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Singing a New Song?
Transnational Migration, Methodological Nationalism and Cosmopolitan Perspectives

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ABSTRACT

The question posed by this article is how all of us - scholars, musicians, citizens of the world can step out of the migrant/native divide and still leave room to study and theorize creative processes that bring together the intertwining of cultural influences. How can we discard a concept of hybridity with its implications of a prior state of native purity and address the ongoing mutual interactions that unfold within migration processes? This is an ever pressing question for cultural theory in a world in which there is widespread migration and a cyberspace environment of multiple interconnections. Migration provides a base for theorizing cultural processes that extend beyond the specificity of people crossing borders.

In order to begin answering this question it is useful to ask when and why do we see a migrant/ foreigner vs. native divide in the first place. This divide reflects and reinforces a tendency in various disciplines to equate nation-state boundaries with the concept of society. In the first section of this article, we will explore the nature and implications of methodological nationalism and place it within a historical context. In its stead we will offer what Glick Schiller has called "a global power perspective on migration" (Glick Schiller, 2009, 2010b). In the second part of the paper we will apply this perspective to case studies of the transnational social field of musical creation that stretches between Europe and localities of artistic production in Africa. Focusing on the movements and interconnections of musicians of Malagasy origin, we will illustrate the ways in which transnational networking can give rise to substantial 'transcultural capital', (Kiwan and Meinhof, 2011; Meinhof, 2009; Meinhof and Triandafyllidou, 2006b) and thus underpin the professionalization of some artists, but can also reflect the inequalities and multiple pressures for authenticity in the world music market.

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INTRODUCTION

As a result of migration processes connections are made between people who have experienced various places. Place-making, as Doreen Massey (2005) and other social geographers remind us is a social process of human construction within a nexus of power. To understand migration as an ongoing site of creativity is to step outside of dominant discourses about migration that see migrants or migration as a social problem capable of threatening the very foundations of our society. The migrants as threat perspective makes the fundamental divide in the modern nation-state between natives and migrants. In contrast we ask: "how do we go about singing a new song about migration?" That is to say, is there a way in which we can study migration as a contemporary and a historical phenomenon that is part of the social process that shapes all our lives? To approach migration this way would be to say that migration is part of what it has always meant to be human.

The question posed by this article is how all of us—scholars, musicians, citizens of the world can step out of the migrant/native divide and still leave room to study and theorize creative processes that bring together the intertwining of cultural influences. How can we discard a concept of hybridity with its implications of a prior state of native purity and address the ongoing mutual interactions that unfold within migration processes. This is an ever pressing question for cultural theory in a world in which there is widespread migration and a cyberspace environment of multiple interconnections. Migration provides a base for theorizing cultural processes that extend beyond the specificity of people crossing borders.

In order to begin answering this question it is useful to ask when and why do we see a migrant/ foreigner vs native divide in the first place. This divide reflects and reinforces a tendency in various disciplines to equate nation-state boundaries with the concept of society. In the first section of this article, we will explore the nature and implications of methodological nationalism and place it within a historical context. In its stead we will offer what Glick Schiller has called "a global power perspective on migration" (Glick Schiller, 2009, 2010b). In the second part of the paper we will apply this perspective to case studies of the transnational social field of musical creation that stretches between Europe and localities of artistic production in Africa, in particular Madagascar (Kiwan and Meinhof, 2011; Meinhof, 2009; Meinhof and Triandafyllidou, 2006b).

As an increasing number of scholars have begun to note (Beck, 2000; Beck and Sznaider, 2006; Wimmer and Glick Schiller, 2002), methodological nationalism is an intellectual orientation that (1) assumes national borders define the unit of study and analysis; (2) equates society with the nation state; and (3) conflates national interests with the purpose and central topics of social science. It builds on the western concept of a foundational alterity that allows only for binary divisions between self and other. In migration studies methodological nationalism normalizes stasis in a conceptual move that denies that movement has been basic to human history. Moreover by posing migrants who cross the national border as a source of difference,

disorder, and disintegration, methodological nationalism homogenizes national culture. Through a discursive move, all people are seen as defined by their national culture and history so that those who come from other places are assumed to come carrying a specific and shared national culture.

Hence international migrants are seen through a lens which views them as ethnics, that is to say migrants who are differentiated from the mainstream culture of the nation-state in which they are settled by sharing a different culture, history, and probably language and physical appearance (Glick Schiller, *et al.*, 2005). Within this ethnic lens, both the local/regional differences within the nation-state of origin and that of settlement are discounted.

