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rpapeles@uaemex.mx

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Spatialities, displacements and transnationalism

Alicia Lindón

Universidad Autónoma Metropolitana/Iztapalapa

Resumen

La espacialidad constituye el tema central de este trabajo. La primera parte analiza la relación entre el transnacionalismo y el territorio. La segunda parte trata sobre la concepción del espacio que llevan consigo los estudios sobre transnacionalismo. En este apartado se contrastan estas concepciones sobre el espacio con las que se han desarrollado en la Geografía más reciente. El apartado siguiente presenta una particular forma de concebir el espacio en el estudio de la vida cotidiana en la periferia de la ciudad de México. Por último, se esboza un horizonte posible para los estudios de transnacionalismo si se replanteara la concepción de espacio hacia otro tipo de visiones, como las geográficas.

Palabras clave: espacialidad, Geografía, transnacionalismo, vida cotidiana.

Abstract

Spatialities, displacements and transnationalism

Spatiality is the central object of this paper. The first part analyzes the relationship between transnationalism and territory; the second one, the concept of space integrated by the studies on transnationalism. In this part, a contrast is made between those concepts and other developed by the most recent Geography. The following part, presents a particular conception of space in the study of everyday life in the periphery of Mexico City. Finally, a possible horizon for the studies on transnationalism is presented if their concept of space is revised in the direction of other visions, such as the geographical ones hereby presented.

Key words: everyday life, spatiality, transnationalism, Geography.

‘Spatialities’ constitute this work’s central topic. The expression can be used in two alternative ways: as the experience of a human being of inhabiting, i.e., as the way of living in the space that includes both practice and knowledge of the common sense which orientates them and is rooted in historicity. Alternatively, it can be understood as the different conceptions of space developed in scientific thought.¹ Even though I usually draw

¹ It is worth mentioning that both meanings can be expressed with the word ‘geographicity’. In this case, it can be said that the first of these meanings was originally used by Eric Dardel in 1952 (1990: 46-62) and nowadays by many other authors, among which Raffestin (1989, 1986) is distinguishable. The second meaning of the word geographicity is found, at first, in Paul Michotte (1922), although more recently in other geographers, for instance Yves Lacoste (1979).

to this term in the first sense, on this occasion I will do it in the second one. This means that along the present work I wonder about the conception of space of certain specialized discourses that enquire on issues related to spatial mobility—displacements—of people or collectives of people, for instance, communities. Particularly, I am interested in exploring the conception of space implicitly prevailing in a certain field of cultural studies, apparently very interested in spatiality, such as it is the case of the studies on transnationalism. However, with the intention of providing a better background I compare said conception of space to that which orients my own research dedicated to people's spatial mobility, not from transnationalism but from the quotidian life's geographies.

Hence, in the first part of this work I review the apparently 'natural' and necessary relation between transnationalism and territory, to continue in the second part with an exploration of the concept of space the studies on nationalism carry. In this respect one must distinguish that such conception is seldom made explicit, there is not a direct reflection on space, from here the task I hereby take on is that of reconstructing—it would be more precise to talk about reconstruction—'that which has not been said on that which has been said' in respect to space in this research field. In this section these findings are contrasted to other space conceptions developed inside one of the clearest traditions of spatiality, such as geography, which contemporarily has configured its object of study around the relation 'space / society'. In the third section I present the conception of space I perceive and follow in my work on quotidian life's spatiality in the excluded periphery eastern from Mexico City. In this point it is worth distinguishing that the empirical only supports the theoretical research that is done, so it should not be read a study case. Finally, I conclude with a reflection on the potential panorama the studies on transnationalism face if they were to restate the conception of space, or to be opened to other conceptions. It is necessary to clarify that all the aforementioned supposes a reading of transnationalism from the outside, this is to say, from an angle (spatiality) which the very transnationalism has not directly stated, but it is included somehow masked.² Last but not least, it is noteworthy that this is neither a study case nor a methodological proposal, it only states reflection lines of the theoretical-methodological kind supported on concrete cases.

² Somehow, this sort of reading is similar to that proposed by Jeffrey Alexander, in the context of Sociology, when he warns that every sociological theory—general or particular—has as a background two decisive suppositions or assumptions. In this case said suppositions are: how 'social action' is conceived and how 'social order' is conceived (1995: 11-27). In my analysis I assume something similar, yet in terms of 'space' suppositions.

Transnationalism and territory

Research on transnationalism has been mainly developed inside Anthropology, not exclusively however, in cultural studies, in post-colonial studies, among other fields related to Anthropology as well. Indubitably, it is a look that crosses disciplines and even thematic fields, opening new horizons. At the time I want to remember that in the last decade «the treatment of the idea of culture as organization of the social relations in time and space seems to have gained acceptance» (Cruces, 1997: 45). Indeed, the field of transnationalism is part of these looks that approach culture and social relations ‘in the space’.

In the case of transnationalism, this approach to space on the one side seems to be more evident than in other cultural studies for the starting point is the spatial displacement of communities that cross national borders. Nonetheless, the relation between transnationalism and spatiality is ambiguous: the empirical phenomenon in study has a particular spatial component, yet the background questions of transnationalism are not directly spatial, even though tangentially spatial indeed. The dissatisfaction of certain Anthropology before local approaches of communities has led to search for other options, such as transnationalism. It is precisely this vision of the local and the alternatives to overcome it those which mark the ambiguous relation of transnationalism and spatiality: transnationalism states that it is possible to study the local without doing it from spatiality; the latter understood as life space. Nevertheless, when transnationalism search for alternatives to overcome the traditional visions on the local, it goes beyond the local, not approaching spatiality.

For transnationalism, population displacements along the territory are the basic nucleus. It is also indubitable that population displacements seem to be a growing phenomenon at global level in the last two decades, so we cannot face it as though it was a completely new phenomenon: in reality, humanity’s history is the history of human displacements across the earth’s surface. This is notorious if some ideas of the parents of the modern Human Geography from the late XIX and early XX centuries are remembered: examples are the interests in mobility on the earth’s surface by Ratzel and the consequential diffusion of techniques, or the idea of the human being’s plasticity by Max Sorre, i.e., human’s notable capacity to adapt himself to different spaces. Likewise, the anthropologic or historic literature that shows human beings’ mobility on earth’s surface is an ancient phenomenon is abundant: the silk’s route, the important

discoveries, explorations inside the American continent, as well as the travelers who in the XVIII and XIX centuries cover Latin America. All of them are examples of spatial mobility.

