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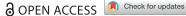
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ABSTRACT

There are many qualitative studies on interactions and activities within mentoring, including on organizational processes. This article concentrates on one pivotal aspect regarding the "doings" of mentorship—the training of future voluntary mentors (known as "godparents") for separated young refugees in a pilot program. The underlying study looks at knowledge production *in* mentoring. The explorative research done in Austria started during the so-called refugee crisis in Europe in 2015. Using data from participant observation, the "triangle of godparenthood" is reconstructed as a core structure underlying the overall pilot program. Thus the ideal-type figures of the "family-like," the "professional," and the "committed contractual" godparent become visible. The interpretation discusses youth mentoring as a form of social problems work. Accordingly, the study shows how social protection is organized based on particular social problematizations and on the construction of voluntary mentors from civil society. The training "teaches" future mentors what kind of young people their counterparts are. It offers a problematization according to which particular "needs" are defined. This allows mentors to legitimize, rationalize, and moralize what is, in the end, a pedagogical approach. By relating the problematization to a personal level, the training provides future mentors with a particular idea and moral obligation regarding what they personally can be for those young people who are categorized as "unaccompanied refugee minors."

Introduction

We are witnessing a worldwide surge in the number of people who have been forced to flee their homes, a number unparalleled in the post-WWII era. According to figures from the United Nations High Commissioner for

Refugees (UNHCR), that number exceeded 65 million in 2016 on a global scale, including 22.5 million (international) refugees, with approximately 50% under the age of 18.[1] In Europe, in particular, a massive and powerful engagement of different actors in refugee protection has been registered lately, among them many "new" ones and from civil society, including refugee groups (Jong & Ataç, 2017). Likewise, the situation of young refugees has become a major debate in the literature on social support and social services for refugee populations. This is particularly true since the movements of people in search for a better and safe that occurred in the "long summer of migration" in 2015 in Europe (Hess et al., 2017).

Popular discourse and at least some scientific debate on these "new" developments often present a picture in which actors from civil society – social or religious organizations, grassroots initiatives, civil society networks and individual helpers – seem to be already "there." According to this image, civil society exists as a sort of preconstituted, given reality within the container of the nation state, which can be activated for a number of policy goals. Besides this, recent professional discourse in youth welfare and child protection has increasingly revolved around the question of what kind of measures, programs and knowledge, both old and new, are required to be able to react to the "special needs" of "accompanied and unaccompanied minors." Some describe these needs as resulting from traumatization before and during the flight. Others argue that they consist in a necessity to "integrate" refugees into society. In this context, integration is often understood as a quest for the "acculturation," adjustment or adaptation of the individual. Yet others claim that there is a need to provide refugees with adequate social services and support in the biographical and institutional transitions they undergo during their life course, which are accelerated, condensed, heightened, and more complex.

Refugee mentoring as a social means to deal with recent arrivals

This claim is, for example, true of Germany and Austria. Relative to their national populations, both nation states were among the main transit and receiving countries in Europe in the context of the recent international refugee movements. Publishing markets in the fields of social work practice and social pedagogy have lately been flooded with contributions addressing these issues. However, these publications often appear to be quickly compiled and based on small-scale studies. Many are anchored only loosely (or not at all) in (critical) migration or mobility studies, and are thus a somewhat better reflection of research perspectives in youth welfare or social work (such as in Alazar, Kleinekathöfer, & Tietje, 2014; Fischer & Graßhoff, 2016; Hochwarter & Zeglovits, 2016; Scherr & Yüksel, 2016).

Much of these recent publications are driven by the impetus of providing knowledge for professional intervention and for organizational or socio-political decisions (examples of this are Brinks, Dittmann, & Müller, 2016; Friedebold, Gissel-Palkovich, & Dettmers, 2016; Prognos, 2017; Quindeau & Rauwald, 2017).

In this overall societal and academic development, the idea of mentoring for refugees has gained a particularly prominent role. In more specific terms, greater attention is being paid to mentorship initiatives which are regulated and organized by third parties, for example, civic associations, charitable organizations, or social service agencies. In Germany and, to a much lesser degree, also in Austria, such programs have even been pro-moted and co-financed by state agencies. Generally, collective actors run-ning mentorship programs for refugees do not only bring together voluntary, unpaid citizens on the one hand and refugees on the other in a one-to-one relationship. Collective actors also develop particular means to legitimate their intervention in the organizational environment, to attract the two unequal parts, to train and prepare one or both sides for the future tasks, to match them into a relationship, to back up, support and enhance voluntary mentoring activities and, not to forget, to intervene in situations of conflict, crisis or discontinuous change within relationships.

Research gap and research question

However, little is known about the different social practices and symbolic representations that are involved, or on the subjectivities and positionalities that people are able or even forced to take up in the context of these men-torship or godparenthood programs (a term used in the German-speaking world) or related mentoring activities and social relationships. In other words, we lack fundamental knowledge on the "doings" and "beings" *in* mentoring for "unaccompanied refugee minors." Moreover, this research gap is true not only of mentorship programs for refugee populations but also, to a considerable extent, of the overall research *on* mentoring more generally (Selle, 2016) and on civil society action in refugee protection (Pries, 2018).

Taking all of this together, the article concentrates on one pivotal aspect regarding the "doings" of mentorship: the training of future voluntary men-tors for separated young refugees within a mentorship program. Among the many facets of the concept of mentoring, the term "mentoring" here refers mainly to formal, planned, nonkin, nonnatural, nonprofessional vol-untary, nonpeer, and hierarchical relations, encompassing regular face-to-face encounters between two or more persons: on the one side a mentor within a more stable, more fixed, more resourceful and, possibly, more

powerful position, and on the other side the mentee or protégé, who is portrayed as more needy or less experienced. This definition fits in with what experts in youth mentoring call "community mentoring" (Colley, 2003a, p. 527) or youth mentoring as "a community based form of intervention that can reach out to vulnerable young people" (Philip, 2008, p. 19). Within a reconstructive perspective, this article presents findings on how "civil society" is produced as an actor in refugee protection through mentorship training. It asks how "godparents" are made for "unaccompanied refugee minors." To this end, data will be used from an extensive one-case in-depth qualitative study in the Austrian context.

In the following, I will first evaluate the state of the art of (youth) mentoring and highlight the research gap. This will reveal the need for a more qualitative approach, looking into organizational aspects and social practices in mentoring programs. This article aims at filling this gap with findings from an empirical, explorative, and in-depth research project. Therefore, the socio-political and organizational situatedness of the underlying study on a pilot mentorship program for "unaccompanied refugee minors" will be outlined, followed by the research question, methodology and design. After presenting selected findings on the training of mentors, an interpretation within the lines of social-constructionist studies in social services or social work is provided. Finally, an outlook on future research is given.

