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Gender in Migration Studies: From Feminist Legacies to Intersectional, Post- and Decolonial Prospects

Abstract

The figure of the female migrant has been a major focus of feminist thought in the German-speaking migration studies since the early 1980s. The article provides some reflections on the past to show how a number of milestones in feminist thought have influenced migration studies. It then continues with reflections on the present stance that analyses the dominant (re)production of (post-)migration realities as a gendered, ethnicized/racialized and class-related project(s). Finally, the article concludes with a discussion of the prospects of gender-sensitive migration research in relation to postcolonial, decolonial and queer approaches to migrant othering.

Keywords

Gender, feminist theory, migration, intersectionality, postcoloniality, decoloniality

Geschlechterverhältnisse in der Migrationsforschung: Von der feministischen Theorie zu intersektionellen, post- und dekolonialen Ansätzen

Zusammenfassung

Die Figur der Migrant*in ist seit Anfang der 1980er Jahre ein Schwerpunkt des feministischen Denkens in der deutschsprachigen Migrationsforschung.

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Der Aufsatz beginnt mit einem Rückblick und gewährt Einblicke in die Meilensteine feministischer Theorien, die die Migrationsstudien beeinflusst haben. Anschließend werden aktuelle Forschungsperspektiven in diesem Bereich vorgestellt. Insbesondere wird betont, dass die gesellschaftliche (Re-)Produktion von (Post-)Migrationsrealitäten als geschlechtsspezifische, ethnisierte/rassifizierte und klassenbezogene Prozesse zu analysieren sind. Der Aufsatz schließt mit der Darstellung der postkolonialen, dekolonialen und queeren Ansätze zur geschlechtersensiblen Analyse von gesellschaftlichen Othering-Prozessen in der Migrationsgesellschaft.

Schlagwörter

Gender, feministische Theorie, Migration, Intersektionalität, Postkolonialität, Dekolonialität

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1 Introduction

This article builds on reflections regarding the role and influence of feminist thought in migration studies in the German-speaking context.¹ The figure of the female migrant has been a major focus of feminist thought in this area since the early 1980s. The article provides some *reflections on the past* to show how a number of milestones in feminist thought have influenced migration studies. It then continues with *reflections on the present stance* that privileges the constructivist lens and analyzes the dominant (re)production of (post-)migration realities as a gendered, ethnicized/racialized and class-related project. Consequently, the paper illustrates how feminist theories, and in particular the theories of intersectionality, influence the current debates in mainstream migration studies. As both intersectional and feminist scholars, we plead for an in-depth analysis of both explicit gendered forms of migration and of knowledge production within the academic migration research. Finally, the article concludes with a discussion of the *prospects of gender-sensitive migration research* in relation to postcolonial, decolonial and queer approaches to migrant othering.

1 We would like to thank Helen Schwenken for her distinguished and helpful comments.

2 Towards a Visualization of ›Migrant Women‹: Reflections on the Past and on the Impact of Feminist Thought Since the 1980s

Gender researchers in Germany and elsewhere in Europe have problematized the invisibility of women as agents of migration processes since the early 1980s (Hebenstreit 1988; Lutz 1988, 1991; Morokvašić 1984; Phizacklea 1983). ›Gendering migration‹ has since not so much meant that women should simply be included in the category of ›the migrant‹ as that scholars should also consider the relations between men and women as a basic organizing principle of social structures (Erel et al. 2003, p. 11). A useful overview of this line of thought was provided by Simone Prodolliet (1999), who identified three phases of gender-sensitive migration research (see also Aufhauser 2000; Hahn 2000):

1. During the first stage (the late 1970s and 80s), the focus was on the ›visualization‹, that is the making visible, of migrant women in migration research. The purpose of this *compensatory approach* was to challenge *male bias* in the conventional migration studies of that time, which usually depicted international migrants as young, economically motivated males and migrant women as mere followers of that male mobility. In response, feminist researchers sought to attribute to women a subject position in the migration process.

2. The second stage, the so-called *attributive approach*, highlighted the distinctive characteristics of female migration patterns and experiences and regarded migrant women as autonomous movers or part of migrant family constellations.

