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Transnational Spaces within the European Union: the geographies of British migrants in France

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**TRANSNATIONAL SPACES WITHIN THE EUROPEAN UNION:
THE GEOGRAPHIES OF BRITISH MIGRANTS IN FRANCE**

by

FIONA ELIZABETH FERBRACHE



A thesis submitted to the University of Plymouth
in partial fulfilment for the degree of

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FIONA ELIZABETH FERBRACHE

Transnational Spaces within the European Union: the geographies of British migrants in France

Abstract

Tensions exist in the way that the European Union is conceptualised. How do we reconcile the persistence of a Europe of fragmented nation-states and the European integration project based on the principle of free movement? This duality is indicative of different geographical visions: between space defined as places and space defined as unifying flows. While places tend to be associated with fixed territories and borders, it is argued that complex global flows and connections may disrupt such notions. Addressing these theoretical tensions, this thesis examines transnational frameworks for discussing the reconfiguration of borders and spaces within the European Union. The aim of this research is to explore the extent to which European Union citizens, with freedom of movement, experience mobility between member states in a frictionless manner. The thesis adopts a "bottom-up" approach of migrants' experiences and perceptions of internal borders, as barriers or opportunities to their movement and settlement. This is illustrated through the case of Britons resident in France. The thesis draws on data generated through qualitative methods, including fifty-three in-depth interviews undertaken in an ethnographic setting. The case study demonstrates how a frictionless European space does not exist for ordinary European Union citizens, for a variety of political, legal, economic and socio-cultural reasons. The analysis reveals how Britons recreate (national) state borders, by adapting to French politico-legal structures, and identifying boundaries between "us" and "them". The thesis also identifies how transnational spaces are created through immigrants' social networks. By exploring the everyday lives of intra-EU migrants, the thesis contributes to literature on British migrants in France, and provides an original contribution to studies of EU integration, focused on ordinary citizens on the move.

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Abbreviations

ACCSO	Association des Clubs de Cricket du Sud Ouest
AGM	Annual General Meeting
ATR	Avions de Transport Régional
AVF	Accueil des Villes Françaises
B&B	Bed and Breakfast
DOM TOM	Départements d'outre-mer and territoires d'outre-mer
EC	European Community
ECSC	European Coal and Steel Community
EEC	European Economic Community
EU	European Union
FFBSC	La Fédération Française de Baseball et Softball
HR	Human resources
ICC	International Cricket Council
INSEE	Institut National de la Statistique et des Etudes Economiques
MNC	Multinational corporation
NUTS	Nomenclature of Territorial Units for Statistics
TWIG	Toulouse Women's International Group
UK	United Kingdom
UoP	University of Plymouth
USA	United States of America

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This project was born in spirit when I made the decision to undertake a Geography degree course at University. I, somewhat anxiously, expressed to my mother that "if I start, I might never stop". Those sentiments have brought me to this point as I synthesise much of my training to date, in this Ph.D. thesis. However, my thesis, like any representation of social reality, is only a partial impression of my academic training, and I am grateful that the institutional requirements of the Ph.D. allow a little space to acknowledge the characters who shaped the environment in which this project, and my skills, were born and nurtured.

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Author's declaration

At no time during the registration for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy has the author been registered for any other University award without the prior agreement of the Graduate Committee.

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Chapter One

Introduction: free mobility

Nation-state and nationalism are now so firmly stamped on the world map, so imprinted in our identities, that we generally take them for granted as almost 'natural' (Anderson, 1996:140)

This thesis is about the experiences and perceptions migrants accumulate as a result of moving between countries in a world that has been conceptualised, on the one hand, as the “space of places” and, on the other, as the “space of flows” (Castells, 1996:408-409). This enquiry is embedded in the European Union (EU) and focuses particularly on tensions between the nation-state system and free mobility policies within the European principle of free movement across national borders.

Some of these tensions are illustrated in the following vignette, presenting the experiences of two British citizens travelling to the European continent; the first is travelling to France in the 1960s, and the second to the Netherlands forty years later. Their moves take place within the context of the European integration project – a politico-legal project to unite European states and establish an economic community towards the political end of “an ever closer union among the peoples of Europe”, as stated in the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) Treaty, 1951, and the Treaty of Rome, establishing the European Economic Community (EEC) (1957). In the space of forty years, these two EU citizens¹ embody the politico-legal changes towards the formation of a common market (now referred to as the Single Market) comprised of free movement of goods, services, capital and people. This example reveals what it means to move and live within a space that is constituted between stabilities and mobilities.

¹ EU citizenship was introduced in 1992 for all national citizens of EU member states.

In the first instance, William arrives at the ferry terminal in Plymouth to cross the English Channel to France. On checking in, William has to show his passport and declare how many (Great British) pounds sterling he is taking out of the country. William is on his way to Albi, roughly 1,500 kilometres south of Plymouth, and to his French wife's family home. In William's words, he "discovered" Albi in the 1960s "when a Briton was an extremely rare sight in the area". Today, William's primary residence is still in Plymouth, partly due to his being unable to work in a French university in the 1960s, because his nationality was British, not French and because his academic qualifications were British and North American, and not French. In contrast, his French wife could find employment in the UK because the British state did not apply the same nationality restrictions on employment in education, even before UK entry into the European Community (EC). More than forty years on, William still drives to the ferry terminal in Plymouth, often three times a year, to make the crossing to France and the family home in Albi. It is this regularity that allows him to note the changing dynamics of mobility between the UK and France.

In the second instance, the scenario is arguably less restricted by nation-state boundaries. It is 2009, and Derrick moves from the UK to Amsterdam, to undertake a new academic position of employment. He does not have a high command of the Dutch language at present, but this is not a crucial factor as many of his international colleagues speak English, and he lectures in English. In comparison to the previous scenario, Derrick's passage across the English Channel involved "no real physical border restrictions" but he does experience difficulties when he begins to settle himself into the daily life of Amsterdam. The issues he encounters involve needing a local address to open a bank account, but being unable to secure an address without a bank account from which to pay a deposit, neither of which can be achieved without a Dutch

social security number, which in turn requires Derrick to hold a registered Dutch address. Luckily, for this migrant, there is an opportunity to pay someone to fast track him through the Dutch bureaucratic system, and Derrick engages a specialist office that provides services for skilled migrants arriving in the city (Iamsterdam, 2009).

Two different geographical imaginations are evoked in this example. In the late 1960s, William moves between the French and UK politico-legal entities as if they are relatively separate, bounded and autonomous states (spaces of place, as conceptualised by Castells (1996)). He not only encounters political, legal and physical borders between these two territorial states, but also economic, language, and social barriers. In contrast, the second scenario reveals how some of these barriers have been weakened through ongoing processes of EU integration, and Derrick passes more easily between the UK and Netherlands, now connected via the common supranational institutions of the EU. Derrick's movements can be interpreted as part of the "Europeanization of national societies" as described by Diez Medrano (2008:5) whereby national citizens' economic and political activities have widened geographically, as a result of progressively closer economic and political interdependence of member states within the EU.

However, Derrick still encounters certain difficulties as he attempts to settle into the Netherlands. These obstacles emanate at the national level, indicating that not all internal borders have been removed. They also serve as a reminder that the integrating EU is composed of twenty-seven member states, each of which is a powerful political and legal entity in its own right. Subtle modes of discrimination towards non-Dutch nationals are also illustrated in Favell's (2008) analysis of "free-movers" (EU citizens moving between member states) in Amsterdam, as well as other intra-EU migrants in

Brussels and London. Analysis of this nature illustrates that the Single Market is more realistically experienced by migrants as a quasi-single market in terms of their own mobility (Diez Medrano, 2008).

This vignette suggests that migrants may experience a tension between a Europe organised in terms of nation-states and a Europe based on the principle of free movement – a perspective at the human level that Favell et al. (2006) argue differs to some visions of European integration as theorised “from above”. This viewpoint of European integration, as it is practised by ordinary citizens in their everyday lives “from below”, leads to the aim and objectives of this thesis

Aim and Objectives

The aim of this thesis is to explore the extent to which intra-EU migrants perceive themselves to move and settle “freely” within the EU based on the principle of free movement between member states. This is pursued through a case study of British adult migrants living in the Midi-Pyrénées region of South West France, and the following four objectives. These are to:

1. Analyse ‘who’ comprise contemporary British migrants in the Midi-Pyrénées, and how they come to be there, with a specific focus on the role played by free mobility policies in encouraging or enabling migration:
2. Evaluate politico-legal freedoms; exploring how these migrants experience taxation, health care, pensions, and other forms of political, legal and civic rights when they move, and the types of spaces and borders created and maintained through the negotiation of these activities:
3. Evaluate socio-cultural freedoms; exploring the degree to which migrants (re)create imagined borders associated with national cultures, or transcend

- national affiliations as part of their lives in a new location. The focus is on socio-cultural networks through the creation and maintenance of formal group activities, *in situ*.
- 4. Be informed by geographies of transnationalism from below, and develop further theoretical and empirical insight to the transnational characteristics of the EU.

Together, these objectives seek to offer a broad analysis at the human level of the political, legal, economic, social and cultural boundaries, and spaces encountered and imagined by migrants embedded in the EU. The tension between the nation-state system and free mobility policies is indicative of space conceived as places and space conceived as flows. This dual vision provides a framework for this thesis and I draw upon some of Castells' (1996) work to illustrate these spatial conceptualisations further.

Spaces of place and flow

Castells (1996) refers to "space as places" and "space as flows" to contrast two spatial logics. In the first instance, he refers to absolute notions of space that he describes as "historically rooted" (1996:408) and "whose form, function, and meaning are self-contained within the boundaries of physical contiguity" (1996:453). A typical example of space perceived as place-based is "the modern state system of territorially fixed and mutually exclusive sovereignties" (Anderson, 1996:140). In Western countries, territories and borders have a long tradition of being interpreted as sovereign units demarcated by a territorial line (Burgess and Hans Vollaard). Connected with this, nationalist movements in the nineteenth century tended to imagine states as nation-states with innate (national) societies contained within. As Anderson suggests in this chapter's opening quote, the nation-state system - its territories, frontiers and nationalised identities - is often taken-for-granted as an objective and natural unit of

analysis and belonging (see Wimmer and Glick Schiller, 2002). However, under contemporary processes of globalisation, flows and mobilities have been said to undermine state sovereignty, as for example in Sassen's (1996) account of the nation-state's diminishing power to control its population and territory as a result of labour migration (see also Hobsbawm, 1990, Levitt, 2001b). It is this that Castells (1996:409) captures when he describes space as flows "becoming the dominant spatial manifestation of power and function in our societies".

For Castells, globalisation takes place in a space of flows where the intensification of interactions between people, places, information, images and capital, stretches relations across borders on a global scale (McGrew, 1992). As one example, changes in technology have been shown to project new spatialities onto the world map by facilitating the extent, frequency and speed of physical and virtual communications. Through these linkages, places hitherto perceived to be separate, are reconfigured as intimately connected and increasingly networked with other places around the globe (Castells, 1996, Portes et al. 1999). In a similar way, people seen to be geographically and historically disconnected are now understood to encounter one another in areas of co-presence or, as Pratt (1992) calls them, "contact zones".

Although these are rather abstract spatial visions, they help to illustrate a tension between notions of stability and mobility, at a time when global transformations are said to be reconfiguring understandings and experiences of places. As Pries (2005:167) notes, "new information, communication and transport technologies are bringing the world closer together". These societal and spatial transformations raise the question; to what extent are spaces of flow reconstituting spaces of place? It is here that the aim and objectives of the thesis connect to broader geographical debates about mobilities and

stabilities, and migrants provide a lens through which to understand the experience of places under contemporary conditions (Collins, 2009).

Mobility and migration

According to Urry (2000:3,18), the world, and the way in which it is understood by academics, is increasingly “organized around networks, mobilities and horizontal fluidities”, and relies upon metaphors of “movement, mobility and contingent ordering, rather than upon stasis, structure and social order” (see also Adey, 2010, Sheller and Urry, 2006, Urry, 2007). This trend is reflected in studies of migration as some researchers have moved away from static conceptualisations of people and places to take account of more complex and interwoven patterns of mobility (Bailey, 2001). Mitchell (1997), for example, notes how migration has tended to be place-based, and analysed in terms of confinement to one place or territory at a time. On this basis, movements have been represented as linear, bi-polar and finite, as migrants move from one spatial territory, across a border, and into another equally fixed and spatially-bounded territorial state (see King et al., 2008). Culture and citizenship have been treated in similar ways, as intimately bounded within the concept of containerised space (see Bauböck, 2007, on citizenship, Hall, 1995 and Mitchell, 1997 on culture). It is recognised by Wimmer and Glick Schiller (2002), that this national focus (of space as places) has shaped the way in which migration has been perceived and studied, and that something is now significantly, but not absolutely, different.

It is argued that migration has changed since the 1980s (Castles and Miller, 2003). In support of this view, researchers have noted an increase in the complexity of migration flows, the scale and nature of their geographical dispersion and diversification of people involved (see, for example, King, 1995, Portes et al., 1999, Vertovec, 2009). Urry

(2007:3), for example, notes how “it sometimes seems as if all the world is on the move”:

The early retired, international students, terrorists, members of diasporas, holidaymakers, business people, slaves, sports stars, asylum seekers, refugees, backpackers, commuters, young mobile professionals, prostitutes – these and many others – seem to find that the contemporary world is their oyster or at least their destiny.

Many of these observed and recorded changes are linked through research to processes of globalisation (a space of flows) including; technological advances, the growth of communication networks, and an increasingly globalised economy (Castells, 1996, Hannerz, 1996, Harvey, 1989, Portes et al., 1999, Vertovec, 2009). As a result of these changes, or as part of them, studies of international migration read differently at the turn of the twenty-first century (Castles, 2007). As Massey (1994) indicates, some relations tend to be contained within a place, while others stretch beyond it, thereby linking places, people and processes together. Migration is seen to contribute to this process, and, rather than conceptualising migration solely in terms of stability and settlement, a growing body of literature has emerged on the topic of transnationalism, to show how “the cultural, economic, and political linking of people and institutions de-emphasizes the role of geography in the formation of identity and collectivity, and creates new possibilities for membership across boundaries” (Levitt, 2001b:202).

Transnationalism

In the context of migration, transnationalism has been conceptualised “as the processes by which immigrants forge and sustain multi-stranded social relations that link together their societies of origin and settlement” (Basch et al., 1994:7). To a certain extent, transnationalism overcomes the perspective that the state is a fixed unit of sovereign space and ‘container’ of society (Agnew, 1994, Basch et al., 1994). It does so by emphasising that societal relations, networks and practices stretch across borders; above, between and beyond traditional container spaces (Massey, 1994). Adopting this

spatial focus, Pries (2005) argues that transnationalism can be viewed as a conceptual bridge between space conceived as places, and space as flows. It is this geographical perspective of the concept that is pursued in this thesis (see Jackson et al., 2004, Mitchell, 1997) and, in particular, “transnationalism from below”.

While Mitchell (1997) is critical of migration analysis that approaches the nation-state as a fixed and isolated entity, accounts of migration taking place under globalisation have also been critiqued for over-emphasising openness and mobility in an unprecedented manner. By way of example, some accounts of migration situated within an increasingly globalised economy have emphasised how certain migrants - “frequent-flying” “avatars of globalisation” (Favell et al., 2006:2,3), “nowherians” (Iyer, 2000), and a “transnationalist capitalist class” (Sklair, 2001) – live nomadic-style lives that are relatively less constrained by structures associated with conventionally-organised state systems (see Findlay, 1996). While these types of narrative indicate the structural possibilities for living more mobile lives – for instance, in terms of increased networks of transport and communication, through the internal labour markets of multinational corporations (MNCs) (Salt, 1988,1992); or special state immigration programmes (Ley, 2003) – there is concern that “the abstract celebration of travel, hybridity and multiculturalism is premature...theories of anti-essentialism, mobility, plurality and hybridity can quickly dissolve into terms emptied of any potential political efficacy” (Mitchell, 1997:109-110). For Pries (2005:169), transnationalism provides a mid-way solution where “nations and national societal spaces (as societies and polities) are considered to be basic constituents of cross-border, overlapping and intertwining structures and processes from the local up to the global level”. In this way, transnationalism provides a conceptual tool to ‘ground’ accounts of migration in the continuing significance of place. As Smith (2001:3) argues;

while the globalisation discourse draws attention to the social processes that are “largely decentred from specific national territories”, as in the case of Manuel Castells’ (1997) discussion of globalization(s) as taking place in a “space of flows,” research on transnational processes depicts transnational social relations as “anchored in” while also transcending one or more nation-states

Favell et al., (2006) are also wary of the suggestion that migration unfolds in “an era of unprecedented global mobility”, as noted by Ley (2010:1). They suggest that such accounts of migration are constructed “from above” via the “parlance of global city theorists” (Favell et al., 2006:2), and therefore often overlook how migration is practised “from below” by migrants. This theoretical and analytical typology distinguishing “above” and “below” has been adopted by Smith and Guarnizo (1998) to conceptualise transnationalism. They argue that “transnationalism from above” focuses upon large-scale activity such as global capital and political institutions. In contrast, “transnationalism from below” relates to local activity and the actual experiences of people moving.

Favell et al. (2006) argue that more empirical work of migration needs to be carried out at the human level, not only to ‘ground’ some of the hyper-mobile accounts of migration in the continuing significance of place, but also to recognise that migrants are agents themselves who contribute to the construction of places, spaces and flows (see Collins, 2009). By way of example, the metaphor of Europe as a fortress implies that outsiders are viewed as hostile invaders and must be excluded from entering the EU at fixed external borders. It draws attention to the range of policies and discourses that shape the EU’s borders (Geddes, 2001), and in particular the physical measures and technologies used to build and police borders. However, these top-down approaches regulating the mobility of non-Europeans are not the only processes taking place, and the full complexity is born out by considering the role played by migrants themselves.

Samers (2010) illustrates how migrants from Western Africa – labeled as not-belonging to the EU – have sought to enter the EU through the Spanish enclaves of Ceuta and Mellila, south of the Spanish mainland in northern Morocco (see Figure 2.1 p.54). The popularity of these enclaves used as entry points to the EU led to the building of stronger border controls including “double barbed-wire fencing, watch towers, water cannons, security cameras and fibre-optic motion detectors controlled by the Spanish Civil Guard who police the 2-5 metre space between the 3-6 metre high fences with guns” (Samers, 2010:3). Here, the materials used to construct borders emphasise the metaphor of a fortress but they are partially constructed through the physical encounter with the ‘other’; in this case between the insider and the outsider. The construction of physical borders in this area has led migrants to seek alternative routes into Spain (FRONTEX, 2009). This example emphasises how borders are a complex mix of political and technological practices from above, and political and social practices from migrants below.

Conradson and Latham (2005b) also argue for greater empirical work focusing on transnational migration from below, with a particular focus on everyday lives and activities. These authors claim that global narratives of migration, such as those composed by Bauman (2000), Castells (1996) and Ohmae (1990) would benefit from attention to the banal practices that migrants engage in, and they observe that;

...even the most hyper-mobile transnational elites are ordinary: they eat; they sleep; they have families who must be raised, educated and taught a set of values. They have friends to keep up with and relatives to honour. While such lives may be stressful and involve significant levels of dislocation, for those in the midst of these patterns of activity, this effort is arguably part of the taken-for-granted texture of daily existence.

By way of illustration, through empirical work, Beaverstock reveals how managerial elites are part of global business networks that involve significant levels of dislocation from specific places, but also that their personal networks – involving kinship and

friendship – are embedded in a range of local contexts. Processes of mobility and stability are therefore shown to be co-present in the lives of high-skilled migrants, as well as the significance of local and embedded processes.

This thesis responds to calls for more empirical work from below, and a focus on some of the more ordinary and taken-for-granted aspects of daily life encountered by migrants. In this way, the micro-level experiences of migrants moving and settling somewhere new are used to explore the extent to which spaces are understood and reconceptualised, between space as places and space as flows. Returning to the vignette of two British citizens moving within the European continent roughly forty years apart, the context exemplifies the tension between a space of place and a space of flows, through the politico-legal changes that have taken place within the European project. It is this context in which this empirical research is embedded, and a context through which spatial characteristics of transnationalism may be explored (Rogers, 2000).

The European Union

The world we live in may still be one primarily organized by and for territorial nation states, but if one empirical example is to be sought of how a post-national or cosmopolitan polity and society 'might' be built, the EU is the only actually existing institutional example (Favell and Recchi, 2009:1).

EU movers are the prototypical 'Highly Europeanized Citizens'. They are the human face of European integration. Their lives and experiences are the best guide to finding out how easy it is to shift one's identity or horizon to a post-national or cosmopolitan level, and of the practical benefits, insights, barriers and failings of a life lived outside the place where you historically belong (Favell and Recchi, 2009:3).

This thesis argues that issues related to migration, and what it means to move between a space of places and a space of flows, can be effectively grasped through the context of

micro-level experiences of migrants taking advantage of the EU's fundamental principle of freedom of movement.

This entity, politically and legally established by the Treaty on European Union (known as the Maastricht Treaty because agreed between the government leaders of the EU member states in Maastricht, 1992) is part of the political project of integration to unite many of the states of Europe into "ever closer union". This post-war European project uses economic means to enable a common market, where internal economic barriers have to a large extent been removed to enable the free movement of capital, goods, services and people beyond the nation-state (McCormick, 2006). As noted in European-level law:

- Citizenship of the Union confers on every citizen of the Union a primary and individual right to move and reside freely within the territory of the Member States (Directive 2004/38/EC).

In terms of employment, travel, study, residency and retirement, citizens of the EU are no longer required to stop at the national state border. Instead, they can move without the need for permits, visas or registration - between the Atlantic coast to the west, the Black Sea to the east and from the Arctic Circle in the north, to the Mediterranean in the south - across the territories of twenty-seven EU member states. However, certain barriers continue to exist. For example, EU citizens wishing to settle in another member state must be able to support themselves financially with adequate resources and medical insurance so not to become a burden on the social system of the host state (Directive 2004/38/EC). The use of the terms "free" and "free mobility" within this thesis refers to freedom of movement within the EU that is subject to certain limitations.

Although not all barriers to mobility have been removed, there has been a reshaping of territories, borders and sovereignty in the EU as a result of ongoing processes of

integration (King, 2002, Rogers, 2000). For example, Recchi (2008) and Skeldon (2006) note that international migration has been internalised for EU citizens. As Favell and Recchi (2009) emphasise in the opening quotes to this section, the EU provides a supranational structure within which those legal constraints tying a citizen to a particular member state are relaxed or undone, enabling more transnational or cosmopolitan lifestyles to develop. In this way, Hajer (2000) conceptualises the EU as a "Europe of flows", while it has also been described as an area "without internal frontiers" in *Directive 2004/38/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council, 20 April, 2004*, on the right of citizens of the Union to move and reside freely within the territory of the member states (Directive 2004/38/EC). This narrative at the European level is similar to what is said to be taking place under processes of globalisation and, as Anderson (1996) argues, the European project represents one of the most advanced challenges to the territorial sovereignty of the nation-state across the globe today. It is on this basis that the EU provides the empirical context in which this research is situated.

McNeill (2004:2) argues that a tension exists between flows and fixities in the EU; "while some authors argue from the perspective that we are cruising more or less smoothly towards a more integrated future, it could be argued that European identity is based upon an understanding of or encounter with 'difference, often drawn from national or regional histories". On the one hand, the EU is conceptualised as a "Europe of flows" (Hajer, 2000), as shaped by the European project. On the other, it is comprised of twenty-seven member states, each of which is a politico-legal entity in its own right. These are the building blocks of the EU, and while the member states have ceded various aspects of their sovereignty under supranational institutions of the EU, certain areas remain fundamentally organised by national governments. For example,

national welfare systems and the majority of taxation powers remain at national level. Furthermore, national authorities remain significantly powerful entities within the EU as they implement EU Directives through their national parliaments by passing legislation adapted to their particular circumstances and legal procedures. As Dijkink and Mamadouh (2006:152) argue, as a result of the ongoing processes of European integration:

The balance between different levels of government inside the EU, especially between the Member States and the supranational level, and between the states and the regions, is under discussion. Thus, there is a continuing, but contested shift of competences and roles between institutions.

In this way, political territory at the state level is preserved, albeit changing. The geography presented here is inherently transnational. Rogers (2000:10) argues that the variety of transnationalism evident in this context is “peculiar to the European Union” and emerges “within and making use of EU economic and political space”. He refers to the way in which activities taking place within the EU are “beyond the national scale but more across or between nations than standing above them” (2000:11). In this way, migration is seen to take place beyond the nation-state, through the legal capacity of free mobility, but it is not entirely separate from the concept of the nation-state, which remains part of the everyday structure of people’s lives, as highlighted with reference to Derrick, above. Tension between mobility and stability is also reflected in the dual citizenship status inhabitants hold; of national citizenship, their politico-legal affiliation to a specific member state, and EU citizenship as a post-national status (see Aradau, 2010). How these complex politico-legal tensions are experienced in the everyday lives of EU citizens is a key focus of this thesis, and is explored in the first two objectives.

The EU can also be said to be transnational from a socio-cultural perspective. Noting the ways in which national ethnicities are historically rooted cultures, Antonsich

(2008:508) acknowledges “that the nation state still rouses powerful expressions of belonging, loyalty and attachments” (see also Calhoun, 2002, Delanty, 2003, McNeill, 2004). These sorts of feelings have been shown to generate imagined borders between peoples (van Houtum and van Naerssen, 2002). However, it is argued that European integration provides opportunities for transcending national affiliations, towards building “an ever closer union among the peoples of Europe” (Diez Medrano, 2008) or, as conceived by Beck and Grande (2007), a cosmopolitan Europe. These arguments are often based on the view that the co-presence of previously separated (geographically and historically) individuals leads to the establishment of intersecting relations between them (Pratt, 1992). These imagined or symbolic borders, as experienced by migrants, are partially explored in the thesis’ third objective to offer a broader perspective of the complex geographies encountered by EU citizens in their everyday lives.

This human-level focus differs to much existing work within EU studies that is heavily oriented towards top-down approaches focusing on EU institutions and policies (Fligstein, 2008). Such studies have tended to situate the EU as a political construction and, it has been argued, neglect the study of the EU as an economic and social process (Favell and Guiraudon, 2009). For example, Jensen and Richardson (2004:x) argue that there is “a huge research field yet to be opened up, analysing the relationships between lived spaces and EU policies”. This thesis seeks to contribute to work in this area by exploring the extent to which intra-EU migrants perceive themselves to move and settle freely in what has been conceptualised as Europe “without internal frontiers”. It is an important question to ask for a number of reasons.

Firstly, at a political level, it is understood that EU citizens who move and live outside their country of residence are more likely to endorse enthusiasm for deeper integration

and forge solidarities towards the creation of a European society and identity (Diez Médrano, 2008). For example, it is noted in the Directive on free mobility (Directive 2004/38/EC) that:

Enjoyment of permanent residence by Union citizens who have chosen to settle long term in the host member state would strengthen the feeling of Union citizenship and is a key element in promoting social cohesion, which is one of the fundamental objectives of the Union.

Academically, the EU may exemplify the possibility of achieving post-national mobility and lifestyles on a broader scale (Favell and Recchi, 2009). It is argued that if “free” mobility is likely to occur anywhere it may be in this European context where numerous policies have been put in place to enable cross-border movement and settlement outside one’s own nation-state (Recchi, 2008). Furthermore, these considerations hold implications for policy, as Favell and Guiraudon (2009:563) indicate:

Although quantitatively small, intra-EU migration is, however, now producing serious legal and institutional feedback effects that are forcing EU policy developments to deal ad hoc with issues concerning EU citizens’ access to pensions, welfare benefits or health care across borders, or dilemmas to do with marriage and divorce in international private law.

Case study

The aim and objectives of this thesis are pursued through a case study of adult Britons, as intra-EU migrants, living in France, and focuses predominantly upon their perspectives of moving between member states of the EU. This national group are part of a north-south migration pattern of “growing communities of Northern Europeans living in the Southern countries of the continent” (Recchi, 2005:11). As existing work on British migrants in European countries reveals (see Benson, 2009, Buller and Hoggart, 1994a, King and Patterson, 1998, King et al., 2000, O’Reilly, 2000), many of the motivations of Britons, and other Northern European nationalities, are distinctly connected with lifestyle change rather than economic reasons (see Recchi, 2008). Thus,

Britons in France provide a case study of different types of intra-EU migrants than have been hitherto examined in, for instance, the work of Andreotti and le Galès, (2010), Favell (2003, 2006, 2008), Recchi and Favell (2009), and Schneider and Collet (2009).

Through this case study, the thesis seeks to contribute empirical knowledge to the phenomenon of British migrants in France, paying particular attention to their daily experiences of negotiating life in France. In doing so, it contributes more broadly to understandings of population change and migration within the EU by highlighting experiences of post-national mobility from the perspective of those who actually migrate.

Thesis structure

The thesis is structured through eight chapters. Following this introduction, Chapter Two addresses the fourth objective and seeks to be informed by theories of transnationalism for understanding migration taking place in times of socio-spatial transformation. The chapter also explores the EU context in further detail and seeks to illustrate transnational characteristics of the European integration project. Chapter Two also evaluates two methods for using transnationalism to inform empirical research; structuration theory and a network perspective.

The micro-level case study is developed in Chapter Three to explore the phenomenon of British migrants in France, and the fieldwork site located in South West France. The study is also placed in the context of literatures on racism and ethnicity where the concepts of whiteness and diaspora have emerged. Next, Chapter Four provides a critical overview of the methodologies informing empirical work. The focus of this chapter is on an integrative approach, drawing upon interviews in an ethnographic setting, and responding to calls for further empirical work at the human level and

“ordinary” aspects of migration practised in everyday life (see Conradsen and Latham, 2005b).

Chapters Five, Six and Seven are dedicated to empirical analysis and approach objectives one to three, respectively. Chapter Five explores the British population comprising the respondents in this thesis and how they come to be living in the Midi-Pyrénées, from their own perspectives. The chapter draws upon existing migrant types such as economic migrants and lifestyle migrants to help analyse patterns of migration motivations. It also discusses the role of the EU in facilitating or hindering these moves.

Chapter Six connects with Diez Medrano’s (2008) concept of the “Europeanizing of national societies” to analyse how EU citizens negotiate political and economic activities when they move to live in another country. Drawing upon a structural approach, this chapter introduces issues of taxation, social security, health care, access to pensions and political participation, and situates Britons as citizens of both the nation and EU, simultaneously.

A network perspective is employed in Chapter Seven to explore migrants’ social lives *in situ*. Taking the concept of the “contact zone” (Pratt, 1992), this chapter considers the socio-cultural boundaries that people construct in and around their leisure activities with other people. The focus is on more formal group activities and the chapter presents four case studies: the English Church, Cricket in France, the Toulouse Women’s International Group (TWIG), and local events.

Finally, Chapter Eight draws some conclusions to address the aim and objectives of this thesis. It also reflects upon some of the limitations of this particular and partial way of telling about society.

Together, these chapters construct a narrative of Britons in France and seek a partial insight to assess the extent to which intra-EU migrants move freely within the EU based on the principle of free movement between member states.

Chapter Two

Conceptualising and contextualising: transnationalism and the European Union

Transnationalism and migration are now understood as processes “constructed through the dialectical relations of the grounded and flighty, the settled and the flowing, the sticky and the smooth” (Jackson, 2004:8).

In the last chapter, transnationalism was introduced as a conceptual bridge, between Castells' (1996) space as place and space as flows, and as a device for understanding how places are experienced and (re)constituted under contemporary processes of globalisation. This chapter addresses the main theoretical objective to be informed by geographies of transnationalism from below, and to develop theoretical insight to the transnational characteristics of the EU.

Collins (2009) describes how transnationalism emerges at the confluence of academic debates concerning migration and globalisation, and Smith (2001:3) employs transnationalism in his work to draw attention to “the continuing significance of border, state policies and national identities even as these are often transgressed by transnational communication circuits and social practices”. This chapter draws upon existing theoretical and empirical insights of transnationalism to argue that the concept provides a significant lens for recognising the continual significance, also the changing nature, of place, particularly in relation to the movement of people in the context of the EU.

Consequently, this chapter maps the theoretical and conceptual lens of this thesis and the contextual framework in which empirical research is embedded. Divided into three main sections, the first discusses literature on migration, transmigration and globalisation. The second section provides further detail concerning the European

project. The chapter then draws concept and context together in the third section to explain how transnationalism is operationalised to support the empirical focus of this thesis. It evaluates two key perspectives – structure analysis and network analysis – and argues for an integrated approach in order to address the research aim and objectives.

Towards a geography of transnational migration

If transnationalism is considered as a conceptual bridge, it is useful to examine the land on either side and to determine why a bridge might add to the landscape and communication between these two sides. This analogy between two spatial logics provides a lens to understand how place-based accounts of migration, on one side, and fluid accounts of migration under globalisation, on the other, are connected, and then to examine the nature of transnational migration, caught between fixity and mobility. Transnationalism is just one way of understanding migration and place in the contemporary era, but one that has grown increasingly salient in the last twenty years. (Vertovec, 2009).

Castles (2007:353) identifies how twenty-first-century migration presents a challenge for academics, where;

until recently, most migration tended to be from one nation-state to another, and usually led either to permanent settlement, or to return to the country of origin after a period abroad. In the era of globalisation, there is a proliferation of patterns of recurring, circulatory and onward migration, leading to greater diversity of migratory experiences as well as more complex cultural interactions.

As Massey et al. (1998) express, human migration is rooted in specific historical conditions. In the current era, Castles (2007) identifies a change in migration patterns connected with processes of globalisation (see also King, 1995). He also argues that new theoretical concepts are required to understand these more complex and interwoven patterns (see Samers, 2010). The concepts employed to analyse and explain migration

reflect particular politico-legal arrangements and social institutions; and many, if not most (Samers, 2010), studies of migration are premised on the concept of the nation-state.

As an ideal type, the nation-state refers to a sovereign political entity (the state) which has territorial jurisdiction over the member citizens (the nation) living within its borders. Torpey (2000) argues that the most fundamental aspect of the traditional state's sovereignty is its power to govern this nationalised society, identity and culture. Few nation-states - where the geographical boundaries of the state coincide with those of the nation - actually exist, but the ideal-type is referred to throughout the thesis to draw attention to: firstly the supposedly intrinsic relationship between people, place and culture; and secondly, as a significant form of political and social organisation that has shaped (and arguably continues to shape) the current era (Antonsich, 2009). "Nation-state" is also adopted in place of separate "nation" and "state" in parts of this thesis because it was a term expressed by a number of respondents during fieldwork, to refer to the structural organisation of the world in which they see themselves living. This observation follows Castells' (1996:453) claim that "the overwhelming majority of people, in advanced and traditional societies alike, live in places, and so they perceive their space as place-based" (see also Edensor, 2002, Papastergiadis, 2000). Castells (1996) argues that places, such as the nation-state, are often *imagined* to be static with distinct form, function and meaning that are self-contained. This includes ideas about people and places having inherent cultures and essentialised attributes (Crang and Jackson, 2001, Edensor, 2002). While this thesis does not presuppose that nationalism has remained static, it recognises the significance of discourse and ontological construction of and about the nation-state.

One of the impacts of nation-state imagining is that social scientific analysis has tended to naturalise the concept in language and analysis (Wimmer and Glick, Schiller, 2002). For example, migration studies and population geography have discussed, understood, measured and predicted migration in terms of the ontological reality of fixed territories, boundaries, nationalities, citizenships and ethnicities (Samers, 2010). One of the fundamental binaries within migration studies is said to be the split between internal and international migration (King et al., 2008), a division characterised by two different concepts, methods and policy agendas that is based on defining human mobility in relation to nation-state boundaries. Methodological nationalism describes the “assumption that the nation/state/society is the *natural* social and political form of the modern world” and therefore the key focus for any research (Wimmer and Glick-Schiller, 2002:301). It is on this basis that Mitchell (1997) describes how borders have often been perceived as places of containment and how international migration has tended to depict movement as linear, bi-polar and finite between two autonomous and spatially bounded territories (King et al., 2008). She also describes how culture has been treated in a similar way where immigrants are assumed to “bring their culture with them and, after arrival, become relatively less or more assimilated to the prevailing cultural norms of the new territory” (1997:103).

Methodological nationalism is not a straightforward or comprehensive explanation of migration, partly because academics acknowledge that nation-states were constructed within historic conditions of transnationalism and global processes (Massey et al. 1998). However, methodological nationalism provides a significant way of viewing the world, for nation-state is intimately entwined with much contemporary research of internal and international migration. As a result, the nation-state, as a relatively fixed unit of

analysis, provides the starting point to this thesis. Furthermore, the nation-state generates material affect.

Territories and borders have material, symbolic and imagined impact on human lives (Newman, 2006). Antonsich (2009:979) notes how "people's lives continue to be rooted in politico-institutional bounded spaces" where, for example, "tax collectors stop at the border, immigrants are stopped at the same border, and transnational linkages can still be arbitrarily snapped off by independent state powers" (Anderson, 1996:135). Strüver (2005) explains how migration between the Netherlands and Germany is a product of the differential state regimes and regulations on either side of the border. She illustrates how the border between the two states is (re)produced as an imagined and real barrier through people's perceptions of it and practices towards it (see Newman, 2006 for a discussion of the processes of bordering that affect daily lives). At the state-level, migration policies reveal the power of nation-states to include some people while excluding others, and shaping how immigrants are expected to live in foreign territories. For example, Australia established a working holiday programme in 1975 which now allows young citizens of twelve countries to holiday and work in Australia for up to twelve months (Clarke, 2005). Thus, one's eligibility to participate is dependent on geography. Germany's Gastarbeiterprogramm (guest worker programme) established in the mid-1950s, welcomes certain Turkish immigrants but dictates how they behave by demanding their assimilation (Ehrkamp, 2006). Everyday spatial structures, such as migration controls, have been shown to institutionalise territorial spaces and borders, thus giving them a social reality (Paasi, 2001). At the extreme, migration controls are said to impact on human lives to the extent of matters of life and death (van Houtum and Boedeltje, 2009).

The examples above begin to suggest how borders and territories can impact on the movement and settlement of people (Newman and Paasi, 1998). As Favell et al., (2006:14) indicate, "without sovereign political regulation of movement – in the shape of citizenship and naturalization laws, welfare rights for members, and the control and classification of border crossing and re-settlement – migration would just be people moving around". Territories and boundaries remain essential components for understanding migration. As Favell et al. note, without them, migrants would "just be people moving around", symbolizing a world where places and difference would be relatively meaningless. Such perspectives have been theorised by some academics, analysing space and migration under contemporary processes of globalisation.

