

Department of Social Research
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THE MAKINGS OF MIGRANT SUBJECTIVITIES

**Time and intersectionality in the transnational everyday
lives of Latin American women in Barcelona**

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ACADEMIC DISSERTATION

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Helsinki, May 2016.

ABSTRACT

This study creates knowledge collaboratively with Latin American migrant women on their everyday lives in Barcelona and studies their subjectivities as transnational migrants. Subjectivity is understood as formed and exercised in relation to individual life course, generational attachments and duties and the larger fabric of intersecting structural hierarchies in a certain time-space context. The relationship between structures and subjects has been important in migration theorising and it is also central for social work research. Yet migrants are often granted positions not connected with full subjectivity.

Latin American women represent an emblematic group in contemporary ‘South’ to ‘North’ labour migration. The Spanish ‘immigration boom’ from the 1990s up to the time of the economic crisis has also shown a high propensity of women migrants from this region. Employed largely in the service sector, Latin American women have been pioneers in migratory chains and heads of transnational households. While it is important to recognise women migrants as economically active workers and breadwinners, paying attention only to the work that migrants do excludes a vast diversity of desires and trajectories.

The empirical phase of the research was conducted in Barcelona between March and May 2012 in a collaborative process with fifteen participants from nine different Latin American and Caribbean countries. The participants formed a varied group in terms of age, educational background, work experience, the duration of their migration, and their migration status situation. The empirical method consisted of two loosely-structured thematic interviews with each participant, complemented by the participative use of creative research methods which offered the participants the possibility to individually explore the research topics through different creative means.

The ontological and epistemological framework draws from critical realism and postcolonial feminism. Through analytical readings based on abduction and retroduction, the empirical results are connected with relevant structural, contextual and discursive factors. The main theoretical tools and conceptual discussions are found in: 1) migration theorising, and specifically transnational migration research, 2) the notion of time and temporality in migration, 3) an intersectional approach on migration. The experiences and consequences of migration and migration status are analysed inside intersecting social hierarchies, namely the ones referring to country or region of origin, ethnic origin, social class, gender and life course.

The research questions are: 1) what are the consequences of migration, and migration status and irregularity, to the everyday movement and time control of the participants? 2) What types of migratory processes are present in the participants’ accounts and how does migration connect with life course? 3) How do the participants make reference to the general social imaginary of the ‘migrant’? 4) How do the participants negotiate belonging in their transnational everyday lives? As a result, three viewpoints to subjectivity become of interest: 1) time-space autonomy (in terms of freedom of movement, and time predictability and control), 2) reconciling migration (with respect to encountered realities, one’s life course and the

general social imaginary of the ‘migrant’), 3) everyday negotiations and practices of belonging in transnational migration.

The results shed light to the ways in which ‘time-space autonomy’, ‘migrancy’ and ‘belonging’ are conditioned and yet negotiable. Irregular migration status often represented restricted movement in the city, insecurity, fear and lack of information. Migration regulations were linked with time experiences of suspension, uncontrollability and ‘liminality’. Yet the participants were able to navigate in regulations and bureaucracy and strive for different goals. Migration may also represent an increase in time-space autonomy, even in a situation of migration status irregularity, as the consequences of migration status for time-space autonomy are relational, contextual and intersectional. The (in)visibility of certain intersectional locations is turned into (in)visibility of migrancy. While acknowledged in the accounts, (in)visibility was not taken as a given but also acted upon and negotiated.

The migratory processes present in the accounts were named ‘target migration’, ‘citizenship path’ and ‘reboot migration’. At an everyday level, however, the idea of detached, planned and informed migration does not hold, but risk-taking, surprises and uncertainty prevail. ‘Liminality’ and unpredictability may also be desired consequences of migration. This addresses the complex intersectional contexts of privilege and disadvantage in which people move. It is also in connection with the fact that migration does not occur outside or irrespective of a person’s life course. Migration halted, intensified and changed different phases in life course. With regard to the general social imaginary of the ‘migrant’, the participants employed the following negotiation practices: 1) stepping aside, 2) making internal and external differentiations, 3) producing variety. All of these practices address the contents and limited nature of the imaginary of the ‘migrant’.

Belonging was also connected with (in)visibility, in terms of looking and sounding like one belongs. Citizenship or migration status regularity were not straightforwardly relevant or sufficient for belonging. Postcolonial context facilitated naturalisation and created affinities but also represented tensions. Language and accent became important in this respect. The results point to a nexus between origin, language and belonging and emphasise the intersectional and contextual nature of belonging. The future shadowed by the economic crisis was not perceived as overly threatening. Return, as such, was hardly regarded as an “easy solution”. These findings challenge interpretations in which economic downturn is automatically considered to lead to return migration in high numbers, and question the persistent image of the ‘economic migrant’ reflected in them.

The quantity as well as the quality of transnational contacts varied, due, for instance, to economic resources. This influenced the ways in which transnational affective ties and support were lived. Often neglected in previous research, women’s role as daughters was salient in the accounts. The results on ‘transnational daughterhood’ highlight the multiple intergenerational caring roles of migrant women and stress the gendered nature of transnational migration. Belonging in migration has a strong temporal dimension, as ‘migrancy’ seemed to be synonymous with not belonging ‘here’ yet nor ‘there’ anymore. Yet the accounts were not only of loss and yearning,

but importantly also of adaptation, reformulation and creation of new rhythms and “ways to be”.

Keywords: transnational migration, Latin American women migrants, Spain’s immigration boom, subjectivity, intersectionality, time, (in)visibility, critical realism, postcolonial feminism, creative research methods, collaborative research methods, multi-language research.

TIIVISTELMÄ

Latinalaisamerikkalaisia naisia voidaan pitää keskeisenä ryhmänä tämän päivän kansainvälisessä siirtolaisuudessa. Heidän osuutensa on ollut merkittävä etenkin Espanjaan suuntautuneessa, 1990-luvulta lähtien viimeaikaiseen talouskriisiin saakka voimakkaasti kasvaneessa muuttoliikkeessä. Espanjassa he ovat työllistyneet erityisesti palvelualoilla. Niin yleisessä keskustelussa kuin tutkimuksessakin on tärkeä yhä nostaa esille naisten aktiivista työperäistä muuttoliikettä. Ymmärrys siirtolaisista yksipuolisesti työläisinä kuitenkin ruokkii kapeaa kuvaa siirtolaisuudesta ilmiönä ja inhimillisenä kokemuksena.

Tämä tutkimus tarkastelee latinalaisamerikkalaisten naisten arkielämää Barcelonassa sekä heidän subjektiviteettiaan transnationaaleina siirtolaisina. Kiinnostus kohdistuu erityisesti siirtolaisuusstatuksen ja sen puutteen seurauksiin muiden yhteiskunnallisten sijaintien intersektionaalisissa risteymissä, siirtolaisuuden ja elämäntulon välisiin kytköksiin sekä kuulumisen mahdollisuuksiin ja rajoihin.

Tutkimuksen empiriinen aineisto on muodostunut Barcelonassa maaliskokuussa 2012 vuorovaikutuksellisessa prosessissa viidentoista, yhdeksästä eri Latinalaisen Amerikan maasta muuttaneen naisen kanssa. Tutkimukseen osallistujien ikä, siirtolaisuuden kesto, koulutustausta, työkokemus sekä siirtolaisuusstatus vaihtelivat. Aineistonkeruumetodina on käytetty temaattista yksilöhaastattelua, jota on täydennetty luovilla ja osallistavilla tutkimusmenetelmillä. Jokaista osallistujaa on haastateltu keskimäärin kaksi kertaa. Luovien tutkimusmenetelmien avulla osallistajat työstivät tutkimuksen teemoja valitsemansa ilmaisutavan, kuten valokuvauksen tai luovan kirjoittamisen kautta.

Tutkimuksen ontologinen ja epistemologinen kehikko ammentaa kriittisestä realismista ja postkoloniaalista feminismistä. Abduktioon ja retroduktioon pohjaavien analyttisten luentojen avulla empiiriset tulokset ja tutkimukselle keskeiset rakenteelliset, kontekstuaaliset ja diskursiiviset tekijät asettuvat keskenään vuoropuheluun. Tutkimuksen teoreettiset ja käsitteelliset työvälineet juontuvat: 1) siirtolaisuusteorioista, erityisesti transnationaalista siirtolaisuuden tutkimuksesta, 2) ajan ja ajallisuuden tarkastelusta siirtolaisuudessa, 3) intersektionaalisesta lähestymistavasta siirtolaisuuteen. Intersektionaalisen lähestymistavan puitteissa kiinnostus kohdistuu lähtömaahan ja -alueeseen, etniseen alkuperään, sosiaaliluokkaan, sukupuoleen sekä ikään ja elämäntulkuun kytkeytyvien sosiaalisten hierarkioiden intersektioihin.

Tutkimuskysymykset ovat seuraavat: 1) Minkälaisia seurauksia siirtolaisuudesta ja siirtolaisuusstatuksesta tai sen puutteesta on arkipäivän liikkumiselle ja ajan hallinnalle? 2) Minkälaisia siirtolaisuuden prosesseja aineistossa on ja kuinka siirtolaisuus linkittyy elämäntulkuun? 3) Kuinka osallistajat suhteuttavat siirtolaisuutensa yleiseen käsitykseen 'siirtolaisesta'? 4) Kuinka osallistajat neuvottelevat kuulumisesta transnationaalissa arjessaan?

Tutkimuksen tulokset kirkastavat ymmärrystä siitä, millä tavoin 'ajan ja paikan autonomia' (eli liikkumisen vapaus ja ajan hallinta), 'siirtolaisuus' (kokemuksena ja suhteessa omaan elämäntulkuun sekä yleiseen kuvaan ja käsitykseen 'siirtolaisesta')

ja ‘kuuluminen’ ovat ehdollistettuja ja kuitenkin neuvoteltavissa. Epävirallinen siirtolaisuusstatus johti usein rajoitettuun liikkumiseen kaupungissa, epävarmuuteen, pelkoon ja tiedon puutteeseen. Siirtolaisuuteen liittyvä byrokrania yhdistyi kokemuksiin ajan pysähtymisestä ja hallitsemattomuudesta sekä ‘liminaalisuudesta’. Osallistajat kuitenkin löysivät tapoja luovia byrokranian ja rajoitusten keskellä saavuttaakseen omia tavoitteitaan.

Virallisen siirtolaisuusstatuksen puuttuessaakin siirtolaisuus voi tarkoittaa myös ajan ja paikan autonomian voimistumista. Siirtolaisuusstatuksen seuraukset ajan ja paikan autonomialle ovat relationaalisia, kontekstisidonnaisia ja intersektionaalisia. Intersektionaalisten sijaintien näkyvyys/näkymättömyys muuttuu siirtolaisuuden näkyvyydeksi/näkymättömyydeksi. Aineistossa tunnustettiin näkyvyyden merkitys, mutta näkyvyyttä/näkymättömyyttä ei otettu annettuna.

Taloudellisia tekijöitä ja yksilön rationaalista päätöksentekoa painottavien siirtolaisuusteorioiden hellimä ajatus vapaasta, suunnitellusta ja informoidusta päätöksenteosta siirtolaisuudessa ei toteutunut arjen tasolla, sillä siirtolaisuuteen liittyy riskinottoa ja epävarmuutta. ‘Liminaalisuus’ ja ennustamattomuus voivat olla myös siirtolaisuuteen yhdistettyjä tavoitteita. Tämä liittyy myös siirtolaisuuden ja elämänculun välisiin kytköksiin. Siirtolaisuus pidätti, voimisti ja muutti elämänculun eri vaiheita. Yleisesti vallitseva käsitys ja kuva ‘siirtolaisesta’ puhutti osallistujia ja aineistossa oli löydettävissä kolme erilaista neuvottelukäytäntöä suhteessa siihen. Kaikki kolme neuvottelukäytäntöä valottivat osaltaan vallitsevan ‘siirtolaisen’ kuvan sisältöä sekä sen kapeutta.

Kuulumisen kokemukset linkittyivät niin ikään näkyvyyteen/näkymättömyyteen. Postkoloniaali konteksti toi helpotuksia esimerkiksi kansalaisuuden hakemiseen sekä loi yhteyksiä ja yhteneväisyyksiä, mutta myös jännitteitä. Tuloksissa korostuu alkuperän, kielen (ja aksentin) ja kuulumisen välinen yhteys sekä kuulumisen intersektionaalinen ja kontekstispesifi luonne. Osallistajat eivät nähneet talouskriisin varjostamaa tulevaisuutta pelkästään synkkänä. Toisaalta paluusta ei ollut “helpoksi pakotieksi” talouskriisin tilanteessa. Tulokset haastavat ja täydentävät tulkintoja, joiden mukaan taloudellinen taantuma automaattisesti johtaisi siirtolaisten paluun, ja kyseenalaistavat osaltaan näihin tulkintoihin sisäänkirjoitettua taloudellisten tekijöiden ylivaltaa siirtolaisuuden tarkastelussa.

Transnationaalien yhteydenpidon muodot ja määrä sekä laatu vaihtelivat, muun muassa sosioekonomisesta asemasta johtuen. Tällä oli vaikutuksensa kuulumiseen sosiaalisen tuen ja vastuun näkökulmasta. Naisten sukupolvien välinen hoivavastuu, erityisesti naisten hoivarooli tyttärinä, nousi esiin keskeisenä ulottuvuutena transnationaalista arkea ja kuulumisen mahdollisuuksia. Kuulumisen neuvottelut ulottuivat Barcelonan lisäksi myös lähtömaihin. Tuloksissa välittyy menetyksen ja kaipuun lisäksi myös aktiivinen sopeutuminen, rutiinien muokkaaminen sekä uusien rytmien ja rutiinien luominen.

Avainsanat: transnationaali siirtolaisuus, Latinalaisamerikkalaiset siirtolaisnaiset, Espanjaan suuntautuva siirtolaisuus, subjektiviteetti, intersektionaalisuus, aika, näkyvyys/näkymättömyys, kriittinen realismi, postkoloniaali feminismi, luovat tutkimusmenetelmät, osallistavat tutkimusmenetelmät, monikielinen tutkimus.

1 INTRODUCTION

I embarked on this study with a rather vague as well as immense question in mind: what is it like to live as a Latin American migrant woman in Barcelona in the spring of 2012? Although extensive and imprecise, this question already included many seeds of a more detailed research interest, such as a specific time-space context of migration, an interest in everyday life, an emphasis on the point of view of migrants themselves and a postcolonial perspective on cross-border migration. The overall research task throughout the study has been to create knowledge collaboratively with Latin American migrant women concerning their everyday lives in Barcelona and to study their subjectivities as transnational migrants.

Latin American women represent an emblematic group in contemporary ‘South’ to ‘North’ labour migration. The Spanish ‘immigration boom’ from the 1990s up to the time of the economic crisis, and commonly addressed inside the rubric of ‘labour or economic migration’, has also shown a high propensity of women migrants from the Latin American and Caribbean region (Gil Araujo & González-Fernández 2014; Oso Casas 2010). Employed largely in the service sector, Latin American women have been pioneers in migration chains and heads of transnational households. While it is important to recognise migrant women as economically active workers and breadwinners, paying attention only to the work that migrant women (and men) do, however, excludes a vast range of desires, experiences and trajectories (also Agustín 2003a, 391).

I place this study within the body of research on migration with an explicit aim to understand and analyse the lived experiences of migration (e.g. Agustín 2007a; Bastia 2006; van Liempt & Doomernik 2006; Phizacklea 2003; Hochschild 2002; Anderson 2000; Ariza 2000; Hondagneu-Sotelo & Avila 1997). Yet the subject of study is not solely the experiences of the research participants as such but equally so what these can tell more generally about our contemporary societies. As a social work study, this research concentrates on the experiences of people who live with the consequences of social systems and policies at an everyday level. Since I focus on the personal experiences and interpretations of the participants, the study reflects their personal realities, but at the same time my interest lies in the logics behind different administrative and control mechanisms as well as in the conceptual discussions around migration present in these realities.

Migrants are often granted positions which are not connected with full subjectivity (Biglia 2013, 752). I understand subjectivity here as formed and exercised in relation to individual life course, generational attachments and duties and the larger fabric of intersecting structural hierarchies in a certain time-space context. The relationship between structures and subjects, i.e. knowing, feeling and reflecting actors, has been

important in migration theorising (Bakewell 2010). It is also central to social work research.

The empirical phase of this study was conducted in Barcelona between March and May 2012 in a collaborative process with fifteen participants from nine Latin American and Caribbean countries. The empirical method consisted of two loosely-structured thematic interviews with each participant, complemented by the participative use of creative research methods which offered the participants the possibility to individually explore the research topics through different creative means, such as photography, writing or drawing. The results of the creative work were not to be analysed as such, but the visual and other creative methods were employed as supportive methodological tools for conversational thematic interviews.

The creative component aimed to deepen the reflective work over the issues addressed, enrich the interview meetings as well as the final research report and enhance sensitivity and flexibility in the participation (Prosser & Loxley 2008; Weber 2008; Hurworth 2003; Harper 2002). All the images, photographs and song or poem quotations presented in the following pages of the research form part of the results of the creative work done by the research participants. Some examples of the creative work are accompanied with a corresponding quote from the interviews commenting the creative work in question, and others are employed as more generally illustrative points referring to the theme discussed in the text.

My ontological and epistemological framework draws from critical realism and postcolonial feminism. Through analytical readings based on abduction and retroduction, I seek to connect the results of the interview transcriptions' empirical readings with relevant structural, contextual and discursive factors. The main theoretical tools of the research and the conceptual discussions in which I wish to take part are found in: 1) migration theorising and specifically transnational migration research, 2) the notion of time and temporality in migration, 3) an intersectional approach on migration and the consequences of migration status and irregularity.

Through an overview on some central developments in migration theorising I draw a picture which leads well beyond the 'push and pull' standards of economic migration theories and promotes a more nuanced understanding of the connections, motivations and consequences of migration (Williams & Graham 2014, 3). My research interest lies in important part on the personal, emotional and affective dimensions of transnational migration instead of concentrating on the calculable quantities and forms of activities and practices. I position myself inside a relatively recent tradition in transnational migration research, interested in imaginations, intentions, affections and emotions involved in transnational engagement and in the possibilities and negotiations of belonging (Takeda 2012; Brown 2011; Boccagni 2010; Ryan 2008;

Levitt et al. 2003, 571). I also posit my approach on the “mundane” and “subtle” features present in transnational everyday life, in order to balance the discussion on transnational (irregular) migration, which often tends to focus on the “extreme” (Cox & Geisen 2014, 156; Brown 2011, 231; Bakewell 2008; also Brekhus 1998, 42).

In the analyses of migration, the spatial generally takes over the temporal, and time remains neglected and under-theorised in relation to migration (Griffiths 2014; Griffiths et al. 2013; Bastia & McGarth 2011; King et al. 2006). In this research, I consider how time is understood, discussed and negotiated in the context of migration in the daily experiences of the participants, how time functions as a control mechanism, and what type of time tensions, resistance and creativity is present in the participants’ accounts. I employ three interlinked dimensions of temporality in migration. The first dimension concerns a historical consciousness, in terms of a postcolonial perspective on the migration of the participants. The second dimension of temporality concentrates on the concrete ways in which migration regulations and bureaucracy produce and affect time and space. The third dimension refers to emotions and affections, and is connected with life course as the passage of time marked both personally and collectively.

I study the “migration experience” as a whole instead of concentrating solely on one or some aspects of it, such as work or transnational family relations. While arguably not unproblematic for a single research, this broad approach challenges the narrow view of migrants as ‘migrant workers’ (Griffiths et al. 2013). It is also in line with my methodological premise of giving the participants the possibility to define for themselves which aspects of migration they considered important to talk about. The study of migration often concentrates on young adults in the productive and reproductive stages of their life courses (Heikkinen & Lumme-Sandt 2013, 199; King et al. 2006, 240). It is therefore also important to nuance this view by paying attention to the migration and transnational experiences of people in other moments of their lives, such as elderly migrants.

I analyse the everyday experiences of migration and migration status and irregularity inside intersecting social hierarchies, namely the ones referring to country or region of origin, ethnic origin, social class, gender and life course. I start from the understanding that there are forces involved in different hierarchical structures in society, which influence situations and experiences in a certain way in a certain historical and geopolitical context (Martinez Dy et al. 2014; Danermark 2008). These influences may be mutually enforcing as well as contradictory (Anthias 2008, 16). An intersectional reading reveals the ways in which migrants’ different locations inside the hierarchical structures around ethnic origin, social class, regional and national origin, gender and life course are enmeshed in a web of acceptance and rejection. The consequences of these hierarchical locations are discussed from the point of view of (in)visibility. I explore empirically the link between social

(in)visibility and migration through studying the ways in which the consequences of migration status for time-space autonomy and belonging became related to (in)visibility.

In current social work research, the concept of migration is not widely explored and the term is often employed without clarifying its meaning or considering migrations' intersections with social dimensions such as ethnic origin, gender, social class and age (Cox & Geisen 2014, 160). In public debates, migrants are generally constructed as poor and desperate in the context of economically, socially and historically shaped inequalities (Leinonen 2012; Andrijasevic & Anderson 2009, 363). In this research, I have wanted to consider the notions of 'migration' and 'migrant' starting from the experiences and accounts of the research participants. The 'migrant' is tackled as a shifting, moral as well as a formal category in the intersections of social hierarchies.

Drawing from the above premises, I aim to answer the following research questions: 1) what are the consequences of migration, and migration status and irregularity, to the everyday movement and time control of the participants? 2) What types of migratory processes are present in the participants' accounts and how does migration connect with life course? 3) How do the participants make reference to the general social imaginary of the 'migrant'? 4) How do the participants negotiate belonging in their transnational everyday lives? As a result, three viewpoints to subjectivity become of interest: 1) time-space autonomy, in terms of freedom of movement and time predictability, 2) reconciling migration, with respect to encountered realities, one's life course and the general social imaginary of the 'migrant', 3) everyday negotiations and practices of belonging in transnational migration.

As an academic study, the primordial aim of this research is the analysis and development of conceptual understanding of its interest matter through a detailed and reflective account of the process involved. At the same time, the research wishes to address and inform policy and services designed to affect the lives of migrants. The initial motivation for this research has come from a discrepancy I recognised between official understandings concerning the issue of (irregular) transnational migration (of women) and the experiences I have had in collaborating with Latin American migrant women throughout my previous academic and NGO work involvement with the issue. One aim has been to challenge the premises of the hegemonic 'Northern' endeavours to "help and save" migrant women arriving from regions considered the 'Third World' and generally conceived of as 'victims' (Jönsson 2014; Agustín 2003a, 378).

In addition, the study contributes to methodological discussions on collaborative and creative social research methods which might as such offer inspiration also to social work practices. I wish to make explicit the dynamic relationship between the researcher and the participants engaged in a mutual learning process and the

production of new tools for understanding (Bilger & van Liempt 2009b, 121; Dahinden & Efiouyi-Mäder 2009, 115; Wahab 2004; 2003). I also discuss ethical aspects of research done in cultural and linguistic contexts other than my own, which include questions of access and anonymity, debates on insider and outsider positions, and ethics in multi-language research.

While a growing amount of empirical research is being published concerning the concrete realities of transnational migration, this research is often ignored in policy making or the media when the topic of migration is tackled. Migration research itself is often policy-driven, meaning that it takes its origin in policy concerns and posits categories, concepts and priorities of policymakers at the core of the research design (Faist et al. 2013, 180; Bilger & van Liempt 2009a, 2; Bakewell 2008; Castles 2008). This draws a picture of the phenomenon in which the multiplicity and complexity of migration and the everyday realities of migrants remain obscured.

In social work research there has been a more general discussion on whether it as a discipline has been able, or even willing, to bring people together, or whether it is used as a way of identifying groups in potentially vulnerable situations as “problem” populations, thus strengthening the divides between ‘us’ and ‘them’ through discourses of the ‘irremediable other’, ‘other as marginal’ and ‘other as outsider’ (Chambon 2013, 123–124). A dialogical stance of “not knowing” and mutual learning is put forward here instead (ibid., 125). While this has to do with acknowledging difference and not knowing, it also has to do with a common ground based on shared humanity and a capacity for critical awareness and self-reflectivity. In addition, I wish to gear attention beyond individual encounters and personal interpretations and experiences towards the structural, contextual and discursive factors surrounding and shaping them.

This study’s concrete point of reference is Barcelona as a European host society of transnational immigration from the Latin American region. In the general understanding and media coverage on border-crossing migration to the ‘North’, specifically migrants with an irregular migration status are often depicted either as suspicious criminals or as helpless and ignorant victims. At another extreme, they may be portrayed as bold-hearted political actors who lead the battles of contemporary social movements advocating for different social and minority rights for instance as *sans papiers* activists. While any of these might be accurate in certain instances, the discussion nevertheless promotes an idea of contemporary migration as an exceptional and extreme experience and situation, something downright problematic and fundamentally difficult, if not utterly impossible, for the majority in the (European) host societies to relate to and understand. This is what this research essentially wishes to challenge.

In the following pages, I embark on these discussions in chapter 2, by presenting the ontological and epistemological underpinnings of the study, after which I discuss the conceptual space of my approach. In chapter 3, I introduce the concrete context of the research. In chapter 4, I present the conducting of the empirical phase of the research and the empirical data that resulted from this, consider the ethics of my research approach and discuss the analysis. The chapters from 5 to 7 are result chapters. In chapter 5, I consider different aspects of time-space autonomy present in the participants' accounts by discussing movement in the city and in the world and the temporal consequences of, and time negotiations with, migration regulations and bureaucracy.

In chapter 6, I discuss what I have named 'reconciling migration'. Firstly, I look at the migratory processes present in the accounts of the participants and the ways the participants sought balance between their initial plans for migration and the encountered realities. Secondly, I consider the linkages between migration and life course and discuss the "rewards" of migration. Thirdly, I analyse the practices of negotiating with the social imaginary of the 'migrant' present in the participants' accounts. In chapter 7, I discuss the results on negotiations of belonging, firstly by looking at the connections between migration status and citizenship and belonging. Secondly, I turn to the postcolonial context of the participants' migration and its connections with belonging. Thirdly, I deal with the consequences of the economic crisis on the possibilities and senses of belonging. Lastly, I tackle belonging in the context of the everyday transnational practices of the participants by focusing on rhythms, connections and emotions. In the concluding chapter 8, I summarise and discuss the central results of the research.

2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK OF THE RESEARCH

2.1 Ontological and epistemological framework: critical realism and postcolonial feminism

For my ontological (referring to assumptions about the nature of reality) and epistemological (addressing questions about how to obtain meaningful knowledge about reality) framework, I draw from critical realist approaches in social research (Danermark et al. 2002; Sayer 2000; 1992; Bhaskar 1998; 1986; 1979) and realist or postpositivist approaches in postcolonial identity and gender research (Moya 2000; 1997; Mohanty 2000; 1993). In this subchapter, I introduce basic ideas in both critical realism and postcolonial feminism, and consider the ways they complement each other in the research approach at hand.

In migration research (e.g. Iosifides 2011; Bakewell 2010; Hedberg 2004), identity research (e.g. Martinez Dy et al. 2014; Sánchez 2006) and social work research (e.g. Craig & Bigby 2015; Pekkarinen & Tapola-Haapala 2011; Houston 2010; 2001), critical realism has been introduced as a pathway for integrating the powers and influences of structures and cultural forms with those of the individual actors and for putting the relational and contextual nature of societal phenomena into the research focus. In the philosophy of science, critical realism finds its place in the realist paradigm which argues for the independence between human mind and cognition and the surrounding material world (Bhaskar 1986, 5). According to critical realism, there exists a reality outside our conceptions of it, while it is considered possible to develop our knowledge of the underlying mechanisms or forces at work and influencing the issue under study.

Critical realism is based on the ontology of ‘transcendental realism’ which sees the world as *real* and as structured by relations and considers knowledge as mediated by concepts and practices (Bhaskar 1998, 19). This is different from ‘empirical realism’ or ‘empiricism’ which would view the empirical world as true (Bhaskar 1998, 20), and it is also in opposition to a purely interpretive framework in which a researcher would seek to “authentically” reproduce the participants’ voiced experiences and concerns (Iosifides 2011, 132). Critical realism encourages the researcher to take an interest in what lies beneath what is said in order to build knowledge on context and the mechanisms or forces active and operating therein.

The general critique of the empiricist/objectivist ideal of science has rightly called attention to the complex relationship between language, power and reality. All knowledge is necessarily socially determined conceptual constructions as well as historical, contextual and particular (Sayer 1992, 12–20; Bhaskar 1986, 12–13). One’s view of the world is always distorted and restricted by constraints of ideology, language and culture, and it is therefore necessary to adopt a critical position of

fallibility (Houston 2001, 851). In the same manner, one's formulations can never be considered predictions, since they are necessarily tentative and generally become refined over time (ibid., 853).

While critical realism takes this seriously, it is wary of the extreme consequences of postmodernist and relativist views, and states that reality cannot be understood as completely reducible to discourse. It sees reality as exerting real influences via specific configurations of relationships and contexts, whether or not these are recognised through language and cognition (Kubal 2012b, 402). While people's (better or worse) understandings provide access to reality, they do not constitute the totality of what can be considered "real". Although social practices are concept-dependent and socially constituted, the social world is not identical to concepts (Parr 2015, 196). It is therefore possible to distinguish between better and worse references and maintain positive claims to a useful knowledge. Critical realists stress the importance of theoretical and methodological tools in order to discriminate among theories, concepts and understandings regarding their ability to inform about the external reality (Danermark et al. 2002, 10, 17). In other words, critical realism accepts 'epistemic relativism' (i.e. that our understanding and knowledge is fallible), while it rejects 'judgmental relativism' (i.e. that all beliefs are equally valid) (Parr 2015, 196).

Critical realism thus entails a view according to which the world has depth, and the 'real' cannot be reduced to experience (Parr 2015, 195). According to Roy Bhaskar (1986, 24) reality is divided in three *domains*: real, actual and empirical. *Real domain* consists of structures, and mechanisms or forces within structures, which bare influence on what happens in the world but which are not directly accessible. While studying social phenomena, these mechanisms may be understood in connection with, or attributed to, legislation, attitudes or different political, cultural, regional etc. conditions and systems. Individual intention is also understood as a mechanism. The *domain of the actual* consists of events triggered by forces operating in the realm of the real. These events may or may not be noticed in the *empirical domain* where experience and observation take place. Mechanisms in the real domain may remain unactualised or they may become actualised but go on unrecognised by actors, groups and institutions (Martinez Dy et al. 2014, 463). Research becomes importantly about investigating relationships between these domains, i.e. between what is experienced, what (arguably) actually happens and the (plausible) underlying factors at work (Danermark et al. 2002, 21).

In addition to domains, reality also consists of different *levels*, or *strata*, such as the physical, chemical, biological, psychological and socio-cultural. One stratum presupposes the other, "lower" stratum, but it is not possible to explain what goes on in one level simply by referring to another because there is emergence in each stratum, i.e. phenomena which cannot be traced back or reduced to what was at the

lower levels (Iosifides 2011, 17; Danermark et al. 2002, 60). The forces which influence and shape social phenomena operate at different strata (bio-psycho-socio-cultural), although one specific research is generally able to concentrate on only one of the levels.

The possibility of a *closure of the system* is often depicted as an important difference between natural and social sciences (Danermark 2014; Sayer 2000, 121–125). While no such thing as a completely closed or totally open system exists, closure becomes more problematic the further up one moves in the strata. In social sciences it becomes impossible to “close the system” for scientific procedures, since it is not possible to have control over the different factors which may affect the processes under scrutiny. According to critical realism, it is nevertheless possible to identify mechanisms at play in a certain phenomenon, triggered by a certain context, despite the complexity of the phenomena at the social stratum and the openness of the social stratum systems (Danermark et al. 2002, 184). Every analysis must be grounded in its context and in its corresponding stratum, and can therefore offer only a partial explanation of the general phenomenon it is tackling (Danermark 2008, 153). It is possible, and even probable, that there are other factors which carry influence or that the interplay between factors varies according to context.

In addition to domains or strata, critical realism understands reality and knowledge production also in terms of *transitive* and *intransitive dimensions*. The transitive dimension consists of knowledge, understanding and science which are all changeable, partial and fallible, whereas the intransitive dimension refers to the objects of scientific inquiry in the realm of the real, which exist independently of their identification (Bhaskar 1979, 11–17). However, in social sciences, the objects of scientific interest do not exist independently of knowledge-production processes (Bhaskar 1989, 60). Social research involves interpreting other people’s interpretations, notions and understandings, and at the same time, it operates in a world where interested and committed co-subjects take part and relate to the production of knowledge taking place (Danermark et al. 2002, 32).

An important dimension of critical realism is its quest to offer a rationale for challenging dominant paradigms (Sánchez 2006, 31; Sayer 2000, 18). Theories are understood as socio-historical processes of knowledge production, whose formation and contents are under the influence of many different social mechanisms (Danermark et al. 2002, 23–24; Bhaskar 1986, 24). Therefore, in addition to the intransitive and transitive dimensions, Bhaskar (1986, 25) advocates for a *metacritical dimension of discourse*, stressing critique and ‘meta-epistemic reflexivity’. This refers to the need of a continuous (auto)critical attitude and reflexivity in research. A central task of social research can be found in the process of seeing that many of the sociocultural conditions and situations regarded as “natural” or “given” are in fact created by various social processes (Danermark et al.

2002, 118; Sayer 1992, 252). The emancipatory dimension of research lies in the quest to identify forces or mechanisms active in the phenomena under scrutiny and to understand how they are manifested in concrete events or processes. In the present study this refers already to the contents of the concept and category of the 'migrant'. It also relates to divisions between 'us' and 'them', which are central in discussions concerning transnational migration.

A critical realist research explicitly endeavours from empirical observations to saying something more. One departs from an observation based for instance on what is present in the empirical data and then intends to understand and explain what is going on below the surface, and what factors and forces are at work. This includes an attempt to recognise and decipher the relevant *structures* to what is being observed and explained. According to the critical realist *Transformative Model of Social Action (TMSA)* (Bhaskar 1986, 212–213; 1979, 42–46), structures precede individuals, while individuals through action reproduce or change and transform structures. Society is therefore understood as an ensemble of practices and conventions which individuals may only reproduce or transform, but which at the same time would not exist unless individuals did so (Bhaskar 1979, 42–46). Yet, neither society nor human action can directly be identified with, reduced to, explained in terms of, or reconstructed from the other.

TMSA thus brings forward and puts emphasis on the interconnected relationship between structures and the individual. People are intentional, i.e. they possess the belief that their actions manifest a certain property. This belief may be unformulated, unconscious or false, but it is always there (Bhaskar 1986, 163). Social structures, as such, may not be intentional but they are social products and rely on human action for their existence. Different societal norms are related to, linked with, and dependent on social structures. Through action preceded by and at the same time necessary for the structure, human beings produce, maintain or change norms. Structures, for instance different norm structures, change, although some are evidently more stable than others. Bhaskar (1986, 123–124) emphasises that in order to understand social structures, one must take into account the context and history of their production and reproduction (also Layder 1993, 72). The explanation must be grounded in time and place (also Houston 2010, 75–76).

In other words, social reality is not just composed of individuals' meanings and intentions, but also of wider processes, related for instance to social hierarchies and norms (Parr 2015, 202). Information on the wider factors is not always directly available in the research interviews and the experiences presented in these, and therefore collecting and repeating interpretations is not enough (ibid.). While the focus in my research is directed at individual experience and meaning-making, this is analysed as reflecting and interacting with wider societal structures and cultural systems of discourses (Hedberg 2004, 57; Layder 1993, 72). The idea of a

comprehensive approach is that it carries within itself a possibility for emancipation. A change in society and in people's lives requires potentially oppressive structures to be recognised and acknowledged (also Mänttari-Van der Kuip 2015).

Of course social research often takes as its aim to transcend seemingly objective definitions of the world and show their limited value in trying to understand and explain what is going on (Alvesson & Sköldberg 2009, 48). However, I welcome the step away from purely deconstructionist approaches, which critical realists take in their straightforward intent to treat scientific research as a source of accumulative knowledge and understanding which intends to "matter", and their consequent refusal to settle with a "plurality" or "relativity" of explanations. I am likewise inspired by the critical realist emphasis on the interconnectedness and interplay between structures and the individual, and on contextually-embedded explanation, as well as the stimulation critical realism offers for striving beyond the empirically descriptive to a more theoretically-driven analysis.

At the same time, critical realism may seem pretentious in its readiness to stress the researcher's privileged access to knowledge or "truth" about the object of study. This runs the risk of patronising the research participants and stumbling over their knowledge and understanding of the situations they face (Parr 2015; Kubal 2012b; Alvesson & Sköldberg 2009, 44–49). At this point, I turn to the contributions of realist or postpositivist approaches in postcolonial identity and gender research, as I intend to carve a common ground for critical realist and postcolonial feminist insights in this research.

'Postcolonialism' is a concept originally used in literature studies since the period of independence of the European colonies in Asia and Africa after the Second World War (Martínez-San Miguel 2009, 190–191). Gradually the inclusion of different modes of imperial expansion and domination allowed postcolonial theory to become more encompassing (*ibid.*, 191). Today, the term has acquired rather ambiguous and multiple meanings, and its adoption in various academic traditions has been accompanied by debates on the possibilities and plausibility of employing it in different times and places (Martínez-San Miguel 2009, 191; Moraña et al. 2008, 5, 8, 11, 15–16; Blunt & Wills 2000, 165). The term is also linked to several other terms, such as neocolonialism, decolonialism, imperialism, nationalism, transnationalism, cosmopolitanism and globalisation.

Postcolonialism is essentially the discourse of oppositionality which colonialism brings into being (Martínez-San Miguel 2009, 189). It can be understood as an umbrella term for research that is interested in the values, representations and interpretations of colonialism and its impacts by making them visible and questioning them (Lazarus 2011, 7; Ossenbach & del Mar del Pozo 2011, 580; Ranta-Tyrkkö 2011, 31; McIlwain 2008, 4). Postcolonialism does not refer merely to

the historical era of post-independence of former colonies, i.e. after colonialism, for this would be to falsely ascribe an end to the colonial process (Blunt & Wills 2000, 167–170). The emphasis is thus rather on ‘beyond’ than ‘after’ colonialism (Blunt & Wills 2000, 170).

Postcolonial feminism, more specifically, refers to questioning the hegemony of white, academic and ‘Western’ feminist thought and the way ‘women of colour’ or ‘Third World women’ are represented in it (e.g. Mohanty 2003; 1984). Postcolonial feminist writings have attacked both the idea of a universal woman, as well as the production of a monolithic ‘Third World’ woman, insisting instead upon the *intersections* of social class, ethnic and national origins, religion, sexualities, gender, etc. and on the uncovering and contesting of global economic, political, military and cultural power relations (Rajan & Park 2000, 54). Postcolonial critique thus intends to address the inaccuracy of homogenising concepts and views of the world. Yet postcolonial thought has itself been criticised for in fact sustaining, contrary to its stated goals, the ‘Eurocentric’ conceptions of ‘Non-Western’ or ‘Non-Northern’ cultures as the ‘other’, and thereby ultimately stressing rather than challenging the central role of ‘West’/‘North’ in world history (Ranta-Tyrkkö 2011, 32; Hutcheon 2003, 17; McEwan 2003, 344). On the other hand, it has been noted that the postcolonialist idea of ‘West’/‘North’ excludes as well all internal differences and divisions (Lazarus 2011, 15).

Postcolonial research has also been blamed for disregarding the economic, material and political aspects of inequality and domination (Lazarus 2011, 7, 10–11; McIlwain 2008). It can be argued that postcolonial thinking and theorising has had a hard time connecting critiques of discourse and representation to the lived experiences of postcoloniality and different political and material problems therein (McEwan 2003, 341–342). Of course a concern for material practices and concrete situations does not require a disconnection from discourse, meanings and imaginings, since these are fundamentally linked, as the relations of power do not exist in separation from words and images which represent them (*ibid.*, 343, 351–352).

Postcolonialism wishes to reduce the spatial and temporal distance between ‘South’ and ‘North’, as it views these parts as integrally linked, albeit in unequal ways. Arguably, predominant patterns of border-crossing migration reflect these broad linkages in different ways (McIlwaine 2008, 5). The colonial era triggered movements around the world from the colonial empires to colonised areas, while the postcolonial era brought about movements of people from the former colonised peripheries to imperial or colonial centres (Castles & Miller 2009, 101; Yeoh 2003, 373). Today, many movements of people are associated directly with colonial linkages, while others carry more complex colonial legacies (Yeoh 2003).

Surprisingly, though, an explicit postcolonial perspective is not common in studies on transnational migration (McIlwain 2008, 2). Yet there are certainly several affinities between a transnational and postcolonial approach to migration. Both examine processes of belonging and alienation, and interrogate dominant narratives of citizens and the state, as these are produced, practiced and challenged in any particular political-economic-historical context (Martínez-San Miguel 2009, 191–192; McIlwain 2008, 6). Both also strive for a need to rethink homogenous geopolitical categorisations as well as epistemological practices and underpinnings (Martínez-San Miguel 2009, 191–192; McIlwain 2008, 2). A postcolonial perspective can facilitate an understanding of migration processes which appreciates both structure and action as well as the intersectional hierarchies which permeate mobility (McIlwain 2008, 2–3). A postcolonial approach also directs the researcher towards questioning how knowledge about migration is constructed, and whose interest this serves (Mains et al. 2013, 140).

In an attempt to build a nexus between a realist understanding in social research on the one hand and work on representation and meaning on the other, I have been inspired by Satya P. Mohanty's (1993) and Paula M. L. Moya's (1997) writings on a realist understanding of identity and experience, in which identities are figured as grounded, yet without essentialising them (Moya 1997, 132). Merging well with the intersectional approach of postcolonial feminism and the insights of critical realism, their thinking seeks to challenge the postmodern subject seen as unstable, unpredictable and forever contradictory, by restoring the link between identity (with its experiential and cognitive components) and social location (as the particular nexus of intersectional social hierarchies in which an individual exists in the world) (ibid., 134–135).

I see migrant subjects here as relational and grounded in the historically-produced social facts which constitute social locations (Moya 1997, 127). This way of understanding the subject seeks to view something as linked for instance to ethnic background without it being uniformly determined by this. As such, it wishes to endeavour beyond the postmodern vs. essentialist binary, in which we are culturally, socially etc. either completely fixed and unitary or unstable and fragmented selves (ibid., 135–136). Differences and subjectivities are relational and one's ability to understand an 'other' depends largely on one's willingness to examine one 'self' (ibid., 125–126).

I write in this study about 'experience', with which I refer to personally observing, encountering or undergoing a particular event or situation. Yet I do not understand experiences as wholly external events, since it is one's conceptually-mediated interpretation of an event which makes it into an experience (Moya 1997, 136). Experience in its mediated form, shared for instance in an interview encounter, contains a "cognitive component" through which to gain access to knowledge of the

world (Moya 1997, 137; Mohanty 1993, 44–45). The experiences a person is likely to have are in part determined by her social location in a given society, and experience always refers to a particular social arrangement of relations and hierarchies that can be analysed (Moya 1997, 137–140; Mohanty 1993, 51). The cognitive component allows for the possibility of error and accuracy in interpreting experience as well as revision over the course of time. “Alternative constructions and accounts” (Mohanty 1993, 52) provide new ways of looking at the world that complicate and often challenge dominant conceptions of what is “right”, “true” and “beautiful” (Moya 1997, 140). This emphasises the epistemic status of personal experience and suggests that granting a certain ‘epistemological privilege’ to the oppressed might not merely be a sentimental gesture, but in fact “the only way to push us toward greater social objectivity” (Mohanty 1993, 70, 72).

In this research, I draw from the realist understanding of separating socially constructed discourses from the reality which goes beyond them. Migrants’ experiences cannot be considered in isolation from the discourses, legislation and institutions that, for instance, constitute particular forms of human mobility as ‘migration’ and make ‘migrants’ out of some people who move and not of others (Scheel et al. 2015, 84). Yet, although the boundaries of the concept of the ‘migrant’ are fluid, contextual and contingent, the consequences of the category are very real. By separating discourses from the realities to which they intend to refer, and studying their interconnections, it is also possible to shed light on the diversity of trajectories and the heterogenic, and often times contradictory, locations present in contemporary transnational migration. Social research essentially aims at explaining social conditions (Danermark et al. 2002, 35, 106; also Dal Lago 2005, 13). In this quest the point of departure of this research is in the experiences of migrants, but the aim is to understand migration and society more generally.

2.2 Theoretical and conceptual framework

2.2.1 Migration theories: towards a transnational perspective on migration

A variety of theoretical models have been presented to explain migration as a social phenomenon, offering different accounts over its reasons, characteristics and effects. These accounts have developed in a fragmented way, segmented by disciplinary boundaries, granting emphasis on varying aspects of human mobility and employing different methodologies (Iosifides 2011, 18; Arango 2000, 287; Goss & Lindquist 1995, 317). Interest in migration as well as in its research has grown considerably since the 1990s, and theoretical approaches have also interacted (Castles & Miller 2009, 21). Still, a quest for a generally accepted theoretical or methodological framework for migration research seems elusive (Castles 2010, 1566, 1569).

While it is not within my purpose or possibilities here to cover in any way conclusively the developments of migration theorising, an overview of some of the central theoretical and conceptual discussions is required in order to position myself in relation to them. In the following, I will discuss some of the main theories of migration by posing them roughly in two groups; 1) economic theories of migration and 2) migration networks and systems approaches (Castles & Miller 2009). I will finish with, and place particular emphasis on, transnational migration research which serves as the main migration theoretical framework for the research.

1) Economic theories of migration

Neoclassical theory of migration

At the end of the 19th century, Ernst Georg Ravenstein (1885; 1889) formulated his famous statistical 'laws of migration', which initially concerned internal migration but were in his second paper applied also to international movements. His statements emphasised people's tendencies to move in order to better themselves in material aspects. After the hectic period of resettlements of displaced populations and accommodation to new borders caused by the two world wars, the primacy of economic motivations in migration became again highlighted (Arango 2000, 284).

Drawing from Ravenstein's laws, and emanating from neoclassical economics, the *neoclassical theory of migration*, or the *neoclassical model*, bases its explanatory power over migration on ideas of rational-choice, utility maximisation, expected net returns and existing wage differentials (Castles & Miller 2009, 21–22; Arango 2000, 285). Migrants are considered, with classical liberalist tones, as pursuers of self-interest in an attempt to maximise individual utility, profit and gain (Castles 2010, 1572–1573; Castles & Miller 2009, 22, 24; Arango 2000, 285). In the theory's vision, migration depresses wages in the capital-rich region, while remittances, combined with the return of skilled migrants, to emigration regions stimulate their economic growth. This eventually leads to the elimination of wage differentials, which will in turn result in the cessation of migration (Goss & Lindquist 1995, 320).

Ravenstein also introduced the well-known 'push' and 'pull' factors (Arango 1985, 14). Push factors, such as demographic growth, unemployment, low wages and income, lack of economic and employment opportunities, political pressure, and environmental degradation operate in the country or region of emigration "pushing" people to move. They are coupled with 'pull factors', such as labour demand, higher salaries, availability of land, good economic opportunities and perceived political freedom, which are active in turn in the societies of immigration. Migrants are seen as reacting to these mainly economic factors in quite an individual and solitary fashion, outside influence of other aspects in their lives, communities or societies (Castles & Miller 2009, 22; Harzig 2003, 36).

The neoclassical model has received various critique over the years, centrally because of its narrow focus on income maximisation and economic decision-making based on full information, which arguably stands in contrast to the concrete situations of most migrants operating inside the “complexity and messiness of the real world” (Castles 2010, 1569, 1573). Also contrary to the theory’s premises, it is rarely the worst-off or poorest people who move, since migration involves considerable costs and risks, and thus tends to require economic, social and individual resources (de Haas 2005, 1271; Skeldon 2002). The model’s predictions of labour migration being a temporary phenomenon have also gone astray (Goss & Lindquist 1995, 321). Nor does it seem that employment abroad would automatically lead to the acquisition of new skills, since many migrants take up low-paying and unskilled jobs shunned by the workforce of the host countries, and thus are not able to utilise their prior education or further continue their training but are more often faced with a process of deskilling (King & Skeldon 2010, 1628; Goss & Lindquist 1995, 322).

The model largely ignores social, political, historical and cultural factors and sets aside differences between migrants concerning for instance their social class, age, ethnic origin, cultural background and gender. This can be summarised in a twofold critique of the model being too individualistic on the one hand while ignoring the individual on the other (Castles 2010, 1573; Castles & Miller 2009, 22–23; Harzig 2003, 36; Arango 2000, 286–287; Goss & Lindquist 1995, 320). Nevertheless, as a simple and compelling explanation, the neoclassical theory has strongly shaped public thinking on migration and continues to provide intellectual basis for immigration policies (Delgado-Wise 2014, 648; Goss & Lindquist 1995, 320; Massey et al. 1993, 433).

The neoclassical theory of migration can be connected to a larger framework of *modernisation theory* which has dominated the analysis of economic growth and development (Arango 2000, 285; Ariza 2000, 28; Goss & Lindquist 1995, 319–320). Here as well it is presumed that the movement of people from areas of abundant labour but scarce capital to regions where the opposite occurs will ultimately contribute to economic development in both (Iosifides 2011, 19; Brettel 2008, 102–103). The modernisation model problematically presents men as the archetypes of modern actors of migration and women mainly as followers of their husbands, fathers and brothers (Ariza 2000, 29; Pessar 1986). It has also been pointed out that it is erroneous to assume that the pre-modern society was immobile (King & Skeldon 2010, 1630).

New economics of migration

Starting from the 1980s, the interest in migration research began to shift towards the role of households or the wider community in migration processes. This led to the

introduction of *new economics of migration* or *new economics of labour migration*, also referred to as the *household model* (Phizacklea 2003, 83; Donato & Kanaiaupuni 2000, 219; Taylor 1999). The promoters of the new economics of migration aimed to respond to the critique received by the neoclassical model concerning its over-individualistic nature (Iosifides 2011, 20; Castles 2010, 1579; Westwood & Phizacklea 2000, 123). The idea of the household model is that decisions concerning migration are not made by the individual alone but together with the family, household or the larger community, with the purpose of maximising gain and minimising risk within a certain household.

The focus is now set in the emigration communities and in the incentives present there for migration (Castles & Miller 2009, 24–25). However, while the unit of analysis is no longer the individual, the primacy of economic factors and utility maximising rationality remains (Iosifides 2011, 20; Castles 2010, 1573; Goss & Lindquist 1995, 327). The model also problematically presumes that income, decision-making power and resources are equally shared within households (Bakewell 2010, 1693; Faist 2000, 41; Westwood & Phizacklea 2000, 123, 126; Phizacklea 2003, 83; Donato & Kanaiaupuni 2000, 219), and sees the decision for one of the household's members to migrate as a result of a conscious strategy fully and equally prepared by all the members of the household (Taylor 1999, 75).

This means that factors such as gender continue to be dismissed as not having an effect on the decision-making processes. Women are often viewed as passively staying behind to wait for remittances and/or later possibly following their spouses in migration (Westwood & Phizacklea 2000, 96). Rational-choice logic also continues to prevail in the presumption of the migration choice or strategy being the result of a rational evaluation process aimed at minimising risks. This is disputable, since migration in many instances takes place more in spite of often several existing and recognisable risks, as it may also be a result of a desire for adventure, thus ignoring, consciously or not, any possible risks it may entail (also Kara 2006, 13).

Dual labour market theory

In the late 1970s, Michael J. Piore (1979) argued in his influential work that in order to analyse the processes of international migration, a theory of economic duality is required. According to Piore, migration follows from structural demand within modern capitalist economies for highly skilled workers on the one hand and lower skilled manual workers who carry out production and service tasks on the other. This two-sided demand leads to, or strengthens, a division in labour markets into primary and secondary sectors. The workers in these two sectors are selected on the basis of their education and skill, but also their gender, social class, ethnic origin and, in the case of migrants, their migration or citizenship status (Castles 2010, 1582).

The *dual (or segmented) labour market theory* concentrates on immigration societies and stresses the importance of institutional factors in bringing about labour market segmentation (Castles & Miller 2009, 23, 25; Massey et al. 1997, 262; Massey et al. 1993, 440–444). Contrary to the neoclassical theory of migration's neglect of government initiatives, the dual labour market theory emphasises the role of employers and governments in initiating migration and perpetuating it regardless of whether or not international wage differentials decline (Castles & Miller 2009, 24; Massey et al. 1997, 262). Still, the theory may be viewed as rather one-sided because of its concentration on factors operating in the immigration societies.

The jobs in the secondary sector for foreign workers are often jobs that native workers preferably decline: low-paid, unstable, unskilled, low-prestige and even dangerous (Arango 2000, 288). Immigrant workers may comply to this type of employment because they might arrive with the idea of earning money for a specific cause and for a limited period of time after which they return home. Migrants' earnings may also be relatively high compared to the standards of the work market of the country or region of emigration. In addition, the low status attached to the work performed in migration may be seen as compensated, to a certain extent, with the prestige that emigration, and for instance remittances, may carry in the society of emigration.

Historical-structural approaches on migration

Influential especially in the 1970s and 1980s, *historical-structural approaches* to migration concentrate on structures at the macro level and stress the unequal distribution of economic and political power in the world. Structuralist approaches see migration primarily as a way of mobilising cheap labour for capital, serving the interests of global capital and thus forming an integral part of capital accumulation worldwide (Iosifides 2011, 21). Migratory movements are viewed as part of a global system characterised by socio-economic inequalities and exploitative social relations (Iosifides 2011, 21–22; de Haas 2008, 8).

The intellectual roots of these analyses lay in Marxist or neo-Marxist political economy, such as *dependency theory* which was particularly influential in Latin America in the 1960s and emphasised the structural position of Latin American countries in the global capitalist economy (Delgado-Wise 2014, 645). The economic underdevelopment of 'Third World' countries is seen here as a result of the exploitation of their resources and labour during colonialism, dating back to the "discovery" of the American continent in 1492, and exacerbated through unfair terms of trade in the postcolonial period (Frank 1969, ref. Castles & Miller 2009, 26). The approach stresses the social processes involved in migration, through which this inequality becomes reinforced (Goss & Lindquist 1995, 322). Latin American research on migration largely draws on the region's tradition of structuralism and the

concept of dependency, and as such it stands in contrast to the neoclassical framework which has prevailed outside the region (Delgado-Wise 2014, 644).

Building on the insights of writers such as Immanuel Wallerstein (1974) and Samir Amin (1974), *world systems theory* as well connects migration to the structuring of the capitalist world market economy which has developed and expanded globally since the sixteenth century's imposition of the colonialist order. The specific focus here is on the incorporation process of 'peripheral' regions into a world economy, controlled by 'core' capitalist states, and the subsequently accelerated rural change which has led to poverty, displacement of workers, rapid and uncontrolled urbanisation and the growth of informal economies (Castles & Miller 2009, 26; Goss & Lindquist 1995, 323; Massey et al. 1997, 262; Massey et al. 1993, 444).

According to both the world systems and dependency theories, migration thus represents a geographical transfer of value greater than the return through, for instance, remitted wages, and therefore creates and sustains what is in fact referred to as a dual labour market at the global level, due to the selection of the most productive and educated workers from the economically underdeveloped regions (Goss & Lindquist 1995, 322). While the neoclassical theory of migration proclaimed that migration would in time lead to an equation of wage differentials between regions, migration is seen here to perpetuate the unevenness of economic development, exploiting the resources of poorer countries while making the rich even richer (Castles & Miller 2009, 26). It is seen in the interest of capital to uproot labour from its own cultural and geographical context or to attempt to separate workers from their social networks (Goss & Lindquist 1995, 324).

Historical-structural approaches concentrate on the macro level reasons for and consequences of migration and, subsequently, carry notions of structural determinism by failing to address migrants' individual characteristics, their more immediate social contexts and agency (Iosifides 2011, 22; Castles & Miller 2009, 27; Ariza 2000, 32–34). All the above mentioned approaches on migration view migration essentially as a labour response to a wage differential or inequality between regions caused by a difference in the level of socioeconomic development and resource distribution (Goss & Lindquist 1995, 317). Jon Goss and Bruce Lindquist (1995) have in fact divided these theories into functionalist and structural perspectives, of which the former, namely neoclassical theory and new economics of migration, focus on the microeconomic processes of the "rational decision-making" individual and assume that the aggregate effects of these individual decisions will eventually lead to a reduction in spatial inequalities and thus also in individual motivation to migrate. The structural perspectives, namely the dual labour market theory and the historical-structural approaches, focus in turn on the macroeconomic processes and view migration as a result of socio-spatial inequalities systematically reproduced within global and national economies. Through migration, this unequal

development is further intensified and perpetuated. Synthesised in this manner, the former paves the way for methodological individualism, while the latter leads to structural determinism. Nevertheless, and whichever the ideological point of departure, migration is ultimately reduced to the circulation of labour power, and other dimensions of the phenomenon are subordinated to an economic logic (Mahmud et al. 2009, 150; Glick Schiller et al. 1992, 5–8).

2) Migration networks and systems approaches

Networks and institutions of migration

In time, migration turns into more migration. This is the bottom line of migration networks and systems approaches, of which I will firstly view the migration networks theory, the cumulative causation theory and the institutional theory of migration. According to all of them, migration produces and sustains connections and networks which bind former migrants, recent migrants and non-migrants in origin and destination areas together in a web of social roles and relationships of information, support and obligations across time and space (Lenz & Schwenken 2002, 162; Ruenkaew 2002, 71; Taylor 1999, 64; Boyd 1989, 639–641). This changes context, for instance through altering the social meanings of certain work in immigration societies and lowering some costs and risks of movement for further emigration in the regions of emigration.

By the 1980s, researchers increasingly saw migration as dependent on different linkages existing between emigration and immigration countries, such as migrants' own social networks (Boyd 1989, 641). Advocates of the *migration networks theory* stress the lower costs and risks and increased expected returns of migration, due to the connections, support and information offered by the migrant's social networks. Networks based on family or shared origin are considered to provide shelter, work opportunities, assistance in coping with different bureaucratic procedures related to migration administration and support in personal difficulties (Castles & Miller 2009, 29). Migrant networks can thus be analysed as a form of transmission mechanisms for information and support needed in the migration process. When these networks become strong enough, migration may become independent of the factors which originally caused it (Bakewell 2010, 1073; Lenz & Schwenken 2002, 162; Boyd 1989, 639).

The *cumulative causation theory* stresses that each migrating individual alters the social context in which subsequent migration decisions are made, as well as the social context in destination societies. This is typically seen to happen in a way that makes additional movement more likely (Massey et al. 1997, 266). The *institutional theory of migration* in turn puts its emphasis on the importance of a diverse set of activities around migration, such as smuggling activities or humanitarian

organisations working with migrants, and their growing institutionalisation as a force sustaining and expanding migration movements (ibid., 265).

Migration networks approaches have also received criticism, in which their rather ahistorical and post factum nature has been pointed out (Krissman 2005, 4). In addition, since their analysis concentrates more on the individual actions of migrants, it has been viewed as one-sided, and the inclusion for instance of employers and other actors has been called for (Krissman 2005, 10, 13). Furthermore, it should be noted that migration networks are not merely resources to be exploited by the migrant. They may also limit migration by influencing the selection of migrants, the availability of destinations, and the conditions of movement and settlement (Goss & Lindquist 1995, 329). Migrants' networks are generally described solely as positive and supportive forces, but it is equally important to recognise their potentially restrictive, demanding and exploitative nature (Kara 2006, 61, 105; Woo Morales 2001, 309, 311).

Migration networks theory and the institutional theory of migration have often served as the basis for studies interested in irregular migration, since migrants' own networks have been considered especially important when moving or finding work unofficially (Hondagneu-Sotelo 2001; Woo Morales 2001). Inside these frameworks, interest could also be geared towards various national and supranational initiatives and institutions aimed at implementing and monitoring increasingly restrictive immigration policies, as well as growing initiatives to combat human trafficking. Attempts to control migration create and sustain a whole spectrum of organisations and institutions, and through the implementation of new policies, for instance, they also collaborate in shaping the ways migration takes place today.

Migration systems approach

As has become evident in the above review on migration theorisation, the analysis of migration movements, as any social research tradition, has in important part been a struggle between micro and macro components. *Migration systems approach* has attempted to synthesise the analysis of these levels (Ruenkaew 2002, 70; Goss & Lindquist 1995, 318; Fawcett 1989). The idea in the migration systems approach is that any migratory movement can be seen as a result of different interacting macro structures, such as laws, political systems, economic dependency or dominance and immigration policies, together with micro structures, such as migrants' networks and personal and community level practices. These are linked by other actors and mechanisms operating at the meso level, such as recruitment organisations, lawyers, agents, smugglers and other intermediaries (Castles & Miller 2009, 27–30; Harzig 2003, 36).

Migration systems approach or migration systems theory can also be viewed as an attempt to map together insights from world systems theory, networks theory, institutional theory and the theory of cumulative causation. It suggests that migration systems become created in the presence of stability of migration movement over time and space (Massey et al. 1997, 266–267). Different linkages facilitating this process may include historical, economic and social bonds, forged for example during colonial rule (Westwood & Phizacklea 2000, 112–113). Thus for instance Mexican migration to the U.S. can be viewed as a result of the southwestward expansion of the U.S. in the nineteenth century as well as the recruitment of Mexican workers by the U.S. government in the twentieth century. Similarly, migrations between Latin America and Europe can be analysed inside the context of (post)colonialism.

A migration system is often thought of including one core destination region and specific emigration countries linked to it, although migration systems are also considered to be dynamic in nature, suggesting that a specific country may be part of several migration systems, and countries may join in or drop out of a system in response to different social, economic or political changes (Iosifides 2011, 28; Castles & Miller 2009, 27). The first formal statement of a systems approach in migration studies can be found in a pioneering paper by Akin Mabogunje (1971, ref. King & Skeldon 2010, 1632–1633), where it was used to describe rural-urban migration in West Africa. The model presented by Mabogunje has, however, had rather limited practical applications (King & Skeldon 2010, 1632–1633).

Migration systems approach is appealing because it emphasises the dynamics of links and flows, causes and effects, adjustments and feedback. Yet it remains somewhat elusive, and there seems to be little concrete consensus as to what actually constitutes a ‘migration systems approach’ (King & Skeldon 2010, 1633; Fawcett 1989, 672). I have been inspired by several elements it, such as the analytical emphasis it makes on the interactions between micro, meso and macro levels, as well as the larger historical view it promotes. I do not, however, aim to study any specific migration system.

Transnational migration research

Transnational migration research is interested in the social, political, institutional, religious, cultural and emotional linkages migrants have and maintain across national borders (Bailey 2009, 75; Phizacklea 2003, 79–81). Transnational migration research partly builds on theories of migration networks, but argues that the importance of these networks goes beyond the micro level (Castles & Miller 2009, 31). Transnational approaches focus on how the cross-border involvements of migrants and non-migrants shape economic, political and cultural conditions, and how these involvements are in turn shaped by already existing structures (Faist et al. 2013, 2,

9). The interest is in capturing experiences and practices which filter through, are influenced by and potentially also challenge existing (national and international) power structures. Since its emergence in the early 1990s (for instance Basch et al. 1994; Glick Schiller et al. 1992) the transnational perspective has gained strong ground among migration scholars, and many writers have come to speak of a transnational paradigm in migration studies (Morawska 2003, 611; Levitt et al. 2003, 565; Wimmer & Glick Schiller 2003, 594)¹.

The term ‘transnational’ is closely linked to the concept of *diaspora*, as both attempt to analyse and depict experiences and practices connected with cross-border processes present in human mobility. As may be expected, the literature on these two concepts is often also fused. Unlike transnationalism, diaspora is an old concept which originally referred to the historic experience of particular groups dispersed by abrupt force, such as Jews or Armenians (Faist 2010, 11–12; Cohen 2008, 1). Although the concept has experienced a considerable expansion already from the 1980s onwards, it is possible to delineate it as referring to an experience of dispersion with a strong orientation to a real or imagined ‘homeland’ as a collective myth or memory (suggesting as well the passage of time before it is possible to speak of a ‘diaspora’) and consequently a high degree of boundary maintenance vis-à-vis the host society (Cohen 2008, 15–18; Brubaker 2005, 5–7)².

There exists quite a versatile terminology to describe a ‘transnational’ perspective on migration. The concept of *transnational spaces* refers to the social formations the “relatively stable, lasting and dense” ties crossing state borders create, while *transnationalism* was originally coined to shed light on the border-crossing grassroots activities of different non-state agents, such as migrants, their family members, networks and associations (Faist 2010, 13–14). Thus, while

¹ Yet, transnationalism was initially theorised mainly in American and Asian contexts, to the extent that Ali Rogers (2000) raised the question of “just how ‘transnational’ transnationalism is”. Later on, research in Europe, for instance, has grown significantly, and there have also been initiatives to establish dialogue between regions. It should be noted also in this context, however, that research still suffers from taking the situation in the ‘Northern’ destination countries as its one-sided starting point (Delgado-Wise 2014, 644; King & Skeldon 2010). It remains to be seen to which extent, for instance, recent changes in direction of migration movements from European countries such as Spain and Portugal towards Latin American, African and Asian countries in search of work and opportunities affect these frameworks.

² Other concepts employed in connection, and in collusion, with transnational include at least international, multinational, global and cosmopolitan. *International* may be defined as diplomatic activities, cross-border activities of national organisations or for instance programmes of student exchange, while multinational or supranational may be considered as referring for instance to the activities of the United Nations or multinational corporations (Portes 2003, 877). *Global* and *globalisation* was first promoted as a predominantly economic phenomenon, involving the movement of investment, capital, technology and services across the globe (Castles 2010, 1577). Yet it is also connected with the movement of ideas, information and services across national borders and with a growing consciousness of interconnectedness and interdependency as well as global inequality, the latter of which is perhaps more accurately referred to as anti-globalisation. *Cosmopolitanism* may be understood as sociocultural existence, ideology, philosophy, attitude, practice or habitus entailing open, pluralistic and heterogenic belonging (Skrbiš et al. 2004, 117).

‘transnationalism’ may be understood as an activity or practice, it also suggests an ideology, although it is not altogether clear whose ideology this would be: that of researchers, migrants or others (Faist et al. 2013, 9). This may lead to normative and prescriptive definitions of ‘transnationalism’, or even one-sided celebration of the social processes it should be critically analysing (Boccagni 2012, 119).

The term *transnational*, in turn, is rather a catch-all term, while *transnationality* may be understood as referring to the social practices of subjects (Faist et al 2013, 9, 16). I will generally employ the terms ‘transnational migration (research)’, ‘transnational everyday life’ or ‘transnationality’. Transnationality, in its understanding of subjects’ transnational ties as formed and lived in connection with, and shaping and being shaped by, the subjects’ intersectional locations involving gender, social class, ethnic origin, life course, citizenship, nationality, cultural preferences and language use (Faist et al. 2013, 16), also forms a link with the intersectionality approach of this research.

Although criss-crossed by several disciplines with their corresponding inter-disciplinary, as well as intra-disciplinary, discussions, it is possible to pinpoint some general developments in the scholarship of transnational migration. Transnational migration research has been rather divided according to disciplines, as well as along the traditional agency-structure divide. Anthropologists have generally concentrated on the concrete and everyday “grass-root” experiences of living in a globally and transnationally connected world (transnationalism from below) while political research has focused on the study of politics and legislation (transnationalism from above) (Delgado-Wise 2014, 653–654; Kim 2009; Morawska 2003, 614, 617; Guarnizo & Smith 1998).

Transnational lives or activities are not a new phenomenon as such, and the rather postmodernist notions which prevailed in earlier transnational migration research placing transnationalism in an epochal turn and presenting the past as static and homogenous and the present as fluid and filled with hybridity and complexity, have been contrasted in later research (Kim 2009, 682; Levitt et al. 2003, 565; Wimmer & Glick Schiller 2003, 596–597). For instance in the “old migrations” from Europe to the American continent, many migrants maintained contact with their relatives and communities, sent money to them, or participated in different ways in the nation-building projects of their countries of origin (Levitt & Jaworsky 2007, 133). Although transportation and communication technologies today permit on average easier, faster and more frequent interconnections (Faist et al. 2013, 51), the ground-breaking and radical importance of modern technologies has also been contested (Wimmer & Glick Schiller 2003, 596).

In addition to being perceived as something new, transnational migration is often taken to suddenly “be everywhere”. It has, subsequently, been conceptually and

methodologically difficult to recognise and explain experiences in which transnational bonds or activities are weak or non-existent (Lazăr 2011, 73; 76; Wimmer & Glick Schiller 2002, 324). Yet, technology facilitating information, communication and travel is still not evenly at everyone's disposal (Lazăr 2011, 74), and social class and age, among other things, shape the use and availability of technology (Faist et al. 2013, 52). Migration, as such, continues to be an exception instead of a rule (Crosby 2007, 47; Glick Schiller 2004, 458). This does not necessarily imply a life completely void of transnational connections and activities, however, for instance in situations where one's family members or friends have migrated (Faist et al. 2013, 27). Nevertheless, while transnational migration is hardly a marginal phenomenon in contemporary, or past, societies, it is not necessary or accurate to depict transnational migrants as the contemporary "prototype of humankind" (Wimmer & Glick Schiller 2003, 600).

Transnational approach on migration has, nevertheless, challenged conventional assumptions of place and space as well as the direction and impacts of border-crossing movements, and called into question the applicability of the so-called 'emigration-immigration-assimilation paradigm' in migration research (Levitt et al. 2003, 517; Hondagneu-Sotelo & Avila 1994, 549). The approach revisits many basic social research concepts, such as family, citizenship and 'nation-state' (Levitt & Glick-Schiller 2004, 1003), and its promoters have demanded broader frameworks and new strategies for research in order to capture contemporary migration experiences more accurately and comprehensively (Levitt et al. 2003, 571; Wimmer & Glick Schiller 2003, 597). Transnational approach has also brought the agency of migrants to the fore.

Although it is widely acknowledged today that transnationality is not in itself a new phenomenon, a certain paradigm shift, extending from migration studies to social research in general, has certainly taken place. In order to be able to analyse and discuss transnational experiences, it is necessary to change the lens through which one perceives the world. One of these demands is to put aside the preconceptions of *methodological nationalism*, i.e. the conflation of the society with the 'nation-state' (Glick Schiller 2010, 110). Methodological nationalism may affect research for instance through practices of 1) ignoring or disregarding the importance of nationalism for modern societies, 2) depicting 'nation-states' as natural, eternal and ahistorical, 3) employing territorial limitations in research, which confines the study of social processes, and the units of analysis employed, to the political and geographic boundaries of particular 'nation-states' (Castles 2010, 1570; Glick Schiller 2010, 109–111; Wimmer & Glick Schiller 2003, 577–578).

Migrant contacts and networks, activities and associations and identities may be built around various categories, such as ethnic origin, regionality, gender, schooling, political affiliation or sexual preference, and importantly not only around national

communities (Faist et al. 2013, 17). The point of the critique of methodological nationalism is not that 'nation-states' should be disregarded in research, quite the contrary. It is important to make them visible. Furthermore, the aim of the transnational approach is to understand that the overall building of 'nation-states' has itself been a transnational project (Glick Schiller 2004, 449, 452). While viewing 'nation-states' as the products of, and in connection with, the processes of modernisation, colonialism and imperialism, the transnational perspective also connects with a postcolonial approach.

Yet transnational migration research itself has been criticised for methodological nationalism, for instance when it explicitly aims to show that transnational practices are not a hindrance to assimilation or integration. According to Nina Glick Schiller (2009, 4), much of migration theory still applies a so-called 'container approach' to society, and disregards both the social and cultural divisions within each state, as well as the experiences, norms and values migrants and natives share because they are embedded in social, economic and political processes, networks, movements and institutions that exist both within and across state borders. In this way, research inadvertently strengthens the 'migrant vs. autochthonous' divide as a decisive challenge for social cohesion, stability and welfare (Glick Schiller 2010, 109).

In fact, the aim of 'integration' as a point of departure for migration research inevitably emphasises the 'nation-state' point of view, and is thus never exempt from methodological nationalism (Mezzadra 2010). Considerations of methodological nationalism become ever more pertinent with respect to social policy and social work initiatives concerning migration. It is generally taken as a given that social work services are necessarily limited in and shaped by national contexts, and much of the discussion on social work's responses to migration and diversity has had a domestic focus, largely divorced from transnational considerations or the global history of colonialism (Cox & Geisen 2014, 166–167; Jönsson 2014, 39; Williams & Graham 2014, 17; Ranta-Tyrkkö 2011, 34, 37). From this also follows that migrants and their migration become decontextualised from a consideration of wider forces, in a focus on their immediate needs and in-country integration (Williams & Graham 2014, 17).

Yet another debate and point of interest within transnational migration research has indeed been the connection between the 'nation-state' and 'transnationalism' and the overall importance and future of the 'nation-state'. Predictions presented amongst the most enthusiastic notions of a "new transnational era" included its demise. These notions have later been questioned, as states continue to play an important role also in transnational processes (Morawska 2003, 616; Wimmer & Glick Schiller 2003, 596–597; Hondagneu-Sotelo & Avila 1994, 550). Both emigration and immigration states have been noted to reconfigure themselves and redefine national membership

(Levitt et al. 2003, 568).³ ‘Nation-states’ have not gone anywhere, and the political borders they intend to vigil and secure maintain a very concrete presence in the lives of contemporary transnational migrants. The processes involved in transnational migration may diminish, shape and also increase the meaning of ‘nation-states’ and nationalisms (Lazăr 2011, 74; Faist 2010, 15).

While earlier research on transnational migration has been accused of conceptual confusion and vagueness (Castles & Miller 2009, 32–33), later research has focused attention to the exact content of transnational migration. What type of life and existence, and which activities, are referred to when the study subject is transnational migration? Research done in this vein has often concentrated on surveys and quantitative methods, and concluded that a so-called “intensive and regular” transnational life is finally led by very few (Glick Schiller 2004, 458; Portes 2003). There has been doubt as to whether transnational practices actually are very widespread or influential, as well as whether these practices will continue to be important through generations or whether they will diminish, or become transformed, over time (Haikkola 2011; Levitt et al. 2003, 565; Guarnizo & Smith 1998, 15–17). Furthermore, transnational (or translocal) connections and activities may vary according to their strength, intensity and formality. More importantly, it is not altogether clear what these activities really are and what counts when transnational involvement is discussed.

My research interest lies in important part on the personal, emotional and affective dimensions of transnational migration, instead of concentrating on the calculable quantities and forms of activities and practices. I position my interest inside a relatively recent tradition in transnational research on imaginations, intentions, affections and emotions involved in transnational engagement (Takeda 2012; Boccagni 2010; Ryan 2008; Svašek 2008; Levitt et al. 2003, 571). While these are not easily observed or measurable, they are deeply felt, and can create a more comprehensive understanding of transnational landscapes and experiences.

My approach comes close to the concept of ‘emotional transnationalism’ (Takeda 2012; Brown 2011; Ryan 2008; Skrbiš 2008), which can be defined as the process of sustaining transnational connections at the level of emotions and ideologies. I pay attention to the participants’ perceptions and the emotional consequences of migration and to the ways “emotions flow” between migrants and their transnational family members (Takeda 2012, 22) as well as in the negotiations around senses of belonging. I also wish to posit my approach on the “mundane” and “subtle” features, experiences and emotions present in transnational everyday life, in order to balance

³ Emigration states have for instance assumed an active role in order to maintain ties with and profit from their transnational constituencies, through for instance dual citizenship standards, facilitating voting procedures abroad etc., in a process referred to as the ‘de-territorialised nation-state formation’ (Guarnizo & Smith 1998, 8; Basch et al. 1994).

the discussion on transnational (irregular) migration, which often tends to focus on the “extreme” (Cox & Geisen 2014, 156; Brown 2011, 231; Bakewell 2008; also Lipman 2006, 622).

Although the transnational approach seeks to challenge the idea of ‘nation-state’ as the strongest or unquestioned framework for a sense of belonging and identification, research is often framed inside migration movements between two states (Lazăr 2011, 77). Research also easily overstates the homogeneity of transnational communities, overlooks the internal divisions of, for instance, social class, gender and ethnic origin, and fails to recognise cases where no transnational communities are formed or they cease to be meaningful for individuals (Lazăr 2011, 76–77; Morokvasic-Müller 2003, 102–103; Pessar & Mahler 2003). The different and varying meanings of transnational life or identity are therefore precluded (Wimmer & Glick Schiller 2003, 598). Yet not all migrants are engaged in transnational activities and not in every stage of their lives (Kim 2009, 682; Levitt et al. 2003, 569). In this research, I have adopted a larger regional identification in ‘Latin America’ as the emigration context, and focused my interest specifically on Catalonia and the city of Barcelona as the immigration context, without dismissing state-level factors in both respects. In addition, my central interest is to look at the consequences and experiences of the interconnections of different social categories and locations of the research participants through an intersectional analysis.

Finally, it is important to consider the overall efficacy of transnational migration research in tackling global power inequalities. Transnational migration is not just about free, multiple citizenry movement. It often involves risks, vulnerability and sacrifice, and entails experiences of conflict, discrimination, uprooting, estrangement, loss and exclusion (Bailey 2009, 79–80; Kara 2006, 3–4, 110–111; Guarnizo & Smith 1998, 5–6; Hondagneu-Sotelo & Avila 1997, 567). Transnational migration also circulates vulnerabilities which deepen inequality, when transnational migrants intend to support themselves in their metropolitan destinations and at the same time meet obligations to individuals and institutions in the emigration regions by working double and triple shifts in unsafe and abusive conditions (Bailey 2009, 76).

Often, in this final point, the interest in transnational mobility connects with the processes and effects of immigration regulations and the concrete consequences of migration statuses and irregularity. In order to contextualise the realities present in transnational mobility, the insights of dual labour market theory, structural-historical approaches on migration and migration systems analysis become of use. Importantly, however, it is my aim also to oppose the simplistic understanding inscribed in the dichotomist division between “completely free and privileged movers” and “desperate eternal outsiders”, when considering transnational life and the realities of mobility and belonging. In transnational migration, people may cross international

borders of states, but they also cross boundaries with regard to families, majority and minority groups, ethnicity, social class, gender, generations, as well as their personal biographies (Faist et al. 2013, 2). A transnational perspective on migration stresses a continuous delocalisation and relocalisation which cannot be reduced to contexts of emigration and immigration or even an overlap between the two (ibid., 4).

2.2.2 Movement in time and space: dimensions of temporality in migration

Migration is conventionally conceptualised as a time-space phenomenon, generally regarded as a permanent or semi-permanent ‘shift of residence’ (Faist et al. 2013, 5; King et al. 2006, 233). Yet migration merges with other forms of mobility, and it is not straightforward where or when migration begins. One might also question whether it ever ends, referring for instance to discussions on ‘second or third generation migrants’. Both the temporal and spatial “edges” of migration are not simple to define.

In analyses of migration, the spatial often takes over the temporal, and although the relationship between time and space has been examined for instance by geographers (e.g. Massey 1992; 1991; Harvey 1990; Hägerstrand 1975b), time remains neglected and under-theorised in relation to migration (Griffiths et al. 2013; Bastia & McGarth 2011; King et al. 2006; for exceptions for instance Griffiths 2014; Griffiths et al. 2013; Cwerner 2001; Malmberg 1997; Hägerstrand 1975a, ref. Malmberg 1997). While I recognise the interconnectedness of time and space, I aim to complement transnational migration research with a consideration of the temporal dimensions in migration and a focus on the time struggles present in transnational daily life (Griffiths 2014; Conlon 2011). Alongside spatial boundaries, which are always negotiated in migration, I place explicit emphasis on the temporal boundedness and time consequences of movement from the point of view of migrants. I also follow the assumption that multiple temporal modes coexist within as well as between societies, and vary between individuals and across contexts and life courses (Griffiths 2014, 1992).

