Wood in Water Does Not a Crocodile Make:

Migrants virtual place-making, ontological security and cosmopolitanism in the transnational social field

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ABSTRACT

Research in the field of diasporic studies relating to media, migration and transnationalism has so far focused on how greater, more frequent and immediate access and consumption of media texts as well as to information and communications technologies (ICTs) help to connect migrant populations with their 'ancestral homelands' and the wider diaspora as well as the effects of this on relationships and identity. Yet, this focus has been criticised by non-representational and non-media centric media theorists (Moores, 2012; Couldry, 2010; Morley, 2009) for its neglect of embodied feeling and the familiar routines that shape behaviour and practice. The way in which migrants living in metropolitan spaces, such as those interviewed for this study, whose identities and cultural moorings are multidimensional, maintain ontological security on a daily basis is considered within the theoretical framework of practice theory. The research, based on empirical data gathered from six in-depth, semi-structured interviews with middle-class Senegalese migrants in London reveal how 'virtual' place-making helps to contribute to a feeling of ontological security, a way to feel 'secure' and 'at-ease' as a cosmopolitan subject. If 'home' is somewhere you can depend on, somewhere you can come and go as you please, where you can control or adapt the environment according to your preferences (Dupuis and Thorns, 1998), then online 'places' and media settings were here seen as essential in constituting that feeling of 'at-homeness' (Seamon in Moores, 2012: 54), by supporting a sort of 'dwelling' in world of flux (Moores, 2012: 82).

INTRODUCTION

According to Roger Silverstone:

> "if the human condition requires a modicum of ontological security for its continuing possibility and its development, home – technologically enhanced as well as technologically disrupted is a sina qua non. We cannot do without it, within or without the household. To be homeless is to be beyond reach, and to be without identity" (2005: 242-243).

Yet, if home is no longer one 'place', or one household, if it is deterritorialised and increasingly characterised by a hybrid, cosmopolitan identity then this begets the question of how this ontological security is maintained. This question is particularly pertinent for migrants in a diaspora, such as the Senegalese diaspora in a world characterised by greater inter-familial mobility and the 'fragmented' home. In global cities such as London, transnational and diasporic studies as informed by a cosmopolitan focus and the idea of the new 'connected' migrant allow us explain to some extent what allows these hybrid identities to arise and yet the question remains as to how these hybrid identities are constituted in everyday life.

By situating this study within non-representational media studies and focus on 'practices' (Postill, et al, 2010) the premise is not that ontologically, 'virtual' settings are the same as physical locales or that any interaction, use or practices of ICTs should be considered from a phenomenological standpoint as affording the same experience as physical co-presence or face-to-face interaction (after all one cannot touch, taste or smell without physical co-presence). Rather, if the very meaning, and thereby experience of 'proximity' becomes dependent not on distance but on time (Tomlinson, 2007), or indeed, on the availability of a technology with which to 'connect' (Diminescu, 2008: 573) then the focus shifts to the phenomenology of maintaining contact in a way that reconstitutes the subject but does not necessarily mean that it is 'displaced' or 'unstable'.

This study is thereby premised on a consideration of how practices or "routinised behaviour" (Reckwitz, 2002) helps to contribute to migrants' sense of ontological security by enabling them to negotiate cosmopolitan identities while retaining relations and feelings of belonging with home and family networks around the world. As it empirically analyses a group of middle-class migrants in the global city of London, it positions this 'place-making' (Moores, 2012) in virtual and media-settings through routine, habitual use of media and technologies.

Understanding how, despite heightened patterns of mobility, migrants retain a sense of their national identities and yet within a scattered diaspora, they may not necessarily feel 'uprooted', or 'placeless', despite a deterritorialised and physically fragmented 'home' remains an important objective in migration and transnational diaspora studies. Locating this research within London is a way to explore the specificity of the city in creating and sustaining transnational, cosmopolitan identities (Georgiou, 2010). As Michaela Nedelcu has written in relation to the uses of ICTs by middle-class migrants in the cosmopolitan city of Toronto, "what is needed is a conceptual vocabulary not to encompass these various processes in an overarching model, but to provide a way of exploring their interrelationship" (2012). This research therefore aims to provide a way of exploring the interrelationship between "dwelling in a world of flux" (Moores, 2012: 82) and maintaining ontological security within the transnational social field that migrants inhabit.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The migrant and mobility studies

In recent years, the increasing effects of globalisation, including the migration of labour, goods and people, has formed the bedrock of much analysis in the social sciences. The effects of information communication technologies (ICTs) on the cross-border relationships and national identities of migrants, or those who "move to a country other than of his or her usual residence" (Dimenescu, 2008: 566), have also been studied, particularly within the framework of transnational and diasporic studies, discussed in greater detail below. Yet, if mobility has become the 'new normal' (Hannam et al, 2006) shaped by a situation of 'perpetual contact' (Katz and Aakhus, 2002) or continuous 'connected presence' (Licoppe, 2004: 145) then the traditional focus in migration studies on migrants' interaction, assimilation and insertion into host communities, must also be reconsidered (Levitt and Schiller, 2004; Diminescu, 2008; Boccagni, 2011; Georgiou 2006, 2010).

This focus may be attributed to a long-standing tendency to analyse social processes from the viewpoint of methodological nationalism or the 'container theory of society' which considers society as bounded by the territorial frame of the state (Beck, 2000; Levitt and Schiller, 2004). Yet, greater mobility across borders and the creation and maintenance of networks facilitated by ICTs and internet access which "diversify ways of being together and belonging at a distance" (Nedelcu, 2012: 1345) mean that the contemporary migrant's experience is no longer territorially bound; it occupies an 'in-between space', where the 'breaks' or 'ruptures' between two distinct communities (Dimenscu, 2008: 566) are blurred. In an 'unprecedented

way', due to the combination of mass and new media, migrants have daily and constant access to images and sounds through mediated communication from their 'symbolic, imagined home' which permeate their everyday lifeworlds (Georgiou, 2006: 4-6). This mobility and connectivity allow for greater 'proximity' with the home nation but also means that the "grounding of identity to a single polity or community becomes irrelevant" (Georgiou, 2010: 18). As Dana Diminescu has put it, describing the new 'connected migrant', "yesterday the motto was: immigrate and cut your roots; today it would be: circulate and keep in touch" (2008: 568). Instead of 'either-or', we must see this as a situation of 'both-and' (Beck in Nedelcu, 2012: 1342). The transnational framework serves well to interrogate this fluid, multidimensional identity generated by new mobility.

Transnationalism

The transnational is not the same as the global, which is often equated with the 'universal' (Georgiou, 2010: 26). Although 'transnational space' may 'transcend' local or national borders and underline "the development of meaningful relations and social formations across borders" (26) it nonetheless "acknowledges the continuing significance of national borders in partly framing and restricting social actions and their meanings" (26). Transnationalism does not collapse entirely the notion of borders but does not reify one set of territorial limits above another. The links between 'local, national, and global' are conceptualised as shifting and interlinking, social processes which follow a continuum rather than ruptures caused by physical uprootings (Nedelcu, 2012; Boccagini, 2011).

