DIGITHUM

A RELATIONAL PERSPECTIVE ON CULTURE AND SOCIETY

Emotional reflexivity in contexts of migration: How the consideration of internal processes is necessary to explain agency

Yvonne Albrecht
Lecturer and researcher at the Friedrich-Schiller-University in representation, Jena

Abstract

Current societies are configured in such a way that relations with others are less defined and social conditions are complex and often nontransparent (e.g. Holmes, 2015; Bauman, 2003). There is never-ending uncertainty over how to act and how to feel. Set rules on how to feel no longer exist (Hochschild, 1983; Neckel, 2005; Wouters, 1999). These conditions also pose a challenge in migration processes: clear demarcations and unwavering sense of belonging are often not possible "just like that" (Albrecht, 2016, p. 1). This implies challenges for the individual. To this effect, emotions become increasingly important in navigating one's own path through uncertain conditions (Holmes, 2015). The following paper addresses how emotional reflexivity processes are relevant for individuals in these situations. As such, emotional reflexivity must be defined as a process of internal adjustment between emotional activity and emotional passivity. The result of this process is visible through a level of action which can also consist in taking no action at all (Helfferich, 2012). Therefore, the paper suggests a modified definition of the terms agency and "emotional reflexivity". The definition of emotional reflexivity includes several aspects of Holmes's (2015; 2010) and Burkitt's (2012) former definitions and expands on them. Emotional reflexivity – internal adjustments of emotional activity and passivity – will be illustrated using empirical data on current processes of migration to Germany.

Keywords

emotional reflexivity, agency, migration, emotion

Reflexividad emocional en los procesos de migración
La necesidad de considerar los procesos internos
para explicar la agencia

Resumen

Las sociedades actuales están configuradas de tal modo que las relaciones con los demás están menos definidas y las condiciones sociales son complejas y a menudo no transparentes (por ejemplo, Holmes, 2015; Bauman, 2003). Siempre hay una gran incertidumbre sobre cómo actuar y sentir. Ya no hay reglas establecidas sobre cómo hemos de sentirnos (Hochschild, 1983; Neckel, 2005; Wouters, 1999). Estas condiciones también plantean un reto para los procesos migratorios: las demarcaciones claras y la sensación inequívoca de pertenencia ya no son posibles «sin más» (Albrecht, 2016, pág. 1). Esto implica una serie de retos para el individuo. En este sentido, las emociones son cada vez más importantes a la hora de seguir nuestro propio camino en condiciones inciertas (Holmes, 2015). El siguiente artículo analiza la importancia de los procesos de reflexividad emocional para las personas que se encuentran en estas situaciones. Como tal, la reflexividad emocional debe definirse como un proceso de ajuste interno entre la actividad emocional y la pasividad emocional. El resultado de este proceso es visible por medio de un nivel de acción que también consiste en no emprender ninguna acción (Helfferich, 2012). Por lo tanto, este artículo sugiere un cambio de definición de los términos agencia y reflexividad emocional. La definición de reflexividad emocional incluye y amplía varios aspectos de las definiciones previas de Holmes (2015; 2010) y Burkitt (2012). La reflexividad emocional —los ajustes internos de la actividad y la pasividad emocionales— se ilustra mediante datos empíricos sobre los procesos actuales de migración en Alemania.

Palabras clave

reflexividad emocional, agencia, migración, emoción

1. Introduction: The problem of navigating one's own path through uncertain conditions

Living today means living in a state of uncertainty (Bauman, 2003, p. 7). Rules – especially those governing feelings, which guide individuals on how to react in the face of social expectations (Hochschild, 1983; Wouters, 1999; Neckel, 2005) – are not given self-evidently anymore. In today's societies there are many frames of orientation which partly contradict each other. That poses new challenges for the individual – especially in migration contexts. Clear demarcations and unwavering feelings of belonging are often not possible "just like that" (Albrecht, 2016). Hence, dealing with ambivalence is one of the main challenges in migration processes (Amelina, 2013, p. 145). Therefore, cognitive or rational control – practiced by doing emotion work (Hochschild, 1983) – is not the only pertinent mechanism. Emotions become more and more important for navigating one's own path through uncertain conditions (Holmes, 2015, p. 61). The thesis of this paper states that, in facing these social developments, emotional reflexivity must be called upon to handle increasing ambivalences, uncertainty and fluidity (Bauman, 2003; see also Kleres and Albrecht, 2015). Particularly in contexts of migration, emotional reflexivity processes are a way of dealing with experiences of racism and facing demands to assimilate under the efficiency imperative of the arrival context. As migrants tackle these challenges, emotional reflexivity processes become ever more visible in their narrations. These processes consist in balancing emotional activity and emotional passivity. In other words, emotions are cognitively influenced – which can also be described as a kind of emotion work (Hochschild, 1983) – or circumstances of passivity are created in which emotions can arise on their own. This is made possible with the support of spiritual-religious interpretation frameworks and rituals which have been carried over from the context of origin.