Time is a challenging concept. Time is arguably everywhere and in everything, yet it is not easy to capture in politically or theoretically meaningful ways. Therefore it may become overanalysed or dismissed altogether and taken for granted (2013 1994). Time becomes visible through relations to time, such as waiting, impatience, regret or nostalgia. Migration also brings to the fore social time and dominant ideas of time in society and being outside of and in negotiation with these times (Frederiksen & Dalsgård 2014, 15).

I employ three interlinked dimensions of temporality in my analysis. The first of these dimensions concerns a historical consciousness in terms of a postcolonial perspective on the migration of the research participants. In the public imaginary,

migrants are often presented as being out of place and time, and migration literature as well easily takes the movement between separate 'here' and 'there' for granted rather than considering these spaces' mutual constitution in light of migration (Mains et al. 2013, 132–133). A postcolonial perspective wishes to amend this by pointing to the political possibility of recognising a shared postcolonial terrain (ibid., 133). Postcolonial theory extends the temporality of the discussion on migration by recognising the extent to which today's migrations draw on colonial histories and the ways in which 'here' has been formed and performed in and through interactions with 'there' (ibid., 134).

The second dimension of temporality concentrates on the concrete ways in which the administrative procedures of immigration regulations produce time and space. These as well have do with negotiations of inclusion and exclusion, i.e. power struggles (Griffiths 2014, 2005; Bailey et al. 2002, 128). Migrants face multiple temporal tensions. This is in part due to cultural diversity which is associated with variations in conceptualisations of time at the level of everyday encounters and activities (Adam 1994), but it is also due to time properties and consequences of immigration systems and their administrative procedures which may cause chronic uncertainty and waiting (Griffiths 2014, 1991). The temporal uncertainties and discords present in migration display points of tension within the system (ibid., 1992). A time-sensitive analysis offers insight into experiences of losing, gaining or resisting control. Space and time are not neutral platforms, and the productions of and resistances to time and space are at the heart of the transnational struggles, in the visible and invisible actions and experiences in daily life (Bailey et al. 2002, 128; also Tazzioli et al. 2015).

The third dimension of temporality refers to emotions and affections, and is centrally connected with life course. Life course as the passage of time is marked personally and collectively. Life course may be understood as flow, as merging and becoming (Griffiths et al. 2013). Taking a life course approach brings into view the events and processes of forming a family, entering work life, having children, ageing and retiring, and the connections these have with migration. Through this dimension it is possible to consider the ways in which migration is interconnected with individuals' entire life course and the processes of personal growth, as well as with changing roles between generations and the gendered patterns of generational responsibilities. In this respect, my approach challenges the fact that migrants continue to be very much viewed as 'migrant workers' rather than as full human beings with their gendered and emotional lives embedded in generational relations (Griffiths et al. 2013; King et al. 2006).

The efforts of migrants to make sense of different locations and to plan their individual and social futures also involve the consideration of the present in terms of the past and the future in terms of the present and so on (Bailey et al. 2002, 128).

Time is employed here as a tool for understanding migration as a personal experience and with regard to social relations, structures and the moment in (historical) time. I consider how time is understood, discussed and negotiated in the context of migration, in the daily experiences and personal reflections of the participants, parting from the premise that this helps to make visible different contextual conditions, discursive patterns and structural forces. The temporal parameters of migrants' actions and experiences reveal the multiple dimensions of desire, cognition, constraint, recognition, control, contingency and opportunity important in migration and shed light on the temporal and spatial disjunctures and adaptations (or resistance) present in contemporary transnational everyday life (Cwerner 2001, 32).

2.2.3 Researching migration status and irregularity: intersectionality and (in)visibility

The issue of immigration and immigrants became a major topic in the United States in 2006, when tens of thousands of immigrants, many of them of Mexican origin and many undocumented, took the streets to publicly declare their right to live and thrive in the country despite policymakers' aims to criminalise their existence (Kim 2009, 675; also De Genova 2009). Some of the questions raised in public opinion commenting on these events were: why are these people carrying Mexican flags if they want to be 'Americans', and why are there so many (Kim 2009, 676)? Although from another context, I find these events illustrative of four contemporary discussions around transnational migration present in this research: 1) the image of contemporary transnational movement as unprecedented and transnational migrants as suddenly adding up to "so many" and being "everywhere", 2) the confusion created by migrants living their lives across national borders with respect to many strongly-held assumptions about identity and membership, 3) the connections between contemporary transnational mobility and immigration restrictions and regulations, 4) the bewilderment caused by the active subjectivity of migrants.

While millions of people move in the world, only certain people are classed as 'migrants', often in contradictory and temporally sifting ways (Anderson et al. 2009, 10). Policies controlling people's movements in the contemporary world are connected with the legacies of colonialism, the imposition of particular forms of statehood, government and nationalisms, and the lasting impact of global inequalities (ibid., 9). Migration is often perceived and presented as a problem, a disruption to the "normal" state of things, caused by crisis and crisis producing (Williams & Graham 2014; Anderson et al. 2009; Masanet Ripoll & Ripoll Arcacia 2008; Dal Lago 2005; Sayad 2004). In media coverages, migration is referred to with threatening vocabulary or imaginary reflecting situations of natural disaster, by employing terms such as migration waves, floods, masses and pressure (Blinder & Allen 2014, 24; Crosby 2007, 45). "Digestive metaphors" (Agustín 2005, 703) are as

well abundant, referring to the necessity and urgency to assimilate, integrate and insert migrants into the host society. Migration research itself has often been rather policy-driven (Erel 2007; De Genova 2002), and as such adopted and reproduced these imaginaries.

The terms ‘citizen’ or ‘citizenship’ have as well a plethora of connotations, and there is little agreement even among scholars as to how to understand the terms (Bosniak 2006, 18). In its strictest sense, citizenship is a legal status that gives a person the right to live in a state which cannot, generally, refuse this person from entering or deport her (Anderson 2011). This status may be acquired at birth, either by the principle of *jus sanguinis*, through parents by descent, or by the principle of *jus soli*, in which a person born in the territory of a state obtains the right to its citizenship. States may also have a combination of the two principles. Citizenship may also be obtained by application through a process called *naturalisation*.

In everyday usage, ‘citizenship’, ‘nationality’, ‘state’ and ‘nation’ often become intertwined. Citizenship brings rights such as voting and access to education and health care, and refers to a formal agreement of belonging, rights and responsibilities, while nationality connotes a more ethnic membership. Yet citizenship may also be understood in terms of feelings of identity and belonging as well as participation, as it denotes membership in a socio-political community (Bosniak 2006, 18–19; Bloemraad 2000, 20). The tendency to conflate the ‘state’ with the ‘nation’ is linked to historical processes where nationalism has been a central force in the development of the ‘nation-state’ (Anthias & Yuval-Davis 1989, 3). The employing of terms such as the ‘nation-state’ generally aims at reinforcing the idea of a narrowed-down and shared ethnicity inside the geographical region of a certain state, while this in most modern states is more a myth than a reality. Spain is as well an example of a state which consists of several different regions or nations, some of which have a strong sense of nationalism of their own, Catalonia being one of the most salient examples.

While attempting to sketch out the historical developments of the control over migration movements in ‘Northern’ or ‘Western’ societies, Martin Baldwin-Edwards (2008) describes a historical process starting from feudal absolute restrictionism, through a period of relatively free movement of labour, capital and goods in the late 19th century, and then back to a period of heavily-restricted mobility towards the end of the 20th century and the beginning of the 21st century. He sees this in connection with the growing importance of the national state during the 20th century, accompanied by the increasing utilisation of modern technologies and documentation, rising nationalism, and the growth of the idea of the modern welfare state for “our” citizens or nationals (Anderson 1991, ref. Baldwin-Edwards 2008). When entering the 21st century, irregular migration has been regarded not only as a challenge to the authority of the states to control their borders, but also connected

with national security and organised crime (Anderson & Ruhs 2010, 175; Koser 2010). Still, rather than a generic increase in immigration policy restrictiveness, the levels of restrictiveness have tended to oscillate with economic cycles and political-ideological shifts (Czaika & de Haas 2014, 316).

To some extent, irregular migration may be perceived as relatively simple to define as migration which occurs outside the legal-institutional frameworks established by any given state (Baldwin-Edwards 2008, 1449). However, in recent years there have been numerous attempts to identify, classify and list different forms of irregular migration. On the one hand, the expansion of the semantic borders of “irregularity” or “illegality” of migrants has created a single overarching category most prominent in public and policy discussions, which stretches to a wide array of different situations (Kubal 2012a, 6). These refer for instance to unauthorised entry, overstaying one’s leave to remain, staying in the country after receiving a rejection of an asylum claim, not being able to renew one’s migration permit or working outside visa restrictions (Kubal 2012a; Baldwin-Edwards 2008).

On the other hand, a considerable amount of alternative or supplementary explanatory categories designed to better capture the multiple and ambiguous situations of migrants can be found in academic research, including for instance semi-legal (Kubal 2012a; Rytter 2012), legally illegal (Rigo 2011), liminally legal (Menjívar 2006) and semi-compliant (Ruhs & Anderson 2006). The use of these alternative categories has been rather fragmented. In this research, I will generally speak of residing with an irregular migration status or living in a situation of migration status irregularity. With this I wish to underline that migration status irregularity is not a quality someone carries around but a (temporary) position (Sager 2011, 24). In the presentation of the research findings, I will employ the terminology used by the participants.

In the somewhat recent resurgence of academic interest towards migration irregularity, one central issue has been to consider it as a phenomenon to be studied rather than a problem to be solved (Anderson & Ruhs 2010, 176; De Genova 2002). Analytic frameworks often have a hard time describing everyday life, as is also the case in discussions around the experiences and realities of an irregular migration status in transnational migration (De Genova 2002, 420). Policy tends to view irregularity as a fixed or permanent, clearly definable state. Yet in reality, there is often a shifting range of statuses that non-citizens may move between, or back and forward in, as a consequence of changing policies and legislation, or because different categories are used strategically (Anderson & Ruhs 2010, 177), as any administrative categories always are.

In public debates, it is persistently common to talk about “illegal immigrants” when referring to persons who find themselves in a situation of migration status

irregularity. Yet a person, as such, cannot be illegal, and the application of this term implies either ignorance of or complicity with the discourse of ‘criminalisation of migration’ (e.g. Kubal 2014, 102; Sager 2011, 22), which refers to the incorporation of criminal law into the domain of immigration and presenting migrants as (potential) criminals, cheats and abusers. In addition to irregular or “illegal”, a few other often-used terms include undocumented, unauthorised, clandestine and illegalised migration. In the Spanish context, the often-employed terminology includes *sin papeles*, *irregulares* or *ilegales*. The contested nature of the terminology and the adjectives attached to it are of course indications of the intensely politicised nature of claims to knowledge and analysis (Anderson & Ruhs 2010, 175; Anderson 2008, 3; Soydan & Williams 1998, 17). Language reflects particular theories, values and ideologies and should therefore be under constant review (Soydan & Williams 1998, 3).

The term (im)migration often becomes surrounded by negative or vilified connotations (Williams & Garaham 2014, 2). A ‘victim discourse’ and a ‘discourse of illegality’ are the ways in which the issue of border-crossing migration often becomes addressed in the media and public discourse, as well as among social service practitioners (Jönsson 2014, 41). The victim discourse is generally femininised and employed for women and children who are considered to “deserve” some kind of help, understanding and assistance (ibid., 42). The discourse of illegality, as well as that of the ‘foreign criminal’, is more often employed for migrant men (de Noronha 2015, 7–8; Jönsson 2014, 42).

In a recent study (Allen & Blinder 2013) on the adjectives employed in connection with migration in the UK media, it was found that *illegal* was the most common modifier of the word immigrant, while *failed* served the same purpose for asylum seeker. Media coverage on migration and asylum in general employed vocabulary of numbers, security or legality and vulnerability⁴. In another study (Masanet Ripoll & Ripoll Arcacia 2008) on the portrayal of migrant women in the Spanish media, it was found that women migrants were generally presented as *victims* for instance of human traffickers or gender violence. The most common verbs employed in the media coverage included *exploit*, *violate*, *arrest*, *abuse*, *traffic*, *abandon*, *prostitute* and *die*⁵, and the most common substantives included *prostitution*, *prison*, *detainees*, *indignation*, *suicide* and *sin papeles*⁶. In addition to victims, women migrants also frequently became portrayed as criminals, (abused) workers and (bad) mothers. This

⁴ While considering the link between media coverage, policy and public opinion, Allen & Blinder (2013, 24), however, do not take a stand on whether the quantity and quality of the media coverage is driving public and policy concern or the other way around.

⁵ *Explotar*, *violar*, *arrestar*, *abusar*, *traficar*, *abandonar*, *prostituirse*, *fallecer* (Masanet Ripoll & Ripoll Arcacia 2008, 178).

⁶ *Prostitución*, *prisión*, *detenidas*, *indignación*, *suicidio*, *sin papeles* (Masanet Ripoll & Ripoll Arcacia 2008, 178).

type of media coverage undoubtedly reflects and enforces the criminalisation of migration discourse.

'Borders' have as well featured prominently in the news and political discourses around migration, and a particular emphasis has been placed on "illegal" border crossing and the (security) threat this poses to the state, in what Nicholas De Genova (2002) has called the "spectacle of militarised border enforcement". Europe's Southern and Eastern borders, the U.S. Southern border and Australia's Northern waters have all featured as sights in this spectacle, despite the fact that research has for several years provided evidence suggesting that much of migration irregularity does not result from "illegal" entries (for instance Godenau 2010, 5, 13). The representation of the militarised border is, however, an important one, since it simplifies migratory movements by reducing them to the space, and time, of the border and its crossings and represents migrants as being located at the "outside" and pushing to "get in" (Andrijasevic 2009, 395).

Yet, despite images such as the "Fortress Europe", borders are not impenetrable and they do not match a fixed geographical demarcation. Borders are productive and generative. They are not firm and stable, and they are not only geographically or territorially drawn as international borders between states, but they also operate within states (Anderson et al. 2009, 7). Just as in the case of the concepts of 'migrants' and 'citizens' shaping each other in a continuous exercise of inclusion creating exclusion, defining the conditions for 'regular' migration creates 'irregular' migration (De Genova 2002). Migration is turned into irregular migration in the interplay with immigration regulations which have their own political and economic justifications and motivations (Suter 2012, 147).

In general, the exclusion of migrants defines the privileges of citizenship (Papadopoulos & Tsianos 2013; Anderson 2013, 2, 9; Étienne Balibar interviewed in Portevin & Blottière 2011). The practice of including and excluding goes on as well in many initiatives promoting the rights of and aiming to assist and offer services to certain groups of mobile people. Advocating for the rights of refugees or asylum seekers may become an exercise of excluding the rights of "economically motivated" migrants, while in a similar vein the debates around "rescuing" the victims of human trafficking dwell upon the degrees of coercion and consent in an endless effort of dividing the "very much exploited" from the "not so much exploited" (Sharma 2009; Anderson 2008; Crosby 2007). These practices of excluding and including are not only about migrants, but, as any practice of boundary-making, also exercised by migrants themselves. They also have connections and consequences beyond the issue of migration.

(Irregular) migrants become commonly conceived either as criminals or as being forced to move, not as active subjects and creators of their realities (Papadopoulos &

Tsianos 2013, 185). In contrast to this conception of migration as a dependent variable of “objective factors”, a focus on migrants’ subjectivity underscores the persistence of ‘moments of autonomy’ of migration within ever more pervasive regimes of border and migration control (Scheel et al. 2015, 85). In this respect, my approach comes close to the perspective of the *autonomy of migration* which sees migrants as autonomous subjects and considers the responsive nature of immigration controls to migratory practices rather than the other way around (Papadopoulos & Tsianos 2013). It wishes to highlight the subjective aspects of movement before and beyond its control.

In this approach, the everyday experiences, understandings, meaning-making, expectations and practices of migrants are taken as starting points when looking at migration. A specific interest is put on immigration regulations and restrictions, and the consequences these have on the everyday lives and livelihoods of migrants. The irregular situations of migrants are understood as produced by a conflictual process which is filled by unquestioned suppositions concerning movement, exclusion and inclusion as well as citizenship (Mezzadra 2010). Do migrants always want to be citizens? Do they, in fact, already act as citizens in many aspects? The straightforward dichotomy between ‘insiders’ and ‘outsiders’ becomes challenged (also Andrijasevic & Anderson 2009, 366; Sharma 2009, 467; Calavita 2005, 158–168).

The autonomy of migration approach considers transnational migration in the historical context of global capitalism and the precariat. It often represents ‘irregular migrants’ or ‘*sans papiers*’ as the new political agents of change who enact contestation and debate as they highlight the gap between (human) rights in theory and in practice. While this is an important critique, it may also have its downsides. It may have a “fixing effect” of its own by converting migrants into certain kinds of political actors, and thus creating a new, equally solidifying category of the ‘irregular migrant’ (also Sharma 2009).

The concrete experiences of migration status and irregularity are composed inside several hierarchical structures, such as the ones referring to country of origin, social class, gender, life course, ethnic origin and sexuality. Migrants are often constructed as the poor and desperate in the context of economically, socially and historically shaped inequalities (Leinonen 2012; Andrijasevic & Anderson 2009). In this research, I want to consider the notions of ‘migration’ and the ‘migrant’ starting from the experiences and accounts of the research participants. The ‘migrant’ is tackled as a shifting, moral as well as a formal, category inside the *intersections* of social hierarchies.

Already labelled as a “buzzword” (Davis 2008) in contemporary feminist theory, the term ‘intersectionality’ was originally coined by Kimberlé Crenshaw (1991; 1989) in

her articles on how law responds to issues of both gender and race discrimination. The need to make visible a multiplicity of experiences and realities falling between both feminist and anti-racist discourses was not new, as such. Since the early 1980s, feminists (e.g. Mohanty 1984; Anthias & Yuval-Davis 1983; Davis 1981) had been questioning the appropriateness of speaking about “women” as a unitary group with a shared experience, on the one hand, and about patriarchy as a singular system of power and domination, on the other. An intersectional perspective can be traced back even further, for example to the famous discourse of Sojourner Truth at the Women’s Rights Convention in Akron, Ohio, in 1851, where she questioned the universality of white bourgeois femininity by pointing at her experience as a black (and formerly enslaved) female worker (e.g. Roth 2013, 6).

‘Intersectional feminism’ and ‘postcolonial feminism’ have both emerged from a disappointment with ethnocentric and homogenising modes of feminist thinking about women (Mohanty 2003; 1984; Anzaldúa 1990; Anzaldúa 1987). The search has been for ways to conceptualise how power structures work at the level of individual experiences, social practices, institutional arrangements, symbolic representations and imaginaries, and how the intersections of different social hierarchies produce specific forms of complex advantage and disadvantage (Davis 2014, 17; Anthias 2012, 107). By disaggregating analytical categories to reveal differences, intersectional approaches reveal the existence, and demonstrate the importance, of intra-group differences (Bastia 2014, 241).

In former debates over how different social divisions are connected, Marxist feminism, for instance, argued that gender and ethnicity were determined by social class (Anthias 2008, 13). An opposite formulation to this argued for a triple burden faced by ethnic minority women, where social class, gender and ethnic inequalities were treated as separate and adding to one another (Davis 2014, 18; Anthias 2008, 13). Intersectional approaches have then tried to move away from the reductionist or additive models by treating divisions as constituted in interaction with each other (Anthias 2002). They have also stressed the researcher’s curiosity and creativity to raise new questions, engage reflexively and critically with previously held assumptions and be flexible in her encounters with the empirical material (Davis 2014, 21–25).

Intersectionality thus refers to the intersections of different social relations in every concrete subject, and emphasises the importance of attending to the multiple social structures and processes that intertwine to produce specific social locations (Anthias 2012, 107; Gunnarsson 2011, 25). It argues for the importance of looking at the ways in which different social divisions and hierarchies inter-relate in people’s lives (Anthias 2008, 13). These different structures are parallel, processual and mutually shape each other in fact perhaps more than intersecting (Danermark 2014; Anthias 2013; Anthias 2008; Yuval-Davis 2006b).

The temporal dimension becomes important here as well, since positionality encompasses both being and becoming, and while it has its present effects, it is also changing and dynamic (Martinez Dy et al. 2014, 448). There are also limitations or weaknesses in the scholarship on intersectionality, which include lack of specific methodology, vague terminology, lack of interest in broader structures and lack of precise conceptualisations of power (Bastia 2014, 246). Intersectionality has also been predominantly employed and discussed by U.S. and European feminists (Bastia 2014, 246; Roth 2013, 3–4).

In an intersectional analysis, focus is often put on the “big three” of gender, ethnicity/race and social class (Anthias 2013). There are on-going debates as to which other categories should or should not be included in the analysis (Bastia 2014, 244–245; Davis 2014, 19). I do not think, however, that the number of categories introduced in intersectional research approaches in general is as important as making sure that the categories employed in any given study are actually put to work through an intersectional reading, and the ones most able to offer explanatory insights over the issues under scrutiny. In nearly any situation multiple categories of differences are involved, while at the same time not every conceivable difference is relevant to a particular situation (Davis 2014, 27).

Here I have chosen the social hierarchical categories of interest, in practice, by considering firstly the similarities and secondly the differences between the research participants. The first consideration, therefore, consisted of categories which separated the participants from other migrant groups and migration contexts, while the second referred to the participants’ internal differences. The participants shared the same gender and geopolitical region of origin which were both of importance with respect to the gendered patterns of migration from Latin America to Spain and the more generally postcolonial context of their migration. The participants differed in terms of social class, ethnic origin, nationality and age or life course stage. They shared the category of transnational migrancy, as such, while their experiences of migration and migration status were different. The categories I chose to include for the intersectional reading of the participants’ migration experiences had to carry some explanatory power over the differences in the participants’ experiences, for instance of transnational connections or the consequences of migration status irregularity.

Therefore, in the context of this research, I am interested in the participants’ intersectional locations involving the categories of gender, social class, life course, regionality and ethnic origin. I study how and in what ways the intersections of these social relations can be both mutually enforcing and contradictory (Anthias 2008, 16). In an intersectional research analysis inspired by the insights of critical realism, the researcher starts from the understanding that there are forces involved in different hierarchical structures in society which influence situations and experiences in a

certain way in a certain historical and geopolitical context (Martinez Dy et al. 2014; Danermark 2008). Intersectionality thus allows taking into consideration different types of structural mechanisms operating at the same time and influencing one another. As such, it is the point of departure for an analysis and not its end result. This means that instead of my research result being that there is an (inexplicable or indivisible) complexity of categories and hierarchies, my intention is to gain some understanding on how these work. I also wish to depict and explain privilege as well as disadvantage (Bastia 2014, 243–244; Anthias 2012, 107).

Thinking about multiple attachments and positionalities is not novel as such but rather involves the application of a fundamental sociological insight in that individuals engage in various, sometimes conflicting or contradictory social roles (Faist et al. 2013, 143). A transnational approach to this adds that such attachments, roles and belongings can extend across the borders of states (ibid.). These locations, as well as their significance or consequences, may also change due to migration (Roth 2013, 2, 28–29).

By adopting an intersectional lens in transnational migration research it is therefore possible to broaden empirical and analytical procedures and in this way refuse a straightforward ‘either/or’ logic of methodological nationalism (Faist et al. 2013, 143). National or regional groups are far from homogenous, and an intersectional approach helps take this into account (ibid., 141). In addition, the question “what is this a case of?” should not concentrate solely on migrancy, nationality or ethnicity merely because one is dealing with the experiences of transnational migrants (ibid., 143). As the intersectional approach understands social categories as relational to each other, it also assists the research in not representing some groups or experiences as straightforwardly and uniformly privileged while viewing others as stripped of any possibility of active subjectivity.

To conclude this subchapter, I wish to turn briefly to the notion of (in)visibility. The term ‘migrant’ carries with it connotations of visible difference from the majority ‘norm’ (e.g. Guðjónsdóttir 2014, 177). In contrast to the hypervisible spaces of state surveillance operations and media images of “mass migration”, however, migrants themselves often become obscured while they are rendered socially visible or invisible through complex hierarchies of power and dominance (Baird 2012, 3; Bigo 2002). Visible difference and the ways in which some traits in some contexts lead to higher levels of exclusion, prejudice and discrimination reflect power relations emanating from histories of racism and colonialism (Williams & Graham 2014, 13).

Yet the practices and consequences of (in)visibility in migration have only recently started to attract more attention in migration research (e.g. Baird 2014; Guðjónsdóttir 2014; Juul 2014; Leinonen & Toivanen 2014; Leinonen 2012; Sardinha 2011; Colic-Peisker & Tilbury 2007). Although the notion of ‘migrant (in)visibility’ often refers

to marked or unmarked embodiment (Mas Giralt 2011, 311), it may also be connected for instance with being visible, i.e. audible, through language use (Guðjónsdóttir 2014, 177; Leinonen 2012, 2014; Colic-Peisker & Tilbury 2007, 61). Social visibility is registered through bodies, clothing, attitudes, speech etc. (Baird 2014, 3; Knowles 2013, 652), and it is in connection with the intersectional location of the subject. Visibility may also be *actively* managed, obscured, hidden or revealed and negotiated (Mas Giralt 2011, 332).

Here I will explore empirically the link between social (in)visibility and migration through studying the ways in which the consequences of migration status and irregularity for time-space autonomy and belonging became related to (in)visibility. Through the participative use of creative and visual research methods, I have also aimed to turn visible the participants' perceptions of the host society as a space for their everyday life in migration. Inside the intersectional framework of my analysis, I am interested in how migrants' social (in)visibility is constructed through intersecting locations concerning for instance ethnic and national origin, life course and social class. Gender becomes as well important from the point of view of migrant (in)visibility, within the gendered nature of immigration from Latin America to Barcelona.

Guðbjört Guðjónsdóttir (2014, 176), has pointed out that migration research ignores or overlooks comparatively affluent migrants, apart from the research focused specifically on professional expatriates or retirees (for example Benson & O'Reilly 2009; O'Reilly & Benson 2009). Interest in social research more generally is often ignorant of and turns away from the constructions of the 'unmarked' (Brekhus 1998). The heterogeneity of the intersectional locations of the participants in this research, on the one hand, and the specific (arguably) postcolonial context of their migration, on the other, offer a possibility to address the complexities of migrants' visibility and invisibility, difference and sameness, privilege and non-privilege, inclusion and exclusion. The advantageous locations reflect the disadvantaged ones, and all ultimately cast light on how global power hierarchies are played out in a local context (Guðjónsdóttir 2014, 176).

2.2.4 Migrant subjectivities

The concept of subjectivity has several dimensions, as it can be employed at least in connection with 1) personhood and identity, 2) consciousness, reflection and cognition, 3) feelings, beliefs and desires, 4) agency and power, 5) knowledge, reality and truth. In this research, I take on the notion of subjectivity firstly in the sense of viewing the research participants as active subjects in their lives, inside the contextual and structural constraints imposed on them and able to navigate and negotiate within these constraints. Secondly, I see the concept of subjectivity as a means of considering the participants as reflexive beings who make decisions and

reflect upon and cope with their practical and emotional consequences. Lastly, subjectivity entails bringing the migrants' perceptions, lived experiences and understanding to the fore.

Subjectivity often becomes associated merely with personal perceptions and responses to a unique situation. Instead, I view subjectivities here as intrinsically shaped inside the fundamental interdependence of human beings with their environment (Buffington 2007, 1642). The subject is always linked to something outside of it (Mansfield 2000, 3). What we do and how we act derive much from the connections we have to other people, events and institutions, whether these are geographically close or distant or located in the present or past (Conradson & McKay 2007, 167). People articulate who they are or where they wish to belong in multiple webs of sexual, ethnic, familial, colonial, political, institutional and cultural co-ordinates. Subjectivity in this sense is produced through historical relationships perpetuated by institutions in power, such as church, family, school, mass media and academia (Härting 2005). In short, subjectivity does not develop entirely on the subject's own terms (Moya 1997). I view this as compatible with Roy Bhaskar's (1986, 122–129) TMSA, discussed above, which views social structures as defining the individual's location and materials (means, media, resources, rules) for action, while it also understands structures as depending on the acting individual to be sustained or transformed.

Subjectivity is the view of the subject as an existentially complex being who feels, thinks, reflects, makes and seeks meaning (Ortner 2005, 33). In this way, subjectivity also becomes understood as the effect of a process of subject production that all subjects must keep up, in order to be culturally existing and intelligible to themselves, their families, communities and the state (Buffington 2007, 1648). While transnational communities might be seen to foster cosmopolitan subjectivities and multicultural pluralism, they are also touched by gender, social class and other patterns of difference. Movement between settings is regarded here as an important influence on subjectivities (Conradson & McKay 2007, 168).

The concept of subjectivity also refers to a language of citizenship, of being the subject of a state and as such endowed with rights and obligations (Härting 2005). Subjectivity can be considered pertinent to subjection and regulation through normative institutional structures, such as regulations and discourses, and at the same time related to movement and agency (Andrijasevic & Anderson 2009, 366). In this way, it "oscillates between the subject as subjected by power and the subject as imbued with the possibility to transcend the processes of subjection that have shaped it" (Scheel et al. 2015, 83). This understanding intends to avoid the voluntaristic and individualistic undertones that accompany the notion of agency in much of the conventional migration theorising where migrants become framed as atomised individual rational-choice actors merely confronting external structures (Scheel et al.

2015, 83; also Buffington 2007, 1643–1645). It also aims for a correction to a simplistic dichotomy between agents and victims (Sajed 2006). Furthermore, it considers problematic the presentation of agency as non-gendered in a way which works to construe gender as “influences on but not constitutive of agency” (Buffington 2007, 1645). I do not, however, wish to dismiss agency or treat it necessarily as subordinate to subjectivity (ibid., 1649). I consider them as interconnected, as I see subjectivity as a necessary part of understanding “how people (try to) act on the world even as they are acted upon” (Ortner 2005, 34).

Therefore, while attempting to challenge the atomised and voluntaristic traits of agency in relation to mobility, my focus is on migrant subjectivity also in order to challenge the idea of the humble, apologising and hopeless migrant. Often specifically women migrants are depicted as victims of forcefully imposed mobility and crude exploitation (also Jönsson 2014; Lutz 2010). Advocating for and studying subjectivity is combatting the view of migrant women as ‘non-persons’ (dal Lago 2005) and non-agents. I wish to put forward and consider forms of subjectivity which challenge the understanding of migrants as economically desperate and destitute individuals whose mobility is promoted by economic necessity or acute humanitarian need thus obscuring the myriad realities present in contemporary transnational migrations (Andrijasevic & Anderson 2009, 363). From a social work perspective, as already addressed above, this simplistic view may lead for instance to a construction of a certain narrow type of “victimised” individuals who become the ones entitled to support and assistance.

It is important to repeat that this emphasis does not mean that I view migrants as isolated and free from constraints. On the contrary, my view of subjectivity is relational and situated. Therefore, it takes into account the intersectional structural situatedness of subjects in the time-space contexts in which they find themselves, their personal life course settings for the motivations and consequences of movement, their family ties and intergenerational responsibilities, as well as their personal emotions, fears and desires. The focus on migrant subjectivities is also aimed at challenging the often completely unquestioned economic logic of migration as a restricted understanding of mobility, its motivations and consequences (Arango 2004, 20, ref. Lutz 2010, 1659).

The concept of subjectivity encompasses the dimensions of personhood, identity, relationality, contextuality and agency. Subjectivity is about reflections, perceptions, affections, desires and fears, which are shaped inside and provoked by the surrounding cultural and social formations (Ortner 2005, 31, 34). Subjectivity is also rooted in time and place, as it denotes cultural and historical consciousness (Buffington 2007, 1650; Ortner 2005, 34). Finally, subjects are always more than merely occupants of particular positions or holders of certain identities (Ortner 2005,

37). Therefore, in addition to relationality and situatedness, the dimension of reflexivity and responsibility in subjectivity becomes important (also Sajed 2006).

While reflective subjects are engaged in interaction and negotiation with surrounding structures, they are also importantly in connection with their life histories and future life courses as well as with other people surrounding them (the generational chain they are part of). This nuances my interest somewhat differently from the understanding of 'migrant subjectivity' decisively in terms of collective political action or activism or 'collective intentionality' (Lugones 2003, 6). The experiences and practices discussed in this research reside on the everyday level, subtle and mundane. Of course, ruptures within the existing order are importantly also produced in the 'everyday'. The microsocial life is always a manifestation of wider social factors, forces and fractions of historical and contemporary social worlds, and therefore makes for an illuminating terrain through which to examine social orderings, resistances, divisions, stratifications and conceptualisations (Neal & Murji 2015, 812–814).

I thus aim to offer insights into the multiple locations that the participants in this research occupy as subjects and the complex and often contradictory processes through which the participants both identify with and resist particular subject positions (Andrijasevic & Anderson 2009, 366). This refers to a dynamic, complex and sometimes limited subjectivity which consists of resistance, negotiations and counteractions (Vanhakkala-Ruoho 2014, 197; Lugones 2003, 6). I therefore embrace a view of subjectivity which aims to encompass both its structural conditions and its time-space context, as well as the uniqueness of each individual existence and life course (Vanhakkala-Ruoho 2014, 199). This does not convey to the rules of a unified and straightforward action in predictable situations and circumstances.

To summarise, I view subjects as thinking, feeling, acting and reflecting individuals inside of, and in relation with, hierarchical systems of social structures and in a specific time-space context. Therefore, subjectivity can be seen as containing firstly an individual level, which consists of emotions, affections, cognition, reflection, attitudes and desires. Secondly, there is the level of the immediate surroundings consisting of generational connections, attachments and responsibilities. Lastly, the third level is formed by the fabric of social hierarchies and a certain historical time-space location. I thus understand subjectivity as a concept which encompasses considerations on identity, agency and relationality, and puts emphasis on reflexivity. In short, subjectivity becomes formed and exercised in relation to one's individual life course, generational attachments and duties, and the larger fabric of structural hierarchies in a certain time-space context.

3 LATIN AMERICAN WOMEN MIGRANTS IN BARCELONA: RESEARCH CONTEXT

3.1 Figures and estimates on global mobility and Spain's immigration boom

Figures and statistics are not objective or neutral, and more often than not they are difficult to compare across times and places. Statistical overviews on border-crossing migration face the immediate problem of how 'migrant' is defined in different contexts, since migrants may be understood, for instance, as people who are foreign-born or have foreign citizenship (in which case dual citizens may or may not be counted). Presenting figures on migration irregularity becomes more complicated still, since it is quite a contradiction in terms to present official figures on an unofficial phenomenon. Estimates of migration irregularity are difficult also because of the processual and fluctuating nature of migration statuses and irregularity as well as constant changes in migration legislation. Yet, even with these limitations, the available statistics on contemporary border-crossing migration already nuance the ways in which the phenomenon is frequently addressed and understood, and as such point to a need for more versatile approaches to studying and discussing migration.

According to the United Nations (UN 2013a), the number of people living outside their country of birth in 2013 was estimated to be around 232 million. In absolute numbers this is more than ever before, but the proportion of border-crossing migrants of the world's total population has for several years remained relatively stable, growing from 2.5 per cent in 1960 to 3.2 per cent in 2013 (also Cebolla Boado et al. 2013, 42; Castles & Miller 2009, 5; UNFPA 2006, 5–6). With regard to migrants' regions of origin and destination, 82.3 million migrants (36 per cent) were born in the 'Global South' and resided in the 'South', while 81.9 million (35 per cent) were born in the 'South' and resided in the 'North' (UN 2013b). This contradicts the general idea of contemporary border-crossing movements predominantly originating in the 'South', that is, in regions considered the 'Third World', with the 'North', that is, the 'developed' world, as the primordial destination.

According to Mathias Czaika and Hein de Haas (2014, 314), the idea of a significant global increase in volume, diversity and geographical scope of border-crossing migration reveals a rather 'Eurocentric' and ahistorical worldview, and it would be more accurate to speak of a shift in global directionality of migration with the transformation of Europe from a source region into a region of immigration. Arguably, more people than ever have the capabilities and aspirations to migrate, due, for instance, to infrastructure, education and improved access to media (ibid.,

315). Yet, while advances in communication and technology facilitate movement, they also allow people to stay at home (ibid., 317).

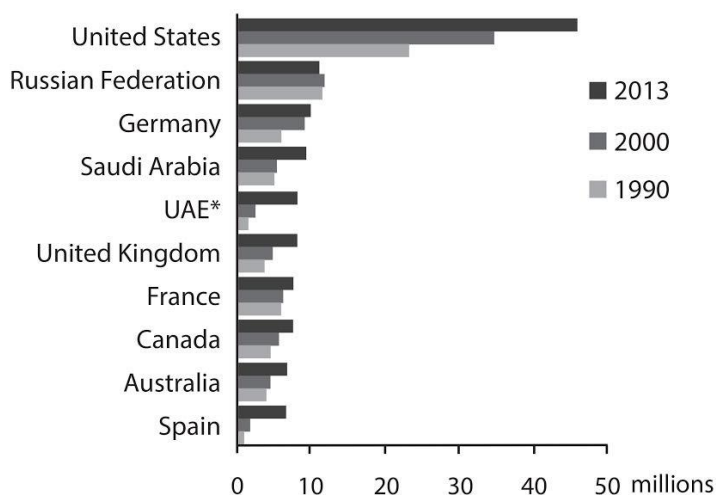
In the 1990s, Stephen Castles & Mark J. Miller (1993, 8–9) ranked the ‘feminisation of migration’ as one of the central features which define the ‘Current Migration Era’ of cross-border movements. Still, the concrete share of women in cross-border migration has remained more or less the same since 1960 up to date, comprising approximately half of transnational migrants worldwide (UN 2013a; Oso Casas 2010; Zlotnik 2003). What has gone through significant change instead has been the interest in and visibility of women as migrants, and it might be more accurate therefore to talk about the ‘feminisation of migration discourse’ (Oso Casas 2010).

This does not imply that the importance currently given to women migrants should be considered an overstatement. On the contrary, it should be understood as an attempt to fill in the gap created by a former lack of interest in a phenomenon which has always been present, through research specifically concentrating on the experiences of women migrants. It should also be acknowledged that one persisting problem has been the little impact the already existing literature has had on policies, public imaginaries and even migration research more generally (Morokvasic 1984, 899; also Lutz 2010, 1647).

Certain age cohorts are traditionally understood to have a higher propensity to migrate than others, and the highest peak in the migration profile coincides with early adulthood and the transition from education to work (King et al. 2006, 240). In 2013, migrants aged 20 to 34 represented nearly 30 per cent of all border-crossing migrants (UN 2013c). On the other hand, migrants aged 65 years and over represented 11 per cent of the total border-crossing migrant population globally (ibid.). Since people aged 65 years or older represent 8 per cent of the world’s total population, their share in the migrant population in fact exceeds that (ibid.).

In 2013, half of all border-crossing migrants worldwide resided in just ten countries. By far the largest number of migrants, almost 20 per cent, resided in the United States. In 2013, Spain was in tenth place on this list (see Figure 1.). The figure also shows the rather dramatic increase of immigration in Spain from the 1990s onwards. In the recent Spanish ‘immigration boom’, two important characteristics have been the sharp increase in the number of foreign residents from the 1990s, and several immigration legislation reforms from the 2000s onwards (Ortega Pérez 2003; Solé & Parella 2003). Another salient feature has been the high share of migration status irregularity (Arango 2013b, 27). I will tackle these aspects briefly in the following.

Figure 1: Ten countries with the largest number of cross-border immigrants in 2013.



Source: UN 2013a. Available at <http://esa.un.org/unmigration/wallchart2013.htm>. NOTE: As countries collect statistics in varying ways, it is difficult to harmonise them across countries and differences in counting affect rank orders.

In the last third of the 20th century, Spain rapidly evolved from its traditional role as an emigration country to a receiving country of migrants, mostly from Northern Africa and Latin America and other EU countries (Cebolla Boado et al. 2013, 32; Ortega Pérez 2003). Already in the 1980s, the immigrant population in Spain gradually begun to grow (Arango 2013b, 25). Yet, during a period of twenty years, between 1990 and 2010, the percentage of the immigrant population rose significantly, from 2 to 15 per cent of the total population (Cebolla Boado et al. 2013, 36; Garcés-Mascreñas 2010; Ortega Pérez 2003).

This Spanish “boom” in immigration has been explained with various factors. Spain’s economic growth is generally put out as an important explanation. Héctor Cebolla Boado et al. (2013, 42–49, 58–59, 167), however, reject this account as insufficient. They stress the heavy presence of Latin American immigration, a feature which bares more resemblance to the immigration to the United States than to other European countries during this period (ibid., 44), and look for explanations for the immigration boom in the political and economic crises that were taking place in the Latin American region, as well as in the immigration policies of Spain of the time. One important factor has been the existence of historical, cultural, linguistic and economic bonds between Spain and the Latin American and Caribbean region (Ortega Pérez 2003). Favourable visa and citizenship policies for migrants arriving

from Latin American and Caribbean countries made Spain attractive, while stricter U.S. visa requirements and border controls, especially since September 11 of 2001, made migration towards the Northern parts of the American continent more difficult (Cebolla Boado et al. 2013, 47, 56; Padilla & Peixoto 2007).

In the Latin American region, the adverse social and gender impacts of the economic structural adjustment programmes, SAPs, had led to marked levels of inequality in many countries in Latin America (McIlwaine 2011, 6). These restructurings had been attached to international loans from multilateral economic institutions, such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank (WB), and applied throughout the ‘developing world’ as a general prescription for economic problems from late 1970s onwards (Lopes 1999, 512; Wentholt et al. 1995, 88–89). Some of the main features of these programmes have been large scale privatisation and cuts in government spending in the public sector. The programmes have been subject to wide criticism for adverse social impacts, since the burden of these adjustments has fallen largely on the low and middle-income strata of societies (Yeates 2009, 17; Lopes 1999, 514). In addition, cuts in public spending impact specifically women as state employees as nurses, teachers, administrative staff etc., while women are also disproportionately affected by cuts in social welfare as primary providers of informal care (Yeates 2009, 17–18, Wentholt et al. 1995, 90).

In Southern Europe, the existence of traditionally extensive underground economy gained an important role as the demand for labour increased (González Enríquez 2007, 324; Padilla & Peixoto 2007; Ortega Pérez 2003; Solé & Parella 2003). Migration status irregularity and immigrant participation in informal employment came to predominate in Spain (Oso & Ribas-Mateos 2012; Baldwin-Edwards 2008, 1452). This enhanced the possibilities to employ migrants residing in the country with an irregular migration status as a non-regulated workforce, from the perspective of the employers, as well as the possibilities to find employment despite of an irregular migration status, from the migrant worker’s point of view. These work opportunities mainly rose in construction, agriculture, tourism, catering, cleaning and care work, and often in positions the autochthonous population would not fill (González Enríquez 2007, 327; Arango & Jachimowicz 2005; Solé & Parella 2003, 123).

The Spanish civil war, between 1936 and 1939, and the dictatorship of Francisco Franco, between 1939 and 1975, had largely isolated Spain from social changes taking place in other parts of the world during much of the 20th century, and for a country which had virtually been cut-off from the rest of the world for more than three decades, the reintroduction that came with democratic reform implied fast structural and policy changes (Garzón 2012, 2501). After 1975, political power began to be delegated towards the autonomous communities, *comunidades autónomas*, such as Catalonia. Today, in terms of migration policy and legislation,

the Kingdom of Spain is in charge of entry policies, while the autonomous communities design their integration policies which are then implemented in the day to day duties of administrators at municipal levels (Anleu Hernández & García-Moreno 2014, 92; Cebolla Boado et al. 2013, 80–81, 163; Garzón 2012, 2504; Morales & Jorba 2010, 271–272; Calavita 2005, 29). Therefore, the regional governments and municipalities assume a great deal of responsibility for immigrant integration. The partnership between subnational governments and NGOs is also important (Arango 2013a, 6).

The first legislative measure designed to regulate immigration in Spain was approved in 1985 (Garcés-Mascareñas 2010; Ortega Pérez 2003). This was a largely restrictive law designed to adapt Spanish legislation to European policies before entering the European Community. The law was passed without much public debate, and it approached immigration largely as a temporary phenomenon (Cebolla Boado et al. 2013, 62–65; González Enríquez 2007, 321; Ortega Pérez 2003). Spain entered in the EEC (the European Economic Community, later the European Union) alongside with Portugal in 1986.

Another important change in Spain's migration legislation occurred in the beginning of the year 2000, when the *Ley Orgánica 4/00* was passed. This law was notable, even exceptional, in the European context for the clear focus it had on extending political and social rights to non-EU foreigners, and for its recognition of the permanent dimension of immigration (Arango 2013a, 5; Cebolla Boado et al. 2013, 69; Garcés-Mascareñas 2010; González Enríquez 2007, 321; Ortega Pérez 2003). It, for instance, gave migrants residing with an irregular migration status access to health and education facilities by tying these rights to migrants registering themselves in the municipal population register, *el padrón*. Through this mandatory registration, *empadronamiento*, all immigrants were able to receive a health card which entitled them to health coverage and access to education for their children.

After a change in political power already the following year, however, a new version of the law was passed, which had a more restrictive nature aligning itself again with common European policies and introducing more extensive control measures (González Enríquez 2007, 322; Ortega Pérez 2003). Migrants residing with an irregular migration status retained their right to health care, basic public education and legal assistance for asylum proceedings or proceedings that might result in deportation, but they were denied political and union rights including meeting, demonstration, association, unionisation and striking (Garcés-Mascareñas 2010; Varela 2009; Calavita 2005, 33–34). During this time, the debate over immigration legislation had also become an important public matter (Gil Araujo & González-Fernández 2014, 17; González Enríquez 2007, 322). The immigration law was modified again in November 2003, allowing, for instance, the police to access data collected in the municipal population registers, *el padrón* (González Enríquez 2007,

322). Many migrants subsequently avoided registering themselves in the municipal registers. This caused difficulties for them to access the services they were entitled to. It also complicated the attempts at keeping track of the numbers of immigrants residing in Spain through this venue.⁷

From the 1990s onwards, the response of the Spanish government to the increase of migrants residing in the country with an irregular migration status has been the implementation of several ‘extraordinary regularisation programmes’, last of them in 2005 (González Enriquez 2007, 322). These initiatives have faced controversy. They have been condemned for producing a “call effect” and increasing immigration, on the one hand, and criticised for being too restrictive, on the other, in order to elicit full participation from the eligible population, for instance due to the short three month period for applications, too strict requirements for necessary documentation, as well as the limited duration of the regular status offered and the difficulties in renewing the permits resulting in many immigrants falling out again to migration status irregularity (Cebolla Boado et al. 2013, 92; Garzón 2012, 2509; Varela 2009, 128; Arango & Jachimowicz 2005; Ortega Pérez 2003).

In 2012, the health card was made contingent upon legal residence. While this did not mean a complete shutdown of health services for migrants residing in migration status irregularity, its aim was to restrict the availability of medical care to cases of urgency, pregnancy, to under-aged migrants or to people who were applying for asylum or assigned the status of victim of human trafficking (Alía 2013). This change was met with intense political, public and media debate, in which opponents claimed that it was contrary to human rights, inefficient in terms of any savings it might produce and dangerous to public health (Pejenaute 2012; Prats 2012b; SOS Racismo 2013; also Arango 2013a, 5). The new legislation was finally greeted with a rather confused application, as many regional governments seemed to reject its straightforward implementation, among them Catalonia (García de Blas 2012; García Vázquez & Ellakuria 2012; Prats 2012a; also Arango 2013a, 5).

In the beginning of 2013, the number of foreign nationals living in Spain was slightly over 5.5 million (representing almost 12 per cent of the total population), out of which around 3.1 million were non-European nationals (INE 2013a, 1). Of all non-nationals living in Spain, 25 per cent (1.4 million people) were from the Latin American and the Caribbean region (ibid., 8). Important Latin American countries of origin were Ecuador, Colombia, Bolivia, Peru, Argentina, Brazil, the Dominican

⁷ In general, there are problems in treating *el padrón* registrations as a way to estimate the size of the immigrant population in Spain, precisely since not all immigrants who reside in Spain are registered, either because they are unaware of the process, afraid of enforcement authorities’ access to the database or their registration is rejected (Escandell & Tapias 2010, 413; Arango & Jachimowicz 2005). On the other hand immigrants do not always cancel their registration in *el padrón* when they leave the country permanently (González Enriquez 2007, 324; also Godenau 2010, 14).

Republic and Paraguay (*ibid.*, 7). The number of migrants from Latin American and the Caribbean region is presumably greater than shown in the statistics, because it is relatively easy for migrants from these countries to acquire Spanish citizenship (Gil Araujo & González-Fernández 2014, 17; González Enríquez 2010, 255; González Enríquez 2007, 327–328; Padilla & Peixoto 2007).

Migration, as well as irregular migration, has been somewhat accepted in the social and political environment in Spain, and Spain has been considered an exception in Europe in terms of its (earlier) migration policies (Arango 2013a; Cebolla Boado et al. 2013, 36). There are several possible reasons for this. Firstly, numerous immigration coincided with a period of economic growth. Migrants were perceived as necessary labour force and beneficial, seen first and foremost as workers and tolerated because there was work to be done and numerous social sectors benefitted from immigration, including middle-class families who hired immigrant workers for domestic service or for care of their children and elderly (Arango 2013a, 11; Godenau 2010, 24; González Enríquez 2007, 327–331; Calavita 2005, 43).

Secondly, there has been a relative acceptance of the underground economy in Spain (Cebolla Boado et al. 2013, 90; González Enríquez 2007, 323), and since legal residence has largely depended on formal integration in the labour market, labour precariousness has in many cases simply translated into migration status irregularity (Garcés-Mascreñas 2010). Thirdly, frequent changes in the legal framework concerning immigration, and the common knowledge of the fact that migration status irregularity often results from slow bureaucracy and the understaffing of public services dealing with migration permits, has made migration status irregularity rather a common feature (González Enríquez 2007, 323; Calavita 2005, 5).

The shared postcolonial history has also contributed to the fact that many migrants were able to find work easily in the service sector, in the absence of a language barrier and due to several other presumed cultural affinities (Escandell & Tapias 2010, 412). One might also argue that due to the fact that immigration and migration status irregularity was so numerous and migrants were employed in the service sector and in domestic work or as personal carers in private households, many people had personal contacts with migrants living in a situation of migration status irregularity, indeed in many cases employed them irregularly. Of course, the fact that people benefit from the irregular labour of migrants does not necessarily mean they would have positive attitudes towards immigration as such.

Joaquín Arango (2013) has also suggested that concerns over national identity seem perhaps less relevant in Spain than in some other countries, since Spanish nationalism is in itself frequently under question by different movements towards decentralisation and regional self-government (also Martínez i Coma & Duval-

Hernández 2009). Indeed, while there has not perhaps been a more general backlash at the national level in terms of anti-immigration sentiments and politics, Catalonia stands out as an exception with more daring critique of immigration (Arango 2013a, 9). Teun A. van Dijk (2004, 32–34) has separated Spanish ‘official or centralist state nationalism’, which opposes any violation of the “national unity”, and may in this sense be seen as a continuation of the Franco period nationalism, from ‘peripheral nationalisms’, found specifically in the autonomous regions of a relatively strong and vital linguistic and cultural traditions of their own, such as the Basque Country, Galicia and Catalonia. Drawing on his insights, it seems that for instance Catalanian nationalism would thus hold the contradiction of opposing the Franco tradition of the ‘centralist state nationalism’ while at the same time promoting a nationalist image and agenda of its own, charged with demands of a “unified identity” as well as the assimilation or rejection of immigrants.

The conditions for immigration in Spain have of course changed in more recent years due to the economic crisis which hit Spain towards the end of 2000s. By the empirical phase of this research in 2012, Spain had converted into a country of net emigration (INE 2013b, 5). In the years following the economic crisis, both tolerant and adverse attitudes towards immigration seem to have increased, while ambivalent attitudes have tended to decline (Arango 2013a, 7). Most of the current debate around migration concentrates on the return migration of the immigrant population and the emigration of the autochthonous population. Still, the emigration “exodus” has also been contested (Cebolla Boado et al. 2013, 137). It has, for example, been noted that a current decline in the numbers of immigrants is due to a combination of factors, such as decrease in immigration, increase in emigration and a recently heightened pace of naturalisations (Joaquín Arango interviewed in Nogueira 2013). Nevertheless, Spain continues to host a large immigrant population which should not go overlooked in academic research (also Arango 2013b, 26).

3.2 Migration of Latin American women in Barcelona

People from former colonies have in general been strongly represented in immigration to countries with a past of a colonial empire, such as Portugal, Spain and the UK (Padilla & Peixoto 2007). In a comparative study on postcolonial migrations, Ulbe Bosma et al. (2012, 15) put emphasis on the close temporal link between colonialism and migration. They do not acknowledge the recent migration from the Latin American region to Spain as ‘postcolonial migration’ according to their definition, since most of the Spanish empire had collapsed already by the nineteenth century (most of Latin American countries declared independence between the years 1810 and 1830). However, they do view this “belated” movement as a “consequence of strong existing bonds” between Spain and the Spanish

speaking⁸ Americas, and, as such, a case in point of persisting colonial linkages (Bosma et al. 2012, 8).

Postcolonial studies generally reserve the term ‘postcolonial migrant’ for subaltern migrants from the (former) colonies, but the term might be widened to include also for instance returning members of colonial elites after the transfer of sovereignty (Bosma et al. 2012, 4–5). From a historical-structural perspective, much of contemporary migration movement is importantly postcolonial, since the current world order which shapes the context of migration movements derives from a colonialist and imperialist world history. Of course, if employed in this manner, the term quickly loses analytic firmness and applicability. Still, European immigrations and emigrations are inevitably connected to a larger history, and at the same time, postcolonial migration movements are not unique to Europe or in connection solely with European empires (Bosma et al. 2012).

I would argue that the colonial world history carries its influence in contemporary migration movements everywhere in different ways and to different degrees, and migration movements between Latin America and Europe surely build on a shared colonial and historical past. The direction of this movement has shifted through times (Yepez del Castillo 2014, 3–6), and migration between Latin America and Europe has seen several historical stages, all of which build on, enforce and reform the link upon which new stages may subsequently be formed. Firstly, these movements have comprised of migrations during the colonial era and shortly after. Secondly, from the late 19th up until the mid 20th centuries, millions of Europeans from Spain, as well as from Italy, Portugal, Germany and Poland, moved to Latin America, motivated in general by the same reasons which spurred migration to the United States and Canada during the same period: labour needs and proactive immigration policies in the “new world” versus poverty and demographic growth in the “old world” (Yepez del Castillo 2014, 4; Padilla & Peixoto 2007). There has also been politically motivated migration from Spain to different Latin American countries during the Spanish civil war and the Franco dictatorship, as well as political exile migration to Europe during the authoritarian regimes in Latin America from 1960 to 1990 (Bosma et al. 2012, 8; Padilla & Peixoto 2007).

The contemporary migration from Latin America to Southern Europe is largely addressed inside the rubric of ‘economic or labour migration’ (e.g. Gil Araujo & González-Fernández 2014; Cebolla Boado et al. 2013; Parella et al. 2013; Padilla &

⁸ In this study I will generally use the more common term Spanish instead of Castilian to refer to the predominant official language in Spain and the Spanish speaking Americas. Castilian is sometimes employed for instance in order to mark the difference between it and other co-official languages in Spain, such as Catalan, or to refer to a standard kind of Spanish as *castellano*, Castilian Spanish (see for instance Real Academia Española 2005). In the result chapters, I use the terminology employed by the participants.

Peixoto 2007). Reflecting the neoclassical theory of migration's concepts, the 'push factors' for this movement can be located in high unemployment rates, political instability and the weakening of the welfare state which has also meant a decrease in social services spending, while the main 'pull factor' in turn has been the demand for labour in Europe (Cea D'Ancona et al. 2013, 214; Padilla & Peixoto 2007). Policies that permit dual citizenship as well as citizenship based on ancestry have also allowed eligibility for citizenships of Spain, Portugal, Italy and France (Bosma et al. 2012, 8; Padilla & Peixoto 2007). Latin Americans were for some time exempted from the requirement of holding tourist visas in order to enter Spain and the Schengen area. Little by little, visa requirements have been imposed for citizens of the Dominican Republic, Cuba, Peru, Colombia, Ecuador and, lastly in 2007, Bolivia (Gil Araujo & González-Fernández 2014, 20; Garcés-Mascareñas 2010; Padilla & Peixoto 2007).

The autonomous communities of Catalonia, Valencia, Murcia, Andalusia and Madrid, and especially the cities of Barcelona and Madrid, have traditionally hosted the largest numbers of immigrants in Spain (González Enríquez 2007, 326; Arango & Jachimowicz 2005; Calavita 2005, 52; Ortega Perez 2003). As a region located in the north-western tip of the Iberian Peninsula and separated from France by the Pyrenees, Catalonia has always been a place of movement and transition. It has been a region of dynamic industrial activities since the early 19th century onwards and, as such, also a region of reception for internal immigrants coming from other areas of Spain, such as Andalusia, Extremadura, Aragon and some parts of Castile (Garzón 2012, 2499; Calavita 2005, 65–66).

Since the hosting of the 1992 Olympics, the city of Barcelona experienced a (controversial) process of urban renewal in a global context. It started to attract important levels of investment of international corporations as well as tourism. The sheer global popularity of Barcelona is arguably one of reasons also for migrants to settle in the city. Today most people in Barcelona work in the service sector which is highly polarised between high-skilled well-paid jobs in management and accounting of transnational companies and low-skilled and lower-paid jobs in cleaning, catering and retail (Garzón 2012, 2503). Migrants from the Latin American and the Caribbean region form a large proportion of immigration to Catalonia and Barcelona (Anleu-Hernández & García-Moreno 2014, 90). According to Catalan statistics (IDESCAT 2012), in 2012 the largest groups of foreign citizens residing in Catalonia came from Morocco and Romania, followed by Italy, China, Ecuador, Pakistan, Bolivia, France, Colombia and Peru. For the city of Barcelona the largest groups of foreign citizens came from Morocco, Italy, Ecuador, China, Romania, Pakistan, Bolivia, France, Peru and Colombia.



From the 1990s onwards, immigration to Southern European countries, such as Spain, has shown a high propensity of women workers coming from regions considered the ‘Third World’ (Oso Casas 2010). In the beginning of 2013, 57 per cent of Latin American migrants living in Spain were women (Gil Araujo & González-Fernández 2014, 17). Latin American women have been the heads of their transnational households and pioneers in migration chains (Oso Casas 2010). This history of immigration with a high percentage of women has been referred to as another Spanish curiosity (Cebolla Boado et al. 2013, 122; Oso Casas 2010). The tendency has slightly balanced during the 2000s through family reunification and certain shifts in labour demands stressing, for instance, the construction sector, and prompting male immigration. As generally in economic distress, also the in economic recession in Spain it has been the male predominant sectors of the labour market which have suffered more rapidly, thus in turn halting this “balancing process” (Cebolla Boado et al. 2013, 122; Oso Casas 2010).

In the case of women migrants, the jobs available for them fall widely into the disputed categories of unproductive, reproductive and nonmarket labour. These include domestic work and different kinds of caring work, cleaning work and sex work, which are occupations often referred to as the service sector, i.e. seen as services, instead of actual work (Agustín 2003a; also Oso Casas 2010)⁹. Importantly

⁹ While the content of the service sector and services such as domestic and care services are disputed,

for the region of Catalonia and the city of Barcelona, there already existed a tradition of internal immigration of women coming from poorer regions of Spain, such as Andalusia, to work as domestic service workers and carers in private households. There has therefore been a transition in this work niche to a workforce increasingly composed of Latin American women, who are generally preferred to women from other countries because of perceived cultural proximity (Gil Araujo & González-Fernández 2014, 17; Garzón 2012, 2506).

Russel King & Elisabetta Zontini (2000) present a series of factors operating behind the development of feminised migration in Spain, including the rapid rise in education standards amongst the autochthonous population after the end of the Franco rule from the early 1980s onwards, women's access to higher education and skilled labour market coupled with a lack of evened distribution of domestic tasks between genders, the failure of the state to provide for services, and the idea of the domestic maid being a symbol of social prestige (also Gil Araujo & González-Fernández 2014, 15). While women have moved to work into the public sphere, men, in contrast, have moved to a much lesser degree into the private, thus creating a situation where either women do double labour or someone else is hired to do the caring and housework (Agustín 2003a, 388; Phizacklea 2003; Zlotnik 2000). This interlinkage between capitalism and patriarchy leads to a sexual division of labour on a global scale, in which migrant women, often working in irregular conditions, are liberating women and men in the 'First World' economies from the difficult "second shift" by caring for their homes, their children and their elderly (Gil Araujo & González-Fernández 2014, 15; Oso 2003, 207, 213; Westwood & Phizacklea 2000, 133).

Latin American women migrants are therefore often considered to travel to Spain in order to work in domestic work or as personal carers (irregularly) and send remittances to their families in their countries of origin (Garzón 2012, 2505). At the time of the research at hand, this migration pattern was considered especially strong for women coming from the Andean countries, such as Ecuador and Bolivia (Gil Araujo & González-Fernández 2014, 19). Since the 1990s, feminist scholars have been analysing the link between globalisation and social reproduction within the concept of the 'new international division of reproductive labour' (Yeates 2009, 19–20; Pessar & Mahler 2003; Ehrenreich & Hochschild 2002). This "transfer of inequality between women" involved in domestic and care work brings with it deep exclusion in terms of the right to family life, care and affection (Gil Araujo & González-Fernández 2014, 14). On the other hand, the emigration of female family members to provide reproductive services abroad ensures the economic survival of many families and communities (Yeates 2009, 22). On a country level, the financial

the work, as Laura Agustín (2003a, 377, 379–381) has written, "goes on, mainly uncounted, undervalued, unregulated and thus subject to different kind of exploitation".

remittances transnational migrants send home may exceed the value of exports and official foreign aid (Orozco 2005; 2002).

In the jobs women fill, the temporality and informality of employment relations, as well as the level of income and type of living arrangements, may make it difficult to satisfy family reunification requirements. Domestic work, for instance, often implies limits on family life, specifically in the case of live-in workers, and the requirements for housing and employment for official family reunification are thus not easy to fill (Gil Araujo & González-Fernández 2014, 14). The codings of labour markets and migration regulations still impact differently on migrant women and men (Juliano Corregido 2012, 530; Andrijasevic 2009, 392). Norms about morality and sexuality are deeply entrenched within immigration procedures, and female sexuality in particular remains bound by socially ‘acceptable’ notions of femininity most visible in numerous anti-trafficking campaigns which discourage women from migrating by equating informal labour migration with forced prostitution and contrasting it to home as a safe haven (Andrijasevic 2009, 390; also Agustin 2003a).

Feminist migration scholars have played a key role in developing an analysis of migration that challenges the mainstream view of labour migration as male-driven (Andrijasevic 2009, 392). It has been important to recognise women migrants as economically active workers and breadwinners. In the context of this research, I would argue, however, that paying attention only to the jobs that for instance Latin American women migrants do, is another extreme which essentialises migrants, women as well as men, as workers and denies the vast diversity of trajectories, hopes and experiences these people have (Agustin 2003a, 391).

To conclude this chapter on the context of the research, I wish to briefly pay attention to what or who I am referring to when I use the concept ‘Latin America(n)’. It may be said that the Spanish empire governed its possessions in the ‘New World’ with determination and unity through three institutions they implemented aggressively: the Spanish language, the Roman Catholic Church and the law (González Echevarría 2011, 7). Independence did not shatter this unity, which is why there still exists an overarching “Latin American cultural tradition” (ibid., 8). Latin America became called ‘Latin’, however, by the French, after they embarked on their imperial venture in Mexico in the 1850s, with the intention of forging an alliance against Anglo America, namely the United States (ibid.).

A distinction between Latin America and Anglo America is of course controversial, since both areas are culturally and linguistically anything but homogeneous. The terms may rightly be criticised as Eurocentric from the point of view of American indigenous or African descent populations. This simplification also quarrels, for instance, with an inclusion of the Dutch or English-speaking Caribbean to Latin America, while at the same time French-speaking territories in Canada are generally

included in Anglo America. However, and as inaccurate as it is, 'Latin America' has gained its terminological ground, although it should be employed recognising that no term ever completely reflects the essence and complexities of the region, nation or group it aims to designate (González Echevarría 2011, 8).

I apply the term 'Latin America' loosely to the regions of the American continent which have been under Spanish colonial domination, thus ruling out, among others, Brazil. In this respect, terms such as Hispanic America or Spanish America might have been more to the point. These terms, however, have problems of their own, and not least because they seem to stumble over the fact that the countries in this region have a history of independence from Spain for more than 150 years. 'Spanish-speaking' Americas might have worked better in this sense. Still, I chose to speak of 'Latin America' mainly for practical reasons, because it is the most commonly used term in everyday speech, in English as well as in Spanish (*América Latina*), and everyone generally knows directly (however vaguely or imprecisely) what region is being referred to. I could also have chosen a more geographical term, such as 'South and Central America', but this would have lacked Mexico, and in some accounts also the Caribbean, and adding these would have made things quite impractical. 'Latin American and the Caribbean countries' (LAC countries) might have been an option as well, but I ruled it out, firstly also as too long and impractical, and, secondly, because even though it might attempt to evade some cultural or linguistic oversimplifications, it does not entirely succeed in this.

In the context of this research, the term 'Latin American' lacks specificity regarding the country of origin or emigration. The participants came from nine different countries, including Mexico, the Dominican Republic, Cuba, Venezuela, Bolivia, Paraguay, Uruguay, Argentina and Chile. One argument for scholarly analysis at a broader than national or state level, while this does not mean shifting the national dimension into oblivion, can be found in the theoretical and analytical premises of transnationalism, introduced previously in chapter 2.2.1. Another argument stems from the attributes of postcolonialism, tackled previously in chapter 2.1 and above. In this research the postcolonial past, and the allegedly shared history, culture and language thereof, become challenged, however, when Barcelona and Catalonia are taken as the context, as will be discussed especially in chapter 7.2.

Finally, I part from the idea that 'Latin American women migrants' are understood and represented as an emblematic and homogenous group in the contemporary border-crossing migration of women from the 'Third World' to the 'First World'. In research on populations with a 'Latino origin'¹⁰ in the U.S., the rather simple and

¹⁰ While in the Spanish language, the word *latino/a* signifies a connection with Latin linguistic or cultural heritage, the term 'Latinos' is employed in the U.S. context to refer to the segment of the U.S. population that traces its descent to the Spanish speaking Caribbean and Latin American worlds

tired idea of "'Latinos' are one big family" raises constant critique, since it glosses over the contradictions, tensions and fissures around social class, ethnic origin, gender, nationality and regionality, which evidently exist (Suárez-Orozco & Páez 2002, 3; also Mas Giralt 2011). Instead of trying to present Latin American migrant women living in Barcelona as some sort of seamless whole, the aim of this research is quite the contrary. I wish to challenge this simplistic view by studying the interactions and results of different locations the participants occupied in terms of ethnic and national background, social class, language and life course. I understand 'Latin American' importantly as a historical, political and cultural category. Upon entering Barcelona, however, the participants also underwent differentiated processes of ethnisation, which as such is one of the foci of interest in this research.

(Suárez-Orozco & Páez 2002). In addition to this confusion, the term is as well prone to the above mentioned criticism of ethnical and cultural Eurocentricism.

4 FROM ENCOUNTERS ON A PARK BENCH: CONDUCTING THE RESEARCH



4.1 Empirical phase in Barcelona

The empirical phase of this research was conducted in Barcelona between March and May 2012 with fifteen participants from nine Latin American and Caribbean countries. My main empirical method consisted of two interactive and loosely thematic interviews with each participant. The interviews were complemented by the participative use of creative research methods giving the participants the possibility to individually explore the research topics through different creative means, such as photography, writing or drawing. In this subchapter, I present the process of getting in contact with the research participants and the encounters with them. I consider my research approach and empirical methods as well as my own position as researcher, and present some general features of the research participants.

4.1.1 NGOs as gatekeepers

In order to contact potential study participants, I used gatekeepers and the snowball method. Both of these methods have been found useful while studying ‘hard to

reach¹¹ populations (Bilger & van Liempt 2009a, 10; Bilger & van Liempt 2009b, 124–125; Dahinden & Efonayi-Mäder 2009, 103–106; Atkinson & Flint 2001; Cornelius 1982, 392–393). Snowball method, or snowball sampling, simply means asking a person already participating in the research to provide contact with someone she knows in order to reach more participants. It is often employed in research where some degree of trust is required already for initiating contact with potential participants (Atkinson & Flint 2001). The same applies to the so-called gatekeepers, such as NGO workers, who ideally have access to many potential participants and can contact them in order to suggest participation (Dahinden & Efonayi-Mäder 2009, 104).

While these methods have been found economical and efficient, there are also restrictions to them. They may, for instance, overemphasise cohesiveness in social networks and miss people not included in them, as well as create research fatigue or compromise confidentiality and anonymity within a certain group (Atkinson & Flint 2001). They may also result in a highly homogeneous group of participants (Bilger & van Liempt 2009b, 124–125; Dahinden & Efonayi-Mäder 2009, 103; Shaver 2005, 296), or altogether hinder or obstruct the research from contacting certain individuals, thus producing a ‘gatekeeper bias’ (Groger et al. 1996) in research.

I made contact with ten NGOs (i.e. non-governmental organisations) working with issues concerning migration. I found the NGOs mainly on the internet, and approached them by telephone calls, emails or by visiting directly the NGO offices. I provided the organisation with a short presentation letter of my proposal for collaboration, in which I briefly stated that my interest was to study the everyday experiences of Latin American migrant women for a PhD research which employed participative creative research methods and individual interviews as methods. I wished that the NGOs might offer me the possibility to get in contact with potential participants and possibly also a place to conduct the interviews. I offered to do voluntary work in exchange for collaboration. I also offered to send copies of the finished dissertation as well as a separate report in Spanish with the main results and information on the research methodology for possible future use in the work of the organisations. Should the NGO express interest, we then arranged a meeting in order to further discuss the research and the possible collaboration.

¹¹ The concept of ‘hard to reach’ is often used in outreach work done with people who are considered to live outside the realm of societies’ social and health services, referring to, for instance, drug users, homeless people, sex workers or migrants. While the aim of “reaching people” for service provision or research might well arise from benevolent intentions, the question remains, though, whether everyone actually wants to be reached. And if not, what does this tell about the services or research? As Laura Agustin (2007b, 529) has written, some people conceived of as ‘hard to reach’ in fact do not need or want the type of services offered. Theodore Baird (2014, 3), in turn, has pointed out that state-based practices of managing populations are bound up with research methods of collecting information and statistics, and contemporary methods in researching ‘hidden’ and ‘hard to reach’ populations have also expanded the means by which institutions are able to make certain populations more visible.

From the ten organisations I contacted, collaboration was finally realised with two.¹² I was able to reach several potential participants and establish contact with them through these two organisations. These NGOs were also very different from each other, thus preventing the possible downside in using gatekeepers of the group of participants becoming too homogeneous. One organisation was a large international NGO working with a wide range of issues, migration included, while the other was a relatively small and local organisation working solely with migrant and refugee populations. It should be noted that while I was searching for participants who were clients of and/or collaborators in the activities of different NGOs, my interest was in the everyday experiences of transnational migration and not in migrant associations or “migrant activism” as such. Potential further participants were discussed in some interviews with the research participants, but eventually only one participant was reached through the snowball method, mainly because of the time limitations of my stay in Barcelona.

The NGOs which collaborated with the research mentioned that they did so because they saw this kind of collaboration as part of their dissemination work, or because they considered that the research might offer them insights in order to enhance their work with migrants. The organisations which decided not to collaborate generally expressed that they did not have enough Latin American women as service-users in order to be able to suggest participation to a “sufficient” amount of participants. Some stated that they were already collaborating, or had in the near past collaborated, with a similar project either from the realm of academia, media or arts.

The NGO workers sent me lists of contacts of women their organisation knew or had worked with. The NGO workers had already contacted the women in order to suggest participation, and the women had expressed an initial interest in participating and given consent to the NGO worker forwarding me their contact information (first and/or last name, country of origin and telephone number). I then contacted the women directly by telephone to arrange our first meeting. I participated in the activities of one of the organisations during the empirical phase in Barcelona. During the rest of the research process I was in contact with the NGOs occasionally by emails to inform them on the advancing of the research.

The NGOs served as recommenders and backups for both myself and the participants. In this way, they offered a valuable support for the research process. This also meant that I had to rely on their initial evaluation as to the number and type of contacts I was offered. I found it important to actively and clearly differentiate the research from the work done by the NGOs, and for instance while going through the verbal informed consent with the participants I put clear emphasis on this. During

¹² I will not name the collaborating NGOs here for participant anonymity reasons.

the empirical phase I noticed, however, that since my relationship with the participants had originated with the help of the NGOs, entirely separating myself from them was not possible.

I sometimes felt heavily the presence of the NGOs in the decisions of the women on whether or not to participate. Some stated that they were keen to collaborate because they valued highly the work done by the NGO and the NGO worker that had suggested this. Some participants also mentioned that one motivation for participating had been to be able to “give something back” to the organisation that had offered them help, advice and support. Sometimes the NGO was still an active part of the participant’s life, either through giving financial or other type of support or as a channel for work opportunities and contacts. I found myself wondering what part the research finally played in the relationship of mutual give and take between the NGO and its service-users. In addition, as I was also interested in exploring the participants’ experiences of different kind of social support, the fact that NGOs had served as gatekeepers did not offer an easy platform for the participants to consider the work these NGOs themselves had done or were still doing with them. However, since this was not a central topic in my research interest, I do not consider this highly problematic.

In general, getting in contact with NGOs and suggesting to them a collaboration in the research was a process of mutual evaluation, where I as a researcher considered the work done by the NGO, as well as their willingness and suitability to collaborate with the research, while the workers of the NGO evaluated my research proposal and my collaboration skills. Through different directories on the internet, I could find a large number of organisations working with the theme of migration in Barcelona, so it was more a case of narrowing down the list of different possible organisations to get in contact with. I felt it was important to be able to personally visit the organisations’ facilities to get a better idea of their work. But while I was in a sense making a selection, I also had to convince the NGOs on the benefits of collaborating in the research and on the research idea. What the organisations wanted to know of the research, and for instance how much written material they required, varied a great deal. As a result, this was not a routine phase where one would merely go about with readymade and fixed material “from door to door”, but an active process of constantly reforming and rephrasing, questioning and specifying the research and its methods.

4.1.2 Research participants

Through the collaborating organisations, I received the contact information of seventeen women, of whom fourteen finally participated in the research. The three women who did not participate made this decision because of sudden changes in their work or personal lives, which rendered them unavailable. I also made one

further contact through one of the participants. Finally, then, the number of the participants rose to fifteen.

I made the first contact with the participants over the telephone. The women had already been informed, to a varying degree, about the research, but generally on the phone I made a short introduction of the research, as well as of the participation and its timeline. Some of the participants also asked questions about the research, such as why I was interested in this topic in the first place, where were the results of the research going to be published, and how much time the participation would take. Most of the participants expressed immediate enthusiasm for collaborating with and participating in a research project with an aim to make the experiences of migrant women more generally known.

The participants came from different parts of Latin American and the Caribbean region. Their countries of origin included Argentina, Uruguay, Paraguay, Chile, Bolivia, Venezuela, Dominican Republic, Cuba and Mexico. Their ages varied from little over twenty to almost seventy years. Most of them were between thirty to forty years old. The time the participants had been living in Barcelona, or in other parts of Spain, varied from one to fourteen years, and on average this was six years. Four of the participants had had prior experience of migration either to Spain or to other parts of the world.

Several participants had higher level studies after finishing high school and corresponding work experience prior their migration. Three of the participants had obtained work in Barcelona which matched their education. Almost all of the participants had been working without official work contracts at some point of their migration. At the time of our encounters, four participants were working full-time with official work contracts and two participants worked as freelancers. Five of the participants were not working, and four of them were actively looking for work. Two participants were working irregularly. The current work situation at the time of our encounters of one of the participants remained inconclusive in the interviews. One of the participants was currently attending a professional course. Four other participants had done some studies or professional courses in Barcelona earlier on. Four were planning on studying or attending a professional course in Barcelona in the future.

Five of the participants were currently married or in a co-habiting relationship. Thirteen participants had children. The participants who had children were mostly living with them in Barcelona. At the time of the research, none of the participants had under-aged children living in the country of origin. Some of the participants had adult children living in the country of origin or in a third country. Eleven of the participants had some family living in Barcelona or in other parts of Spain. All of the participants had close family, i.e. sisters or brothers, father or mother or the father of their children, living in the country of origin or in other countries.

The situation of the participants regarding their migration status varied. Eleven participants were either currently living with an irregular migration status or had had earlier periods of migration status irregularity. Two of the participants had had dual citizenship, i.e. also Spanish citizenship, already upon arriving in Spain. Six of the participants were in the process of acquiring Spanish citizenship. The fact that many of the participants either had prior experience of living with an irregular migration status or were currently living with an irregular status reflected the fact that the NGOs I approached generally worked with migrants residing with an irregular migration status. It may be viewed also in connection to Spain's general characteristics as an immigration country with irregular situations being rather the norm than the exception (e.g. González Enríquez 2010).

4.1.3 Two interview encounters and the participative use of creative research methods

The outline of the empirical phase included two meetings with each participant, during which two conversational interviews took place (see Appendix 1. for the interview themes). The interviews were conducted by me in Spanish. In the first interview meetings, I explained briefly the reasons why a voice-recorder was used, and also offered the possibility of carrying out the interviews without the use of a recorder if the participant so wished. All of the participants agreed to have the audio of the interviews recorded. The first interview meetings lasted on average an hour, while the second meetings lasted on average an hour and twenty minutes. Between the two interview meetings the participants had more or less a week to individually develop their creative work. With two of the participants I met three times for an interview.¹³ One of the participants said she would not be able to meet with me on two occasions for an interview and would not have time to do the creative work, so I only interviewed her once.

The outline of the themes tackled in the first meeting was generally: 1) presentation of the research and discussion on the verbal informed consent (see Appendix 2. for the content of the informed consent), 2) leaving for migration, 3) experiences on arriving, 4) everyday life as a migrant, 5) migration status and irregularity, 6) the future, 7) arrangements for the creative work and the next meeting. The outline of the second interview meeting was generally: 1) discussion on the experience of the creative work and its results, 2) checking and further exploring different themes discussed in the first meeting, 3) discussing the motivations for participation and the overall experience of participating in the research. This outline was referential and it, as well as the interview themes themselves, was not followed rigidly in the interview meetings.

¹³ With some of the participants I also met outside of the research, to have lunch or dinner, visit a museum or while I was participating in the activities of the NGO.

The purpose of using face-to-face conversational interviewing and participative creative research methods was to motivate participation and build an open and reciprocal relationship with the research participants. Other facilitating factors for enhancing participation and decreasing the invasiveness of the research and its themes were the emphasising of voluntary participation and the possibility to discontinue (Jenkins & Sainsbury 2006, 13), the possibility to choose the site of the interview (Bilger & van Liempt 2009b, 123), decreasing the specificity of the information gathered (Iosifides 2003, 439), ensuring informed consent, and protecting anonymity, e.g. through pseudonyms. It was not of my interest to obtain specific information on migration routes, places of work or the social networks of the participants. Instead, my interest was on their personal motivations, assessment and decision-making processes concerning different phases of migration, thoughts and actions in their everyday lives as migrants, encounters with employers, landlords, neighbours, migration bureaucracy, different services, other migrants and the autochthonous population in general, and their experiences of different positions of vulnerability, otherness, belonging and subjectivity in the context of migration.