3. The aim of the third stage was to identify dimensions of *power and domination* in gender relations in migration. Issues addressed in this stage include the construction of masculinity and femininity in the socialization process, the role of the private/public divide, and – with much reluctance – power asymmetries and relations of exploitation and oppression between native and migrant women. Debates on the last-mentioned issue evolved in response to differences in belonging and citizenship as part of ongoing processes of ›othering‹ migrant women (and men).

Although the ›visualization‹ of the gendered nature of migration was a necessary starting point for gendering migration, it was often done by following a specific narrative in which migrant women were marked as victims of patriarchal power relations and regarded as depending on their ›cultures of origin‹. In Germany, the ›othering‹ and racialization of migrant women initially involved every (labor) migrant group without distinction. However, since the 1980s, the focus has increasingly been on those from the ›Muslim‹

world, especially Turkey (Huth-Hildebrand 2002) – a trend that in the 21st century has come to also include refugees from Arab and other ›Muslim‹ countries. This focus disregards not only the heterogeneity between individuals and groups in terms of religious and ethnic affiliation (e.g. Kurdish, Alevi, Sunni, Yezidi, Jewish), nationality and sexuality, but also differences between regions of origin (urban/rural) and educational backgrounds.

Many public and private discourses attribute a significant modernity gap to the figure of the ›migrant woman‹ (Korteweg and Yurdakul 2015). Scientific debates also both implicitly and explicitly construct and reproduce a contrast between what is believed to be the emancipated egalitarianism of the majority society and the traditional patriarchy of immigrants and their offspring. This narrative, which allows members of the majority society a positive self-assessment (Gümen 1998; Lutz and Huth-Hildebrandt 1998), provides a basis for a hierarchic system of categorization of migrant females' ways of life. María do Mar Castro Varela and Nikita Dhawan (2004, p. 207) note that the discursive figure of the ›emancipated Western woman‹ is upheld on the basis of its counter-template, the ›oppressed non-Western woman‹. Along the same lines as this problematic representation of migrant women as victims of patriarchal oppression, migrant men have been characterized with reference to patriarchal domination. Public discourse has recently started to focus on young men's deviant or delinquent behavior in schools and public spaces and to regard this group as prone to violence and potentially dangerous (Huxel 2014; Scheibelhofer 2008; Spies 2010). Use of violence – a gendered phenomenon in most societies throughout the world – has been labeled an ›ethnic‹ phenomenon with regard to young immigrant men. Gabriele Dietze (2016) calls this way of presenting male immigrant adolescents a form of ›ethnosexism‹ that characterizes a particular group as being controlled by ›their‹ culture and ethnicity. Thus, in relation to masculinity, an asymmetric category of difference is brought into play in which male members of the ›majority society‹ are portrayed as egalitarian, emancipatory and tolerant (e.g. towards homosexuality) and ›minority‹ men as ›hyper-masculine‹ strangers.

In addition, queer-sensitive scholars (e.g. Kosnick 2011) have rightly criticized previous feminist migration research for largely excluding issues related to sexuality, treating homosexuality as a special case and thus remaining trapped in a heteronormative matrix (see Butler 1991). This insight is also relevant for studies focusing on transnational migration processes because, according to Castro Varela and Dhawan (2009b), globalization and migration contribute to a diversification of sexual practices and identities.

