Transnational digital networks, migration and gender

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Thematic Report
"Here, There and (Almost) Now: How ICTs Transform Migrants' Living at Home"

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1. Introduction

It is increasingly rare today to see migration as a movement between two distinct communities, belonging to widely separated places and characterised by independent systems of social relations. On the contrary, it is more and more common for migrants to maintain remote relations, typical of relations of proximity, and to activate them on a daily basis.

This mediated bond --- via telephone, email or skype--- makes it easier than before to stay close to one's family, to others, to what is happening to them, at home or elsewhere, and even allows them to do this better. These growing digital trends of ubiquitous interactions between migrants indicate that communication technologies are instruments facilitating what theorists call "connected presence" (Licoppe, 2004). Internet, fixed and mobile communication systems, video-session, messaging, social networks, are zealously tracked down in order to satisfy the 'compulsion for proximity' (Boden & Molotch, 1994) and have led to the production of the different forms of at least intermittent remote presence useful and necessary to the maintenance of family and community life.

The development of communication practices ---from simple 'conversational' methods where communication compensates for absence, to 'connected' modes where the services maintain a form of continuous presence in spite of the distance --- has produced the most important change in migrants' lives. Not only have migratory practices been revolutionised (in particular the activation of networks, remote organisation, the monitoring of movements), but the way mobility is experienced has also been affected, and implicitly the construction of new "*home territories*" (Morley, 2000).

Today's generations, who have become used to mobility, are endowed with an exceptional ability to continuously renew their bond with their home environment even as they establish contacts with the societies of the countries of destination. The idea of 'presence' has thus become less physical, less 'topological' and more active and affective, just as the idea of absence is implicitly altered by these practices of communication and virtual co-presence (Urry, 2000).

When close family members or friends cannot be physically in proximity, users will increasingly opt for the *ambient accessibility of video-communication.* This new form of "connected presence" which is the chief organising principles of our theoretical reflection on the "connected migrant" (Diminescu 2003), introduces a new dimension of locality/localisation (placement) in the everyday lives of migrants. Richard Rogers (2009) and Anat Ben David (2010)

describe this development as a shift away from the perception of the Web as a "spaceless space", in which real geographical locations had no meaning, to the constant and gradual "revenge of geography", as evident in the localisation of both Web content and devices, which eventually led to the grounding of the virtual into the real. The gradual localisation of search engine results and circulation of local content, together with the rise of platforms dedicated to providing localised geographical data, have resulted in a new nationally and transnationally determined spatial organisation of the Web (Ben David, 2010).

Work package 5 researches how information and communication technologies (ICT), and particularly video-communication technologies, influence everyday-life patterns of communication in transnational milieus. Based on empirical case studies conducted in the three partner cities (Paris, Athens and Ljubljana), the research exemplifies the complex combinations of global media uses and face-to-face encounters that emerge in response to the specific needs of transnational populations and bring about new global forms of "being at home". How is global togetherness possible? How does the availability of ICTs alter migrants' everyday lives and senses of belonging? The research combined ethnographic methods of transnational field research with ethnomethodological techniques for analysing virtual communications, which were developed along the research process.

The two main starting points of the research were the following:

A "culture of bonds": Current trends in thinking on contemporary migration (in particular theories on transnational networks) agree that today's migrants are the actors of a *culture of bonds*, which they themselves have founded and maintain even as they move about. Formerly, a latent feature but typical of all groups on the move, this culture of bonds became visible and highly dynamic once migrants began massively to use modern information and communication technologies (ICT). How do media and particularly VoIT technologies contribute to the construction of various kinds of home territories? How do they reconfigure gender relations by giving rise to a mediated domesticity?

The "connected presence": Rather than being absent from their places of origin, migrants become present in different geographical locations simultaneously, through the use of digital technologies. This *connected presence* does not simply imply a digital mediation, however, but mainly a digital proximity. It is thus more and more common for migrants to maintain remote relations typical of relations of proximity and to activate them on a daily basis. Via mobile phones, Skype, MSN etc., there are new forms of 'connected presence', which is the chief organising principle of our theoretical

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reflection on the 'connected migrant'. How and what kind of "presence" is built by the ambient accessibility of video-connections.

2. Fieldworks and methods

2.1. French case

The TIC-Migrations team launched 3 studies in France.

First is an ethnomethodological inquiry on the use of Skype by migrants (see *5. Showing and interacting with the family*). The configuration of the sample used in our survey is determined by the hybrid aspect of our methodology and the gender issues of our research. We favoured the following three situations: Couples living a long-distance relationship (he immigrant / she living in the country of origin); Mother and Child (immigrant mother / child staying in charge of the grandparents in the country of origin); and Disseminated Family, widened and scattered on several continents.

As a first step in the collection of naturally occurring video calls, we analysed discussions on video telephony, and interviewed 50 users about their video telephony practices. We then engaged in the construction of a corpus based on the capture of video calls. Tracing intimate communications was not easy. A couple from the Ivory Coast agreed to do so (he works as a financial journalist in Lille, and his wife is civil servant in Abidjan); we also recorded the conversations of the extended family of two Congolese students, and analysed the recordings made by a person of Colombian origin who lives in Paris and whose family is in Bogotá. A software was installed on the computer of the person in France and also from time to time an independent camera (as a third point of observation).

Subjects were able to avoid recording any calls they did not wish the researchers to have access to. Moreover, to be able to analyse actual video calls, authorisation had to be obtained from both parties to the call. Subjects therefore had to be recruited in pairs accustomed to interacting together on a regular basis via video calls. This also meant that all our pairs of subjects were closely related. We were able to build a corpus of about 100 video calls (80h of conversation) in this way.

In this report, we will present a "typology of calls", and analyses of conversations which are relevant to the question of long-distance localisation and of how to dwell at distance. However, the research has been much richer. Moreover, in order to understand the nature of the closeness created by ICTs, we were inspired by the area of problems for 'proxemic research' developed by Edward Hall (2003, 24), which we adapted for our purpose. What different kinds of distances do people maintain via ITCs? How are these

distances differentiated? What relationship, activities and emotions are associated with each conversation, and with each distance? In this new digital environment characterised by its fluidity and absence of borders, how are boundaries conceived? How permanent are they? How are boundaries marked? When and how do you know you are inside a boundary? Can a hierarchy be observed within the space created by video communications? Is there a hierarchy of spaces, differentiating for instance the most intimate, the most sacred and the most public? What are the taboos in video communication? What is the nature of the sensory involvement for the different relationships in everyday life video communications? What specific spatial needs are there?

Second is a qualitative and quantitative study realised in partnership with the NGO *Emmaüs Défi*, which is involved in an innovative ICT project targeting marginalised people and specifically the homeless. In order to sustain employment and social integration of impoverished people, mostly migrants, Emmaüs *Défi* created in collaboration with SFR (the Vodafone French operator) a prepaid phone cards device at very low costs. They can be used for 6 to 18 months, and the scheme now has about 1300 users. The partnership allows us to have access to migrants for interviews, studying their *habitel* (see *2.5. Habitel*) and communication diaries (see *2.4 Communication diaries*), and also to see the data collected through the scheme for quantitative analyses of migrants' profiles, phone usage, etc. It reveals that 90% of the users are below the poverty line (income < 900€/month) and that 77% of them were born abroad. This also means that even more of them could have part of their family abroad. Most of the migrants using these devices are from North Africa (57% of users are calling North Africa). The partnership with *Emmaüs Défi* also grants confidentiality of research.

Registration to the "fair phone" device

Qualitative inquiries were divided in two parts:

A campaign of 40 interviews was made at the two *Emmaüs Défi* locations,
when people come to subscribe or buy phone cards. All interviews used here
are realized with migrants. Among them, 10 volunteers were asked to fill in a
communication diary during one week, in exchange of gift checks as
compensation. Extra interviews were carried out when the diaries were
recovered.

Interview Grid

- Which *habitel* do you carry with you? Identity card, bank card,
chequebook, health card, transport card, accommodation, phones, number
of SIM cards and mobile phones, TV, radio, newspapers, taxiphone, public
phone boxes, computer, internet, e-mail, Skype, social networks, library
card, NGO cards…
- What must you not forget when leaving home? In what order? What part
of your habitel do you use at home?
- Last 10 calls: What is the mobile phone needed for? Which functions?
Calling who, when, rituals?
- Diary: media (mobile phone, IM, internet, e-mail), date, hour, length of
call, sent or received call, who, topic of conversation, what were you doing
during the call and where?

The third research is devoted to the use of Facebook by Moroccan students in
situation of mobility. The aim of this research is to understand how the use of
online social networks introduces new ways of experiencing space. The
investigation is based on a set of interviews with Moroccan students in
France, which allow us to say that their practice of the internet is mainly
oriented towards the social Web and specifically social networking sites, such
as Facebook. This triggers theoretical questions about the structuration of
these networks, but also the way they interact with spatial dimensions and
particularly places of residence and living, as well as their evolution over time
(in relation to periods of mobility).

We worked on a sample of 25 students and 3 groups in a situation of
international mobility. We used the methods developed for the e-diaspora
atlas (see www.e-diasporas.fr). We browsed and mapped the relevant
networks on the Web. After that, we went backwards and forwards between
the fieldwork and the graph we created with the Gephi software. On the one
hand, this comparison enabled us to geolocalise the physical dimension of the
networks, and, on the other hand, we could analyse and interpret the graphs
through some interviews.

2.2. Slovenian case

To understand the relationship between ICT-supported communication and notions of home and belonging in the context of transnational milieus, our analysis draws from fieldwork conducted during the 7 month period from July 2011 to January 2012 in Slovenia. The findings are based on communication diaries that were collected from seven female and five male migrants who currently live in Slovenia and were asked to document in detail their communication over the course of two weeks, though some also kept the diary for longer (the longest is for one month). So far, communication diaries haven't been used frequently, although they're slowly emerging as an ethnographic method to approach research related to the use of new technologies (cf. Ito, 2005; Wallis, 2011).

Our approach to the analysis of diaries was to explore the meanings of home by addressing: 1) the "who" of communication, 2) the "where", 3) the "when", 4) the "how", and 5) what is the purpose of communication. We were interested in exploring: 1) who are the relevant "others" and the positioning of the self in the network of relations, 2) where does communication take place, i.e. the reference to location, 3) how long does communication last, how often does it occur and during which part of the day, 4) which media device is used for various kinds of communication, i.e. "what" do our diary partners communicate "with" and 5) what is the communication about, i.e. what is the content of their conversation and what are the apparent routines. We thus aimed to collect data about particular forms of communication by a diverse set of migrants.

It has proven quite a challenge to secure partners in research, since some of the approached migrants were not willing or could not find the capacity or time to devote the required time and effort to fill in the diary. In some cases, the prospect of financial compensation was the factor that granted approval for participation in the research. Researchers met our research partners to explain the purposes of research and the method carefully and in some cases several meetings off- and/or on-line were arranged in order to clarify how the diaries should be filled. We approached about twenty people with migration experience and in the end twelve agreed to fill in the diary. The collected diaries were first inspected by the researchers in order to clarify misunderstandings or potential missing data. We then arranged for the follow-up interview to sort out the final organisation of diaries according to the agreed method and to obtain additional information related to our partner's migration experience, family relations, work experiences; asking

participants to elaborate more on how the new technologies influence their everyday life patterns in transnational milieus. Analysis also included filled diaries that were prepared by field researchers giving us insight into bio sketches of our partners, reflection on our own approach and on encounters with migrants.