Nevertheless, it is undeniable that among those forms of spatial mobility and those currently taking place there are differences. Past mobility was linked to a good extent to what geographers have called the transformation from *anecumene* into *ecumene* (from the world with no human trace to the world with human traces). Conversely, current spatial mobility has taken new impulses and new connotations. For some, current spatial mobility is one of the globalization's expressions, of the interconnection of remote places on the earth's surface; for other, it is characteristic feature of post-modern societies or advanced modernity and its unchaining processes (Giddens, 1997).

If spatial mobility in general terms has increased, one must also observe that an important part of these population movements across the earth's surface have the additional characteristic that they cross national borders. What is more, one has to take into account that population displacement carries a movement of capitals, symbols and information. All these movements, and everything they carry, constitute the thematic core which the studies on transnationalism currently approach.

All in all, in nowadays' world we witness an increment in spatial mobility of people in diverse modalities: temporary, cyclic, definitive migrations, daily mobility increased at the rate the metropolises expand, leisure mobility that decades ago was almost unthinkable, intra-urban residential mobility, mobility due to job trips, even crossing international borders on a regular basis.

At the same time, and as instance of the aforementioned, one must consider that the current space, territory and spatial movement's references are reiterated in the set of social sciences and not only in the studies on transnationalism or cultural studies. For example Peter Gould, near the end of XX century, stated that XXI century was anticipated as a "spatial century when one will evolve toward an aware space-time consciousness: a time when the conscience of the geographic will acquire once again a distinguishable presence in human thought" (Gould, 1996). It is also notorious that space and territory are referred to from diverse perspectives and even frequently without a deep reflection: there are no few references to space in the different specialized discourses of the social sciences, where it appears as something evident in itself, or as something given. The burdens of self-evident materiality are still present.

Thus, in social sciences as a whole the reference to space appears time after time, whereas during most of the XX century social sciences were very little sensitive to spatiality. They rather prioritized time over space, and from there some series of nodal concepts for the current social thought were constructed. Perhaps the clearest, best-known and most cited instance is the concept of 'progress', inseparable from temporality, yet totally alien to spatiality. In this current tendency of social life spatial rediscovery the studies on transnationalism are also included.

The unsaid on the spatiality of transnationalism

At first, it could be seen as though the transnational studies start from the movement population on the territory, it is, the migratory flows —which essentially are population movements in the space—, the territorial component in this approaches is evident. Nonetheless, it is also possible to recognize the fact that the studied phenomenon contains a necessary spatiality does not guarantee that the approach constructed to study it reflects, analyzes and constructs knowledge on said component. One can find an instance of this in the demographic research which for long years has studied migrations, either national or international. Even though migration carries a particular spatiality, mainly Demography has studied it — even with a high-technical degree— in an a-spatial manner or with a very rudimentary spatiality. This is quickly grasped if one remembers that the central questioning for such specialists of the studies on population has been to 'clarify the factors or conditions for ejection' from the places of origin, or even, the attraction of the destination places and many a times it all ends reduced to the existence of labor sources or their absence. In these cases, the treatment of the phenomenon's spatiality is diluted or reduced to a localization issue, and localization has always been the most elemental way of thinking of space.

Then, it is suitable to underscore that the spatiality proper to the phenomenon does not guarantee an *ad hoc* treatment of spatiality; because of that, a series of levels on spatiality considered in transnational studies and some questionings for each of them are stated.

Some of the territorial topics which found a great potential in transnationalism are issues such as the blurring of national borders, cracking of the limits, the social processes that cross the national scale and make it fade, and the multiple facets

of spatial mobility. To sum up, it is a series of problems which seem to claim for a spatial approach. The territorial components in the studies on transnationalism are numerous, yet this time I will focus on some in particular: the concept of 'transnational space' and those of 'de-territorialization and re-territorialization', and as a fundament for the aforementioned, the most general concept of 'space', which appears implicit, encapsulated, never directly analyzed. Finally, I insist the this meta-reading of spatiality the studies on transnationalism contain is performed from Geography, partly because it is from there where more thoroughly a theoretical body referring to space has been constructed and systematized, and also because the studies on transnationalism defend the trans-disciplinary visions.

Transnational space

In respect to the concept of transnational space, it would be worth reflecting on three principal questions: the first one is referred to the 'spatial' component of the transnational space concept; the second is oriented toward the concept of 'transnational space' as a whole; and the third question, to the 'transnational' adjectival use of said concept.

The first questioning before the concept of transnational space is referred to its own spatiality. So, I wonder whether this concept of transnational space would not be perhaps synonym or *cuasi* synonym with that of 'transnational community'. If the answer was affirmative, then the word space in that expression would not be referred to a territorial component properly said, or it has a spatial content rather diluted or diffused. On the other side, it would not be the first time that the social theory used the word space as a reference to an ambit of social relations without a strictly territorial component: a well-known example of this sort of use is the Bourdian statement of 'social space'.

With the intention of clarifying whether the concept of 'transnational space' is referred to a space or to an ambit of social life or to a network of social relations, one can formulate a new question for this concept: does that space have a material dimension? This does not imply the space is considered exclusively as materiality, but the history of this concept's construction has showed that even if the material is accompanied by a representation, an idea, a meaning, said materiality cannot be absent. Nonetheless, there are different traditions to think of materiality of space. For example, from the space's perspective as social product (Santos, 1990), the material of the space are spatial forms—sometimes, spatial patterns—constructed through historical processes, either by a past or

current society. These patterns are unavoidable, they tend to produce inertias in the future appropriation of space, not because of this being determinant.

For a spatial perspective as the aforementioned, one can glimpse that the concept of transnational space does not have said material component. In these studies there are no references to particular spatial forms, spatial patterns, or re-functionalized spatial forms by appropriations different from those which such space had in the past. It would rather be a metaphoric use of space: it is called space, yet it is referring to an ambit of social or communal relations. This does not deny that spatiality can be developed as a social product of transnational space.

Nevertheless, if instead of analyzing the spatiality of the concept of transnational space in terms of the social product, it is done from a conception of the simplest space—for instance, from a geometric vision—, then the spatial component of the ‘transnational space’ emerges. If the spatial is geometric, the spatiality of the transnational would not be a metaphoric reference to another thing, but to a locative reference. Transnational space would be the set of points of a plane where the transnational community ‘is’.

