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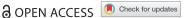Published online: 12 Oct 2022.

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INTRODUCTION

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Spatial and social im/mobility in forced migration: revisiting class

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ABSTRACT

This editorial makes the case for revisiting class in the context of forced migration. We argue that this is necessary to better grasp the inherent diversity of forced migrants. Forced-migration research has increasingly considered aspects of differentiation, such as race or gender. Yet, scholarly work on social class in this field remains scarce. We argue that forced migrants are wrongly homogenised as 'poor' or 'class-less', and show how class-related capitals and their transferability and convertibility remain important determinants of their spatial and social (im)mobility. We develop this angle by first giving an overview of the class concepts developed by Marx, Weber, and Bourdieu, and the ways the authors of this special issue employed these concepts. Building our arguments on the contributions to this special issue that engage in empirical analyses in diverse settings, we display how social class and the different forms of capital available to forced migrants influence their perception and capacity for spatial mobility. Moreover, we discuss how class at a given moment shapes forced migrants' future social mobility in new settings. We conclude by highlighting the considerable variation in socio-economic backgrounds of forced migrants and discussing the effects of the categorisation as 'refugee'.

1. Introduction

This special issue makes the case for revisiting class in the study of forced migration to better grasp the inherent diversity of the demographics, aspirations, and forms of capital, as well as emic and etic categorizations of forced migrants. Although research has increasingly considered aspects of differentiation, such as ethnicity, race, gender, and religion, class as an axis of stratification remains less studied in forced-migration

research, aside from a few notable exceptions (e.g. Van Hear 2014; Bonjour and Chauvin 2018; Ellermann 2020; Pearlman 2020). Our leading question is how social class, understood as a multifaceted concept incorporating objective socioeconomic positions, subjective positioning strategies, and self-perceptions (see also Faist, Fröhlich, and Stock 2021, 85), relates to the social and spatial im/mobility of forced migrants whose journeys are often highly fragmented, that is, whose journeys entail shorter or longer periods of waiting, being stuck, and of being in limbo (Missbach 2015; Stock 2019). Ultimately, we seek to demystify homogenizations of forced migrants as 'poor' and/or 'class-less' and show how class-related forms of capital and particularly their transferability and convertibility remain an important determinant of their spatial and social (im)mobility.

Our arguments in this introduction are based on the contributions to this special issue that cover diverse geographical perspectives, focusing on forced migrants from African, Middle Eastern, and Asian contexts, all of them having crossed national borders, moving to neighbouring and farther European countries. We use the term 'forced migrants' to refer to persons who relocate due to violence, persecution, wars, civil conflicts, natural disasters, and similar events (whether within their country or by crossing national borders). In doing so, we avoid the confusion between legally recognised refugees and those who are not (yet) recognised (FitzGerald and Arar 2018) and acknowledge some forced migrants object to being identified as refugees (ibid; see also Suerbaum 2020).

In line with other scholars, we propose that 'forced' and 'voluntary' migration are ideal types on different continua, most notably the 'continuum of compulsion' (FitzGerald and Arar 2018, 393). Forced migration is typically closer to the compulsion pole, which is characterised by limited options (FitzGerald and Arar 2018; Erdal and Oeppen 2018). It is also often described as a less planned endeavour; for example, forced migrants must often leave their countries on short notice with little control over when and with little time to prepare and plan for migration (Chiswick and Miller 2001, 394). However, the complex relationship between political, social, and economic factors of any type of migration and their significance can change over time and space (e.g. Crawley and Skleparis 2018) and put individuals, sometimes simultaneously, in different locations on these continua (Kogan and Kalter 2020).

We study forced migration in dialogue with the mobilities paradigm, because the lives of forced migrants are characterised by an inherent tension between spatial movement and staying put, but also between upward and downward social mobility. Scholarship has focused on inequalities concealed beneath the 'wonderful new world of mobility' metaphor, with attention to the nexus between mobility and immobility as well as to power relations and ever-changing localities (Massey 2005; Glick Schiller and Salazar 2013; Kalir 2013; Besteman 2019). Mobility can be a major resource for refugees and is evocative of their agency, illuminating the complexity of strategies and the interaction of uncertainty, risk, and fear defining their choices (Gill, Caletrío, and Mason 2011, 308). Moreover, analyzing forced migration through the lens of mobility helps us understand the complexity of forced migrants' fragmented journeys (Collyer 2010) as well as situations of involuntary (im)mobility (Lubkemann 2008). The fragmentation is in large part due to the exclusionary laws of nation-states from which forced migrants depart, through which they transit, and in which they seek to arrive. Although migration regulations often seek to curb mobility, the same legal hindrances that are set up to prevent onward mobility of unwanted migrants can also cause them to be 'stuck in motion' (Lems

and Tošić 2019, 8; see also Wyss 2019), which further contributes to fragmentation. Therefore, although fragmentation may stem from circumstances beyond forced migrants' control, forced migrants may also choose to interrupt their trajectories in line with their changing plans, aspirations, and adaptive strategies.

