

MIGRATION EXPERTS BY EXPERIENCE: DIALOGUE AS A METHOD IN COLLABORATIVE KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTION (IN MIGRATION STUDIES)

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This paper develops a dialogical methodology for collaborative knowledge production in border and migration studies, focusing on experiences of border violence at the European Union's frontiers. Through the collaboration between Samer, a PhD candidate at the Faculty of Social Work and a war refugee from Syria, and Nina, an anthropologist conducting ethnography among people on the move, the paper critically examines the ethics and epistemologies of researching migration. Building on the notion of "migration experts by experience" (Čačinovič Vogrinčič et al. 2011), the authors propose a framework that acknowledges the expertise of people with migratory experience without reproducing hierarchical distinctions between the "researcher" and the "researched". Conventional academic practices risk perpetuating structural and epistemic violence by speaking for, rather than with, those affected by border regimes. Drawing on Paulo Freire's (1970) philosophy of dialogue, the paper advances dialogue not merely as conversation, but as a method of co-learning and mutual recognition that resists imposed frameworks of intelligibility. Through their respective engagements with Arabic- and Persian-speaking people on the move, the authors show how dialogical collaboration can generate ethically grounded, reflexive, and decolonial modes of anthropological inquiry, contributing to a rethinking of the politics of representation and expertise in border and migration studies.

Keywords: migration, knowledge, dialogue, experience

INTRODUCTION

When Nina presented at a migration conference in the Balkans, she argued for the importance of knowledge co-production in the research on border violence. In response, Samer asked: “What do you mean by knowledge co-production?” This question remained with both of us. It continued to shape our in-person discussions and reflections over the following days of the conference and beyond, through numerous phone calls and shared readings. The initial answer to Samer’s question was theoretical: knowledge is always co-produced, but some methodologies deliberately recognize interlocutors as epistemic partners. Yet, our conversations led to a deeper question: How can this recognition be practiced in fieldwork addressing border violence? How to do this ethically, together with people who have experienced it?

Based on this first reflection, the idea emerged to discuss the structural and epistemic violence of borders in this joint article. Border violence in the Balkans involves systematic pushbacks of people on the move who attempt to claim asylum in the European Union (EU). Due to a series of agreements and political negotiations, Balkan states are required to collaborate with the EU to strengthen their borders (Hameršak et al. 2020; Stojić Mitrović et al. 2020). Once people on the move reach a country where they can seek asylum, they face a lengthy bureaucratic process. Most troubling for many is the Dublin regime, which determines that the first country in which an individual’s fingerprints are taken is responsible for processing their asylum case. It is in this context that we conducted our research. Samer personally experienced this border violence as a person seeking asylum. Nina conducted an ethnography on the role of technologies in this context of border violence, mainly among Afghans on the move and those supporting people on the move.

An important strand of literature in migration and border studies has focused on exposing European border violence and the struggles surrounding it (e.g., Heller et al. 2017; Isakjee et al. 2020; Hameršak et al. 2020; Stojić Mitrović et al. 2020). Within this field, critical migration scholars have expressed growing concern about the need for more reflexive and ethically grounded modes of knowledge production (Stielike et al. 2024). Research should not be mobilized to support migration control (Stierl 2020), nor should it reproduce border violence through epistemic violence (Lindberg 2024). In this context, our approach proposes engaging more seriously with scholars of refugee background as one possible way forward (Albtran et al. 2024). To do so, we draw on Paulo Freire’s (1970) emphasis on dialogue and co-learning, where the act of knowing is understood as fundamentally dialogic.

Based on Samer’s thesis (Arkawi 2024), we argue that the notion of “migration experts by experience” provides valuable insights to address some of the ethical issues in migration scholarship. Our aim is to move beyond the dichotomy of “the researcher” and “the researched” based on dialogue. Samer is Syrian and went through the asylum procedure himself. He now lives in Slovenia. Nina is of Iranian origin and was born in Switzerland. We

both reflect on our positionalities. In each case, familiarity with migration and languages played a role – albeit a different one – in building rapport with our interlocutors in the field.