Methodological nationalism by positing that the source of social tensions and divisions comes from beyond state borders, focuses all concerns about the cohesion of the local and national social fabric on the need to "integrate" the foreigner. Social cohesion no longer is discussed in terms of economic inequalities and regional disparities but is posed as a problematic that can be solved by policy measures that either eliminate the foreign presence or erase, moderate, or control the expressions of cultural difference displayed by those whose family histories lie across national borders.

Among the problems with letting a methodological nationalist orientation shape the definition of our units of analysis is that we disregard relationships of migrants and natives that are not framed by concepts of cultural or ancestral difference. We fail to track structures and processes of unequal cultural and capital flow that influence the experience of people who reside in particular localities. Furthermore we ignore the way in which local institutions that incorporate residents of states within power hierarchies are integrally interpolated in networks that extend within and between states and regions. These conceptual problems stem from making the relationship between a concept of national culture and society and migrants both the categories of study and the central building blocks of our theory.

It is always important to point out that a critique of methodological nationalism is *not* a statement that the nation-state and its borders are of no account, nor a denial of genuine cultural differences and the persistence of ethnic allegiances. We cannot currently dispense with states as instruments that create and protect rights, redistribute wealth and protect public goods and services. The legal regimes, policies, and institutional structures of power, as well as the strategic devices employed by different agents affected by these, must be acknowledged in our scholarship and examined within a global power perspective. Currently, in a period of intense globalization, politicians and leaders of national institutions everywhere have engaged in intense nation-state building processes. Speeches of politicians, television and new media websites as well as the marketing discourses of so-called "world-music" sites normalize a division between native and foreigner as if such a distinction was natural, and long-standing, when nothing could be farther from the historical record (see also Kiwan and Meinhof, 2011, pp. 30-32). This trend is important to recognize and study.

Equally, and more positively, the potential of "transcultural capital" (Kiwan and Meinhof, 2011, and in this volume; Meinhof, 2009) needs to be acknowledged as a potent resource that enables many migrants to creatively link the different values, strengths and social networks they construct and employ as part of their life trajectories and careers. There is an important legacy of work in ethnic studies that examines the situational nature of identity formation and public representation (Baumann, 1996; Roosens, 1989; Yancey, *et al.*, 1976, 1988). However, much of the theoretical and practical significance of this research has been lost because the unit of study and analysis has remained the ethnic group.

Our case study in the second part of this chapter, which is exclusively based on musicians of Malagasy origin living in different parts of Madagascar and in France, could be seen as a case in point. We note that the relationships and contexts within which even the most mobile and transnational artists constantly find themselves, involve processes of creating self- and other identifications that reinforce ethnic and/or national labeling. At the same time we highlight that many of these musicians are engaged in multiple networks in a transnational field that interconnect spaces within a nation, places of origin and places of settlement, as well as extending globally across multiple borders and boundaries. In a much more detailed study, Kiwan and Meinhof (2011) also show that when in the course of their everyday and professional lives individual musicians construct their networks with persons and organisations, ethnic origin quickly recedes to one of many different identification patterns. In these more complex transnational fields, the interconnection not only between musicians of different origins, between musicians and other actors in the music industry, but also between musicians and members of civil society organisations continuously challenge the purely diasporic lens. To take this approach is to appreciate the importance of "ways of being" as well as the representational politics that highlight "ways of belonging" (Glick Schiller, 2003). In order to contribute to scholarship on migration and music that does more than reify bounded concepts of culture, scholars must develop theories and analytical paradigms that extend beyond the confines of methodological nationalism and create methodological alternatives for our empirical work.

TOWARDS ALTERNATIVE WAYS OF SEEING PARADIGMS

A whole new world of insights into realms of sociality and cultural production has emerged in the past two decades from the work of scholars who have put aside the nation-state as our unit of analysis of cultural production and identity. Much of this has taken place within the field of transnational, globalization, and diaspora studies. Within transnational migration studies, a concept of transnational social fields, spaces or networks has allowed scholars to explore the social relations and cultural production of persons who live in two or more nation-states at the same time. The concept of transnational social fields that we are advocating builds not on Bourdieu's distinction of discrete domains of power. Instead we build on social anthropology's grounded theorization of the social relations that intersect and transform discrete, territorially based units of the local community, village, city, or state that historically have been envisioned as bounded (Epstein, 1958; Mitchell, 1969). The theorization

of the social construction of space has been prominent in geography but this work has not been taken up adequately by migration scholars, despite the use of spatial metaphors by scholars of transnational processes. Within this perspective transnational social fields of unequal power can be defined as networks of networks, linking individuals to the institutional structures of more than one state. These networks mean that incorporation of migrants takes place within multiple places.