3 Reflections on the Present: The Impact of the ›Reflexive Turn‹ and Intersectional Thought on Migration Studies

While (European and German) gender studies have been populated by a new generation of researchers influenced by post-structuralism (Engel and Schuster 2007), postcolonial (Castro Varela and Dhawan 2009a) and intersectional debates (Collins 1990; Lutz 2001), current migration studies increasingly question gendered and racialized representations of ›migration‹ (Anderson 2013). At the same time, these developments in migration scholarship are accompanied by a recent ›reflexive turn‹ (Nieswand and Drotbohm 2014). The latter criticizes the sociologically based migration research for taking its analytical categories unquestioningly from non-academic empiricism, without reflecting on the analytical substance of the conceptual vocabulary these categories involve (Brubaker 2013; Wimmer and Glick Schiller 2003). Inspired by this insight, the *reflexive turn* in (German and European) migration studies seeks to assess the analytical value of the central categories of migration research (Amelina 2020; Dahinden 2016). To put it in a general way, it builds on the assumption that ›migration‹ is not merely a practice of spatial movement, but essentially the result of an interplay of institutional routines, routinized social practices and power relations based on gendered, ethnicized/racialized and classed knowledge (Amelina 2017; Amelina and Lutz 2019). Consequently, terms such as ›migration‹, ›mobility‹ or ›integration‹ can be regarded as categories of social practice and not as primary categories of analysis. According to this view, migration research should focus on how social realities of migration are produced, or ›done‹, because of repeatedly performed social practices. In order to provide a more detailed overview of the facets of the ›reflexive turn‹, the next paragraphs introduce three partly overlapping approaches, some of which tend to consider gender-sensitive perspectives:

- A. Critical migration and border regime approaches
- B. The concept of ›doing migration‹ and
- C. The impact of intersectional theories on/in migrations studies

A. Critical Migration and Border Regime Studies

Migration and border regime studies have recently become a prominent field to analyze the complex, contested, and conflicting dynamics of migration and border policies (Horvath et al. 2017, p. 302). Despite the diversity of migra-

tion and border regime theories,² the thrust of governmentality approaches in particular has developed into a fruitful basis for analyzing gender in the context of migration regulation. For this reason, the concept of border regimes is introduced here as a concept representative of the governmentality-theory perspective and is examined with respect to gender relations.

The main focus of studies in the field of border regime research is on processes of (un-)doing border or (re-)bordering – that is, on the social production, negotiation and shifting of border(s) (paradigmatically, see e.g. Transit Migration Forschungsgruppe 2007; Heimeshoff et al. 2014; Hess et al. 2017; Tsianos and Karakayali 2010). The focus is on specific national and supranational power formations that generate political rationalities and subject positions in the fields of borders and human mobility. From this perspective, borders are not to be understood as geographical entities but rather as social demarcations that inscribe themselves into the overall social conditions (Hess et al. 2017).

Border regime analyses are also particularly interested in processes involved in the gendering and sexualization of political rationalities in the field of migration regulation. For example, Sabine Hess and Serhat Karakayali, in their study of media representations of flight and migration (2017), showed that the category of ›gender‹ receives excessive attention in public discourses, for instance when male refugees are racialized and sexualized as ›patriarchal‹. Such ›repressive‹ positionings serve right-wing movements and many parties as a reason and occasion to demand a tightening of migration and border policies. At the same time, the authors of this study argue that analyses of gender relations in the mainstream of academic migration research are still inadequately addressed, because female refugees are too often portrayed as dependent and vulnerable, terms that are hardly ever used for men. Similar arguments are put forward by intersectionally inspired studies that focus on the European migration regime (e.g., Amelina 2017). From the perspective of these studies, European migration regulation, which is organized on several different socio-spatial levels, should be conceptualized as a nexus of institutions, power, and knowledge. Most importantly, institutional knowledge incorporates gendered, ethnicized/racialized and class-related bodies of knowledge, in the form of specific classifications, for example, that become relevant in administrative decisions concerning family reunification, access to social rights, or the granting of work permits. Another relevant

2 Roughly four types of approaches can be distinguished: i) migration regime approaches from the field of international relations; ii) the concept of (welfare) regime used in social policy analyses following Esping-Andersen (1990); iii) approaches based on French regulation theory; and iv) governmentality approaches (Horvath et al. 2017, p. 302).

example in the field is the work by Stephen Scheel and Miriam Gutekunst, who conducted research on cross-border ›marriage migration‹. Using governmentality, gender and family-sensitive perspectives, the authors identified the essential conditions put on couples by the European border regime (Scheel and Gutekunst 2019).