Before this last alternative, the second question arises: Will it be that said transnational space ends up being a ‘collection of localities’? If this hypothesis had some pertinence, then another question would arise: Based on which spatiality concepts has the concept of transnational space been constructed? Will it be perhaps that transnational space is supported on the geographic concept of relative space? It is worth remembering that relative space is that which starts from the Euclidian plane, yet instead of being limited to homogeneity as in its most pure version, includes the localization of points, lines and areas.

If the concept of transnationalism has these suppositions, another question can be asked: is not it a very rudimentary spatiality to analyze a thematic where the cultural component is important? However, it could be understood that in this line of cultural studies takes a spatial geometric substratum if one only wanted to include the space as material support for a series of socio-cultural processes which are analyzed in themselves and not spatially. If the latter is accepted, then it is evident that the studies on transnationalism could have refined the treatment of the cultural and have overcome the local visions, yet in terms of approaching to spatiality they remain anchored to locative, geometric conceptions, which disciplines such as Geography repeatedly used during XX century but which currently are very questionable.

In respect to the third question, it is the adjectival use of transnational, just as communities are adjectivally used as transnational; an extension of this logic has taken place in the case of space. Nevertheless, there are possibly very different implications when the use as adjective of this form is made in respect to communities or when it is done in respect to space. I understand that the adjectival use of communities and their displacements in terms of transnational, under the light of the anthropological literature, takes an innovative connotation for it somehow discusses the old idea of traditional communities fixed in their local space, with scarce mobility and even with certain geographic isolation. All in all, it discusses the figure or cultural mosaic, when stating communities in movement that cross national borders, those much closed visions are broken.

Nonetheless, when that which is qualified as transnational is the space, some inconsistencies are generated, mainly because of omission or lack of a vision completely spatial: the geographic space has always been recognized a basic attribution of 'continuity',³ moreover when it is conceived as geometric space. As a last instance, that continuum has only limits on those of the very earth's surface. Continuity is one of the most ancient expressions of reflection on space. Hence, if the geographic space is thought in geometric terms —as a relative space— it can be affirmed with no greater inconveniences that it is a continuum where there are points, lines and areas. For the case in debate, those lines and areas could be borders between nations, and evidently, the points could correspond to localities where transnational communities settle. National borders would be the lines that in a certain way break the continuum.

The adjectival use 'transnational' for space can be understood from the idea of spatial continuity: transnational space would be then, that which as a continuum, goes beyond those national borders. The old idea of geographic continuity is important here since it articulates with the supposition of the geometric space and with the fact that the border does not appear as an obstacle. For long time borders were seen as elements which provided a spatial organization, for instance, Pierre Gourou—in the first decades of the XX century— included them in the 'techniques of framing'. Transnational space somehow discusses that idea, it goes beyond the national border, that is why it seems to approach the perspective of the continuous space. When in the geometric space the obstacle elements are removed (such as borders) the continuum becomes relevant.

³ Continuity is the natural union among the parts of the continuum.

Transnational space would be thus an expression of the ‘extension without solution of continuity’. Nonetheless, in the way of naming it the referent of the national border is kept, even though by means of denial (‘the trans’).

In this terms, the adjectival use of transnational, when it is applied to space, more than producing a new contribution in terms of spatiality would seem to be a return to the old idea of geographic continuity, rejected so many times or criticized, among other reasons because the diverse spatial forms—as borders—diminish its force since history is inscribed into the space and makes homogeneity impossible, the necessary base for the continuum.

However, the adjectival use of space in terms of the transnational could have advanced in the knowledge of spatiality had it been focused on other meanings. Instead of implicitly going back to that idea of geographic on both sides of the border or even better, beyond the border, it would have been possible to construct the concept of transnational spatiality, for instance, in terms of archipelago. Another more complex possibility could be that of constructing the transnational space under the idea of archipelago, yet articulated with the idea of contiguity,⁴ this is to say, different territorial fragments although adjacent.

Some authors from the field of transnationalism, such as Rouse (1991), have proposed the substitution of the concept of transnational space with that of transnational circuit. The circuit would have some advantages; for example, leaving behind the frameworks that have marked the researches on migrations by means of the ‘from’ and ‘to’: the migrants leave ‘from’ certain place and arrived ‘to’ this destination place. Conversely, the circuit would allow thinking in the circulation of people, goods and information as a ‘continuum’. This proposal has on the plus side advancement in respect to the rigid frameworks, it introduces the circulation and with it, the movement the classical studies on migration did not accept for they congealed the phenomenon with the concepts from the places of origin and destination; yet, on the minus side, this vision of the circuit as continuous flow seems to approach the ‘spatial continuum’: it could be inferred that this flow or circuit moves across a space which is continuous or, as Milton Santos would say, it does not have roughnesses. Or even there is the possibility that the idea of the circuit is not intended for the spatial continuum and it is just an a-spatial notion.

To summarize, transnational space sometimes seems to be a mere metaphoric expression to give an account of the social relations. On other occasions, it takes

⁴ Contiguity is the immediacy of one thing with the other; something is in contact with another thing, not implying union as in continuity’s case.

spatial contents, however, excessively limited as all which start from a geometric space. On its own, the adjectival use of transnational applied to space, rather than producing advance in the comprehension of spatiality seems to go back to traditional and overly discussed geographic suppositions. Whereas the traditional circuit does not state clearly if it is also headed to the spatial continuum (with the geometric burden it implies) or if it is a non-specialized notion.

De-territorialization and re-territorialization

The second analytic entry on the spatiality of transnational studies here considered, is that of the issue on 'de-territorialization/ and re-territorialization'. Both are expressions commonly used in recent years in social sciences and even in contemporary philosophy, nonetheless, it is not necessarily clear the content given to them. At first, it can be commented that inside transnational studies there has been some talk on de-territorialization at diverse scales: from the national to the local ones. For instance, the existence of de-territorialized States has been put forward, yet that of de-territorialized communities as well.

As a particular case of the 'de-territorialized States' the idea of Haiti as a de-territorialized State can be cited, for which the key point would be in considering that Haitians abiding in New York are a province in this State. In this case it can be seen that being 'de-territorialized' means being out of the place of origin despite being recognized as a 'part of'; what is more, due the statement's scale, in a more particular manner, being 'de-territorialized' means being outside 'national territory'. Undoubtedly, the reference to territory in this example is inseparable from the ideas of national borders, sovereignty and national territory, or even, the territory as the base of the Nation-State. In this respect two observations are pertinent: the first one, an enormous weight is given to the national scale; the second and more relevant, it is still a version of the conception of space relative to the clearest meaning of continent or container: «I am inside the national continent / container or I am outside that receptacle yet likewise they recognize me as though I was inside» (Kearney, 2002). Finally, it is worth mentioning that because of the fact of being outside their place of origin, it is difficult to assume that a person or a community is not in the territory.

