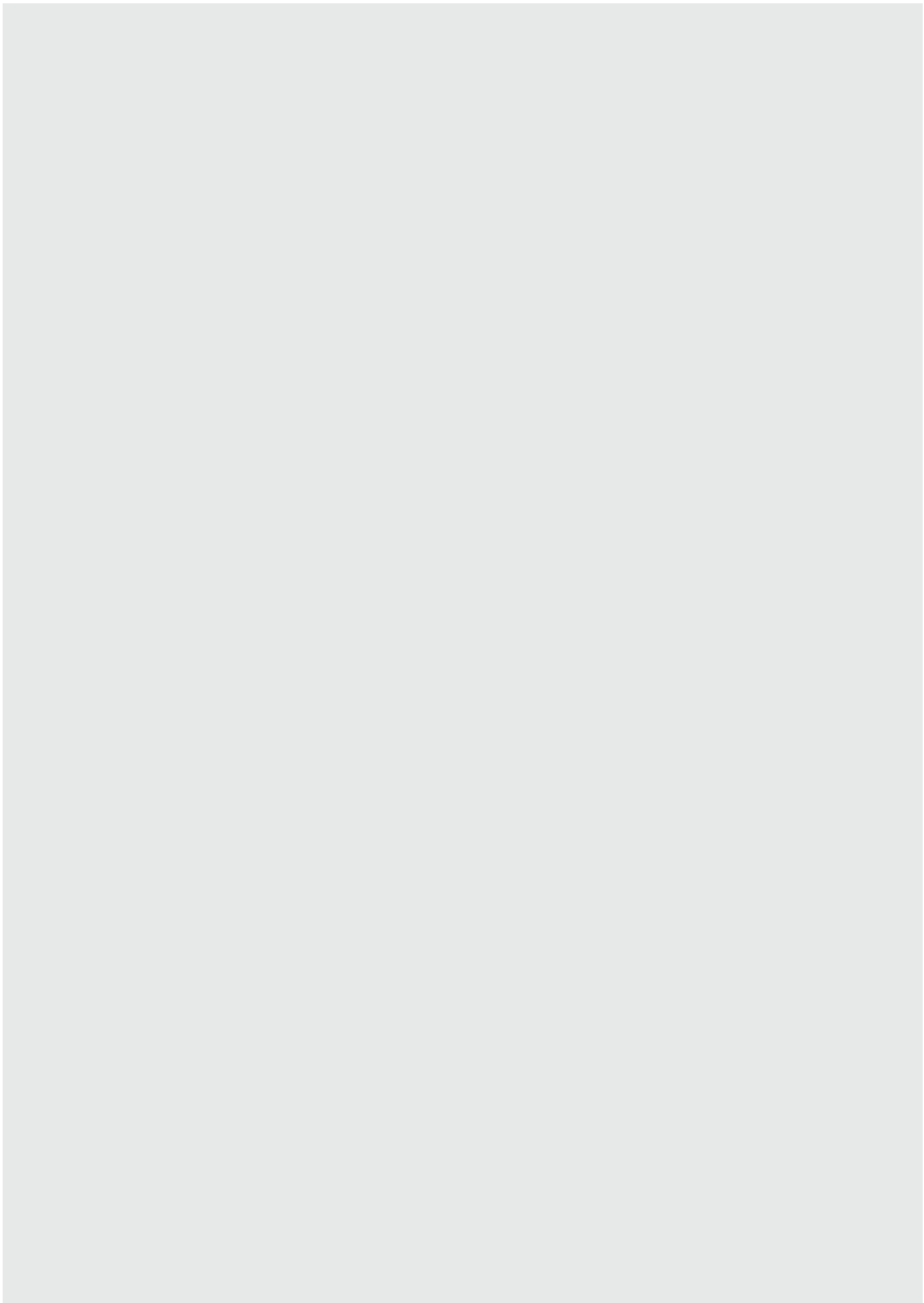# Introduction

MIGRANT KNOWLEDGE: STUDYING THE EPISTEMIC DYNAMICS THAT GOVERN THE THINKING IN AND AROUND MIGRATION, EXILE, AND DISPLACEMENT

Andrea Westermann and Onur Erdur

To historians of science or knowledge, the notion of migrant knowledge comes across as a convenient shortcut for an object of research long studied in different disciplines and places.[1] It suggests the multiple logics, rationalities, and bodies of knowledge that both undergird *and* spring from individual and collective action linked to migrations. From an epistemological perspective — or perhaps even a *political* epistemological one — the notion of migrant knowledge brings together three different yet interconnected semantic strands or associations between knowledge and migrations: 1) knowledge about migrations; 2) scientific knowledge as a phenomenon established through generalization, which entails it successfully moving away from its place of creation; 3) knowledge that migrants or those expelled possess or have come to possess before, in, or after displacement. Let us look at each of these associations with migrant knowledge more fully in turn.