B. De-Naturalization of Migration: Towards the Doing Migration Approach

While concepts of migration and border regimes focus on the gendered and institutionalized ways of migration governance, the ›doing migration‹ approach (Amelina 2020) is more general social-theory inspired and interested in the social and discursive *societal production* of global, national and local migration orders. In other words, it is concerned with the performative strategies of institutions, organizations and face-to-face interactions that transforms (non-)mobile individuals into ›migrants‹. This approach is gender-sensitive in that it is interested in how gendered forms of knowledge (inscribed in the institutional, organizational and face-to-face routines) contribute to the formation of the dominant societal images of migrant masculinities and femininities.³ Thus, the doing migration approach is largely inspired by the doing gender approach (West and Zimmermann 1987). The focus on the *institutional routines* allows to study the gendered institutional definitions of ›[non-]migrant‹ access to citizenship and the labor market as well as political regulations of spatial movements. The interest in *organizational routines* (e.g. ›doing migration‹ at schools, administrations or hospitals) makes it possible to analyze the gendered access of migrantized individuals to organizational resources (i.e. education, welfare, paid work) on the meso-level of the social, while the study of *face-to-face routines* of ›doing migration‹ pays attention to questions related to everyday gendered boundaries between ›us‹ and ›them‹ (Anderson 2013).

In essence, the aim of the ›doing migration‹ approach is to illuminate the nexus between power and knowledge in the social production of ›migration‹ and ›integration‹. Therefore, it argues that various forms of knowledge (discourses, narratives) that generate specific (global, national or local) migration orders contain social classification systems that produce hierarchies between actors who are identified as gendered, ethnicized/racialized, classed and sexualized ›migrants‹. Therefore, this concept has an intellectual proximity to

³ While the doing migration perspective is not based on ethnomethodological premises (as is the doing gender approach) but on praxeological assumptions (Reckwitz 2006), it shares some analytical similarities because of its special focus on everyday routines and dominant knowledge-based practices.

the theories of intersectionality, whose influence on (European and German) migration studies will be presented below.

C. Impacts from Intersectionality Research: Migration as a Gendered, Ethnicized/Racialized and Classed Project

Intersectional perspectives focus conventionally on the interconnectedness and interdependencies of various axes of difference/inequality (Anthias 2001; Klinger and Knapp 2007; Walby 2009; Winkler and Degele 2009).⁴ As early as 1977, the Combahee River Collective (1981), an organization of Black lesbian feminists, had developed the concept of »interlocking systems of oppression« (Collins 1990), which sparked a debate on the interrelationships and simultaneities of subordinating forms of sexism, racism and classism. Kimberlé W. Crenshaw (1989), feminist legal scholar and representative of critical race theory, later used the metaphor of street crossings and descriptions of institutional discrimination against Black female laborers in the context of the American legal system to introduce the concept of intersections of gender, race and class.

While this critical-political project initially focused primarily on analyzing the classical inequality triad race–class–gender, both international research and research from German-speaking countries later began a debate on how many relevant categories of difference should be considered (Hancock 2007; Lutz 2001; Winkler and Degele 2009, p. 15). In addition to gender, these categories of difference have come to include sexuality, class, ethnicity/race, age/generation, disability/health and space (e.g. North/South) (for a detailed description, see Amelina and Lutz 2019, p. 49). A well-known typology in intersectionality research is the differentiation of intercategorical, intracategorical and anticategorical approaches proposed by Leslie McCall (2005). Most of the proponents of the *intercategorical* approach, one of whom is McCall herself, use quantitative descriptive methods. They analyze social categories less in terms of their social constitution and more in terms of their interactions. On the whole, this approach tends towards an essentializing perspective on social inequality, in that gender, ethnicity/race and class are considered as attributes of groups that are regarded as »natural«. The proponents of *intracategorical* approaches take a qualitative perspective to identify the effects of different overlapping or interwoven categories of inequality. Although they analyze axes of difference as historically specific social prod-

⁴ The term »axes of difference« is most commonly used in the research to refer to the diversity of constructions of belonging, whereas »axes of inequality« is used to stress the multi-dimensional understanding of inequality production. Here and elsewhere, we use the two terms synonymously.

ucts, they nevertheless regard these axes as largely stable. In contrast, the proponents of *anticategorical* approaches argue that dimensions of inequality are socially constructed and embedded in social structures (at the micro, meso and macro levels). They use a post-structuralist and often a qualitative perspective to reveal changing systems of classification in their relation to social and historically specific conditions. These approaches makes static and essentializing views on dimensions of inequality obsolete, whereas »social life is considered too irreducibly complex – overflowing with multiple and fluid determinations of both subjects and structures« (McCall 2005, p. 1773).

