

Sergei Shubin

Evaluating the process of cross-European migration: beyond cultural capital

Abstract

The paper explores different ways of thinking about evaluation of cultural resources during the East-West migration in Europe and broader international migration. It goes beyond the dominant Bourdieusian approaches used to evaluate migration in terms of cultural capital, which tend to measure migrants' cultural competencies as calculable entities and overlook emergent regimes of value often leading to the exclusion of itinerant people. The paper draws on the ideas of Gilles Deleuze and Friedrich Nietzsche to reformulate value in relation to transnational cultural resources, re-think distance in negotiation of cultural preferences and highlight spatio-temporal uncertainty of evaluation. It unsettles the attempts to represent cultural resources of migrants solely in relation to the external system of values, determined in relation to Bourdieu's habitus. It argues that in the process of migration habitus mediates what things are valued, converted and exchanged in different contexts, but obscures emergent, affective practices and attitudes. To attend to these mobile practices, the paper explores evaluations as "ways of being" and highlights active or becoming evaluation that expresses the migrants' relational movement with the world. Using a range of qualitative examples from the long-term study of Eastern European migration to Scotland, it questions the placement of evaluation in relation to a region and specific type of migration. The article challenges the existence of a self-defining migrant subject making evaluations and highlights the emergence of hybrid arrangements of people, memories and things in migration. It considers how such migration "assemblages" redefine "minor" in existing systems of cultural validation and expand cultural con/dis-junctions. It highlights temporal and spatial uncertainty of evaluation and expresses multiple evaluating claims in migration that are not teleological or subordinated

to consciousness. It concludes with conceptual observations about the use of “nomadic” thinking, the language of multiplicity, non-representation and immanent production of difference in migration research.

Keywords: Evaluation, value, cultural capital, Deleuze, Nietzsche, migration, Eastern Europeans

1. Introduction: beyond cultural capital

This paper attempts to explore different ways of thinking about the processes of evaluation of cultures in relation to East-West migration in Europe and broader international migration. Traditionally, migration research tended to focus on the concepts of cultural capital and habitus in explaining the role of culture on structuring mobilities and understanding value in mobile lives¹. Drawing on conceptual vocabulary from Bourdieu (1984) and Bourdieu and Passeron (1977), different scholars explored the ways in which migrants draw on preferences, attitudes and behaviours in the form of cultural capital to facilitate social and geographical mobility (Bauder, 2005; Nee & Sanders, 2001). In this context, cultural capital was conceptualised as a combination of internalised (embodied), objectified (physical objects) and institutionalised (legitimised values) elements of cultures affecting migrant mobilities. To describe the process of evaluation of cultural capital Bourdieu and Nice (1977, p.18) use the term habitus, which explains the ways in which migrants use the “system of schemes of perception and thought” to “act... as an organising principle” of their behaviour and, in particular, to assign values to cultural dispositions and practices in a particular context. Habitus

¹ I draw on Urry’s (2007) argument that migration is one of the aspects of a broader category of mobility: “there is mobility in a longer sense of migration or other kinds of semi-permanent geographical movement”. This is a horizontal sense of ‘being on the move’, which involves corporeal, physical, imaginative, virtual, and communicative mobility, and refers particularly “to moving country or continent” (ibid., 8).

provides the “rules of the game” defining what things are valued and rewarded in different contexts, thus setting up a framework for evaluation of different (social, economic, cultural) capitals. Sweetman (2003, p. 529) attempted to broaden the concept of habitus by stressing its “*inherently* reflexive” character as it both embodies social structures (with specific limitations and risks) and allows considerable degree of agency for individuals to produce self-identity. He links the effects of globalisation and increased mobility to the lack of fit between individuals and their social field, which prompts individuals to form reflexive habitus to either support temporary forms of identification (often through displacement) or to fix the self in a particular social terrain. Furthermore, Benson and O’Reilly (2009) used Bourdieu’s insights to reconsider habitus as a generative structure that bridges structure/agency dichotomy and opens space for improvisation, creativity and ongoing re-evaluation of choices available to migrating individuals. In this case, reflexive assessment of opportunities by migrants such as a particular lifestyle choice or discerned use of symbolic capital was framed in relation to the conditions of post-modernity and search for a potential self in migration. These accounts of flexible habitus accept its paradoxical nature: it is pre-reflexive (second nature) and cannot “be touched by voluntary, deliberate transformation”, yet this “reflexive orientation is unreflexively adopted” in the post-modern society demanding individuals to constantly make choices (Sweetman, 2003, p. 544). This paper attempts to resolve the tension between “rational and conscious calculation, indeed reflexivity” (Sweetman, 2003, p. 542) and engagements excessive of individual determinations and knowledge. It offers alternative conceptual approach to go beyond the self-questioning and self-improvement project in discussions of habitus in migration studies.

Different studies critically analysed the function of cultural capital as a power resource used to prioritise specific competencies in home/host locations (Weenink, 2008), to define migrants’ cultural distance (Friedmann, 2002) and to affect the “value” of their social positions

(Erel, 2010). However, the use of the concepts of cultural capital and habitus has often been predicated on drawing clear distinctions between different places assuming the existence of calculable “exchange rates” (Bauder, 2005) between the capital possessed by a migrant in different locations. By developing innovative conceptual approach that explores creation of difference in migration beyond the existing measurements of cultural competencies as calculable entities, this paper reveals often overlooked meanings attached to cultural attitudes produced by migrants in transnational contexts (Erel, 2010).