2.2.1.   Sample

Our interviewees were between 23 and 43 years old, seven female and five male. Countries of birth varied including countries of former Yugoslavia like Serbia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Macedonia, and others like Ukraine, Mexico, South Africa, Syria. For some Slovenia was their first country of immigration, while the majority had previously lived elsewhere in Europe or globally, such as in the UK, the Netherlands, Luxemburg, Switzerland, Austria, Germany, Turkey, or the US. When communication practices are considered, we see an even more global network that is a reflection of networking practices of interviewees from our sample and includes other countries such as Finland, France, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Malta, Poland, Spain, Australia, Brazil, Israel, Japan, Singapore, where family, friends or co-workers are scattered. Year of arrival to Slovenia varies as well, some arrived in the 1990s, one in the 1980s, while the majority are "recent" migrants who migrated from 2008 onwards. Circumstances of migration include work, job search, studies, family reunion, marriage and fleeing from war.

The general level of education is high: eight have university degrees, two have had a vocational education, one finished secondary school, and we have one missing answer. Among the most educated, two have PhD and three are PhD students, of which two have MA degrees. While designing the sample we wanted to include not only both genders and migrants with various educational records but were also attentive to capture migrants with different work experiences and, most importantly, different patterns of cross border communication. It was not our intention to focus on the more "affluent" migrants and we tried to make every effort to include participants with various statuses and experiences, but for some the commitment required in compiling a diary was too big.

Educational expertise of our interviewees was diverse: banking sector, marketing and communication, computer industry, mechanical engineering, pedagogy, transport industry. Five were regularly employed, three were students, one was unemployed, one was in irregular employment, while two more were employed but didn't specify the type of employment. While all use the new digital media almost daily, only one case in the sample is limited to the use of mobile phone alone. This case resembles many comparable migrant stories, as mobile phone use is widespread among the migrant

population, particularly since cheap(er) mobile providers entered the market, allowing reduced rates and cheaper charges for calling abroad (Vertovec, 2004). Relying on mobile phones as the only source of digital mobile technology is therefore a widespread practice among the majority of migrants in Slovenia, since most are male construction workers from former Yugoslavia, who cannot afford to spend the time and means on laptops, internet provider fees and the like. Since their resources and current life situation prevent them from taking advantage of any other digital means, also due to financial limitations, the mobile phone as a single means of digital communication was included in the sample.

2.3. Greek case

After an initial mapping of migrant communities based on prior experience of the researchers, we run focus groups with Filipinos (KASAPI – Unity of Filipino Migrants in Greece, http://www.kasapi.gr/), *Bangladesh Doel Cultural Organization*, Afghan women attending courses of Greek language organised by the Network for Children's Rights. *Through these meetings and through individual contacts* we have identified potential Skype users for personal interviews and recordings.

Nevertheless, we have encountered difficulties in explaining to migrants the purpose of our research, particularly when it comes to the specific methods we want to use, i.e. diaries and video recordings. Most of them however were keen on speaking about their use of Internet, particularly Facebook and other social media, especially when it had to do with less intimate activities than content of intra-family communication. Therefore, instead of diaries, which have been used with Filipino migrants but in an unsuccessful way, we focused on participant observation through gatherings or 'events' and on individual interviews with migrants who experience different types of 'homes at distance'.

These events followed a structured approach through which stories of trajectories, mobility, everyday life incidents and needs where revisited and discussed with an emphasis on home reconstitution. The main idea was: a) to describe how this procedure takes place, cross cutting private_and public spaces, self reconstruction dynamics, socialization needs and b) to rethink how the use of internet technologies intersects with these procedures.

We have also conducted ethnographic research at the very centre of Athens near Omonia square, where large concentrations of migrant population and ethnic businesses are observed, in order to identify ethnic businesses that concern digital communication. It is interesting for our research that the most

common kind of ethnic business in the most ethnically polarised area of the centre of Athens, is that of mobile phone shops, that offer other forms of digital access as well. It is also, and we are talking here particularly about 3g mobile phones, an indispensable part of the overall social capital of the migrants. Another type of recurrent business is Internet cafes, which are mainly "phone driven" with limited gaming activity.

Our ethnographic research also expanded on abandoned buildings and others spaces in the wider area of Athens, that are currently used from migrants as provisional, or less provisional, shelters. These are spaces that are repeatedly transformed to homes, dormitotires, precarious and often, dangerous, squats. In order to keep a relative frequent communication with migrants willing to describe their current situation, we have, at times, provided them with recycled devices (mobile phone, laptop) and a temporary Internet connection. These collaboration resulted in detailed interview with a male migrant (Nurdine) and a collection of photographic material available for the Mignet's Game project.

As far as individual interviews are concerned, the people we interviewed offered us a unique story, questioning whatever assumptions we might have on migration. In order to understand the concept of *home* and the communication flows that cut through its structure, we need to pay attention to narratives that will help us to rethink assumptions built into information and communication flows around the notion of home. The goal of our analysis is to provide alternative viewpoints regarding multiple, parallel, constantly changing, informal home spaces.

Among the persons we met and interviewed within our research, the following types of families/homes, which are constituted in different places, emerge:
- Couples living apart, one in Greece, one in the country of origin
- Couples living apart, one in Greece, one in another country
- Couples living in Greece, with children in the country of origin
- Couples living in Greece, with children in Greece, in the country of origin and/or in another country
- Parent living alone in Greece, with spouse and children in the country of origin or in Greece *and* in the country of origin
- Parent living in Athens, with children with the other parent living and working in another place in Greece

2.4. Communication diaries

The communication diary is an inventory of all the communications of one person during one or two weeks and via all media (mobile or home phone,

Skype, MSN, etc.). It also collects different kinds of information (interlocutor, topic and length of the discussion, place where it occurred, etc.).

First step: we asked our sample to fill in a communication diary that we have devised to collect information and communication data, location and use of different devices. We start with an analysis of this diary, which may record multiple types of activities and places, commonly used in time geography (Hägerstrand 1970; Janelle et al. 1998). We want to understand where and when, (the frequencies and the duration) the migrant uses video-communication.

Below is an example of two pages from a communication diary (filled in French)
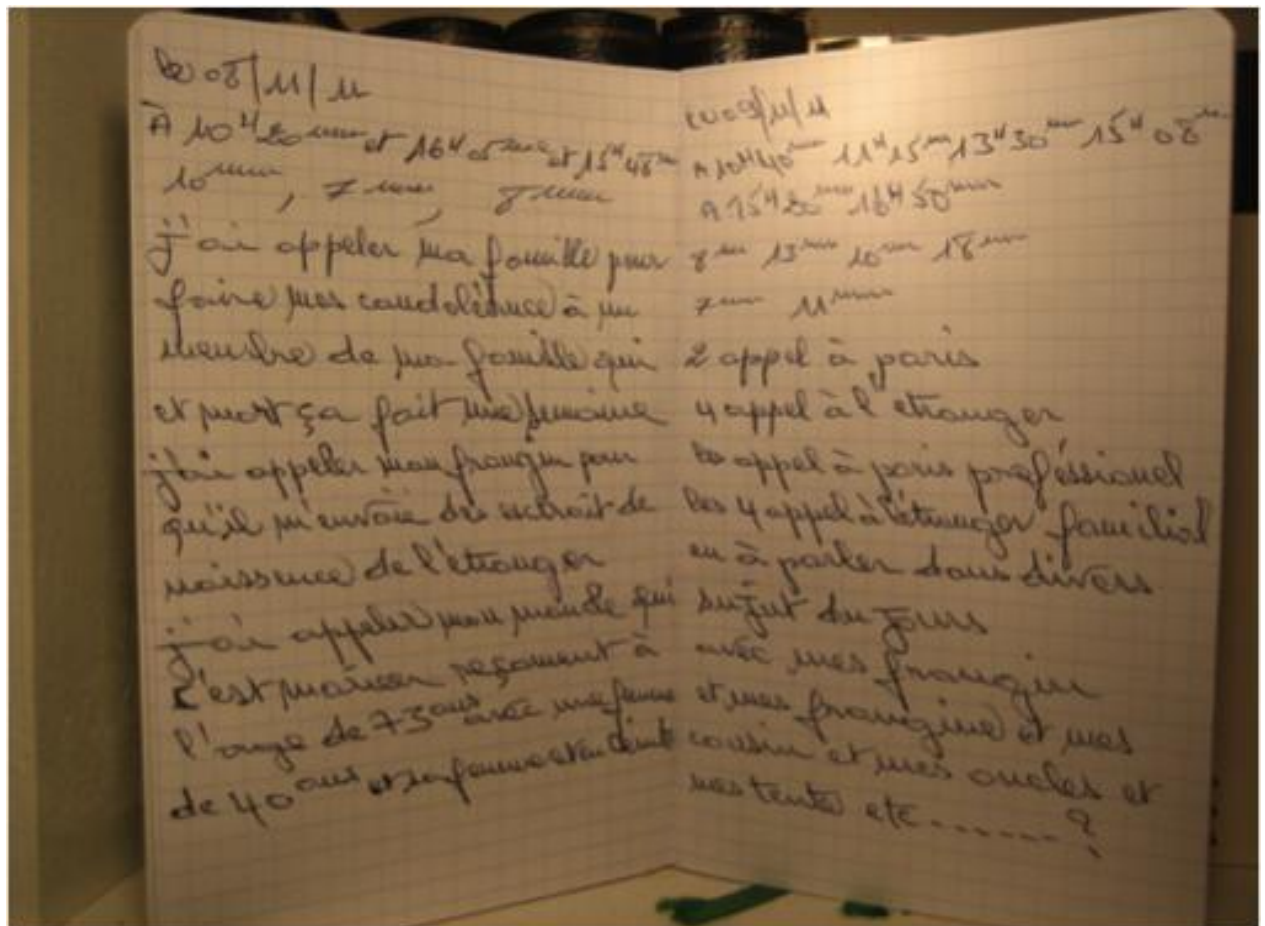
(Mokrane)

This information has been normalised in a table for comparative analysis.

Date/ hour START	Date/ hour FINISH	Media/ device (describe)	Correspondent(s) (who? / where?)	Location of use	Short description of communication
9.00	16.00	Office laptop	Web agency and other business partners	At work, LJ, SLO	Work-related use of internet, e-mail
9.00	16.00	Office mobile phone	Web agency and other business partners	At work, LJ, SLO	Work-related use of mobile Phone

Date/ hour START	Date/ hour FINISH	Media/ device (describe)	Correspondent(s) (who? / where?)	Location of use	Short description of communication
10:13	10:20	Mobile phone	Mother (Ukraine)	Home, Ljubljana	Mother calls to ask how I'm doing, how my son is doing, how's it going on with the paperwork
00:43	00:48	Mobile phone	Husband (LJ)	home	He calls me to say hello

2.5. Habitel

As Dana Diminescu (1995) has demonstrated in her article about connected migrants, our social life is deeply rooted in mobile technologies. Whether we are concerned with communication, information or access, the terminals that we wear about ourselves interconnect us, give us access to different services (transportation, banking, traffic, monitoring) and to different spaces. They are the material support of our connection to our spheres of belonging --- urban, national, financial, social, familial, etc. The portability of such networks of belonging is a feature of our lives. Migrant or non-migrant, practically everyone finds themselves subject to a logic of access: to circulate, to draw money from the bank, to get medical care, to enter one's home, to call, etc.
To account for the anthropological mutations in the mobility of our moorings, Dominique Boullier (1999: 43) has suggested the neologism of *habitèle* to refer to our way of appropriating (materially and symbolically) a networked space. Many studies in the migration literature tend to focus on the organisation of migrant networks, but few of these take into account migrants' ability to appropriate the networks to which they belong.