Taking the fragmented nature of forced migrants' journeys to heart, this introduction develops a two-fold argument. First, economic, social, cultural cultural and other forms of capital of forced migrants influences the level of fragmentation of their journeys and, second, this fragmentation, in turn, affects the extent to which this these capitals can be transferred to a new place and converted to another type of capital. Moreover, both the level of fragmentation and the ability to transfer capitals affect forced migrants' social mobility in their new environment.

In the remainder of this introduction, we briefly introduce in section 2 the papers included in this special issue. Section 3 discusses what we mean by 'Revisiting Class', by briefly presenting the approaches by Marx, Weber, and Bourdieu and outlining how class is complicated by migration and the transnational situatedness of migrants. Section 4 then moves on to investigating (1) the effects of social class on spatial (im)mobility in the context of forced migration and (2) the effects of class at a given moment on future social (im)mobility. Both sections underline which aspects matter for the transferability (from one setting to another) and convertibility (into each other) of class-related capital.

2. Outline of the special issue

The contributions cover social and spatial mobility in different modalities: aspirations for moving on and returning, upward and downward social mobility, and 'stasis' in refugee camps. One common thread is whether one is able to 'move on' with one's life trajectory during forced displacement and how this ability relates to one's socioeconomic background. Another overarching aspect is whether forms of capital are convertible and transferable to different spatial contexts and are thus inherently 'mobile'. Furthermore, the contributions cover a variety of regional class structures and perceptions thereof.

The first two contributions by Scharrer and Suerbaum (2022) and Üstübici and Elçi (2022) explore the relationship between mobility aspirations and social class through the experiences and trajectories of forced migrants who moved to proximate countries of refuge. Scharrer and Suerbaum show how forced migrants negotiate, maintain, and reclaim their class positions when deciding to stay in proximate places of refuge by using similarities in lifestyle and living conditions, distancing themselves from the refugee label, and by becoming entrepreneurs, transferring different sorts of capital to their current context. Üstübici and Elçi analyze why forced migrants choose to stay in Turkey, a so-called transit country. The authors argue, in a similar vein to Scharrer and Suerbaum, that life satisfaction, perceived cultural similarities, and a sense of inclusion define decisions to stay, particularly for those who could bring in 'start-up' capital.

The next three papers investigate the nexus between spatial (im)mobility and social mobility in connection to the refugee policies: Boeyink and Falisse (2022), Rudolf (2022) in the highly exclusionary context of Tanzania, and Hough (2022) in Korea. Boeyink and Falisse analyze the situation in refugee camps and conclude class differences

are flattened almost completely due to restrictive encampment policies. Rudolf, by contrast, focuses on forced migrants settling in cities and finds many manage to maintain some class stability, yet at the high price of illegalisation, discrimination, and precarious living conditions. Hough's piece highlights power relations even more, by analyzing how government policy influences the social status of North Koreans in South Korea. Being depicted as both vulnerable and undeserving affects their social mobility, integration, and experience of belonging in South Korea.

The last two papers by Bygnes (2022) and Stock (2022) look at the processes of socioeconomic positioning of forced migrants in Europe. Bygnes discusses how highly educated forced migrants from Syria in Norway resist exclusionary, interwoven social boundaries they encounter in political rhetoric, the public sphere, and day-to-day life, by drawing on middle-class resources and lifestyle preferences. Similarly, Stock focuses on forced migrants' individual perceptions of mobility as symbolic capital enhancing their social status. She argues these perceptions are influenced by migrants' position in specific national and transnational status hierarchies, as well as the degree of control they perceive they have over their (im)mobility choices.

3. Revisiting class

3.1. Approaches to and critique of class

The authors of this special issue engage with class from three perspectives. Boeyink and Falisse use the Marxian concept of exploitation. According to Marx, exploitation means that in a capitalist system, those working do surplus work (beyond subsistence) for the profit of those owning the means of production and capital. Already Marx ([1869] 1960, 139) postulates that living in similar socioeconomic conditions results in similar perceptions of life, ways of thinking, and shared political interests. The other two approaches used in this special issue delve further into these different elements by decoupling them. Social class, following Weber (Hough 2022), refers to life chances based on resources (property and income generated through occupation) – a definition also used in recent conceptualizations of class (e.g. Savage et al. 2013). In addition to social class, Weber ([1922] 1980) acknowledges status, based on lifestyle, education, and descent, and political association as further dimensions of social differentiation. Bourdieu (1984, 101), who likewise writes about 'objective classes' of people 'placed in homogeneous conditions of existence', introduces the idea of different, convertible forms of capital (economic, social, cultural, and symbolic) and emphasizes ascribed social class, that is, markers interpreted by others and the individuals themselves. Several contributions follow this line of thought. They demonstrate the significance of particular types of capital, such as economic and legal (Üstübici and Elçi; Stock; Scharrer and Suerbaum), for mobility trajectories or the intricacy of converting capital due to the lack of recognition of social status markers in the country of residence (Bygnes). Therefore, although informed by these three approaches, this special issue understands social class as distinctively shaped by the combination and accumulation of the different forms of capital (see also Savage et al. 2013, 5), with class positions transnationally and individually (re-)negotiated.