Our article speaks to the core of the politics of representation and more recent discussions about reflexivity in migration studies. The “writing culture” debate in anthropology in the 1980s (Clifford and Marcus 1986; see also Marcus 2012) advocated for greater attention to research processes, including the role of the fieldworker in the configuration of anthropological writing. In the 21st century, there has been a new emphasis on writing in anthropology – not only to broaden accessibility but also to experiment with different genres (such as creative nonfiction, memoir, anthropological journalism, and travel writing) (Wulff 2023). These questions gain a renewed importance in the field of migration studies, an interdisciplinary field which has been growing in prominence in the last two decades (Pisarevskaya et al. 2020). During the “migration crisis” of 2015, the field, at times, risked turning migration research into extractive practices (Cabot 2019; Stierl 2020), particularly as third-party funding opportunities expanded (for example, in the case of Germany; see Stielike et al. 2024: 4). Who is legitimised to speak about whom or what? What power structures enable some to speak on behalf of others? What tools or techniques could support a more ethical process of knowledge production in practice?

By reflecting together, we began to engage more closely with the notion of “migration experts by experience”. This concept makes it possible to center the narratives of people with migratory experiences. When referring to “migrants”, “refugees” or “people on the move”, we refer to people in precarious legal situations whose official legal status may vary. The phrase “people on the move” emphasizes people’s own agency. In this vein, instead of referring to “asylum” or “integration policies” through institutional language, our aim is to focus on the lived experiences of those who have endured the often terrifying bureaucratic nightmare of going to the asylum center and seeking financial help (Hodžić et al., 2017). In such contexts, words matter. While institutional language describes these processes through bureaucratic and administrative categories, the people who endure them often use different terms that better capture their material and affective realities. For instance, it is common for Persian-speaking people navigating these processes to use the word “camp” to refer to any type of migrant accommodation, even in Swiss cities, regardless of their official designation, which speaks to the experience of surveillance and the unfamiliarity of these spaces (Khamisy 2025). In this sense, using state terminology such as “migrant residency” tends to soften or obscure these lived experiences.

In this paper, we aim to embed our use of dialogue for collaborative knowledge production directly into the structure of the text. It is our way of countering “epistemic colonialism” and what counts as “scholarly” knowledge in anthropology (Gatt 2017: 2). The dialogic nature of our exchanges is inspired by our fieldwork interactions with people on the move. By sharing and comparing the particularities of our fieldworks, our encounters, and our conversations with people with Syrian and Afghan backgrounds respectively, and by using dialogue, we find possibilities and limits of the notion of “migration experts by experience”

and of dialogue. Our own positionalities and use of ethnography and auto-ethnography have provided a fruitful ground on which to link the theory with our experience of jointly writing a paper. At the same time, we remain attentive to the limits of this dialogic process, reflecting on them through our experience of co-authoring this article.

To write this dialogue, in practical terms, one of us prompted a reflection, and the other responded, challenged, or expanded upon it in return. This process constitutes an act of co-writing, where we jointly construct the written text and engage in dialogue as a method of reflection. However, our co-writing also connects to, but is distinct from, collaborative anthropology. While co-writing focuses on the shared authorship of the final text, collaborative anthropology refers to a broader framework in which all stages of research – from design to analysis and dissemination – are carried out collectively. This approach follows the principles that all parties involved benefit from the collaboration (Rodriguez in Gatt 2017: 4) and that the entire research process is designed collaboratively (Lassiter in Gatt 2017: 4).

Our paper reflects on the opportunities and limits of both collaborative and dialogic processes for knowledge production. It recalls earlier initiatives while revealing new challenges and possibilities based on our specific cases. Collaboration in anthropology has a long tradition, particularly within collaborative ethnography and public anthropology, with early examples that involved anthropologists' advocacy with indigenous peoples and related communities (Lassiter 2005). Luke Eric Lassiter recounts collaborations within the Bureau of American Ethnology (BAE) framework – though not always free from power imbalances, given the BAE's authority in defining "legitimate" Indian identities (Field and The Muwekma Ohlone Tribe 2003; Lassiter 2005: 86). Dialogue and collaboration later became central to feminist anthropology, notably in the work of Lila Abu-Lughod (1990, 1993). In our own endeavor, while our co-writing seeks to model dialogic and collaborative principles, we remain aware of the limits imposed by academic conventions and publication norms.

