A: Yes, well, some people are for fighting, you know? Like, I must fight to change. And this is very right, it is something I admire. But this is not something for me! I mean, I can commit into doing something to change what is wrong, but after a while, I'll let it go [orig. *mollo la corda*]. Maybe that's 'cos I have no patience! [laughs] Hence, at that point, this pushed me to say, alright, goodbye. After 8 YEARS! [Antonia]

The evocation of Don Quijote and of revolutionaries oddly reminds of a thread linking both Marx and Bourdieu, however in a reversed way. The former used the figure of Don Quijote to describe the decline of a society based on rank and status, and the emergence of class as the main structuring instance in a society based on increasing rationalization of social relations and production (Marx 1998 [1932]; Woods 2005). Bourdieu also deployed the epical figure of the Spanish wanna-be knight to define the effect of hysteresis, i.e. when the "the sense of the probable future is belied and when dispositions are negatively sanctioned ... because the environment they actually encounter is too different from the one to which they are objectively adjusted" (Bourdieu 1990: 62).

For Maria and Antonia, however, habitus seems to work exactly in the opposite way, as, originating from a labor field in which they see personalism and inefficiencies, they seek precisely the opposite, and therefore choose the exit option, before ending up like Don Quijote, pretending a future based on continuity with a past which seems not to have existed at all. While Don Quijote developed his fantastic beliefs by reading chivalric romances, many of the interviewed migrants learnt by their parents, their social environment and within the educational path that via effort, hard work and accumulation of cultural capital, they could secure a stable source of income, safety and self-realization. As we have seen in the section on rupture and mobility, such discontinuities, broken promises and ill-adjusted dispositions are not specific to one class, but rather have been developed jointly by state institutions in compromise

with both waged and salaried working classes. While parents with high cultural capital have pushed their children to internationalize and keep pace with globalization via acquiring cosmopolitanism and transnational *savoir-de-mouvoir*, parents with lower amounts of capital (in particular cultural) have insisted on their children to acquire a degree and seek a stable job. The concept of the so-called “*posto fisso*” (fixed place”, permanent job) was often evoked as a myth, a “chimera”, during the interviews.

S: Would you see yourself in a permanent job [*posto fisso a tempo indeterminato*]?

A: Look, actually I can't really answer this question. Because for me this is also, also something that has been inducted by society, this one too. Because, in reality, I don't give a fuck! I mean, why should I work all my life long here? I mean, who ordered this to me? I mean, if I work one year here, and then 3 months in Ibiza, and then other 6 months in Ireland, well where's the problem? I mean, I am not, not really interested in this thing! But I often said it “*ha, il posto fisso*”, but this was because they brainwashed me! But, I like changing! I mean, I could do also a more fixed job, maybe now I am saying this because I anyway have no family, I am alone, I mean, I have no one, what the fuck should I give! [Antonia]

Antonia feels that she has been cheated by society, as she has been taught to plan her actions according to rules which after some time revealed themselves as non-existing, as a myth. When asked about what she intends for “society”, she answered:

A: Society, at least where I come from [small village from South Italy], was like “go to university, and then find a permanent job, get a family, and then”, wait, this is the best-case scenario! Worst case scenario is, you end up high school, then get married and have seven, eight or don't-know-how-many children, and then it's over! I mean, do you understand?! I mean, I have it in my mind, in my memories! You go to university, find a job, a secure one, and then, in the end it doesn't work.[Antonia]

Mobility seems to be the only feasible reaction of rupture to a system perceived as blocked, monolithic, and in which paths are already pre-established. Spatial mobility, however, does not seem to be enough for many. More important appears the construction of a subjectivity predicated on mobility in almost all spheres of life, from production to reproduction. Carla, for instance, stresses how important is to move within labor markets, actively searching and constructing the desired job position, instead of waiting for it to be proposed by someone.

At the time of the interview, she had three different jobs in the translation sector, which for her was good as she asserted that she needs change, because if she stays too long without moving, she gets tired and becomes “unproductive”. During the interview, she explains that she proposed herself to a start-up company to hire her as a translator to Italian, even if the company did not have yet an international department. By showing entrepreneurial spirit, she was given the job, which for her was the beginning of her success within migration.

C: Hence, I am saying, you also need to know, not really know, but well, you need to MOVE.

S: You mean, acting like you did?

C: Yes, ... I mean searching, have a go, because, if you wait for things falling down onto you, well you can stay in Italy, you can be here, but you won't get them.

[Carla]

In Carla's case, permanent mobilization within labor markets goes hand in hand with refusal of labor relations of employment.

C: For the future I count on working more on my own, to have the chance to get commissions only with translations, and get out of dependent work, this is my goal.

S: So, you'd prefer working as a self-employed rather than employed?

C: Me, as a person, absolutely, yes.

S: Why?

C: Because after a while I get tired of being below [stare sotto, orig.], I feel that I am doing something for the others and not for me. (...) now it's ok to work 20 hours [in the start-up], but then I realize that I am starting to feel it as too narrow, because you might be delivering a lot, you give a lot for the others, you help the company to grow, but what about you? [Carla]

Carla prefers not having a boss and working on her own and for herself. Her quest for

autonomy and independency, declined on labor relations, is linked to developing the ability to circulate alone and driven by self-set goals. Carla has a working-class father; her mother instead is a housewife. She has developed her skills, moving from her small town in Puglia to other cities in Italy to study and endow cultural capital, language skills, which have opened her the doors to working in a transnational field. After getting together with her boyfriend, she has moved to Germany, where she is now working in the field she has studied for, making also out of her passion for capoeira a side job. At the moment of the interview, her work week was divided in 20 hours a week employed work and 20 as free-lancer. While she has constructed a fix for achieving economic and emotional security in a quite straightforward way, she demands autonomy in labor relations and would like to progressively increase the work share as self-employed, whereby she does not challenge hard work and constant effort. Rather, self-employment appears to her as the only way to face a regular 40-hours working week.

S: Do you consider your weekly work-load as right for you?

C: Yes, yes, also because 40 hours a week, I don't think I can stand them completely as a dependent worker, no, no. But I don't complain, as most of the people I know work 40 hours a week like that, it is the most common way of working here. [Carla]

The institution of the permanent job, the "*posto fisso*", for Carla, is not even a myth nor a chimera, but rather something to bluntly avoid. Learning how to move means for her learning how to get a stable source of income via a mobile and flexible life conduct, thereby reminding the quest for flexicurity developed by social movements at the beginning of the 2000es (Neilson/Rossiter 2005).

5.3.2. Facing Never-Ending Mobility: Of Secondary Roads and Loosing Gravity

Thus, we have seen that the development of a life conduct based on the mobilization of the self is connected to the construction of a habitus which can be marked either by rupture of continuity, but still relies on hard work and individualization. Such vocation to mobility is described by migrants as a way to avoid boredom and saturation of experience, as escape from ill-adjusted social reproduction, or bluntly as the only possibility to get income on a more stable way. While there are no ready answers to predict where these re-configurations of

mechanisms to social reproduction will lead, it can be observed that the struggle to stabilize oneself seems to be closely bound to unpredictability and flexibilization of visions of the future. As previously mentioned, researchers have concluded that these conflicts around social reproduction in which young people in migration are engaged, are strongly characterized by an orientation of agency towards keeping all options open (Drinkwater/Garapich 2015). As Engbersen and colleagues remark, to do so, young migrants require a flexible type of attachment to place: the more they are able to maintain a double attachment to their places of origin and to the places where they moved to, the more they can maintain the doors to both labor markets, webs of social ties and welfare states (Engbersen et al. 2013). Moreover, by preserving their connections to more places, migrants can themselves act and function as connector, as brokers between spatially distant contexts. Becoming a broker can give the way to the construction of a source of income in itself. Martina is settling as a post-doctoral researcher in a well-known Berliner institute for natural sciences, where she could be about to start a very long research project, in case the application she is working on will be accepted. She formulates the wish to “keep options open” in a very clear way.

S: Would you like to be better able to foresee things, to predict what you are going to do in the future, or is it ok to be like this?

M: Well of course I would like to know, have a bit of a perspective. In fact, what I don't like so much of my work, is that it is a job which anyway seems that binds me a lot to Germany, and it doesn't give me, maybe the perspective to be able to come back to Italy with the same job. For which reason I would like to have, not necessarily something really secure, and saying “well, in a x number of years I am ending up there”, but still keeping all options open. Something which I say “ok, what I am doing here, I can somehow apply it somewhere else, or at least I can get a transfer, or things like that”, something which gives me a bit more flexibility to move. [Martina]

Keeping options open, however, means that the more one gets fixed to a place, the more feelings of angst and panic can emerge. When asked if she would like to buy home somewhere, she answers:

M: Well, yes, actually, if I think of the idea of remaining here for other twelve years [referred to the research project] I get panic! My mother, when I got back to Berlin, with a job, my mother told me “well, come on, now that you have a job there, you could also

buy a home there!”. And I got, a, I said “no”, I mean, I don’t know if I want to stay in Germany for my whole life, to be true. Well, for the moment at least, for god’s sake, maybe I’ll find the man of my life, and I’ll start a family, but if not, if it could still be possible, I would go back to Italy now. Of course, I’d like to have a job which enables me to travel, like, to keep my psychic and physical balance! [laughs] [Martina]

Facing the idea of staying forever in Berlin becomes a “real” thought once her mother proposes to buy a home in Berlin. As we will see later, the relationship to housing is crucial for questions of attachment and detachment, fixity and mobility (Jackson 2012). Here, it seems relevant to underline how a vision of fixity, conclusiveness or finality, the image of a decision about mobility “for good” is able to instantaneously trigger emotions of anxiety, suggested also by the evocation of a “psychic and physical balance” to be acquired through a lifestyle marked by travelling. Martina cannot predict which option will establish itself as the ultimate one, marking her own future indelibly, as this depends on too many variables, first of all on the acceptance or refusal of the research project by the biggest German public funding institution. Against a context in which stable pillars to hold are missing, she turns on herself to find stability and a way of predicting. Indeed, she carries out a therapeutic operation and delegates her faith in good outcomes into the idea of self-fulfilling prophecies.

M: Then, ending up in one place or another, well, in the end, yes, according to me this all depends on the attitude that one has, on things. If, if you are convinced that everything will end up badly, it will anyway. Instead, if you put yourself in a positive way, yeess, according to me, then everything will unfold at your best, will develop in the best way. But it depends very much on the attitude that one, with which one stands. To be too bound to certain schemes, sometimes I don’t see it as a positive thing. [Martina]

Martina grounds her hope for stability onto a highly abstracted level, and ultimately takes a leap of faith, however a secular one, one based on developing the right psychological skills of “thinking positive”. In the end, what she can do to face unpredictability is relying on her own individual capacities of “staying cool” and not panicking. If mobilization becomes a requirement for social reproduction, and the possibility of “really” getting back, meaning going back to the department point, is not given, migrants find themselves into an individualized state of limbo, in which only small parcels of future come under light from time to time. Having “chosen” individual “permanent” mobility, there is not really a space for letting conflicts arisen in this limbo emerge on a more collective level than the individual or household one.

While founding a new household works to give stability also in mobility (tied movers), for those in search of a new spatial-temporal fix, and most prominently women, labor on one side, and leisure on the other, are the set standards for taking measure on life. In other words, the displacement experienced by the young migrants, being self-inflicted, is conceived as something which should be handled individually, just as much as the choice to migrate was perceived as an individual one, and one which set the self free from unwanted constraints. Elisa expresses this feeling of gravity-less limbo, strictly connected to her trajectory of spatial mobility.

E: It is a problem because sometimes you feel, I mean, this is always the other coin, from one point of view you have this freedom, nothing binds you, and exactly because nothing binds you, you never have that sense of, gravity, of weight, like something for which you say ok, I am in my reality and I understand it 100%, here you never have this, because reality has become strange, you know. While in Padova, a small city, but in general in Italy, right, it's like, things are like that, you have some kind of certainties, and your gaze is, obviously it's 25 years of your history there, so you cannot do the same as here. [Elisa]

Uprooting as a process, the release of the self from bounds, is at least two-sided, and leaves migrants on a grading line between freedom and displacement. Staying fixed in mobility emerges as an act of juggling, in which sources of support for keeping equilibrium are mobile too. For instance, when the paths of the own peers in mobility take another direction, a sense of loss and displacement takes the lead, as Michela describes.

M: Well, this is a thing, it is heavy, emotionally, it's the people who move on, my goddess. This is a, because, you have to think then, how come, are you leaving the game like that? It is a feeling...

S: Like, other Italian friends moving away?

M: Yes, because anyway you share pieces of life together, right, and then like, some go back to Italy, some move on. I feel a bit abandoned, I feel this thing of abandonment, really, also of the experience we are sharing, not only my own personal one, a sense of abandoning of the experience [of migration] in itself. Because then sometimes I think, well maybe they are right, and what am I doing at all, I mean you just ask yourself all these questions, and you find only a few answers. [Michela]

Michela highlights a sense of emotional precariousness: emotional support in migration is precarious and those who are able to provide it might disappear in a way which cannot predicted. For her, as for many other interviewed migrants, the reaction to the realization of being alone, is that of exploring loneliness in search for the positive aspects of it. By materially spending time alone, migrants manage to stay focused on their own path and avoid anxiety or sense of displacement.

M: Also, staying alone is good for me, I wasn't used to staying alone anymore, but instead I am liking it, I have reconciled a lot with myself. I learned to take care of myself much more, all my small routines, which I like. ...

S: And is this something you discovered here in Berlin?

M: Yes, with my parents, well I grew up always surrounded by many people, I never felt the loneliness in Naples ... Berlin is stimulating on this side, you don't have to follow the rule, fashion, I abandoned them, some impositions, for instance, learning that I can go out to a place and eat alone, or reading a book in the metro. [Michela]

By defining loneliness in a positive way, Michela opposes dynamics of uprooting and abandonment; once again, the city plays a crucial role in becoming a source of rooting and attachment. For Elisa, too, the city gives her a sense of openness and freedom, which she senses at most when she rides her bike.

E: Well, I like it, biking in the city is cool, because you can anyway ride on the cycle lanes, you pass through *other* neighborhoods, *you always have a secondary road to take*, also you always see a lot of different places, I have the feeling there is air, I mean. Which is a bit the first impression I had since the beginning, the fact that, because I needed to breath, the fact that there is a lot of space, the streets are large. There are a lot of people, but they are all *on their own*, which is a very nice thing. [Elisa]

The city of Berlin, in other words, becomes for Elisa a surface for projecting ideas of ontological security: it provides the possibility of keeping options open, with its large streets and the everlasting presence of secondary roads. Ontological security, "a feeling that the self can survive whatever it encounters in the world, open to new, disruptive, even painful experiences", only works if provided by a stable and fixed source; to achieve "the strength to be vulnerable" means that some other instance will take care of the own vulnerability (Sennett/Cobb

1973: 201). From this perspective, migration appears as a move towards finding ontological security. “Staying alone”, on its part, appears as a mechanism of self-defence to face instability in social ties. As Sennett and Cobb investigated in their ethnography of male working class in Boston, dissociation of the self, alienation on and from work, can provide an effective mechanism to defend oneself against class domination (ebd.). Here, it seems that the response to increasing individualization and exposure to globalization leads young people to highlight self-isolation to increase their barriers for self-defence.

In the meantime, however, the search for a more autonomous fix to stabilize reproduction of the self and to emotional safety nets goes on, pushing the frontiers of social innovation out of the comfort zone into areas in which challenging a form of normativity is not free from the danger of imposing a new one. This is mostly evident in the narrative delivered by Lorenzo, in which homosexuality, excess, and re-configuration of love let ongoing conflicts over new regimes of reproduction become most visible.

L: Exaggerating, doing really like this, I mean, losing control! I’m not judging, I’m not! But ... well, I don’t like it, because when you go too far, I mean, you are lacking respect towards the others, I mean, as a homosexual you end up being in environments in which... well I’ll explain you more practically. For instance, it happens that perhaps you have a boyfriend, and everyone is taking for granted that you are in an open relationship, because as a homosexual you cannot not be in an open relationship, in Berlin, of course not! So, they have anyway to bother you because they don’t care at all that you don’t want to, they don’t give a fuck! This thing, in the long term, becomes heavy, I can tell you! Because you are fed up with that! I mean you say, this sucks! ... So, I can’t avoid feeling ill at ease, and have to find myself in situations in which 70% of the people are totally fucked up, you can’t talk to them. [Lorenzo]

As mentioned in the previous sections, Lorenzo has been engaged in practicing clubbing on a quite regular basis (“there is no other place in the world which can satisfy you more than clubs in Berlin!”). He considers the local club scene so attractive because of the “freedom” it allows, in particular to non-heterosexual people. Many clubs are known for their “dark rooms”, indoor spaces in which performing multifarious practices of sexuality is admitted and even suggested, and for series of parties in which gays and queer people receive positive discrimination at the entrance and dress code could be described as “queer” (Gezcy/Karaminas 2013). However, while clubbing and techno music constituted crucial reasons for Lorenzo to

move to Berlin, they have also led him to consider moving away. The interconnection between migration, regimes of re-production and the city as the site and source of contestations emerges as an unsolved nexus, when he states:

L: Berlin is characterized by, a state of mind, an atmosphere, which has made it famous in the world, a pole of attraction for young people in Europe. Well, of course, it is cheap, there are a lot of reasons. But then these people [in the clubs] maybe, maybe you are seeing them since a short time, maybe the majority of them do not work, and you end up saying “why do I have to be in this environment, I mean I don’t want anymore!”.
[Lorenzo]

Lorenzo found out that a style of life based on leisure which entails the possibility of getting “out of control” is hard to be reconciled with an everyday marked by work and regularity. He experiments “freedom” but realizes after a while that this is too much and too excessive to be domesticated within his life conduct of activation and participation in work and a plethora of free time activities. Further, while it is hard to connect with production (“these people do not work”), also reproduction is at the center of his discussion on clubbing. LGBTs movements have historically claimed sexual liberation. In particular, Marxist queer theorizations have stressed out how heterosexual norms are intertwined with norms regarding labor relations. Especially during the 1970s, the nuclear heterosexual family has been criticized as the locus of reproduction of capitalist relations, a site for control of women (and men) and for constituting the institutions working as a tool to discipline bodies towards a sexuality aimed at reproduction. Gay and queer movements have claimed homosexuality and non-heterosexuality as forms of contrasting capitalist reproduction, as formulated in those times in magazines such as “Fuori!” and “Il Vespasiano”, and have been engaged since decades in the elaboration and experimentation of alternative arrangements of love and forms of household. Berlin’s clubbing scene, considered by Lorenzo as many other users as a social locus where to perform and experiment sexual liberation, however, seems to produce also contestations, and to provoke the re-emergence of *other* types of normativity: the never-ending mobilization of the subject emerges also in contexts of reproduction and sexuality, with the elaboration of forms of sociality in which fixity does not find any place. While the experimentations which Lorenzo reminds suggest that the dark rooms of the local clubs donate a sense of freedom and liberation as well as allow the re-configuration of love relationships in forms which deviate from the Fordist norm, precisely such re-configurations let emerge contemporary conflicts at

the nexus of reproduction and labor.

Concluding, the permanent mobilization in which young migrants today find themselves becomes tangible in their everyday lives as they work, enter housing, and take care of others as well as they let others take care of them. In labor relations, mobility expresses itself as the refusal of a permanent job, as well as the inclination towards self-employment. As for housing, we have briefly seen that home ownership can signal the end station of a path of spatial mobility and can therefore produce anxieties. Finally, liberation from fixed bounds via migration is expressed as the release of gender from fixity and the opening of possibilities for the experimentation of new gender compromises. However, the difficulty of “keeping options open” in reproduction, as well as in other mentioned fields, challenges the spatial-temporal fixes elaborated and conquered with fatigue by the migrants.

G: You have to consider what makes the base for you. You see, what works as a base for you? Your girlfriend? Friends? Family? Work? It is always a balance between these things. Because it is a city in which you have fun, this is true, but there is nothing stable, from one day to the other, having a flat, having a job, before we were making jokes on this but, having a girlfriend, a relationship, they are things which in a completely unstable context, imagine something like this happens, like you break up with your girlfriend, you lose the job, but you are in your home town, where you have your friends, your family, you have a pillow under your ass. Here, you don't have it, maybe you have a couple of friends, but one is leaving in three months, maybe he is going back to Italy, or just moving on to London. So, slowly, you have, I always had these phases, if I had to describe these five years in Berlin [makes a gesture with his hand drawing a skyline of mountains]

S: Highs and lows?

G: High and lows, but really high and really low, highs and lows. Because one would like, you see, looks for stability with 30, maybe it can get to boredom, but sometimes I need

S: A straight line?

G: No, because that would mean that everything stays always the same, but at the least something under my ass! Certainty, certainty! [Giacomo]

The next chapters will focus on those spheres of life which matter to migrants the most

when they are faced with the necessity to formulate original arrangements of fixity and mobility. Labor relations, home relations, care relations will constitute the focus of the analysis, which will start from the access to these as a crucial moment for their set up. How do migrants within an alleged free regime of mobility access those resources necessary to throw the anchor and settle themselves? Which resources do they mobilize among those available to them to gain access? What forms of citizenship are mobilized at the encounter with the state in this process? The next chapters will attempt to give answers to these questions.

6. The Arrival: Becoming Migrants

6.1 Accessing the City Via Differential Inclusion

In the European space of migration, EU citizens are formally treated as having equal social rights as nationals. The Directive 2006/54 of the European Parliament and the EU Council has ratified this principle in 2006. According to it, then, EU migrants should have the same working conditions, opportunities for employment and access to social rights as citizens of the EU country where they are residing. Access to welfare services, however, is connected to the employment status: EU migrant workers can join full access, at least on paper, while non-working EU migrants might be subjected to different treatment, according to the national rules. Thus, the European citizenship endows citizens owning it with a wide range of rights, which add to the ones they received via membership to their country of origin. The EU regime of “free” mobility, meant to support and favor mobility of workers and counter economic imbalances between EU countries, has been developed progressively, however maintaining for several years a trend of expansion. Such expansion has occurred both horizontally as the spatial enlargement to countries previously excluded by it, and vertically with the implementation of directives and regulations targeting for instance the right of citizens of the Union and their family members to move and reside freely within the territory of the Member States (Directive 2004/58), or the coordination of the national social systems (Regulation 883/2004).

The production of laws on the topic shows the will by the EU institutions to facilitate and equalize the mobility rights of EU citizens, as opposed to migration from third countries, which has been increasingly opposed and differentiated. However, studies demonstrate that although national borders within the EU are, at least for now, turned off for EU citizens, intra-EU migration is far from being a frictionless path, with discriminations, down-skilling and language difficulties playing a major role (King/Williams 2018). Moreover, bordering practices do not emerge only at national, but also at local level. Local borders have been studied mostly in their effect for migrants coming from third countries or involved in asylum-seeking procedures (Lebuhn 2013; Scholten/Von Ostajinen 2018). The materialization of local borders for EU migrants, on the contrary, has been until now widely neglected. Recently, however, au-

thors have stressed that we should not consider cities and localities as a level of governance merely affected by Europeanization, but as “key players in multi-level networks and as motors of policy dynamics ‘from below’, also within the topic of ‘European free movement’” (Scholten/Von Ostajien 2018: 6). The aim of this section, therefore, is that of exploring how local bordering appears also for intra-European migrants, in fact playing for them a major role. The analysis is necessary since these practices of bordering are even more hidden from the dominant narration of a frictionless mobility within EU countries than the effect of better known barriers such as language and deskilling.

To tackle this phenomenon, which has emerged inductively via the analysis of the produced data of this research, the concept of differential inclusion, developed first by Hall (Hall 1986) and Castles (Castles 1995), and recently reworked by several migration scholars (Mezzadra/Neilson 2013; De Genova/Mezzadra/Pickles 2014) has revealed as a powerful tool. The notion of differential inclusion questions the dichotomy inclusion/exclusion for understanding processes of integration into society, either for migrants or for other minoritized groups. For Castles, differential inclusion is the “incorporation of migrants into some areas of national society (primarily the labor market) and exclusion from others (such as welfare or citizenship)” (Castles 1995, in De Genova et al. 2014: 25). In the presented case, however, migrants should be precisely and by law treated as equals to nationals, including their access to work, welfare and citizenship, with some limitations, of course, such as regarding the right to vote. It seems therefore more useful to approach the use of the concept applied more recently, in particular in the study of the effect of borders on forced migrants and asylum seekers, but not only (ebd.). From this perspective, differential inclusion is about the different ways of incorporation; it places “emphasis on the continuity between continuity of exclusion and inclusion, drawing attention to the violence that underlies both”. Differential inclusion, moreover, “shines light on the productive aspect of the border” (ebd.). This chapter will analyze how urban borders, placed at the access to the local housing and labor market, materialize as newcomers try to trespass them, shaping their subjectivities, for instance by dividing them into deserving or undeserving or low- and high-skilled migrants. The production of subjects, of selves, is closely connected to the construction of the mobile habitus under focus in the previous chapter.

The description of the mechanisms of selection and differential inclusion at urban level highlights the core resource which newcomers need to acquire in order to *become migrants*,

i.e. the formal registration in a local citizen office. The process of formalization of migration ends up in Berlin with the registration (Germ. *Anmeldung*), through which the access to labor and housing can be secured in more sustainable and durable ways. As the interviews show, while the newcomers are struggling to get a registration, they experience a state of “limbo” (Jeffrey 2010), in which they remain excluded from a whole series of processes crucial to embed themselves into the local context. This state of limbo, however, is not inserted into a highly hostile environment as it has been showed for other groups of migrants which are placed on a lower side of the race and ethnicity ladder (Yuval Davis et al. 2018). Rather, the group object of this study experiences an environment of selectivity and competition, an urgency to deliver performances, either at the encounter with state entities or with private intermediaries and gate keepers.

As we have seen in the online magazine discourses praising Berlin and the life of Italian migrants in the capital city, young people from Italy have been lured rather than discouraged to move to the city. However, what they face after the arrival sometimes resembles a trap. To exit this trap, resources are needed, but their provision can be impeded by the very state of exclusion into which migrants are stuck. As a result, during this state of limbo in which the forces of expulsion and inclusion are in a precarious balance, vortices such as club life can attract newcomers and let them gravitate towards an even more precarious life. Indeed, the symbolic boundaries mobilized by migrants often refer to the first stages of life in Berlin (see chapter 4). Bordering practices implemented by a combination of formal and informal settings are thus connected to practices of symbolic boundary-making operated by the migrants themselves. Indeed, the very struggle to become a migrant, functions as a mechanism for differential inclusion, i.e. for the definition and selection of the deserving and underserving ones at the access. In other words, newcomers enter processes of subjectification which make them increasingly different from one another according to the type of access they struggle to achieve. These processes can also be read as dynamics of class formation: as newcomers do not become generic migrants, but align to specific categories of migrants, such as the “burned” or the “moderately hedonistic” migrants. Once newcomers find ways out of the access loop, they start fixing themselves to the new place. Nonetheless, the impact leaves traces and, as the chapter will show, works as a sort of “differentiating machine” for the newcomers.

Finally, the procedures to access life in Berlin will be investigated detail. As the analysis will prove, newcomers in Berlin are structurally prevented from accessing the registration as a

main resource for making their provision of income more stable. The bureaucratic procedure to get the *Anmeldung* is embedded within a closed circuit whose curves are formed by the acts of provision of other documents. As a matter of fact, the circuit can however be opened in a variety of ways, even if the latter are not automatically visible or accessible by all. In other words, there are ways to escape the looping circuit of access to Berlin. The relevant question for understanding the class dimension of mobility, then, becomes: on what do they rest and how do migrants practice them? The next sections will delve into this question, highlighting several aspects of the dynamics of differential inclusion at play for Italian newcomers in Berlin.

6.2. Local Practices of Bordering: The loop every migrant has to face

6.2.1. Getting the *Anmeldung*

Newcomers in Berlin need certain basic things to fix themselves to the new place, even if only on a temporary basis, i.e. a space where to live, and a source of income in order to put a living together. To get these resources, all newcomers, no matter where they come from, need first to register at a local citizen office (*Bürgeramt*). The so-called *Anmeldung* is an administrative procedure which all German and non-German residents must complete to formally declare their address of residence.

According to the EU directive 2004/58, EU citizens residing in a EU state member can be obliged by the hosting country to formally register if their stay is longer than three months (point 12). This provision applies for Germany, and Berlin as well.²⁷ In Germany, the regulation of the procedure to register and the related duties and rights has been regulated by a federal law from 2002 (*Melderechtsrahmengesetz des Bundes*), whereas the local application including the formal procedures and temporalities to be followed were determined by laws at the level of Land until November 2015. Since then, a new Registration law (the *Bundesmeldegesetz*, BMG) has come into force, taking back the regulation of the matter onto the federal level (for a more detailed explanation of the institutional context of the registration procedure, see Schallbruch 2007). As we will see, the new law has produced dramatic consequences for those in need to register as new residents. In the next paragraphs, I will illus-

²⁷<https://www.berlin.de/labo/willkommen-in-berlin/freizuegigkeit-eu-ewr-schweiz/> (last accessed: 02.01.2019).

trate how the law materializes on the ground, with heavy implications for the life of young newcomers.

The *Anmeldung* is a central procedure for both foreign and German citizens residing in the country. The procedure is bureaucratically relatively simple and requires not more than five minutes at the counter, as it is connected solely to the provision of address of residence. However, its significance is crucial for all those living in the country. In fact, the registration is required to carry out a range of activities from crucial ones such as getting a formal job or accessing any kind of welfare benefits, to mundane activities such as borrowing a book at the library or renting a car to move your stuff in your new flat, as the quotes from Armando and Lorenzo suggest.

A: We've had some problems because we didn't have a registration, and thus we couldn't do anything with the CVs we had sent out. ... Everyone was asking where we lived, how long we were living in Berlin, they wanted to see the paper with the registration, and for this we were having troubles. [Armando]

L: It was my first week and I was the only one [among my new flat mates] who had a registration here in Berlin, so I was only the only one who could rent aa, a van. ... On the third day I registered, I rented the van, and we found the furniture for the flat taking appointments via Ebay Kleinanzeigen. [Lorenzo]

In other words, the registration is the core resource to be able to get formal provision of income, housing, social rights, as well as plenty of other resources which can be accessed only in a formal way as they require a proof of permanent residency. The difficulties for migrants to register, however, have become bigger during the last years, in particular in cities with large inflows of newcomers such as Berlin. Several dynamics at play have contributed to make out of the registration a scarce resource, for which the mobilization of all sorts of other resources is needed. Finally, for foreigners moving to Berlin, the *Anmeldung* has become the door to firstly becoming a migrant in a formal and statistical sense, and secondly filtering their access to social, economic, political and civil rights.

Previously to 2015, EU migrants living in Berlin, as well as all people needing the *Anmeldung*, could register at a local citizen office presenting their housing contract and ID. Among other things, which have been object of contestations and protests, in particular regarding privacy matters, the new law promulgated in November 2015 has introduced, as an

additional pre-condition for registering, the provision of a certificate from the landlord or the person renting the flat or room (the so-called *Wohnungsgeber*), testifying that the person to be registered is entitled to dwell there. The new clause has been added to prevent fake registrations (so called *Scheinanmeldungen*), a debate which sparked after a precedent in which special commandos of the police conducted a search in a flat in Kreuzberg, looking for a leftist militant, but finding out that those living at that address had no connections of any sort with the searched person (Berliner Mieterverein 2015). Thus, the certificate should prevent informal arrangements for registration which could be linked to illegal activities. As the research shows, however, this restriction has had consequences for a much wider number of people, making it very hard for entitled migrants to register after the arrival. In fact, as the local housing market has become increasingly tight, and the search for a place to live on long-term a very difficult and time-consuming task, getting a formal housing contract becomes less and less practicable.

S: But did you try to get information, even if you knew no one [in Berlin]?

A: The information we had was about the time before the law on the *Anmeldung*, so no one was mentioning the fact that to get a registration you need the housing contract with your name on it. And no one was giving us a housing contract because we had never been in German, in Berlin, before this. As a consequence, this has been aa bit, a bit hard. (...)

S: ... So, you had no registration.

A: We didn't manage to get it because we didn't have, because on September 30th I think, the law changed, and you now need a housing contract with your name on it to register, and we didn't, we didn't have it so we couldn't do it. E: And we knew that getting an appointment was a long-lasting thing, that you could also wait two months.

[Armando, Emilia]

As the quotation by Emilia and Armando highlights, there is another relevant issue about the procedure to register. Due to the stark increase of inflows to the city since 2011, especially constituted by non-German newcomers (see graph below), and to spending cuts for citizen offices, the procedures of registration have experienced a strong slow-down around 2015, when one could wait several months to get an appointment.

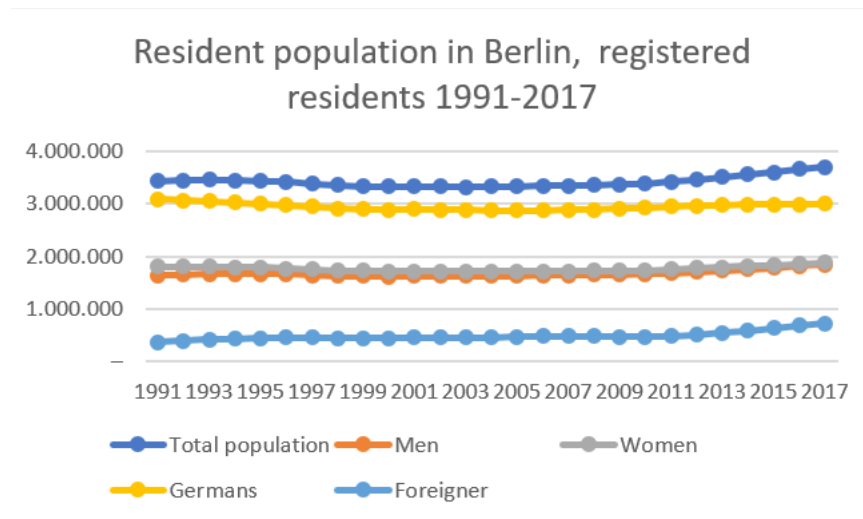


Figure 8: Resident population in Berlin, 1991-2017 along age and nationality. Source: Amt für Statistik Berlin-Brandenburg (<https://www.statistik-berlin-brandenburg.de/produkte/produkte-langereihen.asp>, last accessed 04.01.2019)

Thereby, newcomers were practically impeded to respect the legal term for registration. As Emilia and Armando's words testify, the feeling that the city is not being able to manage the inflow is spread also among migrants. The two compare the process of registering in the small Bavarian town where they previously worked and in Berlin, confirming that the provision of the *Anmeldung* in Berlin plays a different and more crucial role than in smaller provincial cities.

A: Well, so it's not that simply, also because this historical moment is telling us that all people are coming to Berlin, so that there is no space left anymore here. And so, there are a whole series of difficulties, which no one is explaining to you. And above all the German state, especially the province of Berlin, the region of Berlin, is very particular, as it is like a dog chasing its own tail. Because to have one thing, you need to get another one, but what if you don't have that one?

E: Also, because until we lived in smaller places we never had problems with getting a registration. If you need the registration you just go there and take it, I mean you don't need to take an appointment and wait two or three months for that.

[Armando, Emilia]

Through the delay operated by the offices, the state of legal uncertainty in which migrants live once arrived in the city gets indefinitely prolonged, as Marco mentioned during his interview.

M: Because when I still didn't have a flat, well I had a flat, but I had no registration yet, because of some troubles caused by the housing agency [orig. Hausverwaltung]. (...) They gave it to me some months later, in March or April, I don't know. It took them like one and half a month to send me the letter [the *Wohnungsgeber's* certificate], and then it took another one and half month to get an appointment at the Citizen Office [orig. Bürgeramt]. (...) Anyway, since I moved in, I practically needed three months to pass through the whole procedure, this is another thing which cuts out many people from getting a job and a social life here, I think. [Marco]

In this case, the whole procedure of settling via registering was slowed down by two factors. On one side, the housing agency which manages the flat where Marco lives sent the certificate in delay. According to the Registration Law of 2015, landlords and agencies, or in general those renting the flat or the room (the so-called *Wohnungsgeber*), are obliged to provide a certificate within two weeks. If they fail, they can be forced to pay a penalty. However, the enforcement of this rule does not occur often, as tenants tend to be cautious towards their landlords, in order to avoid putting their home under risk. On the other side, Marco had to wait because of the mentioned queues at the Citizen Offices. Local politics have acknowledged this dramatic state of art; the current government, elected in 2016, has included into its coalition program a policy to reduce waiting times to two weeks²⁸, a goal which has been recently met.²⁹

Nonetheless, the congestion at the Citizen Offices has led to the proliferation of a black market of appointments, in which people pay "professionals" to provide them with a short-term appointment.³⁰ Further, as flats become more expensive and the rental housing market tighter, many newcomers tend to spend longer stays in hostels, once they arrive in the city. Therefore, many hostels have started offering the possibility to their guests to use their addresses for registering, against a payment of up to 200 euro, as interviewees mentioned.

I: I also heard about many people, like this guy who was looking for a job in hostels, ehm, he told me that some hostels are renting the room for longer, and if you rent the room for longer periods and pay them some more money, something like 200 euro, they give you a re-

²⁸See the government contract of 2016 between the SPD, Die Linke and the Greens Party (*Koalitionsvereinbarung* 2016), at page 135: <https://www.berlin.de/rbmskzl/regierender-buergermeister/senat/koalitionsvereinbarung/> (last accessed: 03.01.2019).

²⁹<https://www.rbb24.de/politik/beitrag/2018/08/berlin-buergeraemter-wartezeiten.html> (last accessed: 02.01.2019).

³⁰Even a startup have been funded to provide the same kind of services, via the payment of fees up to 115 euro (<https://www.buergeramt-termine.de/>) (last accessed: 02.01.2019).

gistration at the hostel.

[Interviewee]

Also, as one interviewee reminded in our conversation, the need to provide an address can be met by providing the location where people are staying at the moment, even if this is not the real address of residency. While newcomers are usually not able to foresee how operators at the Citizen Offices might react to their moves, the possibility to turn their discretionary decisional to the own advantage attracts the development of innovative ways to face the requirement for registration. In other words, as it becomes increasingly opaque and difficult to obtain a registration, practices of betting and “seeking fortune” are considered as legitimate ways to go through.

I: Paradoxically, I could register at the hotel where I was staying.

S: Really! What did they ask you?

I: I don't know how this happened, don't ask me! [laughs, me too]. If I think about it now, I guess that as I could not speak German, maybe the woman [at the Bürgeramt] gave up, and let me register at the hotel, but I did not specify that it was a hotel. I put the address, I wrote the c/o, but she didn't really look at it, I didn't put the word “hotel”, so she was thinking that it was a surname, you know like c/o another person! [Interviewee]

Concluding, the procedure to register has been at the center of a series of contestations and debates which involve the right to in/visibility, the legibility of the population, the right to fixity within mobility as well as the acquirement of a wider range of rights. After having clarified how the registration procedure is regulated by law, the analysis can proceed in highlighting the links between the process of registering and thus formally becoming a migrant for the German state and local institutions, and other procedures which are as well crucial for migrants to settle. Indeed, the registration is both the starting and the ending point of a series of mechanisms connected to the achievement of fixity via securing a place where to live and a source of income. The road from the starting to the ending point constitutes a sort of closed-circuit, or, as some interviewees have defined it, “a snake chasing its own tail” (int. Marco). The next section will provide an analysis of such circuit as well as an attempt to place it within the broader picture of how migrants access the most fundamental resources in the place of arrival.