In a rather similar perspective, one finds de-territorialization in respect to jurisdictions and smaller territorial units, which geographically would be a large scale as it would be larger than the detail scale. Hence, the studies on

transnationalism have applied the same idea at different scales. An example of that is found in the proposal by Besserer, when it is stated that “San Juan Mixtepec is de-territorialized” (2004). In this case, San Juan Mixtepec’s de-territorialization is conceived—thus cartographically represented in this work—from the current domiciliary localization in the United States of an important part of the people from this community. Once again de-territorialization implies abiding outside the place of origin, said in other words, it is the community which abides in several ‘points’ different from those of origin.

It is manifested that the transnationalism discourses still preserve the supposition that the space is a localization, a relative space or a container space. It is enlightening that de-territorialization is thought in exclusively locative terms, i.e., it only expresses a ‘being in’ or ‘being located at’. As expected, this analysis of ‘de-territorialization’ is totally related to the idea one has of what ‘being territorialized’ is: it is being in the place of origin. All in all, to the limitation of thinking of the space in a locative manner another is added: for a person their territory only seems to be their place of origin.

In the context of the same research project, Besserer (2004) and Besserer and Kearney (2002) state that the community of people from San Juan (*Sanjuanenses*) has achieved re-territorialization in a multi-centric manner, becoming the ‘Greater Mixtepec’. This re-territorialization would express that said community is still located in a series of points, mainly in California (however, not exclusively), far from the place of origin, nonetheless, they have constructed a proper identity discourse, they feel part of a whole, they have created socio-cultural links.

Surely from an anthropological view, both figures —de- and re-territorialization— are a contribution in terms of ruptures and construction of communal links associated to spatial mobility processes. Nevertheless, from a spatial view it can be left aside that in this discourse, de-territorialization and re-territorialization are the same: both are localizations in disperse points of two nation-states. The difference between both is not territorial but cultural: in the first case, they do not feel part of a community; and in the second, they do. There is not a different relation with the territory, as a matter of fact, the relation between these communities and territory where they abide in not stated. The only thing pinpointed in respect to spatiality is that ‘they are’ in certain points within a space that can be thought of as a reticule. In this reticule, these communities have certain coordinates. That is the spatiality considered. Even though that is a very rudimentary spatiality, it can be accepted that the spatial is reduced to

localization, yet what is not clear is why using the word 'territorialize' with its two prefixes (re- and de-) when from spatiality used it is exactly the same.

It is worth underscoring that these authors are at the time critics in respect to the visions on transnationalism which are exclusively defined from the place of origin. Paradoxically, the condition of 'de-territorialized' they use is exclusively defined in reference to the place of origin, this is to say, it is 'being outside the place of origin', without ceasing to be part of the community of origin, however.

There are some other ways to approach de-territorialization (Hiernaux and Lindón, 2005). For instance, de-territorialization can refer to something different from that which is assumed in this studies on transnationalism: being de-territorialized can also be: being in a place as inhabitant / resident yet without feeling part of this place, i.e., feeling that one 'is only there' circumstantially (Lindón, 2006b). Indubitably, despite thinking de-territorialization in these terms the supposition is not any longer geometric and relative space, but the lived space (the senses and meanings attributed to space).

On its own, the urban anthropologist Manuel Delgado (1999), in his researches on public spaces, finds that de-territorialization is the process by means of which people leave a certain public space in a moment; whereas re-territorialization would be going back to gather in said space. To sum up, in such vision, de-territorialization and its opposed are defined from the space of life (the practices). Conversely, the de-territorialization found in the studies on transnationalism is neither stated as a space of life nor lived space, it is rather stated in terms of geometric space, this is to say, it reduces space to its minimal expression.

Space

Maybe the issue of multi-centrality or multi-locality is one of the most solid concepts in the studies on transnationalism, and somehow that which has been the most relevant to approach the subject of transnational communities to spatiality. Because of that, multi-locality turns out to be useful to understand what the most abstract idea of space implicitly assumed in this field is. At first, the multi-focal, within cultural studies and anthropology, had a not-scarcely relevant role, such as that of broadening the horizon in respect to the conception built on the idea of very compact communities, anchored to a place, i.e., the long-standing hegemonic figure of cultural mosaic (Marcus, 2001). In this sense, the multi-local implied an opening of horizons for that discipline.

Nonetheless, when the application of the multi-local to the studies on transnationalism is analyzed from non-anthropologic theoretical backgrounds, or more specifically from the geographic reflection on the concept of space, some observations of a different kind appear. For example, once again the multi-local seems to conceive space in the tradition we usually have called the 'relative space'. As I have previously pointed out, this means thinking of space as a geometric plane where elements are differentially located or said in other words, it is the old geographic idea of the 'container space': the conception of space in terms of points, lines and areas, which, incidentally, has constituted the platform for some highly developed thematic fields, such as Economic Geography. However, also in other geography's fields this conception bloomed extensively, as in Urban Geography. Some concrete applications can be found in the systems of the cities, the urban hierarchies within the system of the cities, even in the known rule of range-size.

These ideas —with geometric support— seem to be close to certain statements of transnational studies. As an instance one can cite Besserer (2004), who states 'there is a rupture in the hierarchy between margins and centers', in reference to the localities where the transnational community lives. Moreover, the same author appeals to a geometric metaphor, which indirectly reinforces his conception of geometric space, or at least, relative or locative: he says that a transnational community does not take the shape of a star but that of a "polyhedron system similar to the formation of crystals".

In Geography, some more sophisticated versions of this conception originated the well-known gravitational models, where the differential weights of the interconnected points are analyzed. What is more, the systems of the cities have been analyzed from this perspective, calculating the different cities' weights in the set. These perspectives' followers have attributed them numerous virtues, yet what is undeniable is that this led, in the case of Geography, to the absence of subject, social actor, the individual and people, who paradoxically were the starting point to grasp how societies appropriate space. This absence of subject was the necessary result of thinking space geometrically. As a matter of fact, the sharp criticisms that in the 1970's and 1980's decades generated in the very geographic discipline were oriented toward this aspect.