State of the a: mentoring studies and youth mentoring

Throughout the last several decades, mentorship has increasingly become a popular topic and measure for interpersonal social support, social intervention, and social (re-)integration in a number of fields. This is not only proven by numerous, practice-oriented publications telling us "how to do it right and effectively." It is also visible in the establishment and updating of a number of more research-based handbooks (Allen & Eby, 2007; DuBois & Karcher, 2014; Fletcher & Mullen, 2012; Ragins & Kram, 2007) and almost innumerable articles in academic journals. Both types of literature show that mentoring is also considered a core means of coping with transitions in life course trajectories (Colley, 2003b; Pflaum, 2017; Philip, 2008). This is equally true with regard to the intersection of youth/young adults and welfare services, as shown by the example of mentoring for young people living in out-of-home care or leaving care. In specialist discussions on youth in residential care, mentorship and godparenthood for young people are generally ascribed a high positive impact, for example, regarding the young people's psychosocial state and their social and occupational integration (Ahrens et al., 2011; Avery, 2011; Greeson, Usher, & Grinstein-Weiss,

2010; Hudson, 2013). This appraisal can also be found in discussions on young refugees, including their placement in families (Blecha, 2012, pp. 59–61; Chase, Knight, & Statham, 2008; Valtonen, 2008, p. 185; Mels, Derluyn, & Broekaert, 2008).

Mentoring as a measure for youth "at risk" and life course transitions

This general affinity between mentoring concepts and transitions in the life course is underlined by the fact that mentoring is particularly stressed as important for "novices," including in the context of protection schemes for the most vulnerable, newly arrived "noncitizens" or "aliens." With regard to social issues, mentoring is often highlighted as an approach to support people living in precarious or marginalized conditions. Some examples of this are studies on individuals or social groups characterized as being "at risk" (e.g., refugees) or disadvantaged (e.g., minorities in academia or children who have mental health needs) (Kerr & King, 2014; for critical overviews see Colley, 2003a; Freedman, 1993; Philip, 2008) or who live with parents suffering from mental strain or illness (Makowsky & Roebers, 2014; Schreier & Wagenblass, 2013). Other studies also focus on children living outside of their original family in residential or foster care (Greeson et al., 2010; Hudson, 2013; Osterling & Hines, 2006; Powers et al., 2018; Sulimani-Aidan, Melkman, & Hellman, 2018; Scannapieco & Painter, 2014; Spencer, Collins, Ward, & Smashnaya, 2010).

Focus for the review on the state of the art in mentoring research

As the body of scientific literature on mentoring has been growing significantly in recent years (Allen, Eby, Chao & Bauer, 2017; Kupersmidt & Rhodes, 2014, p. 439), I evaluate the state of the art with regard to the following question: What do existing publications tell us about the training of mentors and about organizational practices and symbolic representations in the context of formal mentorship programs? To narrow the focus even more, I mainly review the literature on formal mentoring for youth and for marginalized or special populations. Only writings in English and sometimes German are considered. The review wants to roughly present the general scientific perspectives *on* mentoring in mentoring research, including the predominating theoretical and methodological approaches. As a consequence, the specific findings of these studies are largely disregarded.

Mentoring research as creation of the knowledge object "mentoring"

The most general statement on the state of the art within the boundaries outlined above is that mentoring in mentoring research is treated

and brought about as an entity about which scientists can gain a sort of objective, practice-oriented knowledge. In a Foucauldian sense (Foucault, 1972), this kind of mentoring research is constitutive for the construction of an episteme: the knowledge object "mentoring." Many contributions that are part of what I call mainstream mentoring research ask how mentoring programs work and what makes them successful (DuBois, Holloway, Valentine, & Cooper 2002; Reeves, 2017; Singh, Tregale, Wallace, & Whiteford, 2017; Sanyal, 2017). Others analyze how mentoring or mentorship programs are structured vertically, that is, in the course of time, for instance, with regard to cycles or phases (Haddock-Millar, 2017; Mullen & Schunk, 2012; Spencer & Basualdo-Delmonico, 2014). Likewise, they investigate mentoring horizontally, that is, by comparing and identifying different typologies and forms of programs (Busse, Campbell, & Kipping, 2018). A much-addressed topic is what a best practice of mentoring looks like (Miller, 2007), the benefit of mentoring (Blinn-Pike, 2007), and consequently, how this can be evaluated and proven (DuBois, 2014). This focus on benefit and the attainment of objectives explores the side of the mentees to a much greater degree. However, in general, research on the mentors' side has been growing (Allen et al., 2017, p. 330; Pryce, Kelly, & Guidon, 2014; Suffrin, Todd & Sánchez, 2016), including studies on youth mentoring (Larsson, Pettersson, Eriksson, & Skoog, 2016; Lakind, Atkins, & Eddy, 2015; Lim & Park, 2014; Spencer, Tugenberg, Ocean, Schwartz, & Rhodes, 2016).

Studies on the benefit of mentoring for the mentees often focus on increases in their social or human capital, individual capacity, behavioral changes, or performance outputs. Or these studies try to identify mentoring's social support or support functions for the individual targeted, that is, the mentee or protégé (Tolan, Henry, Schoeny, Lovegrove, & Nichols, 2014). One important line of contributions revolves around the question of how mentoring can be used for "special" populations or groups, for example, social groups that are considered to be culturally and/or socially different, such as immigrants and refugees (Birman & Morland, 2014); people with disabilities; or disadvantaged youth, including refugee children (Britner, Balcazar, Blechman, Blinn-Pike, & Larose, 2006; Clayden & Stein, 2005; Kanchewa, Schwartz, & Rhodes, 2017; McBrien, 2006). Some contributions in these texts also ask how programs can be culturally sensitive or integrated, thus referring to populations or places not considered at the heart of the majority white population (e.g., indigenous groups) or are outside of the Western world (Sánchez, Colón-Torres, Feuer, Roundfield, & Berardi, 2014).

The lack of organizational and interactional aspects in mentoring research

Remarkably, few contributions in the overall literature on mentoring explicitly take organizational aspects into account (Allen, Finkelstein, & Poteet, 2009). Those that do analyze the role of coordinators (Baker, 2017; Koczka, 2017), the function of supervision (Goodyear, Rousmaniere, & Zimmerman, 2017), or mentoring recruitment (Stukas, Clary, & Snyder, 2014). Others look beyond the common perception of mentoring as a dyadic relationship. Hence, they investigate the view of program staff (Dutton, Deane, & Bullen, 2018) or other people surrounding the mentor-mentee relationships or somehow engaged in it, for example, parents, other family members, or peers (Basualdo-Delmonico & Spencer, 2016; Taylor & Porcellini, 2014). However, even if such aspects are considered, it is mostly through an evaluative gaze, asking how these issues impact positively on what is defined as a desirable outcome or quality on the level of the target groups. Even where mentor training or recruitment is addressed, it is to prove the importance of such training and/or its effectiveness. Whereas many studies simply use quantitative data or meta-analysis on programs (Kupersmidt & Rhodes, 2014; Stukas et al., 2014), others turn to the question of mentor training by partly using qualitative methods. Even if investigations look at mentor training, their focus is not automatically on researching into what actually happens when future mentors are trained, as a study by Helleve, Danielsen, and Smith (2015) shows. The aim of the study reflects the intentions of a quantitative research paradigm based on hypothesis testing: using a sample of school teachers, the researchers wanted to find out if there was a *difference* between teachers who had received or had not received formal mentor education, regarding the teachers' perception of their mentoring role (Helleve et al., 2015).