Levitt and Glick Schiller argue that transnational migration scholarship does not go far enough in considering how living 'simultaneously within and beyond' borders occurs (2004: 1027). Instead they propose 'transnational social fields' as a unit of analysis for considering who is impacted by transnational activity where 'social field' is "a set of multiple inter-locking networks of social relationships through which ideas, practices and resources are unequally exchanged, organised and networked" (1009). Here 'local' takes on new meaning, as wherever one is, individuals "through their everyday activities and relationships are influenced and shaped by cross-border flows, ideas, laws and institutions" (1010). Nevertheless, within the transnational social fields which migrants inhabit, they contend it is important to distinguish between ways of being and ways of belonging. The former refer to the "actual social relations and practices that individuals engage in" (1010-1011) such as eating certain foods because that is what the family 'has always done'. They are not a 'conscious identification' with a particular ethnicity (1011). Ways of belonging on the other hand are "practices that signal, enact an identity – combine action and an awareness of the kind of identity that action signifies" (1011). These may be political actions such as wearing particular clothing or attending events, conscious attempts at remembering and identifying

with the ancestral home (1010-1011). According to this framework, "if individuals engage in social relations and practices that cross border as a regular feature of everyday life then they exhibit a transnational way of being" (1011). Therefore the migrant experience is "a kind of gauge" where connection to the identified homeland depends on a variety of factors including context (1011). The concept of transnational social field shares similarities with Massey's 'global sense of place' (1991, 2005: 131) and the social relations and identities that characterise diasporic cross-border negotiations of space.

Diaspora and transnationalism

Due to this greater mobility, diaspora, "which implies a decentralised relation to ethnicity, real or imagined relations between scattered people who sustain a sense of community through various forms of communication and contact and who do not depend on returning to a distant homeland", (Durham Peters in Georgiou, 2006: 3) is particularly suited for considering the way transnational connections are sustained in migrant communities.

The Senegalese diaspora, which spread after chronic crop failures and structural adjustment in the 1970s and 1980s (Tall, 2002: 4), forms part of this 'diasporisation' of a particular national community, or "the relocation of people in space and their ability, desire and persistence to sustain connections and commonality across the globe" (Georgiou, 2006: 2).

If we are to consider how ICTs have created a 'new connected migrant' whose 'logic of perpetual access' (Diminescu, 2008) constitutes a new way of being 'in between' the ancestral homeland and the adopted home, then this can signify a 'diasporic consciousness' (Jordonova in Georgiou, 2002: 16) which is not only about 'feeling global', but still tied to national belonging. The notion of diaspora as 'transnational community' (Georgiou, 2010: 27), or 'transnational social field' (Levitt and Schiller, 2004) thus lends itself well to a cosmopolitan approach which "captures the complexities of multiple forms of belonging and of heterogeneous and fragmented publics by challenging essentialist interpretations of identity and bounded communities" (Georgiou, 2010: 19).

Cosmopolitanism or the migrants' transnational habitus in the city

As migrants do not simply leave their homeland, forget their identity or conversely integrate and appropriate their host country's culture, the ontology of 'locality' itself changes. As Arjun Appadurai asks "what is the nature of locality as a lived experience in a globalised, deterritorialised world?" (1991: 191, 196). He proposes the term 'scapes', including

'ethnoscapes' as a means to reimagine the organisation of people as 'a flow', a 'shifting landscape' composed of mobile populations (2011: 288-289).

Echoing this phrase, Massey's term 'global sense of place' points to a conceptualisation of 'place' as 'open and porous', particularly as it is formed through transnational connections and one which refashions the concept of 'local' (1991, 2005: 131). Massey, like Georgiou, refers to how these identities are shaped in London where diverse 'links and interconnections' or 'lines of engagement' spread out 'beyond' the physical boundaries of the city (1991). She cites examples of newspapers, concerts and global commodities purchasable in her local borough of London as an example of these 'lines of engagement' of the local to beyond (1991), but considering the contemporary importance of electronic communication, particularly via the internet, we may also include these as a way that places and by extension the people who inhabit them achieve a 'global sense of place'.

As such, scholars such as Beck have called for a 'transnationalisation' of the social sciences in general, a way of understanding how 'globalisation is happening from within', characterised by cosmopolitanism and a dialogical imagination, or a "clash of cultures and rationalities within one's own life... A coexistence of rival ways of life in the individual experience" (2006: 18). As Georgiou argues, cities provide a particularly 'cosmopolitan' nexus of meeting points (Georgiou, 2013). Migrants in cities are thus geographically embedded in transnational spaces. This results in what Georgiou terms 'critical proximity' (2010: 31), akin to Beck's notion of 'additive inclusion' (Beck in Nedelcu, 2012: 1343); a way of incorporating and negotiating multiple ways of being and belonging in culturally heterogeneous communities. In modern, global cities, levels and continuity of contact between and within diasporas are 'unprecedented' but "at the same time, the growing and constant flows of information often result in critical reflection and selective engagement... Increased information and interaction remind members of diasporic groups that the original homeland is not sacred and pure" (Georgiou, 2010: 29). In cities like London, transnational and diasporic studies as informed by a cosmopolitan focus and the idea of the new 'connected' migrant allow us to partially explain what allows hybrid identities to arise, the question remains as to how these are constituted in everyday life.

Transnational habitus

According to Nedelcu, the internet facilitates the co-presence of mobile actors in multiple locations and allows the emergence of a new transnational habitus, which "reshapes concepts such as national borders, space, time and mobility" (2012: 1340) and where 'habitus' is, in Bourdieu's original definition, a set of 'dispositions' that orient the body towards a certain set of behaviours or practices (Postill, 2010: 7). By studying Romanian migrants in Toronto, he

argues that ICTs allow migrants to "form multiple belongings, capture cosmopolitan values and develop deterritorialised identities and biographies" (1340). Yet by connecting migrants to those back home on a regular basis, they can also "claim a particular belonging while living as global citizens" (1341). Andersson's studies (2013) also highlight this shifting conjuncture between 'deterritorialisation' and 'reterritorialisation'. By learning of their homeland, maintaining relationships, exchanging information and sharing through ICTs, migrants and those remaining in the homeland do not identify with only one nation or identity (Nedelcu, 2012).

These studies therefore seem to illustrate that mobility is not necessarily antithetical to feeling 'at-home' in multiple situations (Moores, 2012: 54, 58, 66). Instead a new 'habitus' is employed, characterised by "dislocation, displacement, disjuncture and dialogism as widespread conditions of migrant subjectivity and nomadism" (D'Andrea qtd in Hannam et al, 2006: 10).