This alternative perspective focuses on social relations and acknowledges the significance of states and state-based institutions. At the same time it allows analysts to focus on the fact that people connect to each other within specific places as they live within networks of relationships. A transnational social fields and network approach to migration facilitates research into the production of multiple simultaneous identities and gives us new entry points into the study of cultural production. However, there has been too little work done on the topic of cultural production from this perspective. (But see Kiwan and Meinhof, 2011; Meinhof and Triandafyllidou, 2006b). Historic literatures on transculturation (Ortiz, 1995[1940]) and more recent literatures on hybridity (Anthias, 2006; Bhabba, 2000; Hall, 2003) do not link research on relationality to cultural production.

A social field or network approach in migration and diaspora studies can include within the same analytical framework (1) persons with a history of movement and connection, irrespective of their place of settlement; (2) those who are part of a place but legally considered as peripheral to it including persons without accepted documentation including short-term labour contract workers, asylum seekers, "expats", retirees and returnees; (3) persons of migrant background and, as was just shown, (4) persons who are classified as "natives" who share social relations with persons in the other three categories. That is to say: a transnational social field analysis of the relationship between migration and cultural production allows most of us to be encompassed within a single analytical lens. Within this lens persons appear as actors in the mutual construction of the global, national and local. Actors can be understood as social citizens creating institutions of daily life across and within borders. Transnational networks of communication within cyberspaces such as websites, blogs, and other forms of new social media readily can be part of this analytical perspective. Nation-states enter into our analysis as units of governance and governmentality as actors participate in various institutional frameworks based within nation-states.

The framework we offer here overcomes some of the empirical and theoretical weaknesses of diasporic and mobility discourses. It puts individuals within multiple institutional frameworks back into the picture which otherwise had been framed within diasporic imaginaries without social actors of very different degrees and kinds of culturally moderated and inflected power: economic, political, racialized, gendered. At the same time, we are not imagining a world of mobile actors or of capital flows that exist apart from emplaced and embodied human relationality. While a research methodology that investigates transnational social fields discards a research analytics that reifies the divisions between native and foreigner, this

approach will not include all individuals of either background. This is a matter of empirical investigation.

It certainly is the case that some people classified as of migrant background confine themselves to a single institutional framework and its nexus of cultural production. However, the people who live in social and cultural ghettos generally are not those classified as migrants; such people tend to be multiply-connected. Rather it tends to be persons generally seen as tourists, travellers, or expats who live within a single institutional nexus and domain of cultural production. Whilst their social field may extend across state borders, they often remain confined to a single language, and identity. Wherever they go, they remain more or less within a gated community. But of course even such people may depend on various service workers who can engage them in social and cultural networks that they may otherwise not encounter.

One could readily respond to our claims about the dominance of a methodological nationalist orientation in social and cultural research by asking the following question: If social theory has been so rooted in methodological nationalism, why are you able to make the current critique and offer a transnational social field framework and global perspective? In point of fact, there is a historical context to our ability to offer an alternative to methodological nationalism. Changing world conditions facilitate or impede both the occurrence and the envisioning of transnational processes. Both migrants and scholars are shaped by these conditions. Several scholars of globalization, transnationalism, and cosmopolitanism have noted this dynamic (Beck and Sznaider, 2006; Glick Schiller, 1999, 2003; Mittleman, 1996). Ulrich Beck calls the ability to step out of the received knowledge of the day and analyze the changing world conditions that influence our concepts and paradigms "cosmopolitan realism" (Beck, 2006).

It is useful in this regard to remember the parallels between the intensive recent globalization of the 1970s-to the present, and a past period of globalization between 1880s-1914. During that period there was also widespread migration, economic disparity and social struggle, transnational nation-state building, and competing paradigms. Transnational visions flourished within networks of scholars whose ties connected individuals in Europe, the Americas, Africa, and Asia and who were informed by the cultural and intellectual knowledges of colonial subjects. Discourse and documentation of the normality and desirability of transnational connections and the world as a space of flows (Bourne, 1916; DuBois and Aptaker, 1968; Simmel, 1903; Thomas and Znaniecki, 1996[1919]) competed with growing nativist rhetoric and anti-foreign tirades.

From the period of World-War One until the end of the Cold War, transnational perspectives were suppressed as methodological nationalism triumphed. Nation-state building processes throughout Europe and in the Americas reinforced national institutions, histories, and imaginaries. Histories of migration linked to the industrial revolution as well as the colonial and imperial penetrations that generated labour capital, and shaped what was considered national culture, cuisines, and identities were neglected within national narratives.