To illustrate the relevance of emotional reflexivity processes in aspects of agency in the context of migration, firstly, I would like to introduce the concept of emotional reflexivity developed by Ian Burkitt (2012) and Mary Holmes (2015; 2010). In this context, it is also relevant to describe more precisely how emotions can be defined. Many definitions of emotions, feelings and affects currently exist (e.g. Reckwitz 2015; Scherke, 2009; Flam, 2002; Gerhards, 1988). In this paper, I will discuss the definition of emotions provided by the American sociologist Jack Katz (1999). Using this definition to look at the concept of emotional reflexivity has proven to be very fruitful and continuative, as we will see. In combining the concept of emotional reflexivity with Katz' concept of emotions, I suggest a modification of already existing definitions of the former. I define emotional reflexivity as a process of adjusting or balancing emotional passivity and emotional activity and as an internal practice which can have effects on a level of action, but does not have to. My suggested definition

bases itself on aspects of Burkitt's (2012) and Holmes's (2015; 2010) definitions, expanding on them.

Finally, I will illustrate this new expanded definition of emotional reflexivity through empirical data (see also Albrecht, 2017; Albrecht, 2016; Albrecht, 2015). This data will show how emotional reflexivity is undertaken in current processes of migration to Germany. Through in-depth interviews in which individuals tell their life stories, these emotional reflexivity processes become apparent. The aim of telling the entire story (Schütze, 1983) is to allow those interviewed to talk, almost automatically, about their internal dialogues, which can be defined as a dialogue between "I" and "Me", according to George Herbert Mead (1973).

I will show that internal processes lead to different outcomes in terms of the level of action: emotional activity can lead to passivity on an action level, and the other way around. Hence, an expanded definition of the concept of agency becomes necessary, one that also includes passivity and which also allows for internal processes of emotional reflexivity. Adoption of the term "emotional reflexive agency" in future research is suggested.

2. The concept of emotional reflexivity

In the current social context, situations can be complex, varied and ambivalent. This reality also implies emotional challenges for the individual. The American sociologist and constructivist Arlie Russell Hochschild (1983, p.190) postulated that there exist feeling rules in society which regulate appropriate emotional behavior. By relating to these feeling rules – according to the constructivist approach (e.g. Berger and Luckmann, 1980) of emotions – the individual is able to modify their own feelings. Hochschild (1983) developed the concept of emotion work, which encompasses all inner and outer efforts, practices and subjective strategies aimed at shaping or adapting emotions – both in one's private and working life (Neckel, 1983, p. 15). Based on this point of view, people are able to change their emotions. The modification of emotions in accordance with social expectations takes place primarily in a cognitively induced way. Emotion work is therefore an active and strategic way of influencing what people feel. It is a cognitive skill which is learned and employed to control feelings in accordance with situated norms (see also Rastetter, 1999, p. 379f.)

However, there is also criticism of the concept of feeling rules in its final interpretation. Holmes (2015, p. 61) and Wouters (1999) point out that, given the new complexity of contemporary societies and especially the new situations, feeling rules are no longer clear. Social conditions are much more complex than in latter days (Holmes, 2015, p. 61). According to Holmes (2015), rather than doing emotion work to fit in with static feeling rules, emotional reflexivity is necessary to determine *what* to feel. And being able to determine what to feel on your own is necessary to navigate in a world of plurality, fluidity and flexibility (e.g. Bauman, 2003).

In addition, Cas Wouters (1999) has stated that manners and feeling rules have become informal – especially since the 1960s and 1970s. Manners and customs are now more flexible and less formal, not to mention more subtly nuanced. Furthermore, relations with others have become less well-defined and more diverse. Referring to Norbert Elias (1976; 1983), Wouters points out that many people are nevertheless under the impression that behavior and emotions must be more controlled. As the scale of socially accepted variations has grown, they have had to start differentiating their behavior and their emotions (Wouters, 1999, p. 53). Therefore, the more differentiated the control of emotions, the more variations that have appeared – they are part and parcel of the same process. The social spectrum of acceptable behavior and emotions may indeed have become more nuanced, but that does not mean it is any less important *how* someone behaves. Manners have become, in fact, more important, simply less clearly defined (Wouters, 1999, p. 54).

Under these circumstances – when feeling rules and norms are often no longer clearly defined, however it is *still important* how to act and to feel – cognitive influencing is not the only mechanism the individual needs in these diverse situations. To control yourself and your emotions cognitively, rationally, you must know in which way or according to what rules they should be controlled. However, what happens if those clearly defined rules and norms can no longer be found? Referring to this lack of determination of norms and rules, Holmes (2015, p. 61) points out that, under these conditions, emotional reflexivity is increasingly necessary for people drawing on emotions to navigate their own path.