First, the notion of migrant knowledge invokes knowledge about migrations and migrants produced by state agencies, international institutions, scientists, and politicians. What did these historical actors know about particular migratory phenomena in specific times and places? How did they know it, and how were ideas of social order shaped by these strands of expertise?

Second, migrant knowledge resonates with and amounts to what science and technology studies address as "knowledge in transit," following the coinage of James Secord.[2] In this strand of meaning, migrant knowledge invites us to emphasize and explain the historicity of (social) scientific knowledge by focusing on the insights and ideas people have sought to transform into well-established facts about the world, societies, or human beings. This semantic strand is about inquiring into how time- and place-specific observations, data, and arguments are turned into "immutable mobiles," robust enough to retain their form when traveling away from their local contexts — a journey that is necessary to validate and naturalize scholarly facts. It is also about mapping what David N. Livingstone has called "geographies of scientific knowledge," that is, readings, adaptations, and

[1] For an alternative mapping of research strands and questions related to the notion of migrant knowledge, see Simone Lässig and Swen Steinberg, "Knowledge on the Move: New Approaches toward a History of Migrant Knowledge," *Geschichte und Gesellschaft* 43, no. 3 (2017): 313–46.

[2] James Secord, "Knowledge in Transit," *Isis* 95 (2004): 654–72.

3   On mutable mobiles, see Bruno Latour, "Drawing Things Together," in *Representation in Scientific Practice*, ed. Michael Lynch and Steve Woolgar, 19–68 (London, 1990); David N. Livingstone, *Putting Science in Its Place: Geographies of Scientific Knowledge* (Chicago, 2003). It is worth asking whether these approaches can be made useful for bodies of knowledge outside of science and scholarship — for instance, for religious articulations.

4   Sabine Hess, Bernd Kasparek, Stefanie Kron, Mathias Rodatz, Maria Schwertl, and Simon Sontowski, eds., *Der lange Sommer der Migration: Grenzregime III* (Berlin, 2016).

5   For German and Swiss views and reviews of the new research and approaches being taken internationally in migration studies, see Maren Möhring, "Jenseits des Integrationsparadigmas? Aktuelle Konzepte und Ansätze in der Migrationsforschung," *Archiv für Sozialgeschichte* 58 (2018): 304–30; Barbara Lüthi, "Migration and Migration History, Version: 2.0," *Docupedia-Zeitgeschichte*, 06.07.2018 http://docupedia. de/zg/Luethi_migration_ v2_en_2018; Maria Alexopoulou, "Vom Nationalen zum Lokalen und zurück? Zur Geschichtsschreibung in der Einwanderungsgesellschaft Deutschland," *Archiv für Sozialgeschichte* 56 (2016): 463–84.

6   For an overview, see Peter Burke, *What Is the History of Knowledge?* (Cambridge, 2015); Monika Dommann, "Alles fließt. Soll Geschichte nomadischer werden?," *Geschichte und Gesellschaft* 42, no. 3 (2016): 516–34. For a programmatic appeal to study the history of knowledge, see Simone Lässig, »

rephrasings of scholarly knowledge that are specific to a particular place of group of people.[3]

Third, migration studies, ethnic studies, and diaspora studies as pioneered in the United States, in particular, have long adopted the practice of highlighting diversity, mechanisms for coping with inequalities and racism, and collective attempts to create more inclusive societies. It is due to this ambition that scholars are interested in what migrants or diaspora communities know and how they voice and use their knowledge. German-speaking academia took up the trend toward putting migrants in the center of such inquiries with new verve after the European "summer of migration" in 2015.[4] In this strand of meaning, migrant knowledge takes different forms, including the production, use, and transmission of knowledge (community, religious, professional, academic, political, or economic); the cultural capital that migrants bring, transform, and acquire; or the questions of how knowledge is shared to ensure that migrants acquire the benefits of social and political citizenship in their new homes.

Each of these three semantic strands of migrant knowledge correlates with specific research interests. At the same time, the umbrella notion reminds us that these aspects overlap and that our analyses can benefit from taking their interdependencies and entanglements into account.