6.2.2. A closed circuit: how access to the *Anmeldung* became formally impossible

A: The perspective is that of coming here and changing, changing the own future, creating one's own future. But then when you arrive here, the situation is a bit different than the one that, that you imagined. Indeed, I imagined we would come here, find a job right away, find a home right away, and then find a [language] school right away. Let's say, it is not very easy to face what we have faced, and we had a proof of this when we went to change our registration address, we met there [at the office] two Italians, who were living here since four months, and weren't succeeding in registering, because they hadn't found a job, and could not work because they didn't have the registration. Well it was, it seemed to be really heavy, and the girl, it seemed to me that she was about to have a nervous breakdown. [Armando]

Intra-EU mobility is usually considered as a type of migration characterized by low barriers of integration into the new context, due to the regime of free movement. Indeed, EU citizens do not have to apply for Visa, nor are they subjected to particular restrictions to access European labor markets, notwithstanding recent attempts by certain national governments to apply limitation to their access to welfare benefits (Remeur 2013). The analysis, however, has revealed that the main barrier for EU citizens moving to Berlin is surprisingly constituted by the registration, which works as the first and most crucial mechanism of selection. During the first period after the arrival, which can span between a few days and several months, young newcomers have the legal duty to register, even though the formal path to get there appears as closed. As the words of Armando demonstrate, newcomers often imagine their arrival to be a smooth one, whereas the reality which they face is often one of exclusion and never-ending loops. This often leads to emotional difficulties and anxieties which eventually can lead people to renounce to their migration project. In order to make visible the mechanisms which brought the couple of young Italians met at the Citizen Office by the two interviewees towards a state of desperation, we must reconstruct the several steps which newcomers must go through to get the *Anmeldung*.

As illustrated in the previous section, people have to present a formal housing contract and the certificate from the *Wohnungsgeber* in order to successfully register. The process of finding home in Berlin become increasingly complex and arduous. The emergence of a dramatic shortage and of rising competition on the local housing market has been caused by a mix of factors, which can be briefly summarized as the increase of housing demand due to

growing population and the failed expansion of affordable housing stock, among other things because of the privatization of a huge stock of public housing since the beginning of the 2000s (Holm et al. 2016). The explosion of rent prices in a city in which an extraordinary 85% of the inhabitants is constituted by tenants, has made it incredibly difficult to find a new home, in particular for residents with low economic capital (Holm 2016). Moreover, migrants often have to face discrimination and racism, which make it even more difficult to settle down (Barwick 2016). As it emerged through the analysis of the interviews, to apply for a flat people need to present firstly a proof of their monthly income, which according to a mostly unwritten but nowadays common rule must be at least three times higher than a monthly rent, as Marta explained me in detail during our conversation.

M: The rule is, the unspoken rule is, that, well actually some announcements say that explicitly, is that on your pay slip, you have to earn at least three times the rent.

S: And how did you learn this?

M: Well, I learned this, I can't remember, the fact is that every time I searched for housing, I met other people, and agencies as well, because I also went to some agencies. And someone told me, more than once, and I also found some announcements in which you could read it, and once they even wrote that they wanted FOUR times the rent! Sorry, but people in Berlin do not earn billions, you know!? Ha! Anyway, in some it was specified, in some other cases I heard it from my colleagues, I don't know, I accumulated a lot of information over the years. [Marta]

Secondly, housing searchers usually need to present the so-called *Schufa*, a document released by the German private credit company of the same name. This document holds an analysis of the creditworthiness of the individual, carried out through the collection of all available data on financial transactions, bank accounts and contracts regarding her/him.³¹ In other words, through the document, landlords and housing agencies are enabled to “see” the financial reliability of the potential client. Together with the proof of income (usually the pay slips of the last three months), landlords can evaluate the degree of security of their future revenues from the tenants. In this way, people in search for home are automatically made into financial subjects to be scrutinized and ranked according to their worthiness and financial liability. What matters for our analysis of the closed circuit of access, however, is the fact that to get a

³¹<https://www.schufa.de/de/> (last accessed: 02.01.2019).

formal housing, newcomers must first be formally employed on the German labor market. As the quote by Armando highlights, such a condition is almost impossible to meet for those who have just arrived and are at the same time looking for a job. Thus, while housing is the condition sine qua non for registering, having a more or less permanent form of income, preferably in form of paid and formal work, is the condition sine qua non for getting housing. Teresa realized quite early after her arrival that to settle down that she had to overcome this deadlock.

T: I knew I would not easily find a job, and I arrived here and understood that, without a flat, you cannot do anything else, you can't open a bank account, you can't get a job, you can't have the Steuernummer [fiscal number], nothing. So, I said to me, until I don't find a home I can't do anything, but until I can't do anything, I won't get any money to pay a room! [laughs]. This is the problem of all, I guess! [Teresa]

There is still one last step to be explained, in order to be able to observe the closed circuit in its totality. To get a formal job on the German labor market, employees are usually required to provide a German bank account onto which they can be paid. While some exceptions to the rule are emerging due to the proliferation of online banks which do not offer any offline services, the pre-requisite to open a German bank account is still linked to the provision of a certificate of registration. In other words, in order to get a job, newcomers must first open a bank account on a German bank, and to do this they need to be registered, which is however precisely the document which should be acquired by both getting a job and a house (see figure below).

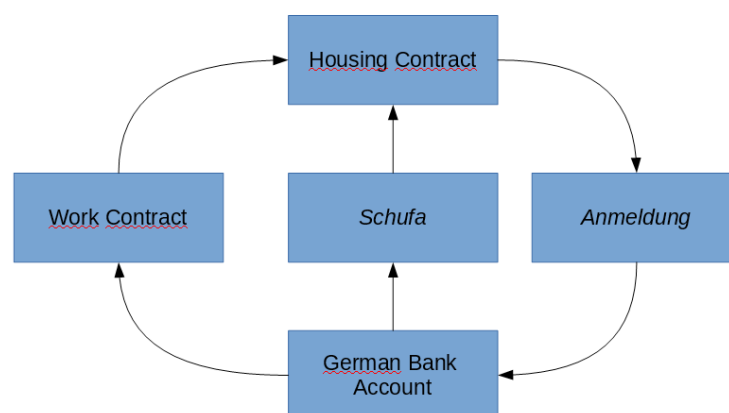


Figure 9: The closed circuit of the access to the registration. Source: author.

It gets clear that access to Berlin is formally close to being impossible for those who ar-

rive without having already a foot on the city, either in the form of a place where to stay or of a job. One outcome of such complex process of differential inclusion is that many newcomers cannot get a proper and formal housing contract because they do not have a job and might end up into finding home only on short-term basis (so called *Zwischenmiete*), thereby moving from home to home every couple of months or even less.

M: Many people are living on *Zwischenmiete*, a bit because they don't have a registration, and maybe they miss some documents, you know, maybe you still miss the Schufa, or some other things. [Marco]

Indeed, several interviewees explained in detail their frequent moves in and out of shared flats, in which they could only remain for short periods, waiting for the proper tenant to come back and take again possession of her/his room. Also, as we saw earlier, many spent prolonged times in hostels, while carrying out the search for both housing and a job, as Giulio reminded during our conversation.

G: Well, when I arrived, I said "well, I'm gonna stay in a hostel", I didn't know anyone here, only some, some friends of friends. Ehm, I decided to stay in a hostel, as I had no contacts, and so I took a room at a hostel, etc. And I thought that within two or three days I would find something, but this revealed to be completely wrong. Thus, I had to stay one week at the hostel, and then I found my first, my first home, ehm, for two weeks, because I couldn't really find anything else, I didn't manage to find anything else. (...) After that, I found a sublet for two months, I actually wanted something for at least six months, but couldn't find it, so I was really arranging wherever I found myself, also because I had it like many, like most of the people, I did thousand castings, etc. And, well, I stayed, I guess within a year I changed eight homes, something like that, eight flats.

S: Wow that's a lot!

G: Yes, two months in one, one month in another one, etc. Then, when they offered me a contract to stay [at the startup where he was working], so it was, I mean I thought now I am gonna have what it takes [le carte in regola, orig.], but, before stabilizing myself it took almost two years, like to find a home where I could really stay. [Giulio]

People remain stuck into a situation of uncertainty and precarious living, during which the attempt to acquire resources to fix oneself to Berlin on a longer term is connected to the

everyday practices of securing a place to sleep for the night. As these practices take place in a vacuum of social rights, the potentiality for return is always present and a threat to migration. This mechanism of exclusion, however, which astonishingly appears as impermeable to access, cannot explain the reason why Italian migrants, as well as many other EU-migrants, keep on moving to the city in increasing numbers. According to the data based on registration, the emigration from Italy to Northern EU countries keeps on growing, with Germany being the second country of destination after Great Britain (ISTAT 2018). Berlin, has well, is hosting an increasing number of EU migrants. However, these numbers are “polluted” by the very mechanisms of exclusion which have been just described. The analysis proves that in the case of Italian migrants in Berlin, many might return to Italy or move on somewhere in Germany or elsewhere, without leaving trace on administrative acts or on statistics, neither in Germany nor in Italy. As studies have acknowledged, the statistics about EU migrants residing in other EU countries are falsified by the fact that many newcomers do not register for longer periods, either voluntarily or involuntarily (Lafleur/Stanek 2017: 2). In other words, it can be assumed firstly that these numbers undervalue the size of emigration from Italy (Tintori/Romei 2017). Secondly, as the EU migrant communities settled in Berlin keep on growing, the mechanisms of differential inclusion via registration might get stricter and the bottleneck effect more efficient. The issue, then, becomes that of understanding in which ways newcomers manage to overcome the deadlock, which resources they mobilize to do so, how these practices of bridging look like and what kind of sociality they produce or negate.

6.3. Taking the exit: the individual and collective elaboration of ways out of the circuit

6.3.1. Economic capital: buying access

One of the easiest way to exit the loop is pouring economic capital into the circuit. Once the young Italian newcomers, the object of the study, face the first difficulties when trying to enter the loop, a first reaction is that of mobilizing the economic resources under disposition. For instance, Teresa, who moved to Berlin to write her Master’s thesis with small money in her pocket, accepted to receive some economic help from her parents to find a room for the first months as to gain some time, during which she looked for a job and secured her existence

in Berlin. When asked about how much she considered that she could spend as a maximum for her first stay, she answered in this way.

T: 350 euro.

S: According to what did you decide about this maximum?

T: According to what my parents could give me, 'cause I left with really few money on my bank account ... Therefore, I asked my parents how much they were ready to help with, and they were ready to help, I had no problem with this. And in fact, the first room that I found I paid 340 euro per month, which was the maximum I could get to. [Teresa]

The transfer of income for housing from parents to young people is one of the main ways how economic capital is transmitted through generations in contemporary times (Lennartz et al. 2016; Hochstenbach/Boterman 2017; Hochstenbach 2018). Economic help to settle down is crucial for young migrants, who otherwise risk remaining stuck into the loop. While a first injection of money results as an important way to overcome the impasse, migrants also need to learn fast how such money can be invested in a way as to secure home for the longest possible period of time. Indeed, the border made up by the interplay of registration and the provision of housing and a job entails barriers of language and knowledge about how things work in the new context. Therefore, economic resources can be deployed also through intermediaries which manage the first integration of the newcomers. As the closed-circuit has become increasingly known among migrants, agencies have started to deliver paid services regarding the whole series of intermediate steps, such as registering and opening a bank account.³² Further, as migratory flows to Berlin increase and the dramatic explosion of rent prices establishes itself as a long-term trend, a panoply of agencies and individual intermediaries have started operating on the Berliner housing market with similar business concepts, however focusing on the provision of fixed-term accommodations. Such flats are “fully-furnished” and ready for hosting newcomers arriving with a couple of trolleys only. The diffusion of furnished flats, however, seems to be an increasing strategy by landlords and agencies in general, as by offering a furnished flat, rent-cap regulations can be circumvented (Möller 2018). The rent prices charged for such accommodations often double or treble the average rent prices in the local rental market, enabling owners to obtain exceptional profits in comparison to a “tra-

³²<https://berlinocacioepepemagazine.com/2018-anmeldung-kindergeld-disoccupazione-a-berlino-il-servizio-in-italiano-per-superare-la-burocrazia-tedesca/> (last accessed: 02.01.2019).

ditional” rent contract relationship.

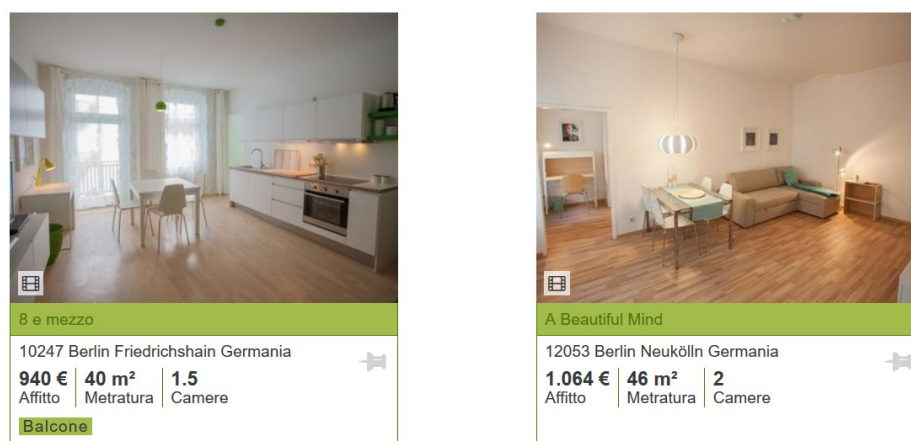


Figure 10: Online announcements for furnished flats in Berlin, website in Italian language.

Source: www.caseaberlino.com (last accessed: 04.01.2019).

According to an interview with one of the facility managers of such an agency, young Italians often accept to pay rent prices which abundantly exceed the local average rent price in order to avoid entering the previously described state of limbo.

S: What kind of persons rent apartments through the agency?

FM: Well, there are various types ... since the young kids, let's say, I say kids because they might be 20, 22, 27 years old, who come to Berlin and don't have any clue about what to do [*dove sbattere la testa, orig.*] to find a home, doesn't have a job, and so...obviously, in this way, they have the chance, especially if they are Italians, that they don't have to use the German language, ... and thus, they turn to an agency, maybe they have to spend a bit more than if they look themselves for a place, but then they are sure that they will find it, otherwise it's not that easy, and secondly, they can avoid handling with the German language right away. There are many of these. (...)

S: And what about the Schufa, and all the bureaucracies that people usually need?

FM: Mmh, I don't think they need it, for this, for a holiday flat [*Ferienwohnung, orig.*] you don't need it. Of course, you have to pay a deposit, and the first rate, otherwise the contract doesn't come into force.

S: Ok.

FM: And of course, the deposit is quite conspicuous, it is made of three monthly rent, if I am not wrong. [Facility Manager]

Thus, a crucial way to overcome the circuit is that of delegating access to third party intermediaries via an economic transition. The commodification of access to the place of destination signals that the concentration of flows of mobility and the related emergence of closed-circuits of access functioning as bottlenecks give the way to the construction of infrastructural networks of integration all along the circuit, in which the capital injected by migrants is tapped from the circuit and accumulated elsewhere. The leverage for profit in the Berliner circuit takes place mostly in the node of the housing search, which occurs in a market characterized by increasing competition and monopolization. Thus, the nodes of such infrastructural network in which the biggest profits are made, are also the most difficult to solve for migrants. They are occupied by successful “managers of integration”, figures who have acquired increasing notoriety within the community.

Concluding, it is important to highlight that the main selection mechanism for the studied group occurs through their different availability to inject economic capital into such infrastructure and thus into the circuit. This operates a first stratification along the classed parental background of the young newcomers. The family of origin is, once again, a fundamental variable for understanding the way how this group accesses the new city.

6.3.2. Mobility as a resource: becoming the mobile individual

The deployment of economic capital for migrants to overcome the access impasse is not a novum. Precisely because money is the universal means for exchange par excellence, it is not surprising that migration is being put under valorization by an infrastructure for accumulation of capital which directly squeezes the economic resources of newcomers. The analysis, however, shows that a further and less immediate way of extracting resources out of migration has to do with what has been termed the “mobile habitus” of the newcomers, i.e. the assemblage of life conducts, sets of values, dispositions and practices developed by young migrants in continuity or rupture with their families and gravitating around mobility as a key resource to cope with a globalized labor market. In other words, the different ability of newcomers to face the exclusionary practices of the loop by deploying forms of mobility as classed resources. In this section, I will explore how through the formation of such a subjectivity predicated on the accumulation of mobility, people are endowed with the ability to secure a better position

within the differentiating machine at the access of the new place, as they gain an “early-bird” favorite position within the competition for the resources required to settle.

As already mentioned in chapter 5, several interviewees took part in the Erasmus program, the EU funded mobility program for students. During the interviews, they often recalled this experience as a facilitator for their access to the registration, housing and labor. The “comfort zone” provided by the program enables them to acquire some of the basic resources to face the loop. From this viewpoint, the Erasmus program, as well as other mobility programs funded by the EU, works as a privileged channel for access.

M: For me, having, having done the Erasmus before, I already had a bank account, so I could ask the Schufa right away, because I had some precedent entries already, even though just a few. [Martina]

As Martina moved to a German city for her Erasmus previously to her current stay in Berlin, she already got the chance to resolve one of the most difficult issues, i.e. opening a German bank account. During the mobility program, she had stayed in a student home, thanks to which she had registered without any problems. This resource allowed her to come to Berlin and be able to get a job and a housing contract straightforwardly. In the case of Marta, instead, opening a bank account constituted even a superfluous resource, which she did not need at all during her Erasmus stay in Berlin.

M: I still had not registered, because actually I didn’t need it. The only thing for which I needed it was, well I did my Erasmus at the Free University, and there they were giving you, to all newly enrolled students, a bonus of 100 euro. But, to get the bonus, you needed a bank account, but to have a bank account, you need the registration! Therefore, I did it just for that, then I took the money and closed the bank account, because anyway I wasn’t needing it!

S: And how were you doing it to get money?

M: Well I had an Italian debit card, I was using it to get money. [Marta]

Finally, familiarity with the German language proves to be a meta-resource which contributes to facilitate access along all its steps, either at the encounter with public offices, or with expanding the chances to get both a housing accommodation and a source of income. Marco, who has learnt the German language as well as several other foreign languages thanks

to his attendance at an international high school and to frequent travelling, acknowledges that he met less difficulties during his search.

M: Well, yes, I had really a big luck, but as I was telling you earlier, the triad I made up in my mind, to have a good life here, is having home, and thus a registration, having a job, and knowing the language. Knowing the language helped me to get a flat and then to get a job, it's obvious, I mean, I saw it, there were people [at the housing casting] who came there, there were people from China, from Italy, from elsewhere. We were maybe thirty, forty, at the flat, the ones who chose me. And I mean, you could see easily that the ones who were not speaking German were getting dumped, because, you know, you start chatting, maybe you are in group of five, you automatically start speaking German, if you can, and you chat them up, you wind up being also nicer. [Marco]

Federico made a similar experience as he spent several months after his arrival moving around from one friend's couch to the next one, because he could not find a room in a shared flat. During the interview, he recalled one of the most unsettling memories related to that period of search, when he happened to participate in a housing casting, which had been announced as an informal dinner.

F: Well, I arrived there, and we were twelve people at dinner! (...) Me and eleven Germans (...) Of course, everyone was speaking German, they were trying from time to time to speak English, but it was eleven against one! You know, also among Italians, if there is one German guy, people try to talk English, but then end up speaking Italian, you know, even if you try it! (...) and the German language, well now I can speak it a bit, but at that time, after one week being here, really, I could speak nothing, nothing! (...) Everyone seemed to think that the situation was normal, but I felt the anxiety, I mean, I still kept on playing the game, but I thought it was bullshit, and after three hours I went to the girl [the one renting one room]. I told her "look, if you want I can give you the provision right now, I am interested, I want the room" "Well, look, I still have to decide, I still need some time" ... and in the end she wrote me again, she was kind in the end, she said "look, I took another person". [Federico]

As for finding home, speaking the language can work as an accelerator for carrying out the various steps described along the loop. Again, Federico met some difficulties when opening a bank account. Even if he arrived in Berlin as an employee of a low-cost airline company, he still needed to open a German account to get the *Schufa* document for the housing search.

However, he felt again discouraged when realizing that even for this step his language skills were preventing him a straightforward access.

F: I just needed to open a bank account. So, I went to the XY³³ [local bank], and I told them, “Look, I’d like to open an account.” And they answered me “Well to open a bank account we need, to set an appointment with a colleague who speaks English, who is authorized to speak English”. But she was speaking English to me, I asked her “why can’t you do it yourself?” “No, we really need the one in charge of speaking English” ... She gave me an appointment, after ten days, and we still didn’t have a home, and then, again, a lot of emails, emails and emails. [Federico]

6.3.3. Making Money First: Becoming labor force

According to the Directive on Freedom of Movement of EU citizens of 2004, employed and self-employed EU migrants cannot be expelled in any case from the EU country of residency. The category of working EU citizens, in other words, is the most protected one in the EU regime of free mobility. Indeed, for many trying to solve the deadlock for registration, work has played a crucial role. The ways to provide income are inextricably connected to becoming a migrant in formal sense, as we have seen before. Making sure that you can make end meets does not only constitute a fundamental security for survival, but also a marker of worthiness and legitimacy which makes your access to the new place easier.

Many interviewees found a way out of the entrance loop by utilizing their employability to access specific sections of the local labor market and thereby becoming part of the urban labor force. While a variety of mechanisms of inclusion into labor can be observed, the analysis points to two main axes, i.e. formal/informal work and skilled/unskilled work, as relevant to understand how the fragmentation of labor markets contributes to affect mechanisms of differential inclusion involving migrants. Firstly, the availability to work without a contract makes access easier. Cheap labor force is necessary to sustain vast branches of the urban economy. To assure the availability of a vast pool of workers, formal contracts can be put aside, and regulations made under the table. Secondly, in order to get labor force endowed with scarcest and highly wanted skills, companies operating on the most skillful and technologically updated edges of the digital economy tend to offer the best conditions, including a facilitated access to migration, and thus to the process of settling down.

³³Name was made anonymous by the author.

An example of the first case is told by Marco, who, when talking about how he managed to find a room and get registered, reminded how crucial it was for him to get hired by a small tourism company. His job, riding a bike for tourist through the city center, allowed him to improve his monthly income and slowly acquire economic independence. However, he was hired while he still had no registration.

M: Above all, as I can speak German, the guy at XY³⁴ [his boss] told me “it doesn’t matter, I will hire you and find a way how to pay you”, he paid me under the table, well, yes, he was handling me some receipts, but they were basically private ones.

S: So, you had no registration and therefore he could not give you a legal contract, right?

M: Exactly.

S: Would you say he was a kind one?

M: I would say he needed workers. [Marco]

For Emilia and Armando, the first job was an informally paid one, too. As they could not manage to find a job through the formal way of sending a CV and get hired, they accepted the suggestion from a flat mate known during their first short-term accommodation and asked for work at an interim catering agency.

A: In the end, we are working in the place which she suggested to us, which she gave to us, all in all thanks to her we managed to get a job right away.

E: Yes, we arrived on the 5th and on the 30th we had a job.

A: We were working.

S: Wow, and had you already looked where you could search for it before?

A: Absolutely not, we’ve had some problems because we didn’t have a registration, and thus we couldn’t do anything with the CVs we had sent out. ... Everyone was asking where we lived, how long we were living in Berlin, they wanted to see the paper with the

³⁴Name made anonymous by the author.

registration, and for this we were having troubles. Instead, this agency could, a bit, close an eye on this.

[Armando, Emilia]

Finding bosses who are willing to hire workers without a contract can be crucial to settle down. While black work usually entails the spoiling of labor rights and harsh working conditions, newcomers often can only rely on these informal channels for the first provision of income. The gastronomy sector, hospitality industry and tourist branch in general have been booming in Berlin since at least a decade (IHK 2016) and offer a straightforward opportunity for newcomers in Berlin to find a first job, usually rewarded with the minimum wage, recently set on 8,50 euro. The wage average in this sector is among the lowest ones and 57% of the average wage across all branches in Berlin ().³⁵ However, when working without a contract, wage can be pushed even below the minimum. As interviewees reported, blackmailing dynamics are at play, with migrant workers accepting hyper-exploitation because of their need to maintain a source of income, even if a precarious one. When stuck into the previously described state of limbo, marked by the lack of an *Anmeldung*, working informally in a hostel, a restaurant or a similar business can be crucial to make a livelihood. However, as the interviews showed, bosses can offer their availability to circumvent labor and fiscal regulation to keep their workers fixed to the city of Berlin also by helping them to disguise as more worthy housing consumers and exit the loop.

I: Well, the thing which saved us, was that I had a job at a restaurant, and you know how it works here, you always need a job, you have to demonstrate that you are able to pay the rent. Therefore, my boss had given us a, a sort of additional, unofficial paaper [*ufficioso*, orig.], in which he wrote that, well because I had a contract for which they paid me really a low money, with that contract they would never give me a house.

S: Was it a minijob?

I: No, it wasn't, it was a 450 euro work contract, the minimum to get health insurance [through the Job Center]. Therefore, I told him "well please write something like I am earning more, 'cause otherwise they won't give me any house". And he wrote a paper, like "she earns this and this every month", I don't even remember anymore, but somehow, he gave me this guarantee for the housing agency. And thus, thanks to this paper, we

³⁵<https://statistik.arbeitsagentur.de/Navigation/Statistik/Statistische-Analysen/Interaktive-Visualisierung/Medianentgelte/Entgelte-nach-Berufen-im-Vergleich-Nav.html> (last accessed: 02.01.2019).

managed to get a house. [Interviewee]

Similar examples are to be found in the collected materials, signaling that often bosses collaborate with workers in helping them acquire a permanent status in the city. While the answer given by Marco (“I guess he simply needed workers”) seems to be pertinent, as cheap and mobile labor force is needed to fill the increasing demand for work in these sectors, it also holds true that these punctual moments of collaboration contribute to make the relationship between workers and bosses a smooth and less conflictual one. Even though young migrants working in this sector earn close to the minimum, often there emerges a sense of collaboration between them and the bosses, which obscures the relationship of domination nonetheless present in their everyday work routine.

The second mechanism of differential inclusion to be analyzed in this section involves an almost opposite end of the labor market, i.e. the creative and digital companies which have been as well booming in the city. Indeed, Berlin has become a major location for the settlement of startups, incubators and in general creative industry on global level (Startup Genome 2017). While there is still a lack of research on how the development of this type of industry is affecting the structure of the local labor force, some studies have highlighted that workers in this branch are mostly young people coming from other countries, often EU ones (Animento 2016). Thus, managing the integration of such labor force into the local bureaucracy has become a fundamental task for companies willing to attract highly skilled workers to the city. This has led to the spread of relocation agencies, i.e. agencies appointed to help newcomer workers to cope with the access to housing and bureaucratic procedures, such as with the registration and provision of a fiscal number. These agencies, thus, can be considered as part of that infrastructure of managing integration of which also the housing agencies mentioned in the previous section are part. However, relocation agencies’ work is directed not towards the construction of a nation-based local community of migrants, but rather towards facilitating the access to the city for a group of mobile workers from a multiplicity of nationalities endowed with highly scarce and wanted skills.

Leonardo, who experienced himself the difficulties of facing the bureaucracy at his arrival as an employee of a big startup incubator settled in Berlin, managed after a couple of years to get into a higher position. By this, he became part of the management; at the moment of the interview, he was endowed with hiring international workers. From his insider position, he was able to reconstruct changes occurred within the company relating to issues of reloca-

tion during the past five years.

S: And how does it work, did Rocket help you with this, how did you manage this?

L: Well, at that time we didn't have anything, in the *relocation package* [orig.] you only had *relocation* in terms of housing, but not for documents, you were told in which office you had to go, where the office is. Mainly, they gave you the material for documentation, maybe you could find there a scanned copy of an *Anmeldung*, with the translation of the various entries. *Name, surname*, blablabla, such a triviality! (...) Exactly, that was my first shock when looking for a home! But now, it is simpler, because the relocation agency which we use, they come with you to get the *Anmeldung*. Often, if I understood it well, they also take for the appointment, you know, the appointment mafia [ironic], they care for the whole thing.

S: Ok.

L: You know, with one of those websites where you can buy an appointment, right? I think they take care of these things. But they really help you a lot with that, they send you a person to go and get the *Anmeldung*, they bring you to the tax office [orig. Finanzamt], they help you with finding out your tax category [Steuerklasse, orig.], they explain you a bit where you are, what are the differences. And the same was for, well let's say the tax return is a bit easier because tax lawyers usually speak English. But for all that part of the initial bureaucracy, also for converting your driving license, you have to face the German language. And, also for that, someone is coming with you to help you. [Leonardo]

Leonardo explains how re-location agencies help newcomers working for the incubator to overcome the various steps along the loop. Over the years, the company has undergone a process of internationalization of its labor force, with 40% of non-German employers now coming from 35 different countries (Rocket 2018). The company stresses out that diverse teams are “better equipped to originate attractive investment opportunities” (ebd.: 11). While “diversity management” is a crucial aspect of the human resources departments of most companies in digital and non-digital economy (Krell 2008), teams tend to be diverse also because the labor force is highly skilled and specialized, and thus scarce. In other words, it is fundamental for companies such as Rocket to hire workers internationally, in order to be competitive. To do this, the company deploys the “Active Sourcing” approach, through which they “directly search and address interesting candidates via professional networks or selected conferences”

(ebd.).

The need to attract workers from abroad requires Rocket to deliver relatively good working conditions to its employees. The issue of relocation, thus, becomes increasingly relevant. For this reason, in parallel with the internationalization of its labor force, the company has invested into hiring a relocation agency to perform more and more tasks linked to the access of newcomer workers to the basic resources located along the access loop. This means also that the company itself might have lowered its standard of conformity with German regulations concerning the legal status of foreign employees.

S: Ok, so you were telling before that Rocket was being much stricter on this earlier, right? How about now?

L: Now I see that, paradoxically I think that also some laws changed, or maybe it became more tolerant, because we can do bank transfers for the pay slips on IBAN. Or, better, now IBAN gets managed at an international level, therefore your IBAN doesn't have to be German. But this is simply a fiscal problem, thus we simply pay the first months with a bank transfer on an Italian IBAN. We try to avoid this, we always try to tell people "open a bank account and give us the German IBAN". But unfortunately, the *Anmeldung* has always been the *blocker* [orig.] to do everything, without *Anmeldung* you cannot open a bank account, and thus, to avoid not to pay wages for the first months we do it like that. But for me, at that time, I had to wait after the first month, I got two paychecks on the second month. [Leonardo]

The internationalization of Rocket occurs also thanks to the internationalization of bank transfers through the adoption of the IBAN (International Bank Account Number), an internationally agreed system for the identification of bank accounts across national borders. By becoming less strict and compliance with the "German" way of dealing with the bureaucratic issues of its labor force, the company favors migration of certain migrants to the city of Berlin, by facilitating their access to local institutions.

Concluding, the process of accessing settlement involves the core mechanism for differential inclusion constituted by labor relations. As newcomers become workers, the degree of scarcity of the skills required for their work make out of them more or less powerful subjects when approaching the main resources to stay such as *Anmeldung*. While working, generally speaking, seems to be a node which in any case brings migrants closer to settlement, the type of work undertaken determines not only the income which migrants can dispose of in order to

settle, but also the type of access they can gain. Further, their relationship to the other side of the labor relations is shaped by their necessity to access. Those in lower and less skilled work positions might be obligated to preserve their labor relationship as the boss is the one who can help them to get an *Anmeldung*. As they are needed as low-wage workers, they are reproduced by this as low-wage workers while they are made into the fictional condition of representing more valuable economic subjects as they try to obtain a flat or an address to register. Those newcomers working in the high-end of the local labor market, instead, are not only facilitated in their access; companies compete to attract them exactly on the level of access, meaning that by having control on very scarce skills, these newcomers have the power to negotiate the level of access and pose it as a condition for their access into the labor relation. Thus, settlement and labor are intertwined and mutually reinforcing processes which build a fundamental component of the differentiating machine object of this chapter.

6.3.4. The art of cheating, hosting and collaborating

In the previous section, we have seen how employers might decide to bypass national and local regulations in order to provide themselves with the labor force which can fit at best the requirements for productivity demanded by their business. However, practices of concealing, disguising, cheating and “closing an eye” are not prerogatives of bosses. Instead, the interviewed migrants developed a series of similar practices on their own, while trying to exit the circuit of access. They often mobilized their social networks, their peers as well as a series of other gatekeepers or brokers, engaging into relationships of help which open the room for more horizontal interactions than the ones described in the previous section, in which labor relations necessarily entailed asymmetry of power. One of the interviewees, after months of unsuccessfully searching for a flat, was informed about the possibility to digitally edit the pay slip in order to raise his monthly income on paper. He found this out while chatting with a friend, who told him:

I: Look! I think you don't, you shouldn't present all these documents, you shouldn't be so precise! Because really my friend, he falsified everything, with Photoshop, and he found a beautiful home, in Boxhagener Platz, in Friedrichshain. ... I mean, I told myself, well, he lives in a squat, and he has a home, I mean, while me, fuck it! I even have a job! Well, I was working part-time, 800 euro a month, but, well, anyway, fuck it! And thus, I started opting for two roads... [Interviewee]

The first of the two roads mentioned was applying for a so-called *Wohnungsberechtigungsschein* (WBS), a document released by local Housing Offices (*Wohnungsamt*) to people with a “special need for housing” due to lower income or other socio-economic disadvantages. Such a document gives access to the lists for getting public housing. However, the “special need for housing”, as it is calculated in the Berliner Law for Public Housing (*Wohnraumförderungsgesetz*, WoFG), applies to more than half of the Berliner population.³⁶ Indeed, the maximum income required in order to get the certificate is 40% higher than the federal average.³⁷ As a consequence, the WBS’ role for finding affordable housing has a limited role, as the stock of affordable public housing is anyway too small to cover the total housing demand of Berliner tenants with low income. What is interesting for the case of the interviewees, however, hints to the fact that to apply for the WBS, people are required to submit, among other documents, also their registration.³⁸ As a matter of fact, while EU citizens have the right to access WBS as much as German citizens, it is almost impossible for them to get a WBS for their first housing in Berlin, as they are not yet registered at that point. During the interview, this conundrum was illustrated very well, as the interviewee could not get a registration for the room he was only subletting for a short time.

I: Well, I had to register at that address, hiding it to the girl I was living with, because she was the main tenant [Hauptmieter, orig.] too, and the girl of the room I was renting wasn’t. Therefore, I had to register without telling her anything.

S: Ok, at the citizen office then...

I: I had to, weell, to hide things, because when I asked for the appointment for the WBS, which usually takes very long to get it, like I had two months waiting. And I applied for it in January and managed to get it at the end of February, I got an appointment at a very far office, in the very last neighborhood of Berlin before Brandenburg. And there, I got there and didn’t have any registration, but it was really very far and I had waited one and half month to get the appointment, I mean, I told her “I brought the documents, but I am still missing the, I have no registration, but please consider, I mean, try to consider anyway all my other documents. I promise I go back home, will get registered

³⁶<https://www.berliner-kurier.de/berlin/kiez---stadt/gut-zu-wissen-60-prozent-haben-anspruch-auf-wbs-4889372> (last accessed: 02.01.2019).

³⁷<https://www.mieterschutzbund-berlin.de/news-lesen/items/einkommengrenzen-regelung-fuer-wbs.html> (last accessed: 02.01.2019).

³⁸<https://service.berlin.de/dienstleistung/120671/> (last accessed: 02.01.2019).

and I send it to you”. And she said “alright”.

S: So, she trusted you.

I: Yes, she trusted me, holy woman! And she gave me, she signed this document, stating that I had presented the registration, even though I hadn’t, I mean, she crossed the bar “Anmeldung” on the list of submitted documents.

S: Ok, great!

I: holy woman! [she laughs, I laugh]. Well, because she had understood, I mean, because I had told her: “look, I need to look for home, urgently, and I cannot wait for other three months to get an appointment”. Instead, she said to me: “Look, don’t worry, I am giving it to you, but you need to send me the registration within a week”. [sighs] I got back home and falsified the signature of my flat mate.

S: To get the registration? O: Yes, to get the registration, weell, there are no other ways in Berlin!

S: Ok.

I: I mean, it’s a jungle!

S: Dramatic.

I: yes, it is dramatic. I falsified her signature, got the registration, and sent it to the woman at the office. [Interviewee]

The interviewee managed to get a WBS firstly convincing the officer to “close an eye” and disguise him as a “normal” resident of the city, a formally registered inhabitant. In this way, he made the officer cheat the procedure to follow his interests. Secondly, he opted for falsifying a signature, thereby circumventing the power held by his flat mate about recognizing him or not as a formal tenant of the shared flat. These two ways of tricking, however involving different practices and subjects, are in his eyes legitimate, as he considered his status of limbo as a trick itself. While he acknowledged to be a worthy individual and migrant because of his work, he could not accept being homeless because of what he recognized as a

closed circuit, a trick on its own. Through these reflections, and the comparison with his friend who was not even working and yet dwelled a big and comfortable flat, the interviewee saw cheating as the legitimate way to access housing and in general better living conditions.

Nonetheless, the WBS was insufficient for the interviewee to find home, as high competition on the demand side of the housing market has raised “automatically” the minimum income to be owned in order to get access to public housing. In other words, as the range of maximum income to get a WBS is very wide, the great internal variety of incomes determines a hierarchization of people looking for affordable home. Paradoxically, the dispositive which should help people with a low income to secure a shelter, has become itself a dispositive operating in the opposite way: people must first demonstrate that their income is low to get a WBS, and secondly have to convince the landlords that their income is nonetheless high in comparison with that of other potential dwellers. Michele talked about this umpteenth deadlock which he encountered during his search for home.

M: During our search, we also thought about applying for the WBS, we started the procedure to get it, but we were missing some documents. And for the homes that you can get with a WBS, too, when I called at the announcements, they asked me “well, but what economic situation do you have?” And when I answered they were like “look, it is difficult that you can find a home with that situation, also with the WBS”. (...) well I was very discouraged when I heard the agencies saying “well, even with a WBS, we look at the overall situation”, probably they also have a lot of requests for WBS housing, therefore it is not that automatic to find such a home.

S: But did you understand what they meant by “overall situation”?

M: Well, the impression that I had is that, well in the end we got into talking about money. They asked me “how much do you earn, which is your monthly income”. This happened to me a couple of times, “look, we don’t know” [Michele]

Going back to the previous story, the interviewee managed to get a WBS, but found the same difficulties in getting a flat for the same reasons explicated by Michele: his income was too low to sustain competition in the housing search. After having obtained to switch to full time and get a pay of 1250 euro per month, the interviewee realized that he would not get a single flat, which at that time costed 500 euro a month on average (remind the common rule according to which income must amount to three times the monthly rent). Moreover, having

a fixed-term contract lowered his chances to get a long-term accommodation. The interviewee got desperate, as he acknowledged that the possibilities to correspond his desire of living alone were close to being non-existent.