This single vision began to break down with new forms of global economic unequal interdependency beginning in the 1970s but with increasing intensity by the 1990s. As part and parcel of the expansions of neo-liberal capitalism and its new interweaving of people, places, economic processes and discourses about human rights and freedom, a new wave of transnational/ diasporic theorizing emerged. However, today, nation-state building projects are resurgent and are constraining transborder imaginaries. The contemporary world context is one in which the political leaderships of neoliberalizing states search for new legitimacy as they dramatically slash their state's commitments to social welfare. In place of social services they offer nationalism.

This delimitation has had several consequences for current scholarship. In the first place transnational migration studies has promoted a language of "transnational communities". Such a perspective confines migrants and their socialities within a nationalist or ethnicized framework in which transborder ties are confined within the parameters of the projection of a homogenous unitary culture. This approach both obscures the multiple and cross cutting identities and relationships that migrants have both with people who share a cultural identity---Pakistani, Malagasy, Polish--- as well as with people with whom they share other identities---as Londoners or Parisians, as parents, as neighbours, as co-workers, as artists, as women or men, as youth, etc. In other words, at this moment of time we see a reassertion of methodological nationalism even within transnational migration studies. This tendency can be challenged epistemologically by positing the multiplicities and situated construction of all forms of identity. But to avoid methodological nationalism empirically requires a radical reformulation of the ways in which we design methodologies for collecting data in the first place, especially in those cases where those being studied share a nation or country of origin. Hence Kiwan and Meinhof's insistence on following individual migrants' movements across different types of interconnecting networks rather than confining them to mono-directional or bi-directional diasporic links.

In designing research methodologies, it is strange that migration scholarship has had so little to say about power since the question of power structures whether or not we even define a person who moves across state borders as a migrant. Clearly those who have rights as citizens in states or confederations of states that dominate the world militarily and economically --- namely the US and the EU—have been able to move to the rest of the world with few barriers. People from the rest of the world have not been able to return the favour. This makes them migrants and the subject of migration scholarship. It would seem therefore that migration scholarship requires a global perspective on power that begins with this basic disparity between states and examines what combination of forces makes possible and maintains this inequality (Castles, 2007; Cervantes-Rodríguez, 2009; Grosfoguel and Cervantes-Rodríguez, 2002; Mittleman, 1994). One aspect of this approach is to follow people labeled as migrants as they form relationships---which although often unequal provide new domains for migrant agency—with those whose mobility is not categorized or questioned. The migrant musicians that are the subject of interest of this article

deploy strategies of relationality that cannot be examined purely through an ethnic lens.

Previous attempts of migration scholars to look beyond the nation-state built upon a world systems, world society approach, or Braudelial world scale approach in ways that have maintained distinctions between levels of analysis or spatial hierarchies (Braudel, 1980; Luhmann, 1997; Wallerstein, 1979). Such distinctions reinforce methodological nationalism by assuming that processes within the boundaries of the nation-state can be analyzed without reference to globe-spanning institutions of power. If looking beyond the nation-state is conceptualized as a higher level of abstraction, that is to say a macro-level analysis, then we are unable to observe and theorize the interpenetration between globe-spanning institutions that structure imbalances of power and migrant experiences within and across state borders. Yet it is this imbalance of power that shapes the circumstances that compel people to migrate while simultaneously shaping the conditions under which they attempt to settle and develop transnational social fields. Notions of levels of analysis obscure this basic transnational aspect of daily life around the globe, which not only penetrates states but also shapes distinct migrant social fields across and within states.

Those social theorists who have developed more global theoretical framings have been marked by their tendency to exclude migrants as actors on a global stage. Scholars such as Manuel Castells (2000) and Bruno Latour (2004), who trace networks of interconnection that are not confined to nation-states provide the basis for an analysis of migrants' transnational social fields within the current historical conjuncture and its transformations of human relations, but neither have addressed migration nor migrants' encounters with regimes of borders, racialization, and dehumanization. There has also been a near total neglect of cultural production and the role of migration in cultural globalization. Ulrich Beck (2007) provides a critique of methodological nationalism that posits transnational migrants as cosmopolitan actors that necessarily and properly destabilize nationalist projects. His approach, while allowing for a global perspective and the role of migrants as transnational actors, homogenizes migrants who may reinforce or contribute to rather than contest neoliberal projects.