Two multi-disciplinary scholarly fields, in particular, have aimed to explore migrant knowledge as an object of research: migration studies[5] and the history of knowledge.[6] A basic insight in both fields — that is, among historians of science and knowledge, on the one hand, and scholars at the intersection of migration, ethnic, or diaspora studies, on the other — concerns the temporal dimension of knowledge and perception. Whether they look at the making of state-centered depictions of migrants and migrations (the first semantic strand of migrant knowledge noted above), whether they look at how ideas travel in specific ways to become facts or take on rather autonomous trajectories in different geographies of knowledge (the

» "The History of Knowledge and the Expansion of the Historical Research Agenda," *Bulletin of the German Historical Institute* 59 (Fall 2016): 29–58. Lorraine Daston critically weighs the claims in the history of knowledge against long-standing achievements in the history of science in "The History of Science and the History of Knowledge," *Know: A Journal on the Formation of Knowledge* 1 (2017): 131–54.

second semantic strand), or whether they take an actor-centered "history-from-below" approach focusing on migrants and those labeled as such (our third semantic strand), these scholars have found that knowledge is neither made quickly nor necessarily plays out directly. Once established, knowledge orients individual and collective action, and it might do so quietly long after any conscious understanding of its impact has faded from collective memory. In other words, forms of knowledge long present and unconsciously taken for granted generate specific epistemic dynamics, as indicated in our title, that enable or constrain various actions. The given epistemic dynamics within specific historical situations — in our case, specific migration-related situations — channel and determine what people think and do.

If we agree that the question of epistemic dynamics governing the thinking around migration and displacement is a key concern for those who analyze migrant knowledge, then we can acknowledge predecessors who made this concern pivotal to comprehensive social and cultural theories of difference or unequality. Take, for example, eminent emigré social and cultural theorists Hannah Arendt, Michel-Rolph Trouillot, and Edward Said, to name only three scholars of European, Carribean, and Middle Eastern origin, respectively, who all ended up having academic careers in the United States. Arendt fled Nazi Germany to finally settle in the United States, where she taught at Brooklyn College, the University of Chicago, and the New School of Social Research. Said was born in Mandatory Palestine, went to a British boarding school in Egypt, studied in the US and became a professor of literary studies at Columbia University in New York. Trouillot was born in Haiti. As a student, he fled from the Duvalier dictatorship to New York and ultimately worked as an anthropologist at Johns Hopkins University and the University of Chicago. All three intellectuals chose to conduct research on the inclusion or exclusion of people according to racialized hierarchies that were, themselves, entangled with forced and voluntary migration. Historians of ideas who analyze their works are eager to emphasize the impact of displacement on the way they crafted their political or cultural theories. In Arendt's writing, the notions and implications of Jewish refuge and exile, camps, and statelessness took center stage.[7] Edward Said, whose thoughts were central to the development of postcolonial studies, made Europe's deeply entrenched impulse to classify and rank others according to racialized cultural categories a focus of his work.[8]

7   Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (New York, 1968 [1951]); and idem, "We Refugees" (https://amroali. com/2017/04/refugees-essay-hannah-arendt, first published 1943 in *Menorah Journal*); on Arendt, see Julia Schulze Wessel, *Grenzfiguren: Zur politischen Theorie des Flüchtlings* (Bielefeld, 2017).

8   Edward Said, *Orientalism* (New York,1978); on Said, see Dominique Eddé, *Edward Said: His Thought as a Novel* (New York, 2019).

Trouillot meditated on the wide-ranging effects of silencing racialized subalterns or subjugated persons for the writing of history.[9]

Scholars in migration studies or the history of migration, in turn, have found that the writings of social and cultural theorists like Arendt, Said, and Trouillot contain valuable tools for studying the processes and rationalities at work in the administrative making of migrants.