The literature has questioned the applicability of the concept of class beyond the modern European context, particularly in three regards: its transferability to social structures different from the ones where it was developed, namely, the Western European societies (for an overview of this debate concerning Africa, see O'Kane and Scharrer 2018); its relevance beyond highly industrialised market economist countries; and its adaption to changing global social structures.

We think the general ideas of the concept developed by the founding figures remain valid across time and space. For Marx ([1869] 1960, 197), for instance, class as similar economic conditions of existence and/or as a means of organising and as perceiving oneself are not specific to a certain place or time. Weber ([1922] 1980) writes about social class only with respect to market economies and refers to status as another dimension of differentiation important specifically for societies not permeated entirely by market values, yet for both class and status, his ideas are not attached to a territory but rather to economic and social structures. Bourdieu (1984) aims at combining these two aspects, economic class and status. Although his way of theory-making is very context-specific, his ideas have been applied fruitfully to other contexts, showing classes 'arise through the conjunction of two partially independent forces' (Weininger 2005, 116), namely, the structure of social spaces and how class is perceived.

Other authors have claimed class cannot be used as a universal concept outside the highly industrialised Euro-American market economist context. Yet, capitalist market structures and values are now significant factors operating globally (Boltanski and Chiapello 2005). Coe and Pauli (2020, 4) show migration can often be regarded as an attempt to resolve the uneven distribution of capital resulting from global capitalism. This 'ideology' of capitalism (Piketty 2020) also influences aspirations to belong to what could be akin to a global middle class (Schielke 2012) and the idea that upward social mobility is possible, with migration being one important pathway. Therefore, we argue that with capitalism having established social values linked to market societies globally, class also matters beyond the regions where this concept was established.

Processes of individualisation have been used as another argument against the usage of the class concept for contemporary societies, leading to a dissolution of entities that can be called classes. These processes would be expected to result in new 'post-class' forms of inequality (Beck 2007). However, social class in the Weberian sense of influencing life chances still matters virtually everywhere, and research shows socioeconomic positioning shapes how one thinks in a more individualised world (e.g. Savage et al. 2013).

Therefore, we argue that in spite of its criticisms, class is a useful concept, alongside other forms of social differentiation, such as status (Weber [1922] 1980), race, and gender (Anthias 2005). As the papers in this special issue show, the core concepts – (1) economic conditions of existence (Marx), (2) resources, including qualifications, shaping life chances and market opportunities (Weber), and (3) social standing (Bourdieu) – remain general mechanisms that are applicable across different spatial and temporal contexts. The concept of class furthermore allows for a perspective that combines considerations of socioeconomic structure or stratification with attention to subjectively experienced lifeworlds, aspirations, and agency. Therefore, the concept of social class provides us with a comprehensive and theoretically solid foundation for our inquiry.

3.2. Class as complicated by migration

The concept of and research about class is complicated by migration, especially when border crossings are involved (Weiss 2005; Coe and Pauli 2020; Faist, Fröhlich, and Stock 2021). On the one hand, spatial and social mobility are interrelated, as we discuss below. On the other hand, class is more difficult to grasp when explored in a transnational setting, which inevitably is the case with forced migrants who relate to multiple places either through their own and/or family's migration.

Most class conceptualizations and research refer to specific bounded contexts, mainly at the nation-state level, and do not address migrants' transnational class-making (Weiss 2005). This nation-state focus is partly due to the role of quantitative research in this field and the difficulties of operationalisation across national borders. Most contemporarily applied class schemes, for example, the Erikson-Goldthorpe-Portocarero scheme (1979), use occupational titles to infer categories of control/supervision of work and the educational qualifications needed as defining criteria of social position. Some of these class schemes have been created to enable cross-national comparisons mainly in the US and Western-European contexts, yet using them as tools to grasp local contextualizations of the status and tasks linked to specific names of occupations turned out to be difficult (Bergman and Joye 2005, 8, 28–29). This focus on occupation and education also plays a role in the widely applied differentiation between unskilled and skilled labour migration, which also failed to problematise the transferability of skills in transnational contexts and in particular ignored the ways in which forced migrants became deskilled in the process.