Globalisation

It has been argued, fairly extensively, that we live in an era of globalisation where increased levels of interaction and interconnection bind people and places across the world through the stretching and deepening of socio-spatial relations (McGrew, 1992). Processes of globalisation take place in a space of flows, according to Castells (1996), and therefore can disrupt the idea of space as places. Massey (2005:81) argues that globalisation is "one of the most frequently used and most powerful terms in our geographical and social imaginations" and that "at its extreme (and though extreme this version is none the less highly popular) what it calls up is a vision of total unfettered mobility; of free unbounded space". At its extreme, globalisation theory presents a narrative of an unstructured, borderless and deterritorialised world where global processes are argued to be advancing the decline of state sovereignty, and leading to the "death of the nation-state" (Hobsbawm, 1990). Anderson (1996:135) is wary of such views, but these so-called "exaggerated rumours" remain a partial view within globalisation discourse (see also, Anderson, 1995); Friedman (2005) and Brenner

(1999), emphasise the power of mobilities when they write about a borderless world, and Augé (1995) conceives of non-places as those that have lost any significance in a world of transient flows. From such standpoints, one comprehends that socio-spatial transformations make it increasingly difficult to conceive of a world involving bounded societies and spaces (Urry, 2000).

Such views have not remained unchallenged (Massey, 2005, Mitchell, 1997, Smith, 2001). While some theories of globalisation focus solely upon mobility, other research argues that what appears to be occurring under processes of globalisation is much more complex and spatially uneven than some of the global narratives suggest (Appadurai, 2001, Massey, 2005, Smith, 2001). Anderson (1996) argues that globalisation presents a challenge to territorial sovereignty but does not necessarily undermine the nation-state. Instead, he argues that "the ground is shifting under established institutions, practices, and concepts" (1996:133). While it has been suggested that people are moving beyond the confines of given territories, boundaries and identities, i.e. becoming deterritorialised or denationalised (see Glick, Schiller et al., 1992, Soysal, 1994), Appadurai (1990) argues for a more complex analysis that evokes *reterritorialisation*, referring to reorganisation or reconceptualisation of places hitherto perceived as relatively stable (see also Guarnizo and Smith, 1998). Connected with these new ways of imagining, Massey et al. (1998) argue that traditional theoretical concepts employed in migration studies (i.e. those based upon fixed notions of the nation-state) are less well suited to the current conditions, new patterns, and forms of migration that are taking place, and that the language of migration analysis requires *reconfiguration* and *reconceptualisation* (Castles, 2007, Urry, 2000).

Recognising the processes taking place at the global scale, King (1995:7) claims that, "migration, particularly international migration, is intimately linked to the general issues of globalisation". On the one hand, migration and our understanding of it are impacted by global processes (King, 1995), while on the other, increased levels of migration are seen to be important contributors to globalising processes. Collins (2009) highlights how migrants contribute to changing political, economic, social and cultural conditions of society, and make it increasingly difficult for researchers to accept bounded notions of nation-states and understandings of space as intrinsically place-based. Both of these I explore in more detail below.

Global impacts on migration

Castles and Miller (2003) argue that there have been fundamental changes to migration since the 1980s. Research indicating changes to migration patterns often highlights an increase in the scale and intensity of population movements (Castles and Miller, 2003, Massey et al., 1998), and a growing complexity in terms of cross-border (transnational) movements (Basch et al., 1994, King et al. 2008). Conradson and Latham (2005b:228) suggest that migration is now more complex and that some, but not all, groups of migrants are symptomatic of this contemporary migration (see also Papastergiadis, 2000). King (1995) also argues that destination countries receive migrants from a wider spread of geographical origins, all of whom make up a greater diversity of migration types (i.e. refugees, retirees, highly-skilled migrants, and illegal migrants, among others). Such changes are often linked with global processes; technological changes, transport infrastructure, and the global economy. Portes et al. (1999:223), for example, argue that complex back-and-forth movements (whether physical, virtual or material) "did not proliferate among earlier immigrants because the technological conditions of the time did not make communications across national borders rapid or easy". They go

on to suggest that the greater access immigrants have to space-time compressing technology, such as transport and telecommunication devices, the greater the frequency and scope of cross-border activities where "the ready availability of air transport, long-distance telephone, facsimile, communication, and electronic mail provides the technological basis for the emergence of transnationalism on a mass scale". This is one way in which global processes have been understood to impact the forms and patterns of migration.

Another significant means of changing patterns of migration is closely associated with expansion and intensification of the global economy (Harvey, 1989, 2005). The liberalisation of world trade, based upon the movement of goods, capital and services, also entails the movement of labour as a factor of production (although Favell et al. (2006) argue that labour does not move as easily as capital). Highly-trained professionals, scientists, technicians and managers have been represented as members of a "transnational capitalist class" (Sklair, 2001), as a group of people populating the global networks of trade between global cities such as Vancouver, New York, London, Singapore, Hong Kong and Tokyo (Hamnett, 1995, Sassen, 1988, 2001). Accounts of "high-flying corporate elites" (Favell et al., 2008) and "global elites" (Beaverstock, 2005) reveal how the mobility of highly-skilled individuals create business networks that span many different cities and oppose the national organisation of society. This is illustrated in the way that economic-migrants are often enabled in their mobility by moving through the internal labour markets of MNCs. These companies may take care of visas, work permits and even, on occasions, accommodation for their mobile employees (Millar and Salt, 2008). Such accounts are only one way of theorising changing patterns of migration and some have been critiqued for being overly reliant upon economic theories of global mobility and using top-down perspectives to theorise

highly-skilled labour migrants as a “set of dematerialized cultural flows” (Ong and Nonini, 1997:3).

While such accounts of migration focus upon the ways in which mobility and settlement can be viewed as increasingly fluid, in terms of access to telecommunications, transport and global business networks, they also provide a means of comparison for exploring how immobile other migrants might be. At the opposite end of the scale, research of poor, low-skilled migrants and asylum seekers can provide a striking comparison (Conradson and Latham, 2005b). Low-skilled migrants in global cities, for example, have been described as part of a dual labour market servicing the needs of their high-skilled counterparts (Sassen, 1996). For these poorly educated individuals, the obstacles to mobility are greater than those experienced by highly-skilled migrants (King, 1995). Samers (2010:180) captures this by describing an evocative analogy of the ever-changing state of the borders and spaces for migration, when stating that “if wealthy states are fortresses or “gated communities”, then their draw-bridges are lowered for some in different times and in different sub-national spaces for quite specific purposes” (see also Ley, 2010). Thus, it is important to explore the multiple, contested and diverse views of any one place by drawing upon different types of migrants.

Between these two extremes of migrant types, however, Favell et al. (2006:2) indicate a diversity of migrants who they suggest has not been adequately researched:

The skilled and educated among the globally mobile also include: students, nurses, mid-level technical and clerical employees, ambitious or adventurous upwardly mobile middle-classes, migrants from a range of intermediate developing states, and many more who it would be hard to describe as “elites”. In addition, there are those international migrants, of course, who are counted as unskilled migrants in official statistics because of their menial employment destinations after migration but who may have attained high levels of skill and education in their home countries or who have had to move for political reasons.

Conradson and Latham (2005b:228-229) also note the significance of considering “ordinary” people as migrants “to emphasise the degree to which transnationalism is in fact characteristic of many more people than just the transnational elites and the developing-world migrants” (see also Scott, 2006, 2007). In addition, Conradson and Latham (p.228) argue that “ordinary” can be applied to the concept of transnationalism to refer to the ways in which banal dimensions of daily life are ordinary and where;

...even the most hyper-mobile transnational elites are ordinary: they eat; they sleep; they have families who must be raised, educated and taught a set of values. They have friends to keep up with and relatives to honour. While such lives may be stressful and involve significant levels of dislocation, for those in the midst of these patterns of activity, this effort is arguably part of the taken-for-granted texture of daily existence.

Conradson and Latham set an agenda for more empirical work that conceptualises a broader range of migrant types and more ordinary activities. Their focus on ‘ordinary’ suggests that researchers focus on everyday activities and ‘normal’ people whose movements and lives have sometimes been taken-for-granted. Focusing upon ordinary everyday activities requires empirical work at the human level that also brings out the “human face” that Favell et al., (2006) argue is missing from many theories of migration. In this way, a bottom-up approach helps to reveal the diverse ways in which places are experienced by different migrants in multiple ways. In addition to exploring how migrants experience places, research seeks to understand how their actions constitute space in a range of political, economic and social ways (Collins, 2009).

Migration shaping global processes

Exploring how migration is understood to contribute to processes of globalisation, Collins (2009) explains how migrants have a tendency to take their cultural practices and social lives with them when they relocate and recreate or introduce these experiences in new locations. This is about the mixing of practices rather than assimilation whereby old practices of “there” are replaced by new ones “here” (Alba

and Nee, 1997). In this way, migrants create linkages between their home and host country – between “here” and “there” – and which have been described as flows within migrant transnational networks (Voigt-Graf, 2004). The sum of flows and nodes (the people, places and things connected by flows) generates transnational spaces so that space is seen to be shaped by social activities. Migrants thus help to shape global processes through which the world is seen to be increasingly connected.

This can be illustrated by drawing on the impact that migration is believed to have on culture – “the systems of shared meanings which people who belong to the same community, group, or nation use to help them interpret and make sense of the world” (Hall, 1995:176). Migration moves people of different backgrounds into the same geographical spaces and therefore spreads socio-cultural relations. Cricket provides one example, as a game that was distinctly linked to Britain but spread throughout the British Empire as British emigrants introduced it to the various colonies (James, 1963). It is noted that cricket flourished in Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, Asia and the West Indies, and that the British post-colonial societies in Asia now dominate the politics of cricket in the contemporary era (Rumford and Wagg, 2010). The spread of cricket illustrates how culture is not confined to one place but shared, mixed and adapted as different geographical locations across the globe have become interlinked through this sport (James, 1963, Rumford and Wagg, 2010)

It is not just culture that is illustrative of the ways in which migrants are seen to stretch relations around the globe and evoke socio-spatial change. The impact migrants have on the global economy has been shown to be significant, not least in terms of the scale of remittances whereby migrants employed abroad send funds back to their country of origin. The Philippines, Pakistan and Egypt are among those countries where

remittances comprise a significant share of their national economies (Vertovec, 2009). In another way, Guarnizo et al. (2003) describe how migrants give shape to new political communities; groups abroad lobbying on behalf of their homeland; or opposing political change in the homeland; migrant hometown associations; and exile groups. Sometimes these activities find their way into government policies, which are then developed specifically towards expatriates. These include special investment opportunities, special voting rights and dual nationality/citizenship. It is argued by Østergaard-Nielsen (2003) that national policies for nationals abroad are usually intended to encourage a sense of membership among those expatriates. For example, prior to the 2007 French Presidential elections, candidate Nicolas Sarkozy held a rally in the UK as part of this election campaign, to meet French citizens living and working in London. The UK's capital has been described as one of the largest French cities owing to the numbers of French nationals resident there (Favell, 2006). This is an example of the way in which states are reinventing their roles outside of territorial boundaries and, as Levitt and de la Dehesa (2003:588) note, "reconfiguring traditional understandings of sovereignty, nation and citizenship".

As these examples indicate, human mobility raises questions about the constitution of place, as well as migrant experiences of it. This has led academics to argue that migration be conceptualised between fixed notions of place and flows in a way that "connects the multitudes of 'heres' and 'theres' in more complex and interwoven ways" (Sämers, 2010:199). Emphasis is thus placed upon notions of re-configuration, re-construction and re-territorialisation, to capture the sense of things changing where; as Smith (2001:2) notes:

...contemporary national and local states have differentially but ubiquitously mediated the flows of transnational investment, migration, and cultural production through their boundaries. Politically constructed state policies, legitimating discourses, and institutional practices are key

elements through which transnational social formations are being constituted.

It is the concept of transnationalism that this chapter now focuses upon.

“Trans”-“national”

Basch et al. (1994:6) conceptualise transnationalism “as the processes by which immigrants forge and sustain multi-stranded social relations that link together their societies of origin and settlement”. Faist (2000) defines these cross-border processes as rooted in the institution of the nation-state and deriving some of their character from theoretically transcending the nation and recognising the value of contemporary flows (see also Pries, 2005). In a geographical review of transnationalism, Bailey (2001:415) states that the “distinctiveness of the transnational framework stems from its critique of international migration scholarship which relies on objective categories of analysis” (see also Basch et al., 1994, Rouse, 1991) Wimmer and Glick Schiller (2002) also argue that transnationalism is part of a new way of perceiving and analysing the world that moves away from preconceptions of methodological nationalism (i.e. that the nation-state is the natural unit of analysis). *Transnationalism* stresses movement which “denotes both moving through space or across lines, as well as changing the nature of something” (Ong, 1999:4).

Alternatively, the development of transnationalism as a conceptual lens in migration studies has been linked, by researchers, to process of globalisation (see, for example, Collins, 2009, Kearny, 1995, Vertovec, 2009). Thus it recognises the value of flows and mobilities that are sometimes said to be breaking down barriers and conventional understandings of place as fixed and stable. Along these lines, Smith (2001:3) emphasises that “globalization discourse draws attention to social processes that are “largely decentered from specific national territories”” while “research on *transnational*

processes depicts transnational social relations as “anchored in” while also transcending one or more nation-states”. In essence, transnational discourse emerges in an inherently spatial form between two ways of imagining the world; as a space of places, on the one hand, and a space of flows, on the other. In the words of Smith (2001:3), transnationalism “insists on the continuing significance of borders, state policies, and national identities even as these are transgressed by transnational communication circuits and social practices”.

Since the work of Glick Schiller et al. (1992) almost two decades ago, transnationalism has been employed extensively in migration studies and has become “a widely recognised and stimulating framework for appreciating the nuance and brutality of international migration” (Bailey, 2001). In this thesis, transnationalism is used to stimulate empirical research between notions of fixity and fluidity at the human level, or “from below”.

“Transnationalism from below” is part of a conceptual typology that presents a human level analysis alongside, or in contrast to, “transnationalism from above”. Smith and Guarnizo (1998) devised this typology to conceptualise space through the relational qualities of dynamic power relations. Transnationalism from above tends to focus on powerful institutional actors, such as national politicians making laws at the European level, or the human resources office of an MNC organising the mobility of its employees. These positions are always relational to transnationalism from below, which tends to focus on the grounded initiatives of individuals – sports stars crossing boundaries for matches, or home town associations created by immigrants, for instance. Transnationalism from below also addresses Mitchell’s (1997:110) concern that without “data related to the actual movements of things and people across space, theories of

anti-essentialism, mobility, plurality and hybridity can quickly devolve into terms emptied of any potential political efficacy". For Favell et al. (2006) transnationalism from below means bringing a human face to global accounts of mobility and for Smith (2001:6), this perspective "concretely connects macro-economic and geopolitical transformations to the micro-networks of social action that people create, move in, and act upon in their daily lives". Transnationalism from below is used to explore the relationship between lived spaces, and policies or global processes, and this perspective is pursued in this thesis at the scale of the EU. Before considering the European context, the following paragraphs explore more explicitly the concept of space in this thesis as it relates to transnationalism.

Relative space

The perspective used to shape the development of transnationalism in this thesis is termed relative space. Massey argues that relativism implies the world should be conceived neither in terms of homogenous spatial units, nor as a borderless and frictionless space across which rush the flows and networks of globalisation. This is the same perspective from which transnationalism has been conceptualised as a bridge between space as places and space as flows. In accordance, Pries (2005) argues that transnationalism evokes a relative sense of place, where it does not operate in a pure space of flows, but is located in particular localities as particular times. Massey's (1991, 1994, 2005) work exemplifies how this interplay between stabilities and mobilities (or, as she describes, between the 'local' and the 'global') is possible through the envisioning of a "progressive" sense of place.

Massey's "progressive" sense of place is based upon three propositions (see, Massey, 2005). Firstly, she argues that space be recognised as the product of interrelations,

taking place at all scales (from the local to the global). Secondly, that space is a sphere of “coexisting heterogeneity” where places are given meaning through the meeting of flows in particular places at particular times. Thirdly, that space be understood as always under construction and always in the process of being made and remade, thus neither finished nor closed. On these propositions, Massey argues that space is inherently fluid and equated with metaphors of plurality, multiplicity, contemporaneity, and interaction. However, places can still be described as unique and relatively stable for, as Smith (2001:107) summarises:

Massey depicts localities as acquiring their particularity not from some long-internalised history or sedimented character, but from the specific interactions and articulations of contemporary “social relations, social processes, experiences and understandings” that come together in situations of co-presence.

In a progressive sense of place, therefore, localities are products of multiple intersecting social relations, practices, perceptions and understandings, and will mean different things to different people at different times (Amin, 2004, Nicholls, 2009, Thrift, 1999). In this way, Massey argues that places can be imagined as a “simultaneity of stories-so-far” as they are made and remade through everyday life (Massey, 2005:9). This view captures both an unfinished notion of space, and the partiality of any way of knowing it (Becker, 2007), and is a fundamental perspective of this thesis.

Transnationalism is intimately connected to “progressive space” for the concept draws attention to the way in which some socio-spatial relations “will be, as it were, contained within the place; others will stretch beyond it, tying any particular locality into wider relations and processes” (Massey, 1994:12). From this standpoint, many argue that other spatial concepts should be discussed relationally, such as the tools used to describe places: borders, territories, scales and nationalities, for instance. That is, to discuss borders in terms of their relations with other borders and territories, rather than seeing

them as sealed containers of social life. The tension between relational spaces and absolute space runs through the European project (Jensen and Richardson, 2004, McNeill, 2004), and it is argued, in the following section, that the EU can be discussed in terms of its transnational characteristics.

European integration project

The European Union offers the most advanced challenge to the primacy of the nation-state in terms of territorially consolidated sovereignty, and thus politically at least it is worthy of specific attention (McNeill, 1999:143).

What happens when you remove race, class, ethnicity, inequality, borders, barriers, and cultural disadvantage from immigration? Answer. you get "free movers" (Favell, 2009:174).

Established in the post-war period, the European project was established to unite European states in an effort to achieve the political goal of "ever closer union", as stated in the Treaty of Rome, 1957. Since the ECSC was established (1951), the European project has taken various forms. In 1957, Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, Luxembourg and the Netherlands became the founding members of the EEC, committed to the creation of The Single Market between them (Wise and Gibb, 1993). This internal market is based upon the free movement of the classic factors of production - capital, goods, services and labour (people) -- and has been progressively established via a series of treaties between the member states.

Since these early stages, the European project has expanded geographically and the EU (established by the Treaty of Maastricht, 1993) now comprises twenty-seven member states. The first accession of new members in 1973 brought Britain, Denmark and Ireland into the European project, and they were joined by Greece, Portugal and Spain during the 1980s. Another enlargement in 1995 extended the EU to fifteen member

states before expanding further into Eastern and Southern Europe in 2004 and 2007. Alongside political and geographical expansion, institutions have developed that now cover a range of political, economic and social policy areas (Wise and Gibb, 1993). As a result of the European project, Europe has changed considerably and Paasi (2001:7) argues that:

Territorial structures and the meanings associated with them have changed dramatically over the course of time, reflecting the perpetual regional transformation of economic, political, administrative and cultural practices and discourses, and inherent relations of power.

This thesis assumes, as a starting point, a map of Western Europe in the first half of the twentieth century as a mosaic of individual politico-legal entities (Figure 2.1). These autonomous and territorially-bounded states were separated from one another by legally-established borders that acted as containers for distinct political communities (usually described as nations), social systems, and languages. Favell (2008:viii) describes this divided Europe as “a continent defined by national rivalries, memories of conflict, cultural distinctions, [and] patriotic identities”. It is this political structure of society that provides the building blocks of European integration and comprises the fundamental components of the current institutionalisation of the EU (Dijkink and Mamadouh, 2006)². Over sixty years, many of these mosaic territories have become increasingly entwined as the European project has encouraged and legalised cross-border cooperation in more and more areas (Anderson, 1996). Wallace (2000:532) argues that the EU “spills across state boundaries, penetrating deep into previously domestic aspects of nation-state politics and administration”. Thus, the map of Europe

² Despite adopting this nation-state map as my starting point, I acknowledge that the European continent has been understood in complex and numerous other ways in the past. Furthermore, McCormick (2002) writes that the idea of European unity is not new and that many have proposed unification as a means of achieving peace within the continent prior to developments in the 1950s.

has been reconfigured significantly in the last sixty years (King, 2002, Massey et al. 1998)³.

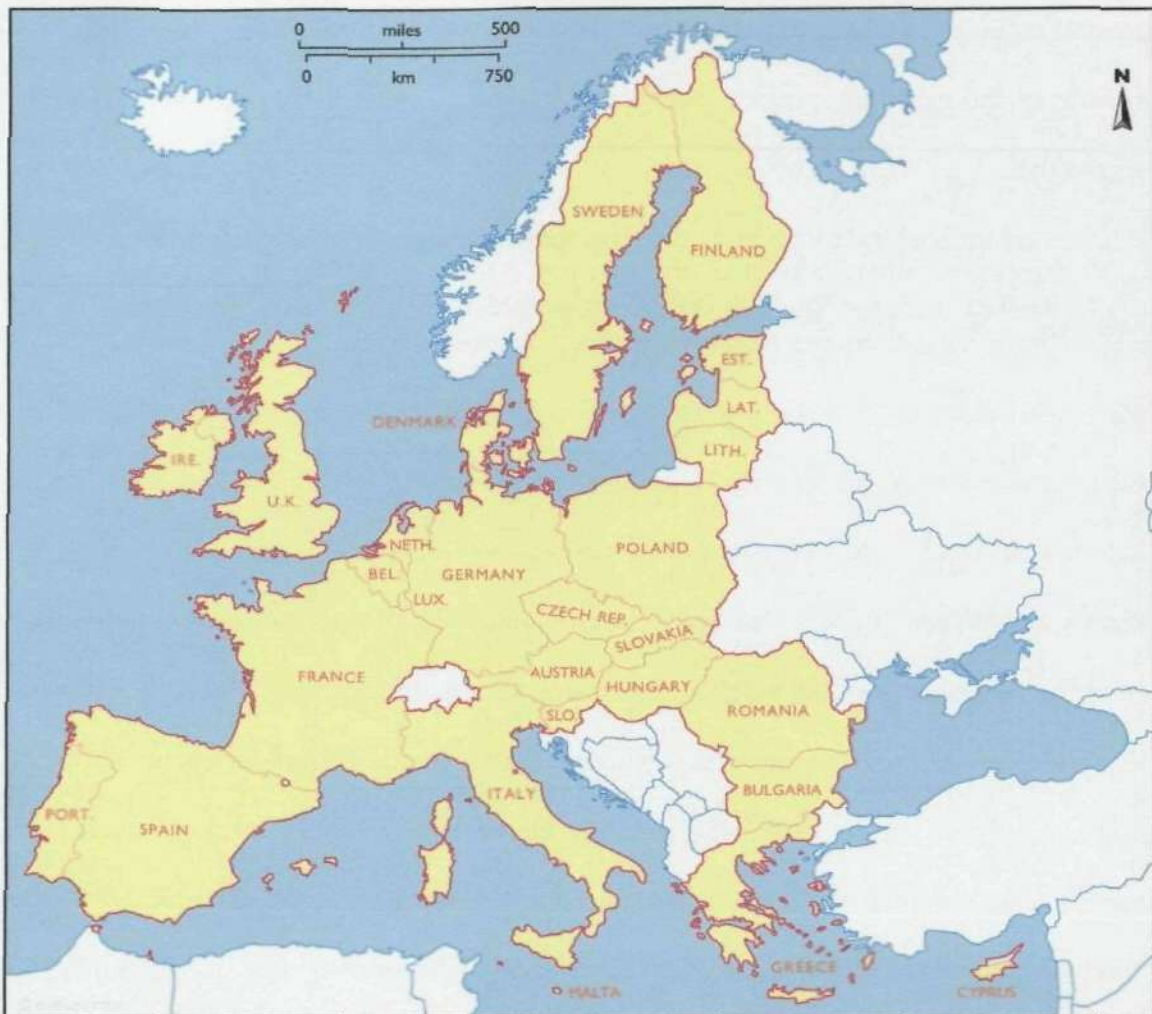


Figure 2.1 The EU and its member states (produced by Cartography, UoP)

How we read the new map of Europe is not straightforward. For Armbruster et al. (2003:887), “Europe is a notoriously difficult concept to pin down” and to Sidaway (2006), the EU’s structure, modus operandi and relations to notions of sovereignty and territory, make it an “unknown beast”. Sidaway argues that European integration poses a challenge “for conventional understandings of the ensemble of relations between territory-government-power that have traditionally lain at the heart of political

³ The map of Europe has also been changed as a result of the unification of Germany and the break up of the Soviet Union. Many of the autonomous states created in the break up of the Soviet Union are now members of the EU.

geography” (2006:1). One way of reading the new map of Europe is “without internal frontiers”, as expressed in Directive 2004/38/EC (Figure 2.2).

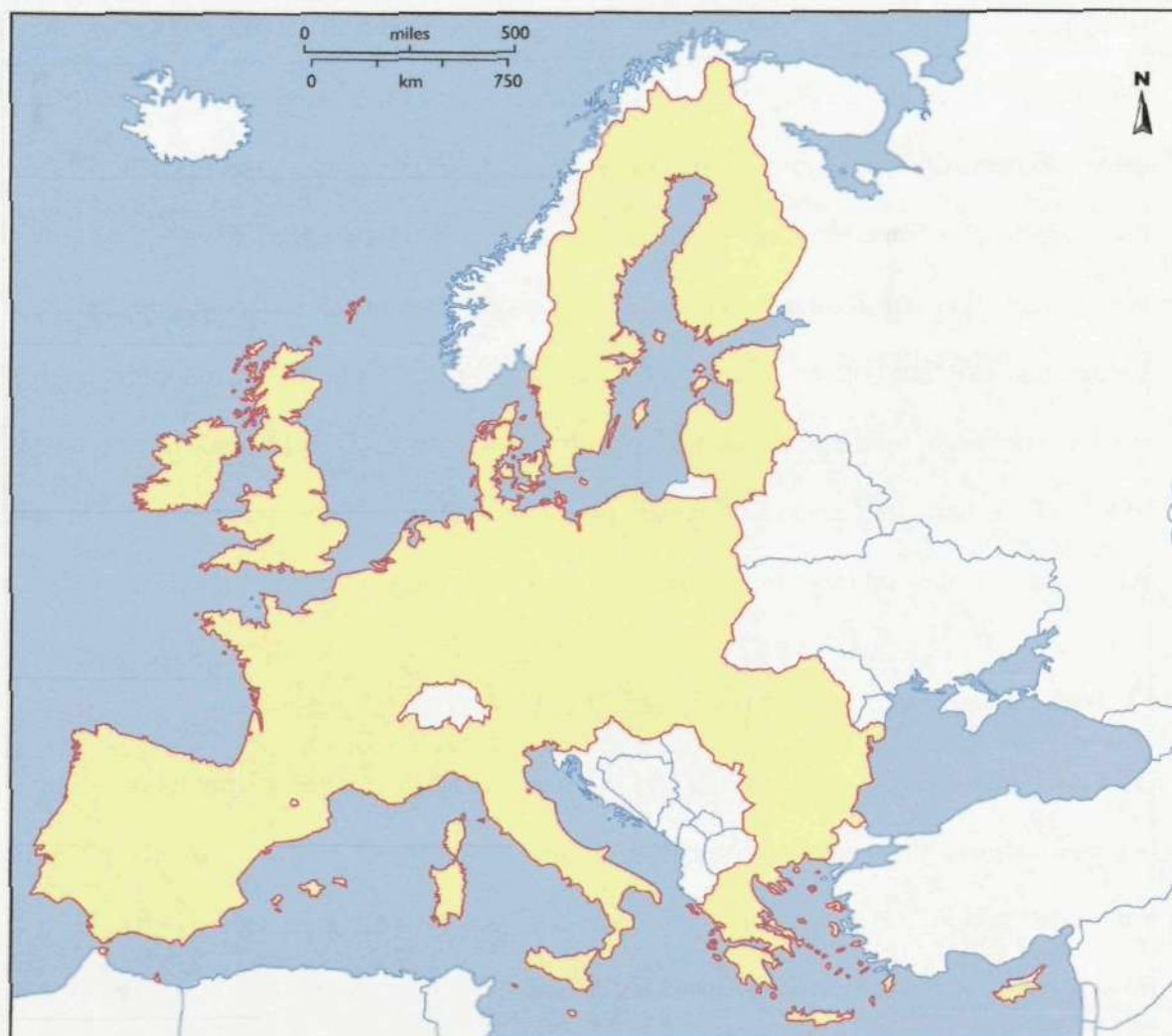


Figure 2.2 Europe without internal frontiers (produced by Cartography, UoP)

The EU has been conceptualised in various ways as “a borderless Europe” (Berezin and Schain, 2003). Jensen and Richardson (2004), for example, argue that a core dimension of the European project is the making of a single European space – a *monotopia* – as “an organised, ordered and totalized space of zero-friction and seamless logistic flow”. Concepts of mobility and fluidity are central to this vision of Europe, as they were shown in certain narratives of globalisation (Massey, 2005). Hajer’s reference to “a Europe of flows” is also symbolic of Castells’ (1996) abstract notion of spaces of flow.

These two ways of conceptualising Europe, as a space of fragmented nation-states, and a Europe of unifying flows, are relatively abstract notions of space but they tell a story by helping to illustrate a tension often emerging in European studies between the historically rooted politico-legal nation-state system, and the reading of a post-national space of integration, flows and networks (Antonsich, 2008, Aradau et al., 2010). They also suggest that something has changed. Thus, the development of the EU not only cha(lle)nges the politico-territorial map of Europe through the reconfiguration of internal and external borders and the meaning of boundaries, but it also constitutes new relations between member states and people living there (Dijkink and Mamadouh, 2006). It is here that transnationalism provides a lens to help understand what is happening to places undergoing processes of European integration and globalisation.

EU transnationalism

As a concept exploring more mobile and more grounded geographies simultaneously, it has been argued that transnationalism provides a conceptual bridge to overcome the binary-distinction between notions of space as place-based and spaces as shaped by flows. I have shown how the EU has been conceived in such ways to exemplify how transnationalism provides a theoretical lens through which to understand European space. This thesis seeks to support this argument with empirical evidence, as first it considers the transnational character of the EU as set out in the fourth objective (see p.19).

Rogers (2000:10) compares EU transnationalism with cross-border movement elsewhere in the world and argues that in Western Europe it is “peculiar to the European Union” as a process “within and making use of EU economic and political space”. He refers to the way in which transnationalism is shaped by politico-legal developments

and measures taken to lower certain internal barriers and harmonise aspects of cross-border relations. Some of these are explored below in relation to the free movement of persons. As a result of political integration, many activities take place in the EU beyond the national scale, while others continue to take place within and between nation-states – the building blocks of the EU. Dijkink and Mamadouh (2006:152) argue that “the institutionalisation of the EU occurred in a territorial system dominated by territorial states, in the birthplace of the modern state system. The new territory cannot be established without affecting pre-existing ones and their relations”. Thus, government competencies in Europe have been re-arranged between institutions so that they are shared by European, national and sub-national institutions (Antonsich, 2008, McNeill, 2004). In a global context, Rogers (2000:8) describes the European project as one of the “major political forces influencing transnational migration above and beyond economic globalisation and technological change”. It is researchers such as geographers, who, by examining migration as dynamic socio-spatial relations, contribute to understanding EU integration as an unfolding process at the human level (Favell, 2009, King 2002).

Fligstein (2008) likens the EU to an iceberg with a visible portion above the water and a greater invisible mass below the surface. He uses this analogy to argue that research has tended to focus on what is above the water - the institutions and policies of the EU, where the object of study has been the EU as a political construction. These top-down approaches have been dominated by political scientists, economists and legal studies (Favell and Guiraudon, 2009). Beneath the surface of the water is much unexplored territory, according to Fligstein, where the EU is viewed as an economic and society process, both producing and produced by European integration. Favell and Guiraudon (2009), and Fligstein (2008), offer short reviews of the type of work that has been done,

but of relevance to this thesis are the developments by sociologists seeking to ground studies of European integration in the dynamics producing and being produced by European societies. This type of work begins to explore the relationship between lived spaces and EU policies. They are situated more broadly within structural studies of the dynamics of European economy and society and an essential part of the (re)making of Europe.

Favell (2009:167) argues that "Europe historically has been made, unmade and remade through the movements of peoples" and that they have shaped contemporary Europe. Milward (1997) also situates people in the production of contemporary Europe by arguing that European middle classes have ultimately driven European integration, just as the middle classes determined national political outcomes and national institutions in the early postwar period (see also Diez Medrano, 2008). From a political perspective, free movement within Europe is seen to promote European integration at the human level, as stated in the Directive on Free Mobility (2004/38/EC):

Enjoyment of permanent residence by Union citizens who have chosen to settle long term in the host member state would strengthen the feeling of Union citizenship and is a key element in promoting social cohesion, which is one of the fundamental objectives of the Union.

The strategy of trying to move towards a politically "ever closer union" via the economic means of first creating a common market was designed to produce material benefits that would "spill-over" into an emotional-political attachment to Europe, or as Diez Medrano (2008) writes, to foster solidarities which would gradually produce a European society. Thus, the political hopes for deeper integration and unity rest partially upon those EU citizens who move and endorse an enthusiasm for life lived outside their national state of belonging (Diez Medrano, 2008, Favell and Recchi 2009, Recchi, 2008). It is with this in mind that the following paragraphs describe the politico-legal aspect of free mobility for persons within the EU, as an essential structural

element to building the EU, and as a further example of the creation of flows within the EU.

Freedom of movement within the EU

The EU provides the only example where freedom of movement has been legally institutionalised at a regional scale. The ECSC, formed in 1951, introduced free movement to facilitate recruitment of coal and steel workers across member state borders. Today, freedom of movement for people has diversified beyond this initial focus on a specialised workforce. In 1993, the Maastricht Treaty introduced EU citizenship as an automatic post-national status of membership to all nationals of EU member states, and subsequently secured individuals rights where:

Citizenship of the Union confers on every citizen of the Union a primary and individual right to move and reside freely within the territory of the Member States, subject to the limitations and conditions laid down in the Treaty and to the measures adopted to give it effect (Directive 2004/38/EC).

“Limitations and conditions” indicate that any EU citizen wishing to reside in another member state without exercising any economic activity or to undertake study must prove that they hold sufficient financial resources and sickness insurance, not to become a burden for the host state’s social assistance system. In this way, ‘free mobility’ is referred to in this thesis as a reference to the EU’s fundamental principle of “freedom of movement”, taking into account the right to move and reside freely subject to limitations, as specified above.

Skeldon (2006) notes that as a result of European integration and freedom of movement, migration within the EU has been internalised. Recchi (2008:207) also notes that “giant steps have been taken in the direction of turning cross-state movements in the EU from *international* to *internal* migration”. These giant steps refer to “a large array of

constitutive, regulative and distributive policies to foster citizens' mobility" (2008:205), of which Recchi argues the most significant to be EU citizenship "which glorifies free movement as a first rank generalized individual right". Some of the other policies include "the right not to encounter the administrative authorities of member states" (Guild, 2006:15) and "the prohibition of discrimination on grounds of nationality" (Directive 2004/38). In addition, Recchi argues that the establishment of a common currency (although not common throughout the entire EU) makes life easier for citizens by lowering transaction costs when they make transnational exchanges (buying goods and property in another member state, for example). In terms of distributive policies, Recchi's list includes research grants, scholarships and EU educational programmes such as Erasmus, which provides scholarships to allow students to move freely from one member states to another (and beyond the EU into Iceland, Norway and Turkey, for example).

Thus, EU citizens face fewer discriminations and fewer restrictions to their mobility and settlement outside their nation-state territory than other migrants, either those who are non-EU citizens within the EU, or migrants elsewhere in the world (see for example, van Houtum and Boedeltje, 2009). This is sometimes why EU citizens are deemed to be the "champions of a borderless, ever closer Union" (Recchi, 2008:213). Once again, this European context resounds with earlier discussion of global mobility. From a top-down perspective, the free movement of EU citizens appears to be celebrated as somewhat frictionless. However, as we know from transnational studies of migration, migrants' lives can be simultaneously mobile and grounded. This thesis follows Favell and Recchi (2009) in hypothesising that if free mobility is likely to occur anywhere, it seems likely here where politico-legal measures support mobility. However, one must proceed with caution for as Favell (2003:10) notes; "it is rarely asked whether real

individuals, with everyday family lives and human relationships, could actually live out the lives predicted for them by the macro economic data about flows and networks" (see also Castles and Miller, 2003).

Intra-EU movers

Those EU citizens moving between member states are termed intra-EU movers. Favell and Recchi (2009:3) describe them as;

the prototypical "highly Europeanised citizens", they are the human face of European integration...their lives and experiences are the best guide to finding out how easy it is to shift one's national identity and horizon to a post-national or cosmopolitan level, and of the practical benefits, insights, barriers and failings of a life lived outside the place where they historically belong.

This thesis explores the experience of living outside one's own country from two perspectives: a politico-legal focus, and a socio-cultural perspective. The former view draws upon the structural reality of the EU as a politico-legal entity comprised of member states. These conditions have enabled what Diez Medrano (2008:5) defines as the "Europeanization of national societies" to draw attention to the "widening of the scope of the national citizens' economic and political activities". Simultaneously however, certain aspects of nation-state sovereignty have not been harmonised within the EU, meaning that EU citizens remain particularly embedded within the politico-legal structure of the nation-state. Diez Medrano (2008) argues that the EU single market falls short in terms of human mobility, and suggests that it is a quasi-single market instead. In this quasi-single market, intra-EU migrants encounter obstacles against their free mobility as informal barriers, including poor recognition of qualification credentials, informal forms of discrimination towards citizens when they search for housing, or attempt to open bank accounts, and lack of clarity of pension benefits, as explored by Favell (2008). Thus, through the experience of intra-EU migrants moving between member states, this thesis explores the extent to which the

integration project enables free mobility, unhindered by the boundary constraints associated with the nation-state system.