They insist on inquiring into how migrants have been subjected to bureaucratic and academic routines of classification, racialization, and the definition — even elimination — of their legal status, personhood, and cultural output.[10] The administrative making and objectivization of migrants, which falls within our first semantic strand of migrant knowledge, continues to be a promising object of historical research. Several empirical studies are now underway that reside at the intersection of the history of migration and knowledge. Three projects of the research group "The Scientific Production of Knowledge about Migration" of Osnabrück, for instance, examine the discriminatory aspects of statistics, the knowledge police possess about migrants, and the making of transnational migration data centers at universities and research institutes, respectively.[11] Such studies analyze the sociopolitical, technological, and scientific conditions involved in the professional making of migrant knowledge, as well as the societal consequences such knowledge about migrants has had over time. What role have economists, sociologists, ethnologists, or pedagogues played in establishing, enacting, and reforming migration regimes? And how has this "scientification of the social"[12] created a space within which migration research could

9   Michel-Rolph Trouillot, *Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History* (Boston, 2015 [1995]); on Trouillot, see Ethel Hazard, "Alterity and History: The Cross-Current Contributions of the Work of Michel-Rolph Trouillot," *Journal of Haitian Studies* 19, no. 2 (2013): 33-46. The creation of counter-archives has been an effort ever since; see Fatima El-Tayeb, "The Archive, the Activist, and the Audience, or Black European Studies: A Comparative Interdisciplinary Study of Identities, Positionalities, and Differences," *Transit*, no. 1 (2005): 1-7; Andrew Flinn and Ben Alexander, "Humanizing an Inevitability Political Craft": Introduction to the Special issue on *Archiving Activism and Activist Archiving*, *Arch Sci* 15 (2015): 329-3, doi:10.1007/s10502-015-9260-6. For an artistic project as an archive of migrant knowledge, see Dan Thy Nguyen's play about the pogrom in Rostock-Lichtenhagen, Germany, in 1992 (https://www.danthy.net/projekte/sonnenblumenhaus-theaterstück/). In an oral history effort, the playwright collected voices of the Vietnamese victims who had originally come to Germany as contract workers in the former German Democratic Republic. Nguyen made these voices into a textual assemblage, producing a testimony that powerfully conveys a truthful depiction of social reality.

10 Liisa Malkki, "National Geographic: The Rooting of Peoples and the Territorialization of National Identity among Scholars and Refugees," *Cultural Anthropology* 7, no. 1 (1992): 24-44; Philip Marfleet, "Refugees and History: Why We Must Address the Past," *Refugee Survey Quarterly* 26, no. 3 (2007): 136-48; Mae M. Ngai, *Impossible Subjects: Illegal Aliens and the Making of Modern America* (Princeton, 2004).

11 The research group is housed at the Institute for Migration Research and Intercultural Studies at the University of Osnabrück. The group is led by Christiane Reinecke and Isabella Löhr; see: https://www.imis.uni-osnabrueck.de/forschung/nachwuchsgruppe_wissen_ueber_migration.html. For a history of bureaucracy initiative beyond migration, see https://www.mpiwg-berlin.mpg.de/research/projects/history-bureaucratic-knowledge.

In an interesting twist, Debbie Kahn combines the study of bureacratic logics and actor-centered perspectives with her focus on bureaucratic agents on the ground, i.e., in borderlands: S. Deborah Kang, *The INS on the Line: Making Immigration Law on the US-Mexico Border, 1917-1954* (Oxford, 2017). Along similar lines, see Margit Fauser, Anne Friedrichs, and Levke Harders, "Migrations and Borders: Practices and Politics of Inclusion and Exclusion in Europe from the Nineteenth to the Twenty-first Century," *Journal of Borderlands Studies* 34, no. 4 (2018): 483-88, DOI: 10.1080/08865655.2018.1510334.

12 Lutz Raphael, "Die Verwissenschaftlichung des Sozialen als methodische und konzeptionelle Herausforderung für eine Sozialgeschichte des 20. Jahrhunderts," *Geschichte und Gesellschaft* 22, no. 4 (1996), 165-193.

develop as a field in its own right among the aforementioned disciplines?[13]

Migration history and neighboring disciplines such as ethnic studies have not stopped at the office desks of state officials and scientific and scholarly experts, though. Historians and other scholars also study the everyday consequences of bureaucracies trying to define and characterize migrants. Immigrants, refugees, "illegal aliens," and other subaltern subjects have inhabited and often actively interrogated the contradictory categories and conflicting goals with which they have been confronted.[14] Consequently, researchers are coming to understand migrant responses to such knowledge regimes about migrants as knowledge in its own right, even though it does not manifest itself in the learned books of émigré scholarship or in sophisticated autobiographical memoirs. Moreover, as with any type of knowledge, scholars are finding that such migrant knowledge is not self-contained. It remains tied to state-produced knowledge and other bodies thereof. Many scholars in German-speaking academia are currently joining in on this trend toward a "history of knowledge from below" — the third strand of meaning associated with the notion of migrant knowledge.[15]