Affected by broader literatures on transnationalism (Basch et al., 1994; Faist, 2000; Schiller, 1997; Urry, 2000; Vertovec, 2007) , migration studies have recently witnessed a shift towards considering cultural capital as a dynamic process (rather than a product) linking together migrants’ places of origin and destination. Energised by this shift, this paper firstly exposes the dominant use of calculative rationality to express migrants’ lived experiences and practices in order to challenge the simplistic logic of *representation* in relation to transnational cultural resources. Migrants’ being is not determined by objective and measurable structures (quantifiable units of time and distance), but rather develops through the engagement of changeable living relations with other people and things (2019; Shubin, 2015). These relations of closeness and nearness cannot be fully determined by calculation (geographical distance from the place of origin) or restricted economy of meaning (negative/positive view of mobility) and therefore question the values grounded solely in the order of representation. If applied to the discussions on migration, Spivak’s (1990) deconstruction of the economic logic of value can help to highlight the excess that exists beyond rational thought and the dominant symbolic system built on exchange. Similarly, Skeggs’ (2004, p. 88) argument in favour of “thinking beyond exchange-value” that relies on the dominant value system calls for more attention to the sensuous expressions and migrant experiences excessive of representable rationality. These go beyond “emotional labour” and reflexive management of individual emotions often

considered in discussions about flexible habitus (Sweetman, 2003) and suggest possibilities for the “habitus of non-belonging” or belonging otherwise. Furthermore, Erel (2010) criticises existing “rucksack approaches” to cultural capital in migration that leads to its simplistic representation as a set of fixed elements (skills, qualifications) that can be calculated and transported from one country to another. This paper challenges marginalisation of migrant cultures (and their cultural capital) in policy discourses and the media (Dickey et al., 2018; Shubin & Dickey, 2013), which present migrants in opposition to the host cultures, undervalue their cultural resources and new forms of competences, skills and attitudes they develop.

Second, the paper builds upon the recent migration studies to address the issues of *scale, distance and form* that emerge in the discussions about evaluation of cultures in different contexts. It focuses on the process of being-on-the-move I explored earlier in this journal (Shubin, 2015) to go beyond the logic of binaries and opposition such as ‘stability versus movement, permanent versus temporary... “first” and “second” home’ which, as Smith and King (2012, p. 131) argue, often hamper the existing studies of migration. Kelly and Lusia (2006, p. 836) stress that for international migrants “all forms of capital are not fixed assets or attributes, but are always dynamically circulating” thus questioning the fixity of cultural capital and construction of distance in migrants’ negotiation of cultural preferences and norms. This paper contributes to these debates by developing novel conceptual approach that highlights the ongoing nature of evaluation in migration and questions the construction of cultural distance and opposition between home/abroad.

Third, this paper draws on the recent debates in migration studies on indeterminacy and uncertainty of migrant identities to reconsider the *spatiality and temporality of evaluation*. Theorists of mobility described the migrant as an unstable “subject-in-transit” (Clifford, 1994, p. 321) that is “non-representable... unlabelled, untamed, unidentified” (Papadopoulos & Tsianos, 2007, p. 234) thus challenging the idea of a subject as distinct from the world and the

ability to construct subject-specific evaluations in the external system of representations. Braidotti (1993, p. 10), drawing on the ideas of Deleuze and Guattari, develops feminist nomadic philosophy, where she advocates for “multiple subject, functioning in a net of interconnections... nomadic, rhizomatic, embodied”. Similarly, Shubin et al. (2014) demonstrated the split and contested nature of migrant selfhood pointing towards unstable meanings of migration and always emergent regimes of value. In a recent critique of the dominant approaches theorising international student mobility using Bourdieusian theorisations of capital, Yang (2018, p. 5) calls for the need to “de-centre or at least give further nuance to the portrayal of ISM as a highly calculative and rationalistic process”. In a similar vein, Collins et al. (2014) criticised the prevailing approaches influenced by Bourdieu’s interpretation of cultural capital that assume pre-determined migrant identities and the existence of self-enclosed agents making rational choices. As Raghuram (2012) suggests, cross-border mobilities and related circulation of knowledge are “assembled” through the oft-unexpected interventions of multiple actors, which makes spaces and times of decision-making difficult to determine. Building on these arguments, this paper not only goes beyond the language of investment, accumulation and return in describing migration practices, but also highlights the uncertainties in migration that cannot be fully accommodated by an external authority of language or knowledge.

2. Re-activating and mobilising value

To develop this particular thinking in the context of Eastern European migration, the paper engages with the work of Gilles Deleuze, and, in particular, his interpretation of the ideas about value developed earlier by Friedrich Nietzsche. In his reading of Nietzsche, Deleuze finds inspiration to develop a “nomadic” thinking that has been widely used in geography and

migration studies to problematize sedentary discourses of fixity and stability (Carling & Collins, 2018; Cresswell, 2006; Shubin, 2011). The Deleuzian (1986:103) interventions seek a “new image of thought” that considers “the real forces that form thought” as a creative and active process. Importantly for this paper, they offer a critique in terms of values upon which things are judged and perspectives that support evaluation. First, they challenge the *representation* and knowledge that frame migrant lives by judging and subordinating them to the system of external values. In so doing, this conceptual approach resonates with the discussions on mobile being in migration studies that oppose the modes of evaluating movement within the grid of measurable and orderable presences. Rather than assuming the existence of transcendent structures of values (external autonomous standards used to judge different phenomena like migration), Deleuze (1986, p. 1) follows Nietzsche in addressing the emergence of “the value of values, of the evaluation from which their value arises, ...the problem of their creation”. He explores evaluations as “ways of being”, where value is not fixed (as universal or too specific) but emerges as interrelation of forces producing difference. Difference producing values is not given, i.e. what is “good sense” or “success” in migration is not determined a priori. Instead of subordinating difference to representation as a matter of opposition or analogy (and expressed as difference of degree), Deleuze sees it as a force of transformation and decentring (or difference of intensity, Young et al., 2013). Deleuze (1986, p. 2) aligns the Nietzschean use of force to explore the processes of differentiation at the basis of values. From this standpoint, “*high* and *low*, *noble* and *base*, are not values but represent the differential element from which the value of values themselves derives”. In this quote, high and low do not mark fixed points in the grid of evaluation but in fact express the degree or intensity of relations that produce new values. In Deleuze’s (2005, p. 136) terms, “it is not the matter of judging life in the name of a higher authority which would be the good, the true; it is the matter, on the contrary, of evaluating every being, every action and passion, even every

value, in relation to life which they involve”. In migration context, this focus on active (or becoming) mode of evaluation means questioning the established values as calculable entities (costs/benefits as converted and exchanged) that obscure the differential meanings attached to cultural attitudes and behaviours of migrants.