The socio-cultural perspective adds additional layers of analysis to the geographies of free movement and intra-EU migration. By socio-cultural, the thesis refers to the social and cultural relations that migrants create and maintain with other people in their new locations. It has been suggested that a European society (displaying cosmopolitan attitudes that transcend national affiliations) could emerge as a result of the intensification of contact, communication and transactions between EU citizens (Diez Medrano, 2008, Recchi, 2008). Here, however, is the potential to encounter further informal barriers created through national rivalries, and histories of geographical separation. Thus, the thesis approaches the fieldsite as a "contact zone" where previously separated (geographically and historically) subjects become co-present (Pratt, 1992), and explores what type of boundaries enable or constrain free movement in this socio-cultural context.

Together, these two objectives provide a broad account that addresses the aim of this thesis to assess the extent to which migrants move "freely" in what has been conceptualised as a "Europe without internal frontiers". It is an important matter to consider on a number of levels. Politically, intra-EU citizens are positioned at "the cutting edge of social change in Europe" (Recchi, 2005:18). Recchi argues that they straddle two issues at the top of the European Studies agenda; integration of European societies (see Calhoun, 2002, Diez Medrano, 2008), and the emergence of a European identity (see Diez Medrano, 2008, Shore, 2000). This thesis argues that intra-EU migrants also provide a good indicator of the extent to which migrants move and live freely, unhindered by boundary constraints associated with a nation-state system.

The question is relevant at the European level where EU citizens are seen to provide “the litmus test of the *debordering* of Europe” (Recchi, 2008:198), and also significant at the global level, as a “key indicator of the very possibility of post-national global or regional integration at the individual, human level” (Favell and Recchi, 2009:2). In order to address this question empirically, the remainder of this chapter explores how transnationalism has been conceptualised and analysed in two key ways.

Transnationalising the European Union

The usefulness of any concepts brought into a field of study should be observed in the ways they can shape the gathering and analysis of empirical and ethnographic data (Vertovec, 2009:52).

Transnationalism provides a concept for thinking about how migrants’ lives are grounded in the continuing significance of borders, nation-state territories, and policies, while also transgressive of these socio-spatial formations. Whilst much conceptual tuning has already been explored in the literature (see Conradson and Latham, 2005b, Portes et al., 1999, Vertovec, 1999), Vertovec (2009:18) argues that “much more conceptual and empirical work remains to be done with regard to sharpening the transnational approach” (see Collins, 2009, Samers, 2010). This section introduces two spatial concepts which have shaped migration studies; a structural perspective and a networked perspective. Both provide templates for examining relations between individuals and wider frameworks in which their lives are embedded. These two distinct (but not entirely disconnected) approaches are compared and evaluated in order that they may assist to realise the research aim and objectives (p.18-19).

Structure and agency

Structures, agents, institutions and social networks provide the main concepts of analysis in (trans)migration studies. The first two of these have been used together in a broadly structuralist approach to migration that has been influential in shaping world systems theory, global city perspectives and globalisation arguments (Gregory, 1994). Following Giddens (1984), a structural standpoint presents human agency and systems of society in a reciprocal relationship of cause and effect. The notion of “duality” is central to this vision, as it emphasises that “the structural properties of social systems are both medium and outcome of the practices they recursively organize” (Giddens, 1984:25). Here, social action is not only seen to be constrained by structures, but also influential in shaping them. Thus, the approach is complementary to relational concepts of space, emphasising how actions are always unfolding and never finished (Massey, 2005). Two examples reveal how this structural approach has been operationalised in research to grasp human-level understanding of broader processes in which lives are embedded.

Sassen’s (2001) global cities theory includes analysis of migration as a significant component of inequality in global city spaces. She draws attention to the ways that demand is generated by cities and high-income workers for immigrants from poorer countries to provide services in such places as restaurants, hotels and homes. In this way, the lives of low-income immigrants are constrained and enabled within the parameters of this dual labour market. Sassen identifies duality by illustrating how low-income immigrants play a role in the development of the city through reinforcing the dualistic labour market between high- and low-income immigrants. This approach allows analysis of the contours of underlying structures in the city; where the city

impels people to migrate from poorer (urban and non-urban areas) to richer cities and simultaneously these migrants shape the way in which the city unfolds.

The second example comes from Samers (2010) who recounts the drowning of 47 “clandestine” African immigrants trying to reach the Spanish-owned Canary Islands. Their goal was to reach mainland Spain and the EU. The narrative reveals how the structures of territorial borders (physical walls and wire boundaries) and state immigration policies (and the relations between differential systems i.e. those separated by external EU borders) imposed limits for these potential migrants that pushed them towards migratory routes which were dangerous and illegal, and which ultimately led to their deaths. As Favell et al. (2006:4) remind us, structures are part of the world in which lives are embedded;

without sovereign political regulation of movement – in the shape of citizenship and naturalisation laws, welfare rights for members, and the control and classification of border crossing and re-settlement – migration would just be people moving around.

Thus, the way in which people are embedded in particular political, social and economic spaces provide crucial aspects for understanding how places are transformed (Nicholls, 2009).

A significant critique of structural approaches focuses on those that appear structure-heavy in their analysis. For example, Favell et al. (2006:3) express concern that;

the first generation of global studies was nothing if not sweepingly macro in its scope and argumentation. Rarely did authors consider the “human face” that might be found behind the aggregate data and structural logic that led to the recognition of global cities and global networks.

Such accounts often lack the nuance of exploring different forms of migration across axes of social difference – age, class, gender and ethnicity, for example. Structures can thus be conceptualised as somewhat “fixed” entities existing externally of human action.

This thesis seeks to balance a structural approach to the EU with an agency-oriented perspective from below. On the one hand this recognises how the politico-legal structure of the EU facilitates the free mobility of persons at a post-national scale, while on the other, it draws this macro-process to the human level, by asking how migrants experience, create or act upon free mobility in their daily lives.

A structuralist approach underpins much of the reasoning behind this thesis for it assumes that EU "free" mobility policies enable possibilities for borderless migration (a standpoint that is evaluated in Chapter Five), and that the EU is made and remade (partly) through the movements of people. These assumptions are not without credibility (Favell, 2009, McNeill, 2004). Structuralism has been particularly useful for exploring (from an ethnographic perspective) "taken-for-granted" knowledge, existing at the level of "practical consciousness". Such knowledge is said to occur without conscious reflection, until it is disrupted by a different routine or activity. This is particularly apparent when people change locations. For example, it was expressed by several British respondents in the French field that they would set off shopping in the morning and then find, to their surprise, that many of the shops would close at midday for a couple of hours, or maybe more. Having been accustomed to shopping more openly in Britain, these migrants described being "caught out" in this way when they first arrived in France and were not yet aware of French working routines. This illustrates the differences between two societies and the need for migrants to adapt to accomplish daily tasks. By drawing upon these elements it is possible to show how migrants are politically, economically and socially spatially situated subjects (Edensor, 2002, Smith, 2005, Thrift, 1985). Thus, a useful strategy is to focus upon the transformations that take place as individuals settle somewhere new.

Adopting a structural perspective, taken-for-granted experiences are explored in Chapter Six, to analyse how everyday mundane practices associated with one nation-state are disrupted, negotiated and transformed when individuals move into another member state, within the broader context of Europe without internal borders. In this way the research analyses how British lives unfold in France in relation to the politico-legal constraints and possibilities posed by the nation-state and EU contexts. One of the anticipated difficulties associated with this will be to distinguish between nation-state and EU political structures for, as Dijkink and Mamadouh (2006:152) note:

The balance between different levels of government inside the EU, especially between the Member States and the supranational level, and between the states and the regions, is under discussion. Thus, there is a continuing, but contested shift of competences and roles between institutions.

Moreover, while the EU impacts citizens through material and representational means, for example in terms of a common currency or through regulative policies discussed earlier (Recchi, 2008), it is noted that “national authorities mediate most of these encounters” (Dijkink and Mamadouh, 2006:153). As a result, for EU citizens, it may not always be apparent how the EU is impacting upon everyday life because it is masked by the nation-state.

A criticism of structuralist approaches used in migration analysis is that they often fail to recognise a “dialectics of scale” concerning differential influences of local, regional, national and international arenas (Miller, 1994). As Samers (2010:118) indicates “territories do not need *necessarily* to be local, regional, national, and global...they can also entail other hybrid or combinational territories which cannot be captured under the usual categories of local, national, and so forth”. He offers the example of the workplace with its own rules and regulations but which is also subject to national-level laws. The workplace is relevant here, as will be seen, but equally applicable to this

research might be the commune level of political territory within France. Adopting a structural stance in Chapter Six, I prescribe the spatial boundaries of analysis as those predominantly related to the EU and the nation-state, and while other scales feature in the narrative, these two take priority. In response to this application of spatial scales in the thesis, I argue that artificial boundaries need to be constructed around this research. While this might be considered a means of imposing particular spatialities, they are predefined somewhat by the questions posed.

Taking the above concerns into account, using EU policies and the concept of free movement to explain all forms of settlement and daily life in France would be misleading and inadequate. Hence, I also draw upon a network perspective that is open to the interactions taking place at a range of scales, a so-called "dialectics of scale" (Jessop et al., 2008), and advantageous to this research in other ways.

A network perspective

Migration studies have made considerable use of various network perspectives (Massey et al., 1998, Vertovec, 1999) and according to Voigt-Graf (2004) "transnational spaces" cannot be understood without referring to networks and nodes (see also Kyle, 2000, Landolt, 2001). Featherstone et al. (2007:383) also apply networks to transnationalism, arguing for the reconceptualisation of "nations, regions and places as key sites in sets of flows and networks, rather than as fixed containers of political and cultural activity". For Voigt-Graf, these "key sites" refer to the nodes between flows of people, products, money, ideas, cultural goods and information in a network. Consequently, networks are the sum of "overlapping and contested material, cultural and political flows and circuits, that bind different places together through differential relations of power" (Featherstone.

et al., 2007:386). Networks are implicitly heterogeneous because they are concerned with place as a multiplicity of relational interconnections (Jessop et al., 2008).

Network analysis is not radically different to structuration and some conceptualisations can be seen as extensions to classical structuralism. Thrift (cited in Gregory, 2000:800), suggests that if Giddens had been able to conceptualise “action as [more than] individual and [had more] fully considered the ghost of networked others that continually informs that action” structuration theory could have become actor-network theory. Vertovec (2009) argues that the two approaches share the idea that network structures provide both opportunities and constraints for social action. Structures (such as political structures) also feature as part of social networks, and it is not uncommon to read about networks being “embedded” in broader structures. Structural embeddedness, for example, is described by Portes (1995) as different scales of social relationship in which many people take part beyond those actually involved in a particular transition. It refers to the (hierarchical and vertical) connections through which local actors are linked to the larger society, culture, economy and polity. Structures and networks are brought into this thesis to respond to certain questions where they help to explicate interpretations.

Considering their interconnections, what does network analysis offer to the explanation of migration over structuration theories? Firstly, networks engage more extensively with heterogeneous interacting components than the structures, institutions and actors of structuration theory, allow for (Bebbington and Kothari, 2006). Yarwood (2010:258) draws upon Murdoch (2000) to argue that networks “combine knowledge, technology, environment and people into particular assemblages”, and we could add to this list the intersection of non-humans, artifacts, practices, discourses and rules (Whatmore, 1999).

Network perspectives are therefore more complex and nuanced than the structuralist approach mentioned above. Agency, for instance is distributed through this heterogeneous arrangement rather than as an intentional activity of human subjects as it is in a more structured approach (Hetherington, 2000). However, while such “unruly materially heterogeneous assemblages”, help to reveal what (re)produce places through transnational practices (Featherstone et al., 2007:386, see also Collier, 2005), networks might be taken to mean anything for they can include diverse elements stretching beyond the relevance of a particular project (Sayer, 1992). It is partly for this reason that I retain a structured approach in Chapter Six. However, Chapter Seven offers a much more diverse analysis of everyday lives which benefits from engaging the multiple relations between people, institutions, and places as interrelational components producing spaces (Massey, 2005).

Network perspectives also differ from structuralism because they dismantle a vertical ontology that privileges certain scales and boundaries between components. Transnational studies have made use of a typology designating “above”, “below” and “in-between” (Smith, 2005, Smith and Guarnizo, 1998) but a common mistake is to equate “transnationalism from above” exclusively with global structures that are external to the “local” social fields and actors who make up transnationalism from below. Not only does this evoke a vertical and hierarchical binary, but also compounds a global/local dualism, of little epistemological value for contemporary geography (Cloke et al., 2004). A network perspective theorises relations between components in rhizomatic form (Featherstone et al., 2007, Jessop et al., 2008). Vertovec (2009:32) indicates that horizontalising scale allows us “to abstract aspects of interpersonal relations which cut across institutions and the boundaries of aggregated concepts such as neighbourhood, workplace, kinship or class” (see also Goss and Lindquist, 1995,

Rogers, 1995). He suggests that processes are not exclusively designated to one category ("above" or "below"), but may transcend various materially constructed boundaries or territories which then produce and reproduce relevant scales of action and association. As one example, this makes it possible to theorise relations between actors who would have been located in the same category, "below", for example. Network analysis has been used in migration to explore relations among individuals in friendship networks (Conradson, 2005), kinship relations (Choldin, 1973, Levitt, 2001a) and migration systems (Massey et al., 1998), as well as between institutions and individuals (Page and Mercer, 2007), including stronger or weaker ties (Granovetter, 1973). These assemblages draw attention to a range, depth, breadth and speed of relations between diverse elements. This horizontal form of analysis informs research exploring the interactions between migrants and other people and shaping Chapter Seven.

A third advantage of network perspectives is their focus on flows, which Castells (1996:442) describes as "sequences of exchange and interaction between physically disjointed positions held by social actors", and which many perceive as expressions of processes seen to be dominating spatial manifestations of political and economic life (Urry, 2000). Structuralism has had a tendency to represent structures as ultimate "fixed" entities with which agents can establish relations (Gregory, 2000). In comparison, networks constitute elements as seemingly fluid and unfinished, incorporating the same "structures" but as integrative parts of the network themselves (Murdoch, 2003). For example, taxation risks being thought of as an isolated entity that impacts the lives of tax payers. However, situated in a network perspective, attention is drawn to the way in which taxation is a process and product of state regulations at multiple scales, the people who work in tax offices, and the economic calculations that give rise to how certain amounts of taxation are calculated, as well as the tax payer.

Analysis of this nature delves deep and might be highly complex. However, it is not always useful for it can lead to a chaotic matrix of meaningless data (Latour, 1996). Hence, a network approach needs to be developed carefully. This being said, I deliberately seek this relational effect when I explore social networks, clubs and associations “whose activity is constituted in the networks of which they form a part” (Whatmore, 1999:28). By specifying which clubs are significant in the social lives of migrants, I then explore how those clubs are sustained and reproduced by other members and institutions as part of the network. This offers an integrative understanding of the nature of key sites in migrants’ lives.

In Chapter Five, a network perspective helps to illustrate the multiple ways in which Britons come to be in France, beyond the scope of how the EU imposes limits and possibilities on their movement. A network approach to migration emphasises how;

networks connect migrants across time and space. Once begun, migration flows often become self-sustaining, reflecting the establishment of networks of information, assistance and obligations which develop between migrants in the host society and friends and relatives in the sending area (Boyd, 1989:641).

These migration networks highlight how people are connected through kinship and friendship and are used to reveal how migration to France is a process that partly depends on and creates such social networks.

Processes of networking are examined in Chapter Seven to trace the role and effects of social interaction between individuals (Britons and other Britons or between Britons and French, for example) as Britons settle into life in France. I draw upon familiar aspects of network analysis used to describe data; the network dynamics (size, content, density, and frequency) (Vertovec, 2009), and whether social networks created have an affect on British feelings of belonging to France or Europe. To make the most of a network

perspective, one must be open to the multiple territories, scales and places that may emerge through analysis. Cloke et al. (2004:190) highlight the way in which a network approach may be operationalised inductively as the researcher

latch[es] on to specific people, things, metaphors...lives/biographies and/or conflicts; and follow[s] them, see what 'sticks' to them and where that takes a researcher who is (un)able to follow a myriad possible leads and to make myriad possible connections.

Their method of following the network concurs with Samers (2010:118) who argues that researchers should suspend any prioritisation of particular scales or structures and remain alert to the way in which "different processes might entail different territorialities". In this way, networks reveal *de facto* flows and nodes rather than reinforcing *a priori* assumptions (Massey, 1995, 2005). A network approach is ideally operationalised where researchers are able to "follow the network" but the extensive relations involved in networks make this largely impossible to fulfill. Kelly and Olds (2007) encountered this difficulty as they sought to analyse the spatiality of transnational networks by following multiple connections from an initial site. They discovered that the multi-scalar forces taking place in a single site led to complex globalising networks that were too extensive to follow and analyse (Hannerz, 2003). Instead, the researchers opted to focus on particular nodes and lightly touch as many linkages as possible. This network-based methodology was a compromise to a more "place-based global ethnography". Focusing on a node installs provisional boundaries which can be effective and necessary within fieldwork, but one which remains sensitive to flows coming in and going out. This interlinks with exploring how migrants are embedded within certain spaces and policies.

Chapter Seven uses individual migrants and their networks to identify the sites that are important to them in their new environments and to assess how individuals negotiate limits and possibilities. Empirical research adopts a more place-based study that

considers the links between people and places elsewhere. In this way my analysis stretches beyond British networks or organisations to sites that are not wholly dependent on the Britons who constitute them. This type of approach was also adopted by Glick Schiller et al. (2006:613) who follow migrants and their descendants through networks and social fields "to develop a conceptual framework for the study of migration, settlement, and transborder connection that is not dependent on the ethnic group as either the unit of analysis or sole object of study". My approach resonates with Appadurai's (1990:297) "ethnoscape" referring to:

...the landscape of persons who constitute the shifting world in which we live: tourists, immigrants, refugees, exiles, guest-workers and other groups and persons constitute an essential feature of the world and appear to affect the politics of and between nations to an unprecedented degree.

By focusing on key sites, I identify the mobilities and stabilities constituting them and which co-exist alongside the politico-legal aspects of migrants' lives, to assess the extent to which intra-EU migrants live in a Europe without internal frontiers.

Geographies of transnationalism

Addressing the fourth and main theoretical standpoint in this thesis, Chapter Two has sought to inform and be informed by geographies of transnationalism. In an era when mobilities are said to be shaping socio-spatial relations across the globe, more stable notions of space, place and society sometimes appear to be challenged. Castells (1996) captures this tension by conceptualising space as characterised by places, on the one hand, and flows, on the other. This tension between stabilities and mobilities is also captured in the growing literature on transnationalism – a concept that has been shown to depict social relations as grounded in, while simultaneously transcending one or more nation-states (Smith, 2001). Drawing upon existing transnational literature within migration studies, this chapter argues that transnationalism from below provides a theoretical lens for assessing the extent to which spaces of flow reconstitute spaces of

place, through the experiences of people actually moving. Not only do migrants experience places, but they simultaneously reconstruct them (Collins, 2009). Drawing from transnational literatures, and geographical concepts more generally, the chapter illustrates how structures and networks provide two analytical frameworks for exploring the various politico-legal and socio-cultural aspects of migrants' lives as they are experienced between a sense of mobility and stability; between migration and settlement.

This chapter has also sought to develop the conceptual framework of this thesis. In doing so, it argues that the transnational character of migration within the EU is theorised at the interface of politico-legal changes to the nation-state system, and the emergence of an integrating Europe. Here, the theoretical tension between places and flows (as set out by Castells), is given empirical reality when EU citizens attempt to move internally, but still encounter certain ongoing aspects of (differentiated) nationalised modes of living and being. The following chapters seek to add empirical insight to the transnational character of the EU by focusing on a specific group of intra-EU migrants and how they experience migration and settlement. The objective of the next chapter is to introduce the empirical subjects of this thesis – adult British migrants living in part of South West France - and to situate them within my research and broader literature.

Chapter Three

Case study: Britons as intra-EU migrants in France

The intra-EU migrants researched in this thesis are British citizens resident in France: English, Northern Irish, Scottish, and Welsh persons who are also part of the UK, and therefore the EU. They are a significant population firstly, in terms of their growing numbers in France, both in their own right, and as a percentage of all immigrants in certain French regions (INSEE, 2005a). Secondly, as part of a north to south trend that is becoming a major feature of intra-EU migration patterns in Western Europe (Favell, 2009). This chapter explores the case study population and location (in the Midi-Pyrénées region of South West France) and considers two further concepts – whiteness and diaspora – through which the lives of British migrants in France may be better understood.

EU migratory system: a north-south trend

By describing a “European migrant tapestry”, Favell (2009:169) draws attention to the diversity of human movements and interactions that comprise the EU. Population movements, he argues, have been significant in “making and remaking Europe” to the present day. Massey et al. (1998) provide a five-phase representation of the main migratory patterns into and out of Europe, throughout the twentieth-century, and it is the fifth phase, beginning in the 1990s, that is of particular relevance here. Massey et al. describe the fifth phase as relating to the consolidation of a free internal EU market; enabling free movement within and tighter controls at, external borders (see also Dunkerley, 2002). They argue that this phase is, as yet, incomplete. It is this phase of free movement that provides the focus for much of Favell’s (2008, 2009) work, and he argues that it comprises three distinctive trends that will shape the EU into the future: “traditional non-European ‘ethnic’ immigrants”; “West European ‘Eurostars’”, and

“new East-West post-Enlargement movers”. It is the second group that forms the focus of this thesis, being also a group that has received relatively little attention in the European context of migration. This is partly due to their relative invisibility, moving without the need for permits and visas, within the sanctions for non-registration, and also because immigrants arriving from other European countries (particularly those moving within Western Europe) are perceived to be less disruptive to “French” society than immigrants from non-European countries. This is also connected to their whiteness, which is considered at the end of this chapter. King (2002:102) suggests that: “Migrations can be spectacular or mundane, or...regarded as problematic or non-problematic. By and large, the mundane, unproblematic forms of movement are left unrecorded and often unstudied” (see also, Overbeek, 2000). Intra-EU migrants generally fall into this understudied group, although on occasions much media, political and public attention has been drawn to intra-EU migrants, for example the case of ‘Polish Plumbers’ at the time of the 2004 enlargement, and the Italian employees contracted to work at the Lindsey Oil Refinery in Lincolnshire, UK, 2009.

Intra-EU migrants in Western Europe are believed to “tell a different story about Europe today” (Favell, 2009:170) for they reflect a unique and politically constructed post-national space (Antonsich, 2008) in which they can move, work and reside “freely” without demands for naturalisation into another member state (Favell, 2008b), as explored in Chapter Two. Favell’s focus on migration in Western Europe embraces a group he calls “Eurostars”; professional, skilled and educated persons who circulate within the “free” economy. Eurostars are characteristically young and single as they look to develop careers or slip out of a nationalised way of life towards denationalised modes of living. Braun and Arsene (2009) are more detailed in their examination of the patterns of movement in Western Europe. They identify four types of migrants

differentiated on the basis of periods of migration and age at migration. They compare “Eurostars” as a younger cohort to “retired” and “pre-retired migrants” and identify a “late traditional migrant” who follows the patterns of “classical labour migration from south to north”. However, Braun and Arsene argue that a major trend in contemporary Western Europe is movement from north to south, primarily as a lifestyle choice rather than economic/employment motivation (King, 2002, O’Reilly, 2000, Recchi, 2008). Britons moving to France are part of this north-south trend in the contemporary tapestry of European migration (Benson, 2009, Buller and Hoggart, 1994a, Gervais-Aguer, 2006; King et al., 2000) and therefore provide a significant unit of analysis at this time.

Employing Britons as intra-EU migrants in this thesis provides challenging terrain through which to explore mobility, because Britain is often imagined and stereotyped as “an awkward partner”, as captured in the title of George’s (1998) book, and positioned “on the edge of Europe” (Chisholm, 1995). Young (1998) argues that the UK has a stand-offish attitude towards the EU, which has not been helped by the UK’s initial rejection of EU membership prior to 1973, and its seeming lack of involvement in various policies. The UK is also sometimes presented as a peculiar member, existing both outside of the Euro currency zone and Schengenland (Young, 2000). It is sovereignty that is often theorised at the heart of the UK’s unsettled relationship with the EU, as a difficult negotiation between the nation-state and integration (Gifford, 2010). What is more, in terms of public opinion, British citizens are seen to be some of the most Eurosceptic among member states (Gifford, 2010). Together, these aspects present contentious relations between the UK and EU, and provide challenging terrain for researching the extent to which “free” mobility is achieved. Thus, British citizens provide the specific empirical focus from which primary data will be generated, although how many there are living in France remains uncertain.

The Scale and nature of British migration to France

The number of British people estimated to be in France varies depending where one searches for these figures. There are also different parameters upon which this is measured; for example, in terms of their length of stay, which may distinguish between permanent residents, temporary residents, sojourners and visitors. An official report on British emigration suggests that 200,000 Britons have moved to France (Sriskandarajah, 2006), while Abbey National Plc, a UK-based bank and former building society, reports nearly 500,000 Britons with property in France in 2000 (Raymond, 2008). The French *Institut National de la Statistique et des Etudes Economiques* (INSEE), draws upon census data to place the figure at approximately 130,000 resident British nationals in 2004 (Gervais-Aguer, 2006). The ambiguity inherent in these differing figures suggests that any statistics are likely to be uncertain. In addition to the pitfalls of enumeration connected with census data (see Cloke et al. 2004), migrants are notably transitory. Desplanques (2008) draws attention to the transitory nature of Britons in France, showing that some cease living in the country after only a short stay, while others spend part of the year in France, and perhaps the other months in the UK or elsewhere. Hence, where does one draw the line in order to calculate statistics? Furthermore, EU citizens can be "too volatile for the statistical eye" (Recchi, 2005:17), as they are no longer required to register their arrival in (or departure from) other member states. Consequently, little and imprecise information is available regarding exactly how many Britons reside in France. In order to present a rough map of the scale and distribution of British migration to France, this thesis draws upon INSEE as the main indicator of this population.

The pattern of current British migration to France is considered to have begun in the 1960s when upper-middle class "expatriates" took up residence in and around the

Dordogne and “depuis, le nombre de Britanniques n’a cessé d’augmenter” (Raymond, 2008:550). Buller (2008) charts an upward trend in the volume of British migrants in France from this period but, despite an overall rise, he denotes a cyclical pattern of migration falling and rising in synchronisation with economic flux and global-political concerns (see Figure 3.1). He notes a fall in population in 1973, at the time of the oil crisis and a period of economic downturn, and shows that this did not rise again until the early 1980s when it continued to grow for almost a decade. Buller offers no statistics in his analysis but INSEE (2005b) records 25,440 British migrants resident in France in 1990.

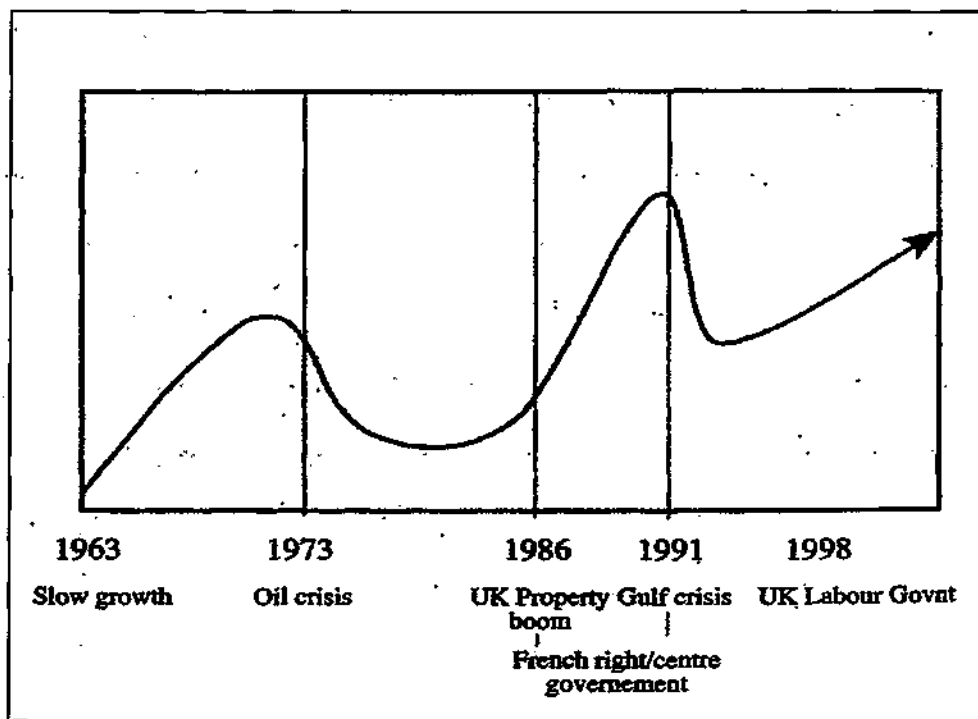


Figure 3.1 A representation of periods of growth and decline in British acquisitions of French rural properties (Source: Buller, 2008:60)

Buller (2008:59) illustrates “a significant drop” in British migrations to rural France during the early 1990s, but from 1992 onward, the upward trend continues “leading to what is the longest single period of growth in British residential migration to rural France” (2008:60). This rise is again embedded in economic growth as Buller explains

how a sharp rise in the cost of property in the UK, and increasing disparity between French and UK house prices, provides financial opportunities for moving to France. If these structural trends are accurate, the “economic crisis” that shaped much of 2009 can be hypothesised as having an impact on the numbers of British people in France during fieldwork. While Chapters Five and Six explore some of the economic influences involved in moving to and living in France, it is beyond the scope of this thesis to evaluate the impact of the economy on respondents in the field.

INSEE (2005a) reflects the growth of British migrants in France since the 1990s. According to INSEE, between 1990 and 1999 the British population rose by 50.8% to 75,546, and came to represent 0.13% of the total population of France. By 2004, this British contingent had grown to 130,000 (Desplanques, 2008), and according to Gervais-Aguer (2006), who explores the aspirations and intentions of potential migrations, will continue at least until the end of 2010. While it is impossible to propose a causal relationship, the period of growth from the early 1990s coincides with the removal of many internal barriers in the EU, to create a Single Market by the end of 1992. Recchi (2008) suggests the removal of impediments to the free movement of individuals helped to make Europeans more mobile. The role that integration played in the migratory experiences of Britons in France is addressed as a main objective of this thesis in Chapter Five.

The geography of British migration to France has diversified over the last fifty years. Initial concentrations in rural Aquitaine have spread into neighbouring areas, particularly the departments of Lot and Charente-Maritime, positioned either side of the most north-western department of Aquitaine (Figure 3.2). New areas of growth have been observed in the north of the country throughout Brittany and Basse-Normandy

(Desplanques, 2008, Raymond, 2008) and in the South West regions of Languedoc-Roussillon and Midi-Pyrénées. Although the Rhône-Alpes have received British arrivals more recently (Geoffroy, 2008), the Eastern side of France remains less populated by British migrants.



Figure 3.2 France and its regions (produced by Cartography, UoP)

Most recently, the Midi-Pyrénées region has been noted as one of the areas of rapid growth due to the arrival of British migrants, and northern Europeans more generally (Dugot et al., 2008: INSEE, 2010). In 1999, 6,061 British people were recorded in the region. Between 1980 and 1989, 5% of all immigrants recorded in the Midi-Pyrénées were from the UK (Figure 3.3), while this figure rose to 12% between 1990 and 1999

(Figure 3.4). The figure rises again between 2001 and 2006, to over 36%; representing roughly 5,976 new British residents (INSEE, 2010).

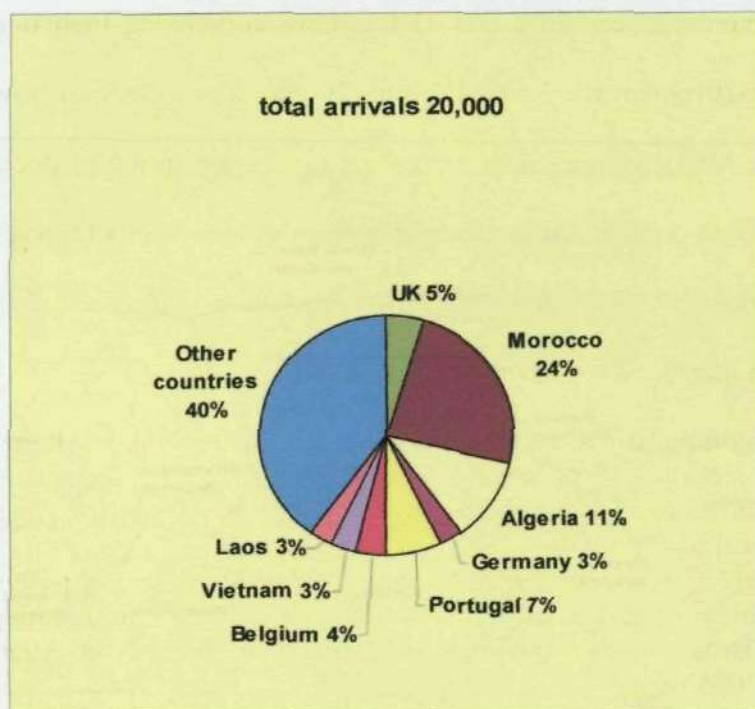


Figure 3.3 Immigrant arrivals and country of origin, Midi-Pyrénées, 1980-1989
(Source: INSEE, 2005a:17)

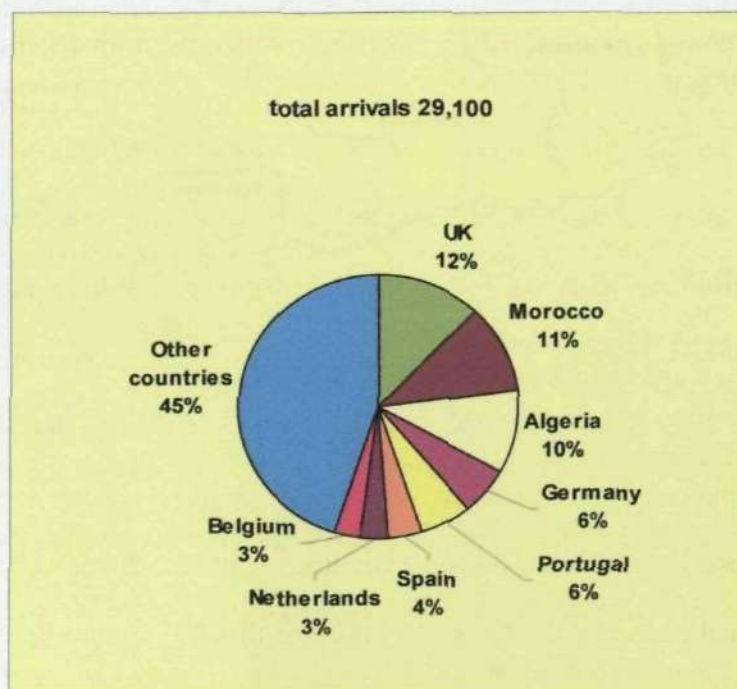


Figure 3.4 Immigrant arrivals and country of origin, Midi-Pyrénées, 1990-1999
(Source: INSEE, 2005a:17)

Within the Midi-Pyrénées, the Gers and Lot departments are the most popular among Britons, where this national group represents 45% of all immigrants, while Tarn, and Haute Garonne have between 30% and 35% Britons comprising their total immigrant population, 2001-2006 (Figure 3.5). INSEE (2005a) sources reveal how the British population in the Midi-Pyrénées now represents the largest group of documented new arrivals from any one country, and are part of a two-third majority of arrivals from other European countries. It is a change that matches the fifth stage of the European migratory system identified by Massey et al. (1998):

Diverses communautés se sont établies dans le region: les Italiens au début du siècle dernier, les Espagnols après la guerre d'Espagne, les Portugais à partir des années 1960, en même temps que les Algériens. Les Marocains et les ressortissants d'Afrique sub-saharienne ou d'Asie ont immigré plus récemment. Au cours de la décennie 1990-1999, des populations, nouvelles se sont installées dans la région, au premier rang desquels Britanniques, personnes originaires du Bénélux et Allemands (INSEE, 2005b).

Diverse communities have settled in the region: the Italians at the beginning of the last century, the Spaniards after the Spanish Civil War, the Portuguese in the 1960s, and simultaneously Algerians. Moroccans and nationals from sub-Saharan Africa and Asia have immigrated more recently. During the decade 1990-1999, new populations moved into the region, foremost among them the British, and people from the Benelux and Germany (author's translation).

Thus, in the last decade, northern Europeans have been forming significant migration flows into South West France and bringing in generally highly qualified individuals, which diverges from the past economic-based movements of Italians, Spanish and Portuguese that have shaped intra-EU migration patterns in Western Europe (Dugot et al., 2008, Favell, 2009, Recchi, 2008). Between 1990 and 1999, intra-EU migrants represented the majority of recent arrivals in the Midi-Pyrénées region (51.6%), outnumbering those arrivals from non-EU countries (INSEE, 2005a). This trend was visible in individual departments; Gers (81.3%), Lot (80.7%), Haute-Pyrénées (71.8%) and Tarn (55.3), across which this empirical research takes place.