Our account of the disciplinary engagements with the various ramifications of migrant knowledge does not aim to comprehensively review the state of the art. Rather, we wish to highlight topical research avenues and observations that might inspire scholars in the field of the history of science and knowledge as well as in migration studies. As historians of science and knowledge ourselves, we strongly believe that the study of migrant knowledge is not confined to the

14 Seth Holmes, *Fresh Fruit, Broken Bodies: Migrant Farmworkers in the United States* (Berkeley, 2013).

15 Michael Goebel, *Anti-Imperial Metropolis: Interwar Paris and the Seeds of Third World Nationalism* (Cambridge, 2015); Nicholas De Genova, "The 'Native's Point of View' in the Anthropology of Migration," *Anthropological Theory* 16, nos. 2–3 (2016): 227–40; Risto Lenz, "Mediators of Knowledge: WPA Folklorists and 1930s Migrant Culture," *History of Knowledge*, https://historyofknowledge.net/2018/04/11/mediators-of-knowledge-wpa-folklorists-and-1930s-migrant-culture; Damir Skenderovic, "Vom Gegenstand zum Akteur. Perspektivenwechsel in der Migrationsgeschichte der Schweiz," *Schweizerische Zeitschrift für Geschichte* 65, no. 1 (2015): 1–14; Ulrike Jureit, "Hoffnung auf Erfolg. Akteurszentrierte Handlungskonzepte in der Migrations- und Flüchtlingsforschung," *Zeithistorische Forschungen* 3 (2018): 509–22, online edition https://doi.org/10.14765/zzf.dok.4.1295.

13 Recent histories of migration research resort to the methodological repertoire offered by science and technology studies or history of knowledge approaches. On the history of German-speaking migration research, see Kijan Espahangizi, "Migrationsforschung und epistemische Teilhabe. Vier historische Schlaglichter auf die Zürcher 'Fremdarbeitersoziologie' in den 1970er Jahren," in *Urban Citizenship: Democratising Democracy*, ed. Katharina Morawek and Martin Krenn, 89–111 (Vienna, 2017); Kijan Espahangizi, "The 'Sociologic' of Postmigration: A Study in the Early History of Social Research on Migration and Integration in Switzerland 1960–73," in *Switzerland and Migration. Historical and Current Perspectives on a Changing Landscape*, ed. Barbara Lüthi and Damir Skenderovic, 33–59 (London, 2019); See also: Tobias Brinkmann, "Acquiring Knowledge about Migration: The Jewish Origins of Migration Studies," *Migrant Knowledge*, September 25, 2019, https://migrantknowledge.org/2019/09/25/acquiring-knowledge-about-migration/; Michelle Lynn Kahn, "Rebels against the Homeland: Turkish Guest Workers in 1980s West German Anthropology," *Migrant Knowledge*, October 23, 2019, https://migrantknowledge.org/2019/10/23/rebels-against-the-homeland/.

intellectual, scientific, or bureaucratic logics — that is, the classic institutional assemblages that migrants are caught up in, and in which knowledge is the dominant currency. The umbrella term of migrant knowledge includes but goes beyond the administrative routines of inclusion and exclusion, their everyday discriminatory effects, and subsequent efforts to counter them. We argue for a clear extension of what one considers valuable research objects. Histories about migrant knowledge can and should focus on a greater range of social actors and phenomena.

In addition to emphasizing a longue-durée framework, scholars in the history of science or knowledge argue that the logics and epistemologies underpinning societal interactions are not linear but, rather, are ramified. By applying a history of knowledge perspective to migration, we can bring together phenomena whose interrelations might otherwise go unnoticed. We could, for instance, sort out the long-term effects that the agricultural protectionism of the European Union and its predecessor states has had on today's flight and economic migration patterns. Such an undertaking need not amount to an exercise in macroeconomics but could instead lead to empirically rich, actor-centered narratives about a myriad of factors that people in rural and urban Africa consider when deciding whether to leave their homes in order to survive and perhaps prosper. Such factors might include the effects of industrial countries' agricultural nostalgia, the consequences of inter-European developmental policies, the worldwide circulation of visions of consumer democracies, advances in agrochemistry and biotechnology, or competing models of economic growth in a decolonizing world.[16]

An object-centered history of knowledge could look, for example, at the inflatable dinghies marketed as refugee boats for the Mediterranean Sea as valuable artifacts. Many types of knowledge are manifested in or attached to these inflatable boats. Studying them could unpack factors ranging from high-tech material testing of synthetic rubber or vinyl, makeshift bricolage, nautical expertise, political calculations, sales estimates, individual bets on the future, legal and illegal monetary flows, group sociologies, and more. This shows just how far we might have to cast our empirical net to understand why collective routines, once established, are difficult to end.