I: You can understand, it was April, and no one would give me a home looking at my work contract, which expired in June. I mean, NO ONE would ever give it to me. Thus, I followed the suggestion by my friend, we falsified the pay slip with Photoshop. What could I do? [Interviewee]

For newcomers, cheating can appear as the only way to move on. The different availability to break the rules and risk retaliation will not be analyzed here, although we can maintain that the chance to share collectively the risk of cheating might be a relevant issue. Finally, what we need to pinpoint is that the informal creation of a closed circuit leads newcomers to undertake practices of disguising and cheating, which can be necessary to become migrants in the formal sense.

Other ways of overcoming the impasse of access are to be located within relationships of mutual care developed by migrants together with their peers. Hosting seems to be the most important mode of collaboration through which migrant peers can support each other during the phase of limbo dominated by the housing search. Many interviewees mentioned having been host as well as having hosted other friends and “friends of friends” in need. There is a shared sense that hosting people with no home is somehow an obligation in front of the impossibility to find home quickly.

A: I am very lucky, because I’ve listening of very bad stories, and I see them, because anyway in our living room we have a matrass ready for friends who need it. And also, friends of friends, they often sleep there because they cannot find a home, and maybe they have been roaming for months. [Antonia]

S: When you arrived in Berlin, then, how did you arrange an accommodation? Were you staying at some friend’s place?

E: Yes, I was there for two months, because, as I had no job, I couldn’t rent a flat neither. [Elisabetta]

Also, migrants often managed to get an *Anmeldung* at their friends’ place.

S: Had you already have an *Anmeldung*?

I: I had already done it with my friend's home address. But I think you cannot do this anymore now. But until last November, you could. So, I did it, and I got registered. [Interviewee]

Here again, we see that the *Meldegesetz* has produced a turn of screw towards limiting informal arrangements to register, and thereby constraining the possibilities for collaboration among peers. The resource needed to provide the address to register consists in being a main tenant (*Hauptmieter*), i.e. being a party of a formal rent contract with a housing agency or a landlord. To acquire such a status, migrants usually need time to settle down and accumulate other resources, entailing those needed to register. In other words, main tenants are placed on a higher level than subtenant within the hierarchy of access to housing in Berlin: they usually have the right to choose their flat mates, to inform the housing agency about subtenants, as well as whether subtenants should become main tenants or not at a certain point. As a migrant, becoming a main tenant often appears as the result of working the own way up the ladder. Marta, for instance, reminded her trajectory within the Berliner housing market while talking about a colleague of her who had just arrived in the city from India. The latter was living in an apartment provided by the IT company they work for, but still paid by him.

M: Well, they gave him the possibility to rent so-to-speak their apartment. The flat is not big, but it costs like 890 euro, fully furnished, etc.! And so, he was looking for another flat, and he came to visit me and my boyfriend, and he was like, "how beautiful it is here!". But well, I was thinking, you need first to work your own way up! [fare la gavetta, orig.] [laughs] (...) And anyway, we want to help him, somehow. Also, simply by giving him some suggestions. Maybe he will get more than what I got at the beginning, because back then I didn't have anything, I had to search by myself, and bang my head, but now I can transmit my experience. But still, I was for three years a subtenant before getting a real house! [Marta]

Mutual support to migrants, thus, takes place also by passing on the own experiences, while acknowledging that the difficulties embedded within the process of access to the city cannot be simply by-passed with knowledge. Becoming a main tenant signals success in accessing the city and a certain status of "having made it". While we have seen before how such a status can be used to keep flat mates in a state of limbo by denying the registration, in other cases alliances were built between main tenants and migrant subtenants. In these cases, exchange arrangements between the two parties were elaborated to include economic advantage

but also non-commodified resources.

Another interviewee, for instance, spent her first years in Berlin in a shared flat rented to the main tenant, a German woman who was living outside of the city, who had decided to keep the public housing flat. This was located in a gentrifying area but still costed a very low rent price. In other words, the main tenant opted for keeping control on the flat, due to its centrality and exceptional convenience, thereby enabling other young people to live there and register at that address.

I: Well, my *Anmeldung* is still in my last home, even if this is illegal, buut ... Well, and the woman of my last home, she is really cool, and I asked her “Look, do you mind if I stay registered at this place” and she said “of course, no problem you don’t have to worry for this”. Also, because it doesn’t change anything for her, also because, well, for her this is good, so they can see that even if the house is very big, it is shared with other people. [Interviewee]

The interviewee could keep her registration at that place also after she moved out; by allowing this, the woman could proof to the public housing agency that she was not using alone such a big flat. Finally, mutual help led to benefits for both the interviewee and the woman, with the allotment of cheap housing redistributed via a network of solidarity aside from tested means but based on reciprocity and mutual trust. A similar case is that of Azzurra, who spent her first months in Berlin in a shared flat together with a sixty years old man from East Berlin. During these months, he started helping her with learning German, while she was cooking from time to time for him. After a while, she had to leave the flat, since she could not get a registration at that address. In fact, the man, who was living on unemployment benefits, would have received less money from the Employment Office to pay rent, if the flat was formally shared with someone else. Even if he tried to set an informal arrangement, Azzurra refused and opted for a more formal rent relationship and provision of *Anmeldung* once she became more stable economically.

A: But to work I needed to register, so I necessarily had to leave. Even if he said “no!”, he wanted me really a lot to stay there, because I was cooking from time to time for him, he was quite poor, ate only bread with butter. ... And he said: “we can solve this situation”, he proposed me to register at some friends of him, in another flat, just to let me stay there, but I said no. [Azzurra]

Finally, simple and single acts of transferring resources take place between newcomers

and settled people, in order for migrants to accomplish tasks involving formalities such as signing contracts or speaking with bureaucrats. In the case of Giorgia, asking a German friend to go with her to sign the housing contract entailed the security to be treated as equal and to avoid discriminations. In other words, to be acknowledged as an entitled housing consumer, she needed to be in a relationship with a German native speaker tight enough to be accompanied to sign the contract.

G: Then the first time we went to sign a contract, a German girl, she is now a good friend of mine, she came with us, because we didn't speak German well enough to, above all because legal German is much more difficult, so we asked her to come and be our interpreter. Also, because they behave differently, I don't know, in many occasions I happened to think that they behave differently. I mean you don't have to be German, but you need to really master the language. And if they see that you are able to answer them properly [a tono, orig.], well this happens everywhere, in Italy too, I mean, then they behave differently. Here, obviously, the language barrier makes the difference. [Giorgia]

Spending one or two hours at the housing agency might have entailed for the German friend the loss of a bit of free time, while for Giorgia, it contributed to her provision of housing on a durable basis. Such an act of help, while very different in its outcomes for both involved persons, helped the two to construct a relationship of friendship. It cemented a durable relationship of trust and solidarity which not only spans across mother languages and inevitable differences, but whose very existence is based on this first act of disinterested solidarity aimed to overcome language barriers.

6.4. “You’d better register”: the provision of health care and the Italian state in Germany

E: Are you registered at Aire? [to the interviewer]

S: No, actually not. Because I have spent much time in Italy too.

E: Well, maybe, I mean registering at AIRE is necessary for the right to vote [abroad], primarily. And it is compulsory for those who live in Germany since more than three

months³⁹. So, you'd better register. Also, for the rights that you can get. Then, if you go back to Italy, you can easily declare it. We, for instance, we were waiting for the definitive address to do it, because it is pointless to do it and then change two or three times! But nooow we have it [Emilia]

The *Anagrafe degli Italiani all'Estero* (AIRE) is the register of Italian citizens living abroad. It was introduced in 1988 with the Law 470/1988 and collects data about Italians who have lived in other countries for more than 12 months, who were born abroad or who have acquired the Italian citizenship while residing abroad. When a citizen registers at AIRE, her/his record at the office in her/his city of residency in Italy is marked as expatriate. The register has been held locally in the various municipal offices, whereas according to two ministerial decrees (109/2013 and 194/2014) a central register collecting all data stemming from the municipalities has been created.

The AIRE was originally created at a time of increasing immigration to Italy, during which the emigration waves from Italy started in the 1950es had already consistently slowed down. According to this, the AIRE was meant to monitor the state of the existent Italian communities abroad and deliver them with services such as the possibility to vote abroad (Bonifazi/Livi Bacci 2014). During the following decades, migration from Italy has started to grow again, in particular after the outburst of the latest economic crisis. Since then, registering at AIRE has acquired relevance for young migrants living abroad. Beyond enabling Italian citizens to vote abroad, the registration involves losing access to the Italian health insurance and with losing the duty to present tax return in Italy.

The procedure of registering at AIRE is detached from processes of registration in other countries' registers. Thus, Italian newcomers in Germany who get the *Anmeldung* do not automatically become members of AIRE. Rather, they have to actively register at the local Italian consulate or embassy. In other words, the AIRE aims to count and collect data on Italian migrants abroad. The register, as to the *Anmeldung* process, however, does not entail sanctions for those who do not comply with the norm. As studies have revealed, many Italian migrants do not register until they are convinced that their stay abroad will be close to permanent (Tirabassi/Del Prá 2014). Main reasons for not registering span from emotional attachment to Italy to avoidance of losing access to the widely public Italian health insurance (ebd: 181 ff.).

As the register collects data voluntarily provided by migrants, it is considered to consist-

³⁹The law states that Italian citizens living abroad are obliged to register at Aire if their stay is longer than 12 months.

ently undervalue the number of Italian citizens living abroad. As studies have shown, statistics provided both by AIRE and by ISTAT on the topic do not coincide neither with one another, nor with registers held by the countries of arrival.⁴⁰ In the case of Germany, according to AIRE, there are 723.691 Italian citizens residing in the country⁴¹, while the German statistics count 643.065 of them.

The feasibility of reaching precise and univocal numbers about the migratory flows of Italians to Germany appears as very low (Pugliese 2018). While the impossibility to measure migration has been already pinpointed by several studies as much as its desirability has been questioned (Anderson 2017), it is appropriate to assume that the actual vastity of this migration process largely exceeds the numbers provided by the various registers. At least for metropolitan cores such as Berlin, the present analysis has shown how the very dynamics of access to labor and housing of Italian, as well as all migrants, rely upon their different ability to overcome a closed circuit of access, whose starting and ending point is the *Anmeldung* (also required for the application to register at AIRE). In other words, the statistical task of monitoring those newcomers who reside in Berlin while not being registered is close to impossible.

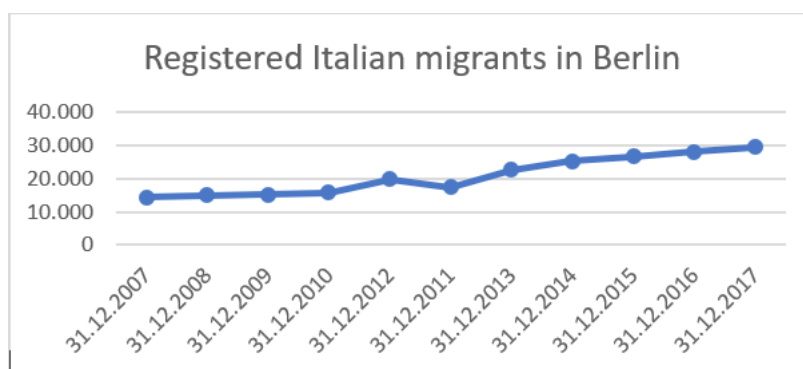


Figure 11: Population with Italian citizenship formally registered in Berlin.

Source: Amt für Statistik Berlin-Brandenburg, 31.12.2017, author's calculation.

The statement that at the end of 2017, 29.405 migrants endowed with Italian citizenship were currently residing in Berlin appears as quite flawed. As representatives from the Italian consulate in Berlin expressed in April 2016 at a public event organized by Comites⁴², the question about how many Italians are living in Berlin “cannot be answered by any one”. Ac-

⁴⁰<https://www.ilsole24ore.com/art/notizie/2017-07-06/oltre-250000-italiani-emigrano-all'estero-erano-300000-dopoguerra-094053.shtml?uuid=AEuX6nsB> (last accessed: 02.01.2019).

⁴¹http://ucs.interno.gov.it/FILES/AllegatiPag/1263/INT00041_Anagrafe_Italiani_estero_AIRE_ed_2017.pdf (last accessed: 03.01.2019).

⁴²These data were revealed during an event organized by the Comites Berlin (the Berliner Committee for Italians living abroad) and by the Italian Embassy in Berlin (field notes, 25.04.2016).

According to that source, the real number for 2016 could amount up to 50% more than the official one, thereby reaching the level of 40.000, while the representative of Comites mentioned 70.000 migrants. After two years, such number should be anyway considered as having increased of at least some thousands.

The event mentioned was organized to promote an informative leaflet about the provision, duties and rights regarding the provision of health insurance in Germany for Italian migrants. The speakers included representatives from the Consulate, from Comites and from a German public health insurance company. On that occasion, the issue of failing counting and measuring of the Italian community in Berlin was presented as a problem mainly related to two issues. Firstly, as services provided by Consulate, Embassy and Comites are publicly funded by the Italian state according to the size of the Italian community officially registered at Aire, its under-estimation leads to budgets smaller than it would be needed in reality. Secondly, all the speakers put an effort in enumerating the risks to which Italians living in Berlin endowed with the European Health Insurance Card (EHIC or TEAM in the Italian translation) provided by the Italian state, are exposed. Specifying that the card provides access only to medical emergency, the Consulate representative reviewed four types of medical treatments not included into emergency, such as planned operations, birth, psychotherapy or physiotherapy. It was specified that those in charge of evaluating the degree of emergency, however, are the physicians involved in the treatments. In other words, the discretionary space to implement the law in one way or the other is explicitly put onto the lower level of bureaucracy, i.e. at the doctor's office. The implications of this, however, were not discussed by the speakers, who limited themselves to assert that being the things so, the risk of being denied of being treated, or to pay for the high costs such as thousands of euros, are alarmingly consistent.

Thirdly, the presenters set a strong focus in repeatedly affirming that Italian citizens who are living abroad but still maintaining their Italian health insurance, and often being not yet registered at Aire, constitute an illegitimate weight on the revenues of the Italian state and of Italian taxpayers in general ("casse dello stato", orig.). In other words, the Consulate conveyed the idea that Italians living abroad but still on health insurance in Italy are parasitizing the Italian state, living their "wealth" on those who pay taxes. Interestingly, such a moralistic rhetoric reminds common statements spread in contemporary public arenas about migrants parasitizing the welfare systems of the countries they have migrated to. However, here we

find a reverse of this morale, in which citizens should demonstrate their loyalty to their country of origin negatively, i.e. by renouncing to the access to welfare and releasing the country from the burden of providing services to them.

S: And did you register at Aire?

I: Yes, exactly, no one forced me, buuut, I registered. Just because many were suggesting it “you’re a thief if you don’t do it”. I mean, not all of them were suggesting it, some said “Look, if you don’t do it no one will care”. But, well, I did it to avoid risks, I did that for the moment when in the future I’m gonna ask Italy something back.

S: Alright.

I: Are you registered too?

S: No. [I explain why]

I: Well, I thought, as I am not going back to Italy very soon, it seemed to me I should do it. [Interviewee]

In the mentioned quote, an interviewee pointed to such a dynamic of stigmatization as the reason why he decided to register at Aire. On the other side, friends told him that nothing would happen in case of not registering. Indeed, there are no sanctions for those who do not register, as mentioned previously. Moreover, there are no mechanisms to control this, although the representative of the Consulate mentioned during the event the legal possibility for the Consulate, once informed about specific cases, to enforce the registration of Italians living abroad. In any case, in front of choosing whether risking being considered as “a thief” and hoping that “no one will care”, the interviewee opted for making his situation formally irreproachable.

However, losing membership to the Italian health care can have dramatic consequences regarding access to actual health care in Germany. To understand this issue, we need to briefly mention the differences between the way how health care is provided in Italy and Germany. While in both countries everyone should have access to health care insurance, in Italy health care is treated as a universal right and is financed through taxation, whereas in Germany it is provided through compulsory social insurance and based on a “pay-as-you-go” basis (Jak-

ubowski/Busse 1998: 61). As a consequence, while Italian citizens as well as all people residing in Italy have automatic and free access to health care, in Germany people need to pay a monthly fee for insurance which depends on their income as well as on their employment status. Such a system leads back to the construction of the German welfare system operated by Bismarck in 1883, which was meant to provide health care for workers (Obermann et al. 2013). Hence, the quest of the Italian authorities for Italian migrants to register at Aire and thereby automatically renounce to their health insurance implies that Italian citizens living in Germany, by registering at Aire, shall become automatically subjected to the compulsory provision of health care via payment. Their employment status becomes the key to their access to health, with employed people paying a smaller fee, directly deducted from the monthly wage, than self-employed ones (from circa 150 to circa 400 euro a month). Workers employed in mini-jobs with a wage up to 450 euro per month and unemployed people also need to pay the monthly fee for insurance. In case they are not able to pay, as the representative of the health insurance company prescribed during the event, people can request for unemployment or under-employment benefits at the Jobcenter, which, in case of positive result, would take over the payment for the health care.

Finally, the approach promoted by the Consulate, responding in this case to the authority of the Ministry of Interior (and not to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs as it would be the normal case), first of all aims to obtain that mobile Italian citizens declare a clear status, either as “Italians living abroad”, as “tourists” or as non-movers. In the case of Italians living in Germany, then, such a status should be verified through the *Anmeldung*, as explicitly formulated during the event. Nonetheless, the two systems of registration (*Anmeldung* and Aire) are not directly connected with one another, meaning that space is left open for the migrants, who can decide whether to register at Aire or not. As the words by Emilia and Armando suggest, migrants can “play” with their statuses, by leveraging the open, or rather grey spaces left in between the two welfare and administrative systems.

E: Well if your employer pays your health insurance than it's ok [for employees, the fee is directly deducted from the paycheck], but if you have to pay it by yourself, then it's not convenient. Indeed, when we arrived here, we weren't working yet, and we stayed here for a couple of months without getting the German insurance, we declared that we were still staying in Italy, therefore at the beginning we were just like tourists. Then, when we got our position declared, we activated our insurance here. [Emilia]

Thus, against the constraints to be either migrants or non-movers, the interviewees employed a variety of strategies to avoid clarifying their status. Among these practices, most of them recognized that keeping access to the free and universal system of health care provided by the Italian state is a crucial resource for staying in migration. An interviewee who at the time of the interview was working on a low income as a freelance, had no problems in getting medication in Berlin with her Italian insurance card.

S: Don't you need the Italian insurance?

I: No, no, as I am Italian, as in Italy I have all the papers in order, and it's fine, I am alright [sono in regola, orig.], and I always use that one, the Italian one. I already went to the doctor, and I only had to fill up a module, to get a prescription. [Interviewee]

The module which the interviewee refers to is a paper which EU citizens endowed with a EHIC willing to be treated in Germany needs to fill to guarantee that they are staying only temporarily in Germany. By submitting such a module, they guarantee that the Italian state will pay back the costs for the treatment, provisionally paid by a German health insurance company of choice. Through such a module, the status as temporary mobile EU citizen can be easily negotiated at the lower level of bureaucracy, i.e. at the doctor's office. As many interviewees asserted, the discretionary space left to physicians often result in Italian migrants endowed with the EHIC being able to get treated via filling this module. Through this path, migrants can maintain themselves into a declared status of unclarity and temporariness, turning it to their advantage.

Once the status is made clear, and the access to Italian health insurance lost, however, the connection between insurance and employment becomes inescapable: the different insurance situation strongly affects the decisions taken regarding provision of income, as Alessio shows as he talks about his wish to become self-employed.

A: Well, the fear I have is that of having to pay by myself the health insurance [Krankenkasse, orig.], therefore this thing is still keeping me from doing it. Because in fact, I realized that I would have something to offer as a freelancer. But if this should mean, if I had to, let's say, it'd be much more stress.

S: How much would you have to pay as a freelancer?

R: well, two, three hundred euro per month.

S: Well, that's a lot.

R: Now it's not, usually your employer pays it, so until now I never had the problem. I'll see, this is an idea which is popping into my head, I want first to understand well how it works, though. [Alessio]

Here, Alessio, who decided to register at Aire, automatically losing its membership to the Italian insurance, cannot opt for the same road undertaken by those who can still opt for being self-employed and keeping her Italian insurance. Another interviewee, too, explained how she managed to spend four years in the city without getting a German insurance. She is a self-employed too and is not economically self-sustained; her upper middle-class parents give her a monthly amount to pay the rent and make a livelihood. During the interview, we talked about the possibility for her to apply for underemployment benefits at the Jobcenter, which she rejected because on one side she does not need benefits as her parents can support her, and on the other because by doing so she would be obliged to take up a German insurance, thereby losing her free access to health care in Italy.

I: Being a self-employed [Selbstständig, orig.], I never got a contract. And, ehm, now it seems that everything is quite legal, but I'm not sure, because someone says "no it's not", someone says "yes, it is", basically I am an autonomous worker [Kleinunternehmer, orig.], and I don't pay taxes, cause my earnings are too low, I am not obliged to, I don't have a commercial enterprise [I am not a Gewerbe, orig.], I have no obligation to get the German health insurance, right?

S: You're right.

I: Great. So, I still have my Italian insurance. Ehm, but if I go to the Jobcenter, then I have to give 'em all, and I also have to get insurance here, which are costs which, as long as you, it means that then I need to find a real work contract, so that someone pays me the insurance. And I am not sure, I haven't decided yet whether I want to move here for good, maybe I am deciding it, but I still don't know. So, for me, in a certain sense, it's more convenient to keep two feet in, in three shoes, like. [Interviewee]

By keeping "two feet in three shoes", she affirms her ability to disentangle herself from

fixity to her country of origin and at the same time to manage the degree of her mobility in autonomy from constraints located on national level regulations. To do so, she learns to navigate away from the Jobcenter, taking advantage instead of the secure resources she accesses via membership to her family. She can maintain her mobility by avoiding fixing herself in a formal way either to the German state or to a work contract. In this way, she can keep a larger amount of time freed from labor and commit herself to her passion for theatre.

I: And in the end, it is more convenient for me, unfortunately I also have to say this thing, as my father is a doctor, if I have a problem, eh

S: A health problem, you mean?

I: Yes, well, if I have to check something, as my father is now working in this private hospital, unfortunately, unfortunately, if I have a real problem, I will be home in 24 hours, and I will get the medical control.

S: Fortunately, isn't it?

I: Yes, luckily, yes, well, no I mean I am sorry because you know, this means really being a scoundrel you know. But, having this luck, I don't want to start with all that, and these costs, I mean, if you are not a student then you have to pay 250 a month. I mean, you really need to work A LOT! To pay that. I mean, much more than what I want to work now! So, in the end, it's not worth it. [Interviewee]

Here, it becomes clear that the interviewee's provision of health care in Italy exceeds the average, as she can count on the services offered by the clinic directed by her father. While she admits taking advantage of this, her privilege remains latent in her account, playing the "elephant in the room". Via her socio-economic status as children, she is placed into a location which clashes with her political values and thus is non-comfortable in terms of narration of the self, but which still allows her freedom regarding control and ownership of her time. In other words, she can avoid working, and indeed praise formation, education and "passion" over hard work and commitment to labor. Thanks to her class-based resources, she can play a convenient nexus of detachment and attachment to the two national systems in which she is embedded. She has much to lose by detaching herself from her family, who is located in Italy, and needs therefore to keep such bounds alive.

An almost opposite case highlights the degree of variety of practices of detachment and attachment produced by differences in class and degrees of citizenship. Maria is a young woman who came to Italy at the age of two with her family from a Central American country. Her mother is a hotel receptionist, the other working members of the family mentioned by her in the interview are employed in low-wage labor relations too. She used to live with her family in a rented flat in a provincial town in Central Italy. Despite having spent more than 20 years in Italy, Maria became formally Italian two years ago, after a long and expensive procedure to get her Italian passport. Her attachment to Italy displays multiple and co-existing ways of belonging, with her being able to separate herself from the Italian peers she knows in Berlin (“They all want pasta”, “always speak Italian when they are abroad”), but also from those “Italians” living in Italy who can rely upon parental support.

M: We are not, my husband and I, we are not the typical, Italian, family, who plods on to get by, well, who struggles, yes, but in the end is doing fine. [Maria]

Here, Maria is speaking truth as she refers to the fact that the crisis has heavily impacted on the wealth of Italian households, although unequally along class and ethnicity lines (Bonifazi/Marini 2014; Sassatelli et al. 2015). Maria cannot rely on privileged access to the health system nor to a system of income provision through her familiar membership as others might have. At the same time, she conducts a life as employee in an investment bank and can count upon a high income deriving from a position which she obtained via commitment to her university path. From her subjective perspective as a denizen *and* successful worker with a working-class migrant family, attachment to the Italian welfare system is irrelevant, as long as she is in a place where she can deploy her degree to secure a livelihood for her, her husband and a future family framework. Maria is one of many migrants deprived of Italian citizenship who are leaving Italy for other EU countries (ISTAT 2018).

S: Did you register because of insurance, taxes, and so on, I guess?

M: Well, actually I did it more because I have nothing in Italy, I mean I really own nothing, I have no house, I have nothing. And, it is convenient, in the case of, I am terrorized about someone stealing my passport, and things like that. And I still have the Dominican passport, I still have to get my Italian passport, therefore either I do it in Italy and then I have to go back twice for this, or I get it directly here. Also, it costs nothing, I mean, registering at Aire, it only changes the Italian health insurance, but for the rest it's

all about pros, so I said “Alright, I am gonna do it”. [Maria]

EU member countries require first of all clarity of status from intra-European migrants; such clarity is needed to assign migrants unequivocal and discretized access to social rights. As stated in the regulation about the access of EU citizens living in other member states to social rights, the principle of equality of treatment should apply, against any sort of discrimination (Reg 883/2004). However, according to the regulation it is also “necessary to subject persons within the community to the social security scheme of only one single member state in order to avoid overlapping of the applicable provisions of national legislation and the complications which could result therefrom” (art. 15 Reg. 883/2004). EU citizens should be assigned unequivocally to one national social security scheme, possibly corresponding to the place where they reside and have their main occupation. As we have seen, however, this is far from being a granted fact. Clarity of status, which would allow national states to better manage the flows of EU migrants, is seemingly impossible to obtain. As the analysis shows, the opening of borders within EU countries for EU citizens allows this class of migrants to construct flexible configurations of rights by negotiating access to the welfare systems of both country of origin and of destination. However, once formally employed as workers, migrants are less free to manage their social rights, as they are assigned much clearer statuses in both countries.

In this section, we have seen how Italian authorities seek to expel Italian citizens who are living abroad from access to social rights in the country of origin. They intend to make out of them “full time migrants”. While lacking the instruments to enforce the law, embassy and consulate attempt to “convince” Italian migrants in Berlin to exit the Italian health care by mobilizing a rhetoric of “parasites of the Italian state”, as well as instilling uncertainty regarding their care provision, suggesting that without the proper status of being ensured in Germany, health care might be denied and either their health or their economic situation put in danger. Processes of indebtedment are also evoked as scarecrows. Thereby, the authorities representing the Italian state abroad act into a discursive space about European citizenship and access which is embedded within a legal grey space. In other words, they try to take advantage of such grey condition and help the Italian state “in Italy” to get rid of a large number of Italians whose migration status is still uncertain and might remain so on a long term. By expecting loyalty to the Italian state and consequent rejection of access to free health care, however, they push Italian migrants living abroad into a status marked by higher health and eco-

conomic precarity, linked to the obligation to find “any work” necessary to sustain the costs for health care. By doing so, inequalities inherently embedded within the process of accessing work and housing in the place of arrival are structurally neglected.

The analysis showed that as a consequence of such structural indifference to the unequal lives experienced by Italian migrants, the processes of accessing wealth, livelihood and security in the place of arrival is made even more different. Those migrants endowed with more resources, either because of their membership into wealth families, or because of their own amount of forms of capital, might be able to turn their unclear status into an advantage. By doing this, migrants turn their mobility into a resource which enables them to access to different systems of welfare through specific and “self-customized” configurations of formal and informal modalities of access which, far from being a “robbery”, can be simply described as the way which best correspond their chosen form of mobility. In other words, they do not accumulate capital out of these configurations, but rather construct a transnational setting of health care provision which enables them to preserve their project of spatial and social mobility.

On the other side, those citizens who have been structurally neglected by the Italian state, such as second-generation migrants who, against the principle of *jus soli*, are denied full citizenship in an EU country, tend to adhere unequivocally to the welfare system of the country of destination within their own path of spatial mobility. Paradoxically, while they have been mostly ignored and mistreated by the Italian institutions, they are also those who might have more interests in staying loyal to those institutions, inasmuch as they renounce to their access to the advantages which they might provide them in a future. By adhering fully to the system of the country of destination, they are stuck into the category of migrants, although their everyday life conditions change according to the country of destination and the specific migration and integration policies concerning non-citizens.

Finally, for those migrants who, once arrived, are primarily concerned with finding a job and escaping precarity, the moral obligation of renouncing to access to benefits from the Italian state is connected to practices of securing a livelihood, the premise for clarifying their migrant status. Time becomes a crucial factor for such negotiation, in particular the period between the arrival to the moment of acquisition of the main resource required for access, the *Anmeldung*. Emilia and Armando, for instance, could resist to the harshness of such period only by leveraging on their collaboration, based upon a sentimental relationship.

E: I think that, if we had come here alone, we would have surrendered after a short time. Because, you need to have support to come here. I mean, [if you come to] Germany, ok, I made it alone in the first years. But, here in Berlin, it's not the same thing here. Because here you need the strength to obtain what you're entitled to. [Emilia]

During the interview, when talking about their practices of delaying the registration to Germany until they could have a job, I offered my help to understand the workings of bureaucracy in these matters. To my offer, Armando pointed to Emilia as the one who was already sorting out their situation among bureaucratic and practical issues.

S: well, it is a bit complicated indeed.

E: Yes, and then, you need to inform yourself.

S: Well, in case of doubts, feel free to write me, if I can help. Although I see, you are quite well informed!

A: Yes, she, she is a machine, a machine, an animal! Yes, yes.

E: Well I store everything [fig.], everything that

S: Well, this seems to be a very good thing.

A: It is quite curious.

S: But had you already, were you like this already in Italy?

E: No, not really, for sure I know it better how it works here in Germany than in Italy...

[Emilia, Armando]

While for the two it seems that it is collaboration and mutual trust, rather than high qualification or wealthy parents the basis for durability within migration, for those who might lack such a network of reliable, trustful and durable relationships of collaboration, the process of resisting the forces of expulsion either from the place of arrival or from the place of origin, might result in a state of inertia, potentially characterized in the case of Berlin, as we have seen before, by procedures of filling time with endless leisure and erosion of psycho-physical

health via consumption of drugs. Moreover, in front of an institutional web of obligations, duties and rights which resembles a smoky cloud, people might prefer staying out of it, and thereby getting access only to a limited set of options regarding the relationship between fixity and mobility.

In the next section we will focus on one last mechanism for selection and differential inclusion of newcomers, which plays a crucial role both for the life of migrants in Germany and in political debates spanning from the national to the transnational and European scale, i.e. the access to unemployment benefits.

6.5. Accessing unemployment benefits: the assimilation of bordering practices

“We will always welcome Union citizens who move to another EU country to work or to take up professional training or university studies. However, the right of EU citizens to freedom of movement is not unconditional. (...)”

Currently, a number of municipalities, towns and cities in various Member States are under a considerable strain by *certain immigrants from other Member States*. These immigrants avail themselves of the opportunities that freedom of movement provides, without, however, fulfilling the requirements for exercising this right. ... a significant number of new immigrants draw social assistance in the host countries, frequently without a genuine entitlement, burdening the host countries' social welfare systems. ... all necessary measures need to be taken to deal with the consequences of this type of immigration and to fight its causes. This includes legal as well as financial measures. ... At the same time, we need practical measures to address the pressures placed on our social welfare systems. Arrangements at national or EU level that allow those who have only recently arrived in a Member State and have never been employed or paid taxes there to claim the same social security benefits as that Member State's own citizens are *an affront to common sense* and ought to be reviewed urgently. [italics mine]

(Mikl-Leitner et al. 2013)

The quote above is an excerpt from a letter sent on 15 April 2013 jointly by the Ministers of Immigration of Austria, Germany, The Netherlands and UK (Theresa May at that time) to the President of the European Council of that time Alan Shatter. While the letter does not specify further the nationalities of those “certain immigrants”, it refers to a political debate which

has spread since the process of enlargement of the EU and the extension of the regime of free mobility to East European countries. The debate regards the issue of so-called “welfare tourism”, i.e. the fear that “EU free movement of persons could be used by individuals to take advantage of more generous welfare systems” (Remeur 2013). Although the debate seems to be cemented more by political concerns than by hard data (Hansen 2015), it has been a central stepping stone for the modification of national migration policies, such as the most dramatic one involving the Brexit in the UK.

Studies demonstrate that EU citizens residing in other member countries contribute to fiscal taxation in a larger manner than how much they weigh on expenditures for social benefits (Remeur 2013; EY 2014). This type of evidence, stemming from an economic perspective based on cost-benefit calculations, should prove as an effective rhetoric tool against the “welfare tourism” accusations contained in the letter by the four Ministers of Immigration. However, the official responses to the letter, provided by the then Home Affairs Commissioner Cecilia Malmström and by the Commissioner for Justice, Fundamental Rights and Citizenship Vivienne Reding, both pointed rather to underline that the Ministers were mixing “apples with oranges”, as “EU citizens exercising their right to free movement are not immigrants” (Hansen 2015, cit. in Anderson 2017). In other words, the two rejected the thesis of welfare tourism by considering the attitude of the national states towards intra-EU mobility as a faulty one, as it mixes mobility with migration, with the latter considered per definition as a “problematic type of mobility” (Anderson 2017).

As Van Ostajien and Scholten show by reconstructing the dialectic between EU institutions and single member states, there seems to be a “paradigm conflict between the European Commission versus its member-states and local municipalities regarding free movement as a clearly contested issue and a site of policy conflict” (Van Ostajien/ Scholten 2018: 2). Germany has played a crucial role in fueling this conflict, by implementing restrictions to the freedom of movement of incoming EU migrants. In November 2014, the Parliament adopted a law to modify the Freedom of Movement Act in the EU, according to which EU migrants who were found guilty of abuse of right and fraud can be punished with temporary re-entry restrictions (Hanewinkel/Oltmer 2018). On that occasion, the then Minister of Work Andrea Nahles declared that „any misuse of the system undermines the legitimacy of social securing”⁴³. Along this line, in October 2016 the German government adopted a further bill restricting the

⁴³<https://www.bundesregierung.de/Content/DE/Artikel/2014/08/2014-08-27-freizuegigkeitsgesetz.html> (last accessed: 02.01.2019).

access to welfare basic benefits for EU migrants. Since then, unemployed EU migrants who never worked previously in Germany can receive benefits only after a stay of at least five years, against the three/six months previously accorded, or after working with a formal contract for at least one year.⁴⁴ In special cases, however, access to basic benefits might be accorded for a maximum of six months also to newcomers with no previous working experience in the country. In the words of the Social Democratic minister of Work Nahles, the bill was adopted to boost “confidence in the European ideal and one of its greatest achievements: the free movement of workers” as well as to protect German “municipalities from financial overstretch, as they have to shoulder the cost of social assistance benefits” (see note 18).

At the center of the German debate around “*Sozialtourismus*” (social tourism) are the so-called Hartz IV reforms, which regulate access to the workfare-based benefits, delivered by local Jobcenters to people in need, either because of unemployment or for working on a low wage (the so-called “working poors”). The Hartz IV benefits include mainly a fixed monthly basic payment (*Regelsatz*) and a housing subsidy (*Kosten der Unterkunft und Heizung*), accorded to recipients mostly via a formal contract regulating both the deliverance of benefits and the accomplishments due by the recipient, which range from attending subsidized training courses to sending job applications. Among other things, for migrants obtaining Hartz IV might entail access to German courses.

After the mentioned modifications, access to Hartz IV is now accorded to EU migrants along the criteria of their employment status and duration of stay. However, both ways of accessing benefits depend upon the first and most important requirement, i.e. being registered at the Citizen Office of residence. In other words, the *Anmeldung* constitutes once again the fundamental *sine qua non* condition for acquiring social citizenship in front of the German state.

E: Well, and when we arrived here, we tried to register at the Jobcenter, but without registration this proved to be impossible. So, we went to Caritas to get an address where we could receive our post.

S: Ok. N: But we never really used it, because

A: Well, because no one was accepting it anyway. It was useless.

[Emilia, Armando]

⁴⁴<https://www.bmas.de/EN/Services/Press/recent-publications/2016/clarification-of-access-to-social-benefits.html> (last accessed: 02.01.2019).

Given the analysis of the closed circuit which has emerged in Berlin around the access to the registration, it can thus be deducted that the difficulties in obtaining the latter channel the probabilities of getting access to social benefits. In other words, the emergence of a local closed-circuit functions as a further informal and preliminary filter to accessing welfare, adding to the ones prescribed by modifications of the formal regulations located in the Third German Social Code (*Sozialgesetzbuch III*). As the quote by Emilia and Armando explains, the closed-circuit might determine a delay in access to welfare, further restricting the possibilities for migrants to get help to fix themselves to the place of destination and selecting out those who have less resources to sustain themselves.

6.5.1. Staying away from the Jobcenter

Once the registration issues are cleared, newcomers are still required to learn the bureaucratic procedures which regulate their encounter with the state. In the case of dealing with the Jobcenter, this task was described by the interviewees as a very demanding one. The analysis also showed that learning how to behave with street level bureaucrats and how to insert themselves into the functioning of the everyday practice of a foreign state is an unevenly distributed skill among migrants. The latter has to do with the recognition by migrants of their own relationship to state and bureaucracy and with the reflexivity about the type of subject one becomes at that specific encounter with the state. Also, it requires detaching oneself from its status of needing migrant, in a way which enables her/him to present the own self as a legitimate recipient of welfare, instead of an illegitimate “parasite” of taxpayers. Such learning process needs time, first of all in order to get hard information about the existence at all of welfare transfers and about the related procedures, which might be inexistent in the place of origin.

Once arrived in Berlin with her boyfriend, Carla, a trained translator, started working in a low-wage job, thereby accepting the de-skilling of her labor power in order to make ends meet. After some months, however, she discovered the possibility to get Hartz IV and subsequently applied to the Jobcenter. During that period, as she was trying to obtain the translation of her degree, she started a career as self-employed translator.

S: How did you get to the Jobcenter, who told you about that, how did you discover about it? You told me that at the beginning you were working at a restaurant.