A closer look at the impact of the intersectional approach on German migration research shows that the research group FeMigra (1994) as well as Sedef Gümen (1998), Helma Lutz (1991, 1992, 1993, 1994), Encarnación Gutiérrez Rodríguez (1999), María do Mar Castro Varela (2007), Iman Attia (2009) and other researchers already started to reconstruct the linkages of gender, migration and racialization and provide valuable insights for the field of gender studies as early as the 1980s and 1990s. However, for a long time their research remained removed from the center of attention as a field of ›specialization‹ that seemed to have little to do with women and gender studies. In the German debate, ›class‹ and ›gender‹ were important categories in analyses of social inequality, whereas the term ›racism‹ was largely avoided because it was associated with German fascism and anti-Semitism and regarded as a »negative category« (Knapp 2009), that is, a category regarded as normatively charged, moralizing or polemic if used in connection with *racism* as a research subject. It is not surprising, then, that Black German women (Oguntoye et al. 1985) and a number of migration researchers were the first to embrace the intersectionality debate that originated in the United States (see Lutz 2001). However, many gender studies scholars were at first reluctant to work with intersectionality for fear they might lose gender as the master category and disavow and weaken gender studies as a result (Bereswill and Neuber 2011, p. 62).

All in all, the contributions from the intersectionality debates to German migration research show that the social positions that emerge in contexts of migration are co-produced by an interplay of various dimensions of social inequality. This insight makes it possible to take a closer look at the gendered experiences and positions of migrantized individuals in their entanglement with other dimensions of inequality (Lenz 1996). It also allows scholars to analyze the mutual shaping of different privileged positionalities of whiteness and (middle-)class- and gender-specific dominance, as has been done empirically in a number of studies on transnational and care migration from Eastern Europe (Lutz 2011, 2018) and on migrantized hegemonic masculinity (Bereswill and Neuber 2011; Hearn 2011).

4 Who Speaks for the ›Migrant?‹ Critical Perspectives in Future Research on Gender and Migration

Despite the increasing visibility of gender-sensitive studies, a number of challenges remain for research on the nexus of gender and migration. These challenges concern two major issues: current entanglements of racism and sexism in anti-immigrant debates and politics (Hark and Villa 2017) and the lack of appropriately sensitive research tools that would allow sophisticated analyses of multiple gender and sexual identities in the framework of migration studies (Manalansan 2006). In the following, we will discuss key elements from three increasingly visible fields of research that exemplify these challenges: (1) postcolonial and decolonial approaches, (2) queer-sensitive migration research and (3) theory of postmigration.

(ad 1) Postcolonial (Bhabha 1994; Said 1978; Spivak 1988) and decolonial (Mignolo and Walsh 2018) perspectives on migration and gender relations have shown that migration movements are not only framed by migration and border regimes and certain forms of political membership; they also occur in the context of hegemonic postcolonial power relations (Castro Varela and Dhawan 2009a). Studies that draw on postcolonial and decolonial theories have contributed to the research on migratory movements by analyzing postcolonial entanglements that extend between countries of the Global North and South. They are based on the premise that postcolonial structures, living and working conditions originally created by colonialism produce the fundamental conditions of current migration processes. For instance, postcolonial scholar Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (2009) argues that colonialism, imperialism and transnational migration correspond to one another. Viewed in this light, current migrations such as those from Mexico to the United States and Canada or from Africa to Europe could be regarded as imperialist continuities of »a gender-specific division of the international labor market« (Castro Varela and Dhawan 2009b, p. 16, transl.), which have brought and continue to bring prosperity to the countries of the Global North at the expense of the Global South (Castro Varela and Dhawan 2005).

Because of their special focus on post-structural insights, especially those inspired by Michel Foucault, postcolonial approaches (e.g. Hall 1997) turn our attention to the entanglements of knowledge patterns and power relations. This discourse- and power-analytical direction of migration research explores conditions under which gendered and migrantized »subjects of power« are socially and politically generated (Rose 2015, p. 335). For this reason, postcolonial migration research focuses on processes of *othering* that is the devaluation of migrants by the ›white‹ majority society. For example, many of these studies analyze the racialization, ethnicization and gendering

of intellectual migrant women (e.g. Gutiérrez Rodríguez 1999), migrant positionalities (Spies 2010) or the emergence of excluding, precarious and subjectivizing effects of postcolonial orders of belonging (Mecheril 2003).