Perhaps these tendencies already covered in Geography could work as a warning for the studies on transnationalism and represent somewhat as the visualization of an anticipated state whereto the suppositions of the geometric space so anchored in the anthropologic studies on transnationalism could be

leading. Some evidence of these problems is already perceived in those studies: it is frequent that the analysis is fragmented, sometimes the transnational space is analyzed based on geometry and the subject disappears; and some others the collective subject is discussed, although in those moments spatiality is significantly blurred, not even geometric. It would seem as though the studies on transnationalism do not achieve conciliating subject and spatiality, and possibly the answer to it would be in the fact that they approach the subject from one perspective and space from another.

Other spatialities

In order to state other conceptions of space, or other 'spatialities', I take as reference point my own work on spatialities and mobilities in the excluded periphery of Mexico City. This research is not on the field of transnationalism, nor in cultural studies, in spite of having common points with both. Some of these points are related to the interest in spatiality and with the movements of people across the territory. I have studied subjects with high mobility in space, neither doing it in terms of migration. The interest lies in the spatiality of quotidian life of people with high territorial mobility, both quotidian mobility and residential mobility along their lives. The transnational dimension of these displacements has not been made a problem, although many a studied subjects have undergone said experience in a part of their biographic trajectory. The center of interest has been the spatiality of quotidian life in the recent metropolitan periphery eastern from Mexico City. This spatiality includes quotidian movements and residential movements in the metropolitan environment as well as the absence of quotidian spatial movement, in certain cases. The former are constructed in quotidian time, the 24-hour cycle; whereas the former are constructed on biographic time. Within residential movements along this biographic time, the movements between the origin rural zones and the metropolitan area of Mexico City: both temporalities—the quotidian cycle and biographic time—have been studied within historical time.

In this perspective, I lightly retake some spatialities found in this empiric research, I do not develop any of them in detail: they are only sketched as a window to the sort of findings that can appear when spatiality is treated from suppositions different from the geometric and locative space, such as those which seem to be hosted in the studies on transnationalism.

Anchorage in unattached complex micro-spaces in the excluded periphery

A thematic that is possible to find in the study of the different communities from 'non-locative' spatial perspectives, but oriented by conceptions of space of life and the lived space is the anchoring and un-anchoring topic. Let us see the case of our own research, but before let us locate the subject of anchoring / un-anchoring in the current discussion. Previously it was pinpointed that the growing weight of the spatial mobility phenomenon has taken in the last decade is undeniable. In relation to this, the interpretations which distinguish said high mobility is accompanied by the multiplication of no-places (understood as those which do not have a symbolic mark) are well-known. This phenomenon has also caused the accelerations of spatial movements. In the same perspective it has also been evidenced that too often such acceleration of the spatial mobility has implied breaking links between subject and space. In a certain way, the no-places give an account of spaces where linking bonds between the subjects and space lack.

Without denying these ideas, the research carried out in certain metropolitan fields of exclusion, eastern from Mexico City, has allowed finding people's strong anchoring in micro-spaces. It is worth mentioning that, in these cases, anchoring does not express the subject's links to the space. In this perspective, the anchoring only indicates if the subject stays in the same place, which most of the times is the household space. These micro-spaces of life become 'complex spaces' since borders and the functional specializations have been erased in them: the separation between work space and domestic space, between the public and private spaces, has been faded. The tradition of urban studies that has considered the place of residence and that of work as two separated spaces, ruled by opposing logics and where completely different social interchanges occur is important. At the city's scale it is also natural to demarcate industrial and commercial zones (zones of labor for the city's inhabitant) and on the other side residential zones.

In the recent periphery eastern from Mexico City, the situations when the contrary takes place are frequent: the borders between those spaces are erased, and the household becomes a complex space, it is the familial and working place at the same time, this is to say, 'one lives in one's job' and 'one works at home', with the social component that such a thing supposes; evidently, this very way

of life is possible because of spatiality itself. If one works at home, most surely 'one works in family'. The overlapping of the space of work and the domestic one provides new connotations to labor itself, nonetheless, also to familial bonds: family life is organized around economic logics and work tinges in familial cooperation logics and the principles of family authority are filtered into the world of work. This shows that complex spatiality influences and conditions the familial life developed in it, even though the familial relations also configure that life space (Lindón, 1999).

Hence, in these territories of exclusion there is neither acceleration nor spatial movement, both recognized as contemporary space-time features, conversely another condition associated to the crumbling of modern patterns: the fading of opposed spatialities, for example, 'place of work / place of residence', 'public space / private space', 'job / family', 'job / leisure time'. This overlapping of spaces, mainly of residence and labor, is closely associated with macro-processes, such as the restructuring of labor processes and the growing forms of social exclusion which have left without a salary to numerous people who are spurred to recreate alternative ways of working within their immediate life space: the household. Another example of this border fading is of temporary character: leisure time is developed within labor time. Leisure time becomes somewhat of a fleeting time inside the extensive working hours, or even, overlaps with them. It is the leisure time which Lefebvre characterized as that of articulated idleness into quotidian life, that which leaves radical dissatisfaction, differently from the idleness of rupture (Lefebvre, 1972). The clearest example is 'television' leisure time, namely, television idleness in commerce.

The observation of this sort of phenomena is possible for the concept assumed is that of «space of life / lived space» (Di Meo, 1991), where the former expresses the spaces of the quotidian practices (space of life) and the latter (lived space) the way the former is lived, i.e., the meaning given to the different spaces where the quotidian practices are unfolded. At the same time, said spatiality also comprehends the premise by Milton Santos (1990) in respect to which the space (in this case of life and lived) is a social product but also a producer of the social. As it can be seen, this manner of conceiving spaces differs from the conception of relative space or geometrical space, for which the space is reduced to a mere point or a set of points.

Incorporating this space conception into transnationalism allowed learning questions as the following: do transnational communities inhabit complex spaces such as those presented above? Or even, do they develop their lives in the most

known perspective of functional specialization? Probably, they do it under the most frequent modality of the separated spaces according to the functions. Nevertheless, enquiring into this would allow introducing other non-despicable questions for transnationalism: are the family and domestic life spaces reproduced according to the spatial models from the places of origin? Or, is it that in private life quotidian schemas proper to the society where they are inserted are appropriated? In this last case and assuming the character of the space of the producer of the social, there is a new question: the appropriation of spatiality schemas of private proper to the place where the transnational community has migrated, is not it a powerful element to transform the very sociality of said community and its cultural patterns?; this only just to mention some issues which would be open to transnationalism if there was a change from the geometric space to the space of life and the lived space.