C: Ehm, exactly. I did not, I didn't know, I don't remember exactly when I learned about it, but, well I worked seven months, I guess I ignored about the existence of Jobcenters for six months! I guess it was at the end of that period, and then I quit, well did they fire me? I don't remember even how it went, if I quit or they fired me, because anyway we had heard about this possibility, aaand, I went out of the job as waitress, and applied to the Jobcenter. [Carla]

Thanks to the income provided by the Jobcenter, Carla managed to match her qualification with a corresponding position on the labor market. She is now working as a part-time employee in a startup, where she accomplishes translating and marketing tasks. Thanks to this employment status, she gets her health insurance half covered by her bosses. At the same time, she is working as a freelancer translator, an activity of which she enjoys the autonomy and self-determination. In other words, her trajectory of labor force within the EU can be defined as an exemplar story from the perspective of both the policies regarding the European regime of free mobility of workers and of the rationales lying behind the construction of the Hartz IV as an economic incentive towards letting labor offer and demand meet. However, when I asked her to tell her way of accessing labor in Berlin in more detail, a different and more nuanced narrative unfolded.

S: And how was it with the Jobcenter?

C: A disaster, because at the beginning there are A LOT of things to fill out, I mean a disaster in the sense that, it went well in the end, but in the first three months we didn't get anything, because every time we filled out some documents, well, something was missing, and we would get a letter at home, "ok, we can't deliver you the benefits because you are missing this other document". So, you go there again, and send it again. Thus, after three months they gave us the unemployment benefit, and they also gave us the three months arrears. But well at the beginning it was a torture! [ironic] [Carla]

The analysis of the implementation of the procedures to access benefits reveals practices of delaying also regarding the delivery of income, as well as the fact that many hours of work in filling out documents are needed to reach the benefits. The latter has been included by Guy Standing into the category of "work for labor", i.e. "work that does not have exchange value, but which is necessary or advisable" (Standing 2011: 119-120). Taking his perspective, "queuing, commuting to queue, form filling, answering questions, answering more questions,

obtaining certificates to prove something or other, all these are painfully time consuming yet are usually ignored” (ebd.). Time consumed in filling out documents which give access to welfare benefits plays a role for the relationship of individuals to provision of income, even if labor relations are not directly involved in it. More specifically, in the case of migrants, time spent in bureaucratic procedures to access rights in the place of destination fills a state of limbo, in which formal detachment from the new context can lead into the erosion of resources for self-sustainment and potentially endanger the migratory project, in case other sources of income are not provided or suitable.

S: During the three months, have you ever thought of letting it go, because it was too difficult?

C: Well, no, we said „ok, if it comes, it will be a plus, if it doesn’t, we’ll keep doing what we have been always doing” [laughs], well you roll up your sleeves and go searching for something else. So, we knew if this arrives, it is something more, it wasn’t, it wasn’t an objective for us, it was one more possibility, it came, and it helped, because it helps you a lot. When you get it, it helps. [Carla]

Through the quote by Carla, it becomes clear that for migrants, the option of receiving benefits often constitutes the only available alternative to doing “any job” once arrived in the new place (Parutis 2011)). To avoid de-skilling and low-wage work, getting “social income” via Hartz IV (Standing) can work as a stepping stone to finding jobs corresponding the migrant’s skills and desires. Encountering difficulties along the bureaucratic path towards accessing Hartz IV, therefore, can lead migrants to renounce to it and opt for engaging themselves in labor relations able to endow them with a similar provision of income. Emilia and Armando, for instance, experienced institutional racism when facing street level bureaucrats at the Jobcenter.

A: We went to the *Arbeitsamt*, to see if we could get some support from the state to take a German course. The very kind woman we talked to [ironic], she saw from our passports that we come from Italy, and the plane ticket slip was still on it. And she commented upon us about the fact that “ah, so you’re even coming with the airplane!”, like she was saying “you came here only to take money”. And she closed the door behind us, saying that, that she couldn’t help us, that she was not going to help. (...)

A: Anyway, she was the first person we were talking to, and it wasn’t such a beautiful

thing. (...) Maybe we didn't have our papers right to get benefits, I'm not doubting this. But at least, treat me aaas, as a person, not as a dog.

S: Alright.

E: I mean maybe in the first month, we just arrived, we couldn't find a job, we didn't know how to move, I said "let's ask for help, as soon as we find a job, we turn it off". I don't think there isn't anything bad in it, right. Also, because we should be entitled too, but no, it wasn't like this. So, I said "look, let's leave the idea of getting help, let's look for a job straightforward".

[Armando, Emilia]

Similar stories were told by many interviewees who had to deal with the Jobcenter, and then opted for working instead. This was also the case of Luciana, who came to Berlin after spending several years in Italy as a precarious and self-employed theatre actress. In Italy, she would not be able to sustain herself solely through her main occupation, as she could not sustain herself during the periods in which she was not working. Due to this uncertainty in providing income, she had to engage in gig jobs to make a living. While talking about the impossibility of making a livelihood out of artistic work, she compared the German welfare system to the Italian one, praising the possibility to acquire some basic income to sustain herself during those periods of unemployment.

L: Well there is a difference, it's the one regarding benefits, something which I never, let's say, exploit- [approfit-, orig.], never taken advantage of. But anyway, THERE IS SUCH A THING, I mean, if there was something like this in Italy, probably I would have stayed there and kept doing it there.

S: You mean a sort of unemployment benefits?

L: Yes, I mean something like Hartz IV, anyway, you don't have such a thing in Italy, but it allows you, if you want to work as actress or as an artist, it allows you, during the work gaps, the holes, it allows you anyway, right, it guarantees you a minimum, right, a survival minimum. Instead in Italy, during the gaps, you always need to, I mean every time I was asking in bars to work as a waitress, etcetera. And also, the difference with the insurance, the artist health care insurance [*Künstlerkasse*, orig.], you don't have it in Italy, and that allows you anyway, you get health insurance at a reduced price. [Luciana]

Although Luciana acknowledges that Hartz IV could provide that part of income which she was missing in Italy, she has never applied for it. Instead, she took a job as cleaner, an activity in which her artistic skills are neglected, and the pay is around the legal minimum. Thus, even if she left Italy because she constantly had to take deskilling jobs in order to make ends meet, she is now working mainly in similar jobs and rejecting the possibility to get benefits. She motivates such decision by asserting that by receiving benefits she would enter a relation of dependency with the state.

L: I could apply for it, I don't have a minijob anymore, I have a normal contract, but I earn less, let's say, than the foreseen minimal threshold, so I could apply for Hartz IV, and get, I don't know, maybe some help with paying the rent. But, well, it is a bit like feeling a bit dependent, like it was, you know, from the state, for, I mean, for 300 euro, I mean, I'll renounce to it, or I'll search for a second job, I prefer it like this. [Luciana]

If discouraged in applying for benefits, migrants often enter low-wage labor relationships, which can constitute traps from which it is difficult to exit. One way of opting for work instead for basic income is the welfare tourism narrative, which Luciana assimilates and refers to herself. Migrants are faced with several discourses around the security of national states, in which they play a role without being asked. The analysis shows that they can adopt them when evaluating a potential encounter with the state in order to motivate their practices of detachment or attachment. In the quote above, Luciana is reinforcing the welfare tourism narrative, taking the perspective of the German taxpayer, while she keeps working for a salary which is well beyond the line of poverty as it is defined by the German state.

Several interviewees mobilized similar ideas of welfare tourism regarding their relationship with the German state. Giovanni, for instance, when talking about the difficulties encountered when trying to access Hartz IV, justified the Jobcenter operators by referring to the welfare tourism narrative.

G: I went to ask for information and help about the German health care insurance, it is difficult to understand how it works here, but, they treated me as an immigrant, like, because I didn't speak German well, and they said "well here no one speaks English, no one speaks English", so I went away.

S: So, are you saying you didn't have the feeling that it was a welcoming place?

G: No, I hadn't. (...) Actually, it is wrong, but I do understand it, when you have hundreds of people coming because of Hartz IV, they don't care at all, they don't really struggle to find a job, effectively, or to follow integration, that's it. For me this was the problem, a friend of mine told me that at the beginning, they were giving it to everyone, with no problems. After a while, they saw that it wasn't working, I mean that people weren't following, were not going to the interviews, they only wanted to have money and nothing more. ... If you think of this, it is a fantastic method, because anyway, they take the money [to finance Hartz IV] from taxes, to help those in need. But if there are TOO MANY asking for it, and only a few taxes incoming, then the money will finish, and finally they cannot give it to everyone. [Giovanni]

Giovanni relativizes the oppression he suffered by admitting that there are too many migrants asking for Hartz IV. By assuming the perspective of the German state, as it has been displayed by the restrictions on access to Hartz IV, he brings his process of assimilation one step further, as he assumes the voice of the "German taxpayers". While he gets treated "as an immigrant" at the encounter with the German state, he develops a narrative of the German state in which he can play the role of the deserving migrant, the one who has come to work hard, not to take benefits.

While many migrants adopted the welfare tourism discourse, in some cases as a motivation not to apply for Hartz IV, interviewees also mentioned other reasons which kept them away from the Jobcenter. Luciana, for instance, added that she prefers not to engage in much of the "work-for-labor" required to get Hartz IV. That type of work includes formally declaring all her spending and sources of revenues to the Jobcenter agent. According to the Hartz IV regulations, welfare recipients can be asked to provide evidence of their monthly income and consumption patterns. By this, the Jobcenter should accomplish the task of making sure of not being cheated. For recipients, these conditions are endowed with stigma and lack of privacy, processes of undervaluation which seems to be more intrusive for their own self-narrative than deskilling on the labor market.

L: And not having then to, because then I saw how the whole procedure works, all that you have to declare, that you have to do, and [they ask you] "how did you spend that money", and they do rightly so, as they are giving you the money!

S: Why, is it something that then requires some time?

L: Yes, well, asking for subsidies, I prefer, I mean I always had this idea, I prefer keeping the possibility to apply for these benefits in the moment when, and if - hoping that this won't happen - if I should REALLY need them. I mean, as long as I have the possibility to work alone, I don't...

S: Alright, I get you. [Luciana]

Luciana prefers keeping the Jobcenter option as the last-resort, to be opted for in a case of “real” need, which she defines as having no other choice. Nonetheless, while embodying the welfare tourism narrative, she also realizes that from her subjective perspective, i.e. considering her individual interests, her decision could be considered as “stupid”, or anti-rational.

L: But, indeed, maybe to take this view has been a bit stupid on my side, at the beginning, because I could have benefitted from Hartz IV and be an artist, work as an actress, then, this allows you also to attend courses, do workshops, meeting people, entering a bit the mechanism, here, into the circuits, without having to bother doing other gigs. Now it is a bit more difficult, because I should, eeeeh, well, yes, now it is a bit more difficult. Yes, now it has become a bit more difficult, but at the beginning, maybe I should have done it. [Luciana]

Luciana's words display the fragility of migrants at the encounter with an alien state, an encounter which is imbued with dialectic contradictions and multiple perspective-takings, in which dynamics of assimilation can play against integration into the labor market, in which the ethics of hard work often win against the admission of falling into the category of those “needing help”. The dynamic of stigmatization operated onto migrants who turn to the Jobcenter to ask for economic support is well displayed by Carla. At a certain point, she received unemployment benefits accorded along the ALG I regulation (*Arbeitslosengeld I*, unemployment money I), i.e. a monthly amount calculated as the 60% of the last salary, which people who worked for at least one year can receive for half the time of the duration of their employment relation. The ALG I, differently from the Hartz IV (ALG II), is managed by the *Agentur für Arbeit* (Agency for Work). When coming close to the ending of her ALG I period, Carla considered about turning again to the Job Center.

C: I wanted to avoid this, because the Jobcenter is an environment, liiike, they control you more, eh, you always have to stay in Berlin, you cannot move, you cannot have holidays, and if you go on holiday, then you feel like a scoundrel! I mean, it's a strange mech-

anism!

S: Well, I have heard about this. (...)

C: Yes, it is a bit alienating. Well, of course, it helps you, but you have to stick to the rules. ... At the beginning, ehm, I was also feeling a bit in shame, to talk, to talk openly about the Jobcenter [lowers down her voice], you keep your voice down, right? So that no one hears you, understood? This is something, it's, it's like a taboo, you don't talk about it loudly, because people maybe, well, and instead it is right to use it, why not using it? ... I mean, in the end I have a job now, I am in the condition I am thanks to that, I mean, thanks to that phase, which helped me arriving to where I am now.

S: Of course.

C: Well, sometimes we [her boyfriend and her] we call it with some nicknames, when we are outside on the street, we call it JJ! [laughs] [Carla]

Stuck between processes of stigmatization and affirmation of the own subjectivity against dominant narratives, migrants might opt for staying out of categorization and surveillance carried out by the state, keeping themselves invisible from sources of authority which are themselves opaque to their eyes as far as for the procedures and fill-out formulas and the effect they can produce on a migrant subject.

We have already seen how accessing the workfare-based basic income program called Hartz IV can constitute a valid option for newcomers to avoid straightforward down-skilling in the labor market. However, deskilling seems to emerge also for those who opted for asking economic support to face unemployment or underemployment. One of the main goals of both Job Center and the Agency for Work is letting labor offer and demand within the national labor market meet. In particular, as these agencies are local and managed at the level of Länder, they usually tend to adapt their task of placing potential workers into those sectors of the labor market which are offering the highest number of work places at each time. Of course, such process of “matching” work places with potential workers entails the evaluation and comparison of the skills required by the labor market with those brought by the people registered at the agencies. While on one side, courses are offered to trainee potential unskilled workers towards acquiring those skills characterized by scarcity, on the other side those workers endowed with skills which are redundant, are “channelled” into less skilled jobs.

C: Well, after having worked at XY⁴⁵, I had to turn to the *Agentur für Arbeit* [orig.].

S: And did they give you some information, some sort of coaching about what to do, what types of courses or specializations?

C: They give you the possibility to do that online. They give you a password to enter the website of the *Agentur für Arbeit*, and there you find some online courses you can attend. They are quite, well, basic, but you can do them. Or they offered me the possibility to take a course on how to write a curriculum in Germany, things like that. Oor, they, attempt, they TRY to orientate you towards the job you would like to do, so they offer you a pool of, well you can go on that website and do a filtered search for those jobs.

S: Also for companies?

C: Yes, also agencies, I mean normal job offers.

S: Did it work for you?

C: The job I found, I didn't find through the agency.

S: Ok.

C: I mean, they haaave, well they have jobs which are not that qualifying in my opinion, they weren't really, I mean I even applied for some of them, but they were not, they were not exactly for me. But they help somehow, anyway they want you to exit unemployment at any cost. [Carla]

At the encounter with the Agency for Work, Carla experienced a pressure by the operator to accept low-skilled jobs, which she did not want to engage with. When scrolling down the courses and job offers targeting her profile, she quickly realized that these did not really “match” her desires and aspirations regarding her work life. When cornered by the operator to accept these offers, she managed to find a way to escape the pressure, by claiming her rights as “customer” of the Agency.

C: Well, I remember that, also at the *Agentur für Arbeit*, I got an operator, she really made me cry! Because she puts me under so much pressure, in a situation like “look, you

⁴⁵Name was made anonymous by the author.

have to take that job!”, like that, and I told her “no, that’s not my work field”.

S: Did she want you to work in another sector than yours?

C: Yes. And instead, after that, I let them change the, the, the operator, because I couldn’t, well it wasn’t being productive at all, the meetings I was having with her, they were really a disaster, therefore I went there and told them “look, there is this operator, she is not able to, she is not letting me move on”, by the way she made me spend a lot of money to let my degree get recognized, while actually there was no need for recognition.

[Carla]

By struggling to get her rights implemented, Carla managed to go through both the institutions of the Jobcenter and the Agency for Work and exit them in a way which she considers successful for her own desires and needs. However, this process included facing anxieties, stigmatization and discriminating practices. For her, success meant avoiding deskilling, and finding a job in the work field for which she is qualified.

Other interviewees were concerned with the same issue but acted differently and opted for navigating away from the such institutions. By doing that, they also mobilized the desire of keeping their independency, while at the same time admitting their bounds of dependency to their family back in origin. By unfolding their practices, they help the analysis take into account once again how background differences affect the access to resources of young migrants.

S: And what about going to the Jobcenter, have you ever thought about trying it, to see if you would be entitled to get benefits?

I: Yes, I thought about it, but I never really tried much, ‘cause in the end I always managed to get by. ... and I am not registered at Aire! Even if I live here for three years, actually it would be compulsory after one year. So, theoretically I have an Italian residency, and the Italian health care. And I am a bit afraid that by doing these official things, such as writing to the Jobcenter, it might come up that I have to register at Aire, that I have to get a German insurance, things like that. And well, I am succeeding to get by, I work with my fiscal number, I have all the papers in order, so it would not be such a big case. But still, registering at the Jobcenter... if they then give you an offer, you have to take it. And, being a full-time garbage collector, no, I absolutely don’t want to do this, I prefer staying alone, getting by like I am doing, as it is working well anyway. [Interviewee]

This interviewee recognizes that asking the Jobcenter for help might require her accepting any job, and entering deskilling, a process she also wants to avoid. However, her refusal of receiving economic support from the German state is also a consequence of her practices of staying attached to the Italian state welfare provisions. In other words, she weighs off Italian health care against German basic income and opts for the first one. She is thereby comparing a welfare provision based on the principle of universality and guarantee against the so called *Leistungsprinzip*, which in the case of the Hartz IV provision is predicated upon the obligation to work “at any cost”, including the obligation to constantly trying to exit the status as welfare recipient. Choosing universality, however, is a possibility which she can obtain thanks to the provision of additional income which her parents donate her from time to time.

I: Ehm, if I go to the Jobcenter, then I have to give it 'em all, I have to get a German health insurance ... this means that then I need to find a real work contract ... And I, I don't want to, also because then I have to declare the money I have, and then, to declare this you have to show your last three monthly entries, and my entries are such low in comparison to what I spend, it is clear that I get money in another way [from her parents].
[Interviewee]

While this interviewee's low income would allow her to ask for basic income, she acknowledges that this would require her to declare her revenues, stemming from her family. Thus, she realizes that she could either renounce to the help provided by them and accept the safety network delivered by the Job Center or staying away from the latter and maintain her invisibility towards the German state, as well as maintaining her “grey status” regarding migration. Once again, the ability to determine attachment and detachment from the welfare provisions of national systems is closely connected to the own class location, or, in the case of young precarious migrants, to the class locations of their parents.

6.6. The production of subjectivities at the access

In this chapter I have focused on the arrival of newcomers to the city of Berlin. According to the analysis of the empirical material, the time spanning from their physical migration to the place to the achievement of the formal status as migrants both in Germany as immigrants and in the sending country, in this case Italy, as emigrants, can be considered as a “differentiating machine”, characterized by closed-circuits. The traversing of these circuits by new-

comers enacts centripetal as well as centrifugal kinetic forces which cross a sort of black box. This black box feels like a “state of limbo” in the newcomers’ lives.

When newcomers arrive, bearing with themselves different types and amount of capitals, different social backgrounds, different ways of accessing different sources of income, they begin their struggle to become migrants. Such a struggle, or hustle, points to acquiring at first the basic resources needed to settle down. Such resources are to be accessed by entering relations of production (including labor and work) and reproduction (including the provision of housing). By doing that, newcomers necessarily enter class relations, through which their “baggage” get turned upside down, shrink or expand. In other words, becoming migrant means being placed into a new location within a new housing market, a new labor market. During the access to these markets, nationality, employability, class background, age and gender, play major roles. But the way how these factors play a role is not a given or fixed, but rather it changes along with the mechanisms for differential inclusion. For instance, the analysis has illustrated how in the case of housing, increasing commodification and competition among consumers in the housing market produce a thickening of the boundaries to access it, as well as the modification of the characteristics which economic subjects should have in order to trespass it. These mechanisms, therefore, cannot be understood as static barriers or borders. Rather, they are more or less thick spaces, which serve not only to ascribe deservingness and un-deservingness to migrants and to select only the “best and the brightest” (Anderson 2014), but rather and more importantly, to shape and mold newcomers into new economic and social subjects. In other words, differential inclusion produces discrete subjectivities, which should then reproduce the very mechanisms underlying differential inclusion, as oil meant to polish the gears of a machine.

As we have seen in chapter 5, the movement of young Italians starts with a process of expulsion, a coin with a negative side, the extirpation of possibilities for reproduction, and a positive side, the transformation of mobility into an individual resource for reproduction and its appropriation. Seen from the angle of migration, expulsion inherently leads to the struggle for acquisition of resources, connected with dynamics of expansion of capital. Nail talks about expulsion as “the deprivation of social status, de-subjection and re-subjection”, while expansion by expulsion is “the social logic by which some members of society are dispossessed of their status so that social power can be expanded elsewhere” (Nail 2014: 35). In Nail’s terms, the migrant is the subjective figure whose movement is defined by this logic” (ebd.).

The newcomers which are under study in this research arrive in the city of Berlin through a movement which can be read, among the multifarious ways of looking at it, as the expulsion from a system whose social reproduction is in crisis. By migrating, they enter a new material and social space, triggering a process of subjectification through which mobility is made productive. In the next chapter such process of making mobility productive will be analyzed closer by looking at the field of labor. As the chapter will show, the trespassing of the closed circuit of access produces new subjects characterized by unstable and simultaneously multiple dynamics of belonging, refusal and aspiration which shape the process of location into fields or spheres.

Generally speaking, a relevant issue is whether these processes of subjectivation might be connected to the emergence of bounds able to sustain and compose a network of solidarity and mutuality (a networked class) or if they enact processes of commodification of a self, which learns to turn to money to buy access and to be recognized in society as a subject of value. In other words, how is mobility made productive and who appropriates the values of it to do what?

We have seen that there is a variety of ways through which the mobility of the young is turned into business around the provision of those services and resources needed straightforward after the arrival. While this has not been the focus of the chapter, it became clear that the emergence of an “infrastructure of migration” (Lindquist/Xiang 2014) endowed with transnational bounds and strategies of accumulation must be reproduced through labor, thereby creating “new” value predicated upon the mobility of others. Such value can then be appropriated by those “migration managers” such as brokers and intermediaries, for instance known and visible figures of the Italian community who have made a business out of the mobility of their peers, either by founding housing agencies or through the creation of a public discourse about the Italian community through online magazines. In other words, these actors, among others, extract value from movement before migrants enter employment relations (Mezzadra 2016), capitalizing directly on those resources which mobility as such is connected with, i.e. with the process of accessing the new place.

However, the focus of this chapter is less on the productivity of mobility in the form of the emergence of chains of valorization related to the management of the migrant community, and more on the production of subjectivities, of “subjects of value” (Skeggs 2004). The analysis has shown several steps of the process of producing economic and social subjects. First

of all, the local registration at Citizen Offices in Berlin is the key resource as well as the key mechanism for including newcomers into formal circuits of valorization such as labor and housing. Becoming an immigrant in a statistical sense, while signaling that one becomes visible to the state apparatus and thus more disposable, is also connected with the possibility to control the own mobility and fixity, as it constitutes the key to access a set of resources necessary to make a living. By registering, migrants can enter formal labor relationships: by that they are made employable, they become “free”⁴⁶ labor force, meaning that they have the option to access income by entering labor relations based on exploitation. For those who do not have alternative possibilities to access income, for instance via membership to their family of origin, labor seems thus necessary to settle down. As for housing, with registration migrants become residents of the new place and formal housing consumers, entering housing relations as well intertwined with power relations. Aside from becoming themselves housing owners, the difference between becoming a main tenant or a sub-tenant constitutes a differential of the power which can be deployed to negotiate mobility and fixity in a more or less autonomous way, as we will see closer in the next chapter.

A less considered but central aspect of the production of subjectivities via the mechanisms for differential inclusion at the access is the financialization of newcomers, who usually need first to open a German bank account and then to ask for a Schufa documentation to apply for homes. By being obligated to open a bank account attached to the German ban system, newcomers are made liable and quantitatively accountable for the economic transaction they engage in. Only via being holders of an account can they become formally suitable for processes of indebtedment or accreditation. Further, with the Schufa they become measurable financial subjects, exposed to a type of quantitative evaluation, i.e. credit worthiness check, which is also deeply endowed with moral valuations. More importantly, however, by being subjected to the Schufa, their economic and financial value is put on paper, thereby becoming a mark which can become crucial for them to find a home or not, fixing themselves to Berlin or not, succeeding in their process of re-location or not.

Further, registration is also the gateway to accessing welfare in Berlin: once registered, migrants have the possibility to decide about asking for unemployment benefits and entering the German health care system. On the other side, as soon as they are not formally recognized as emigrants via registration at Aire, they can opt for keeping some of the privileges connec-

⁴⁶For a critique of the Marxian concept of “free” labor force see: Neilson/Mezzadra 2013.

ted with residency in Italy. By accessing unemployment benefits in Germany, migrants are produced as needy subjects who must be prone to the diktat of working at any cost. As we have seen, accessing unemployment benefits has been made increasingly difficult by politics as well as through the development of a wide public discourse which scapegoats EU migrants for exploiting the German welfare state. While there are no data supporting this argument, migrants are left either with developing individual and collective practices to counter such view on them or navigating away from access to the welfare system. The latter might either opt for keeping their relations of dependency with their families of origin, or for developing a self predicated upon hard work as a proof of their value as migrants. Chapter 4 has shown that while doing so, migrants construct boundaries between them and the other migrants, as well as between them and their peers who have remained in Italy. Such processes of boundary-making, based on diverging forms of life conduct along the criteria of mobility and fixity, hard work and hedonism, serve to sustain the construction of a mobile life conduct, in which stasis is condemned as failure, and constant movement idealized as the key for success.



Figure 12: "If you keep doing what you already can do, you will remain forever the same", postcard from a counseling room at a Berliner Jobcenter. Program for activation in the labor market, 2018.

The process of accessing Berlin is marked by the construction of these boundaries; in the meanwhile, as newcomers travel along the closed circuit in a struggle to become migrants, they are also shaped to become "certain" migrants, acquiring a sense for how to enter labor, housing and social relations in the new place. Actually, they are formally prevented from do-

ing so, as the loop is closed. However, the circle can be exited, as it entails a number of windows, which however are not automatically visible. In other words, how do these windows emerge and who is able to see the windows as such?

Berlin seems to be a mine field for those arriving in the city, or rather a surface full of holes into which it is easy to fall (a karst territory), as they are disguised as something else. While in chapter 4 we saw how club life is considered to constitute a dangerous hole, leading into a vortex from which it is hard to get out, this chapter has presented the closed-circuit of access as a state of limbo in which it is easy to lose the own way to settlement. During the interview with Michela, it became clear that also the Hartz IV is considered as a dangerous vortex, from which it is better to navigate at distance.

M: Well, I really, really like work, I like working, it doesn't matter, maybe I am not living a cool night life, but it doesn't matter. My boyfriend is like this, even though he is young than me, but this unites us a lot, we are very much projected into, well yes, I mean, we work, we earn to make a living. Going to the clubs, first of all I really don't feel it anymore, I wouldn't have the strength, the energy for it anymore! My gosh! Just like, asking for money to the Jobcenter, this other thing. Cause anyway, these are really the so-called infernal rounds [orig. *giri infernali*] of this city, you know, these infernal vortices, the various things like dealing with the Krankenkasse [having to take a German health care insurance], the club life, for me they dooon't really

S: in which sense they are vortices?

M: Well, because they take you, right down, noo, no. So, I have my pickets, I have my path! [laughs] I mean I don't know where I'll get to, where this will lead me, but at least this is a path, made of what I want, what is around me, so maybe, I mean, I am not going to ask for money to the Jobcenter.

S: Why is it, do, do you think you would have to spend a lot of energy to do this?

M: Yees, also looking for home, my gosh, no no. [Michela]

A welfare state able to lose binds from the family and clubbing as a freed form of life have been mentioned by many interviewees when talking about the difference between Berlin and their places of origin and the reasons why they decided to move to Berlin and settle down.

However, at the same time, these very reasons are also perceived as dangers, as something it would be better to stay away, as they might lead straightforwardly to the failure of the migration process. It seems difficult for migrants to develop shared ways of tapping resources embedded within these vortices, and to construct collective and organized ways of reaching them while neutralizing the risks connected with them. The individualized answer is rejecting the vortices, and putting all the efforts on individual hard work, thereby climbing up the ladder or exiting the loops via injecting money into it and opening oneself a window to get out. Nonetheless, as we have seen, migrants also develop multifarious ways of cheating, disguising, pretending to be the economic subject wanted by the market even if they are not. Cooperation among peers is practiced putting forward these projects of disguise, while at the same time a shared understanding about the injustice of the closed-circuit mutually reinforces itself when looking at other migrant peers stuck into difficulties, or at German colleagues who never had to face an Italian boss at the restaurant (see below).

To tackle the complex question about how mobility is made productive, it must be first affirmed that the mobility of these subjects emerges as unequal. The different ability to move of newcomers lays the ground for different and unequal forms of mobility. As Massey argued, it seems that “mobility, and control over mobility, both reflect and reinforce power”, and the “time-space compression of some groups can undermine the power of others” (Massey 1994). To tackle such inequality, Massey pleads for the formulation of more just politics of mobility and access. Here, however, the issue is firstly that of determining whether more and less powerful forms of mobility are directly related by a relation of exploitation, by which “differential mobility can weaken the leverage of the already weak” (ebd.).

Even though they are becoming migrants at the same time and undergoing the same procedures, sometimes experiencing similar forms of discrimination even though, they will place themselves along a line of inequality at whose extremes are the ones who will make out of mobility a strength, a strategy for accumulation, and the ones who will be made subject to strategies of accumulation of others, often experiencing durable downward social mobility as they lose control on their lives. Most of them will have to first lose something before they can get something else, experiencing at first a condition of limbo, of down-grading, in which uncertainty might be faced with different forms of endurance.

The power inequality of their mobility is thus expressed via the different ways how migrants can enact endurance. As the chapter has shown, one way is that of navigating between

two welfare systems, with some having to follow the rule because there is no other source of income which coordinates their actions, other ones spending time within a state of opacity as a consequence of their powerlessness, and others again taking the best out of the two or more systems, not having to get back neither for a step. How do migrants navigate national belonging to legitimize their relationship to resources as citizens?

The way how migrants selectively relate to the two states implies a deep re-thinking of national belonging as a static issue. Such re-thinking involves not simply the already established acknowledgement that fact that identities, and thus also national identities, are multiple, as authors in migration research have underlined. In fact, while they are multiple, they are also constantly subjected to change, within each identity (what it means to be or to feel Italian or German, what kind of meanings, ideals, symbols, artefacts are involved) and across identities (what is German and what is Italian, and why it is so). This means that the negotiation of belonging to Germany always implies a negotiation of what it means to be Italian, both as an Italian citizen living in Italy (their status before being expelled, their social past, projected onto their peers who have remained in Italy) and as an Italian citizen living abroad, and more specifically in Germany. Assimilation of national belonging is not a pure thing, rather it is a process in which people engage in order to sustain the formation of a new self which is worth becoming a citizen, a self which deserves membership.

The state is not only a source of resources via welfare provisions for migrants as well as citizens by birth. Rather, it actively contributes to the production of subjects and of social and employment relations in the very moment as it produces access to its resources via the political elaboration, administrative implementation and juridical verification and sanctioning of migration laws. As Anderson states for the approach of the British state towards immigration, “immigration controls are not simply taps that attempt (successfully or not) to control the flows of entry of non-citizens, but they are moulds that shape social relations” (Anderson 2017: 1532). Thus, the question about how both states of immigration and emigration mediate the access of migrants to resources and thus their relationships to income-generating resources, is a crucial one to understand the class of migration within a system still saturated by the nation-state as “the frame through which public discourse understands the distribution and accountability of political and economic power” (Rose 1999, cit. in Anderson 2017).

This research focuses on how EU member states deal with migration of EU citizens from other EU member states. The national management of this type of migration, discretized in

policies as “mobility”, transforms its liquidity on paper into varying degrees of freedom of movement, which spans from a potentially frictionless freedom to physically move from one place to the other (the take-off), to the encounter with solid borders at the local level (the landing). This process of solidification takes place via the formalization (, i.e. the making formal, giving a form, making static, fixing a shape) of migration and mobility flows. Formalization of migration, as we have seen, occurs through the production of numbers. While the attempt is deemed to fail miserably, states attempt with any means necessary to make the status of mobile people as clear as possible, commanding them to become either stayers or emigrants, immigrants or autochthonous.

In the case of Italian newcomers in Berlin, the analysis has shown that for the sending country Italy, the cancellation of mobile citizens from the register offices is connected with their expulsion from the national health care system. Thus, pushing Italian emigrants to formalize their situation corresponds to the alleviation of the Italian welfare from migrants perceived as burdens, similarly to immigrants living in Italy. By this, we see one crucial dynamic of how through the crisis of social reproduction social groups are re-configured, and loyalty to the state is loosened from any “classical” form of belonging. However, the Italian state is unable to order the flows of its mobile citizens. Efforts put by the Ministry of Interior in expanding its power of control over the Italian community living abroad seem to be pointless as sanctioning has not been implemented yet, nor exist an institutional body able to physically control the residency of those abroad. Also, it seems that the phenomenon of emigration still seems far from becoming on focus of the Italian political debate, dominated by dynamics of scapegoating incoming migrants and racialization of social problems, as it is happening in several other countries (Pugliese 2018). While immigration is at the center of the debate in Italy, Italian citizens are leaving the country quietly, starting to become loud once they arrive in the countries of destination.

On the other side, in Germany, the receiving country, newcomers are required by law to formalize their situation and register, thereby getting counted as migrants. However, in the city of Berlin, where competition on the housing market as well as inflow of newcomers is dramatic, a set of converging borders has made registration for newcomers, including EU citizens, almost impossible. The registration becomes the most wanted resource as well as the basic asset to engage in any sort of strategy of securing and accumulation, either regarding work or housing, considered as fully legal. Practices of informality, of cheating, of disguising

are necessary to accomplish the arduous task of becoming a migrant. While this statement might appear as aligned with public discourses on immigrants, stigmatized and accused of being “parasites” or “scoundrel”, it might deserve more attention as it shows that the very fact of being a migrant requires extra-legality, even under a regime of alleged free mobility, in which subjects can (still) move freely in and out of the German territory, meaning that they are not subjected to border control.

By analyzing how the two states relate with the same phenomenon from the specular points of view of the sending and receiving countries, it becomes clear how migration today pinpoints the limits and crisis of the nation state, as well as the crisis of political representation (Anderson 2017). With regard to the latter, the analysis has highlighted how assimilation of a nationalist view on migration by migrants does not erase completely the attempts to construct spaces of autonomy and invisibility at the encounter with the state. In other words, although migrants often seem to adopt the view of the German taxpayer, of the paying member of the nation state, they nonetheless maintain themselves at a distance from assimilation which is enough to make them feel legitimate in cheating the state, or in applying cost-benefit, rational choice approach against traditional rationality onto their relationship to the state. The latter signifies that the economic rationale wins over a sentiment of national belonging to be placed “before” economy (nation as *natio*, Latin for “born”), that the neo-liberalized subject does pose a threat to the nation state in the very moment it absolves the diktat posed to her/him by a juncture of nation states such as the European Union.

7. Work in Mobility: Migrant Labor Force in Gastronomy and Call Centers

7.1. Fixed in mobility through labor relations

The previous chapter has illustrated the process through which newcomers in Berlin become migrants, overcoming institutional and informal barriers and deploying various practices to reach the basic resources to settle down. The analysis contained in the present chapter starts right after the newcomers have become migrants, thereby securing the right to stay in a more or less permanent way. From this moment on, the struggle to become a proper resident and member of the place of arrival overwhelms the struggle to become migrants. Reaching a job corresponding to the own aspirations, finding a home adequate to the own expectations occupies a large part of the time of migrants once they have overcome the first phase of access. Putting aspirations into practice, hammering out plans for career, self-realization, for objectifying the self into specific goals and dealing out tasks becomes a central part of the everyday life. At the same time, the conception of home is re-configured, as the place of arrival becomes more familiar, and migrants start thinking more seriously about how they want to live, with whom and where in the city. Producing income and reproducing themselves, migrants become workers and residents. In both spheres, they enter processes of subjectification which are processual and relational with other migrant and non-migrant peers and members of their networks.

This chapter will focus on how the very process of getting a livelihood leads many migrants to enter labor relations in specific sectors of the labor market, which fix them *as migrants*. As Bauder (2006) has underlined, instead of approaching the concept of integration from a normative standpoint about whether integration is a desirable outcome of migration and whether it should be achieved, it is preferable to adopt a more functional use of the term. According to the author, “migrants and immigrants integrate when they perform *distinct* roles in society and in the labor market” (Bauder 2006: 9). This original view on integration as a way of maintaining differences not only on a horizontal cultural axis, but also on the vertical

one, can be helpful to understand the location of migrants within the local labor market. This chapter will explore the work situation of those migrants who are employed in sectors in which markers related to the origin of workers is relevant, however for different reasons. Thereby, I will try to follow Bauder's suggestion and do not focus only on the categories of nationality and race or ethnicity as homogeneous entities, but also on a wider variety of "social processes of distinction", such as legal categories as citizenship, institutional mechanisms as the non-recognition of foreign credentials, bodily and habitual signs and practices which might be connected with national or ethnic categories (ibid. 10). In other words, this section will analysis how migrants' resources are given different values according to the segment of the labor market they interact with.

On one side, the place of the migrant in the hosting societies still seems to be that of the performer of low-wage tasks, that of supplying labor force in those sectors not occupied by long-standing workers, societally recognized as dignified members of the "imagined national community" (Anderson 2006). On the other side, the analysis will show that being migrant and endowed with a mobile habitus can be a scarce skill which puts some migrants in a privileged condition towards locals characterized by fixity. Thus, while mobility works as a generator of disadvantage for some, it acts for others as a propeller for others, as polarization of labor markets in creative industries increases.

Here, I will look closer at the modes of generation of income via labor, i.e. work mediated by wage, salary or service relationship, developed and practiced by the migrants. By doing this, I will focus on those sectors of the local labor market in which migrant workers, and in particular those with EU citizenship, are mostly to be found. Thanks to the analysis of data on the existing labor force in Berlin, it will be shown how the interaction between the labor market and migratory flows has produced a stratification by status of migration along and across labor sectors. Segmentation of urban labor markets along the color line or ethnic markers, with migrant labor force fueling the expansion of local service economies, has been documented by a bulk of literature (Piore 1979; Sassen 1988, 1991; Waldinger/Lichter 2003; May et al. 2007). However, scholars have argued that it is not only that places attract migrant workers because of economic differentials and a larger demand for labor force, but also that migrants themselves shape labor markets and migration is deployed to regulate local economies (Castells 1975). In this sense, as Castells argued, "immigrant workers do not exist because there are 'arduous and badly paid' jobs to be done, but, rather, arduous and badly paid

jobs exist because immigrant workers are present or can be sent for to do them.” (Castells 1975, cit. in Bauder 2006). If migrants are often devalued in the labor markets of the place of arrival through a process of differentiation in which they are set against locals, they can also be valorized for the specific resources they are endowed with, not to be found among local population. In this sense, labor markets are shaped by migratory flows, it is not (only) the other way around. Such an argument can be used to clarify the ways how mobility is put under value within capitalist valorization, as much as commodities stuck in a warehouse in a state of under-utilization can become more productive for capitalism as they are set in circulation. The urban economy of Berlin has largely profited from the increase of flows of labor force from abroad, with some sectors expanding more than others. As it will be shown, these sectors have grown organically at the same time as migrants bearing distinctive sets of values and forms of capital have flowed into the city. As the analysis will illustrate, these resources are connected to mobility and encompass for instance the availability to develop a flexible every-day life, openness to travelling, low degree of loyalty to a specific workplace, due to interest in other spheres of life developed thanks to a self-narration along cultural capital more than along class, foreign language skills, i.e. a mobile habitus. Interestingly, these characteristics are to be found across different sectors of the labor market, thereby signaling how we are dealing with a wider re-structuring of labor markets, in which valorization of migrant labor force, far from representing the exception or a marginal aspect, becomes increasingly central for the understanding of how exploitation of labor takes place in urban economies.