Neo-liberalism is defined within this literature as a series of contemporary *projects* of capital accumulation that strive to shape the social relations of production, including the organization of labour, space, state institutions, military power, governance, citizenship, consumption, cultural productions, and personhood. With few exceptions, such as the global cities literature, the past three decades of scholarship on the neoliberal restructuring of urban space within mutually interdependent though unequal flows of economic, political and cultural capital also do not address migration (Brenner and Thoedore, 2002; Harvey, 2005, 2006; Jessop, 2002; Peck, 1998; but see also Meinhof and Triandafyllidou, 2006a). And often the study of cultural processes has been reduced to a discussion of "the creative" city (Florida 2002) or the branding of the cosmopolitan city (Binnie, *et al.*, 2006). However, the research and theorization contained in this literature can prove useful to the project of developing a global power perspective on migration. A global power perspective on

migration must address the various positionalities migrants have assumed within attempts to implement neo-liberal capitalism and the types of contradictions as well as creativities these positions are currently engendering. Hence to begin a new approach to music and migration, scholars must do more than reject methodological nationalism and take up transnational studies. We must build a global power perspective on migration that examines transnational social fields and networks rather than using the nation-state and the migrants within it as primary units of study an analysis. This will allow us to examine local sociabilities and cultural production that can generate alternative social visions (Glick Schiller and Caglar, 2011).

ILLUSTRATING THE ARGUMENT WITH EXAMPLES OF THE PRODUCTION OF NEW SONGS

In the second part of our paper we will illustrate some of these theoretical points by two examples from fieldwork with musicians of Malagasy origin whose life trajectories elucidate the different dimensions of mobility and power, as well as the mutual constitution of local, national and global perspectives. So as to avoid the charge that we are ourselves falling into the trap of methodological nationalism it is important to point out that we are only presenting one series of networks from a much wider and diversified study of the transnational field in which these musicians from Madagascar operate (but see Kiwan and Meinhof, 2011 for a much more complete picture). But even in limiting ourselves to the analysis of two sets of actors originating from the same state – Madagascar - we are able to challenge any notion of a homogeneous culture. Hence without being able to go into much detail we can nevertheless show how convenient and widely used labels such as "Malagasy artists" or "Malagasy music" hide an extraordinary variety and crossing of diverse cultural practices. These answer at one and the same time to local and global contexts of musical creativity and production, defying any essentializing national or ethnic identification. Furthermore in focusing on two case-studies of artists that represent the very opposite poles of transnational mobility we can empirically address the issue of power differentials in the global market place. The transnational field where our examples are located spans places as remote as Nosybe, a village in the extreme South-East of Madagascar not to be mistaken for the tourist island of the same name in the North-West, Antananarivo, the capital city of Madagascar, as well as the differential sites of the culture industries across Europe, especially in the French capital Paris.[1]

Musicians of Malagasy origin are far less known internationally than their more famous African or Latin American counterparts from Senegal and Mali, South-Africa or the Maghreb, Cuba or Brazil. Even the university educated musicians of Mahaleo, probably still the most famous group of Madagascar, who have dominated the music scene there since the early 1970s, and who are regularly departing on national and international tours from their homes in Madagascar, earn their regular living with

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[1] In this brief article we can only touch on these phenomena as an elucidation of a highly complex phenomenon. For a much fuller account see the chapters by Kiwan and Kosnick, Kiwan and Meinhof, Meinhof and Triandafyllidou, all in Meinhof and Triandafyllidou (2006a), Meinhof (2005, 2006, 2009), Meinhof and Rasolofondraosolo (2005), and especially Kiwan and Meinhof (2011).

mainstream professional careers.[2] However, a recent documentary about their careers and two major concerts in the legendary Parisian Olympia have widened their international appeal (for more details see www.mahaleo.com). Most of the Malagasy-origin artists who have managed to access the so-called "world music market" live in or near Paris and live highly mobile transnational lives, but they are a tiny majority in an extremely rich musical spectrum. The artists themselves often explain the relative invisibility of their music by the sheer versatility and variability of musical styles and by their own unwillingness to exoticize their acts through colourful costumes and other ethnic identifiers which would allow the music industry to clearly pigeon-hole and market them accordingly (Interview with members of the Mahaleo group, Paris, June 2003). That is to say, while to explicate their origins we can label them Malagasy, this identification cannot be used exclusively to encompass their musical styles, markets, their professional or personal networks, or even their self-identification in its entirety.

At the very same time, as Fuhr (this volume and forthcoming) shows, the paradoxical discourses of Malagasy musicians about a particular rhythm, referred to as the 6/8 , seem to represent two aspects simultaneously - deep-seated identification *and* a strategic invention for identity construction. Meinhof and Triandafyllidou (2006b) have similarly shown the ways in which, for example, the musicians' choice of the Malagasy language and Malagasy themes for their lyrics, or their performing of "old sing-along" favourites alongside or instead of newer and often more innovative and experimental songs, or their networking across the Malagasy diaspora and their retention of transnational ties, all constitute a "transcultural capital" used within a transnational field that is not ethnically restricted. Making use of these ethnic connections is seen by the musicians themselves as both, a creative necessity *and* a limitation, a nostalgic identification *and* a strategic tool for surviving as a professional musician in a hugely competitive commercialized scene. In Meinhof's interviews with many artists the strategic potential of their transcultural capital emerged as an ability to play the ethnic-diasporic and the cosmopolitan card at the same time. Hence, rather than seeing diasporic or cosmopolitan identities as alternatives, these are better seen as discursive registers within the artists' transnational repertoire.