It was important to be explicit about the fact that participation in the research would not impact for instance the participant's migration status or work situation and that the research was separated from the work done by the NGO which had served as a facilitator in forming a link between me and the participant. Since the participation involved two meetings and creative exercises, it was necessary to discuss the timeline and commitment of participation. It was equally important to stress that involvement in the research project was completely voluntary and the participants were able to withdraw from it at any time without prejudice. I also wished to discuss with the participants beforehand the fact that creative and reflective processes may bring up different emotional and personal issues which are not possible to fully predict.

One of the practical difficulties of the interview meetings was quite simply finding a suitable place for them. In some instances, the NGOs were able to offer a place for the meeting. Yet I came to find this somewhat problematic in terms of separating the research from the NGO and its work or with respect to participant anonymity regarding other research participants or service-users. Since I did not want the participants to have to commute long distances in order for us to meet, I generally asked for them to suggest a more or less quiet bar-cafeteria or a park nearby their homes or workplaces. In addition to this being a practical choice, it also aimed to give the participants the possibility to choose a place for the meetings which they felt comfortable with (Bilger & van Liempt 2009b, 123).

None of the participants expressed problems with talking about their migration experience or their experiences of living with an irregular migration status in public places, although this had initially been one of my concerns. Mainly in order to

ensure the best possible quality of the audiotapes, public parks finally turned out to be the best options for meeting places, and as it got warmer while the spring progressed we usually opted for this. Public parks, with their areas for children to play in, also proved practical when the participant came to the interview with her children. Only one of the interview meetings took place at the participant's home. I generally avoided meeting the participants in their homes for the interviews, since I did not wish to invade their own space. Moreover, since many of the participants lived in shared flats and/or with family, the privacy of the interview moment could have been compromised.

I consider the empirical phase to be a process in which both the researcher and the research participant are mutually engaged in order to produce new tools for understanding (Bilger & van Liempt 2009b, 121; Dahinden & Efionayi-Mäder 2009, 115; Kara 2006, 34; Wahab & Sloan 2004, 4–5; Wahab 2003, 625). I wished for the interviews to be as conversational as possible. By this I mean that I did not want to take an overly passive role in the interview encounters. I also did not want to stare at my list of themes and topics but tried to build on what the participant was talking about or had just mentioned. I wanted to avoid a narrow question format, and therefore also the list of themes I had with me in the interviews was a combination of straightforward questions and more general topics to build on. My aim was to create a situation and experience of interest and dialogue. I also commented and shared my own experiences on different issues, whenever I was asked or this felt appropriate.

But while I wanted the conversations to “flow naturally”, I also had a list of topics which I wished to cover with each participant, provided of course that each individual theme or topic was comfortable for the participant. Although this type of combination of active engagement and space is a common approach in research interviews, achieving this balance and making it work for everyone is not straightforwardly simple. One participant pointed out that she at times felt worried how I might ever manage with the transcript and the analysis of her interview, since she felt I did not give enough guidance or limit her talking enough. Others brought up that they specifically enjoyed being able to talk about themselves without too many interruptions.

Some of the participants pointed out that this was the first time they had talked about the emotions, thoughts and experiences involved in their migration to anyone. In this way, the research was potentially able to give something back to the participants, in the form of offering a space for their experiences in migration and for what they wanted to say. I was initially prepared to provide the participants with a list of contacts for support and advice in case they felt the need to further discuss experiences or feelings possibly opened up in the interview meetings or if any need for practical support should come up in the meetings. This type of list might have been more relevant in the case of contacting participants through the snowball

method, but since all of the participants were already inside the support of an NGO, I did not find this necessary after all.

The practice of two interview meetings proved to be laborious, since it evidently represented more practical organising and scheduling. Although it offered more flexibility for our conversations, I generally tried to go through most of the basic themes in the first interview meeting, in case of not being able to meet again for any reason. In some occasions, the first interview encounter would have a more narrative character, in the sense that the participant would tell her story of migration almost without interruptions on my part, whereas I would have a more active role in our second interview meeting. On other occasions, I felt the participant more reserved in our first interview meeting and more spontaneously talkative in the second meeting.

As in the course of the meetings my relationship with the participant developed, I often felt the second meeting to be more relaxed and open and the themes that were covered at times also more intimate. The second interview encounters often started with a comment on the suitability of the place we had been doing the first interview or the technical quality of the audiotape, suggesting that we already had a common history and were involved in a collaborative process together. The fact that we met twice for the interviews offered the participants also time to evaluate me and the research and decide upon the level of disclosure. It created flexibility for our encounters and allowed more room for each participant to explore and express her experiences in a way that was suitable for her.

I generally listened to the recordings of the first interview meeting before the second meeting in order to check on some possibly unclear topics. This was often greeted by the participants as a token of interest and commitment on my part to our work in progress and to the experiences they had been sharing with me. While I had a possibility to test my preliminary interpretations, clinging too much to what had been said in the first meeting created a risk of the second meeting turning into mere repetitions of issues already tackled, or worse, creating an atmosphere of interrogation. It was important to be sensitive in the way the two meetings were brought into dialogue with each other. Since the research approach was open, I could also add questions and issues to the interview themes along the way and welcome new topics or specific questions brought up by a participant and pursue these in subsequent interviews (Cornelius 1982, 396). In order to make the practice of two interview meetings more transparent and tangible for the reader, I will differentiate between the first and second interview encounters in the interview extracts in the result chapters.

However, although the second interview encounters might have addressed more intimate topics with some of the participants, I wish to stress that I did not aim to systematically and progressively “fish in more personal or intimate waters” during

the course of more than one meeting. Meeting more than once for the interviews is not central as such from the point of view of my analysis, even though I have opted for pointing out in the interview extracts whether they are from the first or second encounter and will consider the significance of this whenever I have found it relevant. The two interview encounters allowed the carrying out of the participative use of the creative research methods and enabled both the participants and the researcher to engage in a collaborative process, during which it was possible to reflect upon the meanings and experiences of migration, choose the adequate forms of expressing these and reformulate and nuance one's understanding of them. The most valuable contribution of the two interview encounters is found in the fact that from the point of view of research participation, it strengthened the sensitivity of the research approach.

The interviews were complemented with the participative use of creative research methods. The purpose of this was to give the participants the possibility to individually explore the topics discussed in the interview meetings through different means of creative expression, such as photography, writing or drawing, and then talk about this creative process and its results in the second meeting. The results of the creative work were not to be analysed as such. The idea was to employ visual and other creative methods as supportive methodological tools in the dialogical process of the interview encounters and as a way to gain insight into the concrete lifeworlds of the participants (Prosser & Loxley 2008).

Often, as also in this research, the aim of using photographic or more generally visual and creative research methods is to reverse the roles of the researcher and the participant and gain access to deeper understanding of the issues tackled together. The idea here was to provide the participants with the opportunity to self-select details relevant to them. Creative work thus served as a supporting element in the interviews and in the collaborative process. The idea was also to subsequently utilise images and other creative material as illustrative points in the presentation of the research, in order to enrich, give texture and make spatially and temporally concrete the issues under discussion. This also intends to refresh and challenge some of the prevailing modes of academic discussion and presentation (Ball & Gilligan 2010; Weber 2008, 46) and provide the participants with more presence in the pages of the research.

For the practical realisation of the creative work, I wanted to offer the participants a mixture of freedom of expression on the one hand and some guidelines which might assist in the work on the other. A written list of suggested themes (see Appendix 3. for the list) for the creative work was discussed with the participants at the first interview meeting. I stressed that they did not have to restrict themselves to these themes. While the empirical phase progressed, I began to wonder whether the written themes offered by me as an inspiration for the creative work were too

problem-centred and oriented too much towards the past. This was also part of the feedback I received from some of the participants. I did not make changes to the written themes as such, but included these considerations in the presentation of the creative work and continued emphasising the participants' liberty to make changes on the themes or concentrate on other issues than the ones expressed in the theme list.

There is always a risk of limiting the creative process by giving guidelines and themes beforehand. If I had the opportunity to do the creative work all over again, I would still offer some form of list, however, since I found it useful in the sense that it gave something concrete on which to build and from which to part. I would now perhaps also include notebooks for the participants to write down their thoughts, or any practical issues they encountered, while they were conducting the creative work. We discussed this process in our interview meetings, but it might have been useful to ask the participants to make notes beforehand. In the interviews, I might now also ask more systematically the participants to compare the results of their creative work and choose for instance their favourite photograph and explain why.

Different possibilities for realising the creative work were discussed in order to find a creative expression each participant felt comfortable with and which was in accordance with her interests as well as the time available to her. I offered the participants some material to choose from, such as a disposable photographic camera, drawing paper, writing paper, drawing pencils and writing pens. The participants generally had more or less a week for the realisation of the creative work between our two interview meetings.

With the participants who chose the disposable camera, I usually met a day or two before the second meeting in order to receive the camera and develop the photographs during that time. If the participant preferred using her own digital camera for taking photographs, I either offered a memory card, or the photographs were sent to me as email attachments for the second meeting. Generally the participant was left with the original results of her creative work while I was left with copies or digital versions.

The participants had different backgrounds and interests, and I found it important to be as flexible as possible as to what the participants wanted to create and through which method of expression. As their creative work, the participants took photographs and searched the internet for photographs and images, made a collage work from images taken from magazines, wrote their thoughts down, cited song lyrics, wrote or cited poems and envisioned a painting and a multimedia work (see Appendix 3. for the list of different creative work the participants engaged in).

In the second interview meeting we went through the results of the creative work and its process, and the participant would generally explain what, for instance a photograph or poem represented for her, what was the reason she had included it, and how the process of, for instance taking the photograph or writing or choosing a poem, had been. In the case of photographs taken with a disposable camera, for instance, we would both be excited to see what the results were and evaluate these also in the sense of which pictures had come out “well”, which ones were blurry and so forth. The discussions over the creative work and its results often evolved around rather concrete aspects of the participants’ everyday lives as well as around emotions and personal reflections on different changes migration had inflected upon them. If the participant did not wish to open up and explain certain traits of her creative work, the work was left to speak for itself.

Although I employed also other creative methods in this research than visual, I have been largely inspired by the use of visual methods in social research. Visual, or other creative data, can be divided into researcher-created, participant-created and found or pre-existing data, the latter being for instance professional photographs, newspaper photographs or photographs in family photo albums (Holm 2008, 327–328; Prosser & Loxley 2008). This data can be employed either for visual analysis done by the researcher or in different participatory approaches where the visual data is analysed or discussed with the research participants, as in this study. In migration research, the use of visual methods is not at all a new phenomenon (for instance Berger & Mohr 1975). Still, in migration research, as in social research in general, studies employing visual methods and reflecting upon them are recent and continue to be limited in number (Fedyuk 2012, 283–284; Ball & Gilligan 2010; Holm 2008, 339; Harper 2002, 15).

Photographs are often employed in social research through a process called *photo-elicitation* or *photo-interviews*, in which visual material is taken up or produced in the research in order to provoke response, views, beliefs and memories from the participants (Holm 2008, 326; Weber 2008, 48; Hurworth 2003; Harper 2002, 13; Smith & Woodward 1999; Banks 1995; Harper 1988). Photographs can sharpen memory and reduce the areas of misunderstanding (Harper 2002, 14). Images in general can often be employed as a more subtle way than words or talk to address sensitive or painful experiences and memories (Weber 2008, 48). An image calls for associations, definitions and ideas which might otherwise go unnoticed (Harper 1988, 65). The *autodriving* form of photo-elicitation employs participants’ own images, and thus in a sense enables a discussion “driven by” the participants (Prosser & Loxley 2008). This material may as well exist already prior to the research or it may be created during and for the purpose of the research, as in this study.

Photovoice, in turn, is a participatory action research method with an aim to enable and promote personal and community change (Coetzee et al. 2008; Wang 2001;

Wang et al. 2000; Wang & Burris 1997). It includes organising public exhibitions of and group discussions on the photographs created during the research. In this way it aims to directly reach policy makers as well as the larger communities or society. Although I did not include a public exhibition or concrete aims of direct community change as such in this study, I benefitted a great deal from photovoice research in the practical and ethical design of the creative component. The approach taken here also shares with photovoice approaches the overall theme of *reflexive photo-participation* (Prosser & Loxley 2008).

Using photographs in research can also be tricky and unpredictable in different ways (Holm 2008, 332, 336; Weber 2008, 50). The participants in this study were given instructions for instance not to take photographs of recognisable faces or private spaces, such as private homes, in order to protect the anonymity of the participants themselves and their families and friends, as well as the public in general. This was also in order to protect the participants from getting into potentially uncomfortable or even threatening situations while taking photographs (Wang et al. 2000, 83).

The creative component inevitably meant more work and organising for the participants as well as the researcher. Many participants expressed that they would have wanted to do more for the creative work but had not had the time. Still, the participants generally asserted that a week was a good time period between the two interview meetings, and that a longer time would only have allowed the active reflection process initiated in the first meeting to fade. The creative work was not always finished and I did not receive the results from all of the participants. I discussed the themes of the creative work also with the participants from whom I did not receive the results. The creative work served many purposes in the study and I therefore do not view it as problematic that it was not carried out in a similar manner with every participant.

One of the central aims of the creative component was to enable the participants to enjoy the participation and express themselves and offer them something more than talking about their thoughts and experiences with me, through the possibility of photography or other creative methods of self-expression. The creative work and its results were therefore aimed to enrich and nuance the participation and the interview meetings and deepen the reflective work over the issues addressed (Harper 1988). The creative component was also intended to strengthen the collaborative nature of our empirical process together. It aimed to give the participants the possibility to bring thoughts, issues and points of view into the interviews, since the creative work was carried out individually according to the participants' own interest. It also aimed to ease the tackling of more sensitive or personal issues.

The creative work offered the participants a possibility to document their Barcelona, for instance by photographing places which were important to them, and to show

Barcelona through their eyes. This also meant converting the gaze of a traditional research arrangement, which I view important not least in migration research where the focus is generally on how the host society perceives the migrants. The results of the creative work also intended to bring more informative and explanatory power to the research publication and offer more stimuli for its readers.

Many aspects of the participants' everyday lives in migration became tangible through the creative work. One example of this would be the increased autonomy of time and space in terms of freedom of movement in the city. This was one of the more surprising results of the research and its emphasis in some of the creative work and the subsequent conversations was strong enough to catch my analytical eye in a different manner than probably would have been the case had it only been mentioned in the interviews. I would say that by employing creative research methods, the research was able to offer a wider range of opportunities for self-expression to the participants. This, in turn, created more shapes and dimensions, not only in the information produced in the research, but also for our mutual relationship and interaction, as well as for the experience of the participation and self-reflection process of the participants.

Giving feedback on the creative exercises seemed easier for the participants than evaluating the interviews. This would underline the importance the creative component had for the collaborative aim of the empirical phase. While we were talking about the creative work and going through its results, we were concretely considering the research and its methods mutually. The participants were involved in this dialogue as doers and evaluators, not as objects of inquiry. They were also the authors of their creative work and the ones who could explain the meaning of its results, should they so wish to do. This was as well a way to challenge the power balance of a traditional research arrangement of "us viewing them" (Hurworth 2003; Smith & Woodward 1999, 31) and create more room for negotiated interpretations. It also challenged the participants (Hurworth 2003) as well as the researcher.

On occasions I sensed some doubts or surprise on behalf of the participants towards the use of creative ways of exploring the themes under scrutiny. The participants generally enjoyed and were good at expressing their thoughts and experiences by talking, and enthusiastic and motivated to tell their story in an interview. There presumably also exist certain general ideas regarding what social research is or should be like. This mostly means interviews where the researcher asks questions and the interviewee answers them or in other ways verbally tells her story. Generally, however, the participants were explicitly enthusiastic about the creative part of the participation. Many of them mentioned it as one of the motivations for them to have wanted to participate in the first place and later on also evaluated it as a particularly positive experience in the participation.

At its best, the creative component raised enthusiasm in the participants and was moulded by them according to their individual purposes and interests, while they at the same time employed it as a tool to reflect upon the themes raised in the interview meetings. Some participants expressed that the creative work had given them a chance to reflect in a new way on their experiences of migration and on how migration had affected their personal lives as well as the lives of, for instance, their family members, and some pointed out that this had been the first time they had reflected on and expressed their personal experiences through some creative method. It is possible that the creative component of the research might have opened new avenues for working on one's feelings, thoughts and experiences also for future purposes.

Social research interviewing often faces the basic challenge of establishing communication between two people who do not necessarily share much in terms of their cultural or other backgrounds, and this proposes a need for bridging gaps between the researcher and the research participants (Harper 2002, 20). There is generally also a power imbalance in the research encounter, since it is mostly initiated by the researcher, and the agenda of the encounter is also assumed to be largely up to her. Visual and creative elements may help to overcome these difficulties precisely because of the concrete collaboration they inspire. When two or more people discuss the meaning of photographs or other visual and creative work, whether these are produced during the research or whether they already pre-existed it, they try to figure out something together (*ibid.*, 23). All in all, I would argue that the creative research methods encouraged participation and collaboration, created space for shared authority over the issues discussed and the methods employed, increased involvement, enriched the empirical phase and the experience of participation and provided a sensitive approach for tackling different issues.

4.2 Ethical considerations: negotiating access, balancing power, protecting anonymity, navigating languages

The discussion of the researcher's position as an 'insider' or an 'outsider' with regard to the research participants and the phenomenon tackled in the research is nothing new. The outsider perspective draws on the classical epistemological arguments of objectivity in research, and aims at a balance between distance and nearness with emphasis more on the researcher achieving and maintaining distance, i.e. "freedom" both practically and theoretically, thus in fact resembling Georg Simmel's 'stranger' (1908/1971, 145–146; also Merton 1972, 32–33). The insider perspective, in turn, which has been promoted for instance by black scholars in the United States as well as many feminist scholars from the 1960s and 1970s onwards, questions the ability of the outsider academic, often a white, middle class man, to understand the experiences of the research participants, for instance women from different minority groups (Kusow 2003, 592).

In migration research, an increasing number of academics who study their own immigrant communities have taken part in the debates over the politics of representation and authenticity (Markova 2009; Kusow 2003). In these discussions, the straightforward benefits of an insider position have also become questioned (also Agustín 2004). Sharing, for instance, the same ethnic or national background does not result in an automatic ability to better capture the research participants' experiences or gain their trust in the research process. Sometimes the opposite may in fact occur. An insider researching her own community may be perceived with suspicion, for instance in terms of maintaining anonymity and confidentiality inside the community (Dahinden & Efonayi-Mäder 2009, 110–111; Kusow 2003, 569).

An outsider position may help the participants to be open and frank when they do not have to worry about social ties or protocols or confidentiality inside a certain group (Hedberg 2004, 44). When the researcher comes from the same cultural background, it is also possible that she takes for granted a shared understanding, and thus leaves issues undiscussed or intact which might be worthwhile taking up, since interpretations and experiences are hardly ever completely similar (Ryan 2008, 302). It is also possible that an “insider” researcher might interpret the participants' experiences and remarks through her own experience.

An intersectional reading of this debate points out that the researcher's insider or outsider position is not formed solely by one character or location or in fixed situations in time or place. One is not just a woman, from some nationality or ethnic background, or of some age, religion or social position, but one is of course “all of these and, depending on the size of the status set, much more” (Merton 1972, 24). The quality of a research, or the reliability of its results and the understanding it offers, do not depend on the researcher's person being enough or too much of an outsider or insider with regard to the research participants or the phenomenon under scrutiny, but namely on her capacity and willingness to critically reflect upon these positionings and their effects. Maintaining an ethically reflective stance towards the research in this respect means viewing oneself, as well as others participating in the research process, from the outside, locating oneself on “the scene” (Martín Pérez 2006). This means being critically aware of one's own position, assumptions and actions and how these influence the research situations and the research process (hooks 1989, 42–48).

In the context of this research, I would refer to my own position with respect to the research participants as having both insider and outsider elements. These elements had potentially positive or negative consequences, in terms of helping or hindering the building of a trustful and reciprocal research relationship, and their effect and importance varied in each encounter. I shared with the participants the same gender, and with the majority of the participants we were also more or less of the same age. My own experiences of living abroad for longer periods of time gave me some

understanding of what it is to navigate in cultural and linguistic contexts different from my own. There were also varying differences, for instance in our ethnic, national, cultural and socioeconomic backgrounds. It is hardly ever possible to share the same experiences, background or vocabulary with the research participants. Yet, this cannot straightforwardly be considered a necessity in order to empathise with or understand different human experiences.

I spoke Spanish which I had learned in Latin America, and the “Latin American accent” and/or vocabulary in my Spanish did not go unnoticed by the research participants. We sometimes also shared observations on differences for instance in courtesy rules between Spain and Latin American countries in general. Yet I was not originally from Latin America, and I was also an outsider to the Spanish society and to its immigration system. I would view that this gave the participants more room to air their views and express themselves more freely than would possibly have been the case had I been from some Latin American country or from Spain.

The participants also informed me on different official and practical matters concerning the Spanish welfare system or immigration protocols. This, together with the fact that I was not a native Spanish speaker, contributed in creating various situations where the participants had an “upper hand”. At the same time, my earlier academic and work experience offered me some general information and knowledge on the issue of women’s migration in and from Latin America. “Knowledge of the language” of the research participants can also be interpreted more widely as knowledge of a specific vocabulary attached to a certain phenomenon or practices and empathy towards certain attitudes or strategies (Martín Pérez 2006). Yet, our encounters did not escape the rather general setting of the researcher representing ‘Northern’ host societies and the participants representing ‘Southern’ regions of emigration.

The interview meetings are meetings of complex social positions while they are also meetings between two unique individuals (Jensen 2011, 68). A logic of human(e) encounters and the tensions and battles of power present in them are important issues in social work research. In much research or work done with marginalised or non-privileged groups, there is an explicit aim to empower, liberate or “give voice” to these groups. Although arguably benevolent in their intentions, I find these approaches and claims also troubling, since they inevitably part from the idea that someone, for instance the researcher, has or takes the position to liberate and empower someone else. I would coincide with Laura Agustín (1998) in that the trouble does not lie in people in marginalised positions not having a voice, but in the fact that the rest of the society does not want or know how to listen.

In the context of this research and the methods employed, I do not feel comfortable or have any need to make claims of liberation or empowerment. I do, however, find

it important to reflect upon the dynamics of power and reciprocity in the research process. What are finally the researcher's and the research participants' roles inside the power structures of a research? What does the participation launch in the participants? What were the goals of a collaborative or participative approach? If the participation triggers a reflexive process over one's location within different social structures, or of migration or other life experiences, there is some sort of a catalysing effect. Whether this has consequences for the participant's life, and whether these consequences are negative or positive, the researcher may ultimately never find out. The participants are also entitled to this privacy.

The participants asserted that the participation had offered them an experience of someone being interested in what they had lived and what they thought and had to say about it. According to them, the research was doing something positive in its aim to shed light on the everyday realities present in the transnational migration of women. However, some participants felt that the approach remained somewhat problem-oriented, and they expressed a concern of this amounting to a reproduction of the general and worn-out imaginaries of migrant women as "poor and pathetic".

The critique of being problem-fixed in my approach troubled me, since my point of departure for the research was precisely the opposite: I did not want to accept the narrow and one-sided narrative of problems and victimhood I felt the discussion around 'South to North' migration, especially of women, was largely about. So why this feedback? To some extent, it might be interpreted in a positive light, since my other point of departure was not to intervene too much but give the participants room to express the experiences, issues and nuances they felt important. So it might be said that I was able to keep my own point of departure out of the way of the empirical encounters in this sense. Yet the critique was also a reminder that even though I was thinking that I might be able to free myself from this general imaginary in my approach, questions and interest, I perhaps finally was not.

The critique also points to the strength of this narrative. The participants may as well have been predisposed for interpreting my questions to follow it, and they might have felt strongly about the importance of challenging it. Finally, it is important to note that people do face adversities, difficulties and problems, no matter what the context and consequences of their migration. The point in this research is to decipher the structural, contextual and relational nature of these and consider the practices of the participants in overcoming, solving and enduring them. The point is also to problematise the straightforward dichotomy between force and victimhood on the one hand and unquestioned freedom of choice and movement on the other.

In the concrete interview situations, as in every human encounter, power relations are at play. The initiative for the encounter has come from me as the researcher, and therefore I evidently exercise some power over the situation and on the general

themes and topics covered in the interviews. I also exercise power through actively posing questions, commenting, and bringing in and operating the tape recorder. The end result of the research in terms of its academic validity, reliability and analytic insight is also ultimately the researcher's responsibility, and this at least to some extent is inevitably present in every phase of the research process.

Nevertheless, the research participants also exercise power in contributing to knowledge creation about their situations. The participants' authority is enforced through the simple fact that they have information the researcher is interested in, and they also exercise power through their participation on the accuracy and trustworthiness of the research (Agustín 2004, 6–7; Wahab 2003, 637). The participants are finally the ones who decide what to answer and how deeply to elaborate on the topics discussed (Wahab 2003, 637). The participants in this research, for instance, might have waited for the second interview meeting to decide whether or not they wanted to discuss more intimate matters. They might have revealed only in the creative work some of the details of their experiences or enclosed some of their thoughts and experiences entirely for any reason.

In addition to the use of creative methods, power balance was sought in the interview encounters by choosing together the place for the interviews and making explicit that each individual theme of the interviews was voluntary and that the participant always retained the right not to answer a question or discuss certain themes if she so wished. The participants were also offered to invent their own pseudonyms for the publications regarding the research. Some participants did this or gave me instructions as to how they wished their pseudonym to be.

I prepared myself for a relatively high level of anonymity and sensitivity in my relationship with the participants (Bilger & van Liempt 2009b; Staring 2009; Kara 2006). It was my intention, for instance, to be able to conduct the research also without exchanging any specific contact details with the participants. In this case, contact during the empirical phase would have been kept through the facilitating NGOs. I wanted also to offer the possibility of carrying out the interviews without an audio-recorder if the participant so wished (Bilger & van Liempt 2009b, 132; Kara 2006, 36–37), in which case notes would have been taken. As already noted, none of the participants expressed objections to the use of the audio-recorder.

The participants themselves were, however, much less preoccupied in hiding their identities during the process of participating or in the subsequent publications. Many of them for instance stated that they would not need a pseudonym at all. The following quote from my research diary describes my thoughts at the time: *“I feel foolish going on about anonymity, suggesting meetings outside the facilities of the NGOs in order to avoid other service-users possibly finding out who participates, and going on and on about the fact that the results from the creative work as well as*

the interview extracts will be published. I feel that it is finally me who is creating here an atmosphere of their experiences and life situations being something clandestine that in fact should be hidden” (Research diary, Barcelona, April 2012).

The protection of the participants’ anonymity is generally an unquestioned ethical prerequisite in social research, and it is strongly assumed that this is, or should be, what the participants want. However, it is never possible to promise complete protection of one’s anonymity, since research always reveals details of the participants’ personal circumstances. In addition, hiding one’s participation may not always be desirable from the point of view of the participant (e.g. Grinyer 2002). One of the participants in this research had quite a long list of public appearances in different NGO initiatives concerning migration. She had publically taken, and was looking forward to taking, part in different projects in this realm either workwise or for civic activism, and did not see much point in “concealing” her participation in the research, quite the contrary. The anonymity of the participation in this research also concerned the results of the creative exercises. The right of the researcher to the material produced by the participants, and the subsequent “anonimisation” of this material, had to be stated clearly, as well as the right of the participants to deny the publication of a certain photograph or other creative work, if they so wished.

From the point of view of ethical sensitivity, I felt it was important to discuss the possible consequences of compromising participant anonymity, since we were dealing with personal and at times sensitive issues and experiences. Time might also make a difference. For different circumstances the participant might have future regrets of having revealed something she at this time does not regard as too intimate or in any way problematic. In addition, when working on potentially sensitive themes, it is paramount that the participants are not placed in a position where their experiences of vulnerability are recreated or reinforced, for instance through insensitive ways of dealing with the issues at hand. The intuition and sensitivity of the researcher are of the essence, as well as an open relationship with the participants, the research supervisors and the supporting NGOs in order to be able to discuss possible issues of concern. It is important to note, however, that ethical sensitivity on participation and anonymity may also turn into overprotectiveness, which in turn signals lack of respect.

As a researcher, I aimed to create a space where personal and sensitive issues could be tackled and discussed. Yet I also wanted to be careful not to intrude. This is not a simple balance, and at times I felt I put more emphasis on the latter at the expense of the former. People do not automatically share the same understanding of what are the sensitive issues and themes, and merely the fact that it is not easy to talk about a certain experience does not mean there would not be a desire or need to tackle it. After all, difficult and sensitive experiences are potentially never told if nobody ever dares to ask.

In the interview encounters, I strived for a space in which it is feasible to talk about difficult and sensitive issues (which also requires that the participant is able to rely on the fact that the researcher “can take it”) and equally possible to refuse talking about certain themes, even if these were brought up by the researcher (also Granfelt 1998, 31–41). This often requires time for the research participant and the researcher to get to know one another at least to some extent. This can be acquired through meeting more than once and having the time and interest to talk about general things which do not necessarily have to do with the research as such. It is also important to “give room” for the participants in the interview meetings, which often translates into the very difficult skill of enduring silences.

Research outcomes might always, and not only in research on disadvantaged or vulnerable situations, have an impact on the participant’s current and future life, either on a personal level or in terms of her administrative, social or political situation. Ethical standards in social research are based on the principles of respect for human dignity, justice and beneficence (Bilger & van Liempt 2009a, 9) which are generally applied through informed consent, non-deception, privacy and confidentiality (Christians 2005, 144). Although these principles and their application might strike as elementary, they have to be weighted constantly, since they are not clear-cut or automatically achieved. For instance, the principle of voluntary participation from an informed position bears with it difficulties when laws and regulations shaping the research participants’ lives are not fully transparent or easily foreseen, and it may therefore be difficult to appraise the possible consequences of the research upon the participants’ lives and strategies (Bilger & van Liempt 2009a, 12). I would stress that in these circumstances it is important to openly admit and discuss this with the participants so that they can evaluate their participation aware that there might be consequences which are difficult or impossible to foresee.

I would, however, also be careful of not building an exaggerated pile of ethical or other concerns in research done with people living in potentially vulnerable situations. The researcher should not engage herself in a moral patronage towards the participants or draw a picture of a research so ethically challenging and difficult that it becomes little less than a miracle to be able to conduct it. Ethical sensibility and awareness of, as well as a continuous auto-critical attitude towards, the premises and practices of the research are always a necessary requirement. These considerations should not, however, amount to a situation where research participants are not treated and respected as adults able to make decisions within their current life situations and carry different consequences and responsibilities inherent.

As a researcher, my obligation is to strive for “minimising harm” and “maximising benefit” with regard to the participation in the research, but it should be recognised that these “harms” and “benefits” cannot always be foreseen and they are not

necessarily perceived the same way by the researcher and the research participant (Bilger & van Liempt 2009b, 133). In a research approach which considers the participants as active subjects bringing their knowledge and interpreting their life worlds, ethical concerns of justice, fairness and moral actions go beyond rigid sets of rules and guidelines (Bilger & van Liempt 2009a, 12). Ethical codes often do not give an adequate answer on how to “do it right”, and ethics in research need to be continuously reflected from the moment of conceptualising the initial research plan to the discussion of the results of the research in the public arena (Bilger & van Liempt 2009a, 13). This means understanding ethics more as an ongoing process.

Language and translation are examples of issues not often discussed or identified in research (Temple & Young 2004, 162). Researchers do not, for instance, necessarily report the moment in which they have introduced translation into their study (Santos Jr. et al. 2015) or present their choices concerning language and translation in different points of their research process (Lincoln & González y González 2008). In this research, I conducted the interviews in Spanish. I am not a native speaker of Spanish, and the participants came from different Latin American countries where different varieties of Spanish are spoken, not all of which I was completely familiar with. I would view, however, that this did not present serious problems for our mutual understanding in the interview encounters or during my readings of the interview transcriptions. People may use different vocabularies and accents even when one is operating in one’s native language. I could also always ask if there was anything I needed the participants to repeat or explain in the interviews. The practice of two interview encounters also assisted in this. Furthermore, as all of the participants had already lived in Barcelona for some time, they had started to adjust and make changes in their Spanish to some extent so that they would be more fluently understood in their daily encounters. This and other aspects of language and accent also became one of the points of interest in the analysis and will be discussed especially in chapter 7.2.

The interviews were transcribed in Spanish. I transcribed some of the interviews myself, but the majority of the interview material was transcribed by native Spanish speakers¹⁴, in order to speed this process up. Whether transcribed by a native Spanish speaker or myself, I listened through the audio-tape of each interview while reading through the transcription in order to correct mistakes or make sense of any unclear moments and make sure that the emphases and sentence structures in the texts seemed accurate. Two of the audio-tapes were of a relatively low quality due to my technical error in the interview encounters, and these audio-tapes were transcribed with less accuracy. Because the microphone was attached to the clothing of the participants, my own voice was often difficult to distinguish clearly and was

¹⁴ All the transcribers signed an agreement of confidentiality, in which they agreed to enclose all details present in the interviews and destroy their copies of the audio and text material once the transcription(s) had been delivered and accepted.

therefore not transcribed with the same detail as the talk of the participants. In general, the transcriptions were not of an extremely high precision, meaning that they only included the participants' noticeable sighs, crying or laughter, and for instance the lengths of pauses were not counted nor were utterances, repetitions of words or the participants' auto-corrections always written out.

I wanted to maintain the participants' accounts and expressions vivid, and only translated the interview extracts from Spanish into English at the moment of writing them into the research report. Still, the translations as well went through several readings, and unclear points were again checked with native Spanish speakers. In the translations, I have avoided the use of colloquial terms in English, since I am not a native speaker and do not feel competent enough to produce accurate nuances of colloquialisms. I also view that colloquialisms easily strike odd in the middle of a written academic text, and while they may bring the interviewees "closer" in a way, they may also take away authority from what they are saying. I have opted for introducing some elements of spoken English into the translated extracts (such as employing *I'm* instead of *I am* or *I've* instead of *I have*). The aim of this has been to achieve a more natural and familiar "flow" in the extracts.

In the interview extracts, I have anonymised countries and cities of origin as well as the names of the collaborating NGOs, the names of the participants and the names of other people or specific places the participants might mention (see Appendix 4. on the reporting of the interviews). I have also anonymised the gender of the children, whenever this does not bear significance to or change the central point of what is being said. The interview extracts include only the pseudonym of the participant and the information concerning whether or not the extract is from the first, second or third interview encounter. I have reported other information, such as country of origin, age or the number of years living in Barcelona, when discussing the general features of the participants in the previous chapter 4.1.2. In cases where any of this information is relevant to the analysis, it is referred to in the analysis text between the quotations and in sufficiently general terms in order to reinforce anonymity. In the extracts in Spanish, I have also generally anonymised very distinct vocabulary or accents, except when these were of the Spanish spoken in Spain, since I did not consider this compromising for anonymity. Any terms employed in Spanish are translated either in the extract itself or explained in the analysis.

I have opted for preserving the original quotations in Spanish in footnotes. With this I wish to offer the possibility to read the wordings and expressions of the participants and also evaluate the correctness of my translations. I find this important, firstly, since I am not a native speaker of either English or Spanish. Secondly, I wish to be able in this way to give more presence to the participants in the final research text. Thirdly, I consider it important from the point of view of the validity and transparency of my analysis. Fourthly, it has helped me as a researcher during

writing, by making it easier to check details and go back to the original wordings of the interview extracts and not be limited to my translation of them.

4.3 Analysis process: triad between empirical data, theoretical concepts and researcher

As described above, the research approach in the empirical encounters was open, in order to create an opportunity and an atmosphere for the participants to define and decide for themselves the issues they valued important when considering their experiences of transnational migration. I intended to ensure that some central themes, such as migration status, were tackled in the interviews at least to a certain extent. My general aim was nevertheless that the empirical material would be a result of what had been deemed important by the participants, in a collaborative process with me as the researcher. I consider the broad and open approach important from the point of view of the nature of the empirical encounters and research participation, as well as in terms of the richness and variety of the empirical data that resulted from these. However, from the perspective of the analysis, this creates an interview material which is not simple to grasp from clearly drawn analytical entry points.

The participants came from several countries of origin, and therefore it is not possible to concentrate in depth on the specific emigration-immigration history of any two states. However, this opens up a versatile compilation of insights and defies methodological nationalism (Wimmer & Glick Schiller 2003; Wimmer & Glick Schiller 2002). The fact that the research approach was broad and I did not concentrate solely on one or some aspects of the experience of migration led to the inevitable consequence of losing some details. However, the research is in this way able to follow the methodological premise of giving the participants the possibility to define which aspects of their experiences they considered important to talk about. Also, this approach challenges the stereotyped view of contemporary transnational migrants narrowly as ‘migrant workers’, instead of as full human beings in the context of their complete human existence and subjectivities (Griffiths et al. 2013).

I would describe my research endeavour as both explorative and explanatory. By this I mean that I did not have a specific pre-decided theory or concepts I wished to test during the empirical phase. During the research process the aim has become increasingly explanatory. I have read previous research and conceptual discussions which I have viewed to have importance based on the interview accounts and my previous understanding of the issue as well as suggestions I have received from other scholars. From these readings I have found conceptual tools with which to tackle the issues present in the empirical material. Examples of these include the time dimension in transnational migration and the intersectional approach to social hierarchies. I would describe the analysis as a threefold dialogue between the

empirical material, theoretical and conceptual discussions and myself as a researcher trying to make sense of what is going on below the surface of the events and experiences present in the empirical material.

In order to produce a comprehensive account of what has been done in any research, it is important to be explicit about the analysis and the way one applies different modes of scientific inference, i.e. thought processes or reasoning (Danermark et al. 2002, 103). The two basic modes of inference are deduction, in which a hypothesis about observations is derived from already existing theory (i.e. one moves from the general toward the particular), and induction, where one draws a more general rule with some probability from particular cases (Tavory & Timmermans 2014, 5; Danermark et al. 2002, 89–90).

Abduction, in turn, refers essentially to a redescription and recontextualisation (Danermark et al. 2002, 91), and poses the question: what could this thing in the data be a case of (Tavory & Timmermans 2014, 5). It therefore starts with consequences and constructs reasons to what has been observed, and presumes and argues for a plausible explanation (*ibid.*, 37). Abduction builds on creativity and ability to form associations and requires a creative meaning-making process in which relations and connections which are not evident or obvious are reached out in order to formulate new ideas about the interconnections of phenomena (Tavory & Timmermans 2014, 121; Danermark et al. 2002, 93). This means trying to figure out what a theory or a concept says about an empirical event and what does the event say about the theory (Danermark et al. 2002, 95). In practice, I understand this as a dialogue between a relevant theory or concepts and the empirical material, together with hypotheses from the researcher engaged in an innovative analytical process concerning the phenomenon and the empirical material as concrete, lived experiences of it.

In a critical realist sense, abduction comes close to retrodution in that they are both essentially about acquiring knowledge on how various phenomena can be explained in relation to structures, internal relations and contexts which are not directly observable (Danermark et al. 2002, 91–92). With retrodution, I refer to “breaking down” the structural composition in order to account for the forces active and bearing influence (Pekkarinen & Tapola-Haapala 2009, 195–196). It reaches out to the domain of the real, beyond what is empirically observable, by asking questions about the conditions of the phenomenon under study. The analytical interest is geared towards factors influencing in the background, or not immediately in sight, which might help to explain the empirical results. While perhaps appearing at first glance complicated endeavours, they represent an exercise taken up frequently, often without noticing, when one tries to understand something, a reaction, a sentiment or an event, and recognise what is important and what is not in order to explain why things were the way they were or went the way they did (Danermark 2014; Tavory & Timmermans 2014, 38). Interpretation in qualitative research analysis in this sense is

merely a more purposeful, explicit and intentional form of meaning-making (Tavory & Timmermans 2014, 25, 35).

In practice, in order to reflect upon the time-space context as well as more general features of the phenomenon under study, I turned to NGO reports, national and international statistics, media coverage and previous empirical and theoretical research which was relevant for me either because of its substance matter or context, or because of its theoretical or conceptual approach. In a research strategy inspired by critical realist insights, method becomes about the relation between theory and empirical observations and how we conceptualise phenomena (Danermark et al. 2002, 115; Sayer 1992, 45). A central idea is that explanation and understanding requires paying attention to and studying structures which have properties and tendencies that can only be identified by means of abstract concepts and theories. Research is thus about switching between abstract theorising and observations of concrete reality and connecting these (Danermark et al. 2002, 117).

Conventionally, analysis refers to the work done on empirical data once it has been generated, or even after, for instance, an interview material has been fully transcribed. I would describe the analysis here, however, as on-going throughout the research. An analytical process addressing the phenomenon and the questions of interest in the research began already with the formulation of the first research plan. It continued in the empirical phase through reformulating and adjusting the focus and the methods, and in the organisation and transcription of the interview material and the results of the creative work. It also went on in every writing and rewriting of the research report. These research phases also intertwine and interconnect and one may move back and forward between them. But in order for the research report to be readable, the phases of the research must be put in some order, however artificial this might be. Therefore, in the remaining part of this chapter, I will concentrate on the analytical work carried out with the empirical material after returning from Barcelona.

Although an overlapping process in itself, I divide this phase of the analysis into a thematic analysis based more strictly on the empirical material, which resulted in the empirical results, and, secondly, to analytical readings inspired by abductive and retroductive reasoning processes which had to do with conceptual discussions and structural and contextual connections. This latter process aimed at an explanation of why the particular experiences, elements or impacts were present in the empirical results, how to understand them and what larger consequences and implications they might be seen to have.

Firstly, I merely listened to the audiotapes and made notes of each participant's account. From these notes I constructed a four page long "report" for each participant in Spanish. The reports consisted of the salient themes and issues tackled

in each account as well as some more specific sayings and phrases in the form of quotations. This stage allowed me to reflect upon the differences between the two interview encounters with each participant and create an overview of each account as a whole. The aim was also to grasp the large interview material and start the process of identifying and organising important recurrent themes and issues, as well as differences, within it. In addition, this phase was intended to serve as a way to return to the actual, concrete encounters with the research participants and maintain these vivid. It allowed me to refresh my memories of the concrete sites, the participants' body language, tones of voice and other details of the encounters which may easily become forgotten when one deals solely with transcribed texts (Hedberg 2004, 59).

Simultaneously to this first stage, the transcription of the interview material, described in the previous chapter 4.2, was carried out. The transcribed text documents of the first interview meetings were on average of 8 890 words and those of the second interview meetings on average of 11 140 words, consisting altogether of roughly 630 pages (font Arial, size 11, line spacing 1,15). Once the transcription of the interview texts was finished, the transcriptions were read in order to divide their content into seven themes. These themes were based on the themes present already in the interview encounters and then further formulised in the reports in the first stage of the analysis described above. The aim of this was basically to carve out and separate from the interview material the parts which had to do more clearly with the research interest (Layder 1998, 60).

The resulting theme documents were in Spanish, and they were from 21 to 124 pages and on average 60 pages long (font Arial, size 11, line spacing 1,15) with an average of 36 640 words. The themes were: 1) migration status, 2) personal significance of migration, and migration in connection to life course, 3) everyday encounters in migration, 4) migration and work/career, 5) transnational family life, 6) the larger context for migration (political, economic, historical), 7) participation in the research (motives and feedback). The content relating to each theme was copied to the documents. The themes were not mutually exclusive, meaning that an extract might well belong to more than one theme and would then be included in several theme documents.

The aim here was to grasp and organise the interview material as textual data and precise quotations, and to clarify and further develop my understanding on the content, consistencies and differences within the interview material. The thematic documents resulting from this stage formed the actual data for further analytical readings, during which several notes and mind maps were drawn in order to tackle the salient issues and their relations. In these notes, relevant conceptual and theoretical notions and contextual insights were also marked. In other words, I intended to link the empirical accounts with ideas and perceptions offered by the theoretical and conceptual framework in a dialogical approach (Danermark et al.

2002, 79). This was in order to organise the content of the interviews according to the themes and their elements, and to grasp relations, orders and interactions, as well as to clarify the usefulness of my analytic tools, such as the temporal dimension in migration experience, the (freedom of) movement, and belonging. The attempt was to combine the descriptive and re-descriptive exercise of the empirical analysis with processes addressed in the conceptual and theoretical discussions, previous research and contextual material in an innovative way.

While reading through the interview material during the analysis, I made choices about what to include and exclude, what was important or interesting from the point of view of the analysis, and what was not, in terms of explanatory or illustrative content (Layder 1993, 180). There were also moments in the interviews where a participant would straightforwardly stress that an experience was of importance according to her, and special attention was also paid to issues which were tackled at length or returned to several times in a participant's account (Tapola-Haapala 2011, 36). While it is important to pay attention to issues tackled explicitly, frequently and at length, it is worth noting that an issue might have been raised only at the second interview meeting, or tackled briefly or inconclusively, precisely because of its personal importance to the participant, which does not necessarily mean that it would be easy to reveal or reflect upon.

In the empirical data I paid attention to issues which I had already encountered in the theoretical and research discussions while reading previous research and against which I compared the accounts, while at the same time my reading of the research and theoretical debates was directed by what was present in the empirical data (Tavory & Timmermans 2014, 2). In this process, the empirical material and earlier research were put into a dialogue through my analytical abilities of connecting these and recognising and explaining consistencies and inconsistencies between them. Although not a clearly structured or chronologically organised process in practice, the analytical readings of the transcribed material may themselves be divided into two stages. The first reading was still more empirical, in which I intended to write down and organise the empirical content (empirical results) for each of the different themes, for instance, what the participants brought up with regard to the connections between work and migration or experiences with migration status and bureaucracy. I wanted to carve out which were the recurrent issues, on which issues did their experiences differ and in what ways, and how did the participants themselves argument for and explain their experiences and opinions.

The second reading was more intentionally conceptual. Here I searched for extracts which were related to or in discussion with a concept which I had viewed relevant for my research based on the research interest and shaped by the earlier readings of the empirical material and the existing research. While for instance reading the thematic documents with the concept of the 'migrant', the following things were of

interest: what is considered as ‘migration’, who is considered to be a ‘migrant’, what becomes coupled with “being a migrant” and who takes this role or who rejects it and on what grounds. In the reading of ‘time’, the thematic documents were in part read through by simply looking for expressions and experiences of time present in the accounts. ‘Time’ was also employed in order to tackle, for instance, different life course motivations and consequences of migration, the daily temporal experiences and adjustments in migration, as well as the concrete time consequences of migration policies and legislation.

I found Derek Layder’s (1993) research map (see Table 1.) useful in both separating different aspects of the results and considering their interrelations. This research map, as Layder calls it, parts from an understanding of micro and macro features as intermingling with each other in social activity, but which for analytic and research purposes can be scrutinised separately (*ibid.*, 71). In order to be able to address the ways the active subject and structures are fused, it is important to recognise that they are different and also partly independent (*ibid.*, 8). Although this map would have been a useful counterpart already in earlier phases of my research process, I employed it here in order to formulate the empirical research material in a meaningful way and to clarify the analytic process.

In the top element of the map, the notion of ‘self’ deals with the way the participants’ accounts respond to and are affected by their social involvements (Layder 1993, 74–75). It refers to self-conceptions, motivations, intentions, emotions, meanings and perceptions of the social world, and is primarily concerned with individual responses to social situations and encounters rather than the encounters and interactions as such. This is the core element in my research interest, since my primary material consisted of interviews and not for instance of observations of interaction. My analysis therefore necessarily concentrates on the level of individual understanding and meaning-making (*ibid.*, 191–192).

At the same time, I part from the understanding that any “individual” activity takes place in socially defined situations and in the frame of a specific setting and context (Layder 1993, 76). I am therefore interested in the participants’ experiences, practices and meaning-making as these are influenced and conditioned by broader processes, relations and structures and reproduce or potentially transform these (Iosifides 2011, 30). I am interested in analysing, for instance, how the participants respond to and negotiate with particular features of their social environment and what emotions, motivations and experiences are associated with particular social activities or positions (Layder 1993, 79–80). Settings and contexts are always sustained by social activities, but for individuals entering certain settings, these are experienced as already established forms of organisation (Layder 1993, 90–91, 97; also Bhaskar 1986, 212–213; 1979, 42–46). Settings and context are thus in part made up of reproduced social relations, while people continually “put life” into the

established character of the social forms that they enter in. These social forms may also change due to the efforts of people living and acting within them.

Table 1. Map of research elements and foci, adapted from Layder (1993, 72).

	RESEARCH ELEMENT	RESEARCH FOCUS
TIME Research element specific interest in time as well as larger historical forces.	SELF Motivations, meanings, intentions, emotions, self-reflection, life-course.	<u>Self-identity and individual's social experience:</u> As these are influenced by the below sectors and as they interact with the unique psychobiography of the individual. <u>For example:</u> Motivations for migration, migration as a personal process, personal level negotiations of belonging and differentiations, "rewards" of migration.
	SITUATED ACTIVITY Encounters and activity, relationships, social imaginary in action.	<u>Social activity:</u> Encounters and activity involving communication by (intentional) participants implicated in the below contexts and settings. Focus on meanings, understandings and definitions of the situations as these affect and are affected by contexts and settings (below) and dispositions of individuals (above). <u>For example:</u> Attitudes 'here' and 'there', consequences of migration status for movement and family life, experiences of encounters at work, experiences of migration bureaucracy and as service-users in general.
	SETTING Specific institutional, legislative etc. conditions.	<u>Mesolevel social organisation:</u> Bureaucracies, health and social services, institutions, social organisation of leisure activities, religious activities. <u>For example:</u> Informal job market, information available on services and activities, changing legislative environment.
	CONTEXT Larger context in which the participants move and live as transnational migrants, social imaginary as context.	<u>Macro level social organisation:</u> Values, traditions, forms of social and economic organisation and power relations. <u>For example:</u> the traditions of internal immigration to Catalonia, historically differentiated traditions for immigration from Latin America, postcolonial context, economic crisis.

Social production or transformation takes place only under certain conditions inherited from the past, and therefore all the different elements in the map can be understood to have their own time and histories, as well as share the "wider sweep of

events” denoted by the conventional notion of history (Layder 1993, 91, 172–173). Finally, of course, also the research itself is located in space and time, and this has different consequences in terms of its realisation and the explanatory accounts it offers (ibid., 191). Since knowledge is situated, it bears the mark of its authors’ social and other positions (Tavory & Timmermans 2014, 41). A critical attitude is therefore needed towards both one’s own reflection and analysis as well as the participants’ accounts through paying attention to the conditions and constraints under which all of these are produced (Mauthner & Doucet 2003, 424). It is important also to acknowledge that one’s institutional contexts enable and constrain in different ways the analytic work and the interpretations drawn from it (Tavory & Timmermans 2014, 41; Mauthner & Doucet 2003, 420–421; Layder 1993, 191).

While my focus is directed at the individual experience, this is analysed as reflecting wider societal structures (Hedberg 2004, 57; Roberts 2002, 4–5, 22, 170). Time becomes important also from this point of view, since these experiences are importantly mediated by the individual’s memories and expectations and situated in time and space (Hedberg 2004, 57–58). According to a realist account, an individual’s story refers to something exterior to it, to its material basis and lived reality (Roberts 2002, 7) which in the interview encounter is mediated by the individual’s conceptualisation of her situation and the intersubjective communication and understanding created with the researcher (Hedberg 2004, 58; Sayer 1992, 22–35). This requires a framework which is contextually specific, explanatory as well as descriptive in orientation, historically grounded, actor-oriented and concerned with linking micro, meso and macro levels (Collinson 2009, 14).

In the analysis, knowledge is created through my interaction with the participants’ accounts and how I have made sense of these accounts (Mauthner & Doucet 2003, 424). It is fair to say that the accounts which challenged what might be considered mainstream models of understanding migration, migration status and irregularity or transnational family life were accorded special weight in the analysis. It has been my aim to bring into view and analyse experiences, elements and impacts which have been absent or overlooked by previous research and/or public debates concerning transnational migration, thus allowing supplementary and complementary insights and contributions to be made and challenging taken-for-granted preconceptions (Tavory & Timmermans 2014, 115; Mauthner & Doucet 2003, 422). In the result chapters, I employ generous quoting which aims at giving the readers the possibility to double check my claims and reconstruct the argument from observations (Tavory & Timmermans 2014, 108), and in this way follow and judge my analytical thinking and interpretations.

A conversation with one woman on a park bench in Barcelona can open up a view to the whole world. My starting point and base lies in the contemplations and perceptions of the participants concerning their everyday experiences as Latin

American women living as transnational migrants in Barcelona. I address these experiences in order to approach critically the simplifying tendencies in the discussions concerning the issue of contemporary transnational migration. At the same time, I remain critical of the fragmentation discourse present in postmodern accounts of identities or subjectivities, as well as of administrative obsessions to divide migrants and migration experiences into different well-defined, simplistic and static categories.

My task, therefore, is not to present an interpretation of the experiences of the participants as such, but to use their perceptions and accounts as tools for concretisation while engaging in theoretical and conceptual discussions over contemporary transnational migration. The aim is to be able to understand in an emotional and concrete way what is discussed and debated in theoretical concepts and legal and administrative policies (also Biglia 2013, 756, 769). This aim goes beyond the paternalistic and simplistic representations of the experiences and life situations of migrants as “positive” or “negative” or the participants as “good” or “bad” (ibid., 770). It does, however, wish to explicitly move beyond representing them as “suffering migrants” or their situations as “strangely deviant”. Most importantly, this research attempts to avoid the representation of its protagonists as victims of the bordered locations they find themselves in, and instead bring into the fore the continuous interplay between social and structural pressures and individual everyday decisions, action and reflection (ibid.).

5 TIME-SPACE AUTONOMY IN MIGRATION

Borders are drawn in time and space. This does not happen arbitrarily or equally, but is a result of a differentiated process in which a person's gender, nationality, ethnic origin, age and social class all bear significance (e.g. Anderson et al. 2009). In this first result chapter, I consider the connections between migration and time-space autonomy, and address migrants' subjectivities from the viewpoints of freedom of movement and controllability and predictability of one's time (and space).

Time is employed as an analytical conceptual tool capable of making visible the everyday consequences of 'borders'. In the first subchapter, I study the autonomy and scale of movement present in the participants' accounts and the ways in which migration status affects these. I will pay attention to time-space autonomy in the city, and consider the participants' migration also in the context of movement and travel in the world. In the second subchapter, I turn to the time consequences of migration status regulations and control present in the participants' accounts.

5.1 Border comes in three months: migration status and movement

Time-space autonomy in the city

To be in a place, to want to go somewhere and be afraid that the police will catch you, that... Because there is a lot of talk about that: oh but if the police catch you and they send you back, you know. So... You were alright for three months, but after those three months... (Bárbara 2.)¹⁵

In the above extract, Bárbara talks about the daily reality of living in Barcelona with an irregular migration status. Her account serves as an example of the time dimensions of state borders. She had arrived as a tourist, for which she did not need a visa at the time as a citizen of her country of origin. After having crossed the international state border and already spent a period of time living in Spain and Barcelona, the border is suddenly present in her everyday life when the three months of stay as a tourist had come to an end (also Kubal 2014, 101). Irregular migration status follows if one has not been able to secure one's situation for instance through employment during the time of regular stay. After this, things change. One cannot move freely but needs to reconcile with the possibility of being apprehended and possibly sent back. Bárbara's account reflects the fact that, contrary to persisting beliefs, irregular migration is often a situation which follows regular stay in a

¹⁵ El estar en un lugar, el querer, el querer ir a algún lugar, el tener el temor de que te coja la policía, el que... Porque mucho, mucho le, impactan con esa noticia de que: ah, pero que si te coge la policía y te devuelve. ¿No? Entonces el, el... Tres meses que podrías estar bien, pero de, pasando los tres meses... (Bárbara 2.)

country and not a result of “illegal” border crossing (e.g. Cebolla Boado et al. 2013, 35, 73; Godenau 2010, 5, 13).

Space and time are not discussed here only in terms of movement across international borders. In the everyday experiences of the participants of living with an irregular migration status, borders are much more quotidianly drawn.

0 How did you live that experience [of migration status irregularity], what do you remember from that time?

1 With fear, yes..., well because in those times they were..., deporting..., because you went to a metro entrance, or whatever, or you got a bus, or [you went] to a market square. Or you heard that you couldn't go to those places because they were asking for documentation and all that..., you couldn't do that. Well, and with that fear, first because of that, and second because you didn't know if you were safe or protected or whatever... (Sofía 1.)¹⁶

Sofía describes her experiences of restricted movement, constant insecurity, risk and fear. She specifies that during her time of migration status irregularity, officials were especially active in checking documents on the street. This reflects the fact that migration policies and their implementation change over time. “Risky places” according to Sofía were often places themselves associated with movement and travel, such as bus stations, buses and metro entrances. “Word goes around” on places with a heightened possibility of controls. The visibility of police on the street keeps migrants alert and uneasy (Baird 2014, 6).

Sofía's account on the consequences of an irregular migration status is also connected with isolation and lack of information. This further creates insecurity and diminishes subjectivity in terms of time and space autonomy and control. While moving around the city and going about one's everyday life, one does not know for sure what to expect from the officials or whether or not one may rely on them should one encounter any problems. This is exemplified also in the two quotations below from Bárbara and Rocío.

So you are in an unstable situation, a bit unsure, a bit fearful of walking on the street, you know? (Bárbara 2.)¹⁷

It was always the fear, and always it was more fear than really necessary. Because on the other hand, I mean, it was strange. Because it is in a way a situation of illegality, I mean: but what does it really mean? So you had all

¹⁶ 0 ¿Cómo viviste esa experiencia [de la irregularidad migratoria]?, ¿qué recuerdas de ese tiempo?

1 Con miedo sí..., bueno porque en esas épocas estaban..., deportando..., porque ibas a la boca del metro, qué sé yo, o en el bus, o la plaza. Claro, o te enterabas que en tales lugares no puedes ir porque estaban exigiendo los documentos y todo eso..., no podías hacerlo. Bueno con ese miedo, uno fue por eso y otro claro, no sé si estaba segura o protegida qué sé yo... (Sofía 1.)

¹⁷ Entonces, eso te hace sentir un poco inestable, un poco inseguro, un poco temeroso de andar por las calles, ¿me entiendes? (Bárbara 2.)

these urban legends and you were thinking that the police will come and they'll take you and put you in jail because you don't have papers. At that time that didn't happen, now it is happening. (Rocío 2.)¹⁸

The above accounts speak of uncertainty the irregular migration status creates and the ambiguity of its consequences. A lack of information is central to both of these experiences. A distinction is made in Rocío's account between living in a situation of migration status irregularity "back then" and being in this situation "now". Rocío talks about her migration irregularity in the past tense, since at the time of our encounters she had regularised her migration status and was also in the process of acquiring Spanish citizenship, i.e. naturalisation. Rocío points out that the consequences of migration status irregularity now might be more severe than before, and that being in a situation of migration status irregularity was not as marginalising before as at the time of our encounters. Legislative, administrative and political environments change in time and this has concrete consequences. On a more individual level, her account also reflects a practice of distancing oneself from the phenomenon taking place "now".

David Harvey's (1990) concept of 'time-space compression' refers to a new consciousness due to globalisation and advances in information and transport technology which have reduced the relevance of time and space in contemporary societies. Ali Nobil Ahmad (2008, 311) has pointed out the rather ironic part that migrants with an irregular migration status play in this contemporary world of time-space compression. On the one hand they are often depicted as the icons of global mobility and global capitalism, and the risks and threats connected with these, while on the other hand their experiences and situations stress the limitations of movement (also Kara 2008; 2006). International travel is out of the question and movement in the city is restricted. Certain times of day or areas of the city are associated with an increased risk of immigration control and the subsequent risk of forced deportation. In this paradoxical experience, one travels great distances and crosses international state borders to find oneself in a situation where it might be threatening to go to the nearest metro station because of fear of the police or immigration officials.

The diminished time-space autonomy is often not the result of one's migration status alone, since long working days already restrict the time available for any other activities to be carried out (also Ahmad 2008). Taking part in different leisure activities would also require spending money. Migration status irregularity nevertheless creates a specific situation of isolation from information and services

¹⁸ Siempre era el miedo, y siempre era más miedo de lo que realmente es. Porque por otro lado, o sea, es como muy loco. Porque es como una situación de ilegalidad, o sea: ¿realmente qué implica? Entonces primero por un lado muchas leyendas urbanas, y piensas que va venir un policía y que te va llevar y te va a meter en un calabozo porque no tienes los papeles. En ese momento no pasaba, ahora sí está pasando. (Rocío 2.)

and uncertainty regarding one's rights and responsibilities which in turn causes marginalisation.

For example I couldn't go to certain places where a lot of Latinos go because there was the police and the immigration so I couldn't go. So of course you were closed inside your house [laughter]. (Sofia 1.)¹⁹

1 Oh my God, it [irregular migration status] limited me in every way. (--) I didn't go out for almost three months because I didn't have a job, my sister was working, and she would come and pick me up, but I didn't go out of the flat. I didn't know, I thought something might happen...

0 Like you would get..., like perhaps the police...?

1 Yes! And also because I was afraid I was going to get lost because when I arrived here..., everything was like: oh God, what is this? Where have I arrived? I mean... (--) More than anything because of the police. I had a brother here, he has already gone back (--) but he was saying: ok let's go walking a bit so that you can get to know where we live. And when we saw a police he said to me: don't look! Don't look, you just walk ahead. And I was so afraid and just walked straight on. Afterwards I understood that he had exaggerated, because normally here, if you don't do anything, if you don't commit a mistake or anything, the police don't do anything to you. But if you do something, they get involved so... I mean, you can't make a mistake, or a scandal or whatever. So that fear, I had it all the time. Well, until I got the papers, until I was legal. (Cristina 1.)²⁰

The experiences of fear and lack of reliable information are explored also in the above accounts. Moving to a new environment might in general represent an experience of loss of control of one's space and time and a process of restricted movement at first and expansion through time until the new environment becomes transformed into knowable, familiar spaces (also Ryan 2008, 303). This was often the case for the research participants with or without restrictions imposed on them because of an irregular migration status. With an irregular migration status this experience is aggravated and the process prolonged, since getting to know the place and moving around causes severe insecurity, as apparent in Cristina's above account

¹⁹ Por ejemplo a ciertos lugares donde van los latinos no podía ir porque estaban allí los policías y los de migración entonces no podía ir. Y claro estabas encerrada en tu casa [risa]. (Sofia 1.)

²⁰ 1 Ay dios, me limitaba en todo sentido [el estatus irregular], (--) yo no salía casi tres meses, porque, eh no había trabajo, mi hermana como ella trabajaba, iba buscándome, entonces yo no salía de del piso. (--) Yo no sabía para nada, pensaba que me pasaría algo...

0 ¿Cómo que te... tal vez la policía...?

1 Sí, y otro también que me perdiera porque cuando he llegado aquí... Todo era para mí: ¡madre mía! ¿Qué es esto? ¿A dónde he llegado? O sea (--) digo por miedo sobre todo a la policía, porque, tenía un hermano que bueno, ahora se ha ido él, que estaba junto con mi hermana y él me decía: bueno iremos andando un poco para que conozcas por donde vivimos. Y cuando estaba allí parada la policía me dijo: ¡no mires! No mires ¡tú camina derecho! Y yo con ese susto yo ni miré, caminé derecho, pero después ya he entendido que mi hermano había exagerado, porque si tú, aquí normalmente tú no cometes ningún error, pues la policía no te hace nada. Pero si vas cometiendo, ya..., se meten, ¿no? O sea no dejan, cometer errores, o un escándalo, yo qué sé. Entonces ese susto también lo seguí llevando, cómo te digo, hasta tener los papeles, hasta ser legal. (Cristina 1.)

(also Bloch et al. 2014, 54, 68–69). As a migrant with an irregular status, it seems that one must be all the time cautious of not attracting attention. This means that one should blend in and become as ‘invisible’ as possible. Cristina describes above how she was advised by her brother that should she see the police, she should just walk on without gazing around and thus potentially inspiring contact and attracting attention.

In both Sofia’s and Cristina’s accounts above, invisibility is sought through simply staying inside and not going out (also Baird 2014, 6). Cristina’s account reveals as well a strategy of trying to “do everything right”. This might include for instance, never travelling in public transport without paying or not getting in the middle of an argument or a misunderstanding in a public place. This is tricky of course, since it is difficult to do “everything right” when one does not know how things work in the new environment.

No, no, I don’t usually..., I move about during the day, I move about normally, normally like any other person, I can go in and out of the metro... I don’t look for a place where there might be problems, I don’t expose myself by going to parties because I don’t like to [go out and party]. (Tina 1.)²¹

Silly things like..., you go out to party at night and everything is fine but you have this little fear that something might happen..., that they might come and ask for your papers and you don’t have them or... (Rocío 2.)²²

Above Tina and Rocío talk about their experiences of limitations for movement and the insecurities attached to this. In their accounts, it becomes not only a question of where you go, but also when or at what time of the day you move and with what purpose. Migrants seem to be able to move around for work but not for enjoyment. This experience draws an image in contrast to Barcelona as a place with a broad variety of cultural activities as well as restaurants and bars for tourists arriving for instance from the Northern parts of Europe in search of warmer weather and affordable food and alcohol to enjoy and relax and stroll around the city.

It was difficult, it was pretty difficult, it was difficult for [her children], I had them living inside the four walls poor things and... It’s just that there wasn’t anything else I could do. And afterwards I found out that there were..., for example every [summer] there are these [places] where [children] can go to spend time, play, I don’t know, so... (--). Lack of information, you know. (Cristina 2.)²³

²¹ No, no, yo no suelo... Me suelo mover en el día, me suelo mover normalmente, normalmente como cualquier otro, puedo entrar y salir en el metro, no buscar un lugar donde precisamente haya un problema, no me expongo a ir a una fiesta porque no me gusta [ir de fiesta]. (Tina 1.)

²² Entonces tonterías como que..., sales a celebrar en la noche y todo está tranquilo y tú tienes un pequeño temor de algo que pueda pasar..., que te pidan los papeles y no los tienes o... (Rocío 2.)

²³ Es que nos costó, nos costó, nos costó bastante, les costó a ellos [sus hijos], yo los tenía encerrados a los pobres y... Es que no había otra cosa más qué hacer. Y después ya fui descubriendo que había,

Cristina had been living with her children in Barcelona in a situation of irregular migration status, and since she was working long hours, she had advised her children to stay inside their room in the flat they shared with other people. Here too, then, invisibility is achieved by not going out and moving around as little as possible. It was only afterwards that she became aware of different activities that were available and did not depend on having an official migration status. Lack of information is mentioned in a rather laconic manner, as to show that this is just the way it is.

You feel rejected, you know? By the people from here. Because you don't know how life is here, how people live, so you start to think about a lot of things... And you limit yourself..., in many ways. (Cristina 1.)²⁴

Cristina continues her reflection of her everyday life in Barcelona. The account shows her constant distrust and an impossibility to relax. In the interview encounters with the participants this emotional state of tension and insecurity was often described. This is a situation of not being sure what one can and cannot do, where and when one can or should not go, being all the time cautious of not attracting attention, and not knowing if one is “protected or not” in face of any conflict, crime or abuse (also Bloch et al. 2014, 58). It is a situation of not knowing, in the case of any misunderstanding, what might follow and how, or even against whom, one should be able to defend oneself. Cristina's response to this situation is to limit her movement, and that of her children, stay constantly aware of her surroundings and her own actions and conduct, and try to stay as “invisible” as possible.

Migration status irregularity did not, however, straightforwardly lead to a situation of constant insecurity and tension and restrictions to one's time and space. In the quotation below, a very different experience is described by Miriam.

One of the things that I like about Barcelona is that, that I think that it's a city which welcomes you in a way, it makes you come and enjoy it, go out, be in it and feel good. (--) The way that I can discover the city and enjoy the freedom of walking around, I love it, you know. (Miriam 2.)²⁵

The above account is rather an opposite experience to what had been described before about movement in the city and the consequences of migration status irregularity to it. Miriam was a “free mover and actor” as a Latin American

en [verano] por ejemplo hay donde pueden ir a distraerse, jugar, yo qué sé, entonces... (--) Falta de información ¿sabes? (Cristina 2.)

²⁴ Sentirte un poco rechazada ¿no? Por... por la gente de aquí. Porque como tú no conoces cómo es la vida de aquí, cómo vive la gente, cómo son, entonces, te pones a pensar muchas cosas. Y te limitabas..., a muchas cosas. (Cristina 1.)

²⁵ Y una de las cosas que a mí me agrada de Barcelona es eso, es que creo que es una ciudad que de alguna manera te acoge y te hace como que vengas, que la disfrutes, que salgas, que estés en ella, que estés bien. (--) La manera para mí de descubrir la ciudad y tener la libertad de poder andar en la calle, me encanta ¿no? (Miriam 2.)

immigrant in Barcelona, even though she had been residing there in a migration status irregularity. I explain this difference through the differing intersectional locations of the participants in terms of national and ethnic origin and social class, and the consequences to visibility these locations carried. Miriam was educated and, as she herself stated in our interview encounters, had a “European appearance” and was therefore not linked to Latin American indigenous or mestizo ethnicity. She thus projected an educated middle class background and was not visibly “ethnically different” from the local population or located by them straightforwardly in the category of the “‘migrant’ coming from an underdeveloped Latin American country” (Cea D’Ancona et al. 2013, 135; Calavita 2005, 27, 154). She was therefore unlikely to be stopped on the street for papers.

Miriam’s experience would go in line with research literature highlighting how migration regulations overall are intended to control the movement of the ‘other’, be that in terms of her religious beliefs, ethnic appearance, social class position, skill and employment, family life etc. or a combination of these (Anderson et al. 2009). This is not only a question of who is able to move around in the world in a regular manner in terms of migration statuses, since, as the experiences of the participants also in this research show, people from diverse backgrounds and in different circumstances may find themselves in a situation of migration status irregularity. It rather seems that for some migrants, due to their intersectional location in a certain context, (an irregular) migration status matters and has an array of consequences, while for other migrants, due to their differing location, it does not.

The experiences present in Miriam’s quotation contradict the idea that a migrant with an irregular migration status necessarily experiences time-space restrictions or lack of time-space autonomy and predictability. In addition to (the visibility of) her location in the intersectional web of social hierarchies which take on certain meanings in the context of her movement, Miriam’s account can be understood furthermore by considering the specific place of origin of her movement and Barcelona as the host city of her migration. This connection can also be made in Regina’s experience, as illustrated in the following account.

0 But what would you say is easy here, when you think about..., perhaps some aspect of your [everyday] life here that would be easier than in [country of origin], that you might say that you have “won” in a way, perhaps, something that you have now and didn’t have over there?

1 Well, I would say freedom. Freedom of walking on the street more than anything else, you know? My children for instance they come and go, I don’t have to be worried all the time. In [city of origin] children live inside their houses because of fear, you know? Here they go... They are more independent, you know. I love the fact that my children can be independent and do what they like. And me as well, you know. Sometimes I come back from work at three in the morning and nothing happens on the street. Well,

nothing has happened [laughter]. In general it's much more secure. In [city of origin] that would be impossible, unthinkable, you couldn't [laughter] even think of doing that. (Regina 1.)²⁶

Both Miriam and Regina were or had been residing with an irregular migration status, but instead of their everyday mobility and time-space autonomy shrinking because of migration, it had actually expanded. One important factor in this had been the betterment of urban security (also Cea D'Ancona et al. 2013, 189). Miriam and Regina had moved to Barcelona from large Latin American urban centres where they had felt a constant potential threat of being assaulted, robbed or kidnapped. Other participants raised the same issue for instance by referring to the fact that in Barcelona it was possible for them to go to the park or the public playground with their children or grandchildren and let them play there freely. In their cities of origin it would not have been possible for their children to go out alone and one should never lose sight of them in public places such as parks.



²⁶ 0 Pero ¿qué sería fácil aquí? En cuanto a..., o sea tal vez más fácil que en [país de origen], en la vida [cotidiana] aquí, que luego como que ha parecido que ¿tal vez hayas ganado? Que ahora tienes algo que allá talvez no tenias...

1 Bueno, te voy a decir la libertad. Libertad, sobre todo para caminar por la calle ¿no? Mis hijos por ejemplo aquí van, vienen, no tengo ese pendiente. En [ciudad de origen] los niños viven encerrados en sus casas por temor ¿no? Aquí van... Son más independientes ¿no? Eso es lo que a mí me encanta que mis hijos puedan ellos solos hacer lo que les guste. O yo misma ¿no? A veces he salido del trabajo a las tres de la mañana y no pasa nada por la calle. Bueno no ha pasado nada [risa]. En general es más tranquilo. En [ciudad de origen] eso es imposible, es impensable, ni siquiera es que [risa] te lo puedes pensar ¿no? (Regina 1.)

Public transport was another important issue in these experiences. In many of the cities of origin of the participants, one could not use a bicycle to move around or walk because of unorganised traffic and insecurity on the streets. Public transport may not run so often or buses or metros travel completely packed because transport is not well organised and because of the sheer number of commuters. The bicycles offered by the municipality of Barcelona, the fact that there existed lanes for bicycles and the well organised public transport were also present in the creative work done by the participants. Being able to move around with a bicycle or a moped symbolised an experience of freedom and independence, an autonomy and control over one's time and space.

The experience of being “exposed” to migration controls while simply walking on the street thus has its connections with a person's visible location inside the hierarchical webs most importantly referring to social class status and ethnic origin. Irregular migration status does not carry the same everyday consequences for everyone (also Bloch et al. 2014, 579). The insecure positions of migrants in migration status irregularity are linked to social visibility (Baird 2014, 4). Magda describes her everyday life and movement in the city in the following two extracts.

I'm the happiest when in the morning as I wake up I say: today I'm going to go... And the first thing that pops into my mind is where I'll go. (--) [Or] I'm going somewhere, along the street and [say]: no, not there, let's go over here. And I change direction, and that's what I love the most. The instinct, it's just a great feeling, of freedom, wow. (--) It gives you this, you know, you could relax, you could, you know, break free, and that's what keeps me from getting depressed [laughter]. (--) Honestly I don't remember that anyone has ever asked me for my papers, no, no, honestly it's not something that would... It does worry me sometimes, it has occurred to me. (Magda 1.)²⁷

I see it in the majority of people, especially in the one's who look like it, you know. (--) I've seen it, I've heard it, I've been in those situations. It has not happened to me because I don't look like it and that's it, so... But people who do: *moros*, Ecuadorians, Bolivians, they'll never be anything else than cleaners, you know. It's so sad. Because they might have whatever studies and here they're not able to get ahead just because you can see that they have indigenous ancestry, that's it. There's a lot of that kind of foolishness, there's a lot of lack of respect. I personally have been lucky but because of what I just told you, I don't look like it. (Magda 1.)²⁸

²⁷ Yo cuando lo paso es mejor es así, es cuando me levanto y digo: hoy voy a... El primer lugar que se me viene a la cabeza es para donde voy. (--) [Or] voy para ese lado, voy por una calle y [digo]: no, por acá no, voy por allá. Me doy media vuelta, y así es cuando mejor lo paso. Entonces es el instinto, no sé qué es, pero es una sensación tan linda, de libertad que: ¡Wow! (--) ¡Ah! te da como esa ¿no? que te pudiste relajar, pudiste, no sé, salir de, de estar atado, parece, y eso es lo que a mí me mantiene sin deprimirme [risa]. (--) Honestamente es algo que yo no me acuerdo que me hayan pedido papeles, no, no, te soy honesta, no es algo que me... Sí me preocupa a veces, me pasa por la mente. (Magda 1.)

²⁸ Lo veo en la mayor parte de las gentes, sobre todo a los que se les nota ¿no? (--) Eso lo he visto, lo he escuchado, donde he estado en situaciones así, a mí no me han pasado, pero porque nose me nota,

In the first extract, Magda describes how important it is for her to feel that she is able to decide for herself where and when she moves during the day. The first point I wish to make here is the great emphasis she places on her time-space autonomy and control. This also seems to include having the possibility of unpredictability, since she comments that the best days for her are the ones when she does not know in the morning where she will go during the day, and she describes the satisfaction she gets from changing plans and directions. This relaxes her and keeps her from being depressed. The second point would be the fact that Magda struggles to remember a situation where she would have been asked to show her migration status documents. She says she sometimes thinks about her irregular migration status while she moves around in the city, but this does not seem to worry her that much.

In the second extract, an explanation for this lack of worry is offered when Magda states that she does not “look like it”, meaning that according to her she does not look “like” an immigrant, specifically an immigrant with an irregular migration status. Magda makes a distinction between herself and people who “look like” immigrants, and refers to the latter as “*moros*” (generally a pejorative term referring to people from Northern Africa or Muslims), *Ecuadorians* or *Bolivians*. What makes specifically Ecuadorians and Bolivians “look like” immigrants is revealed later in the extract to be their Latin American indigenous heritage (also Cea D’Ancona et al. 2013, 135, 247). The visibility of American indigenous ancestry thus carries with it the consequences of discrimination and suspicion, of not being respected, of being badly treated and facing restrictions. Magda’s account speaks of an impossibility of passing unnoticed (Delgado 2003, 218, ref. Calavita 2005, 145).

Racist discrimination and prejudice are not a straightforward consequence of quotidian encounters but contextual practices and patterns of meaning-making, categorising and interpreting, which need to be learned and therefore also taught, for instance through political discourse and rhetoric, the media and education (van Dijk 2004, 92–110). Contemporary racist attitudes and discrimination in Spain towards “*moros*” and “*sudacas*” (a pejorative term referring to people of South American origin), draw from certain ways of employing and making sense of historical events, such as the Islamic occupation of the Iberian peninsula, and its subsequent “reconquest” by the Catholic Monarchs, which expanded into the discovery of the ‘New world’ in 1492 and in turn led to the conquest and racist colonisation in America. Bolivia and Ecuador are countries with a considerable percentage of mestizo and indigenous population, which would most probably explain the rather straightforward connection that Magda makes between coming from these countries

ya está, entonces... Pero a la gente que sí: a los moros, a los ecuatorianos, bolivianos, de limpiadoras no pasan ¿me entiendes? ¡Qué triste! ¿no?, porque las mujeres de pronto tienen tremendos estudios y acá no salen adelante, sólo porque nada más se les nota que son de descendencia indígena, ya está. Hay muchas tonterías de esas, hay mucha falta de respeto. Yo personalmente he tenido suerte pero por lo que te digo, no se me nota. (Magda 1.)

or nationalities and having Latin American indigenous ethnic appearance (also van Dijk 2004, 183).

Noteworthy is the “chain” of conflations in Magda’s account, which departs from an immigrant being understood as a migrant with an irregular migration status and furthermore as a person who is visually ethnically different than the majority of the host society’s population and is thus treated with and suffers from prejudice and discrimination. I will come back to these conflations and differentiations in chapter 6.3. In addition to a visible ethnic origin, I would argue that there is also a gender and social class dimension in Magda’s account. At the time of our encounters, a dominant imaginary of Latin American immigration to Barcelona, or Spain, was that of a female migration of low-skilled, low-paid and poor migrants, who worked in domestic work or as personal carers (irregularly) in order to send remittances to their families back in the country of origin (Gil Araujo & González-Fernández 2014; Garzón 2012, 2505). This migration pattern was especially strong for women coming from the Andean countries such as Ecuador and Bolivia, as becomes apparent in the following short extract from Regina.