7.2. Migrants in the Berliner labor market: some data

According to the Federal Agency for Work (Bundesagentur für Arbeit), at the end of 2017 circa 93.000 EU citizens were formally employed in Berlin (Bundesagentur für Arbeit 2017).⁴⁷ A methodological note is required to be able to deal with these numbers. Firstly, it must be said that this category encompasses all persons engaged in a formal employment or traineeship (see note 1). Excluded from it are those who are in a minimum-income relationship, as well as self-employed, civil servants, members of the army (Bundesagentur für Arbeit 2018). Secondly, it is worthwhile recalling that a significant number of young EU

⁴⁷The data refers to so called “*sozialversicherungspflichtig*”, i.e. those with the duty of paying taxes for pension insurance.

migrants are not registered, and therefore are not entitled to work on the formal labor market. As we have seen in chapter 6, the data delivered by the agency understate the real number of migrant workers employed in Berlin. Yet, these data remain the most reliable one to analyze under which conditions, pay and in which sectors EU migrants become labor force once arrived in Berlin.

The analysis reveals that the distribution of these workers across different sectors is quite variegated, although less than workers with German citizenship. 66,6% of the EU workers are concentrated within the local sectors of construction trade, retail, gastronomy and hospitality, information and communication, technical scientific and real estate services and other services such as call centers. Circa 10% of the total EU workers are employed in each of these sectors. Further, the large majority of them works in the tertiary economy (86,3%), with only 13,7% being employed in the secondary sector, for instance in the construction of built environment. Many of the mentioned categories are among the ones with lowest pay, in particular gastronomy and hospitality, as it will be showed later. However, focusing on the Italian migrants, we can observe that 10,3% of them work in the sector “*Immobilien, freiberufliche, wissenschaftliche und technische Dienstleistungen*”, i.e. in professions which are usually corresponded with a medium until high wage, such as academics, graphic designers, architects, engineers and marketing agents⁴⁸. Thus, the group of EU migrants, South EU and in particular Italian migrants, is characterized by a large variety of occupations, spanning from the less skilled to the most skilled ones. This, however, does not say much about the skills born by the migrants themselves, as many of them, as we have seen, in particular if young and in the first period after the arrival in Berlin, might be employed in low-skilled occupations as gig jobs. This could be reflected in the astonishingly high proportion of Italian migrants employed in low-wage jobs in the gastronomy sector (43,1%). Further, in this sector black work is highly diffused, as both the interviews and media report (Von Borstel 2011; Abdi 2018). Indeed, if we delimit the focus to EU workers falling in the category of *Geringfügigbeschäftigte*, i.e. those employed in low-wage relations (for instance via the infamous mini-jobs), further tendencies of concentration become visible, as 22,6% are employed in gastronomy and hospitality, 15,7% in the categories “various services” (“*sonstige wirtschaftliche Dienstleistungen ohne Arbeitnehmerüberlassung*”)⁴⁹, 14,7%

48The professions included are: lawyers and accountants, consultants and bookkeepers, managers, architects, engineers, research and development, advertising and market research, veterinary (Bundesagentur für Arbeit 2008, Klassifikation der Wirtschaftszweige).

49This category includes workers employed in: rental services of various sorts (cars, consumer goods, ma-

working in private households and 10% in construction trade.

Thus, EU citizens living in Berlin in labor relations typical of the working poor are more often to be found within the mentioned four sectors. Moreover, the comparison between the categories of German, foreigner, EU, South-EU and Italian citizens employed in Berlin shows that further concentration on the gastronomy and hospitality sector takes place. As the interviews have shown, either working full time or “doing a gig” in the gastronomy is largely diffused among South European migrants and in particular among Italian ones. While this can be considered as an outcome of stratification regarding working conditions, precarity and production sector of ethnic groups as they enter the labor market, all sectors mentioned are part of the service industry, in which migrants are even more over-represented if employed in a minimum-wage relation (90%).

Thus, on one side EU migrants arriving in Berlin tend to concentrate in specific sectors. On the other, these migratory flows take place at the same time as those same sectors are expanding at rates above the average. As a matter of fact, most of the sectors in which EU migrants work in great numbers are interested by most dramatic growth in the past decade. Considering the period 2008-2015, a report by the Institute for Statistics Berlin-Brandenburg states that the sectors with the highest growth have been information and communication (for instance web programming, hosting, data processing), water supply and disposal and the previously mentioned category of “other services”, for instance call centers (Amt für Statistik Berlin-Brandenburg 2017a). In another report by the institute, the Berliner economy is said to have grown in service sectors, in particular in information and technology, as well as in construction trade (Amt für Statistik Berlin-Brandenburg 2018). Regarding the sheer number of employed in these sectors, the Federal Agency for Work illustrates how the sectors with the highest increase of employed between 2016 and 2017 were: logistics and transport (+10%), security services (+10,2%), call centers (+10,4%) and communication services such as internet and telecommunication (+11,5%).⁵⁰

chines, audio-visuals, etc.), travel agencies, private security services and systems, janitors, road cleaning, gardeners and landscape architecture, secretary and copywriting, copy-shops, call centers, trade fairs and congress organization, etc.

⁵⁰<https://arbeitsmarktmonitor.arbeitsagentur.de/faktencheck/branchen/tabelle/500/678/?r=&c=2%2C3%2C5%2C14%2C16%2C8%2C10> (last accessed: 02.01.2019).

	Germans	%	Foreigners	%	EU citizens	%	East EU (since 2004)	%	South EU	%	Italy	%
Employed (<i>sozialversicherungspflichtig Beschäftigte</i>)	1.253.937	86	200.567	13,8	92.788	6,4	48.333	3,3	22.779	1,6	10.795	0,7
Construction trade	49.259	3,9	14.375	7,2	8.284	8,9	7.307	15,1	809	3,6	164	1,5
Retail; maintenance and repair of motor vehicles	147.936	11,8	23.778	11,9	10.299	11,1	5.002	10,3	2.570	11,3	1.330	12,3
Gastronomy and hospitality	46.476	3,7	28.240	14,1	11.219	12,1	4.389	9,1	5.220	22,9	3.115	28,9
Information and communication	76.746	6,1	17.861	8,9	9.420	10,2	2.566	5,3	2.551	11,2	1.177	10,9
Real estate, freelance, scientific and technical services	153.104	12,2	18.652	9,3	9.851	10,6	4.191	8,7	2.591	11,4	1.190	11,0
Other services (temp-work agencies excluded)	87.113	6,9	26.365	13,1	12.686	13,7	7.934	16,4	2.437	10,7	1.114	10,3
Other services, private households	72.716	5,8	10.105	5,0	4.537	4,9	2.258	4,7	925	4,1	407	3,8

Table 1: German, foreigner and EU-citizens (selected nationalities) working in socially ensured employment relationships in selected branches of the Berliner labor market. Source: Bundesagentur für Arbeit 31.12.2017 (author's calculation).

	Germans	%	Foreigners	%	EU citizens	%	East EU (since 2004)	%	South EU	%	Italy	%
Minimum-wage employed (<i>geringfügig Beschäftigte</i>)	119.989	80,7	27.138	18,2	9.475	6,4	5.821	4,0	2.095	1,4	955	0,6
Construction trade	3.888	3,2	1.123	4,1	569	6,0	501	8,6	49	2,3	14	1,5
Retail; maintenance and repair of motor vehicles	19.932	16,6	3.460	12,7	948	10,0	548	9,4	215	10,3	111	11,6
Gastronomy and hospitality	16.339	13,6	7.794	28,7	2.139	22,6	970	16,7	787	37,6	412	43,1
Information and communication	2.841	2,4	503	1,9	208	2,2	67	1,2	51	2,4	26	2,7
Real estate, freelance, scientific and technical services	15.767	13,1	1.836	6,8	811	8,6	490	8,4	147	7,0	67	7,0
Other services (temp-work agencies excluded)	13.271	11,1	3.825	14,1	1.487	15,7	1.058	18,2	300	14,3	99	10,4
Other services, private households	13.956	11,6	3.094	11,4	1.360	14,4	979	16,8	215	10,3	94	9,8

Table 2: German, foreigner and EU-citizens (selected nationalities) working in minimum-wage, non-socially ensured employment relationships in selected branches of the Berliner labor market. Source: Bundesagentur für Arbeit 31.12.2017 (author's calculation).

Further, as the table below illustrates, in many of these sectors the percentage of migrant workers is indeed largely above the average.

	Tot. workers	Migrant workers (%)
Agriculture, forestry, fishing	412	17
Mining, energy and water supply, waste disposal	22.187	3,2
Manufacturing sector	11.033	8,9
Construction trade	63.634	22,6
Retail; maintenance and repair of motor vehicles	171.714	13,8
Transport and logistics	72.926	13,9
Gastronomy and hospitality	74.716	37,8
Information and communication	94.607	18,9
Finance and insurance services	35.253	6,2
Real estate, freelance, scientific and technical services	171.756	10,8
Other services (temp-work agencies excluded)	113.478	23,2
Temp-work agencies	33.742	21,9
Public administration and defense	87.048	2,8
Education and teaching	98.561	9,8
Health care	106.783	7
Homes and social welfare	113.824	9,7
Other services, private households	82.821	12,2
All sectors	1.454.504	13,8

Table 3: Number of total workers per sector and percentage of migrant labor force. (Source: Bundesagentur für Arbeit, 31.12.2107, author's calculation).

It can be concluded that migrant workers are strongly contributing to the economic growth of the city of Berlin, as they provide the necessary labor force to foster the expansion of those sectors which are fostering economic expansion at most. These very sectors, from information and communication to construction trade, signal at least two main axes of economic growth along which the city is developing: on one side the digital economy⁵¹, on the other that which David Harvey calls the secondary circuit of capital, strictly connected with urbanization processes, i.e. the production of built environment (Harvey 1985).

Finally, among the categories of migrants considered, the group of Italians constitutes the most interesting case for the purposes of the present research, as it is internally highly variegated, encompassing those employed in both high-wage, medium and low-wage sectors. In other words, they tend to occupy positions both in those areas of the labor market usually

⁵¹As broad and imprecise as the term might be, we will deploy it here as it summarizes all those economic transactions and activities in which the utilization of digital technologies is the sine qua non condition for their existence.

reserved to full-fledged citizens, and in those ones usually reserved to migrants or denizens, in which diversion from standard employment relations are more often the norm.

The question, thus, concerns the understanding of which resources and how are they mostly valued in the two different poles of the labor market. What makes certain Italian migrants attractive for jobs in the information and technology sphere, what makes others fitting with the requirements of low-wage sectors? What role does mobility as a resource play in such process? The next sections will deal with these questions, however focusing on one of the two poles, the low- and middle-low one. Further research is required to explore also those high-end jobs occupied mostly by migrants. Although through a partial analysis, we will start by isolating distinctive sectors of the labor market in which interviewees as well as Italian and EU migrants were mostly employed.

The lights will be oriented towards different areas of the tertiary economy, exploring the role of mobility as an asset which potentially constitutes a major resource for urban development in contemporary capitalism. The next sections will investigate low-income and often informalized work such as in the gastronomy and cleaning services and middle-low-income services related to the digital economy, such as call centers. Different working conditions will be set against one another, however trying to highlight the politico-economical connections and relations of dependency between the different segments of the labor market. These parts of the labor market are commonly characterized by high turnover, valorization of foreign languages and of traits of life conduct such as openness to travel, move and re-settle. In other words, they all rely upon the development of a mobile habitus among an increasing number of young people, pushed to circulate either by economic crisis, strategies of accumulation of mobility or pursue of upward social mobility.

. University degrees and formal qualifications are not required for all these jobs. Nonetheless, we will see how also for the latter jobs, the fact that many workers are in education careers plays a role in the supply of this type of labor force. Thereby, I will try to overcome the distinction between low-skilled and high-skilled occupations, challenging views on incorporation into labor markets as simple matches between resources born by the workers and resources required for the position to be taken. Rather, the analysis of the interaction of demand and supply on urban labor markets needs to be complicated by including the transformations in class relations and structure, as well as the re-configuration of arrangements of production and reproduction.

7.3. Gastronomy

Historians argue that while in 1900 you could find only two Italian restaurants in Berlin, 90 years later the number had risen to 467 (Thoms 2010). The diffusion of these businesses concerned also the rest of Germany, in particular in the aftermath of the WWI, as enormous flows of guest workers from the South of Europe reached the industrial areas of Germany. The first pizzeria was opened in Heidelberg in 1953, soon many others followed. As industrial growth in Germany started to slow down at the end of the 1960es, a large number of guest workers became unemployed; as studies illustrate, some opted for opening restaurants and caf  s, as to do so they needed small initial amounts of economic capital (Pichler 1997). As for skills, Italian migrants could leverage on a largely shared positive attitude towards Italian and Mediterranean kitchen, considered as healthy and tasty (Thoms 2010). Even if the migratory flows of young Italian migrants today differ in many ways from the ones which concerned guest workers since the 50es, even in contemporary times Italian migrants are over-represented in the gastronomy sector of the cities of arrival (Pugliese 2018), as it becomes clear when looking at the data on Berlin. Giovanni, talking about how easy it was for him to find a job as a cook in Berlin, mobilized the idea that Italians are advantaged in comparison with migrants coming from other parts of the world when it is about working in a restaurant.

G: We, as Italians, have a higher level, in comparison to foreigners, well we start from a slightly higher level, as I noticed. Well, me, having no experience, I had never worked in a kitchen before, and learned to lead a kitchen within only three months. [Giovanni]

The idea that Italians are apt to cook was mentioned by many interviewees. Studies illustrate that the reputation of the “Italian way of cooking” has changed over the centuries and can be traced back to the 18th Century and the diffusion of tourism within Europe, in particular of young aristocrats from the Northern part of the continent joining the acclaimed “*Grand Tour*” in the South (Thoms 2010). Of course, the very definition of “Italian” kitchen as a homogenous category can be critically analyzed by highlighting regional difference as well as contaminations and interactions on global scale regarding cooking and recipes (ebd.). Much can be said to deconstruct the ways how food and cooking represent a marker for the construction of Italian identity. However, what is of interest here is firstly that young people moving from Italy today keep on being channelled into this type of work activities, thereby

entering labor relations characterized by minimum wage, black work and long working hours. In Berlin, gastronomy has the lowest pay among all sectors, i.e. 10,54 Euro brutto per hour (Amt für Statistik Berlin-Brandenburg 2017b). As this might be due to the ascription of Italians as being able to cook and to learn cooking fast, it must be nonetheless considered that, secondly, the businesses initiated by Italian migrants in the 20th Century constitute an infrastructure of arrival for newcomers, in particular those unable to speak English or German. The encounters between the latter and their Italian bosses have been described by many interviewees, mostly in negative terms. Previous and contemporary waves of migrants meet in the kitchen of restaurants, their relationship is one based on exploitation and conflict. Thus, many interviewees reported that, after having experienced it, they would refuse working in Italian gastronomy businesses.

G: Well, I can do anything, but I don't want to work in Italian restaurants. (...)

S: And why don't you want to work there?

G: Well, when I went to work there, in Italian restaurants, because of course I didn't speak English well, I only learned English at school, which is not that great English you know, and I couldn't speak German, I did some trials in Italian restaurants, but it was a bit like working in Italy. I mean, you work for four or five euro per hour, you cook recipes which are not the Italian ones, because they are modified for the Germans. On top of this, the bosses exploit you, I mean, I had one trial for one week, I asked him "can you please give me the money for the ticket, at least, because you know, I live one hour away from here", and he was like "I don't know, come back tomorrow, and we'll see". And all these things, so I said, well you are not paying me, I have to travel two hours every day, and you don't even pay me a small budget.

S: Weren't they paying the trial?

G: No. While with the other restaurants, I was regularly paid, I got a contract, two unpaid trial days, but after that I got paid.

S: Ok, so the Italian restaurants...

G: They behave as if they were in Italy, and I escaped from Italy just to avoid that,

thus I won't be doing the same here. Then, of course, if you are desperate, and you are looking for a job in your mother tongue, well they exploit that. You are desperate, came here to work, found it and they take advantage out of that. [Giovanni]

Here, Giovanni mentions a crucial mechanism for the incorporation of newcomers into the gastronomy sector. Learning the German language is a most challenging task for newcomers. The gastronomy sector, and in particular businesses owned by Italian migrants of previous migration waves, offer an easy entry into the local labor market for newcomers, however demanding the newcomers harsh working conditions and lowest pay. In the kitchens of these restaurants and pizzerias, there is no need to speak English or German. At the counter or in the dining room, welcoming clients in Italian or in broken German might be even a sign of "authenticity" of the "Italian-ness" of the place (Prunetti 2018). Thus, finding jobs in Italian-speaking environments is the easiest way to access quickly a source of income, however precarious. More precisely, it seems that the labor environment is characterized by rates of exploitation comparable to those left behind in their country of origin. While moving spatially, migrants do not necessarily move socially and economically. Further, as these workers are employed in labor relations in which there is little time left for learning another language, gastronomy remains the only viable opportunity for accessing income. Finally, the interviews showed that, especially in smaller cities, restaurant managers often provide housing accommodations for the newcomers. Thereby, the young labor force becomes even more vulnerable, as their housing stability is connected with labor relations marked by high precarity, as in the case of Armando and Emilia, as they moved first to a small town near Munich.

A: Well, we have direct experience of this, therefore, we used to work from 14 to 15 hours a day, six days of seven, to have, well we were half legal, I mean, we had insurance for the minimum hours, with a part-time contract, we resulted as part-time workers.

S: While actually you were working for 14 hours a day?

A: Yes, we were doing two shifts a time. And we received, almost, almost a full salary, to do the work of two. And moreover, the positive thing is that they were giving us a place to live, but they could kick us out of there anytime, which he eventually did.

S: Where was this work?

E: Near Munich.

[Armando; Emilia]

7.3.1. Class composition in the gastronomy sector

Once explained how it comes to be that such a high concentration of Italian migrants occurs, I will now illustrate the internal differentiations of gastronomy workers. Working as a bartender or waitress is considered as a low-skilled activity. It is not required to hold a university degree, and experience in the sector is the most valued asset, as the interviewees involved in this job reported. While a part of the interviewees employed in this sector saw this job as their primary source of income, as well as the job they wanted to do in their life, many others, mostly endowed with a university degree, declared that they had worked in the past in bars or restaurants to earn some pocket money while studying. Thus, while accumulating skills in training to be deployed in other segments of the labor market, they engaged in low-wage labor relations which they viewed as bare uncomplicated ways to raise some income, with the additional advantage of informal pay arrangements, such as tips. However, students working in the gastronomy referred about having quit or swapped these jobs with few difficulties, as better opportunities in other sectors occurred. Paola, for instance, worked in two bars, until she took the opportunity to work as a student assistant, thereby entering another low-wage job closer to her primary interests.

S: Thus, in the meantime, while you were studying for your Master, did you start working here?

P: Yes, I worked, yes, yes. At first, in two different bars, as a waitress. And then, I worked, let's say these two were my jobs during my study, then I became a student assistant [*studentische Hilfskraft*] for this professor of mine, and I worked one and half year for her, exactly, these have been my work experiences while studying. Yes, I was studying and was employed in this minijob. [Paola]

The interviews showed that the two groups valued working in the gastronomy in different ways; the interactions sometimes between the two generated conflicts. At the same workplace, young migrants with very different class backgrounds shared the same activity but did not necessarily develop solidarity as if they were members of the same class. In the next paragraphs I will explore how the different value attributed to the job had consequences for the loyalty to

the company shown by the workers.

E: there are many university students who do the job, maybe only to pay rent and their studies, and well, they aren't competent at all! [laughs]

S: I guess.

E: No, no, they only do this to get twenty euro in their pocket, and to go out on Saturdays and Sundays. [Emilia]

Here, Emilia is stressing out that the students working with them in the catering services are not competent, thereby reclaiming their job as a skilled one, one which cannot be improvised. Elisa, who worked for a couple of months in a pizzeria to save some money for her pantomime course, quitted the job as soon as she reached that amount of money.

E: After two months there, I really became listless, I should have received seven euro, and in the end, he was paying me six, I should have received tips, and in the end the tips were divided among all. At a certain moment, they asked me, because I was living in the same house upstairs, they asked me if I could work on call, like, if they needed me they would call me. And I told them "excuse me, what do you think, what about the hour I'm staying home to wait for your call, it is work, isn't it? Of course, it is! That's a required availability! Either you pay it, or you'll do without me! And, things like that. (...) of course, I earned some money, but that level of emotional stress, and the conditions you are in. And also, I mean, it is something ugly to say, cause it's super-bourgeois, it's a shit, but I mean, I spent all these years in trying to understand, I mean, I learned the tools to read the world, and unfortunately now it is very hard for me to, to accept such working conditions, if I don't really need to work. I mean, maybe I have a problem with working, it might be, but if it's not the thing you like to do, well that becomes extremely frustrating! [Elisa]

Having chosen to work in the pizzeria not because of lack of other possibilities, such as benefitting economic help from her parents, but still trying to reach some economic independency, this interviewee didn't accept hyper-exploitative conditions, such as working on call, once they were revealed as such. At the same time, she acknowledged the difficulty of being a waitress consists also in carrying out emotional labor, as the worker establishes a relationship of care and responsibility towards the client, i.e. delivering food, while at the same time s/he is not responsible for the production of the food itself. Thus, as Elisa realized that the food to

be served was bad, but that her duty as a waitress is that of smiling and behaving as she is serving good food, she felt a sense of shame, discomfort and rage.

E: Because then, you have to be nice with the client, but it was a very ugly period, because it was winter, and during winter the boss fires the cooks, so that he doesn't have to pay them, and he cooks himself. And he can't cook!

And you cannot sell a badly cooked thing for twenty euro and that's me who goes to the client, and I have to smile and tell them "good appetite!" and you know that's just shit! I can't do that, no I can't! [Elisa]

Here, it is fundamental to notice that working in the gastronomy, part of the tertiary or service sector, entails establishing relations of care, in which the management of emotions is inherent part of the job (Hochschild 1983). Emotional distress, thus, is a central component of working as bartender or waitress. This type of distress often involves what Lewig and Dollard called "emotional dissonance", i.e. the incongruence between feeling and action when it is about displaying certain emotions as part of the work one is doing (Lewig/Dollard 2003). As intermediaries between the owner or manager of a restaurant and clients, waiters and waitresses, are also in charge of mediating a commercial relationship through activities such as smiling and transmitting familiarity and trust to the client. In other words, as low-wage workers in the service sector, people serving food might experience alienation not only regarding the food itself but regarding their relationships with other people, i.e. the clients. The relations which exist within the "service triangle" encompassing customers, workers and managers, thus, are characterized by both exploitation and collaboration. Workers might ally with managers or with customers according to the resources at stake in the interaction (Lopez 2010). In the case of Elisa, being able to count on other sources of income not mediated by a wage relationship, she tried to organize with her colleagues and confront the boss to change highly exploitative working conditions. However, her attempt was a failure:

E: Then, I also had some issues with the other workers, because there, of course, I tried also to, to find a moment to speak with them, with the colleagues, about the issue with the tip money. And I spoke, and all the other ones didn't say anything, and at that point I said "well, fuck you all!".

S: Were they Italians?

B: Yes, they were all Italians.

S: Was the owner Italian too?

B: Yes, all of them. Well, after that, I said, ok, I kept working until I had the money I needed, and I told him, well, look for somebody else, because I'm not interested anymore.

[Elisa]

Here, it seems that diverging perspectives towards the job is impeding the colleagues to unite and act collectively to improve their working conditions. Such an internally differentiated class composition seems to be crucial for failing solidarity among colleagues. While Elisa quitted and started a low-wage internship in a theater company, those who see gastronomy as their main source of income as well as the only sector into which they can exchange their skills for money, keep working and seek a way to improve their living condition by staying in the same sector but at the same time trying to scale up and specialize themselves.

For instance, Azzurra stressed out the possibilities of career advancing as ways to pursue her interests in her job, marking the difference between a "waitress at the basic level" and becoming specialized. By doing this, she also conceded that unspecialised workers, such as those doing the job just to raise some money, should be paid with a low pay (even lower than the minimum wage by the time of the interview). By valorizing her path of specialization, she devalues those who stay at the basic level, who deserve being poorly paid.

A: I am a waitress, ok, but I don't want to stay forever a waitress at the basic level, I want to become a barista! And I am doing a course now as a barman, then I'll do a language course, do you understand, And I'm going to take a course on wines, because I'm interested in wines, I mean, do you understand, you always try to be a persoon, to get interested, right? Otherwise, you cannot complain of being paid five euros per hour, if you cannot make a cappuccino, of course I'm going to pay you five per hours, you know. While, if you make a decent cappuccino, a Latteart one, then maybe I'll pay you seven, or eight euro per hour. [Azzurra]

The path of upward social mobility within her profession is also connected with the development of a sense of cooperation and solidarity with her boss, as she helps her selecting new workers. Here, she deploys her experience of many years, and uses it to value job-seekers

and “demask” those pretending to be trained waiters. Although being a waitress with a low-wage income, Azzurra is endowed with managing functions. Solidarity with her potential colleagues seems to be overflowed by identification with the interests of her boss.

A: While, many times, I have spent three years in this cafe, and you know how many people I saw passing by? A lot, people who came and said “Me, me, me”, and then in the end you’re no one because you cannot do anything, you cannot even hold a tray in your hands, where do you want to go?! Are you a waiter?! Do you belong to this job?! Well, I see it right away if you’re in this profession or not, you know, I mean I need two minutes. And in fact, every time there was a new one, I was always there. It’s not that I’m treating you bad, for God’s sake, but I just need to look at you, and then I’m saying no, honestly. Because only a few people who came could work, but many came saying they could work!

S: Italian guys?

A: Yes, Italian guys and girls, most of all. [Azzurra]

The analysis illustrates internal differentiations among workers carrying out low-skilled activities. While some claim full dignity for their jobs, the others consider it as gig jobs, useful to raise some income while they seek to accumulate skills in other fields. Thus, different expectations and evaluations of these jobs reduce the possibility for solidarity among the two groups. Class differences placed out of the workplace flow into the work situation. While power relations are reversed, as those with less institutionalized cultural capital are elevated to managing the educated but “out of place” workers, class solidarity within the work place dissipates. As such, labor struggles in one of the sectors with the highest exploitation rates seem difficult to be organized. Moreover, due to high turnover, frequent quitting and firing, it seems difficult for stable relations of reciprocity among colleagues to be built.

7.3.2. The café as a family

As we have seen, identification with the boss also plays a crucial role in breaking solidarity among workers. As intermediaries of commodified relations of care between the owners of restaurants and bars and clients, waiters and waitresses find themselves in a potentially contradictory location. While their job is paid poorly and entails highly exploited working conditions, the social interactions which they engage in their everyday work life, which entail smil-

ing, welcoming clients, establishing relations of care, remind types of relations located outside of the workplace. In other words, in particular in small family-based businesses, a sense of belonging to a family can sparkle and put into the background recognition for exploitation and unequal conditions and pay.

The interview with Michela took place in the small café in Wedding where she was working as a waitress and cook helper, doing long shifts and having to wake up very early as she had moved with her boyfriend to a small town at the border between Berlin and Brandenburg. During the conversation, Michela asked me about the preliminary results of the research, as she was interested in knowing more about other Italian migrants in the city. In particular, she expressed worries about many young people arriving in Berlin without any preparation, as she herself had found it hard to be alone in the city.

M: This is something I understood staying here. That the relationship with friends, is particular, you don't have the same quality of friendship that you had in your city (...) Here, everyone is very concentrated upon themselves, thus, pouring out your problems with someone else, you have to delimit this a lot, because you know that in that same moment the other person has ten thousands problems too, and is in your same situation, thus (...) the friends I have here, of course good friends, but at the same time you know that you always have to rely only on yourself, and you will never have someone telling you "ah, Michela, do you have some problems? I'll help out", you don't have this, maybe it is also right. [Michela]

Against this background, Michela feels that her workplace as giving her a sense of belonging and stability. When I explained her that many migrants I had interviewed had found a job in call centers, she immediately rejected working there as a possibility for her.

M: Holy God, nooo.

S: Would you do that?

M: Look, I have been thinking many times about this, because I mean, the salary is good, anyway it trains you for a job, a profession, I mean. But honestly, I couldn't make it, it is too much. Well, I mean at least here [at the café] I like the job, and anyway, there is a lot of humanity, I feel like being in a family, because XY⁵² [the manager of the café] has built the furniture by himself, and anyway, I feel to be in a place which is family to

⁵²Name was made anonymous by the author.

me, which is home, I am not a foreigner, I mean, like that if it wasn't me, there wouldn't be someone else. I am not a number, nor a slave. And anyway, I like cooking, I was thinking about doing a training [Ausbildung, orig.]. And she [the female manager, wife of XY], wants to change my contract [until now as minijob], but, I mean, I am precarious, but not like, not in the derogatory sense of the word.

S: Well, like you feel good in this state of instability?

M: Yes. ... Anyway, I feel I put my roots a bit in here. [Michela]

Being precarious in a non-derogatory way meant for Michela that the relationship established with her bosses were ones of friendship and trust. Even if her pay is low, and work was very hard, as she mentioned in other parts of the interview, she valued the familiar atmosphere at the café, the self-made furniture, against a background of anonymity and loneliness which she perceives as permeating her everyday life as newcomer in the city. In the quote, she contrasts working in the café against working in call centers, perceived as a “being a number”. The next section will explore this type of work, highlighting the characteristics of the corresponding segment in the Berliner labor market. The idea of call centers as anonymous and unfamiliar places will also be challenged, as it seems that the companies behind them are just trying to adapt the workplace to the needs and lifestyle of the labor force employed there.

7.4. Call centers

As we have seen in the previous section, incorporation of the labor force of newcomers often takes place via the valorization of their language deficits. Precisely because they lack knowledge of the local language, migrants are channelled into those segments of the labor markets in which their mother tongue constitutes a profitable skill for the employer. While the analysis reveals that gastronomy is the easiest and most immediate way for these young people to earn some income, either if they do this as a gig or as their main occupation, call centers emerged as a further common workplace for newcomers. Here, again, communication and language are the central elements of the process of creation of value. Indeed, in call centers in Berlin, migrant workers mostly deploy their mother tongue and English as *lingua franca*. In the interviewed cases, proficiency in German language was not required.

While language can be considered as a foundational ingredient for the construction of

national identities, language skills have become an increasingly crucial asset to access labor markets in post-industrial economies. Service economy relies on language skills to facilitate communication and circulation of information and knowledge (Zolberg/Woon 1999). Call centers, which have grown enormously worldwide in the past two decades, epitomize the shift from industrial to service production (Woodcock 2014). While in the early 90es call centers still were connected mostly to financial services and utilities, their application has expanded to most parts of the private sectors as well as part of the public sector (Glucksmann 2004). Some authors have talked about a “call centerization” of the economy (Huws 2009). Also, the function of call centers has become much more differentiated, encompassing multifarious tasks. As argued by the collective Kolinko, which at the end of the 1990es conducted a militant inquiry into several call center workplaces, “call centers are not an economic sector, but rather a specific work organization that is being used in diverse sectors” (Kolinko 2002). According to Glucksmann, they can “provide information to callers, connect consumers to third parties, sell goods/products over the telephone, sell services, or supply emergency services and helplines” (Glucksmann 2004: 801). Finally, call centers have been largely involved by processes of outsourcing and delocalization towards labor-intensive countries. Nonetheless, it remains economically relevant and in expansion also in the Global North.

Indeed, taking the European labor market into account, Berlin and the surrounding region of Brandenburg have developed in the past decades into one of the most important clusters for call centers and outsourced secretary services. From 2008 to 2015, they have been the 3rd most growing cluster in the city’s economy (Amt für Statistik Berlin-Brandenburg 2017a). The trend has not stopped until 2017, although, as we will see later, the future of this segment of the labor market is now less clear, as contradictory dynamics are currently taking place. In any case, Berlin Partner, the city marketing company as well as the local Chamber of Commerce, advertise Berlin as a best fitting location for call center businesses. According to the two actors, circa 240 call centers are currently located in Berlin, employing more than 20.000 workers (Berlin Partner 2010).⁵³ Finally, an annual congress takes place every year in the city hosting 270 exhibiting companies to facilitate the encounter of demand and supply of labor force.

As data show, the average pay in call centers is the second lowest after gastronomy,

⁵³Further information and data on call centers located in Berlin can be found at: https://www.ihk-berlin.de/produktmarken/branchen/Dienstleistungen/Unternehmensnahe_Dienstleistungen/Brancheninformatioren/Call_Center/2280136 (last accessed: 03.01.2019).

amounting to 15,90 Euro per hour in full time employment (Amt für Statistik Berlin-Brandenburg 2018). Moreover, most of the jobs in call centers are regulated by fixed-term contracts. Call centers seem to be the hallmark for processes of precarization and casualization of work in the service sector. As we have seen in Michela's quote, also common imaginaries about call centers have for long time depicted workers as alienated, de-individualized ("being a number") and constrained to tedious activities (Woodcock 2014). While they are part of the service industry, which is based on production, circulation and management of information and knowledge, call center workers seem far from being "brain workers", falling rather into the category of chain workers (Berardi 2009), with their labor being comparable to having an "assembly line in the head" (Taylor/Bain 1999). However, call centers vary widely according to both the national system they are located in as well as to the specific form of organization they take. In particular, different work conditions emerge if call centers are outsourced or in-house. Outsourced call centers are managed by companies offering call center functions to other companies and usually entail worse working conditions, as the interviewee Irene reported.

C: It was ugly, yes it has been a negative experience. It was on the phone, selling, it wasn't outbound, so I wasn't calling people, this is even worse. But I received calls, well it was outsourced, I worked for a company which offers customer care to other companies, so I wasn't employed by the company of which I was selling products, but from another one. And of course, at each step, you get paid less right, obviously also the company by which I was employed had to gain from that too. Well, I was selling products, digital television contracts, which is something I really don't care, I have no television myself! (...) And that was devastating, because we were like puffers, people called because they had a problem, like the zapper was broken, and I had to sell them internet contracts, I mean this was insane! (...) I mean, and I had never done sales in my life, it was terrible, terrible! (...) This lasted for four months, then I quit. [Caterina]

At the time of the interview, Caterina had quitted the job since a couple of years but was still working as a call center agent, however for the company of Booking.com. Her attitude towards the new job had changed consistently from the previous one. Among the interviewees, four had worked or were working at the same company. Therefore, the next section will focus on this company, considered as paradigmatic for work relationships in the sector of call centers in Berlin. Booking.com is an online website which intermediates

between customers willing to book an accommodation and hotels or private hosts. While the core of the business relies on collection and analysis of data through the website, as the CEO Gillian Tans revealed in interviews,⁵⁴ its labor force is mainly composed by call center agents, who are in charge of various activities, both in-bound, i.e. concerning customers calling the agents, and out-bound, i.e. concerning agents calling the customers (Kolinko 2002). The call center of the company is managed by a subsidiary firm called Bcom Customer Service Center. Differently from the company Caterina was working for earlier, call centers at Booking are in-sourced. The company is one of the biggest of this sector located in Berlin, employing at the time of the interviews circa 800 people; it embodies in an exemplary way the changes which have been taking place in the call center sector as a workplace and most importantly in call centers of companies of the digital economy, specialized in the treatment and collection of big data, just as Booking.com.

Booking's workforce is composed on one side by highly skilled and well-paid jobs, such as software developers ("techies" in the jargon of digital economy) as well as product and marketing managers, on the other side by customer service agents and team supervisors (see picture below). The next section will focus on the latter, showing how young migrant labor force trained for a range of other professions has been attracted into working in the customer service sector. At the same time, it will be argued that the very presence in the city of labor force with these specific characteristics has fostered the booming of call centers, contributing to shape the urban's economic development.

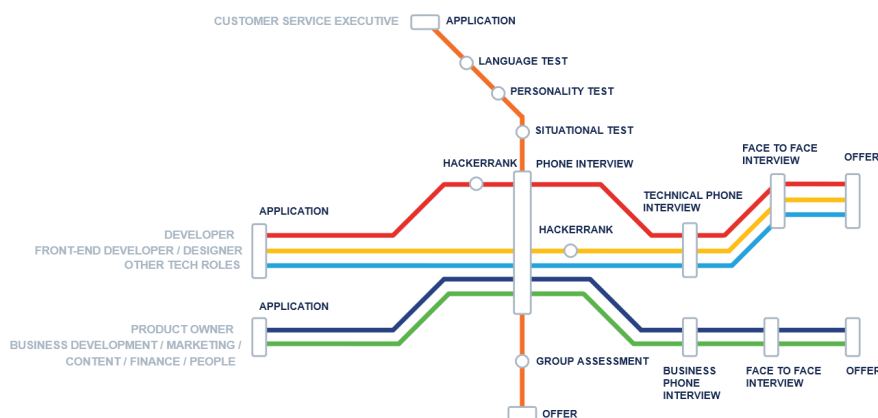


Figure 13: The hiring process at Booking.com (Screenshot from: <https://workingatbooking.com/how-we-hire/>, last accessed: 03.01.2019)

⁵⁴<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-vfsgOyzDj8> (last accessed: 03.01.2019).

7.4.1. Class composition

“As we were looking for new locations for the twelfth Booking.com Customer Service Center, Berlin revealed to be for the second time the best choice against Amsterdam and London, thanks to its language diversity, internationality and the good transportation network. This time it will be in the first-tier location of Potsdamer Platz. So far, workers from 54 different nations are employed in both Customer Service Centers in Berlin. What they have in common: the company language is English.”

Claudia Andersen, Customer Service Manager (in: Berlin Partner et al. 2010)

“Our workers at the Customer Support Center need to know the complete range of IKEA goods, with almost 10.000 articles, to support customers in every question. This is a particularly big challenge. Therefore, I am very glad about our new Berliner team (...) for which we just hired 90 agents.”

Klaus Cholewa, Customer Experience Manager IKEA Deutschland, 20.02.2018⁵⁵

The two quotes above remind a common trend about companies of various sorts expanding their in-house call center locations in Berlin. While workers hired at IKEA are required to learn the whole range of products but not to know other languages than German⁵⁶, workers of Booking.com are valorized for their knowledge of the English language and for their internationality. As call centers are increasingly used to manage the relationship between companies and their customers, research highlights an increasing differentiation of the skills required to do this job, according to the type of company and of products sold by it (Huws 2009). While in medicine, IT or public service, workers are required to have expert knowledge and are paid as specialized workers, in other field, especially if outsourced, they receive minimum-wage and fixed-term contracts. Further, labor force in call centers can be described as predominantly young, female, and skilled (Kolinko 2002). As the following quote by Elisabetta highlights, Italian-speaking migrants in Berlin seem to experience smooth transitions from gastronomy to call centers, especially in those ones in which only Italian language is required. Again, language skills are crucial for channelling migrants into one or the other job in service economy.