Second, Deleuze’s ideas help to expose the *binary opposition* in evaluating cultural practices of international migrants. Migrant lives operate independently of transcendental value structures that, as Bourdieu (1984) asserts, are predicated on binary conceptualisations such as high/low, pure/impure, aesthetic/useful. In Deleuze and Guattari’s (1987, p. 216) terms, migration and its evaluation cannot be reduced to an either/or relationship, “there is always something that flows or flees, that escapes the binary organizations”. What concerns Deleuze in his reformulation of Nietzsche is the simultaneous construction of active and reactive forces that make the evaluation of values possible. The difference between forces is based upon the difference between affirmation and negation: active force affirms its own nature, goes to its limits and can transform itself into something else, while reactive force limits and decomposes (Patton, 2000). Importantly, these forces fold back on each other so there is no simple hierarchy of evaluation based on their quality: reactive forces can become affirmative while active forces may “subside because they do not know how to follow the powers of affirmation” (Deleuze, 1986, p. 67). Deleuze makes negation (as a “difference from”) productive (as “difference in itself”) thus focusing on becoming different, the very dynamism of change. As a result, there is an ambivalence in evaluation of these forces that can at once maximise one’s potential for change and present greatest limitations to one’s existence. From an evaluative point of view, Deleuze and Guattari prioritise processes that show the greatest potential degrees of creativity and metamorphosis, oscillating between the possibility of the greatest joy and extreme anguish (Patton, 2000). The process of displacement can limit migrants’ opportunities for action (as a reactive force) but can also open up new possibilities and shift centres and margins in the

process of evaluation. In this context, Deleuze and Guattari (1986) destabilise the notion of value by redefining the categories of minor and major in migration that had a tendency towards reducing difference to binary oppositions and marginalisation of migrants.

Third, Deleuzian interventions reject identity as a governing principle and, in resonance with the recent migration literatures, *de-centre* the process of evaluation. Deleuze's reading of Nietzsche offers a critique of the Kantian discourse on individuality and evaluation, which considers a possibility of judgement of an object by a removed spectator placed at a correct distance from action. His main intention is to "replace on each occasion the claims of transcendental judgement with an immanent evaluation" (Deleuze, 2005, p. 163). He argues that there is no subject (individual) who connects different experiences and gives them moral or aesthetic values. Instead, Deleuze's Nietzschean philosophy deals with the arrangements of relative stability, which he calls "larval subjects" that are formed by continually fluctuating forces. Unlike intentional judgements of the subject based on transcendent systems of value, Deleuze's immanent evaluation emerges from the in-between position of always developing manifold of bodies, functions and machines that he calls an "assemblage" (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p. 337). Sympathetic to the dynamic and "assembled" interpretations in recent migration studies, this approach challenges the representation and regimes of values based on measurement, analysis and manipulation of seemingly distinct objects and subjects. It shifts the attention to "categories like Interesting, Remarkable, or Important that determine success or failure" (Deleuze & Guattari, 1994, p. 82) and requires an ongoing evaluation that cannot be located in specific place or subject and cannot be known in advance. Movements of migrants across different territories constantly create spaces by productively combining bodies, actions and expressions. Immanent evaluations reflect the multiplicity of forces that make them: they are spatially and temporally unpredictable and excessive of the limitations of consciousness.

3. Recent Eastern European migrations

The paper explores these conceptual ideas in the context of the recent (post 2004) migration from Eastern and Central Europe to Scotland that represents an exciting case study due to the large number of people involved in migration and complex settlement transitions. It is argued that the circular movement of these migrants represents a new migration system (Favell, 2008), where transnational mobility is not solely driven by economic reasons and reflects wider lifestyle choices and complex motivations (Burrell, 2006; Cook et al., 2011; Shubin, 2012a). However, within this burgeoning research on Eastern European migration many scholars draw on relatively taken-for-granted assumptions about the identities of migrants, processes of movement and their effects. Despite acknowledging migrant heterogeneity and increasing complexity of their motivation, East-West cross-border mobilities were often presented as a form of traditional labour migration with labour market integration prioritised over other migration outcomes (Barrett & Duffy, 2008; Dustmann et al., 2013). Dominant portrayals of Eastern European migrants as rational economic actors have prompted the proliferation of integration strategies framed in purely economic terms and evaluated in terms of different types of accumulated and exchanged capital (Shubin, 2012b; Shubin & Dickey, 2013). The result is that migration experiences of many of the Eastern Europeans are often accommodated within the existing institutional infrastructures in the host countries in ways that misrepresent their experiences and contribute to their exclusion (Dickey et al., 2018).

In response, this paper draws on the recent research that started to unpack “new” migrations in Europe. By drawing on gender and family studies and challenging the stereotypes of migrants as “homo economicus” (Ley, 2011) recent studies have articulated a greater sense of complex itinerant identities incorporating stretched-out family links, cross-border affective capacities and networked relationships, as well as social and emotional challenges (Kennedy,

2010; Parutis, 2014). Similarly, recent debates on fluid and relational constructions of migrant subjectivities questioned the stereotypes of Eastern Europeans defined solely in terms of their nationality and ethnically bounded systems of evaluation (i.e. seen predominantly as “Polish”, cf. Ryan et al., 2008).

Building on this momentum in migration research, this paper draws on the results of the recent ESRC-funded study on ‘Experiences of Social Security and Prospects for Long Term Settlement in Scotland amongst Migrants from Central Eastern Europe and Former Soviet Union’ (SSAMIS). This 5-year (2013-2018) research project took place in 4 locations across Scotland (Glasgow, Aberdeen, Angus and Aberdeenshire) and produced 207 in-depth interviews with migrants who had been resident in Scotland for more than one and less than ten years. It also included observations and 60 expert interviews with policy makers, service providers, NGOs and practitioners. This paper predominantly draws on a selection (16) of interviews with participants, predominantly collected in Aberdeen city and rural Aberdeenshire, where the majority of fieldwork took place and where we benefitted from the access to previously established networks. This approach reflects the broader focus of the whole project on Scottish rural contexts with little previous experience of large-scale international in-migration, whereas the majority of previous studies of migration from Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) to the UK tended to focus on urban areas. Furthermore, selected data resonates with the goals of the broader project in highlighting the diversity of CEE migrants and experiences of smaller migrant groups, as well as those coming from beyond EU, who have been relatively neglected (Dickey et al., 2018). Aberdeen city and shire have experienced some of the highest levels of post-2004 migration, with the majority of migrants arriving from Poland, but also with a sizeable groups of Russian-speaking migrants, mostly

from Latvia and Lithuania, often invisible in the official statistics². The paper answers the call by Vertovec (2007) in attending to “super-diversity” of migration by giving voice to such smaller, more diverse and often more scattered communities, moving frequently between places of employment and residence.