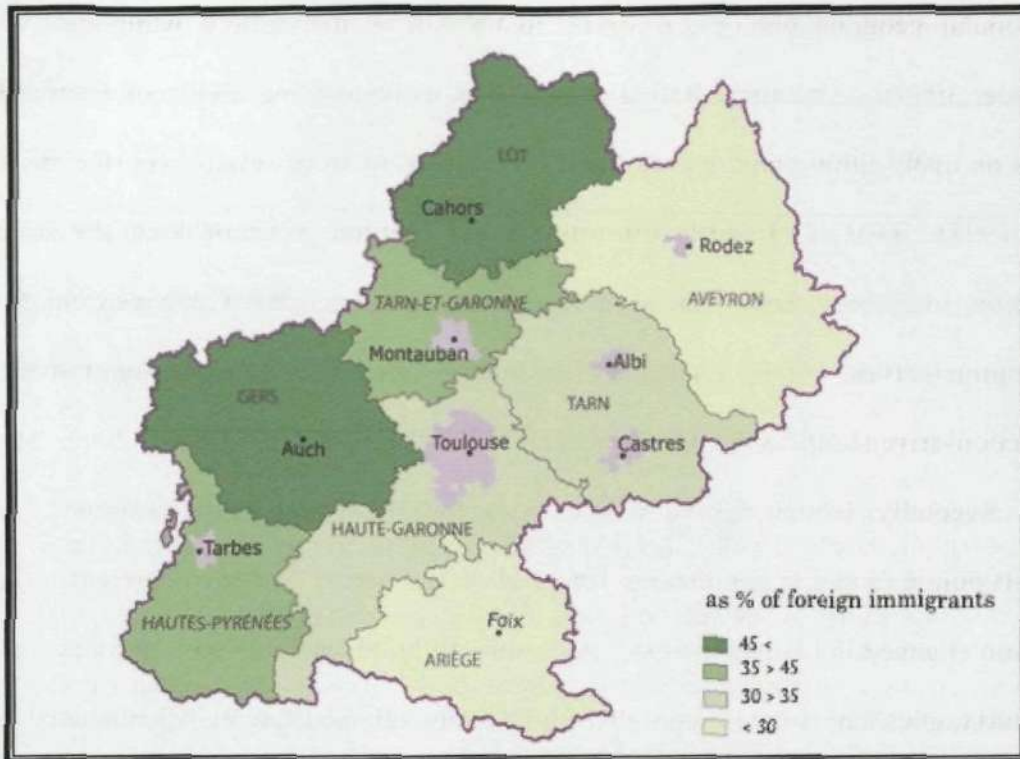


Figure 3.5 Britons as a percentage of foreign immigrants in Midi-Pyrénées, 2001-2006
 (Source: INSEE, 2010)

The study of Britons in France

Academic interest in British migration to France emerged in the early 1990s. Buller and Hoggart (1993, 1994a, 1994b, 1995; Hoggart and Buller, 1994, 1995a, 1995b), publishing in French as well as English, undertook broadly quantitative surveys to understand the influence of Britons on the French housing and estate-agency markets (Buller and Hoggart, 1993, Hoggart and Buller, 1995a), retirement migration (Hoggart and Buller, 1995b), and social integration (Buller and Hoggart, 1994a, 1994b). Their research focused on rural locations and marked Britons as a distinctive set of immigrants in “modern” France vis-à-vis those commonly encountered in the literature (see Ogden, 1989); Buller and Hoggart illustrated issues of environmental preference as a motivation for migration over the dominant perspective of economic reasoning (Halfacree, 2004, King, 2002). Buller and Hoggart (1994a) conceptualised this

phenomenon as “international counterurbanisation” and provided an international view of a popular geographical field of study in the UK at that time (Champion, 1991, Halfacree, 1994). The rural setting was also a distinguishing factor of these new arrivals as many immigrants before them had moved to towns and cities (Barou and Prado, 1995). Two key findings from this period continue to characterise the British population in France according to more recent research; firstly the relevance of consumption-driven motivations for movement over economic or employment (production-driven) objectives (Benson, 2007, 2009, Drake and Collard, 2008, Scott, 2006). Secondly, British migration throughout the 1980s and 1990s represented the socio-economic (and geographical) diversification of what had been a more elite-based migration engaged in by a smaller group of upper-middle class citizens. While Benson (2010:68) argues that British migration to France predominantly remains embedded as a “middle class aspiration and value”, Gervais-Aguer (2006) reveals that would-be and actual migrants come from diverse socio-economic backgrounds (see also Scott, 2006). This notable broadening of migrant socio-economic categories reflects the diversity of migrants noted by Urry (2007) and of whom Conradson and Latham (2005b) argue for further research.

This bank of studies in the 1990s revealed a new focus in migration studies as little attention had previously been given to British immigration in continental Europe (Zlotnik, 1992). Since then, however, British persons have become the focus of more studies linked to migration and integration around Europe, reflecting the growing numbers of British citizens in these destinations and, notably, as retirees (see King and Patterson, 1998, for Italy, King et al., 2000, for the Mediterranean, O'Reilly, 2000, 2002, for Spain) and lifestyle migrants (Benson and O'Reilly, 2009).

Academic interest in the phenomena of Britons in France appeared to decline between the mid-1990s and early 2000s but was marked again with the emergence of three studies in France (Gervais-Aguer, 2004, 2006, Labié, 2004)⁴. These papers reported empirical work exploring the reasons why and where people choose to live in France, thus exploring motivations and the geographical spread of the British population, but retaining a focus on rural France. On the British side of the English Channel, a range of new studies were also undertaken. Among them, Scott (2004, 2006, 2007) explored the British population in Paris and situated his work amid studies of skilled-migrants in world cities. With his focus on Britons in a French urban environment, Scott's work differed to the majority of existing literature that situated the study of Britons in France in more rural areas. His work connects with Buller's observation that "the majority of British people currently living in France, live in the major urban areas, notably Paris" (Buller, 2008:56), although there are no figures given to support this statement. Scott constructs a six-fold typology to differentiate "types" of Britons resident in Paris, based upon their age, motivation and familial status. Drawing from in-depth interviews and participant observation, Scott's work brings a "human face" to existing studies of Britons in France. He explores social integration through community sites and voluntary organisations, and explores the social networks constructed in these places as they relate to the six "types" of people.

Benson has more recently contributed to interpretative insight about Britons in rural France through research undertaken in Lot⁵ (Benson 2009, 2010, forthcoming, Lord, 2006). She presents Britons through the sociological lens of lifestyle migrants

⁴ During this decade, UK media interest continued with a range of magazines and television programmes constructed around moving and living abroad, of which France was the main focus in some cases, and a part-focus in others. In addition, a host of books arrived on the market in autobiographical style of people who had made the move and written of their experiences.

⁵ Previously publishing under the name of Lord.

emphasising their motivations to move to France in search of a better way of life (Benson, 2009, 2010). As part of this conceptualisation, Benson argues that Britons' daily lives are characterised by an ongoing search for an "authentic" life which is embedded in local connections with people, environment and place (Benson, 2010b). Other academics have adopted place-based research to explore the case of Britons resident in certain regions or specific areas of France, including Aquitaine (Smallwood, 2007), Chamonix, in the Rhône-Alpes (Geoffroy, 2008), Normandy (Drake and Collard, 2008), and Provence (Aldridge, 1995), while French authors have also been contributors, adding insight into the regions of Midi-Pyrénées (Puzzo, 2007, Raymond, 2008), Poitou-Charentes (Labié, 2004), and Limousin (Ardillier-Carras, 2008).

Together, this range of studies generates knowledge across three main areas; (i) changing geographies of British migration to France; (ii) motivations and intentions of migrants; and (iii) social and economic impact of migration, which includes specific focuses on: the French property market; economic impact of rural in-migration; British employment patterns and behaviour in rural areas; and social integration issues. Britons in France have been used to exemplify counterurbanisation, retirement migration, lifestyle migration, and highly-skilled migration. However, their status as EU citizens, or the role of EU citizenship in their lives, has not been explored to the same extent. Labié (2004), for example, questions British levels of integration in France by counting how many registered on local electoral lists in the Poitou-Charentes region. Although these actions are related to EU policy, Labié does not focus on this explicitly. In contrast, Collard (2010) explores political involvement of EU citizens, drawing upon primary data of Britons' involvement in France.

Drake and Collard (2008) attempt a more inclusive study of the embeddedness of Britons in France as intra-EU migrants. They explore how far Britons have contributed to the French countryside as a “laboratory of European citizenship” (Barou and Prado, 1995:228) and how their lives have unfolded in respect of “the practical benefits of EU free movement that have accrued over time”. This longitudinal scope was achieved by revisiting a group of Britons who were interviewed fifteen years earlier and feature in Barou and Prado’s (1995) research. Drake and Collard’s findings focus upon EU benefits in terms of voting rights, which they argue “do not, apparently, exceed or trump national loyalties” (2008:227). They also determine that “none of the respondents could relate their own venture to the broader framework of Europe or the concept of a European citizenship” (2008:227).

These insights into a British population of intra-EU migrants lack comprehensive analysis of the sort existing of other intra-EU migrants (Favell, 2008, Strüver, 2005). Therefore it is difficult to understand and compare their nuanced experiences in relation to other intra-EU migrants. There is, for example, no consideration for benefits such as cross-border pension access, international schooling, property purchase or welfare policies. Drake and Collard (2008:230) acknowledge that;

continuing work on the...newest British arrivals in France will go some way to fill out our picture in these respects. We can at least expect both the new ‘wave’ and the next generation of ‘old’ British migrants in France to tell us still more about the phenomenon of intra-EU migration per se, and in particular the perceived salience and relevance of the EU citizenship framework for the decision to migrate.

Some of the above work provides information concerning the daily experiences of living and negotiating life in France, something which Buller (2008:59) calls attention to as a “more adventurous research agenda”. It is here that my research makes its contribution to the literatures on Britons in France, and seeks to develop a broader and more nuanced analysis which situates Britons as intra-EU migrants. By centralising

Britons as the subjects of this empirical research, it is appropriate to reflect how they are situated more broadly as a “white” population and foreign-national (diasporic) community in France. The ways in which Britons are perceived by others inevitably impacts how they are received, and thus how they experience place and society in France.

Whiteness

While this thesis was being constructed, media in France reported on President Sarkozy’s controversial policy to deport some Roma (Gypsies) to Romania and Bulgaria, where many originated (Bekmezian, 2010). Other media stories covered the debate surround the wearing of burkas and other types of clothes by Muslim women in France (Cosgrove, 2010). These issues causing political and social debate in France relate to immigrants and the social construction of categories of race, ethnicity and skin colour. As Ardagh (1999) observes, there appear to be endless reports of discrimination against non-whites in France, as in other EU states.

A growing literature acknowledges the multiple ways in which such categories are constructed, including “whiteness”. Frankenberg (1993) argues that whiteness is often constructed as an ideology related to social status and can be an invisible category against other skin colours. The key issue about whiteness in this thesis is that it renders Britons in France as relatively invisible immigrants, at least in comparison with those discussed in the paragraph above.

Gilroy’s (1992) landmark book *There Ain’t No Black in the Union Jack* explores the history of racism in Britain, as shaped against an imagined national culture that is homogenous in its whiteness. As an extension, Europe has often been imagined as a

single homogenous culture of whiteness and Christianity (McCormick, 2006). If these thoughts are transferred to France, then most British citizens (and other Western Europeans) represent little threat to the supposedly homogenous whiteness of the cultural origins of French society (although it can also be argued that they maintain a greater cultural affinity with French society, in general, than certain other immigrants do – those from Asia, for example). The British citizens who may differ in this respect are those who are not white and therefore potentially more visible in French society. Whiteness, it is argued, is an expression of the way in which racial identity shapes daily life (Anwar, 1998).

The social construction of whiteness remains implicit in this thesis but was not explored to a great extent, as all the British citizens encountered during fieldwork were white. The concept of whiteness raises questions about individual and collective identities among migrants, and indicates that if Britons are seen to be less different by French society (in contrast to West Africans, for example), then settling into life in France may be easier for them, than for other migrants with alternative skin colours. Another concept that relates to identity, and also to place, is diaspora. The following section analyses this concept as an alternative way for thinking about Britons in France.

A British diaspora?

Migration studies and literatures of transnationalism often make reference to diaspora. The two concepts hold much in common and both have been used to explore the “social, cultural, political, and economic links that migrant communities maintain across international borders” (Samers, 2010:95, see also, Bailey, 2001). The key difference between diaspora and transnationalism, however, is the former’s association with the concept of “community”. Although diaspora is a much contested concept (Blunt, 2007,

Cohen, 1997), there appears to be agreement that it is deeply intertwined with notions of community, collective practice, memories, and identity, which are part of a process of reproducing the homeland (Appadurai and Breckenridge, 1989).

Drawing on theoretical and empirical work on diaspora, the concept differs from migration and transnationalism in three further ways. Firstly, diaspora is used to draw attention to the process by which a population becomes scattered from its original homeland (often through forced measures) and regroups elsewhere. Secondly, empirical work has focused on how the community lives in foreign parts, including investigation of collective memories and myths about the homeland, and collective practices aimed at creating and maintaining the homeland (from afar). Thirdly, diasporic networks help define the "place" in which dispersed groups live, as those connected through cross-border ties with co-ethnic members, either in the homeland or in other countries (Baumann, 1995, Cohen, 1997). The concept of diaspora provides alternative avenues to transnational research, but to what extent is it relevant to Britons in France?

Baumann (1995) identifies three "classic" diasporas - Jewish, Greek and Armenian. However, Vertovec (2009) notes that by 1998, the *Diaspora* journal had acknowledged 36 "diaspora" communities in its coverage. He also suggests that this is an underestimation of the number of diasporas in the world. This pattern indicates that the concept has diversified in its meaning and application from its traditional association with dispersal. Safran (1991) suggests that diaspora can be applied to a migrant minority who show some of the following characteristics: (i) dispersal from a specific origin; (ii) a collective memory or myth about the homeland; (iii) partial separation from the host society and a belief that they can never be fully accepted by this host

society; (iv) a desire that they, or their descendents, will return to the homeland – the so-called “myth of return”; (v) an active and collective commitment to the maintenance and prosperity of the homeland; (vi) the continuing relation, practically or vicariously, to the homeland in one way or another.

While there might be grounds upon which to reject Britons, in comparison to Jewish and Armenian communities (for example, there is no record of Britons moving to France as a result of political persecution), the broadening scope of the concept no longer makes it so easy to dismiss a diasporic perspective.

On the one hand, existing analysis of Britons in Europe illustrates that in certain ways Britons do recreate a British culture. O’Reilly (2000), for example, writes about elderly Britons on the Costa del Sol forming communities between themselves. She identifies over fifty British clubs based upon activities such as bowls, cricket, Scottish country dancing, bridge, Brownies and choirs. Connected with these activities, O’Reilly argues that there is a strong ethnic identity where Britons spend their time with British friends and acquaintances, “British bars full of British customers and British clubs full of British members” (2000:90). These activities are efforts in part to recreate elements of familiarity relating to the British homeland, and are heavily suggestive of diaspora.

On the other hand, unlike some Pakistani migrants in the UK (those explored in Anwar’s (1979) work, for example), or Iraqi refugees in the American state of Michigan (Shoeb et al., 2007), the majority of Britons in Spain did not express a desire to return to the UK (O’Reilly, 2000). Similar findings emerge among Britons in France, where Buller and Hoggart (1994a:107) note that “few permanent residents wish to consider returning to Britain”. See also King et al. (1998), in their analysis of retired migrants in

Mediterranean Europe. Furthermore, research into lifestyle migration reveals that many British migrants seek to escape the UK, and search for a better way of life (O'Reilly and Benson, 2009). Expressions of dissatisfaction with the UK are difficult to reconcile with the supposed yearning to return to the homeland. Cohen (1997) however, suggests that it is unhelpful to place too much emphasis on the myth of return.

The empirical examples above only relate to Britons living in Europe, but begin to illustrate the difficulty of identifying a diasporic community. The concept is evoked at certain times throughout the thesis and returned to in the conclusion, to consider the value of adopting a diasporic lens in future research of British migrants in France. This chapter now concludes with a focus on the case study location in which empirical research was carried out.

Fieldsite

Fieldwork took place within the Midi-Pyrénées region⁶ of South West France and straddled three of its eight departments; Haute-Garonne (31), Tarn (81) and Tarn-et-Garonne (82) (Figure 3.6)⁷. The “corridor” within which qualitative and ethnographic fieldwork was executed stretched from roughly 10 kilometres west of Toulouse to Albi, which is about 80 kilometres north-east of Toulouse. The two cities are connected by the A68 auto route (opened in 1992), and my fieldwork evolved predominantly to the north of this motorway. I lived roughly midway between these two cities for twelve months.

⁶ Midi-Pyrénées is designated a NUTS 2 region – a statistical division forming part of the EU’s Structural Fund delivery mechanisms.

⁷ The other departments comprising the region are the Ariège (09) Aveyron (12) Gers (32), Lot (46) Haute-Pyrénées (65).

The choice of location for this case study was determined by two factors; the observation that, since the 1980s (see above), this region has recorded a significant influx of Britons, as well as northern intra-EU migrants, and remains relatively understudied; and secondly, the proximate juxtaposition and accessibility between a more rural environment and a more urban environment (the city of Toulouse), to access a diversity of experiences related to moving to and living in France. These justifications are discussed in more detail below, and I also establish some of the key characteristics of this case study location.

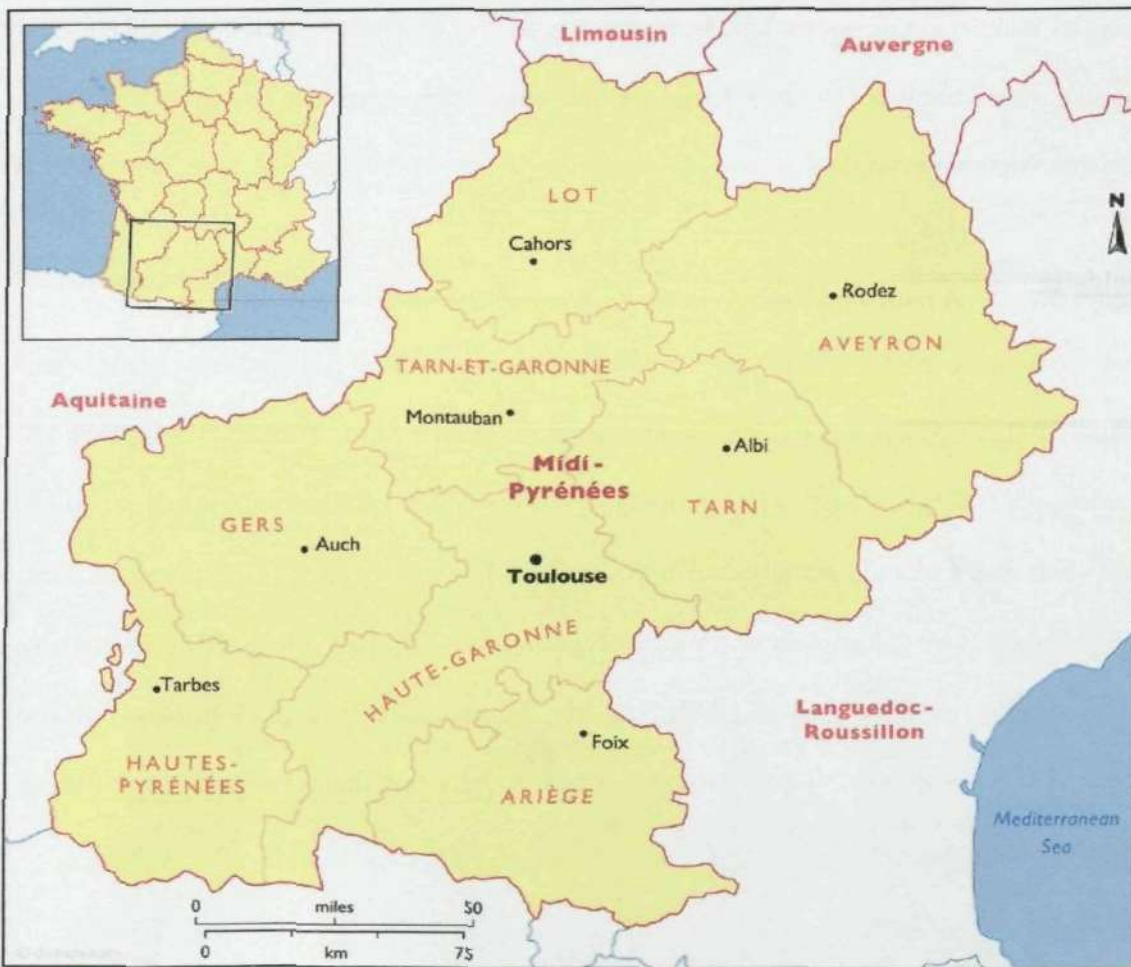


Figure 3.6 Midi-Pyrénées region, South West France (produced by Cartography, UoP)

Buller and Hoggart (1994a) identify the Midi-Pyrénées to have the largest increase of British residents in any region during the period 1980-1991. They argue that Britons

are drawn by the remote rural nature of much of the landscape, as well as its status as an area of traditional agriculture. Benson's examination of Britons in Lot shows that many have a propensity to see and live a rural idyllised way of life (Benson, 2007). The departments south of Lot, which are those providing the focus of this work, are renowned for their rolling hills, hilltop villages and vineyards (Dugot et al., 2008) (Figures 3.7 and 3.8).



Figure 3.7 A more rural landscape: the rolling hills and vineyards of Tarn



Figure 3.8 A village in Tarn-et-Garonne

However, this area is much more than a rural landscape, and the Haute-Garonne is host to France's fourth largest and most rapidly expanding city of Toulouse (Ardagh, 1999). Toulouse is also the fastest growing metropolitan area in the EU, with a population of over one million inhabitants (Nicholls, 2006). Over the last forty years, Toulouse has unfolded as one of France's key centres for high-technology activities; predominantly a pole for aeronautics, electronics, and biotechnology, as well as university and public research (Dugot et al., 2008, Nicholls, 2006). Many of these sectors have industries with key branches or headquarters located in Toulouse. Hence, this city constitutes the modern economic and industrial core of its region, and a destination for many EU and non-EU migrants (Bossuet, 2006, Dugot et al., 2008, Nicholls, 2006, Puzzo, 2008)⁸. Ardagh (1999:358) notes that "modern elites" (executives, scientists and others) coming to Toulouse from Paris, other parts of France, and Europe are part of the migratory flows shaping the city:

Fly over the city and it sprawls beside the Garonne on its wide plain. The old pink city is ringed by a white circle of more recent flats, *colleges*, factories and labs, a gleaming superstructure grafted on the old core. Here the two rival elites confront each other: on the one side, energetic scientists, pilots, professors and managers, together with the resourceful *pieds-noirs* and other immigrant entrepreneurs; on the other, the "real" Toulouse as it sees itself, a bourgeoisie of doctors, lawyers and landowners.

In particular, the aeronautic and space industries have attracted many hundreds of foreign engineers to work alongside French colleagues, and in terms of aeronautics, Toulouse has been designated as the European aerospace capital (Figure 3.9) (Ardagh, 1999). Toulouse is collectively established at the intersection of relations between practices, institutional networks, migrants and older residents (*human agency*) in a particular configuration of flows (from all scales) intersecting in this specific locality. The countryside locations can be viewed in a similar way, although the range and

⁸ This observation was also made by Laurence Bundy, a Ph.D. candidate working with Puzzo at Toulouse University, on Britons working for the Aeronautical industry in Toulouse (2009).

intensity of trajectories and connections are said to be less concentrated than those in a city (Smith, 2001). While not disputing the interconnectivity of people with other flows, I am most interested in the people who comprise these spaces and draw upon Appadurai's (1990) idea of an "ethnoscape" of persons who constitute the places focused upon in this thesis. Britons are very much part of an ethnoscape, although the scale and boundaries of this as a predominantly local, national, or EU ethnoscape remain to be explored through micro-level analysis.



Figure 3.9 Part of the Airbus complex, Toulouse

The Midi-Pyrénées comprises a fieldsite that juxtaposes a traditional agricultural landscape (in some parts) with a European centre of high-technology in Toulouse. Not only does this region provide employment opportunities where “the rate of occupational professionalization has tended to be more advanced in Toulouse than at the national level” (Nicholls, 2006:1723), it also offers strong opportunities for those people who “are deeply attracted to the notion of rural living” (Buller and Hoggart, 1994a:100). This context provides a diverse environment in which a wide range of migrants can come to live and settle. Most research of Britons in France concentrates on their preference for rural areas, but Buller highlights that the highest proportion of Britons live in the cities. Similarly, work exploring intra-EU migration has tended to

concentrate on cities more than rural locations (Favell, 2010, Recchi, 2009). Urban and rural are not deliberately treated as mutually exclusive categories in this thesis, for as Hoggart (1990) argues, rural-urban similarities can be sharp, while intra-rural and intra-urban differences can be enormous. However, research is employed across a more and less urban environment as a means of building a more complete picture of the diversity of stories, nodes and flows surrounding the everyday lives of Britons as intra-EU migrants.

Through the lives and experiences of adult Britons living in part of South West France, this empirical research seeks to illuminate some of the frictions and flows that shape what it means to move in Europe conceptualised, in various ways, without internal frontiers. In this chapter, Britons have been situated within literature concerning the phenomenon of British migrants in France, as well as literatures on intra-EU migrants, and studies of whiteness and diaspora. This population, sometimes revealing a strong desire to live in more rural areas, provides an alternative perspective to existing work on intra-EU migrants. By making Britons the focus of questions on intra-EU migration, this research also seeks to contribute to existing literatures of Britons in France, and specifically to develop insight towards their everyday lives in the Midi-Pyrénées region. Having presented the 'who?' and the 'where?' of this empirical research, the next Chapter discusses 'how?' by focusing on research methodologies and specific methods employed to realise the thesis aim and objectives.

Chapter Four

Methodologies

I'm convinced that there is no best way to tell a story about society. Many genres, many methods, many formats – they can all do the trick. Instead of ideal ways to do it, the world gives us possibilities among which we choose. Every way of telling about society does some of the job superbly but other parts not so well (Becker, 2007:285).

The methodological means to achieve my aim and objectives draws upon the interpretative philosophy of hermeneutics and ethnographic-style methods. In choosing to tell about society in this way I adhere to calls from geographers for more empirical work on transnationalism from below (Conradson and Latham, 2005b, Mitchell, 1997), and to calls from sociologists for further human-level research of intra-EU mobility (Fligstein, 2008, Smith and Favell, 2006). This chapter explains *how* the thesis is constructed by reflecting critically on methodologies, methods and practicalities informing research. Throughout the process, Lincoln and Guba's (1985) definition of "good data" provided a guide towards producing reliable qualitative research and is part of a reflexive approach adopted. This chapter offers a short summary before discussing these issues in more detail.

Building upon the conceptual framework of Chapter Two and the quantitative data used in Chapter Three, this empirical research employs a search for meaning among Britons, as intra-EU migrants, resident in France. For twelve months during 2008 and 2009, fifty-three in-depth interviews and many hours of participant observation were undertaken to generate primary data concerning the lives of Britons in the Midi-Pyrénées region of South West France (see Figure 3.6 p.96). In 2009, this region recorded a population of approximately 2,865,000 and the census of 1999 identified

6,061 British citizens resident⁹. Over the decade 1990-1999, 12% of all immigrants in the Midi-Pyrénées arrived from the UK, representing the largest group of incomers from any one country (see p.83).

This chapter is arranged into four sections. The first part discusses interpretative geographies as the research rational, and everyday life as a way of exploring the meanings associated with peoples' mundane activities. Secondly, this is followed by an analysis of ethnographic methods used to explore the everyday life experiences of transnational migrants. The third section of this chapter takes up the interconnected issues of reflexivity, positionality and ethics in research, before providing details of analysis and writing-up in the final section.

Research Rational

According to McHugh (2000), quantitative data has long provided the staple of migration research. Large-scale counts, surveys and questionnaires are said to remain the fundamental tools by which population change is measured over time and space. In population geography and migration studies, analysis often draws upon the assumptions of methodological nationalism. Similarly, state institutions also rely upon distinct territorial states as the basis upon which to describe, correlate and predict cultural, social and economic change at all scales (Ogden, 2000). The construction of seemingly fixed categories of analysis (nation-states, ethnicities, nationalities and citizenship, for example), as discussed in Chapter Two, enables enumeration for comparison, contrast and measurement (Cloke et al., 2004). Furthermore, for governments in need of figures to manage their populations, large-scale counts are useful as the accumulation of quantitative data can generate statistically-sound results and can be used mathematically

⁹ These are the most recent figures available for the numbers of Britons resident in the region

to prove or reject a hypothesis. As Smith (1998) indicates, in some instances only a rough figure is needed to anticipate problems and make decisions to resolve them. Drawing upon these strengths, Chapter Three has made use of quantitative data to convey patterns and trends relating to British migration in general.

However, this research seeks a more nuanced understanding of intra-EU migration and everyday life in France. Thus, a qualitative approach is adopted to develop a more complex interpretation of some of these patterns. Here it is important to move away from methodological nationalism and the assumption that the nation-state is the natural, and only relevant, unit of analysis. A qualitative perspective helps to position migration as a complex and ongoing process that is given meaning by the people involved, rather than determined by objective categories of analysis. In accordance with this, Cook and Crang (1995:11) claim that:

It is not research for truth but how people make sense of events and render 'true' in their own terms that is most revealing about how their lives are embroiled in larger social, cultural, economic and political processes.

The qualitative approach in this research presents so-called intensive methods to access the subjectivities of migration, and to explore how Britons in France “orchestrate *meaningful* lives under conditions in which their life-worlds are neither “here” nor “there” but at once *both* “here” and “there”” (Smith, 2001:151). Following Cook and Crang (1995), the goal is not to determine “the truth” about migration, but to reveal multiple truths apparent in the complexity, ambiguity and heterogeneity of Britons’ lives in France. This, therefore, is concerned with understanding the EU as “a series of spaces of encounter” (McNeill, 2004:121) through “a simultaneity of stories-so-far” (Massey, 2005:9) (see p.50).

Everyday lives

One way of understanding the world is to explore experiences and meanings as they unfold in daily life (Lefebvre, 1971), it is a view that complements M  ssey's (2005) notion of space as always in the process of being made. Latham (2003:1996) argues that: "Everyday life and everyday culture are two of the great frontiers of contemporary human geography". Thrift (1997:126-7) defines the concept as the "mundane everyday practices, that shape the conduct of human beings towards others and themselves in particular sites", while Conradson and Latham (2005b) suggest that daily existence involves the taken-for-granted activities of migrants eating, sleeping and socialising. The focus on everyday life draws attention to banal activities taking place at the level of practical consciousness (Edensor, 2002). Situating this concept in the study of migration, Ley (2010:198) argues that a focus on everyday mundane activities helps to reveal how moving somewhere new entails disruption "where one's 'thinking as usual', habitual schemes of thought, language, and problem-solving, suddenly have no currency". By examining these moments and activities of disruption, the researcher separates everyday life from the level of practical consciousness, so that meanings become visible to the researcher and the researched (Thrift, 1985).

Studies of migration have used everyday as a concept through which to address transnationalism from below and to capture the complex co-existence of fluidity and fixity in human lives (Fielding, 1992, Halfacree and Boyle, 1993, Mountz and Wright, 1996). Basch et al. (1994:6, emphasis added) even incorporate the everyday into their definition of transnationalism as "a process by which transmigrants, *through their daily lives*, forge and sustain multi-stranded social, economic, and political relations that link together their societies of origin and settlement". Thus, everyday sites of meaning lead researchers to examine "shared experiences, everyday routines, fleeting encounters,

embodied movement, precognitive triggers, practical skills, affective intensities, enduring urges, unexceptional interactions and sensuous dispositions” (Lorimer, 2005:84). This differs from more positivist and demographic styles of analysis, because it does not seek to uncover meanings and values that are inherently awaiting discovery or ultimate representation, but gives attention to multiple forms of expression accessed in more qualitative ways.

Everyday is not an approach limited to analysing the micro agency of migrants’ lives. It is also useful for recognising how mundane activities are grounded in specific contexts; for example, in relation to realms of social action such as “the state”, “the economic”, and “the political” (Latham, 2003). Lefebvre (1971) and de Certeau (1984), for example, present ordinary people and their everyday use of urban spaces as a challenge to the hypothetical urban spaces constituted by capital and the state (see also, Smith, 2001). Ley (2004) chooses an everyday perspective to show how migrants are not automated individuals simply responding to the conditions of global capital flow, but are active in shaping their own fortunes and processes of “globalisation from below”. This connects with analysing transnationalism through a more structural perspective, as explored in Chapter Two. Everyday has also been used in a more networked perspective to explore the language, discourse and narratives of people living in European border communities (Armbruster et al., 2003) where researchers used daily banality as indicators of the extent to which processes of European integration and EU enlargement translated into people’s lives. Consequently, everyday life allows researchers to examine how individuals are caught up in various networks of relational assemblages (Thrift, 1997). Drawing upon Campbell’s (1996:23) definition of “everyday life”, the concept is used in this thesis as “a transversal site of contestations rather than a fixed level of analysis” where “global interconnection, local resistance,

transterritorial flows, state politics, regional dilemmas, identity formations and so on are always already present" (see also Smith, 2001:185).

Thesis methods: ethnography and the everyday

Calls to be attentive to cultural aspects of migration and everyday practices have been matched by "a case for ethnographic studies in migration" (McHugh, 2000). According to Herbert (2000:51), "any attempt to define ethnography precisely will...obscure important differences in approach" for different versions exist (Cook and Crang, 1995). Hence, a focus on the ways in which ethnography has been used provides one means of defining this methodology.

Ethnographic field research is employed "to understand parts of the world as they are experienced and understood in the everyday lives of people who actually 'live them out'" (Cook and Crang, 1995:4). It is concerned with accessing the complexity and heterogeneity of important processes and meanings behind social actions (Emerson et al., 1995). McHugh (2000:83) also celebrates ethnography as a significant standpoint "for grounding and revealing the play of migration and mobility in socio-temporal reorderings and transformations" and connecting micro-level analysis with meso- and macro-scale contexts. In this way, ethnography provides a direct means of accessing human lives at the micro-scale, as they are simultaneously embedded in broader frameworks (Marcus, 1995). This is the type of empirical work said to be missing from studies of European integration (Recchi and Favell, 2009).

To achieve these ends, ethnographers have been committed to seeking physical and social proximity to research subjects, by taking up positions in the midst of key sites and scenes of people's activities, in order to observe and understand (Emerson et al., 1995). From this position, ethnographers typically seek to build "innumerable scenes

and scripts – so-called thick description – into larger interpretative wholes that inform and illuminate” (McHugh, 2000:75). Here, however, is one of the risks associated with an ethnographic approach, for there has been much discussion about the emphasis on description, which has been interpreted by some as uncritical and overly subjective (Clifford and Marcus, 1986). Unlike more quantitative research, ethnography typically focuses on a small number of cases to understand certain processes. Findings therefore tend to be idiosyncratic as well as heavily descriptive, and it can be difficult to assess their reliability. Herbert (2000:561) suggests that the critical factor in determining the use of a single intensive case study is the reasoning the ethnographer gives for its analysis against a broader context where;

even if a case is ‘unique’, the ethnographer’s task of explaining that uniqueness requires an explanation of both the broad social dynamics and the specific contextual realities that constitute the setting. If this is done rigorously and logically, the resulting analytic payoff is significant.

Thus, ethnography is still required to be rigorous in its application so that the findings of a particular piece of research can be deemed reliable. Further critiques against ethnography, such as “the concern about generalization” (Herbert, 2000:560) are explored below in a discussion concerning the value of qualitative data.

While an ethnographic approach was adopted in this empirical work, it was designed to offer a more rounded empirical understanding of British migration to France (in terms of focusing on a range of political, economic, social and cultural aspects) rather than seeking empirical depth in one aspect of life. This multi-faceted approach was pursued, partly to provide a broad canvas in relation to intra-EU migration against which the experiences of other intra-EU migrants could be compared (see Herbert, 2000, Lincoln and Guba, 1985), and also to contribute more nuanced understandings of the experiences of Britons in France (see Buller, 2008).

“Doing ethnographies” involves a variety of possible methods, of which Cook and Crang (1995) identify four of the most popular as:- participant and non-participant, observation; in-depth interviews; group discussions; and documentary materials. Others, suggest that participant observation is the pivotal point of ethnographic studies (Geertz, 1973, Herbert, 2000), while interviews have sometimes been classified as “other qualitative methods” rather than ethnography because they are only concerned with what people say they do, and not what they actually do (see Herbert, 2000). This reinforces the perception that any precise definition of ethnography is hard to pin down. Ethnography is used from here on to refer to in-depth interviewing and participant observation which were used to generate primary data in this research, both of which are explored below.

In-depth interviews

Personal narratives are uniquely capable of accommodating the complex stories of migration and transnationalism (Kelly and Olds, 2007:257).

The principle means of data generation was provided by fifty-three in-depth interviews with individuals, couples and families living in the Midi-Pyrénées region. Talking and listening to people provided an opportunity to understand their experiences, to learn what was important to them, and what assumptions and meanings endowed their opinions, behaviours and relationships (Silverman, 1993, Valentine, 1997).

As a social scientific method, interviews emerge in various shapes and sizes. Cloke et al. (2004) simplify these into four types based upon different intensities of relations between the researcher and the researched (see also Hoggart et al. 2002). At one end of the spectrum, researchers engage with the researched using heavily structured questionnaires or surveys. These extensive methods are distinguished for seeking breadth over depth and a large-scale sample. In contrast, “intensive” methods toward

the other end of the continuum are more concerned with accessing detailed knowledge of smaller groups. The researcher/researched relationship is shaped by increasing immersion in the social setting of the interview. As it was the intention to access personal stories of Britons' experiences in France, this research was most concerned with intensive interviews, which Cloke et al. (2004) describe as being interactive and involved. In the former case, the relationship between the researcher and researched is negotiated through the interaction of asking and answering questions, and listening in a face-to-face setting. What begins as semi-structured questions developed by, and thus belonging to, the researcher become co-owned and co-shaped through unfolding conversation. This feature of intersubjectivity (through which research becomes a product of both researcher and researched) is more intense in involved interviews where the flowing dialogue commonly replaces questions and answers, and topics should emerge naturally as discussion unfolds. Although attention is drawn to subtle differences between these approaches, in practise these separate characteristics become blurred and the relationship between the researcher and researched might evolve through the course of an interview in what is ultimately a dynamic situation. In-depth interviews are referred to as those which fall somewhere between the two types described above, but which broadly delineate interactive relationships between two parties. It was this style that was adopted in the field to encourage fluid dialogue, but not to be so "involved" that it would be difficult to use probes or questions to seek clarification, deeper insight, or to steer the conversation onto (or back to) the topics most relevant to the research questions.

Drake and Collard (2008) indicate that gaining a representative sample of Britons in France is almost impossible; not only are the necessary statistics lacking in sufficient

detail, but records do not exist uniformly¹⁰. Part of the associated difficulty is that Britons, as EU citizens, can move between the UK and France fairly invisibly (see p.80)¹¹. With this in mind, Britons were sought as respondents through a sampling technique of purposive and availability methods (Cloke et al., 2004). Purposive samples refer to cases which are judged by the researcher to be of particular interest (Baxter and Eyles, 1997), while availability samples are those where anybody who agrees to be interviewed becomes part of the sample. A record was maintained of the gender, age groups (to the nearest decade), household type, geography, occupation and travel biography of each interviewee and purposive sampling was carried across these axes of difference, in order to access a polyphony of voices and stories-so-far (see a summary of this profile in Table 1).