Whereas postcolonial approaches were largely inspired by post-structuralist and, partly overlapping with it, postmodernist thought, the aim of decolonial research, as a more recent body of literature, is to develop a more normative research program of ›delinking‹ from the (post)modernist heritage of social theories (Mignolo and Walsh 2018). To achieve this, decolonial approaches focus on the ›coloniality of migration‹, with particular reference to studies based on world systems theory (e.g. Bhabra 2017; Gutiérrez Rodríguez 2018). Categories such as ›race‹ (Quijano 2000) and ›gender‹ (Lugones 2007, 2008), but also various forms of citizenship (Boatcă and Roth 2015) are understood in this context as social figurations that are embedded in the ›coloniality of power‹ and (re)produce unequal cross-border life chances and positionalities. For this reason, representatives of decolonial thought propose to deconstruct racializing/ethnizing and gendering knowledge systems of post- and neocolonial contexts that either facilitate or restrict migration and social movements. One example is the aforementioned transnational labor migration of care workers from countries of the Global East or South to countries of the Global North. As research has consistently shown, the social mobility of female care workers in their receiving countries remains largely restricted by structures of institutional racism that is based on colonial knowledge patterns (Nghì Ha 2009). Therefore, both postcolonial and decolonial theory require us to regard powerful forms of colonial and postcolonial knowledge production as being related to precarious gendered life worlds, but also to forms of resistance (Castro Varela 2008; FeMigra 1994). This way of thinking shares some similarities with migration-sensitive queer studies (Kosnick 2011), of which queer diaspora studies is a paradigmatic field, as we shall see in the following.

(ad 2) While the emergence of queer studies goes back to a differentiation of subfields within feminist and gender research (Butler 1991), migration-sensitive queer studies is a relatively new research area (Kosnick 2011). It addresses heterogeneous issues related to multiple sexual and gender identities and a variety of different forms of intimate relations and positionalities in the context of transnational migration, mobility and settlement (Manalansan 2006). A paradigmatic example of such research are studies associated with the term ›queer diaspora‹. The term itself was coined by Gayatri Gopinath (2005), who sought to provide a methodology for analyzing non-heterosexual forms of desire, identifications, cultural positioning, practices and struggles (Klesse 2015, p. 136). Here, ›diaspora‹ is not defined in the traditional sense of a cross-generational ethnic or religious community in a specific geographic

location such as migrants' places of arrival and residence (e.g. Cohen 2008), but as a hybrid sociocultural space encompassing various gendered and sexualized ›forms of relationality within and between diasporic formations« (Klesse 2015, p. 136). A major objective of queer diaspora studies is to reveal diverse gender identities and sexualities that are reproduced beyond the heterosexual matrix (Butler 1991).

Proponents of queer diaspora studies (e.g. Haritaworn et al. 2008) also argue that migration research has given little attention to the social forms of sexualization of migrant and colonized ›others«, and that even research that does consider queer migrations tends to regard queer forms of sexualization as exceptional cases that stabilize the heterosexual norm (for criticism, see Kosnick 2011). For example, gay, lesbian and bisexual individuals are often not portrayed in such literature as active actors but as ›victims«, and current public debates on ›integration« tend to portray the ›white« ›majority society« as ›tolerant«, ›open« and ›civilized« and racialize the ›migrant population« as ›traditional«, ›dangerous« or ›anti-democratic« (for criticism, see Barglowski et al. 2017; Haritaworn et al. 2008).