The lack of qualitative and ethnographic approaches in research on mentoring

All of this underlines the fact that, from a qualitative view rooted in the social and cultural sciences, there is a dearth of studies on interactions and activities within the overall mentoring and mentoring programs, including organizational processes, patterns, and realities (see also Colley 2003a, p. 539). Up to now, mentoring activities and interactions have rarely been investigated, with a few but notable exceptions, most in the UK context (e.g., Philip, Shucksmith, & King, 2004, Colley 2003b; for a review of qualitative studies, see Philip & Spratt, 2007, pp. 43–54). As a review article by Karcher and Hansen (2014) shows, instead of carrying out research "into" or "within" the activities and interactions in youth

mentoring processes, the researchers' perspectives are in line with practice-oriented and evidence-based approaches in the mainstream mentoring literature. For example, Karcher and Hansen "consider the role of context (e.g., community vs. school setting), mentees' and mentors' genders, and age of mentee to generate *testable hypotheses* for what types of activities are best for what kinds of youth under what circumstances" (2014, p. 64, emphasis by the author). This quantitative research bias is also obvious even when the conversations between mentor and mentee are targeted, as in a study by Tillema, van der Westhuizen, and van der Merwe (2015). The authors focus on the "learning potential of mentoring conversations" (Tillema et al., 2015, p. vii). Astonishingly, their aim of using a qualitative approach such as conversational analysis is shown to be that of measuring the *learning outcome* and, thus, explaining cause and effects. The main interest behind such a study could be defined as a longing for what is, in the end, a positivistic didactical understanding of learning.

These examples point toward an important assessment: mentoring research, including studies on youth mentoring, is often conducted by psychologically oriented scholars, predominantly using a quantitative methodology. For the U.S. context, in which a developmental perspective is dominant, Philip notes "that the absence of qualitative studies overall, suggests some important gaps in our understanding of mentoring" (Philip, 2008, p. 24). In the UK context, some remarkable studies take the meaning-making and interactions of different actors into account as well as organizational structures using qualitative methods (e.g., Clayden & Stein, 2005), including participant observation (Colley, 2003b; Philip, Shucksmith, & King, 2004). One especially notable example is Colley's critical and power-sensitive perspective on formal volunteer-based mentoring programs for the social inclusion of disaffected youth. She interprets and discusses her findings within a Bourdieusian and feminist-Marxist perspective against the background of wider social, economic, and political structures and individualizing neoliberal/neoconservative policy agendas. Some articles in German representing educational and pedagogical perspectives seem to use qualitative approaches more often. However, they frequently lack a fundamental research perspective, appropriate methodology, and design. Overall, available studies on youth mentoring often seem to focus on the evaluation of programs. Many use so-called "before and after" designs and are oriented toward measuring outcomes. The problem is that core aspects such as meaning-making or social interactions in mentoring relationships cannot be encompassed by these designs. In particular, as Keller and Pryce (2010, p. 38) emphasize, interpersonal processes and perspectives of individuals in youth mentoring relations have only been investigated in a few qualitative

studies, including some in the U.S. context (Basualdo-Delmonico & Spencer, 2016; Keller et al., 2018; Pryce & Keller, 2012).

One can say that, up to now, research has been conducted mainly within the perspective of mentoring as a knowledge object, as a sort of entity which can be scrutinized, measured, and evaluated. Roughly described, this line of research generally follows a positivistic and evidence-based approach, often driven by individualistic psychological perspectives and theories. Most studies in mainstream mentoring research (in)tend to produce knowledge *on* mentoring, for example, by determining causally what "kinds of youth mentoring interactions (…) are most helpful" to achieve program outcomes (Karcher & Hansen, 2014, p. 64). To put it in the starkest possible terms, though most studies strive for evidence-based knowledge *on* mentoring, from a qualitative research paradigm we have insufficient evidence on how mentoring takes place and what is constructed *in* mentoring.

Moving from knowledge "on" mentoring to knowledge "in" mentoring

A qualitative, interpretative, and ethnographic perspective would suggest looking *into* interactions, activities, and conversation *in* mentoring. Related approaches aim at understanding and reconstructing what kinds of realities and knowledge are produced. In particular, ethnographic approaches examine one basic question, What (on earth) is going on here? They ask how meaning-making, socio-material order, and social structure are established, achieved, and performed *in* mentoring-related situations. Research in the social and cultural sciences that is anchored in social constructionism (Berger & Luckmann, 1966) and the sociology of (scientific) knowledge (Barnes, Bloor, & Henry, 1996) and that is interested in understanding everyday life (Douglas, 1970) would not simply complement or expand on the existing mainstream literature but also strive for different knowledge. Instead of investigating *a* mentoring program or *on a* mentoring program, this kind of approach suggests that research should be carried out *from within* or *inside of* a mentoring program, to use a slightly modified quote from the social anthropologist Clifford Geertz in his plea for an ethnographic, "thick description" (Geertz, 1973, p. 22). Within the alternative view proposed here, "mentoring" would have to be considered as a native term in the everyday, mundane language of practitioners (and some politicians and scientists) that is used within a number of heterogeneous, complex, and dynamic sets of partly unrelated, both personal and organizational practices, which nevertheless are connected.

The lack of research on the "doings" in mentorship

For the purpose of this article, it can be concluded that there are only few studies which take into account the dynamic "doings" of mentorship, for example, the different social practices that constitute mentoring. This encompasses the training or preparation of (adult) volunteers or professionals as mentors on the one hand and future mentees on the other hand, or which looks at the everyday life and social practices within mentoring relationships. Likewise, we lack ethnographic research with a culturally sensitive perspective, that is, research that analyzes the different socio-material representations and performative practices *in* and *around* mentoring programs, for example, during public presentations and enactments, media reporting, and in negotiations between actors behind closed doors. To my knowledge, up to now and worldwide, no qualitative reconstructive study has addressed the question of how godparents or mentors for separated young refugees are actually brought about and "made," for instance, within training courses, individual selection courses, matching sessions, or collective supervision for mentors and/or mentees.

Sociopolitical and organizational context of the study

As a reaction to the deficits indicated above, this article draws on findings from a complex, qualitative, and partly ethnographic study on a youth mentorship program for unaccompanied refugee minors in Austria. This pilot program came into operation in an Austrian region in 2015 during the "long summer of migration" in Europe. It encompassed many different aspects of how to bring about "godparents and families for 'unaccompanied refugee minors.'" The program served as the basis for a one-case in-depth study. Paralleling the complexity and dynamism of the pilot project, the postdoctoral research was explorative. Initially, the ombudsman organization running the pilot mentoring program approached the main researcher to do an evaluation of the pilot phase. The staff expressed their hope of getting scientific proof of the positive impact and success of the program. However, it was agreed that, first, the researcher would take an independent position, and, second, the study would be conducted within a more fundamental research perspective. Both were necessary to produce rich, high-quality data and to allow for a thorough utilization of the unique data set. The research project, with a background in social work/social pedagogy, was not primarily motivated by an interest in "migration" or "refugees" or, in fact, in "mentoring." Instead, it was an empirical playground within the conceptual development of a research perspective aimed at understanding the intersection of social protection (or removal thereof) and (im)mobilities (Raithelhuber, Sharma, & Schröer, 2018).