The migrant interviews for this paper were selected for a number of reasons. First, reflecting the emphasis of this paper, they straddle different periods of migrant arrivals in the UK, with the majority of participants expressing continued commitment to living on the move and requiring ongoing evaluation of their lives (see Table 1). Second, they reflect diversity of migrant experiences across different ages and countries of origins, which can help to focus on the difference in their experiences of change and transformation. The intention here is to let different others speak in this text honouring direct quotations (Braidotti, 1993), particularly giving voice to smaller groups of migrants from countries like Hungary, Latvia or Lithuania, often neglected or obscured as a part of the dominant “Polish” group (Ryan et al., 2008). Our research in Glasgow and Angus was led by a Polish-speaking researcher and targeted Polish migrants, while the data from Aberdeen and shire was collected by several researchers with broader linguistic competencies, expressed higher migrant diversity and seemingly marginalised minor positions of particular migrant groups. Third, these interviews expressed the views of participants employed in a range of unskilled and semi-skilled positions, who often questioned the meaning of their migration “success” while they were “stuck”, similar to many other Eastern European migrants, in low-paid and lower skill-intensive occupations (Dickey et al., 2018). The majority of the interviews were carried out by two researchers who resided in the above locations for more than a year, conducted in the migrants’ native languages, then transcribed, translated into English and analysed using Nvivo 12.

² The data from the Scottish Census 2011 only indicates the presence of Polish migrants (1% of the total population), but does not provide detailed information on other migrant groups for Central and Eastern Europe, <http://www.scotlandscensus.gov.uk/>

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4. Becoming and immanent evaluation

Deleuze's reading of Nietzsche focuses not on values that can be represented as an object of knowledge, but on the emergence of forces that give rise to values. He stresses that "evaluations [...] are not values but ways of being, modes of existence of those who judge and evaluate" (Deleuze, 1986, p. 1). When migration is described as "being-on-the move" (Shubin, (2015) involving a dynamic opening of spaces and unfolding of relations, evaluation is not based on the system of external codes but can be better articulated in relation to these mobilised engagements with the world. In the context of this study, some migrants expressed the forces emerging in migration and settlement that are beyond thinking and given systems of order:

"A lot of things are not good or bad, they are different in Scotland... things you don't think about [...] I was very lost to begin with, but I was moving along the main road, going downhill, I didn't feel very comfortable, and somebody on the road stopped and let me past. The first thought I had was that the police are going to catch me and punish me! I could not even think, why would they let me past?! [...] Perhaps people here don't evaluate life [*lyudi ne tsenyat*], we don't have that. [In Lithuania it is oppressive:] you have to pay a bribe for the doctor, for the police, there's none of that here at all".

Roza, 52, Lithuania

As this quote suggests, emergent qualities of the process of migration are beyond evaluation within the system of "bad"/"good" values. The value here is immanent to migration

and it situates it in a particular relation to others as a possibility to escape from bribing and oppressive relations to other people. The process of becoming comfortable, of being moved by the concerned intervention from the others cannot be considered independently of the forces that produced it. Expressed in Deleuzian terms, value here marks the potential for degrees of difference, of being otherwise that expresses the migrants' relational movement with the world.

While many migrants talked about the importance of formal evaluations of their skills, linguistic aptitude and experiences (in the form of diplomas and qualifications) in the new settings, many also stressed the significance of affects and emotional links that cannot be represented. As Nietzsche (2003, p. 10) argues, emergent evaluation develops with the flow of emotions that orientate the forces of life. A Polish migrant explains:

“I had Polish qualifications but was unlucky enough to get a Polish manager who made my life a misery. One day I told her: “I'm really sorry, Magda, but I'm feeling miserable today and am not able to work, finished, kaput” And she could not understand. It's the pressure which sometimes happens [when you migrate]. But it's Polish people, which is interesting. It's the fear of losing sense of good and bad. She must have been afraid herself – that's how I try to explain it to myself in order to understand”.

Bartosz, 48, Poland

This interview fragment does not reference the external classificatory use of cultural codes. Here the intense experiences of misery and fear are beyond the value that relies on the outside system of knowledge, which Nietzsche criticises as pre-determined and quantitatively limited. Instead, the migrant reflects on the sense of lostness in the measurable system of formal knowledge and general culture (“Polish qualifications” linked to cultural capital) that is rooted in the subject/object structure of representation. Values here express fear and anxiety that are

sensed, but cannot be apprehended as rational entities of representational system and escape consciousness (Deleuze, 1986). They are articulated through the variations of degree and intensity rather than in the objective system premised on exchange.

Unlike the models of evaluation based on representation and opposition (migrant/non-migrant, home/not-home), emergent evaluation is sympathetic to assessing the forces producing nomadic forms of life. A mother of one states:

“Job agencies that particularly specialized in employing Eastern Europeans... they used a term ‘nearly locals’ for those who settle down here and have become a local, once they refuse to work for an extra 10-20 or an extra 100 pounds, or even 200. I refuse too. But I have a good reason. [...My friend] is a foreigner, pretty well-off with a great job, great car, great house. If he loses family or health, he will realise all of it is not worth it. [...] Only one thing is missing for him that we possess. Love. You can’t buy that. So what’s the point of life? If someone, let’s say a person who just arrived here, independent of their mother country, if they’re here to get a job and work for a living, I don’t necessarily think they know the real value of life”.