To overcome these methodological challenges and to carve out a space for the influence of migration, several scholars have suggested new approaches to class. Faist, Fröhlich, and Stock (2021, 85) introduce a multifaceted research approach, looking at 'objective social positions, subjective social positioning strategies, transnational approaches to the study of social positions and self-positioning, and social boundary theory'. Ambiguities can exist not only regarding the different yet simultaneous social positions migrants can occupy in various places, but also in their evaluation of their social position and the ascription by others. According to Faist, Fröhlich, and Stock (2021), stratification in the transnational social space occurs in an interplay between various forms of differentiation, with class being one 'marker of difference along with others, such as gender, ethnicity, race, or religion' (ibid., 86). Similarly, Coe and Pauli (2020) speak of multiple social-class transformations for migrants, related to their various spatial and structural connections. They highlight the increasing 'awareness of inequality and a wish to belong' due to migration (ibid., 4), mirroring the two approaches suggested by Faist, Fröhlich, and Stock (2021), namely, social comparison traversing national borders and boundary-making vis-à-vis those who are not perceived to belong.

Scholars have also specifically focused on migrants' use of different strategies of positioning in the transnational space. In her research about Polish migrants in Germany, Nowicka (2013, 34–35) distinguishes between three types of positioning: in the 'single-space' of one country, as 'bi-local' when capital obtained in one country is used to improve the position in another country, and 'overlapping' in 'continuous conversions in two directions, thereby migrants live almost parallel lives, being embedded in two countries simultaneously'. Other authors have shown transnational positionings in the

context of migration can lead to a 'status paradox'. Nieswand (2014), for instance, through the example of Ghanaian migrants who lived in Europe for a few years and then returned to Ghana, reveals how, as unskilled labour migrants, they usually held a low status in the receiving country because of the kind of employment they were in, but simultaneously gained status in the regions of origin because of the relatively high wages they earned. This relatively high status, however, often 'lacks conventional legitimation, such as high education, prestigious occupation, and/or descent', creating 'irritations to the established middle classes' (ibid., 404).

The authors in this special issue make wide use of the approaches outlined above and thereby prove their applicability to different contexts of forced migration. As we show in the next section, contributors analyze boundary making (e.g. Bygnes) and social comparison across state borders (e.g. Üstübici and Elçi, Scharrer and Suerbaum) to understand the structures of social inequality and migrants' strategies. This approach opens a window to understand how migrants negotiate their multi-layered social status, which becomes particularly complex with the attached 'refugee' label, even in co-nationalist contexts (Hough), and how these strategies are entangled with (im)mobility aspirations. The contributions also detect instances of status paradox (e.g. Stock) because, despite higher levels of uncertainty and fragmentation, forced migrants might perceive themselves as having a higher status than co-citizens in the regions of origin.

4. Forced migration and class

Although we agree with scholars (e.g. Erdal and Oeppen 2018; FitzGerald and Arar 2018; Kogan and Kalter 2020) that research on forced migration should be conducted in close reference to general research on migration, we argue that, regarding social class, the peculiarities of forced migration accentuate two conditions. *First*, given that we use the term forced migration for im/mobility as a consequence of violent conflict or disaster, the conditions of initially leaving or of staying put often occur under circumstances of compulsion, limiting the range of options available for migration and other life opportunities. *Second*, even though migration is much more complex than what a linear phase model of departure-journey-arrival suggests, forced migrants' journeys require nuanced attention to their high degree of fragmentation. During these fragmented journeys, forced migrants might spend extended periods in refugee camps or stay self-settled in neighbouring regions and countries. These contexts, initially consider transitory, can become long-term destinations or places of protracted displacement (see also the 'in-between' in Crawley and Jones 2021), a transformation likewise influenced by class.

Following Mookherjee's warning (2011, 405) about the overemphasis on 'poor' refugees, we draw attention to the various forms of capital migrants might have at their disposal, the convertibility of different forms of capital in the migration context, and the subjective dimension of class positions manifested in self-descriptions of previous and current class belonging as well as class aspirations. Building on the conceptualisation of migration as a continuum and social class as emerging out of economic, cultural, and social capital, as well as their different symbolic appropriations, we address two intrinsically related but analytically distinct questions about the impact of social class (background) on spatial and social (im)mobility.

4.1. Class and spatial (im)mobility

Sociological and economic migration theory (e.g. Borjas 1989; Massey et al. 1998), mostly inspired by 'labor/economic' migration, conceptualises the decision to migrate and the choice of the destination country as individuals or families considering the costs and benefits of staying versus leaving within the constraints set by immigration policies. This reasoning often portrays staying as the less risky choice. One conclusion from this framework is that relocation generally implies considerable costs, and therefore, migrants usually do not come from the lowest strata of a country of origin and are typically also not from the highest strata (e.g. Van Hear 2014, 111/113), because for the latter, the benefits of staying are usually higher than the benefits of moving. Therefore, migrants tend to be positively selected from the middle classes (e.g. Spörlein et al. 2020). Destination choices are influenced by the costs of migration, geographic distance, cultural similarity, a common language or religion, and links through colonial legacies, trade, or politics (Ferrie and Hatton 2015). Previous immigration from a given country is the most dominant factor (ibid., Massey et al. 1998), which corresponds to social networks reducing the costs of relocation and making the decision less risky and the move more predictable.