The advent of the *age of access*, announced by Jeremy Rifkin speaking for the economy, implies the passage from a regime of ownership, based on a notion of inheritance amply distributed within society, to a regime based on short-term use of resources controlled by networks of service providers. It has already come to pass that the spaces we feel a part of are no longer just territories, but also networks. More liberated from geographical constraints, it

is conceivable that the connected migrant also enjoys more autonomy. But the passage from *habitat* to *habitèle* also entails changes in the mode of *hospitality.* In private space, one talks less and less of reception and more and more of aid to access: for a migrant, sharing the address book of 'my French friend', using his/her bank account to receive pay checks, buying a mobile phone with his/her help are as much evidence of hospitality as steps towards integration.

Studying the habitel involves understanding the extent of the digital capital of a migrant: mobile phone, SIM cards, credit, health or transport cards etc. Combined with official documents (identity card, passport, work card etc.), the habitel is thus an indicator of connection and integration within society.

Lahoucine's Habitel

Lahoucine is an undocumented migrant from Morocco who has lived in France for 9 years. When he is out of his flat, he takes his credit card and his bank number card, keys from his flat, a health card delivered especially to migrants, which is used as an identity card and of course… a mobile phone to stay connected.

2.6. Ethnomethodological analysis

2.6.1.   Recording of video sequences in the homes of services users

Recording of video communications requires the use of different software depending on the operating system of the user (Mac/Windows), and the material configuration of their computer. There is no one-size-fits-all solution, which is why we used four different programs at first: Call Recorder, Pamela, Supertintin Skype Video Recorder (a Skype add-on), and Snagit, when Skype clients do not work.

The recordings made thus far are of the "picture-in-picture" type.

showing environment

This recording option is currently being changed to a "side-by-side" configuration so as to better capture the non-verbal communication of one of the participants.
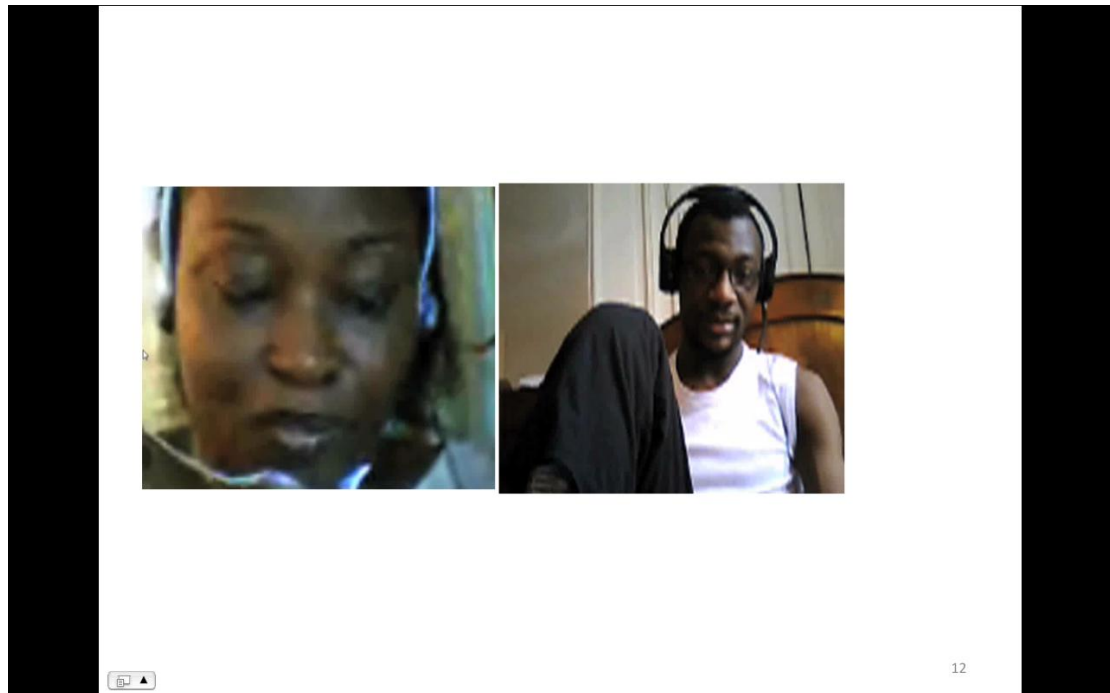
Software coding affects the quality of images as they appear on the screen, which is why we are currently putting in place "peripheral" capture systems. Essentially this involves three cameras connected to a multiplexer.

These offer a capture that is true to the activities that are shown on the screen (scaler), and synchronisation with other input streams from the "environment" (user, "office," "large" environment).

2.6.2. Capture and analysis the video conversations

Next, the corpus undergoes several treatments: de-rushing, encoding (avidemux), and transcription using *Elan* annotation software. This program allows the user to precisely transcribe the "multi-modality" of the video communication (speech, gestures, eye contact, facial expression, objects, ritual sequences etc.), and also to produce statistical summaries of the exchange (time speaking vs. silent, mutual eye contact, etc.).

The combination of these two descriptive techniques allows us to carefully analyse the structure of Skype video interactions and to understand the structure of new forms of "presences" and "home territories".

Here is an example:
(see part 5.1 for explanation of transcription symbols)

5. H : ah;;;;; (1.0) c'est quoi ta nourriture préférée ?
    ah;;;;; (1.0) what is your favorite food ?

6.   (2.0)

7. F : en huit ans tu sais pas ce que je mange ?
    after eight years you do not know what I eat ?

8. H : alors y a du futu y a d'la sauce graines y a:: du (.) plakali y a d'l'atéké y a: (.) du crabe
    so there is the futu there is the seed sauce there is the (.) plakali there is the ateke there is the (.) crab

9. F :   [((smile))   ]

10. H : (.) y a d'l'escargot y a:: (.) du tô y a du riz (.)
    there is the snail there is (.) tô there is the rice

11. F : [((laughs))   ]

12. H : et [euh ;;;;;

13. F :   [(inc) ça va c'est bon c'est bon (.) c'est bon   (((with hand gesture))
    It's ok it's enough it's enough (.) it's enough

14. H : [laisse moi finir
    let me finish

3. Different approaches of what home can mean

3.1. Affective Approach

Starting from the idea that home is a social construct, in terms of its digital and non-digital manifestations, we move on to describe that the individual is not always the sole object of social meaning within the home and that information and communication technologies support a range of experiences subjected to cultural and social demands. Therefore, the notion of households as sanctuaries, which provide a refuge from work where people can rest or play without scrutiny (Hindus et al 2001 and others), becomes problematic from these new reconfigurations, because of the control imposed from other house members, but also due to the possibilities that modern information flows create.

Home can be conceived in multiple ways: it can be conceived as an *economic unit*, if we insist on the household notion of home; it can be conceived as one of the main *affectivity-production units*, if we insist on the relations and ties/bonds that home includes; it can be conceived as a broader *cultural unit*, if someone broadens the scope of affective bonds - including the sense of community - to a larger space of emotions and relations, e.g. ethno-cultural community, neighbourhood, city, country, diaspora or even, as Yann-Arthus Bertrand suggests through his film[1], the whole planet.

In our case, which is in the case of migrants, home *ipso facto* includes all three notions, along with a strong sense of mobility. More precisely, migrant home is defined by the economic element, not only because migration, among other things, is essentially an economic-financial endeavour (individual and familial-collective), but also because ties with the place of origin are sometimes predominantly financial ties. In other words, Western Union notifications might be a more familiar figure than the hand-writing or even the photo of the person who is abroad.

Another aspect that has been thoroughly elaborated within migration studies is the ethno-cultural conception of home. Even if some have insisted that "not everything in us is ethnic" (Higham 1982; Gans 1992), when it comes to migrants and particularly to diasporic subjects, the concept of home is almost always nuanced with the broader sense of ethno-cultural community. Even or particularly in transnational times like ours, the migrant home fluctuates between localities, communities and persons.

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[1] http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jqxENMKaeCU&feature=watch-now-button&wide=1

Both economic and cultural elements are part of the above-mentioned second way of conceiving 'home', the affective way. It is not only the "economies of affectivity" (Prada 2006) that, in turn, affect home as a place of work and a place of affective bonds; it is also the fact that migrant homes by definition embrace broader cultural ties within places and actors. Within the variety of existing types of migrant homes, the constant that one can find is the extension of home onto different localities. Couples, their children and family may be living in different countries. For instance, Mukta (Bangladeshi migrant in her 30s) is living in Greece while her husband is in Bangladesh and her parents in Manchester.

One could also easily argue that examples of transnational families have always existed within the short history of international migration. To give an example from the recently enriched historiography, which refers to Italian migration in the United States:

> "For most families touched by migration, a transnational way of life meant mainly the construction of family economies across national borders. Initially, family economies linked work camps populated by wage-earning Italian men (the "men without women") and rural Italian villages housing disproportionate numbers of women and children awaiting their return. Between 1870 and 1914, male work camps and rural Italian villages had more communication with each other than with the national societies that surrounded either." (Gabaccia 2000, 82-83)

The additional element in comparison to older forms of 'transnationalism in practice' is the development and generalisation of ICT usage. As Madianou (2012) points out, speaking of transnational mothering, "what has changed since the intensification of research on transnational families over the past 15 years is the explosion of opportunities for cheap communication. To the availability of cheap calls through international prepaid call cards a plethora of technologies and platforms have been added, notably mobile phones, instant messaging (IM), video-calls through VOIP and social networking sites."

3.2. Intersectional Approach

Another approach is to treat the notion of home as a normative category, as both a practice and a space where one is related to people (Hannerz 2002) across borders; home does not give the monopoly to home in a national-state, in territorial terms, but it recognises that states have been changing and so have perceptions and experiences of their citizens and noncitizens alike. Thus, home is primarily not something one possesses but it relates to the spaces and relationships with others in a transnational milieu.

We are here interested in exploring what are the communication practices of our communication diary and interview partners, and look at how these relate to their living and to their perception of home. We thus explore the various notions of home that are situated in concrete stories of concrete individuals. At the same time, we are careful to approach home in more "grounded" terms, i.e. to explore the hindrance to inclusive living and perceiving of home that are clustered along gender, ethnic and class divide. Theorists who conceptualise belonging and intersectionality (Yuval Davis 2011, Anthias 2002) remind us that when analysing social relations and positions, one needs to consider that these are deeply embedded in social and economic locations. From this perspective, we see a limitation in the notion of home itself if this is simply understood or operationalised with subjective identifications or with subjective practices in networks of relations. These are indeed important and have gained ground especially in actor-network oriented theories (Castells 1996, Latour 2006) that remind us that agency should be seriously considered and analysed if one wants to understand the complex social realities.