Let us reflect on a few more examples. Welcoming networks and solidarity groups produce their own knowledge that is worth analyzing;

16 In an epistemological approach, Loren B. Landau criticizes European answers to current out-migration from African states to Europe: "A Chronotope of Containment Development: Europe's Migrant Crisis and Africa's Reterritorialization," 2019, *Antipode* 51, no.1 (2019): 169–86.

migrants have been involved in unionized labor relations, schools, and memory politics. Analyzing such constellations calls for history of knowledge approaches. So do the alternative geographies that emerge from tracing the paths that migrants follow. Borderlines become borderscapes: Migrants aim to evade ever expanding, even deterritorialized, border control techniques. In other cases, migrants and border enforcement personnel count on the advantages and disadvantages of the physical landscapes that people on the move need to traverse.[17] And, last but not least, let us consider "big" societal concerns — that is, those that are currently at the forefront of global public debates — and combine them with migrant knowledge: What can we learn about the environment, global markets, sexual relations, or violence in a given historical time and place if we also factor in what migrant workers, their families, or political refugees have or had to say about these phenomena?[18]

This disparate list exemplifies our suggestion to look for both *alternative sites of migrant knowledge production* and hitherto *overlooked repositories of migrant knowledge*. Histories of migrant knowledge will not necessarily end with classic migration-related topics such as citizenship, xenophobia, or hybrid identities. We suggest that scholars apply the methods in the history of science and knowledge to new and old sources related to migration that have been accumulated beyond academia and state institutions, or, perhaps, to sources within such institutions that are categorized under rubrics that are not specific to migration. A similar idea is manifested in the concept of "postmigration," which was developed in German-speaking migrant activist and migration studies circles.[19] Scholars within these circles increasingly conceptualize migration as a cross-sectional research category.

We want to conclude our reflections on migrant knowledge as a shortcut for studying epistemic dynamics in and around migration on a note very dear to us. Approaches in the history of knowledge call for studying all actors and bodies of knowledge in equal measure and with similar methods. This is how the field differs from more conventional approaches in the history of science and the history of ideas. At the same time, the premise of studying different actors and spheres of knowledge symmetrically does not mean ignoring asymmetrical power effects. Different types of knowledge

18 Benjamin Nobbs-Thiessen, "Marginal Knowledge: The Transnational Practices of Latin American Mennonites," Migrant Knowledge, March 22, 2019, https://migrantknowledge.org/2019/03/22/marginal-knowledge-the-transnational-practices-of-latin-american-mennonites/; Chelsea Schields, "Eros Against Empire: Visions of Erotic Freedom in Archives of Decolonisation," *Journal of Gender Studies/Tijdschrift voor Genderstudies* 22 (2019): 145 –61; Claudia Roesch, "Love without Fear: Knowledge Networks and Family Planning Initiatives for Immigrant Families in West Germany and the United States" *Bulletin of the German Historical Institute* 64 (Spring 2019): 93–113.

Andrea Westermann, "Migrations and Radical Environmental Change: When Social History Meets the History of Science," *NTM Zeitschrift für Geschichte der Wissenschaften, Technik und Medizin* 27, no. 3 (2019): 377–89.

19 Erol Yildiz and Marc Hill, eds., *Nach der Migration: Postmigrantische Perspektiven jenseits der Parallelgesellschaft* (Bielefeld, 2014); Francesca Falk, "Telling History from a Migration Perspective Is Not an Add-On," *Migrant Knowledge,* March 15, 2019 https://migrantknowledge.org/2019/03/15/telling-history-from-a-migration-perspective-is-not-an-add-on/; Naika Foroutan, *Die postmigrantische Gesellschaft: Ein Versprechen der pluralen Demokratie* (Bielefeld, 2019).

17 Jason de Leon, *The Land of Open Graves* (Berkeley, 2015); Francisco Cantú, *The Line Becomes a River: Dispatches from the Border* (New York, 2018).

are backed by very specific sources of authority and enjoy unequal social currency.