First, we briefly present our fieldworks and positionalities in the field, and we share the insights gained from placing dialogue and language at the core of our interactions with research participants. Second, we reflect on the keyword of "migration experts by experience" and what "expertise" means in this context. Third, we reflect on language and accents in dialogue with scholarships that inspired our initial discussions about knowledge co-production. Finally, we conclude with a reflection on the experimentation in writing this paper, and on the reflections that the methodology of dialogue brings to the broader field of critical migration and border studies.

SITUATING POSITIONALITIES IN FIELDWORK PRACTICE

Nina: We met at a migration conference, and you are currently working on your PhD thesis. Since we focus on positionalities and you experienced migration on perilous routes yourself, how would you say your positionality influenced the way you frame your research?

Samer: I was born in Syria, where I lived and struggled under a dictatorship. On March 15, 2011 the Syrian revolution began, aiming to overthrow Assad's regime. Four years later I found myself in great danger due to my involvement in the revolution and refusal to join Assad's military service. At the end of 2015, I began my migratory journey from Syria to Lebanon, Turkey, Greece, Albania, and ended up in Slovenia. It was a journey full of extraordinary experiences, one that can only be truly understood by living it. Which as a result can be recognized as a limit when it comes to research and can expose the researcher to the danger of misinterpreting the migratory experience (Arkawi 2024). In many incidents it occurred to me that migratory experience is misunderstood (in instances during my master studies), which led me to dig deeper into understanding the knowledge production on migration in academia, where I am currently doing my PhD.

While writing my master's thesis, I encountered an example. I was conducting the first interview for my thesis. The first time I approached someone to ask them about their migratory experience, I asked the questions I prepared beforehand. I quote: "Would you share your experience of migration on the Balkan route, could you please emphasize the question of agency and your perception of autonomy during the many stages of the experience?"

Their answer was shocking, I quote: "Why are you talking like a white academic, you are a refugee, my experience of migration did not start on the Balkan route. I am Iraqi, the story started long long ago, in 2003 [when] the US and the international coalition invaded Iraq". That made me stop and ask many questions, questions such as: How do we understand migration? Do migrants and refugees take part in that process? Is their narrative on migration taken into account?

Nina: Realizing that your initial questions may have been shaped by frameworks and concerns that were not originally yours, but framed, in fact, by decontextualized and dehistoricized understandings of migration as primarily occurring in Europe, how did this realization lead you to adopt a more critical stance toward existing theories in migration studies?

Samer: The autonomy of migration, emerging from critical migration studies and post-colonial theory, foregrounds migrant agency and the dynamic interplay of power between migrants and state authorities (Mezzadra 2011; De Genova 2017). While this approach reorients analysis toward the active role of migrants, it differs from earlier ethnographic initiatives – such as those of the Transit Migration Research Group and proponents of ethnographic regime analysis – which explicitly aimed to center migrants' lived perspectives and situated experiences. In contrast, the autonomy of migration has not consistently engaged with the experiential and reflexive knowledge that refugees and migrants develop through their journeys – forms of expertise that can deepen our understanding of the complexities of migration and challenge conventional hierarchies of knowledge (Čačinovič Vogrinčič et al. 2011).

Nina: It seems that the approach you advocate is not only about recognizing that migrants are agentive, but it is also an epistemological question about how to build this recognition in the research framework itself. In this sense, what methodology did you use and how did you conceive of narratives of people with migration experience in knowledge production?

Samer: The methodology combines literature review, narrative inquiry, autoethnography, and qualitative interviews with five refugees, thereby ensuring a diverse representation of perspectives. This multiplicity of voices underscores the importance of people with migratory experience as experts who can provide critical insights into the conditions of migration and the political structures that affect their lives.