How exactly can emotional reflexivity be defined? According to Holmes (2010) and Burkitt (2012), the term remains partially unclear: emotional reflexivity is a process which is not only cognitively induced but also embodied and relational. Thus, emotional reflexivity seems to include both cognitive aspects and processes which are embodied. Therefore, emotional reflexivity is more than emotion work, which is only cognitively induced (Hochschild, 1983). "Emotional reflexivity here appears as different to individual emotion work or labor exercised in relation to feeling rules […]" (Holmes, 2010, p. 63). Nevertheless, emotional reflexivity is still something active, but it is less cognitive than emotion work. The body is explicitly involved in the definition of emotional reflexivity.

In addition, Holmes states: "Emotional reflexivity refers to the intersubjective interpretation of one's own and others' emotions and how they are enacted" (Holmes, 2015, p. 61). That means that emotional reflexivity is about reflecting and acting in response to one's own feelings and to the feelings of other people (Holmes, 2010). According to this, the individual also refers to the norms and interpretations of others in processes of emotional reflexivity. Holmes and Burkitt see emotional reflexivity as *practice*, something which becomes obvious in interactions with others and something which cannot be exercised in isolation. In that way, emotional

reflexivity is a *capacity*, something that people are able to do while interacting with others.

To sum up: according to Burkitt and Holmes, emotional reflexivity is a practice which is more flexible than emotion work, which only implies assimilating one's own feelings based on social expectations. Emotional reflexivity, meanwhile, is something *active*, something which is done – but they are vague about what this activity exactly entails. What does it mean that emotional reflexivity is a practice which becomes obvious in interactions with others? Is it something that we do – like playing soccer or kissing someone?

Furthermore, they state that emotional reflexivity is not only cognitively induced but also embodied, but the bodily dimension is quite nebulous in this definition. Neither Burkitt nor Holmes specifies how the embodied components are involved in processes of emotional reflexivity. This will be embellished on further in the next section, when discussing the approach of Jack Katz.

According to Burkitt and Holmes, emotional reflexivity is a *capacity*, but it is unclear how this capacity is expressed. In what kind of activity does this capacity consist? If emotional reflexivity is a capacity, then what characteristics or features must the individual possess in order to exercise it?

I suggest building the concept of emotional reflexivity on the concept of practice but defining it as an *internal practice* which is interwoven inextricably with agency – with the possibility and ability to act (Helfferich, 2012, p.15). Without a process of emotional reflexivity – and the result of this process is undetermined – people are not able to act in any way. I propose understanding emotional reflexivity as an internal practice which *can* be caused by concrete interactions with others – but does not have to be. In addition, the imagining of norms or reactions can lead to processes of emotional reflexivity. The results of emotional reflexivity processes *can* – but do not have to – have effects on an action level. They can also include the decision *not to act* at all, which can be defined as passivity, which is in fact a special kind of agency (Helfferich, 2012).

In this expanded definition, the internal practice of emotional reflexivity consists of a process of adjustment or balance between emotional passivity and emotional activity. And this balancing is the "doing" of the individual in which different aspects of identity and society – you could define them as "I" and "Me", according to Mead (1973) – are negotiated in internal dialogues. The result of these internal practices can be manifested as specific action. However, in cases of passivity in regard to action level, people can talk about their emotional reflexivity processes. Furthermore, passivity can also be observed. Emotional reflexivity processes can become apparent in bodily reactions. According to Reckwitz (2008, p. 151), a practice is a kind of ensemble of linked and regular activities of the body, which are held together by shared

forms of understanding and knowledge. They also might be implicit and can be understood as a cultural framework.

Because of the plurality of social demands and expectations, it is not possible to make the fulfillment of social expectations the ultimate goal. It is necessary to differentiate, to evaluate and to reflect on what is important. Due to the lack of well-defined rules and norms, the individual is its only trustworthy point of reference. Immersed in this insecurity, the only stronghold available is the individual and their emotions. Hence, it is immensely important to figure out what a person feels. But what *are* feelings or emotions?

3. Emotions as contemporaneity of action and something that befalls and the process of emotional reflexivity as their mediation

The American sociologist Jack Katz (1999) does not differentiate between emotions and feelings. According to Reckwitz[1] (2015, p. 29f.) and Dewey (2007), emotions must always be conceptualized in a duality of material embodiment and cultural framework. That means that emotions are parts of the body and they are framed within cultural-symbolic interpretations. These processes cannot be described separately; they are always linked to each other. Hence, we are not able to recognize embodied emotional phenomenon without framing them by language. Therefore, it is important to analyze how individual-embodied and sociocultural processes are linked to each other. The dual character of materiality and culturality highlights the special place emotions hold in sociality (see Reckwitz on affects, 2015, p. 29f.).