⁵⁵<https://www.presseportal.de/pm/29291/3872321> (last accessed: 04.01.2019).

⁵⁶https://ww8.ikea.com/ext/job/search/external/de/de/jobdescpage?newTab=true&jobId=334426BR_EX_de_1031_11031 (last accessed: 03.01.2019).

S: What kind of job did you look for there?

E: Well, actually, I started dishing washes, because anyway I couldn't speak neither English, nor German, well in English I could barely say "how are you" and "can I go to the toilette please", I mean those things you learn at school, right! [laughs]. ... Thus, I became a dish washer.

S: That was the easiest thing right.

E: Yes, in an Italian restaurant, for eight months, I think, and after that the call center, where I still work now, yes, as a customer consultant, yes. [Elisabetta]

Elisabetta, who dropped a university course in Law after one year, was still working in such a call center at the time of the interview. During the interview, she highlighted that she only had Italian colleagues, and that at her work she would feel as if she had not left Italy yet. Far from being an "international" or "cosmopolitan" workplace, she experienced it as a very homogeneous and parochial environment. While she wanted to quit her job, when asked about her occupational expectations, she admitted that call centers were the best workplace she could find at the moment, as for any other type of clerical work she would have needed to attend a vocation training (in Germ. *Ausbildung*) first.⁵⁷ As Huws reminds, between the most and less skilled call center agents we find a wide range of workers who own good qualifications and language skills, but still are exposed to monotonous work and low expectations of making career (Huws 2009.: 3). The internal variety of call centers agents is reflected into the disparate ways how they are classified into occupational schemes in various nations. In other words, employees of call centers are hard to be categorized along the traditional class schemes, because of their internal variety as well as because the activities they carry out cannot be allocated to only one category among the traditional ones but rather to more ones at one time (clerical work, specialized worker, etc.). This is true especially for the mentioned in-between call center agents; it is to this third group that most of the call center agents working for Booking.com belong. The latter are not required to have university degrees, nonetheless the company stresses that all potential workers at Booking should be fluent in English.⁵⁸ The latter skills are described as "attitude" (Callaghan/Thompson 2002)

⁵⁷In Berlin, two vocational courses have been introduced to train call center agents. However, during the research, I never encountered migrant workers who were asked to attend such courses to work in call centers.

⁵⁸See the video targeting potential call center agents or the online announcements (<https://youtu.be/fJ7BWFny-K0>, <https://workingatbooking.com/> last accessed: 03.01.2019). From the video:

and management of emotions (Hochschild 1983) and entail emotional labor. While the sector of gastronomy can be considered as a more traditional edge of service work, as it is still connected to traditional paths of education (vocational training to become workers of the hospitality industry), call centers seem to be on the more innovative edge. As the figure XX shows, to become a call center at Booking, applicants need to undergo a situational, a personality and a language test. Thus, rather than simply unskilled, these jobs seem to require skills not yet formalized by a system of education. As Alessandra's quote reminds, call center agents are trained by the company in-house, thereby learning only those specific skills and knowledge they need to work for the company. Through a tailored path of training, employees are more closely embedded into the company, their bound of loyalty becomes narrower. On the other side, gifts and benefits provided by company aim to fulfill such sense of belonging and loyalty with lifestyle rewards.

S: do they require a specific formation?

A: No, any kind of. They give you a course, as soon as they hire you, to learn to use the system and everything. [sighs] I mean, you need to have some communication skills, I guess, you need to be a bit empathic, you can't be a mummy with the customer, but, well, they deliver you the course, and they give you a lot of training, there are a lot of people who follow you, after the course finishes, for three months, they control with you what you do, what are your "rooms for improvement"[orig.], and what you're doing really good.

S: Alright.

A: It is really a big system.

S: So, let's say, if I have no university degree, can I get hired?

A: They aren't interested at all in this.

S: And if I am a communicative person...

"Are you a born problem-solver with smart and fast solutions in the heat of the moment? Are you a super human communicator with a passion for friendly service? And are you an ace in English on top of your mother tongue? It's the operating language of the company, so you NEED to be fluent. If you are, you could find yourself with the most varied job on the planet, working with international colleagues across the world and a whole world of people only a call or a click away and ahead of you looking forward to meeting you!"

A: Exactly, you get interviewed, and they hire you. Aand, it is enough to speak English, and your mother tongue, or maybe two, there are also people talking 3 or 4 languages, thus, for them it's easier! But you need no particular skills, not at all! [Alessandra]

If Italian as mother tongue facilitates access to gastronomy and to unspecialized jobs in call centers focused on Italian customers, then, mastering also the English language opens the doors to a wider variety of jobs in call centers, connected to slightly better working conditions. The central question to understand how the access to such jobs takes place, then, is where and how migrants manage to acquire proficiency in the English language as a central resource to access this type of job. I will briefly take two examples which depict two distinct ways of accessing this skill, according to different class origins. All interviewees employed at Booking.com at the moment of the interview had accomplished a Bachelor's degree at least⁵⁹. While they reported that the discipline studied was not relevant for them to be hired, they obtained their fluency in the English language, required for the job, during the university years. I will focus on the case of Alessandra, as her trajectory from being a student of Political Science into becoming a supervisor at Booking, can be considered as exemplary for many other young migrants working in the sector. As we have seen in the previous chapters, she came to Berlin for her Erasmus year. During this time, she faced her language deficits in English as she was trying to pass exams at the university.

A: I couldn't really speak German, but I had the possibility to do all courses in English. (...) But I couldn't really speak English neither.

S: Did you learn it here then?

A: Exactly, but the first months were really a tragedy, at least for me. I found it difficult, we are not used to write essays, it was hard for me to write in English, I could speak it much worse back then, four years ago. [Alessandra]

In those years, Alessandra had managed to become fluent in English. She used the language in her everyday life and at work, so much that during the conversation she inserted English words, clearly borrowed from her work language (orig., "ho matchato", "cose di questo trend"), switching between English and Italian with ease. The job at Booking was her

⁵⁹The interviewee Miriana, who did not attend university, had previously worked for Booking, but her six-month probation contract had not been extended.

first “real” one, which she started after having failed to get a scholarship for a PhD in Gender Studies, the matter she was interested in. During the interview, she often tackled the topic, underlining how important this was for her. Nonetheless, she valued it as too difficult to pursue her passion and opted instead for a job as a call center agent.

A: Well, if I think that this is the first job I’ve had, I’ve never worked before in my life [laughs]

S: Are you satisfied with it?

A: I cannot really complain. Of course, this is not what I studied for, absolutely not, but I mean, who is? Only a very few people, therefore it’s fine. [Alessandra]

Alessandra considered it as normal not to be employed in the field she has studied for. Once acknowledged that there is no possibility for matching between the own educational qualifications and the current position in the labor market, she values her job as a good one, compared to the precarious working conditions which her peers have experienced in Italy. After two years of work at the company, she had become a supervisor, getting more responsibilities at work, an open-end contract and a better pay. Also, she is not working anymore with customers, but with hotel managers. This implied for her a higher position, as she dealt with “mass issue”, involving managing the communication with a larger number of customers at one time, and more autonomy and responsibility.

S: Do you like the job?

A: Well, that’s too much to say. I was hired two years ago, in the customer service, for one and half year. And I was freaking out, then they opened other positions, I applied, and they took me immediately, and well, I don’t call customers directly anymore.

S: And what do you do now?

A: I do backup, well, it is hard to explain, but when there are problems with the hotels, with large numbers of bookings, such as flooded hotels, overbooking, I manage those problems. Yes, “mass issues” [orig.], with at least five or six bookings “involved” [orig.]. [Alessandra]

While she had changed position, however, her work schedule had remained similar,

meaning that she had to do shifts, also on weekends (“Of course, I work in shifts, also on Saturdays and Sundays, I don’t have the weekend, nothing like that, but well”). This did not seem to invalidate her high consideration for the job. While comparing her work with a professor of her, who was still working in Italy as a precarious research, she judged her job as more secure and rewarding, thereby accepting that, as time goes by, the possibilities for her to find a job in her field, would become smaller and smaller.

S: Would you like to stay in this sector, or would you like to change?

A: I think that, unfortunately I am skimming myself in this sector, I mean, once you start specializing, it is difficult to switch. Mmh, I think I will stay here a bit in this field. Of course, if I’d found something that matches what I really like to do...but the problem is that, I have, I stopped looking for, I have to say the truth. Earlier, I was aiming to.. but then, out of desperation I said, fuck it, I’ll accept what I find. And in the end, I was lucky, in the end I can’t complaint at all, I mean. [Alessandra]

Finally, her skills in English, which she improved during the Erasmus, have enabled her to enter the Berliner labor market by specializing in the field of customer service. Through her experience of mobility as a migrant with high cultural capital, as well as a middle-class family who supported her economically, she has managed to acquire an unfixed-term contract, however with a low pay in comparison to local standards. While she could be considered as a clerical worker, located in an office and carrying out communication and administration tasks, she has unfixed working hours and a low-wage income. Subjectively, she has found a fix via mobility to the rising unemployment and poor job opportunities in her country of origin. Although she had to give away her dream of working in the field she has studied for, and of pursuing her passion in Gender studies, she feels lucky and considers her move as a successful one.

The next story is Miriana’s one. At the time of the interview, she was working as a call center agent for an e-commerce company. Miriana did not attend university, her family of origin is working-class, and she did not count on economic help from them. In comparison to Alessandra, she had a more diverse history of mobility, as she had already lived several years in London, Amsterdam, after which she moved to Germany, first to a small town and finally to Berlin. During her moves, she learned English, which she could not speak at all before leaving Italy.

M: Actually, I was thinking about moving to Berlin since many years (...) but the problem was that, when I was in Italy, I couldn't even speak English, and, I couldn't think of getting directly into the German language without even knowing a word of English! Thus, I decided to move to London, also for that reason, I said "let's try first to learn English!" (...) And within six months I was already independent, I could manage my things, well after three months I started being able to do that, but I was still always having someone with me in case of need, and after six months I was ready to do things alone.
[Miriana]

Miriana started working as a call center agent in London and has since then remained in the sector. Once arrived in Berlin, she also tried to get a similar job, capitalizing on her working experience.

S: Well, how did you get the job at Booking?

M: Well, I had experience in customer care, I have experience, in Amsterdam I worked for XY⁶⁰, one and a half year, also in customer care and technical assistance. And, also in London, among the many jobs I did there, I was working in call centers. And in Italy too, I worked as receptionist and as a secretary. Thus, anyway, speaking at the phone, I never had big problems with that.

S: Ok, and was it also because you could speak Italian and English?

M: Well, yes, in Amsterdam, speaking English wasn't a problem anymore, but I had to speak only Italian, for XY. And when I moved to Berlin, to Booking, that was the first time I found myself in speaking only English. Well, wait, also in London a couple of times I had to, because they [the employer] were desperate to find someone, and it had been a horrible experience! I mean, I was living there since seven or eight months, thus I wasn't very familiar with the British accent. And as I was calling people in their homes, sometimes they would answer in cockney, it was terrible! [laughs] I was left alone on the phone for only 20 minutes, they were the most terrible twenty minutes in my whole life! I mean, speaking at the phone, in a foreign language... [Miriana]

The quote highlights once again how language skills are crucial for this type of job, determining not only access to it, but also the emotional environment in which workers spend their time. Differently from Alessandra, who became proficient in the English language as a

⁶⁰Name of the company was made anonymous by the author.

way to be able to pursue her education path in a university abroad, Miriana managed to learn the main skill required for her job only by experience, neither in a university nor in another formal path of training. By practicing mobility, she has secured the ability to work in a sector which opens possibilities in different national labor markets, just because it is detached from using the local language. Exploiting the English language as a *lingua franca* entails the possibility to keep with accumulating mobility as a resource, without interacting with formal sources of education. After several years spent in other places, Miriana managed finally to move to Berlin, a destination she always wanted to move to because of its subcultural environment.

S: What about Berlin did make you want to come here?

M: Well, the main reason why I wanted to come is the punk scene, basically, because anyway, among the various European cities for what I know, this is the city with the most active and present one. While London is, declining, is falling in a drastic way, especially after the Olympia games, because during the Olympia games they somehow cleaned up the city, and closed all alternative activities, among which squats and others, and a lot of people lost their homes. London, well rent prices are unacceptable there, therefore a lot of people left the city. And I have a lot of friends who are forced into having two jobs to pay rent [sighs] Yes, it is not livable. While Amsterdam, it seems to me that it is quite dead, too. While Berlin is still, well house projects, concerts, events, it seems it is still living. [Miriana]

Thus, Miriana moved to Berlin and found a job as an in-bound agent for Booking.com for six months. Once the probation period had ended, however, her contract suddenly was not renewed. A consequence was that Miriana had some troubles in receiving unemployment subsidies, as the firing was abrupt and unexpected and she therefore had not prepared any document for asking for them.

M: If you get fired, you can receive subsidies, but you have to go there three months before the expiration of the contract. You have to go to the *Arbeitsamt* and tell them that you might lose your job. (...) For months, they told me they would give me an unfixed-term contract, but in the last month a new team leader was hired, and she told me “look, I have no intention to give you any contract, you can remain home tomorrow”. Fortunately, the *Arbeitsamt* only skipped one week, thus it wasn’t too bad, but it might have taken one month before they started giving me money. [Miriana]

After a couple of months of unemployment, she was then hired by her former boss, starting to work in an office building just a few meters away from her previous workplace, in the district of Mitte, the commercial core of the city. On the interview day, she, still in the probation period, was home because of a flu. Having missed some days of work because of sickness, she was worried that she could lose the job again after the six months period.

M: The colleagues in the office told me that this flu is going around. What bothers me most, is that I am still on probation, but well, if I am sick I am sick.

S: How does it work?

M: Six months of probation, and if you pass them, well you're in, until the end of the contract. And if you keep going well, they give you a contract for another year, and if you keep going well, they give you the unfixed-term contract.

S: And do you mean you should try not to get sick in this period?

M: Well, I don't know, this is something I learned in my past experiences. But I always, I mean, it is the first time I am sick at home, thus. Well, there is always this thing like "gosh, maybe they will be influenced by the fact that I stayed one week at home for sickness". [Miriana]

Miriana had a long experience in call centers. When asked about her projects for her occupational future, however, she expressed her desire of becoming a part-time worker at the call center, in order to have time enough to develop her interests, i.e. tattooing and sewing various clothing and artefacts by using recycled material.

M: I'd like to have a part-time, to be able at least to keep with tattooing! A friend of mine offered me to start working in her studio, but I have to see, because working full-time, I get free from work only at four thirty, and well, then I can only start at the studio at five, and can only do smaller tattoo works during the week, and on the extra free day I have, then I can do bigger works. [Miriana]

Miriana decided to follow her passion for manufacturing and creative work during her time living in a squat in the northern part of the district of Friedrichshain, a neighborhood famous for the squatting and alternative scene, recently involved by the escalation of conflicts between residents and police. During the interview, she explained how she started thinking

about working part time during that period. In the squat, she used to live with around thirty people.

S: What did your roommates do?

M: Well, a bit of everything, students, working people, mostly they were working part-time, however, I guess I was the only one working 40 hours a week. And everyone was telling me “Miriana, you are working so much!” and I was like “well, I’ve always worked 40 hours”, well, that was the normality for me, that was the norm. And, well in the last year at Booking, I managed to switch to part-time, and I started working three days a week. [laughs]. Well, I have to admit it, a new world was opened up to me!

S: Do you mean positively?

M: Yes, because I kept having money enough to live, but now I had much more time at my disposition! But that was only the last period at Booking. (...) and I enjoyed it, because, well, at the first time I wanted to use it to work on my projects, but then I decided, ok, I’m gonna enjoy it and that’s all. Well, I was counting very much in obtaining the unfixed-term contract, because honestly, that was a good part-time. Tre days a week, well in the worst times though. S: At evening?

M: Yes, always at evening, and always on Saturdays and Sundays. But still, only three days a week, it seemed to be a good compromise. And on Sunday I got paid sixty percent more! I was hoping very much to get the unfixed term contract... [Miriana]

Here, she was operating a calculation about the value of time free from labor. First, she challenged the normality attributed to working full-time, as she started to be surrounded by a social environment at home in which full-time work was considered as the exceptionality and connected to over-exploitation of the self (“you are working too much!”). Having decided to opt for working less, Miriana found herself working always on weekends, in exchange for a higher pay, as well as late night shifts.

M: I had to work in the evening, and I finished working at eleven pm. And, I could not sleep until four o’clock in the morning, because I was still active after all those hours spent working on the phone. (...) Thus, I woke up late in the morning, couldn’t really look around very much, I just went to work and at eleven in the night everything is closed, I had a quite limited life. [Miriana]

Being at work in those days usually considered as days off, as well as working in those times of the day usually spent by people in activities outside work, entails a re-formulation of what is acceptable in terms of how time is spent. The relationship to time developed by Miriana was qualitatively marked by her desire to work on her own projects. Quantitatively, her aim was that of diminishing work time at the call center, not necessarily all work, but rather that time determined by a wage relationship. She wanted to free some of that time in order either to “simply enjoy”, or to pursue her passions, producing artifacts and tattoos, possibly against payment. However, for those activities she seems to put monetary reward in the background. On the contrary, her activity at the job center appeared rather as a source from which she primarily wants to extract a living wage. While Alessandra considered herself to be lucky for finding the job at Booking, however working long hours and on weekends, Miriana’s focus was located rather outside of the wage relationship. It seems that while the job at the call center for Alessandra implied a confirmation about her aspirations of continuity of a middle class life, however with evidently less income than her parents could have, for Miriana, coming from a background of low income and no familiar support, the main logic behind the decision whether to accept or not to do a job was rather about making enough money to live, while freeing as much time to develop her passions against a work which is considered as monotonous, but nonetheless as a kind of necessary evil.

7.4.2. The Call Center as a Family

In the previous section I highlighted firstly how, starting from different positions in social space, young migrants develop different paths that lead them to the acquisition of the core resource required to access call center work as a source of income, i.e. proficiency in the English language. Secondly, I showed that such different trajectories are also marked by different processes of subjectivation: perceptions about their occupational situation vary according to the expectations, which themselves are class-related. Thus, similar working conditions and the creation of economic value out of labor in call centers relies upon the production of an internally variegated labor force, similarly as in the gastronomy sector. In this section, I would like to highlight how again, similarly as in gastronomy, service work in the call centers is also related to the development of alienation in the form of emotional dissonance. Such dissonance produces a working subjectivity in which emotions are managed instrumentally, as prominent thinkers such as Arlie Hochschild have already theorized since the 80es (Hochschild 1983).

As the example makes clear, however, such “hardening of the self” (Silva 2013), based on the alienation of emotions, also spills over into life outside of the wage relationship. As waged work entails reproductive labor, work also becomes the site and source of relations of reproduction (Weeks 2011). As the analysis will show, in call centers within the digital economy, the development of a sense of loyalty and belonging, pushed by the policy of the company, re-equilibrates the dissonance experience in the relationship with the customer.

A: It has been hard, because anyway I learned many things, but really, at the level of character, I became thicker, I mean I am much more direct now, I don’t bend that easily as earlier.

S: You mean, because of all the people insulting you.

A: Exactly, you get the character, exactly. (...) I noticed, also my parents, also my friends noticed it, I noticed the differences between before and after. Now I am, well, I had the luck I’ve always been very “self-confident” [origin.], and of knowing my limits and so on. But such a work in my opinion, thickens you a lot, I mean, I can’t stand bullshit anymore, I have a lot less patience now in comparison to before. Which is nice on one side, but on the other you tend to be much more aggressive, because you have to defend yourself a lot. I mean, if you work for eight hours with people who’s breaking your balls, after a while you need to do that. [Alessandra]

Alessandra, who works at Booking since a couple of years, upgrading her status of agent within the company and becoming a supervisor, acknowledges a transformation of her character undergone via her work. Functioning as an interface, a buffer between customers’ complaints and the company, her work entails developing strategies to cope with insults and reproaches, which can be applied also to life outside work. Although valuing such process as negative for the development of her own personhood, Alessandra is satisfied about her professional situation, as such thickening also led her to develop managerial and communication skills learned on the ground, aside from her formal path of qualification which took place within the university.

A: I have a lot of responsibility, I appreciated this a lot, because I developed a lot of skills I didn’t have before, for instance multi-tasking, negotiating, and so on. But also, simply having to organize and manage things, because in some cases there are huge amounts of money at stake, like 40.000 or 50.000 euro, and I have to do calculations on

them. [Alessandra]

Acquiring more responsibilities and the ability to solve more complex tasks, she is also rewarded for the high emotional charge she has to deal with in her work, which becomes more prestigious and relevant in her eyes. At the same time, she also acknowledges that the company is actively carrying out policies to increase loyalty in the company, based both on discursive policies and on providing benefits related to the sphere of reproduction.

A: After a while customer service becomes very monotonous, as a work, I mean they try to gild the pill, because anyway, I mean the company, they aren't stupid, they know that this work sucks, thus they try to develop your loyalty to the company, thus you get a bit "brainwashed" [orig., brainwashato], but it's not that heavy. They try to pad it as much as possible (...)

A: We have a lot of things, company parties, and some money to travel, we have discounts on hotels, and things like this, it is really convenient. It might seem stupid, but already the fact, psychologically, that you get something more is important "ok, the work I have, it is what it is, but I have my bonus every three months, I got many things paid by the company". They also sent me to Amsterdam [the main headquarter of Booking] three or four times to do training, thus I also could travel quite much. It was really cool. (...) They have an ENORMOUS benefit system, they know that work is like that, so they give you a lot of benefits to help you in your work. I mean, it might seem bullshit, but we got free canteen! [Alessandra]

Far from being blind towards the strategies deployed by Booking to make working conditions appear as more dignified and less monotonous, the interviewed workers rather accepted the game, by contrasting work at Booking with work in call centers in which monotony and alienation is not countered by company branding and loyalty strategies, as Caterina also pointed out.

C: Then, you also need to say that call centers have been demonized a lot, because they were all decentralized, thus they answered from who knows where, to speak with who knows who, and thus you had a linguistic-cultural clash, and conditions were absurd, and you could not go to the bathroom, and pay was low. Nothing of which concerns the work I am doing now. I mean, of course it's not the job you dream as a child, but one thing I like is indeed the international environment. English is the *lingua franca*; thus, you don't use the "tu" and "Lei" [colloquial and formal pronouns, not present in the Eng-

lish language], basically everyone uses the “tu”-form [colloquial way], in theory. Thus, you call everybody by their name, and also the Italians who work there are good. [Caterina]

A sense of flat hierarchy, a must for contemporary management, especially in the service sector, can be simply accomplished by the use of the English language as a tool for bringing workers with different positions into one same level of communication. Here, internationality also seems to be connected to prestige and to the development of a sense of belonging which exceeds the national scale and creates a connection between workers in several countries. This can be observed in the use of social media by workers to swap shifts with colleagues working in other countries, as it happens in the Facebook group “Endless swap”, used mostly by Italian-speaking call center agents employed in several European cities, including Berlin. Here, call center agents use their private Facebook profiles to communicate with each other. The group serves as a market for offering and demanding shifts. Thereby, failing flexibility in working conditions is tackled via collective organization, however not aimed to change working conditions as such (the rules of the game), but rather at adjusting problems without confrontation with the company itself. While shifts can be exchanged from one headquarter to the other without spatial mobility of the workers themselves, multinational companies such as Booking also offer their employees the possibility to change work location, and thus the place where to live, without changing job. If they stay loyal to the company, employees have the possibilities to travel and decide the location of work among a various range of cities. While the working conditions as more or less specialized call center agents are not going to change substantially, these people on the move are still offered the possibility to keep moving without having to start every time from the beginning. In other words, the more they stay attached to the company, adapting their everyday life to the shifts, accepting to work on weekends as well as complying with the development of a sense of family and belonging, the more they can pursue and accumulate mobility by virtue of their labor relationship.

A: I am lucky, as with Booking I can move a lot. (...) 'cause if they open new offices, I can get relocated, we also have office in Italy, so I am quite lucky you know.

S: Could you go back to Italy though your job at Booking?

A: Yes.

S: Where in Italy?

A: Venice, Milan, Florence, Rome. There are a lot of them, Verona too. In Italy the market for Booking is the biggest one. [Alessandra]

Here, it becomes clear that the trajectories of mobility on which the company invest, often correspond to the trajectories of migration the employees. Considering that tourism is a fundamental economic sector for Italy, Italian migrants are channeled into working abroad for call centers dealing largely with Italian customers (both tourists and hotel managers). The expansion of the trajectory of mobility is thus double as Booking functions as a pull and push factor for young people in Italy, accelerating and smoothing their mobility between countries embedded within the company business network. The construction of an infrastructure for the valorization and circulation of labor force counters tedious work, placing it within a context in which mobility can be accumulated as a side effect of being employed by and loyal to the company. This occurs through the creation of transnational bubbles which are inserted within national frameworks of labor regulation and culture, but nonetheless whose boundaries are quite clearly marked, as the quote by Irene exemplifies. Again, the access to mobility is the key resource required to the workers as well as offered by the company.

C: I recently was in Florence [the city where she comes from], I just came back last week. And just to tell you, I mean not that I am a convinced capitalist, right, but just to explain you what is it that gives you a sense of belonging to this company. During my holidays, I decided to visit the local Booking office in Florence. There isn't a call center there, there is a small commercial office, of course because that's Florence, there a lot of hotels affiliated to Booking dot com there. And I was amazed by their efficiency, I mean I really realized that the Human Resource department there is making a very clear selection. I mean, it didn't even seem to be in Italy, like I arrived there, and I saw this girl. Because of course, they don't know me personally, I mean we are like a million working for B., thousands and thousands, but they asked me "do you work for Booking?", and I answered "yes", and well I explained her the whole situation, and she said "don't worry, look, we have a meeting now, but if you want to come back again in two hours, I'll send an e-mail to everyone, so they know you're coming". I thought "well, what!?". I came back after two hours, and I found the account manager down at the hall, waiting for me. The account manager, I mean, is quite a responsible and high position, not someone who's working as a porter, you know. And he asked me "are you Caterina?", I said "yes",

“well, we were waiting for you!”. Do you understand? And he showed me the whole office, and, I repeat, he’s quite high within the company hierarchy, he is an important one in there, so you don’t feel all those barriers that you always feel in Italy, you know! There was just the same dynamism as here. And I mean, I don’t want to acclaim capitalism, for God’s sake, but well! S: Is it working? I: It’s working! You feel that it is efficient, and, I mean I repeat myself, the conditions, you don’t do this job for 1200 euro. And anyway, most of the people in Italy would dream of getting 1200 euro. Here, you can allow yourself to spoil yourself, and to say something like this. This is one of the reasons to stay. [Caterina]

Satisfaction among the workers and the development of a sense of belonging to a community seem to be connected. Of course, a satisfied workforce is of great benefit for the company, which secures thereby its access to cheap and overqualified human workforce. Overqualified workers such as Alessandra or Caterina seem to correspond their aspirations of a middle-class life with adherence to the logic of hard work and to the interests of the company. They see in the company the possibility to achieve internal career; they accept hard shifts and tedious work by pre-figuring a future of mobility and choice about their location thanks to the company. They actively engage in a compromise, far from being tricked or swindled. Rather, they put up with their work as they are guaranteed access to mobility and a series of gift and benefits which are related with a lifestyle based on consumption of travels and tourism. That this dynamic does not only involve the interviewed workers, but rather involves the whole labor force of Booking, can be observed when taking into account a video commercial by Booking, based on video recordings filmed by “the 14.000 employees of Booking” during their travels.⁶¹ At the end of 2018, the video had almost 6 Mio. views, proving to be a successful marketing tool. The content of the video, being proved for free by Booking workers, shows once again how strategies to increase loyalty and sense of belonging produce huge advantages for the company business.

7.5. Conclusions

The analysis has tackled two forms of unskilled work in the service sector, which relate on one side with the provision of food, on the other with the provision of information to customers via communication on the phone. While employees in gastronomy, and in particular

⁶¹https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_jLx_Z8mV2g (last accessed: 03.01.2019)

waitresses and waiters or barkeepers constitute the interface between customers willing to eat and the owners of the business, in-bound call center agents constitute the interface between customers complaining about the products they have been sold and the company itself. To carry out the activities of both occupations, workers are not required to hold university degrees, but rather they are valorized for their knowledge of foreign languages, in particular English and the specific language needed for a particular niche of the market, as well as for their communicating and negotiating, i.e. social skills.

The chapter has then focused on the case study of Booking.com, a travel fare aggregator website. Booking.com thus has to do with the sector of tourism, that specific form of commodification of “lifestyle” mobility, which leverages on consumption of various goods in the place to be visited. Being a transnational company, with offices and call centers in many countries, Booking.com offers an infrastructure of mobility also for its employees, who are mostly young migrants. Both analyses in gastronomy and call centers, reveals that the labor force employed in Berlin is mainly constituted by young migrants, who are often overqualified. In gastronomy it seems that the labor force is composed by migrants whose migratory paths resemble more the trajectory of migration in Fordist times and by young educated migrants who cross the sector to provide bare amounts of income. In the call centers, however, the internal differentiation of the labor force might be similar but opposite. The call center, if embedded into a digital company, with a strong focus on branding and loyalty building, might resemble the clerical workplace typical of middle-class social locations. The young migrants interviewed, who left behind a situation of economic stagnation and thus a perspective of downward social mobility, access jobs at Booking.com as if they could provide that security of a middle-class lifestyle. However, this section should provide with this regarding the kind of horizon which might be opening, the very security of these types of jobs might be much more fragile than their appearance.

As we have seen, both in gastronomy and in call centers, much work is about receiving complaints by customers, and being able to solve the potential emotional dissonance by “smiling” and maintaining the communication. This also produces a kind of “thickening” of the character of the worker, meaning that training for the job produces a modification of personality also in spheres beyond work time. The problematic and often contradictory relations of care between worker and customer, however, might be solved by companies by introducing automation, as the case of Booking reveals. As the CEO argues in a recent interview, the com-

pany has brought more and more automation within the processing of bookings and customer assistance. In her words, “each customer touches machine learning” several times during the booking, whereas Artificial Intelligence, mainly in the form of chat bots, is now employed in the 30% of bookings carried out in the English language.⁶² Automation leads to an even more monotonous work for call center agents, as their activities are more and more restricted to clicking options between the customer demand and the data base. By this, the relationship between the customer and the company becomes increasingly automated and standardized. Less emotional labor is involved, however at the cost of monotony and alienation. Automation, however, might also produce the obsolescence of human agents for wider parts of the relationship with customers. While the development of call centers might be accelerated in the next years by the increasing application of machine learning and AI, in Berlin Booking recently announced that around half of the employees located in the city will be fired, and one of the two offices closed (Schlenk 2018). Such component of the Berliner labor force of the company is working on fixed-term contracts, which according to the company itself will not be renewed. The firing, coming after a series of legal disputes at the Work Court, might have to do with legal troubles in regulating the shifts for agents. In any case, the case of Booking reveals how the service sector in Berlin is being fuelled by a young migrant and mostly educated labor force. Call centers seem to be either “gateways to the global knowledge economy” or “electronic sweatshops” (Huws 2009: 5). What the analysis reveals, is that they might be both, as they are on the one side sources of wage relationships in which mobility as a resource is required as well as provided, meaning that they boost the mobilization of young labor force, at the same time providing a transnational infrastructure for it. Moreover, call centers employed in the digital economy tend to produce a work environment in which lifestyle based on emergent cultural capital is praised and facilitated. The whole branding and loyalty-building seems to set possibility to consume mobility against exploitation and monotonous work. The latter are not tackled by the company, nor is the company willing to discuss these issues, as the disputes with the Berliner work council show.⁶³ On the other side, call centers are sources of wage relationships in which work time can be expanded and exceed into hours of the day and days of the week usually filled by reproduction (as in the gastronomy), and security is supplanted by the imposition of a maximum of flexibility.

⁶²<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-vfsgOyzDj8;> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O5yp9yLcjWo> (last accessed: 03.01.2019).

⁶³http://www.it.migration-online.de/beitrag_aWQ9MTA3MjE_.html (last accessed: 03.01.2019).

8. Bringing Movement into Class Analysis: Contributions to Politics of Mobility

This research contributes to the fields of Class Analysis and Migration Research in two ways. On one side, the theoretical effort provided in chapter 2 delivers a comprehensive update of Class Analysis, which seeks to encompass all relevant strands, without privileging one approach over the others, but rather trying to make each one productive for exploring different aspects of class. On the other side, the production of empirical data on the case study of Italian migrants living in Berlin has given the possibility to develop several claims on the interaction between class and migration/mobility, able to bring advancement in the two above mentioned sociological fields. Finally, the exploration of the local borders to citizenship informs the field of Urban Studies about the relationship between migration and cities. The contributions conveyed by the research will be now illustrated in greater detail.

Chapter 2 delivers a systematic critique of the analysis of social class and social status, by updating it to the developments brought by Feminist Studies, Racism Studies and Critical Geography. Feminist Studies have instructed class analysis to acknowledge and comprehend the analysis of reproductive labor, meaning all that labor, such as domestic and emotional one, which maintains the labor force productive. Blackness and Racism Studies, instead, can inform class analysis regarding the study of all that unpaid and forced labor which is carried out in contemporary capitalism without being recognized as such. “Free” or unpaid labor is nowadays a fundamental component of labor relationships and in all sorts of provision of income. For instance, in order to access social income as provided by the state, labor in the form of queueing, compiling forms, translating documents is required. Finally, Critical Geography, with its focus on the secondary circuit of capital, can help Class Analysis to open itself to encompassing a wider variety of forms of provision of income beyond wage work. Housing rents, for instance, are increasingly relevant for accessing income, as the dramatic explosion of the use of platforms such as AirBnB demonstrates.

The theoretical effort of the research has been that of defining the main analytical problems which have accompanied the crisis of the class concept. The latter has taken place at

least since the 1970es both in research, as a useful analytical category to think of social inequality, and in societies, as a concept for individuals and collectivities to define themselves. The chapter has identified five unsolved dilemmas to be considered at the same time as symptoms and causes of the decline of class. Thus, the issue of class consciousness was one of the first manifestations of the crisis, with increasing unease for sociologists in explaining why the working classes ceased acting in the way predicted by theories of social change. The second theoretical node is that of the middle classes, stuck in between being considered classes or status groups, and whose boundaries have become increasingly difficult to be drawn. Thirdly, the relationship between class and age has been tackled as hard to depict, as changes in the dominant mode of production in capitalism and in the role of the state have fostered the social distance between older and younger generations. Fourthly, the concept of class composition is put under focus, as to problematize the easy alliances between different factions of dominated classes proposed on paper by researchers, such as Standing (2011). Finally, the shortcomings in class analysis are put in relation with those in gentrification research. Gentrification is taken as a case study to illustrate how the flaws of traditional class analysis have spilled over in the study of social phenomena defined and conceptualized as being class-based.

The problems illustrated call for a re-structuring of class analysis and for generating research in which categories are not assigned neither formulated *a priori* (see also Benson/Jackson 2018). Rather, they suggest moving towards a class analysis placed beyond the dichotomy between purely objectivist or subjectivist stances (Bourdieu 1987), and oriented to making visible hidden struggles upon meanings, classifications and distribution of resources. Thereby, the analysis pleads for analysis of class carefully located in time and space, as the boundaries relevant for such struggles and conflicts might shift from context to context. Further, the analytical critique suggests problematizing the established concepts of middle- and working-class as their strength in understanding the flexible production of subjective collectivities in contemporary flexible capitalism appears increasingly challenged.

This research did not formulate the existence of new classes, such as Standing has done with the “precariat” (2011), or Savage with the “emergent service workers” (Savage 2013). In fact, following Skeggs, I argue that the task for social class analysis, rather than pointing to the emergence of a new subject on paper, is that of exploring the hidden and untold stories of struggles over power, classification, ownership and control lived by people in their everyday life (Skeggs 2015). In this research, the concepts of working class and middle class have been

used punctually as shortcuts when talking about the combination of economic and cultural capital of the migrants and their social environments. However, they are not integrated into the analytical structure of the research, as the goal of the latter has not been that of assigning class labels to practices of livelihood. Rather, I attempted to highlight lines of continuity and rupture in strategies of social reproduction in different parts of social space, focusing on the role of mobility as an income-generating resource.

In order to deal with the exploration of various aspects of class in people's lives, I adopted the broad definition, developed by Wright, of class as "relationship to income-generating resources" (Wright 2016: 105). Following Wright, I suggested a multiplicity of approaches when studying class. As he argues, there are different approaches according to the type of question asked: "One can be a Weberian for the study of class mobility, a Bourdieusian for the study of class determinants of lifestyles, and a Marxian for the critique of capitalism" (Wright 2005: 192). I tackled several questions concerning the relationship between class and mobility. To do so, I deployed a variety of analytical tools, which enabled me to explore various aspects of the reproduction of social inequality along class. In chapter 4, I explored the symbolic boundaries drawn by migrants to distinguish different "classes" of migrants, i.e. the successful and long-lasting achievers, able to balance hedonism and hard work, reproduction and production, against those migrants "burned" by hedonism and destined to the fate of getting back, failing their project of migration. In the chapter, the Weberian concept of life conduct was employed to start sketching how objective and subjective aspects of mobility hold together. In chapter 5, Bourdieu's concept of habitus was used to highlight the practices of social reproduction developed by migrants with different classes of origin. In chapter 6, concepts from Critical Migration Studies, such as differential inclusion, have helped to tackle the practices of accessing resources of migrants endowed with different forms of capital. Finally, chapter 7 has deployed a Marxist understanding of labor relations to critically analyze how migrants are valorized and exploited as labor force.

As a further contribution, the theoretical work on the concept of social class has delivered an actualization of the analysis of the relationship between social class and social status, challenging the opposition production vs. consumption, and criticizing the concept of "lifestyle". In advanced capitalism, lifestyle seems to be connected with commodities which can be bought by people to display a certain way of living. I argue that the concept is flawed and biased when used as the main descriptor for status groups, as it neglects all forms of subjectiv-

ation not mediated by purchasing power. Moreover, status is inter-class, as it relates to the sets of values and meanings around which people structure their lives. Thus, I propose to re-establish the Weberian concept of life conduct (Germ. *Lebensführung*) as the common trait of people who might be located in different class situations, but who are united by the same calling to act. In my view, the concept of life conduct can hold together the spheres of production and reproduction, the time spent in work and the time spent in leisure. The concept, thus, is also better able to address contemporary trends towards the dissolution of the boundaries between production and reproduction.

The conceptualization of life conduct as a critical concept to pursue class analysis has been implemented when examining the empirical data produced for this research. The analysis of the practices of mobility and fixity of Italian migrants in Berlin has generated an account of the development of a life conduct predicated on mobility. The imperative to move spills over from the domain of spatial mobility and the plans and practices about where to live into the domain of work, with the refusal of open-ended contracts and the impossibility to imagine doing the same job “forever”. The migrants involved in the research, mostly endowed with qualifications, are highly mobile within the labor market, passing from “any job” to a “better job” and possibly to their “dream job” (Parutis 2011).