Linda, 37, Hungary

As this quote suggests, love for this woman acts as a force connecting different places and activities. From Deleuze’s (2005, p. 136) perspective, the focus here is on “affect as immanent evaluation, instead of judgement as transcendent value: ‘I love or I hate’ instead of ‘I judge’”. The emergence of “nearly locals”, neither migrants and nor not-migrants, reflects the workings of the transgressive force that goes beyond the bounds of identity and representation. Affective forces such as love emerge unexpectedly and often change previous plans, as our respondent explains:

“In the end I came to Scotland not just for work, I met my Scottish boyfriend and I came here to live. [...] I met him and he said "I am going to visit you in Lithuania", and he did! Everyone was surprised. Next year I came here to live with him, even though I did not like my job. I was thinking about learning language, earning money and qualifications, finding a good job first, but ... that's how I learnt what I really need - love”

Ieva, 24, Lithuania

In this quote, respondent's plans for developing cultural resources, financial and symbolic wealth are changed in the process of migration. Love emerges beyond the individual, surprisingly and unexpectedly, and makes this migrant re-evaluate her previous expectations and projects. It is not related to the external classificatory system but to the ways of being on the move and changing conditions of migrant life that serve as principles for the values. As Lionnet et al. (2005, p. 7) state, this mobile living escapes monetary definitions and reveals “micropractices of transnationality in their multiple, paradoxical, or even irreverent relations with economic transnationalism”. Love here emerges as an activity that shapes life and its “real value”. Forces of love, passing through challenges of transformations, disclose the world as something that is happening outside reason and economic thinking.

As this section demonstrated, the production of value in international migration is not rooted in external structures of assessment. Instead, evaluations as ways of being on the move reflect broader forces that instantiate movements. Evaluations are created and recreated as forces such as love, fear and anxiety meet to create conditions that are interesting, comforting and challenging. A different kind of value arises in the process of migration that is not limited to the reproduction of the existing investment-return systems assessing migrants' transitions but emergence of the new evaluations immanent to the powers and qualities of moving bodies,

affects and things. Importantly, value that is produced through the ongoing creation of difference challenges the oppositions between specific identities and places, as the next section illustrates.

5. Transformative evaluation

Deleuze's dynamic and emergent mode of evaluation points to the impossibility of carving out stable self-referential territory where values are grounded. As Proust (1985, p. 230) explains, "the value of the human spirit cannot be precisely 'placed'" any more than "the monetary value of a picture in the world". Such "placement" of value in relation to the separate cultural processes operating either in places of departure or arrival is central to the application of Bourdieusian framework in migration studies (Waters, 2006). While there are issues with the devaluation of cultural practices and preferences of migrants affecting their integration (Shubin & Dickey, 2013), transversal movements of culture undermine clear binaries of home and host, dominant (positive) and dominated (negative) cultures. A migrant, who lived in three countries before coming to the UK, explains the transformation of evaluations in migration:

"I have practical knowledge and I know more in terms of workshop than an engineer. In Norway, they value people who come already qualified, but there is also flexibility. [...] If the employer sees that he has a specialist without the diploma, he will always employ you. [...] But in Norway they are not as open as in here [UK], where it's multiculturalism. People are very open-minded and it is easier to make contact. Great Britain gives us a feeling ... a bit of home away from home".

Aleks, 35, Bulgaria

Here the respondent questions the allocation of skills used to validate cultural capital to a particular domain (practical or formal) and suggests a possibility of renegotiating the placement of value in relation to qualifications. Furthermore, the ongoing evaluation in transnational space between Bulgaria, Norway and Great Britain makes the migrant rethink cultural norms (open-mindedness) and challenge their association with a particular place as values are displaced. When the UK becomes a strange place of “home away from home”, in-between home and abroad, the value becomes “the property of nowhere. ... it is and is not wherever it may be” (Muller & Richardson, 1988, p. 79). Deleuze (1986, p. 175) suggests that such process of transformative evaluation offers an alternative to the “placement” of value: “it is the place itself that changes, there is no longer any place for another world”. Deleuze’s reading of Nietzsche prioritises movements that resist borders and negative interpretation of difference. Evaluations from two young migrants illustrate this point:

“Was it good to move? It’s a hard question. It is not about my skills transfer to the UK. [...] I would say that not good not bad, rather different. If it is my destiny [...] I take that challenge, I accept that challenge. But I wouldn’t say it was negative, definitely not negative. It’s positives and negatives, I will put it like that. There were lots of difficulties but difficulties help me to become a stronger person. Immigration continues to make a big, big, big difference in my life”.

Anar, 26, Azerbaijan

“Was it a good or bad decision? It is different. My mum told me: “you are now independent, you are making your own decisions, you don’t listen to suggestions, I can hear happiness in your voice.” It is like the third vein that now flows with migration”.

Marek, 27, Poland

In these quotes, the migrants value difference and opportunity to become stronger people over the availability of skills or resources. The migrants do not arrive at evaluation based on the subtraction of differences between “home” and “abroad” cultures, where cultural practices and preferences in Azerbaijan or Poland find their value in the UK cultural system. Instead, they value challenge, the very flow of events involved in migration. In Deleuze’s interpretation of Nietzsche, the affirmation of difference does not simply replace negative with positive processes – instead it involves the transformation of the negative. As Deleuze (1986, p. 175) states, “values and their value no longer derive from the negative, but from affirmation as such”. Similarly, in the migrants’ stories, negatives produce a potential in migration for making “big difference” that they consider positively. The logic of difference celebrates different values (the active, the creative) that overturn the binary categories of representational model.

Furthermore, Deleuze’s approach to evaluation questions the notion of cultural distance that is often applied to international migrants. In Bourdieu’s (1984) terms, cultural capital (as cultural goods and values) varies with its cultural distance from the dominant culture legitimated by the prevailing institutions. However, in the process of migration production of cultural behaviours and attitudes continues in transnational space (Kelly & Lusic, 2006), which challenges the idea of cultural distance determined by mechanisms of symbolic exchange and accumulation as well as by the logic of displacement within the measurable grid. Evaluation emerges in the process of migration, it rises up as a play of forces in-between (beyond) different places.