Due to a lack of funding and given the highly dynamic forces in play during this time, the project leader and author of this article recruited a team of four intercultural volunteer researchers with extended linguistic skills, among them a former refugee.[2] For the purpose of this article, I will focus first on the public information events for people from civil society, which were held to raise their interest in taking part in the program as adult volunteers. Second, I will focus on the compulsory training for those who already declared their interest in being a future godparent. Related participant observation was conducted by the main researcher and one team member. However, data analysis of the field reports in the initial phase was always done by two or more researchers, including some who did not participate as participant observers in the mentor training.

The discrimination of unaccompanied refugee minors in youth welfare and beyond

State-based responsibility for and action regarding so-called "unaccompanied minor aliens" (an Austrian legal term) in Austria historically has been characterized by the frictions between an equality-oriented and a difference-oriented approach. This means that, on the one hand, young refugees entering the country without a guardian (e.g., a parent) fall into the responsibility of official youth welfare (Fronek, Rothkappel, & Österreich, 2013; Koppenberg, 2014). However, legal guardianship through official youth welfare services does not allow for a close connection to the individual minor. On the other hand, and despite the official youth welfare services' involvement in their guardianship, the majority of young separated refugees between ages 14 and 18 do not have access to regular youth welfare services, for example, residential care, including foster families. The reason for this is that as long as unaccompanied minor aliens have not received a positive decision on their asylum claim, they are de facto not granted access to the installations and services of what I will call regular youth welfare, such as residential care. In other words, an unaccompanied minor refugee without status is housed in a special mass accommodation unit for young people, which is part of the "Grundversorgung" – the special basic social services scheme for refugees. Also, according to key actors in child protection, this form of legal and structural discrimination clearly constitutes a violation of international conventions and norms of equality within the national constitution (Die Kinder- und Jugendanwaltschaften Österreichs, 2015). For the young people affected by such a discriminatory and racist practice, this is only one aspect that contributes to their extended structural discrimination. For example, youth accommodation for refugees without legal status generally has a lower level of professionalization and

funding. Due to this system, the young people have accelerated transitions in their life courses. For example, on turning 18 they have to move out of youth accommodation and become care leavers without a safety net (see also UNHCR & Council of Europe, 2014).

Mentoring for unaccompanied refugee minors as a reaction to discrimination

Human rights and children's rights organizations, including the official ombudsman institutions for child and youth protection in Austria, have repeatedly labeled this treatment of unaccompanied refugee minors as scandalous. However, not much has changed throughout the years. This legalized discrimination was characteristic even before the number of asylum claims by unaccompanied refugee minors reached its climax, with almost 10,000 new claims by unaccompanied refugee minors in 2015, at a time when more than 10,000 refugees passed through Austria every day on their way to Western and Northern European countries. Thus, several actors in favor of children's rights planned to react to this situation by developing concrete, practical measures to support these individuals. One measure that seemed to be feasible in this context was the idea of providing the young people with "adult voluntary mentors" or "godparents" from local civil society. The pilot project providing the case for our study was inspired by such an endeavor. The ombudsman organization for children and youth built its ideas for this type of youth mentoring for unaccompanied refugee minors on their positively valued experiences with a general child and youth mentoring program they had been running for a decade. However, the ombudsman institution thought it advisable to introduce a special program for unaccompanied refugee minors. For example, the new training scheme for the "local adult volunteers," a term we used in our research to denominate this group, was also to include information on trauma, impart general knowledge on asylum law and procedures, and provide basic knowledge on intercultural communication.

Research question and methodology

Given this unsatisfactory scientific knowledge on mentorship programs for unaccompanied refugee minors, we asked a simple but fundamental question: What is actually constructed in the project? We concentrated on the public advertising of the project and, in particular, on the training or preparation of local adult volunteers willing to engage in the program as mentors. This part of the research did not focus on the migrants or the beneficiaries of support measures, though this is the predominant

perspective we find both in practice-oriented and fundamental research on refugee issues. Rather, the research team took part in the above-mentioned activities, thus protocolling more than 20 real-time hours of the public program presentation and the training course for adults. For this part, we used an ethnographic research strategy, predominantly using participant observation (Delamont, 2007). Hence, we wrote ethnographic protocols on the information events and on a full training course cycle during the phase of the initial program implementation (Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw, 2011).

Research situation and observational focus

We attempted to write down important parts of the conversations word for word. This strategy was feasible, with this natural situation for data collection (i.e., the training units) organized in the form of a typical setting in adult education. A dozen future mentors and the researcher sat around one big table while, at the front, presenters – some members of the ombudsman institution, others invited guests – led them through the six training modules, each lasting several hours. All participants were informed about the research and data collection.[3]

   Generally, we chose a relatively broad approach for our observations but decided from the beginning to pay particular attention to the following questions: What kinds of differentiations are made, for example, between different "groups" such as unaccompanied refugee minors or mentors? How are people and groups (including their behavior) characterized? At the beginning of the analytical process, the research team went line by line through the ethnographic protocols using a hermeneutical approach. Throughout the process, analytical memos were made, and initial interpretations were formulated following this detailed analysis. After this initial work, we decided to focus on categorization and problematizations. Theoretically, this was held to be fruitful because it was considered, especially at the beginning of the pilot project, that the different actors did not have any clear, saturated, collectively shared experience-based knowledge about who the different participants within the project could or should be (such as godparents, refugees, etc.) and how the overall situation of the unaccompanied refugee minors could and should be handled. Hence, we expected that categorizations would be made in the course of the initial implementation phase. Categorizations allow for a mutual definition of positions, roles, necessities, and obligations, enabling actors to orient and understand one another, to act toward one another, and possibly to establish something like a relatedness. Based on these ideas and our initial analysis, we also expected that the protocols would entail attributions and

definitions of (moral) obligation, competence, and duties, among other things.

Membership categorization analysis as a theoretical background

This focused second step of the analysis was informed by membership categorization analysis (MCA). MCA can be seen as a way to analyze common, reasonable, and pragmatically oriented considerations and justifications in everyday life. MCA aims to grasp how ordinary people construct themselves and others as particular members of society. MCA is based on the idea that people use these perceptions and identifications through categorization processes as resources to act toward each other. Thus, categorizations always entail the attribution of characteristics and correlations that are bound to the corresponding category (e.g., a "mother" to a "child" or a "godparent" to a "godchild"). Further, categories are amended by predicates that highlight certain attributed characteristics. These predicates illustrate and exemplify how one can act or behave according to the norms in an adequate way, that is, a way that "fits" the categorization. These kinds of practices, including verbal communication, can be considered actions which shape, bring about, and position groups, actors, institutions, and individuals in relation to different worldviews. In this process, moral logics are produced and inscribed that support the establishment and the development of social relationships (Housley & Fitzgerald, 2009, pp. 358–359).

Applied to our material, the training of godparents can be understood as an exceptional setting of categorization work and practice. In this context, godparents are furnished with a moral legitimation and mission defining what has to be done – and what cannot be done – and how this has to be valued. In the next section and for the sake of brevity, I will focus on our concluding interpretations, substantiating them through translated quotes from our field protocols, originally written in German.