This 'habitus', or way of orienting one's self through a particular socialisation shaped by mobility, global media flows, and deterritorialised 'imagined life possibilities' (Appadurai, 1991), is partly facilitated by ICTs, as previously discussed. The issue of how this socialisation occurs, or how and where it is experienced has been less theorised. An analysis of space and place is therefore necessary in order to better understand how their contested definitions attempt to grapple with the new phenomenology of communication across borders in a context marked by shifting experiences of space, time and place.

Space and place

Time, space distanciation, co-presence

The sense of 'immediacy' (Tomlinson, 2007: 72-94) brought about by ICTs has led to the use of terms such as the 'collapse' or 'compression of space and time' (Harvey, 1989) or the "dematerialisation of the medium leading to the conquering of space and time" (Benedikt in Urry, 2002: 266). Notions of space, what is meant by 'far', 'distant', and 'close' or 'nearby' (Urry, 2002) are reconfigured when one can be simultaneously 'on the move', and interacting with others despite not being physically co-present. This 'presence' has invariably been described as 'virtual co-presence' (Baldassar, 2008), 'virtual travel' and 'imaginative mobility' (Urry, 2002: 256) or 'space time distanciation', that is Anthony Giddens "reorganisation of time and space within social life that takes into account the presence and action of the 'absent other'" (qtd in Nedelcu, 2012: 1344).

Studies such as Urry's (2002) or Miller and Slater's (2000) have addressed an altered experience of space and time, where multiple 'places and practices' are brought into meaningful formation and where the combined analysis of 'spatial belongings', and coexistent 'multidimensional identities' can no longer be "framed within a single place" (Georgiou, 2010). Yet place remains largely considered as a physically grounded 'locale', hence the notion of 'virtual co-presence', people not in the 'same place' but brought together in time and space.

Places in space

In explaining the differentiation between place and space as it has evolved through Western philosophy, Edward Casey explains that among Greek philosophers place was "primarily locatory and that what it locates is a physical thing" (1997: 272); place is equated with site (288). On the other hand, "space means something nonlocal and nonparticular, something having little to do with close containment and everything to do with outright infinity" (275). Places 'sustain and support' bodies in 'space', they 'contain' although such "indwelling and upholding power applies to nonmaterial as well as material things, to anything that is 'contained' in anything else (276-277), that is within 'infinite and absolute' space" (277).

This definition of place as the relational position of objects in space was later modified. For Locke "each different distance is a different modification of space" so that "his concept of place is nothing but the relative position of anything" (283). Casey refers to this as a collapse of place 'into space', where the two become interchangeable due to the fact that place and space became simply relational – an 'order of coexisting points' (288). The modern self thus becomes a 'placeless subject' (292, 293).

Some have argued that increased mobility has led to the 'disembedding' of social relations from 'place' (Giddens, 1991: 20-22) and thus a 'Durkheimian loss of orientation' (qtd in Rossi, 2007) or a 'placelessness' (Sheller and Urry, 2006: 208). Others have acknowledged the experience of place in an era of greater mobility as 'dynamic' (Hannam et al, 2006). As people interact, or perform activities on the move the corporeal body becomes "an affective vehicle through which we sense place and movement and construct emotional geographies" (14).

However, Moores and Rossi believe these theorists do not go 'far enough' in their reconceptualisation of place. Place is still written as synonymous with 'location' even if in Meyrowitz's term 'glocality' (2004), Massey's 'global senses of place' (1991, 2005), or in

Appadurai's 'ethnoscapes' (1991), places are locations informed by the global, they are nonetheless physically bound, tangible sites. They contend that individuals, through virtual interaction, construct places through 'meaningful' action or oriented action-controlled practices (Rossi, 2007: 341, 344, 348). Therefore, place, whether virtual or geographically 'anchored', is formed, sustained, and visited in 'space' through routinised habit, practices specific to the transnational social field or the transnational habitus.

According to Moores, places are constituted when "a habit field is formed, through repetitive, habitual practices"; it is not about occupying space so much as inhabiting it and making it familiar (2012: 27). Such familiarity requires a learning process, a know-how that is 'pre-cognitive', concerned with 'getting around' and orientation in everyday environments, which allows one to 'feel at ease' (2012: 31, 41, 44, 49). This 'embodied know-how' which is needed to 'feel at home', is equally constituted in digital or media environments as it is in what are traditionally termed 'places'; the physical, territorially-bound locales (Rossi, 2007: 344; Moores, 13). The physical or material, including the material technologies as well as urban infrastructure and the digital are co-constitutive (ibid.). For example, the 'know-how' in using 'Google Maps' relates not only to being able to orient oneself in a physical locale but through the digital interface as well; feeling at 'ease' thereby requires both knowing one's way around both 'places'. This embodied 'know-how', 'in the hands' (Moores and Metykova, 2009: 317) provides a sense of ontological security, the familiarity needed to ground oneself in any place within space.

Ontological security

Dupuis and Thorns's anthropological study of home ownership in New Zealand explores the ways in which the home as a physical locale provides homeowners with a sense of ontological security (1998). They draw on Gidden's definition of the term as "a sense of confidence and trust in the world as it appears to be....The confidence that most human beings have in the continuity of their self-identity and in the constancy of their social and material environments" (Giddens, 1990: 92).

This 'sense of reliability of persons and things', a 'feeling at ease' that is emotionally manifested, is 'closely connected' with routine and habit, and rooted in the unconscious (Giddens, 1990: 92). Yet, as Thorns and Dupuis explain, Giddens believed that it had become undermined in the modern world, with the demise of everyday life being lived in 'built', 'urban' environments where daily existence was less sensitive to the predictable cycles of the natural world and where there was an accompanying break-down of routine 'face-to-face' interaction (1998: 28). Saunders, however, argued that as long as "day to day activity is

routinised and takes place through familiar time-space paths", then this sense of ontological security could be maintained (Saunders in Thorns and Dupuis, 1998: 27). For him, the 'home' constituted that locale. Dupuis and Thorns posit that home ownership is an important source of ontological security for their subjects of study as it meets four conditions 1) it is a site of constancy 2) it is a spatial context in which day to day routines are performed 3) it is a place where people maintain a sense of control and privacy as it is a private realm and finally 4) it is a secure base around which identities are constructed (1998: 29).

Yet, if contemporary forms of 'dwelling' now 'almost always involve diverse forms of mobility' (Urry, 2000: 132), and if activities and relational activities can happen outside of a 'fixed' locale, then arguably in this new spatial and temporal context, home and place must also be ontologically redefined. As Giddens asserted, although ontological security is established through routine and 'unconscious' practices, it is still 'actively sought', and is therefore a "social action that is shaped by the framework in which it is set" (Thorns and Dupuis, 1998: 30). In this spatial framework where communication is 'freed' from the bonds of space and time and increasingly mobile and unsettled, the question as to how 'place' and 'place-making' play a role in constituting home or feelings of 'at-homeness' arises. The need for ontological security does not disappear and so 'place-making' remains central for feelings of 'at-homeness' (Moores, 2012: 54). This "unnoticed, taken for granted, situation of being comfortable in and familiar with the everyday world" (D. Seamon qtd in Moores, 2012: 54) can be achieved "in a media as well as a physical setting through 'place-making'" (Moores, 2012 : 13).