Respondents were sought, in the early stages of research, through a request for help posted on an Anglo-French networking internet site. A British contact also introduced me to three prospective interviewees and from there the list of names snowballed as each person suggested at least one other person they knew (the final column in Table 4.1 indicates these connections). In this way people were accessed via a network of respective friends, family, neighbours and acquaintances. As the list of potential respondents grew, purposive sampling was employed, to a greater extent. Following the advice of Cook and Crang (1995), the net was cast widely and respondents sought through various clubs and associations, internet sites, and English-language publications, as well as chance encounters through being in the same place at the same time.

¹⁰ Many Britons in France appear in official statistics as resident foreigners, and occasionally as resident foreigners arriving from the UK. At the commune or municipal level, British households may appear in official statistics, but as I found when visiting the Mairie to request such information, this information is not always accurate and I was advised that the best possible indication would be to add up the 'British' names from the list of those registered through the local rubbish disposal scheme. Associating surnames with nationality remains an unreliable source of accurately shaping data.

¹¹ Some make it their goal to do so

Name	Year of arrival in France	Gender	Age (to nearest decade)	Household in France	Employment status at time of interview	Located for interview
Albert	2004	M	50	Single	Self-employed builder	Contact from 01
Allen Waters	2004	M	60	Married couple	Semi-retired	Met at point E
Annette & Steve Lee	2006	both	30 40	Couple	Self-employed UK company	Contact from 08
Annie & Ian Ashdown	1989	both	80	Married couple	Retired	Contact from 13
Barbara & Gerald Solomons	1999	both	60	Married couple	Retired	Met at point B
Bert Hirst	1998	M	70	Single	Retired	Unexpected attendance at interview
Beth & Jack Bennett	1998	both	60	Married couple	Retired	Met at point N
Carina	2005	F	30	Single	Self-employed masseuse	Contact from 05
Catherine & John Silvey	1994	both	40	2 Parents, 2 children	Vintners	Met at point L
Cathy & Iain Gillingham	2006	both	50	Married couple	Chaplain	Met at point H
Gary	2004	M	60	Married couple	Taxi driver	I telephoned
Charlotte	2005	F	50	Single	Airhostess UK	I telephoned
Christine & Malcolm	2003	both	50	Married couple	Teaching (part-time)	Contact from 02
Claire	1980	F	60	Couple	Retired	Met at point D
Daniel Jones	1979	M	50	Married couple	Airbus	Met at point D
Fraser	2003	M	70	Single	Semi-retired	Met at point F
Diane & Luke Nash	2002	both	60	Married couple	Investments	I telephoned
Eliza & Samuel Milner	2001	both	70	Married couple	Semi-retired	Met at point B
Ellie & Geoffrey Major	2003	both	60	Married couple	Retired	Contact from 12
Flo & Julie	1996	F	50 20	2 Parents, 2 children	Artist	I telephoned
Hannah & Thomas Wood	1997	F	40	2 Parents, 3 children	Self-employed	I telephoned
Helen	2005	F	40	2 Parents, 2 children	Housewife	Met at point C
Isabel	2006	F	30	2 Parents, 3 children	Housewife	Internet site
Janine & Robert	2007	both	30	Couple	Freelance for UK firm	Contact from 09
Jim	2004	M	50	Married couple	Restaurant owner	Met at point J
Katy	2003	F	30	1 Parent, 2 children	Personal carer	Contact from 05
Kay & Jamie Edwards	2003	both	60	Married couple	Retired	Contact from 02
Laurence	2001	M	60	Married couple	Semi-retired	He contacted me
Lily & Michael	2007	both	60	Married couple	Retired	Internet site
Lisa	1999	F	30	2 Parents, 1 child	Housewife	Contact from 06
Liz	1996	F	40	2 Parents, 2 children	Housewife	Met at point K
Mandy	2005	F	30	2 Parents, 2 children	Housewife	Contact from 11
Margaret	1978	both	50	Couple	Part-time work	Unexpected attendance at interview
Maria & Joe	2008	both	40	Married couple	Retired	Met at point B
Mark	1979	M	50	2 Parents, 2 children	Teaching	I telephoned
Nancy	2002	F	40	1 Parent, 2 children	Estate agent	Contact from 01
Natalie & Henry Fellows	1999	both	40	2 Parents, 2 children	Investments	Contact from 04
Nigel & Miles Williams	1996	M	40 20	2 Parents, 2 children	French aviation company	Contact from 02
Olive	2004	F	50	Single	Free lance UK	I telephoned
Owen	2002	M	30	2 Parents, 2 children	Bank manager	Met at point I
Pam & Clive	2006	both	60	Married couple	Retired	Met at point A
Patricia	2003	F	40	2 Parents, 1 child	Housewife	Internet site
Phillip	1996	both	50	Couple	Self-employed FR company	Met at point M
Rachel	2001	F	40	2 Parents, 2 children	Housewife	Met at point G
Rita & George Russell	1992	both	60	Married couple	Retired	Contact from 03
Rosie	2005	F	40	1 Parent, 2 children	Unemployed	Contact from 06
Sally Jones	1980	F	57	Married couple	Teacher (part-time)	Met at point D
Sandy & Michael Devon	2006	both	50	Married couple	Retired	Met at point A
Sarah & Stuart	2005	F	40	Married couple	Self-employed UK company	Met at point F
Shirley & Eric Berry	1987	both	80	Married couple	Retired	Contact from 12
Sophie	2009	F	30	Single	Utility company	Contact from 07
Sue	2006	F	40	2 Parents, 2 children	Housewife & teacher	Contact from 10
Wendy	1986	F	40	Married couple	Self-employed	Internet site

Table 1 Summary profile of interviewees (all names are pseudonyms)

Conducting the interview

Cloke et al. (2004) employ the metaphor of drama to emphasise the way in which an interview is a stage-managed performance. The interviews in this research correspond with this description as they all took place at pre-arranged times and places. These differ to chats, which refer to un-arranged and spontaneous conversations occurring during fieldwork. Chats include talking with Britons while participating and observing, as well as bumping into someone in the supermarket. In interviews, I always requested the respondent to select the location in which the interview would take place, and in all but seven cases this turned out to be their place of residence. The others were conducted in cafés and, on one occasion, in the interviewee's private office at the place of employment. All but one interview was recorded and transcribed verbatim so that respondents' own words could be used as raw material in the thesis. As a result of the techniques used, each interview was unique, and fairly different to those before.

According to Cloke et al. (2004), in the stage-managed interview, the interviewer plays an interchangeable role as actor, director and choreographer, thus bringing issues of positionality to the fore, and thereupon highlighting the need to adopt a reflexive approach towards the researcher/researched relationship. As choreographer, I designed an interview schedule which would assist in opening up three main topics of discussion. These related broadly to thesis objectives 1-3; how these Britons come to be in France; how the administrative aspects of life were negotiated; and what socio-cultural networks shaped their lives. I drew upon Spradley's (1979) advice to begin the interview with a "grand-tour" question, such as "tell me how it is you came to France" or "what is it that you enjoy most about living in France?" – broad questions intended to encourage respondents to talk openly and introduce topics that could be later explored.

In my role as director I was able to (and had to) maintain the performance along a certain trajectory and ensure I understood why actors were responding the way they were. This involved using probes to seek clarification, as well as asking the “right” kind of questions which would encourage open and flowing responses rather than one-word answers. Early on in fieldwork I happened upon Katz’s (2001) recommendation of replacing “why” with “how” at the beginning of questions. Katz states that asking “why?” “gives respondents reason to anticipate that the versions of self they express will be reviewed by the researcher” as a moral judgement (2001:445), and by replacing this with “how?” the respondent is more likely to provide information on what he did and experienced in a personally historicised manner, therefore providing data which is more useful to the research process.

Researcher/researched interview dynamics

The researcher/researched dynamic is a reflexive strategy that refers to ways in which the data and the field are co-constructed simultaneously by both parties (Crang, 2003). This view situates me as a subject in this research, which is partly what constructs the intimacy and complexity that characterises the primary data upon which this thesis builds. McDowell (1992:409) states that “we must recognise and take account of our own position, as well as that of our research participant, and write this into our research practices”. She refers to reflexivity in research as a technique towards self-critical introspection of oneself in the role of researcher (Limb and Dwyer, 2001). This role is a dynamic one (Cloke et al. 2004), with different situations requiring or inflecting more actor-like, or more-director like engagements between the two parties (see also, Rose, 1997).

The impact of my participation on how members talk and behave is termed “reactive effects” by Emerson et al. (1995). I became aware of some reactive effects in one interview, in particular when the two respondents were concerned about the information they were sharing:

Robert: *Oh come on darling, we don't want to come across too negative.*

Nicola: *Why not? This might be interesting to Fiona.*

A little later, Nicola refers to the break down of a marriage between two Britons who had moved to France. Again, Robert is cautious:

Robert: *Hold on, maybe we shouldn't be talking about this [he points to the dictaphone].*

Nicola: *I haven't said any names.*

Robert: *[shrugging his shoulders] What happens to the thesis? Oh, it's just going to be put away, it will be on a shelf somewhere.*

The exchanges indicate the differing positionalities that can occur within a single interview (Rose, 1997). At first, I become aware of Robert's perception that I should hear a certain “positive” version of events from them. In the second exchange there is some negotiation about my role as a researcher, who has access to sensitive information, but this concern is put aside when Robert's views of the Ph.D. research process emerge, and he assures himself that the dissemination of information will be minimal. In this way, I move between a superior and inferior positionality through the eyes of the interviewee, highlighting how the redistribution of power between subjects is dynamic and always relational (Cloke et al. 2004). Hence, my positionality requires constant (re)negotiation and reflexivity, although this seems somewhat easier to analyse in hindsight that at the time (Mohammad, 2001).

Aware of potential power dynamics where I could be perceived as “director” in command of the interview, I sought to transfer power to the interviewee. For example, I always allowed the interviewee to select the time and place of our meeting, and many

chose to meet in their homes; a situation which would likely help them relax in familiar surroundings (Elwood, 2000). By interviewing in the space belonging to the researched, they were also in control, to some degree, of any interruptions to the session, or how these interruptions were best dealt with in a way that might minimise their discomfort. The downside was that I often had to negotiate interviews around the needs or activities of pets, occasionally children, household chores or the ringing of the telephone or door bell. On the whole, interviewing in a British-owned home enriched the research process through the possibility of observing an interviewee in their surroundings, and to be shown items such as artifacts and photographs, which sometimes diverted conversation in useful ways (Elwood, 2000). By way of example, I interviewed Shirley in her kitchen while she was peeling and cutting tomatoes for a pot of soup. The activity led to a discussion about where the tomatoes had come from and how the inhabitants of villages share home-grown food, and how important this was for Shirley in giving her a sense of local belonging.

Generally, I sought to maintain a balance of power to complement a flow of conversation. Rather than a question and answer session, and tried to remain critically reflexive to the unfolding dynamics throughout the interview, and to assess whether I needed to express more assurance (i.e. that any sensitive information would remain anonymous), more sensitivity, or retain silence a few seconds longer to allow the interviewee time to think and express their thoughts in their own way. These relations were constant negotiations and sometimes made a little more problematic by my intention to record each interview. I wanted to capture what people said as accurately as possible, for the credibility of the thesis, but in doing so I risked upsetting the researcher/researched balance and my ability to access certain sorts of information, such as negative standpoints (as in the example above) or sensitive information (Mountz,

2007). This was made clear by Daniel, who was the only interviewee who said he would prefer not to be taped. Without being recorded, he spoke about issues concerning the company he worked for, which he told me would have been “more toned down” if the recorder had been used. Thus, the dictaphone has a presence, albeit a silent and listening one. In terms of ethics, respondents were given the option of talking without being recorded, and were made aware that the dictaphone could be switched off at any time during the interview. On the whole it seemed to remain invisible, evidenced by comments such as “Oh, I forgot all about that” at the end of the interview, and in that fashion the benefits outweighed the disadvantages in this research.

Interviews elicited fifty-three verbatim transcripts (which I return to below) of Britons’ experiences, thoughts and feelings concerning moving to and living in France. One disadvantage of this data was that it limited my understanding to what they said they did or felt in a partly stage-managed setting. To supplement narrated experiences generated through interviewing, I immersed myself more fully into everyday activities to observe experiences taking place.

Participant Observation

Emerson et al. (1995:1) identify two distinct activities involved in ethnographic research; first-hand participation in a social setting where the ethnographer “develops ongoing relations with the people in it, and observes all the while what is going on”; and secondly, the production of written accounts of that world by drawing upon such participation. Participant observation is used to describe this basic research approach, and for twelve months I became an observing participant in group activities among Britons in France.

Seeking to follow the social networks of interviewees (see p.68) to explore who they engaged with and what sorts of spaces were appropriated, I was often led to group activities and events taking place in public spaces, and these became the basis of participant observation. Partly this is because group activities were important parts of many Britons' social lives (see, Beaverstock, 2002, O'Reilly, 2000, Scott, 2007), but also because group activities taking place in public spaces were fairly accessible to study and I was able to become a member in many instances and blend as an insider. Chapter Seven considers in more detail the value of group activities, as well as non-participants.

There is more than one way of characterising the process of participant observation, and Junker (1960) suggests a model differentiating between four combinations of participant and observer; complete participant; participant as observer; observer as participant; and complete observer. Each indicates a different balance between these two activities. In reality, over different times and places in the course of the year I was sometimes more observer than participant and vice versa. For instance, I became a member of a walking group and hiked with them on a monthly basis. I also joined *TWIG* and attended a variety of their activities throughout the year. *Accueil des Villes Françaises (AVF)* provided me with weekly French-language lessons, as a newcomer to the area, alongside other Britons. Other events took place in association with this group: tours of local villages, handicrafts and lunches, for example (Figure 4.1). I also became a member of the social group *English in Toulouse*, attending a couple of evening meetings in Toulouse and a weekend snow-shoeing in the Pyrénées with a wide range of nationalities. Most of the observation of this group, however, was conducted through emails and therefore has not been used to its full advantage in this thesis. During fieldwork I was given honorary member status of *English Ltd*, to enable my meeting of

British persons through this Toulouse-based business network, and I was invited to give a presentation of my research to the *British International Business Network of Toulouse*, although I did not become a member. In each of these, I participated first and observed as a secondary feature, writing fieldnotes outside the time and place of the activity.



Figure 4.1 An AVF-linked event: French/English conversation over lunch.

In other situations I was much more of an observer, as on market days where I would mingle to watch and listen, and sometimes chat with people (Figure 4.2). I supported a South West cricketing team in their league and cup matches, where I was observer, but also fulfilling a role as spectating participant. I would share a lift to matches with some of the members and, on arrival, set up a rug on the edge of the pitch. During the match I would sometimes chat with other spectators and team players but spent a lot of the time watching what was taking place on and off the pitch. Notes were made about the topics of conversation, the material objects involved in the cricket setting, and concerning interactions taking place on and around the pitch. Before the cricket season began, I spent Sunday mornings attending English-language Church services.



Figure 4.2 One of the many weekly markets taking place in the fieldsite

Through repeated visits to group activities, I was also able to observe patterns of behaviour that allowed me to understand the activity better. However, one-off events also provided opportunities for me to observe, participate and develop further contacts in the field. These included village events such as communal meals and various fêtes. The annual *vendange* (harvest) found me picking grapes among Britons in a vineyard owned by a British family (Figure 4.3). At Christmas I attended the dress rehearsal of *Snow White* in a theatre on the outskirts of Toulouse. The pantomime was produced by *The Secret Panto Society*; a group of Britons who, in 1984, decided to put together a show for their children, and who have organised pantomimes almost every year since. Fieldwork also involved attending a Burn's Night celebration, and various invitations to lunch and dinner, often given by people who became friends, but in situations where I would write a few notes into my notebook at the end of the evening. Thus, my role as participant observer never ceased in the field, and it was often a messy business, not only to draw a line between being "on" and "off" research duty, but also between participating and observing (Herbert, 2000).

Participant observation supplemented interviews in the field. The non-staged setting of participant observation is an advantage over an interview for it offers a "real"

perspective of everyday life as it unfolds, at that very moment, in front of one's eyes (Kusenbach, 2003). The researcher becomes a witness to actions, reactions and interactions between people in particular spaces. Herbert (2000:551) suggests that participant observation assists in exploring the layers of everyday life, to reveal the processes and meanings which underlie social action, and which enable order to be reproduced and sometimes challenged. With this in mind, ethnographic analysis was employed to explore Britons' social networks and to understand the role and impact of certain group activities in their lives.



Figure 4.3 The participant observer: making fieldnotes while grape picking

While engaged in participant observation, I followed the guidelines of Emerson et al. (1995) and made notes on scraps of paper or in my notebook, which would then be written more coherently into narrative accounts of my experiences once back at a desk. Notes were made about the role of the group (from the perspective of the aims of the group, and from the perspective(s) of its members), and the impacts of social interaction taking place within and through such sites (who takes part - who does not - what sort of ties connect people - what are the feelings about the group). These objectives were achieved in some groups more easily than others (see below), by communicating with a

range of people involved in the group (and some not involved), as well as through participation and observation over a period of time.

As these social sites tended to be used for leisure and socialising (I was generally unable to follow people into their work places – if they had one) this method of observing supported the third objective of my thesis to the greatest extent; to explore the interactions and networks people created through socio-cultural lives. In this way I follow Murdoch, who argued that “we let them [people] show us where to look, what material they use in the course of network construction and how they come to be related to others” (cited in Cloke et al. 2004:190). Subsequently, this method of “go-along” enabled me to piece together “a mosaic of the invisible social architecture of a particular setting” (Kusenbach, 2003:13), which might otherwise have remained in my imagination (I emphasise this in the case study of cricket in Chapter Seven). This was a less structured part of the research process than interviewing, but more adept for exploring social networks than exploring how people negotiated politico-legal boundaries.

Researcher/Researched Participant Observation dynamics

Many of the researcher/researched dynamics applicable to the interview context were also relevant in my participant/observer role. It was often easier to balance the relationship and remove myself from a position as researcher, because taking part in daily life was part of a more authentic experience than a staged event such as the interview (Cloke et al. 2004). Rapport was enhanced by my visibility as people became aware of my presence (as researcher or as someone else living in the area) and grew used to seeing me talking to people. I encountered people who already knew what I was doing in the area and, as a result, I was approached by people wanting to be interviewed

before I approached them. I was always frank about why I was there and what I was doing.

By way of example, while helping to harvest grapes in late September, 2008, I explained my research to the couple cutting grapes on the opposite side of the vines to me. The couple attended an English Church and suggested that I might like to go along to meet some British people whom I could interview. Subsequently, the following Sunday I arrived at the church and was greeted by members of the congregation who had been told of my intended attendance. I was looked after for the rest of the service and introduced to many members of the congregation. After this first service, a pattern emerged where I would arrive at the church, sometimes walking in with people I had happened to park alongside in the car park, then spend ten minutes greeting and chatting with people in the back of the church. I would sit among Britons in the pews during the service, sing hymns with them, and listen to the prayers and the sermon, before accompanying many of the congregation to a nearby café after the service. There, I would chat with people for around twenty minutes until the group dispersed. On return to my accommodation I would make notes on my laptop about the service and conversations that I had had with people. Perhaps to an outsider, I would have looked like an inside member of the congregation as I was seen to behave in similar ways, and developed a rapport with some members of that group.

The value of a close rapport to the research process became evident over successive months. For eight months, I rented accommodation from a British couple who ran a gîte business (i.e. holiday cottage rental). Almost each day we chatted and this contributed to my deepening understanding of aspects of the field, and over time I was

able to use this ongoing close encounter to seek corroboration of my interpretations¹². After eight months I searched for alternative accommodation using the contacts I had developed in the field, and rented accommodation from a cricket player in France. This unexpected turn of events catapulted me into the world of cricket in France and provided access and insight beyond what I might have found initially. In this way, moving through the network of people and places that had evolved in the research process, I became immersed in a particular configuration of flows, around which I could develop deeper insight from a position of flexibility.

Participant observation is a method for accessing the more "natural" events of daily life in a less managed way, particularly in comparison to the staged event of the interview. However, this required clarification of my position within a wider social setting of power and status. Outside of an interview, my role as researcher was not so prominent and my background, attributes, and values felt more exposed in relation to the people I encountered. There were limitations to what could be achieved in this context, and most distinctly I found it more difficult to access private spaces than public spaces as a result of my socio-demographic position, in contrast to those around me. By way of example, I attended French lessons on a Wednesday morning through *AVF* alongside twelve other Britons, most of whom attended as couples and were in the age range fifty to seventy. Many of these people met outside of French lessons in one another's homes. While I was invited for coffee in a nearby café after the lesson, I was never invited into the private sphere of events taking place in their homes. I learnt, from interviewing single people in the field, that being on one's own can cause a sense of exclusion from many places where people tend to socialise as couples. This is one way in which I was "different" to the majority of persons around me, but a double exclusion might have

¹² Corroboration is one means by which qualitative research can achieve credibility and dependability (Baxter and Eyles, 1997).

occurred due to my age, as being distinctly younger than these people. What emerges is my relative position, in terms of gender, age and relationship status, to those individuals I researched in the field and is a factor shaping the entire research process, not just participant observation (McDowell, 1992). Thus, the way I tell about society is reflective of my positioning but something that I aim to make transparent towards achieving reliable research.

Criteria for effective research

It is necessary to consider the criteria by which effective qualitative and ethnographic data might be judged and deemed trustworthy, as a means for guiding an appropriately rigorous research process. Baxter and Eyles (1997:51) advise how:

Being forthcoming about these criteria will better equip those who do not traditionally work within the qualitative paradigm to judge its approach and findings and, perhaps more importantly, these criteria will be made public for constructive scrutiny and debate.

Strauss and Corbin (1990:250) stress that the "usual canons of 'good science'...require redefinition in order to fit the realities of qualitative research". They argue that objectivity, generalisability, reliability and validity, on which quantitative work is often judged, are inadequate elements through which to assess the value of more qualitative research. Lincoln and Guba (1985) replace these four measures with credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability, which are adopted as guiding principles throughout this project.

Credibility

This criterion refers to the authenticity of representations of experience as they move from the researcher, through the field and are reconstructed into an acceptable product for sharing with a wider audience (i.e. a thesis or map, for example). Work deemed credible should provide nuanced and accurate description so that those undertaking the

experience recognise it immediately, and those outside the experience can understand it (Lincoln and Guba, 1985)¹³. Scott (1990:22, emphasis added) indicates that credibility is concerned with two related issues:

The extent to which an observer is *sincere* in the choice of a point of view and in the attempt to record an *accurate* account from that chosen standpoint.

In the field, there was always much taking place and I was unable to take everything in. Sincerity refers to the way in which certain aspects were selected. Overall, I let respondents guide this process by following the activities that were important to them. Inevitably, however, some of these places were more open to me, as a positioned researcher, than others, and this practical element also shapes what and how I tell about Britons in France.

Baxter and Eyles (1997) suggest that credibility can be sought in research by including raw data (see Becker, 2007). In this way, the reader can make their own judgement regarding the sincerity of the author's interpretations. Consequently, the thesis includes many interview quotes to record what was said at the time. For the same reason, less personal field notes are included in this narrative (see Herbert, 2000). The accuracy of these sources can be vouched through the conditions under which they were produced. Interviews, in all but one instance, were audio-recorded and transcribed verbatim.

Transferability

Transferability indicates the degree to which findings fit within contexts outside the study situation. As Baxter and Eyles (1997) indicate, due to the idiographic nature of ethnographic research, claims of transferability are less prominent in these types of research than in others. It is recognised that ethnographers may connect their

¹³ Schiellerup's (2008) ethnographic and autobiographical description of doing qualitative data analysis is a good example of this.

interpretation to wider issues that provide a context for findings which can be identified as relevant research in the field (Emerson et al, 1995, Herbert, 2000). I link my broader research questions to the specific context of EU integration, and suggest that findings, in this world-regional context give an impression of mobility at a global scale. The degree to which findings are transferable is discussed in Chapter Eight (p.278).

Dependability

Baxter and Eyles (1997) argue that if research is credible, it is likely to be dependable, as the two are interconnected. However, I attempt to draw out the dependability of the research by combining research methods. For example, through interviews I have access to what migrants say they do but through observation I can test whether migrants do act as they claim, or whether they practise something different. The multiple methods thus provide more complexity (for example, understanding why migrants might say one thing and do another), but also help to ensure that research findings are more dependable.

Confirmability

This criterion is defined as the extent to which bias, motivations and perspectives of the researcher might influence interpretations. All accounts of social events are shaped to some degree by the researcher's involvement in the process, but rather than seek to control or eliminate distortion in its entirety, the ethnographer is advised to be sensitive to, and perceptive of, the implications and consequences on the research process. Patton (1990:58) argues that confirmability should be seen through the concept of "empathic neutrality" where empathic "is a stance toward the people one encounters, while neutrality is a stance towards the findings". The essence of this is to report findings in a balanced way. Empathy is recommended as a vital ingredient of any good interview,

and neutrality thus refers to the need to avoid bias and be self-reflexive, by scrutinising one's own involvement in the research and personal politics. I consider my positionality below, and how relations between myself and research subjects might influence this work.

Together, these rather general criteria enable a judgement to be made concerning honesty, integrity and plausibility of design and accounts with reflexivity "allowing qualitative research to demonstrate the relevance of the single case (credibility) and to move beyond it (transferability) with a degree of certainty (dependability and confirmability)" (Baxter and Eyles, 1997:521). These criteria guide the way in which methods were used in this thesis.

Research Politics

Preparing for fieldwork required immersion in literature concerning the interrelated issues of positionality and situatedness; techniques of reflexivity aimed at making transparent any aspects of the personal which may influence the research process (Fuller, 1999). Harstock (1987:188) describes positionality "where we are located in the social structure as a whole and which institutions we are in...have effects on how we understand the world". It is the recognition that I, like all other researchers, carry a unique biography shaped by my cultural, social and historical background, and which should be a continual part of critical reflection throughout the research process (Rose, 1997). The ways in which positionality is crucial in producing geographical knowledge have been explored by Sidaway (1992) and Rose (1997), among others, while the interrelation of positionality, biography and personality has been shown to impact research, as illustrated by England (1994), Fuller (1999), and Mohammad (2001). Rose (1997) argues that being transparent and reflexive about one's positionality is not a straight forward process (see also, Katz, 1992, McDowell, 1992).

Textbook advice on positionality recommends one to undertake critical self-engagement in relation to one's "social location (in terms of class, gender, ethnicity and so on)" (Fuller, 1999:223). Thus, on the eighth day of September, 2008, I arrived at my temporary accommodation in a region of France that I had not previously visited. A few places in France were known to me because as a Sarnian (Guernsey, Channel Island born and bred), France was the closest landmass for summer camping holidays with my family. France seemed both similar and different to me: similar because parts of the Brittany landscape were not too different to Guernsey scenes; and different, exciting even, because of the unfamiliar language, sights and sounds. The main aspect that distinguished me from those people I was researching was that I was not an EU citizen in the same way as most of the Britons I encountered. Guernsey is neither part of the UK nor the EU, but my ability to take advantage of EU provisions for free mobility, and not to be classified as a third-country-national, falls to the event of my mother being born in the UK¹⁴. My not being from the UK was occasionally noted in the field (predominantly by my car registration plate) and while I felt different, this probably had little impact on the research as people often spoke to me as if I might have shared similar problems they had experienced in settling into life in the Midi-Pyrénées.

Assessed at face-value, these characteristics are relatively impersonal. I had the same white skin as my interviewees, spoke the same first language, and thus on the surface I appeared fairly similar. This contrasts with much work on positionality that explores first-world researchers in third-world contexts, where they are ethnically and or linguistically (perceived) as different to the researched (Mohammad, 2001).

¹⁴ If neither of one's parents nor their grandparents is born in the UK (or other EU member state), a clause in the individual's British passport states that "The holder is not entitled to benefit from EU provisions relating to employment or establishment".

My positionality was not separate from how people assessed my character, and I was described several times as “brave” and “adventurous” for living in France on my own for twelve months. More often than not, those perceiving an adventurous spirit were older women who then expressed that, if I needed a room to stay in, or wanted a cup of tea, or “anything”, that I should “not hesitate” and “just pop in anytime”¹⁵. This generosity was symbolic of the friendliness and warmth with which I was treated by almost everyone I encountered and interviewed, and in accepting offers for refreshments and chats, my positionality and personality enabled opportunities and access to certain information that other researchers may not have gained.

I recognise the impact of externally-defined relative positions between Britons in the field, and myself, as the researcher, but as people were generally friendly and open, I found that aspects of my personality were equally applicable to this unfolding research process as those structured aspects of positionality. Hence, I follow Moser (2008:1) who argues that:

I found that it was aspects of my personality, such as my social skills, my emotional responses to and interest in local events, how I conducted myself and the manner in which I navigated the personalities of others that were the main criteria by which I was judged.

Participation involves a degree of resocialisation to share everyday life with people not previously known. Cloke et al. (2004:170) suggest that:

A good ethnographer is someone willing and able to become a more reflexive and sociable version of him or herself in order to learn something meaningful about other people's lives...

In order to participate as fully as possible, to learn from others what is important, and to become a recognised member of that group, a researcher must be highly sociable and

¹⁵ Although this was an open invitation to their private spheres, it was a personal one-to-one invitation and not one in which I could observe ongoing daily life or social networks among people in private places).

sensitive to others. For research so dependent upon establishing contacts in the field, it was not gender, race or age that impacted on how I was treated, but my showing of enthusiasm, personal communicative skills, chatting, being on time for meetings, and willingness to spend time with people and regular participation (Rose, 1997). The value of some of these qualities was emphasised to me when, during my sixth consecutive visit to church, a woman exclaimed "you're still here" and only from then on greeted me in a friendly manner and increasingly revealed more about herself. This woman became less forthcoming when I stopped attending church services (replaced with attendance at cricket matches), and despite meeting her in the supermarket a few times afterwards, she seemed no longer interested in chatting with me

The way in which I conducted myself and how I was seen or heard to have conducted myself with others had an impact on research. I very much wanted to interview a British couple who I had heard had been living in the area the longest time, and while they invited me to their home to meet them, the woman in particular appeared a little reluctant to open up to me and I was told "I've got much to do, you cannot stay very long". Her responses were short and she busied herself about the kitchen while I spoke. However, as the interview progressed she seemed to relax and made jokes, and then offered me refreshments, and told me "you can stay, just keep asking me things as I work". At the end of the interview I had been able to ask more than initially expected, and Shirley was eager to help me make contact with someone else whom she knew, and immediately picked up the telephone to introduce me to another British resident. As she explained my research to the other woman she added "she'll just ask a few questions, she's very polite, very nice, it'll be fine", and I felt that my conduct throughout the interview had gained acceptance, more so than any externally-defined characteristics. In this example, personality was vital in gaining access to her story of experience in

France¹⁶. What I, perceived as “researcher”, might have represented changed by my being there in person.

I have briefly considered some of the elements related to positionality that impacted on the research, but it is impossible to make visible, or even be conscious of, all the dimensions surrounding positionality (Rose, 1997). Many of these elements involved continuous reflection through the research process, and indicates, to some extent, how research is always situated, contingent and partial in its form of “telling about society” (Becker, 2007).

Ethics

Politics of research encapsulate issues of ethics and the need to consider the moral implications of power relations present between the researcher and researched. Throughout the research process, particularly where close encounters shape research methods, there is a potential to “harm” recipients, and these issues need to be addressed before and during research (Hay, 2003). As a standard procedure, my research passed assessment by the University of Plymouth Ethics Committee before it proceeded, and adhered to the Ethical Principles for Research Involving Human Participants policy (1995). I was guided by four recommendations set out by Hammersley and Atkinson (1983) as an appropriate ethical agenda for this specific empirical research. Firstly, I always sought to conduct research with “informed consent” where I could. This meant that all interviewees were informed about the research prior to seeking their consent to be interviewed, although signed forms were not required by my policy. This was slightly more difficult to negotiate around participant observation, and when speaking to people who were part of groups under investigation. These situations were dealt with

¹⁶ I do not attempt to separate personality from positionality here, as I believe the subjectivities of both are mutually reinforcing. Personality, however, is less socially structured than positionality, and is therefore apolitical.

by ensuring that consent had been given by the known person in charge. (organiser, leader, or chairman), and thus working within the parameters established by this group representative.

A second recommendation is that researchers ensure the anonymity and privacy of their subjects. Before respondents offered their consent, the potential means of disseminating research findings were discussed. All respondents were assured that their real names would be substituted with pseudonyms and, in some cases, that place names would also be fictitious towards making them untraceable.

Hammersley and Atkinson (1983) recommend that researchers avoid harming participants. While there was little risk of physical harm from the aim and objectives of this thesis, the personal questions I asked had the potential to raise painful or confidential issues for research subjects. No known instances arose, but interviewees were advised that they could terminate an interview at any time with no repercussions, and withdraw their scripts from research at a later date (England, 1994). The fourth guideline refers to exploitation and the need for the researcher to avoid "using" respondents to gain information with little or nothing in return. Cloke et al. (2000) suggest that researchers unethically "flip in" and "flip out" of people's lives, staying only long enough to collect stories. My experience of attending church services was one example where I felt somewhat guilty of attending without a long-term commitment. However, when I discovered that people used the church as a channel for socialising as well as religious ceremony, I felt more relaxed about taking part in this way.

Ethical issues are considerably important to the code and conduct of research, but abiding by a strict code is not always possible, as situations demand different management and responses that must be constantly negotiated. For instance, while engaging in research, I also had to survive and make friends in France where I was living for a year. Thus, the boundaries between research and non-research were often blurred and the ethical code of conduct had to be flexible to take into account the intermixing of these situations. Thus, the guidelines above were adopted to provide a practical and flexible means of operating in a morally responsible manner, not only in the field when face-to-face with research subjects, but also when interpreting, writing up and dissipating the data generated.

(Re)presenting the field

Analysis

Narrated chronologically on these flat pages, data analysis – making sense of primary data - misleadingly appears to be a self-contained section that follows directly from the generation of data in the field. In *de facto* terms, making sense of the data was entwined with the task of accumulating and learning in the field, and it also became entangled with writing drafts of the thesis. Thus, research required an open approach that allowed interpretation between field sites and field notes, and then back again, as the research process unfolded.

As analysis emerged in this process, a strategy somewhat akin to grounded theory developed (Cloke et al., 2004). Charmaz (2006:187) defines how grounded theory

focuses on creating conceptual frameworks or theories through building indicative analysis from data. Hence, the analytical categories are directly 'grounded' in the data....The method is distinguished from others since it involves the researcher in data analysis while collecting data – we use this data to inform and shape further data collection. Thus the sharp

distinction between data collection and analysis phases of traditional research is intentionally blurred in grounded theory studies¹⁷.

Initially, analysis of fieldwork in this thesis followed the trajectory of grounded theory by sorting, ordering and coding data (Cloke et al., 2004). Sorting became a rather regimented process whereby interviews that were transcribed would then be dissected so that different parts of the transcript were divided into categories of themes depicting, for example, "taxation", "pensions", "cricket" and "religion". Many sections of the transcript were copied into multiple categories and cross-referenced to begin the process of ordering and linking different themes or concepts. Over time the various categories changed or were sub-divided, so it is impossible to say how many "themes" were used overall, and the regimented process grew increasingly chaotic. The activity of analysis in this project took on the characteristics of the "black box" that Schiellerup (2008) uses to emphasise being in the middle of a messy process. The computer-based analysis package *NVivo* was used briefly but it was found that data could be managed more flexibly through a series of Word and Excel documents, and handwritten notes in an array of colours.

Another similarity between the strategy adopted here and grounded theory is the construction of theory from data (Charmaz, 2006, Glaser and Strauss, 1967). The grounded approach seeks to develop interpretations that are soundly anchored in data, and does so by encouraging the researcher back to the field between different moments of analysis to check or corroborate findings. This technique was employed throughout the process of research as, for example, I used later interviews to explore emerging themes in greater detail, and participant observation as an alternative means of corroborating results.

¹⁷ Grounded theory is noted as one of the most popular approaches for identifying themes in qualitative work (Cook and Crang, 1995) and different versions exist (compare, for example, the individual approaches by Glaser, and Strauss).

By building inductive analysis from data, it is possible to suspend expectations or limits concerning what may be understood through fieldwork (Charmaz, 2006). This is crucial in the formation of sincere data, as noted by Lincoln and Guba (1985) (see p.126), and in adopting a network approach. Murdoch (1994:23) defines a network approach as tracing specific people, stories, lives, and places to "see what 'sticks' to them, gets wrapped up in them, unravels them". In this way "we let them show us where to look, what material they use in the course of network construction and how they come to be related to others". Thus, a network approach provides a means of shaping theory as data emerges from the field.

Grounded theory places much emphasis on toing and froing between data collection and interpretation until saturation is reached. This is described by Strauss and Corbin (1998:136) as the situation:

When no new information seems to emerge during coding, that is, when no new properties, dimensions, conditions, actions/interactions, or consequences are seen in the data.

As Strauss and Corbin highlight, achieving saturation is a matter of degree as one will always find additional properties. Hence, they suggest placing a benchmark where "collecting additional data seems counterproductive". Saturation was sought in this instance by accessing a range of views across axes of socio-demographic difference, to understand, for example, the multiple meanings associated with French bureaucracy. It was fairly easy to achieve a point of saturation around certain themes, but less practical when following social networks as I was unable to explore all the flows that people were engaged in. As a result, it was necessary to focus on key sites such as group activities, rather than following the lives of Britons living in France but travelling to the UK for work, which would have added a physical dimension of transnationalism, but

fell beyond the scope of this project. The group activities that form part of this thesis emerged through fieldwork and analysis, in the spirit of grounded theory.

Grounded theory provided a rough, rather than strategic, model of analysis in this thesis. It involved jumping between concepts, interviews and participant observation as categories and coding were applied to an increasing amount of data. As such, moments of interpretation were not achieved while sat at the desk and working through layers of axial and selective coding, but halfway through an interview or on the cricket ground. Piecing together, and making sense of data in this way, ensured that analysis was a continuous process of interpretation accumulating from a series of stories that had been heard so far.