And there are also the typical grannies [in Barcelona] who dream of having a Bolivian carer, you know [laughter]? Yes, they say that, you know. I’ve heard it quite a lot [laughter]. (Regina 2.)²⁹

Travelling the world

Well, when we arrived to the airport, as we just had our [tourist] visas, there was the problem to enter. We had intentions to stay in Spain, but we were not going to tell that, so we had the hotel reservation, we had money and we had the return ticket. And we got through, they didn’t ask us anything, we passed. That was the fear, the worry, that we’d lose the money, I don’t know. (Luz 1.)³⁰

I was really nervous. What will they ask me? What will they want? And if they take us to a room to ask us questions, I’d be nervous... But everything worked out. (Luz 2.)³¹

In the society there [country of origin] only the people who have money travel, the people who are of (--) lower classes never travel. So for me to have had

²⁹ Y, también hay las típicas abuelitas [en Barcelona] que, que sueñan con su cuidadora boliviana ¿no? [risa] Que sí, que lo dicen así ¿no? Lo he oído bastante [risa]. (Regina 2.)

³⁰ Bueno pues al principio cuando estábamos en el aeropuerto, como nosotros veníamos sólo con visa [de turista], con pasaporte de turista era el problema de entrar. Nosotros teníamos intenciones de quedarnos pero no se lo íbamos a decir ahí al policía, entonces teníamos la reserva de hotel, teníamos dinero y aparte teníamos el pasaje de vuelta. Y pasamos sin ningún problema, no nos hicieron ninguna pregunta, pasamos. Ese era igual el temor, el nervio de perder el dinero, no sé. (Luz 1.)

³¹ Entonces yo sí tenía los nervios de punta. ¿Qué me iban a preguntar? ¿Qué me iban a pedir? Y si nos llevaban a otra sala a hacernos preguntas yo me iba a poner nerviosa... Al final salió todo bien. (Luz 2.)

this opportunity to travel was good, I had to take advantage of it. (--) They [her mother and her sister] would not want to come and stay here, they only want to come for vacations. My mother's dream has always been to visit Spain, travel through Europe, so she like saw this opportunity now in me to be able to travel. (Luz 1.)³²

In the above extracts, Luz gives a concrete account of her experience of travelling from her country of origin to Spain and passing through international airports and passport and visa controls. In the first extract from our first interview encounter, Luz talks about the necessary documents she and her husband had prepared to travel with. In order to get into the country, one must show either an invitation from someone local or legally resident, or hotel reservations for the duration of one's stay, as well as a "necessary" amount of money to prove the touristic purposes of the travel (Kubal 2014, 98). In the second extract from our second interview encounter, Luz describes the doubts and nervousness she remembers feeling during the travel and while passing the airport security checks.

At the time of the interview encounters, there was discussion also in the Spanish media (e.g. Vidales & Barón 2012; Ceberio & Barón 2012) about the control practices and procedures taking place at international airports in Spain. The arbitrary nature of the requirements for entering, on the one hand, and the differential treatment people from different origins were receiving, on the other, were taken up. It seemed unclear what the requirements for necessary documents or a "sufficient" amount of money actually were, and it was also noted that the checks and interrogations were directed disproportionately to people with Latin American origin.

In the third extract, again from our first interview meeting, Luz speaks about her migration in the context of contemporary movement and world travel, and the restrictions imposed on this, from her perspective. She considers herself fortunate and special because of this possibility to move and see the world she has had in her migration to Barcelona. She specifies that in her country of origin, travel is restricted to people "who have money" and not considered something people from lower social classes are supposed to do. Through migration Luz wishes to offer the opportunity of movement in the world to her family members. Once she has been able to regularise her migration status and stabilise her work situation in Spain, she looks forward to inviting her mother and sister to visit Spain and perhaps travel more in Europe as well.

³² En la sociedad que hay allá en [su país de origen] solo los que tienen más dinero viajan, los que son (--) [clase] baja jamás viajan. Entonces para mí que se me haya dado esta oportunidad de viajar fue igual buena, hay que aprovecharla. (--) Ellas [su madre y su hermana] no quieren quedarse aquí, quieren solo venir de vacaciones. Ella [su madre], su sueño siempre de toda su vida es ir a España, viajar por toda Europa, entonces ella como que vio una posibilidad en mí de poder viajar... (Luz 1.)

Luz may be considered here as a kind of ‘pioneer traveller’ of her family in a world order where many are constrained to stay “trapped in the local” (Bigo 2006, 41) due to hierarchies of citizenships and what has been called ‘birthright lottery’ (Shachar 2009), the differential consequences of nationality, social class, race and ethnicity to people’s movement and the consumerist dimension of international travel. Didier Bigo (2006, 41–42) refers to Zygmunt Bauman’s analysis on globalisation and its logics of exclusion between those who are free to circulate and those who are not. Bauman (1998, 2–3) writes that “[g]lobalization divides as much as it unites (--). Mobility climbs to the rank of the uppermost among the coveted values — and the freedom to move, perpetually a scarce and unevenly distributed commodity, fast becomes the main stratifying factor (--). Being local in a globalized world is a sign of social deprivation and degradation.”

Having been able to move in spite of financial and administrative restrictions, see the world and expand one’s horizons, and potentially being able to invite people to visit in the future, is considered an accomplishment by Luz and as something she can be proud of. This movement is an expansion of space for herself and, in the future, potentially also for her family.

Yes well, one always has this curiosity to know Europe, in that way I have to say that I do feel proud, it was always my dream to know the Mediterranean. And I always feel like my spirit is lifted, when I see the seagulls, because I’m quite romantic, I read a lot and I listen to romantic music and classical music... That’s what I... To feel another culture, to be close to the theatres, classical music, books. (--). That does fulfil my life... I can say: I’ve been to Europe. (Tina 2.)³³

In the above extract from Tina, a curiosity to travel and see the world is presented as a central motivation for and gain from migration. The fact that Tina has been able to live the experience of “having been to Europe” is something which makes her proud. She puts great emphasis on the possibility of knowing another culture and being close to the cultural activities in Barcelona. Motivations such as a desire to see the world, move around, experience the ‘old continent’ and its historical sights and have a sense of adventure were frequent in the participants’ accounts. These aims and desires are often exempt when the migration of people from the ‘Third World’ is discussed. Yet the desire to see and experience the world is not limited to rich travellers and tourists or expatriates, whichever the region they come from or travel to.

³³ Sí bueno, siempre uno tenía esa curiosidad de conocer Europa, eso sí que estoy en ese sentido orgullosa, mi sueño era conocer el Mediterráneo... Y donde siempre siento que me está realizando, que me está animando, cuando veo las gaviotas, porque como soy una romántica y leo mucho y escucho mucha música romántica y clásica... Eso es lo que a mí me... El sentir otra cultura, estar de cerca de los teatros, de la música clásica, de los libros. (--). En eso sí realmente llena mi vida... Me puedo decir: he estado en Europa. (Tina 2.)



When travelling, many migrants borrow money from someone (be that family members, acquaintances or more or less official money lenders) and arrange for different documents and papers (in whichever way practical or possible). After arriving, they may find job opportunities in the informal sector, which sometimes pay miserably and working hours and conditions may be straightforwardly abusive. Still, to seek to understand and explain all this inside the rigid binary between the “suspicious illegal migrant” and the “passive victim of human trafficking” is an attempt to jump over people’s subjectivities, aspirations, decision-making processes and life trajectories (Agustín 2003a, 392). This form of argumentation also views especially ‘non-Western’ or ‘Southern’ women as better off staying home as it keeps the gaze fixed on extreme cases while the more prosaic and everyday needs and situations of the majority of migrants (be they women or men) are not addressed (Agustín 2003a, 392). It is also an attempt to ignore the economic and political inequalities which shape and create the universe in which we all move, live and take part (Anderson 2008; Agustín 2003b).

In concrete terms, the fact that in order to enter a country as a tourist one must prove to have the “necessary” means for sustaining oneself added to the debt one may be forced to make before leaving the country of origin. Yet the financial costs of migration do not stop there (Ahmad 2008, 312).

Of course, you arrive and you [have to] have money to show, because in addition to the debt to cover the tickets, you have to bring money to show that you can... If you come as a tourist, you have to have money to spend, you know. So... That money you borrow as well, and when you arrive here you have to be able to pay this money back. So, when we arrived we had to start paying the money back, but you arrive and soon you notice that you need money for transport, for food and everything. So, well, I took from the borrowed money, I took a part and I only paid back some of it and the rest I used to... , to being here, without having to ask anything from anyone, because one thing I was made very clear since I arrived: here no one looks out for anyone else, you have to take care of yourself, of your family. Here no one will do you any favours. (Bárbara 2.)³⁴

As Bárbara points out, one needs money for subsistence, for organising things, for renting an apartment, for public transport etc. It was not unusual for the participants to receive more money from their family members who were in the country of origin, or extend the paying back of their debt to these family members or other people in order to cover their living costs in Barcelona, which were often experienced as surprisingly high. This is of course in contrast to the conventional idea of (irregular) migrants as supporters of their home community through financial remittances (also Ahmad 2008, 312). Bárbara’s account also rejects the strongly held assumptions of solidarity between migrants, most prominent in migration networks theorising. This lack of solidarity is discussed further in connection to the negotiations around belonging in chapter 7.1.

Time also sets movement, as borders and migration legislation shift and change over time. This is illustrated in the following account from Cristina.

Yes, before they closed the border for..., entries with just the passport. Before you could enter and now you no longer can, if you don’t have the [tourist or some other] visa you can’t enter Spain. So they were able to... (-- Yes all of

³⁴ Y claro, el llegar, eh, hay [que tener] dinero que tú muestras, porque aparte de contraer el, el, la deuda para tu pasaje, tú tienes que traer dinero en efectivo para mostrar cómo, cómo uno tiene que... Si vienes como turista pues tienes que tener dinero para gastar ¿no? Entonces... Este... Eh... Ese dinero también lo prestas, y cuando llegas acá, tienes que volverlo a girar para tu país de origen. Entonces, cuando llegamos teníamos que volver a girar el dinero, pero tú llegas aquí y te encuentras que necesitas para transporte, que necesitas para el alimento y todo eso. Entonces, pues bueno, de, de eso que presté, cogí parte de ese dinero y solamente una parte devolví, y otra me quedé para poder... Eh... Estar aquí, eh, sin tener que pedir nada a nadie, porque algo me pusieron bien claro cuando llegué: bueno, aquí nadie ve por nadie, tú ves por ti sola, por ustedes solos. Aquí nadie regala nada. (Bárbara 2.)

them took the opportunity, my mother and my two brothers. They arrived almost at the same time. (Cristina 1.)³⁵

Cristina explains above that several of her family members arrived in Spain/Barcelona at a very specific time, namely just before legislation was changed to demand a tourist visa for citizens of her country of origin. In addition to reflecting the changing character of immigration laws, this account may also be considered in the context of continuous practices of negotiating, adjusting and acting upon borders and immigration restrictions. Through controlling the timing of one's movement, one may also reach some extent of control over the restrictions to it.

Since a registered presence in the country counted for regularisation and naturalisation in Spain, there was also, in a sense, "worth in time". Vanessa describes below how she was able to take advantage of the time inscribed inside the migration regulations.

Well, it was an uncomfortable situation [migration status irregularity] because I couldn't go out of Spain and then come back. Yes, I was in a way stuck here. But since it was a question of time, it was... I took it as the first time in my life that time was working for me. (--) I dedicated that time to making new acquaintances, friendships, getting to know the nature [different places in Spain], new people, new food... (--) So I dedicated myself to living that part of things. (Vanessa 2.)³⁶

The form of applying for migration status regularisation Vanessa speaks of in this extract is called *el arraigo*, which refers to making or having "roots" in the host society. In this manner, one may apply for a regularisation after a certain number of years of residence, provided one fulfils other requirements. In Vanessa's account the time of staying in the country in an irregular migration status situation is presented as a possibility to "let time work" for oneself. Although during this time she was not able to leave Spain and come back, and was therefore stuck in Spain, she took this time as a possibility to form social circles, travel and work in different places inside the country, and get to know it and its sceneries, culture, food, customs and traditions. While these activities were for the most part also for her enjoyment, they would as well prove beneficial in the future application for migration status regularisation and later naturalisation.

³⁵ Sí, sí, antes que se cierren las fronteras para..., que puedan pasar sólo con pasaporte. Antes pasaba y ahora ya no, si no es con visa no pueden. Sí, para entrar a España. Entonces lograron... (--) Todos ellos también aprovecharon, mi madre y mis dos hermanos vinieron casi seguidos. (Cristina 1.)

³⁶ A ver, tenía una situación incómoda de que no podía salir de España si quería alguna vez regresar a Europa. Sí, estaba de cierta forma metida aquí. Pero como era una cuestión de tiempo, era... Lo tomé como que era la primera vez en la vida que el tiempo jugaba a mi favor. (--) Me dediqué a criar relaciones, amistades, a conocer, a conocer la naturaleza, conocer gente, conocer comida nueva... (--) Entonces me dediqué a vivir ese lado. (Vanessa 2.)

In Vanessa's account, time restrictions are used strategically or instrumentally (Anderson 2009, 413), even from a position of migration status irregularity. Her account is an example of utilising or navigating restrictions to one's own benefit as well as in terms of achieving personal goals and enjoyment inside, or despite of, regulations and restrictions. However, again, for this to be possible, it is important that "one blends in", as Vanessa goes on pointing out in the following account.

I knew what I was getting into, it wasn't something... I knew that it was going to be complicated, the administrative procedures more than anything. But I haven't had problems..., very rarely problems with the people here, rarely. Well, I don't have... I have certain benefits. I have more of a European look than a typical Latin American one. I mean had I looked like a Bolivian, people surely would have hurt me. (--) I think it's a fear of the different more than anything else. I have in a way been lucky not to have been so different. So it's [about] being more..., more convenient. But it's pure luck. Had I had a more indigenous face or more... (Vanessa 2.)³⁷

Vanessa refers here to "certain benefits" she has as a person with a "European look" as opposed to a person with a "typical Latin American" one. A "very Bolivian face" is taken up as an emblem for showing visible Latin American indigenous heritage. It thus becomes clear once again that regulations and restrictions of movement and their consequences for time-space autonomy are not the same for everyone. The possibility of blending in, and in a sense becoming invisible, is decisive to the consequences of migration restrictions and regulations at an everyday level. Vanessa states that she has been "lucky" not to have been "so different". This might be interpreted also as a way of stressing the arbitrary and changing nature of regulatory and discriminative practices and the attributes which are connected to them.

That was like six months, I was working for six months or almost ten months with them... And then came the elections. Zapatero won and made the law that..., the people who had been working for a certain time, who filled certain prerequisites [could regularise their migration status]. And I took with me all that I..., like the newspaper and told to my bosses that they would have to regularise my situation, that the law was obligating them to do that. And of course, since they saw that this was the law, even though they would not have wanted to, they regularised my situation. (--) And so they organised for me to get the papers and everything and in two months' time I told them that I'll quit [laughter]. (Miriam 1.)³⁸

³⁷ Yo sabía lo que venía, vamos, no era una cosa... Yo sabía que esto iba a ser complicado. Sobre todo desde el punto de vista administrativo. Pero yo no he tenido problemas..., rara vez problemas con personas acá, rara vez. Ahora, yo no tengo... Yo tengo ciertas ventajas. Yo tengo más bien un aspecto europeo que un aspecto latinoamericano típico. Es decir si yo hubiera tenido cara de boliviana seguramente me habrían hecho mucho daño. (--) yo creo que es más bien el temor a lo diferente. Yo tengo, de cierta forma la fortuna de no ser tan diferente. Entonces es ser más..., más convincente. Pero eso es pura suerte. Si hubiera tenido cara más indígena o más... (Vanessa 2.)

³⁸ Eso fue como seis meses, estuve trabajando como seis o casi diez meses con ellos y... Para eso ya eran las elecciones. Ganó Zapatero y Zapatero hizo una ley que..., a la gente que tiene tanto tiempo en

In the above extract, Miriam refers to one of the extraordinary regularisation acts which gave migrants residing in Spain in an irregular migration status the possibility to regularise their migration status. Miriam shows a great deal of agency in the extract. She follows the developments in politics and changes in legislation, and has the capability and the courage to turn this information to her own benefit as she demands of her employers at the time to regularise her migration status through an official work contract. In addition, after achieving this, she seizes the opportunity to leave the employment in order to search, now from a more secured position, for other work opportunities which might better suit her education, skills or interests. In the following quote, the timing of one's migration movement is tackled further.

And putting it [her migration] in a specific historical process. I think that I travelled..., I decided to leave at a moment of transition, of many political and economic changes, in Spain. So the time when you decide to travel and arrive to a place also influences a lot, you know (--). Also how immigration was tackled at that moment, it already started to become a bit alarming. And it's not the same to arrive at that moment than to arrive ten years earlier when..., you know? Let alone twenty years ago. It depends a lot on the context. And to look at migration from that point of view. I mean not just what you plan but what you live. And how people receive you according to those perspectives which have to do with the context, you know. (Rocío 1.)³⁹

Migration always takes place in a specific historical, economic and political moment in time. In the above extract, Rocío states that her migration to Barcelona had "bad timing", since she considers that at the time of her arrival, during the second half of 2000s, the political, social and legislative environment around migration was becoming more and more restrictive. She stresses that the particular time-space context for one's movement shapes the way one's migration experience will turn out to be. She also makes a distinction between what one plans and what the reality then is. She stresses the real context of one's movement and how one is received because of this context. In this reflection the structural and relational factors and one's own plans, attitudes and activities are put together and reflected upon inside a certain time-space context.

una empresa trabajando, que cumplía ciertos requisitos... [se les hacen los papeles]. Y yo me llevé todo mi..., como el periódico diciéndoles a los jefes que me tienen que hacer los papeles, que la ley los obligaba hacerme los papeles. Y claro a ver que se les obligaba aunque ellos aunque ellos no querían, hicieron los papeles. (--). Pero mira me hicieron los papeles y tal y después a los dos meses dije bueno me voy [risa]. (Miriam 1.)

³⁹ Y particularmente ya ubicándolo en un proceso histórico y específico. Yo creo que viajé..., decidí partir en un momento de transición de muchísimos cambios políticos, económicos, de España. Entonces también tiene que ver mucho el tiempo en el que decides viajar y llegar a un sitio ¿no? (--). Incluso eso, desde cómo se enfrentaba la inmigración en el momento en el que yo llegué, que ya empezaba a ser una especie de alarma roja. Y no es lo mismo llegar en ese momento que hace diez años atrás donde ¿sabes? Y menos veinte años atrás, o sea... Depende mucho del contexto. Y ver la inmigración desde ese punto de vista. O sea ya no de que lo planificas, sino que lo vives. Y cómo te recibe la gente según esas perspectivas del contexto ¿no? (Rocío 1.)

Shifting migration policies accord shifting status to migrating people, when permits are withdrawn, renewed, renamed and reshaped (Anderson et al. 2009, 7). In addition to legislation and policy, ‘borders’ are continuously drawn in everyday encounters. Migration status and irregularity are not static but fluid and flexible, and the multisided and processual nature of status mobility and irregularity is tangible in the everyday experiences of the participants (Bloch et al. 2014, 151; Donato & Armenta 2011; Anderson 2008). I will now turn to the everyday time consequences of migration statuses and control present in the participants’ accounts.

5.2 Liminal times of migration: migration regulations and bureaucracy



The relationship migrants have with the public administration and services reflects their political condition (Martín Pérez 2010, 183). In this section, I study the participants’ personal and everyday experiences of migration restrictions, administration and bureaucracy. As an analytical tool I turn again to time, and discuss these experiences in the light of time autonomy and control. Whereas in the previous subchapter my interest has been on physical movement with regard to space and time, the focus here is on personal and everyday experiences of time paradoxes and the emotions attached to migration administration and bureaucracy. Central here is the experience of control and power over one’s time which refers to the equation: the less power you have, the more your time is determined, and wasted, by others (Griffiths et al. 2013).

- 1 Well, I have the appointment nothing more. I have the appointment and they’ll ask for the requirements, I’ll present... And I don’t know how much they’ll tell me that I’ll have to wait for the answer, it’s a really long process...
- 0 Yes. So they haven’t told you yet what..., what are the requirements?

1 No, no, no, until the appointment (--) I don't know anything, I don't know anything. (Cristina 2.)⁴⁰

Cristina had been living in Barcelona with an irregular migration status, but had acquired regularisation through her work. She was now waiting for her first appointment in the application process for Spanish citizenship. In the above extract, she describes this administrative process. She did not know much about the requirements or the timelines of the procedure beforehand. She merely makes a rather general remark of these processes being very long.

The experiences of the participants of immigration bureaucracy were characterised by feelings of uncertainty and instability (also Griffiths 2014, 1993). This was often presented as something more or less expected. The accounts draw a general picture of migration bureaucracy as complicated and slow (also Anleu Hernández & García-Moreno 2014, 98). It never seemed to be possible to really know what were the requirements or the time limits for different administrative procedures. Up-to-date information seemed difficult to obtain, and the information one received was not always reliable because the laws and regulations were in constant flux and also because they were implemented arbitrarily. This same uncertainty and insecurity accompanied other administrative procedures or services in one's everyday life.

It's always a bit of a complex when you're not inside the system. You go and try to access a service but you don't go: yes, I have the right to health services. But you go: [whispering] excuse me, I'm a migrant... So you do feel it's more like a disadvantage you know? And like a... Because you know it's not really inside the law, it's treated as something bad, you know. (Rocío 2.)⁴¹

What stands out in the above extract from Rocío is the lack of information and security on where one stands as a migrant, specifically with an irregular migration status, with respect to the host society and the local service structure. Rocío describes the situation of an irregular migration status as having a “complex”. She gives the example of never entering the local health care centre with clear confidence that she was entitled to the services there, although during the time she is referring to in this quote, health services were available to everyone residing in Spain regardless of their migration status. Rocío's account speaks of a gap existing between formal rights to services and actual access (also Calavita 2005, 104–110). It locates her not exactly inside the system, at a disadvantage, as she says. She seems to stand in a grey

⁴⁰ 1 Bueno que, tengo la cita nada más. Tengo la cita y me pedirán los requisitos, presentaré... Y no sé cuánto tiempo me dirán que tengo que esperar para la respuesta, o sea, es un proceso larguísimo...
0 Sí, sí. Entonces todavía no, no te han dicho bien tampoco ¿qué... cuáles son los requisitos...?

1 No, no, no, hasta llegar la cita (--) no sé nada, no sé nada. (Cristina 2.)

⁴¹ Siempre se crea un pequeño complejo de no estar dentro del sistema. Porque sí vas a tramitar tus cosas pero no vas: ay yo tengo el derecho a la salud pública. Sino vas: [en voz baja] perdón, mire que yo soy migrante... Entonces lo sientes más bien como una desventaja ¿no? Y como una... Porque sabes que no está dentro de la ley, está visto como mal ¿no? (Rocío 2.)

area, an unsecure and suspicious location filled with ambiguity over her rights and obligations. Rocío refers to the confusion and mixed information attached to migration bureaucracy as follows.

Well, first of all it's the disinformation. I mean I lost a lot of time in disinformation... Because what happens with migration is that there's a lot of disinformation. From the embassies when you leave your country of origin and when they receive you here... I don't know if it's because they feel so overwhelmed by the phenomenon or they're just not interested in giving correct information... Because what I have lived, concerning these procedures is that it all depends a lot on who happens to attend you. (-- I for example was for a while illegal, without papers, because of a silly stamp that I didn't get at the right time but it was because no one advised me. That type of things, you know? (Rocío 1.)⁴²

Rocío describes her time in a situation of migration status irregularity as an experience of falling in-between migration permits because of fluctuating and overburdened migration bureaucracy. She says she has “lost a lot of time” in disinformation. In her account this disinformation starts from the embassies and continues in her encounters with the immigration administration in Spain (also Cebolla Boado et al. 2013, 80). Rocío's explanation for this presents Spain as “overwhelmed by the phenomenon” with which she refers to the exceptional immigration “boom” in Spain. She assumes that the immigration officials are either too few or ill-qualified or they deliberately stall procedures and do not wish to give correct information and prompt service. She feels that regulations are implemented arbitrarily, and there seems to be no certainty as to what the administrative processes should consist of and how long they should take.

At the time of our encounter, Rocío had already regularised her migration status and was in the process of acquiring Spanish citizenship. An experience of fluctuating requirements and unpredictable decisions goes on in her account on the naturalisation procedures. Rocío was applying for Spanish citizenship on the basis of the “Historical Memory Law”, which gave the children and grandchildren of the refugees of the Spanish civil war and the Franco regime a privileged possibility to obtain Spanish citizenship (Jiménez Zunino 2014, 47). Below, she describes this administrative process which in her case had been going on for years.

⁴² Bueno, primero es como siempre la desinformación. O sea perdí muchísimo tiempo en desinformación... Porque una de las cosas que pasa con la migración es que hay mucha desinformación. Desde las embajadas cuando te vas a ir de tu país de origen y cuando reciben aquí... No sé si es que están abrumados por el fenómeno o no sé si es que no les interesa tampoco dar la información correcta... Porque yo lo que he vivido a nivel de esto de trámites y tal, es que depende mucho del funcionario que te atienda... (-- Que yo por ejemplo estuve un tiempo ilegal, sin papeles, por una tontería de un sello que no lo hice en el momento que lo tenía que hacer pero porque no me asesoraron. Ese tipo de cosas, ¿no? (Rocío 1.)

I mean it depends on the moon and the sun and who happens to attend you (--)
We're now at a point [in her application for Spanish citizenship] where I don't know really if what I've given them according to the requirements at the time was, now... Whether it's not just a mistake in the form but now they might say: alright, but now we're thinking you should bring us the photocopy of the nail of the dog of your grandfather [laughter]. (--)
So we keep writing to each other and they keep telling me [of new requirements]... [laughter]. We have an epistolary relationship [laughter]. (Rocío 1.)⁴³

Above, Rocío describes a continuous chain of “errors in the form” or changes in the requirements. This is a situation I have labelled as living at ‘administrative mercy’. It underlines an experience of not being in control, being at the mercy of others and having to adapt to other people’s time. This is a time found profoundly unpredictable and uncontrollable. Rocío illustrates this in the beginning of the quotation by referring to the “universal” order of things she feels is required in order for her application to move forward and get accepted. She feels that the implementation of the requirements is unpredictable and arbitrary and that all depends on the person that happens to attend you. She ends by referring to her relationship with migration bureaucracy as an “epistolary” one, presumably to emphasise the amount of written correspondence they have had until the date and will most probably continue to have in the future.

Catalina was one of the participants who already had a dual citizenship and a Spanish passport at the time of her arrival in Spain. In Spain she applied for and was granted a Spanish national identity card, which is what one generally uses for identification inside the country instead of the passport. The card was given to her the same day she applied for it. In the following extract she describes her surprise by the promptness of this procedure.

And well with that paper and others, I don't remember well what I had with me, I went to the office where they make it [identity card], and the same morning they gave it to me. (--)
In fact my aunt was just visiting me and she couldn't believe that they had given me the card the same morning [laughter]. She said: and they didn't ask you anything? And there was no police? And I said: no! I just went there, had a photograph taken, signed something and that was it. Wow! (Catalina 1.)⁴⁴

⁴³ O sea dependiendo de la luna y del sol y del funcionario de turno... (--)
Estamos en un punto en que no se sabe realmente si lo que yo introduce en el momento con los requisitos que eran, ahora... No solo es el error de expediente sino que ahora dicen: vale, pero ahora estamos valorando que tienes que traer la fotocopia de la uña de del perro de tu abuelo... [risa]. (--)
Entre cartas y cartas me van diciendo [nuevos requisitos]... [risa]. Tenemos una relación epistolar [risa]. (Rocío 1.)

⁴⁴ Y bueno con ese papel y otros, no me acuerdo que yo tenía, me fui a la oficina donde te hacen el DNI y en una mañana me dieron el DNI. (...) De hecho en ese momento estaba mi tía aquí, y no podía creer que en una mañana me hubieran dado el DNI [risa]. Decía: ¿pero no te preguntaron nada?, ¿y no vino la policía? Y yo decía: ¡no! Fui, me saque una foto, firmé no sé qué cosa, y ya está! ¡Wow! (Catalina 1.)

The account illustrates the expectations concerning migration bureaucracy. According to Catalina, it seems evident that these procedures take time, that they are difficult and demanding, and that one is inspected and kept waiting and normally not able just to walk away the same day with what one had come for – in this case the identity card. When one is not treated with suspicion and things work promptly and efficiently, this seems to be rather miraculous (also Svašek 2010, 872). The extract exemplifies again that there is generally little prior knowledge of what the necessary administrative procedures will be and how much time they on average will take. In the following two extracts, Ana talks about the process of applying for Spanish citizenship for herself and her family.

We don't have the [Spanish] nationality yet, but we're in the process. (--) two years ago we applied for it, we're waiting, for them to reply, yes. (--) We're just waiting for them to call. (--) because it takes a long while. Yes, it takes time. It has been about three years already since we've waited for them to call us and inform us. (Ana 1.)⁴⁵

We're in the process, we're just waiting now for them to call. (Ana 2.)⁴⁶

The administrative problems and long queues in the naturalisation procedures in Spain were well known and reported in the media at the time of our encounters (e.g. Gutiérrez Calvo 2012; Irujo 2012). The number of people working in migration administration in general has been small and the efficiency of the administrative procedures has lagged behind, making waiting times longer and longer (Cebolla Boado et al. 2013, 79). While Ana does not complain about the length of the process as such, she refers several times to the fact that she and her family have been waiting for “them to call us” about the application’s advancement. The accounts show an experience of time ambiguity, in which a “call” may come at any moment, while at the same time one is not entirely sure for how many years one has already waited.

The Oxford Dictionaries (2015) defines the verb ‘to wait’ as follows: “to stay where one is or delay action until a particular time or event”. This definition presents waiting profoundly as a time-space phenomenon. It also shows a connection between waiting and the active subject, in terms of having or not the power to (decide when to) take action. To wait is to stay in a place or stage and to delay until permitted to act by someone or something exterior, something which is out of one’s own control. As an everyday experience, waiting can furthermore be divided into two qualitatively different experiences, as it may be a queue-like waiting for a more or less explicit goal, or more of a temporal suspension and a timeless present without a

⁴⁵ Todavía no tenemos nacionalidad, pero estamos saliendo, ya la tenemos como depositada. (--) hace dos años que ya la pedimos, estamos esperando, ya que nos contesten sí. (--) Solo ahora esperamos que me llamen. (--) porque eso se tarda mucho. Sí, tardan mucho. Hace más de tres años ya que nosotros estamos esperando que nos llamen y que nos digan. (Ana 1.)

⁴⁶ La estamos tramitando, ya solo estamos esperando que nos llamen. (Ana 2.)

clear purpose, goal or progression (Griffiths 2014, 1997). In the following extract, a temporal suspension and a sort of limbo between official migration status and an official work contract is described by Tina.

Well, I feel uncomfortable, because if I had papers, I might have obtained a job already. Without papers it's much more difficult. Yes, it limits you a lot. Because they always ask you if you have papers, but in my case I only need the work contract for the regularisation. (Tina 2.)⁴⁷

Tina was currently unemployed, and in order for her to be contracted "officially" she states she would need to have a regular migration status. On the other hand, her path to the regular migration status would ideally go through an official work contract (Solé & Parella 2003, 128). Her account reflects the rather complicated circle created in the legislation, where work contract, work permit and residence permit become entangled and mutually dependent on one another (Calavita 2005, 41). Tina speaks of frustration, uncertainty and lack of control. She continued looking for work through different agencies and personal networks and hoping for the best.

This sort of 'suspended time' is connected here with a lack of personal or social progress and a disjuncture between the surrounding society and one's personal expectations and reality (Griffiths 2014, 1998). It may also be lived as a time 'pending' between the past in the country of origin which one has now lost and the present in the host society which seems to never begin.

That really bothers me..., that does bother me a bit, that I won't find it [the life she had in her country of origin], it's not the same anymore, in that sense. And here it's like I'm starting again and that's what I'm waiting for still. For my life to change, for my situation to change. (Tina 2.)⁴⁸

Migration controls can effectively violate the time horizons of migrant life paths and livelihoods (King et al. 2006, 237). Experiences of life course stagnation were mainly in connection with the extended liminal stages participants faced in terms of securing work, migration status, financial resources, as well as personal relationships. Being able to imagine a future time for oneself with some degree of predictability, to anticipate and take risks and have a sense of possibility are central aspects of human experience and subjectivity (Anderson et al. 2009, 7; Ahmad 2008, 303, 310). There might also be difficulties in establishing new personal relationships and commitments due to a pending situation of suspension, insecurity,

⁴⁷ Bueno, sintiéndome incómoda por esta situación de que si tuviera papeles a lo mejor ya hubiera conseguido un trabajo, y sin papeles cuesta mucho más conseguir. Sí te limita mucho. Porque siempre están preguntando si tienes o no tienes papeles, pero en mi caso solamente me falta un contrato para regularizarme. (Tina 2.)

⁴⁸ Eso sí que me choca, un poquito me choca que ya no la [la vida en el país de origen] voy a encontrar, que ya no es lo mismo, en ese sentido. Y acá como si fuera empezar de nuevo y que es aun lo que estoy esperando. Que cambie mi vida, que cambie mi situación. (Tina 2.)

unpredictability and uncontrollability. These are experiences of living ‘permanently temporary lives’ (Bailey 2009, 80).

My fear is that [her partner], at any time he can go back also to his country, or he also fears now that I might go back to mine. And just now, this year, when we had planned that we might make a life together, that already a lot of time has passed, we had to find ourselves in this situation [of unemployment]. (Tina 1.)⁴⁹

A minimum degree of predictability can be considered necessary in order to build social relations and feelings of affection (Foti 2004; also Ahmad 2008, 303). This can be seen reflected in the experiences of Tina above, where she talks about her relationship with her new partner and the unpredictability of both of their situations with regard to their migration status and work opportunities. The uncertainty of Tina’s situation makes it difficult for her to build a relationship in a situation of migration status irregularity, the weakening prospect of finding employment and the connections these have. Tina describes how either one of them at any moment might be forced to make the decision to return.

An ambivalent relation between work and migration status becomes apparent in the participants’ accounts. The accounts show a general reluctance of employers to go through “all the hassle” of employing a person regularly and thus also providing her with a regular migration status. Migration status regularisation through employment was sometimes presented as a battle against time. While caring for the elderly in private households, for instance, time usually passed and the elderly person died before any official contract was made and any official migration status secured through a work contract, as is illustrated in the following two quotations.

Of course one always wishes that the family regularises your situation, they promise you all these things and then they make you wait a month, two months, until, well, the mother or the father dies, the person dies and that’s it. (Tina 1.)⁵⁰

I’ve been very lucky because the people I was working for started immediately to prepare the work contract, to work on the papers for the regularisation. But the old person died. In six months four people died on me. (--) And it’s true that they hire you to help in the house when their old relative is already very

⁴⁹ Mi temor es que [su pareja], cualquier momento él pueda regresar también a su país o el temor de él ahora es si yo me regrese a mi país. Y justo este año cuando hemos planificado que pudiéramos hacer una vida juntos, de que ya ha pasado mucho tiempo, vinimos a quedar en esta situación [sin empleo]. (Tina 1.)

⁵⁰ Claro que siempre uno espera de una casa siempre uno espera de que se regularice la situación, te prometen unas mil cosas y luego te hacen esperar un mes, dos meses, hasta que de repente bueno a lo mejor mamá, papá ya se va a morir y se muere la persona y punto. (Tina 1.)

poorly. So it's not so strange that in six months... And the contract... [weak laughter]? I continued like that for quite a while. (Vanessa 1.)⁵¹

Specifically, the participants who worked in care work in private households pointed out that regularisation through this type of work was nearly impossible (also Bastia 2015, 123, 125). Since their client was usually in very poor health, the employers, in most cases the client's children, often preferred to let time pass until the elderly person passed away before there was any official work contract which might have secured official migration status. These accounts highlight again experiences of waiting as well as losing control over time and the possibility to plan ahead. While trying to make pressure on the employers, one has to take into account that one needs the money and the work, and thus has to bargain between achieving a regular migration status through the work or losing the work altogether and being left with nothing. An irregular migration status was often referred to as an "open letter" for employers to take advantage of and exploit the worker.

First of all, people take advantage of you, you feel used. People take advantage of the undocumented situation in order to exploit you. And as they know that you can't do anything, or at least in the ignorance, you don't know where to go or if you have rights or not, over your work, over the effort you make, you know? Even if you're undocumented, there are offices where you can go and denounce if you become abused, you know. So... But of course, in the ignorance and because you're afraid that instead of reporting an offence it will (--) that in the end it will be you who is punished and not treated as a person who is searching for justice. (--) And you take the first thing [a job] that they offer you, even if it would mean that you'll be exploited, because there are necessities which need to be met and because of that perhaps... If you have children, those necessities are stronger perhaps than your own ego, your own..., you, you know. So... You die in many ways as a migrant. (Bárbara 2.)⁵²

In the above account, Bárbara states that because of the irregularity of the migration status, and the situation of clandestinity and stigma that comes with it, one does not

⁵¹ He tenido suerte porque las personas que me querían me hacían contrato inmediatamente, iniciaron el papeleo, para regularizarme... Pero se moría el viejito. En seis meses se me murieron cuatro personas. (--) Y es cierto, también te contratan a ti, a ayudar en casa ya cuando el viejito no da para más. Entonces no es de extrañar que a los seis meses... ¿Y el contrato... [risita]? Seguí así durante bastante tiempo. (Vanessa 1.)

⁵² Lo primero es que, eh, la gente se aprovecha de ti, te sientes usada por la gente... La gente aprovecha la indocumentación para, para explotarte. Y, y como sabe que tú no puedes hacer nada, o al menos en la ignorancia, uno no sabe dónde ir, y, y si tienes derechos sobre, sobre lo que uno trabaja, sobre lo que, sobre el esfuerzo que uno hace ¿no? Por más que no tengas papeles, eh, que hay oficinas que puedes denunciar estos abusos ¿no? Entonces... Pero claro, en la ignorancia y en el temor de que en vez de denunciar más bien a ti (--) que, más bien, tú seas el damnificado, y no la persona quien busca justicia. (--) Y coges lo primero [trabajo] que te ofrecen, así, así sea para explotarte, porque hay necesidades que las tienes que suplir, y, y eso tal vez... Si hay hijos, pues son más fuertes, que, que tal vez tu propio ego, tu propio, eh, yo ¿no? Entonces... Uno muere de muchas maneras, como inmigrante. (Bárbara 2.)

dare to seek help, assistance and information. It is not clear what one's rights and obligations are and whom to turn for advice. Bárbara is very explicit in stating that one has rights and that there are offices and organisations which can and should offer support and assistance. Yet her account also shows that one does not know exactly what these rights or these organisations are. She also makes a point of it not being certain what might be the consequences of trying to defend oneself. As a migrant in migration status irregularity, one risks being "punished" instead of being treated as a person who is searching for justice after having experienced mistreatment.

In Bárbara's account also the presence of children is raised as a factor in having to accept working conditions which might be exploitative. When one has to be able to cover one's children's basic needs and expenses, one might be forced to renounce to a certain extent one's existence as a person who is entitled to search for justice for herself. "Justice" thus moves ahead in time by a generation, since the aim is that the next generation with their resources would be in a position to better defend themselves.

Because..., when you have documents you have certain benefits. Where I was working for two years, and I was undocumented, they paid me unofficially, I didn't have rights to have vacations or [extra] payments or all of it, I didn't have the right to get those benefits, so... (--) I dedicated myself to work because if not, what would I've had to live on, who could help me... (--) Work and work even if you don't have benefits but it's work right? And that's the way I worked, and in two years' time they gave me the contract. (Sofia 1.)⁵³

Sofia describes a strategy of perseverance: she goes on working and working for two years without vacations or benefits and is finally able to regularise her migration status through an official work contract with her employer. Her path is a very lonely one and she stresses that she had no one else to turn to other than herself. Also her relatives were far away and unable to help financially. What becomes central here is the lack of information and support the situation of migration status irregularity represents.

Generally the negotiation power and the power of planning ahead was not considered high in work relations, and many expressed a strategy of compliance, of not asking too many favours. This meant complying with the employer's time, in terms of the permanence of the work and possible migration status regularisation through the employment.

⁵³ A ver..., al tener los documentos tienes beneficios. (--) Donde trabajé yo dos años y era indocumentada, me pagaban en negro, no tenía el derecho a las vacaciones o las pagas y todo eso no los tenía..., no podía tener esos beneficios, entonces... (--) En mi caso era dedicarme a trabajar porque sí no, de qué voy a vivir, quién me va a ayudar... (--) Trabajar y trabajar aunque no tengas los beneficios pero es trabajo ¿no? Y trabajé así, y a los dos años me dieron el contrato. (Sofia 1.)

I try to..., not to ask too many favours, let's say, because sometimes they'll tell you: I've done you these favours, now would you do us a favour. Or something like that. They are always..., one way or another they keep reminding you. But yes I mean if I need something, like for instance this change in work shifts, which they accepted. Perhaps in some other job they would not have accepted it. I explained to them my situation, that I'm studying and that I have to do certain things and they know how..., all this has cost me... So well, yes you can... They've helped me in that sense. (Sofia 1.)⁵⁴

Sofia had a regular migration status through her work and she had also been able to arrange to work night shifts in order to study and spend time with her child during the day. While Sofia has been able to negotiate with her employers over time tables and migration permits, she holds a very careful attitude in her dealings with them (Martín Pérez 2010, 173). Sofia's account illustrates that the migrant workers' negotiation power does not necessarily increase with a regular status, but if the migration status is tied to a specific employment or a specific employer, it might actually shrink (Solé & Parella 2003, 126). The vulnerability of "temporarily regular" situations derives in part from the threat of falling (back) into a situation of irregular migration status (Calavita 2005, 101–102).

However, the irregular nature of employment was not always presented as a straightforwardly exploitative affair, but as an arrangement with certain flexibility which "goes both ways", as is described in the following quote.

No, the first one [a job] was irregularly, I was contracted for a ridiculous 4€ per hour, but it was my only option at the time, and they knew it. (--) And I said ok, I'm a student, I still have some savings but I need to work because I was getting seriously out of money, and I'll accept it. And I wasn't a waitress, so it was also like a course in that for me, because I told them I was a waitress and I didn't know the work. So I said, fine, if you're going to pay me 4€ per hour, at least I learn to carry the trays, you know? And that's the way I did it. (Rocío 1.)⁵⁵

Central in Rocío's account is the power and position of negotiation of the migrant worker in a situation which is often characterised straightforwardly as lacking any.

⁵⁴ Trato de..., de no pedir muchos favores, digamos, porque a veces te dicen, bueno: te he hecho tantos favores, pues haznos el favor. O qué sé yo. Siempre están..., una u otra forma pero van recordando. Digo bueno pero sí, en lo que yo necesite algo, digo, bueno, por ejemplo este cambio de horario me lo aceptaron. Quizás en otro trabajo tal vez no me lo iban a aceptar. Les he explicado mi caso que estoy estudiando y tengo que hacer ciertas cosas y ellos saben lo..., todo lo que me ha costado... Entonces bueno, sí se puede... Me han ayudado en eso. (Sofia 1.)

⁵⁵ No, el primero [trabajo], fue en negro, me contrató irrisoriamente por 4€ la hora pero era mi única oportunidad en ese momento, y ellos lo sabían. (--) y yo dije vale bueno, soy estudiante, me quedan algo de ahorros, pero necesito ya generar ingresos porque me estoy quedando en rojo y lo aceptaré. Y yo no era camarera y también era como un cursillo de camarera porque yo me ofrecí como camarera y no lo sabía hacer. Entonces bueno dije vale, si tú me vas a pagar 4€ la hora pues yo aprendo a llevar las bandejas, ¿no? Y así lo hice. (Rocío 1.)

Although Rocío points out that the terms of her employment were “ridiculous”, her account stresses that she did not accept the job merely as a form of resignation. She was in this way able to get a job she had really no experience in or qualifications for, and she was also able to obtain new skills on the way.

The “choice” to be exploited and its associated misery are of course not confined to migrants, since citizens as well work in low waged jobs, do double shifts and accept short term and unsecure employment. Experiences of compromising one’s personal goals, time, or even rights are not solely in connection with migration or migration status, even though migration status irregularity has been treated as “precarity at its worst” (Ahmad 2008, 303; also Mezzadra 2010), referring to a workforce continually available and ready to work, the worsening of the possibilities of the employee to negotiate working conditions, hours, etc. and being forced to work in uncertain circumstances with short work contracts and under the constant possibility of getting fired (Mitropoulos 2005).

All in all, while the participants seemed to even expect that different administrative processes concerning migration take time and call for patience, it still had been a surprise to discover how difficult it was to arrange for migration status regularisation or continuation, employment, housing etc. The ‘liminal stages’ in which the participants found themselves, kept prolonging. This discrepancy between expectations and reality enhanced feelings of loss of control and unpredictability (Cwerner 2001, 21).

Well, I worry, you know. Because we don’t yet have, let’s say, that easiness, you know, that we have this much money, a stable job, we have... That’s what costs, you know, to find that stability. It’s the insecurity, of course. (Regina 1.)⁵⁶

So, well, I feel very much responsible, you know. I feel a lot of weight because of them [her children], you know. That I can’t... (--) I don’t know how to explain it, [offer them] that stability, you know. That they could feel safe and that they could also become independent. (Regina 1.)⁵⁷

The lack of stability and the uncontrollability of one’s situation affected also the participants’ children. Regina stresses that her migration decision has had consequences for her children and that she feels responsible for the changes migration has brought into her children’s lives. In her account, these changes are connected with ‘liminal’ times, when she refers to the lack of everyday stability,

⁵⁶ Bueno, la verdad que sí vivo preocupada ¿no? Porque aún no tenemos, digamos esa facilidad ¿no? , contamos con tanto dinero, tenemos un trabajo, tenemos... Eso es lo que cuesta trabajo ¿no? Encontrar esa estabilidad ¿no? Es la incertidumbre claro. (Regina 1.)

⁵⁷ Entonces bueno, me siento muy responsable ¿no? me siento con mucha carga de, de ellos [sus hijos] ¿no? de que no les puedo... (--) No sé cómo explicarlo, esa estabilidad ¿no? que ellos se sientan seguros y que también ellos puedan independizarse (Regina 1.)

safety and predictability in her children's lives due to migration. The effects of this uncertainty and liminality are extended in time through the challenges she feels the present situation of unpredictability and instability imposes on her children's processes of forming independent lives of their own.

It limits me [irregular migration status] because my child also has an irregular status. That no, I don't know.... I can't have more children [at the moment] because things might be complicated. (--). Because sometimes I also think about having [another] child. But no. (Luz 1.)⁵⁸

In the above quotation, Luz connects the liminality caused by her (irregular) migration status with a difficult situation for having more children (also Rytter 2012, 100–101). She says that things are “complicated” in this respect. In our interview encounters, she took up several times the possibility of having another child as something she would want to do in the near future but which seemed difficult, if not impossible, while she and her family remained in a situation of migration status irregularity. Luz stressed that her first priority was to regularise her migration status and that of her family. Everything else depended heavily on this. She considered the situation at the moment of our encounter specifically difficult due to changes because of the new legislation which would no longer offer health services for everyone regardless of their migration status, as the earlier legislation did. It was unclear to her what the new legislation would actually mean for health benefits, her child's possibility to attend daycare or the possibilities for them to eventually apply for citizenship.

Luz's account reflects the confusion amongst the public and in the media caused by the legislation change in 2012 concerning health services for the immigrant population in Spain (also Alía 2013; Prats 2012a). There was a general lack of information on what type of health services continued to still be available for migrants, and how to access or organise them, both among service users and service givers. Luz's account also reveals that the discussion around the limiting of health services caused anxiety concerning other aspects of migrants' lives, their right to other services and the possibilities for regularisation and naturalisation. The arbitrary or even chaotic organisation of the immigration bureaucracy and the confusion concerning the extent to which migrants are entitled to public services reflect the perception of migration primordially as a social problem and the consequent inferior position accorded to migrants in the host society (Martín Pérez 2010, 183).

A pointless and halted time also constructs alterity, as one's existence differs from the surrounding society (Griffiths 2014, 1998). Therefore the 'other' becomes the

⁵⁸ Me limita en que mi hijo también está irregular. Que no, no sé... No puedo tener más hijos [ahora], porque igual sería más difícil. (--). Porque a veces igual me dan ganas de tener un hijo. Pero no. (Luz 1.)

one who lives outside of the time of the society, outside work, education, family, the one who lives other times or has excessive time, or contrarily has no time of her own because she is always at work and at hand.

I went to various places [to work], I went from one place to another... (--) and I simply just came to my room to sleep. And the next day the same thing. Yes, the next day the same and it was like that every day... (Cristina 2.)⁵⁹

In the everyday experiences of the participants concerning migration status regulations and control, time was generally presented as moving slowly when one is “trying to get in”, while one is waiting for appointments with migration officials or news on the advancement of one’s application. There is almost nothing one can do to hurry things up or be able to foresee the exact duration of these processes. As a contrary experience to this, however, the potential consequences of an encounter with the migration officials or the police became associated with time moving too rapidly as completely out of one’s control (also Griffiths 2014, 1998–2000). The following quotes from Cristina below illustrate this combination of time moving slowly to let you in and fast to get you out.

Everyone was telling me that I should already have [regularisation]. I don’t know what was going on. I insisted but I don’t know... It seems that she [the employer] couldn’t do it..., but finally as I insisted, she did. (Cristina 1.)⁶⁰

Well, I only have the appointment [to start the naturalisation process], nothing more. I have the appointment and they’ll ask for the requirements, I’ll present..., and I don’t know how much they’ll tell me that I’ll have to wait for the answer, it’s a very long process... (Cristina 2.)⁶¹

Let’s see..., some examples of the things that surprised me [in the life here]..., more than anything the fact that you’re not legal. I mean to live with that fear. That at any moment the police might catch you and..., just like that without thinking twice, you’re back in your country. Without anything and without having anything, I mean, having wasted pointlessly the money that you might have taken as a debt. To buy the air ticket for us in our country, it’s a lot of money. So it’s..., it would be like a failure. I mean to live with that, you know? (Cristina 1.)⁶²

⁵⁹ Iba a varios sitios [a trabajar], me desplazaba de un lado a otro... (--) y simplemente llegaba a mi habitación a dormir. Al día siguiente lo mismo. Sí, al día siguiente lo mismo y así todos los días... (Cristina 2.)

⁶⁰ Todos me decían que ya debería de haber tenido [la regularización], que no sé lo que pasa. Y yo insistía pues no sé... Parece que no podía la señora hacerlo, pero al final cuando insistí sí me lo hizo. (Cristina 1.)

⁶¹ Bueno que, tengo la cita nada más. Tengo la cita y me pedirán los requisitos, presentaré y no sé cuánto tiempo me dirán que tengo que esperar para la respuesta, o sea, es un proceso larguísimo... (Cristina 2.)

⁶² A ver unos ejemplos que me sorprendieron [aquí] de que..., sobre todo que no eres legal. O sea vivir con ese miedo. De que en cualquier momento te puede agarrar la policía y..., así sin pensarlo aparecer otra vez en tu país. Sin nada y sin tener nada, o sea, haber gastado inútilmente ese dinero que

In the first quote, Cristina talks about her experience of waiting for and trying to insist upon the regularisation of her migration status through an official contract of employment with the person for whom she was working at the time. This was taking time, and she is still unsure of the reasons why. Again it seems that there is little for her to do but continue insisting and waiting, without knowing why the process did not seem to be advancing and was taking so much time.

In the second extract, I retake Cristina's description of the process of acquiring Spanish citizenship as a very lengthy one. She does not seem to be sure at all how much time it might take and what the requirements are. However, when she, in the third extract, comes to discuss the potential consequences of being "caught by the police" while residing in the country with an irregular migration status, time suddenly starts to proceed rapidly. She might, from one moment to another, be sent back to where she came from, as quickly as possible (Kubal 2014, 92), and without anything. She describes this as a failure which would feel almost unbearable.

Only two of the participants discussed a personal experience of encountering migration officials or the police on the street and being asked to present migration documents. An incident like this might have taken place also with some of the participants' family members or acquaintances, on the street or at a workplace. Cristina shared her experience of this kind of an encounter, which took place when she was residing in Barcelona without a regular migration status. In the following, she tells her experience.

They approached me, as I was going to work one morning, and they asked for my documents. And my passport was already out of date. I mean the time I was permitted to stay in Spain as a tourist, because my passport as a tourist was valid for three months. So they saw that, they saw that I wasn't legal, they took me to the police station and they kept me there for hours to... So they could find a lawyer, a public defender I think they call it, who could get me out, who could fill in these forms... (--) And well, they took all my information and... It was so bad, I felt so bad! I mean I felt as if I had committed a serious crime because in my life no one has taken my fingerprints, no one has... Well, of course when you get your passport, yes, in my country, the fingerprints, the photographs and everything but that's for the passport. For that you put on some makeup and everything [laughter]. But to be on your way to work and someone tells you: would you follow us. And they take you in their car, I mean it frightens you, I don't wish it for anyone... It was really bad, I was something like traumatised after what happened, but... That was why I insisted more with her [the employer] to assist me to get the legalisation. (Cristina 2.)⁶³

tal vez, te has adeudado. Para comprar el pasaje que para nosotros en nuestro país es mucho dinero. Entonces es..., sería como un fracaso. O sea, vivir con eso, ¿no? (Cristina 1.)

⁶³ Se acercaron, cuando me fui a trabajar una mañana y me pidieron documentación. Y mi pasaporte ya estaba caducado también, del tiempo de que yo tenía que estar aquí en España porque mi pasaporte

The encounter resulted in her receiving a document called an ‘expulsion letter’, and a file being opened in her name as a person with this document. It was possible, however, to arrange one’s migration status situation within a time limit in order to avoid deportation, in which case the file was also closed and the expulsion letter erased. The encounter with the officials did not ultimately lead to an uncontrollably fast deportation, but Cristina was given time to arrange her situation. She was able to put pressure on her employer to regularise her work contract, and, on the basis of this, apply for migration status regularisation which was granted to her. This rather “rationalised process of control”, however, interlaces with complex emotional dynamics (Svašek 2010, 872–873).

The quotation is an account of strong emotions, such as fear, shame and insecurity. It is noteworthy that the experience was shared only in the second interview meeting and Cristina referred to it as something she does not go around telling “gladly”. She also later said that she felt relieved to have been able to get it “off her chest”. The position of migration irregularity is drawn here as a very unsure one, with unclear definitions of the type of administrative fault or misconduct it is considered to be. What had been the biggest fear of Cristina had now actually taken place. She describes the experience as traumatising. Being abruptly taken away in a police car while on her way to work one morning, being questioned, photographed and having her fingerprints taken, is a chain of events which made her feel like a “serious criminal”. Each step of the process seems to be unexpected, uncalled for and out of her control.

Staying in a situation of migration status irregularity could, however, also be a way to deliberately maintain freedom from the webs of administrative power. The multiplicity of desires, hopes and aspirations that accompany the projects migrants pursue is not only something within but also in excess of their regulation by different structural and governmental regimes (Scheel et al. 2014, 85), as the next quote shows.

You’re exposed without papers, you know. You’re very exposed. But, honestly, well, you adapt. It’s either that or you have to lower your head and ask for help, and I’m not so much into that, you know. They’ve helped me, but

como turista tenía que solo valer tres meses. Entonces ya vieron ellos, vieron que no estoy legal, me llevaron a la Comisaría, y me tuvieron horas ahí para..., hasta buscar un abogado de, de oficio me parece que lo llaman. El abogado que me sacaría y... Haría esto del trámite de... (--). Y pues nada, me tomaron todos esos datos y... Me fue muy mal no, ¡estaba de moral muy, muy debajo! O sea me he sentido como si hubiese cometido un delito porque en mi vida nadie me había tomado las huellas, nadie me había tomado... Bueno, en el sentido de sacar pasaporte sí, en mi país, sí: huellas, fotos, pero para el pasaporte. Ahí te arreglas y todo [risas]. Pero esto de ir a trabajar y que te digan: Usted nos acompaña. Y te lleven en un coche, o sea es un gran susto que, no se lo deseo a nadie y... pero bueno... Estaba muy mal, muy mal, estaba algo como traumada, lo que me había pasado, pero... eso ha sido más el motivo que insistí a esta señora en que me ayudara siempre con la legalización. (Cristina 2.)

very punctually. I prefer to avoid being... It's not because I'm too proud, but if I can work why should I go and..., you know, stand for impertinences. And wait for them to give me some charity, for them to control me as they like and get involved in my life and how I raise my child and how I don't. So I made my own way a bit, they don't complicate my life too much, they've noticed that I move, I don't bend my head down and ask for things, and so they have not, I mean, complicated things... (Magda 1.)⁶⁴

In the above account, Magda says that living in a situation of migration irregularity is to live "exposed". Also Miriam referred to this experience in her interviews by stating that as an irregular migrant one is "hidden and exposed at the same time". While the situation of certain clandestinity may "hide", it at the same time strips one of many basic securities, due to the insecurity over one's rights and possibilities to defend and inform oneself. One becomes "bare".

This does not mean, however, that one is forced to live "at the mercy of others", as Magda puts it above. Magda states, in fact, that she prefers this state of insecurity and "exposure" to being controlled by others, asking and waiting for them for help and support, and adjusting to their rules, requirements and timetables. She wants to be free from all that, and she therefore explicitly refuses papers in order to avoid being controlled. In the above extract, Magda describes a conscious decision to live her everyday life in migration, in terms of housing, work, routines etc. as much as possible outside of the (time) control of the administrative webs of the society, and thus resist regularisation. While this as well is time outside the system, it is presented so because the system is considered profoundly flawed as apparent in the following quotation.

I could have made a contract with a friend, a cleaning job... Yes, there was a time when I thought of that. And then I told myself: but like hell, why should I have to lie? (Magda 2.)⁶⁵

In these quotations from Magda, a certain pride can be detected when she speaks of her refusal of "getting in" and her choice of not attempting to regularise her migration status. In the above extract, she presents her decision to stay in a situation of migration status irregularity as a more honest one. She could have arranged a regularisation through a friend who would have organised this for her and she then

⁶⁴ Estás expuesto sin papeles y esto ¿no?, estás muy expuesto. Pero, honestamente, bueno te vas adaptando. Es eso o ir a bajar la cabeza y estar pidiendo ayudas, que tampoco soy muy partidaria ¿no? Que me han ayudado, pero muy puntual, prefiero evitarme estar... No por falta de humildad, sino porque si yo puedo laborar, ¿por qué tengo que ir a..., ¿me entiendes?..., a aguantar impertinencias? Y a estar esperando a que me den limosna, y me manejen para antojo, se metan en la vida de cómo crio a mi hijo o cómo no lo crio, entonces hice la mía, hice por mi lado, no me complican porque ya ven que me muevo y que no jorobo mucho tampoco para pedir muchas cosas, y entonces como que no me han, este, complicado. (Magda 1.)

⁶⁵ Podía haber hecho que me hicieran un contrato, una amiga por hacer limpieza. Sí, también en un tiempo lo pensé. Y después dije: bueno ¡carajo! ¿por qué tengo que estar yo mintiendo? (Magda 2.)

officially would have resided in Spain regularly as a cleaner, although in reality she would not have worked in that. She rejects this option as unnecessarily complicated and false and accuses the system of making people lie. The migration regulations are depicted as a system of fools where anything can be made to look as it should on the outside.

In addition to a conscious rejection of the (migration regulation) system, there were also experiences of living the lack of a regular migration status as a possibility for transformation, a liberating time outside different social expectations and controls (also Griffiths 2014, 2002). This is illustrated in the following extract.

Curiously it was not a bad experience (-- Without papers... It creates a peculiar situation because... When you don't have papers you're also in a situation of enormous liberty, where you don't have anything to lose. Now I have things I can lose. Now I have papers, I have..., social security, I don't know, I'm... I don't know if I already told you that I'm..., I have the possibility to apply for dual citizenship, so I'm applying for Spanish citizenship. (-- So, but that also implies that I have things to lose. Because to access citizenship, there are all these administrative things, you have to... Well, you have to have papers, you have to have work, you have to have a contract, you have to have this, you have to have that [laughter]. So now I already have something to lose, before I had nothing to lose. It was a situation of..., it was like living in a limbo, let's say, that I had no rights but I also didn't have any obligations. And now it's not like that anymore. (Vanessa 2.)⁶⁶

In the above extract, migration irregularity is depicted as a sort of “free falling”. One is outside of the system, so one does not have to mind about many social and administrative expectations. One has nothing to lose, as Vanessa puts it. At other points of our interviews, Vanessa explained that during the phase of migration status irregularity she accumulated experience and knowledge useful for the processes of regularising her migration status and applying for Spanish citizenship. This might have included getting to know people and local customs as well as attending Catalan language courses, doing voluntary work and seeing to the obligatory municipal registrations (*empadronamiento*). In this way it is perhaps not entirely correct to make the assumption that Vanessa was living her time of migration status irregularity without paying any attention to social and administrative expectations. It

⁶⁶ Curiosamente no fue una mala experiencia (-- Sin papeles... Te crea una situación muy peculiar porque... Cuando estas sin papeles también estas en una situación de libertad enorme, cuando no tienes nada que perder. Ahora tengo más que perder. Ahora tengo papeles, tengo..., seguridad social, qué sé yo y además estoy... No sé si te dije que estaba... Yo tengo la posibilidad de tener doble nacionalidad, entonces estoy optando la nacionalidad española. (-- Entonces pero también eso me implica que ya tengo algo que perder. Porque para poder acceder a la nacionalidad ya llega el tema administrativo, hay que... Bueno, tienes que tener papeles, tienes que tener trabajo, tienes que tener un contrato, tienes que tener esto, tienes que tener el otro [risas]. Entonces ahora ya tengo algo que perder, antes no tenía nada que perder. Era una situación que..., como que era una situación casi en el limbo, un estado, digamos, que no tenía ningún derecho pero tampoco tenía ningún deber. Ahora ya no es lo mismo. (Vanessa 2.)

is nevertheless noteworthy that her experience of it stresses this side of things. As this time has passed, she remembers it here first and foremost as an experience of freedom from responsibilities and obligations.

Instead of restrictions, insecurity and fear, an experience of migration status irregularity is associated in Vanessa's account with sentiments of freedom and "own time". On a personal level, Vanessa's experience can be read in connection with the fact that she did not have under-aged children or other family members with her in Barcelona or in the country of origin who would have depended on her financially or otherwise. She also had one work career already behind her, from which she in fact now wanted to distance herself. Her experience of freedom in migration status irregularity is arguably also linked to a possibility to "blend in", as she herself stressed at another point in our conversations. This means having certain visible characteristics, such as ethnic appearance and Spanish accent as well as social class and educational background, which were not necessarily connected, in the context in question, to migration status irregularity (Cea D'Ancona et al. 2013, 135; Calavita 2005, 27, 154).

In her article on the time consequences of the asylum process for applicants in the UK, Melanie Griffiths (2014, 1998) has referred to the experiences of temporal suspension and un-control as a 'liminal stage'. This represents entrapment or an in-between space between firm legal categories, rights or countries as well as with respect to access to work, education, marriage or childbearing. In a study on Brazilian immigrants in London, Saulo Cwerner (2001, 27–28) in turn describes 'liminal times' as transitional stages between statuses and positions marked by a lack of temporal consistency and predictability. Similarly to his analysis, in the accounts of the participants in this research, this stage of liminality was generally related to feelings of concern and worry, frustration, confusion, incompleteness and underachievement.

'Liminality' is a term, which, according to anthropologist Victor Turner (1974, 231–233), traces back to Arnold van Gennep's (1909) formulation of *rites de passage*, transition rites, which accompany every change of state or positionality. It refers to *limen*, which is Latin for threshold and signifies a phase in the transition rite where the state of the ritual subject is ambiguous, neither here nor there, betwixt and between (Turner 1974, 232). This is a condition of being, either voluntarily or by ascription, outside and in between the structural arrangements of a given social system (ibid., 233). It is characterised by being hidden or "invisible" and "out of time" (ibid., 232, 238). Turner himself sees migrants, however, not as 'liminars' but as 'marginals', in a classical Chicago school manner (for instance Park 1928). While the 'liminars' would lack clear stages, positions or reference points altogether, Turner describes 'marginals' as simultaneously members of two or more groups whose social definitions and norms are distinct from or even opposed to one another

(ibid., 233). They are as well betwixt and between, but unlike ‘liminars’ they have no cultural assurance of a resolution for their ambiguity (ibid.). In the accounts of the participants, I found traits of both liminality and marginality as defined above.

Feminist philosopher María Lugones (2003, 60) has emphasised the fact that in the interim that the state of liminality in Turner’s depiction represents, there is the possibility of “standing aside not only of one’s own social position but from all social positions and of formulating unlimited series of alternative social arrangements” (Turner 1974, 14). There is therefore an important liberatory potential and the possibility of structural critique inside the limen, and as such, liminality may be considered threatening to any aspect of a world that requires political, moral or metaphysical unification (Lugones 2003, 61). As in Turner’s depiction, both marginality and liminality may be ascribed and unwanted but also intended and voluntary. This possibility of, and potential for, liberation found in the philosophical understanding of the limen is both important and inspiring.

I find that the concept of the ‘limen’ or ‘liminality’ captures analytically well many important features of the everyday experiences of the participants living lives “on hold” and “in between”. At the same time, the potentially critical and liberatory dimensions of the concept bring forward and offer space for migrants as subjects, and, as stressed by Lugones above, also point to the reasons why these positions and realities are often represented and experienced as threatening. An interest in revealing and analysing the hierarchical systems of social structures in the specific historical and geopolitical context under study becomes important also in this respect. The focus of my analysis is directed to the consideration of the ways in which the locations and positionalities of the participants are conditioned by the surrounding structures, yet questionable and negotiable in different ways and to varying degrees.

The uncertainty created by waiting on a personal level reflects the unequal logics inscribed inside it and point to it as a control mechanism at a societal level. Being made to wait is bound up in power relations and associated with bureaucratic domination as well as with perceptions and evaluations of ‘deservingness’ (Griffiths 2014; Martín Pérez 2010). A time spent waiting is the basis of the social organisation of access and delay (Schwartz 1975, ref. Martín Pérez 2010). The imposition of waiting, always with a glimmer of hope, can be seen as part of a control technique sustaining the marginality and compliance of, in this case, migrants (Griffiths 2014, 1996). While waiting is socially produced, and imbued with social hierarchies and geopolitics, it is also actively encountered and resisted in the everyday of migration (Conlon 2011). The liminal spaces of waiting thus show themselves as sites of struggle, adjustments, action as well as possibilities (Mountz 2011; Martín Pérez 2010, 184).

The situations faced by migrants concerning employment and working conditions, migration status regularisation, service-provision and deservingness, should also be brought into dialogue with broader discussions on the changing nature of employment and welfare in contemporary societies (Ahmad 2008, 302). Recognising simultaneously the artificiality and the real consequences of categorising people into 'migrants' and 'citizens' reveals a 'politics of migration' broader than 'immigration policy' (Anderson 2013, 180). An exclusive focus on the struggles present in irregular migration risks obscuring the fact that 'regular' migrants and citizens alike also live and struggle in conditions that are produced by a system of stratified and often racialised and gendered positionalities (Mezzadra 2010). Researchers, policy-makers, social service providers and public alike should not distance themselves from the experiences of migrants and treat these experiences as merely something which happens to the 'other'.

6 RECONCILING MIGRATION

*“I don’t know what the destiny is,
I’ve gone on and became what I’ve been.
Out there God will be divine,
I will die the way that I’ve lived.”*
(Silvio Rodríguez: *El necio.*)

*“Yo no sé lo que es el destino,
caminando fui lo que fui.
Allá Dios que será divino,
yo me muero como viví.”*
(Silvio Rodríguez: *El necio.*)

[Extract from the creative work, English translation by the researcher.]

A time-sensitive analysis regards migration as action in time. This demands opening the analytical eye to the “vagueness” in migration processes and a resulting degree of openness in their outcome (Halfacree & Boyle 1993, 338). In this section, I turn the analytical attention towards the participants’ reflections on their migration decisions, the potential discrepancies between the expectations they have projected to migration and the realities they have faced, and the ways these discrepancies are dealt with. Although life course is a recurrent theme throughout the research, in this section I specifically consider the interconnectivity between migration and life course. Lastly, I address the ways the participants negotiated and made sense of their migration experiences with respect to the general social imaginary of the ‘migrant’.

My approach to life course reflects the four central themes presented by Glen H. Elder Jr. (1994, 5–6), which convey the multiplicity, social embeddedness and dynamic nature of life course. Firstly, individual life courses are affected by the historical times in which people live. Historical change and circumstances, such as fluctuations of the economy, have personal implications. Secondly, age is imbued with social meanings. Social timing refers to age-based expectations and the timing of life course events. The personal impact of any change, such as migration, is linked to where people are in their lives at the time of that change. Thirdly, human lives are interconnected and interdependent and embedded in social relations. Through these relationships social regulation and support occurs. Each generation is also affected by the decisions and events taken place in other’s life courses. Fourthly, human agency permeates individuals’ interactions with their broader context. Within the constraints of the broader social context, people make plans and choices which have influence on their life course.

The rootedness of migration in everyday life and individual life course means that a large number of issues are entangled in and expressed through migration (Halfacree & Boyle 1993, 339). People move in a myriad of life situations and circumstances and for a myriad of reasons, and dividing and categorising movers according to one specific motivation or circumstance quickly turns into a rather absurd exercise. In

this research, I employ a nuanced approach to decision-making able to acknowledge constrained and “good enough given the circumstances” decision-making around migration (Griffiths et al. 2013). This understanding wishes to avoid the voluntaristic and individualistic undertones that often haunt the notion of agency in conventional migration theorising which depicts migrants classically as detached rational-choice actors (Scheel et al. 2014, 83). I also want to pay attention to the fact that decision-making is not something which happens only at a singular moment in the beginning of migration. On the contrary, I see decision-making as on-going, variable and complex and in constant change over time (McCormick & Schwanen 2011).

6.1 Migratory processes: ideas, plans and realities



I And well, this was the first street where I lived when I had just arrived to Barcelona. I lived on this street.

0 And what memories does it bring?

I Really good.

I Good memories?

I Yes, yes, yes. There's everything there, there's happiness, suffering, missing, sadness, there's everything, but really good memories, really, really good memories.⁶⁷

[Extract from the discussion on the creative work.]

⁶⁷ *I Nada, esto fue la primera calle donde yo llegué aquí a Barcelona. Donde vivía, esta era la calle.*

0 ¿Y qué recuerdos te trae?

I Buenísimos.

0 Buenos recuerdos.

I Claro, claro, claro. Ahí hay de todo, hay alegría, hay sufrimiento, hay añoranza, hay tristeza, hay de todo pero de verdad muy buenos recuerdos, muy, muy buenos recuerdos. [Extracto del trabajo creativo y su discusión.]

In the so-called ‘target-worker migration’ (Phizacklea 2003, 95; Hondagneu-Sotelo & Avila 1997, 558), migrants are considered to aim to spend a certain amount of time in the host society, work there as much as possible, support their society of origin with economic remittances, and after a certain period of time return there themselves. In the following quotation, Cristina discusses her original plans for migration which reflect the idea of target-worker migration.

And that was the decision to say: I’ll go and make a little bit of money and then I’ll come back and... To see if I can do something here [in Barcelona], if I can help myself with something, I’ll arrive, I’ll do and I’ll go back. But no, it hasn’t been as easy as I thought. (–) Well, many things have happened here, it hasn’t..., hasn’t been so easy. [Pause.] No, no, it hasn’t been easy here, the life that one lives. At least me... When I was thinking... People told me a lot of things about this place before I arrived. I was very excited. I had these..., illusions of... I saw the world as an easy place, very... Yes [laughter]. I mean, [I thought that] I’ll just come and go... It wasn’t like that, it wasn’t like that. People talk about it and it’s very different when you actually live it. (Cristina 1.)⁶⁸

In the above account, Cristina speaks of having wanted to see if she could “help herself with something” through her migration to Barcelona. With this she refers to her idea of studying further in order to obtain a profession, find a job in this area of work in Barcelona, earn well and eventually return with savings which would have been put to use in the country of origin, for instance by buying a house there. This initial idea is described, however, as illusive. She even struggles a bit while looking for words to describe the profound discrepancy between her expectations and reality. In the following extract, Cristina continues to explain how she, after a certain period of living apart from her children, decided to send for them to join her in Barcelona.

Those two years that I had put as my aim, to have gathered a sufficient amount of money but... I had realised that I could continue here working. And..., as I said before, eh, I tried it out, to see if my children could enter Spain and if not, well I would return. So... Everything I had saved I gathered, what I had earned working during the two years I sent..., the tickets, the administration of passports and everything, everything cost money, I spent almost everything I had in that. And I couldn’t... Finally, had they not entered, I would have gone to [country of origin], even without any money left, I would have gone. But since we were lucky enough for them to enter and stay here without any

⁶⁸ Y eso fue la decisión de decir: yo iré a hacer un poco de dinero, luego regreso y... A ver si hago algo aquí, me ayudo con algo. De decir voy, hago y regreso. Pero no, no ha sido tan fácil como lo he pensado. (–) Bueno, han pasado muchas cosas aquí, tampoco..., ha sido muy fácil [una pausa]. No, no, no ha estado fácil aquí, la vida que se lleva. Al menos uno... Cuando yo pensaba... Me hablaban mucho de aquí, antes de venir. Yo me ilusionaba, me hacía..., ilusiones de... Veía el mundo fácil, muy... Sí. [Risa]. Digo entro y salgo donde... No fue así, no fue así. Es diferente cuando te lo cuentan, que cuando lo vives tú... (Cristina 1.)

problems, I said: I'll go on working to earn back what I had invested. Like that..., I stayed here. (Cristina 1.)⁶⁹

Cristina explains how she had put a time limit of two years for her target migration, but since things had not progressed as planned in terms of education and work, she opted for sending for her children to join her instead of going back after the two years were up. Paying for all the necessary expenses took up all that she had managed to save until that moment. She gambled this money, as she says, because had the attempt resulted to be unsuccessful she would have returned to her country of origin to be with her children even with nothing to show financially for her migration. Her gamble was worthwhile since she was able to reunite with her children and was living with them in Barcelona at the time of our encounters.

Cristina's account reflects inequalities based on gender, social class, official migration status and nationality (Gil Araujo & González-Fernández 2014, 13). It also exemplifies the ways in which family obligations may prevent migrant women from investing the time and resources needed to develop strategies for upward occupational mobility (Parella et al. 2013, 1379). Yet, her experiences serve as an example of achieving family reunification, despite of the requirements imposed by migration legislation for housing, earnings and employment, which make official family reunification very difficult (Gil Araujo & González-Fernández 2014, 14; Andrijasevic 2009, 392).

'Transnational motherhood' is a term coined by Pierette Hondagneu-Sotelo and Ernestine Avila (1997) in their article on the ways in which Latin American migrant women working as nannies or housekeepers in Los Angeles have transformed the meanings of motherhood to accommodate the spatial and temporal separation from their children who remain in their countries of origin. While securing a better future for one's children is often depicted as a fundamental motivation in women's 'target-worker migration', the separation from children is referred to with feelings of worry, anxiety and guilt (ibid., 552; also Kara 2006, 18). In this research, somewhat surprisingly, none of the participants had under-aged children residing in the country of origin at the time of our encounters, and most of them were not economically responsible for their family members in the country of origin.

⁶⁹ Esos dos años que yo ya había tenido la meta, que me he propuesto..., haber reunido un buen dinero pero... Había visto que yo podía seguir..., aquí trabajando. Y..., como te dije anteriormente, eh, hice una prueba de que si no podían entrar mis hijos aquí a España, pues me iría. Entonces..., lo que yo había reunido con todo lo que había trabajado en los dos años los envíe..., los pasajes, la tramitación de, de los pasaportes y tal ha costado un dinero, un buen dinero. Entonces he invertido todo ese dinero, casi como que me ha quedado nada. Y no podía... Al final, si ellos no entraban..., igual me iba [a país de origen], aunque sin dinero, igual me iba. Pero como ha habido una suerte de que ellos han podido sin ningún problema estar aquí entonces dije: seguiré trabajando y recuperar lo que he invertido. De esa forma me..., me he quedado yo aquí. (Cristina 1.)

Normally the marriages fall apart, I mean that's the consequence, you know? [What] you pay for having left your country. Not just in my case but in many couples that have been through what I've been through... And there are also mothers and fathers, or both of them, who have come and they've left their children, forgotten them over there, and their children don't have the same love for them anymore. So those are the consequences that one pays, so if that had happened, I wouldn't have been able to go on living, because you can accept, you know, that your relationship with your partner ends because of things that happen, but to break your relationship with your children, I would say that's very hard, I'd say it's very hard. And as I heard [stories about] that, I insisted even more in bringing them here because I didn't want to break that connection. (Cristina 2.)⁷⁰

Cristina describes the estrangement between couples almost as an inevitable consequence of the everyday affective distance caused by transnational migration. Distancing herself from her children, however, was something she was not prepared to bear. Some factors supporting the participants' possibilities to bring their children with them in migration were arguably the relatively enhanced access to citizenship and the existence of linguistic and cultural proximity due to the postcolonial context. Some participants compared Spain with the United States, for instance, as an immigration destination, and although they might have considered it easier to work and be employed in the U.S., acquiring migration status regularly and/or citizenship and being able to feel affinity in terms of language, culture and religion, was considered more challenging there.

Many accounts consequently come close to another migration depiction, referred to here as the 'citizenship path'. Here migration is understood as a fairly straightforward process with quite simply definable steps: the decision to migrate, which is followed by the journey and the settlement which then ideally leads to citizenship. Regina's two accounts below illustrate how a well-planned migration process in this respect might turn out to contain several surprising turns.

My partner had a firm and I worked with him. Until, because of the crisis and everything, here in Barcelona, well, the firm had to close (--) when it closed well I saw myself a bit out on the streets, in fact, because I had no money, I

⁷⁰ Normalmente los matrimonios se rompen o sea esa es la consecuencia ¿no? [Lo] que se paga por salir de tu país. No sólo en mí, en varias parejas que han pasado por esto mismo que yo he pasado... Y también de que hay otras madres o padres, o los dos que se han venido y a sus hijos los han dejado olvidados allá y que ya, sus hijos ya no tienen el mismo cariño. Entonces son consecuencias que se pagan, entonces a eso si hubiera llegado no, no hubiese querido ni existir porque, puedes pasar a aceptar ¿no? de que ya ha habido una ruptura de tu pareja porque han pasado cosas, pero romper la relación de tus hijos, yo diría que es muy duro, diría que es muy duro. Y como yo siempre escuchaba [historias sobre] eso entonces insistía más aún de traerlos porque yo no quería romper ese lazo. (Cristina 2.)

had nothing, we had nothing. (--). And our relationship ended, so... (--). and well I was left without papers. (Regina 1.)⁷¹

I arrived [to Barcelona] with work, with a relationship, with... Well I had a whole life project ready (--). I wouldn't have come otherwise (--). I had a good life in [country of origin], it wasn't bad, I mean. It was my partner, you know, we fell in love and all that. That's why I came. He had a firm. I was supposed to work with him, I did work with him, and I was supposed to get my papers in order through that and all. But well the plans went down because of the crisis (--). because of many things. (Regina 2.)⁷²

Migration decisions, as any decisions in life, are made in certain circumstances which during the course of time may change radically. Regina explains in the two accounts above how Spain had not been a preferred destination for her migration as such. Migration had not been a "necessity" for her, since she had a "good life" in her country of origin. She arrived in Barcelona because the man with whom she was at that time in a relationship was Catalanian and he had a business where Regina could also work. Things changed, however, since because of the economic downturn her partner lost his firm. Eventually their relationship also came to an end. Regina had arrived in a country where she had autochthonous contacts through her spouse and a job already waiting for her, and she later found herself in a situation where there was no relationship, work, income or home, and her official migration status had also been lost, since due to the changes in her circumstances she had no possibilities to regularise it.