ICTs could be seen to, 'hold' up, or 'contain' places where feelings of identity 'can flourish' and relationships can be maintained. Practice theory is well-suited to exploring this assertion. As "it is concerned with the constant re-affirmation of our being – in the world and the relationships which stabilise this", through every day practices, it is a useful framework of analysis within which to situate the exploration of 'place-making' in media settings through ICTs as a way of achieving ontological security and 'at-homeness', or 'dwelling in a world of flux' (Moores, 2012: 82).

Practice theory

Practice theory seeks to understand how social order and individuality are created and re-created through 'every-day' practices (Warde, 2005: 133). Practices are defined as 'routinised', 'embodied', behaviour which are discernible through "forms of bodily activities, forms of mental activities, 'things' and their use, a background knowledge in the form of

understanding, know-how, states of emotion and motivational knowledge" (Reckwitz 2002: 249). In media studies this may involve sensitivity to the 'sensuous' aspects of media use, that is to say the emotion-generating interaction between the body and object, and the meanings people attribute to the use of certain technologies and the consumption of media through them. As such, Bourdieu's notion of habitus is situated within this theoretical framework, seeing as it examines how the social order is 'internalised' or embodied by a human agent, while "recognising the agent's capacity for invention and improvisation through his or her practices" (Postill, 2008: 7). It is this 'invention' or 'improvisation' which accounts for levels of internal differentiation (Warde, 2005: 146) in practices and which empirical study of practice will uncover. Thereby, it is an approach which seeks a middle-ground between the familiar structure vs. agency dichotomy and a way to "liberate agency from the constrictions of structuralist and systemic models while avoiding the trap of methodological individualism" (Postill, 2008: 7) through attention to the context-dependent nature of meaning and action.

Practice theory approaches are similar to Giddens' 'structuration theory' which explains how order produces and is reproduced through human action and activities and their habits, routines, practices operating within the limitations and possibilities of societal constraints (Couldry, 2008: 45). In other words, "human social activities are continually recreated by human beings via the means whereby they express themselves as actors" (Giddens, 1986: 2). Behaviour is 'steered' in a certain way, through conventions and standards, in a way that can be said to ensure 'ontological security'.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Here, I wish to bring the two main theoretical frameworks together, namely diasporic transnationalism with a phenomenological consideration of ICTs in space and place through a practice theory approach. In doing so, I have chosen to empirically investigate the experiences of a group of migrants, whom Diminescu has termed "the ideal-type of the management of a world in motion" (2008: 568). In particular, I have chosen to focus on what has been termed a 'neglected' group in academic research thus far, that is middling migrants or those who do not form part of highly or lowly skilled migrant labour (Conradson and Latham, 2005).

I will look at how the practice of 'keeping in touch' changes due to migration and the integration of a new technology in shaping and sustaining relationships and national identity in a transnational context. By considering ICT and media uses in the context of other social

practices however, I do not wish to isolate these technologies from the dynamics of everyday life but see how they are interwoven into the context of the day-to-day activities and routines of the respondents who provided the empirical data for the exploration of the research question outlined below. The limited scope of this study means that I will not comment at any great length on the economic or technological institutions and processes in which the lives of middle-class migrants are embedded or the epistemological debates that continue to shape practice theory (see Couldry and Hobart, 2010: 77-81).

Objectives and rationale

My aim is to understand how and if 'place-making' through media or 'virtual' settings as facilitated by ICTs, when situated within the everyday life of migrants, both contributes to a migrant's ontological security and at the same time demonstrates a transnational habitus, or a cosmopolitan identity; a way of 'inhabiting' the transnational, diasporic 'space'.

Research question:

How do migrants experience virtual place-making through the routine use of ICTs and how does this routinised behaviour, in combination with other 'place-making practices', contribute to a sense of ontological security while simultaneously helping to construct a hybrid, shifting, cosmopolitan identity?

- Sub-question 1: How do middling migrants, specifically in this case a group of young, middle-class Senegalese migrants in London negotiate cross-border relationships and maintain ontological security by routine and 'place-making' activities in their use of ICTs (including the internet, television, mobile phones and computer devices)?
- Sub-question 2: How does this use also exhibit a transnational 'habitus', or hybrid identity and cosmopolitan sense of 'being' as a way of inhabiting the transnational social field?

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

Recruitment and fieldwork

I conducted the interviews from July 26th to August 10th, 2014 in London in the respondents' homes and office spaces. Snowball sampling was employed, whereby I used my existing

contacts in the field and further recruits were snowballed from referrals. I used this method as I was looking for a particular type of under-researched person from a community to which I had some links. Recruiting respondents through my existing networks had the potential to bias the responses. The interviewees for example knew I had spent time in Senegal and this was clear from some of their responses … "You know how it is", "you've been there", etc. However, this was not seen to skew the responses, as the interview topic was not particularly sensitive or personal. Nevertheless, my knowledge of the country and the people I had in common with the respondents did lead to some 'off-topic conversation' relating to the time I had spent in Senegal, particularly when I asked if the respondents had any questions for me. This was not, however, retrospectively considered a 'waste of time', as it allowed me to 'bond' with the respondents, and thus helped create an open and trusting environment.

Basic respondent profiles are included in the appendices. All respondents signed consent forms, which permitted the recording of the interviews and as some respondents requested to be anonymised, I have anonymised all the respondents by substituting names.

Design of research tools

As Martin Bauer and George Gaskell have written "the real purpose of qualitative research is not counting opinions or people but rather exploring the range of opinions, the different representations of the issue" (2000: 14). Moreover, in-depth interviews allow for an exploration of "the deeper meanings that people hold…Below their level of awareness about things" (Zaltman in Berger, 2011: 137). My aim was to explore perceptions that shape practices and as such the fixed-response-answer survey methodology would not have been appropriate. This was important because I sought to understand and explore the respondents' varied and situated use of ICT technologies in their daily lives and in this way remain true to my intent of employing a non-media-centric conceptual framework, as outlined in the theoretical section above. For this reason, I employed an open-ended interviewing technique. For example, the topic guide started with and included questions relating to the respondents views and feelings of living in London. This led interviewees to explain how long they had lived in London, whether or not they had lived away from home before and naturally led to a discussion of how they had maintained contact with family and friends since that time.