An important component of my research is the emphasis on knowledge production as a site of agency in the refugee experience. Engaging refugees as experts by experience (or experts through lived experience) originates primarily from social work and participatory welfare research traditions, especially in Central and Northern Europe. In the work of Gabi Čačinovič Vogrinčič et al. (2011), the concept emphasizes the recognition of individuals' lived experience as a valid and essential form of knowledge in professional and academic contexts. Developed within the framework of collaborative social work practice, it challenges hierarchical distinctions between professionals and service users by positioning people who have directly experienced social issues – such as displacement, illness, or marginalization – as co-creators of knowledge and practice. I seek to contribute to ongoing efforts in critical migration and refugee studies to decenter traditional academic authority and amplify migrant perspectives that have often been underrepresented in scholarly discourse. I argue that their first-hand experiences are indispensable resources for understanding migration, framing narratives of emergence, mobilization, and integration as forms of resistance against hegemonic discourses. This approach facilitates a nuanced understanding of how refugees negotiate their identities amidst systemic challenges, such as bureaucratic barriers, discrimination, and marginalization. I highlight the importance of the contextual factors that influence refugees' experiences, including notions of belonging, community solidarity, and the socio-political dynamics in host countries.

Furthermore, the question of an ethical research practice remains an important future step into my research, an ethical practice that takes into account the notion of experts by experience when researching migration. What about you, Nina, how would you engage with “migration experts by experience” for an ethical research practice when it comes to migration?

Nina: The notion of “migration experts by experience” challenges traditional definitions of expertise, which are usually tied to institutional status and credentials. It helps to counter non-reflexive use of nation-state-led categories and epistemologies (Dahinden et al. 2021), by recognizing that people who have directly experienced border regimes and migration processes produce forms of know-how and situated knowledge. For example, many of my research participants were tech-savvy and shared survival advice based on their use

of smartphones during perilous journeys. We looked together at information circulating on online platforms about migration and ways to triangulate it with other sources. When I publish research on digital practices, for example, the roles of messaging platforms in migration trajectories, I turn to “experts by experience” to discuss whether sharing this knowledge further could cause harm. By highlighting people’s agency in unsettling borders, we may inadvertently expose strategies. For example, explaining how messaging platforms circulate information based on an ethnography of online and offline interactions can reveal tactics that are meant to remain unseen.

However, a single research participant cannot “represent” an entire migrant community, and including only a few voices can become superficial and tokenistic (see Albtran et al. 2024). Expecting individuals to act as spokespersons for a whole “community”, often without adequate support or compensation, can be exploitative. It places a heavy burden on individuals to explain, represent, and make sense of the violence they have endured, as well as the practices they develop to counter it. If left unexamined, these dynamics undermine the very ethics the notion of “experts by experience” seeks to advance. Researchers engaged in collaborative work ultimately have to make final decisions about what to publish and how – as Karen Waltrip (2020) also notes in her study on the uses of smartphones by her research participants.

The key questions remain: Who counts as an expert? How can lived experiences not just be showcased as testimony, but recognized as expertise? And how do we build structural conditions that contribute to collective forms of knowledge production? And you, Samer, how do you relate to this term?

Samer: Considering migrants and refugees as experts does not mean omitting the researcher’s role or disregarding the skills and contribution of the researcher. On the contrary, I see such practice as a way of evolving the researcher toward ethical engagement, where one forwards someone’s perspective rather than redefines it as it suits one’s personal aims or research goals.

It does not mean that, as a researcher, I cannot use my skills when doing research. On the contrary: it means being fair, sensitive and considerate of the delicacy of the topic; it involves being open to cooperation, to considering participants as partners in co-authorship and in knowledge production, forwarding their agenda, compromising my own predefined views, being open to think and do outside the white academic box.

EXPLORING LANGUAGES AND ACCENTS

In our joint reading, we selected publications that prompted us to engage more deeply with the notion of “migration experts by experience”. In this section, we reflect in particular on the article by Shahram Khosravi (2024) that examines power relations in migration

studies as seen from an accented perspective. For Khosravi, “accentedness is an intellectual response to the precariousness of working and thinking that racially marginalized researchers face at European universities” (2024: 2347). What moved us in this article was the attention to language and the migration itinerary of researchers themselves. Although language has felt central to our work from the outset, we were surprised by how neglected it remains within migration scholarship. This absence reveals underlying power relations shaping this field. In what follows, we reflect on the literature that inspired us to rethink our respective research practices.