From the abiding to the being located in the periphery

Another of treatment of spatiality that avoids looks into the relative and locative space is found in displacing the scale of the space of life of the ‘household’ (as in the previous section) toward the scale of the neighborhood space in the studied periphery. In this case, spatiality can be studied in terms of ‘uprooting’. In the eastern periphery of Mexico City it was found that it was something frequent — mainly among those who had reached the dream of the ‘own commercial establishment in the own household, thus producing the complex spaces above mentioned— that the neighborhood space would take the sense of a mere ‘localization’. They do not feel like inhabitants of a neighborhood, but they ‘are’ in a true *locus*. They feel inhabitants of a household or commerce. The sense of belonging to a space of life ends in the limits of a household, as though beyond that household there was a *Terra incognita*,⁵ or at least a territory which does not offer anything interesting (not even because of holding the clientele of the own commercial establishment) and with which there is not any link.

This is to say, the neighborhood space turned out to be lived as a localization in the geometric sense.⁶ This finding is unexpected from the inhabitant’s point of

⁵ The expression *Terra incognita* was stated by John K. Wright in 1947 in order to refer to all those places which for the subject symbolize the geographically unknown from the point of view of the places’ spatial experience.

⁶ This should not be mistaken with the previously stated: now we show that certain subjects live and experience their place as a localization. Previously, it was showed that in certain perspectives of analysis the scholar reduces spatiality to a localization independently from how the very inhabitants of the place live it.

view. The tradition of thought which has used the concept of localization is extensive, yet it has always been a way of approaching to the logic of the enterprises (hence its importance in Classical Economic Geography). In other words, it has been a concept used by the researcher in order to understand spatial patterns, and also a way to leave the subject aside, the inhabitant and the bonds they establish with the place they abide: the space was geometrically treated since that which was involved were issues such as why a company was located at A instead B or C, or what implications a localization would have in these places.

Conversely, in this case the analysis is done from the conception of space of life and lived space (not that of location). Nevertheless, the paradox lies in the fact that localization appears as the finding: it is the way of living the space of certain inhabitants of the place. This inhabitant of the periphery lives in a neighborhood as if their household would be in a geometric plane or in the middle of nowhere. If one deepens into this point it can be seen that behind that meaning which discursively empties a space that is not empty, one finds a deep-seated uprooting and even sheer rejection for the place. That sense of rejection for the place or 'topophobia' cannot be understood being besides the trajectory of life with high spatial mobility of this sort of subject (Lindón, 2005a, 2005b). The inhabitant from the periphery rejects that space when contrasting it with other spaces they previously inhabited. In this exercise of contrast (or pairing), the current neighborhood is evaluated as a space which has nothing: not even the characteristic elements of the rural fantasy, nor what the city can offer. That is why the sense of being located (instead of abiding) in a void is separable from a deep-seated topophobia. At the time it establishes an affective belonging bond with the household's more limited space. This is understood because it represents the dream come true of the own household and commercial establishment. Nonetheless, this sense is not extended to the household's surroundings, but restrained to their narrow limits. Possibly, these thoughts of spatiality would be fruitful for transnationalism, we know where the transnational communities are, however, it is quite unknown if they are building topophobias or topophilias (Tuan, 1974), if they feel inhabitants or located in an empty plane, if they are anchored and rooted, or anchored and uprooted.

The lack of pertinence in respect to the local or neighborhood environment, the absence of rooting in respect to the place where one 'abides' has its counterpart in sociality: a clear distancing emerges in relation to the inhabitants of that immediate surrounding where the household / commerce is located, it is, respect to the neighborhood. The notion of 'neighborhood' loses its meaning as

well as that of 'community' understood as 'community of life', in accordance with the terminology by Berger and Luckmann (1997). It is not a community of life settled in a territory, but a multitude of families closely located to one another; nevertheless, distant in social terms. Moreover, affective distancing becomes a protective strategy from the other (the neighbor, sometimes a kindred neighbor) who is seen as dangerous or conflictive. Superficial, sporadic and usually conflictive relations are established.

In the studied peripheral context, if solidarities are not present in the neighborhood context, they are unquestionable in the domestic familial space. Nonetheless, that does not exclude conflict and intra-domestic violence. In this respect the traditional idea that the constitution of a neighborhood is a process that requires certain timing, which possibly in these settlements, has not taken place yet, can be considered. However, this interpretation does not seem to be a satisfactory option if one considers that the anchoring into the micro-space of the household / commerce has brought the withdrawal of the familial group inward this space, which is paradoxical under the light of the commercial function these households offer 'outwardly' that micro-space (toward the neighborhood environment). Even so, this commercial function does not create strong neighborhood bonds as once again it seems to be tightly bound to the economic logic of 'localization' rather than that of creating a strong neighborhood sociality. This is to say, the commercial function offered in the neighborhood environment does not go beyond commercial interchange, does not contribute to construct more intense neighborhood relations; what is more, the idea that social distancing from the neighbor is protective appears.

This perspective would make the formulation of questions on transnational communities in these terms possible: are these communities located in certain spaces (for instance, neighborhoods) or are territorialized inside them? This would allow learning if they are in a place that does not have any other meaning but that of a *locus*, a being somewhere or, on the contrary, they have developed some sense of belonging, i.e., have they developed some kind of topophilia, or even, of topophobia?

*Preparatory residential nomadism for anchorage or
sedentarization*

The two previous sections referred to the ‘current’ spatiality of a profile of the inhabitants of the studied periphery: those who have joined labor and family in the space of the household. Conversely, this section is devoted to the ‘biographic’ spatiality of the same subjects’ profile. Hence, this section allows observing another treatment of spatiality which, avoiding falling into the geometric, displaces through time.