In contrast to the above conceptualisation of migration decisions, the initial relocation of forced migrants is usually triggered by some form of crisis, which includes the compulsion to be mobile, and is often marked by less time for planning, preparation, and researching information on possible destinations (FitzGerald and Arar 2018). Moreover, when migration is triggered by armed conflicts, the set of possible destinations that are safe to reach might be further constrained. Recent attempts to develop integrated theories of migration have sought to account for instances of mobility and immobility in migration journeys, attentive to the macro as well as micro levels of analysis, temporalities of migration, and both structural factors and migrants' agency (e.g. Carling 2002; Carling and Collins 2018; de Haas 2021). At the heart of such integrated theories lies a fundamental analytical distinction between migration aspirations and capabilities or abilities, as a two-step approach that is concerned with explaining who, among those aspiring to migrate, are able to do so. Paying attention to the conditions of forced migration, de Haas (2021, 27) holds that the movement of refugees and other 'distress migrants' should be categorised as 'involuntary mobility', because staying is not an option in life-threatening conditions.

The *first* corollary of these conditions is that, compared with the voluntary end of the continuum of migration, we presume that beyond the middle class, a broader range of individuals and families wish to leave, resulting in a marked heterogeneity of forced migrants from the same region. Even though some form of stratification concerning ways to leave a region and reach a safe (first) destination (Van Hear 2004) will likely arise, when analyzing all forced migrants who *initially* relocated due to a crisis, we will probably not find the same middle-class selection as above. Travelling farther, however, typically requires more resources (Pearlman 2020) or is facilitated through resettlement programmes. By contrast, research in more distant destination countries such as the US (Feliciano 2005) or Germany (Spörlein et al. 2020) documents more heterogeneity regarding social class within the group of 'refugees' and the group of 'labor' migrants than between these groups. Yet, in line with the first argument, research on Syrians shows only a limited number and/or group of forced migrants can 'afford'

onward journeys by making use of their class-related capitals. For instance, studies show only Syrians with relatively high education levels (Khourshed et al. 2019; Spörlein et al. 2020) or with middle-class backgrounds (Pearlman 2020) arrived in Germany compared with countries neighbouring Syria.

Who wants to and is able to afford an onward journey leads to the second specificity of the conditions of forced migration: the fragmentation of journeys. Forced migrants may find themselves more often in first destinations they may not have moved to under different circumstances – if they would have moved at all. Having relocated to a suboptimal (first) destination also has implications for their further mobility aspirations and fragmentation of their journeys. Fragmented journeys might entail different combinations of voluntary or involuntary im/mobility, various legal categorizations (i.e. regular as well as 'irregular' border crossings), and phases of upward and downward social mobility. Here, we see class-related capital affects forced migrants' journeys, particularly by determining their access to 'infrastructures' that mediate migration processes (Xiang and Lindquist 2014). For example, economic capital enables the use of 'services' that facilitate fast, safe, or distant movements, whereas cultural and social capital enable knowledge of these 'services' and the assessment of their reliability. In addition to affecting the extent of fragmentation mainly via capabilities influencing the number and length of phases of involuntary immobility (Van Hear 2004; de Haas 2021), class influences ideas of where to migrate. One could add that others might decide to stay as well if they are afraid to lose their livelihood or may even profit from conflict (see Kothari 2003).

These ideas are exemplified but also further complicated by the contributions to our issue. Scharrer and Suerbaum's article comparing the mobility and class-making practices of forced migrants in 'proximate places of refuge', namely, Syrians in Egypt and Somalians in Kenya, show forced migrants do not necessarily stay in the region, because of their limited financial resources. Another important motive is the capacity to 'blend in' due to the perceived similarities in lifestyle and the resulting potential to create distance between self-perceptions and the 'refugee label'. Similarly, Üstübici and Elçi show the role of perceived cultural/religious similarities in aspirations to stay in a neighbouring country through a mixed-methods study of Syrians in Turkey. They also show forced migrants who arrived with little capital and have not been able to convert it in their new settings are primarily the ones who hold on to mobility aspirations.