Findings: the "triangle of godparenthood"

The categorizations and problematizations, including proposals for how (not) to react to them, that come up during the training course we studied for future godparents for unaccompanied refugee minors paint a fairly disparate, confusing, and ambiguous picture. On an abstract level, they merged to form the "triangle of godparenthood." This model reconstructs a core structure underlying the pilot project. Each tip of the triangle is one ideal-type aspect of what it means to be a mentor or godparent (see Figure 1). Thus, each tip presents different aspects which future godparents can or
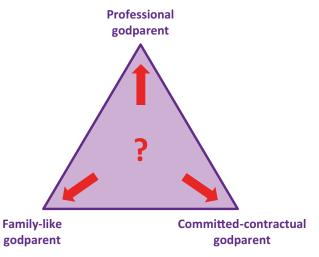
Figure 1. The triangle of godparenthood.

should use to understand their position, obligations, duties, and as a consequence, their action toward unaccompanied refugee minors as mentees.

The figure of the "professional godparent"

The first tip of the triangle is defined as the "professional godparent." This figure possesses specific academic knowledge that is connected to, and typical of, professions with a particular societal legitimation. In a functional perspective on professions (Abbott, 1995, p. 547), which is still present in everyday, normative perspectives and legal frameworks, professionals, such as psychologists, doctors, priests, or lawyers, have a particular ethical responsibility toward wards, that is, people in need of protection. One example of this professional framing of godparenthood in our study is the designation of the preparatory course for future mentors as training ("Ausbildung") and its compulsory character. In German, "Ausbildung" connotes a sort of formal vocational training and education toward specific occupational skills and competences. Also, the content of this training and the setting created on a material and symbolic level underline this trait of it being professional training for godparents. One example for this is the specific time-space arrangement of the training (e.g., start in time, positioning of "students" at tables which were prepared with writing materials). In addition, the legal preconditions for participation in the training support this interpretation. For example, future godparents had to present a police clearance certificate. Normally, such a certificate is required in Austria, as in many other countries, in specific contexts to demonstrate that a person

is allowed to carry out activities with high responsibility and safety requirements, for example, when working professionally or volunteering with children and youth. Symbolically, the professional aspect of the training culminates in a sort of ceremony at the end of the final training module. Here, a staff member, standing upright, awarded certificates to the sitting participants, distinguishing them as qualified for godparenthood. The following quote is an example of the great significance of defining the future mentors as "now being trained" and as "ready for the job." In this scene, the different contents of the six training modules, along with several questions that had been collected by the participants at the beginning, both visualized on a chart, are crossed off like a checklist by a staff member near to the end of the training course:

> [Staff member of the ombudsman institution] calls upon the module on "asylum law": That was the point where most of the questions were asked. She simply says regarding the legal questions: they can be checked off. The question about whether they will be sent back: is that clear to you? Some participants show their consent. Then she continues: They are not sent back. That can also be checked off. [Protocol M, lines 142–145]

This ready-to-begin moment, which resonates in the quote, also underlies the following three sequences. In these situations, the staff members from the ombudsman institution addressed their godparents toward the end of the training cycle:

> From now on you are fit for use [exactly these words]. Now you are really ready [exactly these words]. [Protocol M, lines 188–189]

> Yesterday I was in a meeting with [people responsible for the issue in politics and administration] (…) They were really enthusiastic that the first ones are now ready and trained for the task of godparenthood. [Protocol M, lines 358–362]

> [Staff member of the ombudsman institution] takes over and thanks everybody: I hope that the matching will take place soon, because you are really ready. Meanwhile, the certificates are handed out. Somebody makes a loud comment on being individually given the certificate by [staff member]: "successfully passed" [which seems to be partly ironic, joking, to which others react with laughter]. [Protocol M, lines 451–455]

These scenes entail a particular symbolism: Godparents are displayed as well-trained, certified professional workers whose occupational qualifications are also acknowledged within the organizational environment of the training institution. After such a positive completion of the training course (six meetings, each lasting three hours), the participants are now "pros" in the sector or the social- and health-related services. They are represented as generally competent to engage in a particularly problematized part of life, whoever they might be confronted with.

What is attributed here is a sort of professional disposition or attitude. Generally, in "normal" life, a disposition of this sort is problem-oriented and nonpersonal, or not person-specific, since professional treatment does not and must not depend on a unique relationship with a particular person. Hence, professionals normally do not "select" their clients based on their subjective and private evaluation of how they match up. Thus, taking up a client relationship as a professional is normally not dependent on a "matching" process bringing together the "right persons," as is the case in other parts of social life. Normally, taking up a professional relationship needs nothing more than a clarification of the conditions under which a person-oriented service should and can be provided, for example, a psychotherapy.

This shows that the figure of the professional godparent remains ambivalent, however clean and clear it might seem at first. The reason for this is that a profession usually involves a specific competence and authorizes people to treat a specific problem. For example, a medical doctor is authorized to treat issues that have to be defined as medical. As a consequence, professionals are not held responsible for differently defined problems that fall under the remit of other professionals or require a generalistic, holistic approach (e.g., those offered by professionals in social work and social pedagogy). In turn, this also means that professionals are principally responsible for anyone who matches the professional problem definition. They are entitled and even obliged to separate their private life from their professional life. Hence, they are professional helpers who are entitled to draw a line and to say no.

Partly, this is also true of the figure of the professional godparent because this figure is, to some extent, defined negatively, based on the categorization of the young people as unaccompanied refugee minors. First, according to the picture drawn during the training, the adult mentor is *not* responsible for particular things; for example, he or she is *not* an educator or legal guardian and is *not* responsible for financial issues, which are covered by other professions. Second, a godparent is only responsible to a *limited* degree. For example, the professional godparent only needs to have a "basic vocabulary" and "basic knowledge" on certain issues or needs approval from others, for example, the legal guardian, to do certain things. Third, he or she is only responsible *up to a certain point*, at which other, "full" professionals with their specific authorization and competence have to come on board because the problems at hand have to or would under normal conditions have to be dealt with within a specific professional pattern. One example of this is the case of trauma. Interestingly, the course presented trauma as a fundamental feature of unaccompanied refugee minors, which is certain to break out at some point in the mentorship

relation and has to be treated professionally. According to the image promoted during the training course, trauma usually requires professional psychotherapeutic treatment. As such, it is said to be impossible for other professions to take over the task; this delegation of responsibility is not feasible, however proper and essential it would be according to professional (psycho-medical) knowledge. The reason presented in the course is that trauma therapy requires the refugee to have stable legal status and access to adequate psychological treatment, as the following sequence shows in which an invited "trauma expert" talks to the trainees:

> Often, in the course of asylum proceedings it emerges quite intensively, the trauma. We found out that there are no specialized trauma therapists for refugees, for these particular topics, war … and definitely none at all in their mother tongue. And you think and talk about emotional things in your mother tongue!!! However, we have to maintain a positive outlook on the future together with the youngsters!!! (expert pauses). Yes, what else shall I tell you. Are there any questions? [Protocol A, lines 182–192]

The trainees also learn that these young people do not have access to therapy of this kind due to their definition and discrimination as unaccompanied refugee minors. Therefore, as a consequence, godparents are depicted as those who have to stay there, who have to stand this unbearable and unsolvable situation, no matter the circumstances.