Many people talk about their bad experiences, that they have returned within a year, that they have not been able to stand it, they have found it very hard and difficult. And with these experiences that many share, well, people, even if they wanted to [leave for migration] they don't because they see all these people who have come back. (Gloria 3.)⁷³

It is never possible to completely foresee the context and circumstances waiting in the society of destination. Still, for the participants, accurate and reliable information on Barcelona or Spain as a host society for migration had been rather scarce, both

⁷¹ Mi pareja tenía una empresa, yo trabajaba con él, ¿no? Hasta que bueno por la crisis y todo eso, aquí en Barcelona ¿no?, pues, cerró la empresa (--). cuando se cerró pues sí me vi un poquito en la calle ¿no? porque no tenía dinero no tenía nada, no teníamos nada. Y yo rompí con mi pareja, entonces... (--). y bueno me quedé sin papeles. (Regina 1.)

⁷² [Yo] ya venía con trabajo, con una relación, con... Bueno, con todo un proyecto de vida ya (--). sino no me hubiera venido, también, venirme así a lo loco pues no, yo tenía una vida más o menos bien en [su país de origen], no, no estaba, no estaba mal, vamos. Era la cuestión de mi pareja ¿no?, que nos enamoramos y todo eso. Y por eso es que vine. Pero él tenía una empresa. Yo me iba a poner con él, bueno me, me puse con él ahí, y a través de esa empresa no sé, yo me iba a regularizar y todo el... (--). Pero, pues los planes se, se vinieron abajo por la crisis (--). por muchas cosas. (Regina 2.)

⁷³ Eh, habla mucha gente con malas experiencias, que han venido y se han ido al año, no han aguantado, no han soportado, se les ha hecho fuerte, difícil. Y con las experiencias que mucha gente cuenta, pues la gente, aun queriéndolo [migrar], no se animan mucho porque ven que mucha gente se ha vuelto. (Gloria 3.)

before their arrival and during their migration. In the above extract, Gloria describes how in her country of origin many are discouraged from leaving for migration since people who have migrated tell others about their experiences of hardship and difficulties abroad. In other accounts, the discrepancy between high expectations and harsh reality was underlined (also Bloch et al. 2014, 47–50), and it generally seemed that in the country of origin one is surrounded by the positive rather than the negative aspects of moving and starting a life in a new context, as discussed below by Luz.

No, I didn't know [how life in Barcelona might be like], I had no idea, no, I thought that it would be, like I don't know, easy, I didn't think that not having papers would be so difficult. At first everyone says: immigration in Spain is the most common thing, but it's really difficult. You would say: you just arrive to Spain, you look for work and you start working and that's it. And it's not like that. It's not like that... Everyone tells you that it's easy but you arrive here and you see that it's difficult. (Luz 1.)⁷⁴

In the extract above, Luz describes a discrepancy between her expectations and how she has found the everyday reality in Barcelona (also Escandell & Tapias 2010, 412). Luz explains that in her country of origin, the general understanding of life in migration in Spain is that it is simple and straightforward: you arrive, you look for a job and get one, and you start living your life. Yet in reality, everything is complicated, unsure and time-taking. She says she thought that migration “would be the most common thing” but she has found out that it is not. With this she refers to experiences of having to battle to be informed and access services, being unsure of one's position and future and facing prejudice or discrimination.

1 So I have this friend who was here in Spain and she told me: it's easy to go there, there's more work and everything, and you start making connections there and you can study. Well, this is why I came here. I arrived here but it wasn't the way they had said, it was..., it was different.

0 How was it different?

1 For example you had to start working in whatever you could find, for instance cleaning work, whatever, in private houses..., something that you didn't study for, you come here with your studies and not..., it's something... Well, I arrived, I worked here... I carried on. (Sofia 1.)⁷⁵

⁷⁴ No, no, no sabía [cómo iba a ser la vida en Barcelona]. Ni la menor idea, no, y pensé que iba a ser, como más, no sé, fácil, no pensé que no tener papeles iba a ser tan difícil. Al principio todos dicen: la inmigración en España es lo más común que hay, pero es muy difícil. Uno dice: llegar a España y buscar trabajo y empezar a trabajar y ya está. Y no es tan así, no es tan así como... Toda la gente cuenta como que es fácil, pero uno al llegar aquí ve que es difícil. (Luz 1.)

⁷⁵ 1 Entonces... Tengo una amiga que estaba acá en España y me dice: “allá es más fácil ir, hay más trabajo y todo eso y puedes abrirte campo y estudiar”. Bueno, por eso me animé y me vine acá por eso. Llegué acá pero no era lo que me decían, era..., era diferente.

0 ¿Cómo era diferente?

In the above account, Sofia describes how she was also told that life would be “easy” in Spain. With this she refers for instance to plenty of work opportunities and possibilities to make a career in her own field of work and study further. But she had soon noticed that things were not like that. She had to start working in something entirely different than what her studies had been preparing her for. She struggles to find words to describe the disappointment this had represented for her. Sofia speaks of an experience of having studied and made an effort in order to progress in life, and having then been in a sense “pulled backwards” because of migration. She goes on describing the reasons for her emigration and the realities she faced.

(--) to improve our situation and well in order to work and study, complete the specialisation for instance here, as they told me that I could. But for that of course you need a student visa and that’s something I couldn’t afford to pay. So I thought that I would come to work here and see if I might go about it like that and I started to work. I worked and within a year I was pregnant, I had just arrived and I was pregnant. What could I do? I had my child and things got worse. It was more difficult because we just couldn’t... [starts to cry] (--) I’ve regretted coming sometimes [cries]. Until now... (--) I still work in [the workplace which does not correspond to her education]. I mean, I’ve studied so much in order to work... It’s difficult [cries]. But I have a stable job, I have my family, I can’t... If I were alone here perhaps, but no. So, I have to go on, I don’t have any other choice, go on working until I might find something better, go on working there [cries]. I don’t, I don’t know.... (Sofia 1.)⁷⁶

Sofia’s above account speaks of a reality filled with interruptions and surprises. At the time of our encounter, Sofia had been living in Barcelona for several years with her partner. Shortly after arriving she found out that she was pregnant. During these years Sofia has nevertheless been working in different jobs and struggled to study further.

Sofia’s experiences reflect the way migration, instead of representing an opportunity to advance one’s skills as has been proposed in the economic theories of migration, may stand out as a process of deskilling (King & Skeldon 2010, 1628; Goss &

1 Por ejemplo a ver, tú tenías que empezar a trabajar de lo que podías, por ejemplo de limpieza, qué sé yo, en una casa... Cosa que para lo que tú estudiaste, vienes acá con eso pues no, es algo... Bueno, llegué, trabajé acá... Seguí. (Sofia 1.)

⁷⁶ (--) para mejorar la situación y pues para poder trabajar y poder estudiar, hacer la especialidad por ejemplo acá si se podía y me dijeron que sí. Pero claro tenías que venir con una visa de residencia de estudiante de allá, y claro eso es un costo que yo no podía pagarlo. Entonces dije bueno me voy a trabajar y pues ya veré si puedo sacarlo así, y pues eso, empecé a trabajar. Y yo trabajé allí y justo al año me embaracé, recién llegué pues me embaracé, ni modo, ¿qué voy hacer? Bueno, tuve a mi hija al año y las cosas se pusieron peor. Era más difícil porque no se podía [empieza a llorar] (--) A veces me arrepentía de haber venido aquí [llora] Hasta ahora... (--) sigo trabajando en la [su lugar de trabajo que no corresponde a su educación]. Digo, tanto he estudiado para poder trabajar... Que cuesta... [llora] Pero tengo un trabajo fijo, tengo mi familia, entonces no puedo... Si fuera sola pues tal vez, pero no. Entonces, tengo que seguir, no me queda de otra. Y seguir trabajando y hasta que me salga algo mejor pues, seguir trabajando allí [llora]... Y no, no sé... (Sofia 1.)

Lindquist 1995, 322). Her account reflects the premises of dual labour market theory and, more specifically, the consequences of her intersectional position in the stratified job market in which migrants, specifically migrants from certain countries and with a certain nationality, gender and ethnic appearance, are not easily allowed space in jobs other than “immigrant jobs” which generally require little or no education (Gil Araujo 2006, 17–18; Solé & Parella 2003). Her plans had also been altered due to a change in her personal and family situation when she had become pregnant.

Sofia’s account is of different conflicts which may arise between one’s personal aspirations, family commitments and intersectional location. It draws a picture of a subject far from that of an isolated individual exempt from personal relationships and larger social forces. Nevertheless, in the account Sofia discusses her decision-making, her actions and her sense of responsibility. She also recognises her achievements, as she now has a stable job and she has been able to support her family. She has not given up on her initial goals. She is going to go on working and studying and hopes that she is eventually able to secure a better position for herself in the job market.

In practice, even when the initial plan of migration included an idea either of target working or the goal of citizenship, surprises were inevitably encountered along the way, due to changes in economic, legislative, familial or personal circumstances, or because of lack of adequate information in the first place. Migration status irregularity and the difficulties of regularising one’s migration status situation had come as a surprise to some of the participants, as did the everyday life of limitations and fear due to the irregularity of work or migration status and the stress this inflicted. It comes as no great surprise that at the level of concrete everyday experiences an idea of planned, informed and calculated migration and migration decision-making does not hold, but varying degrees of risk-taking and uncertainty instead seem to be present every step of the way.

To some participants, however, this situation of certain uncertainty and unpredictability was something they in fact had been looking for in migration. I refer to this as ‘reboot migration’. Here migration is essentially about acquiring liberty and freedom from predictability and it is precisely the escape from the routine and the time-space certainty of everyday rhythms and life plans that is sought after and enjoyed. Instead of finding unpredictability stressful and undesirable, migration can be lived as a possibility for experiencing just that (Griffiths 2014, 2002).

I was living a moment of a lot of stability in my life, in the town where I had been born and had lived always and... Well, I saved and saved money and said okay I’ll go away for a year, I asked a year of leave of my work. (--) I didn’t know at all what I wanted to do with my life and I didn’t care... (--) When you

change the place, you can reinvent yourself, I mean you can make other decisions, do other things, choose other things... (Catalina 1.)⁷⁷

In the above account, Catalina describes her experience of desired unpredictability which she has strived for and achieved in migration. Migration as a temporal discontinuity and rupture is referred to as something inherently positive, a sort of 'reboot' and rebirth and a deliberate act to break stasis and generate change (also Griffiths 2014, 2001). It allows one to do different things, make different kinds of decisions and reinvent oneself.

But yes everything was very unstable and I didn't care. I think it was the first time in my life that I was in this kind of a state of absolute irresponsibility and I loved it, I liked very much not knowing what I was going to do. (-- I had never been in a situation like that, so unprotected, you know, that I didn't know a lot of people, I wasn't working or I was working in something which I hated..., and of not knowing at all what I was going to do, especially in the beginning... Of course, it was nerve-wracking but on the other hand, I don't know, there was something, it was like a boost of adrenaline. (Catalina 1.)⁷⁸

Well, I wanted to do other things in my life because I knew that I couldn't go on like that (-- There was a moment I said I'm not going to be able to do anything more here [professionally]. And well, apart from that, I also felt that, you know, I only have this life, nothing more. And I wanted to change the chip as well. (Vanessa 1.)⁷⁹

Catalina had a job in her country of origin which was put on hold when she left. This created a situation of economic security in which a relatively careless phase of soul-searching was possible. Vanessa in turn had a successful career behind her and she did not strive for economic or professional advancement in her migration. This seems in fact to have lost importance for her. Both also had little familial responsibility in terms of people financially or other ways dependent on them. Catalina also had dual citizenship. In addition, their (visible) intersectional positions,

⁷⁷ Estaba en un momento de mucha estabilidad en mi vida, en la ciudad donde nací y viví siempre y... Bueno, ahorré, ahorré dinero y dije bueno me voy un año, pedí un año de licencia en mi trabajo. (-- A todo esto yo estaba que no sabía que iba hacer de mi vida ni me importaba nada y... (-- al cambiar de lugar, o sea uno puede reinventarse, o sea tomar otras decisiones, hacer otras cosas, elegir otras cosas (Catalina 1.)

⁷⁸ Pero bueno todo era muy inestable y no me importaba para nada. Yo creo que era la primera vez en mi vida que estaba en un estado de tanta irresponsabilidad absoluta con todo, y me encantaba, me gustaba mucho estar así que no sabía que iba hacer. (-- Yo nunca había estado en una situación así de, digamos de desprotección en el sentido de eh... De conocer poca gente, casi no trabajo o un trabajo muy nefasto eh... Y además de no saber qué iba hacer, sobre todo el primer tiempo que estuve y.... Claro, eso era muy angustiante pero por otro lado, no sé, como que había algo así de una adrenalina. (Catalina 1.)

⁷⁹ Pero bueno, en fin, yo quería hacer otras cosas de mi vida, porque sabía que había un momento en que no podía seguir así (-- Hay un momento que yo dije ya no voy a poder hacer nada más acá [profesionalmente]. Y bueno, independientemente de eso, también sentía que, a ver, yo tengo esta vida no más. Y tenía que cambiar el chip también. (Vanessa 1.)

in terms of their national, ethnic and social class backgrounds, evoked little fear of forced return even in periods of migration status irregularity, as had been the case for Vanessa. In general, a situation of economic security, little familial responsibility, little fear of forced return and little fear of devastating economic consequences of an abrupt return from migration all enhance the possibilities of living migration as a chance to enjoy being outside of routines and reinventing oneself (also Griffiths 2014, 2003; Griffiths et al. 2013).

In some accounts, emphasis was placed away from plans for future or what laid ahead in migration, and what bore more importance was the need to leave the place and the situation in which one found oneself in the country of origin, for instance due to difficulties in one's family life.

The situation was like that and I made the decision and I don't regret it because things could have ended really badly, things were really bad, there was a lot of aggression and well, it was really bad. (Magda 1.)⁸⁰

In the above extract, Magda describes a situation of aggression and threat of violence. Domestic violence has been represented as an important motivation specifically in women's transnational migration (Anderson 2000, 30). In some instances the need to leave came down more to a general feeling of discrepancy between oneself and one's surroundings and a curiosity or need to see and experience something different. This was taken up in the accounts in relation to a personal, even existential, experience, as illustrated in the following quotes from María and Miriam.

I came here also with a personal objective, to create my own way of life, my own..., to follow my own life philosophy, you know? (--) And I like it, you know? I see that it's because of this that I came, you know, to follow my own philosophy and continue like harvesting that, so I want to go on maintaining what I am and what I want. (María 2.)⁸¹

I wanted to know another country, I wanted another way of, of being, there were other things that I was interested in that I didn't see that my country was giving me. (Miriam 1.)⁸²

⁸⁰ La situación fue eso, y yo tomé la decisión y no me arrepiento, eh, tampoco me arrepiento porque si no, podíamos haber acabado muy mal de esto, estaban muy mal las cosas, había mucha agresividad y bueno, y era muy jodido. (Magda 1.)

⁸¹ Yo he venido siempre con un objetivo personal también, como crear mi propio estilo de vida, mi propio..., seguir mi propia filosofía de vida ¿no? (--) Y me gusta ¿sabes lo que te digo? Me doy cuenta que por eso es que vine ¿no? por seguir mi propio, mi propia filosofía y seguir como que cosechando esto, entonces esto me gusta también o sea como que seguir manteniendo lo que soy y lo que quiero. (María 2.)

⁸² Quería conocer otro país, quería otra manera de, de actuar, había otras cosas que me interesaban que yo veía que mi país no me estaba dando. (Miriam 1.)

Both María and Miriam refer to a need to experience a different way of life and have the possibility to create a life style for themselves with which they would feel comfortable. Both of them were convinced that living “their own kinds of lives” would not be possible in the country of origin. This rejection had to do with cultural, religious or family values or with a distressing political situation. Rocío, in turn, speaks below of an explicit aim of enjoyment. She migrated not because of a necessity to leave a place for some specific reason or to arrive somewhere else for some specific aim, but merely to have more experiences in life.

I came for enjoyment more than anything else, in order to gain more life experience, not because of a necessity really, because over there, I was doing very well. (Rocío 1.)⁸³

Many of the above accounts of ‘reboot migration’ come close to what Karen O’Reilly and Michaela Benson (2009, 1–3; also Benson & O’Reilly 2009) have named ‘lifestyle migration’, which involves a search for a better quality of life, alternative lifestyles, freedom of prior constraints, an opportunity for self-realisation, an escape and a desire to recreate and rediscover oneself. Since O’Reilly & Benson (2009, 1) situate these migration motivations exclusively to “individuals of the developed world” and distinguish them from the movement of “labour migrants, refugees and asylum seekers”, I should like to add two points in order to diversify this dichotomy.

Firstly, it is important to bear in mind that migration movements from ‘South to North’ are not composed of a homogenised group with a simple and all-encompassing typology of circumstances and trajectories, but are of course versatile, for instance in terms of social class and economic resources. Secondly, in the compilation of motivations and desires directed to migration, I think it an oversimplification to assume that people with less economic resources emigrating from economically poorer regions of the world could not also project aspirations of self-realisation, reinvention or self-discovery to their migration. Desires to “know another country”, “gain life experience”, “make one’s own way of life”, “make a fresh start”, “explore one’s identity” or “see the old continent” are certainly not reserved to economically well-off people departing from economically well-off countries. It is important to bear this in mind while simultaneously recognising what Doreen Massey (1991) has called the ‘power geometry’, stressing the very different and unequal ways in which people are located within the reformulations concerning time, space and mobility.

The accounts of a possibility for a “reboot” in migration, and the concept of ‘lifestyle migration’, stress the possibility of starting over from zero and reinventing oneself

⁸³ Que lo hice por gusto más, por ampliar un poco mi experiencia de vida que por una necesidad, porque yo donde estaba y como estaba, estaba muy bien. (Rocío 1.)

personally, socially or workwise through migration. This reflects the classical idea of the migrant as a ‘stranger without a history’ by Alfred Schuetz (1944, 502). It seems, however, that this freedom to remake oneself in migration is connected with one’s (visible) location inside the intersections of the hierarchical structures around social class, gender, ethnic origin, nationality, age and life course etc. And yet, whatever this location may be, it remains rather unclear to what extent a “remake” is ever entirely possible. To a certain extent, it might also in fact be in migration that one effectively becomes “from somewhere”, as in the following extract from María.

I value my real roots because the identity of [people of her country of origin] really has been lost, you know? With the influence of the United States it has been lost. Now people are ashamed of everything, the traditional clothing, the music, everything, they reject it. And..., that’s what I value now a lot, you know? When you’re a migrant then you become from that country, it’s what identifies you, you know? It takes over. I’m [from her country of origin], I have these things to show from my country, and when you’re there you have it and you don’t even notice and... Well, that, to show the best, the best of my country. (María 2.)⁸⁴

María speaks of being in a sense filled with a history, in terms of national, cultural and ethnic origins which one possibly has never really thought of before (Boccagni 2010, 189; Cwerner 2001, 25–26; Kramsch 1998, 67). Her extract is an account of changing positionalities due to migration. Different aspects, such as one’s nationality, accent and ethnic appearance may only now become important, or they may acquire different, even oppositional, connotations and consequences than in the country of origin (Roth 2013, 2, 28–29). Some positionalities, related for instance to one’s work situation or social class, may also radically change.

María’s account talks about having to face different cultural and social expectations and stereotypes (Cwerner 2001, 25–26). To a certain extent these are categories imposed by others, but it is evident that she is also able to intervene. She speaks of being able to find and form an identity through moulding her national, cultural and ethnic origin to correspond to what she appreciates most in them (also Mas Giralt 2011, 341). She wishes to show people what she considers to be “the very best” of her country of origin. In this way, it seems she is in fact able to show national pride. In the context of specific connotations attached to the local ‘immigrant imaginary’, stressing and making visible a certain national origin and identity may also prove to be useful in order to avoid the ‘immigrant identity’.

⁸⁴ También valoro mis raíces reales porque se ha perdido la identidad [en su país de origen] ¿no? Se ha perdido allí con la influencia yankee y todo esto, allá a la gente le da vergüenza todo, usar ropa tradicional de allí, la música, todo, todo, le da vergüenza, lo rechazan. Y... esto, esta parte sí que la valoro un montón ¿no? Ya cuando eres inmigrante ya eres de ese país entonces, es lo que te identifica ¿no? Te avala. Soy [de su país de origen], tengo estas cosas que mostrar de mi país y cuando estás ahí lo tienes y no te enteras y... Bueno, eso sí, como que rescatar lo mejor, lo mejor que tiene mi país. (María 2.)

Because you watch the television and you say; ah, they're talking about Spain. Or you come to Spain as a tourist. Or you hear about..., whatever, news..., you watch things. Or you know someone who comes to Spain but..., I mean who came here as a tourist. But the tourist only sees what he wants to see, not the reality really. He comes to these tourist centres or whatever. (--) There are a lot of unemployed people, life is becoming worse, eh, people live all together in the same flat, twenty people in a single flat, that's no way to live. But the tourists they don't see this, and they transmit what they see to other people, so it's: ah Spain is spectacular! So that's why everyone comes here and people don't know how life is here because they can't imagine it. I didn't think it was going to be like this. (Luz 2.)⁸⁵

(--) the idyllic experience of not actually living in a place but seeing it from outside, and it captures you, you like everything and it's different. Well, the city has its magic and beauty and I liked that very much. From the architecture... And the experiences I had had [visiting Barcelona as a tourist] which had been very good at that time and they left me with a very agreeable impression of the city. (--) I mean you don't concretely think what it really..., everything that is involved, you know. (--) There are so many things you don't take into account. (Rocío 1.)⁸⁶

In the two accounts above, Luz and Rocío separate between the experiences of a tourist and a migrant. Luz talks about the misinformation she feels people give and have because of their experiences as tourists. From the television and tourist encounters one forms a picture of a place which does not necessarily correspond to all aspects of it. The 'tourist' sees, and later tells, what she wants and not the reality. Rocío, at the moment of her decision to move to Barcelona to live there, seems to have relied upon her own experiences of visiting Barcelona as a 'tourist' or 'traveler'. In the following extract, she elaborates further on the differences she has found between her expectations and reality as a migrant.

(--) and how hard it is to confront the work environment, to find work. When you live in your country, you have contacts and structures that you have been creating naturally and when you leave you have to start again from zero, and

⁸⁵ Porque uno ve la televisión y uno dice: ah, hablan de España. O andan de turistas en España. O hablan..., cualquier noticia..., uno ve qué pasa. Entonces, uno se imagina otra cosa. O conoces a alguien que viene de España, pero... O sea, que vino de turista. Pero el turista ve sólo lo que le gusta, no lo que realmente es la realidad. Viene a estos centros turísticos, qué sé yo. (--) Hay mucha gente en paro, la vida está siendo peor que antes, eh, la gente siempre vive toda acumulada en un piso, viven veinte en un puro piso, y eso no es forma de vivir. Entonces, los turistas no lo ven, y eso es lo que pues transmiten a los demás, entonces: ¡ay, España es espectacular! Entonces, por eso todos llegan aquí y la gente no sabe cómo vivir aquí, porque no se lo imaginaban. Yo no me lo imaginaba así. (Luz 2.)

⁸⁶ (--) la experiencia idílica de no vivir en el sitio sino cuando lo ves de fuera que todo te atrapa, te gusta y es diferente. Bueno la ciudad tiene una magia y un encanto que me gustó mucho. Desde la arquitectura... Y las experiencias que había tenido [visitando Barcelona] que fueron muy buenas de esa época y que me dejaron una impresión agradable de la ciudad. (--) O sea que no te lo planteas concretamente que realmente..., todo lo que implica ¿no? (--) Hay un montón de factores que no los tomas en cuenta. (Rocío 1.)

you don't necessarily understand that. You're starting from zero, and at the moment of leaving you see this as a positive energy, and at the moment of arriving it's like: and now what, how do I solve this? It's like a challenge but it's also difficult sometimes and time-taking. (Rocío 1.)⁸⁷

In the above accounts, Rocío talks of an idyllic experience of a place and the life there when one does not actually form any part of these but is looking at them from afar. One becomes captured by the new and different elements compared to what one is used to in one's place of residence and in the life one currently leads. Rocío refers to Barcelona as a place with beautiful architecture and an atmosphere that leaves a positive impression when one visits as a tourist. But to move in the world as a tourist is a different thing than to move as a migrant, and to organise an entire everyday life with everything that this involves is another thing than to visit. One has to take into account other things and one is also received in other ways. While this might seem rather self-evident, I think that the above extracts from Rocío show a central element of decision-making on emigration, which is something profoundly other than well-informed, rational, detached and calculating. There is an intention to a different existence which fascinates precisely because it is not concrete and it does not take into account all the necessary elements that are involved.



⁸⁷ Y luego lo duro de enfrentarse a un entorno laboral, a una búsqueda de trabajo. Cuando tú vives en tu país, tienes una serie de contactos y de estructuras que te has ido haciendo naturalmente y el partir y comenzar de nuevo es otra cosa que tampoco te planteas, de comenzar de nuevo lo ves a la hora de partir como una energía positiva, y a la hora de llegar como: ahora ¿con qué me enfrento yo? Como que es un reto pero que también se hace a veces difícil y poco llevadero. (Rocío 1.)

I would say that the thing that made me decide that I didn't want to go back was the possibility. I mean in [city of origin] I knew what I was going to do, I mean in the sense that, I was working in this place, I had a boyfriend, I lived alone, I don't know, I mean, everything was more like already arranged, and here I was starting from zero (--) I knew three people and that was it. I didn't know what I was going to do or anything. (Catalina 1.)⁸⁸

Catalina talks about the “possibility” which encloses one of the main ideas of what migration, always to some extent, represents on a personal level. Life in migration is contrasted here to a life in the place of origin where one presumably “knows” what one is going to do or how life is going to be like. A future in migration represents the unknown. It might carry perils but, more importantly, a possibility of something new and different. Many aspects of the process of migration are plagued with ambiguity, uncertainty, unpredictability, vague information and often times not so good options from which to choose. Instead of a steadily advancing and foreseeable process, the experiences of migration of the participants were accounts of surprises, abrupt changes and discontinuities, rather like human existence overall. Catalina's account also shows another important point of decision-making in many of the participants' accounts: the decision to not go back when the airline ticket or the tourist visa expires. In Catalina's account this moment is depicted as more important than the actual decision of leaving her country of origin in the first place.

For you woman

A tí Mujer

*Oh desperate soul
is that of a woman who decides to leave
everything to arrive to a better future.*

*Oh alma desesperada
es la de la mujer q decide dejar lo
suyo para conseguir mejor futuro.*

(--)

(--)

*For you, woman, who has arrived to the
unknown and to the strange,
what keeps you firm, is to fulfil
your dreams of a future prosperity,
although that may cost
your life.*

*A ti mujer q llegando a lo
desconocido, a lo extraño
lo q te mantiene firme, es cumplir
con tus sueños de futuro próspero,
aunque para ello te dejes la vida
en el camino.*

[Extract from the creative work, English translation by the researcher.]

⁸⁸ Me parece lo que me hizo decidir no volver fue como la posibilidad. O sea yo en [ciudad de origen], yo sabía lo que iba hacer, como en el sentido, como trabajaba en este lugar, tenía novio, vivía sola y no sé, como que, estaba ya más armado todo, y en cambio acá estaba empezando de cero (--) y conocía tres personas y ya está. No sabía que más iba hacer ni nada. (Catalina 1.)

6.2 Rewards in other times and places: migration and life course

Perhaps eh because we're young it's easier to make these decisions more lightly. It might have been a bit crazy to come here, we both had permanent jobs there, to come here with our eyes closed. Maybe it was a bit crazy, but had we not done it we would have regretted it for the rest of our lives. (Luz 1.)⁸⁹

In the above extract, Luz describes her decision to leave for migration and makes a point of her and her partner being young and throwing themselves at new adventures because of this. She seems to remain dubious about the correctness of their decision. At the same time, she asserts that had they not tried, they would have regretted it. It seems that their migration decision was made with little information and abruptly, with their "eyes closed" as Luz puts it. This very human component in decisions, such as leaving for migration, comes apparent also in the following quotation from Rocío where she describes the way she dealt with the pros and cons of migration while she was making the decision of whether or not to emigrate.

Everything is pro, 99 percent. Because of course, once you go on actually living the experience [of migration] you notice the cons. But with the idealised vision, when you have everything ahead of you, I mean, you've got nothing to lose, well you don't see the cons, everything was pros. The only problem, which was the one percent, was family, you know, to break that direct and daily link with your family which makes you think a bit, you know: will it be worth it? But precisely if you're in that phase, in that restlessness that you'd like go somewhere else, it's because you want to separate yourself a bit from the family circle. I mean it ties you down a bit (--) in reality I wanted precisely to break that and leave in order to open for myself my individual circle. (Rocío 1.)⁹⁰

At the moment of deciding whether or not to leave for migration, Rocío was not sure about separating herself completely from the routines and people familiar to her. While this is the only doubt she states she had at the time, this also seems to be one of the very fundamental reasons for her desire to leave for migration. She also connects migration with her life course when she states that the decision was made in a life stage of "restlessness" where she was reaching for independence from her

⁸⁹ Igual eh...al ser jóvenes es más fácil. Uno toma las decisiones más a la ligera. A lo mejor fue una locura venirse, teniendo nosotros trabajo allá venimos aquí a ojos cerrados. Igual como fue más o menos una locura, pero si no lo hacíamos nos íbamos a arrepentir toda la vida. (Luz 1.)

⁹⁰ Los pros son todos, 99 por ciento. Porque una, claro, una vez después que tienes la experiencia de vida te das cuenta de los contras. Pero con la visión idealizada que te digo de la experiencia que tienes todo por delante o sea que no hay nada que perder, pues no ves contras, todos eran pros. El único contra que era el 1% es la familia ¿no? el romper ese vínculo directo y diario con la familia que es lo que te hace un poco plantearte: ¿pero vale la pena...? Pero justamente si estas en esa etapa de inquietud de querer partir es porque justamente quieres separarte del vínculo familiar. O sea que es lo que te ata un poco (--) en realidad quería justamente romper e irme para abrirme yo mi círculo individual. (Rocío 1.)

family in and through migration. She wanted to distance herself from the family circle, and form a circle of her own.

An age cohort peak for migration is generally considered to coincide with the transition from education to work (King et al. 2006, 240). This is reflected in the concentration of migration research on “working age migrants” and arguably also in the subsequent tendency of migration research to conflate migration with work and leave other human aspects of mobility aside. Studies on transnationality in migration as well tend to concentrate on people who can be considered to be at the height of their productive and reproductive stages in life (Heikkinen & Lumme-Sandt 2013, 199). It therefore becomes important to nuance this view by paying attention to the migration and transnational experiences of people in other moments of their life course. This effectively problematises the tendency of viewing migrants plainly as ‘migrant workers’ (Griffiths et al. 2013) as the interest is geared towards the participants’ migration in connection with different life stage decision-making and their life course consequences.

As apparent in the above accounts from Luz and Rocío, the connections between migration and early adulthood processes of independence were present in the interviews. There was an idea of “growing up” and achieving independence through or in migration. This process was linked to striving for educational and professional advancement, forming a family, struggling to progress in life to gain economic independence and creating one’s “own space” in life. In the quotation below, Sofia compares her life in her country of origin and in Barcelona and considers some central differences.

Well, I think independence, the fact that I’m living alone, I’m alone. For instance over there they [her parents] are always backing you up, if something happens to you, you need anything, your father and your mother are there, you know. You don’t learn that when you’re alone, you have to take life in a different way, you can’t depend on anyone anymore. (--) everything depends on me now, I have to go on working and go on... Over there I could have said: mom, I need this or give me that, or can I live in your house? Of course. You could have lived for a while in the house of your mother but here you can’t do that. You have to find a way to go on, independently... (Sofía 1.)⁹¹

Sofia speaks a great deal of independence when she considers the differences and changes migration had represented to her. She compares her life ‘back then’ and

⁹¹ Pues tal vez independizarme, que estoy viviendo sola, saliendo adelante sola. Por ejemplo allá, siempre están detrás de ti o siempre estas, si te pasa algo, falta algo, está papá, mamá o quiero esto o quiero aquello o vives con tu familia. No aprendes eso que, estando sola, ya tienes que ver de otra forma a la vida, no depender ya de nadie. (--) todo ya depende de mí, a seguir trabajando pero con mi trabajo salir adelante. Cosa que allá podía haber hecho: mami, necesito esto, dame mamá. O si quiero vivir: mamá ¿puedo vivir en tu casa? Claro, podías vivir una etapa en la casa de tu madre, pero acá no se puede hacer eso. Tú tienes que buscarte la vida y salir adelante, eso, de independizarse... (Sofía 1.)

‘over there’ with the ‘here’ and ‘now’. She emphasises her current independence, which seems to be accompanied by loneliness. The account draws a picture of having to cope with different issues without help, advice or support from anyone (also Bloch et al. 2014, 51). This is presented in stark contrast to the close relationship she has had with her parents in her country of origin, where she could have counted on them for advice, different types of backup and support or even accommodation, should there have been a need for this.

Sofia says that had she stayed “back home”, she would never have learned what it is to take complete responsibility of oneself and one’s own family. In Barcelona everything seems to depend on her, and she is on her own completely. Sofia’s account shows an abrupt and isolated process of personal growth and independence, which does not reflect the migration networks theory’s assumptions of strong ethnic or migration based social networks on which to lean in search for support and advice. Information on available services and support is also scant, adding to Sofia’s experience of having to do it all by herself.

If the process of growing up in migration seemed to be abrupt and intensified, so did the experiences of aging. Migration does not occur somehow outside or irrespective of a person’s life course, but it may reinforce, stagnate, reverse, disrupt or qualitatively change different life stages. At the same time, one’s life stage also influences migration.

It’s not that it has been bad. I’ve made a lot of sacrifices and I’m very tired, very stressed, the word of the century. I’ve turned old here. (--) And I wasn’t even very well when I arrived, not in high spirits, you know, but here I feel that I’ve aged ten years, at least, I’ve become old. (Magda 1.)⁹²

In the above account Magda tells that she has turned old in migration. Although “not all has been bad”, her account conveys sadness and tiredness. Many participants looked back on their migration in our interview encounters, considered the way time had passed and thought about the sacrifices that had been made. In the following two extracts, Magda continues further on the changes she sees that migration has brought upon her.

I’ve changed in many ways, for better and for not so good. Because I’ve also lost positive things. I used to be a cheerful person and here I..., the reality has pushed me down a lot, it has taken away my will, and I’ve noticed that I don’t smile anymore like I used to, you know? When I used to call my friends it

⁹² No es que la haya pasado mal. He hecho muchos sacrificios y estoy muy cansada, muy estresada, que es la palabra del siglo. He envejecido muchos años acá. (--) Y eso que estaba mal cuando me vine, anímicamente ¿no?, pero aquí me siento que he envejecido diez años, por lo menos, he envejecido. (Magda 1.)

wasn't my voice that they'd recognise, it was my laughter. (--) It was unmistakable. (Magda 1.)⁹³

I've lost my laughter here, that's something I find very... (--) It's been so long since I've laughed out loud, you know? And that's... That's a high price to pay, you know? But well, let's see if I can get it back. (Magda 2.)⁹⁴

In addition to acuteness or intensification in the advancement of one's life course, migration can also become a pause button.

Well, you know, in reality when I look at the photos of my friends, what they're doing, I feel that they're doing a lot more than me, so I suddenly think: why am I not there with them, you know? (--) But then I say, I have to be realistic, I'm here and that's that, what I have here is also good. (Miriam 2.)⁹⁵

In the above account, Miriam talks about experiences of suspension in time due to migration, while the world around continues forward (Griffiths et al. 2013). She describes a feeling of stagnation, as she tells how she feels that everyone in the country of origin is progressing more than she is able to because of migration. Many participants also expressed sadness of missing out on different time rituals in their family or with their friends in the country of origin, such as yearly celebrations, birthdays, weddings and graduations. Miriam contrasts this with gaining new experiences precisely through migration. She considers migration as a building block for the future, a way to acquire a varied set of personal, professional skills and experiences (Griffiths et al. 2013).

As already discussed in terms of time liminality, the participants talked about the ways in which migration, and migration status importantly, affected the life course processes of childbearing and forming a family. The situation of migration status irregularity, and the legislation changes concerning the consequences of migration status for receiving health care and other services, created insecurity which, among other things, halted plans of having more children.

⁹³ Entonces me ha cambiado muchas cosas, algunas para bien y otras no para bien. Porque también he perdido cosas positivas. Yo antes era muy alegre, y acá me..., la realidad me ha aplastado mucho, me ha sacado las ganas y me veo que no sonrió como sonreía ¿me entiendes? Yo llamaba a mis amigos y no, no era que me conocieran la voz, a mí me conocían la risa (--) era pero inconfundible. (Magda 1.)

⁹⁴ Yo acá perdí la risa, eso sí fue algo muy... Perdí la risa. (--) Hace tiempo que no me río a carcajadas ¿me entiendes? Y eso no me... El precio me parece muy alto ¿me entiendes? Pero bueno, a ver si la recupero. (Magda 2.)

⁹⁵ Bueno, mira, nada, a ver, la verdad es que cuando me pongo a ver fotos y veo a mis amigos, lo que están haciendo, de repente siento que ellos están haciendo mucho más que yo, entonces de repente pienso: ¿por qué no estoy allí con ellos?, ¿me entiendes? (--) Pero después digo ya, tengo que ser realista, estoy aquí y ya está, esto también que tengo aquí está bien. (Miriam 2.)

The fact that my child also has an irregular migration status, it limits me, that I don't, I don't know.... I can't have more children [at the moment] because things might be complicated. (Luz 1.)⁹⁶

The emotions connected with becoming pregnant and having a child in migration were tackled with some of the participants.

And well, in all of that I find out that I'm pregnant, so, it was a terrible blow. I said: what am I going to do? So..., the pregnancy was a really bad time for me because, of course, I felt like, like I couldn't do anything. I mean, to come here and want to do things and, and then pregnant... (Bárbara 1.)⁹⁷

For Bárbara, getting pregnant and having a child brought about feelings of uselessness and desperation since this halted the fulfilling of the aims she had posed for her migration and settlement.

When you have a child, and I'd like to put a lot of emphasis here, that I've been lacking support, like for instance if I don't feel well and I'm far away, in another country with a child, you notice the lack of family in the sense that, you know, if I have any problems, my child shouldn't suffer from whatever problem I might have at the moment and because there is no one who could help and offer to take her for a little while (-- there's absolutely no one, or a grandmother who could say: come on, let's go for a walk (-- I mean there isn't..., sometimes there's the lack of that role, you know, (-- or the grandmother or the aunt or something like that so that [her child] could say: ok, there's my mother always but there's also my grandmother and she teaches me this and that, you know? (María 2.)⁹⁸

María's account emphasises loneliness and lack of intergenerational support in transnational everyday family life (Ryan 2008, 304). As a single mother living in migration with her family mainly living in the country of origin, María has often been in situations where she would have needed concrete support in terms of being able to have her mother or her aunt watch her child for a while when she has not felt physically well or in good spirits. She also refers to a lack of roles, meaning that she

⁹⁶ Me limita en que mi hijo también está irregular, que no, no sé... No puedo tener más hijos [ahora], porque igual sería más difícil. (Luz 1.)

⁹⁷ Y, eh, entre tanto, me entero que estaba embarazada, entonces, para mí fue un, un golpe terrible, yo dije: ¿ahora qué hago? (-- Entonces..., la pasé muy mal todo mi embarazo, porque, claro, me sentía que, que no servía para nada. O sea, llegar aquí y querer hacer cosas, y, y con el embarazo... (Bárbara 1.)

⁹⁸ Que al tener un hijo este sí que con respecto a eso lo puedo hacer mucho énfasis sí que me ha hecho falta un apoyo de que por ejemplo no me encuentro bien y cuando está uno aparte en otro país, lejos de todo con un hijo, sí que se nota la ausencia familiar en el sentido de que bueno, no me encuentro bien, mi hijo no se puede "comer el marrón" que tengo yo ahora y hace falta una persona que a lleve (-- y no hay absolutamente nadie, o la abuela o esto que diga: mira vamos a dar una vuelta (-- O sea falta..., a veces como falta de ese papel ¿no? (-- o de la abuela o de la tía, o algo así que [su hijo] diga: bueno, está mi madre siempre, pero también está mi abuelita y mi abuelita me enseña esto, ¿sabes lo que te digo? (María 2.)

feels she is not able to offer her child the everyday connections where one may learn to be part of family relations and how to relate to each member of these relations: mother, grandmother, aunt etc. Although María and her child have constant contact with their family in the country of origin, this seems to fall short in comparison to a physical and routine-like everyday proximity and support in this sense.

It is important to note, however, that it is not only when children are under-aged that one's migration can have a profound effect on the relationship one has with them. In the two following extracts, Vanessa talks about the consequences her migration has had upon the relationship she has with her grown-up daughter who stayed in the country of origin.

I mean I haven't had the quality of life I had in [country of origin]. Quite the contrary [laughter]. Here I'm poor [laughter]. And well, I don't mind that but it does bother me in the sense that I haven't been able to offer better support economically to her [daughter]. I feel that I've failed in that. (--). But years went by before I was able to go back to [country of origin]. She came here, I sent her the ticket and she came for a while but she already... (--). There was, I feel that there was an important distancing with my daughter. Eh, she didn't want to come back [to Spain], she had her future, her boyfriend over there... I feel like in some ways... Life is a bit strange... You become responsible for things you only understand afterwards. (--). My relationship with her is different now. I came here and I left a girl there but now she's a grown woman, with her own problems, with her own interests and her own way of life. (Vanessa 1.)⁹⁹

I can't talk about material things. It's true, I'm poor now. (--). Eh, but I'm also rich. I really don't need anything more. So I don't need to be very rich. I do want to have money so that I can travel because I like it so much and I want to have money so that I can help my daughter and encourage her. (--). I want to help her flourish and become happy. (--). So in some way I want my daughter to know that her mother can help her, can project..., towards self-renovation. (Vanessa 2.)¹⁰⁰

⁹⁹ Es decir nunca he llegado a tener el nivel de vida que tuve en [país de origen]. Todo lo contrario [risa]. Aquí soy pobre [risa]. Y claro, no me molesta la pobreza pero sí me molesta en relación a la falta de una mejor ayuda económica que yo hubiera podido darle a ella. Y allí es donde yo siento que he fallado. (--). Pero pasaron años antes que yo pudiera volver a [país de origen]. Igual, la hice venir, la traje, le mandé pasaje y todo y la hice venir acá un tiempo pero ella ya... (--). Había entonces, siento que hubo un distanciamiento con mi hija, importante. Eh, ya no quiso volver [a España], ya tenía su futuro, su novio allá... Yo siento que de cierta forma... La vida es un poco rara... Uno es responsable de cosas [de las cuales uno] se da cuenta después. (--). Mi relación con ella es distinta ahora. Lo que pasa es que, a ver, me vine acá y dejé a una niña y ahora es una mujer adulta, con sus propios problemas, con sus propios intereses y con su propia forma de vida. (Vanessa 1.)

¹⁰⁰ Yo no te puedo hablar de que haya cosas materiales. Es cierto, ahora soy pobre. (--). Eh, también soy rica. La verdad es que nunca me falta nada. Entonces no necesito ser muy rica. Sí que quiero tener dinero para poder viajar que me gusta mucho y quiero tener dinero para poder ayudarle a mi hija y darle impulso. (--). Quiero ayudarle a ella florecer y a ser una mujer feliz. (--). Entonces bueno de alguna manera quiero que mi hija sepa que su mamá la puede ayudar, la puede proyectar y..., a esa renovación. (Vanessa 2.)

In the above accounts, Vanessa is struggling with the way time had passed and life had continued and her migration had been followed by important, and in part surprising, changes in her relationship with her daughter. Leaving a well-paid job in her country of origin in order to fulfil a personal goal of travelling and self-reinvention, she risked not being able to offer her daughter the economic stability they both had been accustomed to. It also took her several years before she was able to go back and visit her daughter because of her migration status and lack of sufficient resources. While they were constantly in contact over the telephone or through the internet and she was able to send for her daughter to visit Spain, she feels that her migration has created an important distancing between them. She feels that she has let her daughter down, in ways in which she perhaps at the time of leaving for migration did not even consider.

While years have gone by, her daughter has now become a grown woman with her own life and family. Sometimes one understands different consequences of one's actions only in retrospect. Still, time as such does not stand still and wait. In the second extract from our second interview encounter, Vanessa returns to this topic and adds that in addition to still aiming to improve her economic situation in order to be able to offer her daughter more security in this sense, she also wishes that her migration would be able to give her daughter an example and tools to courageously explore life and reinvent herself in order to be able to flourish.

Some of the participants who had migrated at a later stage in life, had done so either independently or in order to join their children in migration.

And I wanted to do other things with my life really. I didn't know exactly what. At all. But yes (--) if I don't go now I never will. And I'll regret it for the rest of my life. (Vanessa 1.)¹⁰¹

Vanessa stresses above the timing of her migration in terms of her age and personal life course. She feels she had to leave when she did because according to her she would have not been able to do so later due to her higher age. She seems certain she would have regretted this. In addition to timing, the experience of independence and freedom from responsibilities becomes central. Vanessa, after creating a career and providing for the wellbeing and education of her grown-up daughter now considered she had a "last chance" to do "something different", something for herself.

So, well, I don't know, it was strange [to arrive to Barcelona]. I was happy but I also doubted: how will my life be like? I mean, first, because I've been used to work all my life, I've been very independent economically. And now, no matter how much I'd like to work, no one will give me a job. That's one thing.

¹⁰¹ Y quería hacer otras cosas de mi vida realmente. No tenía exactamente muy claro qué. Para nada. Pero sí (--) si no me voy ahora, no lo voy a hacer nunca. Y me voy a arrepentir el resto de mi vida. (Vanessa 1.)

[Then] for me as a person, because, well, I've always liked to go out, work, have money to do whatever I like, have independence, you know? And well, I said: how will things turn out? How will I manage? (Gloria 3.)¹⁰²

Alongside migration, elderly migrants may need to deal with different changes, losses and limitations involved in their own ageing processes (Heikkinen & Lumme-Sandt 2013). Gloria had migrated after retirement in order to live closer to her children and grandchildren. Some time after she had moved to Barcelona, however, some of her children moved to another country or returned to the country of origin, while some of them stayed in Barcelona. While Gloria is content to be near some of her children and grandchildren, she also portrayed feelings of confusion, frustration and fear of dependence in our interview encounters.

In the above account, Gloria speaks about her worry of becoming more dependent on her children now. She also seems to struggle in order to see future value in her migration (Griffiths et al. 2013). She speaks about being able to give support to her children while they are trying to construct their lives in migration. This stage in life seems to be exacerbated and more abrupt for Gloria due to her migration. Migration may also change family dynamics, since the networks, information and knowledge one has gathered during life might suddenly lose importance in the eyes of the younger generations due to the changed context (Zhou 2012).

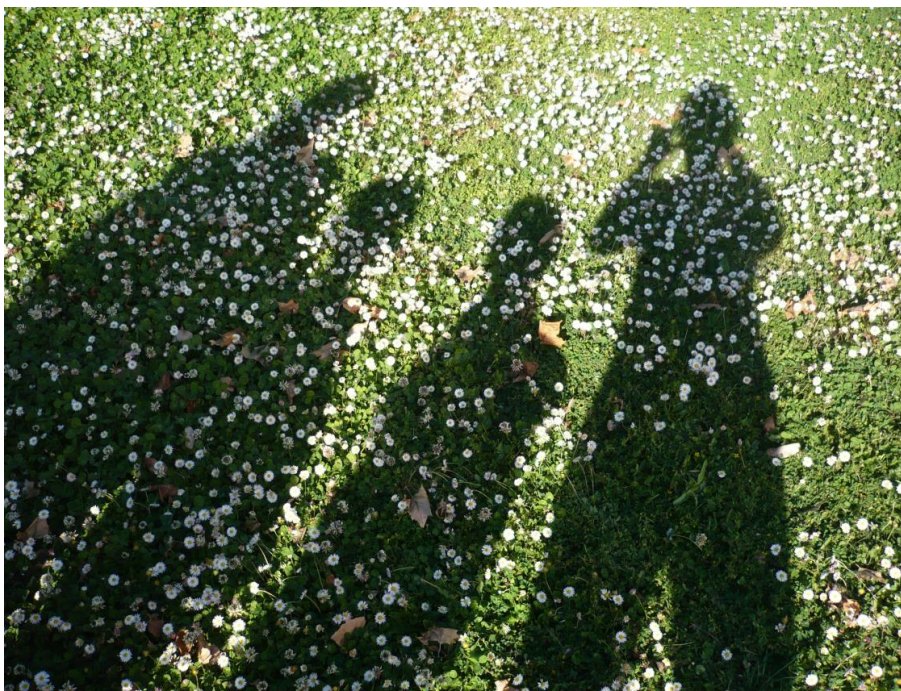
I think, perhaps because of my age it's more difficult, of course, because I've left everything there, all my family, my friends, all my people, eh, and I came here. (--) It's more difficult to try and make friends, eh... (--) I mean to have come here at my age, it's really hard. (--) I knew that I was coming here very old to start a new life, but [laughter], but I don't know, until now, I haven't had like the urge to just cry that I want to go back, no, no, no, but well... (Gloria 1.)¹⁰³

In the above account, Gloria stresses the consequences of her higher age to her experience of migration as well as to her struggles to achieve a sense of belonging. Her emigration has coincided with the loss of participation in working life which also provided an important social circle for her. Gloria had had an active life in her country of origin with friends and colleagues, and this had now changed rather

¹⁰² Entonces, bueno, no sé, era así, era extraño [llegar a Barcelona], y tenía alegría y me extrañaba de que ¿cómo será ahorita mi vida? O sea, porque, primero porque yo estuve acostumbrada a trabajar toda la vida, he sido muy independiente económicamente. Y ahora por muchas ganas que tenga de trabajar nadie me va a dar un trabajo. Este, eso por un lado ¿no? La parte mía de, de como ser humano porque, bueno, me ha encantado salir, trabajar, tener el dinero para lo que tú quieras, este, ya es una independencia ¿no? Y bueno, yo decía ¿cómo será aquí? ¿Cómo haré yo? (Gloria 3.)

¹⁰³ Lo que pasa es que, a lo mejor, a mis años es un poco más difícil, claro, porque ya yo dejo allá todo, toda mi familia, mis amigos, toda mi gente, y eh, y me vine aquí de repente. (--) es más difícil intentar hacer amistades, eh... (--) O sea, a mis años era fuerte haberme venido, o sea (--) Y para mí, bueno, yo sí sabía que me estaba viniendo muy mayor para empezar mi vida de nuevo, pero [risa], pero no sé, hasta ahorita no me ha dado ese de llorar o de irme, no, no, no, pero bueno... (Gloria 1.)

drastically due to her migration. Gloria states that migrating is “not the same when you’re older”. Migrating at a later stage in life also implies one has more to leave behind. Elderly migrants therefore may have an enhanced need for establishing and maintaining transnational contacts and connections with the place they have lived in and the people they have known for most of their lives (Heikkinen & Lumme-Sandt 2013, 199; Zhou 2012, 240; Treas 2008, 469, 472). At the same time, they might not have the financial capacities or technological means to do so.



I No there's nothing, there's nothing I wouldn't have there [country of origin], on the contrary, there are things that I had there that I don't have here (--)

0 What kind of things for example?

I Everything, everything, tranquility, no stress.¹⁰⁴

[Extract from the discussion on the creative work.]

Here you have to think about, you know, from paying the monthly rent, to, is there enough food in the house, do you have to go and by groceries, whether..., whatever, if it already soon is summer and what you're going to do

¹⁰⁴ *I No hay nada, no hay nada que no tuviera allá [el país de origen], al contrario, hay cosas que yo tenía allá, que acá no tengo (--)*

0 ¿Y qué cosas por ejemplo...?

I Todo, todo, tranquilidad, no estrés. [Extracto del trabajo creativo y su discusión.]

with your children, how will you entertain them [during the vacation]? There are so many things to think about, sincerely I tell you, I don't know if I'm exaggerating, but there are so many things, at least if you have children. (--)
It's hard but I sometimes do make it, I mean I make it. But, well, no, it's not easy. (Cristina 2.)¹⁰⁵

Above, Cristina lists several tasks she has to consider and take care of during her everyday routines in Barcelona, such as paying the rent, making sure that there is enough food in the fridge, and organising activities for her children during the summer holidays. I read the extract as an outburst, which, more than listing demanding tasks as such, reveals the lack of support Cristina is experiencing in her transnational everyday life. Having to organise a smooth running of everyday chores when with children and working outside home is certainly not simple, let alone in migration where one does not know and is constantly learning how things work. This might be the case even after several years of residing in the country, and especially if there have been periods of migration status irregularity.

Some of the participants discussed experiences of change of life in terms of living now an existence filled with stress, work routine, haste and worries (also Escandell & Tapias 2010). They talked about life in their countries of origin as being more care free, relaxed and “natural”. These experiences were at times connected with many other changes in the participants' lives, such as starting to work outside their homes, having children and separating from their families. These coincided with moving to a new country and having to organise sometimes interminable and often unsecure administrative processes with regard to their possibilities to live and work and lead their everyday lives in these new circumstances. The difficulties concerning migration status, work opportunities and conditions, living arrangements or experiences of reproach and discrimination came as a surprise to many. In order to make life bearable in migration (Griffiths et al. 2013), as well as to maintain face or potentially enhance one's position in the eyes of the family and community left behind, one often tells a tale of migration that may not be exactly right.

They [referring to people in her country of origin] treat you better, the same or better. Or better, because already the fact that you've left the country, that you're in another county, they think that it's marvelous, that it's something big, and that in this country where you are things are going very well, because they see that you seem different and they think that there's a lot of money here, for example, that there's abundance, that life is very easy. But of course, they don't know, we know because we're here but of course they only have the impression you give them (--)
But they treat you well, I would say they treat

¹⁰⁵ Aquí tienes que pensar ¿no? Desde que ya va a llegar el mes del alquiler, que si falta comida, hay que ir a comprar al súper, y que si..., yo qué sé, si ya está llegando el verano ¿qué vas a hacer con tus hijos?, ¿dónde los vas a poner?, ¿en qué los vas a ocupar? Aquí hay bastantes cosas en qué pensar, yo te digo sinceramente, no sé si exagero, pero si hay muchas, muchas, cosas, al menos si tienes hijos. (--)
) Cuesta, pero a veces lo logro, o sea logro hacerlo. Pero pues no, no es fácil. (Cristina 2.)

you better, because already of the hope that you might someday do something for them. (Ana 2.)¹⁰⁶

My mother tells me: I'm proud of you because you're there, in another country that is not this, you've travelled. Because there are people who never travel in their lives, you have travelled. Eh... Each time people talk to her about me, she..., she talks and talks and talks about me. So she's like really proud of me, because I'm here. And, I like that, it encourages me to stay here. (Luz 2.)¹⁰⁷

It is important to consider time here, in terms of enduring the present because of the imagined future that lies ahead or with the help of memories from the past, as well as spaces and places and one's changing location in them, in terms of enduring the reality 'here' with the help of the pride one may feel in terms of the place one has left (O'Connell Davidson 2013, 10; Bastia & McGarth 2011, 11, 31). In the above account, Ana says that she receives a lot of respect and celebration when she visits her country of origin because people suspect that life 'here' must be "marvellous" since "they only know what you tell them". In the eyes of her acquaintances in the country of origin, Ana is now in a position of potentially being able to "do something for them", meaning that she is respected as a person who might be able to contribute to the benefit of other people in her community of origin, due to her migration.

Luz as well affirms that the pride her mother shows in the country of origin because Luz has migrated and lives now abroad gives her a great deal of strength in her everyday life in Barcelona. Luz and Ana both take pride in the fact that they have had the courage to leave. In their host societies they enjoy respect and are admired or celebrated because of this. They also felt the responsibility to "play their part" as successful migrants in the eyes of their families and communities in their countries of origin, as is discussed in the following by Luz.

1 My cousin wants to come here, he's gathering money, and we've told him: come, come [laughter]! (--) They [people who had already migrated to Spain before her] told us: come, come. We arrived here and we saw how Spain was, the reality that you have to live, so you just have to be strong [laughter]... But to this cousin who wishes to come, who already is counting his money to see if he could come...

¹⁰⁶ Te tratan mejor, igual o mejor. O mejor, porque ya el hecho de pensar que ya tú saliste del país, que estás en otro país, ellos creen que es, que es, que es una maravilla, que es una cosa muy grande, y que en este país que tú estás la cosa marcha muy bien, porque te ven que tú vas diferente, y piensan que aquí hay mucho dinero, por ejemplo, que aquí sobran las cosas, que la vida es muy fácil. Pero ¡claro!, eso no lo saben ellos, lo sabemos nosotros que sí estamos aquí, pero claro, ellos tienen la impresión que tú les das (--) Pero te tratan bien, y, ah, yo digo que mejor te tratan, porque solamente con la esperanza de que algún día pudieras tú hacer algo por ellos. (Ana 2.)

¹⁰⁷ Mi mamá me dice: yo estoy orgullosa, porque tú estás allá, en otro país que no sea éste, viajaste. Porque hay, hay personas que nunca viajan en su vida, viajaste. Eh... Cada vez que le hablan de mí, ella como que se..., como que habla, y habla, y habla de mí. Entonces, está como orgullosa de mí, porque yo estoy aquí. Entones, eso igual me gusta, me da aliento para estar aquí. (Luz 2.)

0 So now it's you who are saying to him that...?

1 Yes [laughter]! You're not going to say that don't come because here it's bad... No, it's better than there. If you work you earn well. (Luz 2.)¹⁰⁸

In the above account, Luz continues the tale of an “easy success migration”, even though she already knows for herself that it is not quite correct. The ambiguity she seems to feel over her migration is strong. On the one hand she is not very content with the information she was given when she was considering migration, since she feels that this was unrealistic and overly optimistic compared to the reality. On the other hand, she does not question this type of “migration storytelling”. There even seems to be a kind of obligation to maintain it. She says that she cannot tell them the way it is, as to say that one cannot say it is not possible. It is possible, it just might be very hard. One has to maintain the story of a possibility of a better future through migration. Ana and Luz thus felt that their society and community of origin looked at them with admiration because of their migration, but this was not the experience of everyone, as can be seen in Rocío's account below.

And then there is the vision that your friends have, of the one who leaves, you know? For the people who stay on and want to struggle and want to go on it's like: okay, here comes this one to tell me that it's better to leave. It's like..., not a traitor but in a way it's like: don't come here with your ideas, I'm fine here in my stability, and it's not even such a big thing because okay you go there to look for work and for that I'm better off in my country. (--) and now you come here as a stranger. (Rocío 2.)¹⁰⁹

Rocío draws a different picture of the attitudes of her friends and acquaintances in her country of origin. She feels uncomfortable in the face of a possible return to her society of origin for a visit and seems to have a certain amount of guilt for being another one to leave instead of staying and struggling on in the country of origin. Reactions seem to reject her migration as an unwanted and unwelcomed challenge to stability on the one hand, while on the other hand going abroad is not considered “such a big deal” at all in the end. One goes abroad “to work” while there is plenty of that also in the country of origin. This questions and undermines the purpose and acceptability of Rocío's migration.

¹⁰⁸ 1 Un primo se quiere venir, está juntando dinero, y nosotros: ¡vente, vente! [risa] A nosotros nos dijeron: vénganse, vénganse. Nosotros llegamos aquí y vimos cómo era España, la realidad que hay que vivir, entonces ya uno tiene que sacar fuerzas... [risa] Pero al primo que quiere venirse, ya está contando dinero para poder venirse...

0 Y ahora son ustedes que le dicen que...

1 ¡Sí! [risa] Es que uno no le va a decir que no te vengas porque aquí está mal... No, está mejor que allá. Por un trabajo uno gana bien. (Luz 2.)

¹⁰⁹ Por otro lado la visión que tienen los amigos del que se va ¿no? Para unos que son los que están allí, que quieren luchar y que quieren seguir, es como una manera de que: ay, ya va a venir este a decirme que lo mejor es irse. Como que..., no traidor, pero una especie de: no vengas a contagiar de algo, que yo estoy tranquilo aquí en mi estabilidad, y eso tampoco es la gran cosa porque bueno vas allá a buscar trabajo o tal, yo para eso me quedo en mi país. (--) y ahora vienes como extraño. (Rocío 2.)



Well, I've asked myself that, eh. I mean, had I known about all of this that would happen here, would I have come? Probably not, eh. (-- No, because I was okay in [country of origin]. Well, let's say more or less. Of course, I hope that within a few years I could say the contrary, and say: well, it was worth it to have come here and to have gone through it all, you know. It's too late now to give up and say: let's just go back, you know. I still hope that I could, that I could say that, that it was good that we came. (Regina 2.)¹¹⁰

They [her children] have, mm, for the first time they've seen the beach, I mean, that's what they've liked the most, yes. (-- And that they can have, well not whatever they'd like, but what's possible to have, I mean, when it comes to clothing, they can have clothes that they like, good shoes, whatever. They can have the games they couldn't have over there, things that we couldn't offer them there. Here we could offer them that. Those kinds of things, they're happy about that side of things, that they've had, you know, at least for Christmas, they've got a good present. (Cristina 2.)¹¹¹

I've already become a helper of others, eh. Now I'm a woman who helps other women who have fallen down, who are going through... (-- And now I'm convinced that if God made me go through all the hardship it was so that I could become stronger, so that I could say to other people: you can get through this, this is not the end. (Bárbara 1.)¹¹²

¹¹⁰ Mira, yo me lo he cuestionado, eh. Es decir, a ver, si hubiera sabido que todo esto me iba a pasar, ¿me hubiera venido? Quizás no, eh. (-- No, porque yo estaba bien en [país de origen]. Bueno, digamos bien dentro de todo. Claro, ahora espero que dentro de unos años pueda decir todo lo contrario, decir: bueno, valió la pena haber venido aquí, y haber pasado lo que pasé ¿no? Ahora ya es muy tarde como para rendirme y decir: vámonos de regreso ¿no? Como que todavía espero que pueda, que pueda decir eso ¿no? Que: que bueno que vinimos ¿no? (Regina 2.)

¹¹¹ Ellos mm, por primera vez han conocido la playa, o sea eso es lo que más les ha gustado a ellos, sí, sí. (-- Y de que tengan, no todo lo que ellos quieren ¿no?, sino todo lo que se pueda tener, o sea por ejemplo vestirse, con una ropa que a ellos les gusta, un buen calzado, yo qué sé. Tener los juegos que ellos no podían tener allá, tampoco les podíamos dar. Entonces aquí se les podía dar. Esas cosas sí, ellos están felices de esa parte, de que han tenido, por lo menos en las navidades, han tenido un buen regalo. (Cristina 2.)

¹¹² Ya yo me he convertido en ayudadora de otras personas, eh. En una mujer que levanta a otras mujeres que están caídas, que están pasando... (-- Y ahora estoy convencida que si Dios me hizo

Well, I wouldn't say that I had a negative experience, quite the contrary. My experience is very positive, of everything I've been able to do here. And also from the point of view of..., liking myself a bit more because, well, I know that I'm a woman with courage and I can prove it. (Vanessa 2.)¹¹³

In their accounts, the participants considered the “correctness” of the past migration decision and other decisions they had made during their migration. They considered their present situations and how all this might fold in the future. The above extracts are examples of these reflections over whether or not migration and all the aspects and experiences involved in it had been worthwhile (McGhee et al. 2012). In very concrete ways the participants realised and concretised in their accounts that they had made substantial progress in their lives in Barcelona in terms of now knowing the city, knowing about different administrative procedures and being able to manage them, having found a place to live and sometimes sorted out problems related to this several times, having endured different types of hardships and surprising situations and resolved these, having found work and perhaps been able to move from subsisting work to work which corresponded to their education and interests, having created networks and dealt with different aspects in the adaptation and integration of their children and seeing them now forming their own lives either in Barcelona or looking for opportunities for themselves elsewhere.

All in all, different balances were found in their accounts. Sofia hoped to have her European degree and specialisation, Tina hoped for a better economic situation in order to feel pride and show independence from her siblings, Ana and Cristina were happy to have been able to give better opportunities to their children and wished for them to do better with what they were able to offer through migration, Bárbara considered her struggles worthwhile since it was because of these she was now able to help others, Magda wished to be able to use what she had learned ‘here’ for her community when she returns, Luz was building a life ‘here’ and María, Catalina and Rocío wished to be able to keep searching, perhaps through a new migration somewhere else in the future. Miriam stated that she was content right here, right now, and Vanessa considered her migration as a personally important act and proof of courage. If Nelli could have said something to herself arriving in Barcelona all those years back she would have wanted to say: “what a great idea you just had!”

Many were still waiting and hoping for “rewards” in the future, whether professionally or personally or in form of opportunities they might be able to offer for the future of their children. This is related to a practice of ‘futures’, i.e. looking

pasar por muchos tragos amargos, era para fortalecerme, y yo decirle a otras personas: mira, [de] esto se puede salir. Eso no se termina aquí. (Bárbara 1.)

¹¹³ Bueno, no tengo digamos un balance negativo, ninguno, todo lo contrario. Tengo un balance muy, muy positivo de todo lo que he podido hacer. Y por lo otro también..., y querer un poco más a mí misma porque bueno, sé que soy una mujer valiente y que esta valentía la puedo probar. (Vanessa 2.)

for, and being able to see, future value in present experiences (Griffiths et al. 2013). Many stated they would not want to return “empty-handed”. What they wanted to be able to “carry in their hands” could concretely mean for instance financial resources, education, work experience or Spanish citizenship. It essentially meant a story one might be able to tell which had a happy ending.

6.3 Not your typical migrant: negotiating with a social imaginary

I will conclude this chapter by studying, from empirically based accounts, the concept of the ‘migrant’. My intention is to study and challenge fixed essentialist constructions (Yuval-Davis 2010, 264–265). I am interested in the ways in which the participants understood their migration and themselves as migrants on a personal level and the way they saw and understood the ‘migrant’ on a social imaginary level. These levels are brought together in considering the ways in which the participants negotiate and locate their experiences with respect to the latter.

We all struggle in language to discover and recover ourselves, to constantly rewrite, reconcile and renew our existence and our relationship with what surrounds us (hooks 1989, 28). bell hooks (1989, 5) has defined ‘back talk’ as an act of speaking as an equal to an authority figure or position, a dominant understanding and imaginary. As hooks (1989, 9–16), I treat the act of ‘talking back’ here as an expression of movement from object to subject. It is about having an opinion and voicing it out. Since my ontological and epistemological understanding underlines the relational and contextual nature of social phenomena and human subjectivity, I understand talking back here primarily as an act of negotiating. Although this negotiation is not always directed at posing an outright challenge to the existing dominant understanding, it is always an act of defiance in the sense of questioning one’s status as an object merely suppressed by external forces and the definitions of others. It is an act against oppressive mechanisms of silencing, ignoring, overruling and censoring.

I will employ analytically the concept of ‘talking back’ as acts which comment on and/or resist culturally dominant definitions of a social phenomenon (Juhila 2004, 263). I wish to bring to the fore the culturally dominant talk on migration by paying attention to the ways of negotiating and talking back of the research participants. The participants were aware of the culturally dominant contents that the term ‘migrant’ entails (also *ibid.*, 264), and negotiations with these contents were a recurrent theme in the interview encounters when the participants would reflect upon themselves as persons who have migrated and the contemporary social imaginary of the ‘migrant’. I have divided the negotiation practices employed in these accounts as follows: 1) stepping aside from the ‘migrant’ 2) making internal and external differentiations to the ‘migrant’ and 3) producing variety in defence of the ‘migrant’. The division is analytical, which means that each research participant may have employed several of

these practices in the interviews (also *ibid.*, 271). In the following, I will deal with each of these negotiation practices separately.

Stepping aside from the 'migrant'

The thing is that my case, I always say this, it's not... It's different, it's not the same, I didn't migrate for the reason for which 90% of migrants do. So perhaps I'm not the person who might give you a global vision of all of this, you know? Because I'm aware that it's not, I didn't come here to earn money. I came without money but I didn't come for money. (-- I came for personal reasons, but not for money, you know? (Magda 2.)¹¹⁴

I know that I'm an atypical being, I realise that I came... I didn't have an economic necessity to come here. (Vanessa 2.)¹¹⁵

In the above extracts, Magda and Vanessa present themselves as atypical migrants. This is essentially because their migration has lacked an economic motivation. Magda even doubts whether or not she is a good candidate for the research because she has not migrated for the reason she considers the majority of migrants move: in order to earn money. She presents her case of migration as something different and feels unsure whether or not she will be able to shed light on the phenomenon at all through her own experience since it has been different than that of the "majority". She seems to stress this point also when discussing migration and her own migration experience with people. She came without money, yes, but not because of a desire or plan to make money.

The above accounts are part of a negotiation practice I have labelled as 'stepping aside' from the general and dominant social imaginary of the 'migrant'. Many participants took explicit distance from this imaginary by stating that they were not "typical migrants". According to what characteristics the participants referred to when making this differentiation, some general features of a "typical migrant" would be carved out. In the accounts of the participants this referred to a person who has exclusively economic motivations for her movement, is forced to leave her country of origin, is poor and uneducated, has migrated primarily in search of an economic betterment for herself and her family, sends remittances to family members who have stayed behind in the country of origin, is rejected and discriminated against in the host society, misses "home" and wishes to be able to eventually return. Regina continues in the following extract on the characteristics of the 'migrant' narrowing

¹¹⁴ Lo que pasa es que en mi caso, yo siempre digo..., no es que sea... Es diferente, no es lo mismo, yo no, no me emigré por lo que emigra el 90% de la gente. Entonces quiera o no, de pronto no sea la persona más, que te pueda dar una visión más global del asunto, ¿entiendes? Porque, yo estoy consciente que no es, yo no vine por dinero. Me vine sin dinero, pero no vine por dinero. (-- Me vine por un tema personal, pero no por dinero ¿me entiendes? (Magda 2.)

¹¹⁵ Yo sé que soy un ser atípico, reconozco que me vine... No tenía una necesidad realmente económica de venirme. (Vanessa 2.)

these down specifically to a (visible) ethnic difference and consequent experiences of rejection and discrimination.

Like I said, I feel like an atypical immigrant because I have not encountered, eh, a direct rejection, you know? I have found the doors closed, that's true, but that's because of the papers, but there hasn't been any direct rejection. Nothing like getting into a bus and people moving away because they don't want to sit next to me because I'm a migrant, you know. Because I've seen it, I've seen people move away from sitting beside a person from Africa, you know? I've seen it, I don't understand why, but there is this rejection, a prejudice towards foreigners, you know. Especially if they have a different skin colour or if they come from Morocco, you know. (-- I don't know what fear these persons can cause, you know. Eh, but as I said, my experience is not of rejection or anything like that, but I've seen it happen to other people. (Regina 2.)¹¹⁶

In the above extract, Regina states that she feels like an atypical migrant because she has never been discriminated against due to the colour of her skin or her ethnic appearance. She makes a distinction between limited opportunities because of the lack of regular migration status and direct rejection because of ethnic origin. She describes blatant acts of discrimination which she has witnessed but emphasises that this has not been directed at her and has not been her experience. Her negotiation with the general imaginary of the 'migrant' seems to focus on the fact that she is not "visibly different enough" from the local population in general in order to have encountered discrimination and therefore has not had the "typical" experience of migration.

But really, I've never felt the difference like..., never ever have I felt like the difference that you're a migrant and I'm not. I don't know if it's me, if I just have another chip and I don't absorb it, you know? I mean, it might be that I've heard: fucking *sudaca*, but I don't feel that it's about me, if they've said it at some point, which I don't remember, I don't remember having these bad moments for being an immigrant, seriously, if I've had them I don't remember. I've let it pass because I don't care, it's not important. (-- The fact that I'm a migrant, I mean, it's not..., I don't know, I sometimes forget it. (Miriam 2.)¹¹⁷

¹¹⁶ Ya te digo, yo me siento una inmigrante atípica porque no he encontrado eh..., rechazo directo ¿no? Sí que las puertas cerradas y todo, pero por los papeles, pero no he encontrado un rechazo directo. No me he subido al autobús y se han quitado de mi lado, porque yo era inmigrante ¿no? Porque si lo he visto, si he visto gente (-- que no se sientan a lado de (-- alguien de África, ¿no? (-- Lo he visto, y no entiendo por qué, pero que lo hay, hay un rechazo, hay una, un desconocimiento, un prejuicio hacia, hacia los extranjeros, ¿no? Sobre todo pues si son de color o si son de Marruecos, vamos a decirlo así ¿no? (-- Yo no, no tengo ni idea qué, qué miedo les puede ocasionar una persona así ¿no? Eh... Ya te digo, mi experiencia no es, no ha sido así de rechazo ni nada, pero sí lo he visto en otra gente. (Regina 2.)

¹¹⁷ Pero de verdad nunca me he sentido como..., nunca, nunca he sentido como la diferencia de tú eres inmigrante y yo no. No sé si es que yo, mi chip es otro y no lo, no absorbo ¿me entiendes? Digo, de repente puede ser que uno escuche..., el "sudaca de mierda" pero siento que no es conmigo. Si me lo dijeron en algún momento, que no me acuerdo, no recuerdo haber tenido como ahí algún mal rato por, por ser inmigrante y tal, de verdad, si lo he tenido, no me acuerdo, lo he dejado pasar porque no me

Miriam stresses how she has never felt that being a migrant would have served as a decisive differentiating aspect between her and the people she encounters in Barcelona. She also implicitly connects being a migrant with having experiences of ethnic discrimination and prejudice as she continues trying to remember whether or not she has ever heard insults directed at a South American mestizo or indigenous ethnic heritage, referred to here by the pejorative term “*sudaca*”. She is not in fact sure whether this has ever happened or whether she just has not paid any attention to it, because she feels it is not about her, since it is not important to her. Finally it remains somewhat unclear whether she is saying that a certain visible ethnic heritage or being a migrant is unimportant to her, so entangled these two seem to be.

In the last sentence, Miriam talks back at the idea according to which a ‘migrant’ would be decisive of what she is and could somehow define her as a person entirely. She concludes that she sometimes forgets that she is a migrant. It thus seems that in order to be a ‘migrant’ in the general imaginary sense, this should also be decisive of what one is, and other attributes, experiences and interests become questioned or lose importance. By putting emphasis on the fact that she is so much more than a ‘migrant’, Miriam at the same time talks back at and reveals the overwhelming character of the category (Cwerner 2001, 15). Her remark may also be read as a critique of, and a challenge to, a migration centered research approach, or a migration bias in research, which forces the ‘migrant identity’ upon its participants and emphasises it above everything else (Anthias 2002, 500).

I at least feel, because of the language and everything, I feel like I know what is going on, you know? Because there are also a lot of Spanish people in [country of origin]. But someone who comes from Senegal, well, it’s a different matter for them, you know, or someone from Bangladesh, well that’s a [laughter], that’s a different thing, it’s another universe, I mean, it must be difficult for them to adapt, you know? (Regina 2.)¹¹⁸

In this extract, levels of difference are employed in a way which seems to sketch ‘degrees of migrancy’. A person who knows one or some of the local languages, is accustomed to or even shares the local culture and knows and can interpret “what is going on” is presented as not that much of a ‘migrant’ than the one who comes from very different cultural and linguistic surroundings and therefore presumably struggles more in order to adapt (also Leinonen 2012, 219). This differentiation is linked with being visibly, and audibly, different, as opposed to being able to blend in.

importa, no me importa. (--) El hecho de ser inmigrante, o sea, no me... No sé, algunas veces se me olvida. (Miriam 2.)

¹¹⁸ Todavía yo me siento un poco por el idioma, por todo esto, me siento un poquito más en conocimiento ¿no?, porque también en [país de origen] hay muchos españoles. Pero alguien que viene de Senegal, pues esto es otra cosa para él, ¿no?, alguien que viene de Bangladesh, pues esto es [risa], es otra cosa, es otro universo, o sea, les cuesta trabajo adaptarse ¿no? (Regina 2.)

Regina takes as an example migrants coming from Bangladesh or Senegal and draws a vast gap between herself and people from these countries when she speaks of them as coming from “another universe”. A ‘migrant’ thus would essentially be someone who “does not know what is going on”, who does not operate with the same cultural toolkit and who is “very different”. Her account reflects the public image of the ‘immigrant’ in Spain which carries attributes of being phenotypically and culturally different from the majority of the local population, coming from an “undeveloped” country, having low socioeconomic status and possessing scarce knowledge of the culture and language of the host country (Álvarez-Gálvez 2014, 4; Cea D’Ancona et al. 2013, 214; Calavita 2005, 27, 154). It also reflects the “privileged” position of (at least some) Latin American migrants justified in the political debate by stressing cultural, historical and linguistic ties and commonalities between Latin America and Spain (Anleu Hernández & García-Moreno 2014, 98; Cea D’Ancona et al. 2013, 228; Gil Araujo & Fernández-González 2014, 17; Cebolla Boado et al. 2013, 153; Bosma et al. 2012, 8).

I think it’s different because people from [country of origin] have a different type of insertion in the labour market. Not always but sometimes. Because of the culture, language, because of a capacity I think of adaptation, to look and find, how to say this, a way to survive, let’s say, in general there’s the possibility to access all kinds of jobs and not just... I mean the people who come from Pakistan or from Bangladesh who run the supermarkets, they have a whole network of that or they sell beer or whatever, or run the *locutorios* [call centres]... They are like limited to that. (-- I don’t know, in that sense, I’ve been able to work in what I’ve wanted, now, not in the beginning. But I don’t know, I mean, I’ve never felt rejected, like..., like direct discrimination. (Catalina 2.)¹¹⁹

Catalina’s account addresses the ways in which one’s ethnic and national origins connect with the job market. As Regina above, Catalina as well refers to degrees of differences in terms of origin, language and culture, but specifically in connection with how these influence one’s possibilities regarding the kinds of jobs to which one may aspire. These differences work to draw out the ‘migrant’ as a person who is “limited to” certain migrant labour niches, such as the people from Pakistan or Bangladesh who often work in and run the minimarkets in Barcelona. One’s location or autonomy in the labour market therefore also becomes presented as an important factor in determining one’s ‘migrancy’.

¹¹⁹ Es que yo creo que es diferente porque en general como la gente que viene de [país de origen] logra tener una inserción laboral diferente. No siempre pero a veces. Por la cultura, por el idioma, por una capacidad que creo que es de adaptación, de buscar, de encontrar, no sé qué palabra sería, como de sobrevivencia digamos que en general son otros trabajos o hay una posibilidad de acceder a otro tipo de trabajo que no sea solamente o sea... Digo, la gente que viene de Paquistán o de Bangladesh que tienen los supermercados, hay toda una red, que venden las cervezas, que no sé qué, que en los locutorios... Como que están asignados a eso. (-- No sé, en ese sentido yo he podido trabajar, ¿no? de lo que he querido, ahora sí, pero antes no. Pero no sé, como que no he sentido un rechazo, una..., como una discriminación directa. (Catalina 2.)