That many artists are fully aware of these strategic options is not to deny the huge inequality that limits their ability to realize their potential in the international music market, nor the very real fears and anxieties that globalization has carried even into the most remote villages. Two examples from the very opposite end of the spectrum will help to illustrate both of these points. The first takes us to the village of Nosybe and has to do with the fact that many musicians who live in such a remote rural area of Madagascar have no or very restricted educational opportunities, with the results that literacy skills are limited or non-existent. According to every possible indicator, the educational, cultural, social and economic disparities are immense between this locality and even the nearest towns, far more so than those between the capital city of Antananarivo and Paris. And yet in spite of these distances, musicians are acutely aware of the opportunities but also of the threats of transnational and translocal

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2 Sadly, one of the seven, the singer song-writer and doctor Raoul, died in September of 2010.

connections. These find expression in the hope that incoming artists- be they visitors or returnees from the capital city – may bring them opportunities to have their music heard outside the village and enable their own move to the capital city – a *passage obligé* for any Malagasy artist who wants to make a professional career. At the same time there is anxiety and fear, focusing on the potential theft of their music by those who come and go.

During Meinhof's field visit in December 2009, where she was accompanied by Dama from Mahaleo and Ricky Olombelo, two famous musicians from Antananarivo with good local connections, plus a local mediator from nearby town Fort Dauphin, stories were told of such thefts of songs. It appeared that one of the artists from a local band called Nosibe Tsykivy, had once heard a song of his creation being taken up by a band who made the jump to Antananarivo, without their ever having acknowledged his author's rights.[3] Hence when our team of researcher-musicians appeared in Nosybe to the warmest of welcomes by the musicians and villagers alike, we were nevertheless asked at one point whether we, too, had come to "take their songs". The sub-text here is not just prejudice against newcomers but arises from a very real situation of inequality and differential access to the means of communication and rights' protection.

To understand these suspicions one therefore needs to contextualize the situation of rural musicians in Madagascar both in terms of their local isolation and the space they occupy in a globalized communication system. Rural musicians are not professional artists but make their living as peasant farmers, cattle herders or fishermen. Access to any kind of music industry is non-existent except for those who leave for bigger towns, especially the capital city, and authors' rights protection is inaccessible even to those who can read and write. Yet these artists very often are original singer-song-writers and not simply interpreters of existing "traditional" music or folklore in the Western sense. Their songs speak of their everyday life practices, and thus carry the imprint of the life cycle and rituals of their contemporary daily lives in the countryside. Although individuals or members of bands create these songs, those musicians who stay in the villages cannot stop their songs being interpreted and even released by other musicians. Thus the absence of literacy skills and related professional know-how plus a completely underdeveloped infrastructure for protecting authorial rights can undermine the recognition of these artists as original singer song-writers, and explains the fear of having their creations left unprotected in a global market place.

Where this music does make the leap into the so-called "world music" market, as was the case with the polyphonic groups Salala and Senge in the 1980s and 90s, it becomes marketed as "authentic" and "traditional" by the music industry. Those with better connections can thus in turn collude with the industry's marketing of "ethnically authentic" music (for a much more detailed account of this see Kiwan and Meinhof, 2011, chap. 1). What we therefore see here is a situation where in spite of the extreme geographical remoteness of rural musicians in Madagascar we can

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[3] The ethnomusicologist Julien Mallet (2010) reports similar worries being articulated by the much more urban musicians of the Tsapiky scene in and around the South-western town of Toliara.

nevertheless perceive them as creative participants in a transnational social field where local, national and global networks intersect and overlap, even where they themselves may remain without access to mobility themselves and thus remain victims of unequal power relations. We need a methodology and analysis that does more than move beyond a portrayal of Madagascar as a homogeneous cultural field by highlighting differences between specific regional musics within the country, since this would risk reproducing the problems of methodological nationalism by simply scaling down from the national, with equally essentializing implications albeit now for the sub-national or tribal. By contrast, in highlighting the intersections between the local and the global we can explicate the impact on cultural production of ongoing differences of power between the rural and urban, the literate and illiterate, the transnationally connected and the more locally situated.