“I am at home here and a stranger at home. I don’t think I regretted moving. I see so much, that our place is here, and that there is no way back. Or when I talk to mum, too,

and I know, I hear, that they live much worse. But when, you know, she says, that well now we were at the Hungarikum festival, now we are going here, we are going there, now we made a trip with the others to the Hortobágy, and comparatively I see, that even if we had 5-times as much money, here somehow life is still much more dreary, somehow I feel in-between”.

Kati, 43, Hungary

As this passage suggests, migration here reflects the sense of becoming different, a “stranger at home”, or, in Kristeva’s (1991) terms, “strangers to ourselves”. Operating between these different environments, and moving both physically and imaginatively, evaluation is not restricted to specific locations but is linked to continuously emergent difference. This difference is refractory of the dualist categories of economic evaluation of the cultural capital model (home/abroad). The logical distinction between evaluations in terms of income (“5 times as much money”) cannot deny the difference in itself. Difference has a creative function here – it transforms the binary of home/host distinction (and geographical distance) into an “in-between” creation (and relational distance of nearness and closeness), a mutation of stranger-at-home, “a third” (Deleuze & Parnet, 1987, p. 131).

Lastly, an engagement with Deleuzian ideas helps to reveal the transformative effects of minoritarian becomings. As two of the older migrants with families in Russia suggest, their migration continues to bring critical alternatives to the system in Scotland that escape the dominant evaluations:

“Yulia: We bring something different to Scotland.

Yevgenii: Still, we are Soviet people. Locals do not understand how USSR changed us, and how we now change them. We bring different energy, initiative that you cannot value

in terms of money. The USSR may have been a dictatorship but if you weren't lazy, you could get everything [...] Alex [at work] thinks we are some kind of half-wits, but he himself can't do sums on the calculator. I tell him the answer and he doesn't believe me [...] Now here I look around and I see we have brought the USSR here in Scotland. The whole structure: bribes, bureaucrats, and what they told us in childhood about how things will be great in socialism”.

Yulia, 53, Latvia; Yevgenii, 52, Russia

In the above quote, what is treated as foreign and dysfunctional gives rise to the new forces of evaluation, not necessarily “good” or “bad”. It points to the values that cannot be measured in monetary terms. It speaks to Nietzschean (2003, p. 10) revaluation of values that undermines the “slave morality” where the opposition between “good” (meaning “noble, high” in relation to masters and “not dangerous” in relation to slaves) and “bad” is based on undermining human condition and productivity. This approach challenges the division between non/locals and helps to rethink seemingly marginalised minor positions in the process of migration, as a mother of two explains:

“When I'm trying to do something with my life, others stop looking from the side [making stereotypes]. In migration my priorities are changing. Many migrants do not understand the point of volunteering as you don't earn money, but for me it is the way of showing that I care and let people understand that I am not only good for factory work”

Klara, 32, Czech Republic

In terms of Deleuze and Guattari (1987, p. 7), such migration and the process of becoming-minor leads to deterritorialisation, or mutation escaping the force that attempts to tie

the migrants down to a particular stereotype (“factory worker”). Lionnet et al. (2005, p. 7) describe the process of such transformative evaluation as a part of development of “minor transnationalism”, which challenges the placement of values within the global or the local, involves minor cultures developing productive relationships with the major, and creates hybrid cultural forms allowing migrants to reclaim and reinvent cultural spaces in-between different homes.

To summarise, the transformative understanding of evaluation develops through the interplay of territorialising and deterritorialising processes. While it is linked to the “placement” of migrants within a specific system of values, transformative evaluation highlights the creative forces in migration that produce difference and metamorphic arrangements of people, memories and things (such as strangers-at-home or post-Soviet ecologies). Such evaluations challenge the measuring of the capacity of minorities to affect the majority system. Furthermore, they highlight the transformative potential of becoming minor that goes beyond evaluative limits set by the powers of the majority and produces different spatialities and temporalities, which this paper will now explore.

6. De-centering evaluation

Deleuze’s reading of Nietzsche challenges the idea of a stable subject distinct from the world. Instead, Deleuze’s (1994, p. 277) philosophy deals with the arrangements of relative stability, which he calls “larval subjects” that always exist in the plural and are formed by continually fluctuating forces. Rather than assuming the existence of a self-defining and enclosed migrant subject who thinks and makes evaluations, this approach helps to explore the evolving assemblage of forces dissolving the subject. When knowledge is not limited to a migrant as an enclosed entity, spaces and times of evaluation also become de-centred and

uncertain. Spatially, evaluation develops through inter-subjective encounters as something that cannot be fully known and possessed:

“I don’t even know where is better... on one hand, I want to go back to Latvia, but the main cause of that is that my elder son and his family are there. It’s because I’ve always been with my children: we’ve never been split up before. For me, family means a lot: of course, that’s the main reason I would go back to Latvia. But considering living standards, and money for my family, I want to stay here ... I have the feeling that I wouldn’t find a place for myself in Latvia, so it’s a bit difficult for me in terms of wages, I wouldn’t be able to live there. So right now I’m staying in Lat-... for the time being I’m staying here”.

Svetlana, 44, Latvia

Seen from Deleuze’s perspective, this example reveals the multiplicity of subjects, which give rise to multiple evaluating claims that are not teleological or subordinated to consciousness. The resultant fragmentation of space of evaluation is visible in the slippage of the migrant who speaks somewhere between “Lat-[via]” and Scotland. Instead of evaluation being a matter of a migrant as a representing subject, it emerges in a dialogue between different members of the family living across different borders. The emergent and diffused subjectivity of the migrant produces evaluation that brings together an impossibility of quantitatively measuring (“in terms of wages”) the co-existence here (the particularity of life in Scotland) and elsewhere (indefinite space of “the family” linked to Latvia).

The above quote also highlights the temporal uncertainty of evaluation. It is temporally unspecified (“for the time being”) as the “subject” of migration continues to emerge through the assemblage of different bodies, connections and sensations. This runs counter to the

dominant perception of migration as a ‘planful’ process (Clausen, 1995) where time is seen as orderable and internal to consciousness of an individual subject (for detailed analysis, see Collins & Shubin, 2015). As our respondent stresses, migration develops as a combination of payments, family, debts and temporalities beyond his own plans:

“I thought I’d come here for a season, finish and go home. But after getting the salary, family problems [came up] – okay, one more month [...] then debt repayment deadline - okay, just until the start of the new season!”