Samer: Who are the main critical thinkers that inspired your approach?

Nina: I have been inspired by anthropologists who center the words and practices of those at the margins of the state (Das and Poole 2004). For example, Lila Abu-Lughod (1986) and Zuzanna Olszewska (2015) show how poetry carries worldviews and political commentary on its own terms. This perspective guided me to take seriously how my interlocutors name and describe their experiences, not only to highlight their agency, but to situate their words within broader sociopolitical contexts.

Samer: How did these thinkers shape your own practice?

Nina: In fieldwork, I paid close attention to the vocabulary used by migration experts by experience. Working with Persian-speaking people allowed me to move beyond state categories and to approach mobility as a multilingual process. For instance, I analyzed the term “game” used to describe border crossings by many people on the move in the Balkans. But it was not enough to describe the use of this word as a metaphor, it was more constructive to trace its genealogy and focus on variations in place, time, and speaker. Language and accents in the migration trajectories of Afghans matter greatly because, due to decades of displacement (Centlivres and Centlivres-Demont 1998; Monsutti 2005), they could be born in Afghanistan, Iran, Pakistan, Turkey, or beyond, keeping different accents or utterances of Persian variations. Accents, in a linguistic sense, reveal power dynamics and social hierarchies. Accents in Persian are often linked to experiences of migration – one could grow up speaking Dari (the Persian variety spoken in Afghanistan) and then move to Iran and learn how to speak with an Iranian accent, then meet people on the move from yet other places and adopt a new language or accent.

In fieldwork, my encounters were also shaped by my Iranian accent in Persian and my French accent. It opened discussions with my interlocutors as we could both exchange insights on each other’s family migration backgrounds, but it also reproduced power dynamics. For example, I explained that my family had been impacted by the Iran–Iraq war and that I was later raised in French-speaking Switzerland. Throughout, my interlocutors often adapted their Persian accent to mine to smoothen mutual intelligibility.

Having a French accent in academia is also linked to certain power dynamics. It often conveys that one has been socialized in a Western state. It opens access to resources and funding schemes and puts one in a privileged position. Reflecting on the way that accent

both in the field and later in the university played a role in accessing dominant or less dominant spaces of knowledge production relates to the way Khosravi (2024: 2348) draws on Frantz Fanon (1961) who explains that “spoken words always are grounded historically and culturally, hence racialized. Speech is not fixed and coherent but always dialectically in relation to the epidermal racial scheme. Bodies frame speech and affect how that speech is perceived. If the other’s face is unseen, then her words are also unheard” (Khosravi 2024: 2348). The stance of “accent as refusal” in Khosravi’s work echoes our interest in refusing commonly held understandings of “expert” to reverse this notion in favor of the notion “migration experts by experience”.

How has Khosravi’s article on “migration studies with an accent” inspired you and your work?

Samer: When I read Khosravi’s paper (2024) I felt understood when it comes to challenges faced by people with migratory experience in academia. I recognized the limits and the importance of our struggle as migrants. I understood my responsibility to advocate for migration, claim my agency, and contribute to forwarding the perspective of fellow migrants and refugees into the academic discourse of migration. I recognized the importance of a decolonial approach by attempting to use notions such as “experts by experience”.

Nina: Would you have some examples to share on how language and communication was key in your fieldwork? For example, you mentioned once how slow research takes place by sharing tea and exchanging casually over time, and how your interlocutors end up guiding the conversation...

Samer: The process of writing my master’s thesis lasted four years. The methodology used emerged organically through the process of writing the thesis. It started when I attempted to form my research question. I prepared a couple of research questions where I framed my interests and intentions and then moved forward to interviewing fellow migrants and refugees. The first time I approached someone to ask them about their migratory experience, as mentioned, I asked the questions I prepared beforehand, I asked and I quote again: “Would you share your experience of migration on the Balkan route, could you please emphasize the question of agency and your perception of autonomy during the many stages of the experience?”

