

# **Transnational musicians' networks: a challenge to migration research**

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# Overview



- Previous research on Changing City Spaces and its limitations
- Re-theorizing migration:
  - Network model based on individual agents (human hubs)
  - *Transcultural capital*
- Field work examples

Previous work (Meinhof and Kiwan):  
EU fifth framework project Changing City Spaces: New challenges  
to cultural policy in Europe ([www.citynexus.com](http://www.citynexus.com)) 2002-2005

Migrant flows, nexuses between and across capital city spaces in  
Europe: three challenges

- A challenge to nation-state models of migration through the concept of the metropolitan city as theoretical and empirical device for migration research
- A challenge to uni-directional paradigms: host > diaspora, through the concept of cities as hubs
- A challenge to 'community-centred' diasporic research through a focus on networks and nexuses

## Some key results from the field work with migrant musicians in Paris

- Movements between capital cities mainly restricted to 'world music stars' from abroad
- Many migrant musicians restricted to ethnically defined settings (socio-culture vs artistic merit)
- Most successful local migrant musicians cross over and perform in differentiated settings to different audiences across Paris and in the festival circuits: ethnic, non-ethnic, mixed
- Differentiated relations audiences<> musicians according to audience composition
- Identity constructions, identity performance of 'ethnic audiences'
- Transcultural capital (cultural, social, economic) : strategies of success

## Key limitations for migration/ diaspora research

A focus on European capital cities and spatially defined networks neglects multi-directional local to local social networks:

- neglects movements in originating countries from and between country-side and city(-ies)
- neglects multiple networks between localities within originating and host countries
- neglects significance of social networks across many localities
- neglects the agents in civil society within migrant communities as well as from 'host' associations which underpin multiple movements and flows

TNMundi: AHRC funded project 2005-2009  
Diaspora as social and cultural practice:  
Transnational (musicians') networks across Africa and Europe



- Our team:
- 2 consultants:
  - Taieb Belghazi, Morocco
  - Dama (Zafimahaleo Rasolondraosolo), Madagascar
- Researchers
  - Meinhof, Kiwan, Gibert

# **Network model and some implications for migration research**

Following particular individuals' movements and connections rather than observing them in pre-defined spaces establishes multiple, often over-determined trajectories, rather than singular uni-directional or bi-directional movements from A to B

# Re-theorizing migration

- *Transcultural capital theory* (Meinhof and Triandafyllidou 2006)
- Network model: mapping of multi-dimensional, multi-directional parameters (Meinhof in press)
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# *Transcultural capital*

- becomes visible to researchers through the network approach based on key individuals and the methodology of linguistic ethnography
- subsumes cultural, social and economic capital (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992) in one interconnecting theory
- redirects and integrates uni-directional notion of 'social remittances' (Levitt 1998)

# Key parameters in a network model

- Spatial hubs: translocality and key cities
- Human hubs – particular individuals as key agents
- Strategic hubs- institutional mediation
- Accidental hubs- multi-level researcher involvement

# Field work focus

- Musicians from Madagascar, living in Madagascar and/or Europe (Meinhof and Gibert)
- Musicians from North Africa, living in Morocco, Algeria and/or Europe (Kiwan and Gibert)

# Spatial hubs and translocal movements

Migration begins in the country of origin and often works in repeated cycles of movement across key locations in and across country of origin and countries of destination:

- village<>town circuits: (e.g. Toliara, Morondava, Fort Dauphin, Diego)
- town<>capital city circuits (Antananarivo as key hub)
- capital city <> capital city circuits (Antananarivo <> Paris)
- capital city <> cross-European circuits (Paris as key hub)
- 'by-passing' capital city circuits (rare but occasionally feasible)

# Capital city hubs

Antananarivo (Tana):

- offers national recognition to aspiring musicians
- functions as hub for translocal touring and the potential entry to the national and transnational music industry
- functions as international jumping board

Antananarivo and Paris: both function as hubs for Europe und Madagascar alike:

for migration <> return migration <> migration cycles

# Human hubs: individual artists and their multidirectional trajectories

Established musicians in Madagascar or Europe

- provide first access to local and/or newly arrived musicians (e.g. Mahaleo (Dama), Rajery, Justin Vali, Ricky Olombelo, Tarika are actively promoting new artists)
- link up with one another in transnational groupings (e.g. Madagascar All Stars)
- actively sustain transnational links between musicians in the South and in the North (e.g. shared performances and concert tours)
- represent the interface between all other 'hubs': spatial, human, strategic, accidental

## Strategic hubs: Institutionalised connections

- Entrepreneurs (e.g. concert organisers from Europe or Madagascar, e.g. Justin's story)
- Competitions (e.g. radio competitions on France Inter, e.g. Regis' story)
- NGOs (involved with social/ developmental issues) from Europe and Madagascar who use musicians as mediators
- Cultural institutes , embassies from overseas with representatives in Madagascar

# Accidental hubs: Researchers involvement

Researchers may create new networks, enlarge existing ones, or support access to 'gate-keepers'

- though their research activities (e.g. following individual musicians or asking musicians to become mediators)
- through their dissemination activities (e.g.: our own music and migration conferences in Tana, Rabat and forthcoming in October in Southampton)
- through their own networks (e.g.: attracting the attention of media gatekeepers through joint events or through publishing work)

Music and  
Migration  
third international  
conference



# University of Southampton, United Kingdom 15-17 October 2009



## Keynote speakers

Professor Nina Glick-Schiller, University of Manchester  
Professor Philip Bohlman, University of Chicago

*Round table chaired by:* Simon Broughton, Editor of Songlines magazine



## Music and Migration: a cultural event at Southampton, 15-17 October

- Combines conference papers, keynotes and debates
- Brings together all constituents of our research (academics, musicians, music industry and media professionals, NGOs)
- Demonstrates the resourcefulness of cultural diasporas and transnational networking through artistic residencies and joint performances
- All invited