Our Bulletin Supplement

Our GHI Bulletin Supplement adds to this ongoing discussion about the histories of migrant knowledge. The contributors are scholars of migration history who participated in workshops or panels hosted by the Pacific Regional Office of the German Historical Institute of Washington DC in 2018. We asked them to take a significant point, principle, methodological consideration, or concrete analysis from their own work testing a history of knowledge approach. Whereas each case study presents a unique perspective, their juxtaposition in this volume, and particularly their groupings, illuminate what they have in common and enrich the analyses, as we elucidate below after summarizing the individual contributions.

Sheer Ganor's essay "To Farm a Future: The Displaced Youth of Gross-Breesen" looks at the making of an agricultural youth community. Established in 1936 to prepare Jewish youth between the ages of fifteen and seventeen for emigration from Nazi Germany, the school trained its disciples in diverse agricultural skills before the trainees were dispersed much earlier than they had hoped. Ganor traces the ways in which the exiles formed a transnational network, utilizing letters as a vehicle for knowledge-sharing, addressing a variety of themes and questions. From a history of knowledge perspective, Ganor recounts a knowledge collective in the making along the lines of the thought collectives theorized by Ludwik Fleck.[20] In Fleck's view, academic studies are not only syllabi but multifaceted initiation rituals with which each scientific discipline "disciplines" its students; it subjects them to a particular collective habitus and thought style. The Gross-Breesen youth collective formed, among other things, around the thought style of a charismatic teacher. The emerging collective still varied in an interesting way from university students. A good deal of the knowledge and identity formation of the group happened after the fact, so to speak: It was only in the medium of the life-long communication network among the former members of the agricultural utopian project, Ganor argues, that a dynamic migrant knowledge, highly localized in each individual case, was brought into being.

20 Ludwik Fleck, *The Genesis and Development of a Scientific Fact* (Chicago, 1979 [first German edition, 1935]).

In "Small Strangers at the School of Friendship: Memories of Mozambican School Students of the German Democratic Republic," Marcia C. Schenck examines the memories of the former child

migrants, revealing that the knowledge-transfer program that saw 900 Mozambican schoolchildren attend secondary school in East Germany from 1982 to 1988 played out differently from what both the organizers and participants expected. As the young adults returned to their home country with professions and political attitudes that had been valued in East Germany but had little use or prestige in Mozambique, many were disappointed. They had been groomed as a revolutionary vanguard workforce for a socialist world that had ceased to exist upon their return. This contribution sheds light on how bodies of knowledge become obsolete, are partly appropriated through transformation, and reemerge as tools for citizens to criticize state politics.

Risto Lenz's essay "The South and the Making of the American Other: Folk Music, Internal Migration, and the Cultural Left" identifies the importance of internal migration for cultural knowledge formation in US urban leftist circles, often located on the East Coast. It does so by exploring the political epistemology underpinning the (re)making of "folk music." Folk singers attached to the Great Migration of black Southerners, the dust bowl migration, and the Appalachian migration differed in terms of their backgrounds, regional heritage, as well as class, race, and sex. Yet, for many Northern leftists these three Southern strands of folk song all carried on dying rural traditions and symbolized the Southern tensions of their native homes: racism, poverty, as well as the plight during the Great Depression. An abstract entity, "The South," became a proxy for Northern urban intellectuals' projections in the face of national crisis. This was no unidirectional appropriation of historical and sociological bodies of knowledge about rural America, though. Seen from the angle of a history of knowledge from below, the migrants contributed to shaping the overall depiction of a fundamentally unequal US society. They controlled the message of their songs and deployed their public personas as migrants, political activists, and heritage preservers.

In her contribution, "From 'Ethnic Community' to 'Black Community': The Cultural Belonging of Migrants between Race-Relations Research and the Politics of Blackness in 1970s and 1980s Britain," Almuth Ebke focuses on the shifting sociological knowledge about cultural belonging of postcolonial migrants. Using the debate following the riots and confrontations between predominately black youths and police in a number of English cities in spring and summer 1981 as a case study, Ebke explores the ways politicians, commentators,

as well as first- and second-generation migrants, assigned blame for the unrest, but also how they proposed solutions. The controversy surrounding the riots became interwoven in longer-lasting scholarly debates about immigration, racism, and race in post-war Britain. In this essay, colonial and postcolonial immigrants are protagonists on a par with more familiar knowledge players such as the government, journalists, and academics: While the conception of "ethnic communities" by race relations experts had proved decisive in setting the vocabulary for the wider political discourse on the place of colonial and postcolonial immigrants in British society, black activists challenged these interpretations both on academic and political grounds by using the adjective "black" to describe their own communities.