The process of writing

As with analysis, the practice of writing overlapped with other parts of the research process, but tended to dominate the third year of this research process. Writing the thesis unfolded as a process of “making less out of more” and of “making what has been gathered more intelligible and assimilable” (Becker, 2007:57). From the relatively private and messy process of sorting, coding and cross-referencing data, order had to be translated, interpreted, and established in a neatened version that was acceptable in length, style and content (Brace and Johns-Putra, 2010). Writing is an integral part of knowledge construction, as it creates a particular view of reality through content and style, and therefore requires reflexivity on ethics and positionality as much as the rest of the research process (Barnes and Gregory, 1997, Clifford, 1986).

Making a(nother) representation from copious notes and themes generated as primary data entailed a process of creativity whereby I selected and reconstructed the data into a

coherent account. From the sections of text accumulated beneath headings, I selected certain foci towards constructing a narrative through the multiple versions of experience (Becker, 2007). It was my intention to use interviewee quotes to shape these arguments, to give voice to the people who are the focus of the research, and to link these with interpretative narratives. In this way respondents' words were used as stylistic devices, and to strengthen the credibility and dependability of the work (p.125). In seeking specific quotes to narrate concepts and ideas, the thesis draws upon those that were representative but summative of what other migrants had said. Thus, in some of the following chapters, themes are illustrated using the words of one respondent, but it is sometimes noted that other respondents have expressed similar sentiments. In addition, quotes were used to illustrate differing and diverging viewpoints that highlighted the complexity of experiences. In this way quotes could be juxtaposed to highlight patterns as well as diversity and complexity (McHugh, 2000).

Returning to Becker's (2007:285) view at the start of this chapter; "there is no best way to tell a story about society... Every way of telling about society does some of the job superbly but other parts not so well". There are different theories that could inform the various methods employed. Alternative methods would have answered different questions and provided varying perspectives. However, the agenda of this research is towards a more interpretative understanding of British migrants, as intra-EU movers, in France. This is not to say that this is the only interpretative version of society, but one among many. Consequently, the research process and knowledge produced are always situated, specific and partial (Becker, 2007, Clifford, 1990). Moreover, this partiality is shaped by my positionality in the process, in relation to that of research subjects and through my academic training. Another researcher could draw upon different versions of this society. However, by making visible some of the key biases, subjectivities and

positionalities that have shaped this research, I seek to bring value to this specific telling of society in an ethical and reflexive mode of production. In this way, this thesis aims to be an accountable, transparent and credible version of Britons in France at this particular time, and to further the empirical work by geographers into the human experiences of mobility and freedom under conditions of socio-spatial transformation. The next three chapters present empirical analysis of Britons in France by addressing objectives one, two, and three of the thesis; to explore the extent to which intra-EU migrants move freely in Europe, supposedly without internal frontiers.

Chapter Five

“We live in France now”:

how a diversity of Britons come to be in France

A broad spectrum of people experience migration through a variety of different situations, and while “migration is a bewildering set of processes to understand” (Samers, 2010:52), analysis seeks to draw out the relevance of different processes to explain who migrants in a particular group are, and what causes might explain their migration. These aspects shape the aims of this chapter, as I answer two interlinked questions: who comprise the Britons in this thesis? and how do they come to be in this part of France at this particular time? In addressing these questions, I seek to explore the role of the EU in the lives of these migrants: to what extent does it hinder or facilitate their decision to migrate? The chapter also seeks to broaden existing knowledge of Britons in France by drawing upon the diversity of people living there.

The chapter is based upon interview data, generated by asking each respondent how they came to be in the Midi-Pyrénées at that moment in time. Individual responses took a biographical form, often revealing sets of complex reasons for moving, staying, or relocating within and between households. In order to express the diversity of motivations and types of British migrants in France, these stories are represented through more general patterns which draw upon concepts, such as economic migrants, lifestyle migrants and trailing spouses, familiar within migration literature and EU studies (Castles and Miller, 2003, King, 2002). As a result, these British intra-EU migrants can be situated in ways that provide comparison with other intra-EU migrants, for example those living in London, Brussels and Amsterdam (Favell, 2008a). The disadvantage of this approach is that some of the complexity involved with a single

move is lost in the discussion of diversity across the population as a whole. With this in mind, the chapter concludes with an extract from one interview to illustrate the multiple, and often inseparable, reasons why Britons come to be living in a particular part of France.

Inter-national movement?

When asked how they come to be in the Midi-Pyrénées, fifty respondents defaulted to the national scale to express their choice to be in France. In comparison, the scale of the EU was rarely mentioned. Just three interviewees revealed to me that they deliberately chose to remain within the EU when considering their moves. The Fentons describe themselves as pro-European and Rita Fenton recalls:

It may have been more I wanted to move out of the UK and live in Europe. I think it was Europe first and then France was a preference¹⁸.

The EU was also a deliberate choice for Rachel and her husband. With their two sons and Rachel's mother, the family initially moved from the UK to the USA but the need for visas to live in the USA, and lack of them in the EU, persuaded the family to move back across the Atlantic (see p.164 for further details). The third instance of the EU being a deliberate choice was expressed by the Edwards who had spent the last eight years of their life living on a boat in different parts of the world, and were eager to return to a place where they could experience the traditional four seasons of the year (see p.173 for further details). These cases differ from the main pattern in this research, and differ slightly from research carried out among Britons in France by Drake and Collard (2008:227), who note that "none of the respondents could relate their own venture to the broader framework of Europe or the concept of a European citizenship".

¹⁸ These interviewees refer to the EU as if the UK remains separate across the Channel. This geographical imagination, separating the UK from continental Europe is one that I encounter with Britons several times during fieldwork, illustrating how it is deeply embedded in British speech and minds

Thus, I had to explore more deeply the seemingly invisible role that the EU may be playing in facilitating intra-EU migration of Britons to France.

As the EU is a political entity using economic means to achieve an "ever closer union", the concept of labour mobility is an appropriate place to begin conceptualising.

European workers' mobility

From a theory-based economic perspective, intra-EU migration is determined by economic rationalities at the micro-level (that of the individual) and macro-level (where movement of labour is central to the perception and reality of global and European economic competition). At the individual level, rational choices related to the job market, career prospects and wages, are said to motivate people to move (Smith, 1998). I met one such individual, Sophie, a single woman in her early thirties, at the end of her fourth week in Toulouse. She has worked for the same utility company in Brighton (UK) since leaving school, but felt that she needed to distinguish her career from the experiences of her colleagues:

An opportunity came up with our parent company to manage the International Customer Services team based in Toulouse. I was asked by my HR manager back in the UK...if I would be interested in coming here and I'm based here on a two-year contract.

Sophie is certain that this move will boost her internal career prospects when she returns to the UK. It is a transnational migration connecting "here" and "there" simultaneously. Moving to France was also expressed in these terms by Owen who, by his late twenties, had worked in several UK branches of a high street bank before he was asked to move across the Channel in 2002:

I was working in Birmingham, they asked me to go out to Paris to meet someone and within six months I was posted out.

Three years later, Owen arrived at the Toulouse branch to manage the team dealing with international clients. While these moves are recounted in terms of rational economic

choices at the micro-level, they also interact with flows and structures of macro-level processes. I interview Owen in his office, where we are frequently interrupted by rapping on the door and telephones ringing - clients wanting Owen's time. He explains the significance of international clients to this particular branch:

Owen: *I would say it represents between a third and a half of the clients we have in the branch, so international clients are extremely important here for us.*

Fiona: *And you cover a wide area?*

Owen: *Yes, all of Midi-Pyrénées and all the way to Montpellier in Languedoc-Roussillon, down to Perpignan. And out across almost to Bordeaux and Basque country. Then up as far as Rodez [and] Brive. Quite a way.*

Sophie's international customer service team also covers a large area, extending "about a fifth of France". I learn of another two high street banks in Toulouse that have recently set up similar departments - one managed by a British woman. Owen tells me that these companies "recognised there was a big need" to provide a service tailored to the non-French (English) speaking population in France. The establishment of services for a specific population creates boundaries of difference by distinguishing Britons in France from other groups, especially French-speaking groups. To some extent, this may represent a diasporic existence (see Safran, 1991).

Sophie is aware that her most valuable skill in France is her native language and specific UK-based training:

It was a good opportunity for the team to have an English manager, to help them understand about the cultural differences. And I think there is definitely a difference in the expectations French customers have to English customers.....the people who phone tell us that they're so grateful they can speak to someone who can speak English

As indicated by Sophie and Owen, their moves were initiated by an opportunity within the companies they worked for, both of which arose through the demand for English-speaking employees to cater for a non-French community. For business, geographical mobility is important to find the best people for a job, which can bring about product

enhancement, improved service delivery, innovation and competitiveness (Recchi, 2008). In this respect, the EU plays a significant role in opening up an (almost) European-wide labour market allowing businesses the capacity to (re)allocate human capital efficiently. This is partly achieved through the implementation of policies to foster labour-mobility alongside flows of capital, goods and services (McCormick, 2002). It is not possible here to assess the extent to which the EU has initiated these opportunities for British persons or companies, or to what extent they might be more realistically termed “global” (Fligstein and Merand, 2001), however, the EU has taken considerable steps towards the development of the single market, particularly since 1986 (Diez Medrano, 2008, Wise and Gibb, 1993). The EU has been involved in making it easier for businesses to move people between workplaces by reducing the costs of mobility (for example, no visa or work permits are required, and the EU sometimes supplies special grants or scholarships (see Recchi, 2008)). This is a Europe of flows which structures networks of business around the creation of an internally seamless market space.

I introduce these two salaried workers first because they are representative of Favell’s (2008a) “Eurostars” in “Eurocities”; young and, predominantly, single persons who change countries through the internal corridors of MNCs, and who could be working for any MNC in a European city. They also share similar characteristics to highly-skilled migrants involved in so-called global mobility (Favell et al., 2006). Favell’s “Eurostars” would most likely be encountered in the office blocks of Europe’s capital cities, some of which have been labeled “global cities” or “Euro cities”¹⁹. There appear to be far fewer “Eurostars” to observe in Toulouse than those cities Favell visited, but

¹⁹ Favell describes a *Euro city* as a hub of European free movement with a significant foreign European population. In this way it is similar to a ‘global city’ as an important node in the global economic system (see, also Smith, 2001:49).

the fairly recent arrival of Britons to newly developed positions suggests awareness of the value of migration towards seeking competitive advantage in the market. This is also one manifestation of an interconnected Europe that undermines the traditional map of nation-states – a Europe of flows and connections (Jensen and Richardson, 2004)

Migration systems: economic networks

Migration forms a key component of research exploring the making and remaking of world cities (Findlay, 1996, Sassen, 2001) and transnational urbanism (Hannerz, 1996, Smith, 2001) where flows of highly-skilled labour provide incentive for cities to remain competitive on a global scale (Sklair, 2004). Transnational corporations play a significant role in labour migration by;

‘pulling’ and ‘pushing’ professional, managerial, and scientific/technical labour, in intra- or inter- firm transfers within or between world cities, international office networks, subsidiaries or affiliates (Beaverstock, 2008:1).

Toulouse can be analysed in this way. The city has developed as the thriving heart of the European civil aviation and aerospace industry (Nicolls, 2006, Wastnage, 2003), and its labour flows are connected to its specific “proximity in networks in relation to other cities” (Jönsson et al., 2000:157). An employee of Airbus for nearly forty years, Daniel has worked at the Blagnac site in Toulouse since 1979:

When Airbus was formed it was a really new idea; France and Germany had their little aviation industries; Britain used to be leading in Europe, but started to go down. The only way that Europe could possibly stand up in the market against the might of the Americans with Boeing, [McDonnell] Douglas and Lockheed, was to join forces. We'd already had the experience of Concord(e) project, which was Franco-British, and so Airbus was an extension really bringing in Germany and Spain. Those four nations decided to get together²⁰

²⁰ Airbus Industrie is an aircraft manufacturing subsidiary of the European Aeronautic Defense and Space Company. It was formed in 2001 as a consortium of European aviation firms and employs around 57,000 staff across 16 sites in 4 European countries (France, Germany, Spain and UK). Its main base is in Toulouse

These four nations pooled their skills and resources in trans-European economic integration and “an ever closer union” to provide a greater stake in the global market. As a result of the joint venture, Airbus has mobilised flows of highly-skilled individuals in and out of Toulouse and developed proximity with UK sites such as Broughton, Filton, Hatfield, Preswick and Woodford, where those Britons involved with Airbus had moved from²¹. This could not be just anywhere in Europe, this is (part of) the place-specificity of Toulouse produced through networks of “complex and enduring connections across space and through time between people and things” (Urry, 2000:34).

The influx of British people connected with the aerospace industry is large scale compared with any other migration that has brought a concentration of British people into this part of France in recent times²². Phillip reflects on being one among many when he arrived in France in 1996:

I worked for British Aerospace and we formed a joint venture with ATR in Toulouse. We amalgamated the sales and marketing team with customer support, and we moved a lot of people. I suppose we must have moved two hundred Brits. to work, plus families, so maybe about 600 people from Woodford and Preswick.

Airbus' Expatriate Management department indicates a flow of “three or four expatriates from the UK every month” which they claim is an overall increase of about 30% in five years. This steady flow of migrant workers contrasts with the historic picture offered by the employees themselves who describe people arriving in “waves”. Daniel recalls a “first wave around mid-1970s, maybe fifty families”. He was “part of the second wave in 1979”. Nigel and Phillip arrived in a “1996 wave”, and Liz “came along with a large group within two or three months of each other”. Hence, a large

²¹ Other companies exist in Toulouse which transfer people from the UK, such as Rolls Royce, and Atrium - a subsidiary of Airbus. They do not employ the numbers of British nationals that Airbus and its subsidiaries do. However, like Airbus, this is an international specialisation where skilled people move regardless of borders. Rolls Royce is strongly connected with Derby, UK.

²² Airbus was unable to provide figures of how many Britons worked for them in France, in total.

number of British people living in this area are connected with employment in the city as they are manoeuvred through the structures of free market economics. The theoretical question is to test how these people differ from "Eurostars"? I ask this of

Phillip:

Phillip: *I am here because circumstances brought me and it was economically worth my while to come.*

Fiona: *What degree of choice did you have to move?*

Phillip: *They basically said it is the intention to form this joint venture and when it's formed you may be offered a job, and if you don't take the job you may be found an alternative position in the UK with a partner company, or you may have to be made redundant. But basically your current job will not exist anymore, so those are the choices you have*

At first, perhaps Phillip is not all that different to the "Eurostars". Phillip articulates his migration as a weighing up of the costs (the search for alternative work, moving to a new country, finding somewhere to live) and benefits (wages and other economic packages, job security) of moving, and as a single man he acted independently, making an informed choice for himself alone. However, Phillip appears to represent a minority among British aeronautical engineers, managers and technicians in Toulouse, and Airbus' Expatriate Management team identifies the average Briton arriving to work for them in Toulouse as "male, 35 to 40 years old, married, one child". While the employment choices available to Phillip were similar to those encountered by Daniel, and the husbands of Liz, Wendy and Rachel, in all other cases the decision to migrate was articulated around a decision for the family's immediate and future security. Nigel provides one example. He worked for Airbus in the UK, while his wife was also employed to finance their two children's upbringing and the mortgage on their property.

Did he ever imagine migrating?

No. I don't think you do. When you're young and you've got kids at an early age, a big house, a bit of money, you know, normal...to me normal things that the majority of people think, you don't think "I want to travel; I want to do this or something else" But then when an offer's been made to you -

Nigel falls silent, the pause in his response symbolic of the way in which an unexpected event can disrupt the flow. Nigel's geographical horizon never stretched very far. For him, normality was about staying in one place and investing in the family's future there: a world shaped more by roots (stabilities) than routes (mobilities). His assumptions, however, were challenged when he learnt that his job was being relocated to France. Nigel's aspirations for life are much more centred upon mobility now, as he looks forward to following his business network further by someday moving again to live in Germany. He is an example of an EU free mover who, according to political viewpoints, will endorse enthusiasm for mobility and provide the building blocks towards a European society (Recchi, 2008).

Corporations, such as Airbus, move labour through networks and across borders. On the back of these opportunities, a significant population of British (families) comes to be living in France, particularly within and on the outskirts of Toulouse. Like Nigel, some respondents had never contemplated moving from the UK, but through interconnected business flows, channels open up and provide opportunities so that people, like flows of goods, capital and services, become mobile across borders and therefore interconnected with them as nodes within a particular network (Voigt-Graf, 2004). Subsequently, Britons in Toulouse can be interpreted as key components of a broader "scape" in which networks of organisations, technologies and actors constitute various interconnected nodes (Appadurai, 1990, Urry, 2000).

There is a geographical pattern to the residential location of British families (couples with one or more children living with them) within the study area, for families were encountered more frequently among those people I met in and on the outskirts of Toulouse. All but one were connected with the aviation industry (Puzzo, 2007). My

observation is supported by Iain who works within the Anglican Chaplaincy of Midi-Pyrénées. He indicates that across five geographically dispersed congregations, “most of the people in the Toulouse congregation, probably two-thirds of them, are in their thirties and forties with children”. This differs to his congregations elsewhere that have either no children or “the odd one or two”.

While families appear to act rationally weighing these costs and benefits as individuals might, not everyone experiences migration in the same way, and this draws attention to “who” these migrants are as shaped by their diverse experiences.

Family choices

It has become common to read about transnational families as family groups (father, mother and children in a household) who are geographically separated and affected by transnational ties (Ong, 1999, Parreñas, 2005, Waters, 2005). Sometimes, migration control is cited as a cause of splitting a family household where, for example, states may issue work permits to foreign nationals, but prevent family members accompanying the “worker” (see Kofman, 2004). This is not the reality for many families in the EU, as EU citizenship enables any individual the right to live, settle and seek work throughout EU territory²³. It is evidence of a porosity of boundaries. However, while migration analysis may focus on the family as the unit of analysis, experience is idiosyncratic, or perhaps shared more closely with similarly gendered, aged or ethnic individuals than with members of one’s family (Coles and Fechter, 2008). In my ethnographic research (particularly through TWIG), gender emerged as a factor around which many women in Toulouse shared their experiences of being in France.

²³ This is not the case for mixed marriages between an EU citizen and a third-country national, of which there were two examples among my respondents

Sally, Flo, Claire, Liz, Rachel and Wendy explain being in France as a result of their husband's employment. The experiences they articulate are suggestive of migration literature concerning the conceptual field of "trailing spouses" (Mincer, 1978). One similarity between this literature and findings in this research is the heavily gendered aspect of this mode of migration (Coles and Fechter, 2008). A second similarity is the insight to compromise, difficulty and identity that "trailing spouses" encounter through their moves (Gordon, 2008). Sally's experience is classic. At the age of twenty-eight she was a young wife who gave up her teaching career to accompany her husband to Toulouse. At the time they "were both very young" and "when the chance came to move here it was great, it was like an adventure", however:

It's odd. I mean a lot of people think ooh great, you live in southern France, wow, but it's not all roses, it's not all glamour and living in French vineyards. You have to get down to life and deal with the problems and there are lots of women especially who are very unhappy and want to be back in the UK.

Despite initial excitement, Sally also experienced a deep sense of loss, which has persisted over twenty years. Giving up her career was "one of the most difficult things to cope with", closely followed by living with a sense of guilt at moving away from her parents. Wendy told of a similarly difficult experience of copy with feelings of "loss" and "homesickness" that she experienced at different times over more than twenty years. Their stories are not unlike those of others I spoke with. However, their lives are dynamic and situations change, and Sally and Wendy eventually found ways of using their UK teaching qualifications in France, which helped them find a strong sense of purpose and identity²⁴. As Sally states, it was important to her "to be someone other than Daniel's wife and Luke's mother, to actually be me in my own right". These examples highlight how being in France can occur for the same reasons (work-related

²⁴ Both taught in the International School of Toulouse (<http://www.intst.eu/>) after it opened in 1999 to service the needs of the aircraft industry's globally mobile workforce. IST offers English-language education and pupils sit for the International Baccalaureate Diploma.

instances), but how this can be experienced very differently by those directly affected, even within a household.

How one comes to be in France varies over time so that experiences continue to shape the people I meet and define "who" they are. Nigel has changed jobs and now works for another aviation company to the one that initially brought him into the country. Flo developed her own business so that she could follow her geographically mobile husband without losing her own source of income and business identity. Sally and Wendy both gave birth and raised children in France. In the former instance, being in France at a particular time of her life, Sally was no longer working and found that a lack of constraints made it a perfect time for her and Daniel to start a family:

When we came we hadn't got any children and we thought what are we going to do? So because the choice had been made for us, I hadn't got any work, that was the time to start a family.

This might be interpreted as another material effect of the momentary fixing of networks, which inevitably involved personal trajectories. Their son has completed his university education and now works in Montpellier. I ask Sally where she sees her future as her husband approaches retirement:

I don't see the point of moving back to the UK if our son is in France. Mind you, we don't get to see him very often, but at least he's only down the road

Despite the anticipation of being free from the "employment constraints" (as Sally expressed) that brought the couple into Toulouse in 1981, living in France now holds more meaning for this couple as it is the only place they know as a family. This example illustrates how motivations reconfigure through time, and emphasise the difficulty of placing such experiences into exclusive categories; Sally moved from being a "young wife" to "mother" and "teacher" in France, where each position is not a closed category, but part of who she is shaped through experiences. Drawing from EU studies,

what is significant here, in comparison to many places in the world, is that when work ceases for the family, they do not have to return to their country of origin or nationality, but are entitled to remain in France along with their French son (whose French nationality was acquired through birth). What is more, as the following chapter will highlight, their ability to remain in France is also supplemented by the provision of social policies that facilitate, to some degree, cross-border living. In this way, the geography of their move within the EU is fundamental to their lives after retirement through the structural reality of the EU and member states.

Lifestyle migrants: choosing France

Twelve interviewees articulated being in France for work-related reasons. These migrants tended to be based in or on the outskirts of Toulouse, where many of their employers are based (see also Puzzo, 2007). The importance of work and careers is also identified by Scott (2006:1112-1113), whose typology of Britons in Paris indicates that “the professional ‘career path’ is the most significant motive” for migration. This finding offers an alternative view to work which has been focused upon Britons in the French countryside (Benson, 2007, Drake and Collard, 2008), and which therefore overlooks the qualities, motivations and lifestyles associated with Britons in cities (Buller, 2008).

Among my other interviewees, thirty-one people expressed being in France as fulfilling a desire to live in this particular country. At the younger end of the scale, Patricia and Mark have plans; “things we’d like to achieve throughout our life and moving to France happened to be one of them”. Three decades older are Eliza and Samuel, living in one of the oldest bastide villages in the Tarn:

As far as I was concerned, it has been an intention, not even a dream, from a very early age. Samuel got sucked in on the end of it because I preferred French life to English life. I used to feel at home as I stepped

off the boat this end, and hated going back to the UK, so it was just the thing to do as far as I was concerned.

It was also “just the thing to do” for others. France “left a big impression” on Albert when he holidayed in the country as a child, and when “there was talk of moving out of the UK” with his then partner, Albert “wanted to live in France because of the history” that was personal to him. When speaking with Sue, her passion for France is communicated through her language and her animated face as she confesses: “I’ve always wanted to come to France, that was a forgone conclusion”. Having purchased a house in France during their working lives, Allen and his wife moved in permanently when they retired and have a sense of inevitability that France is the place they will see the rest of their days: “we came to live in a French environment. I want to die in France”.

How these people come to be here is related to a personal desire to be a part of (what they understand or imagine to be) France. It is something very particular, as Allen captures in wanting to live in “a French environment”. The Nashs agree, confirming that “the reason you come” is “because you want to be a part of that particular life”. The Berrys, a couple in their eighties, moved to France when Shirley retired. She had “always wanted to live in France, simple as that”. It was an easy move for her, she tells me, “to live where I wanted to live”. The cross-border movements expressed above are predominantly described in terms of being self-motivated and intentional choices to live in France. What is evoked is a migration closely aligned with that expressed through the concept of lifestyle migration which refers “to an increasing number of people who take the decision to migrate based on their belief that there is a more fulfilling way of life available to them elsewhere” (Benson and O’Reilly, 2009:608). It is therefore also about France imagined as a spatially bounded “place”.

Who are these people making a choice to come and live in France, and what enables them to make the move here? The premise of academics researching lifestyle migration is that these people are “relatively affluent individuals of all ages, moving either part-time or full-time to places that...offer the potential of a better quality of life” (O’Reilly and Benson, 2009:1). Using this concept as an analytical tool facilitates building a profile of what Britons would be like if they operated according to the model of lifestyle migrants. Heuristically, the deductive assumptions also offer insight into how the most typical of lifestyle migrants come to be in France. As their personal stories grow increasingly complex, the model’s framework needs to be relaxed to consider the nuance of personal experience. Quality of life, after all, is a subjective and personal view of the world, which is not isolated from individual (financial and family) circumstances.

Starting with a loosely defined “quality of life”, the decision to live in France was recounted in these terms by Maria. She and her husband were both working in London, “both had quite prominent careers” but, in their thirties, life was unfulfilling and had a sense of imbalance about it. Maria continues:

The only time that we really had together was a Sunday and we had quite a busy social life and so usually a Sunday we were so exhausted, and then you’ve got all the one hundred and one jobs you try and crash into a weekend. So we had, for a long time, thought that the quality of our lives was unbalanced and had wanted a different quality of life and a different way of living.

They chose to leave London and took over a small business in the French Alps where they could work together free of the constraints that different professional networks imposed upon them. Lifestyle migration is defined as an ongoing project – a continual search for a better way of life (O’Reilly and Benson, 2009). Maria displays such characteristics as she explains how she and her husband worked in the Alps “twenty-four hours a day for six months of the year and then you collapse”. Leaving this

lifestyle behind, the couple moved to the Midi-Pyrénées in 2008. Now in her fifties,

Maria reflects on their initial move from London:

Maria: *Having this life now, at the end of the time we've spent, so compensates for everything else because the bar life wasn't really the kind of thing I was totally happy with and it was the business and it was a means to an end and having this at the end of it is brilliant.*

Fiona: *What is it that you feel you have at the end?*

Maria: *We felt that we would like to go somewhere where the weather was better than the UK but we'd have a more seasonal year so we'd be able to see spring and autumn, and we wanted a house with a garden for the dogs, to grow vegetables and basically live a more normal life.*

Fiona: *What is a typical day like for you here, in comparison?*

Maria: *Really lazy [she is laughing].*

They seem to be happy in here, having found a slower pace of life and once again freeing themselves from constraints associated with employment. On the surface, this couple might be the model lifestyle migrants involved in the project to find a better quality of life, where employment is not the priority. It is also about being part of something and somewhere specific. Nancy, the mother of two boys, appears to be another ideal type lifestyle migrant:

I worked so hard when I was in the UK and I was a young mother... I'd finish at 7pm in the city and get my train back and I was knackered. But because I had the boys I wanted to spend time with them, they went to bed about 9.30pm so I could spend time with them. You worked, you lived to work.

Narrating dissatisfaction with her life in the UK, Nancy shares a vision with other migrants that life after migration is much better. Although she continued to work full-time, the greatest value for her was being able to negotiate work around the needs of her family. She now meets her sons when they arrive home from school and enjoys playing a greater role in their lives by being present more often.

If these two examples are the ideal types of lifestyle migration, they are representative of active persons looking to improve their work/life balance, and therefore representative of seven other interviewees. This figure accounts for younger or more middle-aged Britons, but within the more rural areas there was a higher concentration of older British residents for whom full-time work or professional careers ceased in the UK. Among my respondents, couples aged sixty and above made up the largest cohort of people residing outside of metropolitan Toulouse, comprising just over 25% of my interviewee sample. Their moves were not articulated in terms of renegotiating a work/life balance, instead they tended to talk about life as a comparative project between the “home” and “host” situation, comparing various aspects of what life is or used to be like “there” in relation to “here” (See Benson and O’Reilly, 2009). These types of “push” and “pull” factors are covered substantially in earlier and more quantitative works exploring what attracts migrants to France (Buller and Hoggart, 1994a, Gervais-Aguer, 2006). The people I encountered expressed many of the same elements; “better lifestyle”, “better climate”, “nicer environment”, and articulated them as an “escape” from constraints (work, family, financial situation) and negative presentations of life before migration. For example, after describing a negative life in the UK, Gerald sighed with relief “you come out here, you think oh yes that’s a much more enjoyable restful life out here”.

Exploring some of these factors a little more deeply, the essence of France for the older migrants I met living in the countryside was that it was more traditional and, as Ellie tells me, “like England was fifty years ago”. Sipping tea at their chateau, Bert nods enthusiastically, agreeing with his friend’s comment:

Yes, it’s like England was. I grew up in a little village in Sussex and it was wonderful. Even though it was wartime you never locked your bike and you cycled into the village. People trusted each other and were polite to each other, and all these things have gradually eroded to nothing now.

Here you still find that civility and the charming French people who are always polite and they always say good day, good morning.

In his seventies, Bert is still a keen cyclist and he never locks his bike; a testimony to the civility and trust he believes exists in the French countryside. Bert's feeling that life in France is meaningful because it reminds him of life in the UK fifty years ago is shared by other interviewees, as well as Britons in other parts of France (Buller and Hoggart, 1994a), Britons in Spain (O'Reilly, 2000), and by the media (Mayle, 1989, Oyler, 1961). This perspective reveals how migration can be driven by consumption; the purchase and appropriation of a perceived image of French life. This vision is also geographically situated: the secret to France's comparative attractiveness lies in the countryside. Fraser, who purchased his home in France when he retired in 2003, commented on its appeal:

- Fraser: *I think I wanted to live in the countryside first before I decided I wanted to come to France, but I've always liked France; like the atmosphere, like the people, love the countryside, like the food, like the feeling of civilisation that you have in France*
- Fiona: *Everywhere in France?*
- Fraser: *Oh much more in the countryside. I think country people are much more easy to get on with than town people*

Fraser draws attention to the people he could imagine meeting in the French countryside, people who have lived there all their lives. Fraser is more comfortable mixing with such people he believes he shares the same values with. Lily and Michael articulate the French countryside as a place where "family values" remain strong, and speak specifically about "families acting as families" when they sit down to eat dinner together. Isabel offers the same assessment about her own family of five, and their sitting down together for dinner in France. These people paint a spiral of decline around the UK from which they have "escaped". In comparison, France is the antithesis of all that is bad about the UK "over there". The comparative reasoning works in terms of describing life in France as somehow better than the life prior to migration, but it is a narrative of comparison that is expressed most often by residents outside of Toulouse.

These are essential attributes accredited to France as a territorially bounded entity through which people detach themselves from the UK (mentally denationalise) and re-attach themselves to France (mentally renationalise).

Families with children below the age of fifteen account for thirteen of my interviewees (24%) outside of Metropolitan Toulouse. This cohort articulates another example of the countryside as a comparative advantage to the UK, by emphasising the “freedom” that they feel their children have in the French countryside. Mandy is typical of the mothers encountered:

We decided that actually we'd have a higher quality of life here in terms of space for the children, and freedom and a more relaxed upbringing. There's a lot of fear in England around children, people are getting silly about ridiculous things like climbing trees and playing in the park, but there's also the whole kind of thing about children getting kidnapped and paedophiles walking around and that type of thing, which you don't really feel here, the kids are free, you see them running wild all over the countryside which you don't see in England.

Nancy feels the same, adding to the layers of complexity involved in how she comes to be in France:

Nancy: *The main reason we came to France was so the children would have exactly the same upbringing as I had in England. I wanted them to have the freedom of movement*

Fiona: *Freedom of movement?*

Nancy: *I wanted the kids to have the freedom where I don't constantly have the worry of looking over my shoulder and worrying about too much traffic, too many people, aggression...*

What Nancy might be looking for is more freedom for herself as a parent, to be free from worrying what could happen. She evokes a similarity between France now and the UK of her childhood “thirty years ago”. The point here, as with Lily and Michael, is that France is evoked as an imagined place based upon a very personal and subjective sense of quality of life and individual experience. Interviewing mothers in urban Toulouse, the contrast with rural perceptions is considerable. Wendy is quite blunt about things:

Some of the people who come here, they all go on about how wonderful France is and it's just so safe and its so this and so that. And I thought it isn't, and it has a very similar crime rate to the UK, it has as many risks Both my children had been attacked. My son was just leaving school, he was going off to the physio and he got hit over the head with a metal bar by a lad who wanted his mobile. Then my daughter was at the cinema and she got her hair cut off.

What might someone who has grown up in this environment think about freedom?

Eighteen year old Miles lives on the outskirts of Toulouse, surrounded by fields:

Here there's not much to do, maybe because I live in the countryside, it's not ..it's less accessible to everywhere, whereas whenever I go back to England there's always things to do. It might be because I live in the countryside here

His freedom is constrained by lack of things to do and lack of personal transport to allow him to reach other places. He, as many other young people in France leaving school and university, considers moving to another country in search of work or higher education (Favell, 2006). Thus far, these accounts reveal how a move to France can be based upon a quality of life that is defined loosely in relation to personal values and the way in which France and the UK are perceived, (partly) experienced and represented to them by media and other forms of representation²⁵. Britons are able to try this lifestyle for themselves through the EU's freedom of movement. Paradoxically, EU "free movement" is about giving the opportunity for people to realise actual moves between specific places (as they imagine them) and which is evidenced in the way that the UK is articulated as distinct from France. Many Britons seek to live in France, which they imagine as a distinct territory with different characteristics from the UK, and in this way they articulate moving *inter-nationally* from within the confines of one country and its boundaries, to another.

²⁵ A large amount of autobiographical books, and website blogs describe the process of moving to, and living in France. While they touch upon the difficulties, the landscape evoked is quite idyllic (see for example, Sharp's, 1999 account of *A Year in Provence*)

An affordable lifestyle

The quest for a better way of life is highly individualised and wrapped up in subjective aspirations and experiences, but it also appears to be embedded in more material aspects at the level of both one's personal financial situation and broader economic conditions (Gervais-Aguer, 2006, King et al., 2000). This is related to Buller's (2008) argument that migration patterns correspond to shifts in macro-economic concerns (p.81). Scott (2006:1100) situates the British movement to France as a classed and geographical migration where the French countryside is "the affordable bucolic idyll of the British middle classes". Interviewee Phillip puts it slightly differently: "it's an affordable rural escape". What he refers to is a higher quality of life at a more affordable price. Ian illustrates how this influenced his move to France:

I was a chartered accountant with a private practice and I rather went off the whole idea and then decided I'd rather sculpt and paint and play with toys and took early retirement because we could afford to live in extreme comfort out here than in England [sic].

Waves of British migration to France can partly be explained by the economic relationship between Britain and France (Buller and Hoggart, 1994a, Buller, 2008). It becomes common to hear Britons talking about land and property in France being cheaper than in the UK (at the time of fieldwork), and how the exchange rate at the time of their purchase generally worked in their favour so that they received "more for our money". Interviewees spoke about a lifestyle that was cheaper than they had been used to in the UK, or of having an improved lifestyle on the same budget. Pam and Clive, in their sixties, had been living in their new house only one week when I interviewed them:

Pam: *I was already retired when Clive got made redundant.*

Clive: *Bless them.*

Pam: *Which gave us a bit more capital than we expected to have at that time. We knew we could have something a lot nicer than we could ever have afforded in England, you know, in terms of the space. We've got 3 acres here, that is a lot.*

Clive: *What we could have afforded in England, there's absolutely no comparison to what we have here.*

Their comments are typical of older migrants I encountered, and similar could have been quoted from Phillip, the Nashs, and the Devons, among others. For the Turners who wanted to establish a Bed and Breakfast (B&B) business, the costs in the UK were too high. Malcolm explains the plans they had:

I was made redundant in 1999 and we decided that we'd like to have a go at doing B&B and had originally planned to go to Norfolk from Essex but realised that prices had gone up too much for us to be able to afford a decent size house

Priced out of the UK, the couple explored the option of moving abroad and chose to move to France. Here they bought a property to be their home and from which to run their B&B, and also a piece of land that they could one day build a separate house on. The lower cost of property was therefore expressed as a positive attribute to France. These financial rationales work for younger people too. In Rosie's case, the crucial aspect of living in France involves being able to own her house outright and to "have security of a roof over our heads come what may". In this respect, the economic reasoning behind a move was not difficult.

Such economic boundaries can be seen to facilitate migration (Buller, 2008) by providing favourable conditions between differentiated economies (including exchange rates and housing markets²⁶), but can also hinder migration and the way life is lived in France. These boundaries are dynamic. For Allen, who is retired in France and finances his stay by converting his sterling savings and pension into Euros, he summarises what has happened recently:

It's bad news at the moment because the exchange rate isn't particularly good. When we came the Euro was two-thirds of a Pound and now the

²⁶ When eleven member states adopted the Euro as their new currency in 1999, the UK continued with the British Pound as its currency.

Euro is about the same as the Pound so we're lost about a third in the last two years.

It is a difficulty that British people have encountered before. The Fentons accept that this is something one has to put up with:

This is the third devaluation since we've been here; 1992, 1997 and now. Until the UK come into the Euro there's not much you can do about that. I think that's the one observation we've made.

However, the rate of exchange between the pound and the euro reached its lowest monthly average in January 2009 when one pound would fetch 1.08962 Euros. The concern surrounding this emerges when British people have budgeted on a rate that has been much higher. The Nashs made many calculations before they moved to France in 2002:

For most of the time we've been here it's been between 1.40 and 1.50, it did drop at one point to about 1.35, but then came back up. When we've looked at budgets, we've always worked at about 1.40 to be on the safe side, and if we've got better than that great. So effectively it's 10% down on what traditionally we've worked on, which effectively means all our income is 10% less than it used to be.

They admit making further calculations based on a rate of exchange at 1.25, but never dreamed it would go so low. The tale is familiar. It is of most concern to those people with fixed incomes in sterling, especially those reliant on UK pensions, where the value of their pension has fallen when examined from the perspective of turning it into usable Euros. There is concern among respondents and a sense that they have to "wait and see" what happens with exchange rates and the economy more generally. I am often asked rhetorically and optimistically "it has to bounce back, doesn't it?". How long people can wait partly depends upon other assets. The Edwards explain how they negotiate finances living in France. They live off three main sources of income:

Jamie: *The rental income is, I suppose, one quarter of what we live on and in a normal year, a normal sort of period of time, incoming investment is the rest of it. A small part is a pension that Kay's taking early. Since we're not getting anything out of the investments, we're spending capital until the market picks up and starts paying investment again. The reasons why*

we don't have the income we did a year ago are exchange rate, and equities and dividends paid, and low interest rates on bank accounts. It's made an enormous difference to our income.