Catalina's account reflects the ways in which migrants' 'otherness' and marginality become both compounded by and partially produced through their economic locations (Calavita 2005, 73–74). Catalina takes distance from the 'migrant' by locating herself as a person who, after perhaps some difficulties at first, has been able to secure a place in the job market corresponding to her education, former work experiences and current interests. She emphasises her capacity for adaptation as a person from her country of origin and does not connect her experience with labour-market segmentation due to systemic features of immigration regulations or ethnic discrimination in the job market in Spain (Parella et al. 2013).

It's like I think that the reason why I don't collaborate that much [with migrant organisations] is because I don't feel that much [of a migrant]. But not, let's see, I mean, we've been talking here all this time, of course I am [a migrant], I really am. One thing is that I don't feel like one but it's clear that I am, so I have to take on that, I mean, first of all, put my feet on the ground and if you have a different situation, that's a different matter but you are an immigrant and no, you can't avoid that, that's it. (Miriam 2.)¹²⁰

The above extract from Miriam is illustrative of the internal battle the 'migrant identity' (Anthias 2002, 500) may cause. It also hints at a close link between the imaginary of a 'migrant' and a 'migrant activist' who participates in local or transnational initiatives of migrants and in the work of migrant organisations. The latter is also in connection to the above mentioned overwhelming nature of migrancy as an identity former. The extract shows a difference between being a migrant as a matter of fact, in terms of having moved from one country to live in another, and coming to terms with the social imaginary and the discursive location of the 'migrant' and the intersectional locations this might assume (Leinonen 2012, 218).

The contemporary notion of the 'migrant' relates to the prototype of the economic migrant coming from poorer regions of the world to richer ones. This prototype is created inside immigration policies which promote certain ideas about movement, skill, employment and family life (Anderson 2013, 10). The notion is typically extended temporally to people who continue to be designated as migrants even when they have attained citizenship, and their children and their grandchildren continue to be referred to as 'second' and 'third generation' migrants (Haikkola 2011; Levitt & Glick Schiller 2004, 1005, 1017–1018). Other terms, such as expatriates, retirees or cosmopolitans are often preferred and emphasised by people themselves in contrast to the 'migrant' (Leinonen 2012, 213; Näre 2012, 46).

¹²⁰ Es que de repente pienso que una de las razones por las que yo no participo [en actividades de ONGs de migrantes], soy más colaboradora con estos centros y así, es porque no me siento tanto [una migrante] pero porque no, a ver, de repente digo, ahora que hemos estado hablando este tiempo, claro, es que soy, de verdad lo soy, una cosa es que yo no me sienta pero es que claro que sí, yo lo soy, entonces tengo que como que asumir, vaya, sí, primero los pies sobre la tierra y que tú tienes otra situación es otra cosa pero de que eres inmigrante, eres inmigrante y eso no, no, no lo puedes quitar, ya está. (Miriam 2.)

The meanings of the term ‘migrant’ are formulated in the context of the arbitrary and fluctuating ways in which states define their boundaries. In addition, the term ‘migrant’ relates to ethnic, religious, social class, age and gender as well as national and regional inscriptions (Leinonen 2012; Näre 2012, 46–47). The media coverage on the emigration of Spanish workers during the economic crisis might be seen as one example of these subtle but decisive differences. An internet service put up in the Spanish newspaper *El País* which aimed to give information and guidance to and report on the experiences of Spanish workers leaving Spain in search for work opportunities elsewhere was titled *Expatriados por la crisis*, “Expatriates due to the crisis” (El País 2013), while the earlier “immigration boom” had been a movement of migrants or immigrants, *migrantes* or *inmigrantes*.

At times, some participants employed, consciously or unconsciously, other terms, such as ‘foreigner’ (*extranjera*) or ‘outsider’ (*la que viene de fuera*). In the Spanish context, where a distinction is made between people from the European Union and people from outside of the EU referred to as ‘extra-communitarians’, the term ‘foreigner’ refers to the former while ‘immigrant’ is reserved more exclusively to the latter (Jiménez Zunino 2014, 50–52). ‘Foreigner’, in this sense, can be seen as escaping the pejorative connotations of the ‘immigrant’ as the economic migrant coming from poor countries to do low prestige work, and referring more to a sort of world citizen with freedom of movement (Jiménez Zunino 2014, 50–52; Cea D’Ancona et al. 2013, 212–214). Yet as such, the accounts of the participants did not include an active move towards other terms considered more appropriate or a creation of an alternative term or identification.

Instead of adding variety to the image of the ‘migrant’, the accounts of this negotiation practice take distance from it by stating that the speaker is not a “typical” migrant, or really a migrant at all, because her experiences and situations are different from what migration is “in general”. Talking back is done through distancing oneself from the unwanted imaginary, and so rather than resisting a culturally dominant imaginary, the accounts actually affirm the imaginary but insist on it not applying to the speaker (Juhila 2004, 271–272; Howe 1998, 532). Instead of stating that the imaginary does not fit oneself because it is false or simplistic, it becomes simpler to intend to step aside from it, to try to present oneself as not quite inside it.

Does this negotiation practice wish to challenge the weight of ‘borders’ or merely present the participant in question as included in the group whose movement is or should be considered acceptable? I would argue that it essentially wishes to challenge the ignorant, suffering and victim-like attributes so firmly attached to the contemporary concept of the ‘migrant’, especially to the migration and mobility of women (also Masanet Ripoll & Ripoll Arcacia 2008, 183).

I mean, you're an immigrant and so you start thinking how badly things have been for you, poor thing, it's like you just go on being and feeling like the poor little immigrant, so I prefer that the good things that have happened to me, I want them to weigh, I want to put emphasis on them so that I can carry on. (Miriam 2.)¹²¹

Making internal and external differentiations to the 'migrant'

There are people who just come to earn money and then they leave. But there are also people like me who want to come and live here, live, have papers, grow my child here, have more children, have them here. (Luz 1.)¹²²

In the above extract, Luz employs a negotiation practice in which she presents herself as a “certain type” of migrant. Rather than distancing herself from the category of the ‘migrant’ altogether, she introduces two groups of migrants: the ones who come to make money without the intention of settling and forming a life ‘here’ and others, such as herself, who wish to settle down, regularise their migration status and form a life in Barcelona.

I've always had papers here, since the beginning, I arrived with a [work] contract (-- I mean I've always had papers, I've never been here as a migrant without papers, never, no, never. (-- Later more and more migrants started to come and these, these migrants, these other migrants worked..., they are people who don't have papers and they work with very low salaries, very low salaries. That's something that I don't..., that we who have documents, we don't do. (Ana 2.)¹²³

Ana in turn stresses that she has never resided in Spain in a situation of migration status irregularity. She arrived with a work permit and ever since she has never lived or worked in Barcelona without the necessary documents. Ana makes a group distinction between ‘us’, migrants with documents or “papers”, and ‘them’, migrants who do not have the necessary documents. As part of the former group, Ana is able to align herself also with the hardworking locals who aim to earn a decent salary while the latter group is presented as people who do not, or cannot, play by the rules and cut down wages.

¹²¹ Es que sí, imagínate, eres inmigrante y tú misma te vas poner a pensar que mal te ha ido pobrecillo, es que vas a seguir siendo y sintiendo que eres un pobre inmigrante, entonces yo prefiero que lo bueno que me ha ido, las buenas cosas que me han pasado sean las que realmente pesen, sean más fuertes para que yo pueda seguir. (Miriam 2.)

¹²² Hay gente que sólo viene a trabajar y es juntar dinero, dinero y se va. Pero hay gente como yo que quiero venir a vivir aquí, vivir, tener mis papeles, que mi hijo crezca, tener más hijos, tenerlos aquí. (Luz 1.)

¹²³ Yo aquí, siempre he tenido papeles, yo desde un principio vine con un contrato (-- O sea que yo aquí siempre he estado con papeles, yo aquí nunca he estado emigrante sin papeles, nunca, no, nunca. (-- Después empezaron a llegar más emigrantes, muchos más emigrantes, entonces esto, estos otros emigrantes sí trabajan... Son personas que no tienen papeles, y sí trabajan por un precio muy, por un saldo, un salario muy bajo. Que yo no lo..., que nosotros los que tenemos, eh, los documentos no lo hacemos. (Ana 2.)

In addition, Ana employs a time dimension. She expresses authority by presenting her migration as having a long history (with a regular migration status). She furthermore makes use of a general discourse of migration becoming a more contested issue in Spain by speaking of herself as having arrived “before” this, when things were different and the comers were fewer. “Problems” started to arise only later.

We have friends who are from [country of origin] for example and don't do any of this [cook local Catalan food]. (-- Or they eat it at a restaurant or... But we prepare it, we get the recipe and we find out how it's done. (Rocío 1.)¹²⁴

It's not like I would just meet with [people from her country of origin] and do nothing else, no, no, no. I believe that the integration also comes from oneself, you know, from the immigrant. I mean, I believe that there are many migrants who close themselves, you know? And they just eat food from their culture, they just see each other, you know. That makes things very closed. (-- I think that it's necessary to be open because if not... If you're an immigrant, a real immigrant [laughter]... (-- The immigrant has to change as well, I mean, so that there can be this exchange from the both sides, you also have to change, you know, as an immigrant because it's you who arrives here, I mean, that's it. It's not that you come here for them to love you, no, you come here to form part of all of this, you know? (-- I want to survive here so I learn, and well I've sinned a lot since I haven't learned Catalan, I mean, I've lost a lot of time in not studying Catalan, but well, I respect their culture, I have Catalanian friends and I take part in their festivities like one of them... Because I think that this has to start from both sides. (Miriam 2.)¹²⁵

Rocío and Miriam both make internal differentiations above by distinguishing and differentiating between migrants who “do not make the effort” of adapting but live their lives in migration inside a closed group of people from their country of origin, and migrants who are interested in and willing to learn about the culture, food, customs and language of the host society. They view it indispensable to step out of one's national or ethnic community (also Gruner-Domic 2011, 477). Miriam extends

¹²⁴ Porque tenemos amigos que son de [país de origen] por ejemplo pero que no hacen nada de este tipo de cosas [preparar comida local catalana]. (-- O lo comen en un restaurant o... Pero [nosotros] vamos a prepararlo, nos dan la receta y vemos cómo se hace. (Rocío 1.)

¹²⁵ No es que yo solamente ando con solo [gente de su país de origen] y no hago nada más, no, no, no. Yo creo que también la integración viene de uno mismo ¿no?, como inmigrante. O sea, yo creo que hay muchos inmigrantes que se cierran ¿no? Y solamente comen lo de su cultura, solamente se reúnen entre ellos ¿me entiendes? Entonces eso hace que sea muy cerrado ¿no? (-- Yo creo que de verdad tiene que ver que haya una apertura porque si no... Si eres inmigrante, inmigrante de verdad [risa]. (-- que hasta el mismo inmigrante tiene que cambiar, o sea, para que haya ese cambio también de la otra parte, tú mismo tienes que, tú misma tienes que cambiar ¿no?, como inmigrante porque tú eres el que vienes, o sea, ya está. ¿no? Tú vienes a que te quieran, no, tú vienes a estar aquí y a formar parte de esto ¿no? (-- Yo quiero sobrevivir aquí, entonces, bueno, aprendo un poco más y de verdad yo aquí he pecado muchísimo en no aprender bien catalán, lo asumo, es verdad, o sea, he perdido mucho tiempo en no estudiar catalán, pero bueno, respeto su cultura, la respeto y tengo amigos catalanes y voy y hago y festejo como una más de... Porque yo creo que tiene que ser de las dos partes. (Miriam 2.)

this differentiation of being or not willing and able to “make an effort” also to the local people while she stresses that the encounter between migrants and locals has to go both ways.

It is this active willingness and capacity to learn, adjust and change, which, according to Miriam, in fact makes a “real immigrant”. While this is her aim, her actions might not add up altogether, however, as she herself admits by mentioning that she has “sinned a lot”, since she has not learned or even studied the Catalan language. While a lot of pressure is put on the side of the migrant, her account may also be read as a way of portraying the ‘migrant’ as an active subject able to influence her fate.

Of course, but you can also do it in another way, I mean, like finding..., more than anything not staying in this place of: uy, I’m feeling bad, I suffer, I’m alone. Yes, yes, I mean, I can say this because I haven’t been like that, well perhaps a bit, but very little. I have friends, I have a partner, I have a group of friends whom I can trust, who protect me, yes, but also because I’ve made that happen. I mean I could be like super closed and all the time with [people from her country of origin] like I know a lot of people are. They get together to miss what’s there. (Catalina 2.)¹²⁶

I don’t have absolutely anything to complain about Barcelona. And well, in all the places there are all kinds of people, you know. And everything depends on what you attract and what you move, so when everyone says: I feel so discriminated, and this and that.... Well I’ve found humanitarian people. But really wonderful people, from here, Catalans, and from other parts of the world, a lot of different people..., with whom I can go like towards the same direction, you know? And so they open, you know, doors for me. (María 1.)¹²⁷

The same type of internal differentiation is made in the two quotations above from Catalina and María. Here the “complaining migrant” is opposed to the migrant who finds her own way, looks for and encounters people she can relate to and rely upon and surroundings in which she can feel comfortable. Both Catalina and María draw on their own authority as persons who have experienced and gone through the struggle of creating their “own way” (also Juhila 2004, 267).

¹²⁶ Claro que sí, pero también se puede hacer de otra manera, digo, como ir encontrando y sobre todo no estar en ese lugar de: uy estoy mal, sufro, estoy sola. Sí, sí, a ver, yo lo puedo decir porque no la he pasado mal, digo sí, la he pasado mal pero muy poco. Tengo mis amigas, mis amigos, tengo mi pareja, tengo un grupo de gente en quien confío, que me arropa, sí, pero yo también lo he hecho eso. Digo yo podría estar súper así cerrada y todo el tiempo con [gente de su país de origen], como conozco a mucha gente que lo hace. Se juntan a añorar lo de allá. (Catalina 2.)

¹²⁷ No tengo absolutamente nada de que quejarme de Barcelona. Y bueno, en todos los lugares hay gente de todo tipo ¿no? Y todo depende de lo que tú atraigas, de lo que tú te muevas, entonces siempre dicen: yo que sí me siento discriminada, que esto que lo otro. Bueno yo me he movido por la parte social y he encontrado gente humanitarian pero extraordinaria, y de aquí, catalanes, y de cualquier parte del mundo, y la diversidad de gente... Y entonces vamos como al mismo al mismo sentido ¿no? Entonces te abren ¿no?, los campos y las puertas. (María 1.)

It was not, however, exclusively against other migrants that a discourse of active initiative and resilience was presented, but this kind of discourse was also employed with respect to local people in negotiation practices to which I refer as ‘making external differentiations to the ‘migrant’.’

People here make a mountain out of a molehill, I’m sorry but they do. Who knows, perhaps it’s the way they were brought up, because over there I was brought up knowing that I have to work, if I was hungry I had to look for food [laughter]. So perhaps that also forms you to have another mentality. (--) Look at the system they have here... They have family which takes care of them and they make everything complicated just the same, I mean, sometimes it seems like people are just determined not to get ahead. (--) [People] complain but they still don’t do anything to change things, and they’re ashamed to do this and that work. (--) Shame, I don’t know, I’ve never been ashamed to work... (- -) And as I don’t receive help from anywhere, I don’t have a choice, I don’t have the luxury to feel depressed, that’s it. I think that depression is a luxury, something I can’t afford, something us poor people can’t afford [laughter]. (Magda 1.)¹²⁸

In the above extract Magda makes a differentiation between herself as someone who has had to learn to work and find a solution to whatever the situation, and the local people who in contrast do not seem to really know about difficulties. Migrants are opposed to the locals as people who have initiative. Local people know the local system and have family and friends to support them, unlike migrants, yet still they complain and stop trying if they face difficulties. A migrant is presented in contrast to this, as someone who has taken action in order to get ahead in life, to create opportunities and earn a living and who is not afraid or ashamed to do whatever work. Magda’s negotiation has both regional and social class dimensions. She pictures herself as a poor person from the ‘South’ who is resourceful and hardworking, and contrasts this with the affluent people in the ‘North’ who live comfortable lives, yet are still eager to complain.

Here the Spanish people, it’s not to judge but..., where I work, the majority of us are Latinos, there’s just one or two Spanish worker. I don’t know if they’re lazy or what but they don’t want to work there, they don’t. Perhaps there’s a lot of work, lot of things to do, I don’t know. Us... (--) to keep a job we’ll do

¹²⁸ La gente acá se ahoga en un vaso de agua, yo lo siento mucho pero se ahogan en un vaso de agua. Yo qué sé, será la crianza, que allá, bueno yo me críe siempre teniendo que trabajar, así que si quieres comer anda a buscarte la comida [risa]. Entonces también capaz que te lleva a que tengas otra mentalidad (--) Imagínate acá el sistema que tienen... Tienen familia que se los cuida y se complican igual, entonces yo digo que a veces la gente también está todo armado como para que no salga adelante. (--) [La gente en Barcelona:] me quejo pero tampoco hago nada para cambiar, y me da vergüenza hacer esto o trabajar de aquello. (--) La vergüenza no sé, a mi trabajar como no me da vergüenza. (--) Y como no recibo ayuda de acá ni de allá, no me queda otra, no me puedo dar el lujo de deprimirme, ya está. Hoy por hoy creo que deprimirse es un lujo que no te puedes dar, ya está, y menos los pobres, no nos podemos dar ese lujo [risa]. (Magda 1.)

anything, in order to keep a job you work more, more hours, whatever. But the Spanish, they don't, they do the minimum, only what they have to do, their hours exactly, nothing more. They don't want to work. In my workplace, everyone is Latino. We do the work they don't want to do. (Sofia 1.)¹²⁹

In the above extract, Sofia makes a distinction between “lazy local workers” and migrant Latin American workers. She is puzzled by the fact that in her workplace there are virtually no local workers, but the majority, if not all, are migrants from Latin America. She suspects this might be because there is simply “a lot of things to do”, meaning there might be too much work for the local worker. The local workers also seem not to care whether they keep their jobs or not while in the face of losing a job, Latin American migrant workers are presented as ready to make extra hours and be flexible. Sofia's account coincides with an idea of “Latin American migrants as hard workers” (Cea D'Ancona et al. 2013, 154). Sofia also talks back to the general assumption of “immigrants coming to take away our jobs”, as she concludes that “we do the work they don't want to do” (Calavita 2005, 68). She presents herself as having a strong work ethic and a great deal of flexibility, and in this way draws from an idea of the ‘migrant’ as a sort of ideal worker. She leaves intact the differential positions of Latin American migrant workers and autochthonous Spanish workers in the labour market, in terms of their possibilities for defending their rights for instance to reasonable working hours and predictable time-tables.

For example there are people here who could study but they don't. I've met people for instance in my child's school, there are people who don't work and I say: how can they live? There they are, at a bar or in the park and I say: my God, I couldn't be there like that, being able to work but doing nothing. They could study and they don't. If someone told me: study, I would take the opportunity. But here no, I see that they don't. (Sofia 1.)¹³⁰

Sofia continues stressing that she does not claim nor could she ever picture herself claiming unemployment benefits for “doing nothing”. She sees migrants as willing to make the effort of travelling across an ocean in order to get ahead in their lives. The local people, in contrast, seem to spend large parts of their days at bars and parks doing nothing even though they would have the opportunities Sofia lacked in her country of origin, for instance to study.

¹²⁹ Aquí la gente española, no es por nada pero... donde yo trabajo, la mayoría somos Latinos, son uno que dos españolas digamos, no sé si son flojos o no sé pero no quieren trabajar allí, no quieren. Hay mucho trabajo, hay muchas cosas que hacer y no sé qué. Claro, nosotros..., (--) para tener un trabajo haces todo. Para coger ese puesto de trabajo, trabajas más, pues trabajo más, más horas o qué sé yo. Pero los españoles no, ellos son: lo justo, lo que tienen que hacer, su hora que tienen que salir y a su hora que tienen que llegar, más no. No quieren trabajar. En mi trabajo, todos son Latinos. Trabajamos en lo que a ellos no les gusta trabajar. (Sofia 1.)

¹³⁰ Por ejemplo hay gente que puede estudiar pero no lo hace. Ha habido gente por ejemplo en el colegio de mi hijo, hay gente que no trabaja y digo: ¿de qué vive? Están allí, sentados en el bar, sentados en el parque, yo digo: ay Dios mío, yo digo, yo no puedo, yo no puedo estar allí, pudiendo, sin hacer nada. Pueden estudiar pero ellos no lo hacen. Yo por ejemplo si a mí me dijeran: estudia, pues aprovecho. Pero aquí no, veo que no lo aprovechan. (Sofia 1.)

While negotiating through a practice of external differentiations, the participants passed judgements on local people who, for instance, were not considered to have high work ethics, or were seen to be completely outside of employment or education, pass their days in bars or parks or watching television and have the time and the possibility to “feel depressed”. These external differentiations often times stood in complex contrast with the connotations fought against in the imaginary of the ‘migrant’ being the one who just receives benefits and privileges, suffers and complains. Both of these discourses pass a moral judgement on people, ‘insiders’ and ‘outsiders’ alike, who are not considered ‘deserving’ since they do not “show enough effort” (Anderson 2013, 6; Lazăr 2008; Howe 1998).

This is a practice and a discourse of dominance and subordination within shifting features of situations, so that those who are subordinate in one context become dominant in another (Howe 1998, 532–543; also Anderson 2013, 6). While people as social actors are influenced by dominant images in different ways, they also develop strategies to manipulate these images in order to pursue their own interests and survival, as each individual or group strives to claim a creditable status by impugning others. People who face the consequences of an undesired or downrated social imaginary seek to differentiate and dissociate themselves from yet another ‘other’, both inside and outside the category in question.

In these negotiations, the migrants with a regular migration status distance themselves from the “illegal immigrants”, the migrants with an irregular migration status distance themselves as hardworking people from the “benefit scroungers” or the “lazy local workers”, and the actively integrating immigrants distance themselves from immigrants who do not “make the effort”. This is not only a rhetoric but a practice with concrete aims and (unintended) consequences, as it aligns itself with contemporary immigration regulations producing an image of the ‘ideal (migrant) worker’ who is flexible, temporary, precarious and unprotected.

Bridget Anderson (2013) has written about migrants’ struggles in order to gain access and belong to the ‘community of value’ in their host societies. She states that those who wish to naturalise have to demonstrate ‘super citizenship’ because naturalisation is about the idealisation of citizenship (ibid., 109). What is expected, then, of migrants aspiring for naturalisation is not just to be citizens but good, if not ideal citizens, in terms of accepting the “values of the nation”, knowing and appreciating the history, culture and language and proving themselves to be hardworking and uncomplaining. This type of discourse is recognisable in the following two extracts from Ana and Vanessa.

Not everyone has the citizenship or the residency, you know? And they don’t give the citizenship or the residency to anyone. (--) [Only] if you can meet certain prerequisites. And I think it’s good, I think it’s very good. And of

course over the years and..., and if they consider that we deserve it, well we deserve it and you can't let that chance go by. (Ana 2.)¹³¹

1 After having lived in the country for some time and being able to show that you've done this and you've done that, you've studied, you've done...

0 You mean the *empadronamiento*?

1 The *empadronamiento*, *empadronamiento*, but on top of that, you have to show that you are useful to the place. It's very easy to register yourself [*empadronamiento*] but if you're not useful and you don't bring anything good and you just dedicate yourself to bothering other people... You have to show that you have a history of doing..., studying and having..., learning and showing an interest, activities... (Vanessa 2.)¹³²

Debates over the issue of migration often dwell around notions of 'good' and 'bad' migrants, and migrants themselves are also urged to explicitly distance themselves from 'criminals', 'benefit dependents', 'sex workers' etc. and present themselves instead as hardworking, moral and law-abiding (Anderson 2013, 28). While this rhetoric may work for the benefit of some migrants, it raises the question of what, then, is the fate of migrants (and citizens) who are dependent on benefits, have criminal convictions or work in the sex sector, and ultimately only serves an endless logic of exclusion, failure, fear and blame (ibid.).

Producing variety in defence of the 'migrant'

And all of this: what do you do [here]? Where do you work? Why did you come? For how long will you stay? How should I know! I mean, I don't know! And: why did you come? In your country were you better or worse [than here]? I was bloody great in my country, I mean, but I wanted to know other things, to, I don't know, try another life... Just for the sake of it. (Catalina 2.)¹³³

In the above extract, Catalina challenges the assumption that she should constantly be ready to answer questions which ultimately seem to interrogate her right to be in

¹³¹ No todo el mundo tiene una nacionalidad o una residencia ¿sabes? Y no todo el mundo le dan una residencia, una nacionalidad. (→) [Sólo] si cumples con los requisitos. Y es así y yo lo veo muy bien, yo lo veo muy bien eso. Y claro a través de los años y..., y si ellos consideran que nosotros la merecemos, pues la merecemos y eso no se puede dejar perder... (Ana 2.)

¹³² 1 Después de un tiempo de vivir en un país, y tener además una hoja de vida, que has hecho esto, has hecho el otro, estudiaste esto, hiciste lo otro...

0 ¿El empadronamiento?

1 El empadronamiento, el empadronamiento, pero además de empadronaje, tienes que parecer como una persona que sea útil al lugar. Empadronarse es muy fácil pero también si tú eres un inútil que no aportas nada y que te dedicas a joder al resto de la gente... Y tienes que mostrar una historial, y tener..., educarte y tener..., aprender y tener interés, tener actividades... (Vanessa 2.)

¹³³ Y todo eso de: ¿qué haces [aquí]?, ¿dónde trabajas?, ¿y por qué viniste?, ¿y cuánto tiempo te quedas? ¡Y yo qué sé! O sea ¡no sé! Y ¿por qué viniste? Y ¿en tu país estabas mejor o estabas peor? Estaba de put madre en mi país, o sea, pero quise venir para conocer otra cosa, para, no sé, intentar otra vida... Pero porque sí. (Catalina 2.)

Barcelona by calling for a specific reason and a concrete and definable duration for her stay. The questions Catalina refers to also seem to demand a straightforward qualitative difference between her life in Barcelona as opposed to the one she lived in her country of origin. She talks back to the expectation that these questions are important for her migration or that she has a responsibility to (be able to) answer them. In doing so she also talks back at the basic assumptions present in the conventional economic understanding and theorisation of migration movements, its push and pull factors and its idea of a definite, clearly-depicted and recognisable aim for migration.

The practice of adding variety to the dominant cultural image of the ‘migrant’ aims to create space for the construction of the participant’s own identity “as such” (Juhila 2004, 267). I understand this as an attempt to “fill” the concept of the ‘migrant’ with a variety of other of connotations than the dominant ones. It is a negotiation practice essentially based on a positive meaning of difference and an overall possibility of a space for variety which is not addressed in a hierarchical manner.

Here generally people always talk like this, you know, that the foreigners come and they just take and take and take. I was saying to one of my friends the other day: it must be that I have such a bad luck then. I promise. I have had very bad luck. No, no, but you know they paid the electricity bill for her or they gave her discounts on food or something was given for free to her child... Oh really! I have paid with blood, sweat and tears everything here... And if for some reason I’ve missed a payment: pum, pum, pum, they’ve been knocking at my door: listen, you owe this and that. So either there’s a lot of people who talk without having a clue or I’m the woman with the worst luck in the world because you have no idea how much everything I have here has cost me! (Nelli 2.)¹³⁴

In the above extract, Nelli describes how people “generally” talk about migrants in Spain as people who arrive and are simply given all sorts of benefits and privileges for free (Cea D’Ancona et al. 2013, 268; Solé & Parella 2003, 135). She refers to a recent discussion she has had with an acquaintance (presumably local). Her friend had listed different rumours of immigrants being offered benefits, discounts and services. Nelli had contested this by making a humorous claim of possibly having the worst possible luck in the world, since she as a migrant has never received anything for free. Either that, or these rumors are simply untrue and the imaginary

¹³⁴ Generalmente aquí siempre hablan ¿no? pues que los extranjeros vienen y tienen y tienen y tienen. Y yo, y yo le decía a [una amiga]: yo tengo muy mala suerte, entonces. Te lo prometo. Yo he tenido muy mala suerte. No porque le pagaron la factura de la luz. No porque le dieron para que fuera a no sé qué y le rebajaron la comida. No porque si le salió de gratis no sé qué cosa del niño... ¡Jolines! A mí me ha costado sangre, sudor y lágrimas, por Dios... Y cuando no he pagado ¡Pum, pum, pum! Me han estado tocando las narices: óigame, qué no sé qué, óigame que usted debe, óigame que esto falta. Y yo: o hay mucho burro en la calle, ¿me entiendes?, de gente que habla y no tiene ni idea, o yo soy una mujer con la más mala suerte del mundo, porque ¡no veas cómo me ha costado a mí todo acá! (Nelli 2.)

constructed upon these claims is sustained by people who have no idea of what they are talking about. Nelli challenges these claims and talks against the general imaginary by referring to her experience as someone who knows because she sees things from the inside (Juhila 2004, 267).

I don't know, maybe this will sound a bit arrogant but I don't accept the general story: I come from an undeveloped country to see the first world and how everyone leaves so nicely here. Since I arrived I've noticed that people live very precarious lives, I mean, earning a shitty salary and doing five jobs at the same time but no one will say anything. It was something everyone was hiding. (Catalina 2.)¹³⁵

In general to be in this position of the victim, of the person who arrives to a new place, who doesn't know anyone or anything, who suffers, who is discriminated, no. I don't know, because if there has been affluence here or welfare and everything, it's because this country and half of Europe went to America to kill everyone and bring with them all the fortunes and from that moment on there has been this idea of the 'First World'. I mean, it's not a direct cause and consequence, it's not like that. But I don't owe anything to this place, I mean, or to the people here. (Catalina 2.)¹³⁶

In the above two extracts, Catalina presents a stereotyped process inscribed in the imaginary of the 'economic migrant' of a naïve or uninformed person who comes from conditions of destitution and poverty and arrives to a new place expecting affluence, yet suffers there and is discriminated against. Catalina positions this account forcefully inside the narrative of the 'South to North' contemporary migration and talks back at the idea of herself as this kind of migrant arriving from the 'Third World' and expecting charity from the more affluent residents in the 'First World' (e.g. Calavita 2005, 2). She compares her society of origin to her host society in Barcelona and makes the point of having noticed how many people in Spain live precarious lives and try to hide it. Her country of origin and Barcelona, as places, stand as no great counterparts in terms of resources and opportunities. What she has been offered 'here', could have been possible for her also 'there'.

In the second extract, Catalina seems to refer to a certain kind of 'postcolonial right' for her movement (also Anderson 2000, 30). She makes clear that the affluence of

¹³⁵ No sé, por ahí yo creo que también, seguramente va sonar un poco soberbio, pero digo no me trago el cuento de: vengo de un país subdesarrollado, este, donde, a ver el primer mundo como es y como toda la gente vive bien acá. Yo desde que llegué me llamó mucho la atención que mucha gente vivía de una manera precaria, o sea cobrando una mierda y atendiendo cinco trabajos a la vez, pero no lo decían. Era algo que se ocultaba. (Catalina 2.)

¹³⁶ En general como estar en esa posición de la víctima, de la persona que llega a un lugar nuevo, que no conoce, que no sabe, que sufre, que es discriminada, no. No sé, porque también porque si aquí hubo una situación de digamos de riqueza o de bienestar y todo eso fue porque este país y la mitad de Europa se fueron a América a matar a todo el mundo, a traerse toda la riqueza y a partir de ahí fueron sosteniendo este primer mundo entre comillas. Digo, no es causa y efecto, no es así. Pero yo no le debo nada a este lugar, o sea, ni a la gente de aquí. (Catalina 2.)

the ‘First World’ is due to what these countries, their enterprises, governments and people have taken during and after colonialism from the ‘Third World’. She challenges this “order” of the world as such and stresses that it is a historical construct. The fact that she has come to Spain from Latin America, and has lived and worked in Barcelona, does not make her indebted to the place or the people there. While serving as a back talk by a way of justifying Catalina’s presence in Barcelona, postcolonial discourses challenging the discrimination of immigrants and employed as an explanation or “naturalisation” or “their right to be here” arguably take away from other groups which cannot claim such connections (Del-Teso-Craviotto 2009, 579) thus creating new divisions.

I mean, when I arrived here I was very conscious about wanting to learn other cultures, I mean... I mean I’m clear about where I come from, you know? My culture, I mean, a number in the Spanish identity card does not change the fact that I’m from [country of origin] because I carry that inside me, I know a lot of my culture. So I come here to Spain, well I come because in my country things are not so good at the moment, but now that I’m here I’m interested in the culture of this country, you know. So I’m more interested in learning, knowing, understanding, and I don’t come asking for their understanding, like poor me, look at me I’m an immigrant, my poor country, how poor, no, no, I don’t come here asking for that, poor nothing. My country, well, it’s the way it is, that’s that, but I’m interested in seeing how I might fit here, you know. (Miriam 2.)¹³⁷

A ‘hybrid identity’ (Brown 2011, 232) involves an identification with more than one national or cultural context. Miriam advocates above for an idea of being several things and having several points of reference at the same time, of not being forced to choose, or only being able to obtain one at the expense of the other. Miriam wishes to be clear about where she comes from, and she wants to make equally clear that she is willing and able to learn new things from the place in which she presently finds herself. Her negotiation also has a time dimension: she wants to look forward towards the future, not back towards where she comes from or the circumstances she has left behind. She talks back at the idea of asking for understanding or pity and wishes to present herself as an active subject in her migration and in her everyday life in Barcelona.

¹³⁷ O sea, yo cuando llegué aquí yo iba consciente que quería aprender otras culturas, o sea... A ver, yo estoy clara de dónde vengo ¿no? Mi cultura, o sea, yo, un número de mi DNI español no me va a quitar que yo sea [de su país de origen] porque yo lo llevo dentro y conozco bastante mi cultura, entonces si vengo aquí a España, bueno vengo porque, claro, porque mi país está mal pero estando aquí también me interesa la cultura de aquí ¿me entiendes? Entonces, me ha interesado más aprender, conocer ¿no?, entenderlos, y tampoco vengo aquí para que ellos me entiendan a mí, pobre de mí y vean que soy inmigrante, que pobre de mi país, que pobre, no, no, no vengo de pobre y no vengo de nada, mi país, bueno, sí, está como está pero bueno, ya está, pero me interesa ver cómo encajo yo aquí ¿me entiendes? (Miriam 2.)

I find that being in the position of the foreigner permits a different lecture, a different way of interpreting what is going on, because [one is] a bit outside and a bit in. And if you don't know exactly what something means, you're able to problematise it, instead of just saying, oh yes, I know, period. (Catalina 2.)¹³⁸

As presented in the above quote from Catalina, the position of the 'foreigner' can be understood as being "a bit inside and a bit outside" and as such a privileged position, in terms of gaining an insight rather than losing one, being able to change context and pose new questions. Noticeably, Catalina does not speak here about 'migrants' but refers to this position as that of the 'foreigner'. However, since she did not make the point of drawing an explicit or deliberate difference between 'migrants' and 'foreigners', I have interpreted her account as essentially wishing to add variety in the way migrants and migration is contemporarily addressed. Migrants are generally granted positions which are not connected with "full subjectivity" but regarded as inferior (Biglia 2013, 752). The intersectional location of the subject, in terms of gender, ethnic background, social class and region or country of origin, shapes the possibilities and consequences of mobility, but while 'borders' are limiting, they are also importantly possibilities for a change in the established "order of things" (Biglia 2013, 753; also Lugones 2003; Anzaldúa 1987). This also refers to migration as ultimately an act of courage, as is stated by Nelli in the following extract.

I mean, for me it's important, not that I would be like that because I've migrated, but as such the act of migrating, it's important to say that I find that it's an act of courage, completely. To be bold enough to leave everything, for whatever reason, for obligation, for devotion, I don't care, eh, to have the courage to leave everything, everything you know, everything you've established, everything, in order to integrate in a new place, I see it as an act of courage. (Nelli 2.)¹³⁹

All of the above discussed negotiation practices are revealing of the weight of culturally shared understandings and imaginaries in general (Juhila 2004, 267, 271), and they also expose how narrow and pressing the specific contemporary imaginary of the 'migrant' seems to be. The challenge is often posed towards the suffering and victim-like attributes so firmly attached to the concept of the 'migrant', especially to the mobility of women. It also seems that in order to be a 'migrant' in this general

¹³⁸ A mí me parece que estar en una posición de extranjera como que siempre posibilita una lectura diferente, una interpretación de lo que pasa de una manera diferente. Porque un poco afuera un poco adentro. Y muchas veces no saber exactamente qué quiere decir no sé qué cosa, te permite problematizar eso en vez de decir ah sí ya sé, punto. (Catalina 2.)

¹³⁹ O sea, para mí es importante, no que yo lo sea por haberlo hecho, sino el hecho de migrar, en sí, es importante, porque me parece un acto de valentía. Atreverse a dejarlo todo, por cualquier razón que sea, eh, tanto como por obligación, como por devoción, me da igual, eh, atreverse a dejarlo todo, todo lo conocido, lo establecido, todo, para integrarte en un sitio nuevo, me parece un acto totalmente valiente. (Nelli 2.)

imaginary sense, this should be decisive of what one is, and other attributes, experiences and interests become questioned or lose importance.

Why, finally, bother with talking back? The analysis on how people make sense of social imaginaries and try to negotiate and reckon with them in the context of their own personal experience, everyday encounters and individual existence can be very informative of the ways these imaginaries work and the influence they have in societies (also Juhila 2004). Language is always an action, resistance and struggle (hooks 1989, 28). An analytical deconstruction of the images and connotations a certain concept conveys is finally aimed at giving room for it to be conveyed differently (Juhila 2004, 263). It is a step towards creating possibilities for collective action towards changing these images and space for variety and difference (Juhila 2004, 273).

7 BELONGING IN MIGRATION

Spanish, no, because I don't even look like it and I don't speak like a Spanish person, no. [From the country of origin] not so much anymore because, well, I was born there, but I live here. Eh, my life is not anymore as it was there. (--) I feel like an immigrant, but if I have my papers I won't feel so much like an immigrant anymore [laughter]. I'll feel more like, more like Spanish. And as years go by, the accent sticks, so I think I'll feel a bit more Spanish. But right now I feel like an immigrant. (Luz 2.)¹⁴⁰

In the above extract, Luz connects her (sense of) belonging to various themes present in this last section. Firstly, she talks about visibility, about “looking like” one belongs or does not. She also refers to language and accent and “sounding like” one belongs or does not (also Cea D’Ancona et al. 2013, 216). Secondly, she makes a comparison in a transnational context: does she belong ‘here’ (Barcelona/Spain) or ‘there’ (her city/country of origin). Her account provides no easy answer to this. While she is born ‘there’, her everyday life is no longer ‘there’. Still, belonging ‘here’ is also placed under suspicion. Thirdly, Luz takes up the issue of her migration status with respect to belonging. She stresses that in the absence of “papers”, i.e. official migration status, she does not feel “Spanish” but should she obtain an official migration status, this might change. She concludes by stating that she feels like an immigrant. Her ‘migrancy’ has an important temporal dimension, as it seems to be synonymous with not belonging ‘here’ (yet) nor ‘there’ (anymore).

In this chapter, I discuss subjectivity from the point of view of feelings, reflections and negotiations of belonging present in the participants’ accounts and consider the conditions, possibilities and limitations for these. Belonging, in this sense, refers to an experience of being part of the social fabric and the ways in which social ties are manifested in experiences and emotions (Brown 2011, 230; Anthias 2008, 8). Belonging is therefore about connections, values, rhythms, networks, practices and feelings of being accepted and safe. In this way it is related to both inclusion and exclusion. Belonging is viewed as a dynamic process, not a reified fixity (Svašek 2008, 215; Skrbiš et al. 2007, 261–267; Yuval-Davis 2006a, 199). It is reciprocal and relational, encompassing connection and community, being taken care of and taking care of (Rubenstein 2001, 4).

In the first subchapter, I deal with the importance participants put on migration status and citizenship inside the general fabric of negotiations and feelings of belonging. Whereas in chapter 5, migration status and migration bureaucracy were tackled from

¹⁴⁰ Española, no, porque ni me parezco, ni hablo como española, no. [De su país de origen], ya no es tanto porque, a lo mejor, nací allá, pero vivo aquí... Eh... Y ya no llevo la vida que llevaba allá. (--) Yo me siento como una inmigrante, pero si tengo papeles ya no me voy a sentir tan inmigrante [risa]. Me voy a sentir como más, como más española. A parte, con los años se pega el acento, como que me voy a sentir un poquito más española. Pero en este momento me siento como inmigrante. (Luz 2.)

a perspective of time-space autonomy, I approach them here from the point of view of feelings of or aspirations for belonging. Then, I analyse the participants' negotiations of belonging more specifically in the historical, economic and geopolitical context in which they took place by turning the focus in the second subchapter on the postcolonial context of their migration and in the third subchapter on the effects of the recent economic crisis in Spain. In the fourth subchapter, I study the everyday temporal and emotional adjustments in and consequences of migration from the perspective of creating and negotiating belonging and consider the participants' transnational everyday contacts, affections and identifications.

7.1 Endless corridor of formal belonging and other passages

In terms of the importance given to formal aspects of belonging, i.e. achieving regular migration status or citizenship, the participants' accounts may be divided into two groups. In some accounts formal administrative belonging was presented as highly relevant. The intention of acquiring formal belonging might be illustrated with a metaphor of walking through a long line of rooms with doors separating one room from the other (also Hammar 1994). From a situation of migration status irregularity, one strives for regularisation because this is understood as a way to achieve an official status, wider range of possibilities and a sense of belonging in the host society. Migration status regularisation would thus represent the first step in the journey towards the "inside".

Without papers the doors are closed, completely closed. (Regina 2.)¹⁴¹

In the above account by Regina, as well as in the account from Luz in the beginning of this chapter, regular migration status is depicted as decisive for feeling more on the "inside" in the Spanish or Catalanian society. In Luz's account, 'immigrant' is in fact straightforwardly conflated with 'irregular immigrant'. Therefore achieving a regular migration status can be considered a step away from the category of the 'migrant' itself. At the same time, a regular migration status seems decisive for becoming "more Spanish". Regina expresses similar feelings in her short account by simply stating that the irregular migration status closes all doors for entry. With this she refers specifically to work opportunities. She employs the metaphor of "doors being closed" for entry as opposed to at least some of them potentially opening due to migration status regularisation. Migration status regularity, however, did not necessarily open doors to the "inside".

We shouldn't feel that we're less than they because we're equal and we have the same knowledge as well and... And when it comes to rights, perhaps we don't have the same benefits as they do. They always come first and then us, that's true but..., we have the same rights. Now even more because I now have

¹⁴¹ Si no tienes papeles, puertas cerradas, totalmente cerradas. (Regina 2.)

my residence permit and I'm getting the nationality, and once I have the residency I'll have the same rights as they, the same, although I'm Latina, and I won't feel so rejected by them, you know? But yes, they always try to make you feel less even though you have more knowledge or whatever than they. (Sofía 1.)¹⁴²

In the above account, Sofia presents the Spanish citizenship as her goal. Sofia had been living for a while in migration status irregularity and had later been able to regularise her migration status and obtain a residence permit. At the time of our encounter she was in the process of acquiring Spanish citizenship. Although she calls this residency later in her account, I assume that she continues referring to citizenship. Sofia speaks about “feeling less” than the autochthonous population. She had a university degree, and she had come to Spain to work and study further. She had not yet been able to find work matching her education and she states that people were not appreciative of her studies and her degree and what she might have to offer professionally. She stresses that one should not feel less in terms of one's knowledge and education. According to her account, the unappreciative attitude she had perceived emanated from her lack of citizenship. She believes that citizenship might make the difference and allow entrance, inspire acceptance and prevent rejection. She has her doubts, though, as she ends the quote by marking that local people always try to put migrants down and doubt their abilities and knowledge.

The “corridor of formal belonging” seemed in fact to extend indefinitely and there was always a new door and a new room separating the participants from their goal. Nelli points out in the following that it is hardly clear what finally might open the doors for access to the “inside”.

You arrive here and after some time that you have been here you realise that no matter how much you would want to get in, there will always be a wall: institutional, social, economic... (Nelli 2.)¹⁴³

Nelli talks of an experience of an endless set of doors to open and walls to climb. The longer one has lived in Barcelona and the further one has been able to walk along the corridor of formal belonging or see other people advancing in it, in terms of regularising their migration status and achieving citizenship, one finds out that where you have been able to “arrive” seems to never be enough.

¹⁴² No tenemos por qué sentirnos menos que ellos, porque somos iguales y tenemos los mismos conocimientos también y..., en cuanto a derechos tal vez no tenemos los mismos beneficios que ellos. Siempre son ellos primero y luego nosotros, eso sí, pero... De lo otro pues no..., tenemos los mismos derechos. Ahora ya más porque como ya tengo mi tarjeta de residencia y a punto de tener la nacionalidad, y también una vez que tenga residencia voy a tener los mismos derechos que ellos igual aunque sea latina, y los tendré y ya no me sentiré así rechazada por ellos ¿no? Pero sí, siempre te tratan de hacer menos aunque tengas más conocimientos o qué sé yo que ellos. (Sofía 1.)

¹⁴³ Llegas aquí y tienes un tiempo de estar aquí, y comprobar que por mucho que tú quieras entrar siempre tienes un muro: institucional, social, económico... (Nelli 2.)

Gloria had arrived in Spain with dual citizenship, but in her account below it seems that even Spanish citizenship did not create a sense of unquestioned belonging.

I've been attended very well (--). Because you go thinking that who knows how they're going to treat you, you know, one already has these ideas, you know? And when you arrive and they attend you... Oh, but they treated me well, you know? So you are thankful [laughter]. (Gloria 3.)¹⁴⁴

The above account draws an image of insecurity and doubt of Gloria's Barcelonan everyday environment. Earlier experiences and stories she might have heard are reflected in her own attitudes, as she states that "one already has these ideas" of "who knows how they're going to treat you". Although Gloria has Spanish citizenship, she does not seem sure of how she will be received and treated, for instance when she visits services or takes care of necessary administrative or other formalities. She expresses surprise and thankfulness when she discovers that she is treated well. Gloria continues describing her everyday life in Barcelona in the following account.

So generally speaking, really, I sometimes go out and I see the people walking there with their maps or looking around. I feel like them. But I mean at least they have come here to travel, to enjoy and to get to know the place and then they leave. But I don't leave. Tomorrow I'll get up and I go and see the same places, the same streets, the same shops, not knowing anyone because I really feel like a tourist. (Gloria 3.)¹⁴⁵

Gloria states that more than a citizen she feels like an outsider, a visitor, another tourist. The location of the 'migrant' is avoided and her sense of being in a position of an outsider is connected with that of the 'tourist'. As a point of reference, this is of course understandable in the context of the large-scale tourism which is present everywhere at least in central Barcelona. Although Gloria has Spanish citizenship, she is a long way from feeling she belongs.

Gloria's experiences with regard to belonging echo the multidimensionality of migration. In our interview encounters, Gloria often referred to her higher age as an extra impediment for achieving a sense of belonging. She had just retired before her arrival to Barcelona, and although she had the will to continue with some type of

¹⁴⁴ A mí me han atendido muy bien (--). Porque vas pensando ¿cómo nos irán a tratar?, porque, ¿sabes?, ya uno va como premeditado ¿no? Y cuando llegas y te atienden... Ay, pero me atendieron bien, ¿sabes? Entonces lo agradeces [risas]. (Gloria 3.)

¹⁴⁵ Entonces, en términos generales, de verdad, yo a veces salgo toda dispuesta y veo que la gente anda con el mapa o mirando, igualito me siento yo que ellos, yo digo ay pero siquiera ellos vinieron a viajar, a disfrutar y a conocer y se van pero a mí queda que yo no me voy, que yo mañana tengo que amanecer y me voy a ver en el mismo, mirando la calle, la tienda y no conociendo a nadie porque de verdad, entonces me siento turista. (Gloria 3.)

work, she found it very difficult to find work in Barcelona, even in the voluntary sector. Another factor which she presented as important was the prevalence of Catalan language, perhaps specifically among the Catalan-speaking autochthonous elderly. These two factors had meant extra impediments for instance for forming a social circle. As already discussed with respect to the connections between migration and life course in subchapter 6.2, migrating later in life generally means time in a new environment without work or educational activities which often are the most effective ways to establish new contacts. This may lead to isolated lives, even with children and their families living nearby (also Heikkinen & Lumme-Sandt 2013).

Gloria's above account also resonates with the idea of the 'other' living 'other times' than the rest of the society (Griffiths 2014, 1998). Time is a resource, a commodity which one can have too much or too little of, and which one can feel in control of or anxious of not being able to manage or control (ibid., 2003). Time is also a component of social life, and different temporal experiences and realities may bring people together as well as separate them from each other. Gloria speaks of her everyday life as a flow of "endless time", spent in good part in solitude, while her children and their families were trying to create their working lives in Barcelona. Gloria wanders the streets of the city and enters the tourist attractions several times. She blends in the midst of the buzzing touristic life of Barcelona "as another tourist", with the difference that she never leaves.



I have the possibility to have dual citizenship, so I'm applying for the Spanish citizenship. Not because I would want to be Spanish. But because it's my right to have it and it's more convenient for me to have a passport from the European Union than the one from [country of origin]. And I can have both. (Vanessa 2.)¹⁴⁶

But completely no, I will never leave [Spain]. If I go to [country of origin] I'll keep in contact, I'll come and go, you know? Because it has cost us a lot to have the facility to come and go. (Ana 2.)¹⁴⁷

As apparent in the above accounts from Ana and Vanessa, advancing in the formal corridor of belonging and acquiring Spanish citizenship was considered important also in order to move around freely, to leave the country and be able to come back, to visit other countries and travel. In other words, as much as citizenship, and a resident status, are associated with belonging and stasis, they are also importantly about being able to be mobile (Anderson 2013, 112; Cea D'Ancona et al. 2013, 153; Martín Pérez 2010, 177; Treas 2008, 473).

Although acknowledging certain advantages to formal belonging in a practical sense, some of the participants presented accounts of regular migration status and/or citizenship being rather irrelevant in terms of their feelings of belonging. These accounts were more about a sense of a sub-cultural, non-nationally defined belonging (also Erel 2010, 648–650), as is illustrated in the two quotations below.

There is this, I suppose people more or less of the same age, I mean, if anyone needs anything: talk to this guy if this happened, or call to, I don't know the friend of I don't know who... From fixing your cell phone to how to do this and this administrative thing, I don't know, your title, or what to do if they give you a fine. (--) In that sense it's a strong network of people, from here and from outside. And also a network of people for emotional support, really strong. (--) Yes, those things are really important. (Catalina 1.)¹⁴⁸

With my friends, we helped each other, we helped each other a lot. Also the time when I wasn't working, they supported me, with food, to be able to pay for the flat and... We shared a big flat and we all had our rooms, we were four.

¹⁴⁶ Yo tengo la posibilidad de tener doble nacionalidad, entonces estoy optando la nacionalidad española. No porque quiera ser española. Uno porque es un derecho que tengo y segundo, porque a mí me conviene más tener un pasaporte de la Unión Europea que uno de [país de origen]. Y puedo tener los dos. (Vanessa 2.)

¹⁴⁷ Pero rotundamente no, nunca me iré. Aunque me vaya, pero me mantendré en contacto, entrando y saliendo ¿me entiendes? Porque como nos ha costado mucho tener la facilidad de poder entrar y salir. (Ana 2.)

¹⁴⁸ Veo que hay..., quizás más como la gente de mi edad... O sea si alguien necesita algo siempre hay un movimiento: habla con tal si pasó esto, o llama a no sé quién el amigo de tal... Desde para que te arreglen el móvil hasta para hacer un trámite de..., no sé, de renovación del título o qué hacer si te ponen una multa. (--) Y en eso sí es como un tejido así de gente, de aquí, de allí. Como que esto también una red así de soporte emocional, súper fuerte. (--) Sí, esas cosas son súper importantes. (Catalina 1.)

Between all of us there, and there were other friends who would come, we'd cook together... It was really like a family, and we supported each other and protected each other. (--) The group we had back then..., we were all without documents here, we formed a family, you know. (--) We didn't feel excluded. I didn't feel aside from anything. (Miriam 1.)¹⁴⁹

The accounts from Catalina and Miriam refer to a certain solidarity which goes beyond any national affiliation and to which a formal belonging in the host society through regular migration status or citizenship seems somewhat irrelevant. This is a solidarity and a feeling of belonging based on mutual (artistic, political etc.) interests, a similar life situation and perhaps also a life course stage or age. The above accounts draw a picture of strong networks to rely upon, where information is passed on, rooms to let are found and emotional, informative and financial support is offered. Free-time was spent together in different activities, such as going to exhibition openings, meeting regularly with a reading club, gathering together to watch football and to cook and have dinner. Miriam describes this network as a family. This group made her feel she belongs and that she is not missing out on or aside or excluded from anything. Both Miriam and Catalina stated having also several autochthonous acquaintances, friends or even a partner, while in general this was not so common in the participants' accounts.

In her article on the transnational lifestyles of Latin American non-elite women in German cities, Sandra Gruner-Domic (2011, 476–477) has written of a 'cosmopolitan sociability' present in the experiences of her interviewees who used their lifestyles to signal universalistic ideas of openness and belonging. Many of the participants in this research also expressed their fascination with Barcelona's cultural diversity, active art scene and cosmopolitan lifestyle. While the experiences of Catalina and Miriam arguably draw from a rather privileged position validated by middle-class origins and high education, they take place in the intersectional context of hierarchisation based on regional, national and ethnic origins and in the local context of a certain migration imaginary, which locates them in a 'subaltern position' (Gruner-Domic 2011, 478). The possibility and/or realities of discrimination and exclusion become contested in these accounts by proclaiming an active choice of lifestyle and milieu which is recognised by others who share similar styles, values, interests and philosophies of life (ibid.). These are accounts of active search and negotiation of belonging in order to turn away from potential exclusion and discrimination. Using lifestyles as a form of (cosmopolitan) identification creates

¹⁴⁹ Mis amigos también nos ayudábamos entre nosotros, nos ayudábamos muchísimo. Ese tiempo que yo no estuve trabajando, entre todos, me ayudaron, para la comida, para poder pagar el piso y... Teníamos un piso grande y teníamos nuestras habitaciones, éramos cuatro. Entre todas allí, y estaban los amigos que venían, cocinábamos... La verdad un ámbito muy de familia que creamos, y entre nosotros nos ayudábamos y nos protegíamos. (--) Los amigos que estábamos..., que estuvimos ese tiempo aquí sin documentos, hicimos como una familia ¿no? (--) No nos sentíamos que estábamos excluidos. No me sentía como aparte de algo. (Miriam 1.)

To tell you the truth, why should I lie, eh, everyone goes their own way... They have their own lives, so, their friendship is already enough and no, they can't really support you or give you a hand in any way. (--). Here you can't ask anyone for anything. (--). It's not like in my country, with people, you can go and knock on the door. At least I haven't dared to do that [here]. I haven't dared to knock on any door or ask my friends for anything. No one. I mean, it hasn't been because of proudness but because I've seen also that life..., that everyone has their work and their..., expenses. You can't do anything more. (Cristina 1.)¹⁵⁰

In the above account, Cristina describes her experiences with co-national migrants in Barcelona, and draws a picture of limited solidarity. There seems to be some room for emotional support, sharing and even friendship, but virtually no possibilities for financial or other more concrete support, since everyone is busy working long hours and overwhelmingly preoccupied with problems of their own. Some participants also pointed to family ties being under strain, since migration may have altered the power relations and trust between family members by, for instance, putting newly arrived migrants in a highly dependent position with respect to family members who had already been living in the host society (also Escandell & Tapias 2010, 414).

And to notice that the ones who screw you the most are from your own country. It's the strangest thing, it would give cause for another research, a scientific study all on its own, because it's the strangest thing and I've seen it in almost all the cultures. When people go to another place, when we go, I include myself, it's like there's a rejection of the people from your country. It's so strange. If they can take advantage of you they will. (--). [It's like] get away from me, I don't want to know anything about that place..., which I've left... I don't know. (--). Here the people... There's no time. Time is fundamental. You don't have time to socialise, you don't have time for anything. Time, time, time. So you're closed inside your bubble and you don't get out, you do what you do automatically, you maybe also stop doing things that you used to like, because of that routine, it just eats you up, you get sick and tired of it. (Magda 1.)¹⁵¹

¹⁵⁰ La verdad que no, porque, para qué te voy a mentir, eh todos van a su mundo... A sus vidas, entonces eh con que sea su amistad es suficiente y no, no, de echarte una mano, no lo pueden hacer. (-) Aquí no puedes pedir a nadie nada (--). No es como en mi país, en cuanto a las personas, tú golpeas una casa. Al menos no me he atrevido. No, no me he atrevido a ir a golpear una puerta, ni a pedir a mis amistades. A nadie. O sea, tampoco ha sido por orgullo, sino porque también, he visto la vida, que cada uno con su trabajo y su..., y sus gastos. De acuerdo a eso no se puede. (Cristina 1.)

¹⁵¹ Y darte cuenta también que la gente que más te jode, son tus propios compatriotas. Es una, eso es una cosa rarísima que daría para un estudio más, científico y todo, porque es extrañísimo y lo he visto en casi todas las culturas. Cuando la gente está en otro sitio, cuando estamos, me incluyo, es como que es un rechazo a tus propios paisanos. Es rarísimo. ¡Si te pueden sangrar, te sangran! (--). Lejos mío, no quiero saber nada de tal sitio..., de que salí de allí... No sé. (--). Que acá la gente... No hay tiempo. El factor tiempo es fundamental. No tienes tiempo para sociales, no tienes tiempo para nada. El tiempo, el tiempo, el tiempo. Entonces te encierras en una burbuja del que no sales, haces tus cuatro cosas automatizadas, quizás dejas de hacer lo que te gusta inclusive. Porque esa rutina te, te engulló, y te hartas. (Magda 1.)

Magda presents an even murkier picture of straightforward rejection between co-national migrants. In her account, attempts to belong ‘here’ and maintain contacts and identification with people ‘from there’ seem to be mutually exclusive. She connects this lack of solidarity primarily to devouring work and everyday routines and lack of time (also Brown 2011, 232; Martín Coppola & Rogero García 2010; Ahmad 2008, 310–311). Precarious work and migration status conditions affect migrants’ social and kin networks in many ways. Scant material and time resources may leave migrants little to share with each other, in which case reciprocity and norms of exchange are difficult to uphold according to the way cultural norms and expectations would dictate (Menjívar 2000, ref. Menjívar 2006, 1023; also Bloch et al. 2014, 53). In the accounts of the participants, experiences of strong solidarity networks between migrants seemed to draw on situations of higher social class status, greater economic security and a relative unimportance of formal belonging.

In practice, everyday experiences of not belonging in the host society emanated often from registered visible difference, as is apparent in the following extract.

In the metro they tell you..., they look at you like..., [laughter] because you’re from somewhere else, it’s evident [laughter] that you’re from somewhere else, everything is different, your skin and everything is different. (Sofía 1.)¹⁵²

Sofía takes the example of riding the metro and feeling people’s looks, since it seems to be evident to everyone that she is from somewhere else already because of the colour of her skin and the way she looks (also Cea D’Ancona et al. 2013, 215). Being visibly different and “from somewhere else” presents a continuous challenge and questioning of one’s possibilities to belong. In the following account, Rocío discusses her experience of being out of place in a multicultural urban metropolis such as Barcelona.

One thing that surprised me a lot was the fact that this city sells itself as multicultural and as a very open city. And yes, there are a lot of cultures here. But the city is multicultural because people come here, nothing more. Because although there is multiculturalism, everyone stays in their own cultural niches a bit and the level of acceptance of the people from here, I’m not saying that they’re xenophobes or anything like that, but they sell an idea of multiculturalism which in practice and in the everyday doesn’t exist. Because it’s really a slogan that serves the city, but for the citizens this is a recent phenomenon and they’re not really accustomed to it and this causes friction which makes it..., not as multicultural and open as it’s presented to be. This city slogan attracts and it also offers you a sort of security to say: yes, I’m part of this multi-world and I have my position here and with my ego high because I’m part of this city’s colourfulness. But when you meet the everyday citizen that collides with that, it’s when your self-esteem starts to go down a bit and

¹⁵² En el metro te dicen..., te miran así..., [risa] porque eres de otro lado que ya salta a la luz [risa] que es de otro lado, que todo es diferente, la piel y todo es o es diferente. (Sofía 1.)

you find yourself in this collision which was not what they were selling, and you're not used to it either, and it's an attack in a way. Because here you are with your colours and the other says: no. (Rocío 2.)¹⁵³

Attracted by an image of a diverse and global city, Rocío has wanted to live in Barcelona, decidedly a European urban space which claims to be culturally versatile and tolerant and open to different cultures, ethnic origins, lifestyles and beliefs (also Gruner-Domic 2011, 485). Yet, multiculturalism, diversity and celebration of difference seem to be merely a surface, beneath which there is friction caused by suspicion and insecurity towards difference at the level of everyday encounters. Rocío speaks of her attempts to introduce her “colours” in the general “colourfulness” of the city. Yet she encounters an ambient which is not interested in or ready for this. Rocío puts this down to the relevant novelty of more large-scale transnational immigration in Barcelona. The description of a presence of an unclear “threat” in Rocío’s account illustrates how in practice, diversity always raises questions of hegemony and power (ibid., 458).

¹⁵³ Una cosa que a mí me sorprende mucho es que esta ciudad se vende como una ciudad multicultural y muy abierta. Y es verdad, hay muchas culturas. Pero es multicultural porque llega gente, no porque lo asumen como tal. Porque a pesar de que, hay mucha multiculturalidad, cada quien se mantiene como en un nicho de su propia cultura y el nivel de aceptación de los de aquí, no te voy a decir que son unos xenófobos ni mucho menos, pero venden una imagen de multiculturalidad que en la práctica y en el día a día no se da. Porque realmente eso es como un eslogan que viene muy bien a la ciudad, pero que para el ciudadano es un fenómeno reciente que no está acostumbrado a vivirlo realmente y que se dan unos roces, que no, que no..., es tan multicultural y tan abierto como se presenta. El eslogan de la ciudad por un lado te atrae y por otro lado te da una seguridad de decir: vale, yo formo parte de este multi-mundo y tengo mi posición y bien, con mi ego en alto porque soy parte de ese colorido que tiene la ciudad. Pero cuando te enfrentas con el ciudadano del día a día que choca con eso, es cuando el autoestima empieza un poco a bajar en ciertos puntos porque te encuentras con un choque que no es el que te vendían, que tampoco estás acostumbrado y que te agrade en cierta manera. Porque tú vienes con tu colorido y el color del otro dice: no, a mí no. (Rocío 2.)

7.2 Postcolonial negotiations of belonging: visibility and language



Somehow the dimensions of Barcelona, the city, made me feel comfortable, made me feel like at home, because it resembles more or less my city [of origin] (--). Also I had friends from [city of origin] who were living here. The language, Castilian, not Catalan, because when I arrived I didn't understand a word of Catalan but... But there was something... (--). I don't know, there was something here that made me feel welcomed... I don't know if it was the physical features of the people... Although yes, also that. (Catalina 1.)¹⁵⁴

In general in [country of origin] Spain is called the Motherland because so many Spanish people migrated [there]. There has always been this idealised image of Spain in a way. And also my grandparents were Spanish and they came to [country of origin] during the [Spanish civil] war. (--). There has always been this cultural link in the family, my grandmother used to put on music... I mean we were raised a bit... We ate Spanish food, we saw...

¹⁵⁴ De alguna manera las dimensiones de Barcelona, la ciudad, me hacían sentir cómoda, porque me parece que es más o menos como mi ciudad [de origen] (--). También tuvo que ver que tenía estas amigas [de su ciudad de origen] que estaban aquí. La lengua, castellano, no el catalán, porque no entendía nada del catalán apenas llegué pero... Pero algo sí... (--). No sé, si hubo algo acá que me hizo sentir acogida... No sé, si rasgos físicos... Aunque sí también, sí. (Catalina 1.)

Spanish culture reminds me of my grandparents, so there has been this link... And then of course the language, just that I didn't take into account Catalan, that was the only... But well, there's that as well, you know, the Spanish language makes things easier. (Rocío 1.)¹⁵⁵

In this subchapter, I look at the migration of the participants inside the framework of postcoloniality, which represents a shared history, albeit one perceived from very different angles (Sardinha 2011; Del-Teso-Craviotto 2009, 573–574; Merino Hernando 2002). The postcolonial context may create affinities, but it also has inherent frictions and tensions (Arenas 2005). I am interested in considering these affinities and tensions for the senses and negotiations of belonging of the research participants.

As concrete examples of affinities, Catalina, in her above account, takes up the architecture and the dimensions of the city planning, which reminded her of her city of origin. She also mentions the linguistic affinities, in terms of the Castilian language as well as the physical appearance of people, as aspects which she found familiar and welcoming when she arrived in Barcelona. Rocío, in turn, states that in her country of origin, Spain is sometimes referred to as the Motherland, *madre patria*, due to several historical migrations from Spain to her country of origin. Rocío's own grandparents were also Spanish emigrants. For her, Spanish music and food represent her childhood and the time spent with her grandparents. She, as well as Catalina, mentions the Spanish language as an important affinity, despite the importance of Catalan, to which I return later on in this subchapter.

Achieving citizenship, and thus advancing in the corridor of formal belonging tackled in the previous subchapter, was facilitated, due to the postcolonial history between Latin American countries and Spain (Gil Araujo & González-Fernández 2014, 17; González Enríquez 2007, 327–328; Padilla & Peixoto 2007). Several cultural, religious and linguistic affinities also exist, as well as family ties, due to migratory movements in different directions between the regions also in more recent history. In the account below, however, it becomes clear that the road to the 'inside' is still not necessarily open and wide.

So, for me the idea was... I have my roots here, because my great great great someone [laughter] was Catalanian and my surname is Catalanian. So for me there was this feeling of belonging. I said: well I'll arrive there and they'll

¹⁵⁵ En general en [país de origen] a España se le llama la madre patria, porque muchísimos españoles migraron [allí]. Siempre hay una relación ahí como muy idealizada con España por un lado. Por otro lado mis abuelos eran españoles y en la época de la guerra [civil de España] ellos se fueron, emigraron hacia [país de origen]. (→) Siempre había como un vínculo cultural dentro de la familia porque mi abuela siempre ponía la música... O sea crecimos un poco, comiendo la comida española, viendo... La cultura española es el recuerdo de mis abuelos, entonces de ahí había un nexo un poco... Y luego la facilidad de la lengua pero que luego no tomé en cuenta el catalán, era la única... Pero bueno, también está eso ¿no? El español que te facilita las cosas. (Rocío 1.)

receive me... You know? Because also, I come from a place where they have been, where they... And it wasn't so, it wasn't so. It's quite impressive to understand that with time. When you arrive you say: I thought this would be easier. I thought that they would accept me. That they would see that... You know? That I could relate to them, and it would all be easy. But you find out that it's not so. You can live the rest of your life here and you'll never arrive where you would want to arrive because they won't let you, because for them you are not from here, even if you have the surnames, the grandparents, whatever, from here. (Nelli 2.)¹⁵⁶

In the above extract, Nelli refers to the colonial period, of coming from a place "where they have been", and to her family history and family roots which are from Catalonia. She arrived with the idea of being able, because of this shared past, to be accepted fairly easily in Barcelona. She expresses this by saying that she thought people would notice that she can "relate to them". But this notion of being able to relate to one another was not reciprocal, and her feelings of belonging have generally not been reflected in the feedback she has received from the host society.

In addition to the shared history and culture, Nelli refers to the time she has been living in Catalonia as an aspect which according to her should already make things easier for her. She seems quite impressed by how clear and consistent the message of non-acceptance still continues to be after several years spent in Catalonia and Barcelona. She doubts whether time as such will ever prove to be beneficial, and she seems convinced that even with a shared history and culture apparent in her surname and her customs and after having lived the rest of her life 'here', she'll never "arrive where she would want to". Yet, as may be read below, she feels she belongs.

My grandmother was a daughter of a Catalanian. I remember for example..., my uncle who was the eldest, he would sit in a rocking chair and he would sing us songs, what he had heard her mother sing, and it was like... From the point of view of feelings of emotions, the feeling of belonging that I have here. (--) I mean, I'm not from here. But I don't feel like an immigrant or stranger, even though I've had clashes with people..., you know. Because I have. Even though I've had these clashes with strange people and these..., narrow minded people, even still, I have a very strong feeling of..., like I'm from here. Because I remember the food, the smells, you know? (--) You find things with which to make sense of your childhood, you know, and you say: ah that's

¹⁵⁶ Entonces para mí, para la idea que yo tenía concebida, yo tengo mis raíces acá, porque mi bisatatará, no sé qué [risa], era catalán, y el apellido de mi padre es catalán. Entonces, para mí era un poco como que el sentido de pertenencia, yo decía: bueno yo llegaré allí y la cogida que tendré... ¿Sabes? Porque además vengo de un sitio en donde ellos han estado, donde ellos... Y no es así, y no es así. Y eso es muy, muy impactante, darte cuenta de eso con el tiempo. Cuando llegas dices: es que yo pensé que iba a ser más fácil. Yo pensé que me iban a aceptar más, mejor. Que se iban a dar cuenta... ¿No? Que yo iba a poder llegar a ellos más fácilmente. Te das cuenta de que no, de que te puedes pasar la vida acá y nunca vas a llegar a donde tú quisieras, porque no te dejan, porque no te dejan, porque para ellos no eres de aquí, aunque tengas los apellidos, y los abuelos, y los no sé qué de acá. (Nelli 2.)

because my aunt..., that's because this and that, you know? And you feel close, you feel really close. (Nelli 1.)¹⁵⁷

In the above account, Nelli goes on elaborating on her family's past being "from here", and presents her migration to Barcelona and Catalonia as a way of "coming home" (Jiménez Zunino 2014, 48–49). Her account even becomes a legitimisation, at least on a personal level, of her migration. Her account is interesting from the point of view of belonging as negotiations of access, acceptance and communality. While Nelli discusses an identification with different aspects of Catalonian history and culture due to her own family history, it seems that belonging is not entirely possible or allowed for her. Yet, in her own wording, she explicitly states that she experiences feelings of belonging, *pertenencia*. The boundaries of belonging are multiple, changing and negotiable. The 'emotional belonging' Nelli experiences draws from her childhood and family relations. While Nelli describes a concrete and strong emotional link with the music, traditional festivities, food, smells and flavours of Catalonia, this 'emotional belonging' clashes with the experiences of non-recognition from the outside. What factors, then, might lie behind and influence these tensions and clashes in the negotiations of belonging?

Language is arguably one of the most significant indicators of the relationship between an individual and a social group and the principal means of conducting social lives (Kramsch 1998, 3, 65). It is therefore also essential in building and negotiating senses of belonging (Brown 2011, 234). At the level of everyday activities, one of the important aspects of 'postcolonial affinities' between the participants and their host society was the shared Spanish language. This is a simplified image, however, since accents and vocabularies vary a great deal and are audible, i.e. visible, and recognisable. As such, they are also as hierarchically valued as the nationalities, ethnicities and social classes to which they refer. In the following, Nelli describes the complex intersectional dynamics between ethnic, national, cultural and linguistic hierarchies, acceptance and rejection.

The treatment of a South American is not the same as that of a Moroccan for instance: the Moroccans and the Pakistanis, perhaps because of the religion, I think it probably has something to do with that, are treated in a completely different way. And then there are scales for Latin Americans as well: an Ecuadorian or a Bolivian is not treated the same as, you know, an Argentinean

¹⁵⁷ Mi abuela era hija de un catalán. Yo recuerdo por ejemplo..., mi tío que era el mayor, se sentaba en una mecedora y nos cantaba lo que había escuchado que cantaba su madre y era como entonces... Desde el punto de vista de sentimientos y emociones, el sentimiento de pertenencia que yo tengo acá (--) O sea, yo no soy de acá. Pero no me siento inmigrante o extraña, a pesar de haber tenido encontronazos con gente ¿no? Que también los hay. A pesar de haber tenido encontronazos con gente rara y estas..., estrecha de mente, a pesar de eso, pues tengo un fuerte sentido de..., como que soy de acá. Porque recuerdo los platos, los olores..., ¿sabes? (--) Entonces vas descubriendo cosas y le encuentras sentido a todo un mundo de la infancia, ¿sabes? Y dices: ay por eso mi tía..., ah por eso no sé qué... ¿sabes? Y te vas sintiendo cercana, muy cercana. (Nelli 1.)

or a Cuban. Cubans and Argentineans are treated better. I mean, they may treat you badly until you open your mouth, and when you open your mouth [they ask]: where are you from? And if you say: from Cuba. Ah, *la cubanita*. And it changes. You see? For a Cuban with blond hair and blue eyes, well, there would be no difference [in the first place]. You know? And with Argentineans it's the same. If [you are] an *indio*, because there are these *indios* with their dark skin and beautiful dark hair, well until you open your mouth and people hear that you're Argentinean, you're *indio*, you know, from Bolivia or from somewhere. Until the *indio* (--) [says]: *che, vos*, whatever, *boludo*. It's like: oh, [an] Argentinean! It changes. (Nelli 2.)¹⁵⁸

Unlike migrants from African or Asian countries, Latin American migrants generally share religious, linguistic and cultural traits with Spaniards. The extent of this proximity and the easiness of “blending in”, however, vary according to one’s nationality, accent, ethnic origin and social class. In the above extract, Nelli gives an example of a regional variation of global social hierarchies (Yeates 2009, 23) and their (in)visibilities, as she speaks about the complex consequences of ethnic and national appearance and accent in the postcolonial context of Latin American migrants in Barcelona. Her account describes how a Spanish accent and vocabulary associated with a Latin American country of a relatively small indigenous or mestizo and large European immigration, such as Argentina, are registered in a more positive manner (also Jiménez Zunino 2014, 44; Cea D’Ancona et al. 2013, 180; Parella et al. 2013, 1378). The positive attitudes towards Cubans are presented here arguably in the context of cultural exotism and the more general international revival of Cuban music and other traditions.

In addition to the (postcolonial) ethnic hierarchies which posit a visible American indigenous heritage below a European one, a hierarchy of countries of origin may also be explained in the context of a more recent history of Latin American immigration to Spain and Catalonia which, during the late 1970s and 1980s, originated predominantly from the Southern Cone countries of Chile, Argentina and Uruguay, and was in connection with the military dictatorships of these countries at the time (Garzón 2012; Padilla & Peixoto 2007). This was largely a migration of highly educated workers who arrived in a country which had been closed for decades due to the long Franco dictatorship, which ended in 1975. This also meant that the University system in Spain had not developed as in other countries during this same

¹⁵⁸ No se trata igual a un sudamericano que a un marroquí, por ejemplo: los marroquíes y los pakistaníes, igual por la religión, pienso yo que sea más por esa parte, se tratan completamente diferente. Luego, dentro de Latinoamérica también hay escalas: no se trata igual a un ecuatoriano, o a un boliviano ¿sabes?, que a un argentino, o a un cubano. A los cubanos y a los argentinos les tratan mejor. O sea, igual te tratan mal hasta que abras la boca, cuando abres la boca: ¿de dónde tú eres? De Cuba. Ay, jaja, la cubanita. Y cambia. ¿Te das cuenta? Ya no te digo si el cubano es rubio, de ojos azules, pues la diferencia es nula. ¿Sabes? Y con los argentinos pasa lo mismo. Si [eres] indio, que los hay estos indios que son así morenos de pelo muy lindo. Pues ya. Hasta que no abre la boca y no se escucha que es argentino, es indio ¿sabes?, de Bolivia o de por ahí ¿no? Cuando el indio (--) [dice]: *che, vos*, no sé qué, *boludo*. Es: ¡ah, [un] argentino! Cambia. (Nelli 2.)

period, and people who migrated from Latin America were largely able to get employment which corresponded to their education (Yepez del Castillo 2014, 6; Garzón 2012, 2500, 2508).

From the 1990s onwards, in contrast, immigration to Spain from Latin America has taken place more in the context of migrants coming to do work which does not require education. Other countries and Latin American regions have prevailed in this movement, and specifically immigration from the Andean region, from countries such as Ecuador, Bolivia and Peru, have been represented. These are also countries with large indigenous and mestizo populations. These regions of origin have prevailed in the gendered immigration of Latin American women arriving to work in domestic and care work in private households (Gil Araujo & González-Fernández 2014, 17–19; Garzón 2012, 2505–2506). In this way, the consequences of gender, social class, nationality, regionality and ethnic origin are connected and shape one another.

Changing one's accent is presumably difficult to avoid during years of living in Spain, and several participants pointed out that their Spanish accents and vocabularies had been modified towards the Spanish spoken in Barcelona. Paying attention to the way they spoke Spanish in their everyday encounters was sometimes also deliberate and purposeful. One of the ways of “getting in” was to consciously modify accent or vocabulary of Spanish, as is apparent in the following account.

So you have to change your vocabulary so that they understand you. (--) Also, as years go by you get the accent, it sticks, so I think I'll feel a bit more Spanish. But at the moment, I feel like an immigrant. (Luz 2.)¹⁵⁹

In the above account, Luz makes a connection between her vocabulary and accent and her migrancy. She seems to hope that along with the changes that will either purposefully or inevitably take place in the way she speaks, she might start to “feel a bit more Spanish”. Through modifications in her speech, Luz thus actively strives for invisibility, or inaudibility, blending in and belonging.

There were also exceptions to this adaptive linguistic strategy of accommodating one's Spanish to the local Spanish. Participants with a “privileged accent” inside the intersectional hierarchies of regionality, nationality, ethnic origin and social class did not have the need to change their accent or vocabulary. Accent was in fact sometimes used as a distinctive practice and a way of proudly standing out (also Sardinha 2011), as can be seen in the following extract.

¹⁵⁹ Entonces hay que cambiar el vocabulario para que te entiendan. (--) A parte, con los años se pega el acento, ahí como que me voy a sentir un poquito más española. Pero en este momento me siento como inmigrante. (Luz 2.)

And I told him that I know, that of course, obviously many words have changed, because that's the way it is. And I don't have a problem with that. But when I'm talking to a friend of mine here from [city of origin] I'm sure not going to say *la patata* [the word for potato in the Spanish spoken in Spain] and so on, hell no! I mean, NO [laughter]! (Catalina 2.)¹⁶⁰

In the dynamics of (postcolonial) ethnic, cultural, national, linguistic and social class hierarchies, it is sometimes beneficial to restrain oneself from speaking and in this way becoming more 'visible' (also Mas Giralt 2011, 342). For others, in turn, it is more beneficial to speak out, since this might offer a possibility to adjust an already apparent visibility and thus negotiate further upon one's position inside the intersectional hierarchies of acceptance, rejection and belonging. For the same reason, it becomes important in some occasions to try to learn a new accent and change vocabulary in order to blend in. Yet, in cases where this does not pose a threat of suspicion, discrimination or rejection, accent may be proudly employed as a tool of self-differentiation.

As the context of this research was Barcelona and Catalonia, speaking Spanish, however, got the participants only so far. The Catalan language was central in the participants' accounts concerning requirements for or obstacles to belonging. The next quote from Regina exemplifies this.

1 No, no I haven't studied it, unfortunately no, I should have studied it but I haven't. I can understand it but I don't speak it. It has been difficult... I don't even... And languages are easy for me, but Catalan just doesn't enter [laughter], I don't know why.

0 The course you're taking is in Catalan?

1 Fortunately no, it's in Spanish, it's in Spanish, because the person who teaches there is from Madrid or somewhere. If it wasn't! It would be difficult for me. But in the office everyone speaks in Catalan. Also when we go out to take a cup of coffee, everyone speaks in Catalan. It's..., there's no...