Our second example comes from the opposite end of the spectrum- from a new group that epitomizes transnationality per se: the Madagascar All Stars. Consisting of 5, (or occasionally 6) singer song-writers, the group has formed between 2005-10, originally under the name of Vala, and has since performed at different festivals and concert halls across Europe, with their debut album released in 2009. Several intriguing factors about this group highlight the necessity and significance of an empirical subject-centred approach to transnational migration and networking, since judging from the name alone – Madagascar All Stars – one could easily mistake them for another instance of an exotically authentic other. In fact the name itself- Madagascar All Stars- seems to underline rather than challenge ethnic and cultural homogeneity. However, according to the artists, the name serves two functions: a strategic one that allows them to be recognizable and marketable in a particular world music niche- a vital survival tactic in the music industry - but simultaneously to mark a project through which musics from Madagascar should be recognized as diverse and multiple rather than singular and exotic. Consequently, the Madagascar All Stars play a double card: one which uses the transcultural capital of the Malagasy identifier to the strategic maximum for multiple audiences, and at the same time personifies, embodies and foregrounds the highly diverse musical allegiances personified in their life histories and wide-ranging transnational links. Their collaboration reflects a strategic choice by the musicians themselves to form a group that can show-case musics *from Madagascar* not as one or several secluded ethnically or nationally marked traditional styles but as a project that continuously engages and reengages in constructing "unity in diversity", or to "create harmonies from differences" (Interview with the group, Duisburg, 2006, and with Dama Paris, April 2009). However, just as significantly for our argument, the emphasis that all members are stars highlights their readiness to engage with other musicians from highly diverse backgrounds in more obviously transcultural or cosmopolitan settings. All of these interactions leave traces on their musical production and exchanges. The artists residencies and the final concert of the TNMundi conference from which this volume originates, showed this negotiation of widely divergent musical talents in action, when the group met up with 9 other artists originating from Algeria, Morocco, and Madagascar, all resident and/or professionalized in either North-Africa, Madagascar, Senegal, Germany, France, and the UK, who were together

creating dialogues and conversations between their instruments, rhythms, voices and languages. Thus what could superficially appear as a return to a homogenizing cultural label in so far as the Madagascar All Stars' musical practices aim at highlighting Madagascar as point of reference, becomes instead understandable as a deliberate intervention in the context of pressures to perform and equate one style with one culture and one nation.

Thus this grouping of musicians contributes to nation-building projects insofar as they address a complex political world where these issues are still very raw and easily manipulated. At the very same time, their performances and identities can be completely open and cosmopolitan at the same time. What becomes primary at any one moment very much depends on the setting and the people these musicians are with. Hence we insist on following individual artists, and approaching cosmopolitan, neo-communitarian and diasporic discourses as registers rather than fixed boxes. Within this approach there is a resilience of the ethnic identification, albeit only as one of many. Neither the musicians nor our analysis dispense with nor make ethnicity consistently primary. The escape from methodological nationalism lies in the methodological research design, which undercuts or at least complexifies the nation/ ethnic perspective through empirical findings.

In following the trajectories of the artists across their multiple connections and across many national boundaries in Africa and Europe, and in letting their voices speak, one can begin to appreciate the very different moulds from which transnational fields are being constructed. Firstly, all musicians originate from very different regions of Madagascar representing different musical traditions and a range of instruments that are rarely heard together. Guitar, kabosy and harmonica player Dama (Mahaleo), guitarist Erick Manana and valiha player Justin Vali were born and grew up in the Hauts Plateaux of Madagascar, in Antsirabe, Fianarantsoa and the small village of Fierenana respectively, the accordionist Regis Gizavo originally came from Toliara in the South, the multi-instrumentalist Marius Fontaine (Fenoamby) came from the North-East, and percussionist Ricky Olombelo, who joins the group whenever feasible, was born in the deepest South-East of the island. Secondly, their collaboration is unusual as well as complicated since Dama and Ricky live and work from their homes in Antananarivo, Erick lives in Bordeaux, Marius and Regis in Paris, and Justin moves between Lille or lately Paris and Antananarivo. Thirdly, each performs as a solo artist and as a member of other groups of highly diverse musical styles, each has a large repertoire of original songs to his name, and everyone of them continues to release new CDs in different settings. Fourthly, to each of them, the two capital cities of Antananarivo and Paris respectively represent spatial "hubs" through which transnational movements are organized. Both cities represent a *passage obligé* for out-migration, cyclical migration, return migration, or for what Kiwan and Meinhof have described as "to-ing and fro-ing". And finally, their coming together as a group was made possible by a series of transnational interconnections and several more accidental encounters across different types of social networks of friends and professionals, linking musical, commercial, developmental and academic spheres

across Madagascar and a whole series of different sites in European countries such as the UK, Germany, Austria, Switzerland, Belgium, to name just a few.