This mirrors the concept of identity developed by George Herbert Mead (1973). He differentiates the self into "I" and "Me" – parts of an identity which are continuously in internal dialogue with each other. The "I" is the impulsive, body-based part of the identity, while the "Me" encompasses the roles and internalized expectations of others, that is, the social conditions which must be brought in line with the demands of the impulsive "I". The result of the invisible dialogue between "I" and "Me" is the self, which is visible in interactions (Abels, 2010) and expressed through the emotions that arise from this interaction between the spontaneous and creative "I" and the reflexive "Me" (Dietz, 2012, p. 39).

Jack Katz understands emotions as processual, creative and embodied. He defines emotions as self-reflexive *actions* and *experiences*, emphasizing that emotions are not active or passive phenomena, but rather both *at the same time* (Knoblauch, 2015). While having feelings, the individual simultaneously becomes subject and object. Katz asks: How does a smile *happen to* a person

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and how is it *done by* a person at the same time (Knoblauch, 2015, p. 9)? That is, Katz (1999) was interested in questioning how the impulse of laughing is at once sensed by individuals as well as shaped and influenced (see also Plessner, 1961). The result is the expression of laughter. Emotions are the contemporaneity of passivity *and* activity. Emotions can be experienced and consist of actions which refer to the self, in other words, are *self-reflective*. Katz argues that spontaneous expressions not only befall us; we produce them in artful ways (Dietz, 2012, p. 31). That is, emotions befall us and are practiced actively by us at the same time. I would go so far to say that they are mediated and balanced in internal processes of emotional reflexivity. Therefore, emotional reflexivity is part of the emotion itself.

From Katz's (1999) point of view, emotions are characterized by three parallel processes. Firstly, there is the transformation of the body as medium and carrier of feelings. These transformations are understood as sensual metamorphoses. They are the psycho-physical actions (Dewey, 2007, p.170) which are antecedent but always named and thus also always social. However, if people act and experience emotionally, these processes are always connected with real transformations of the body, for example, blushing when someone is ashamed. There exist transformations of the body which cannot be influenced cognitively and are therefore more than just people's constructions (see also Plessner, 1961). And here lies the dimension of the experience of emotion, the more passive dimension (see also Albrecht, 2017, p. 84). This occurs, for example, when someone notices that he or she is blushing or is about to blush and intentionally tries to avoid it, with the only effect being that the blushing increases.

The second process which Katz mentions is the self-reflective interaction in which interpretations and social expectations of others can be considered. This is one of the active dimensions of emotions. How do individuals shape their own emotions by referring to the expectations of others? Alternative ways of acting are developed through a dialogue with the situation. Here is the space in which Hochschild's (1983) emotion work *can* take place. The individual can try to modify their own emotions, for example, practicing deep acting or surface acting. While practicing deep acting, the person tries to modify their own "true" feelings.[2] In the process of self-reflection the individual comes to the conclusion that their feelings are not socially appropriate and wants to modify this cognitively. But the embodied feelings set limits to this procedure. The other way of acting, surface acting, involves faking emotions: only the expression of emotion is modified (Hochschild, 1983; Rastetter, 1999).

Thirdly, the narrative project of integrating situation-specific and situation-transcendental challenges in a narration is a characteristic of emotions (Dietz, 2012, p. 34). For Katz, narration is an important component of characterizing emotions. The function of this narration is a synthesis of heterogeneous elements (Ricoeur, 1988), a bringing together of previously different and disconnected elements. In this narration, gestures, words and images attempt to connect in a coherent way. Generating a narration is necessary for emotional acting because this is where the allocation of meaning takes place. In the dimension of meaning, aspects of the unconscious or preconscious as discussed by Sigmund Freud (1998; 1972) can also become important.

But how can this definition of the concept of emotion help us to understand more precisely the concept of emotional reflexivity? Katz's definition helps to specify the term emotional reflexivity in that it talks about emotions are both *befalling and being practiced actively at the same time*. Embodied processes and sociocultural framings are mediated at the same time. It is important not to ignore the embodied, more passive dimension of emotions – aspects which are often marginalized by sociology. It is not enough for future research to merely analyze the cultural frameworks that are used to try to achieve cognitively induced modification. The embodied parts must be taken as a sui generis reality, developing ideas of how to research more adequately this part of emotions. The *interplay* of the embodied part and the sociocultural framings must be analyzed. This is the emotional reflexivity process which I define as a process of adjustment or balancing between emotional passivity and emotional activity. The result of this process can be the specific action as well as taking no action at all. But how do emotional reflexivity processes become obvious in empirical material?