Each interview was recorded and transcribed, with the use of some paralinguistic characteristics such as short pauses or hesitations denoted by the use of '…'. Gestures and intonation were not included as I was not carrying out narrative analysis where the interview

process is conceived as a 'performance' shaped by the particular situations in which the interview takes place (Holstein and Gubrium: 1997); gestures, body language and other actions are taken to be an important, constitutive part of analysis. Such an analysis could have been useful within the framework of this study because of the respondents' interaction with their phones during the interviews, including the receiving and ignoring calls or messages from relatives and friends abroad. Situating the responses to questions and their reactions to these interludes could have provided a fuller account of the meanings and feelings articulated within the interview environment. However, as my aim was to identify common patterns and themes across the data set, I carried out thematic analysis according to the six phases identified by Clarke and Braun (2006; 2013):

1) Familiarisation with the data: This involves reading and re-reading the transcripts which as Gaskell and Bauer (2000) describe should allow one to be able to 're-evoke' the interview situation

2) The generation of 'pithy' labels or codes (Clarke and Braun, 2013: 121). For example, as I was searching for examples of 'feeling secure', I coded words and terms 'secure', 'loved', 'connected', and phrases 'doing the chores' for 'routine' while deductively reading the data

3) Searching for themes: I looked for similarities across codes that could be brought together under a common heading or 'theme' (121)

4) Reviewing themes: Re-reading the coded and annotated transcripts together again, the aim is to see 'whether the themes tell a story about the data', defining each theme and identifying relationships between themes (121)

5) Defining and Naming Themes: Deciding on the 'essence' of each theme and its particular characteristics (121)

I was aware of the 'active' role I played in identifying patterns or theme described as "some level of patterned response within the data set" (Clarke and Braun, 2006: 10) and thus of my inductive and deductive approach to the data (12). This was not a case of 'giving voice' to the respondents (7), or attempting to 'extract' authentic data (Holstein and Gubrium: 1997). Themes 'emerged' because through my analysis I was necessarily embedding the data within my research question. Despite expected internal variation between data sets due to the respondents' different life trajectories, values, needs and aspirations, the interview guide, as a tool through which to operationalise the theoretical framework, proved effective in ensuring a set of comparable data.

Thus, I reflexively employed an approach that went beyond the purely 'semantic' (Clarke and Braun, 2006: 13) and interpreted terms and phrases within broader themes as I was aiming

to theorise the data. For example, when respondents used phrases like 'go there' or 'every Sunday' or 'I choose when to go on', 'change the settings' when referring to use of ICTs, I coded this as an example of 'place', 'routine' or 'control' respectively. My aim was to understand if the respondents generally considered and used ICTs in a way that could be illustrative of the premises on which my research was conducted; namely to understand how these perceptions and practices could be seen as contributing to a sense of ontological security through place-making within a transnational social field.

RESULTS AND INTERPRETATION

Although aware that situating my research through a focus on practices where "practices are internally differentiated not least in the differing qualities and degrees of commitment to the practice" (Warde, 2005: 138) would lead to some anomalies in the responses, the use of the interview guide ensured that although there was variation in the results, patterns could be discerned across the interviews. Quotes were highlighted and extracted from the data during the staged transcript analysis process described above and after coding and categorising codes into themes, two broad themes emerged: 1) the establishment of ontological security and the 2) cosmopolitan, hybrid identity.

Ontological security

My establishment of the ontological security afforded by the use of ICTs follows the four-part categorisation outlined by Dupuis and Thorns, as discussed in the literature review above (1998). Here, however, I have combined the four into two broader categories due to the overlap in codes I observed when analysing the transcripts.

A site of constancy and a spatial context in which day to day routines are performed

Each of the respondents referred to the use of a particular medium in a way that comprised a routine, or a habit. Malick for example, when asked if he preferred using some mediums over others because of the affordances of the medium (e.g the synchronicity or visibility offered by VOiP technologies), described keeping in touch with his wife and his parents in the following way:

> Depends on which one you like started with that person? If you started Skype, you remain with Skype. Khadijah for example, we started with like, now she's in Senegal at the moment...But before we started like with Tango when we were living long-distance and now that she's back

in Senegal we went back to our...So to Tango. We could have changed actually. With my parents it always has been Skype and it won't change...

Badara, who lived with his cousin, Papa (also interviewed), referred to routine when relating to watching Senegal's most popular sport, wrestling, through the internet streaming service Roku:

> We watch all the programmes relating to it – all the fights. And we always talk about it online at the same time. For example like usually Sundays. We've got a few friends, two of our friends and they come here watch it with us. The arguments and all that...

The routine of having a live internet stream on 'in the background' while doing the chores at the weekend was also identified by Fatou when asked if she listens to the distinctive Senegalese pop music, mbalax:

> Oh, I would! Like when I'm cleaning, it's like my cleaning routine. Like when I vacuum. But no, no, no definitely, music is like a big part of like Senegalese culture. Like when I listen to it, I think it just makes me feel like I'm in Senegal. Even though sometimes, like when I was in Senegal, yeah, like last year...I was playing them, I was listening to it and they were like 'eh, Fatou no one listens to this anymore...' I was like 'whatever, I still do!'

This extract highlights how the routine of listening to Senegalese music while doing the chores did not necessarily mean that Fatou felt up-to-date with the latest music, it provided her with a reminder of 'being back home', and was an activity she engaged with in a particular context; a familiar, routinised habit.

For Khadijah, who identified as politically active, keeping up to date with the political situation in Senegal was important: "Yeah, it is important. I look at the news, I read, I watch the news...I read in the morning, I browse quickly what's going on... not Seneweb. I have some alerts for the topics that are of interest".

The extracts serve to illustrate the routine and habit associated with the use of ICTs to maintain contact with those at home and to keep 'up-to-date'. Whether it is listening to Senegalese music when doing the chores at the weekend, the setting up of routine Skype calls, watching the wrestling on Sundays, or receiving tailored newsfeeds, the state of 'perpetual' access or connection that is often identified in the literature is negotiated and fits into everyday life in a way that can be identified as routinised habit. Distinctive habits were

cultivated, particular to each respondent and which reflected their own time constraints, needs and interests.

As discussed above, this is a new 'spatial context', one where media and technology is fitted into and comprises one's daily activities. Websites are routinely visited, familiar social network pages and messages checked and a certain 'know-how' is employed as these technologies are navigated, thus contributing to the place-making identified by Moores in pluralised settings through electronic media use (2012: 13). Moreover, the possibility of the distinction between the on and offline spatial context, is blurred, for example where online streaming allows one to watch TV shows or listen to the radio online.