This studied peripheral territory’s inhabitants carry biographic trajectories marked by continuous residential displacements, because of that on one occasion we retook the expression of ‘eternal migrants’ —taken from art⁷— as an image that condenses meanings. They are subjects who along their lives have acquired knowledge on mobility in space, on ‘how to move’, ‘how to relocate’. These biographic trajectories integrated by numerous displacements are what we call ‘residential nomadism’. As these continuous movements in the place of residence within the metropolitan fabric are oriented by the search for a place to live and an income source for the familial group, spatial movement is always toward the recent periphery, where urban occupation is beginning. This movement can only take place in this direction for the settlements in the recent periphery are the only places where these subjects can reach the ‘own household’ and even the commercial establishment at home, by means of which solving familial reproduction.⁸ Spatial movement with inverse orientation (from the periphery to downtown) would imply a progressive increment in the costs of reproduction and the impossibility to start or carry on with the small commerce, and lastly, it would make familial reproduction even more fragile.

Residential nomadism is a set of residential practices by means of which families periodically displace their abiding place toward new peripheries; it is a periodical ‘de-locating’ and ‘relocating’ (Hiernaux and Lindón, 2003). These practices become more profound under the light of the Schutzian expression of the ‘motives for’, this is to say, what the subject projects for the future; in this case, that which projects them to the future is the search for a household and a source of income (commerce); in other words, solving familial reproduction.

⁷The expression comes from Remedios Varo, who—from painting— always manifested a great interest in human being’s spatial mobility, which made her express social life, mainly, through spatial mobility and state the figure of *Homo Rodans*.

⁸ On other occasion we have analyzed this from the perspective of the ‘own house’ myth (Lindón, 2005c).

In this residential practice of displacements one must also include another Schutzian concept: 'the motives why', it is worth mentioning, the knowledge people have because of past experiences and which allows them to solve the present circumstances spontaneously or 'non-problematically'.⁹ In other words, the knowledge on how mobilize, where to, how to obtain an irregular lot, how to settle, how to start constructing a new household, how to begin a business. Solving these questions is possible because the inhabitant subject has practical or 'experience' knowledge, yet in this case it is a sort of knowledge which is essentially of the spatial kind: it is 'know how to do' in relation to space and the city in particular (motives why). In this last point one must consider that in those past experiences and source of practical knowledge are also included those which were not directly lived by the actor, but they were transmitted by an 'ancestor', such as parents or other members of the social network could be.

All of the above shows that these trajectories with a lot of mobilization experiences from the place of residence leave a mark on the subject: practical knowledge, not only available as recollections. They also leave practical knowledge that is processed and typified, i.e., removed from the particular in order to be elaborated as a recipe that can be used again every time it is needed: 'available and at hand' knowledge.

Hence, reiterated residential movement has as objective reaching a place and anchoring or fastening to it for a period (motives for). This anchoring is sustained as long as the contextual conditions will not change adversely, this is, as long as the urban consolidation will not bring along a local rise in the costs of living that makes abiding there difficult. When this occurs, the subject starts exploring other possible territories for a new relocation. Nomadism, even though toward zones with greater lacks in the urban sense, from a collective subjectivity is seen as a practice that somehow permits an improvement in the conditions of life: it is leaving everything behind and start afresh in another territory that promises to improve life conditions despite the high personal / quotidian cost of begin once again. It is necessary to underscore that said improvement in the material conditions of life is not something evident for the ethnographer. It is only possible to reconstruct this interpretation in the light of the narrative of the life of such periphery's inhabitant, where they refer to different residential experiences.¹⁰

⁹ Let us remember that for Schutzian phenomenology 'the problematic' is that experience for which the individual at first does not have shape of schema with which acting, as they have not lived any similar experience before. Even though, in the end, the individuals will always find a 'recipe' or 'typification' used in the lived experience which is considered quite similar at some level or facet of the lived. Hence, the 'non-problematic' is that experience before which there is a quick typification by means of which interpret it and find the better possible course of action.

¹⁰ The notions of improvement, as that of deterioration, are relative valuing that only make sense within the lived.

Another apparently paradoxical issue, inserted in this residential nomadism, is that the 'guide idea' of progress (transmuted in preserving the competitiveness of the familial commerce) is still present in the collective imaginaries of these eternal migrants. The idea of the guidance of progress is reconstructed in 'the achievement'. i.e., that which has been achieved and that strategically is sought to be preserved, even to the extent of a new de-localization which worsens the 'urban' conditions of life. Finally, residential nomadism and periodical anchoring in micro-spaces turn out to be an indissoluble unit: the subject relocates to anchor again awhile.

This sort of findings on the spatiality that goes beyond geometric space will also allow incorporating new questions in the studies on transnationalism. For example, it would be possible to state: are transnational communities rooted (in the sense of tight bonds with space) to certain places? Or, do they develop life styles based upon periodical anchoring into different places, which are left as soon as a better horizon is glimpsed somewhere else?

The spatiality of labor precariousness

Another form of spatiality found in this peripheral territory is that associated with those dwellers who have not established a commerce at home, but recreate the different labor practices in the public space, it is, on the streets. Previously in the text it was stated that the spaces of life are those where the quotidian practices are developed. So, the spaces of laboring life are the spaces where the person works. Not only are they a materiality where labor develops, but also become lived spaces since they carry meanings that can derive from the sort of job there performed, or even, from other previous experiences and transfer them to labor (or any other practice) there contained.

In this inhabitants' profile almost always labor trajectory is marked by a number of lived laboring situations, because of this, labor activities have been developed in many and diverse spaces of life. Nevertheless, in spite of this heterogeneity, it is reiterative that those practices have been almost always unfolded in 'public spaces'. These public spaces can be understood through the word *outdoors*,¹¹ it is, the spaces outside the physically limited sector. Constancio

¹¹ In English this expression is opposed to indoors, which is all the space within a room that can be enclosed by means of a door. Sometimes this expression has been translated as intra-domestic scenarios (*escenarios intradomésticos*); however, it is not maybe the most pertinent.

de Castro (1997: 12), in order to name these spaces, proposes the expression 'street scenarios'. It is worthy clarifying that the word street is not taken as referred to street in a narrow sense.

In this case, research has showed that there can be two types of street scenarios (outdoors) which operate as spaces of laboring life (Lindón, 2006a): the first are the fixed street scenarios, such as stalls in a market; there are also other fixed street scenarios, concrete places in public space, for instance, a crossing of two streets, the gate of a school, the entrance to one's household.

The other street scenarios are spaces in movement, it is, they are not scenarios in the strict sense of the word, but 'trajectories of displacements' on the streets. In the former and in the latter, the laboring activity developed is similar; it is the sale of diverse products. Even though, in accordance with the product interactions with different people and particular circumstances take place.