4. Emotional reflexivity in migration processes

I will illustrate processes of emotional reflexivity through examples taken from my study of emotions in contexts of migration (Albrecht, 2017). In this chapter I will show that emotional reflexivity is an internal practice, a balancing process. This process of balancing – or adjustment between emotional passivity ("letting feelings happen") and emotional activity ("influencing feelings cognitively") – can lead to different results in terms of level of action. In the cases of Faysal,[3] who migrated from Tunisia to Germany, and Caven, who migrated from Ethiopia to Germany, their internal process of balancing emotional activity and emotional passivity results in a decision to engage in emotion work as Hochschild (1983) discussed it. In the end, they decide to modify

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2. Sighard Neckel (1983) criticized the terms "true" and "real" feelings because he emphasized the socially constructed character of every emotion. However, for the term "emotional reflexivity" it seems to be relevant to differentiate between modified and at least pre-modified feelings. That leads to the question of how sociology could adequately consider this pre-modified, more embodied dimension of emotions.
3. Names have been changed.

their feelings, that is, influencing them in a cognitively induced way, referring to the expectations of others or to the requirements of an altered post-migration environment. Emotional reflexivity processes lead to changed forms of agency – to acceptance, in Faysal's case, and in Caven's, to passivity on an action level.

The cases of Hayet and Lilia – who both migrated from Tunisia to Germany – are different. Hayet's emotional passivity – the refusal to engage in emotion work based on the perception of different norms and ways of acting in the context of arrival to a new place – leads to opposition and communicated resistance. Lilia's emotional passivity leads to passivity on an action level. In their processes of emotional reflexivity, spiritual-religious interpretation frameworks are relevant to the possible evocation of emotions.

4.1. Emotional activity ("influencing emotions cognitively") leads to acceptance and to a change in action

Faysal, who migrated from Tunisia to Germany, speaks in his in-depth interview about a situation he experienced with his daughter. This situation took place following his migration to Germany and illustrates how he designed his internal dialogues while dealing with problems in the context of arrival. In this special case, he had problems with the rainy weather in his new environment:

Faysal: "[…] eh here I try to be a little bit more realistic and, um, in the beginning I had problems with the weather, eh, yes, it is grey and I see the sun one time, I don't know. Yes, and I can remember, I went for a walk with my daughter, she was four years old, and she jumped and sang: 'Oh, it is raining, it is beautiful!'. **And I asked myself: 'Man! How is this possible? The same environment, but for me, it is terrible, it is sad, so the color and cold and the rain.' And then I thought: 'Aha – what's important is the attitude!'** And since then I have different feelings. [...] And if I stay here or, eh, have to stay here, then I have also to decide that I, what is my aim, to be happy and then my attitude towards the things, yes." (Interview Faysal, Lines 114–131, highlighted text by the author)

The excerpt from Faysal's interview shows his insight into his process of emotional reflexivity in the simultaneity of emotional passivity – the experience of his own feelings in that situation – and emotional activity (Katz, 1999) – the awareness that it could be different and that he might be able to do something cognitively to change his feelings. The situation with his daughter functions as a trigger for his internal dialogue: he recognizes that other feelings are possible, that he does not need to be controlled by circumstance. "Aha – what's important is the attitude" – that is his moment of awareness in that situation.

If we base our reading of this emotional reflexivity process on Mead (1973), the internal practice could be defined as a negotiation between "I" and "Me". The impulsive "I" is depressed because of the circumstances in the rainy environment, but when this is combined with possibly internalized expectations/role as father, Faysal recognizes the need to be happy. Though emotional reflexivity is a process of reflection, there is also the process of balancing one's own feelings and the expectations of others or the requirements of the environment, which in Faysal's case is triggered by the interaction with his daughter. The result of this process is a decision to have cognitive influence over his feelings, which Faysal describes as something he must do for himself: "If you want to be happy, you must do it yourself" – that is the interpretation which seems to work for Faysal. This can be looked at in a context of emotional self-management, which Hochschild (1983) described as emotion work, and in the context of the demands of current societal constellations: every person is the architect of his or her own fortune. Faysal decides that he wants to be happy and tries, cognitively induced to do so, to feel differently. Since this light-bulb moment with his daughter, he states that his feelings have changed. The rainy weather in the new environment no longer poses a problem; he goes for a walk no matter the skies. Because of his emotion work, he has enabled himself to accept the environmental differences between his context of departure and his context of arrival.

Hence, Faysal describes the effects of his cognitive emotional influencing as positive. However, it is important to keep in mind that according to Arlie Russell Hochschild (1983), emotion work could also have negative effects for the individual – especially in the long run. For instance, emotions could lose their signal-function for the individual, which translates into a loss of valuable and important information. Furthermore, Hochschild sees the possibility of estrangement: if emotion work is practiced long-term, people might lose a sense of their own selves.