Malick for example referred to the 'internet' as 'simply part of his life': "I think it's part of my life really, everybody's life. I don't really feel like I'm on the internet. I'm just somewhere, I need information..." while Papa stated "the phone is probably the most important thing because you can go anywhere here. Even watch TV". Malick's reference to the internet not as somewhere you 'go' but somewhere you always 'are' suggests a feeling of being 'perpetually connected' in this space. However, one must also 'go places' within this space and as he describes... "I feel like I need to be on LinkedIn, or Facebook, or email or to watch something on Youtube or...I go there. Everything is, you know, on it". But being there in 'space' is not what matters. Certain routines and mediums are equated with certain people or events, they may be seen to 'sustain', 'dwell', 'hold' up (Casey: 1997: 288) these places, from which one can communicate, in space. Routine access to these 'places' embodies 'sites' of constancy, made real through 'pre-cognitive', daily activity such as scrolling through websites, newsfeeds, accessing group conversations on Whatsapp, or friends and family social network pages. As Bakary described:

> I don't feel that desire to connect all the time but I like the feeling of knowing that it's there and I go on anytime I want and that makes me feel safe. Yeah, that makes me feel safe knowing that I can get in touch...Even if they're like a thousand miles away...It makes me feel safe, and makes me feel connected.

Control, a secure base from which to construct identities

Just as Dupuis and Thorns identify routine as essential to the maintenance of ontological security, they identified 'control' in the home as a 'private realm' as essential (1998: 29). Although the widespread surveillance that occurs on the internet is well-known, documented

and theorised, on a subjective level, feelings of control can still be exercised, forming a secure base from which to construct identities (1998: 29). For example, Khadijah declared

> Yes, I'm connected but as I was telling you I choose how to be connected. So I don't receive notifications and so on, I refuse that. I go when I want to go [sic]. I don't want to, even emails and so on, I don't [want] to receive notifications… Yeah, so there are ways of being connected while not being connected.

Both Bakary and Malick expressed the same annoyance with the possibility that friends and family could see that they had 'seen' messages on an instant messaging service and therefore felt a pressure to respond. As Bakary stated "Well, when I want to get in touch with somebody I want to take the initiative. I don't want people seeing me and 'oup, he's online…Oup'". For this reason, he stated that he had disenabled the instant messaging service from Facebook and from Viber. Nevertheless, he still felt in control of his communicative practices…

> You know, sometimes, even at work, yeah you know I might receive a text from family and then reply…Or being in a bus, I can call if I know that I'm going to be like twenty minutes in the bus or twenty five minutes I might see who I can call.

None of the respondents felt that these technologies were 'controlling' them or excessively intrusive. Whether it was through switching off notifications, putting the phone 'on silent' when at work, checking or replying to messages when they had time on the bus, the possibility to communicate was there, as they needed it, to 'come and go from' – even if the pressure to respond or to keep in touch existed. This also echoed or paralleled their lives in other ways. Khadijah for example, noted how when at home in Senegal, she is known to use home as a sort of 'dormitory', as she is 'hardly ever there' due to her busy work schedule, not dissimilar to her experience of being connected online, where she noted that her friends and family sometimes reproach her for 'disappearing': "Yeah, you're always there. But they reproach me for not being there. But I choose how to be connected and when to be connected."

Badara described how he avoided posting photos on Facebook or Instagram that could lead to his family or friends thinking that he was 'living extravagantly', described as 'yangi noss' in Wolof. Instead he used these mediums mainly to 'follow others':

> I have a few people who follow me and I do post pictures sometimes but I don't like that…People saying 'yangi noss'. I'm not really into that. I know some people do that on

purpose, you know what I mean, wearing like fancy shirts, gold chains but I'm not really into that.

Importantly, however, none of the respondents felt that the use of any communication medium 'substituted' for physical co-presence and each made at least bi-annual visits home to see family and friends. As Fatou asserted, "it is not almost like being there. It is so not, because at the end of the day, when I walk out it's still cold out". Khadijah noted that 'it depended' on the occasion and the relationship:

> For example, when my sister was sick. Even when you talk, it's not the same. Sometimes, perhaps it's when it's really personal so even when your sister has a baby and you only, you see pictures, you see the video but it's not the same.

It should be noted that these migrants are situated within a particular class and power structure. Half of the respondents sent remittances back home and so their families were in some way dependent on them. Their privileged economic status means that they are not necessarily subjected to the same pressures or surveillance as those identified in Dinah Hannahford's study on the ways that Senegalese husbands in the diaspora control the actions of their wives back home through ICTs (2014). All of the respondents identified the cost of using free, online services and applications such as Viber, Facetime, WhatsApp and Skype as a positive improvement in their ability to communicate with family and friends around the world, explaining their choice to use these mediums as a question of cost. Therefore, their choices are framed by global economic processes as well as technological advances and improvements in telecommunications services in Senegal that make frequent, daily use of Wi-Fi-enabled communications devices as a means to maintain contact efficient and advantageous.

The transnational habitus; ways of being and belonging in the transnational social field

According to Nedelcu, the transnational 'habitus' may be described as "socialisation as the learning of cultural norms and the building of a lived world gradually released from its territorial anchoring" (2012: 1345). ICTs are an essential part of this shaping of the habitus as "they tend to diversify ways of being together and ways of belonging at a distance" (2012: 1345).

The 'dispositions' that steer practices necessary to maintaining relationships and cultivating a distinct identity, or one's social habitus, for each of the migrants interviewed as part of this

study involved a complex interweaving of consumption of Senegalese media and contact with family in the diaspora with other, diverse media and ties to the host nation as well as other cultures. Their articulation of their practices and the significance they attached to them was reflective of the 'dialogical imagination' (Beck, 2006), 'in-between' (Diminescu, 2010), 'syncretised' identities (Gilroy, 1994: 211) that exemplify the experience of being and belonging in the transnational social field.

Local, national, global: Senegalese, African, Londoner

All of the respondents identified as Senegalese, although three also had dual nationality. Bakary for example, who had been resident in London for six years and was married to a British woman identified as

> African and Senegalese. So it's in me, I can't get away from it but it's not, it's just not more important than me as a person. It's just, it's just...I don't know, how am I going to...It's a 'tag' basically. I am Senegalese, that's one tag, I'm African as well, and that's a 'tag', and also I am British, that's another tag, I'm a Londoner, that's another tag, and the whole of it makes me who I am.

His stated media practices seemed to reflect this, when describing his internet use while relaxing after work:

> Yeah, browsing, you know...Going to Seneweb...Reading what's going on. And if I'm not reading that, I've got the British TV on or French TV because you know, I want to be, I want to stay connected to what's happening around the world in general.

Malick, who had left Senegal at the age of twelve and had thus lived just over half of his life in France, interspersed with periods in South Africa, responded to the question, 'where is home?' by stating:

> Maybe, it's just a sign of respect of saying home, home is where my father is...It's a hard question...But in a way, I can feel like I can live anywhere. I can make home anywhere. I don't know if it's a diaspora thing?

He was particularly clear about his dislike of 'clique communities', referring to his experience in South Africa

When I was in South Africa for example we had a big French community. I'm black and they were all French, white but I….I would rather prefer trying to get you know, involved with the community, I mean South African people…Try to integrate…Instead of being in a community.