This is one example why the figure of the professional godparent partly appears to be a sort of "surrogate professional," or "proto-professional," or flips toward a "joker-professional." The godparent seems, at least partly, to be a figure that is "drafted" and has to remain "in battle" as a generalist, whenever other specialists normally needed for such a complex situation are simply not there. This particular figure of the professional godparent is already in itself ambivalent. What makes it even more ambiguous is that it conflicts with the two other figures of the "family-like godparent" and the "committed contractual godparent."

The figure of the "family-like godparent"

The second tip of the godparenthood triangle is formed by a figure that is characterized by a hierarchical, generational relatedness to others, the family-like godparent. Inherently, it entails aspects of a semi-natural, almost pedagogical relationship, which counts on the generativity of the older generation toward the younger. It reflects a sort of responsibility of care and for the enculturation of the younger generation. Such family-like relationships are usually and generally unquestioned in everyday life: responsibility of care is considered unconditional and, thus, also irrevocable. Likewise, such caring relationships are connected to (deferred) expectations of

reciprocity, precisely because these relationships are conceived as "natural" (e.g., by being bound to parenthood or kinship).

This dimension of a family-like godparent becomes visible in moments within the training course in which this relationship is defined as exclusive and intimate. Likewise, the very denomination of the adult group as godparents (in German, "Paten") also amounts to this family and kinship dimension within godparenthood. This unequal connection of two different parts (typical for parent-child or adult-child relationships), which nevertheless entails an affective dimension, is exemplified in the following quote. In this situation, a staff member introduces an older local female volunteer who has already been a mentor to two young refugees for a while:

> [Name of woman] has two young charges at once, says [staff member]. [Protocol Z, line 180]

Likewise, the following pictures created by an experienced mentor and addressed at the trainees support this construction of a family-like godparent. Even at retirement age, she refers to her mentee as follows:

> He is really like my second grandchild, says [woman]. He is proud of me and I am also proud of him and he also feels it. In an aside, he once said, "Apart from you I do not have anybody else." [Protocol Z, lines 200–202]

This kind of family-like, private, intimate, and unique construction of a relationship allows for certain forms of actions and mutual "treatment," which would not be possible if people only acted in line with the figure of the professional godparent. However, as a consequence, certain forms of dissociation, of distancing and of declaring noncompetence, can render the situation problematic. Some are even unthinkable. The ordinary, everyday nature of the older generation, a conception of the relationship as a matter of course and the attribution of omnicompetence to the older generation are characteristic of an unequal, hierarchical family relationship. This is clearly illustrated by the following scene from a field protocol. In this situation, an experienced mentor, functioning as a role model in the course, is asked what tips she has for new godparents. She answers as follows:

> It is important to offer a relationship, to show interest in the other person and to "take somebody in," says [woman] word by word. Showing interest in other cultures, not being shy, daring to face it. Because they need a long-lasting relationship. Just wanting to help, that's not the most important aspect, says [woman] word for word. [Protocol Z, lines 215–219]

Generally, situational forms of dissociating which are experienced as serious and liminal by the interacting persons in family relationships have a high potential to damage the overall relationship pattern. They entail a serious risk of leading to the irrevocable disruption of a relationship, possibly causing deeper damage and disappointment. Whilst such scenarios could

be imagined to happen within a mentorship relation, they would be considered worst-case scenarios within the overall program. The reason for this is that the program actually legitimized itself through the mission of offering these young people a *different* form of personal relationship. This is based on the image portrayed in the training course that the young counterparts – the "unaccompanied refugee minors" – are vulnerable, in need of protection and highly traumatized young people who are "on their own" in this world.

The figure of the "committed-contractual godparent"

The third and last tip of the triangle is inhabited by a fairly different figure, the "committed contractual godparent." This figure is painted as one whose personal interests and conditions are taken into consideration and are legitimate, for example, preferences for particular activities, such as walking, participation in "sophisticated" cultural activities (e.g., theater plays), or cooking. It fits into the picture that here the activity of being a godparent is depicted as a limited endeavor, for example, regarding the time spent on the young refugee. However, even a limited expenditure of time on the refugee (e.g., comparable to the time one spends on a hobby or any weekly activity), is presented in the training as personally "rewarding" and fulfilling. This is visible in the following scene, in which an experienced mentor sums up the situation as follows in front of the future godparents:

> Yes, I can really recommend it to anyhow who has spare time. If you have two hours for the refugees, you can do quite a lot for the refugees. It is wonderful to see when they start to become integrated. [Protocol X, lines 445–446]

The figure of the committed contractual godparent is also supported by the fact that the tasks one has to fulfill within the relationship are depicted as manageable and sufficiently concrete. Furthermore, the training course ensures that godparents do *not* assume any liability (in the sense of longer lasting, negative impacts) and will *not* cause any additional costs, which could possibly lead from a commitment to a new relationship, as can be seen in the following two quotes, in which, first, a staff member speaks and then two experienced mentors:

> [Staff member] explains that the activities which someone will undertake with an unaccompanied refugee minor are covered by the personal liability insurance of the state. [Protocol Z, lines 275–276]

> What should be in the foreground is turning towards the other and the relationship. We simply went on excursions [she emphasizes "simply"], for example a picnic, nothing exceptional in an expensive restaurant. The simpler, the better. [Experienced mentor No. 2] amends: Make use of the cultural bonus card! And [experienced mentor

No. 1] emphasizes once again: Particularly the money, I would just leave that.
[Protocol X, lines 473–477]

This quote shows that the training course presents certain formats of activities which are presented as reasonable, rational or manageable to conduct with the young refugee. Moreover, this idea that activities (and their possible impact on the mentors) are manageable and foreseeable is supported by the affirmation that all young refugees possess a "cultural pass," a sort of bonus card issued by the state which allows them to take part in particular activities for free or at a reduced price:

A third woman [woman No. 3] now asks what the basic prerequisites are for godparenthood. Basic conversation must be possible, says [staff member No. 1] [referring to a general capacity for communication through language]. Often, they are already very good at German, says [staff member No. 1] about the young people. [Staff member No. 2] adds: you can communicate a bit in English, in particular the Syrians are very good at it. [Protocol Z, lines 264–268])

The quotes highlight a pledge that the mentoring project communicates to the future godparents: Being a godparent or, moreover, having a successful godparenthood relationship, is a matter of effective matching. Hence, matching through the organization is presented as effective and reliable, so a "mismatch" is most unlikely, as the next quote reveals:

Another woman [woman No. 7] wants to know: "What, if it doesn't fit?" [Staff member] estimates roughly that this happens only in one out of twenty cases. [Protocol Z, lines 290–292]

This significance of matching up is symbolically underlined by a number of forms which people have to use and fill out when declaring their written interest in becoming a mentor. Besides giving information on their occupation, family status, etc., they are also required or, at least, asked to mention other interests and personal conditions for the volunteering activity. For example, they can specify when they have spare time (e.g., during the week or the weekend) or if there is somebody with whom they would like to share the mentor role. Likewise, future mentors are asked at what time they are considering taking part in the compulsory training course. Moreover, the staff members reassure them that if they match the different parts – the godparent and the unaccompanied refugee minor, it will fit and match up, as shown in the following sequence:

[Staff member] now comments on this. This "matching up" is very important within the project. You will know right from the beginning if it matches up. [Protocol Z, lines 222–223]