In his contribution "Displaced Knowledge and Its Sponsors: How American Foundations and Aid Organizations Shaped Émigré Social Research, 1933–1945," Joseph Malherek examines how foundations and aid organizations in the United States helped bring about émigré social research in the 1930s and 1940s. Philanthropic institutions, refugee assistance organizations, and university administrators in the United States responded to the global refugee crisis with efforts to place these exiled scholars at US-American universities and research institutions. Malherek looks at the motives and values, both broadly humanistic and intensely personal, that drove the émigrés' sponsors, including the officers of the respective philanthropic institutions and assistance organizations, especially in their relationship to two of their most prominent beneficiaries: Max Horkheimer and his Institute of Social Research, and Paul Lazarsfeld and his Office of Radio Research (later the Bureau of Applied Social Research), which coexisted for a time at Columbia University and represented what came to be known as "Critical Theory." The boundaries between fields of knowledge, and between the university and the practical world of sponsors and business, were in flux for the émigré scholars and their sponsors, but that very disciplinary liminality provided the crucial context in which Critical Theory could flourish as a new form of social research.

Avi Sharma's essay "Mass Displacement in Post-Catastrophic Societies: Vulnerability, Learning, and Adaptation in Germany and India, 1945–1952" uses insights from migration, forced migration, and urban studies to look at post-catastrophic cities where locals encountered displaced persons arriving on a mass scale. In Berlin (1945–1948) as well as in post-Partition Calcutta (1947–1952) both migrant *and* local populations shared vulnerabilities because the catastrophes subtly

and radically transformed rules and routines for everyone. Sharma's analysis conceptualizes migration as work. Informed by a history of knowledge perspective, Sharma closely follows the economic rationality that all involved parties and actors embraced. He not only shows that this economic grammar was spelled out in a variety of languages but also discerns a distinct body of knowledge among the migrants and locals: knowledge used for coping and survival.

The final essay of the volume, "Humans, Not Files: Deportation and Knowledge in Switzerland," by Barbara Lüthi, addresses shifting deportation regimes in Switzerland from the 1970s to the present. Against the backdrop of sweeping historical shifts on both the national and global level during the 1970s and 1980s, migration governance in Switzerland and Western Europe in general was marked by far-reaching administrative reforms, including those relating to deportations. The Swiss federal authorities and their administrative apparatus developed enormous powers, not least because they systematized and radicalized the deportation logic and logistics in Switzerland. However, administrations were not the only decision makers, but rather part of a dynamic field involving numerous actors such as politicians, administrative officials, doctors, lawyers, NGOs, media, and the migrants themselves. In trying to grasp the responses of migrants to these changes, it is important to understand how they struggled with uncertainties, contingencies, and chances during their multiple moves across continents and in the face of active deportation policies in Europe. In this context, an economy of migratory knowledge played an important role which also included solidarity and support networks. By example of the specific trajectory of one migrant during the 1980s, Lüthi's article tells the entangled history of administrative and individual migrant knowledge.

While the essays just presented do not each neatly map exclusively onto one of the semantic strands outlined at the outset, here we have highlighted their specific take on migrant knowledge. The essays can also be put into conversation with each other and thus illuminate ways one can generalize from individual case studies. Marcia C. Schenck deals with academic exchange programs between the German Democratic Republic and Mozambique that were established to prepare young people for an imagined future that never came true because history took a radically different turn. In this respect, Schenck's contribution is comparable to Ganor's case of a Jewish agricultural youth community established to build a collective future

in exile (Section 1: Futures That Never Were). Risto Lenz and Almuth Ebke look at internal migration within the United States and within the British Empire, so to speak, as well as the impact of such migration on cultural leftist societal visions and politics (Section 2: Internal Migration and the Left). Last but not least, we have three inquiries into how place-specific material resources shaped the migrants' professional and economic engagements: Joseph Malherek examines the cultural, material, and financial contexts of émigré social research in the United States of the 1930s and 1940s; Avi Sharma's case study focuses on mid-twentieth century Berlin and Calcutta, with the aim of determining common features of mass displacement in urban environments with scarce material resources; and Barbara Lüthi studies how a refugee journalist from the Palestinian territories of Israel navigated and contested asylum procedures in Switzerland and was helped do so by intellectual resources and solidarity networks (Section 3: Place-Specific Material Resources).

With this collection of articles, we hope to spark further research into the epistemic dynamics of displacement, into alternative sites of migrant knowledge production, and into overlooked repositories of migrant knowledge.

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