Their answer was shocking, I quote again: “Why are you talking like a white academic, you are a refugee, my experience of migration did not start on the Balkan route. I am Iraqi, the story started long long ago, in 2003 [when] the US and the international coalition invaded Iraq. Which was a result of long-term imperialist interference in the region, followed by a sequence of strategically planned events aimed at weakening Iraq and the neighboring countries, the Iran–Iraq war in the 1980s, the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in the 1990s, etc., and why are you putting words and predefined questions in my mouth?”

I got schooled on many important aspects. One of them is how we (as researchers) mis-define narratives on topics such as migration and how we greatly misconduct our

positionality as researchers. I understood that my job as a researcher is to learn, listen, adjust, and forward the people's perspective ethically, and formulate it within a more analytical and conclusive academic discourse. I hold a profound ethical responsibility in conducting research. I must include experts on migration (refugees and migrants) throughout the whole process of research from defining and designing the research question to the point of presenting conclusions and outcomes of my work (Albtran et al. 2024).

Did you perceive a similar trend among the people you did your ethnography with?

Nina: Yes, language and communication were central to maintaining contact with the people I encountered on the so-called Balkan route. Like you, I also had to learn, listen, and constantly adjust my research depending on how the conversation unfolded. Many of my research participants were stranded at borders and our exchanges continued over several months, first in person, then via messages and calls, while I was doing fieldwork with grassroots organizations between Italy and Serbia. Regular visits to squats and camps allowed us to build rapport slowly. However, my positionality as someone able to cross borders and maintain contact, while my interlocutors often could not, highlighted the material asymmetry shaping our communication. The ability to keep communicating was conditioned by unequal access to resources, and this difference was part of the power relations linked to language in the field.

Another similarity with your experience is that most of my interlocutors had already moved within the region surrounding Afghanistan before reaching the Balkans. Their migration journeys had also started earlier, like your interlocutors'. This speaks to the longer history of migration among people from Afghanistan and the region more broadly. In the 2020s, longer-distance migration trajectories were shaped not only by the wars, the two-decade-long intervention in Afghanistan, and the abrupt withdrawal of American and NATO troops in 2021, but also by a deeper history of imperial entanglements that repeatedly turned parts of the region into an unlivable place. What we are witnessing, therefore, is not merely the movement of individuals labelled as "refugees" by state and institutional categories, but rather a process of displacement and mobility that goes back in time. The accents and vocabulary people use are rich repositories of this social history, and attending to these linguistic traces is essential to understanding experiences of migration.

CONCLUSION

This conclusion acts more as a prompt for further reflection, where we come back to the multiple moments of our endeavor towards knowledge co-production.

In terms of the research, we propose our dialogue as research material to explore the notion "experts by experience". We used dialogue as a contribution to research methodologies: where the act of knowing is understood as fundamentally dialogic (Freire 1970).

Approaching “migration experts by experience” contests power structures and dynamics, an approach which critically diverts from Eurocentric academic epistemological hierarchies. It advocates for the recognition and importance of people’s experiences in their own words and frameworks, to be forwarded as a valuable and analytical source for understanding the complexities of migration. In this sense, this methodology is also a political stance of solidarity. The notion of “experts by experience” advocates for the recognition of people undergoing migration processes as co-creators of knowledge, thereby challenging conventional researcher–subject dichotomies and promoting epistemic justice. This shift aligns with postcolonial and decolonial critiques that seek to decenter Western epistemologies and amplify marginalized voices. The use of autoethnographic, participatory, and dialogic methodologies exemplifies a move towards more ethical, relational research practices. These methods foster genuine engagement, reciprocity, and co-authorship.