The research made clear that we need to challenge not only migration categories, but also dichotomies such as high vs. low skilled, as they are not enough to explain the access to labor market of migrants. Like many other young people, migrants might be employed in gig jobs. For them, however, such precarious occupations might leave enough time free for learning the German language and setting a foot on the city. Thus, overqualification is not necessarily an imposition and constraint given simply by structural conditions for accessing the labor market but could be strategically chosen as to gain time to accumulate other forms of capital and resources. Moreover, higher mobility within labor markets constitutes a requirement which migrants perfectly meet, as they, mobile per definition, have structured their social lives, networks, everyday routines around the idea that they will not stay forever, but rather move on.

At the same time, also arrangements for reproduction are affected, as increasing spatial mobility challenges established and well-oiled mechanisms for social reproduction. New ways of dealing with reproductive necessities of a life in mobility must be formulated, implying the development of flexible forms of household, and new forms of emotional engagement based on flexibility and the possibility of re-discussing the terms of agreement. In other words, the

becoming practical of the appellation to move, assimilated and formulated through learning of foreign languages and practices of spatial mobility, entails the development of a mobile habitus in which fixity and rootedness seem to undergo processes of devaluation. The attempt to predict the future, which is already challenged by the flexibilization and temporalization of work, housing, and in general of the mechanisms to access resources, is further blocked by migration: when asked about what they would do in 5 months or 5 years, migrants often laughed. Uncertainty and mobility made them laugh about the possibility to predict where they are going to be and what they are going to do in the next years.

In his book “The Figure of the Migrant”, Nail rejects the perspective on migration as lack and as the failure of citizenship, pointing out that it rather constitutes the “structural necessity of the historical conditions of social reproduction” (Nail 2015: 12). In his view, migration entails both aspects of social expulsion and social expansion. The analysis has shown that the development of a life conduct predicated on mobility is not to be understood as the bare reaction of young people to correspond the imperative to move stemming from the labor market as well as from an activating welfare state, nor as the impetus of self-propelling individuals re-locating themselves as to maximize the realization of value contained in the capitals they bear with themselves. Rather, their movement entails both a component of expulsion and one of expansion, i.e. of valorization of the own self via spatial re-location.

The analysis of their biographic accounts of mobility questions both categories of economic and lifestyle migrants, as both components are present. It is true to affirm that the interviewed migrants left Italy mostly as a consequence of the erasure of possibilities to making a livelihood by physically living there. At the same time, it is also true that their practices of spatial mobility have been informed by the appreciation and evaluation of the interaction between activities meant to provide income and activities meant to enable their reproduction. Migrants’ experiences cannot be reduced to being mobile labor force, nor to being detached tourists willing to consume life experience via travelling.

While the investigation has rejected these categories, it has illustrated how the development of a life conduct of mobility is hard to be reversed. In other words, in analogous way as studies of social mobility have shown, it seems that that there is no possibility of getting back in a social sense. In a nutshell, could one ask: “once a migrant, forever a migrant”? While it is hard to answer this question regarding migratory paths which have started not so long time ago, it is possible to state that going back to the place of origin depends upon the ability of

migrants to negotiate their multiple belongings, as well as on their ability to keep more doors open, in terms of access to social networks, economic opportunities and welfare states. The ability to move, thus, is not limited to being able to leave the place of origin and let forces of social expulsion be enacted. Rather, it is about being able to expand the own life chances via spatial mobility, instead of simply re-locating. Such expansion of life chances, however, should not be understood as limited to class.

As the analysis has shown, in the production and reproduction of social inequality, class operates not in isolation, but in interaction with other partitioning principles, which might acquire more or less relevance according to the specific mechanism of social inequality. In the case of migration, the analysis revealed that gender is as well crucial in affecting access to and practices of mobility. In the case studied, spatial mobility seemed to offer ways out of oppression for women and young people whose sexual orientation and gendered behavior were marked as deviant in the home places. Mobility is thus understood as part of a project of emancipation and self-realization which not only entails economic condition and access to income, but also the unfolding of renewed understanding of gender and class. By becoming migrants, young people enact their autonomy as projects of molding of the self, including their relationship to gender roles.

As mobility entails both expulsion and expansion, the question about how social class interacts with mobility and migration should look at the different possibilities for action at both junctures. In the narratives developed by Italian migrants in Berlin, taken as a sort of proxy for the movement of South European young people to the North of Europe, symbolic boundaries were drawn between peers who stayed in Italy and those who made it to leave Italy. Further, migrants spoke of feelings of unease and discomfort when spending time with their friends in their home towns and cities during holidays. Here, the research pointed to the dividing line emerging between those who have the resources to move and those who do not.

Differentials of mobility can be observed in the “expulsion” aspect of migration: those staying in Italy were described by the “movers” as being stuck in depression and as if they drove permanently in a roundabout, unable to take the exit. These subjective perceptions seem to refer to the emergence of mobility as an outcome of existent social inequality and of class relations connected to the parental generation. Many of those who left had the resources to do so. In any case, most of them traveled since they were children or studied already abroad. In other words, their horizon of mobility has been wider than their peers who have stayed in

Italy. From their perspective, spatial fixity is seen less as rootedness and more as an outcome of the action of constraining bonds, which immobilize young people to accepting hyper-exploitative jobs and a monotonous everyday routine.

When seeking to highlight processes of class emergence within migration, it became clear that migration itself, or rather the more abstract notion of mobility, i.e. migration detached from the nation state as instance of regulation, constitutes a class-related resource and asset. Within globalized labor markets, those who are able to move acquire resources through which they can improve their social condition. In other words, it seems that the ability to move rather than to fix oneself to a place is the key to accumulation of capital nowadays. Such a statement, however, requires more empirical research into the processes of valorization of mobility regarding various social groups, spatial contexts and labor markets.

In any case, the relationship between mobility and class is not exhausted by pointing to the different ability to give in to forces of social expulsion. Mobility is not simply an outcome, but also a resource which can be accumulated and made productive in different ways. Thereby, it can be understood as a potential and increasingly relevant source of class inequalities, with the dividing line being on one side marked by the ability to move or not, and on the other by the different ways of moving, the *know-how-to-move* or *savoir se mouvoir* (Tarrius 1992; Morokvasic 2004), i.e. the different ways to deploying mobility to access broader sets of resources.

In the case analyzed, newcomers in Berlin are exposed to a sort of informal selection according to the resources they bring with themselves. While they are described in public and in policies as “free movers” (Lafleur/Stanek 2017), in fact they encounter a series of borders and obstacles which possibly impede them to set foot on more stable grounds in the new place. The logic of “the best and the brightest” (Anderson 2017) applies to them via a mix of formal and informal requirements for getting a registration, the key to fixing oneself to Berlin. Once registered, they are formally made into migrant subjects and placed as EU citizens in a quite privileged position within the hierarchy of citizenship status, in comparison with other migrant groups. Those who are still in the midst of the fatiguing process of obtaining a registration, on the contrary, experience a sort of limbo in which they are formally considered as tourists, but are actually being treated as exploited and deprived migrants. As chapter 6 has shown, Italian migrants living without a registration in Berlin are exposed to going back, as centrifugal forces are strong: housing precarity, job precarity, relational and emotive precarity.

Moreover, “dangerous vortices” such as clubbing and drugs, can fill time left empty by lack of work. Finally, these precarious migrants are also symbolically constructed as a group and blamed as “burned” by those migrants who have “made it”. These, instead, might have accepted clerical jobs delivering them a sense of stability, however indeed very precarious as we have seen in the case of Booking in chapter 7.

The struggle to access the basic resources necessary to fix oneself to Berlin, i.e. registration, housing and labor, illustrates how institutional mechanisms interact at local level, making it almost impossible for migrants to go through the “closed circuit” without either deploying assets brought “from home” or mobilizing social networks. At the same time, the analysis has revealed how the Italian state seeks in various ways to expel young people who left for Germany from its competence and responsibility, above all regarding their participation in the Italian system of health care. Migrants are thus stuck between being pushed by Italian institutions to renounce to some of the rights connected with residency and German local institutions seeking to keep them outside participation in social citizenship. Further, the mismatch is reflected into official statistics, as both the data collected by the Italian institute for Statistics and by the German and Berlin Register are flawed as they consistently underestimate the number of Italian migrants. Having delved into the informal mechanisms producing such a gap, it becomes clear that it is the very precarious young, those are stuck in the limbo of accessing a registration, who are not counted as migrants. As Pugliese argues, such oversight has clear class implications, with the making invisible of those subjects more prone to hyper-exploitation and dispossession (Pugliese 2018: 14). At the same time, invisibility is a tool which can be deployed strategically by those able to do so in order to maintain bounds as to maximize rights in the two national states. While claims about the impossibility to count and measure migration have already been explored (Anderson 2017), this research shows that such fuzziness is not distributed equally, but rather follows class, ethnicity and possibly gender lines.

Finally, the reasoning suggests that the difference between migration and mobility is constituted by the different ability of people to detach themselves from the bonds of national states and negotiate their belonging to multiple places in such a way to maximize the benefits they can get from all of them. To do so, migrants need resources, which can be related to parents endowed with capital, to qualifications and foreign language skills, to social networks of mutual care and help. Differentiation takes place during the process of becoming migrants. At

the same time, mobility as such still represents a possibility of widening opportunities for all migrants, notwithstanding their different class locations. By accumulating spatial mobility, young migrants can supply for the lack of formal qualifications, as they can learn the language on the ground, access a wider network of job offers. The aspect of social expansion is potentially open to all those who have the right to move and are not persecuted for enacting movement, as in the case of EU citizens moving within the EU migration regime.

The final issue emerging from the research and connected to the statement that mobility is an income-generating resource, is about the ways how mobility is made productive within and beyond wage work. Who appropriates the value generated by spatial mobility of young labor force? Chapter 7 has explored how the development of the labor market in Berlin towards making out of the city a core of the service and digital economy is fueled by mobile labor force, often employed in low-wage activities. Yet, the very fact that they are migrants constitutes a crucial asset in the tertiary sector. By interacting with the labor market, migrants are transformed into subjects of value which can be appropriated via mechanisms of exploitation. In chapter 7, the analysis has focused on gastronomy and call centers, thereby sketching some of the mechanisms through which the value of migrant labor force is first recognized and then appropriated by others. However, more research is needed to unravel the various ways through which spatial mobility of people produces value, as well as to investigate how such value is extracted from working bodies on the move and appropriated. A further program of analysis is much required to answer this question.

8.1. Concluding lines

As Anderson states, recalling the article by Stephen Castles “Why Migration Policies Fail” (Castles 2004), “migration policies fail because they are about migration” (Anderson 2017: 1528). As soon as the focus of migration policy will be the regulation and control of movement, it seems that death and suffering will continue being sold as the markers for the success of migration policies. Anderson, like many other voices from the academy and the public sphere, suggests that states should rather point to reducing social inequality, and thus counter the forces of expulsion which are increasingly pushing people away from their homes (Sassen 2014). This research has explored movement whose governance is marked by the absence of direct control on flows. However, the analysis has shown that migration from the

South of Europe to the North, far from being “free” and frictionless, is substituted by indirect and informal processes of differential inclusion at the arrival and afterwards. In the case study of this research, migration control takes place at local level, as newcomers lacking certain resources are informally prevented to fix themselves to the new place. Endless mobilization, thus, rather than migration reduction, seems to constitute the main policy goal for the governance of intra-EU migration.

When a policy defines a social phenomenon as a problem, the problem begins existing in the public and being treated as such. When this does not happen, then a specific phenomenon might remain absent from the public sphere (Bacchi 2009). Young people moving within the EU have been narrated as free and mobile “Eurostars”, pioneering the European space and constructing their biographies through the creation of multiple belonging and of a post-national identity (Favell 2008). In this research, I opted instead for showing the very materiality of intra-EU migration, focusing on the accounts of those producing such mobility. While many of the young migrants interviewed for this research referred to their mobility as marked by freedom, buying into the dominant narratives predicated upon their lives, the investigation has brought to life a more nuanced picture. Young EU-migrants coming from Southern countries are still very much constrained inasmuch as they are kept constantly on the move. These flows are self-regulating, composed by young labor force put to work in exchange for self-realization oriented towards the adherence to a life conduct predicated upon mobility, hard work and adaptation. At the same time, spatial mobility does indeed release their practices of livelihood from constraints due to the class and gender relations in which they were embedded in their home places. The mobilization of the self in search for a better life (importantly constituted by both work and leisure, production and reproduction), however, seems to constitute a mechanism which, once initiated, is hard to be stopped. The research has shown that, more than by circularity, such movements are characterized by endless mobilization. In the case of South-North migration, it seems that migrants will stay away from the country of origin until the economic situation there gets better. As this has not occurred for the past ten years, it is to expect that this mobile labor force, accustomed and taught to re-adapt and become even more flexible, might stay on the move for quite a long time to come.

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Web Survey - Questionnaire



Note sulla privacy:

L'indagine è completamente anonima e i tuoi dati verranno trattati secondo le vigenti norme sulla privacy (d.l. 196/2003).

La registrazione delle risposte fornite all'indagine non è relativa a informazioni che consentano l'identificazione del rispondente, a meno che qualche domanda del questionario non la chieda esplicitamente. Se è stato usato un codice identificativo per accedere a quest'indagine, questo codice non sarà registrato assieme alle risposte fornite. Il codice identificativo è gestito in un database diverso e viene aggiornato soltanto per indicare se è stata completata (o no) l'indagine. Non c'è nessun modo per abbinare i codici identificativi alle risposte all'indagine.

Sezione A: Provenienza

A1. In quale città italiana hai vissuto più a lungo con i tuoi genitori?

Comune

Provincia

A2. A che età hai lasciato la casa dei tuoi genitori?

Se sei tornato/a in seguito a vivere con i tuoi genitori, prendi come riferimento l'età che avevi quando hai lasciato la casa dei tuoi genitori per la prima volta.

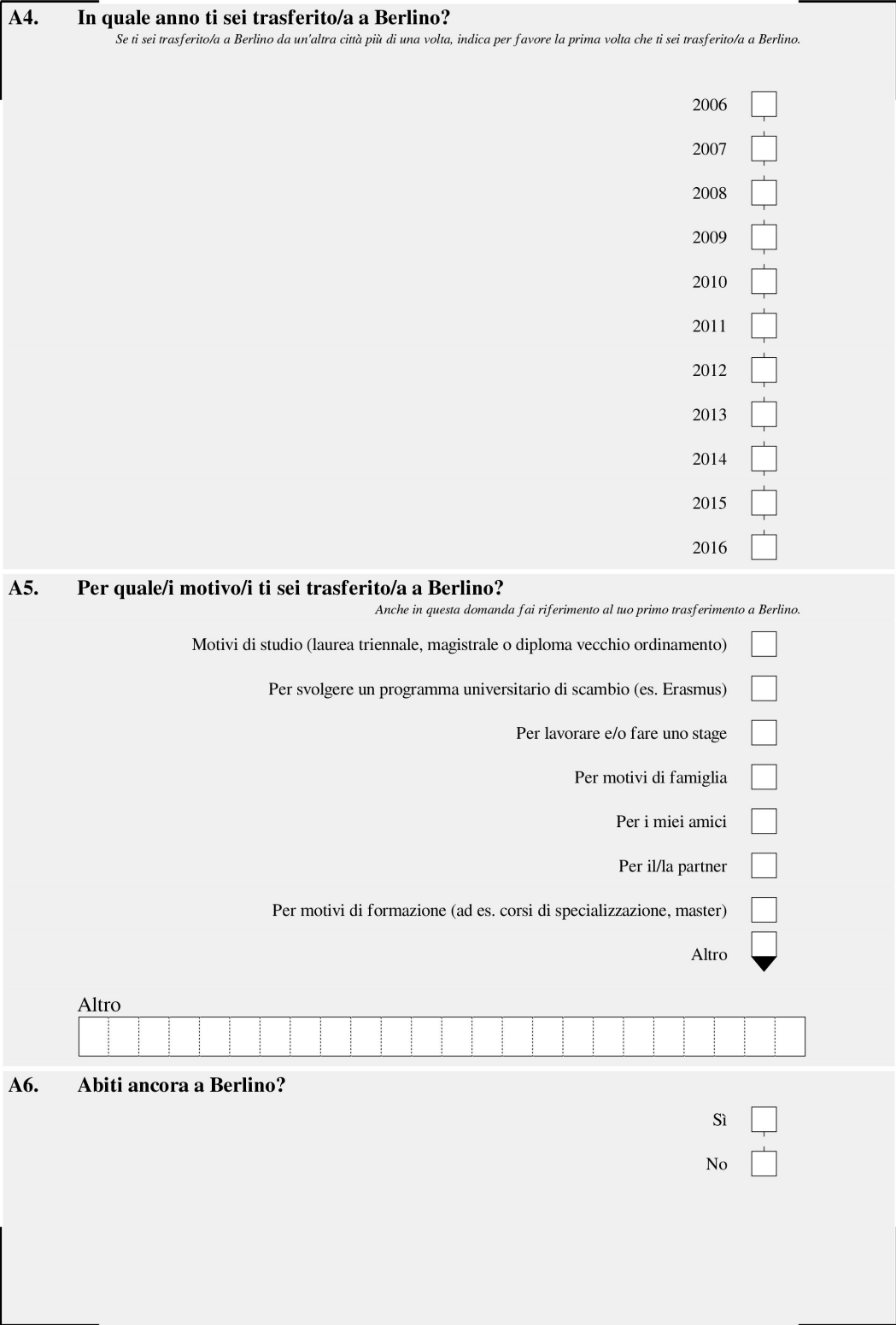
A3. Dove sei andato/a a vivere quando hai lasciato la casa dei tuoi genitori?

nella stessa città ☐

in un'altra città italiana ☐

all'estero (a Berlino) ☐

all'estero (non a Berlino) ☐





Completamente d'accordo ☐

Abbastanza d'accordo ☐

Nei limiti d'accordo nè in disaccordo ☐

Poco d'accordo ☐

In completo disaccordo ☐

Sì, ne conoscevo molti/e (più di 5 persone) Sì, ne conoscevo pochi/e (meno di 5 persone) No, non conoscevo nessuno	☐ ☐ ☐

Mai	☐
Da 1 a 4 volte all'anno	☐
Da 5 a 10 volte all'anno	☐
Più di 10 volte all'anno	☐

☐ In una casa in affitto a tempo indeterminato

☐ In hotel e/o ostello

☐ In una casa con couch surfing o simili (non a pagamento)

☐ In una casa con Air BnB o simili (a pagamento)

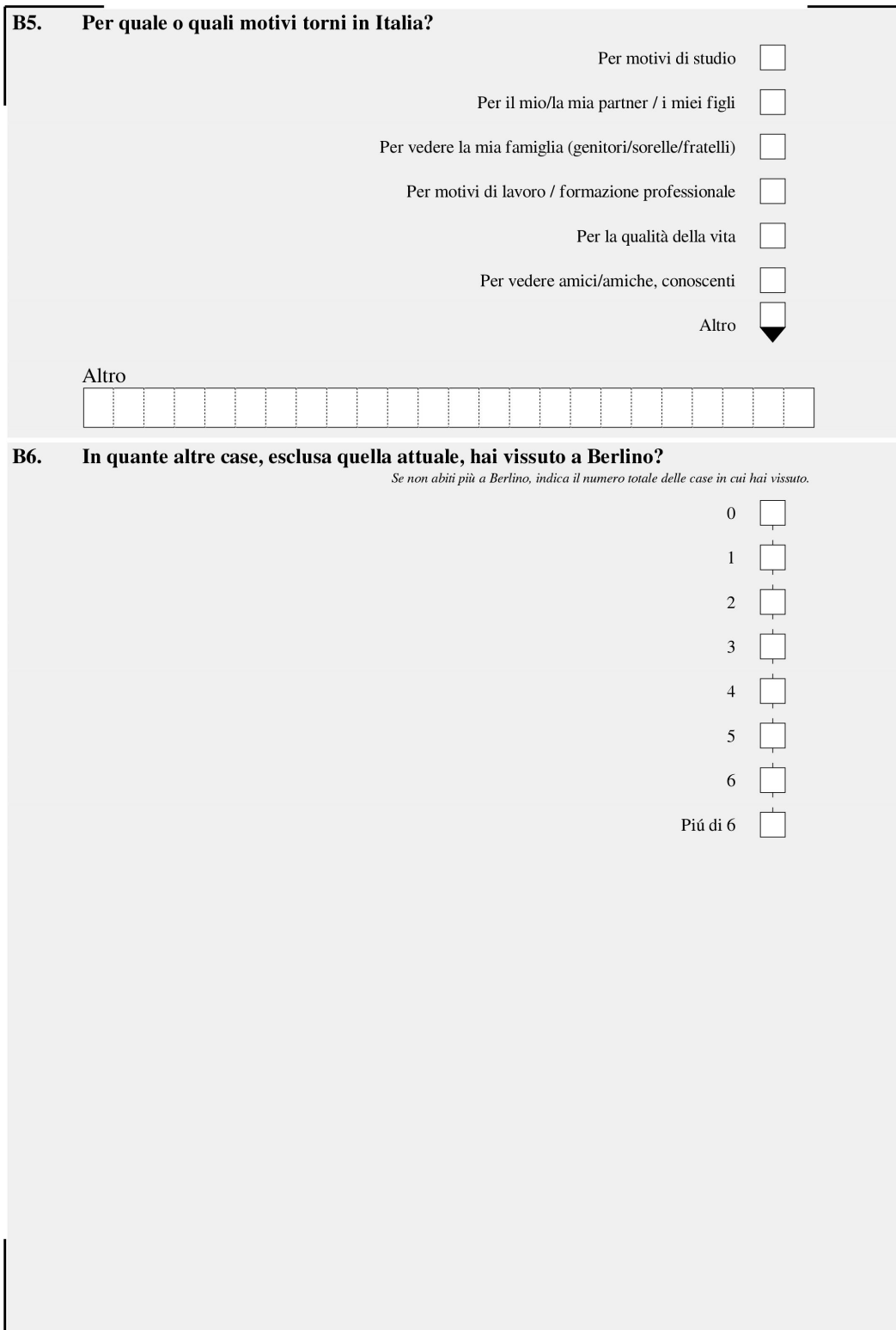
☐ A casa di amici e/o conoscenti (non a pagamento)

☐ A casa di amici e/o conoscenti (a pagamento)

☐ In una casa in affitto a tempo determinato

☐ Altro

[illegible]





	1990	2000	2005	2007
Mitte	10,0	10,0	10,0	10,0
Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg	10,0	10,0	10,0	10,0
Pankow	10,0	10,0	10,0	10,0
Charlottenburg-Wilmersdorf	10,0	10,0	10,0	10,0
Spandau	10,0	10,0	10,0	10,0
Steglitz-Zehlendorf	10,0	10,0	10,0	10,0
Tempelhof-Schoeneberg	10,0	10,0	10,0	10,0
Neukoelln	10,0	10,0	10,0	10,0
Treptow-Koepenick	10,0	10,0	10,0	10,0
Marzahn-Hellersdorf	10,0	10,0	10,0	10,0
Lichtenberg-Hohenschonhausen	10,0	10,0	10,0	10,0
Reinickendorf	10,0	10,0	10,0	10,0

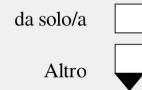
[illegible]

Meno di 1 mese	☐
Da 1 a 3 mesi	☐
Da 3 a 6 mesi	☐
Da 6 a 9 mesi	☐
Da 9 a 12 mesi	☐
Da un anno a un anno e 6 mesi	☐
Da un anno e 6 mesi a 2 anni	☐
Più di 2 anni	☐

con coinquilini/e (ted. WG) ☐

con i miei genitori ☐

con il/la mio/a partner e/o figli ☐

[illegible]

Niente, ci abitavo gratis perché ☐

Per la mia stanza/casa spendevo (incluse bollette e spese varie) Euro

Stadtteil	Anteil
Mitte	10,0 %
Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg	10,0 %
Pankow	10,0 %
Charlottenburg-Wilmersdorf	10,0 %
Spandau	10,0 %
Steglitz-Zehlendorf	10,0 %
Tempelhof-Schoeneberg	10,0 %
Neukoelln	10,0 %
Treptow-Koepenick	10,0 %
Marzahn-Hellersdorf	10,0 %
Lichtenberg-Hohenschönhausen	10,0 %
Reinickendorf	10,0 %

[illegible]

con coinquilini/e (ted. WG) ☐

con i miei genitori ☐

con il mio/la mia partner / figli/e ☐

da solo/a ☐



Altro

Niente, ci abitavo gratis perché

9

Per la mia stanza/casa spendevo (incluse bollette e spese varie) Euro

9

Mitte

1

Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg

11

Pankow

7

Charlottenburg-Wilmersdorf

1

Spandau

1

Steglitz-Zehlendorf

1

Tempelhof-Schoeneberg

1

Neukoelln

1

Treptow-Koepenick

[illegible]

Marzahn-Hellersdorf

5

Lichtenberg-Hoehenschoenhausen

1

Reinickendorf

7

[illegible]

con coinquilini/e (ted. WG)

3

con i miei genitori

con il mio/la mia partner / figli/e

7

da solo/a



Altro

E4. Quanto spendevi ogni mese per la casa, incluse bollette e spese viarie (ted. *Nebenkosten*)?

Niente, ci abitavo gratis perché ☐

5

Per la mia stanza/casa spendevo (incluse bollette e spese varie) Euro

9

F1. In quale quartiere di Berlino ti sei trasferito/a la quarta volta?

Mitte ☐

9

Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg ☐

Pankow

1

Charlottenburg-Wilmersdorf

Spandau

1

Steglitz-Zehlendorf

1

Tempelhof-Schoeneberg

1

Neukoelln

1

Treptow-Koepenick

Marzahn-Hellersdorf

11

Lichtenberg-Hoehenschoenhausen

1

Reinickendorf

7

F2. Scrivi il nome della via in cui abitavi.

F3. Con chi vivevi in quella casa?

con coinquilini/e (ted. WG) ☐

con i miei genitori

con il mio/la mia partner / figli/e

7

da solo/a ☐

[illegible]

Niente, ci abitavo gratis perché ☐

Sezione G: Berlin - Housing 5th

G1. In quale quartiere di Berlino ti sei trasferito/a la quinta volta?

Mitte ☐

Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg ☐

Pankow

Charlottenburg-Wilmersdorf

Spandau

Steglitz-Zehlendorf

Tempelhof-Schoeneberg

Neukoelln

Treptow-Koepenick

Marzahn-Hellersdorf

Lichtenberg-Hoehenschonhausen

Reinickendorf

G2. Scrivi il nome della via in cui abitavi.

[illegible]

G3. Con chi vivevi in quella casa?

con coinquilini/e (ted. WG) ☐

con i miei genitori

con il partner e/o con i miei figli

da solo/a ☐



Altro

Niente, ci abitavo gratis perché

5

Per la mia stanza/casa spendevo (incluse bollette e spese varie) Euro

9

Città

StatoMitte

7

Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg

7

Pankow

1

Charlottenburg-Wilmersdorf

[illegible]

Spandau

7

Steglitz-Zehlendorf

Tempelhof-Schoeneberg

5

Neukoelln

1

Treptow-Koepenick

1

Marzahn-Hellersdorf

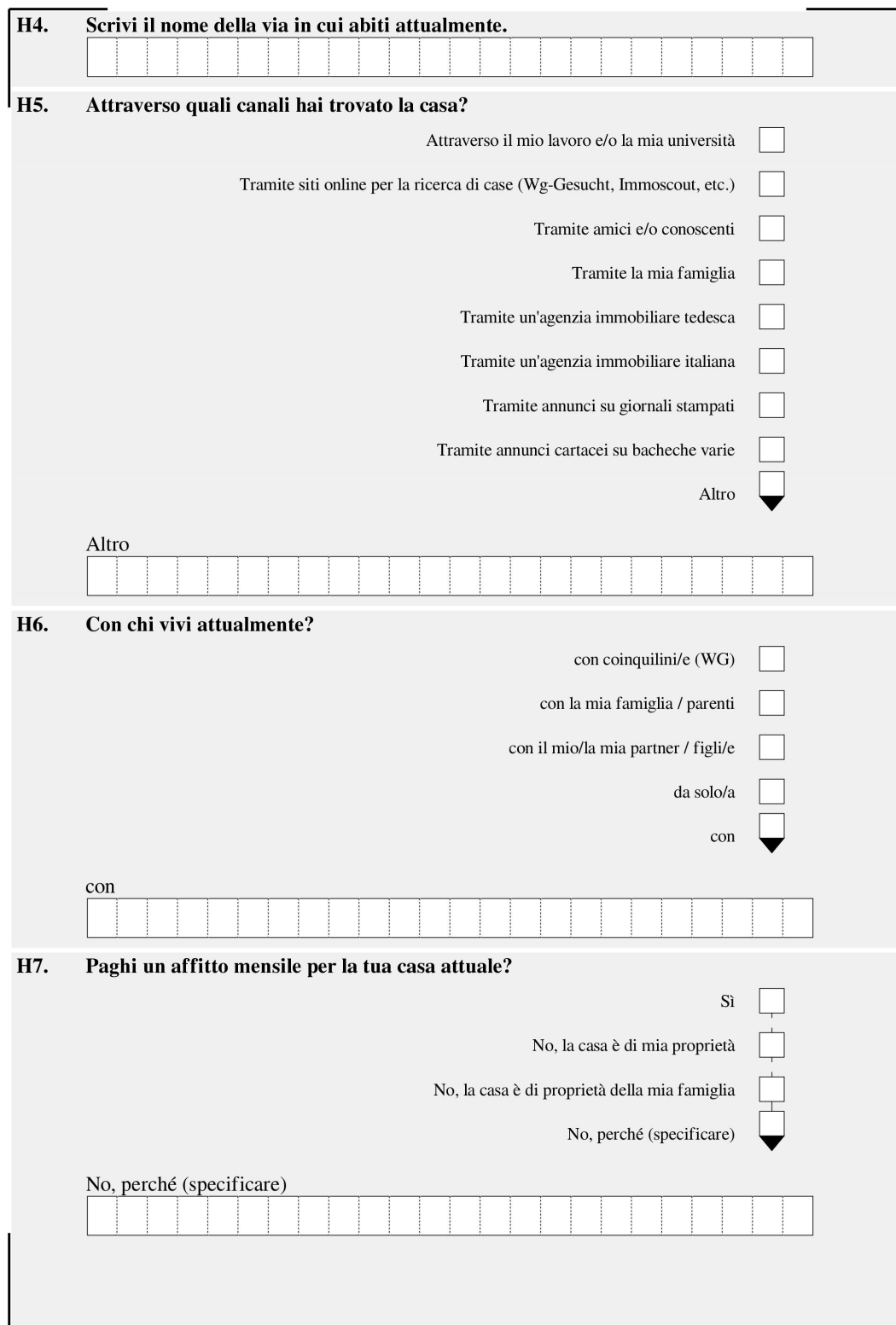
1

Lichtenberg-Hoehenschonhausen

7

Reinickendorf

1





Aiuto economico da parte della mia famiglia

Con i miei risparmi personali

Mutuo ☐Eredità ☐☐ Altro

Altro

[illegible]

A me ☐

A uno o più coinquilini/e ☐

A una o più persona/e che non abita/no qui

L'affitto non è regolato da un contratto

Altro

Altro

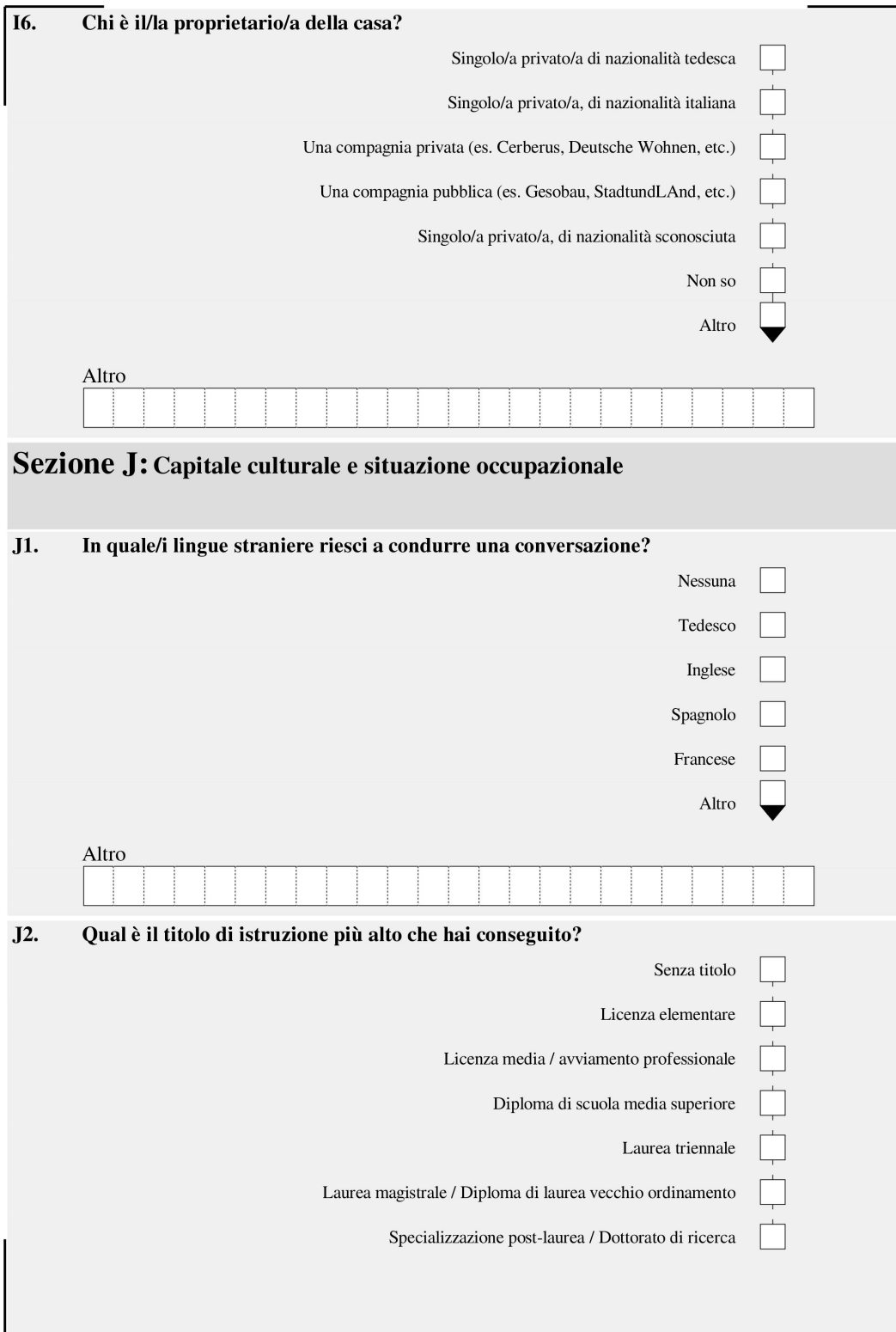
[illegible]

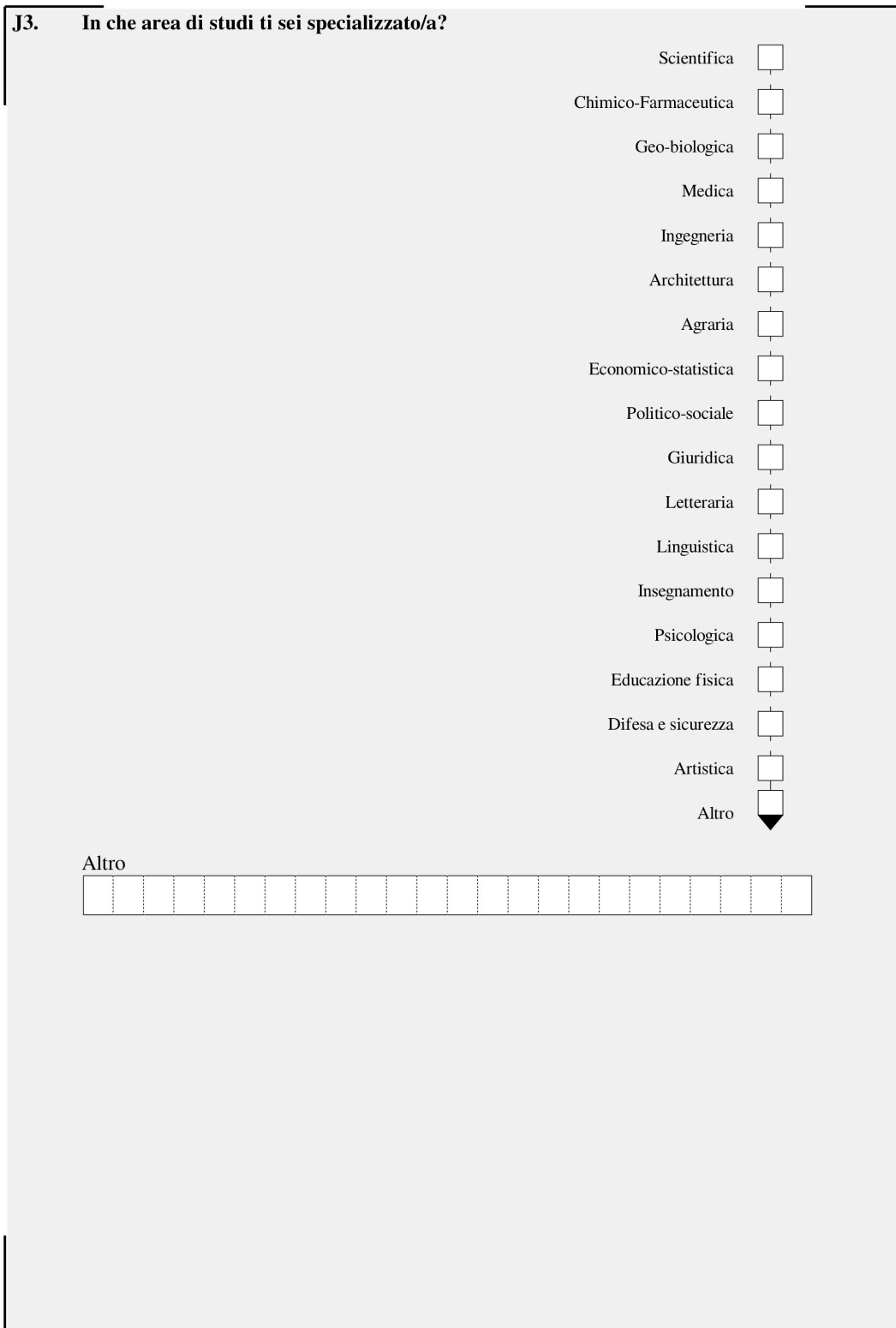
A tempo indeterminato

A tempo determinato (durata mesi)

A tempo determinato (durata mesi)