Forced migrants may also be able to travel farther. Boeyink and Falisse illustrate how onward migration requires considerable economic, social, and cultural capital even within the same region, and therefore, this option is limited to a privileged class. In the Tanzanian camp they analysed, they found primarily poor rural Hutus from Burundi. Stock's contribution reveals that for forced migrants who move beyond neighbouring countries, in her case, to Germany, lower amounts of economic and cultural capital affect the control that migrants exercise over their trajectories, leaving them with fewer options regarding timing and means. These contributions therefore underline not only the impact of class-related capital on migrants' journeys, but also the heterogeneity of class backgrounds among forced migrants, once again displacing the prominent notion of 'poor refugees'.

As a result, we observe a wide variety of experiences in forced migrants' journeys in terms of being able to plan and control their migration or having to move (on)

hastily. Moreover, we observe different levels of fragmentation, from reaching a stable place of refuge immediately, to fleeing to places which were thought to be transitory yet developed into places of settlement, to finding oneself in places which remain short-term escapes, e.g. because of legal regulations, and might trigger another hasty and unplanned move. Being able to avoid the last scenario or finding a way to move on in a planned way is again influenced by class background, especially the accumulation and convertibility of sufficient capital. Moreover, class influences the journey itself, with those who have less capital at their disposal likely to experience fleeing differently than those who have better access to economic, cultural, and social capital.

Scholarship on migration has underlined the significance of the convertibility of different types of capital for spatial mobility purposes. Kim (2018, 263) theorises the interaction of aspiring migrants and migration brokers[1] over the processes 'through which various resources are turned into migration-facilitating capital', which is unevenly distributed. Bringing temporality into the picture, Moret (2020) displays the intrinsic intertwinement of moments of mobility and immobility and demonstrates the cumulative nature of capital convertibility: although the creation of mobility capital among Somali forced migrants depends on local anchoring, once attained, it can be employed to negotiate social status transnationally. Similarly, scholars have underlined the role of 'legal capital', such as having a passport, secure legal status, or know-how about legal procedures (e.g. Al-Sharmani 2006; Bauder 2008; Kaşlı 2016; Scharrer 2020), in enabling multiple mobility practices.

Several articles in our issue advance these insights by evidencing which types of capital matter the most in which contexts and how convertibility plays out for mobility purposes. Whereas Scharrer and Suerbaum argue cultural capital can be decisive in enabling spatial mobility to proximate places of refuge, Üstübici and Elçi stress the significance of economic capital at the onset of displacement in shaping opportunities for settlement. Yet, in their focus on further mobility aspirations, Üstübici and Elçi also note conversion to migration-specific capital, including legal (i.e. acquiring a passport) and social (i.e. maintaining and extending transnational networks) capital, remain key for spatial mobility. Stock complements this picture by evidencing how forced migrants who have arrived in Germany with higher levels of economic and relevant cultural capital were more capable of converting those forms of capital into legal capital. Yet, she also shows forced migrants interviewed for her study were weary of the conversion of their capital, accumulated under difficult circumstances, into mobility capital and did not perceive onward migration to be a strategy to enhance status.

4.2 . Class and social (im)mobility

The leading question of this section is how class at a given moment, and the capital related to it, shape forced migrants' future social mobility during their often-fragmented journeys. Scholars have grappled with the transferability and convertibility of migrants' pre-departure economic and cultural capitals, through various adaptations of the Bourdieusian framework into migration studies. In her work criticising 'rucksack approaches' that reify migrants' cultural and human capital as static variables, Erel (2010) draws attention to the dynamic and context-dependent negotiations of convertibility that legitimize certain types of capital as migration-specific cultural capital but not others. Using

the example of Turkish migrants in Germany and the UK, she shows how the successful validation of migration-specific cultural capital (e.g. language use) results in new intra-migrant distinctions (Turkish-speaking vs. Kurdish-speaking) and grants differential life chances. Others have shown high social status is not always transferable in migration contexts (Jansen 2008, 182). Furthermore, although middle/upper-class backgrounds can ease the start in a new country, the high expectations often linked to that background can also lead to frustration and to giving up entirely (Kleist 2010, 198).

As we have argued, the situations of conflict or crisis might cause a loss of capital and may entice precipitated movements. In such circumstances, the first move is in many cases not related to the economic conditions in a destination country (Ruiz and Vargas-Silva 2015). In neighbouring countries, competition due to increased labour supply may result in difficulties in transferring and using resources and may impede social mobility for forced migrants (ibid.). Situations of conflict and crisis can also involve the sudden loss of resources and the inability to prove one's previous socioeconomic status in the country of settlement, thus disturbing established social hierarchies (see, e.g. Suerbaum 2020). Even though these levelling effects often prevail only for a certain period, some forced migrants experience downward social mobility for a long time or even their entire lives.