Drawing a parallel with other activities which people take up later in life, for example, a salsa course or continuing professional education, the project communicates that this new step of becoming a godparent will be

manageable, plannable, and consistent. Hence, what is assured here is that the fundamental questions and intricacies of relating with someone unknown can be cleared up beforehand and in a positive manner *before* engaging in a new relationship. Given that not everything might work out for everybody according to the expectations and previous assessment, the project suggests that a reorientation or reassignment of the "mentor-mentee couple" is possible in the starting phase:

> You simply have to feel a spark. Can I really get on with this person? That question should be asked by both sides. If they don't match, then another mentor and unaccompanied refugee minor will be connected. [Protocol Z, lines 228–230]

Here the metaphor of the spark is revealing: normally, the sparks of a campfire discharge quite unexpectedly and beyond any clear control. Nowadays, most people in secularized, liberal societies would consider such affective sparks of love or attraction as a good, if not necessary precondition for the start of a (romantic) relationship. We do consider these situations of "love at first sight" as something personal, which might just happen or not. However, here the generation of the "spark" between two people is highly organized, assisted, and mediated artificially and artfully. Even if it is expected to happen, the training program frames a possible spark failure by simply offering a second matching with a different person, thus preventing frustration or withdrawal from godparenthood. Consistently with this manageable attitude, the staff members formulate minimal requirements for the future mentors:

> Another man now has a "basic question" [man No. 2]: "How much time do you think has to spent on the godparenthood?" [Staff member] answers: once a week. Let's say some hours during the day, half a day. Taking a walk, or cooking together. It makes little sense if the young person gets the impression right from the beginning that the other does not have time for him. But that does not mean that you cannot go on vacation. That is the idea with the unaccompanied refugee minors. [Protocol Z, lines 278–282]

This sequence underlines that the godparent relationship and the concomitant commitment and obligation are limited and self-paced, at least within the boundaries of the program. In line with this, these limits are also formulated in the written "contracts." Such contracts were formally concluded between the mentor and the mentee and are the basis on which the project sets their seal. However, we were unable to collect direct data on this procedure.

The pilot project as a back-up for problems arising for godparents

The three figures of the professional, the family-like, and the committed contractual godparent form a triangle, which should allow future mentors

to find their way and fill their own mentorship position. The three figures offer different images, which are possibly conflicting and at least partly ambivalent by nature. In this situation, the pilot project organization backs up future godparents by providing a sort of 24/7 safety net, which supports the individual mentorships and which can be used in case of upcoming questions, insecurity, complications or excessive strain. This is exemplified in the following three sequences:

> [Staff member]: And you know, there will be supervision for you, so you will have us at hand, [staff member A], and [staff member B], to ask questions, to exchange views, … [Protocol A, lines 213–214]

> Now [staff member] distributes lists with contact details: telephone numbers, names and e-mail addresses of the participants, of the project staff members and of the invited speakers. [Protocol M, lines 167–168]

> In addition, we have the rounds of reflection. Some want to know how often they will be offered. Reacting to this, [staff member No. 1] says, having consulted [staff member No. 2]: Every two months. But if a question arises in the meantime, please don't hesitate to get in touch. And we can also take questions into the reflection talks. [Protocol M, lines 189–192]

Interpretation of findings

This article started out from a critique on the current state of the art in mainstream (youth) mentoring studies. The key argument was that there is a lack of research on interactions and activities *within* mentoring, particular with regard to organizational processes, patterns, and realities. As a reaction to this, the assessment on the state of the art concluded there is need for a shift in perspective: a move from producing knowledge *on* mentoring to knowledge production *in* respectively *from within* mentoring, providing evidence on how mentoring takes place and what is constructed *in* mentoring. To do so, a qualitative approach rooted in the social and cultural sciences was proposed, aiming at reconstructing and understanding the socio-material realities that are created, and how they are achieved and performed. This particular awareness was based on the general observation, both in practice and in academic writing, that mentoring is often regulated and organized by a civic association, a charitable organization or a social service. Hence, instead of just taking note of the fact that various collective actors implementing and executing mentorship programs bring together voluntary, unpaid citizens and refugees, the question that arises from this is how this is achieved within the "doings" in mentoring. Asking a question like this meant looking at organizational and social practices, (everyday)

knowledge production and related symbolic representations, including artifacts.

What does this small selection of findings of research *in* or *into* mentorship for young separated refugees tell us about the overall mentoring program and, possibly, extending beyond the case presented in this article. There are two ways to answer this question, that is, from a normative-political and professional social work perspective and, second, an organizational reconstructive perspective, looking at youth mentoring as a form of social problems work.

A normative-political and professional social work interpretation

One feasible interpretation is to understand the development and implementation of the pilot project in its particular time and space as a collective search for a practical model showing how to react to the apparently absurd situation in which young separated refugees find themselves under the given circumstances. Seen in this way, it is an attempt to formulate a practical response on how something such as "refugee integration" could be brought about within the organizational contexts of child protection at the intersection of public welfare agencies and private civil society. Within such a perspective, the pilot projects looked out for a pragmatic answer amid an overt lack of state enforcement of social protection and social rights for young refugees. This is because core entitlements, which can be identified professionally, normatively, and legally (e.g., from the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child or other universalistic, human rights-based agreements), are not granted to these young people. Starting from their own assessment of the status quo, the institution running the pilot project developed a support program with strong participation by individual members of civil society, which reflects what they, the ombudsman institution, considered as doable, administrable, developable, institutionalizable, and evaluable (e.g., by also taking on board a scientific research team). The categorizations and problematizations we found in the ethnographic protocols on godparent training were tailored and devised to create and stabilize a personal relationship between two unequal persons, who were unfamiliar and even "alien" to each other. This relationship was intended to react to the precarious situation of the young people, both as "normal" young people in residential care (e.g., having to cope in an unusual situation with significant transitions in their life courses) and as unaccompanied minor refugees (i.e., being in a new societal context with a foreign language and without parents, and having in addition gone through hard times of crisis and flight).

An organizational interpretation on the doing of social problems

Beyond just showcasing concrete findings within explorative, ethnographic in-depth research, on a more abstract and organizational level, the study contributes to two core questions in research on the social services and social work: First, in what ways is social protection organized and constructed based on particular social problematizations? Second, how are social problematizations achieved and created in organizations, including the organizational environment? In many ways, the training for mentoring reflects research findings on the construction and processing of social problems in organizational sociology, the sociology of social problems, and so on (Gubrium & Järvinen, 2013; Holstein & Miller, 2003). Thus, the production of the triangle of godparenthood within the mentorship program parallels the narrative construction and patterns in social work case stories, for example, in the context of youth welfare (Klatetzki, 2014). According to this, social work case stories are narratively constructed using the pattern of a "social problems formula story" (Loseke, 2003, pp. 89–93). It entails at least four basic aspects: categorization of the problem or child, problematization, relationing, and proposed actions.