Fiona: *Is it a concern to you?*

Jamie: *We know we can pull our horns in and survive. So if it continues for another year like this we'll be fine. If we really are in the mud of a whole depression that lasts ten years we will have to start really pulling our horns in. So yes it's a concern, but only a concern in so far as the extent to which we have to change our lifestyle. We've done that before and it doesn't worry us.*

Changing one's lifestyle to adapt to France is one thing. Changing one's lifestyle to take account of currency rates is something more frequent and perhaps less able to be planned for over the long-term and at moments of difficulty. At times such as this, it is potentially useful to be able to seek support from family and friends.

Social networks have long been used in migration studies to explain how people migrate, often because networks are considered to provide the channels for the process of migration itself (Tilly, 1990), as they link previous migrants with potential migrants between the countries of origin and destination. Sometimes referred to as "social capital" (Portes, 1995), the concept of social networks expresses the value of membership in social structures as a means of accessing scarce resources (jobs and housing for example), gaining information, reciprocal exchange, and emotional support through family and friendship ties, political affiliations and other modes of membership. Such links, mainly between family and friends (although I have explored employment membership above) were particularly relevant to how many Britons come to be in the Midi-Pyrénées.

Relationships, family and friendships

For three interviewees, migration was connected to romance and the institutional structure of marriage. Julie moved to France in 1978 at the age of 21 when she married

a Frenchman she had met in the UK (her town was twinned with his).² Mark and Owen are also halves of bi-national marriages. The former met his wife in France and he is now immersed in family life with two teenage children. While his career brought Owen to France, he admits that he would “be back in the UK now” if it were not for meeting the woman who became his wife, with whom he now has a daughter. Cross-national marriages are a symbol of the integration occurring throughout Europe (Diez Medrano, 2008, Favell, 2008a) and part of the ongoing reconfiguration of how Britons come to be in France. Diez Medrano (2008:9) remarks that “Europeanization means contact, direct or virtual, and without such contact it is difficult to see how people from different European countries would intermarry”. While the geographical opportunity structures for meeting potential marriage partners have increased with EU pro-mobility policies, communication networks through transport and the internet are also understood to play a role (Houston, 2005). The mixing of nationalities emphasises the need to think of “the British” not as a homogenous group of people, but as individuals with heterogeneous experiences that provide context to who they are. Cross-national marriages are also part of widening network-mediated migrations as family members from the UK often follow relations to France in the capacity of visitors, temporary or seasonal migrations, or on a permanent basis.

Half of my respondents had either been introduced to the Midi-Pyrénées through having family and friends in the area already or have been responsible for bringing in new residents. When Sue, her husband and two daughters moved to a village in 2006, her parents were not far behind:

Sue: *We arrived in the October and my parents arrived in the November.*

Fiona: *Was it an independent move or did they follow you?*

Sue: *Yes, they followed us. They always said they would retire to Brittany or the Vendee somewhere like that because we've got*

friends in Brittany, but they have bought a place here, ten minutes away.

She reveals that her husband's parents might also be moving to the same *departement*. These kin networks provide temporary accommodation and assistance in finding property and information, or registration with such things as the health service and utility companies, as well as support more generally.

Another example, Rachel, followed her husband, with their two sons, when his job took him from the UK. Her mother also made the move.

She was on her own in the UK, and she was in a position where she's a widow and I'm an only child, and .. she just had her first grandchild, so that was it. We thought well what are we going to do, and in fact it was my husband asked her to come.

First they moved to Chicago and then transferred to France. Rachel explains the logistics:

Had we remained in the USA she [the mother] would have had to keep applying for a visa. ...and they couldn't keep guaranteeing that they're going to let somebody stay on if they're not a direct descendant or a spouse of the person who's working there. So this was always hanging over our heads and they could have turned around and said no at anytime. When she came here, there's no problem. It's the EU and there was no problem with her being here from a legal aspect or having to provide any kind of authentication of what she was doing.

This example reveals the opportunity structures created for EU citizens, and the relative ease with which families are able to remain together through mobility. In this case, the ability to realise migrant-networks was based upon individual agency and structural forces in terms of immigration policies.

Gary is another case, explaining how he came to live in France to be closer to his daughter and two grandsons. Having retired, he was no longer tied to a particular place for his job and he chuckles when he recalls how his daughters bullied him into retiring abroad:

The girls were on the phone to me each day "come on Dad, South West France, you know you'd love to see your grandson" so I have to confess that that was a major motivation for me.

These family connections also work the other way around, bringing adult children closer to their parents, especially, I observed, when children of their own were involved. Four of the six younger interviewees, below the age of forty, lived within half an hour of (one or both of) their parents. Carina's house adjoins that of her parents, she moved from the hectic and bustling city of Barcelona when her parents left the UK to find a permanent residence in France. Her parents offered her an opportunity to set up her own business alongside one that they were planning:

They were basically offering me a lifestyle of a free house and a business over here. Yeah, it sounds wow, so I said yes of course, pack up my life in Barcelona, drive to France, spend the next 3-4 months living in a tent while we looked at property.

Carina is convinced she would never have come to France had it not been for her parents' link providing a form of safety net beneath her. Carina moved on the basis of not needing to search for work or a property through her own means, thus making the move a rational and easier one for her (lowering the costs of mobility). Three other daughters live ten minutes drive from their parents: - Rosie, Mandy and Katy, who each have young children. For Rosie and Katy, their parents provided valuable emotional support when their marriages came apart. Rosie tells me:

The marriage broke down and my mother lives up the road from me here. My children were one and three at the time, and it made a lot of sense to be close to my mother with two small children.

Katy faced a time of turmoil as her marriage ended at the same time as her son was diagnosed with a disability. Embedded in family networks, Katy built up a life close to her family in the Tarn:

We came here because my parents are living here and doing up a house. And we came to have a holiday of about three months and then stayed. It's been really good because it's been difficult at times, especially when Adam was really really poorly. It's been great for my children to have

their grandparents. I love that they've got such a close relationship with them. And I'm really close to my parents.

These experiences reveal how family networks typically smooth the transition into a new place by providing a sense of familiarity, comfort and support. As another example, when Mandy moved back to Europe with her American husband they considered whether to live in the UK or France but:

Because my parents have lived here fifteen years, this is an area I know pretty well and am very comfortable with and we came up here because my friends were already here.

The family connection provided social and human capital in terms of introducing Mandy to other people, and helping the couple to purchase a house, thus making Mandy's transition into France much easier.

Family networks provide a significant channel through which several persons come to be living in this area. However, mobility can place a great strain on relationships as illustrated in Ley's (2010) work, where marriages can come apart and families become split across great distances for various reasons. Favell's (2008a) ethnographies also illustrate how relationships can crumble in the gap created by intra-EU mobility "opportunities" which pull people along different routes, in opposing directions. Subsequently, the freedom of movement of persons is not always to be seen as an opportunity.

Friendship connections (and more distant kinship relations) play a role in how my respondents come to be in France. Here, a number of people tell me how their friends arrived for a holiday (as tourists) and returned to purchase their own property. Sarah and her husband holidayed in France when her parents were house-sitting in the Tarn-et-Garonne and

...were seduced by the loveliness of around here, and the really brilliant food and wine. We really got sucked into the whole wine, mushrooms and foie gras, so we just stayed. We also realised we can do it here (continue running their own businesses from France) so we thought why do we have to live in a basement flat in Clapham when we can live here.

They saw a better quality of life with an “escape” from London and the “rat-race” of daily commuting. Initially, the number and extent of pre-migration connections between Britons in France surprised me, but over time such stories became familiar and I recall overhearing three couples in a café counting how many friends and family they were responsible for having introduced to life in France. The winner claimed five additional families.

EU “scape”

I have discussed the role that the economy plays in bringing Britons to Toulouse, the imagined “France” that attracts many others to more rural areas of the region, and the networks of connections between family and friends. In all these aspects, the EU remains fundamentally undisclosed as having any specific influence on individuals’ decision-making; a finding corresponding to research by Drake and Collard (2008). Britons in France are not seeking denationalised lifestyles as Favell’s (2008a) intra-EU migrants appear to be, but nevertheless, the EU is there, albeit taken for granted, in the background. Hannah summarises what five other interviewees comment:

I’m just a Brit. that lives in France. I know technically I am, but I think of myself as a Brit. who has chosen to live in France and we’re all allowed to as Europeans.

The EU enables the mobility of persons, making it a legal possibility to move more “freely” than in the recent history of nation-state-societies. This is partly achieved through the ongoing creation of an EU “scape”. I borrow this concept from Appadurai (1990) but draw upon Urry’s (2000:35) definition of “scapes” as “the networks of machines, technologies, organizations, texts and actors that constitute various interconnected nodes along which the flows can be relayed”. Urry’s scapes are not

entirely different to the networks identified by Castells (1996) which are configured by interpersonal relations of communication. Urry identifies several scapes including “transportation of people by air, sea, rail, motorway roads, other roads” and “fibre-optic cable for telephone, television and computers”. At the scale of the EU, these scapes enable a significant number of Britons to live more easily in France (Diez Medrano, 2008).

Commuting to the UK is a popular option for Britons in France, as a Monday morning flight from Toulouse to Gatwick airport allowed me to observe. For interviewees Rita and Diane, France provided the best location (out of a choice of France, Italy and Switzerland) at the time from which to commute to London on a weekly basis:

From here you can get to three good airports; Toulouse is one hour's drive, Carcassonne an hour and a half and then Rodez airport we have used.

These airports service a range of destinations throughout the UK (although some are seasonal). Both Luke and Diane have elderly mothers in the UK and they needed to live somewhere close in terms of travel distance or time. For Beth and Pam, the advantage of France was that they could both be near to children, an advantage expressed through transport connections. Pam has calculated that she has lost no time-distance from her son by moving to France:

While our son's in Aberdeen, he flies through Amsterdam to come here because of connections and routes, it takes five hours for him and, you know it is the same as when he drove to see us in Nottingham from Aberdeen

Transportation networks throughout the EU are part of the way in which a monotopia is created (Jensen and Richardson, 2004) through infrastructure, and liberalisation measures in the air transportation industry which have been linked with the lowering of travel costs throughout the EU (McNeill, 2004, 2009). Fifteen respondents suggested that an important criterion to them when selecting potential areas to purchase property

was the location within "convenient" or "close" distance to an international airport with connections to the UK (see Faucon, 2008). Even the escapists, Michael and Lily wanted a property within an hour's drive of an airport. The reasons are diverse, from commuting and shopping, visiting friends, and celebrating birthdays or weddings, to a trip to the dentist. Laurence tells me that he has a wardrobe of clothes in his flat in the English capital and another in his tiny Tarn village. He is not quite sure where he spends the most time. Phillip even travels to the UK to have his haircut in a French "gendarme" style.

As Urry (2000) indicates, it is not just air transport that is significant, but other routes and channels. Shirley used to drive north through France to reach the ferry port at Calais in order to commute to London on a monthly basis. The Woods lived in London and used their second home in France for holidays. When the couple had three children in four years they decided that it was time to "up sticks and move out of London into the countryside". The London home was sold before the family had found somewhere to move to and without an immediate place to live they decided to spend a few months in France. Hannah explains that they decided to make their second home their principal residence and continue to run their UK-based businesses by commuting; "the A68 was built in 1992 so we could reach the airport which made commuting possible". "It just worked out" claims Hannah. I bump into Hannah's husband at the airport as we both wait for a flight to London. This is one of about 150 flights he takes a year within the EU and beyond, but one which balances with the couple's desire to continue living in France, supported by EU infrastructures which provide channels for increasing mobility options.

Hannah and Thomas might be neither typical economic migrants nor lifestyle migrants but they cross borders in the course of their daily lives (their children all attend boarding school in the UK). For Britons living in France and who commute to the UK, their physical movements make these people more like the classical transnational migrants, living, working and generally negotiating their daily lives between two countries.

Intra-EU migration to France

The aim of this chapter has been to present simultaneity of stories-so-far in order to produce multiple layers of analysis and insight into the diverse nature of the British population in the Midi-Pyrénées. Addressing the question of who these migrants are reveals the complex nature of their identities as inseparable from their experiences. Sally provides a particularly good example of this entanglement as she describes herself as “following” her husband to France, as if in a marginal position to him, but then taking on the role of motherhood and, eventually, regaining her independence and chosen lifestyle through teaching.

Individual and household experiences explored here begin to provide intimate portraits of intra-EU migrants as ordinary people, going about their lives encompassing both mobility and settlement. The categories adopted to help analyse these migrants and their motivations also link this work with existing research, for example with the typologies highlighted by Scott (2006), relating to Britons in Paris, and to the categories of “couples”, “spouses”, “global elites and corporate movers” and “social spiralists” identified by Favell (2008a). It is possible then to analyse, to a certain extent, how Britons compare to other intra-EU migrants. One of the distinctions, for example, is that many Britons encountered appear to fit the category of lifestyle migrants in search of a better way of life. Such migrants tend to be living outside of urban areas. The

same could be said of Strüver's (2005) Dutch migrants slipping across the border into Germany for an improved quality of life. In comparison, those Britons for whom work-related activities were a central aspect of their decision to move, appeared to be more abundant in Toulouse. Similar work-related motivations shape the lives of intra-EU migrants in other cities. These patterns suggest the need for further research of the types of intra-EU migrants moving to live in a range of cities, as well as towns, villages and rural areas (see Rogers, 2000).

Britons in France not only appear to share some of the migratory patterns and trends of other intra-EU migrants, but also with migrants outside of the European regional context. Some of the Britons working in Toulouse share aspects of their migration with bankers and accountants transferred to Amsterdam and London, for example (see Favell, 2008a). They also reveal similar styles of movement to labour-based migrants elsewhere in the world - accountants and financiers (Beaverstock, 1990; 2002), and business professionals more generally (Ley, 2004, Walsh, 2006; 2008). In this way, Britons in France may be considered part of a global economic network. This is particularly observable in relation to those Britons working within Airbus and its subsidiaries. While researching cricket in France, I conversed with some of the Asian players (Indians, Sri Lankans and Pakistanis) who were working in Toulouse through similar networks that had brought Britons into Toulouse. In the case of the Indian members, they mainly worked for Indian companies in Bangalore and Hyderabad which were subcontractors for Airbus. These connections indicate the wider networks that Britons are embedded within, and highlight how processes of European integration are only part of broader processes taking place at the global scale (see Fligstein and Merand, 2001).

The reasons expressed by Britons, concerning how they come to be in the Midi-Pyrénées, are shown to be diverse. They highlight the opportunities that the EU generates for all (sorts of) persons to seek the homes they desire, the lives they wish, and the jobs they strive for, beyond the scope of the nation-state. The nature of EU free mobility rights today means that, unlike fifty years ago, when a person working in another member state retires from that employment, he does not have to return to his country of origin. Furthermore, the EU has been shown to play a role in facilitating free mobility through the development of a European "scape" (or, as Jensen and Richardson (2004) explore, a *monotopia*). An evolving network of transport and communication provides the means and channels through which people are able to move physically between member states, with greater frequency and speed, in many instances. All of this is accomplished within the structural realities of the EU.

Despite the removal of some borders that have previously impeded the movement of people, and "ever closer union" between member states, the structure of the EU remains almost invisible to, or taken for granted by Britons in France, for the majority discuss their migration and lives in relation to the scale of the nation-state. In this way, Britons present their moves in ways that evoke the spatially bounded territories associated with space defined as place (Castells, 1996), and therefore maintain the notion of international migration between the UK and France, rather than internal migration within the EU. The impacts of this are explored in the next chapter.

Having focused on the diversity of experiences in this chapter, some of the richness and complexity that often emerges in biographical accounts has been marginalised. Thus this chapter concludes with a vignette; part of Kay and Jamie's biography of how they come to be in the Midi-Pyrénées. The complexity involved, although explained fairly

logically, is representative of all the respondents. This particular biography is selected as it highlights a wide range of issues negotiated in their migration decision-making process for instance; border control (visas), economies, language barriers, psychological and imagined borders.

Jamie: *We were living on a boat before France, and the decision-making process about where we were going to settle when we decided to leave the boat was a bit complicated because it could have been anywhere, or anywhere that would have had us.*

Kay: *In terms of residence permits and things like that, could have been Australia, could have been the States, could have been any island that we called on when sailing, "I wonder whether this will be the place we'll end up". It wasn't going to be the UK because house prices were out of our range by the time we came back off the boat.*

Jamie: *But it's an unfortunate comparison, in that I suppose we're not just comparing being in France with being in another country.*

Kay: *We're not very good at these sorts of English niceties.*

Jamie: *We were genuinely offshore, where were we going to actually settle. And we thought of Spain, we thought of France, we thought of anywhere in the EU, and French was our best language.*

Kay: *I think the main reason was we definitely wanted to come back to Europe. I think that was a decision. Just missed Europe.*

Fiona: *What was it that you missed?*

Kay: *Well we missed the seasons because we were living in the Caribbean and I think if you've been born and bred in countries that have proper seasons, your whole body and everything starts to miss them. And I did, a lot. And so wanted to move somewhere which was seasonal, and also there's the thing about where are your friends and they were in Europe, and family in England. Although Jamie's daughter's in Australia. So in terms of where in the world, Europe seemed the right place to be.*

Fiona: *And no resident permits to worry about in Europe.*

Jamie: *No. And so it came down to language. We could speak good French and could live here.*

Fiona: *Then how did you narrow down to settling here in the Tarn?*

Jamie: *This is going to sound terribly controlled, but that's exactly how it was. I took a map of France; I went on the internet and looked at departments in France and the average house prices that were for sale. All of the departments that had an airport because that was going to be very expensive because the English were flooding in and raising the house prices around the airport. It had to be away from the coast because that was where the property prices were higher. Not too far North because we wanted to garden. Not too high mountainously, not too wet, not too dry (laughing), and we ended up with 2*

departments, Tarn and the Gers. We'd never visited either. So we did a tour of each of them for 3 weeks in the winter. We could have got a better value property in the Gers, but we liked Albi and so we looked in this area. We have no plans to move

Kay: *Well, never say never.*

Jamie: *[laughing] For the time being it's a subject that comes up every now and again and we just go for a walk in the garden.*

This vignette illustrates that while Kay and Jamie's complex decision to live in the Midi-Pyrénées was a highly subjective process, their choices were simultaneously embedded within broader structures, of which the politico-legal realities of the EU were acknowledged as a significant component. I also learn from the couple that the EU continues to shape their daily lives after migration, as they seek to settle in their new home and manage their finances at times of economic downfall. Negotiating the daily realities of life after migrating is explored in the next two chapters.

Chapter Six

Politico-legal boundaries

National identity is facilitated by the state's legislative framework, which delimits and regulates the practices in which people can partake, the spaces in which they are permitted to move, and in many other ways provides a framework for quotidian experience (Edensor, 2002:20).

People's everyday lives are characterised not only by continuous adaptations, but also by collisions with various structures of time and space (Lykogianni, 2008:135).

Everyday lives are always embedded in broader frameworks of which they are an integrative and constituent part (Giddens, 1984, Portes, 1995), as indicated in the above quotations. As both British citizens and EU citizens, the intra-EU migrants at the centre of this empirical work are affected by legislation at two distinct levels (Dijkink and Mamadouh, 2006). In order to explore the extent to which “free” mobility is a reality in a post-national sense, I address the second objective of the thesis to evaluate the politico-legal boundaries that hinder and facilitate “free” mobility, taking into account the nation-state social welfare model and to what extent any continuing frictions to mobility are the result of enduring national-state politico-legal structures. This chapter adopts a more structured approach focusing on the way in which nation-state and EU frameworks impose differential limits and possibilities on these migrants, and do so by drawing upon concepts of citizenship.

This chapter draws upon interview data to explore a range of politico-legal issues. By including personal experiences and opinions in this narrative, the chapter reflects what is true to these migrants rather than the reality of the system. Towards the end of this section, two case studies - citizenship rights and pensions – help to illustrate some of the deeper complexities involved with politico-legal practices.

Citizenship and the welfare state

This chapter distinguishes between “formal citizenship”, as the legal status of an individual in relation to state membership, and “citizenship belonging” expressing a subjective sense of fitting in somewhere²⁷ (Bauböck, 2007). The latter term draws attention to the way in which migrants’ ideas about belonging are carved through politico-legal relations and practices encountered in their lives (sometimes, but not necessarily, connected to formal citizenship). According to Bauböck (2007:19), modes of belonging are not purely subjective but “must be grounded in some factual, dependency” for they are always shaped by socially constructed entities, discourses, policies and practices. In this way, taking Edensor’s quotation at the opening of this chapter, “national identity” could be replaced with “citizenship belonging” to consider how legislative frameworks interact with migrants through network relations, and express themselves in certain territorial nodes as boundaries of daily experience (Glick Schiller et al., 2006). Interviewees, Rita and George illustrate how a sense of belonging (in terms of personal security and well-being) can be facilitated by the nature of particular state structures. At this point, they are explaining how they selected to live in France over other EU member states:

George: *If the heart rules the head I would have said Italy, but with a wife and responsibility - Italy is a wonderful country but the system doesn't work.*

Rita: *In France if you fill in the forms and follow the rules it works, and works beautifully. Whereas, we know in Italy the admin and bureaucracy is heavy and doesn't work.*

George: *France is a socialist country through and through and they do protect you, sort of, from the cradle to the grave*

George refers to the concept of the protectionist state which, through welfare institutions, oversees the pastoral care of its national citizens throughout their lives

²⁷ I apply Bauböck’s (2007) definition of citizenship in this thesis as pertaining to the internal aspects of the relation between an individual and a sovereign state and regulated by domestic law. In contrast, nationality refers to the international and external relationships between such actors

(Burgess and Vollaard, 2006, Schierup et al., 2006). For this couple to feel secure and anchored they want to live where they feel able to trust the social welfare system to take care of them if needed.

In modern Europe, social welfare is typically linked to the nation-state-society model where national citizens make a series of investments (obligatory payments made through the social security system), in return for the provision of public services and benefits related to sickness, disability, child rearing, unemployment and old-age (Soysal, 1994). Bauböck, (2007) refers to these as “citizenship rights” but as Soysal (1994) indicates, some territories grant rights and protection to non-citizens too, and thus membership in a state that is not “their own”. EU citizenship differs substantially to classic notions of national citizenship, and the EU does not claim to be a welfare state. However, it does stipulate certain rights for EU citizens, which includes their legal ability to claim important forms of social entitlement in other member states (Ackers and Dwyer, 2004)²⁸. Access to a “good” welfare system that will deliver social rights on an equal basis is what George seeks, and he is correct to compare different social systems across member states because of geographical difference in the level and access of provisions (Dwyer, 2001, Feldblum, 1998, King et al., 2000). In this way, *de jure* borders within the EU demarcate a degree of territorial containment which migrants are required to negotiate when their trajectories collide (Lykogianni, 2008).

²⁸ It is worth noting again that receiving member states are obliged to treat EU citizens in the same way as its own nationals (Article 12 Treaty of Rome).

Becoming (a) resident in France²⁹

We're not British resident anymore, we chose to be resident and domiciled in France. We've changed everything; tax, social security, insurance, car registration, banks, health care.

Diane and Luke define moving to France as detachment from the UK and reattachment, or renationalisation, to a new politico-legal territory. They list a range of administrative factors that reveal their adaptation to a new regime contained within the border of their new territorial residence. Sandy describes this process as “a bit like being reborn”. For these Britons, choosing to live in France means behaving in a certain way, which Eric terms “the French way”:

The bureaucracy... you've got to remember you're in somebody else's country; you're not in your own so you've got to do it their way

Eric does not perceive himself as part of French society, thus providing an example of spatial differentiation between “us” and “them”. Furthermore, he draws attention to a spatial differentiation in the way that things are done that requires one to “perform” to a new national rhythm. I refer to “performance” as the art of producing the now and as a metaphor to highlight the ways in which identities and spaces are enacted and reproduced as dynamic elements in continuous production through particular sites (as stages) (Gregson, 2000). For Eric, this is about performing to a French script in order to participate on the French stage (see Soysal, 1994). Sue also articulates the notion of performance but with a stronger sense of obligation:

As soon as you enter the country you're meant to be registered for tax...you have to be registered with the right people.

Her claims are accurate for some Britons in France, however not all Britons have to register as tax residents and how one is classified as either/or is a complex process with

²⁹ I refer to two forms of resident status: Firstly, an unofficial status of dwelling in a place (temporarily or permanently); secondly a legally recognized French resident. According to domestic French residency rules, a British national is a legally recognized resident of France if he holds a residence permit or if his principle abode is in France. However, since 2003, British nationals in France are no longer legally required to hold a *carte de séjour*. Residency status is significant for tax purposes. It is also not exclusive, and one person might fulfil two countries' residence criteria simultaneously

cross-border assets, residency, and employment taken into account (Blevins, 2010). For Sue, whose only property is in France, and all her family's employment is in the same country, she is liable to pay tax in France from the day of arrival. In addition to the legal requirements of residency, there is a moral side to performing in a "French way", which was expressed by Steve, Margaret and the Fentons;

...if you come here then you do as the Romans do and you pay in the system, you don't just come here and take all the good things like the cheap wine, lovely weather and nice food.

Laurence illustrates the moral argument further with a quirky story:

Here [in Tarn] you get people with Aveyron plates picking mushrooms at the side of the road and the locals will stop and ask them what they think they are doing, "those roads are paid for out of our taxes so those are our mushrooms". I know of an incident of it happening but what I actually saw was Aveyron plates picking up snails on the road and a local car stopped and told them it was wrong. So the people got in their car and drove off, they accepted the moral force of the argument.

The moral of the story is that one cannot have something for nothing. The idea is connected with the binary concept of citizenship: reciprocal social and political relations between an individual and a political community that marks a boundary between insiders and outsiders (see Soysal, 1994). Although legal citizenship is often a mark of full membership to a polity, certain of the same rights are granted to legally recognised non-citizen members, as is the case for Britons (as EU citizens) in France (Kofman, 2005).

The examples above express the requirement for people to register and contribute to the French system. It is seen as a necessary part of becoming a legal resident in France or as seeking a personal sense of security and well-being. Consequently, Britons perform to the legal requirements of nation-state systems in an integrated Europe, which simultaneously responds to and reproduces the EU as a jigsaw puzzle of clearly defined pieces, each one representative of a nation-state system (Antonsich, 2008). Looked at

another way, the opportunity that Britons have of accessing similar social entitlements in France as in Britain is a fundamental condition of EU citizenship and a reminder that the nation-state regime coexists and interacts with a post-national mode of integration. Consequently, both the EU and the nation-state provide significant fixtures and flows through which daily lives unfold. The enquiry requires a closer examination on personal experiences of these interacting frameworks to assess the extent to which they facilitate or delimit settling in France, through the way that borders are perceived and encountered. Where does one's EU citizenship status fall short against national citizenship, thus differentiating between French citizens and non-French citizens? As Schierup et al, (2006:5) argue; "the very future of the European project is dependent on the successful framing of new inclusive modes of citizenship" so it is an important question to ask.

"Different country, different system"

Edensor (2002:93) emphasises how arriving in a new place inevitably leads to migrants "come[ing] across a culture full of people who do not do things the way we do them, who draw on different practical resources to accomplish everyday tasks". Among a range of "mundane everyday tasks", Edensor argues that popular competencies take place without conscious reflection, aspects such as the ability of citizens to fit into the regulations imposed by the state. For roughly thirty-four of the Britons interviewed, administrative formalities were predominantly organised in France³⁰. For all but one interviewee, French administration was described as being "confusing", "time-consuming" and "bureaucracy for bureaucracy's sake". Discussions were characterised by emotive language and were frequently illustrated with negative stories of personal experience. French tax, for example, is "a nightmare" and "a pain in the neck" while

³⁰ I say roughly because situations changed over time and multiple experiences were encountered within one household

the country's bureaucratic issues are "teething problems" and "uphill struggles" that cause "confusion", "difficulty" and "defeat". The metaphors convey the sense in which the "nasty bits; the financial bits and the health bits and paperwork" fuel a negative stereotype of French administration:

Well I think the administration is a pain in the [posterior], but it's just typical French administration.

French system's so un-wieldy, it's so difficult, it's very slow, it's very bureaucratic.

The Fellows were surprised to find things were not organised as they were in England:

We basically didn't know how the system works. You assume that everything works on an English basis around Europe, it doesn't. I think it's a learning curve, it's a different country.

This learning curve is sometimes steep but nothing stands in for personal experience:

Michael: *We spent a year buying French Property News³¹ and looking through that and learning all about the legal side of France and how it's different from England, and the medical side and the tax side, all the financial side, so we knew an awful lot in theory before we came.*

Fiona: *How did that information compare in practice.*

Sandy: *A lot of it is rubbish.*

Michael: *A lot of it is no substitute for experience.*

Experience can be a costly learning process:

I have made a huge amount of mistakes with the system, which is why they now owe me 1000 Euros. I didn't know what that small print meant and I didn't know what I do now.

Each of these interviewees identify a system that is distinctly "different" and while it was generally accepted that living in a foreign country required one to do things differently, it remained an enduring barrier in an integrated Europe. No amount of habitual experience with the UK system provided currency for French bureaucracy:

Catherine: *In the UK everything's sort of done for you, you don't have to think about your health, it's all done. So when we came here, I didn't really know what to do.*

Luke: *Well if you're in England you know the system properly because you're parents will tell you about it, or your*

³¹ French Property News is a magazine and internet guide to buying property and living in France.

grandparents or your uncle, or your older brother or sister or whatever. But here, it's that much more difficult because of that.

Various administrative requirements were part of a different politico-legal culture requiring Britons to adapt in order to settle legally in the country, highlighting how state boundaries continue to pervade migration for intra-EU migrants and distinguishing insiders from outsiders (see Favell, 2008b, Strüver, 2005).

Transnational lifestyles

A classical notion of citizenship maintains that it has a territorial threshold. If that threshold is crossed, one's status, rights and obligations change in relation to a particular territory (Bauböck, 2007). This has been one means of protecting and regulating a state's citizens (Torpey, 2000), but in the context of EU free movement, how does the nation-state organisation of social rights play out? For people moving to France long-term, there is a strong pattern of adapting and realigning themselves with French systems - a pattern of renationalisation. However, the EU offers opportunities for free mobility to work and live across member states, but can people seeking transnational lifestyles really live the lives predicted for them and retain a certain element of personal security and well-being? How do people living and working in different member states reconcile the patchwork of different welfare regimes in their transnationally integrated lives?

Annette and Steve take it in turns to chat with me in their chateau while the other mixes lime and cement in the rain outside; they have set themselves a rapidly approaching deadline for finalising their renovation project and starting up their anticipated *chambre d'hôtes* (B&B) business. The couple wishes to live and work in one country and we start talking about social welfare:

Because we've got our main business interests in England we stay, as far as that type of stuff, resident in England and not France. But I think we'll next year become resident, it depends a bit how the financial stuff goes and if we're making good money and don't need to work in England. It would be nice to be permanently here, but at the moment it is just not feasible.

Steve expresses the feasibility of becoming an officially recognised French resident based on having a regular and satisfactory income in France rather than the UK. At present, the couple continue to travel to the UK where they have their client base. What this means is that Steve and Annette remain tax residents of the UK and committed to the social rights available there. The problem Annette highlights is that “we want to be living and investing in our future in France, not in the UK”. Investment is about preparing for the future, making social contributions in respect of their healthcare, pensions, or unemployment benefit, and the couple fear that their UK contributions are not portable across the state border. Annette asks rhetorically “what if it doesn't work?”, hence the reliance on having a regular income in France. It is noted by King et al. (2000:13) that “‘welfare state’ sources of support, including not only income benefits but also many subsidised and tax-financed social and health services, are commonly conditional upon residence in the home country”. The impact of bureaucracy organised at nation-state level, and interlinked with where one is employed, means that people such as Steve and Annette “don't ever feel secure” and like “invaders to a sort of French life” as if they do not belong there. This is why they express an urgency to complete their renovation project and align themselves more securely with the French bureaucratic system.

Laurence is another Briton with residency in the UK, officially at least.

Laurence: My residence for all purposes is the UK. Tax too. As circumstances change and the application of the rules change and make me resident of France then I would register with the French health service and get a carte vitale and those things, but at the moment my circumstances are such that those things

are all in England. My tax is in England. My dentist is in England and all sorts.

Fiona: *And what do you base your residency on?*

Laurence: *The number of days spent in a country. But the rules in England are you have to spend at least 3 months there, and the rules in France are that it's the place where you spend most of your time....The real question is what are your circumstances and those vary for everybody. But it's something one has to face, you can't ignore it.*

For Steve, Annette and Laurence, the potential to change things illustrates residency as a dynamic process of renegotiation and reproduction, but simultaneously exclusive to one or other country. These citizens are trying to organise their activities in accordance with the nation-state because it is perceived as problematic to do otherwise (Favell, 2003b). Laurence also raises the point that these rules and regulations are in a constant process of being reformed at both EU and member state levels (see Blevins, 2010, King et al., 2000, Payn, 2005). This changeable situation can be connected to the notion of duality for Favell and Guiraudon (2009:563) suggest that the everyday lives of intra-EU migrants are:

Producing serious legal and institutional feedback effects that are forcing EU policy developments to deal ad hoc with issues concerning citizens' access to pensions, welfare benefits or health care across borders, or dilemmas to do with marriage and divorce in international private law.

The nature of such changes is not highlighted but it is suggested that the EU is moving towards more cross-border fields of entitlement (social security, social service and health service entitlements) as a result of developing social policies to the needs of mobile EU citizens (see also King et al. 2000).

Until a more unified European social welfare space emerges, self-employed migrants Sarah and Stuart hope to freeze their residency status in the UK. Sarah is a self-employed events organiser registered in the UK. She has clients throughout Europe and the Middle East and organises events across a range of countries. When I ask from where she runs her business, Sarah shakes her head:

When I'm organising one event I might be travelling on another event and basically wherever I have my lap top and my phone I can work....I have this 0870 phone number, so it follows me around wherever I am. Basically I'm a mobile worker; I can work where I am.

Sarah describes her own company as "footloose" but she concedes to the need to abide by state legislative frameworks. Sarah and Stuart manage this situation to optimise personal benefits:

You can be registered wherever you want, but you have to pay the tax in the country where the work takes place. People don't really know what conference organisers do so people might not cotton on to that. So there is sort of a way to fudge it and a way of not being totally legal. We've been here three and a half years and we still pay our tax in the UK, but it's not quite right.

Sarah has an economic residence strategy that promotes the couples financial advantage. Aware of higher social costs in France than they currently pay in the UK, Sarah relies on her business being footloose and uses her email and a decentralised telephone number so that she can work anywhere in the world; in their home in France, at her family's house in London or at various venues around the globe where Sarah is organising a conference. Her mobility is key, as she spends her time in many other places than France, although if all the days were added up, Sarah calculates spending more time in France than anywhere else – a condition that may make her eligible for French tax residency (Blevins, 2010). By maintaining a UK address (on a property which is rented out) the couple maintain a strategy for remaining UK tax residents. In this way they avoid the higher costs of the French system. Such cross-border strategies are used by some transnational migrants in Favell's (2008a) research, and in Strüver's (2005) work.

The downside to this lifestyle is that while the couple has access to healthcare in France (through their European Health Card); they make no contributions to the country in which they wish to retire. Dwyer (2001) clearly shows that for retired migrants who have never worked in the host country, access to social rights are limited, particularly in

contrast to those people who have worked in the member state they wish to receive social security from. King et al. (2000:178) observe the same conditions.

In the UK, most of the additional benefits for low-income, retired, dependent and disabled people have a residential qualification and are not payable to a citizen who has retired abroad – even a visit abroad can compromise a person's eligibility. In short, at present this group is strongly disadvantaged if they move from their home country to another EU state. As with the "Eurostars" (Favell, 2008a), Sarah and Stuart are young and feel able to take risks, there is no rush to settle down and no children to provide for. Favell (2008a) indicates how bringing up children in a foreign location raises a range of issues that, when negotiated, seems to renationalise families and ground them in specific places. What concerns Sarah the most (apart from saving money she might have to pay as tax) is health care. Although the couple access public healthcare in France using their European health cards, Sarah is concerned about the unexpected:

Sarah: *I would like to be in the French health care system, which we're not at the moment. Stuart broke his leg and he went back to London and he had a big operation but it would have been better if he'd had it here and not traipsed back with a broken leg.*

Stuart: *Well....*

Sarah: *I know you would rather have had it in London.*

Stuart: *Only because I would have more visitors.*

Sarah: *I know, but it's a silly reason It's silly to fly all that way. But if one of us got cancer and we needed regular chemotherapy. Then what are you going to do?*

Stuart: *That's what it comes down to*

Sarah: *That's what I think, that's why we need to start paying tax in France so we can get into their system*

For Sarah, the concern for personal welfare is prevalent and she is aware of the impracticalities of travelling away from "home" when one is unwell. If their residency and tax is "not quite right" there is also the question whether they would be denied benefit as residents of the UK and therefore refused treatment there (Favell, 2008a). For Stuart, his personal sense of well-being is shaped by having family and friends nearby.

Both concerns draw *de facto* boundaries around settling into life in France, and living cross-border lives that are neither clearly here nor there. While they live strategically to benefit the most from lower social costs, the future investment of this choice of lifestyle could be compromised, highlighting the challenges to integrated living through disparate systems. Favell (2008a) and King et al. (2000) emphasise how important the disparities between national systems of social security, health services and social services are to older intra-EU migrants in particular when “the sense of unease expressed by these young free movers gets even more troubling when the question of long-term planning is raised” (Favell, 2008a:205). King et al. (2000:178) suggest that

EU retirees are faced with a dilemma when they move to another member country, namely whether or not to declare themselves as permanently resident. The advantages and disadvantages of so doing are particularly difficult to estimate when the individual has properties in, or income from, more than one country, and when they spend substantial time in two or more countries.

Make the wrong decision and life can be restricted – a counter perspective to the “free” mobility logic and a feature of life that Charlotte has to get used to. An airhostess working out of the UK but living in France, Charlotte is a French tax resident and needs to be meticulous about planning her trips to visit family and friends in the UK:

It's not easy to spend extra days there because you're only allowed ninety days in England and that's difficult because all the days that I go to work, that's all added up as minutes and so I can't really spend that much extra time in England. The tax man is counting.

The impact of regulations and abiding by the rules produces a tension in Charlotte's life that turns it into a mathematical formula about who she sees and when. Her movements are highly regulated and hardly the type of situation one would imagine in a Europe without internal frontiers.