Because the field of queer diaspora studies builds on and draws from discourse and queer theory, it has some overlap with the above-mentioned post- and decolonial approaches, which also reveal *othering processes* regarding gender and sexual relations in the context of powerful postcolonial orders of migration (Manalansan 2006). Studies that use such approaches explore various forms of ethnicization/racialization, gendering and sexualization that are attributed to particular social groups, such as German-Turkish or German-Asian queers. Some recent studies also show how, as a result of public debates on migration and integration in Germany, ›queer« individuals are constructed as ›white« and ›European«, and the ›majority society« as ›tolerant«. At the same time, citizens and migrants who are attributed as ›Muslims« are approached as being by definition heterosexual and homophobic (El-Tayeb 2012; Heidenreich 2005). Queer and feminist diaspora studies therefore seek to illuminate social categorizations and their power effects in relation to the interdependence of sexualization and gendering. They reveal the heteronormative assumptions of classical diaspora research, which is based on ideas of an intergenerational heterosexual reproduction of ›migrant diaspora communities«.

(ad 3) The concept of postmigration (Foroutan 2019) is another fresh attempt to revise the classical gender-blind theories of integration and assimilation. Though its analytical angle is not a gender-sensitive one by definition, it is worth being mentioned, particularly because of its normative-emancipatory orientation. Originally, the notion of ›postmigration« was first used by theatre maker and artistic director of the Berlin-based Maxim Gorki Theatre,

Shermin Langhoff. She imported the term from the theatre works of Canadian writers and literary studies' authors, and it was quickly taken on by German migration researchers. As the sociologist and educationalist Erol Yildiz (2016, p. 71f.) writes, the term ›postmigrant‹ is a deconstruction of polarizing interpretations like natives/migrants, *we* and *they*: It is supposed to create a ›contrapuntal view‹ which irritates and deconstructs hegemonic discourses on migration from the perspective and experience of migration, and is related to Foucault's genealogy and ideology-critical approaches of postcolonial theories. Here, as Yildiz argues, the focus is on entanglements, overlaps and transitions, which make visible other ideas about the construction of reality.

In a similar way, Naika Foroutan (2019, p. 19) argues that ›postmigrant‹ is concerned with negotiation processes after the recognition of Germany having become a country of migration or immigration when society defines itself in a new way. The ›post‹ points beyond the separating lines of migration. As the established codes *natives* versus *migrants* dissolve, other struggles for structural, social and indicative recognition, hidden behind the question of migration, become the focus of analysis. It is obvious that there are intersections analytical points of departure in the conceptualisation of the ›post-migrant‹ with decolonial and queer perspectives; all of the use intersectionality as heuristic tool (see Huxel et al. 2020).

5 Outlook

Concluding this article, we would like to address a question regarding how future migration studies can benefit from these fields of research? In our view, this question is best answered by showing how the three fields can contribute to the future alternative forms of academic knowledge production. First, according to the post- and decolonial approaches, migration research can be considered as a gendered and sexualized colonial project (Mignolo and Walsh 2018). In order to decolonize and delink migration research from its colonial heritage, it is necessary to identify post- and neo-colonial knowledge patterns still visible in migration studies (e.g. colonial traces in the concept of ›integration‹, see Schinkel 2018). Second, decolonizing not only involves a ›strategic forgetting‹ (Araujo 2020) of the modernist heritage in migration studies, but also reflecting on naturalized gender-related knowledge (e.g. ›active men‹/›passive women‹) migration scholars often generate either explicitly or implicitly. By revealing naturalized gender- and sexuality-related assumptions, we will be able to ask »Who speaks in the name of ›migrants?‹« (Lutz 2020). By addressing this question, we will see that knowledge production in European migration research is often reproduced from the standpoint of the ›majority society‹ (on standpoint theory, see Har-

away 1988). In particular, quantitative studies of ›integration‹ and ›assimilation‹ are largely shaped by the ›white male heteronormative‹ perspective, which relies on a male breadwinner role model to examine such issues as ›labor market integration‹ or ›immigrant‹ fertility. In other words, the analytical distinction between the ›majority society‹ and ›immigrant minorities‹ in need of ›integration‹ is itself a result of the privileged social position of the ›male‹ scholar, who is a representative of the ›majority society‹. Finally, queer (diaspora), postmigrant and decolonial studies invite us to reveal our own privileged or subordinated standpoints while doing migration research and to transform our research subjects' experiences of gendered and sexualized subordinations into sources of alternative knowledge production within the contested research field of migration studies.

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