Generally, in social work a pattern like this is used to build a case, often about an individual subject. Here, in the training course for future godparents, the formula story is used to create collective figures: the unaccompanied refugee minor and differently characterized figures or elements of the godparent. All of them are intended to be used for sense-making within the individual mentorship couples. This is because any action on the part of the local adult volunteer *as* a mentor toward a young refugee *as* a mentee *after* the training depends on and requires a categorization of the young persons and their problems at stake *in the first place*. In concrete terms, this means the training provides knowledge and teaches the future mentors what kind of young people their future counterparts (i.e., the mentees) are, to then offer a problematization according to which particular needs or necessities of the young person are defined. This, in turn, allows them to legitimize, rationalize, and moralize what is, in the end, a pedagogical approach by relating the problematization to a personal level. Hence, the future mentors are provided with a particular idea and moral obligation regarding what they *personally* can be for the unaccompanied refugee minor who is categorized and problematized. The fourth step or level in this building of a sort of blueprint for future, individual, dyadic mentoring relationships is to offer a panoply of specific, bounded actions. The triangle of godparenthood reflects all this knowledge for the meaning-making of future mentors.

This means that to be able to "work" a case – here not in a classical, professional, social service setting but in a "private" relationship – a *particular*

meaning-making following the social problem formula story has to be achieved, to allow for a *particular* processing of problems as *social* problems in the context of refugee mentorship through volunteers from civil society. The training reflects strong categorizations, which could be problematized from an ethical and professional perspective as reproducing culturalistic stereotypes (a point which cannot be elaborated here due to the lack of space). However, it is exactly the ambivalence and polarity of the three mentor figures – the professional godparent, the family-like godparent, and the committed-contractual godparent – that provide not only a sort of vessel for the individual but also structured biographical meaning-makings of future mentors. To put it another way, it is most likely that if the program had offered too strict or too narrow an image of the target group, its problematization, the pedagogical relating, and the appropriate actions, the program would have run the risk of failure according to its own criteria for success. One such success criterion for the organization would have been, for example, not being able to find enough members from civil society to engage in the program or experiencing too many breakups after the matching process. Hence, the program designed here shows to be clever enough to know that future mentors do not reflect the constructed reality one-to-one or adopt one particular, limited, collective, and standard meaning-making unaltered. Hence, this kind of strict prescription in the sense of a mere "technical" manual for social problem treatment was avoided. Thus, the social problem definition presented in the training was tailored to allow future mentors to develop their own readings of the social problems, to individually appropriate them, and to understand the problem at hand not only within their own systems of meaning and within their biographical and social situatedness but also within the lines of the social problem definition provided by the ombudsman institution in the training.

To sum up, this means that allowing, qualifying, and enabling future mentors to do this, to appropriate the bounded knowledge for "doing social problems" with young separated refugees in their own way, equates with constructing individual civil society actors to carry out refugee protection and with creating godparents for unaccompanied refugee minors. Part of this is the attribution of particular rights and duties, (non)responsibilities, and evaluations, provided through the training. From an organizational perspective, such attributions enable the coordination of different actors within the acts of "doing social problems," as they define and rationalize what the "other" needs or will do in future, and how their own actions can be projected and legitimized in the process of sense-making (Weick, Sutcliffe, & Obstfeld, 2005).

Qualitative research on social services and social work, respectively, provides ample evidence that categorizations and related perceptions of the self and the other, including interpretations and processes of negotiation, are not only typical of social help. What is more, they are constitutive for the functioning of social support and social help, as evidenced by organizational and person-related research in various fields (Hall, Juhila, Matarese, & van Nijnatten, 2014; Hall, Slembrouck, & Sarangi, 2006; Wolff, 1983). We can see this in studies on professionals and how they act, e.g. in their accounts of "cases" in youth welfare (Thieme, 2013) and how they address clients in family-related help (Richter, 2013), in social practices of constructing and addressing clients in the context of counseling (Karl, 2015; Karl, Müller, & Wolff, 2011), or, last but not least, in the context of the care planning conference for individual assistance in youth welfare (Messmer & Hitzler, 2011). It is also known that potential or future clients have to present as being within the rules of the game in a particular manner. They have to position themselves in a way that enables them to get access to and make use of the help mechanisms in the first place. As research shows, these processes do not take place *before* a help mechanism is actually realized or activated. Rather, they are part of the processual construction of help itself, including the mechanisms to ensure that it works. Hence, not only the curriculum of the training course but also the overall development of the mentoring program can be understood as a way to create knowledge on unaccompanied refugee minors. Therefore, refugee minors had to be established as a specific problem category within the organizational environment of the pilot project at this particular historical moment to be able to create and appropriate various resources (including local adult volunteers as future "godparents") and to achieve legitimacy for a *social* intervention. Drawing analogies to approaches in organizational sociology (Groenemeyer, 2010), the pilot project can be reconstructed as a first or early step toward the institutionalization of this problem definition in the context of a much wider, professional, and political problematization of refugees. However, this institutionalization shows the characteristics of "loosely coupled systems" (Orton & Weick, 1990) of different, in(ter)-dependent actors. Hence, the pilot project (understood as the initiators and main implementers of the mentoring program) and other coupled actors are able to take on a life of their own when it comes to dealing with the constructed problem of unaccompanied refugee minors.

Discussion and future research perspectives

The material and findings selected for this article do not allow any conclusions to be drawn on how the corresponding people mutually interpreted

their new relationship *after* their matching as a mentorship couple. Further, we cannot conclude from this how exactly they made sense of it on the basis of their biographical development, their current social situatedness and (political) positionings, and their imaginings of a possible future. Likewise, we cannot determine, based on what is presented here how the training of future godparents affected these processes. However, this is something our research focused on in other parts of our overall explorative study, which will be published at some time. To do so, I will draw on the analysis of various narrative interviews with future and experienced godparents within a processual design and on multilingual group interviews with experienced young refugees taking part in the program.

This article provides a deeper understanding of the dynamics of social protection for refugees at the intersection of institutional and individual actors, official public and private spheres, and state welfare and other forms of social protection (e.g., through civil society). The findings from our research and the ways of approaching and theorizing youth mentoring programs point to a number of future research perspectives and necessities, some extending beyond mentoring. For example, extending this kind of approach would facilitate investigation into the production of new social protection arrangements beyond the limits and boundaries of consolidated but pressurized welfare services. For example, research could be carried out and support mobilized for social practices that work not only for those whom the state wants to acknowledge as its national citizens (Raithelhuber et al., 2018). This leads to the final consideration: it is fair to say that regarding both the refugee question and more generally mentorship programs, we lack knowledge on the political dimension these kinds of programs, performances, and enactments entail and reveal, programs at the intersection of social/state welfare and other forms of social protection (e.g., through civil society, and at the intersection of institutional and individual actors and of (official) "public" and "private" spheres). This would involve looking closely at the function of mentoring programs and how they are interwoven with neo-liberal and neo-conservative turns in social policy. In a wider perspective, such knowledge seems to be necessary if we want to understand and engage reflectively in the development of social protection arrangements for (im)mobile populations and conditions, especially in the context of ongoing discussions on changes in social policy, (state) welfare, and the role of "civil society" in Europe and beyond.

Notes

1. http://www.unhcr.org/figures-at-a-glance.html, last entry 16 April 2018.
2. I owe particular thanks to my co-researchers Amancay Jenny, Doris Reithmaier, Hila Kakar, and Kübra Çağlar.

3. All institutions, places and names were anonymized for reasons of data protection. Following the ethics and practices of factual anonymization, any information that was not necessarily needed to understand the argument of the text respectively the content of a quote, was altered or deleted, thus avoiding that information can be related to or someone is identified as a particular person.

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