Regardless, Faysal describes the short-term effects of this influence over his feelings as positive and useful to him. This is congruent with Daniela Rastetter's (1999) differentiated perspective on emotion work. She postulated that modeling one's own emotions could lead to estrangement but that it could also have empowering effects. In this regard, the result of Faysal's emotional reflexivity process led him to engage in emotional management and as such he was able to develop a different – in his view, more positive – form of agency: he is now able to act, in this case, to go for a walk, and to accept the circumstances of the new environment.[4]

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4. In this case, a qualitative longitudinal section study could provide deeper insights.

4.2. Emotional activity ("influencing emotions cognitively") leads to acceptance and passivity in terms of action level

Caven, who migrated from Ethiopia to Germany, also talks in his in-depth interview about his own emotional reflexivity process, which led him to influence cognitively his emotions. Caven's process of emotional reflexivity was triggered by discriminating and racist experiences with the German police:

> Caven: "That's why if I have to drive to F.-city or something, I go to the station, I stood easily one time in my little corner waiting for the train, then they always came to me and asked me for my identification card – again and again. Ah, this was totally boring, every time (laughing). **'What is actually weird or how am I acting?' And then: 'Okay, maybe it is my fault, so I have to change my behavior with the people.'** I didn't realize it yet, but I tried […] I really tried to integrate." (Interview Caven, Lines 95–119, highlighted text by the author)

Caven shares a story of institutional discrimination: because he is identified easily as a "foreigner", he is a victim of control and exclusion. He emphasizes that this is not a one-time situation but rather the norm. As he narrates his internal dialogues, it becomes obvious that these interactions with people in institutional settings in Germany are what triggered his process of emotional reflexivity. He is aware of a problem, he states that social expectations and demands are apparently different to how he can portray himself or act. These racist discriminations (Terkessidis, 2004) have led him to think that it is *he* who has to change. What this transformation could look like is very unclear since the discrimination takes place because Caven is a person of color. In his interpretation, the need for transformation is linked with the discourse of integration: he sees it as being up to him to become integrated but he states that he has not been able to accomplish this yet.

Later in the interview, Caven talks about his way of coping with these difficulties in the context of arrival. This is the result of his emotional reflexivity process:

> Caven: "**Therefore: 'Be strong!' (laughing) – I said to myself**. That's why, there were many things, for example, you go one time in term to the club, then you go there. 'No, you can't come in!' […] because I'm a foreigner, but also for this, I am prepared." (Caven, Lines 799–801, highlighted text by the author)

The result of Caven's emotional reflexivity process provides a very strong example of the power of circumstances, which provoke a cognitive influencing of his emotions. This can again be seen in the context of Hochschild's (1983) concept of emotion work.

Practicing emotion work becomes necessary for migrants dealing with racist interactions. In his internal dialogue, Caven asks himself to be strong, although this means not allowing weakness, which is linked with emotions such as sadness, anger or fear. He interprets being upset as a waste of time, so he prefers influencing his feelings; he tries to become still and to get his feelings under control. And he gives an explanation for doing so:

> Caven: "Because I have the feeling, for the Germans, 'no' means 'no'. That's why, why should I waste my time, because if you discuss it further, you can say something bad, how do you profit of this? […] Not at all, before fighting or saying something, better go home and be quiet, […] have it under control." (Interview Caven, Lines 830–832)

The result of his process of emotional reflexivity, which could also be defined as a negotiation between "I" and "Me" according to Mead (1973), is the forced acceptance of socially derived norms and interpretations with effectiveness as the justification. Caven cannot see what he might stand to gain from a position of opposition, so he chooses to exert a cognitive influence over his emotions and in that way tries to stay calm. The result of his emotional reflexivity process is the possibility of accepting the stressful racist circumstances, being passive and having his own emotions under control. Caven is – compared with Faysal – confronted with different challenges in the context of arrival: he must deal with racist discrimination. These interactions trigger his process of emotional reflexivity. The result of this process is the same as in Faysal's case: Caven decides to influence his feelings cognitively, to control them, and through this he creates for himself the possibility of not acting – a passivity which is merely a different kind of agency (Helfferich, 2012).