Both sorts of street scenarios, with the unavoidable materiality they impose, contribute to conceive the labor they perform as something changing, ephemeral and transitory. These labor activities are evidently ephemeral and transitory if they are analyzed from the angle of labor precariousness they carry. However, from the point of view of the person who lives said experience, working in this sort of spaces favors the idea that it is an ephemeral job, for the scenario in the material sense changes constantly. In both street scenarios there is constant change: in some because the scenario is fixed in a place, different people come and go (enter and leave the scenario). In the other, change is more evident, since that who works does it displacing on the streets offering a product. This shows the capacity of space to produce the social, being at the time a product of the social.

These two forms of movement —by the subject's displacement or by the entrance and departure of the people in the street scenario— do not only contribute to the meaning that labor is ephemeral and transitory, but also represent a fragmentation of the spaces of laboring life. The spaces of laboring life are not lived as a closed set, but as separate pieces of a puzzle which will never be complete. Nonetheless, something unexpected is also sketched, these subjects find in said fragmentations cracks of freedom or an illusion of liberty, in structural conditions which can seem to be totally limited and closed. Once again, spatiality (now through the meaning it is attributed, as well as the meanings given the labor there performed) allows understanding something that is beyond space.

In terms of the treatment of spatiality there is another important feature: these street scenarios —fixed or moving— are organically linked to the household space. Hence, outdoors and indoors are connected by a thread that is the pattern of the subject's precarious labor practices. For instance, the preparation of food in the household in order to go out (of the household) and sell it, or even, bouquets of flowers are prepared at the household, then they are sold outside, on the streets or in a market. It is important to notice that even if food or bouquets are prepared inside the household, the labor space —or the space or laboring life— is the street, as it is there where the interaction takes place and the activity is carried out. Yet as the object was produced inside the household, there is an organic bridge between the outside and the inside.

It is necessary to underline that both what is outside (outdoor) the household and inside (indoor) it are lived in a different manner from what can occur in the case of a person with a well-defined place of work. In this case, what is usual when the subjects arrive to their household live it as a totally separated space from their space of laboring life, even if those individuals displace from one to the other and connect both by means of said displacement. Conversely, in this profile of periphery inhabitants the connection takes place in a different manner: that indoor feeds and makes the outdoor possible, that is why we refer to an organic linkage. Without that indoor the street would only be 'street', instead, it thus becomes laboring space, street-like, changing, mobile, yet finally space and anchorage for their laboring life. Through that linkage with the indoor, the street scenarios —the outdoor— are not only a material space where a product is sold, but they receive a meaning from the inside of the household: the street scenarios (spaces of life) are lived (lived space) as cracks to leave from a structure of limited opportunities.

If we transfer those findings to the studies on transnationalism, we could wonder how the relation between indoor, outdoor and transmigrant subject is established. Research on transnationalism has presented images respect to reproduction in California of names from Oaxaca as well as the opposite, nonetheless, that is not sufficient to understand if the public space is appropriated and organically connected with the indoor, or if these appropriations within the 'household' take the character closest to resistance, becoming an indoor totally different from the outdoor.

Final reflections

In order to conclude I state three issues that I consider central. On the one side it is eloquent to take the expression by Crang *et al.* (2003: 440) pointing out that, “the transnational operates as a figure that liquefies geographies, questions the resource to local contexts and local studies. . . .” The ‘liquefy’ metaphor deserves reflection, it is provocative; however, it leaves an open question: Is it a merit of the transnational studies or a weakness? Doubts grow larger if one observes that the very authors are somehow recognized as part of this field, despite doing it in a critical manner.

On the one side, the metaphor of liquefying the geographies can be seen as an assertion of transnationalism if it is a way of restituting movement, the dynamic. Mainly it would be a merit if one takes into account that almost all of the concepts, as well as the registration techniques, congeal and immobilize the studies reality, such cartographies immobilize. In this sense, the possibility of liquefying would be the surpassing of a limit.

On the other side, before this metaphor there is inquietude in the background: is it possible to liquefy spatiality without losing it? This question makes sense if it is considered that space has an unavoidable materiality, which has led authors such as Milton Santos to state concepts that express that said feature is proper to space. Some instances are the concepts derived from roughness, or dynamic inertias, it is, a series of expressions by means of which the spatial forms (produced by a time’s societies) are still present, even if the society that produced them is not there any longer. Perhaps it would be more understandable to apply the metaphor of liquefying time. Nonetheless when it is stated that a certain approximation —transnationalism— liquefies space or geographies, one is probably making a very relevant warning in the sense of ‘losing spatiality’. On the other side, the revision of certain analyses on transnationalism previously done would seem to support that idea, that transnationalism is liquefying spatiality, or at least blurring it. From our point of view, the clearest way to liquefy spatiality, in the meantime lost, is reducing it to the level of localization. Localization and the conception of transnational space, as relative and geometric, liquefy the space as they reduce it to an expression so basic that space is not recognized in it. These very authors — Crang *et al.*— provide us with more elements to reflect in this sense when they warn us that “transnationalism has become an ubiquitous expression to refer to multiple links and interactions. . . .”

(Crang *et al.*, 2003: 439). Indeed, when the analysis is done in a ubiquitous manner it is another form of spatiality loss.

A second issue on which it is worth emphasizing is that despite everything achieved by transnational studies and the problems solved, they have not showed life's spatiality and the spatiality lived by transnational communities. It is important to distinguish as well, that acknowledging that both life's spatiality and lived spatiality of transnational communities do not have to lead to closed and static visions. In a certain way this could be reflected in similar terms to those stated in relation to certain urban researches, where there has been a change from the analysis 'in' the city to the analysis 'of' the city. Indubitably, the perspectives 'in' are heavily locative (in the sense of geometric space or container space), possibly the studies on transnationalism would also be enriched if they started to change from visions 'in the space as localization' to visions 'of the space as a place, as a life space and space of the lived'.

Finally, the third issue I retake to conclude is that possibly there could be enrichment for the studies on transnationalism if the perspectives on the 'place' were included, this could generate knowledge on the life's spatialities and lived spatialities of transnational communities. In this sense, let us remember that the visions of the 'place' must not be confused or assimilated, mainly in the perspective of geographic humanism, with the local studies. The subjects hereby stated from empiric findings, such as anchoring and un-anchoring, rooting and uprooting, the spatial knowledge which articulates nomad lives' trajectories and the organic relation between spaces of life inside and outside the households are some possibilities which would be opened for the studies on transnationalism that dared to cross the border of relative, geometric and locative space.

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