Admitting to that he was 'not a big fan of politics', he stated that he preferred to keep up to date with the country he was in…'I usually follow the politics of the country where I am. For example, when I was in Senegal, or when I was in France, I was following that'.

Nevertheless, Malick declared that sometimes he gets a 'craving' to listen to a particular show to watch a particular drama, illustrative of Levitt and Schiller's statement "that the desire and ability to engage in transnational practices will ebb and flow at different phases of the lifecycle and in different contexts" (2004: 1018). Indeed, all the respondents expressed a desire to return to Senegal at some point and work there, or 'give back'. Bakary described this as a sense of 'duty' because he had gained his education there while Malick described it as a need to 'learn, earn and return'.

On the other hand, for Khadijah who had been politically engaged before leaving Senegal to study for her undergraduate degree in France, ICTs allow for the ability to "act across borders in real time" (Nedelcu, 2012: 1340), through, for example

RSS feeds and also Twitter. And also I have a group of friends who are politically active let's say…And they keep me posted on what's happening. And even online, I'm very active, on media like Twitter and so on, like when the Turkish Embassy took the land on the Corniche…

However, she noted that such engagement was not necessarily 'sufficient' and had to be supplemented by intermittent physical co-presence:

With them, then you know you have to catch up. Even if you are on the mailing list, they tell you what's happening and so on but with some that are really closed, like the ones I was committed to during the elections, campaigning against corruption and…Those kind of people, maybe you need to, to sit down and catch up.

Nevertheless, her that when asked about how ICTs could be used in Senegal to engage young people politically, she commented

Not only Senegalese but other youth from other countries of similar interest. I think yes, it is one way, it's certainly not the only one but it is one way important way because if we are talking about all this social media and so on, you can't just be outside it and make any change.

Thus, she didn't conceive of being politically active through social media as bound by nation-state boundaries. Her political interest through social media was echoed in her involvement in her university's Pan-African society and could be seen to reflect a transnational way of 'belonging' as well as 'being' (Levitt and Schiller, 2004: 1010-1011).

For Badara and Papa, who described their interests as 'sport' and 'music', socialising at the weekends involves frequenting Afro-Caribbean nightclubs, where dancehall music and American hip-hop intermingle. When asked if he knew other people from the West African diaspora, unlike Malick who expressed a conscious decision to 'stay away from' such 'communities', both Badara and Papa stated that they attended 'African parties', every few months:

> There are like Nigerians and Ghanaians and that and at the end of the day we're all Africans so yeah...So when we go to like for example African parties in general, it feels like home. It's not that different to be honest...

For Badara, socialising occurred through friendship groups made through work and his local football team, which he had joined upon first arriving in London four years ago. He stated that when he first arrived he "spoke no English"... "We used to go out...Even though I couldn't answer them, you know what I mean, sometimes they'd talk to me, I'd check on my phone trying to translate..." Since then, however, he stated he feels 'at ease' communicating and on occasion he used slang such as 'touche' to describe women at clubs which he described as "a London word".

This contextualised and situated understanding of the practices, preferences and habits of each respondent illustrates a 'hybrid', 'creolised' (Gilroy, 1994), a 'multilocal' (Beck, 2000), multi-dimensional belonging' (Georgiou, 2010) and where the use of ICTs, such as the mobile phone to 'attempt to translate', listen to music or organise a night out, football match or respond to a message on Viber, FaceTime or WhatsApp from family constituted part of a daily flow of activities.

All of the respondents found that their Senegalese identity was simply 'part of who they were', an indissoluble aspect of their identity...For Malick, "the language, the culture. I think all of that, you'll always keep it, you can't just say ok I'll avoid this or that. Um...Even if I'm living here, in Europe, I still have that connection". As Fatou said "I do feel like this I guess this

American identity is not just something I can just delete because I did live in the States for like...I lived in Senegal for the longest but I did live in DC".

This 'hybrid' identity was reflected in the way she described that she felt she should "watch more Senegalese TV at home", even if she would have preferred to watch something else:

> I feel like I should just stay in touch. It's like, it's not a matter of like, watching TV. I'm not a TV watcher at all. So, yeah, like also being home, when everybody's watching it, you kind of have to watch it, you can't just switch to MTV...That's not ok.

For all of the respondents, the idea of moving again was a possibility:

> When I first arrived, I was definitely um, saying I am going to go back but the more I stay here the more it's reducing and the more I'm thinking, might move somewhere else, to another country or might stay here. (Bakary)

> Maybe I'll go to America... I have friends who live there. They always tell me about the life there, how good it is. (Badara)

> Johannesburg maybe? Maybe Johannesburg...I'm looking for an opportunity there And the US – I would love to work there in a few years...Maybe in five years' time. Um...Singapore maybe...I don't know.. because the ways of working from one place to another are really different and the concept of work is totally different, so that's something I'm interested in...The experience... (Malick)

These aspirations and outlooks, informed by the 'borderless' social imaginations in the fluid ethnoscape (Appadurai, 1991), are illustrative of the distinctive profile of the migrant identified by Diminescu as characterised by "multi-belonging (to territories and networks), hybermobility and flexibility in the labour market" (2008: 569).

Moreover, as Malick's recounting of his job-search illustrates being 'grounded' in one's local community through his membership of a local athletics club, and seeking to work and settle in another country may be mutually constitutive for the middle-class migrant... "It's quite interesting because I was just writing to my, right now...To my athletics coach who is actually a SAP head-hunter because I'm looking for a job experience with SAP in South Africa."

Critical self-engagement; additive inclusion

An essential component of the transnational social field and of cosmopolitanism, is what Ulrich Beck terms 'additive inclusion', a way of 'being' in the transnational social field that reflects the 'politically ambivalent', 'reflexive' nature of modern subject (qtd in Nedelcu, 2012: 1343). As he states, "the increasing globalisation of biographies and life trajectories relate not just to any kind of multiple location but to multilocations, crossing the borders of separate worlds and whose oppositions must or may lodge in a single life" (Beck, 2000: 75). Yet, central to this 'multilocal' way of being and belonging, is a 'critical self engagement', (Georgiou, 2010: 31) arising from exposure to and co-existence of multiple and sometimes, conflicting values and norms. It is the ability to re-align these on a daily basis that helps to constitute the transnational social habitus.

All the respondents reflected on how differently they 'considered' or 'experienced' home after time spent abroad. When asked about when he might consider settling back in Senegal, Bakary responded:

> You know, obviously Senegal has got its good but it's got it's bad as well. You know, it's just like any country. So, the more I stay here, the more I discover new things, some good, some bad which I'm thinking 'oh well, the way we do it there was actually quite bad'.

Likewise, for Khadijah, she commented that although she had been given the moniker 'toubab' or 'foreigner' in Wolof by her family before she moved abroad due to her distinct, nonconformist political values since moving away this 'difference' was accentuated...