Our aim is to use dialogue as an ethical approach to the production of knowledge on migration and border violence. As a result of this exercise, we can trace some exchanges embedded in our conversation that show our joint interpretations. First, we use dialogue in the field to allow experts by experience to indicate where the story begins. We put the language – whether Persian or Arabic – and relatively, the history and culture attached to them with a vision from below, beyond nation-state borders and categories, at the center of the narrative. Second, dialogue can include several “voices” that serve as a collective rendition of an experience rather than an individual one, this approach emphasizes that migration is a collective and often multi-generational experience rather than an individual and de-historicized one. Dialogue can also be based on an auto-ethnography that explores one’s words and world, shared cautiously according to one’s own subjective experiences. Third, dialogue pushes us to be attentive to words, intonations, and accents and to situate them in their circulation and cycles of re-interpretation. With this paper, we suggest that our experience-based collaboration contributes both to ethical knowledge production and to epistemologies of migration studies.

In terms of the process behind writing this paper, we made several practical observations that relate directly to our core research questions. Our collaboration required time to coordinate our reflections and writing, involving iterative exchanges in different formats (text messages, calls, track-changes in the text). Even when certain quotations refer to one of us, the other one sometimes edited or reformulated some sentences, contributing to a “docu-fiction” effect – similar to films that blend documentaries and fiction. While the paper preserves something resembling a transcript, a limitation of this approach is that the written form cannot fully convey the spontaneity of dialogue, with its specific words, accents, rhythms, and tonalities. The dialogue may appear spontaneous, but it has undergone several layers of editing and collective reflection. The written version makes visible the contributions of migration experts. But the reviewers and editors also shaped the manuscript. In this sense, the paper itself is a collaborative effort, even when this is not explicitly visible. Nevertheless, we hope that experimenting with knowledge co-production

through a dialogue between co-authors can open up new imaginaries and possibilities for other fieldworkers.

In this paper, we have addressed key ethical concerns in migration scholarship by emphasizing the recognition of lived experience as a form of expertise, which helps avoid reproducing structural and epistemic violence. Drawing on reflexive, decolonial, and critical approaches to knowledge production, alongside insights from autoethnography, our analysis seeks to expand the conceptual and methodological horizons of migration studies. Overall, the paper contributes to ongoing debates in the field by promoting epistemic inclusivity, destabilizing hierarchical power relations, and advancing a reflexive, justice-oriented paradigm of knowledge production within migration and border studies.

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MIGRACIJSKI STRUČNJACI PO ISKUSTVU: DIJALOG KAO METODA U KOLABORATIVNOJ PROIZVODNJI ZNANJA (U STUDIJIMA MIGRACIJA)

U ovom se radu razvija dijaloška metoda kolaborativnog stvaranja znanja u istraživanjima granica i migracija, s naglaskom na iskustvima nasilja na granicama Europske unije. Na temelju suradnje između Samera, doktoranda na Fakultetu socijalnog rada i ratnog izbjeglice iz Sirije, i Nine, antropologinje koja provodi etnografska istraživanja s ljudima u pokretu, rad kritički propituje etiku i epistemologiju istraživanja migracija. Polazeći od pojma migracijskog stručnjaka po iskustvu (Čačinović Vogrinčić et al. 2011), autori predlažu okvir koji priznaje stručnost osoba s migracijskim iskustvom, a da pritom ne reproducira hijerarhijske razlike između "istraživača" i "istražvanih". Konvencionalne akademske prakse nose rizik perpetuiranja strukturnog i epistemološkog nasilja jer govore u ime, a ne u suradnji s onima koji su pogođeni graničnim režimima. Oslanjajući se na filozofiju dijaloga Paula Freirea (1970), rad promiče dijalog ne samo kao razgovor već i kao metodu zajedničkog učenja i međusobnog uvažavanja koja se opire nametnutim okvirima razumljivosti. Kroz svoja istraživanja s ljudima u pokretu koji govore arapskim i perzijskim jezikom, autori pokazuju kako dijaloška suradnja može dovesti do etički utemeljenih, refleksivnih i dekolonijalnih modaliteta antropološkog istraživanja, čime pridonose preispitivanju politike reprezentacije i stručnosti u istraživanjima granica i migracija.

Ključne riječi: migracije, znanje, dijalog, iskustvo