Arturs, Latvia, 32

In the above narrative, there is no sense of a pre-given world or destination produced by the migrant: a combination of forces bigger than an individual give rise to a new, unpredictable world. According to Skeggs (2004, p. 77), the dominant Bourdieusian framework suggests “the possibility of a self that can conceive of a *future* in which value can be realised: a specific exchange-value perspective, one that transforms leisure into employability and cultural into symbolic and/or economic capital”. Contrary to this, Deleuze (1994) stresses that the nature of time cannot be confused with its measure – it is defined not by a subjective choice (“it excludes the coherence of the self”, p. 121), but “assembled” by a network of processes characterised by infinite variability. In this context, evaluation remains in suspense in the process of becoming, when the past continues to work itself out and creates potentialities for a future yet to come. Another migrant explains:

“I don’t know if it was a good decision to come to Scotland, at the start I thought: “yes, it would be good to forget about everything, have a rest from it”. But now, five years have gone by, I don’t know... Because my daughter doesn’t really know Lithuania, her

home is here. She goes there as a guest, she's already comfortable here. But as for myself, I feel torn. I'm always thinking about home, how are things at home, and it's turned out to be difficult. When five years have already passed, I don't want to just be all the time – factory, factory, factory ... I don't want to live that way for such a long time. I already feel like something needs to change in the future”.

Jadvyga, 42, Lithuania

In this fragment, the migrant finds herself “torn” between the past opportunities that can yet be realised and the renewal of possibilities. In the process of intersubjective communication between the mother and the daughter evaluation does not appear in the present (“I don't know if it was good to come”), it is always unfolding to the surprise of the respondent. In the process of migration where the subject “never “arrives” somewhere” (Papadopoulos & Tsianos, 2007, p. 224) and is always “à venir” (Lionnet et al., 2005, p. 3), evaluation does not occupy the time of the present from where the future benefits are mapped out, but is a part of an elusive process of becoming-different and bringing about irreversible transformations.

Lastly, the de-centred and “assembled” nature of evaluation redefines the meaning of “success” in migration, one of the key markers used in the Bourdieusian (1984) model of possession and appropriation of symbolic wealth. The value and sense of “success” in migration are uncertain as they emerge through intersubjective engagements with the world, oscillating between successful from one perspective (evaluation) and failures from another (Werbner, 1999). A father of one explains:

“I know a few Polish families with a permanent job, who now own their own houses. [...] Their children play outside with their neighbours' children. They learn the language extremely fast; they learn the culture extremely fast, extremely fast. [...] But then, through some laziness or lack of skill, lack of professional knowledge. They

quickly drop out. They simply can't find a job. [...] Success is a moving target. It's incredible, it's remarkable".

Jerzy, 70, Poland

This quote reflects on different meanings of "success" in Polish migration to the UK, which is described by Galasiński and Galasińska (2007, p. 51) as the economic ability of the individual "to 'make it', using his resourcefulness and industriousness" abroad. Usually considered in the context of male economic migration, a gendered meaning of "success" is often described by goals the migrant worker is expected to achieve such as a permanent job or house ownership (Galasińska, 2009). However, the above quote suggests that multiple elements involved in migration (parents, children, expectations) disturb teleological view of success. Beyond the linear rules and binary operations, "success" in migration is changeable and is not gathered into the unity or mappable "whole", but into a process of differentiation, where every assemblage of bodies, affects and percepts produces a different and unpredictable entity, a "moving target". This resonates with Deleuze and Guattari's (1994, p. 80) quest for "the Interesting, the Remarkable" as a possibility of considering value beyond true or false, especially in relation to success or failure. The objects, bodies and expressions in migration emerge ambiguously in several quite different regimes of value simultaneously, as this Hungarian migrant explains:

"I gave myself two years in Scotland, then I will assess where I am and rethink again [...] I still have to see the possibilities, the ways I can take, to be able to see what comes afterwards.... So I didn't have a concrete goal or anything, more like this time interval during which I would like to see where I can get [...] I thought this was a fair time, and if one spends it with the right things, then it should lead to success. But there are other factors beyond my control [...] My acquaintance that brought me to Scotland told me

that if you don't get a job within 3 days, you are a loser, and so when I could not find a job, I thought I must be a loser. After two days I was totally beyond myself, in total panic and fright. After four months, one of my friends suggested that I start being a masseur, gave me the bed she could not sell, it was an amazing luck. [...] So I put up the masseur bed, and within a minute I managed to build a large circle of clients. And within 3 weeks I finally found a full-time job as well”.

Eszter, 35, Hungary

In this quote, chance and luck are seen as transgressions of the dominant evaluative order. Luck appears as an exception to the system of values, something the migrant does not own and that happens outside of allocated time. For Nietzsche, values define the conditions of possibility for a phenomenon, so migration would be seen as successful or productive if it continues to enhance itself (Marsden, 1998). In Deleuzian terms, evaluation can be said to emerge from chance combinations of objects (bed), bodies (friends), expectations (job in 3 days) and sensations (panic) to determine if migration was affirmative or creative.

This section re-examined the view of an evaluative migrant as a single and isolated entity that plans, strategizes and develops exchange-value self. The exposure of a migrant as being-multiple produced through different encounters shifted the focus to spatial and temporal uncertainty of evaluation. Multiple evaluation suggested the impossibility of defending migration solely in terms of subjective goals and specific positionings marked by specific locations and dates. It exposed the “assembled” nature of evaluation that often relies on the logic of chance, communicating the movement beyond the systems of economic calculations.

7. Conclusions

The paper contributed to the recent discussions in social sciences on the process of evaluation of cultures in migration. Drawing on the results of the study on the recent migration from the Eastern and Central Europe to Scotland, it attempted to go beyond value expressed in economic terms and challenge dominant symbolic evaluations based on accumulation and exchange. It engaged with the ideas of Gilles Deleuze and reformulation of value by Friedrich Nietzsche to contribute to the recent trend in migration studies towards re-thinking the logic of representation, scale and distance, as well as spatio-temporal uncertainty of evaluation.