Thus, individual identifications are important, however, they shouldn't be the only dimension of analysis. If they are, they may – purposefully or not – (re)produce the masking of structural relations as relations of inequality (cf. Wallis 2011). Super-positive notions of "hybrid", "flexible" (Ong 1999) or "networked" (Castells 1996) identities have been the subject of critique for ignoring the structurally bounded presence (Anthias 2001, Pajnik 2011). Firstly, individual identifications are not just "floating around" as accidental products of networks, but are situated in context and these are never neutral. Secondly, social, political and economic locations should be considered in relation to the subjective, but also separately in order to avoid the collapse of social structures to individual attachments. It is thus crucial for our analysis of home to consider that living and perceiving home is not only an individualised experience in networks of relations, but is affected by locations in space and time that are constructed by often intersecting divisions, such as gender, ethnicity, class, or age. Following the analogy of the intersectional approach (Yuval Davis 2011), we should consider that people are differently located socially, politically, economically and also spatially.

In our understanding, home, manifestations of home or feelings of home are closely related to the notion of belonging. This has often been debated in the context of an expanded notion of citizenship, where citizenship does not only relate to the jural dimension, often reduced to the acquisition of citizenship as nationality status, but includes participation of citizens in the public sphere. According to Calhoun, the valuable attempts to broaden the understanding of citizenship should devote attention to distinctions among "different modes of belonging" (Calhoun 1999, 219). Our empirical material confirms that belongings are shaped in multiple ways, transnationally and across cultures.

As noted by Calhoun, we may "feel at home with people whom we know personally, to whom we are committed in the networks of social relationships" (Ibid. 222). Our analysis of diaries and interviews presented below shows that migrants in general feel "at home" when connected to family members and friends, and also to various locations or spaces, those that they currently inhabit and those they feel related to through memories.

4. Transformations: what makes home different and still the same

4.1. Here and there: home is no longer a single and static place

Interviews point to a somewhat "fluid" understanding of home for some of our partners, in the sense that they change perceptions according to their current location, the location of their family and friends, or future plans. When speaking of fluidity or hybridity of belonging, it is crucial not to overlook the situated perspective from which one speaks (cf. Anthias 2001). Namely, those who are mobile and who can afford to travel associate home to a diversity of places and circumstances compared to those who are bound by lack of money or time to travel. Andrea currently lives in Zurich but has previously lived in Germany, studied in the US, worked in London and met her partner in France. For her, home is where she currently lives, and she can feel at home in different places where she is located or will be in the future.

> "The home for me is my flat in Zurich and Switzerland in general but this is just for the time being. In the past when I was living abroad this respective place became my 'home' very quickly and I'm sure it would be similar if I moved again. ... Home can be any place I decide to move to in the future, as long as I have a couple of people around me that I consider my friends." (Andrea)

Marko too has a flexible understanding of "feeling at home", but from a very different perspective. His narration below is a good example that shows how "situated" belongings really are, and how this very fact enables one to practice the "shifting" or the "multiplicity" of belonging. Marko has been a war refugee, a very situated and hard-fact experience which makes him "lose sense" of home.

> "But yeah bottom line, home is here where I am, as the most of what I need is available to me online. So now there is not really place like home, you know like the one that if it is taken from you, you will not be the person any more, now the home is much more flexible category, at least for me. Maybe it is also being Bosnian and refugee for all that time in 1990's, but it makes you lose the sense of it. That and cheap airplanes and constantly moving friends makes you feel that geography is lost and we live in this "translocal" space all the time." (Marko)

Some espouse a dual belonging, arguing that they feel at home both in their country of birth and in the country where they've migrated to. Temjana is at home in Slovenia, but she is *really* at home in her birth town Skopje in Macedonia.

> "I perceive Slovenia as my home and I'm happy upon returning to it from a longer trip. However, I'd have to add that once I am in Skopje, my birth town, I really feel connected and really at home." (Temjana)

Katarina's narration embodies both the "adaptability" of the notion of "home" to the situations at hand (she belongs to the Hungarian minority in Serbia, but currently lives in Slovenia – or between Slovenia, where she studies, and Hungary), and the expression of multiple belongings scattered between the place where she is currently staying and her birth place.

> "Home for me is on one hand a temporary place, the place where I am residing at the given moment, and I don't have a problem calling a place my home after a few weeks of living there (it was like that in Szeged, in Budapest several times, Belgium, Ljubljana). On the other hand, if I think of it more, real home is where I was brought up, Zrenjanin in Serbia. If I move from Budapest, it won't be my home anymore, but Zrenjanin will always remain that. That is why it is possible for me to say I'm going home from home." (Katarina)

Two points of departure can thus be proposed for the analysis:

a) Using the Lacanian model of the barred or split subject, we can see migrants as dark or hidden subjectivities. Everybody acts through some sort of network(s) that can be alternated, depending on a given situation. These networked acts do not produce a new unified subject, but reshape the initial motives and make more apparent the objects involved. Migrants develop a new relation with such opportunities to express their potentialities (material or immaterial). This does not stop them from networking, consuming or participating in structures around them, but the nature of the effort is much less anticipated (not normal, undocumented), thus more hidden (less visible through mainstream or normalised networks) and dependent (less opportunities to alternate their activity to different networks).

b) Home is not a static place—it is movement (Wise, 2000). We need to reverse the concept of home as a static, defined place, and look at how links between networks are formed, around this new notion of home. The following questions should then be raised: What are those links? Where are their more centralised points for migrants? How is it possible to form or interact with new networks?

As Chaitin, Linstroth and Hiller (2009) note, the meanings of "home" largely depend on the ways in which individuals and groups construct them, and the attributes they associate with them in a given context. Drawing from Bruno Latour and Manuel DeLanda, these constructs reflect networks as objects and networks as assemblages of objects. Moreover, Deleuze and Guattari (1987) suggest that each accretion bends and reshapes home or home territory, with the effects being expressive rather than functional. Networks then are no longer digital or non digital. Belonging is not discovered and experienced only in places (see Rowe & Wolch, 1990), but also *in between networks*.

The main point of both approaches is to recognize how we are dependent on broader networks of entities for our agency and existence. That does not mean that we have equal access to networks around us. Researching the transnational activities of migrants provides us with an opportunity to reconceptualise the very nature of ourselves, nature, our actions and desires.

In order to map the extension of home onto different localities, we need to rethink the materialities which they produce. These materialities are not to be divided between digital and non digital, or virtual and real, but should be treated as *products of networks*. Their interconnection appears in the tensions within these networks: the moments of conflict, cooperation and their potential reassembling.

We therefore need to overcome the questions that focus on the "amount of connectedness" or the "digital divide", and try to analyse the networks in which migrants already participate, especially when it comes to reconstructing home. These networks can be obvious and apparent, but also implicit and more hidden. In other words, information and communication technologies support a range of experiences subjected to cultural and social demands.

The Greek case offers an illustration of this. After researching on various groups, formal or informal, of migrants (the Bangladeshi "network", the Filipino "network", the "chorus", the Bangladeshi kindergarten school, Afghan (wo)men), we can sketch up examples of such dynamic networks and the effects being reproduced, in this context of home. The following are some generic networks that foster this interconnection between digital and material aspects:

- business activities (working from home, working and living in other homes)
- schooling networks (engaging in formal and informal educational systems, sharing children care chores)
- financial transactions (sending money home, sharing common resources)
- entertainment platforms (watching TV from everywhere, playing music, doing sports together in different places)
- communication tools (connecting from home to previous or future homes, rethinking everyday home functions)

4.2. Ritournelle: New routines and rituals

By analysing the diaries, we were interested in understanding what the communication is about, i.e. what the usual routines of our respondents are, or the topics they usually take up when conversing with family, friends or workmates. Several respondents complained in the interviews about the "banality" of everyday chats.

> "My family in Algeria used to ask me when I will have papers to come and see them. I ask them if they're fine. It doesn't last when I call them because it's always the same" (Mokrane, illegal migrant living in France since 10 years)

Interestingly, the analysis of diaries confirmed the great prevalence of communication as "checking in" (saying hi, bye, goodnight etc.), and the general "chat/talk" as catching up or keeping in touch with family and friends. The Slovenian team found that from 13 indicators used to measure the "what of communication", these were the only two that weren't given the option "never" in any of the diaries. Thus, all respondents (12 altogether) use ICTs for checking in and for chatting, and this is also generally done quite frequently: as many as 7 respondents call to say hi several times a day, 2 once every day and 3 several times a week.

Communication for other purposes was less frequent, sometimes for practicalities such as arranging to meet (7 respondents use ICTs for this reason several times a week), other times dedicated to information search via internet - 9 report using internet as a source of information, 4 on a daily and 5 on a weekly basis. Other purposes include checking or writing emails, which is generally more frequent than checking or engaging with social media - 3 never checked emails while 6 never checked social media, which points to the fact that email communication still prevails among our respondents. Even less

common is using ICTs for watching video or films, since 7 reported their communication was never about radio or TV streaming. Our small sample doesn't allow any generalization, however we can see that those who engage with social media are more likely to use TV streaming.

Exploring the relations between the what and the who of communication we can see that checking in is very frequently used both with family (less frequently with the immediate partner) and friends - 7 used this kind of communication with friends several times a week (4 on a daily basis) and, very similarly, 6 used it with friends several times a week (5 on a daily basis). A similar situation can be observed when one looks at chat/talk and its relation to the relevant others of communication: 6 respondents chat to catch up with their family several times a week and 8 do the same with friends. In general we see these two purposes of communication are the most widespread of all. As expected respondents rarely communicate via emails with family and friends, and never with partners, but email communication is a little more frequent with friends. Here we can see a clearer dividing line between home and work. Indeed, checking in is very rarely done with workmates, while chatting shows a completely different picture: here the divide is blurred again, and chatting is quite frequently used to communicate about work (for 5 respondents several times a week, and for 2 several times per day).

4.2.1.   A new range of homes

Based on home routines and rituals, we suggest there are a *range of homes*, which derive from how migrants describe their everyday experiences:

- the "integrated" home resembles more to a normal, typical home, carrying all the characteristics of migrant families that manage to secure a more stable life (Nestor, Filipino man who lives in Athens since 1990, father of three children who live in Manila)

For Nestor "*home is where you are more useful for your family*", a place where the family is staying; an event which also allows you to create wealth and manage it accordingly; a situation that gives you an opportunity to be in touch with your family in multiple spaces and for a period of time. Half ironic, he declares that "*with Skype we can see what our children do*" – meaning that they can see events in their lives, the clothes they wear, the grades from school, renovation works taking place at home. Nestor summarises his life with a feeling of being "*lucky because thanks to the people (family) there and our advice our children stayed at school*".