4.3. Emotional passivity ("letting emotions arise") leads to opposition against perceived norms and expectations in the context of arrival

In Hayet's case her process of emotional reflexivity leads her to handle her emotions quite differently from Faysal and Caven. Hayet migrated from Tunisia to Germany with her husband, who found work in a German city. In her in-depth interview, she explains how she was very "modern" when she lived in Tunisia. She specified the word "modern" in her interview: while living in Tunisia she did not wear a scarf. However, when she arrived in Germany and experienced life in the context of arrival, she experienced a kind of "culture shock":

> Hayet: "When I came here, **I said: 'No, that is never anything for me. I don't want this to be like that!'** […] Because it

is connected with virtue. Eh, eh, when I came here I went clubbing with my man, eh, because I wanted to explore this European lifestyle, and we were sometimes with groups of German people and women and men drank alcohol, very much alcohol, then they were different, they were without a standard, and that shocked me. […] I didn't like this kind of life." (Interview Hayet, Lines 271-290, highlighted text by the author)

Hayet's process of emotional reflexivity is triggered by interactions with people from Germany: they drink alcohol and behave in a way which Hayet could not tolerate. As the others, she provides insights into her internal dialogue that could again be interpreted as the negotiation between "I" and "Me" referred to by Mead (1973): she observes social norms and roles in that specific situation and generalizes her observations. She defines her observations using terms such as "European lifestyle" and generalizes the behavior of the people partying in the context of arrival. Her "I" with its impulsive power says "No" and she decides not to assimilate into the situation but to adopt interpretation frameworks of "virtue", as she calls it. Later on in interview, she specifies that these interpretation frameworks of virtue are linked with religion and the values which Hayet is familiar with because of her socialization in the context of origin. Following her experiences in the context of arrival, she decides to wear a scarf – against her husband's wishes – and to become a real and conscious Muslim believer, as she defines it. Unlike Faysal's and Caven's, her process of emotional reflexivity leads to her not changing or cognitively influencing her own emotions. She decides to re-activate interpretation frameworks and norms that are linked to her religion and her belief in Allah, and she uses them to stabilize herself. Hence, not influencing her emotions cognitively – thus being emotionally passive in a way – enables her to behave in opposition to the perceived norms in the context of arrival on a level of action. She describes the effects as primarily positive: Hayet mentions inner calm, being free of fear, good feelings, self-confidence, calming down and coping with stress. The activation of spiritual-religious interpretation frameworks enables internal emotional passivity. And this emotional passivity (Katz, 1999) – not changing her own emotions but leaning on the power of Allah – leads to self-confidence through a level of action that goes along with different cultural framings. This allows Hayet to say "No" to behavior and norms which she cannot accept based on her different sociocultural background. Because of her emotional passivity (Katz, 1999) – allowing her emotions to happen with trust in God – she can be in an oppositional position and does not have to assimilate into areas she does not agree with. In that way, emotional passivity enables a form of agency which can be defined as opposition or resistance to norms in the context of arrival.

4.4. Emotional passivity ("letting emotions arise") leads to acceptance and passivity in terms of action level

The Muslim religion and her belief in Allah are also very important to Lilia, who came from Tunisia with her husband who found work in Germany. Just like in Hayet's case, spiritual-religious interpretation frameworks and practices like praying facilitate emotional passivity in her emotional reflexivity process. However, in her case, it leads to acceptance and passivity on an action level. In her in-depth-interview, Lilia speaks about a situation of discrimination in the context of arrival. One day she was in a car accident and the driver yelled at her afterwards.

Lilia: "But the police weren't nice either. Then I went to my doctor and cried and said: 'It is like that, they think, scarf, that is maybe illiterate or something like that', I don't know, then they can produce a bit of pressure or something. I think so, yes. Probably that is wrong, that I am wrong with that, yes. But I suppose it is like that, because once I was without the scarf and it was different. […] **So I actually try to be a bit friendly and nice, because Islam told us to be**. I have a neighbor, and no matter what she says, I say 'Yes and Amen'". (Interview Lilia, Lines 613-625, highlighted text by the author)

Like Caven, Lilia tells of a situation of institutional discrimination and racism (e.g. Terkessidis, 2004). While reporting the accident she was not treated in a "nice" way by the police – even though she was the victim of the crash. She traces the unkind behavior of the driver and the German police back to wearing a scarf because there was a time when she did not wear it. At that time, she was not confronted with this kind of discrimination. Unlike Caven, she does not really believe that it is her "fault", but she decides to call on Islam as a reason to be friendly and nice – even if she is confronted with discrimination and racism. She says "Yes and Amen".