0 And you? I mean is there...?

1 It's difficult, of course.

0 You participate in Spanish, then?

1 Yes, I participate in Spanish, of course [laughter]. Because it's difficult. I should learn it [Catalan] someday, it's just, it's something I haven't done, so [laughter]... (Regina 2.)¹⁶¹

¹⁶⁰ Y yo le decía eso, que yo sé que sí, y obviamente que hay un montón de palabras que cambiaron, porque sí. Y no tengo problema con que cambien. Pero si hablo con mi amiga de [ciudad de origen] qué voy a decir "la patata" no sé qué, no sé cuánto, ¡no, que mierda! O sea, ¡no! [risa]. (Catalina 2.)

¹⁶¹ 1 No, no lo he estudiado. Desgraciadamente se me ha pasado, debería haberlo hecho, pero no lo hice. Lo entiendo, pero no lo hablo. Y me ha costado trabajo. Inclusive no... Tengo facilidad para los idiomas, pero el catalán no me entra [risa]. No sé por qué.

0 ¿El curso que tomas está en catalán?

1 Afortunadamente no, ése está en castellano, ése sí está en castellano, porque él que lo da es de Madrid, no sé de dónde. ¡Que si no! Me costaría más trabajo. Pero en la oficina todos hablan catalán. Incluso, si vamos a tomar un cortado, todos hablan catalán. O sea..., no hay...

Learning Catalan was often taken up in the interviews as something the participants felt the host society was more or less expecting them to do, but which, always for some reason or another, they had not been able to get around to. It was fairly general for the participants to state that they could understand Catalan but not really speak it, as also Regina does in the above extract. I then continue asking about a course she was taking at the moment of our encounters and inquire if this course is in Catalan. She seems a bit startled by the possibility of this being the case and expresses immediate gratitude over the fact that it is not, since she seems to be sure that this would make it very difficult for her. She explains the fact that the course is in Spanish by its teacher being from “Madrid or somewhere”, thus not a Catalanian. This point can be read to reflect the nexus between origin and language in the Catalanian context.

Regina then tells that in the office where she works, everything functions in Catalan. The formal and informal contacts and activities at work, such as coffee breaks, are all in Catalan. She finds this difficult, and when I ask whether she then just participates in the discussions in Spanish, she confirms this with a laughter. It does not become that clear, in the end, how well this co-existence of the two languages actually works, and Regina merely ends by stating that she really should learn Catalan and perhaps someday she will. In other words, while there was an understanding of the importance and prevalence of Catalan in the day to day life in Barcelona, the need to speak Catalan actively and fluently was still approached with some reservations.

As apparent in Regina’s account above, the practical day to day level attitudes of the participants towards studying, learning and practicing Catalan were rather ambiguous. Still it was in part understood as a necessity in order to “fully enter”, as can be read in the two accounts from Rocío below.

And that’s where you really feel that you’re an outsider, in the sense that you don’t have the same natural way of speaking [Catalan] or (--) I’ve studied Catalan, I’m already in the third level. I don’t speak it normally because I’m quite embarrassed, although I could, because I’m able to communicate with it. (--) Here it’s like..., well for me, I think it’s a distinctive element. Always when you try to speak it, there’s a certain correction from the outside. It’s like: you’re not a Catalan speaker by nature. But perhaps it’s just a silly impression I have, really. (Rocío 1.)¹⁶²

0 ¿Y tú?... Bueno ¿hay...?

1 Te cuesta más trabajo, claro, sí.

0 ¿Participas en castellano, entonces?

1 Sí, participo en castellano, claro [risa]. Sí, pero cuesta, eh, cuesta. Que tendré que aprenderlo [el catalán] algún día, es que eso es una tarea que no, que no he hecho, pero bueno [risa]... (Regina 2.)

¹⁶² Y ahí es donde tú realmente te das cuenta que eres de fuera, en el sentido que no tienes la misma naturalidad para hablarlo de alguna manera o... (--) Yo he estudiado el catalán, ya estoy en el tercer nivel. No lo hablo en la vida cotidiana porque soy bastante vergonzosa, aunque podría hacerlo porque

When it comes to the language, what I was saying the other day, that you can feel it in moments as silly as when you're talking to someone, you're in a group and they just change the language, because they're used to do that and because it's their language and they have all the right but it's also a bit distinctive, you know? It's like: here we draw the line with the language, you cross it or you don't. (Rocío 2.)¹⁶³

Knowing and speaking Catalan is portrayed by Rocío as highly important in order to “get inside” the Catalan society. Rocío presents this in fact as the ultimate barrier which draws the line between the ones who are inside and the ones who are left out. Rocío had been studying Catalan and states that she can understand it quite well, yet she felt timid and hesitant to use Catalan in her everyday encounters. Her experience as well puts emphasis on the nexus between origin, language and belonging. According to her account, it is not good enough to have a “third level” knowledge of Catalan, but one should be able to speak it “by nature”. While people might respect the effort, an accent already draws a barrier of its own.

Rocío also describes everyday moments when people switch to Catalan and she immediately feels left out. Similarly to Regina above, Rocío had opted for interaction in two languages in these situations. She spoke in Spanish and others in Catalan. While Rocío emphasises towards the end of the second extract that she completely understands that the autochthonous people in Barcelona should be able to speak their own language and go about their everyday lives in Catalan, this at the same time seems to erect a barrier of distinction which strikes her as impossible to climb over.

Internal migrants arriving in Catalonia during the 19th and 20th centuries generally spoke Spanish, which was the only official language during the Franco dictatorship. Catalan was spoken by the autochthonous population also during this period, although it was formally banned by the dictatorship (Garzón 2012, 2499). Today, Catalan is enforced by regional government policies, and municipalities offer free courses of Catalan to immigrants (ibid., 2500). The current educational model implemented in Catalonia is known as ‘linguistic immersion’ which means that Catalan is the main language in education (ibid.). While the number of migrants in Catalonia has increased exponentially, the linguistic question has become ever more pertinent and controversial (ibid., 2508). The experiences of the participants reflect a

puedo comunicarme. (–) Aquí como que, llega a ser..., bueno para mí, es una visión muy personal, como ese elemento distintivo. Siempre cuando intentas hablarlo de alguna manera hay una cierta corrección de la parte de fuera. Como que tú no eres catalán parlante por naturaleza. Pero bueno, quizás es una impresión tonta, la verdad. (Rocío 1.)

¹⁶³ A nivel lingüístico, por el idioma, lo que te comentaba el otro día ¿no? De sentirlo yo directamente en cosas tan tontas como que estas conversando con un grupo y cambian de idioma, ya sea porque ellos están acostumbrados y porque es su lengua y tienen todo el derecho pero también es como distintivo, ¿no? O sea: aquí marcamos la barrera lingüística hasta cierto punto: la pasas o no la pasas. (Rocío 2.)

contemporary “battle” between the contrasting ideologies of anonymity and authenticity, i.e. between Catalan as a common public language that belongs to everyone and no one, on the one hand, and as an identity marker of ethno-linguistic categories, distinction and difference, on the other (Pujolar & González 2013, 140).

At another point of our interviews, Rocío referred to her child as a kind of a “cultural ambassador” for the Catalan culture, traditions and language in their home. The necessity of learning and knowing at least some Catalan was often exacerbated in the case of the participants whose children were enrolled in the educational system which operates fully in Catalan. When participants had children who were attending school or daycare, children brought knowledge on local customs, celebrations, foods and traditions, as well as the Catalan language home with them.

The accounts of the participants whose children had migrated as adolescents stressed that they struggled to adjust to the educational system operating completely in Catalan. Some of these youngsters had either planned to move alone to other parts of Spain in order to be able to continue their studies in Spanish or dropped out of school entirely as a result. This questions the way Catalan language requirements play out in terms of integration, perhaps particularly in the case of Spanish-speaking immigrants from Latin America, and gives reason to consider whether practices which might well be intended to work towards inclusion are experienced or play out as mechanisms of exclusion.

Yes, I have to know Catalan [at work], they don't demand it like 100 per cent, but they do tell you that you have to learn it because the people [clients] are Catalanian, well, you have to, you have to learn it. (--) I understand a bit because at work the majority is, they are Catalanian people, really Catalanians and everyone speaks Catalan. Well I understand it but I speak very little, but mmm [thinks]... I haven't really had the interest to learn it, even though the courses are free, it's that I don't have time and I don't like it [laughter]... I don't like it. If I have to learn it, I have to learn it, if it's an obligation and also with my child I have to learn it (--) And when I have time, I'll just have to learn it... I have books to study Catalan and I browse them but... It doesn't really interest me that much. In my child's school..., everything is in Catalan, they send all the information in Catalan, and well, you have to learn it. (Sofía 1.)¹⁶⁴

¹⁶⁴ Sí tengo que saber el catalán [en el trabajo], no te exigen al 100 por cien, pero sí te dicen que tienes que aprenderlo porque, como la gente es catalana, pues, tienes que aprenderlo. (--) Entiendo sí algo, porque en mi trabajo la mayoría son, es gente que son catalanas, catalanas y todos te hablan en catalán. Bueno yo entiendo, hablarlo muy poco pero mmm [piensa]... No he demostrado ese interés de aprenderlo, a pesar de que aquí son las clases de catalán gratuitas, a parte fue el tiempo y no me gusta [risa]... No me gusta. Si tengo que aprenderlo pues tengo que aprenderlo, porque me obligan a aprenderlo y aparte con mi hijo tengo que aprenderlo (--) Y cuando tenga tiempo pues ni modo tendré que aprenderlo... Tengo libros para el catalán para estudiar y así, voy viendo pero... De interesarme, interesarme no me interesa mucho. El colegio de mi hija..., todo es en catalán, te mandan los informes solo en catalán y bueno, tienes que aprenderlo. (Sofía 1.)

Sofia's account serves as another example of the ambiguities projected to learning Catalan. On the one hand, she seems to experience a constant pressure to learn and speak Catalan, because at her work and her child's school everything functions in Catalan. On the other hand, she seems to be able to manage her everyday life, more or less, in Spanish, since she states that she has not "had the interest" to learn Catalan. She even shows some degree of reproach towards it, as she repeats several times that she does not actually like it and learning it would only be by "obligation".

In other words, Sofia does not see a clear practical purpose to knowing and using Catalan. She seems to judge, therefore, even unfair the demand for having to find the time and energy for studying Catalan, despite of the possibility of courses free of charge. While there is pressure and possibilities for learning Catalan, the benefits are not considered sufficiently high or clear in order to be motivating. The nexus of origin and language is taken up here as well, as Sofia stresses that some of her clients at work are "really Catalonians" and it is because of this that they prefer or demand to speak and be spoken to in Catalan.

In the next extract, Regina continues to comment on the rather ambiguous presence of the Catalan language in the Catalonian job market as follows.

Well, I imagine that in some places they might demand it [knowledge of Catalan], eh. (-- But that has never happened to me. Well, where I've worked, I mean... I haven't needed it, I've been in commercial work, I can speak in Spanish and there are no problems. But if they speak to me in Catalan I have to listen to them, you know? (-- It's not that they would be considerate, and I wouldn't want them to be, that they would speak Spanish, because they're in their country and they have all the right to speak Catalan, you know? I've met people who get offended, who say that: why don't they speak Spanish, if I'm here...? Well I'm sorry [laughter], you're in Catalonia, you should learn Catalan. (Regina 2.)¹⁶⁵

Regina states that she has not had the necessity to speak Catalan at work because she has worked in the "commercial sector", which at the outset seems a bit bewildering. Yet in part, this might also be explained through paying attention to the historical processes of internal migration in Spain and the historical connections of migration, language and social class in the Catalonian context. Contemporary Latin American migration fills labour niches previously occupied by internal migration arriving from

¹⁶⁵ Pues yo me imagino que para ciertas cosas sí lo deben de exigir, eh. (-- Pero a mí nunca, es que nunca me ha pasado. Bueno, lo que yo he hecho no, o sea, sí que... No lo he necesitado porque siempre he estado de comercial, y, y puedo hablar en castellano y no pasa nada. Pero si me hablan en catalán me tengo que aguantar y oírlos en catalán ¿no? (-- Tampoco es que tienen la consideración, ni espero que la tengan, de que hablen en castellano ¿no? Porque están en su país y tienen todo el derecho de hablar catalán ¿no? Hay gente que... He conocido gente que sí se enfada por eso ¿no? Que dice: ah, ¿por qué no hablan castellano? Si yo estoy aquí... Pues lo siento [risa], estás en Cataluña, tienes que aprender catalán. (Regina 2.)

poorer regions of Spain (Garzón 2012, 2507). These immigrants were generally uneducated and they were often employed in the unskilled sectors of the labour market. They were also not Catalan speakers, and as their migration took place during the Franco regime, they were not offered courses or encouragement to learn and speak Catalan. Regina's account, and to a certain extent the general lack of Catalan skills presented by the participants, reflect a situation where skills of Catalan, at least fluid speaking skills, are perhaps not always expected from shop attendants or domestic service workers. In this context, Regina's account seems to confirm Catalan as a language of prestige and necessary for achieving upward social mobility at the local level (also Pujolar & González 2013, 139; Alarcón Alarcón & Parella Rubio 2013, 102–103). This points to connections between language, social class and integration.

Thus, Latin American immigration to Catalonia can be seen as repeating the gender, linguistic and social class positions of the earlier internal migration movement from poorer areas of Spain to Catalonia, but to these patterns new layers are added. Firstly, the consequences of migration status, and secondly, the postcolonial context of ethnic hierarchies and discrimination. The latter can also be seen in connection to a certain suspicion towards the competences and educational background of the participants and the general level of technical development in their societies of origin. This was manifested for instance in situations where the participants working as domestic workers or carers for elderly in private households were taught to use the lift, the television remote control or the washing machine by their employers. When a participant discussed these experiences with surprise, amusement or indignation and emphasised that this had been completely out of order since she does not come "from the rainforest" and is "no indian", she was also operating and negotiating inside a (post)colonial field of differentiations, wishing to differentiate herself from an American indigenous background.

The colonial past and its inherent hierarchies are thus added to national migration histories as well as regional nationalism and cultural and linguistic traditions in Catalonia and Barcelona and their connections to social class composition. This creates a complex network of hierarchies for belonging. Catalan seems to serve as an important distinctive feature particularly in the context of Latin American immigration, since speaking Spanish and thus getting along with it lowered the motivation to learn Catalan. The ways in which language, social class, occupation, ethnic origin and migration status shape each other and together form the positionings and the image of the immigration of Latin American women to Barcelona might result in a contradictory environment for their learning of Catalan. If language, social class and occupation are historically intertwined in ways suggested above, perhaps proficiency in Catalan is not even expected of them?

In general, it has indeed been noted that Latin American migrants stand out as a group less willing to follow Catalan courses and more critical towards the policies which enforce the use of the Catalan language, since these are experienced as exclusionary (Garzón 2012, 2500–2507). Arguably these policies are also seen as undermining the relative advantage Latin American migrants might be seen to have through postcolonial affinities with respect to migrants from other regions and cultural and linguistic groups. As can be seen also in the accounts of the participants in this research, many Latin American migrants do not speak Catalan in their daily lives (ibid., 2509). At the same time, the legal framework increasingly enforces Catalan as a requisite for integration (ibid.). From the migrants' point of view, a "postcolonial advantage" turns into a barrier for belonging.

Another recurrent question in the accounts was the complex nexus and the contradictions between national and regional belonging. How to enter Catalonia and Barcelona through acquiring Spanish citizenship and learning the correct Spanish accent and vocabulary? In some respects one could consider that the participants were in fact trying to become Spanish through being Catalanian and trying to be Catalanian through being Spanish; while Catalanians more and more poignantly wish to distinguish themselves from the Spanish. In this context, Spanish citizenship does not carry very far into the Catalanian society. With regard to formal belonging, this might also in part explain why Spanish citizenship did not seem to get their holders any further 'inside'.

In general, there are some distinctions which can be made between postcolonial migrations and other migrations from the 'South to North' on the one hand, and inside the composition of postcolonial migrations themselves on the other (Bosma et al. 2012, 11). In the former sense, it is useful to bear in mind the already mentioned potential privileges with respect to the access to citizenship and the cultural and/or linguistic affinities. These aspects may serve as facilitators in migration, while they arguably do not guarantee a warm welcome, as the experiences of the participants also in this research show. It is therefore important to make a distinction in the latter sense between 'subaltern and dominant groups' and their descendants. To this aim, I have employed the framework of intersectionality and paid attention to the participants' locations in a variety of social hierarchies and to the ways in which these different structural hierarchical positionings shape each other's influences.

There might often be a tangible and painful continuity between the colonial traditions of socio-racial structures in one's country of origin and the European policies regarding entrance and settlement of migrants, the practices of defining citizenship and the possibilities of belonging (Bosma et al. 2012, 10). The participants came from countries with Spanish, and at times also more specifically Catalanian, immigration and presence. The changing directions and contexts of migration between the two continents are illustrated in the two following accounts.

In [country of origin] there are a lot of Catalonians, for years there has been, and in a beautiful place where there are these really beautiful buildings, a place where people all like to go, there is a Catalonian Club, but an enormous Catalonian Club! Before I came here I used to visit it because my cousin worked there. (--) So there's this gorgeous Catalonian Club, enormous, where there's everything and the Catalonians can stay and go there and spend time with each other. There's a Canary Islands Club, immense. There's a club for the Galicians, it's like being in Galicia, here, the food and everything is the same and people dress the same, the foods, the traditions, everything. They enjoy all of that like if they were here and they don't miss so much. There are many clubs like that but just to name some. I don't think people from [country of origin] could think of having a club like that here because I don't think they'll let us [laughter]. (Gloria 3.)¹⁶⁶

For example I couldn't go to certain places where a lot of Latinos go because there was the police and the immigration so I couldn't go. So of course you were closed inside your house [laughter]. (Sofia 1.)¹⁶⁷

In the first account, Gloria describes her migration as different from that of Spanish migrants of various regional origins to her country of origin. She comments that there are “no clubs for us here”, the way there is the Catalonian Club and others over there. With this remark she refers to clubs found in larger cities in Latin America where people from different regional origins inside what is currently Spain may gather and enjoy the food, music and traditions of their regions. Gloria sees her migration, the reception she has had and the possibilities and conditions for being accepted and even celebrated in her host society as very different from the situation other way around. A picture of the celebrated Catalan club in Gloria's country of origin draws a clear contrast to the second extract from Sofia, where she states that in some places in Barcelona, where it is known that plenty of migrants from Latin America meet up, there is a possibility of raids by the immigration officials or the police, which is why she does not, or formerly did not, like to go out at all.

This does not mean to say that migrants from the Latin American region would not have active associations and centres in Spain. Quite the contrary, there is a lively network of associations. Due to the autonomy of regional and local governments,

¹⁶⁶ En [país de origen] hay muchísimos catalanes de hace tiempo, muchos, y en un lugar precioso que hay edificios lindos, que es donde a la gente le gusta más estar, hay un club catalán ¡pero tremendo club catalán! que yo antes de venirme estuve yendo porque mi prima trabaja allí (--) Entonces hay un club catalán estupendo, enorme, que no le falta de nada y donde los catalanes se sienten y van allá a convivir, a compartir. Hay un club canario, inmenso. Hay un club de gallegos, y eso es igualito que si estuvieras en Galicia, aquí, en las comidas y todo igualito, igualito que si estuvieras aquí y la vestimenta de la gente, las comidas, las tradiciones, todo. Ellos disfrutaban todo eso como si estuvieran aquí y no lo echan tanto de menos. Y así hay muchos clubes pero por nombrarte estos. Yo aquí no me imagino que los [de su país de origen] podamos pretender tener un club porque yo creo que no nos lo dan [risas]. (Gloria 3.)

¹⁶⁷ Por ejemplo a ciertos lugares donde van los latinos no podía ir porque estaban allí los policías y los de migración entonces no podía ir. Y claro estabas encerrada en tu casa [risa]. (Sofia 1.)

there are differences in approaches to migrants' integration and thus variation also in the associational landscape from one region to another (Morales & Jorba 2010, 271–273). For instance, country level associations organised around a national origin are more promoted by the policies of the city of Madrid than those of the city of Barcelona which has traditionally advocated for integration starting from a more general perspective and has not welcomed migrants to organise around ethnic and national identities (ibid., 272–273). Some associations are specific in their activities while others have a wide spectrum of activities and interests, ranging from cultural and social activities, food, sports and traditional festivities to legal and social assistance. Some associations operate from larger Latin American regional bases.

João Sardinha (2011) writes in his article on the insertion and visibility tactics of Brazilians in Portugal, that the Brazilian associativism in Portugal has been divided by two immigration phases with similar characteristics to the two immigration phases from the Spanish speaking Latin American countries to Spain. The first phase was composed largely of qualified workers with predominantly European ethnic ancestry who were able to find work which corresponded to their education, and reside and work in the country in migration and work status regularity. The latter phase has more predominantly been of unqualified migrants with mestizo ethnic origins who have worked and resided in the country often irregularly. In the Portuguese context, Sardinha notes a concomitant change in the migrant associations' typology and scope, recently focusing more heavily on legal and social assistance. I would argue that in the Barcelonan context, Gloria's difficulties in imagining "a club for us here" reflect a similar environment of and attitudes towards immigration shaped in the intersections of regional, national and ethnic origin, postcolonial and geopolitical hierarchies, social class and migration status.

In the accounts of the participants, the negotiations of belonging took place in different intersectional locations. There is a complex negotiation of visibility and standing out versus invisibility and blending in. Some characteristics are worth displaying while other aspects should be hidden. One's ethnic origin, nationality, gender, social class, vocabulary and accent all shape these negotiations of visibility and belonging. Some accents were a source of pride while others were best to be learned away from. A certain accent might be eagerly voiced out since it had the potential to change the perceptions caused by a certain already visible appearance. The hierarchies of different nationalities have to do with recent migration histories as well as discriminative postcolonial scripts and the ethnic compositions of different countries.

There's something, [it's] like a bit contradictory because... The way I look, I mean (--) I don't look like... I mean my skin is very white, I have all these genes, more Italian, Spanish, I don't know... And that makes me blend in at first sight, with the people from here. (--) [If not] perhaps other things would

have happened to me here, like when it comes to prejudice and what is identified with the color of your skin and your body and everything... But I don't feel Spanish, I don't feel Catalanian either (-- I mean it's not visible in the skin what some people are and others are not. And it bothers me, it's like, I would like to... (-- it's like [people say]: oh, I thought you were Catalanian... No. (Catalina 1.)¹⁶⁸

Catalina's above account is an example of a situation where one's "European-like" ethnic appearance caused experiences of 'unwanted belonging' and an anxiety of one's origins going unnoticed or being misjudged. As tackled above, these experiences might have been challenged for instance by deliberately voicing out one's accent and vocabulary, at least whenever this accent would not cause a hierarchical descent but give a possibility to stand out from the autochthonous population in a positive and interesting manner, as well as separate oneself from the immigrant population and the local general imaginary of the 'migrant'. There may be value in "being different" when this does not necessarily pose a threat to possibilities of acceptance and belonging. Yet there are limits and co-ordinates as to "how" one is allowed to be different.

7.3 Belonging in times of economic crisis

During the time of the interviews, in the spring 2012, the economic crisis was on everyone's minds in Spain. The crisis seemed to carry rather contradictory consequences for the participants' negotiations and feelings of belonging. In general, the future shadowed by the economic crisis was not perceived as overly threatening by the participants. The crisis was not seen as something which would necessarily diminish their employment opportunities and "force" them to move somewhere else or return to their countries of origin. The majority of the participants did not have plans to go anywhere. In some of the accounts, their "Latin American cultural background" and the politico-economic history of their countries of origin were presented in fact as a relative asset in this situation.

For me the word crisis has never had so much importance because in [country of origin] we have always had a crisis, so for us a crisis is more or less..., you're sort of either in a really bad or just in a bad situation. So I

¹⁶⁸ Hay como algo, como un poco contradictorio porque eh... Mi aspecto, o sea (-- no parezco... O sea que tengo la piel súper blanca, tengo todos los genes más italianos, españoles, no sé qué, eh... Y eso como que a simple vista también me mimetiza con la gente de aquí. (-- [Sino] quizás me hubieran pasado otras cosas en el sentido de todos los prejuicios y de esas cosas que pasan con la identificación de la piel y del cuerpo y todo eso... Pero no me siento española, tampoco me siento catalana (-- Como que no es tan visible en la piel que alguna gente sí y alguna no. Y que a mí eso me da bronca, eso, como que me gustaría... (--) como que [la gente dice]: ay, pensaba que eras catalana... No. (Catalina 1.)

wasn't really afraid of that. But here in fact... (--). This has been a really long crisis frankly, I've never known a crisis this long. (Vanessa 2.)¹⁶⁹

It's just that all this talk about the economic crisis, it really doesn't frighten me because well, we've lived that in [country of origin] already so many years ago and I know what it is, you know. And it's simply just about surviving, being creative, being optimistic and finding a way. (María 1.)¹⁷⁰

In the above accounts from Vanessa and María, the economic crisis is not perceived as startling, since they have seen so many economic crises before in their countries of origin. While both of them present a strategy of persistence and waiting for improvements (also Bastia 2011, 587), in Vanessa's account doubts over whether things will soon get better are starting to show. Many participants stressed, however, that they might have an advantage in this situation because of the rather general image present in the Spanish society of Latin Americans as a hard-working and flexible workforce (also Anleu Hernández & García-Moreno 2014, 101). They in fact considered themselves more resourceful, innovative, creative, flexible and persistent than what they perceived the autochthonous Spanish workers to be. María as well seems to find reassurance from her own experiences during economic crisis in her country of origin. For her this seems to be business as usual. She seems convinced that everything finally comes down to being creative, persistent, optimistic and just finding a way.

Due to the economic crisis also the social benefits were becoming more competed, and this was taken up in the accounts. Interestingly enough, this seemed to produce feelings of sameness with regards to the autochthonous population, which potentially enhanced sentiments of belonging.

Curiously, this year I applied for the cafeteria grant because it helps a lot of course, and this year they didn't give it to us. And the director was saying that this year there were a lot of applications from locals for this support. (--). So they start to be in the same disadvantaged situation as the immigrants a bit. Now everyone is vulnerable, now we're all citizens at risk of social exclusion. (--). In fact, I mean, I think that they're getting off their high horse a bit. Before it was the immigrant who was always below, you know? (Rocío 1.)¹⁷¹

¹⁶⁹ Ahora, yo... Para mí la palabra crisis no tenía gran, gran importancia porque en [país de origen] siempre hemos tenido crisis entonces para nosotros la crisis es más o menos..., que tengas más mal o menos mal. Entonces no le tenía mucho miedo a eso. Pero aquí de verdad... (--). Esta ha sido una crisis francamente larga, yo no había conocido una crisis tan, tan larga. (Vanessa 2.)

¹⁷⁰ Es que, lo del tema de la crisis a mí no me da miedo porque, o sea, lo de la crisis, lo vivimos ya hace tantos años y yo sé de qué va. ¿Sabes? Y es, es simplemente sobrevivir y ser creativo y ser optimista y buscar la manera ¿no? (María 1.)

¹⁷¹ Y curiosamente este año opté a la beca de comedor porque bueno es una ayuda que finalmente viene muy bien y este año no quedé. Y la directora me comentaba que este año hubo un montón [de] las solicitudes locales que han solicitado este tipo de ayuda. (--). Entonces comienzan a estar como en una situación de desventaja igual que los propios inmigrantes un poco. Ahora todos son vulnerables

In public debates on migration, immigrants are often either accused of “stealing our social benefits”, or when working, they are seen to “take our jobs” (e.g. Cea D’Ancona et al. 2013, 268–269, 330). In the above, Rocío refers to the former, while she discusses the “cafeteria grants”. The so-called cafeteria grants were grants directed to children in primary and secondary schools so that they may have lunch at school, and there had been complaints of an “unusual amount” of them being awarded to children of migrants while the “local” children were left behind (Garzón 2012, 2504). In the above account, Rocío refers to the cafeteria grant as an example of how during the economic hardship, different social benefits had become more competed, because a greater proportion of the population had fallen into a situation which fulfilled the prerequisites for receiving these benefits. According to her, this now meant in practice that the “predominance” of migrants or migrant families in the receivers of this support was being levelled up with more and more “locals” receiving these grants.

Rocío talks about the prerequisites that one has to fill in order to be in a “vulnerable enough situation” to be granted this support and perceives the fact that more and more “locals” are now applying for this grant and receiving it as a sign of being more in the same boat with the “locals” and not so much looked down on by them as before. The account describes a sensation of the differences between “migrants” and “locals”, or at least some segments of both populations, disappearing along with the economic crisis. Thus, while the economic crisis made Rocío’s situation more precarious, for instance through the social benefits becoming more competed, this was a precariousness now shared with the autochthonous population and a situation which was perceived to be present in the society “in general”. As Rocío puts it, “now we’re all citizens at risk of social exclusion”. In the account below, also Nelli describes the feeling of being in the same boat with the local people, albeit a boat of unemployment and a very unsecure future. Because of the economic crisis, things were bad for “all of us”.

I feel fine here. Well, as fine as all of us, you know? That there’s no work, there’s no this, there’s no that, but it’s the same for all of us, included the people from here. (Nelli 1.)¹⁷²

In our second encounter with Rocío, however, we tackle again the situation of economic crisis and she continues her account on its consequences on her everyday life and belonging as follows.

realmente, y ahora todos somos ciudadanos en peligro de exclusión social. (--) Igual, o sea, yo creo que un poco se está bajando del pedestal. Antes el inmigrante era él que estaba por debajo ¿no? (Rocío 1.)

¹⁷² Como yo estoy tan bien acá. Bueno, tan bien como todos, ¿sabes? Que no hay trabajo, que no hay esto, no hay el otro, pero así estamos todos, incluidos los de acá. (Nelli 1.)

I think it's a reality that when you come from abroad, you're always at a disadvantage in a way. The risk of exclusion is right there, in not belonging, I mean, the reality is that you're not from here. Even if you adapt, even... You're not from here. And that vulnerability, of not being from here, in moments like this of the [economic] crisis, things radicalise a bit. So the vulnerability sort of comes up to the surface in difficult moments, you know. So you say: ok, employment, the topic of the day. In the list of priorities... And you start to feel a bit... That if they put their priorities down, first are the unemployed people who are from here. (--)

These things that make you see that yes, you have to be aware of what is going on, you know. That I have to apply for a continuation of my residence permit, because if not... I might be left without health services or... I mean you can't get distracted because you don't belong here, you have to keep your guard so that you continue in the... So it's that vulnerability that sometimes frightens me or makes me feel weak or how to say... (Rocío 2.)¹⁷³

While the above two extracts from Rocío serve as examples of the multifaceted nature of the negotiations of belonging, they also show how in interview situations people emphasise different things depending on a plethora of factors, such as their current state of mind, the timing of the encounter, the relationship between the researcher and the participant, the moment of the interview when a certain topic is raised, etc. Based on the different evaluations in the above account and the one before, there seems to be a deep ambivalence in how Rocío perceives the consequences of the economic crisis with respect to her possibilities, negotiations and feelings of belonging.

In the above account, Rocío starts from a position of disadvantage which only deepens and sharpens in times like the current crisis. She seems to be, because of the crisis, acutely aware of the fact that she is not from 'here' and does not belong, and of the vulnerability she finds herself in as a result. She is not on the top of anyone's list of priorities and thus has to be extra vigilant herself over her situation, the continuation of her permits and what these may or may not entitle her to. There is no room for distraction or letting one's guard down.

¹⁷³ Creo que es una realidad, que cuando vienes de fuera, siempre por una u otra razón tienes alguna desventaja. La no pertenencia, en principio, tiene un riesgo de exclusión, o sea la realidad es que no eres realmente de aquí. Aunque te adaptes, aunque... No eres de aquí. Y esa vulnerabilidad de no ser de aquí, en momentos difíciles como ahora lo de la crisis, las cosas se radicalizan un poco. Entonces esa vulnerabilidad como que sale a flote en los momentos difíciles ¿no? Se dice: vale, bueno. Ahora el empleo que es así como el tema del día a día, vale. En la lista hay prioridades... Y empiezas a sentir un poco... Que si se marcan las prioridades según las necesidades de cubrir puestos de empleo de los que son de aquí. (--)

Los detonantes de hacerte ver que sí, que estás allí como en una posición siempre de ver qué va a pasar, ¿no? De que tengo que renovar mi residencia porque si no, me puedo quedar sin el servicio de salud o porque... O sea que no te puedes distraer porque no perteneces aquí, tienes que estar siempre en guardia para mantenerte en el... Entonces esa vulnerabilidad es la que de repente me asusta o me hace sentir débil o como lo decía... (Rocío 2.)

Rocío's account reflects a feeling of 'permanent anguish', which Alberto Martín Pérez (2010, 172) has called a crucial feature of immigrants' social condition. This is related to not having citizenship and thus having to periodically gain permission to stay by renewing one's residence permit. The marginalised and uncertain position of migration status irregularity is in this way converted into an obligation to actively remain "legal" within the host society, which in turn transforms anguish into a permanent emotion (also Menjívar 2006, 1000–1001, 1008–1009). A moment of economic hardship and diminishing resources seems to aggravate and sharpen this. Rocío's above extract is by no means an account of belonging in the sense of being part of the social fabric and feeling accepted and protected (Anthias 2008, 8). Yet, one might also ask whether the emotions presented here are exclusively tied to her position as a migrant or to what extent they reflect more generally the precarious and unsafe situation of cuts in public spending and a rhetoric of personal and individual responsibility present in the current European political atmosphere of economic uncertainty and downturn.

Return, as such, is the least understood stage of migration (Bastia 2011, 585). Yet the conditions of deciding upon return and the experiences of returnees of reintegration are certainly issues worth exploring in order to create a more wholesome understanding of migration as a social phenomenon and human experience. I specifically argue that it is important to complement the persistent image of the 'economic migrant' reflected in interpretations where economic downturn is automatically considered to lead to return migration in high numbers. In the following extract, Miriam discusses the economic crisis, her motivations for migration and her future plans as follows.

It's like... Well, I didn't come here because of not having work, because I had work which I liked very much in [country of origin]. The country was getting very political, everything, also the projects where I was working were turned into something political and I wasn't interested in that. And also one of the reasons for which I decided to emigrate..., was because of the delinquency, insecurity, you know? And..., I still think that. Perhaps I don't have here..., I haven't yet been able to get the kind of work..., or be stable economically. I can do work that I like but it's a difficult situation, you know, the times that we're living here in Europe. But on the other hand I'm more relaxed here than..., because of the insecurity, you know? (-- I have friends [in the country of origin] who are economically stable but they live inside their houses. (-- I don't want to live like that. Perhaps I lack many things here but the tranquillity..., being able to walk on the street and feel that I'm not..., I mean that you don't think that something might happen to you. There if you go to the next street corner you have to go by car. (Miriam 1.)¹⁷⁴

¹⁷⁴ Sí. Lo que pasa es que... Claro, yo no me venía porque no tenía trabajo, porque tenía trabajo que me gustaba en [país de origen]. Se estaba volviendo..., se estaban politizando todos los sectores ¿no? entonces también los proyectos [en el trabajo] se convirtieron en [algo político] y a mí eso no me interesaba. Y también una de las causas por las cuales me decidí emigrar..., es por la delincuencia,

The motivations Miriam states in her account for migration are multiple, but they all lie outside of an expected economic “gain”. She describes her life in the country of origin as a stable one in terms of her economic and work situation, in spite of the fact that the political atmosphere started to be more and more evasive. In addition to the political situation, urban security is mentioned as one of the main reasons for her migration (also Cea D’Ancona et al. 2013, 189).

Miriam compares her current situation to that of her friends in the country of origin and points out that they are better off and more stable economically than she is. Although in terms of employment and professional advancement she might now opt for returning to her country of origin, there has been no change for the better in the matters which triggered her emigration in the first place and did not have to do with better work opportunities or higher salaries as such. Her account stresses one of the decisive features of belonging, safety (Anthias 2008; Yuval-Davis 2006a), more concretely urban safety and the freedom of movement in one’s everyday time and space. In the following extract, Miriam further points out that migrating somewhere else in search of better work opportunities would mean starting everything from zero, whereas in Barcelona she is not exactly in this position anymore.

Yes because I’ve already moved once and I mean, to move again..., wherever I go I have to start from zero. I can also start from zero here. I already know people here and everything... I think it’s a moment of..., you have to be creative and... Wherever you go it’s going to be difficult. (Miriam 1.)¹⁷⁵

The reasons for not going back despite of the economic crisis also point to the intergenerational nature of migration. In previous research (e.g. Bastia 2011), it has been noted that children left behind in the country of origin play a decisive part in returns from migration in the context of economic downturn. If salaries go down and remittances run dry, the sacrifice of living separated from one’s children ceases to be worthwhile. In this respect it is important to note that none of the participants in this research had under-aged children currently living in the country of origin, but their children were living with them in Barcelona. Children played an important part in the participants’ consideration and decision-making on return, but in a different manner.

inseguridad ¿no? Y..., y lo sigo pensando ¿sabes? Quizás aquí no tengo..., no he llegado todavía a tener el trabajo..., o estar estable económicamente. Trabajo en lo que me gusta pero es una situación muy difícil ¿no? por el tiempo en el que vivimos aquí en Europa. Pero por lo otro lado estoy más tranquila que..., por la inseguridad ¿no? (--) Tengo amigos [en el país de origen] que económicamente están estables pero viven encerrados en sus casas. (--) No quiero vivir así. Tal vez aquí me hacen falta muchas cosas pero la tranquilidad..., de estar en la calle y sentir que no me..., o sea no piensas que te va a pasar algo. Allá si tú vas a la esquina, tienes que ir en coche. (Miriam 1.)

¹⁷⁴ Claro porque igual, ya me moví la primera vez, y digo moverme otra vez..., adonde me vaya tengo que empezar desde zero igual. También puede ser desde zero aquí. Ya conozco gente y tal... Yo creo que es un momento de..., hay que pensar un poco más en la creatividad y... En cualquier parte va a estar igual de difícil. (Miriam 1.)

But they [her children] say that they don't want to go there [country of origin], they don't, eh, they say that they don't want to go. (--) Yes I don't know, they don't miss, of course, they don't feel bad because there are only aunts and uncles there whom they know only by name. Here they have made friends, also, they have their friends and so... (Cristina 2.)¹⁷⁶

0 And have you thought of that [going back because of the economic crisis]?
1 Well yes, of course [laughter] I have thought of that. But the thing is that..., well, my children, they don't want to leave, they have their friends here, they have..., their life here a bit. And well, for the moment..., I go on trying to do things, you know. (--) I'll try and go on [looking for work and migration status regularisation]. One more try [laughter] and if not, well, I'll have to think it over, we'll think it over and see how... Because we really wouldn't want to go back, you know. After all that we've sacrificed, all that we've lived here, I mean, to go back and [for it to be] for nothing, I don't know... (Regina 1.)¹⁷⁷

As Cristina and Regina above, many participants stated that since their children had already become accustomed to the life in Barcelona, had made friends and were going to school 'here', they would not want to consider, at least for the time being, leaving Barcelona and going back to their countries of origin. The above accounts show that the participants and their children had their everyday lives in Barcelona, and this was not straightforwardly simple to "cast aside" even in circumstances of economic downturn (also Cebolla Boado et al. 2013, 137, 143). Despite of the economic crisis and pressures, it was often still perceived that Spain offered better future possibilities for the children in terms of education and employment than their countries of origin (also Cebolla Boado et al. 2013, 144).

Going back also requires something worthwhile to go back to. In some accounts, going back would have meant becoming an additional burden to one's family and kin (also Bastia 2011, 584; Van Houte & Davids 2008, 1414–1415, 1425), and this was considered profoundly undesirable. Furthermore, going back because of unemployment and lack of opportunities in migration would evidently represent a failure in the face of the community of origin and in one's own life course (also Bastia 2011, 588). As Regina puts it above, it would be as if all the sacrifices had been for nothing. This is a powerful reason for staying on.

¹⁷⁶ Pero en cuanto a querer irse allá [país de origen], ellos [sus hijos] no, eh, dicen: no, no queremos ir. (--) Sí, no sé, no les da nostalgia claro, es que tampoco no les da pena de nada porque allá ya sólo les quedan tíos que solamente eran tíos de nombre. Aquí también se han hecho amigos, tienen sus amistades y tal... (Cristina 2.)

¹⁷⁷ 0 Y ¿tú lo has pensado [regresar al país de origen], o...?

1 Bueno, lo he pensado claro [risa] que lo he pensado. Lo que pasa es que... Bueno mis hijos no quieren, no quieren irse, tienen a sus amigos aquí, tienen..., ya la vida un poco hecha. Y bueno..., por el momento..., voy haciendo cosas ¿no? (--) Intentaré seguir [buscando trabajo y la regularización], otro intento más [risa] y si no, bueno voy ya a repensarlo, lo pensaremos y veremos cómo... Porque no nos apetece muchos regresar ¿no? Ya todo lo que hemos sacrificado, todo lo que hemos vivido aquí, eso..., regresar y para nada, no sé... (Regina 1.)

7.4 Transnational everyday rhythms, connections and emotions: resynchronising time



(--) a flower shop which was next to the school where [grandchild] studied when she was small. After school we would pass by the flower shop and it was always: mom buy me these flowers to take them to the house. And a lot of flowers were bought there [laughter]. And they decorated the house.¹⁷⁸

[Extract from the discussion on the creative work.]

While transnational migration research has arguably marked an influential point in the discursive realm in migration studies, I have struggled somewhat with its actual implementation as a distinct and concrete analytical device. Inspired by Paolo Boccagni's (2012, 119; 2010, 202) division of 'transnationalism' into separate spheres or perspectives, I have adapted and built on his definitions in order to approach everyday transnationality from four different analytic entry points in the context of this study. The first sphere concerns active political, economic and institutional involvement across borders. The second is that of cross-border social and affective ties, obligations and contacts. The third perspective refers to symbolic and emotional ties with and nostalgia for people, routines and rhythms, and the

¹⁷⁸ *(--)* una tienda de flores y al lado hay el colegio donde [su nieto] estudió cuando era chiquitito. Cuando salía del colegio siempre: mamá, cómprame esas flores para llevarlas a la casa. Y fueron muchas las flores que compraron allí [risas]. Y decoraron su casa. [Extracto de la discusión sobre el trabajo creativo.]

fourth sphere considers identity orientations and perceptions. The fourth and last dimension may be tackled as a pre-condition for transnational social practices or as significant issue in its own right (Boccagni 2012, 119).

I follow here a change in focus towards the unseen, often unstated and unmeasurable features of transnational existence as a break from and complementing approaches more interested in the calculable political, economic etc. activities of transnational migrants. I tackle the personal, emotional and affective as well as the routine-like dimensions of the participants' transnational everyday lives and identifications. An intersectional framework is employed in order to shed light to the interrelations of social categories present in the negotiations and feelings of belonging. Time is used as an analytical device on its own in order to address in a tangible manner the different features present in these negotiations at the concrete level of everyday interactions, contacts, routines and rhythms.

Although the presence of (calculable) political, economic or associational activities was not a specific interest in my research approach in the first place, I consider it worthwhile to note that an 'active transnational life' (Portes 2003), referring for instance to entrepreneurship, political activity, involvement in clubs or charity linked to one's country of origin or consistent and/or substantial monetary support, was virtually non-existent in the accounts of the research participants (also Boccagni 2010, 190). There was generally also less interest towards current news from the country of origin than towards Spanish and Catalanian politics, economics and social affairs. The situation in Spain at the time of our encounters was indeed filled with critical discussions concerning for instance the economic crisis, cuts on public spending and changes in the legislation on migration.

I'm not sure if it's... How could I say this? I don't know if it's because of the pain that I feel for having come here. Of that: why have I come? I try not to know about things that go on in there [in the country of origin], which is something... (--) I keep informed a little bit, and the little I know, well, some things are getting better, other things are not. The work situation has not improved, it's the same it ever was, it's not getting better. Why would I keep informed? I... If my parents and my sisters and brothers are okay, that's enough, really I don't... (Sofia 1.)¹⁷⁹

Sofia presents above a disconnection from her country of origin and the political, economic and social events taking place there. Instead of a sign of strong identification with her host society and sense of belonging, however, this seems to

¹⁷⁹ No sé, no sé si es el... ¿Cómo lo diré? No sé si tengo ese..., por el dolor de haberme venido de allá. De: ¿por qué me he venido? Trato de no enterarme más de allá, algo que... (--) Voy enterándome poco y de lo poco que me entero bueno van bien algunas cosas, otras no, tampoco mejora mucho lo del trabajo, está así, lo mismo, no mejora. ¿Para qué enterarme? Yo... Si mis padres y mis hermanos están bien eso es suficiente, la verdad que no. (Sofia 1.)

reflect rather insecure belonging and an uncertainty of what the consequences of her decision to migrate will turn out to be. This disconnection also seems to be a sign of resignation. She feels nothing will ever change for the better in her country of origin, for instance in terms of work opportunities. Sofia limits her contacts and interest towards the country of origin inside the realm of her family and relatives. The news she wants to get from her country of origin are predominantly news about how her parents and siblings are.

Consequently, the second dimension of transnational everyday life referring to cross-border social and affective ties, contacts and obligations was very present in the participants' accounts. The literature on women's transnational migration demonstrates the ways in which migrant women manage distance and time and practice their roles as mothers, daughters or grandmothers on the global stage (Zhou 2012; Takeda 2012; Ryan 2008; Svašek 2008; Hondagneu-Sotelo & Avila 1997). The participants in this research maintained contact with family members living in the country of origin or in other countries through telephone calls, Skype sessions, emails, Facebook and visits. None of the participants had under-aged children residing in the country of origin, nor were they economically responsible for their family members in the country of origin. However, what affected almost all of them in one way or another, and was discussed at length in the interview encounters, was their caring role as daughters. Up until more recently, this has been a rather neglected role in the studies on transnationality (Bastia 2015, 122; Takeda 2012, 25). The experiences of time stagnation or 'permanent temporariness' were discussed by the participants also in the context of not being able to assume different generational responsibilities, for instance taking care of one's parents in the country of origin who were getting old or were not well.

If I had a good job, economically well and stable you know, I would bring my parents here to live with me. But at the moment I cannot do that, but yes I have this idea. They are older... (--) My greatest worry is that they will be left alone. I would like them to be with me. (Sofia 1.)¹⁸⁰

In the above account, Sofia struggles with the fact that she is unable to look after her parents residing in her country of origin. Her parents were getting more elderly year by year and their wellbeing was of great concern to her. For Sofia there was no possibility to visit or plan ahead in any concrete way in this respect. This made the consequences of migration and her migration status and work situation all the more unbearable. Her account speaks of the ways in which conditioned autonomy of movement, uncontrollable time stagnation caused by migration regulations and

¹⁸⁰ Si yo tuviera un buen trabajo digamos, económicamente bien y estable pues, yo los traería a mis padres aquí a vivir conmigo. Pero de momento no puedo, pero sí tengo esa idea. Es que también ellos están mayores... (--) Mi mayor preocupación son ellos cuando se queden solos. Y yo quisiera que estén conmigo, eso sí. (Sofia 1.)

bureaucracy, life course advancement and transnational intergenerational roles and responsibilities collide.

The emotional distress of ‘transnational daughterhood’ described in the account deriving from a consciousness of the difficulty and failure in fulfilling one’s family obligations is also reflective of gender roles. The gendered family expectations and obligations do not become irrelevant in migration (Pessar & Mahler 2003). While this reflects the idea of women as primary caretakers in family dynamics in general, it also shows migration as a gendered experience (Takeda 2012, 25, 27; Ryan 2008, 305–309). Because of long distances and lack of resources and/or the irregularity of migration status, many participants were not able to take care of their family obligations as they would have wished or felt obliged to do, and the awareness of this inability led to feelings of worry, sadness, anxiety and guilt (also Takeda 2012, 22).

I mean, you can miss your mother, eh, after your wedding because you don’t see her for a week or for a month, you know? But to come to a place and know that... that while you don’t have the legality, you cannot go back and see your family, or while you don’t have the money, you cannot go back and see your family... (--) So you think about it, one year goes by, then two, then three..., and I can’t go back. The only thing I can do is to ask, ask to the one who is in all places and say: look, take care of her, keep her safe so that when I go back, I can see her. (Bárbara 2.)¹⁸¹

Bárbara’s above extract of ‘transnational daughterhood’ speaks of a time paradox of living in a situation of time suspension, while simultaneously being acutely aware that time as such does not stop. Your loved ones grow old and “opportunities are missed which never come back” (Anderson et al. 2009, 7; also Ahmad 2008, 313). The presence of unachievable time (and space) is palpable in the extract. Bárbara had a close relationship with her mother and she spoke a great deal of her in our interview encounters. She considered her mother an important role model and a source of inspiration and strength. Her mother was not well and she had been anxious for quite a while in the face of the prospect of not being able to see her again. She describes above how time passes, year after year, while she is unable to go back to visit, either because of her migration status or because of a lack of resources, or both. More than merely a separation from someone or something, her account describes an absence that continues to occupy tangible emotional space, assembling what Roberta Rubenstein (2001, 5) has termed the ‘presence of absence’,

¹⁸¹ A ver, que a tu madre la puedes extrañar, eh, una semana que no la ves, cuando recién te casas ¿no?, hasta un mes, que no la ves. Pero, llegar a un lugar y, y saber que..., que mientras no tengas la legalidad, no puedes volver a ver a tu familia, o mientras no consigues el dinero para volverte, no puedes tampoco ver a tu familia... (--) Entonces, claro, el solamente de imaginarme que pasa un año, pasan dos, pasan tres..., y que no pueda[s] ir o volver a tu país. Lo único que te queda pues es, es pedir a, al que está en todas partes y decirle: mira, cuídamela que..., guárdamela para que, para que cuando yo vuelva, la pueda ver. (Bárbara 2.)

a haunted longing and grief for something of profound value that might potentially be irrevocably lost.

In addition to filling their roles as daughters and carers for their parents, the participants also discussed the importance of creating and maintaining ties between their children living in Barcelona and the grandparents and other kin living in the country of origin or somewhere else. The following extracts from Rocío and María reflect upon their intermediary roles as establishers and nourishers of inter-generational relationships in their transnational families and kin through transnational connections and communication.

My child was raised through Skype, she was playing with her uncles and aunts virtually, a lot of looking at each other through the computer, commenting things, writing letters occasionally and so on (-- contact through email or Facebook and on the phone, my cousins, my uncles and aunts, to know a bit how life is going there... (Rocío 1.)¹⁸²

And well, my communication with people over there, it's not very constant, you know. I mean my main contact and the one of [her child], is my mother, so we talk eh... But it's not like we'd have a fixed date, or... It's very spontaneous but it's constant, you know. There's the instinct, you know. And well [her child] learned to talk here, so every time, of course, the grandmothers, they're surprised, you know, of the way she talks, how she's growing... I mean of course they say: look, I'm missing out on this. But I mean, as long as you're alright, it's okay, you know. (María 2.)¹⁸³

These two accounts show a rather constant communication mainly through phone calls, Skype sessions and Facebook with family members in the country of origin. In these communicative moments of mutual sharing, relatives living in the country of origin are able to talk with their grandchild or niece or nephew, see how they are growing and learning new things and even play with them. Rocío, in fact, phrases the importance of transnational connections and contacts in her child's life by saying that she was "raised through Skype".

María's account, however, opens itself to another type of reading as well. While transnational contact-keeping is arguably composed of moments of recognising and

¹⁸² Mi hijo creció por Skype, jugando con sus tíos virtualmente y siempre son mucho por Skype, mucho verse a través del ordenador, comentarse, escribirse alguna cartita y tal (-- contacto a través de email o de Facebook o el teléfono, mis primos, mis tíos, saber un poco cómo va evolucionando la vida... (Rocío 1.)

¹⁸³ Y bueno con respecto también a la comunicación allí y eso, no es una cosa demasiado constante ¿no? O sea mi mayor comunicación y de [su hijo] allí es mi madre, entonces hablamos alguna cosa, eh... Pero tampoco tenemos ni un día fijo, ni un, es muy espontáneo pero siempre es constante ¿no? Está el instinto ¿no? Y bueno [su hijo] bien, aprendió a hablar aquí entonces cada vez claro, las abuelas se sorprenden ¿no? Que habla de una manera, que va creciendo... O sea que claro dicen: mira me estoy perdiendo de esto. Pero bueno, con tal de que estés bien, no pasa nada ¿no? (María 2.)

strengthening a bond, they are also encounters where the different environments and distance become tangible, for instance through concretely showing how time has passed since the last session and what has been missed meanwhile, or due to different vocabulary and accent in the relative's speech. In Regina's account below, virtually all family contacts are placed on the internet and they seem to be fairly frequent and informative, as she presents Facebook as the meeting point for her "dispersed" family.

It's like, everybody [in her family] is so dispersed [laughter], so the only way to see each other is through internet, you know? Through Facebook. It's like a meeting point for all of us, you know? To congratulate each other on birthdays, to say hi, to send photos, to know how things are, and, for example my cousin, she's in [another country], so to know if she already graduated, this and that [laughter]... Everything is there. If the child was already born, or another one, if someone got married, if someone didn't... (--) It really has brought our family back together, you know? Since we're all dispersed. (Regina 2.)¹⁸⁴

Participants' accounts, however, also questioned the idea of a self-evidently frequent and active transnational connectivity and communication.

We have these kind of video conferences, so yes, we see each other, or we call by phone. Yes, we're always in contact (--) Once a month. Yes, it's not... It costs as well and..., it's not possible [to be in contact more frequently]. (Sofía 1.)¹⁸⁵

We talked over the phone, we wrote emails and so on. Although there was a time when I couldn't write daily because in [the place where she was living] there were no emails [no internet connection], nothing. So we called by phone, weekly, because the phone calls are expensive. Weekly, every week to know what she was doing, how she was. (Vanessa 1.)¹⁸⁶

In the participants' accounts, several factors potentially decreased the quantity and frequency of transnational telecommunication connections, such as time difference, financial cost and lack of access to a computer and/or internet (also Boccagni 2010,

¹⁸⁴ Como te digo que todo mundo está por todos lados [risa], pues la única forma donde nos vemos es por internet ¿no? Por el Facebook. Es, es un punto de encuentro para todos, ¿no? Y nos felicitamos cumpleaños, nos saludamos, nos enviamos fotos, nos enteramos de cómo van nuestras cosas y, y por ejemplo, mi prima está en [otro país], que si ya se graduó, que sí esto, que sí [risa]... Todo por ahí, todo por ahí. Que si ya nació un hijo, que si ya nació el otro, que si se casó, que si no se casó... (--) Y la verdad es que sí es, sí es una herramienta que, que nos ha vuelto a unir a toda la familia ¿no? Que estamos todos dispersos. (Regina 2.)

¹⁸⁵ Estamos como en video conferencia, entonces sí, nos vemos, o llamamos por teléfono. Sí, siempre estamos en contacto. (--) Una vez al mes. Sí, tampoco no... También cuesta y no..., no se puede [estar en contacto más a menudo]. (Sofía 1.)

¹⁸⁶ Hablamos por teléfono, escribíamos mails y todo. Aunque hubo una temporada que no podía escribir diariamente porque en [el lugar donde estaba trabajando y viviendo] no había mails [no había conexión internet], no había nada. Entonces llamábamos, semanalmente, porque llamar sale muy caro. Semanalmente, todas las semanas, para saber qué estaba haciendo, cómo estaba. (Vanessa 1.)

190; Svašek 2008, 216). The latter often had to do with elderly family members in the country of origin who did not want to use the internet or did not know how. At times, the participants themselves did not have sufficient or constant access to a computer or the internet because of lack of resources or in case of employment in remote areas of the country (also Parreñas 2005, 329). The transnational contacts of the participants thus varied in terms of their mode and frequency. Transnational practices are not unified or stable, because they are importantly shaped by the actual geographical distance, time differences, financial constraints and migration status (Takeda 2012; Svašek 2008; Cwerner 2001). The celebratory attitudes towards transnational life and contacts often neglect the power of states and overlook individual migrants' financial, social and emotional costs (Bailey 2009; Menjívar 2006, 1021–1022; Parreñas 2005; Salih 2001; Hondagneu-Sotelo & Avila 1997).

In addition to the quantity, frequency and manner of transnational contacts and communication, I wish to pay attention to the quality of transnational connections and the support these are able to provide. This is important from the point of view of migrants' quality of life and personal coping as well as from the point of view of migrants' resources and possibilities for integration. The accounts of the participants were twofold in this respect.

1 I mean, very much on the surface of what is really going on here, you know?

0 And why do you think that is, why not...

1 Why not talk about them [the problems]?

0 Yes.

1 Because I think that a person suffers more when she knows that another person is suffering and she cannot do anything. Because when I hear about things that are happening in my country, with my mother, with my brothers and sisters, I suffer here because I feel powerless, you know? I'd like to be there at least, I don't know, to help, to do something, you know? So... I have never wanted to give them that burden, to no one of my family, you know? They know very superficially about my problems, but thoroughly never, never. I don't tell them. (Bárbara 1.)¹⁸⁷

Bárbara states above that when she is in contact with her family in the country of origin, she merely tells in a "superficial" manner about her life in Barcelona and does not really reveal what is going on. The account reflects a general understanding

¹⁸⁷ 1 O sea, muy por encima de la realidad de que se vive realmente aquí ¿no?

0 Y ¿por qué crees que, que es así?, ¿por qué no...?

1 ¿Por qué no sacarlos [los problemas]?

0 Ajá.

1 Porque yo creo que una persona sufre más cuando sabe que otra persona está sufriendo y no puede hacer nada. Porque cuando yo sé cosas que están pasando en mi país, con mi madre, con mis hermanos, yo sufro acá, porque me siento impotente ¿me entiendes? Y quisiera estar ahí para por lo menos, no sé, ayudar, hacer algo ¿no? Entonces... Yo nunca he querido darle ese, ese afán a ninguno de mi familia ¿sabes? Ellos saben muy por encima los problemas, pero a fondo, nunca, nunca. No les cuento. (Bárbara 1.)

in the literature on transnational connections, which suggests that migrants tend to exaggerate the positive sides of their lives in migration or at least remain silent about the more challenging and problematic aspects and intentionally leave out challenges and worries faced in their everyday lives from their transnational communications (Wright 2012, 475; Boccagni 2010, 193–194; Escandell & Tapias 2010, 413). Bárbara explains this lack of “sincerity” with limited possibilities to offer help and assistance. She sees no reason to cause worry or anxiety in her family, since they are ultimately unable to offer assistance from afar (also Fedyuk 2012, 295). Katie Wright (2012, 475) stresses in her article on Peru-based non-migrant counterparts in transnational communication, however, that despite this strategy of “superficiality”, described by Bárbara above, immediate relatives often have a realistic understanding of the difficulties their family members face in migration, since these are, among other things, “perceived in their voice”.

The only thing is that they [family members in the country of origin] don't tell me anything about what they do, about the bad things that happen, or those kinds of situations, so that they would not worry me, I don't know... (--). If I have problems with my husband [here], I don't tell her [mother in the country of origin]. Why would I? (Luz 1.)¹⁸⁸

In the above account, Luz shows frustration over the fact that she feels that her family members in her country of origin do not tell her about the problems or troubles they might be facing. At the same time, she states that she does not disclose her personal worries, such as marital problems, to her mother residing in the country of origin. Her question at the end of the quotation demonstrates that she quite simply does not see any reason to do so. In our encounters, Luz framed her migration within the context of a process of personal independence as well as a sacrifice for a better future for herself, her husband and their children and for her family in the country of origin (also Wright 2012, 480–481). Migration had been a life decision of which she was now constrained, and able, to bear the consequences. This seems to require conscious emotional management (Svašek 2010, 866).

Your family relations also change and mature when you're away [from the country of origin]. [There is] this healthy distance which makes you view things from other perspectives and you seek support from your family and find strength in them in another way, you know. Not like when you're close and you have to gather for a meal together every Sunday and it's more of a ritual than a real closeness. But the distance, time, different rhythms, the time difference in which you may coincide for a moment and talk, perhaps on fewer occasions, at least in my case, I'm telling this from my experience, it forces you to be much more concrete, there's no time to lose, you know? Look, this is happening to me... You look for a more sincere support without so much...

¹⁸⁸ Lo único que no me cuentan nada de lo que hacen, de cosas malas que pasan, o de alguna situación, no me cuentan, para no preocuparme, no sé... (--). Si tengo algún problema con mi esposo, no le cuento. ¿Para qué? (Luz 1.)

Because you don't have the possibility of closeness or to loose or waste time in a more relaxed way, you know? But they are there and you are here and the connection is more like..., even though it's more distant and scarce but it's like more direct. At least in my case. (--)

In fact you become closer in spite of the distance, it's like a bit crazy, you know? (Rocío 2.)¹⁸⁹

In this extract, a very different quality is presented of the transnational connections with one's family members across the differences of time and space. Rocío talks in fact of an increased sincerity or straightforwardness in her transnational relationship and contacts with her family members. She explains this change with the fact that the connections become stripped of mundane routines and rituals and a closeness taken for granted. She explains how the spatial distance and the different rhythms as well as the time difference, which all need an effort to be made coincide, actually intensify the long-distance moment spent together, and the things that are said and shared seem to carry more weight and become more sincere. There is no time to waste, as she says.

There were therefore differences to the quantity, frequency and quality of transnational connections and to how transnational affective ties and support were experienced. In some cases, ties were comprised of a highly fragmented and selective flow of information (also Boccagni 2010, 194) and able to offer a thin mutual support. This may have been a way to show responsibility for one's migration decision or a way to save face in the eyes of family, kin and community in the country of origin. At the level of family relationships, however, this was also importantly in order to prevent suffering in the face of events, situations and circumstances which were considered impossible to be managed at a distance, rather than simply wishing to transmit an idealised picture of one's conditions overseas (also Boccagni 2010, 194; Escandell & Tapias 2010, 413). Yet there were also accounts of strong transnational support and experiences of family ties and contact becoming in fact more direct, intense and supportive due to migration.

Economic resources play an important part in shaping the nature of transnational connections (also Parreñas 2005). The quantity of calls and the possibilities to use the internet, let alone pay visits, all have their connections with economic resources.

¹⁸⁹ Que también cambia y madura la relación de familia cuando estas afuera que cuando estas cerca. Ese distanciamiento sano de ver las cosas de perspectiva también y con una cosa hace que te apoyes en la familia y cojas una fuerza de manera distinta ¿no? No de la misma manera cuando estas cerca, por ejemplo en el mismo país que habitúas comer todos los domingos y se hace más como un ritual cotidiano que un acercamiento real. En cambio la distancia, el tiempo, los ritmos distintos, la diferencia de horarios que te hace coincidir en algún momento y hablar a lo mejor menos veces de las que son, por lo menos en mi caso, estoy hablando de mi experiencia, hace que seas mucho más concreto, mucho más sincero, no hay tiempo que perder ¿no? Mira me está pasando esto... Buscas un apoyo más sincero sin tanta... Porque no tienes esa oportunidad del roce y de desperdiciar o gastar el tiempo de una manera más relajada ¿no? Sino que ellos están allá y tú estás acá y hay una conexión como..., aunque es más distante y más esporádica pero es más directa. Por lo menos en mi caso. (--)

De hecho te vuelves más familiar a pesar de la distancia, es como muy loco ¿no? (Rocío 2.)

Travelling, as has been dealt with earlier, was also related to one's migration status and the consequent possibilities of and limitations to movement. Many participants considered transnational connections to be rather poor surrogates for actual physical proximity (also Boccagni 2010, 193, 200). Being able to concretely show, experience together and share aspects of one's life in migration became possible if a relative or a friend was able to visit Barcelona.

Economic resources and time-space autonomy more generally had a rather straightforward effect on the frequency and quantity of contacts, but they might also affect the content or the quality of them. It becomes arguably easier, and makes more sense, to talk about adversities and difficulties, when there are resources through which it is possible to offer help and assistance, for instance money, information, contacts or even visits. Difficulties are also more easily taken up when the prospect of an "unsuccessful return" due to these adversities does not represent an important financial loss and a grave failure. Many participants had borrowed money from their family members in order to cover the expenses of their migration. Whether this money was considered a debt that needed to be paid back or whether it was conceived of as "normal support" with no necessity to be reimbursed also had its connection to the general economic resources of the family and their social class position.

The third sphere of everyday transnationality, i.e. accounts of nostalgia, were as well related more with concrete former everyday milieu than to any nationalistic attributes of belonging (also Boccagni 2010, 188). The feelings of nostalgia had to do importantly with the reminiscence of different sensory features of daily lives in the country of origin, such as colours, tastes, smells, light and sounds.

Food represented an important and concrete aspect of the symbolic and emotional ties which the participants had and maintained with their countries of origin (also Cwerner 2001, 24). Food could "take you right there", through space and time.



I know how to prepare certain dishes [of traditional food from the country of origin], not all of it but... And all the time you can find more ingredients here as well. (--) There are also restaurants now which offer traditional dishes [from the country of origin]. So whenever you feel nostalgic, you just go and eat one of those meals and that's it, it takes you right there, it's like my injection. (Miriam 2.)¹⁹⁰

In the above account from Miriam, food is presented as an important means to actively maintain an emotional link with one's country of origin (also Brown 2011, 235). Food can also be a central feature and a distinctive factor determining (national) identity and representing (national) pride, as in the following account from Regina where she makes a connection between national identity and an appreciation of certain type of flavours, dishes and food.

The food, the typical food from my country, I miss that so much, so much [laughter]. (--) Yes, it's very special, you don't find it in other places because it's spicy, it has these flavours a bit..., really strange, you know? For other people. It's not so easy for other people to like it, you know? (Regina 2.)¹⁹¹

Food and its associated practices thus play a key role in the affirmation and expression of identity (Brown 2011, 235). Food also bears a dimension of everyday rituals and customs, which, when shared and mutually valued and respected, create a sense of belonging and community. Food represents affections, and it is therefore about belonging at the level of close human relationships, as is apparent in the following account.

The food, well, at first it was worse because there wasn't any [restaurants or typical ingredients from the country of origin] but now you can find anything anywhere. So, it's not so bad. (--) The thing is, do you know what it is, it's that... I cook [traditional dishes from the country of origin] in my house, but it's me who does it. So it doesn't taste the same when you have to make it yourself, to eat it yourself, than when someone else makes it. So, have I eaten it here? Yes I have. What I really miss, is to eat it when someone else has made it. Because whenever I eat it, I eat because I've made it myself [laughter]. So it's a bit like missing my sister and my mother... Uy, uy! Wouldn't there be anyone here who could cook it for me [laughter]? Every once in a while. (Nelli 2.)¹⁹²

¹⁹⁰ Sé preparar ciertas cosas, no todas pero... También, o sea, cada vez aquí se consiguen más cosas, más ingredientes. (--) Aquí también ya hay sitios que venden comida [de su país de origen]. Entonces, nada, cuando estás nostálgico vete a una de estas comidas y ya, y transpórtate, ya está, es como mi inyección. (Miriam 2.)

¹⁹¹ La comida, la comida típica en mi país, que la extraño mucho, eso sí [risa]. (--) Sí, y es muy especial, no la encuentras en otro sitio porque es picante, tiene sabores un poco..., muy raros ¿no? Para los demás. No es fácil que a, que alguien que no es de ahí le guste ¿no? (Regina 2.)

¹⁹² La comida pues mira, al principio era peor porque no había nada [restaurantes o ingredientes típicos de su país de origen], pero ahora te encuentras de todo, en todos lados. Entonces, ya no es tanto. (--) Lo que pasa... ¿Sabes qué pasa? Que yo... Esto [la comida típica de su país de origen] yo

Nelli's account above shows how food is not merely about the ingredients or the specific dishes, but centrally about sharing and having a sense of connection. Food stands for other things, such as a common family history. The act of preparing traditional dishes and eating together is presented as a chance to share and appreciate a connection and commonality. Food "does not taste the same" when it lacks this purpose and the presence of these connections. Nelli's above account of yearning for affections and connection comes close to what Roberta Rubenstein (2001, 5–6) has named 'cultural mourning', with which she refers to the loss of something with collective or communal associations, an emotional displacement from home, community and cultural everyday practices that contribute to one's identity. Yearly festivities were also brought up as examples of time routines which were connected to affections and belonging.

That's the negative thing, that your family is far away. During festivities for instance, when you see that everyone gets together with their family, it's... Sometimes my friends say: come with us. But you go and then it's worse. Because you go and there's the grandmother, mother, father, grandfather, sister, nephews... And that's it. It gets you down, my god! I should have stayed home with my dog on my couch watching the television. Really! (--)
Because you think: how is my family now? You know? You'd like to be with your family. (--)
People invite you with all their good intentions: come, come. No thanks, don't worry. I'll pass around your place tomorrow and we'll have a drink. Because it kills you. (--)
That's the most... The affections. The worst of all are the affections. The rest of it you can manage. (Nelli 2.)¹⁹³

Above, Nelli gives a tangible account of her transnational experience of yearly festivities, such as Christmas. She gets invited from time to time to spend these holidays with a friend, and whenever she has taken them up on these well-intended offers, she seems to have regretted it. It has only made her painstakingly aware of the distance between herself and her own family in her country of origin and made her think even more about them, the ways in which they are spending the festivities and how they are.

lo hago en mi casa, pero lo hago yo. Entonces, no te sabe igual cuando lo tienes que hacer tú, para comértelo tú, a cuando te lo hacen. Entonces, ¿yo lo he comido acá? Pues sí. Lo que echo de menos es comerlo hecho por otra persona. Porque siempre que lo como, lo como porque lo hago yo [risa]. Entonces es un poco echarle de menos a mi hermana, a mi mamá... ¡Uy, uy! ¿No estará alguna acá que me lo haga? [risa]. De vez en cuando. (Nelli 2.)

¹⁹³ Lo negativo es eso, que tienes a la familia lejos. La época de fiestas, por ejemplo, cuando ves que se juntan todas las familias, pues... A veces, los amigos te dicen: vente, vente. Pero tú vas allí y es peor todavía. Porque vas y está la abuela, la madre, el padre, el abuelo, la hermana, los sobrinos... Y ya. ¡Te va entrando un bajón, madre mía! Tenía que haberme quedado con mi perro en el sofá, mirando la tele. ¡Claro! (--)
Porque piensas: ¿cómo estará mi familia ahora? ¿Sabes? Te gustaría estar con tu familia. (--)
Cuando la gente con su buena fe te quiere abrazar y: vente, vente. No, no te preocupes. Nos vemos pasado mañana, yo me paso y nos tomamos una copita. Porque si voy me... Vamos, que me mata, me mata. (--)
Es eso, más... Los afectos. Lo peor de todo es, son los afectos, lo demás pues lo vas matizando. (Nelli 2.)

In general I don't think that nostalgia or feeling nostalgic would be a very important thing in my life [here]. It's not something I would be thinking about all the time. But sometimes yes, I mean, sometimes, on Sundays, or in some situations, wow, I can get so caught up with it all of a sudden, it happens, of course. It keeps adding up and adding up until it: puff. (Catalina 2.)¹⁹⁴

In the above account, Catalina first states that she is not so much concerned with nostalgia. Yet it appears as something which she pushes away for certain periods of time until it periodically invades her. As apart from the busy work week, Sundays are quieter days often also considered family time, and Catalina seems almost to have a transnational routine-like relationship with her 'Sundays of yearning'. This 'transnational routine of mourning' might also be considered as a practice of mediating and traversing the gap between longing and belonging (Rubenstein 2001, 6).

*My land?
My land is you.*

*¿Mi tierra?
Mi tierra eres tú.*

*My people?
My people are you.*

*¿Mi gente?
Mi gente eres tú.*

*Exile and death for me are
where you're not.*

*El destierro y la muerte para mí están
adonde no estés tú.*

*And my life? Tell me, my love.
What is it, if it's not you?*

*¿Y mi vida? Díme, mi vida.
¿Qué es, si no eres tú?*

[Extract from the creative work, English translation by the researcher.]

The participants' accounts included also a great deal of consideration of the way their lives were 'back there back then' (Boccagni 2010, 190). Typically, the desire to return or recover "home" is regarded as an expression of a regressive wish to retreat to a less complicated moment in history or personal experience (Rubenstein 2001, 3). This type of nostalgia was often described in idyllic tones as an existence free from stress, worries and responsibilities, living a more relaxed and "natural" life. This was compared with living now an existence filled with stress, work routine, haste and worries. These experiences reflect the moment in life course when these participants had migrated, since their migration had coincided with other changes in life such as getting married, moving away from home, having children, finishing

¹⁹⁴ En general para mí no está muy presente el tema de la nostalgia o de la añoranza no. No es algo que todo el tiempo lo tenga enfrente, no. Pero a veces sí, o sea a veces, o sea los domingos o en algunas situaciones, wow, por ahí me agarran unas angustias, que me pasa, claro. Voy juntando, voy juntando, voy juntando y por allí llega un momento en el que: puff. (Catalina 2.)

studies or entering work life. It also refers to the aggravating effect migration has on these life course changes, since in a new environment and far away from the support networks of one's family and friends and when in a precarious work or migration status situation these responsibilities evidently took on another toll.

[Here] you live with a lot of stress, over there I never had stress. At least, when it comes to migration, you know, like: why did I leave? (Magda 2.)¹⁹⁵

Magda refers here still to another layer of worries and stress brought about by migration. While this stress has to do with migration administration issues, it also has to do with a personal evaluation of migration being "worthwhile". This is a continuous space-time exercise of trying to figure out how things might have been had one stayed in one's country of origin or decided to move at another time or to another place.

Yet, the accounts were not only of experiences of loss and yearning or a nostalgic reading of rhythms and routines but importantly of adaptation, reformulation and creation of new "ways to be". The participants talked about maintaining earlier temporal routines and structures, looking for ways to restore traditions and creating new ones. There were activities with co-nationals during different national festivities celebrated in the country of origin. Also festivities, such as Mother's Day, were celebrated according to the calendar of the country of origin and with traditions, such as different traditional dishes, emanating from there. This may be interpreted as an attempt to reproduce and maintain vivid earlier social worlds, i.e. habits, values and life styles (Bocagni 2010, 199–200). In other words, it is an attempt to 'resynchronise time' (Cwerner 2001, 23), to fix an asynchronised temporal existence through maintaining, recreating or adjusting earlier rhythms. "New" everyday rhythms and ways to be were also actively processed, worked and reflected upon, as tackled by Rocío in the following extract.

And something as simple and basic as the way you speak and communicate, everyday expressions... When you arrive you realise that there are things that seem out of place. (--) So you start thinking about it and the first thing is that: right, I'll continue to be me. Because it doesn't mean that you should stop being you, but you start to reformulate things. First you see yourself like in a mirror, because as you see the other person's reactions and how she acts, you start to understand yourself. That's one thing. And then you have to make the decision: ok, I'll keep being me, even though at times it makes me feel uncomfortable because I know that it's out of place. So you start to work a bit the way you are, you know. And to Europeanise yourself. What I have done is to maintain a bit my essence, what I am, but knowing how to determine the contexts where you have to [make more effort in order to] communicate. When

¹⁹⁵ Vives muy estresada, y yo allá no tenía estrés. Por lo menos no en los temas de migración, ¿no? de que: ¿por qué me fui a otro lado? (Magda 2.)

in [country of origin] I think I never had to formulate these things, I was the way I was because I was in the context I was. That's what I mean by Europeanisation: you start to reformulate a bit also who you are and how you do things in different contexts. (Rocío 1.)¹⁹⁶

The experience of 'otherness' and changing contexts often makes one aware and self-reflective about one's own positionings and (temporal) dispositions (Gruner-Domic 2011, 476; Cwerner 2001, 19). In the above extract, Rocío considers the changes, adjustments and reformulations she has made in terms of her everyday rhythms central to the negotiations around being in or out of place. These may refer to a plethora of concrete everyday encounters and ways of being, such as different codes of conduct, rules concerning politeness, rhythm of speech, physical distance, pace of walking or norms on queuing. The experience of feeling "out of place" is described by Rocío as looking at oneself in a mirror. In the conduct and the reactions of one's surroundings one sees oneself. One becomes acutely aware of things one scarcely paid attention to before. Rocío states that she does not want to change what she considers to be her "essence". Yet she seems to move about "measuring", consciously or unconsciously, what is acceptable and appropriate, where and when.

I mean there's a certain rhythm that is presented to you, of life in fact, of talk, of thought, of manner, that you have to get adapted to in a way, you know? (--)
The rhythms of the city, to put it like that. That now that I live this from the inside, I feel that I have internalised that. Because when my friends come to visit, I realise that what I used to reject at first is what I'm doing myself now. Like..., it's like I'm already inside this: come on let's go quickly because we have to..., you know. Or that type of things, you know. (Rocío 1.)¹⁹⁷

Here Rocío refers to the new rhythms of everyday life that she seems to have adopted almost without noticing. The fact that she now lives other times and rhythms

¹⁹⁶ Y algo tan sencillo, por irme a lo más básico, lo que es el lenguaje y la comunicación en la expresión cotidiana, cuando llegas aquí, empiezas a enfrentarte con que hay cosas que se ven fuera de lugar. (--)
Entonces, ahí te empiezas a plantear, como una primera cosa que es: vale, sigo siendo yo. Porque tampoco es que tienes que dejar de ser, pero te empiezas a replantear. Primero te ves como en un espejo, porque al ver a la otra persona como reacciona, como se desenvuelve normalmente te das cuenta de cómo eres tú. Eso por un lado. Y entonces luego viene la decisión de decir: vale, lo sigo manteniendo aunque a veces eso me haga sentir incómoda porque sé que está fuera de lugar. Empiezas a trabajar un poco con esa forma de ser tuya ¿no? Y Europeizarte. Yo lo que he hecho es mantenerme un poco mi esencia, y de lo que soy pero saber determinar cuáles son los contextos en los que tienes que comunicarte. Cuando a lo mejor estando en [país de origen] nunca me lo había planteado, siempre era como era porque estaba en el contexto que era. A eso me refiero con Europeizarse: comienzas a replantearlo un poco incluso como eres tú y en qué contexto funcionas de determinadas maneras. (Rocío 1.)

¹⁹⁷ O sea se te impone un cierto ritmo incluso de vida, y de dialogar, de pensar, de tener humor, que tienes un poco que irte adaptando, ¿no? (--)
Los ritmos de ciudad por decir de alguna manera. Que ahora ya que lo vivo desde dentro, siento que me he metido eso, porque cuando vienen amigos a visitarme, me doy cuenta que aquello que yo renegaba en algún momento es lo que estoy haciendo ahora. Como..., es como que ya encajé en ese: pero vamos rápido porque tenemos que..., ¿sabes? O ese tipo de cosas ¿no? (Rocío 1.)

in the sense of a hurried pace of walking and trying to advance as quickly as possible, becomes apparent when her friends from the country of origin come for a visit. A new pace of life separates her from them and hence from the life “over there”, and she is located in the host society in terms of her everyday rhythms (Cwerner 2001, 19). The attitudes and rhythms she struggled with at the beginning of her time in Barcelona are now perceived by her friends as equally odd, but now in Rocío’s own behavior. Catalina continues on this point in the following account.