- the "fragmented" home is the space of a member of a larger family where a person moves far from it but attempts reunite home occasionally, and particularly through the use of internet video technologies (Mukta, Bangladeshi woman, who lives in Athens since 2009 ; Lisa, 46, divorced, roaming around since 23 (end of college), mother of a 21 years old non accessible son)

Mukta has her husband in Bangladesh and they communicate almost daily through Skype. She seems to be annoyed at times with this obligation, and finds that this is not a normal life for a married couple. She mentioned she was finding it difficult to give meaning to this periodic exchange, wondering "*what will there be next to say*". She thinks that after being free from home for a few years, you can settle in and create another notion of home that does not yet have a steady reference (parents in Manchester, husband and rest of family in Bangladesh). Mukta cherishes her independence that seems to be the basic driver for her decisions for the future, though she is now threatened with unemployment (because of the crisis). In the end, the possibility of cheap, day to day, video enabled communication with her husband does not always fit with her desired way of living.

Lisa, established in Greece, is a traveller who roams around different continents. Home, for Lisa, is where she is located at a given time and thanks to Skype this home is now shared (every Sunday) with her family back home. She says "*My home is where I am. Because if I don't do this, I feel like a loser. If I keep on thinking that my home should always be with my family, I cannot go on and I cannot help them financially*". Her son doesn't like to communicate with her and this is a reminder of a non desired communication that is very painful to her. She says she feels homesick when she gets physically ill, or when she needs moral support.

- the "misplaced" home is an always moving family, or part of it, in different spaces where basic functions of home need to be rethought and implemented (Afghan women)

- the "unthinkable" home is a place which people imagine as a home but which bares very few similarities with our perception of home due to its extreme poverty and precarity (Nourdine, Moroccan man in his late 30s, with wife and child in France, and the rest of his family in Maroco)

Nourdine ended up in Greece, after being expelled from France, and is on his way to Morocco. His daughter lives in Paris, which is the main reason why he walks a dozen kilometres some days in order to have access to a computer with internet. The place where he is currently staying is an abandoned factory

in downtown Athens. It is a space shared with other immigrants, which is prone to conflicts, outside attacks and constant insecurity. He declares having "no life" now, waiting to continue his trip, yet full of ideas to work, find access to resources, and reconfigure home. "Look at the garbage" he says, "you will be surprised with what people throw away in time of crisis".

Here, we explored some of the ways in which contemporary migrant homes and households are constituted when the physical is impossible. In the question whether and how this absence of physical proximity is covered through affective, or other, bonds which are possible through new technologies, the only sincere answer from our part is that we really have no answer. Migrants experience a permanent negotiation of their privacy, relationships, access to resources and provide research with opportunities to reflect a variety of aspects of home life, not only those that seem unproblematic and optimistic. But then, maybe there is no need for a positive answer. Mukta, whose most intimate relationship, this with her husband, is built mainly upon broadband networks, deals with it without denying the new possibilities and the old constraints. As she characteristically told us, "Me, I also want a baby; being in Bangladesh and in Greece, it's impossible. This cannot happen through Skype neither through telephone."

What we need to instigate from these descriptions, ranges of home, is the following: their own stability, their own nature, depends on, but at the same time, defies, the organised ecology around them. Home can be anything, can refer to everything: a thing, an idea, a person, a space, a feeling. The evolving relations do not despise or ignore social and economic powers that exist within these objects but develop a way to move through them. These moments they can be, at times, conflicting and painful, at others, evading and playful. They can appear decided and positioned but also imaginary and fluid.

4.2.2.   ICTs as Deleuze and Guattari's *ritournelle*

For those who do not have any settled and fixed address, the only home base left is often one's mobile phone. In the French case of the "fair phone" survey, 82% of the device's users had no fixed phone. Even those who had a permanent accommodation did not necessarily have a landline, for this could be too much of expenditure for users who are seldom "at home". For instance Kelidja, in her forties and originated from Algeria, is divorced and living in a low-rate apartment with her 18-year-old daughter, who stopped her studies to help her. Kelidja does not know how to read and write. She has just been in a lawsuit for excessive debt:

> "Mobile phone is what is important. I had a phone plan by Orange before, but I don't know what is a mobile plan. I had bill of 1000€ . My daughter she told

me "you won't pay. We earn 500€ per month of social minimum income (RSA). Go to the bank to block it". I didn't meet the bailiff. My daughter told him I wouldn't come." (Kelidja)

When the bailiff came to her flat, there was nothing to seize:

"The bailiff was a really good person. There's only a TV. Mattresses are on the ground. No table. He said "I don't mark the refrigerator. You have nothing. I'm not going to push you even more in destitution". That's why Kelidja says: "I don't have fixed phone because I'm always outside, never at home. What will I do here? There's nothing." (Kelidja)

When a house is missing, or when there is no desire to stay there, the mobile phone becomes a virtual home, allowing to keep in touch with close relatives and friends, social services, employers etc. on the move. Maria is about forty. She is from Romania and presents herself as "*an occasional psychologist, philosopher, poet, artist*". She is a singer and composer :

"My sister tells my daughter "You're mother is crazy with music". I have no love, no father, no daughter. Everything is music. My daughter lives in another world. The world of money. I am Don Quichotte. Everybody get rid of me with that."

She got an accommodation thanks to the NGO *Emmaüs*. For her, a mobile phone represents more than a simple tool:

"I sold things to buy the phone. I don't care how I'm dressed [showing her shoe with a hole]. Phone is vital. Without phone you don't have any identity. Where are you? » (Maria)

Allik, from Spain, says just the same:

"Seven months ago, I bought a mobile phone. I call my friends, my wife and for work. Everybody has a mobile phone. If you don't, you're nothing. I've been looking after a job 3 weeks ago. I'm an electrician. Mobile phone is very important to find a job." (Allik)

Maria resists because she has a dream to which she is ready to sacrifice everything, or rather, a talent she does not want to waste: "*Music was always easy for me. Do you think my situation is going to improve? Otherwise I commit hara-kiri. I want to say fuck off! Sorry* [leaves in a sudden]". Just before leaving, she gave us her calling card: "*Author/composer. Promoting parties with sound. Popular music and Jazz.*" A phone number and an e-mail to be available: « *I buy phone cards of 5€, 10€, only when I'm afraid to lose my number, that it gets erased.*" How could she hold on without hope to be contacted? Better not to lose one's phone or contacts: "*I always have a*

notebook and a pen with me so I don't lose my phone numbers and meeting points", explained Aymar (from Algeria).

With these examples, we can see the identity issues bounded to mobile phones and connectivity. For Deleuze and Guattari (1980:393), when we need to keep at a distance the forces of chaos knocking at the door, we draw a "transportable and pneumatic territory. If needed, I will catch my territory on my own body, I territorialize my body." The mobile phone is that very kind of ritournelle, which allows to reterritorialize oneself when the forces of chaos are knocking at one's (door) life.

4.3. H@me means connection

Home basically means connection: a simple though hard way to realize this, is first to hear people who have neither accommodation nor connection. Access to a mobile phone is one of the first needs they express. Then we will see that one can feel everywhere at home as long as one has important relationships around.

4.3.1.   Looking after connection

For those who are helpless, access to a mobile phone is all but a luxury; rather, it is one of the most basic needs. A young man, probably in his thirties, comes and visits the French NGO *Emmaüs Défi* where part of the fieldwork for this study was carried out. He comes from Marseille. He is French, but he is living in the street and has no identification papers at all, not even an identity or health card; strictly nothing. Beside him, most of the illegal migrants encountered are far better equipped. At least they all have a special health card which entitles them to state-subsidised health care (*Aide Médicale d'État*, AME), the transport card which AME gives access to and of course... a mobile phone. He has nothing and wants to get out of this situation: "*My first goal is the identity card*". He also takes steps to obtain a bank account, a health card… and a mobile phone. The phone would allow him to be available. At the moment, his son calls him at seven every evening in a public phone box. Along with an identity card, a bank account number and access to health care, we can see here that connectivity is one of the first things that a helpless person is looking for.

Sami and Elias help us to understand why. Sami is 59 years old and he too is living in the street. We met him at the very moment when he got his first mobile phone, and was learning how to use it.

> "I call my family in Morocco. At night, I sleep in a social housing center. I stopped drinking two months ago. My father used to hit me three times a week. I have five sisters and one brother. I call them when I need money, when there is a baptism, a wedding etc. I had no mobile phone before. When a family gathering happened, I didn't know." (Sami)

Elias is an illegal migrant. He will soon have been living in France for 10 years. His grandfather and father were soldiers in the French army. He explains why he calls his mother in Algeria three or four times a week:
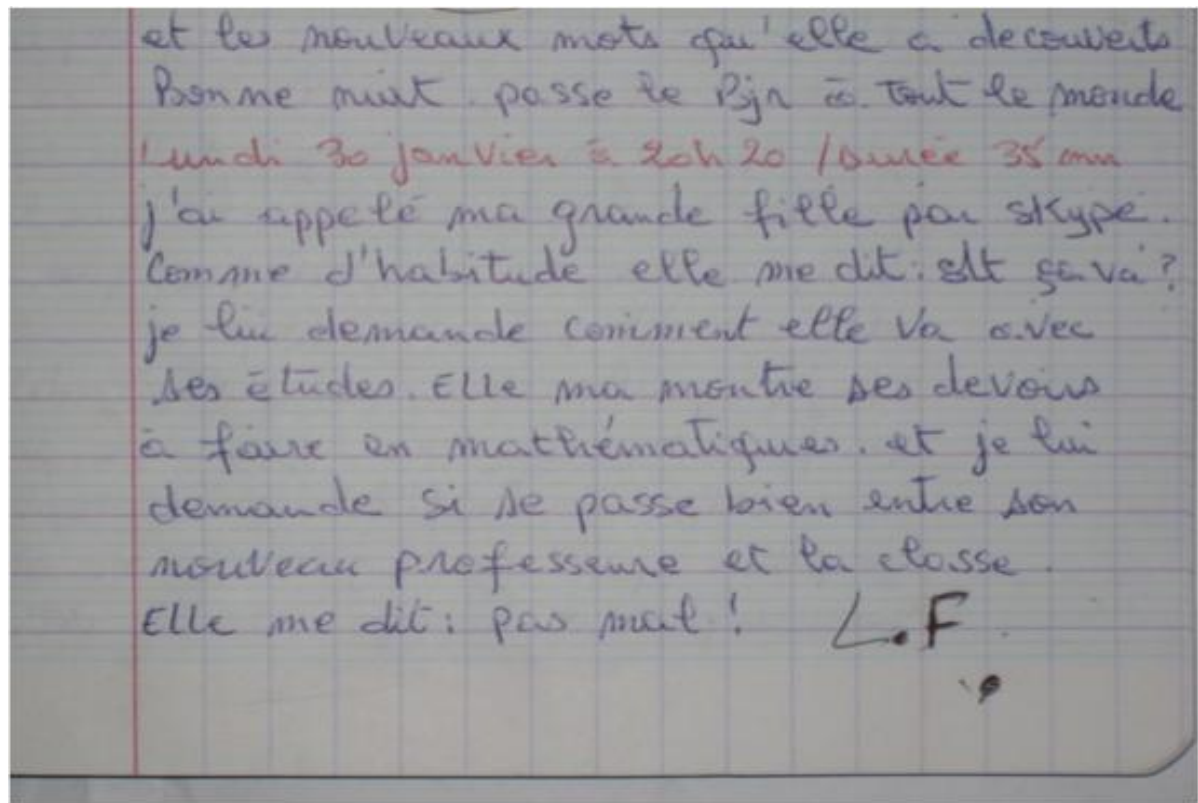
> "People in illegal situation they suffer. There is nostalgia. I haven't been home (*au pays*) since 10 years. My father died, I didn't see him. My brothers got married, I didn't see them. People in illegal situation we call them the sailors. They leave, yet we don't know whether they will come back. You mustn't feel down, otherwise it's alcohol, drugs, otherwise it's death. It's a very hard work" (Elias)

Although he says "*I don't call when I'm feeling down. I have a drink, some beers*", it is easy to understand that staying connected is what helps to keep one's spirits up. Facebook and Skype are helpful technologies in that case. S. is for instance a Moroccan student living in France, speaking about the difference between his friends from France and from Morocco on Facebook:

> "It's true that the relationship is stronger with friends from Morocco. For instance when I'm sad, I post a little message and immediately, everybody answers me. They tell me: come to Morocco, we are all together, this kind of heart-warming message. I am Facebook-addicted. It is on my cell phone, so I can say I'm connected almost 24h/24. For me, Facebook is a must. I have nonstop news from my friends, this means I can know the different moods of my friends in Morocco every day. It's great! For instance, I know their timetable, I cheer them up when they have difficult lessons and so do they. For each statistics' lesson, I have lots of messages to cheer me up because I don't like it" (S.)