Levelling effects not only emerge in situations of violence and flight, but also due to refugee policies. Boeyink and Falisse, who focus on the situation in Tanzanian camps, highlight that levelling effects take place mainly due to the strict Tanzanian refugee policy. Except for North-to-South Korean migration analyzed by Hough, all contributions deal with forced migrants who either get some form of temporary refugee residence status or remain undocumented. The various temporary residence permits as well as being undocumented cause varying degrees of constraints, for example, concerning access to the regular labour market (Becker and Ferrara 2019, 8). However, class resources can help one navigate the political-administrative commotion of migration regimes. Cultural capital may help in making a claim for asylum more credible (e.g. Wikström and Johansson 2014). Hough (2022) illustrates the advantages of cultural capital, that is, being fluent in the destination country's language and being able to adopt a local accent.

The politics surrounding the 'refugee label', be it in the form of an official residence status or as a broadly applied categorisation, show societal (mis)recognition in the destination country matters for social mobility. Hough explains North Korean refugees do not face legal constraints upon arrival in South Korea; rather, they are entitled to citizenship and support immediately. However, being perceived as refugees and dependent on welfare affects their lives negatively. Turner (2020) stresses that perceptions of refugees in the humanitarian sector are not uniform but often correlate with 'colonial hierarchies of race'. For instance, humanitarian workers in Jordan portray Syrian refugees as 'natural traders' and entrepreneurs, whereas 'African' refugees are seen as passive welfare recipients. Ellermann's (2020) analysis of 'hierarchies of migrants' points to similar distinctions regarding who can use their resources and how they can be applied to a social mobility project. Depending on how the destination society perceives them, some forced migrants will have more opportunities to make use of their resources, whereas other groups will not be able to deploy their resources. In a similar vein, Scharrer and Suerbaum and Bygnes discuss how the refugee label equates with a low-status category. Bygnes' work on

Syrian migrants in Norway illustrates the burden of overcoming the boundaries demarcated by 'refugeeness'. The categorisation of specific groups as 'refugees' is also linked to issues of visibility versus the potential to blend in, an argument that Scharrer and Suerbaum elaborate on in their contribution on forced migrants in proximate places of refuge.

Within the range of forced migrants' (fragmented) journeys described above, we can distinguish additional aspects of how class background might influence social mobility. The perception of being in a stable and generally suitable destination or a 'deadlock' can depend on many factors, for example, changes in policy in the destination country but also individual differences regarding aspirations for social mobility and assessment of opportunities in the country of (temporary) settlement.

For forced migrants whose journey is not strongly fragmented by situations of involuntary mobility and immobility, the process of transferring capital may be experienced as relatively smooth. Given the context dependency of cultural capital, such as educational qualifications, an initial downward social mobility is to be expected; however, forced migrants who had the opportunity to deliberately select a destination country and have had the economic resources to make it there are often able to rebuild their socioeconomic status. Scharrer and Suerbaum show forced migrants who have the resources to choose might remain in 'proximate places of refuge' to maintain or rebuild a socioeconomic status similar to the one they held in their country of origin. Stock describes another interesting case: a forced migrant from Iraq who had a degree in German literature. Her education points to a high-class background, and even though Germany was not the preferred destination, she could use the limited set of choices to establish herself economically due to her cultural capital. However, the fact that she did not receive refugee status in accordance with the 1951 Geneva convention resulted in heightened uncertainty. As Bygnes shows, the legal security of the refugee status is, however, often coupled with stigmatising stereotypes, making it a constraining label at the same time.

When looking at the other extreme, that is, contexts when forced migrants find themselves in continuous situations of forced (im)mobility in combination with heightened uncertainty, for example, protracted displacement in refugee camps, the picture changes. Forced migrants from lower-class backgrounds often experience forced immobility, as in the Tanzanian camps analyzed by Boeyink and Falisse. The authors find the remaining differences in resources have hardly changed the everyday life of camp inhabitants, and they coin the term 'a camped class'; that is, the camp situation further 'flattens' the (limited) economic stratification. One of the few remaining class differences is that those few who can mobilise more resources utilise them to leave the camp. The case of self-settled urban forced migrants analyzed by Rudolf exemplifies how a change in policy renders a destination country previously assumed to be a long-term place of settlement into one with features of forced immobility and heightened uncertainty. While Tanzania was characterised as a 'safe haven' for forced migrants who could settle in urban areas, authorities started to enforce a strict encampment policy in 2017, which made it much harder for displaced persons to settle outside the camps. The cases Rudolf discusses are unique to some extent, in that all forced migrants interviewed had established themselves well before the stricter enforcement of the encampment policy and could mobilise their relationships with locals to partially shield them from

the adverse effects. Rudolf concludes the discussed policy and other structural obstacles result in relative inertia regarding social mobility.