First, the paper explored *evaluations as ways of being* and not representations forming an external system. It followed Deleuze's (1986, p. 163) reading of Nietzsche that offered not just a change of values, but "transvaluation" or fundamental reconsideration of "the element from which value of value derives". In migration studies, this means changing the character of evaluation from being transcendent to becoming immanent to life, i.e. exploring risks, opportunities and practices that show up as mattering to migrants in their everyday lives. This implies the focus on the values of interesting or boring and the joys of "doing nothing" (Katz, 2011), which attend to surprising and indeterminable ways of being on the move, but are often described negatively and reactive to the transcendent system of control. Stallybrass (1998, p. 186) criticises this system of (market) evaluation hollowing out life with the coherent subject "fixated instead upon transcendental values that transformed gold into ships... and all into an accountable profit". In reversal, the paper followed Deleuze (1994) and Nietzsche (2003) in shifting evaluation from the question "what is..." pertaining to an isolated entity to "which one..." ascribed to the relations of force and internal to them. Instead of the fantasy of an external system of assessment representing migration as appropriation or accumulation of *things*, this article explored the creation of active difference irreducible to the logic of calculative measurement and exchange. It therefore questioned discussions of difference in terms of opposition or resemblance, which tie migrant cultures to specific geographic places

through the system of representation. In so doing, it contributes to the recent discussions on productive difference and desire in migration, which draw on Deleuze's work to reconceptualise migration as an "ongoing process of spatio-temporal differentiation rather than as a univalent and knowable phenomenon" (Carling & Collins, 2018, p. 1). The paper resonates with the broader efforts in geography to attend to life-affirming values and develop alternative ethics of encounter (Conradson & McKay, 2007; Popke, 2009), which call for increased attention to the values of feelings such as love, hope and fear recreated by active forces excessive of a representational investment-return system.

Second, in following Deleuze's (1986) engagement with Nietzsche and *shift towards pluralist typology and topology*, the paper considered a transformative evaluation in migration. It demonstrated that the traditional topology often deployed in migration studies draws on a specific place where evaluation belongs to and is predicated on the "placement" of migrants within external value system. To paraphrase Deleuze, it is a matter of reactive forces ascribing values to a region and specific type, so that the displacement of migrants does not change the hierarchy (high/low) of values. It argued against the vision of migrant values as elements of codes that can be selectively integrated into a particular symbolic territory or cultural hierarchy. To address this "placement", the paper explored the creation of a new, in-between place of evaluation in the process of migration. It argued against the reversal of the relation of forces forming migration and the values corresponding to them, which opposes active forces to reactive forces (creates negative difference) and separates them from what they can do. In so doing, this paper contributes to the recent analysis of the broader effects of mobility on cultural capital, which unsettle simplified representations of migrant cultural practices through the reversal of values (negative vision of certain migrant "home" values) in the "host" countries (Collins et al., 2014; Gulson & Symes, 2017; Yang, 2018). By unfolding migration stories, the paper followed the creation of difference in itself (creative difference) that maximises the

potential for change and escapes attempts to “place” migrants within a specific system of values. Attending to the “minor” processes destabilising the notion of value, centrality and margins, is perhaps a first step in developing experimental politics that can bring about unintended outcomes and provide “the ability to respond differently” to often marginalized migrants (Albright, 2003, p. 258).

Third, the paper shifted from rationalist and utilitarian evaluation grounded in the logic of identity towards *multiple evaluations*. By escaping the self-centred evaluations, the paper challenged the scheme of object/subject relations used in the “rucksack approaches” to cultural capital transported by migrants across time and space (Erel, 2010). In so doing, it added to the discussions on flexible habitus in migration research, which refutes both subjectivism and objectivism in producing evaluations, and further problematised conceptualisations of migration as the reflexive project of the self (Benson & O'Reilly, 2009). Following Deleuze’s call for an affirmation of difference, the paper challenged an evaluation that puts the self at the centre of life and creates the linear, “pure and empty form of time” (Deleuze, 1994, p. 110). Drawing on the examples from the study, it challenged evaluations that are based in the external timespaces of the self, limited to individual judgement, quantity and representation. It highlighted complex connections of filiation between migration times and revealed surprising and aleatory timespaces transforming migrants thus contributing to broader discussions about the importance of “migration assemblages” transcending mobility regimes and “fixed” migratory politics (Carling & Collins, 2018). Furthermore, the paper highlighted migration spaces as pure becomings, opening up new spaces and affective intensities where demands of utility and calculation are suspended. Within these spaces, evaluations emerge through encounters with others based on proximity rather than cultural distance, entanglement of connections between bodies, functions and machines rather than exclusive individual assessments. With its emphasis on the dissolution of the migrant subject and subjective

evaluations, the paper addresses the recent calls for unsettling existing mechanisms of migration decision-making and established classificatory systems of cultural validation (Papadopoulos & Tsianos, 2007; Xiang & Lindquist, 2014). It resonates with the broader attempts in social sciences to shift the focus in policy-making from calculation as a capacity of a singular actor to hybrid evaluations or “evaluativeness” of assemblages of actors that create difference at the limits of knowledge and rationality (Callon, 2007).

By engaging with Deleuze and Nietzsche’s revaluation of values, this paper adds to the emergent discussions that call for a reappraisal of the primacy of economic rationality, “placed” and autonomous visions of migration (Carling & Collins, 2018). It brings “nomadic” thinking and the language of multiplicity, non-representation and immanent production of difference into often calculative assessments of cultures in migration research. By focusing on processual migrations, the process of becoming-different and inter-subjective transformations, the paper broadens discussions beyond evaluations focusing on accumulation, exchange and conversion of different capitals across borders. It takes a step towards opening up the process of migration, challenging assessments based on negative difference and unpacks immanent evaluations that cannot be expressed through utilitarian ends achieved through calculative and goal-oriented rationality.

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