Below is an extract of Ikram's communication diary, where she describes how she uses Skype to watch over her daughter's homework.

> "Monday, 30th January, at 20h20 / length 35 min
> I called my oldest daughter by Skype. As usual, she tells me: hello, how are you? I ask her if she's all right with her studies. She shows me her homework in mathematics and I ask her if things are going well between her new teacher and the class. She tells me: Not bad!" (Ikram)

et les nouveaux mots qu'elle a découverts
Bonne nuit. passe le Bjr à. tout le monde
Lundi 30 janvier à 2oh 20 / Durée 35 mn
j'ai appelé ma grande fille par skype.
Comme d'habitude elle me dit: Est ça va ?
je lui demande comment elle va avec
ses études. Elle ma montre ses devoirs
à faire en mathématiques. et je lui
demande si se passe bien entre son
nouveau professeure et la classe.
Elle me dit: pas mal !   L.F.

Yet calling also means remembering the distance, seeing the others without seeing them, as Ikram wrote in her communication diary:

> "I called my mother (in Algeria), spoke about the weather. Spoke with my youngest daughter. It's a heart break each time I speak to her. I always cry afterwards because I miss them a lot. It's hard when you live far away from your family, especially when you don't see your children growing. It's not easy but that is life." (Ikram)

ICTs helps her to live with distance, not to erase it.

4.3.2.   "Home can be any place": Moving and connecting

We have seen (4.1.) that for Andrea, living in Zurich, "*Home can be any place I decide to move to in the future, as long as I have a couple of people around me that I consider my friends*". This account also highlights the basic meaning of home for a person who is very mobile. Having friends around is what makes Andrea feel at home. So is it for Aymar, who is in his forties-fifties, and lives in France with his family in Algeria. For him, friends are more

important than family when you are abroad, because they are those who make you go ahead, help to integrate and feel at home :

- The family, I call it once a week. If you stay too much with family, your mind doesn't go ahead. I rely on friends.
- Does the "fair phone" device help you for applications?
- Yes, because I have a good circle of friends too. Friends are the most I call. Friends are sacred here. It's like family back home (*au pays*). (Aymar)

When we asked him to show us his last ten phone calls, one was indeed towards his parents in Algeria, one for work and the remaining eight to friends. One was to play lute and mandolin with a fellow countryman. The seven others are former work colleagues: "*that one is an Italian friend I used to work with. He's a good friend. Calling him gives me energy. If we meet only jobless people, we become like them*". But friends are not the only ingredient to feel at home. According to Aymar, being mobile and staying on the move is an essential condition:

"I'm getting about to find a job. I'm not waiting to be called. One has to move to find a job. One must not stay at home. I'm working as bricklayer, in restaurants, whatever. But the boss has to see the employee. I also prefer that. People used to communicate only face to face. With internet and all that stuff, we lose communication" (Aymar)

Mokrane's answer is just the same. He is an illegal and homeless worker from Algeria, who has lived in France for 10 years.

"Sometimes, people make me work in the gardens, the market. From time to time, I call them when I am available. There are also friends I call when I'm down in the street, for accommodation. I live a little bit everywhere." (Mokrane)

His parents and sister live in Algeria, but his brother is a legal worker in France. "*He's been working since I arrived. He's got papers, a family*". Listening to him, we understand that papers and a legal situation means family to Mokrane. First because papers means that he will actually be able to see his family back in Algeria:

"My family in Algeria used to ask me when I will have papers to come and see them (…). I haven't seen them for 12 years. Fortunately nobody died. My brother goes to see them once every two years" (Mokrane)

Second because he wants to build a family, but his situation doesn't allow him to even think of that. So he tries to protect himself, by being always active and positive: "*If I get papers, it's sure I'm going to get by. Every man has an*

obstacle". Like Aymar, he says moving is a first necessity. Calling home comes second.

- What do you do when you're feeling down?
- I do resist. I'm always searching. One must move and look. And when I have some money left, I buy a phone card to call my parents back home [*au bled*]. (Mokrane)

When we encountered him for the second time, Mokrane was worried he would lose his phone number, because he had not been able to buy a phone card since three months: "*I go to the taxiphone if I really need* ".

Noureddine is living the opposite situation. He completed a mobile phone communication diary for eight days. It reveals that he called first his family in Algeria (25 calls and over 35 IMs, i.e. 70% of total), spending 3h17 with them. His calls for France totalled 58 minutes. 4 were for work, 2 for social applications and one with a friend. He also received one phone call from a friend in France.
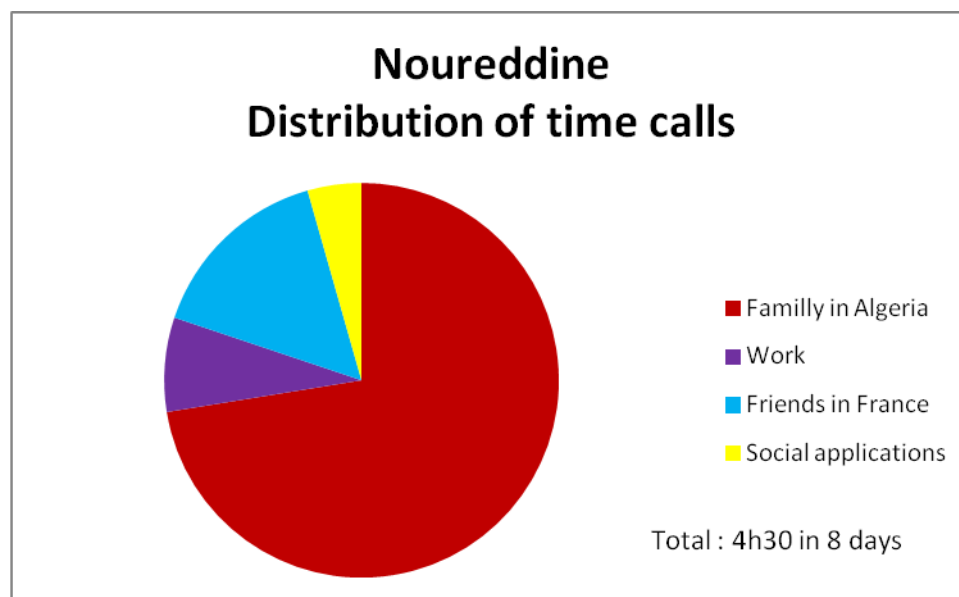
Why does he spend so much time with Algeria? His parents, brothers, sisters, cousins and uncles are living there, but his wife and baby too. Thus, he also had to call his family to send wishes for the Aïd celebration, for one member of his family who died recently, for one of his brothers who had an accident, for one of his uncles who "*recently married a 40 year old woman although he is 73 and his wife is pregnant*". He also needed a brother of his to send him a birth certificate. In France, he is living in the hard situation of illegal workers. He used to be a joiner, but the wood dust has brought about a respiratory disease which makes it difficult for him to speak – and therefore also to keep

on working with wood and to find another job. Now he is looking for work in restaurants and handling. He is sleeping here and there, at friends' houses or turning to the black market for sleeping.

> "I must have a job before, an accommodation before. Then I can use the internet but I have to be cautious. (...) I'm looking for a work but it's too hard with my handicap. Fortunately I'm neither an alcoholic nor a smoker. I spend the bare minimum. I don't go to the café. Fortunately, to eat there are the *Restos du Coeur* (NGO distributing free food). I don't have any family here, just temporary friends, not real friends"

With a hard life, no real job, nor real accommodation, nor real friends, we now understand why Noureddine is spending so much time calling his family. His home is obviously connected to Algeria.

4.3.3. Gender and ICTs

Another dimension of ICTs is the help they provide in parenthood and love relationships. As Mehdi's communication diary shows below, almost a quarter of his phone calls are to speak with his girlfriend:
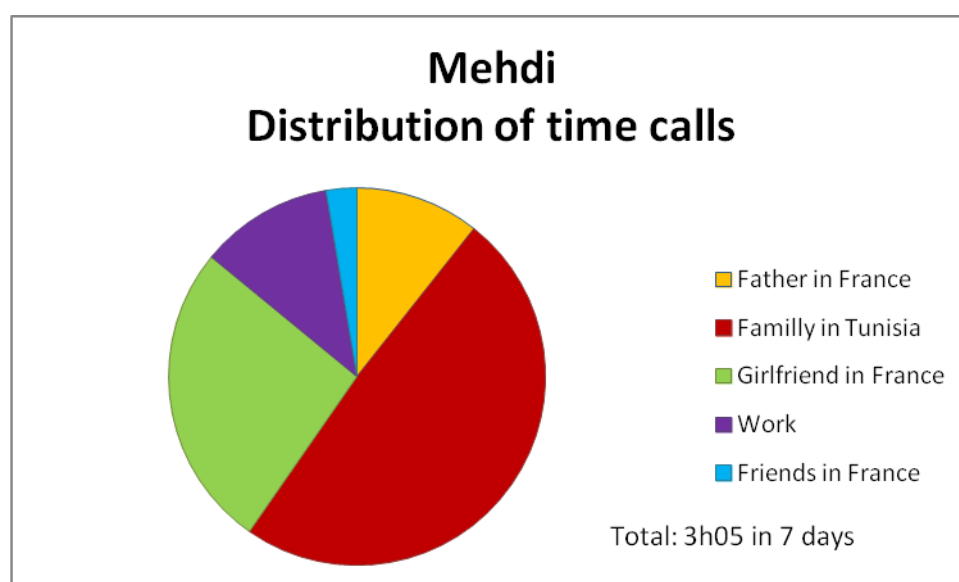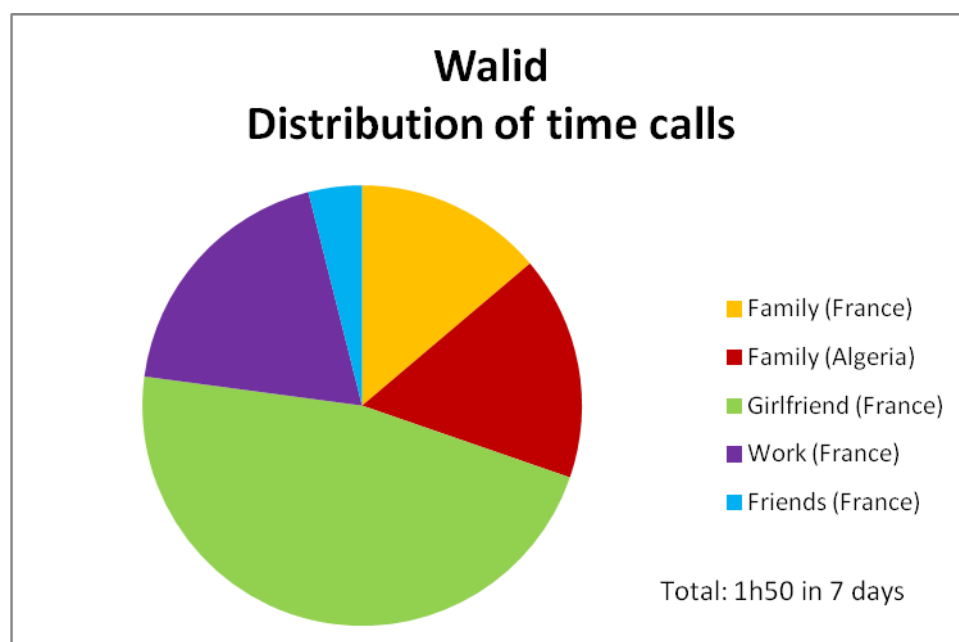