Lilia: "Yes, like I have already said, I believe in God very much, and eh (0.2) **if I sometimes have trouble or stress, then I go for a prayer and say: 'God, that is the problem, yes?**' That is really a bit like coping with stress, I would say." (Interview Lilia, Lines 323-325, highlighted text by the author)

Lilia speaks about the process of emotional reflexivity she undergoes while praying. Drawing on Mead's (1973) work, the internal dialogue between "I" and "Me" in the case of Lilia is accompanied by a third component: belief in Allah. She tells "God" about her problems and puts – as does Hayet – the responsibility

for the things happening in the mundane world in his hands. In this case, emotional reflexivity processes can take place through prayer, which fulfills the function of internal dialogues. Praying enables emotional passivity, allowing one's own emotions to arise, which according to Katz (1999) is a very important aspect of emotion itself. The negative interactions with people experienced in the context of arrival triggered trouble and stress, which Lilia had to find a way to deal with. Lilia speaks about the effects of her internal dialogue, accompanied by the God she believes in: the emotional reflexivity process – the balancing of emotional activity and emotional passivity during prayer – leads to emotional passivity because she does not try to influence cognitively her emotions (Katz, 1999). Instead, she lets them happen and gives the responsibility to a higher power. She describes the effects as positive: the emotional passivity experienced is linked to coping with stress. In terms of her level of action, Lilia accepts the circumstances and is able to do nothing – even when facing situations of racist discrimination. Of course, one could raise the question of whether the acceptance of racism is maybe being too tolerant.

5. Conclusion: Agency as emotional reflexive agency

My analysis of emotional reflexivity processes in contexts of migration shows that there is more to emotional experience than emotional intelligence (Goleman, 2011) or emotion work (Hochschild, 1983). The concept of emotional reflexivity challenges the paradigm of rationality and emotional control: it shows that cost-value ratio as the only maxim for controlling emotions does not go far enough in contemporary societies. This is only *one* possibility of dealing with emotions. The concept of emotional reflexivity broadens this view: "Reflexivity is not just rational and involves rationalization; it is also relational, dialogical and emotional" (Burkitt, 2012, p. 471). More important still is how necessary emotional reflexivity seems to be in determining what to feel (Holmes, 2015). In circumstances where there are no clearly defined feeling rules and norms, according to Holmes (2015), emotions are needed for one to be able to navigate their own path.

The concept of emotional reflexivity shows that internal processes are indispensable interwoven with agency, which can be defined as the possibility and the ability to act. Internal processes influence people's actions – or lack thereof – and therefore influence how society is designed. To further define these processes, the concept of emotional reflexivity will be an indispensable tool in future research because it broadens the analytical perspective on agency. By considering emotional

reflexivity processes, it will be possible to observe the interplay and reciprocal influencing of material-embodied components and sociocultural framings (see Reckwitz's (2012) definition of "affects"). Hence, it might be useful to use the term "emotional reflexive agency" in future research. Both internal processes to balance emotional passivity and emotional activity as well as passivity on an action level can be defined as a special kind of agency (Helfferich, 2012).

The empirical data has illustrated emotional reflexivity processes' different results and their links to different forms of agency. In the cases of Faysal and Caven, it is clear that they decided to handle actively their emotions and influence them in a cognitively induced way: they cognitively tried to feel differently so that they could act in another way. Both were able to accept their circumstances. In Faysal's case, he was able to accept the rainy weather in his new environment. Caven thought that, through cognitive control, he would be able to accept racist discrimination and calm himself down. Both described the cognitively induced influencing of their emotions as a kind of empowerment. However, from the perspective of Hochschild (1983), emotion work can lead to estrangement from one's own feelings in the long run.

Hayet's case differs from Faysal's and Caven's. Her process of emotional reflexivity did not lead her to alter her emotions. Hayet decided not to accept her new environment's norms and feeling rules and instead focus on spiritual-religious interpretation frameworks taken from her socialization in her context of origin. This enabled her to be in a place of opposition and develop a different form of agency. This was possible because she adopted a state of emotional passivity and left responsibility for mundane events in the hands of a higher power, namely Allah.

This is exactly what Lilia does, but with a different outcome: in her prayers, which can be understood as internal dialogues accompanied by a God in whom she believes, Lilia delegates responsibility for what is happening to that higher power. Being emotionally passive – not trying to influence or change her own emotions cognitively – effectuates passivity in terms of level of action. This allows Lilia to accept even racist discrimination. Both Hayet and Lilia describe reliance on Allah as a coping mechanism. In Hayet's case it leads to a kind of opposition; in Lilia's, to acceptance.

The concept of emotional reflexivity gives differentiated insights into processes of integration or inclusion (Amelina, 2013). It shows that internal balancing has different effects on leves of action. It also illustrates the emotional challenges that are linked with racist discrimination. Research into migration and inclusion must analyze the challenges faced as a part of these processes in order to manage emotional ambivalences in the future (see also Amelina, 2013, p. 145). Therefore, the concept of emotional reflexivity implies new analytical possibilities.

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Yvonne Albrecht

Lecturer and researcher at the Friedrich-Schiller-University in representation, Jena
(yvonne.albrecht@uni-jena.de)

Friedrich-Schiller-Universität Jena
Institut für Soziologie
Carl-Zeiß-Straße 3
07743 Jena
www.uni-jena.de