Two weeks ago two of my friends from [country of origin] visited me. (--) They made me notice things that I haven’t seen that I’ve changed, that I’ve adapted, or whatever. And I in fact loved it because they were saying for example that they noticed that... We went out to a bar, and they told me that I had been really, like direct, like I don’t know, I don’t notice it myself, but I think that I used to be more like: well, I don’t know, maybe yes, I suppose I should tell you that, but I don’t know... And well here it’s more like: give me a *café con leche*. [There’s] no thank you, no nothing, just that. Or at work when I send an email: hello, how are you, good morning, I’m writing to you because this and that, thank you, best of greetings. And they respond: the answer, bye. That’s it. And it doesn’t mean that... It’s just, to the point, and that’s it. And I think it’s good as well, I mean, I like it, I felt like, when my friends told me that, it was like: oh look at that. I hadn’t noticed that, I mean, that now I have some of that. I mean, to tell you the truth I like it. (Catalina 2.)¹⁹⁸

Catalina has also had her changed rhythms pointed out by friends who have come to visit Barcelona from her country of origin. In the above account, Catalina uses the differences in courtesy rules and turn-taking as examples (also Cwerner 2001, 19). According to her, in her country of origin it is expected that certain polite phrases are exchanged when ordering a coffee or at the beginning of an email message, while in the everyday encounters with people in Barcelona this is not considered necessary, but people seem to get more directly to the point. Although Catalina had not noticed herself that the mode and rhythm of her communication had changed in this respect, it does not appear to be an unpleasant surprise when her friends point this out to her. The fact that she has changed, that she now has “some of that”, is presented in a positive manner.

¹⁹⁸ Bueno hace dos semanas vinieron dos amigas de [país de origen]. (--) Ellas me devolvían cosas que yo por allí no me doy cuenta. Que he cambiado, que he adoptado, que no sé qué. Y la verdad que me encantó porque me decían por ejemplo que les llamaba la atención... Fuimos a un par de bares así y me decían como que he estado muy..., como muy directa, como no sé qué eh... Claro, yo no me doy cuenta pero creo que antes yo no era así, como más: ay no sé, bueno quizás sí, capaz, debería decirte que, pero no sé... Y bueno digo como que es una manera acá que es más así aquí de: dame un café con leche. Ni gracias ni nada, ya, sí, ya. O en el trabajo que mando por allí un mail: hola, qué tal, buen día, te escribo porque tal, no sé qué, gracias, saludos. Y me responden: fíjate en tal lado, tal cosa, tal cosa, punto. Ya está. Y no significa que... A lo concreto, o sea, es así. Y en algún punto está bueno eso, o sea me gusta, me ha dado como eso que me decían mis amigas que: ah mira. No me he dado cuenta de eso, yo, de que algunas cosas tengo de eso ahora. Digo, pero la verdad que me gusta. (Catalina 2.)



At first when I had just arrived I used to always look around me because I came from that anxiety, with that stress, that they're going to take my neckless, my wallet, so I was tensed, I walked and..., you now? Or if I went out a bit late, I was afraid, because someone might come and assault me you know? So, but, I saw that people were walking relaxed, crossing the streets without problems, at night time, during day time, with their children, there wasn't any stress. And I started to calm down a bit. (Gloria 3.)¹⁹⁹

I still have the..., I'm still programmed for that, you know? To say: be careful with this, pay attention to that... Because you get used to living like that, you know? You get used to always looking out... (--). For everything that might happen to you. You look out for the danger, you now? (Regina 2.)²⁰⁰

In the two accounts above, Gloria and Regina describe the differences in their everyday modes in the country of origin compared to Barcelona. Gloria explains how after arriving in Barcelona she used to walk around feeling nervous over the fact that that someone might come and rob or assault her. She was surprised to see that people seemed to move about in the city at all hours of the day in a relaxed way. Regina points out that she still has the habit of checking frequently the whereabouts of her purse and of being careful and paying attention to her environment in order to prevent herself or the people she is out with from being victims of petty crime. She still “looks out for the danger”, as she puts it. While Barcelona is as well a large city with security problems of its own, these accounts inevitably draw a rather dreary picture of the profound lack of urban security in many parts of Latin American urban centres. Changing into an environment with higher levels of experienced urban security had its consequences for the participants' experiences of time-space

¹⁹⁹ Al principio yo cuando llegué caminaba y miraba para atrás porque venía de ese estrés de que me van a jalar la cadena, la cartera, entonces estaba así como tensa yo, caminaba y ¿sabes? O si salía un poco más tarde me daba miedo porque qué sé yo quién me va a salir por ahí y me va a asaltar ¿no? Entonces, pero veía que la gente caminaba tranquila, cruzaban sus calles tranquilos, de noche, de día, con los hijos, no había ese estrés. Y como que me fui como que un poquito aplacando de esa angustia (Gloria 3.)

²⁰⁰ Todavía tengo yo la..., ya estoy programada, ¿no? Para decirte: cuídate de esto, fijate por aquí... Porque te acostumbras a vivir así ¿no? Te acostumbras a ver siempre... (--). De todo lo que te pueda pasar. Vas viendo, vas viendo el peligro ¿no? (Regina 2.)

autonomy, as was discussed in chapter 5.1. It also carried consequences for the participants' everyday rhythms and ways of being.

While visits from family members and friends in Barcelona made visible the changes that had occurred in the participants' everyday rhythms and paces of life, these became clear also when the participants visited their countries of origin.

I had gotten used to... For instance, you enter a store [in Bracelona] and you can by, you know, I mean that no one will come and take your purse because there are cameras and everything, you know? But over there, there are these market places on the street, you know, here they call them *ferias* so there you go to these *ferias*, well, you're not safe, your purse, at any moment they can rob you, and if you buy something you don't know if it's fresh or whatever, I mean, the products don't have expiration dates. I mean it's different. I missed a lot [while visiting the country of origin] the comfort here... Of course. Over there I used to think: it's better I don't even go out to buy anything since something might happen to me. (Cristina 2.)²⁰¹

In the above account, Cristina describes her trip to visit her country of origin as an experience of not fitting in. She has gotten unaccustomed to a whole spectrum of everyday life routines and rhythms of her country of origin. She is doubtful of how to check the conditions of the items she wants to buy so that these do not result to be out of date, and she is not sure how to act in order to avoid the risk of being mugged. Apart from a description of low urban security, her account describes the fact that she was now, in her country of origin, 'out of sync'. As a consequence of this, she seems to opt for invisibility in her country of origin through staying inside instead of going out into the street and risking that her manners might make her visible as being 'out of place' and thus potentially vulnerable to scams or petty crime. The account therefore speaks of a life in constant negotiation, ambiguity and insecurity concerning what are and where lie the "normal" modes and rhythms (Boccagni 2010, 288).

Well I come from a place where..., every day it's summer, all the months it's summer, any month of the year you can go to the beach (--) Winter, summer,

²⁰¹ Me había acostumbrado a que... Por ejemplo, tú entras a un súper [en Barcelona] y puedes comprar ¿no? O sea, nadie te puede, en el súper nadie puede venir y quitarte la cartera porque es cuestión de cámaras y tal, hay muchas cámaras en el supermercado ¿no? En cambio allí son mercados así como, como en la calle, por decir... Aquí lo llaman, *ferias*, sí *ferias*, entonces allí por ejemplo, si vas a como un tipo feria, pues no estás segura de tener el bolso, que cualquier momento te pueden robar, y si estás comprando algo, no sabes si, si está bien, si es fresco qué sé yo, o sea no tienen, no tienen fechas de caducidad. O sea es diferente. He extrañado bastante eso, o sea la comodidad de... Claro. Y en cambio allá siempre estaba pensado digo: al final no voy a ir a comprar nada porque me puede pasar algo. (Cristina 2.)

spring... Those codes I had to learn here, I mean what to wear, the fabrics, all of that I learned here. (Miriam 1.)²⁰²

And well, to realise how you get used to everything, another kind of weather... I mean your own body tells it to you, you have to get acclimatised again, to go back to the rhythms, back to eating at the same time you used to, all of that, you know. Your body tells you physically that you've adapted to another context. (Rocío 2.)²⁰³

In the above extracts, Miriam and Rocío give tangible accounts of the differences between the everyday lives in their countries of origin and Barcelona, in terms of seasons, weather, fabrics and eating times. Miriam speaks of "codes" that one has to learn in terms for instance of different clothes and fabrics that had to do with different seasons. Rocío gives a palpable account of her visit to her country of origin and describes how she can physically feel the change in her day to day rhythms and routines. These have to do with different time zones, hours of sleep and being awake, meal hours as well as different climates and seasons. When she visits her country of origin, she needs to readjust these changes. Changing time zones, climates and meal habits are very concrete examples of actions through which her body adapts to different contexts.

I don't think he understands the change, what I've learned here because he has not lived it, it's been very intense for me, these years (--) because this has been very intense, so I've changed in many ways, for better and for worse, you know? (Magda 1.)²⁰⁴

I feel a bit anxious, yes, because of... Because even if I went back now to [country of origin], so many things have changed. I mean my grandfather has died, my father has separated and he went to live in [another city], my little brother has grown a lot and will go to school, my sister has a boyfriend now and even if I lived there I'd see her maybe twice a week... Everything is like that. My cousin got her degree and she now has a boyfriend, my other cousin moved away... Everyone's life, I mean... (--) Yes, of course, I mean, because I had the idea that everything would stay like it was, I'd come here and live my life but everything over there would stay the same. (Catalina 1.)²⁰⁵

²⁰² Claro, vengo de un país..., vengo de todos los días verano, todos los meses son verano, cualquier mes del año puedes ir a la playa (--) El invierno, verano, la primavera... Esos códigos los aprendo aquí, o sea cómo vestirse, las telas, todo esto lo aprendí aquí. (Miriam 1.)

²⁰³ Y luego bueno, el darse cuenta el día a día como se va uno acostumbrando a todo, sea a un clima distinto... O sea el mismo cuerpo te lo dice, tienes como que llegar y volver a temperarte, volver a tomar los ritmos, volver a comer a la hora que solías comer, como que eso ¿no? El cuerpo te lo dice físicamente, que te has ido adaptando a otro contexto. (Rocío 2.)

²⁰⁴ No, creo que él no entiende tampoco el cambio, de lo que yo aprendí acá porque él no lo vivió, ha sido muy intenso para mí, estos años (--) porque esto ha sido muy intenso, entonces me ha cambiado muchas cosas, algunas para bien y otras no para bien ¿me entiendes? (Magda 1.)

²⁰⁵ O sea siento por allí una angustia, sí de... También de que aunque yo ahora me volviera a vivir en [país de origen], ya hay un montón de cosas que también cambiaron. O sea mi abuelo se murió, mi papá se separó y se fue a vivir a [otra ciudad], mi hermanito ya está más grande y va a ir a la escuela,

Of course I miss my country, but I'm afraid as well to confront all that pain of not finding what I've lost, my home (-- my family (-- my house, everything, my community, the coexistence I had there, I'm afraid of confronting all of that. (Tina 1.)²⁰⁶

The three extracts above discuss the emotional possibilities and consequences of return. They show that return, even for a visit, was not approached with straightforward enthusiasm. Magda doubts whether her near ones will be able to understand the changes she has gone through during her years in Barcelona. Catalina seems to be dubious over how she might adapt to the everyday life in her country of origin, because nothing continues to be the way she left it. Despite one's absence, one's loved ones have continued with their lives. Tina talks about the pain she feels because she knows that if she goes back she will have to confront the changes and losses occurred during migration or caused by it, as these will be concretised finally at the moment of return.

These thoughts reflect the idea of the 'irreversible costs of migration' (Ahmad 2008, 313), which has a strong emotional and spatio-temporal dimension. Nostalgia for the way things were 'back there back then' is a yearning towards time which has passed and will never come back. This is referred to in the following account from Catalina as the "point of no return", since one cannot go back in time. Even if one returned to a place, it is not the same place anymore. People change, situations and circumstances change and the participants themselves had changed.

You cannot define that [the object of nostalgia] really, no, because if those people were here, I would be bored with them. If I were there I don't think I would have a good time either. It has something to do with the impossibility, I mean there's a point of no return, because if I was to return to [city of origin] to live there, and I talk about this with my friends, it's not the same city anymore. I have known other things, I've known other ways of seeing the world, to be in connection with different things, with people from all over, another speed as well of things, I don't know, going back to live in [city of origin] would be boring, I don't know, it would be like very tedious, very tedious. (Catalina 2.)²⁰⁷

mi hermana esta de novia y aunque yo viviera allí la vería dos veces a la semana... Todo es así. Mi prima terminó su carrera ya tiene un novio, mi primo se fue a vivir solo... La vida de cada uno, o sea... (-- Sí claro porque o sea tenía esa idea de que todo había quedado así y yo me venía acá y hacía mi vida pero allá, que todo allá estaba igual. (Catalina 1.)

²⁰⁶ Claro yo extraño mi país, pero también tengo miedo a enfrentarme a ese dolor que yo tengo todavía dentro, de no encontrar más lo que he perdido, mi hogar (-- mi familia (-- mi casa, todo, mi comunidad, la convivencia que llevaba, todo eso tengo miedo a enfrentarme. (Tina 1.)

²⁰⁷ No se puede definir eso [el objeto de nostalgia], no, no, porque si estas personas estuvieran acá yo me aburriría un montón. Si yo estuviera allá creo que tampoco la pasaría bien. Es algo de la imposibilidad o sea, de que ya hay un punto irreversible me parece porque aunque yo vuelva a [ciudad de origen] a vivir y esto es algo que lo hablo con muchas amigas a veces, ya no es la misma ciudad digamos, ya conocí otras cosas, ya conocí otras maneras de detectar el mundo, de conectar más

Above, Catalina describes her migration in terms of space and time and in doing this intends to carve out the confines of an ever present nostalgia. The parameters she seeks have to do with people and affects, with place and with time. Her account is of an impossibility of return since one would not find the same place any longer as time has passed and things have changed. One has also changed and would not be able to relate to places and people 'there' in the same manner as before. One has made other connections, met other people and gotten to know other kinds of rhythms. According to Catalina, one crosses the "point of no return" as a migrant, a border that does not have to do with geographical borders nor with one's migration status and the restrictions this might pose. A border which ultimately draws space and time for everyone. Even if "going back" were possible in legal or financial respects, it is never simple in terms of one's individual existence.

In her study on the notions of longing and belonging in women writers' fiction, Roberta Rubenstein (2001, 4) has differentiated between homesickness and nostalgia. She writes that while homesickness refers to a spatial or geographical separation, nostalgia is essentially a temporal emotion, a yearning towards the way things were in the past. Inspired by Rubenstein's division, Jennifer Brown (2011) has written about the differences between post World War II and post EU accession migrants from Poland to the UK and their transnational practices, emotions and belonging. Brown makes a distinction between these two groups on the above grounds based on the different temporality of their migration, and concludes that post war Polish migrants were experiencing nostalgia for a lost era and a country and community which no longer existed, while the post accession migrants who had emigrated from Poland after 2004 were experiencing mainly a spatial/geographic separation (ibid., 231). Interestingly enough, in the accounts of the participants in this research, there were references to the country of origin which seemed to have already acquired many attributes of a "temporal distance" required for nostalgia. These referred to aspects of their countries of origin which were representative to the participants but had already been changed and consequently lost.

Because some countries change more or less, but for example in my case, in my country, everything has changed, I mean, we live with accelerated changes (--) So the politics change. So I go to a country where the flag has been changed, the currency has been changed, they've changed..., so many things, that it's not anymore the real referent of a country it used to be. (Rocío 2.)²⁰⁸

con las diferencias, gente de otros lugares, otra velocidad también de las cosas y no sé, volver a vivir a [ciudad de origen] sería como aburrido no sé, como muy tedioso, muy tedioso. (Catalina 2.)

²⁰⁸ Porque hay países que cambian más o menos, pero por ejemplo en mi caso en mi país ha cambiado todo, o sea, vivimos como los cambios muy aceleradamente (--) Entonces nada, las políticas cambian. Entonces yo llego a un país donde ha cambiado la bandera, ha cambiado la moneda, ha cambiado..., un montón de cosas, que ya no es el referente real de país que como era. (Rocío 2.)

Rocío explains in the above extract that her country of origin undergoes changes with an “accelerated” rhythm. She states that during the few years she has spent in Barcelona, so many things have changed that should she now return, she would find a country with “a different flag and a different currency”. Her account is one of nostalgia in terms of having lost concrete referents of her object of yearning. It seems that the pace of political change can alter “the tempo” in which nostalgia in this sense may occur.

As discussed in the previous subchapter 7.3, the participants’ children were often mentioned as one of the principal reasons for the participants not actively considering a return to their countries of origin, irrespective of the economic hardship Spain was going through. Barcelona, or Spain, had become the base of their children’s lives and their family life together, and this made the possibility of return seem unlikely (also Brown 2011, 233). In the following two accounts, however, Magda represents an exception to this when she states that it is precisely because of her child that she wishes to return to her country of origin.

And now I want to go back because of [her child] as well so that he... (--) so that he could live what he should live, what’s his, because I sometimes feel bad of bringing him here because he has missed out on his family, you know? (Magda 1.)²⁰⁹

You can’t live your child without a homeland, like my child now is, without a homeland, because he’s not from one place or the other. (Magda 2.)²¹⁰

Magda stresses that she wants her child to be able to get to know the family. In the second extract from our second interview encounter, Magda expands on the consequences of her migration to her child from the realm of the family to a sense of not having a “homeland”. She states that due to migration her child is “not from one place or the other”. While the literature on ‘transnational motherhood’ often deals with feelings of helplessness, guilt and regret of mothers who live in separation from their children due to their migration (e.g. Parreñas 2005; Hondagneu-Sotelo & Avila 1997), these emotions were also present in the experiences of many of the mothers in this research who had brought their children with them into migration. Issues related to battles of belonging, such as experiences of discrimination, not fitting in and lagging behind in school, living with stress because of fear of deportation, forgetting one’s family and losing one’s national or cultural identity were present in the worries of the participants in this respect (also Yoshikawa & Kholoptseva 2013).

²⁰⁹ Y ahora me voy por [su hijo] también, para que él... (--) para que él viva lo que tiene que vivir, que él viva también un poco lo que le toca, porque quiera o no a veces yo también me siento mal de habérmelo traído, porque él también de su familia se ha perdido ¿entiendes? (Magda 1.)

²¹⁰ No puedes dejar un hijo sin, sin patria, como está mi hijo, sin patria, porque no son ni de un lugar ni de otro. (Magda 2.)

Foolish things! From commentaries... My son when he was three years old he asked me: mummy what's a bloody immigrant? Three years old... Three year old children don't say things like that, those come from their parents, the children have heard them and they repeat it in the playground. (--) People shout at you: go back to your country. Well, that's the typical..., that's the only thing the ignorant can say to you: go back to your country. (Magda 2.)²¹¹

In the beginning of this chapter on belonging, I presented an account from Luz of an experience of not belonging 'here' (yet) and not belonging 'there' (anymore) and in this way remaining "on hold". I will end this chapter by elaborating on the participants' accounts of belonging in the light of self-identification.

I've asked this of myself many times [laughter], many times. Let's see, I don't feel like I'm from here, obviously, I'm not from here. I have not arrived to the point of feeling I have roots here. Perhaps my children might feel more from here, you know? (--) more from here than from there, because, obviously, because of their age, you know? But I don't feel I'm from here. I don't feel I'm from there either that much, I don't feel... (--) I'd like to feel from some..., feel identified with a place, you know? But no, I don't. (Regina 2.)²¹²

Although in many ways an eternal and even tiring question for migrants, belonging in terms of self-identification (where am I from, with which place do I identify myself) was included in the theme list for the interview encounters and it became a recurrent topic in the interviews, either by my initiative or by that of the participant. As apparent in the above account from Regina, it was a question the participants had inevitably reflected upon. It is interesting to note that Regina starts by stating quite clearly that she "obviously" is not or does not feel from Barcelona. Yet it seems possible to arrive, with time, at the point of "making roots here". Regina brings up her age, as she makes a differentiation between her belonging and that of her children. Because of having lived most of their lives 'here', having gone to school 'here' and having all or most of their friends from 'here', she considers her children to belong 'here' more easily. Her account also shows a clear desire for making roots and being able to identify with a place.

But I feel that I don't really belong [to the country of origin] like before..., in many ways, because also the vision I have of things has changed because I've been here, I evaluate things in a different way... So I feel that I belong but I

²¹¹ ¡Tonterías! Desde comentarios... Mi hijo con tres años me dijo: mamá, ¿qué es inmigrante de mierda? Con tres años, eso no lo dicen unos niños de tres años, eso lo dicen los padres, lo escuchan los niños y entonces lo repiten en el patio. (--) Que la gente te grite que: vuélvete a tu país. Bueno es la típica de... El ignorante lo único que sabe contestarte es eso: vuélvete a tu país. (Magda 2.)

²¹² Me lo he preguntado un montón de veces, eh, [risa], un montón de veces. A ver, no, de aquí no me siento, obviamente; yo no soy de aquí. Y no, no he llegado a ese punto de sentir que, que me he enraizado tanto en este país, no, tampoco. Eh, quizás mis hijos..., sí pueda[n] sentirse más de aquí ¿no? (--) más de aquí que de allá, porque, obviamente, por la edad ¿no? Pero yo no, no es que me sienta de aquí. Tampoco me siento tan de allá, o sea, no me siento... (--) Me gustaría sentirme de algún... Identificada con, con algún lado ¿no? Pero no, no lo siento. (Regina 2.)

don't really fit. And from here..., I don't feel I'm from here, I feel that I live here, I feel a resident here, I feel that I form part of the life here and I have my most recent memories as well from here. I have a child from here, an inevitable part of my life is here and has been shaped by this place, but I don't feel from here either. (Rocío 1.)²¹³

A 'hybrid identity' (Brown 2011, 232) involves an identification with more than one national or cultural context. In the above account, however, Rocío seems to struggle with having a clear sense of belonging, either with respect to her country of origin or with regard to Barcelona as her current host society. To a certain extent she feels she will always belong 'there' as a matter of fact since she was born and raised 'there'. Still her account has a clear element of outsidership, as she states that she feels she belongs but does not "fit". Due to the personal changes she has undergone during her years in Barcelona, she does not belong 'there' anymore. Similarly to Regina above, Rocío seems to quickly reject the idea of belonging 'here' either. However, when she lists her connections with Barcelona, these are many: she lives 'here', is a resident 'here', forms part of the everyday life 'here' and has her most recent memories from 'here'. She has a child who has been born 'here' and her life has been importantly shaped by the place. Yet she does not feel that she belongs. She continues her reflection with the following anecdote.

I remember so well the morning when I was going to take some papers to [the Spanish consulate in her country of origin] (-- and I take a taxi and I tell to the driver to take me to the Spanish consulate, and the driver looks at me through the rearview mirror and says: another one to go. He says: I'm Spanish, you know, he tells me, and you should think very carefully what you're going to do, because now I'm not from there or from here. I've lived here for 35 years and my country will never be the one I once left. Every time I go back I try to look for that shadow and I'll never find it. And I'm not from here either because here I'm the Spanish, I'm the one who has come from somewhere else. And that's a bit how I feel as well, to tell you the truth. (Rocío 1.)²¹⁴

In the two extracts below from Nelli, belonging and identification is discussed in the following manner.

²¹³ Pero siento que un poco no pertenezco ya tanto como antes [en el país de origen]..., en muchas cosas, porque también un poco la visión me ha cambiado al estar aquí, evalúo las cosas de una manera diferente... Entonces siento que pertenezco pero no encajo del todo. Y de aquí..., no me siento de aquí, siento que vivo aquí, me siento ciudadana de aquí, yo siento que formo parte de la vida de aquí y que tengo mi memoria reciente también, más reciente de aquí. Tengo un hijo de aquí, parte inevitable de mi vida está aquí y la ha marcado, pero tampoco me siento de aquí. (Rocío 1.)

²¹⁴ Me acuerdo muchísimo la mañana en que me venía hacer los papeles [en el consulado de España en su país] (-- Y tomo un taxi y le digo al taxista que me lleva por favor al consulado español, y el taxista me mira por el retrovisor y me dice: otra más que se va. Me dice: sabe qué, yo soy español, me dice el señor. Y tiene que pensar muy bien en lo que va hacer porque ahora yo no soy ni de allá ni de aquí. Ya yo tengo 35 años viviendo aquí y mi país no es nunca el que yo dejé. Cada vez que vuelvo intento buscar esa sombra que nunca va a ser. Y tampoco soy de aquí porque aquí soy el español, soy él que ha venido de fuera. Y un poco es eso lo que yo siento, la verdad. (Rocío 1.)

I take great pride in being [from her country of origin]. (-- That's more than politics or ideologies or heads of state. I mean, it's love for the soil that saw your birth. In this sense I feel that I have a big responsibility as..., I mean, and proudness as well, to be [from her country of origin] and Latin American. I think that's important, for me it's important. (-- I mean, we come from a very privileged continent where all the races and cultures have been mixed, we have a great richness in that. (Nelli 2.)²¹⁵

Because a person who leaves everything and goes to another place where she knows no one, where she has to start a new life, with new habits, I think of her as rootless. I mean, I'm not from anywhere. I go to my country and I'm not from there because I wouldn't be able to get used to again to the customs, to the way of life. And here, I'm not from here, not because of the customs or the way of life because I've already gotten used to that but because the people here will never see me as someone from here, even if I've spent twenty years living here, you know? So, you're never from anywhere. (Nelli 2.)²¹⁶

Nelli first presents a clear identification as a person from her country of origin and secondly a 'Latin American' identity. She connects the former to the soil of the place where she was born and the latter to the privilege and pride she feels of the fact that she comes from an ethnically and culturally diverse continent. In the second extract, however, she separates this identification from a concrete everyday rootedness, which emanates from having gone to another place where one knows no one and has started a new life with new habits. Consequently, she has lost touch with the everyday "way of life" of her country of origin, and while she has now gotten used to the customs and rhythms of Barcelona and Catalonia, she considers it impossible to become accepted and treated as someone from 'here'. She finally comes to the same conclusion as Rocío above and the Spanish taxi driver Rocío had met as she was organising her departure from her country of origin: one is never again from anywhere.

In general, instead of yearning for one's "homeland", the feelings of nostalgia were discussed more with regard to one's former everyday existence, past routines, rhythms and ways of life. Yet, the accounts were not of unidirectional actions, emotions or identifications. Transnational everyday life was not exclusively about

²¹⁵ Pues, para mí es un orgullo [ser de su país de origen]. (-- Es más allá de políticas o de ideologías o de jefes de estado. O sea, es el amor por la tierra, por el suelo que te vio nacer. Y en ese sentido tengo, tengo una responsabilidad tremenda como..., vamos, y un orgullo también, de sentirme, eh, [de su país de origen] y latinoamericana. Yo creo que es importante, para mí es importante. (-- O sea, pertenecemos al privilegiado continente en donde se han mezclado todas las razas y las culturas, entonces tenemos una gran riqueza. (Nelli 2.)

²¹⁶ Porque una persona, ya te digo, que lo deja todo y se va, a un sitio nuevo donde no conoce a nadie, donde tiene que empezar una vida nueva, con nuevas costumbres, me parece un desarraigado. O sea, yo ahora mismo no soy de ninguna parte: yo voy a mi país y no soy de allí, porque no me haría de nuevo a las costumbres, a la forma. Sin embargo, yo acá, no soy de aquí, no por las costumbres o las formas porque ya me hecho, sino porque la gente que me ve no me verá nunca como alguien de acá, aunque lleve veinte años ¿me entiendes? Entonces, nunca eres de ningún lado. (Nelli 2.)

loss, lack or longing, but necessarily active in the sense of making adjustments, resisting, recreating and maintaining as well as creating new practices, rhythms and routines.

Table 2. Spheres of everyday transnationality (Boccagni 2012; 2010).

Spheres of transnationality	Empirical observations	Analytical considerations
Active political, economic and institutional involvement across borders.	Not mentioned in the accounts apart from occasional following of the news.	<p>Although a strong emphasis in the literature, perhaps not necessary or essential for transnational existence?</p> <p>A disconnection does not automatically imply strong integration or sense of belonging in the host society, but can also imply the opposite.</p>
Cross-border social and affective ties, contacts and obligations.	<p>An active managing of distance and time in order to practice their roles as mothers, daughters, nieces, sisters, grandmothers etc. on the global stage.</p> <p>Telephone calls, Skype sessions, emails, Facebook and visits.</p> <p>Caring role as daughters.</p> <p>Superficial and fragmentary vs. intense and supportive contacts.</p> <p>Variations and differences in contacts.</p>	<p>The salience of ‘transnational daughterhood’, often neglected in previous research.</p> <p>Intermediary role as establishers and nourishers of inter-generational kin relationships.</p> <p>Time stagnation as a result of migration regulations made it difficult or impossible to assume generational responsibilities.</p> <p>Gendered patterns of migration.</p> <p>Results challenge the unquestioned celebratory notions of transnational connections considered able to offer strong social and emotional support.</p> <p>Variation in terms of mode, frequency and quality of connections are shaped by geographical distance, time differences, migration status, social class status, work situation and economic resources.</p> <p>Economic resources affect not only the quantity and frequency but also the quality of the connections and contacts.</p>
Symbolic and emotional ties with and nostalgia for people, routines and rhythms.	<p>Sensory features of daily lives, such as colours, tastes, smells, light, sound.</p> <p>Affections.</p>	<p>Related more with concrete former everyday milieu and affections than to nationalistic attributes of belonging.</p> <p>Nostalgia for place and time.</p>

	<p>The importance of food and sharing (the understanding of) food rituals.</p> <p>Missing out on time routines, creating them anew, forming new ones.</p> <p>Return as problematic.</p> <p>Balancing modes and rhythms of everyday life 'here' and doing the same 'there' anew.</p>	<p>An asynchronised existence is treated with attempts and initiatives to 'resynchronise time' (Cwerner 2001, 23).</p> <p>New transnational routines are formed, such as a 'transnational routine of mourning', which may also be seen as a practice of mediating and traversing the gap between longing and belonging (Rubenstein 2001, 6).</p> <p>Modes and rhythms of everyday routines and communication need to be (consciously or unconsciously) balanced both 'here' and 'there', in order to be 'in sync'.</p> <p>Return conceived of as emotionally distressing and impossible in terms of 'place in time'.</p>
<p>Identity orientations and perceptions.</p>	<p>(Obviously) not from 'here'.</p> <p>Also not from 'there'.</p> <p>National and regional identifications.</p>	<p>Belonging in migration in time and space: not from 'here' (yet) nor from 'there' (anymore).</p> <p>Identification vs. concrete everyday rootedness.</p> <p>Belonging vs. fitting in.</p> <p>Not about unidirectional actions, emotions or identifications.</p> <p>Not exclusively about loss, lack or longing, but also of active adjusting, resisting, recreating, maintaining as well as forming of new practices, rhythms and routines in order to create identification and (senses of) belonging.</p>

8 CONCLUSIONS AND DISCUSSION

Social work has been said to suffer still from a lack of adequate knowledge concerning the realities of, as well as the global structural and politico-historical mechanisms active in, transnational migration and situations of migration status irregularity (Cox & Geisen 2014, 158, 165; Jönsson 2014, 49). Yet migration represents an important focus of consideration, even a challenge, for social work, not least due to its intimate connections with issues such as identity, inequality, discrimination, deservingness, diversity and belonging (Williams & Graham 2014, 3, 5). It has also been argued that social work is lagging behind in developing appropriate models for a research able to inform policy and practices, due to its narrow and myopic understanding of migration and the ‘migrant’ (Cox & Geisen 2014, 166). Limited considerations of mobility result in migrants’ situations and needs becoming disaggregated, categorised and labelled, according for instance to particular status, and simultaneously culturalised, stereotyped and homogenised (Williams & Graham 2014, 7–8). This does not match the complex realities of migration and migrants’ experiences. A lack of representation and participation of migrants themselves in social work practice as well as research has also been pointed out (Williams & Graham 2014, 13–14; Valtonen 2008, 183, 187–188).

In this research I have wanted to build understanding on what it is like to live as a Latin American migrant woman in Barcelona in the spring of 2012. I have studied the ways the participants’ subjectivities are constituted in migration by paying attention to the intersecting structural forces which influence their subjectivities in their everyday lives. My more precise viewpoints to subjectivity have been: 1) time-space autonomy, i.e. freedom of movement and time predictability and control, 2) reconciling migration, with respect to encountered realities, one’s life course and the general social imaginary of the ‘migrant’ and 3) the everyday negotiations and practices of belonging in transnational migration. I have aimed to create knowledge on the personal experiences and interpretations of the participants and link this to socio-historical context, conceptual discussions and different administrative and control mechanisms. I have therefore intended to recognise important structural, contextual and discursive factors active and shaping the environment in which the participants move, live, work, feel, love and reflect.

The results show how even in an environment which has been relatively accepting of immigration and migration status irregularity, such as in the case of the Spanish ‘immigration boom’, irregular migration status often leads to everyday experiences of restricted movement in the city. The invariable consequence of migration status irregularity was a lack of information on available support and services as well as rights and responsibilities. The experiences of isolation, insecurity, risk and fear reflect an environment of ‘criminalisation of migration’ (e.g. Kubal 2014; Sager 2011, 22). Yet there were also “free movers” in the city who were, for instance,

unlikely to be stopped on the street for papers. Specifically in situations of a participant coming from a large Latin American urban metropolis, the experience might in fact have been of an increase in time-space autonomy, even in migration status irregularity. Enhanced urban security was emphasised as adding to the experiences of freedom and increased autonomy of movement.

The experiences present in the participants' accounts of being "exposed" to migration control while simply walking on the street derived from the person's *visible* position in the context-specific *intersections* of hierarchical webs around social class, ethnic, national and regional origins and gender. Irregular migration status does not carry the same everyday consequences for everyone, but the insecure positions of migration status irregularity are linked to social visibility. The consequences of migration status for time-space autonomy therefore are relational, contextual and intersectional. The (in)visibility of certain intersectional locations is turned into (in)visibility of 'migrancy'.

In addition to the day to day movement and life in the city, I considered the participants' migration experiences in the context of world travel and the restrictions imposed on this. This movement became positioned inside the general frame of the European Union and the "rest of the world", which is a common sight at international airports inside the EU area. Travelling was also discussed in terms of a social class differentiation where poor people or people from lower social classes are not considered able or supposed to travel. Many participants displayed pride in having been able to move and see the world despite of this division between free movers and the ones subject to constant suspicion and control. The timing of one's migration movement was a concrete example of managing the restrictions to it, and as such part of ongoing practices of negotiating with borders and migration regulations.

Migration status regulations and bureaucracy were linked to everyday experiences of time suspension and 'liminality'. There was a twofold uncontrollability of time. Time was generally presented as moving slowly when one is waiting for appointments with migration officials or news on the advancement of migration status or citizenship applications. There was little or nothing one was able to do in order to be more efficiently informed on the procedures and their timelines, let alone influence these. The accounts showed an experience of time ambiguity, in which a "call" may come at any moment, while at the same time one is not entirely sure for how many years one has already waited. This type of waiting turned into temporal suspension and a timeless present without a clear purpose, goal or progression (Griffiths 2014, 1997), which referred to the equation: the less power you have, the more your time is determined, and wasted, by others (Griffiths et al. 2013).

As an opposite time experience, the potential consequences of a surprising and abrupt encounter with migration officials or police, for instance while walking on the street, and the consequent threat of being forced to leave the country, became associated with time moving in an intensified manner, rapidly and again completely out of one's control (also Griffiths 2014). This can be described as time moving slowly to let you in and fast to get you out. Furthermore, the arbitrary or even chaotic organisation of migration bureaucracy, and the confusions concerning for instance the extent to which migrants are entitled to public services, reflect the perception of migration primordially as a social problem and the consequent secondary position accorded to migrants in the host society (Martín Pérez 2010, 183). The consequences of this I have labelled as living at 'administrative mercy'.

Personal goals were nevertheless achieved despite of (arbitrary) regulations, through various means of navigating the restrictions posed by migration bureaucracy. Also (in)visibility became acted upon and negotiated and not merely taken as a given. In some instances invisibility was actively sought. This was done for instance simply by staying inside and not going out. Another strategy was paying intense attention to "doing everything right" in order to avoid attracting attention, for instance by never travelling in public transport without paying, not getting in the middle of an argument or a misunderstanding in a public place or avoiding going out at night-time to party. Local Spanish accent and vocabulary was learned in order to blend in. Evidently, in a new environment it is difficult, however, to know how to "do everything right", and some of the accounts were descriptions of constant tension and an impossibility to relax.

The migratory processes present in the accounts were named 'target migration', 'citizenship path' and 'reboot migration'. In practice, even when the initial plan of migration had included an idea either of 'target working' or 'citizenship path', surprises were encountered along the way, due to changes in the economic, legislative, familial or personal circumstances, or because of lack of adequate information in the first place. It comes as no great surprise that decision-making in and on migration cannot be considered exempt from personal relationships and larger social forces, and that at the level of concrete everyday experiences an idea prompted by the neoclassical tradition of migration theories of detached, well-planned, well-informed and calculated migration decision-making does not hold, but varying degrees of risk-taking and uncertainty prevail.

The work situation of the participants was shaped by social class position and education, national and ethnic background, migration status, personal aspirations and the time-space context of migration. The latter included aspects of the postcolonial context, the history of gendered internal migration to Catalonia, the context of the recent economic crisis and the rising prevalence of regional nationalism in Catalonia. While migration status was an important factor in shaping employment and working

conditions, it was by no means the single most significant force in determining the work experiences of the participants.

The informal economy was generally at least the starting point for employment also for participants arriving in Spain with Spanish citizenship (also Calavita 2005, 69). This reflects in part the significant existing informal economic activity in Spain (Oso & Ribas-Mateos 2012; González Enríquez 2007, 324; Padilla & Peixoto 2007; Ortega Pérez 2003; Solé & Parella 2003). Work in the informal economy was perceived as exploitative as well as flexible. Due to the entanglements between work and migration regulations, work was an important avenue for migration status regularisation (also Calavita 2005, 41). This often times resulted in a prolonged liminality with regard to both work and migration status.

Accurate and reliable information on Barcelona or Spain as a host society was often scarce, both before arrival and during migration. Falling into migration status irregularity and the difficulties of achieving regularisation had come as a surprise to some of the participants, as did the everyday life of limitations and fear due to the irregularity of work or migration status and the stress which this inflicted. Time suspension and 'liminality' caused discrepancy between expectations and realities (also Cwerner 2001). The 'liminality' and time unpredictability in migration was coupled with feelings of stagnation and loss of control.

In what I have called 'reboot migration', however, time unpredictability was perceived and presented as a liberating chance to live outside routines, and as such as a desired consequence of migration. In migration research, this type of 'lifestyle migration' has mainly been reserved for 'affluent' emigrants from the 'First World' (O'Reilly & Benson 2009; Benson & O'Reilly 2009). A situation of economic security, little familial responsibility, little fear of migration control because of certain ethnic and social class appearance and little fear of devastating economic consequences of an abrupt return from migration due to more or less secured resources all enhance the possibilities of living migration as a chance to enjoy being outside of routines and reinventing oneself (also Griffiths 2014).

It is important to note, however, that migration movements from 'South to North' are not composed of a homogenised group but are versatile, for instance in terms of social class and economic resources. Another oversimplification is to assume that migrants with less economic resources emigrating from economically poorer regions of the world could not also project aspirations of self-realisation, reinvention or self-discovery onto their mobility. This type of a dichotomised understanding of migration movements derives from and reinforces migration policies, regulations and debate designed to control the movement of the 'other', be that in terms of regionality, nationality, ethnicity, gender, social class, economic resources, religion or a combination of these (Anderson et al. 2009). As the results of this research

show, this is not solely a question of who is able to move in the world in migration status regularity in the first place, but becomes reflected over and over again in the concrete everyday life situations and consequences of migration.

In addition, while the freedom to remake oneself in migration is connected to one's (visible) location inside the intersections of the hierarchical structures around social class, gender, ethnic origin, nationality, age and life course etc., whatever this location may be, it remains rather unclear to what extent this is ever entirely possible. Often it is in fact in migration that one effectively becomes "from somewhere", and is filled with a history, in terms of national, cultural and ethnic origins which one possibly has never thought of before (also Boccagni 2010; Cwerner 2001). Some positionalities may also acquire different, even oppositional, connotations and consequences than in the country of origin, and others, related for instance to one's work situation or social class, may radically change (Roth 2013, 2, 28–29).

To a certain extent these are categories imposed by others, but it was sometimes possible for the participants to intervene and "mould" for instance their national, cultural and ethnic origins to correspond with what they wanted to bring out in them. Within different context-specific connotations attached to the imaginary of the 'immigrant', stressing and making visible a certain national origin and identity may also prove useful in order to avoid the 'immigrant identity'.

In an attempt to challenge the narrow understanding of migrants as economic based rational-choice actors and migrant workers, I have viewed the participants' migration in a broader temporal context of their individual lives, intergenerational relationships and responsibilities as well as structural and contextual conditions. I regard this type of a holistic consideration especially fruitful from a social work point of view.

Migration does not occur somehow outside or irrespective of a person's life course, but it may reinforce, stagnate, reverse, disrupt or qualitatively change different life stages, and life course stage also influences migration. "Growing up" and achieving independence through or in migration was very present in the participants' accounts. The accounts mainly showed this as an abrupt and isolated process. This was often referred to by stating that after migrating, one is completely on one's own.

In addition to acceleration or intensification, migration could also become a pause button in the advancement of one's life course. Experiences of life course stagnation were mainly in connection with the extended liminal stages migrants face in terms of securing work, migration status, financial resources as well as personal relationships. The situation of migration status irregularity and the changes in migration legislation concerning for instance the possibilities of receiving health care and other services, created insecurity which halted plans of forming a family or having more children.

Because of downward mobility, for instance in terms of work, some participants also felt they were being “pulled backwards” because of migration.

In the accounts, higher age worked at times as a liberatory element, as migration was not coupled with aspirations of making a career and forming a family but lived as a chance to finally create one’s own time and space. Yet aging and growing old in migration was also at times experienced as abrupt and intensified. The migration of elderly migrants may represent specific challenges. Some participants stated they felt they had “more to leave behind” than younger migrants, and forming new connections and relationships was experienced as challenging.

Elderly migrants may potentially find themselves in isolation from many everyday activities where new contacts are formed, such as education and work life. They may therefore have an enhanced need for transnational contacts and connections with the place they have lived in and the people they have known for most of their lives (Heikkinen & Lumme-Sandt 2013, 199; Zhou 2012, 240; Treas 2008), while they may not have the financial capacities or technological means necessary for engaging in and maintaining these contacts. On an intergenerational level, elderly migrants may become dependent on their children, specifically when an important motivation for their movement has been to live closer to their children and grandchildren. On a personal level, they may struggle to see future value (Griffiths et al. 2013) in their migration.

I have argued here that the analysis on how people make sense of social imaginaries and try to negotiate and reckon with them in the context of their own personal experiences, everyday encounters and existence can be very informative of the ways these imaginaries work and the influence they have in societies (also Juhila 2004). I find this to be of high importance especially for social work research and practices. In current social work research, however, the concept of ‘migration’ or the general imaginary of the ‘migrant’ have not been widely explored, and the terms are often employed without clarifying their meaning (Cox & Geisen 2014, 160).

In order to study the culturally dominant talk on migration, I have wanted to analyse the concept and the general imaginary of the ‘migrant’ from empirically based accounts. This has been in order to find and provide tools for becoming reflective and critical in one’s dealings with the imaginary. By separating the discourses from the realities to which they intend to refer and studying their interconnections, I have wanted to shed light on the heterogenic, and often times contradictory, locations present in contemporary transnational migration. I have understood ‘talking back’ as an act of negotiating. Although this is not necessarily directed at challenging dominant understandings, it is always an act of defiance in the sense of questioning one’s status as an object suppressed by the definitions of others, and as such an expression of movement from object to subject (hooks 1989, 9).

I have divided the negotiation practices present in the participants' accounts in: 1) stepping aside from the 'migrant', 2) making internal and external differentiations to the 'migrant', and 3) producing variety in defence of the 'migrant'. In the first negotiation practice, the participants took distance from the social imaginary by stating that they were not "typical" migrants, or really migrants at all, since their experiences and situations were different to the ones a 'migrant' is considered to have. Many accounts presented the participant as an 'atypical migrant'. Thus, rather than resisting the culturally dominant imaginary, the participants affirmed this but insisted on it not applying to them (Juhila 2004, 271–272; Howe 1998, 532).

A 'typical migrant' was considered a person who has exclusively economic motivations for her movement, is forced to leave her country of origin, is poor and uneducated, has migrated primarily in search of an economic betterment for herself and her family, sends financial remittances to family members who have stayed behind in the country of origin, is rejected and discriminated against in the host society, misses "home" and wishes to be able to eventually return. This "typology" resembles the general prototype of the 'economic immigrant' coming from poorer regions of the world to richer ones in order work there, and subsequently its ethnic, social class, age, gender, national and regional inscriptions. It is also linked to the (in)visibility of these inscriptions. (Visible) differences were discussed also in terms of knowing or not the local languages, culture and customs, and in this manner 'degrees of migrancy' were carved out. Participants stressed the affinities they had with the Spanish and Barcelonan autochthonous population in terms of culture, religion, and, to a certain extent, language. In this way, a 'migrant' was presented as someone who does not share the same cultural toolkit and is therefore (visibly) different.

Due to a certain ethnic, social class, national, regional and gender position, a 'migrant' was also seen as restricted to a specific labour niche. The varied set of labour market experiences of the participants question the overly limited views of work niches connected to the category of the 'migrant', and more narrowly to the category 'Latin American migrant woman in Spain'. Yet they also point to the ways in which the consequences of intersectional locations play out. Roughly said, American indigenous or mestizo ethnic origin and lower social class background represented more restrictions in this sense, whereas the participants who had a more "European ethnic appearance", privileged background and accent in terms of nationality and middle or upper social class background were able, at least in time, to gain more freedom also in terms of labour market opportunities. This worked as well the other way around, since one's location or autonomy in the labour market was presented as a factor in determining one's 'migrancy' in the local context.

In the second negotiation practice, instead of entirely questioning their 'migrancy', the participants emphasised through 'internal differentiations' that their migration

was of a “certain kind”. For instance, ‘target migration’ and ‘citizenship path’ migration were opposed and the latter was presented in a more positive light, since it showed an interest in settling down, regularising one’s migration status, forming a family and making a life in Barcelona. Differentiations were made between migrants with a regular migration status and the ones who did not have the necessary documents. This presented an avenue for aligning oneself with the “hardworking locals”, while the latter group was presented as not playing by the rules and cutting down wages. In addition, differentiations were made in relation to time by locating one’s own migration to a time before migration was perceived to be problematic and a source of concern in Spain. Differences were also carved out according to migrants’ willingness and capacity to get to know local people, culture, cuisine, customs and language, in other words a division was made into migrants who “make the effort” and the ones who do not. While a lot of pressure is put on the side of the migrant here, this may also be read as a way to highlight the ‘migrant’ as an active subject.

In ‘external differentiations’, migrants were opposed to the autochthonous locals. Here, migrants were presented as people who have initiative and have taken action in order to get ahead in life, create opportunities and earn a living, and who are not afraid or ashamed to do whatever work. This negotiation practice had both regional and social class dimensions to it by picturing migrants as poor persons from the ‘South’ who are resourceful and hardworking and contrasting this with the affluent people in the ‘North’ who live comfortable lives, collect unemployment benefits and yet complain and feel depressed. A general imaginary of “immigrants coming to take away our jobs” was turned into a discourse of presenting migrants as sort of ideal workers. At the same time this imaginary was questioned by leaning on another ‘South to North’ migration narrative of migrant workers doing the work locals are not willing to do. The practice of ‘external differentiations’ also fought against the prejudice of the ‘migrant’ being the one who just receives benefits and privileges, suffers and complains. It nevertheless passed a moral judgement of its own on people, ‘insiders’ and ‘outsiders’ alike, who were not considered ‘deserving’ since they do not “show enough effort”.

‘Stepping aside’ and ‘producing internal and external differentiations’ are negotiation practices in which those who are subordinate in one context strive to become dominant in another (Howe 1998, 532–543). They are examples of the ways people are simultaneously influenced by and develop strategies to manipulate social imaginaries in order to pursue their own interests and survival. People who face the consequences of an undesired or downrated social imaginary seek to dissociate themselves from yet another ‘other’, both inside and outside the category in question. This is not only a rhetoric but a practice with concrete aims and (unintended) consequences within a range of social and welfare policies, for instance in terms of aligning itself with contemporary migration regulations which conflate

the 'ideal migrant' with the 'ideal worker' who is forever active and productive, flexible, temporary, precarious, uncomplaining and unprotected. These negotiation practices also reflect a debate on migration obsessed with the notions of 'good' and 'bad' migrants. In these debates migrants themselves are urged to explicitly distance themselves from any behaviour considered 'deviant' and present themselves instead as hardworking, law-abiding and decidedly moral (Anderson 2013, 28). Ultimately these rhetorics only serve an interminable logic of exclusion, fear, failure, and blame (ibid.).

The third negotiation practice of 'producing variety in defence of the 'migrant'' consisted of a more straightforward questioning of many aspects of the general imaginary of the 'migrant' or 'migrancy'. These accounts challenged for instance the idea of having to accept questions which interrogated one's right to be in Barcelona by presuming one should be able to provide a specific reason and a concrete and definable duration for one's stay or present a profound qualitative difference between one's life in Barcelona as opposed to the one in the country of origin. These accounts therefore also challenged the conventional economic understanding and theorisation of migration, with its focus on 'push and pull factors' and definite, clearly definable aims for movement. I have understood this negotiation practice as an attempt to "fill" the concept of the 'migrant' with a variety of "other type" of connotations than the dominant ones.

Authority for being able to present this challenge was sought by referring to one's experience as someone who knows because one sees things from the inside (Juhila 2004, 267). These accounts attacked the stereotyped imaginary of the 'migrant' as a naïve or uninformed person who comes from conditions of destitution and poverty and arrives in a new place expecting affluence, yet suffers there and is discriminated against. A "postcolonial right" for one's migration was sometimes presented. An exclusionary logic of migrants' belonging and integration 'here' vs. 'there' was also questioned. A possibility of being two things at the same time and not being forced to choose was advocated for, and being able to obtain or strive for one axis of identification only at the expense of another was criticised and challenged.

All of the above negotiation practices reveal the weight of culturally shared understandings and imaginaries (Juhila 2004, 267) and point to the narrow and pressing nature of the specific contemporary imaginary of the 'migrant'. The challenge was often posed towards the suffering and victim-like attributes so firmly attached to the concept of the 'migrant', especially to the mobility of women. It also seemed that in order to be a 'migrant' in this general imaginary sense, this should be decisive of what one is, and other attributes, experiences and interests become questioned or lose importance.

Different dimensions of belonging were the last point of interest in the analysis. The results showed that achieving a sense of belonging in the host society was also connected to (in)visibility in terms of “looking and sounding like” one belongs. Spanish citizenship or migration status regularity did not become straightforwardly relevant or sufficient for belonging in the accounts. This questions a straightforward continuum between migration status irregularity, regularity, citizenship and integration. In addition, it became apparent that although citizenship, and resident status, are generally associated with belonging and stasis, they are also importantly about being able to be mobile. There were also experiences of a sub-cultural, non-nationally defined belonging, a sort of ‘cosmopolitan sociability’ (Gruner-Domic 2011, 476–477), where lifestyles were used to signal universalistic ideas of openness and belonging. Using lifestyle as a form of (cosmopolitan) identification was a way to contest the possibility and/or realities of discrimination and exclusion, and in this way renegotiate the rhetorics of belonging (*ibid.*, 485).

In general, solidarity between migrants is often considered to be strong, and approaches such as migration networks theorising and the theory of institutionalisation of migration can be considered to build upon a premise of “migrant solidarity” in great part. This is especially the case with respect to migration status irregularity (e.g. Hondagneu-Sotelo 2001; Woo Morales 2001). It is important to note that solidarity between migrants is not to be taken for granted. In the accounts of the participants, social activities were indeed carried out more often with co-nationals or other migrants than with the autochthonous population. The tightness of the networks consisting of co-nationals and other migrants, however, varied. Precarious work and migration status conditions affect migrants’ social and kin networks in many ways. Scant material and time resources may leave migrants little to share with each other, in which cases reciprocity and norms of exchange may be difficult to uphold (Menjívar 2000, *ref.* Menjívar 2006, 1023). Intra-regional and intersectional differences also have their effects.

The postcolonial context of the participants’ migration facilitated the possibilities of achieving Spanish citizenship and created cultural, religious and linguistic affinities, but a complex shared history also represented frictions and tensions. The boundaries of belonging are multiple, changing and negotiable (Mas Giralt 2011). (Visible) regional, national, ethnic and social class origins worked in complex ways in creating or limiting (possibilities for) belonging. An experience of a strong ‘emotional belonging’ was at times severely at odds with a non-recognition from the outside, while a “European-like” ethnic appearance might have caused ‘unwanted belonging’ and an anxiety of one’s origins going unnoticed or being misjudged.

On the level of everyday activities, one important aspect of ‘postcolonial affinities’ was a shared language. However, since accents and vocabularies vary and are audible, i.e. visible, and recognisable, they are also as hierarchically valued as the

nationalities, ethnicities and social classes to which they refer. While adopting local accents and vocabulary might be unavoidable as years go by, a conscious modification of one's accent or vocabulary was sometimes employed as a way to blend in. There were also exceptions to this adaptive linguistic strategy. Participants with a "privileged accent" inside the intersectional hierarchies of nationality, ethnic origin and social class did not have the need to change accents or vocabulary. Accent was in fact sometimes used deliberately in order to stand out.

In addition to negotiations around Spanish accent and vocabulary, the Catalan language was central in the participants' accounts concerning requirements for or obstacles to belonging. While there was an understanding of the importance and prevalence of Catalan in the day to day life in Barcelona, the need to speak Catalan actively and fluently was still approached with reservations. Catalan was not straightforwardly considered to be a relevant, sufficient or possible pathway to belonging. The accounts emphasised the nexus between origin, language and belonging. Here as well an "accent" already drew a barrier of its own. Catalan language seems to serve as an important distinctive feature particularly in the context of Latin American immigration, since speaking Spanish and thus getting along with it lowered the motivation to learn Catalan. Catalan language and regional identity were considered difficult to penetrate on the one hand, while the postcolonial affinity of sharing Spanish language did not assist in motivating the participants to learn Catalan. Interesting topics for future research in this respect might be to compare the insights of native speakers and migrants on Catalan as a 'common public language' versus an 'identity marker' (Pujolar & González 2013, 140), as well as comparative approaches between the Catalonian context and other bilingual contexts for migration.

The results here also point to a context-specific connection between migrants' integration, language and social class. The migration of Latin American women can be seen as repeating the gender, language and social class positions present in the earlier internal migration movements from poorer areas of Spain to Catalonia and Barcelona (Garzón 2012). Migration status consequences and the postcolonial context of ethnic hierarchies and discrimination are added to these patterns. This creates a complex network of hierarchies for belonging, where language, regionality, nationality, social class, occupation, ethnic background, gender and migration status together shape the positions and the general imaginary of Latin American migrant women in Barcelona. This resulted in a contradictory environment also for learning Catalan, while at the same time, Spanish language or even Spanish citizenship as such did not automatically open doors to the 'inside'.

The recent economic crisis had ambivalent consequences for the possibilities, negotiations and feelings of belonging present in the accounts. The future shadowed by crisis was not perceived as overly threatening. The participants emphasised that

for them “as Latin Americans” economic crises were nothing new, and they saw themselves even at an advantage because of this. They also considered themselves to be more resourceful, innovative, creative, flexible and persistent than what they perceived the “native Spanish workers” to be. In addition, although the economic crisis made the situation of the participants more precarious, this was now a situation largely shared with the autochthonous population. Yet in the context of the economic crisis, experiences of disadvantage and exclusion due to migration were deepened and sharpened, thus exacerbating the social condition of ‘permanent anguish’ (Martín Pérez 2010, 172). While this is connected to migrancy, it also reflects more generally the precarious and unsafe situation of cuts in public spending and a rhetoric of personal and individual responsibility present in the current European political atmosphere of economic uncertainty and downturn.

I have argued here that whenever economic downturn is automatically considered to lead to return migration in high numbers, the persistent image of the ‘economic migrant’ takes over. The participants had their everyday lives in Barcelona, and it was not straightforwardly simple to leave these behind, even in circumstances of economic difficulty and pressure. The reasons for not going back despite of the crisis also point to the intergenerational nature of migration. Many participants stressed that one of the main reasons for staying were their children who had their lives, schools and social circles in Barcelona. Furthermore, going back because of lack of possibilities would evidently represent a failure in the face of the community of origin and in terms of one’s own life course. Return is the least understood stage of migration (Bastia 2011, 585), and it certainly merits more attention in future research in order to advance towards a wholesome understanding of migration as a social phenomenon and human experience.

In order to tackle analytically the transnational everyday lives of the participants, I was inspired by and adapted Paolo Boccagni’s (2012; 2010) divisions of transnationality into distinct spheres or dimensions. The first sphere concerned active political, economic and institutional involvement across borders. Although this was not a specific interest in my research approach in the first place, I consider it worthwhile to note that this type of an ‘active transnational life’ (Portes 2003) was virtually nonexistent in the accounts of the research participants. Disconnection from the political, economic and social events taking place in the country of origin was not necessarily a sign of strong identification with the host society and sense of belonging, but could also reflect stress and uncertainty over what the consequences of the migration decision will turn out to be.

The second dimension was that of cross-border social and affective ties, contacts and obligations. This was widely discussed in the accounts. It is noteworthy that the participants did not have under-aged children residing in the country of origin, nor were they economically responsible for their family members in the country of

origin. While the literature on 'transnational motherhood' often deals with feelings of helplessness, guilt and regret of mothers who live in separation from their children due to migration, these feelings were present also in the experiences of many of the mothers in this research who had brought their children with them into migration. Issues such as experiences of discrimination, lagging behind in school, living with stress because of fear of deportation, forgetting one's family and losing one's national or cultural identity were present in this respect.

The literature on women's transnational migration demonstrates the ways in which migrant women manage distance and time and practice their roles as mothers, daughters or grandmothers on the global stage (e.g. Zhou 2012; Takeda 2012; Ryan 2008). Yet 'transnational daughterhood', referring to the caring role of women as daughters, has been rather neglected. In the accounts of the participants, their role as daughters was salient. The emotional distress deriving from a consciousness of the difficulty and failure in fulfilling these family obligations also refers to a gendered experience of migration. Because of long distances and lack of resources and/or the irregularity of migration status, many participants were not able to take care of their family obligations as they would have wished or felt obliged to do, and the awareness of this inability led to feelings of worry, sadness, anxiety and guilt. The participants' accounts also discussed responsibility for creating and maintaining ties between their children living in Barcelona and the grandparents and other kin living in the country of origin or somewhere else.

The practices of transnational contacts of the participants varied a great deal. The accounts largely questioned the celebratory attitudes towards transnational life, which often neglect the power of the states and overlook the individual migrants' financial, social and emotional costs (also Boccagni 2012; Bailey 2009; Menjivar 2006; Parreñas 2005; Salih 2001; Hondagneu-Sotelo & Avila 1997). Several factors may affect the mode, quantity, frequency as well as quality of transnational communication, such as geographical and time difference, financial costs and economic resources, migration status, and lack of access to a computer and/or the internet. These differences influenced the ways in which transnational affective ties and support were lived.

In some cases, these ties were comprised of a highly fragmented, selective and superficial flow of information able to offer thin mutual support, due to, for instance, the fact that difficult experiences and situations simply remained unaddressed. This was a way to show responsibility for one's migration decision or save face in the eyes of family, kin and community in the country of origin. It was also a way to prevent suffering in the face of events, situations and circumstances which were considered impossible to be managed at distance. This is important, and not least for social work research and practices, from the point of view of migrants' quality of life and coping as well as their resources and possibilities for integration. In these

situations, loneliness and lack of intergenerational support became emphasised. Yet there were also accounts of strong transnational support and experiences of family ties and contact becoming in fact more straightforward and supportive due to the distance caused by migration. Furthermore, while transnational contact-keeping refers to moments of recognising and strengthening a bond, it is also composed of encounters where the different environments and distance become tangible, for instance through concretely showing how time has passed since the last encounter and what has been missed meanwhile or due to different vocabulary and accent in the relative's speech.

Economic resources, and time-space autonomy more generally, had a rather straightforward effect to the frequency and quantity of contacts, but economic resources might also affect the content or quality of them. It becomes arguably easier, and makes more sense, to talk about adversities and difficulties, when there are resources through which it is possible to offer help and assistance, for instance money, information, contacts or even visits. It is also conceivable that difficulties are taken up more easily when the prospect of an "unsuccessful return" due to adversities does not represent an important financial loss and as such a grave failure. Economic resources thus play a crucial part in the extent to which transnational practices are possible to develop and maintain.

The third and fourth dimensions of transnationality refer to symbolic and emotional ties with and nostalgia for people, routines and rhythms, and identity orientations and perceptions, respectively. Belonging in migration has a strong temporal dimension to it, as 'migrancy' seemed to be synonymous with not belonging 'here' yet nor 'there' anymore. The feelings of nostalgia were as well connected more with concrete everyday milieu than to any nationalistic attributes of belonging. Nostalgia was discussed not only in terms of place but equally so in terms of time, people and affects. Feelings of nostalgia also had to do with different sensory features, such as colours, tastes, smells, light and sounds. Belonging was negotiated through everyday rhythms not only in Barcelona but also anew in the country of origin when visiting. Yet the accounts were not only of experiences of loss and yearning or a nostalgic reading of rhythms, routines and ways of acting, but importantly also of adaptation, reformulation and creation of new "ways to be".

Social work holds an important position and possibility to understand and support migrants' engagement with complex experiences and emotions in the loss, maintaining, adjusting and rebuilding of social relationships, in challenging prejudice, marginalisation and oppression and in achieving rights to social justice (Cox & Geisen 2014, 161; also Valtonen 2008). As a social work research, I wish this study is able to provide tools for the analytical and theoretical understanding of transnational migration as a social phenomenon and human experience, as well as for conceiving and addressing people's 'subjectivities' inside the interplay between

social structures and hierarchies and the individual in a specific time-space context, even beyond the phenomenon of migration. I have also wanted to challenge a stereotypical understanding of social work as an academic discipline and a profession interested solely in local issues or restricted inside a local or national framework, culture or language. Issues present in social work often have transnational dimensions and connections, and not only in social work done explicitly with migrants or refugees. In addition, changing the context while one considers a certain phenomenon can give valuable insights for understanding and working with the same phenomenon in one's local, national or regional context (also Jäppinen 2015, 22, 264).

In this study, I have sought to shed light on the intersectional nature of the consequences of migration and migration status and irregularity, formed in relation to the specific time-space context of migration, hierarchical ethnic and nationality structures, social class and gender hierarchies, age and life course, as well as personal life histories and aspirations. I have studied the ways in which migrancy, time-space autonomy and belonging are conditioned by the surrounding structures, yet negotiable in different ways and to varying degrees. In the context of discussions generally depicting migration as a problem, migrants as an object of concern and 'migrant' as an unfortunate identity, I have sought in this research to confront one-sided and superficial understandings of transnational migration, provide new analytic insights on transnational everyday life, and the issues of inclusion and exclusion present in it, and challenge persisting stereotypes.

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APPENDIX 1: General themes for interviews / Temas para las entrevistas

GENERAL INFORMATION

- Age.
- Place of origin (country, city/countryside).
- Education/profession.
- Marital status.
- Family.

DECISION-MAKING ON MIGRATION

- The decision to migrate
 - o Motivations.
 - o Pros and cons.
 - o Circumstances.
 - o Attitudes and reactions of other people.
- Prior experiences of migration or travelling.
- Other people among family or friends who have migrated.
- Expectations concerning migration.
 - o What did you wish for when you decided to migrate?
 - o What worried you?
 - o Were these expectations realised?
- Support received in the place of origin.
- Motivations for choosing Barcelona/Spain.

ARRIVING

- Your recollections about travelling to, and arriving and settling in Barcelona/Spain:
 - o Feelings and thoughts.
 - o Surprises.
 - o Something difficult, something positive.
- Contacts.
- Documents and permissions.

EVERYDAY LIFE

- How would you describe your everyday life here?
- What is different and how do you manage those differences?
- How did you picture your life here? Have there been surprises?
- Work
 - o What kind of work.
 - o How is it? What is good, what is not so good?
 - o Working hours.
 - o Possible problems and how were they solved.
 - o Difficult/easy to find work, reasons why.
 - o What type of work did you expect to find and why?
 - o Did you think finding work would be easy, why?
 - o Economic crisis.
- Family and friends
 - o Here/there.

- In contact (how often, how, what type of things do you talk about, etc.).
- Support.
- Remittances sent here/there.
- Living conditions
 - How do you live (alone, with your family, in a shared apartment)?
 - Difficult/easy to find a place to stay, reasons why.
- Food
 - Would you say you cook more Catalan/Spanish dishes or dishes from the country of origin and why?
 - What do you like/dislike in the food here?
 - What is different here compared to your country of origin?
- Leisure time activities and hobbies.
- Friends and acquaintances from here/from the country of origin/from somewhere else and reasons why.
- Access to and use of social, health, education etc. services.
- What type of social or other support do you think migrants should receive that is missing now?
- Contacts and encounters in general (colleagues/neighbours etc.).
- What would you say is difficult/easy, negative/positive in your life here?
- Language.
- Have you had any negative/positive experiences due to being a migrant?
- Attitudes of people from the country of origin towards your migration.
- Do you get nostalgic? What do you do then?

MIGRATION STATUS

- Current situation concerning migration status.
- Experiences of different migration statuses and their effects.
- Plans concerning migration status/citizenship.
- If experience of having an irregular migration status
 - How has the irregular migration status influenced everyday life (work, moving, place to stay, contacts).
 - How did the migration status situation become irregular/regular.
 - What stands out in the experience of an irregular migration status.

FUTURE

- Plans for the future (concerning, for instance, family, children, studies, work, personal).
- What would you wish for your future?
- Where do you picture yourself in 5 or 10 years? Do you plan on staying here or going back to your country of origin or maybe going somewhere else and why?

DISCUSSION AROUND THE CREATIVE WORK

- How would you describe your experience of migration in a word or phrase or in a feeling or emotion?
- What does it mean for you to be a migrant/from Latin America/from your country of origin?
- Identification: would you say you were more Spanish/Catalonian/Latin American/from your country of origin/migrant/something else?
- Has the experience of migration changed you in some way? How?

- What gives you strength/what causes insecurity/what gives you hope in your current situation as a migrant?
- What do you think people in general think about migrants and migration? Is there something you would like to change in those views?
- What would you say have been the positive and negative sides of your experience of migration?
- If you could say something to yourself when you had just arrived here, what would you say?

EXPERIENCE OF PARTICIPATING

- Motivation for participating. What would you wish from this study?
- Experience of participating (something difficult, easy, rewarding, awkward, interesting, fun, surprising).
- Experience of the interviews.
- Experience of the creative work.
- Is there anything you would like to add?

**

INFORMACION GENERAL²¹⁷

- Edad.
- Lugar de origen.
- Educación y profesión.
- Casada o no.
- Dependientes/familia y dónde están.

DECISION DE MIGRAR

- La decisión de migrar, el proceso qué involucraba.
- Las circunstancias antes de la migración.
- Los pros y los contras presentes en la toma de decisión.
- Las actitudes y reacciones de los demás ante la decisión.
 - o Si alguien se opuso, lo motivó, etc.
- Anteriores experiencias de migración.
- Anteriores experiencias de viajes.
- ¿Otros familiares que han migrado?, ¿Su experiencia afectó tu decisión?
- ¿Cómo tu decisión ha afectado los planes de los demás?
- La situación general en el país de origen y su efecto.
- Esperanzas sobre la migración.
- Preocupaciones o inquietudes ante la toma de decisión.
- Apoyo recibido en el lugar de origen.
- ¿Qué era lo que más te hizo posible o empujó o motivó para tomar la decisión de migrar (una experiencia, situación, facultad, carácter, persona)?
- Motivaciones para elegir Barcelona/España como lugar de destino (trabajo, familiares, amigos, conocidos, idioma).

²¹⁷ Aquí las preguntas están enlistadas usando la forma del “tú” en vez de “Usted”. En la práctica las entrevistas tomaron la forma del español de España donde el uso del tú es por lo general más usual que en América Latina. Cuando la participante era mayor de edad o si ella se refería a mí con Usted, las preguntas las he formulado también de Usted.

EL VIAJE Y LA LLEGADA

- La primera cosa que te viene en mente cuando piensas en tu llegada a Barcelona y en el período de tu instalación. ¿Qué pensabas? ¿Qué sentías?
- ¿Qué hubieras hecho de forma diferente?
- ¿Cómo sería el viaje y la llegada a Barcelona en una palabra o frase?
- Algo difícil/fácil. Sorpresas.
- ¿Hubo ayuda o colaboración de alguien? ¿De qué tipo?
- El estatus migratorio al llegar.
- El proceso de quedarse en Barcelona.
- Alguna deuda.
- Contactos con oficiales de inmigración u otros oficiales.
- Conocimiento o contactos de diferentes servicios u organizaciones civiles que trabajan con los migrantes.
- Otros contactos.

LA VIDA COTIDIANA

- ¿Cuánto tiempo llevas en Barcelona/España?
- ¿Qué esperabas (positivo/negativo) de la vida aquí y si se cumplieron tus expectativas? ¿Algo te sorprendió? ¿De qué forma?
- La vida laboral
 - o ¿Cómo es tu trabajo? ¿Qué te gusta y qué no te gusta de tu trabajo?
 - o Horas de trabajo.
 - o Algunos problemas y cómo han sido resueltos.
 - o Fácil/difícil encontrar trabajo.
 - o ¿Qué tipo de trabajo esperabas poder encontrar aquí y por qué ese tipo de trabajo?
 - o ¿Has recibido ayuda/apoyo o sabes adónde recurrir en el caso de que necesitaras resolver un problema en relación a tu trabajo?
- Familia y amigos
 - o Aquí/allá (hijos, esposo, padres, hermanos).
 - o Contacto con ellos. ¿Cada cuándo? ¿Con qué medio de comunicación?
 - o ¿Qué cuentas de tu vida aquí a tus hijos, familiares o amigos?
 - o ¿Qué efecto sientes que ha tenido tu migración sobre la relación que tienes con tus familiares y amigos?
 - o ¿Alguien de ellos quisiera venir aquí?
 - o Apoyo de algún tipo a los familiares o de los familiares.
- Vida cotidiana en Barcelona/Cataluña
 - o Tipo de vivienda. Fácil/difícil encontrar un piso/cuarto.
 - o Pasatiempos, diferentes actividades no-laborales.
 - o Contacto con otros migrantes o paisanos.
 - o Amigos o conocidos por lo general de Barcelona/España o extranjeros.
 - o Encuentros con la gente en general en tu vida cotidiana (vecinos, etc.).
 - o Alguna ventaja/desventaja en ser migrante.
 - o En general ¿qué sería fácil/difícil para ti en tu vida cotidiana aquí?
 - o El idioma.
- Servicios
 - o Experiencias con los servicios (de salud, sociales, seguridad social, oficiales de inmigración y la administración/burocracia de inmigración u otros).
 - o Organizaciones civiles.

- Información y acceso en general a servicios, apoyo, consejos.

ESTATUS MIGRATORIO

- Tu situación migratoria actualmente.
- Ha cambiado tu situación migratoria, ¿qué efectos ha propiciado?
- Planes sobre el estatus migratorio o la ciudadanía.
- Si hay experiencia de una situación migratoria irregular: ¿Cómo ha afectado la vida cotidiana (trabajo, vivienda, moverse, contacto con personas aquí/allí etc)?
- ¿Cómo llegaste a una situación migratoria irregular/regular?
- Qué destaca de la experiencia de la situación migratoria irregular.

FUTURO

- Planes para el futuro (en cuanto a la familia, hijos, estudios, trabajo, lugar de residencia, personal). ¿Qué esperas de tu futuro?
- ¿Dónde te gustaría verte en cinco o diez años?
- El futuro aquí, en algún otro lado, la posibilidad de regresar al lugar de origen, motivos para quedarse, motivos para irse, la familia aquí/allá, etc.

DISCUSSION SOBRE EL TRABAJO CREATIVO

- La experiencia de la migración en una palabra/frase/imagen/sentimiento.
- El significado de ser migrante, mujer, madre, hija, esposa, trabajadora, latinoamericana, de tu país.
- Identificación, de aquí/del país de origen/de algún otro lugar.
- ¿La experiencia de la migración te ha cambiado de alguna forma? ¿Cómo sería ese cambio?
- En tu situación actual como migrante ¿qué te hace sentir fuerte y segura o qué te genera preocupación?
- Un mensaje, ¿algo que según tú la gente tendría que saber o entender sobre la migración y los migrantes?
- Lados positivos/negativos de tu experiencia de migración.
- Si pudieras decir algo a ti misma cuando recién habías llegado aquí ¿qué te dirías?

LA EXPERIENCIA DE LA PARTICIPACION

- ¿Cómo te ha parecido participar?
- Algo te ha preocupado o parecido difícil.
- Algo que hayas disfrutado especialmente y por qué.
- Alguna sorpresa.
- ¿Cómo te pareció el trabajo creativo y sus temas?
- ¿Cómo te parecieron las entrevistas?
- ¿Hubieras pensado o querido que algo fuera diferente?
- Motivación de participar, ¿Qué esperas de la investigación?
- ¿Qué tipo de apoyo social crees que sería necesario e importante poder ofrecer a las mujeres migrantes o migrantes en general?
- Algún mensaje que quisieras dar todavía para los que trabajan con los migrantes (organizaciones u oficiales) o los investigadores sociales o al público en general.
- ¿Tienes algo más que quisieras decir o algún tema más del cual quisieras hablar?

APPENDIX 2: Informed consent / Consentimiento informado

- This is an academic research for a doctoral thesis on the experiences of Latin American women migrants in Europe (Barcelona).
- The research is for the University of Helsinki, Finland, the Department of Social Research. It is independent of any government or civil organisation. This means that participating in the research will not result in advantages or disadvantages with regard to, for instance, your migration or work status.
- In addition to individual interviews, the research employs participative and creative methods, which means that the themes discussed in the interviews will also be dealt with in creative ways, for instance photography, writing, drawing or sharing song lyrics or poems, according to the interests of each participant. The creative work and its results will complement the interview encounters.
- The audio of the interviews will be recorded. It is also possible to participate without the use of the audio recorder in which case notes will be taken.
- As a participant in the research you consent to the publication of the results of your creative work and the extracts of your interviews in future publications concerning this research.
- In these publications, each reference to your work or interviews will carry a pseudonym. Each reference to your creative work/interviews will be made without connecting it to your general socio-demographic information, such as age or nationality. Each reference to your friends and family will also be anonymous.
- While carrying out the creative exercises of the research, participants are encouraged to follow some general instructions in order to protect themselves and their anonymity, for instance avoiding taking photographs of clearly recognisable faces or home interiors.
- You can receive paper prints of your photographs and the originals or copies of any other creative work you produce.
- Your participation in the research is entirely voluntary. You have the right to discontinue your participation at any moment, as well as the right not to answer certain questions or discuss certain themes.
- The duration of the participation is approximately one week, including a minimum of two interview encounters with the researcher, as well as some time in between the two encounters for conducting your creative work independently, according to the time available to you.
- While considering your interest in participation, please take into account that the research will include exercises on different personal experiences, memories and sentiments.

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- Esta es una investigación de una tesis de doctorado sobre las experiencias de las mujeres migrantes provenientes de América Latina en Europa (Barcelona).
- La investigación es para la Universidad de Helsinki, Finlandia, para el Departamento de Investigación Social. La investigación es independiente de cualquier gobierno u organización civil, de modo que su participación en la investigación no va a tener ningún impacto sobre su estatus migratorio actual.
- Como métodos, la investigación emplea entrevistas individuales y métodos participativos y creativos. Esto quiere decir que los temas de conversación en las entrevistas también serán trabajados a través de métodos creativos, tales como la fotografía, escritura creativa, dibujos, extractos de letras de canciones populares o poemas etc., según el interés de la participante. El trabajo creativo completará las entrevistas con la investigadora.
- En las entrevistas se usará grabadora de audio. Es también posible participar sin uso de la grabadora, y en tal caso se tomarán notas.
- Al participar en la investigación Usted dará su consentimiento para la publicación de los resultados de su trabajo creativo y los extractos de las entrevistas en las futuras publicaciones relacionadas a esta investigación.
- En las publicaciones cada referencia a su trabajo o a su entrevista va a llevar un seudónimo. Cada referencia a su trabajo creativo y entrevistas será presentada sin conexiones directas con sus datos generales (tales como su edad, lugar de origen etc.). Posibles referencias a sus familiares y amigos serán igualmente presentadas de forma anónima.
- Para proteger el anonimato de las participantes, se sugiere también que en el caso de fotografías tomadas como parte del trabajo creativo no aparezcan en ellas personas identificables, ni interiores fácilmente reconocibles etc.
- Como participante tiene la posibilidad de recibir las impresiones en papel de sus fotografías y/o los originales o copias de otro trabajo creativo que ha producido durante su participación.
- La participación en la investigación es completamente voluntaria, y Usted tiene el derecho de terminar su participación en cualquier momento. Tiene también el derecho de no contestar a alguna pregunta o hablar sobre algún tema en específico.
- La duración de la participación será aproximadamente de una semana e incluirá un mínimo de dos encuentros entre Usted y la investigadora, como también un tiempo en medio de estos dos encuentros para que Usted desarrolle su trabajo creativo de manera independiente, según el tiempo que tenga a su disposición.
- Quisiera que Usted, al decidir sobre su participación, tenga en cuenta que la participación incluye ejercicios sobre sentimientos, memorias y experiencias personales.

APPENDIX 3: Creative work

Possible themes for the creative work/Algunas temas para el trabajo creativo:

- What do I have in my life here that I did not have in my place of origin? / Qué tengo aquí que no tenía en mi lugar de origen.
- What do I miss from my place of origin? / Qué extraño de mi lugar de origen.
- How do I think my migration has affected my place of origin? / Cómo creo yo que mi ausencia ha afectado mi lugar de origen.
- My migration experience? / Mi experiencia de migración.
- What do I expect for the future? / Qué espero de mi futuro.

Engagement in creative work:

Number of participants who did the creative work and delivered its results: 10

Number of participants who did (some of) the creative work but did not deliver its results: 3

Number of participants who did not engage in the creative work: 2

Types of creative work engaged in by participants:

Photographs (taking photographs and/or using photographs from the internet): 3 participants

Writing (writing thoughts down and/or writing or citing poems or song lyrics): 2

Photographs and writing: 4

Collage work: 1

Painting: 1

Multimedia work: 1

APPENDIX 4: Reporting the interviews

Signs or symbols in the interview extracts

[]	Text added by the researcher to clarify what is being said, explain the context of the interview extract, express participant's emotions, such as laughter, smiling, sighing or crying, or include participant's body language.
(--)	Text missing in between.
..., minuscule letter	A pause after which the same phrase continues.
... Capital letter	A pause after which a new phrase begins.

In extracts of dialogue between participant and researcher

1	The participant.
0	The researcher.

Measures taken in order to protect participant anonymity in reporting

- A pseudonym is employed for each participant.
- Interview extracts include the pseudonym of the participant and a number indicating whether the extract is from the first, second or third interview encounter. Other information, such as country of origin, age or the number of years living in Barcelona, is reported when discussing the general features of the data or, when necessary for the analysis, discussed in the analysis text in general terms in order to reinforce anonymity.
- Terms such as 'country of origin' or 'city of origin' are employed in the interview extracts instead of the names of the places in question.
- When the participant refers to other people by name in the extract, their names are supplemented by merely referring to, for example, a friend, sister, brother, child.
- The gender of children, siblings etc. has been modified, whenever this does not bear significance to or change the central point of what is being said.
- Collaborating NGOs are not named in the interview extracts but referred to simply as NGOs.
- In the extracts in Spanish, the most obvious regional accents or vocabulary are generally removed, except when these are of the Spanish spoken in Spain, since this was not considered compromising for participant anonymity.