> "Thanks to the fair phone device, I can speak to my girlfriend longer. She comes back late in the evening. I see her twice a week. My girlfriend is Ukrainian. She makes cleaning, but people often keep her late. And you know men are weak against women." (Mehdi)

Mehdi's situation is difficult. He is about twenty years old. In his pocket he has the whole history of his grandfather, who fought for France during the

war. Before coming to France, he worked in Italy and before that on markets in Tunisia, where his mother and his three sisters are living. It is his fifth year living illegally in France, although he was born here. His father, who also lives in France, didn't want to register his birth at the prefecture: "*We are not friends with my father. I'm not living with him. He discovered he had a son when I was 18.*" From time to time, when his father is in a good mood, Mehdi lives with him but "*he tells me to: do the prayers, all that stuff*", so it never lasts and Mehdi prefers to have his own accommodation, though it involves the black market for sleeping: "*I'm living with two colleagues. We have a room for three at 850€. In illegality there are no gifts*". After work, he is often so exhausted that he does not have enough strength to cook and eat something: "*Work must be done, but not that way. It's really hard. Seems like we're no human beings. This is slavery.*" These are the reasons why calling his mother, sisters and girlfriend is a relief for him.

> "To speak the truth, since I've been in France, it's been really hard. The only thing… to get married. To tell you the truth, I'm looking for a girl to marry. But I can't find the girl I need, brave, who can help me, have children, a good and easy life."

Like Mehdi, Walid is an illegal migrant living in France. During the interview Walid said he was in contact with his family in Algeria twice a week, his seven sisters and above all his mother. He also says: "*I have a girlfriend here. From time to time I call her*", but the communication diary he fulfilled reveals that he is in fact spending much more time calling his girlfriend in France than his family in Algeria.

Walid
Distribution of time calls

- Family (France)
- Family (Algeria)
- Girlfriend (France)
- Work (France)
- Friends (France)

Total: 1h50 in 7 days

On the other hand, some migrants find it hard to get married or have a girlfriend. Mokrane for instance says he cannot get married because of his bad situation. That he cannot even think about it: "*I'm not married. You can't get married when you are in such a situation. Your mind is elsewhere. I avoid girls. I forget I have to...*" As for Lahoucine, he finds that "*girls are complicated now. They drink alcohol, smoke cannabis. I don't like that. They ask for money, but I can't afford it. To tell the truth, I call whores from time to time.*"

4.3.4. "Alone Together"

Source: D Diminescu/ Paris, 2006

The picture above shows a small room in a building of the 16th
arrondissement in Paris, where Mr and Ms H., a fifty-year-old couple from the
Philippines, have been living for a few years. They both work in the domestic
field. Their small flat is full of all the things they have accumulated during
their time in Paris. Everything sits in a certain order stacked in 12 square
meters.

Next to the window that overlooks the Eiffel Tower, on a little table, the
couple have installed their computer, a gift from their elder daughter, who
works in a big multinational in Dubai. A webcamera is connected to the
computer. The screen saver is a picture of the facade of a two-storey villa:
their house in Manilla. Both their son and Ms H.'s mother live there. One can
clearly identify the entrance, the 3 windows of the house and, in the
foreground on the right, the Yahoo Messenger window. It is 7am in Paris,
2pm in Manilla, one click and they are "home". Home in Paris? Home in
Manilla? Home in Paris and in Manilla at the same time?

The picture used here is very revealing indeed. It embodies perfectly the
paradoxes which surround these new "home territories". How can one dwell
in two places at the same time? How to be present in two different places,
which are so far apart? What is at stake in this situation has to do, first and
foremost, with the notion of displacement and how it relates to presence.

Presence at a distance is linked to the fluid shifts generated by ICTs. These
have been studied by Jean-Louis Weissberg, who speaks of presenceS, in the
plural[2] . He explains that telepresence is not poised to replace flesh-and-blood
interactions, but that it is the expression of "intermediate solutions" between
absence and presence strictly defined.

The manner in which people are "present" in these situations has appeared as
a relevant entry point in order to better understand the connected migrant,
and also to establish a dialog with other fields of research. Of particular
interest have been the performative effects which the "appearances"
(generally as mediated through technology) of the individuals involved can
have, since their presence takes on a more substantial form in such cases.

The notion of presence can be understood in a very general sense, as the
capacity of a person to act in a given situation, to affect and be affected by
this situation. As concerns social relations, co-presence has for a long time
been the ideal-typical form of presence, and has generally been opposed to
absence. From this perspective, and with co-presence being such a full and
ideal form, any other type of interaction can only be understood as lacking.
This conceptual approach can be found in profane understandings of action,
but also throughout many sociological and anthropological theories: presence
and focalised engagement appear to be the prerequisites for any successful
rational actions, planning or rituals, and straying from this norm triggers
various forms of anxiety. The absence-presence dichotomy also affects the
meaning we give to communication technologies – yesterday the letter or the
telephone, today digital networks and video communication. They can only be
thought of as resources to try and compensate for the impossibility of
meeting one another, but can never quite fulfill this purpose. This normative
order of presence, which is often buried but always latent, makes it difficult
for us to accept that "strong" social ties may develop at a distance, with no
"encounters" taking place, or on the other hand that we may take part in
social events yet not fully believe in them (as Paul Veyne said, the Greeks
may not have believed in their myths).

Abdelmalek Sayad, an Algerian sociologist, one of the key figures of migration
studies in France and a very close associate of Pierre Bourdieu, wrote in a

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[2] Jean-Louis Weissberg, *Présences à distance*, Harmattan, 1999,

famous article that: *the paradox of immigration studies is that it is both a science of absence and a science of absent people* (Sayad 1999: 184). Indeed, as Bourdieu himself underlines[3]: because he cut his roots and is neither citizen nor foreigner, because he is neither on the side of his home society nor on the side of his country of arrival, and because he doesn't manage to find his place in the host society, the migrant is twice absent.

The following quote sums up the ethos of almost a century of academic literature about migration; these concepts do not hold up well in a world affected by generalized mobility and by means of communication whose complexity is unprecedented:

> "What we suggest is that the development of communication practices --- from simple 'conversational' methods where communication compensates for absence, to 'connected' modes where the services maintain a form of continuous presence in spite of the distance --- produced the most important change in migrants' lives." (Diminescu 2008)

More and more often, when the close family members or friends cannot be physically in proximity, users will opt for the *ambient accessibility of video connexions.*

According to Hans Ulrich Gumbrecht (2010:9), we consider that the present does not refer mainly to a temporal relation to the world and its objets, but to a spatial one. The new forms of "connected presence" have introduced a new dimension of local and "localisation" (placement) in the everyday lives of migrants. If the migrant, through different media, is the subject of various forms of displacement and de-territorialisation, s/he also has the possibility to reinvest the home territories with his presence. The role of ICTs must be understood as both transgressing the boundaries of the household – bringing the public world into the private – and simultaneously producing the coherence of home territories.

What follows shows how a family visit via Skype takes place concretely.

5. Showing and interacting with the family

The reason for calling isn't necessarily linked to the need to show one's environment (human and/or material). The project of showing can emerge as relevant during the course of the exchanges. Such is the case in the transcription following bellow between France's and Ivory Coast's members of the same family.

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[3] ibid. Preface, p. 9

5.1. Transcription symbols

°small°	Low talk
CAPS	Loud talk
[	Speech overlap
=	Contiguous utterances
(.)	Brief pause of less than 0.1 second
( )	Transcriptionist doubt
(inc)	Incomprehensible word
1.23	Timed pause in seconds
:::::	Extended or stretched sound, syllable or word
hhh	Audible outbreaths. The more h's, the longer the aspiration
🟧🟦	Colors demarcate static shots
🟥	Frozen frame
⬜	No frame
italics	Camera's move
⊥	Lean towards one's laptop
🖐	Unplug one's laptop
🧍	Stand up

5.2. A family visit via Skype

R participant in France, background (bottom left picture)
V participant in France, foreground (bottom left picture)
N participant in Ivory Coast 1
B participant in Ivory Coast 2
RAY participant in Ivory Coast 3
X unidentified speaker

One of the participants (R, France) wishes to know where her mother works as a hairdresser ("les maman (.) elle fait les tresses où:", l.1). The request follows a discussion about hairdressing, and as such does not involve showing the place in question. At first (l. 5), N (Ivory Coast) answers the request by localising her mother relative to her own position, then in a second step she offers an exhibition. V and R (the two participants based in France, represented on the bottom left in the pictures, and l.7 to 11) respond favourably, then both devise a change in the initial project: V (l.12) opens up the possibilities for visualising the co-present individuals ("qu'on voit quelqu'un"), and this demand is passed on by R in the next round of speech

("montre maman et puis euh::: ceux qui vont être là quoi"). The initial objective is reintroduced, but the project of showing is extended to any person in the near vicinity. If this last round is understood as an instruction, the order of appearance of the co-present individuals will depend on the choices of the person operating the system, who must first manage the transition from framing the heads of the people who speak, to the first scene being displayed.

- R   les maman (.) elle fait les tresses où:

- S   0.660

- R   laeticia

- S   2.349

- N   derriere là (.) vous voulez que je vous montre

- S   0.610

Figure 1: trinomial shot

- V   oui[:::::

- R   [ouais ! faudrait quand meme que:: (la voix)

-        et si ça enregistre en fait a chaque fois que:

- S   0.240

- R   vas [y montre la

- V   [qu'on voit quelqu'un

- S   1.260

- R   montre maman et puis euh::: ceux qui vont être

-      là [quoi

- N   [(inc)

- S   4.[240

- N   [(inc)↧

- R   j'crois ✋ qu la connexion va pas partir hein

-      (.) donc tu d'places parce que là::🧍

- S   *12.850*

From line 18 onwards, N seeks to change the framing: she leans towards her laptop (↧), unplugs the power cable (✋) then stands up (🧍). A significant silence follows (l. 21), during which N's camera is moving. It first shows the house interior, then the walls outside.