Finally, forced migrants might find themselves in destination countries that some perceive as a long-term solution, whereas others may have initially regarded them as transitory places. Üstübici and Elçi analyze Syrian migrants in Turkey and illustrate the complex interplay of how aspirations, the amount of resources Syrians were able to transfer to Turkey, and the initial settlement experience shape aspirations to move on to other countries in Europe or to succeed in Turkey. The authors stress that successful conversion of initial capital raised life satisfaction in Turkey, allowed for social mobility – or rebuilding of previous class position – and closed off the option of further mobility with a reasoning of avoiding to 'start from zero' for many. Yet, those with lower resources to begin with had limited recourse to social mobility, thereby keeping their migration aspirations alive.

5. Conclusion

The contributions in this special issue focus on two main questions, namely, the impact of social class and the different related types of capital on (1) forced migrants' spatial mobility and migration journeys, particularly the level of fragmentation, and (2) forced migrants' social mobility in the contexts of reception, transit, and protracted displacement. The authors and the special issue together stress the significance of the transferability and convertibility of different types of capital in enabling spatial and social mobility, as well as avoiding involuntary immobility.

First, the contributions in this issue that cover diverse geographic foci and a variety of socioeconomic contexts show the concepts – economic conditions of existence (Marx); resources, including qualifications, shaping life chances and market opportunities (Weber); and social standing and types of capital (Bourdieu) – are applicable across different spatial contexts, including the applicability for research on forced migration. Fruitfully engaging with social class contributes to the explanation of mobility and settlement intentions, processes, and outcomes in a diverse range of settings. The fluid understanding of class as distinctively formed through the combination of different forms of capital, which themselves are transnational, combined with the theoretical foundations, for example, on the convertibility of resources, allows the capture of relevant heterogeneity among forced migrants in their endowment with different forms of capital and how they shape their lives in a new country. Therefore, social class as a comprehensive and theoretically rich concept not only emerges as a significant marker of forced-migration research, but also opens fruitful new avenues, for example, researching different patterns of capital conversion and convertibility more systematically.

Coming back to the questions posed in the beginning, the contributions to the special issue decidedly show social class shapes spatial mobility. A continuous negotiation process concerning the decision(s) to stay or migrate frequently dominates forced migrants' fragmented journeys, which are constrained by the conditions and regulations in the various countries of settlement. Yet, forced migrants' capacity to have control over their migration journeys also depends on their accumulated capital, which also determines their convertibility and transferability. Importantly, we find that not only economic but also cultural and legal capital help determine the fragmentation of migration

journeys. Every move changes the parameters of subsequent decisions and the kinds of capital available.

Regarding the impact of class on social (im)mobility, the special issue demonstrates more concretely how, along the transferability of forced migrants' capitals, subjectively experienced lifeworlds remain crucial to our understanding of forced migrants' trajectories. Here, two types of categorizations and/or ascriptions that homogenise forced migrants seem particularly relevant: their 'refugeehood' and their 'poorness'.

To start with the complexities arising from migrants' categorisation as 'refugee', this categorisation concerns temporary legal statuses and restrictions tied to them, the social categorisation by others, and forced migrants' strategies of negotiating their status and class position to 'escape' this categorisation. Contributions to this special issue stress that the successful renegotiation of being categorised as 'refugee' depends on forced migrants' class-related resources, which also shape their lives in destination countries. Concerning ascribed social class, that is, markers interpreted by others and the individuals themselves, or social standing based on descent, the 'refugee category' shows features of 'a social class', most notably regarding the decision-making process concerning staying versus onward migration or with respect to shaping economic activity. Yet, in the examples collected in this special issue, the counter strategies to overcoming this categorisation do not form a collective consciousness or struggle. Overall, examples of a restricting moment of the 'refugee' categorisation prevail; however, these conditionalities and interactions deserve more theoretical and empirical attention in future research.

With regard to the portrayal of refugees as 'poor', the papers in this issue document that the dominant focus on 'poor' refugees conceals considerable variation in socioeconomic backgrounds. Public discourse as well as research on forced migrants tends to homogenise them as a specific group, distinct from other migrants, hence as refugees all being in a similar situation. The papers highlight the diversity of class backgrounds and the interrelations of social class and forced migration beyond the often-researched European context. They also vividly show how class is negotiated in forced migrants' everyday lives and that particular types of capital, for example, economic and legal, shape forced migrants' mobility trajectories and their capability to convert capital or negotiate their social status.

We conclude by coming back to the overarching question of whether social class systematically shapes spatial and social mobility in the context of forced migration. The contributions demonstrate that this interconnection of class and mobility is indeed strong and shed light on how social class is negotiated in everyday lives through mundane practices and decisions. This special issue shows that linear approaches are misleading when seeking to grasp the often fragmented migration trajectories. Instead, our focus on class disentangles the complex interplay between forced migrants' personal circumstances, perceptions and actions, and wider structures that are mostly not in their control, such as global and national migration regimes or changing economic and political conditions in origin and destination countries.

Note

1. Kim discusses work, education, and commercial marriage-migration brokers and their partially illegal or illegitimate brokerage activities, for example, contracting paper marriages.

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