> Before I left, they called me 'toubab' but when I came back…You will never hear Khadijah at home…Toubab, toubab, toubab and it's just…. It's just doing things as they should be..! I'm not saying that I'm perfect but it is considered 'foreign' because I say what I think…I think it's not fair.

Although admitting later that it didn't bother her, she also remarked that those in the diaspora who return are almost always subject to some 'othering':

> When you spend some time abroad and come back they feel like, they are the ones…They are entitled to test you, test your 'Senegality' and anything you do, they say 'oh, that's not right…' or 'toubab' or this kind of thing….there is a kind of 'complex' of inferiority that should not exist. Because, I'm Senegalese in the first place. It's not the fact that I spent like time away. You know, there is an expression in Wolof…They say when you take a wood and put it in the water, it will never become a crocodile…

Fatou also noted that, in particular, her distinct mixing of English, French and Wolof would lead to people assuming that she was not Senegalese – "I do get offended though like when people assume that I'm not from there."

Therefore, despite myriad ways of keeping in touch and up-to-date with 'home', the effect of physical 'distance' on relationships and identity was felt and reflected upon. Nonetheless, the Senegalese identity of each of the respondents was not something that was felt to be subject to dilution in any way. For Khadijah for example, the definition of 'Senegalese' was one of her own making:

> So this is one thing, I will not let anyone decide what makes me Senegalese or not. Even, for me, to come and say 'this is what makes me Senegalese'…I don't think this kind of thing should exist…

For Bakary, 'feeling Senegalese' was equated with 'knowing how to get around':

> The language, the understanding of the social, cultural norms, you know…The social life, the geography, the, you know where you're going, you know what car, what bus to take, public transport in general. Yeah, it's just the general knowledge of the country, how it works, that makes me Senegalese I think.

Bakary's description of his Senegalese identity was related in a way that reflects the components of ontological security required for a feeling of 'at-homeness'; a familiarity and 'pre-cognitive' know-how of the topography, the geography of the places one is in, analogous to the phenomenology of use of ICTs to negotiate and construct a cosmopolitan identity in the transnational social field.

CONCLUSION

The claim that "information and communication technologies make the project of creating ontological security problematic because they disengage the location of action and meaning from experience" (Morley et al, 2003: 17) may be disputed if we consider new ways of conceiving place-making as a way of 'knowing' and feeling 'at ease' in pluralised media and virtual settings (Moores, 2012: 13, 52) including through the use of ICTs within space. Moving away from abstract considerations of 'space' to space as it is 'experienced' or 'as we act in it', described by Heidegger as spatiality (Light, 2009: 195) allow us to review and

reimagine how ontological security is achieved, despite a mobile lifestyle characterised by the experience of perpetual proximity to physically distant others.

Ontological security or "confidence of continuity of one's self-identity and the constancy of their social and material environments" (Giddens, 1990: 92) is afforded, in part by ICTs because they constitute environments through which a feeling of 'at-homeness' is attained. Furthermore, through the meanings attached to them (Rossi, 2007), they offer ways of being and belonging (Levitt and Schiller, 2004). Therefore, although the media settings and the physical locales which ground us may be multiple, shifting and pluralised (Moores, 2012: 13) it is still through the routinised activities, habits and relational activities that occur through and within them that they provide ontological security and allow for the meaningful maintenance of relationships 'at a distance'.

The practices, uses and feelings described by the respondents interviewed for this study illustrated how virtual media settings, whether the routine checking of a website, watching TV shows streamed online or visiting friends' social network pages, provide a sense of reliability, continuity and constancy, a way to exercise control and privacy and a sense of familiarity through routine actions. Hence, it is through routine, habits associated with certain places and things, the 'embodied memory' that nourish one's social habitus, and the transnational interactions and social networks that are sustained through ICTs which help stitch together otherwise fractured and temporal spatial frames.

If places are constituted through routine and the comforts of ease and familiarity, deployed through embedded, embodied knowledge then just as the routine and comfort of time space-paths can be achieved in either natural or built environments (Dupuis and Thorns, 1998: 27-29), this routine and comfort can be achieved in virtual environments through the use of ICTs. These virtual environments co-exist with other environments as it is this co-existence which defines the new, diverse and multidimensional spatial context in which feelings of 'at-homeness' and ontological security are sought. For the transnational migrant they are not only a way of 'connecting' with the ancestral homeland, however, or with the wider diaspora, but a way to constitute a particularly cosmopolitan identity or a 'transnational social habitus'; a fluid, deterritorialised identity that mirrors the shifting physical and media landscapes on and through which they are formed.

This study did not comment on the wider technological and economic processes in which the consumption and practices of ICTs occur and therefore did not consider the dynamics of power which are upheld and reproduced by the practices observed through the empirical

analysis. Future studies may consider how practices are subject to social differentiation (Warde, 2005), particularly due to unequal access to media resources, depending on class and how this may explain and reproduce particular practices.

Finally, if as Diminescu states, "the migrant seems to embody the ideal-type of the management of a world in motion" (2008: 568), then practice-oriented studies of the phenomenology of place-making in virtual and media settings may help shed light on how other groups, including non-migrants, achieve a sense of ontological security in their everyday lives through the use of ICTs.

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APPENDIX 1

Participant profiles: One-to-one, in-depth, semi-structured interviews

Name in Report	Age	Occupation	Nationality	Gender
Malick	26	Sales and Marketing Manager	Senegalese/French	Male
Badara	23	Sales Assistant	Senegalese	Male
Papa	21	Student	Senegalese	Male
Khadijah	25	Student/PHD Researcher	Senegalese	Female

Bakary	31	IT Project Manager	Senegalese/British	Male
Fatou	22	Student	Senegalese/French	Female

APPENDIX 2

Interview Guide

Open questions

- How do you feel about living in London?
  - What's it like?
  - How did you imagine it before you came?
  - Was it different than you expected?
- What's your life like here?
- What are your hobbies? Who do you socialise with?
- What are your plans for the future?
- Do you miss home? How do you maintain that connection with home?
  - Do they feel more 'connected'/more in touch/more disconnected at certain times? (i.e Ramadan?)
- Do you have family in other parts of the world?
- What words or phrases come to mind when you think of Senegal, of home?
- What do you use the internet for?
  - How important is it to you?

More closed questions

- How long have you lived in London?
- Do you watch Senegalese TV?
- Do you have a smartphone? What do you use it for?
- Do you prefer to use some mediums (like a laptop or mobile phone) for some types of communication?
- How often do you spend online a day?
- Do you use some mediums more than others – or does it depend on the family member?
- Does cost matter?
- Do family and friends expect you to be in touch more frequently because you have access to all these devices?
- Do you feel a lot of obligations (e.g to send remittances etc.?)
- Do you know other Senegalese in London?
- Do you ever go to 'Senegalese/West African' events in London?
- What motivated you to come? Who did you know beforehand?
- How often do you visit Senegal?
  - What's it like when you go back? How do you feel?
  - Is it different/same?

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