Figure 2: one of the shots taken while N is moving

Although the images are not completely unintelligible, they are not the subject of a conversation on the part of R and V, who wait for the first display of the co-present type. It is only at the end of the silence on l.21 that two people sitting outside appear on the screen (fig. 3). They are not yet correctly centred, they are difficult to see in the background, and the transitional movement of the camera is still ongoing (italics), but despite this a first impression of these images is expressed, followed by a request to determine the identity of the people on the screen (l.22)

- *V*   *y a plein* *de gens dehors en plus (.) ça c'est*

Figure 3: the first image showing people

- *qui: ?*
- S   0.590

Figure 4: binomial static shot

- V   jimmy: (0.21) OH[::::: NON:::::.

- R   [ah:::::: (inc)[er

- X   [(inc)

- S   1.9[98

- B :   [✋

- R   salut:::

- S   0.170

- R   uh uh

- S   0.802

- R   c'est qui ?

- S   0.120

- V   ah: [yannick euh::::

- R   [ah yannick euh::: ah ah (.) ah

During the silence on l.24, a first static and close-up shot is presented, providing equal visual access to the two co-present persons. The shot is quickly assessed by V, who identifies the young man by his first name (Jimmy) then expresses his emotion in a pronounced way (l.25). At the same time, R also expresses her joy, then salutes (l.30), probably in response to a hand gesture by B on the preceding line. However, by introducing another request for identification ("c'est qui?", l. 34), R either questions Jimmy's identity or seeks to determine who is sitting next to him (or both). The first alternative is certainly accurate, since V will answer the request (l.36) by naming the young man "Yannick". The "ah" which precedes the introduction of the name marks a "change of state" ("change-of-state token, Heritage, 1984), leading out of the initial wrong identification. The quality of the transmission is quite bad, and affects the understanding of the only verbal contribution made by B (l.39). However the salutation gestures he makes (from l.41 onwards) are well perceived by R and V who laugh about them.

- S   0.420

- B   (wou dou dou)

- S   0.320

- B :   ✋

- R   uh::: [ah ah ah ah

- V   [ah ah ah

- S   0.470

- V   hh[hhhhh

- R   [(bé::::)

Figure 5: image freeze

- S   0.270

- V   salut::::::: ah ah ah ah ah hhhhh

- S   0.840

- V   yannick ça va:

- S   1.030

- V   (a wa) c'est bloqué

- S   0.080

- V   il arrête pas d'grandir [celui la

- R   [c'est clair hein

- S   3.880

- V   euh::: y a quelqu'un

- S   2.350

- R   euh ça bloque (inc) ca cou[pe

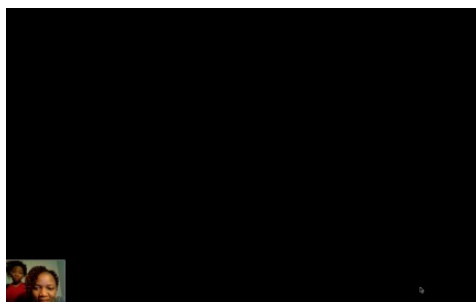- V   [ah:::::.

Figure 6 : no image

- S   0.410

A "how are you" ("comment ça va") is introduced on line 50, but the connection is bad (l.52): the image freezes on Yannick's salutation gesture (from line 46 onwards, fig 5), who doesn't answer the "how are you" request, and doesn't respond to the question "is anyone there" ("y a quelqu'un", l. 57) which aims at checking the state of participation of the persons involved in the long-distance interaction. The shift from a frozen image to a black one (fig 6) is interpreted as a sign that image and audio might be coming back (l.60, prolonged "ah" which underlines this potential change), and indeed the video comes back on line 62. However, Yannick no longer appears on the screen, but has been replaced by a new participant (whom we have called RAY, infra). Contrary to what can generally be observed in this type of displaying of co-present individuals, the person who controls the camera does not follow the sequential organisation – neither the lack of response to the "how are you?" request, nor the lack of response to the questions intended as a check on the conditions of communication. Usually, the person who does the showing films the interacting individuals, and changes the framing when they have expressed signs that they wish to end the interaction. However, the preceding shot may have been ended due to the temporarily defective transmission. Video returns at the beginning of line 62 (infra), and shows a static shot of a person correctly placed in the centre of the screen.

- R   attends (.) non (.) ça va (.) ça va

Figure 7: static shot RAY

- S   0.800

- V   mamou toilé

- S   0.610

- V   bonsoir mamou toi[lé

- R   [bonsoir::

- S   1.320

- V   uh uh uh uh uh (.) hhhhhh (.) eh eh eh eh eh

- S   1.360

- RAY   *ça va la jeunesse*

This time, the new participant is rapidly and correctly identified (l.64), and salutations are introduced (l. 66 and 67). RAY does not return the salutations however; instead he asks "how are you?" ("comment ça va") but doesn't receive a response either. The outside setting as well as the distance between the microphone and the persons shown on the screen may affect understanding, and hinder the normal development of conversational sequences (identification, salutation, how are you). It is difficult to follow a sequential progression, since the interactions are framed by a succession of static shots. Although showing a person generates a form of obligation to interact with this person, the way this person is filmed may limit the possibilities for visual and conversational interaction. This aspect can also be observed on line 71: RAY introduces a "how are you?" request at the very moment when the camera starts to move (italics). His request will not be answered, and a new static shot (end of l.73) will become the focus of attention:

- *S   0.210*

- *V   hhhhh* eh

- S   0.380

- R   ah ouais (.) ca [c'est (inc)

- RAY   [(inc)

- S   1.000

Figure 8: Malé shot

- R   qui ?

- S   0.300

- V   non ah::: ma:/ malé:

- S   0.450

- V   uh uh [uh uh

- X   [(inc)

The new person in the centre of the screen is difficult to identify in the dark (l.75-79), but V probably does so on line 80. We are unable to understand the conversation which follows, because of the language used or because nothing can be made of the segments (l.88 for example), and because we are not sure who is speaking (X). We cannot understand the next shot (l.96) in relation to the sequential organisation. However, we observe that the participants have held a short conversation, which has lasted only a little more than 5 seconds.

- S   1.125

- X   (si a qui ti)

- S   (.)

- V   oui[::::

- X   [(inc)

- S   1.525

- X   (ah crai::::::::)

- S   (.)

- V   uh uh uh uh

- S   1.*120*

- V   hhhhh

- S   0.330

- V   (nenigo *malé*)=

- *X   =(inc)=*

- *R   =(inc)*

- *S   4.060*

- *X   (inc)*

Figure 9: trinomial shot

- R   bo[nsoir (éhon)

- V   [bonsoir (éhon)

- (...)

A transitional movement of the camera is started on line 96, and ends on line
100 with a static shot. A woman is positioned at the centre of the screen and
other persons are visible on either side of her. Very quickly, R and V assess
this new shot, and nearly at the same time they salute and identify the
woman in question (l.101-102). The three of them will engage in a short

conversation of about 15 seconds, but transmission is bad, cuts arise, and the
connexion finally ends.

Figure 10: connexion is cut

With this communication sample and the transcription we made, it is possible
to establish certain characteristics of such video showing between migrants
and the family and acquaintances that have stayed in their home country.

Being able to carry the computer (laptop) and to adjust the direction of the
camera towards the relevant parts of the environment has made it possible to
perform "home visit". Interactions between migrants and their family and
acquaintances have moved increasingly closer to face-to-face interactions.
Such an orientation could be linked to the original motive for calling, but the
rest of our fieldwork shows that it generally emerges randomly during the
course of the exchange. It is the case here, where a request aimed at
localising a person and her activity (hairdressing) makes it relevant to show
the environment. Abandoning the "default" format of "speaking heads"
therefore depends on a collaboration, which starts with different types of
introduction (offer, suggestion, request etc.). These guarantee: 1) that the
participants agree to the video showing, 2) that the unsettling effect of the
transitional images will be minimised, 3) that a pre-selection is made of the
elements considered relevant and worthy of being filmed, and 4) that the way
of filming itself will be pre-structured. This last point should be explained
further. The gradual agreement to the video showing involves choices in how
to frame and organise it, in a way which resembles a sequence shot: if they
are not strictly defined in advance, the elements which will be filmed and the
order in which they will be shown is determined by the manner in which the
idea is brought about by the participants. A good illustration of this
phenomenon is provided by the excerpt which has been analysed: first, a
suggestion is made to do the showing (i.e. the visualisation of a woman and
her activity); second, the persons addressed accept the idea, but immediately

change the nature of the project by asking to visualise all the co-present individuals (V: "qu'on voit quelqu'un"; R: "montre maman et puis euh::: ceux qui vont être là [quoi"). The person who does the showing takes these instructions into account, insofar as the first static shot reveals a young man and a woman. After this, two other individuals are successively shown, and it is only in the last static shot that the initial request is finally addressed: the woman in the centre of the screen is indeed having her hair done by another young woman in the background. The first idea has been enriched by the persons addressed, and the filming is tailored to their demands. Indeed they ask to "see somebody" and to have a glimpse on "those who are there", which doesn't involve engaging in a specific or prolonged interaction with all of the persons who are co-present. The brevity of the shots (apart from the last static shot) is adapted to the way in which the project of showing has been progressively introduced and modified, i.e. ratified by interaction. Moreover, the various static shots show how the filming is organised according to the position of the co-present individuals, relative to the points of departure and arrival of the person holding the camera.

Losing the connexion suddenly ends the video interaction, which is of bad quality overall. Even inside and with individuals positioned in front of the screen, there are many misunderstandings, mainly because of the transmission delays and probably the data rate. Audio interruptions are very frequent, and the image is often pixelated or affected by freezes etc. The brightness of the environment and the sensitivity of the camera are also an impediment for visualising the participants and identifying them correctly. Distance, which was supposed to disappear through the prism of ITCs, reappears in the guise of technical malfunctions, affecting the conditions in which presence is displaced.

Conclusion

The use of cell phones has made it easy to move around whilst keeping contact. As we have seen, there is a strong drive to remain close to the family, a desire of presence, which often overrides economics constraints. All ICTs are welcome, but for the vast majority of migrants the mobile phone remains the main channel of communication.

Therefore, and despite some phenomena indicating the emergence of new forms of ghettoisation (where individuals get trapped in a "media bubble"), ICTs have considerably alleviated the constraints weighing on migrant populations. Wide access to ICTs has become particularly significant. In host societies, this technical aid has generated new forms of improvised and informal social integration, which often make up for the shortcomings of institutions. Moreover, thanks to ICTs, individuals who are separated from their family can not only maintain occasional contact with their place of origin, but also take part in family decisions and events. Questions relating to integration – which are a concern for authorities as well as the academic world – need to be reconsidered in order to take this reality into account. Yesterday: migrating and severing one's roots; today: moving around and keeping contact. This evolution seems to announce a new age in the history of migrations.

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