This example illustrates what we posited theoretically at the beginning of this article, namely that the risk of methodological nationalism can only be counteracted if transnational fields are investigated "bottom-up", across the different nodes or hubs that link people, spaces, institutions and organisations in the complex multi-encoded world. The study of music and migration offers us one of many possible entry points into this world, and one which shows through empirical example that rootedness and openness to the world do not need to be seen as oppositional poles.

CONCLUSION

In this article we have chosen to challenge both theoretically and with two brief empirical examples, the deep-seated disciplinary and conceptual divisions that prevent an analysis of the domains and relationships within which cultural production takes place. Migrants are only one vector of such transnational production. The social fields of the production of contemporary music stretch across national borders, rural urban divides, and categories of native and migrant. This should be obvious. The fact that it is not has been the subject of interrogation of this article. We have argued that an analysis of the intellectual and political history of migration studies is necessary to disentangle the productive processes of migrant musical composition and performance from narratives of authenticity, ethnic specificity, and local/world dichotomies and divisions. Migrant music, as all other aspects of contemporary migrant life, emerges as a product of social relations that link multiple localities and people of various cultural and class backgrounds within and across borders.

These social relations, even when connected digitally, are ultimately emplaced in the sense that they connect people within space and time. As they connect to space and consequently produce, contest, and reestablish local place identities, the transnational social fields of migrants serve as relationships of creativity and empowerment as well as exploitation. Musicians from Madagascar find that their transnational networks can provide new economic and social opportunities as well as inspirations; they can also be the means of their loss of rights to their cultural production or their marginalization through racialized narratives of difference. To understand how the trajectories of migrants and those within their transnational social field including musicians in remote villages experience and participate globally, it is urgent that scholars abandon concepts that speak of nation-states as separate societies and also discard discussions of local, national, and global levels of analysis. The conceptual framework we have provided in this article allows us to understand that the rural artist is no more a "traditional" musician than the migrant in Paris and both do not live in segregated or discrete "communities" . We have not made an argument for the emergence of a homogenized global culture but for a nuanced reading of the unequal globe-spanning social networks within which all contemporary cultural production takes place. Moreover, by providing a global power perspective on migration we have provided a language to talk about culture production that sets aside discussions of

mainstream vs. migrant culture that have gained salience with a return by migrant scholars to concepts of assimilation, integration, and social cohesion.

In the US migrants are often seen as becoming part of the mainstream over several generations while in France and Germany there is a view that migrants have failed to integrate (Alba and Nee, 2003; Waters and Jimenez, 2005; Weaver, 2010). However while this discourse is phrased somewhat differently in the various national contexts, many migration scholars share a concern for the national fabric and identify with the process of nation-state building. That is to say, they envision cultural process, production, and identity as taking place within a single nation-state and either contributing to or threatening a national "mainstream" culture (Alba and Nee, 2003). Transnational networks of production and experience and transnational social fields ultimately are seen as peripheral or deleterious to the social processes of integration and national cohesion that they seek to both track and celebrate (for a critique of the contemporary discourses of integration see Armbruster and Meinhof, 2011). At the same time those who note and support the transnational ties of people categorized as migrants or of migrant background, see such connections as diasporic in the sense that they are supposedly principally reflecting and building national or ethnic identities and cultures.

To counter this trend we need both a global power perspective on migration on the one hand and detailed empirical studies of individuals' networks across transnational fields on the other (Glick Schiller, 2010a, 2010b). The global perspective addresses the reproduction and movement of people and profits across national borders. Such a perspective places the debates about international migration and the contemporary polemics and policies on immigration, asylum, and global talent as well as cultural production, mainstreams, and hybridity within the same analytical framework. A concept of diasporic cosmopolitanism can be formulated that allows for the simultaneousness of various forms of ethnic identification and rooted cultural practice and an openness to common human aspirations (Glick Schiller, 2010a; Glick Schiller, *et al.*, 2011). This approach allows scholars of migration and culture to address the mutual constitution of the local, national, and the global. A global perspective on migration first of all situates migration as one of numerous processes that both cross state borders and contribute to the constitution or restriction of state powers. Secondly, it recognizes the continuing importance of states as actors within and across state borders. Thirdly, this perspective recognizes that states constitute only one set of institutions of power that extend transnationally. Financial conglomerates, NGOs, religious organizations, treaty based organizations; international corporations are also institutions of power that work across state borders. Fourthly such a perspective builds on yet critiques theorizations of global networks that posit that the world has been transformed into a space of flows (Castells, 1996, Hardt and Negri, 2000). And finally a "subject-centred ethnography" (Rice, 2003) provides the necessary empirical challenge to the national optic and all it entails by showing the material reality of transnational interconnections.

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