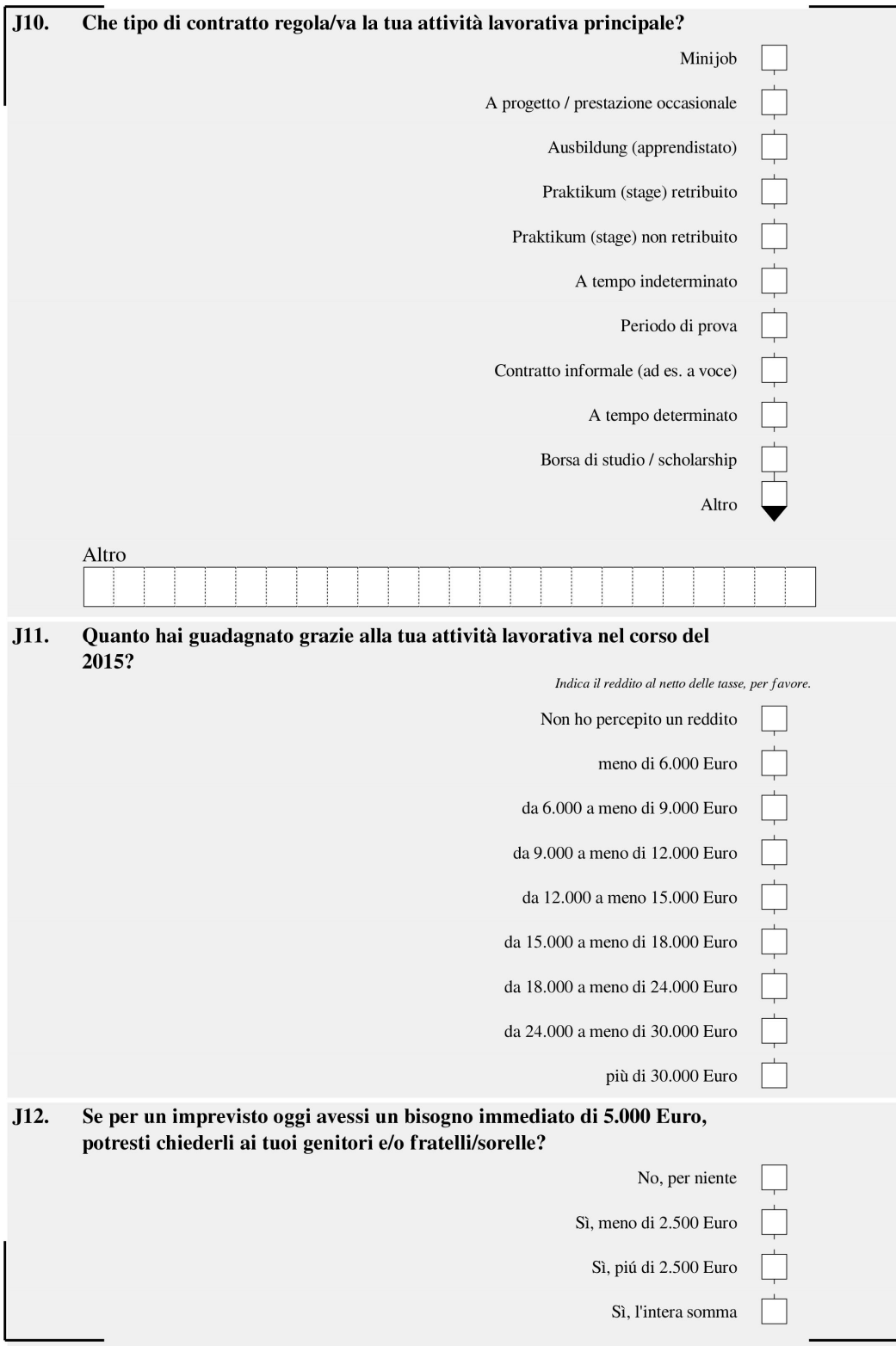
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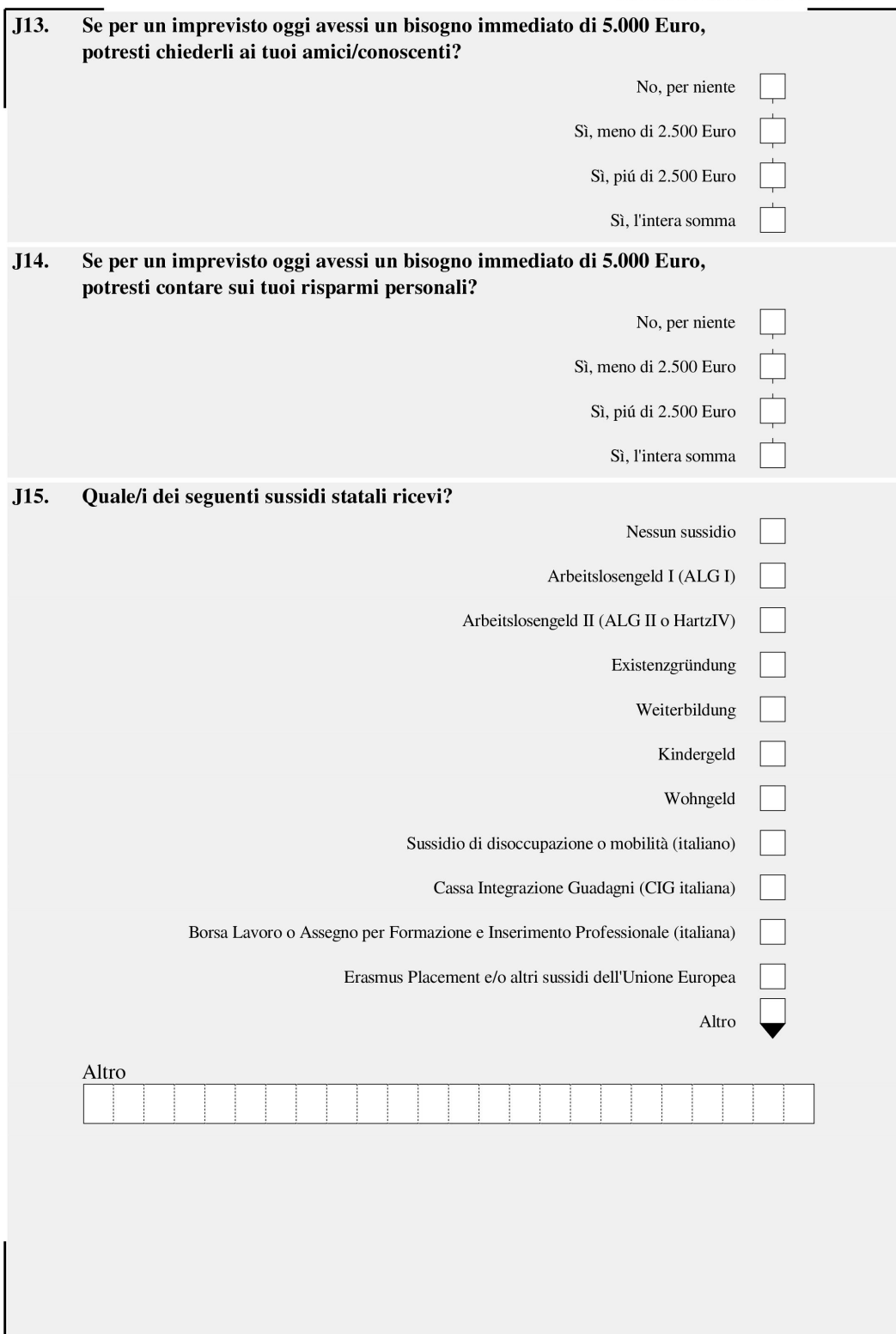


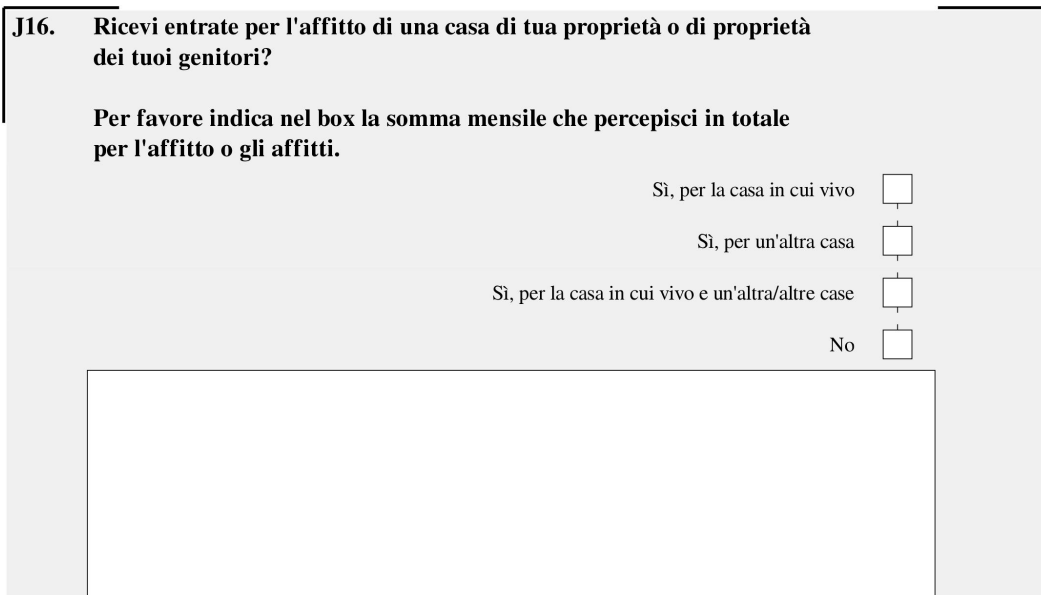




J4.	Quale delle seguenti categorie descrive al meglio la tua situazione occupazionale attuale?	
	Occupato/a (dipendente)	☐
	Occupato/a (autonomo/a / freelance)	☐
	Disoccupato/a in cerca di lavoro	☐
	Disoccupato/a non in cerca di lavoro	☐
	In cerca della prima occupazione	☐
	A casa per maternità/paternità	☐
	Casalingo/a	☐
	Studente/ssa a tempo pieno	☐
	Altro	☐
Altro		
J5.	Qual è l'attività lavorativa principale che svolgi o hai svolto negli ultimi tre mesi?	
J6.	Qual è l'ultima attività lavorativa che hai svolto prima di diventare disoccupato/a o smettere di lavorare?	
J7.	In quale ambito di lavoro in cui svolgi o svolgevi tale attività?	
<i>Es.: presso famiglia privata; in una azienda di grandi dimensioni; in una scuola elementare; ecc.</i>		
J8.	Quante ore lavorative svolgi o svolgevi settimanalmente per questa attività?	
J9.	In quale città svolgi o svolgevi tale attività lavorativa?	







Senza titolo	☐
Licenza elementare	☐
Licenza media / avviamento professionale	☐
Diploma di scuola media superiore	☐
Laurea triennale	☐
Laurea magistrale / Diploma di laurea vecchio ordinamento	☐
Specializzazione post-laurea / Dottorato di ricerca	☐

Occupato

Disoccupato/in cerca di occupazione

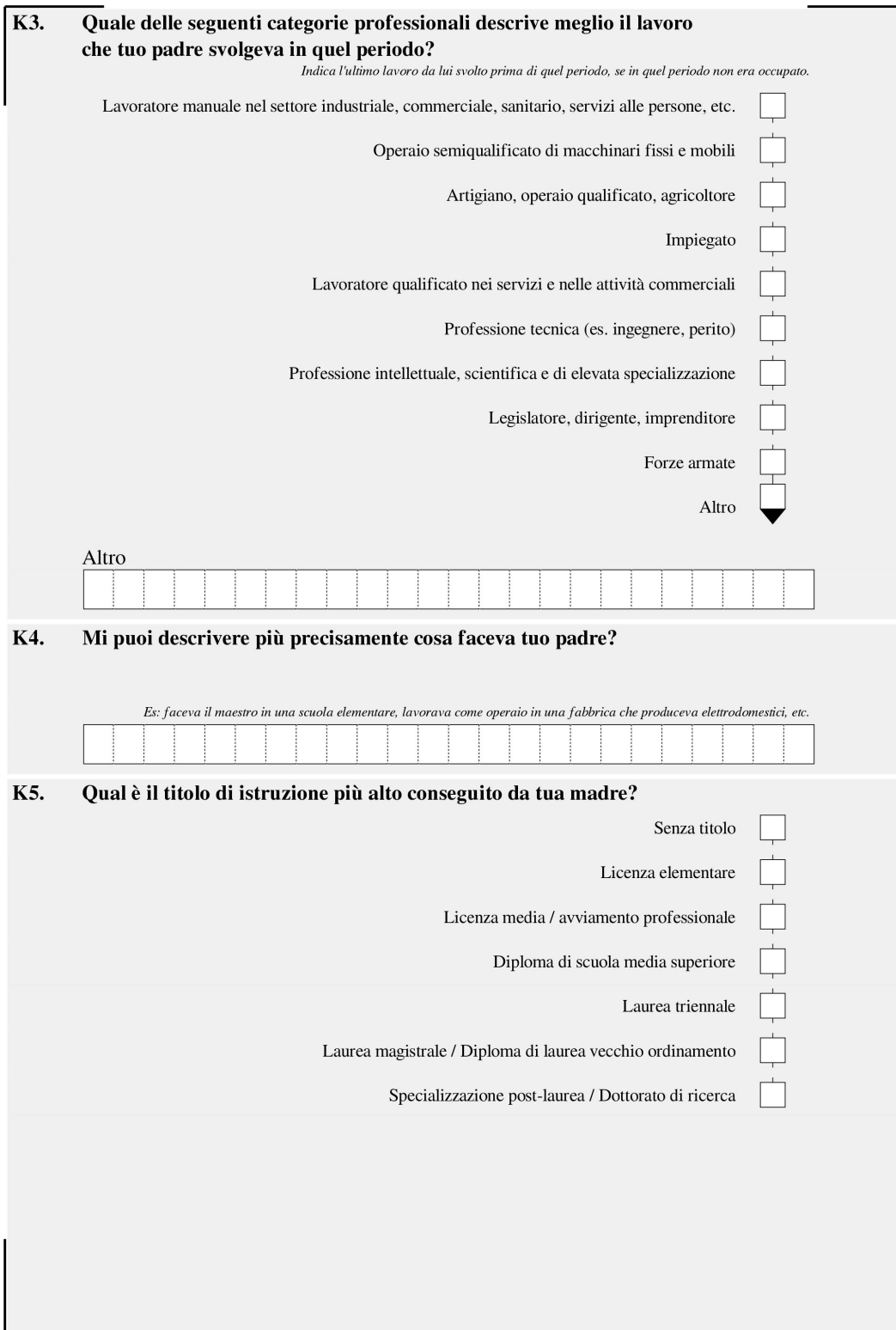
Pensionato

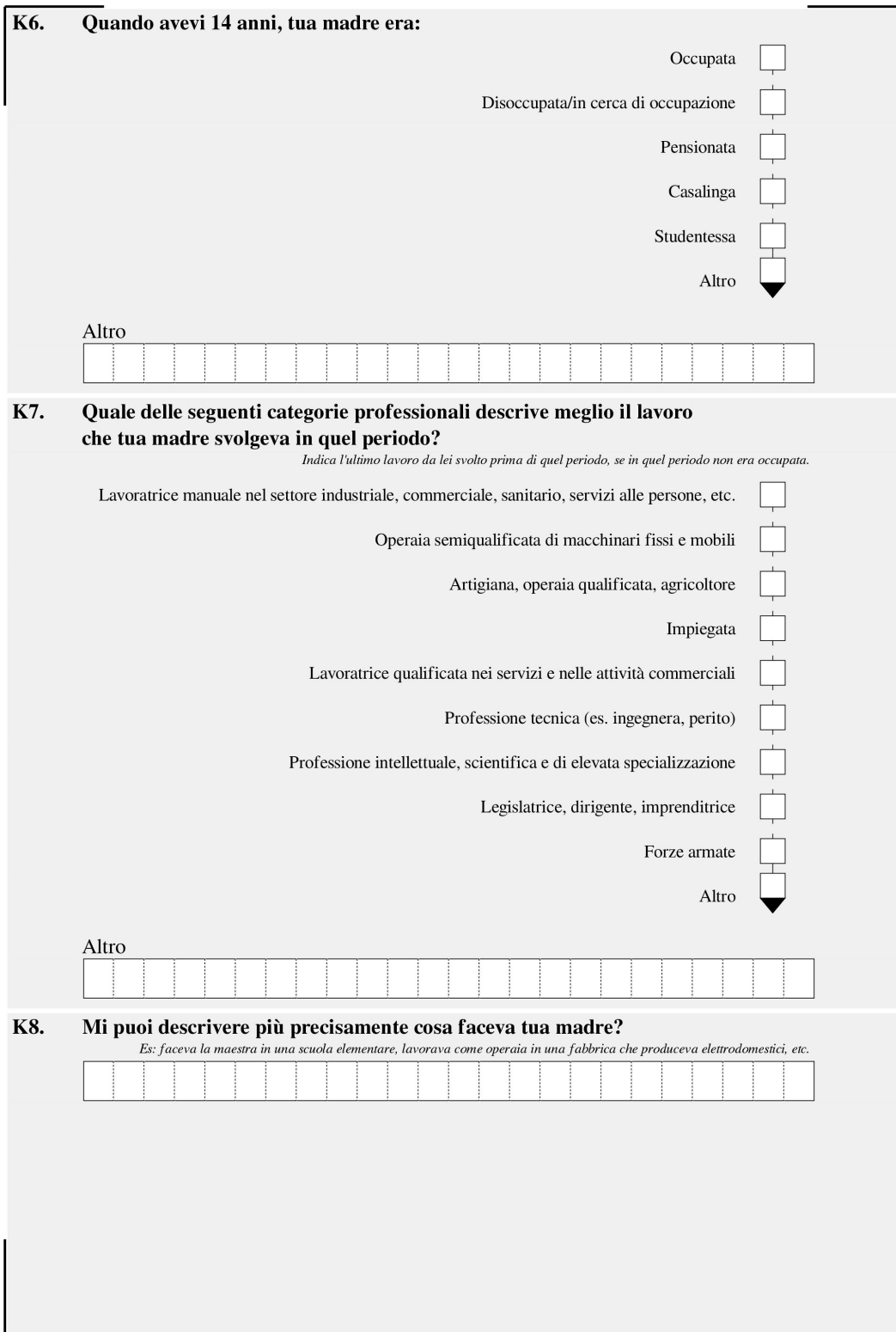
Casalingo

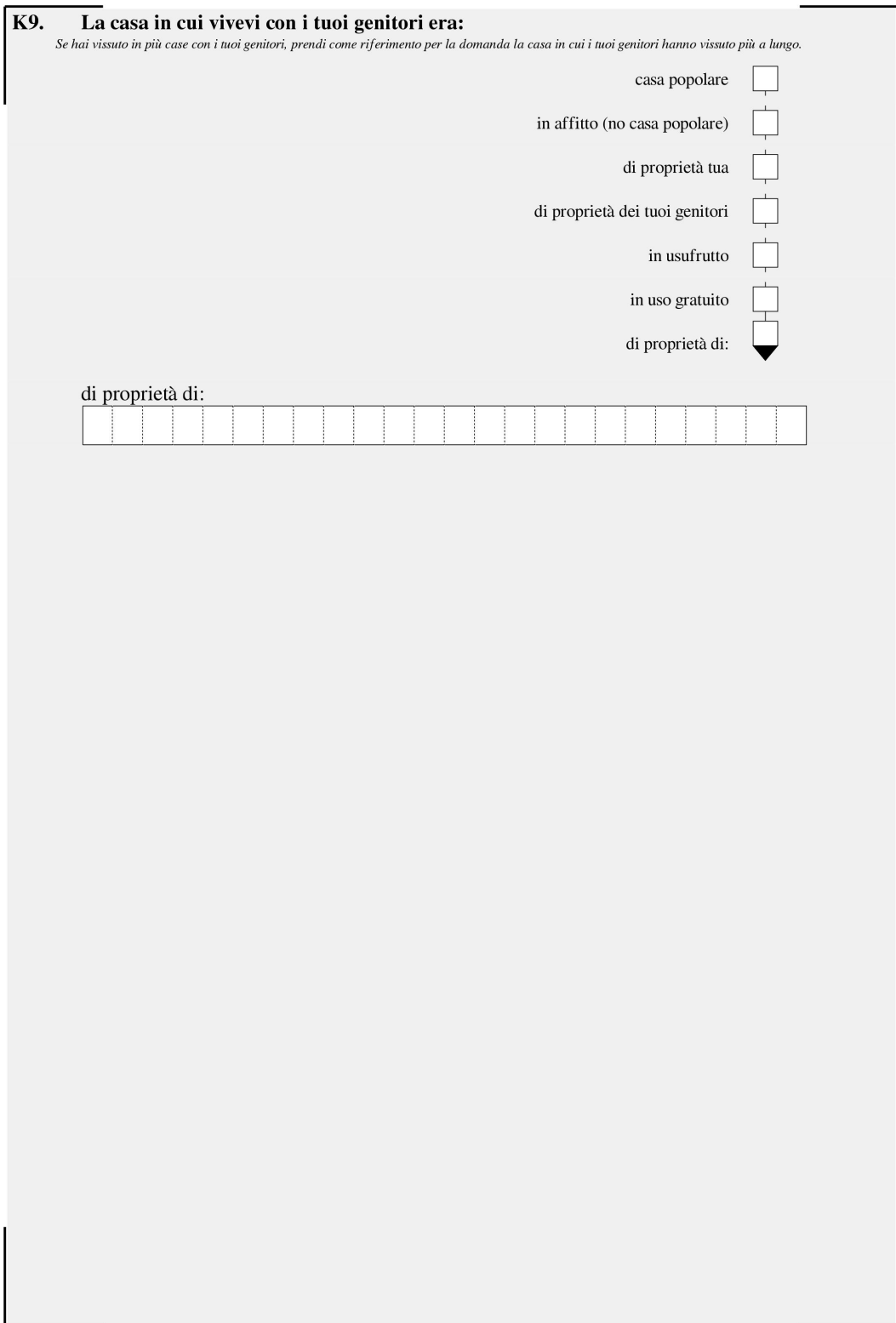
Studente

Altro

[illegible]









L1. Quanti anni hai?

20	☐
21	☐
22	☐
23	☐
24	☐
25	☐
26	☐
27	☐
28	☐
29	☐
30	☐
31	☐
32	☐
33	☐
34	☐
35	☐
36	☐
37	☐
38	☐
39	☐
40	☐

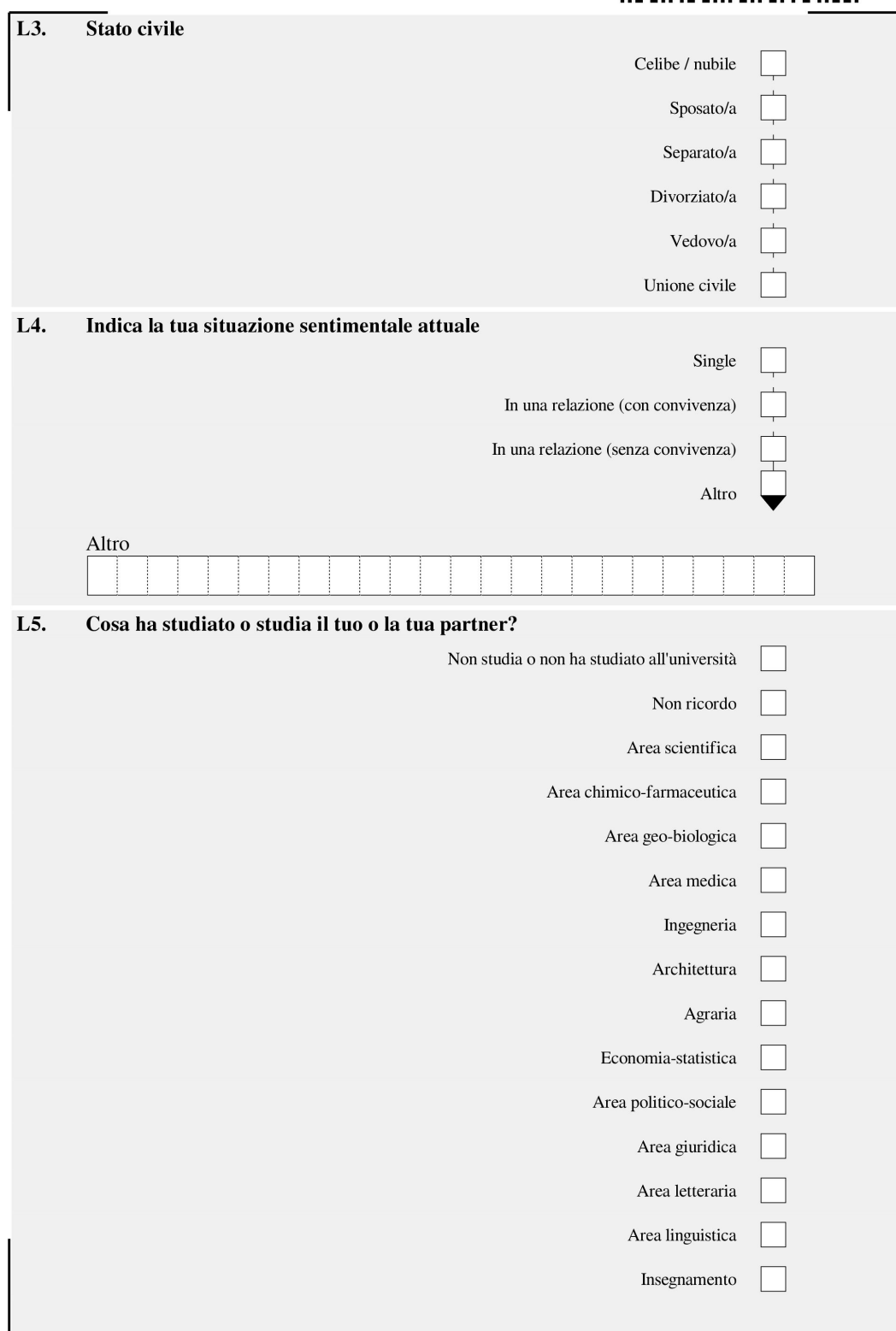
L2. Indica il tuo genere

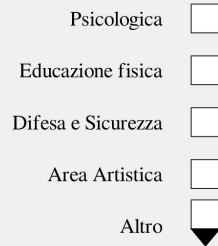
Maschio ☐

Femmina ☐

Altro ☐

[illegible]



[illegible]

No, per niente	
Sì, meno di 2.500 Euro	
Sì, più di 2.500 Euro	
Sì, l'intera somma	

Sì ☐

No ☐

Per città si intende un centro abitato di qualsiasi dimensione.

0	
1	
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	
7	
8	
Più di 8	



Sezione N: Città in cui hai vissuto - 2

Escludendo la tua città di origine e Berlino, ordina cronologicamente le città in cui hai vissuto, partendo dalla meno recente alla più recente. Per ogni città, indica la motivazione principale per cui ti sei trasferito/a, quando ti sei trasferito/a e quando l'hai lasciata.

N1. Informazioni relative alla prima città:

Nome città:

Città

Motivo del trasferimento:

Città

Anno Arrivo:

Città

Anno Partenza:

Città

N2. Informazioni relative alla seconda città

Nome città:

Città

Motivo del trasferimento:

Città

Anno arrivo:

Città

Anno partenza:

Città

N3. Informazioni relative alla terza città

Nome città:

Città

Motivo del trasferimento:

Città

Anno Arrivo:

Città

Anno Partenza:

Città

N4. Informazioni relative alla quarta città

Nome città:

Città



Motivo del trasferimento:	Città	
Anno Arrivo:	Città	
Anno Partenza:	Città	

N5. Informazioni relative alla quinta città

Nome città:	Città	
Motivo del trasferimento:	Città	
Anno Arrivo:	Città	
Anno Partenza:	Città	

N6. Informazioni relative alla sesta città

Nome città:	Città	
Motivo del trasferimento:	Città	
Anno Arrivo:	Città	
Anno Partenza:	Città	

N7. Informazioni relative alla settima città

Nome città:	Città	
Motivo del trasferimento:	Città	
Anno Arrivo:	Città	
Anno Partenza:	Città	

N8. Informazioni relative all'ottava città

Nome città:	Città	



Motivo del trasferimento:

Città

Anno Arrivo:

Città

Anno Partenza:

Città

Sezione O: Contatti

O1. Oltre a questo sondaggio, la ricerca prevede una serie di interviste e di focus group con giovani migranti italiani/e. Se sei interessato/a a partecipare, lascia il contatto che preferisci nei box qui sotto, sarai contattato/a al più presto. Grazie! Ps: Partecipando all'intervista, potrai conoscere e scambiare informazioni e consigli con tuoi coetanei/e che hanno vissuto o stanno vivendo simili esperienze nella ricerca della casa.

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Grazie per aver partecipato!

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Interview – Questionnaire

Questionario: Giovani italiani/e a Berlino

1. Strategie migratorie

1.1. Puoi raccontarmi di quando hai cominciato a pensare di spostarti in un'altra città?

Dove vivevi e che stavi facendo in quel periodo?

Perché hai cominciato a pensare di spostarti? Da cosa è partita quest'idea?

Eri insoddisfatto? Se sì, qual era la causa di quest'insoddisfazione?

Quali aspettative avevi circa lo spostarti in un'altra città?

Con chi hai parlato all'inizio della tua idea di migrare?

A chi hai chiesto suggerimenti?

Quanto tempo è passato tra questa prima fase e il momento in cui hai concretamente pianificato il trasferimento?

E cos'è che ti ha fatto prendere la decisione finale?

1.2. Avevi già in mente da subito il posto in cui volevi spostarti? In che tipo di posti pensavi di spostarti?

Hai pensato anche di spostarti in un'altra città italiana? Se sì, in quale o quali?

Come hai pensato di spostarti all'estero?

Hai valutato altre città prima di scegliere Berlino? Se sì, quali e perché?

1.3. Hai vissuto anche in altre città se non sbaglio? In quali, e come mai ti eri trasferito lì?

Come ti sembra l'esperienza di allora paragonata a quella che hai fatto qui a Berlino, potresti fare brevemente un bilancio?

1.4. Come mai hai scelto di trasferirti in una metropoli, una grande città come Berlino?

Quanto era importante per te che si trattasse di una grande città?

2. Informazioni su Berlino

2.1. Quando hai cominciato a pensare di trasferirti a Berlino, cosa conoscevi di questa città?

Eri già stato a Berlino prima?

Se lo hai fatto, come ti sei informato su Berlino prima di partire? Cosa ti interessava

sapere maggiormente?

Conoscevi i quartieri, e se sì quali, e cosa sapevi di questi quartieri?

Cosa sapevi di come si cerca casa, quanto costano le case ecc.?

2.2. Come mai hai scelto Berlino alla fine?

Quanto è stato importante il costo della vita nel decidere dove trasferirti? E il costo degli affitti?

2.3. Cosa ti veniva in mente quando pensavi a Berlino?

Che tipo di aspettative avevi rispetto al tuo trasferimento a Berlino prima di partire?

Cosa pianificavi di fare una volta arrivata qui? Quanto pensavi di rimanere?

Avevi amici a Berlino? Come è stato arrivare qui (non) conoscendo altre persone?

2.4. Quanto sono state influenti le persone più vicine a te (famiglia, amici) nella decisione di partire?

Cosa pensavano della tua decisione i tuoi genitori? E la famiglia (fratelli, sorelle, nonni etc.)? E i tuoi amici? Come hanno reagito alla tua decisione?

3. Cercare casa a Berlino

3.1. Mi potresti descrivere come è andata la ricerca della tua prima casa?

Cosa sapevi di come e dove si cerca casa a Berlino? Come ti sei orientare per capire come cercare casa?

Quando hai cominciato a cercarla?

Hai cercato di ottenere più informazioni a riguardo? Come?

Quali canali hai utilizzato per trovare casa?

A chi hai chiesto aiuto o consigli?

Come è cambiato il tuo approccio alla ricerca della casa nel corso del tempo? Cosa hai fatto di diverso le successive volte che hai cambiato casa?

Hai notato cambiamenti nel modo in cui le persone cercano casa da quando sei arrivata ad oggi?

4. La scelta del quartiere

4.1. Quali erano i quartieri in cui avresti preferito vivere all'inizio?

Cosa ti piaceva/attraeva di questi quartieri come posti in cui vivere?

Sono cambiati rispetto a quelli dove vorresti vivere oggi?

4.2. Quali criteri hai seguito da quando sei qui nel cercare casa?

Sono cambiati questi criteri nel corso del tempo?

Ci sono delle cose che prima erano poco rilevanti nel decidere come e dove cercare casa e oggi non lo sono, e viceversa? Ad esempio, quali informazioni guardavi maggiormente negli annunci prima e quali guarderesti oggi?

Sei soddisfatta del quartiere in cui vivi oggi?

Quali caratteristiche ti piacciono e quali ti piacciono meno?

Esci spesso nel quartiere la sera?

Passi molto tempo in questo quartiere? E dove comincia e finisce per te?

Conosci molte persone in quartiere? Me ne puoi parlare brevemente?

5. Le pratiche abitative

5.1. Mi potresti raccontare un po' delle tue esperienze abitative qui a Berlino? Parlami soprattutto delle esperienze che sono state più significative per te, quelle che ricordi meglio e a cui pensato più spesso.

Dove hai vissuto, in quali case, con chi?

Hai cambiato casa spesso? Perché? Senti di aver scelto di cambiare casa autonomamente? Quali fattori hanno influenzato il dover cambiare casa?

Com'è stato cambiare casa, che tipo di sensazioni hai avuto quando hai cambiato casa qui a Berlino?

5.2. Hai vissuto (anche) in *WG* (case condivise). Come sono state finora le tue esperienze di convivenza qui a Berlino?

Hai già condiviso una casa con altre persone in altre città oltre a Berlino?

Cosa ti viene in mente paragonando le diverse esperienze fatte in altre città e quelle vissute a Berlino?

Quali luoghi e oggetti appartengono alla tua sfera privata nelle *WG* in cui hai vissuto? Quali invece venivano condivise?

5.3. Con chi hai vissuto? Cosa facevano i tuoi coinquilini?

Quanto e in cosa sono state diverse tra loro le diverse esperienze di condivisione?

Hai incontrato anche problemi, difficoltà, conflitti in queste esperienze? Ti va di parlarne brevemente?

5.4. Come erano gestite economicamente le case condivise?

Come venivano prese decisioni circa ad. esempio come dividere l'affitto etc.?

Ci sono differenze tra le esperienze fatte qui e quelle che hai fatto altrove?

Sei mai stat* intestatari* del contratto? Cosa ha determinato per te (non) esserlo?

5.5. Mi puoi descrivere la tua situazione attuale per quanto riguarda la casa?

Cosa è cambiato rispetto alle volte passate?

Come è cambiata per te la gestione della casa?

5.6. Ti senti a casa nella tua attuale situazione?

Sei soddisfatta di come vivi?

5.7. Quanto pesa sul budget mensile l'affitto della casa?

Pensi di pagare un prezzo adeguato alla casa?

5.8. Conosci i vicini di casa? Che tipo di relazioni hai con loro, es. scambi cose, vi fate favori a vicenda?

Che tipo di rapporto c'è con il proprietario di casa e/o con la *Hausverwaltung*?

Pensi che rimarrai stabilmente in questa casa?

5.9. Hai mai pensato di comprare casa qui a Berlino, o, eventualmente, altrove?

Quali criteri sarebbero importanti, se comprassi casa? Es. dove, quartiere, prezzo, tipo di casa etc.?

Pensi che ti capiterà, in un futuro più o meno breve, di comprare un appartamento?

Come ti immagineresti di finanziarlo?

6. Lavoro, istruzione, aspettative

6.1. Hai intrapreso un percorso di formazione da quando sei a Berlino?

Se sì, quale e come lo hai scelto? Se no, come mai?

6.2. Potresti raccontarmi dei lavori che hai fatto qui a Berlino, se hai già lavorato?

Come definiresti la tua situazione di lavoro attuale?

6.3. Che tipo di lavori hai fatto in Italia o in altri posti prima di spostarti a Berlino?

Come mai hai fatto questi lavori?

Quanto eri soddisfatt* del tuo lavoro?

6.4. Che tipo di lavori hai cercato da quando sei a Berlino?

Che tipo di idea avevi rispetto ai lavori che potevi trovare a Berlino prima di partire?

Avevi già pianificato la ricerca del lavoro prima di partire? Se sì, come? Se no, come mai?

6.5. Mi potresti raccontare come è andata la ricerca del lavoro?

A chi ti sei rivolt* per ottenere informazioni?

Come pensavi di mantenerti una volta arrivat* a Berlino?

6.6. Ti diresti soddisfatt* del tuo lavoro a Berlino?

Se sì, potresti raccontarmi cosa ti soddisfa e cosa ti piace del tuo lavoro?

Se no, quali sono i problemi che hai riscontrato?

Come è l'ambiente lavorativo in cui sei immers*?

6.7. Sei soddisfatt* del carico di lavoro? Quante ore lavori mediamente?

Hai potuto influenzare la scelta delle ore di lavoro e della quantità?

Come ti piacerebbe che cambiasse la tua giornata lavorativa?

6.8. Hai bisogno di vivere a Berlino per fare il tuo lavoro?

Ci sono altri posti in cui preferiresti lavorare? Quali?

Quanto è importante secondo te vivere a Berlino per poter fare il tuo lavoro

6.9. Hai mai ricevuto dei sussidi di disoccupazione?

Se sì, come sono andate le procedure per ottenerli?

A chi ti sei rivolt* per chiedere informazioni? Come ti sei informat*?

Che tipo di esperienze hai avuto agli sportelli degli uffici in cui ti sei recat*?

6.10. Pensi di appartenere ad una classe sociale?

Se sì, a quale? Se no, come mai?

7. Sentirsi a casa e prospettive per il futuro

7.1. Cosa significa sentirti a casa per te?

Cos'è che associ alla casa, al sentirsi a casa?

Come è cambiato il significato di casa nel corso del tempo?

Come è cambiato una volta che ti sei trasferit* qui a Berlino?

Ti senti a casa in questa città?

Quali sono i luoghi, i momenti, le situazioni in cui ti senti più a casa qui a Berlino?

7.2. Ti senti ancora molto legat* all'Italia? Alla tua città di origine?

Cosa fanno, dove vivono gli amici più stretti di quando vivevi in Italia?

Cosa pensi della loro (eventuale) scelta di rimanere?

Suggeriresti loro di trasferirsi all'estero o a Berlino?

7.3. Pensi che rimarrai qui a Berlino? Perché?

Da cosa pensi che possano dipendere eventuali spostamenti?

Ti puoi immaginare dove sarai tra 5 mesi?

E tra 5 anni?

Se potessi scegliere liberamente, cosa ti immagini per il tuo futuro?

8. Domande finali

8.1. Ci sono domande che pensi fossero rilevanti per la tematica migrazione e casa?

Come hai trovato il questionario?

Pensi che potrebbe essere migliorato in qualche modo? Come?

8.2. Hai contatti di amici e/o conoscenti che pensi potrebbero essere interessati a compilare il sondaggio e eventualmente anche a fare l'intervista?

Grazie per la tua disponibilità!

Coding – Code Book

Codebuch

phd_analysis.mx18

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Codesystem

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