Despite the rhetoric of an open and frictionless space of movement, for these Britons attempting to live and work in two different places, mobility brings uncertainty and impacts future lives (see Favell, 2008a, who describes the possibility of a denationalised

lifestyle only as a temporary measure, suggesting that as people settle, they become renationalised). Such persons were unsure of their rights and the portability of contributions made in one country and sought elsewhere, not only indicating that geography matters, as does residency from a legal perspective of being recognised as belonging. These physically transnational Britons are influenced by the limitations of cross-border entitlements as they attempt to live mobile lives that have not already been organised for them between integrating member states. To live in France would involve opting out of the UK welfare state, a measure that these people are not quite prepared to take, and one that Favell (2008a) argues is only a temporary solution. However, to achieve their mobile lives in two places at once (and to seek the best of both worlds in terms of paying less tax) entails various tensions and sometimes the need to be flexible to “fit” the systems³².

The “alternative welfare system”

The persons above face certain types of EU boundaries which present impermeability or difficulty for their long-term movement and access to rights. Another cohort of Britons moving to France appears to face fewer barriers as they move through the corridors of MNCs. In the experience of twelve interviewees, settlement in France, in relation to state legal frameworks, was achieved with ease. The corporate structures, through which they have employment and come to be in France, function as an alternative welfare system where the costs of negotiating taxation, social security, health care and pensions were considerably lowered. As a result of frequent worker mobility, the supply of lucrative deals, and high remuneration packages, which may include access or funding towards accommodation and education for the employees’ family, MNCs are well practised in offsetting many of their employees’ mobility and resettlement costs.

³² Ong’s (1999) notion of flexible citizenship expresses how some people manage their dual citizenship to always seek the most advantageous rights. One retired interviewee told me that “we’ll look at changing our residency status to France because at our age we’ll pay less tax here”

For Sophie, guided by company structures, her move to France was “a smooth transition”:

Sophie: *It's a perfect package where I haven't got to go and find a job, find somewhere to live all off my own back...I've had people helping me. Before I came to Toulouse they appointed a relocation agency to help me find an apartment and sort my electricity contract and my telephone and find me someone to bank with...so they were involved with the day to day getting set up and getting settled in Toulouse, and they organised my removals so they came and moved my stuff to France.*

Fiona: *What was the cost to you of moving?*

Sophie: *Nothing. They paid for all my relocation, they've given me three month's rent just for moving, for the inconvenience of it, and they give me an allowance for my rent and my utility bills, and they pay for two flights home a year.*

Sophie's corporate experience is shaped around a highly managed “perfect” package that “cuts through the red tape” to reduce the anxiety of moving and the time it takes to settle in, thus allowing Sophie to concentrate more efficiently on her new job. Through a network that involved her employer and commercial-based relocation agencies, Sophie was fast-tracked into settling in France with all the mundane aspects of moving and resettlement taken care of³³. The commercial agency is similar to the type used by Derrick, in the introduction to this thesis.

The contrast with non-corporate movers is distinctive: Pam and Clive were still waiting, after four weeks, for France Telecom to sort their telephone line; in separate cases, Sandy and Rod have been negotiating problems with their Broadband services for over a year; it took Patricia five months to have her electricity connected; Sue visited the tax office four times, and after a year discovered she still was not registered; while Albert has been waiting for his carte vitale more than twelve months. A “perfect-package” not only prepares all these mundane activities in advance, but wraps them up and presents

³³ Through contacts and information gathered in Toulouse, I come across a number of relocation agencies, two of which had been established by Britons in the city to cater specifically for the population of business personnel and their families coming either short- or long-term to Toulouse.

them “ready-to-go” to the employee. Should there be any problems, there is also someone on hand to help out, as Liz confirms:

The support - really we were very very lucky with BAE [Systems], the support was there and obviously some people had more support than others, we tend not to pester, but if it was something we really couldn't sort out ourselves we'd go

Having experienced moving abroad once before, Rachel was reluctant to embark on another family move and is convinced that without the company's assistance “with all of the move and all of the paperwork” her family would “have seriously thought hard” about committing to the second move which brought them to France.

In terms of the administrative fundamentals of social welfare and personal security (taxation and social security) corporate employees responded to my questions with relatively short and matter-of-fact answers. This was quite unlike the emotionally-charged language and lengthy stories of (often ongoing) experiences recounted by other Britons. After the fifth corporate-related interview, I was able to correctly anticipate the response “well the company deals with that”, a reply which reveals just how mundane these aspects of life and settlement can be for some people. Phillip provided me with a little more detail into how things were set up for him under a “seconded contract”³⁴:

We stayed as employees of BAE and so we continued to be accruing pension rights in UK, we continued to pay UK national insurance, even though we were in France. We had French medical rights, but French government allowed people in our situation to basically continue with allegiance to UK social security system whilst being in benefit from French social security system. So it was a bit of a hybrid There was no break in pension, no break in anything else and we continued to be paid in the UK

For EU migrants who reside outside their country of affiliation to live and work, Daniel informs me that there are a number of different contracts, which dictate where an individual employee's tax and social security payments should be made (see for

³⁴ Seconded refers to an employee working abroad for a temporary period of time who is expected to return to his country of affiliation at some point in the future. With Airbus, someone may be contracted as a secondeed for a maximum of ten years

example, Millar and Salt, 2008). The payments made by Phillip would not compromise his access to future healthcare in the EU (Payn, 2005). Owen recently encountered the change over from a secondee contract to a French contract and he highlights how this impacted his perception of administrative matters in France:

Owen: *Initially I was on an expat contract so I had my apartment paid for, tax paid, social security. The whole expat package. Then I switched to a French resident package and got a full time French contract.*

Fiona: *What was the impact of changing to a French contract?*

Owen: *There are two things. Supposedly there's more job security in France, so you would hope to benefit from more job security, but I don't know in practice how true that is. Secondly, the complexity of the pay slip and all the things you have taken off your salary, and then also your tax declaration because your tax isn't taken off your salary directly, so it's a lot more complex to learn to understand. I think the negative aspects of living in France is anything to do with work contracts, anything to do with tax, it's extraordinarily complex. Like in the UK, mainly people get taxed at source, so at the end of the month you know how much you've got to spend. I'm now in a situation where I don't even know how much my tax bill is for 2007, because they haven't decided yet. That's definitely a negative point.*

The largely frictionless space created by the company as mediator between migrants and national systems is a valuable condition cherished by those who know what it is like to move with and without support. Wendy arrived in France under the guidance of this alternative welfare state but later the family established their own business:

We didn't think they were very supportive but when we looked at British people who had come out, who were on their own and seeing what they had to tackle we thought yes, they have helped us. There was always somebody at the end of a phone if you did have a problem.

Wendy highlights how isolated they were from the practical mundane everyday tasks initially. The contrast is also evident when Luke compares both sides of the process in two different countries:

Coming to live abroad on your own is vastly different than going to live abroad with a company supporting you. I think that was one of the biggest lessons we learnt...It came as a shock because it was us relying on our own resources rather than if things got sticky turning around to someone in the office and saying "can you do this for me, or how do I do

that?" you know. They helped you find a house to rent, they organised a car, I asked the secretary and if I needed anything doing she did it.

These stories illustrate the differential experiences encountered among Britons in France and their relative perception of the (im)permeability of state-structured borders. Many of these aspects are mundane, but can provide practical obstacles and moments of tension as people negotiate life in another member state, and may impact the length of stay beyond the country of affiliation (Dwyer, 2001). While in France I hear stories of people who had to leave because they could not reconcile their personal and business taxation or social security entitlements.

Before summarising this chapter, two case studies provide a means of discussing some of these issues more deeply. In the first instance, the practice of voting draws attention to the reciprocal side of national citizenship, as one of the core political rights for citizens. It connects with EU citizenship in some ways but also highlights how different levels of citizenship coexist in the EU. The second case study, relating to pensions, draws on two interview biographies to highlight the complexities involved with moving across borders.

Citizenship rights

The majority of respondents sought to renationalise themselves by adapting to French politico-legal routines (or a migrant's employer took care of these measures on their behalf). However, the extent to which people were able to adapt was conditioned by their status as EU citizens and national citizens, which in all instances for my respondents, meant non-French citizenship. Geography still matters in the project of EU integration for it shapes the benefits that people are able to receive from the state in which they live (King et al., 2000).

For Katy there is no problem, the French system works well for this EU citizen. Her disabled son requires full-time care in a special school and at home and Katy has had no difficulty accessing carer's allowance and housing benefit:

There is a reciprocal agreement, because we're the EU and provided for as a European citizen... They assess your disability and they have decided that I need to be at home at least 50% of my working time to care for my son so they provide money in order for me to do that. It's really great. The benefits out here are incredible.

It also works well for the mothers I encounter who receive children's allowance; although in Hannah's case it seemed to work too well for a time as she received child benefit from the UK and France simultaneously. In these ways, membership in the French state appears equal to that of French citizens. However, there are also instances where this is not perceived to be true. Julie, the twenty-year old daughter of an Airbus employee (but also an EU citizen in her own right) completed her secondary education in France and has since been looking for full-time employment. The search remains fruitless beyond low-paid temporary cleaning jobs and she feels that there is nowhere to turn for support apart from her parents. Julie's mother is disappointed at the response from the French system:

Flo: *Julie's not earning anything like the minimum wage and she gets nothing at all from the French system. They keep coming up with different excuses.*

Julie: *I've tried to ask for benefits.*

Flo: *But they keep coming back with excuses why she can't get it: We're not in the system, we're not French enough.*

Julie: *If you're single and female and a foreigner you're at the bottom of the pile.*

Flo: *Oh they're quite open about this. [One of the employment agencies] suggested she took out French nationality if she wanted to get a job; the French have always looked after themselves.*

Fiona: *How does that make you feel?*

Julie: *You feel isolated, you feel alienated, but they're just playing by the rules and if you don't do exactly the way they say you should do, you just can't get by.*

Fiona: *And would you take French nationality to play by the rules?*

Julie: *I don't know, even though I'm bilingual, I don't feel French enough to become French. I still feel too British to want to become French.*

In the opinions of Flo and Julie, the system is not treating them in the same way as it would treat French citizens, and they perceive this to be a result of distinctions being made between “us” as non-French citizens, and “them” as French citizens. Frustration is clear on Julie’s face; she wants to be independent but feels that she is not being given a chance. She also reveals some confusion about where she belongs – a sense of diaspora (see p.92)? Lisa is another Briton who believes that being non-French is a disadvantage in France when seeking employment:

The French, they are very much in the EU, and the EU has rules, but the French don't actually obey them, they just make their own rules And forget freedom of movement of work, as far as France is concerned it's yeah, ok. The guy basically was making it incredibly difficult for me to work here.

Lisa is a pharmacist with qualifications earned in the UK. She later explains how she would have had to take exams in the French language before she was able to use her qualifications in France. The situation is thus much more complex than being defined as French or non-French. Without the necessary standard of French, Lisa would have struggled to communicate in the workplace, despite her specialist qualifications. This highlights the barrier that language can produce over and above other perceived boundaries.

These examples are perhaps more complex than they at first appear. However, the perception that one might be treated differently reveals a general feeling of difference between two nationalities and their rights. Connected with this, Diez Medrano (2008) notes how “subtle forms of discrimination by national origin when hiring workers” operates as an obstacle to the “free” movement of workers. He argues that this is part of the process that maintains the EU as a “quasi-single market” in terms of labour mobility.

There is one potential solution available to overcome such sense of difference between French citizens and non-French citizens; to really belong, legally at least, one needs to become a French citizen (Ackers and Dwyer, 2004). This is a route closer to assimilation, reinforcing boundaries of nationality and moving away from idealistic aspirations of EU integration. Sue is the epitome of migrant-assimilation, taking the path that national governments have dreamed immigrants will go (Alba and Nee, 1997). She has made a “one-way trip” to France and wishes to have that legally recognised:

We will apply for French citizenship, we decided before we came that we would. Definitely. I know I personally feel like I've come home which is kind of peculiar.

Her motivation is spurred by an emotional sense of belonging, but it also brings additional benefits that are not granted to the non-French EU citizen, most significantly, a democratic voice at national level.

EU citizens are entitled to vote and stand in local and European level elections in their country of residence even if they are not nationals of that member state (Article 19 EU). France was the last member state to apply this directive in 1998, six years after it was signed, and participation was restricted by stipulating that non-French EU citizens could not become mayor or deputy-mayor (Collard, 2010). Connected to the seeming “reluctance of the authorities in France to promote European citizenship in practice...through political participation in local elections” (Collard, 2010:94), is the association of the right to vote with acquisition of nationality rather than residency. Britons in France have been able to vote in two rounds of local elections (2001 & 2008), but as EU citizens they have no political representation at the national level. “And why not?” demands George, “you don’t have a choice about paying”:

Rita: *We think it ludicrous that we are not allowed to vote nationally because we pay our taxes, we are living here. We are governed by rules here so why shouldn't we be allowed to have our say?*

Give us all the benefits, let us have a say in what's going to happen in the country.

There is a twist too; Britons living outside of the UK who do not register to vote in UK parliamentary elections lose the opportunity to vote there after a fifteen-year period (The Electoral Commission, 2008). Thus, Britons in France could lose the eligibility to have a democratic voice at the national level altogether.

Some Britons regard being unable to vote at the national level as a form of exclusion from the country they choose to live in or find themselves living in. Phillip, like the Fentons, would like to vote in France:

I feel that the fact I'm in France, it is their country, but at the same time, as a European and as part of the developing European-entity, then I've a right to have a view and put it forward, and see it represented the best I can. Also I'm paying taxes. No taxation without representation. If they're taking my money they can take my vote as well.

There are mixed scales and mixed expectations here. As an EU citizen, Phillip has a right to vote in European elections and have a voice at that level. He also pays taxes locally (such as property tax and refuse collection) and has the ability to vote on local issues that affect him. However, Phillip also recognises that he contributes financially at the national scale, and this is where he feels that there is no return to his contributions. According to Favell (2010:193), the right to vote is "one of the most obvious political dimensions of the notion of European citizenship, and the element that links the participatory rights of EU citizens as political actions, with their economic and social rights as consumers and wage earners in a free Europeanised common market". For Britons in France, EU citizenship falls short of offering them a fully integrated lifestyle alongside the national norms of citizenship they so readily embrace in other aspects of their lives. To find a voice at the national level outside of one's country of affiliation, a British citizen must become a French citizen.

Wendy believes that voting is “the only thing you can do if you want to change things”. Edward, who is secretary of a national organisation, has experience of many things he would like to see changed at the national scale and considers it “a personal insult” that he is unable to cast a national vote. Annette laughs, “I think it’s all to see if we’re really serious about staying”. She might have a point; asking immigrants to commit to the country before having a say in its future is coercive towards assimilating immigrants, and a popular means through which states have controlled their population (Torpey, 2000). The conflict arises, partly, when EU citizenship is heralded as a post-national or cosmopolitan status (see for example, Favell and Recchi, 2009). While this might be experienced in relation to some issues, in other areas, the nation-state remains the fundamental politico-legal entity in which people live out their lives.

Eliza provides the final thoughts on this matter. She is currently the only respondent in the process of completing procedures to apply for French nationality. I ask what inspires her:

I think practical and legalistic. There is an advantage in one of us [either her husband or herself] getting hold of French nationality, because you never know what idiocies may go on about the EU, and if one of us got French nationality we would be reasonably safe in staying here. So I think it makes sense on an emotional level but also on a practical level, just in case.

Eliza is aware that their ability to live in France is defined by the EU, but just in case the EU disintegrates, she wants to hold French nationality and therefore be entitled to remain. Above all others, these issues of voting and belonging, and having a democratic voice in a country are symbolic of the different levels of citizenship experienced in the EU, based on whether EU citizens live within their own country, or live outside their country of affiliation (Kofman, 2005). Another issue arising is pensions, which is notoriously connected to the welfare state and nation-state.

Pensions

This case study on pensions is developed by contrasting the (on-going) experiences of George and Rita Fenton, and Daniel. Some background material provides an introduction.

Policies that support and enable free movement have gradually spilled over from economic concerns to social policy areas through EU treaties and bilateral agreements between member states. In this integrating EU, where policies first catered for workers, one might expect that the principle of free mobility would guarantee the portability of pensions and pension schemes as a means of securing frictionless mobility for workers changing countries (Andrietti, 2001). Pensions systems in the EU, however, remain embedded in nationally bounded schemes, often preventing them from becoming mobile (Dwyer and Papadimitriou, 2006, Eckardt, 2005). This spatial immobility is reflected, to a degree, in the EU's avoidance of "hard" laws to harmonise the vastly different pension systems, and instead shape pension policy based on an Open Method of Co-ordination, which aims to encourage best practice across member states in relation to agreed EU goals (Eckardt, 2005). The impact for migrants can be rather confusing as they negotiate where to save and how to access various statutory (public) pensions, occupational pensions and private pensions (see examples in Dwyer and Papadimitriou, 2006 and Favell, 2008a). In a very simplified manner, Britons are able to receive UK statutory pensions abroad and, before any claims are made, they can make individual contributions to this UK scheme from abroad. Occupational pensions are different and many are not yet coordinated and transferable across the EU (Dwyer and Papadimitriou, 2006). Drawing upon two experiences from the field, the Fentons and Daniel illustrate how the interaction of member state and EU systems can build confusion and obstacles around the concept of frictionless mobility.

Several years prior to his sixtieth birthday, George made enquiries about his public pension rights for he had made pension contributions to UK and French systems throughout his working life. George describes his enquiry as "rhetorical"; seeking reassurance that two statutory pensions could be coordinated across borders. However:

Rita: *There was a hitch because we assumed with all this free movement in Europe that George's years worked here paying into a pension scheme, would have been like a reciprocal arrangement with the UK, but it turned out that once he started to make enquiries that no that wasn't the case. It's two separate things*

The couple hoped to find that the contributions made in France would add to those made in the UK and that the combined total would entitle them to a full state pension from one or other of the countries. This was not the case and George had not made enough contributions in either country to be entitled to a full state pension:

Rita: *If he wanted his UK state pension to be at its maximum then we had to pay in the years that he had been working in France so we continued paying the state pension into the UK.*

George: *We realised we'd be silly not to carry on paying in the UK to complete our full number of years so for a number of years we were paying double. So that was the lack of the integration between the various systems within the EC.*

Fiona: *And will you receive two pensions?*

George: *Yes now I'm 60, but how much is my French pension going to be, because if you take the number of years I've paid in, it's minimal - no more than seven or eight years, so nowhere near the 40 years or 160 quarters that you have to pay to get your full pension, however, I'm in discussion with the caisse regional to see whether they will take into account my UK years of paying in, to see if there is now a better reciprocal arrangement than there was when we first arrived.*

Rita: *At the time it was a big shock. We were a bit horrified.*

George: *We thought, rather naively, that it's all sort of one big basic system.*

Rita: *Free movement.*

George: *And all speak to each other and you couldn't be paying social charges twice, which we have been.*

Rita: *He's now waiting to hear whether there is a way.*

George: *We're still learning about this.*

I left the couple noting that their confidence in EU cross-border entitlements was shaken. Ten months later, I made contact with the couple again to see how these ongoing issues had resolved. George replied in an email:

I am pleased to tell you that the integration was seamless. The French authorities needed to know the years that I had paid National Insurance contributions and the relevant employment information whilst employed in UK. They then did their research and came up with a calculation of how many trimesters I had contributed and a consequent amount of my French pension. All straight forward but good records are needed to back up your claim.

Past his sixtieth birthday, George receives a full French pension that has taken into account the accumulation of his UK contributions. In addition, what he paid above the necessary number of contributions has been refunded. Despite initial concern that things “did not work”, the pension problem for George was resolved seamlessly. The state system works, pensions can be paid overseas and the contributions made in both countries count. This is cross-border cooperation working as it should but as Rita suggested, it was only through George’s tenacity that the issues were resolved and the couple might have otherwise lost valuable income.

However, while things might be easier left to a company to negotiate, Daniel’s story below reveals that they too can be caught in the middle between EU and member state frameworks, leaving the people on the ground, the company and individual migrant, highly vulnerable³⁵.

The trend towards more frictionless mobility for MNC employees is strong among Britons in Toulouse, but it may also offer a false sense of personal security for corporations “in between” state systems (from above), and actors from below³⁶. *The*

³⁵ This interview was not recorded and the narrative is reconstructed from the author’s notes.

³⁶ Smith (2005) proposes the “in-between” as a scale between transnationalism from above and transnationalism from below which offers a more comprehensive understanding of the interrelations between various actors at different scales.

Occupational Pensions Directive “on the activities and supervision of institutions for occupational retirement provision” (2003/41/EC) was adopted in 2003 by the European Council of Ministers to provide an EU-wide framework for pension schemes organised by an employer for its employees. These “cross-border provisions seek to enable multi-nationals operating in a number of EU Member States through subsidiary companies to consolidate their pension arrangements in one Member State” (DWP, 2007:2).

Daniel transferred to France in 1980 and his pension contributions continued to be paid, by his employer, into an occupational scheme based in the UK. This cross-border arrangement facilitated Daniel’s mobility by allowing him to accrue contributions in the same way he would have done had he remained in the UK with the same employer. These spatial arrangements continued for Daniel until, as he tells me, “the people sitting in Brussels in ivory towers got it wrong”. In late 2008, Daniel’s cross-border contributions stopped and, alongside his British colleagues in Toulouse, Daniel was called to a meeting. All were told that as a result of the implementation in Great Britain of the Occupational Pensions (Cross-border activities) regulations 2005 (SI.3381), based upon 2003/41/EC directive, the pension scheme into which contributions were made was no longer eligible to accept cross-border payments. Daniel explains that where the EU defined how an occupational pension scheme should operate, they effectively made some existing systems ineligible for further cross-border (co-)operation.

For three hundred of Daniel’s British colleagues, pension contributions are no longer portable to the UK. Daniel reveals that he is not too concerned as he is nearing retirement and has probably made sufficient contributions that his payout will not be affected. His worries are reserved for the younger employees who are beginning to build up their contributions, and to what extent their futures will be impacted in terms of personal security and social protection. These circumstances no longer allow the MNC

to offer durable and effective pension plans to their existing or potential migrating employees, something that Daniel, and other Britons, have taken for granted. One of the company's main objectives, according to Daniel, has been to make amends as quickly as possible to reduce the impact on its employees.

Fifteen months later I telephone Daniel to discuss how this situation has evolved. He reiterates that the company have "really done everything they can" to sort things out. The long-term solution is for the company to be active in applying pressure for further reform, most probably at the member state level. In the short to medium-term, all impacted employees (those Britons operating on French contracts) have been given new (temporary) contracts that designate them as "seconded". This reclassification enables cross-border payments to continue for a period of ten years, but then what? Daniel suggests that solutions are threefold; to return to the UK; to retire; or to become a French worker with pension contributions made to a French occupational pension scheme. Considering this third option, it remains to be seen whether this disadvantages, or even benefits, the employee financially, and to what extent this might be possible or not (Dwyer and Papadimitriou, 2006).

The empirical evidence indicates some of the confusion surrounding pensions for Britons within the EU, and the frictions that can occur when trying to live out a cross-border life. These findings are no different to the confusions and tensions expressed by other migrants in my research, and fit into the pattern on pensions and future financial planning explored by Favell (2008a). Pensions are fundamental to consider in the movement and stasis of intra-EU migrants, as people are often reliant on them for a certain standard of living. King et al. (2000) explain that such factors influence whether or not migrants declare themselves as permanent residents when they move to another member state. Furthermore, as time passes, occupation and private pensions are of

particular concern as public pensions come under increasing pressure at the member state level.

in order that things might be achieved more quickly. In this way, social networks helped people to negotiate these boundaries.

For some people, aligning themselves with the “French way of doing things” provided an opportunity to establish roots and a subjective sense of belonging to the country, which simultaneously detached them from the UK. This process of renationalising (in politico-legal and social welfare terms) goes against Favell’s (2008a) theory that EU free mobility offers a chance for a denationalised mode of living, even if only on a temporary basis. In comparison to the Eurostars, who appear reluctant to adjust their lives to national rhythms, these Britons, many of whom have made a choice to live in France over any other place in terms of their lifestyle, actively sought to adapt as “the right thing to do” and out of choice. Performing to nation-state rhythms becomes a means of living a normal life as well as situating Britons firmly in the confines of a particular state territory.

For those Britons who do not seek to become permanent residents in France (or feel unable to do so at this particular time), life is a little more difficult to organise across national systems, revealing the gaps within areas of cross-border welfare entitlement. Taxation remains an area where nation-states retain sovereignty, but in terms of social security, social rights and health services, EU legislation changes rapidly and systems have begun to converge. Taxation remains one of the problem areas for Britons trying to live and work in different countries, often as they do not wish to pay higher rates of tax associated with one or other of those countries. In this way, migrants can be seen to generate their own barriers to movement. Thus, the structure and comparative provision of these systems becomes of greater relevance to people who might be able to access both in two different countries. These often shape how lives are organised, for example, in terms of Charlotte limiting the number of days in the UK to avoid paying more tax,

and Sarah and Stuart seeking lower taxation costs by keeping their UK property as their principal address. That these avoidance strategies are possible or must be negotiated is testimony to the EU territory not providing a seamless domain of entitlement. As Diez Medrano (2008) argues, the EU appears to provide only a quasi-single market for human mobility.

Those people for whom mobility is the most “free” in these terms are those moving to France through MNCs, who mediate many of the encounters between individuals and the state. Under MNC policies, arrangements are set in place (through specific contracts) for employees to continue their allegiance to one country’s system while working in another. Any changes that might be made are also taken care of by the company so that mobility is perceived to be effortless. The comparison with non-MNC movers is significant, partly because much research exploring global mobility examines the cases of employees moving between or within companies (Beaverstock, 2002). Similarly, Favell’s (2008a) work explores the lives of working intra-EU migrants whose move may not be arranged through company transfers, but whose settlement somewhere can be eased by their employers; for example through the provision of housing, accommodation allowances, or fast-tracking their resident registration. Those people identified by the EU as workers appear to gain more assistance in negotiating their moves, a theory that fits with the EU’s principle freedom of movement focus on workers.³⁸

Despite the politico-legal reality of integration and free mobility within the EU, the fundamental building blocks – the member states – remain highly significant in the lives of Britons in France. France and the UK remain politico-legal entities with their own

³⁸ Social rights were first introduced in the EU for workers and it has been shown that moving at the age of retirement limits one’s access to entitlements abroad (King et al., 2000; Dwyer & Papadimitriou, 2006).

various systems (and citizen rights), but in addition to this, Britons can be seen to maintain a sense of these relatively autonomous borders and territories by seeking exclusive membership to one or other state. Thus, the continuing significance of the nation-state, as experienced and perceived by Britons in France, is one of the ways in which Europe is not always an area without internal frontiers.

Space as places still matters in the European project as migrants move between member states. Boundaries and territories are made, unmade and remade in ways that often situate these migrants within nationalised ways of life. In Chapter Seven, the social networks of these intra-EU migrants reveal other scales of meaning to the ongoing lives of Britons in France, and the type of socio-cultural boundaries that influence a cosmopolitan sense of belonging.

Chapter Seven

Social networks and boundaries

The forms people build, whether in the imagination or on the ground, arise within the current of their involved activity, in the specific relational contexts of their practical engagement with their surroundings (Ingold, 1995:76).

The European Commission (CEC) (1983:15) states its aim:

To substitute for age-old rivalries the merging of their essential interests; to create, by establishing an economic community, the basis of a broader and deeper community among peoples long divided by bloody conflicts; and to lay the foundations for institutions which will give direction to a destiny henceforward shared.

This chapter examines the extent to which Britons resident in France experience life in what has been conceptualised as Europe without internal frontiers, from a socio-cultural perspective. By socio-cultural, I imply the new and changing relations between people as migrants encounter one another and others (i.e. those already resident) in places of settlement or “contact zones” (Pratt, 1992). Their social and cultural interactions shape what it means to live in a place and how that place is made and remade through migrant networks, practices and social relations (Pratt, 1992, Pries, 2001).

Research shows that migration involves the reconstitution of social relations and cultural patterns (Conradson and Latham, 2005a, King, 1995), which can be represented in a variety of spatial forms including hybrid spaces, transculturation, ghettoisation, socio-spatial exclusion and homogenisation (Massey and Jess, 1995, Pratt, 1992, Shore, 2000, Vertovec, 2009). People and places can be drawn together or set apart through language, cultural traditions, interests, values, and religion – aspects of “otherness” or “sameness” which demarcate barriers around and between different individuals (Sibley, 1995). Such boundaries are sometimes said to be weakening as a result of border-crossing processes of globalisation (Appadurai, 1996, Mau et al. 2008) and

Europeanisation (Diez Medrano, 2003, 2008). In the context of intra-EU migration, Diez Medrano (2008) suggests that groups of EU citizens moving and living across borders (a process of Europeanisation) will come to share a consciousness that denotes solidarities transcending national affiliations. Favell (2008a:118) argues that due to an ease of mobility afforded by free movement laws, an “increasing diversity and *de facto* multiculturalism can be seen among European foreign populations in major western European cities”. He refers to this as “the promise of European integration”; the potential that intra-EU migrants will foster cosmopolitan lifestyles through increased connectivity and cultural contact and therefore endorse unification of the EU and its deeper integration (CEC, 2002, Recchi, 2008).

“Cosmopolitan”, as expressed by Favell, implies openness to difference towards other people, cultures and ways of life in particular localities (see also Beck and Grande, 2007, Pollock, 2000). It is a view of the EU that is not bound by national categories, and therefore an important step towards broadening a perspective of a (at least perceived) borderless Europe transcending national affiliation (Diez Medrano, 2008). On a cautionary note, Mau et al. (2008:7) argue that “there is only a partial overlap between Europeanization and the concept of cosmopolitanism” for the latter “is broader and more encompassing and, hence, exceeds European boundaries”. However, rather than applying cosmopolitanism as a fixed concept, it is a useful heuristic device to consider migrants’ capacity to mediate between different cultures through daily practice in new settings (see Datta, 2009, Vertovec, 2002). Datta (2009:353) for example, illustrates that cosmopolitan migrants use interaction with “others” as practical strategies towards “getting by” and surviving somewhere. An example of this is discussed towards the end of the chapter (p.254). Following this more flexible use of cosmopolitanism, I explore how Britons “get by” on a daily basis through their interactions with other people (their social relations and cultural patterns) and how their

socio-cultural lives fit into the EU (i.e. how their everyday social lives eliminate or create barriers to settlement along the lines of national distinctions). Thus, this chapter addresses the third objective: To evaluate “free” mobility at an interpersonal level from a socio-cultural perspective.

Settling in

As the last chapter revealed, geography matters to the everyday lives of mobile EU citizens as it generates limitations and possibilities. In terms of social life, geography continues to affect interpersonal relations. The process of moving to and living in France brings Britons into contact with other immigrants, French people and, by their own admittance, difference (Diez Medrano, 2008, Edensor, 2002). As part of settling into life in France, becoming comfortable with one’s surroundings and lifestyle in a particular locality, many of my respondents expressed the importance of getting to know people; growing acquainted with neighbours, making friends, finding someone with similar experiences or people with whom to share activities and hobbies. The significance of “lifestyle migration” among this population indicates that work-related activities are likely to be less important to them than leisure time, which makes socio-cultural networks a significant avenue to explore among Britons in France (Benson, 2010a, O’Reilly, 2000).

More than half of my respondents were socially and culturally embedded within distinct groups, for example clubs, societies and associations based upon hobbies, sports, religious affiliation and local activities. These are familiar forms of socialising that characterise the ordinary social and cultural requirements of many English migrants in Wales (Day et al. forthcoming), Paris (Scott 2006, 2007), Australia (Clarke, 2005), Dubai (Walsh, 2006, 2008), Singapore (Beaverstock, 2002), and China (Yeoh, and

Willis, 2005), and other nationalities in Vancouver (Ley, 2010), London (Conradson and Latham, 2005a), and Liverpool (Bunnell, 2007), for example.

Organised activities in France were engaged in by Britons individually, in couples or, less often, as a family, and many pursuits were undertaken as part of a larger group of participants. When asked about involvement in activities, 64% of respondents claimed membership of a club or organisation in France and 72% said that they attended or helped with their village events (*fêtes* and car-boot sales). The range of activities included gardening clubs, a mother and toddler group, a women's group, business/social networks, health and well-being activities, sports clubs (football, rugby, tennis, cricket, fishing and boules) and French language groups³⁹. These sorts of group activities provide the focus in this chapter through four case studies; the English Church, Cricket in France, TWIG and "local" village events. Not only were these group activities accessible to research through my own ethnographic participation, but they provide an important lens for exploring participation and interaction between migrants and the host society, and to the interactive nature of the immigrant population itself (Schrover and Vermeulen, 2005)⁴⁰. The following four case studies illustrate some of the socio-cultural spaces and boundaries encountered and constructed by migrants through their leisure activities.

³⁹ Inevitably, among my respondents were those who did not desire to engage in organised community life, content to remain on the margins or enjoy the solitary pleasures of landscape, home, and individual activity. There were fifteen such examples in my sample but some of their voices are included in relevant parts of the narrative so as not to marginalise their thoughts and experiences.

⁴⁰ My focus here is on the grounded nature of migration networks and practices *in situ*. This is not intended to suggest that these Britons did not maintain significant and regular ties with people and groups in the UK or elsewhere (as nearly all did), but analysis of these more individualised networks is beyond the scope of this thesis.

The English Church

Religion has been described as “a pivotal dimension of transnational identities and practices” (Samers, 2010:284). It is a view which recognises the crucial role religion can play in shaping societies (Holloway and Valins, 2002, Ley, 2010). As a system of meaning that produces culture, religion shapes powerful senses of belonging and, simultaneously, symbolises difference between migrants and “others” (Hall, 1995, Hirschman, 2004). These two factors are visible among Britons in France who practise and create their mode of Christianity through an English church in France.

Realising that I lived within a fifteen minute drive of English church services, it seemed a convenient opportunity to observe some Britons going about their lives on a weekly basis. In the Midi-Pyrénées, roughly 180 worshippers regularly attend English services. I had not attended a service of worship since roughly the age of ten when I was released from having to attend Sunday school. But with research objectives in mind, I set off with a box decorated in green tissue paper, and containing tins of fruit, vegetables and sardines, and packets of biscuits, for the Harvest Service, wondering would this be the same style of harvest service that I recalled from my youth.

Constructing religious spaces

In *Making Muslim Spaces in North America and Europe*, Metcalf (1996) traces the religious life of Muslims across two continents by exploring their social networks (of individuals interacting in new contexts) and cultural networks (of Muslims interacting with one another and the larger community). She also distinguishes physical space (of buildings and visible phenomenon) as a component in the constant reproduction of

religious spaces. I adopt this framework here to analyse the nature and construction of Anglican space in France.

Social networks

The church attended is part of the officially established *Church of England* facilitating services outside of its "England" homeland through its global network of Anglican communities. This chaplaincy was established within the Diocese of Gibraltar in Europe (1980) but its growth in South West France is intimately connected with British residents' geographies as Iain reveals:

In the Toulouse area, growth was stimulated by British collaborations in the aircraft industry, initially Concord(e) and later Airbus... Both led to an influx of British and other English-speaking workers. At the same time, a further congregation developed [several kilometers north] composed mainly of British retirees. Since then, as the area has become so popular... congregations in both centres have grown significantly. In addition, people living some distance... and feeling the need for regular reflection and worship, formed home-based groups in a number of areas... With support from the chaplaincy clergy, these groups have taken root and are now a vital part of our spiritual life

The church is constructed around concentrations of British inhabitants who generate a demand for such services in their new locations. This population is central to the creation of these "English" spaces⁴¹ because this church has a clear function:

The role of our church is quite specific...we exist only to look after expatriate Brits. in the area and we try to make it feel like normal church worship in England.

Although anyone is welcome to attend, services are conducted in English and follow an established practice of Anglican worship. This leads to a distinct group congregating each week, united by particular religious beliefs and the English language. All but one member of the church was British (one French woman was the wife of a British man

⁴¹ I use the term 'English' here due to the relationships between the Chaplaincy and 'England' and not as a designation of the geographical location of the Britons involved

attending)⁴². In this way, the Chaplaincy represents one organisation that in practise caters for Britons in France by reconstructing the homeland.

Tarn services differed little from those I recalled from my childhood; the service books were well worn but essentially the same; the white British congregation filling the pews looked the same with some of the ladies wearing hats and men in suits or shirt and tie; the musical accompaniment sounded similar, but the organ was played through a keyboard rather than the one installed in the church, and even the chilly breeze that cast through the church and made people pull their coats around them more tightly was a memory evoked from years ago, and contributed to my sense of being in an "English" space.

For members of the congregation, the services did "feel like normal church worship" and this brought an element of familiarity to lives lived in France by providing the opportunity to continue practices "here" that were engaged "there". The main difference noted by members of the congregation was the obvious effort undertaken by the church to incorporate a variety of forms of worship in one service. Jim tells me that:

The people who come to church have different beliefs amongst them; some are much more fundamentalist than others, others range from high church to evangelical, and there's a Baptist who comes. We try very hard to maintain a middle way because of the recognition that really there is nowhere else for somebody who wants to worship in English.

Merging a diversity of beliefs into one congregation may differ from the services some people are familiar with, and Claire notes this as the main reason she stopped attending church:

Slowly, slowly it changed from being fun to being preaching and pontificating, and that's when I thought enough.

⁴² Six of my respondents regularly attended religious worship; two couples were involved with the French Roman Catholic church in their villages, while the remaining four participated in the Church of England.

Due to the minority presence of Anglican communities in France, the church attempts to construct multiple denominations in one space and therefore is constantly negotiating the format of "English" space among its congregation. It does not always meet the specific religious requirements that people might have, suggesting the complexity of religious transactions.

The church provided a secondary function as a means of socialising. Cathy, another key person involved with the church, has met most of the congregation:

Some people come to widen their circle of English speaking friends but then they become hooked and want to stay. There are one or two who started off because it is easy: Go to church, meet some English people and it opens them up to other areas.

Beth is an example of someone using the Chaplaincy to meet and interact with other people. Her first year in the area was "lonely" as she and her husband "knew nobody".

I ask what changed:

Beth: *I went to church.*

Jack: *That is what changed.*

Beth: *I said to Jack "right! I'm going to get out and meet people" and I went to church. It's something I quite like doing anyway I turned up one morning with my hymn book with my tunes in and somebody said "do you play?" and I said "very badly", and they said "will you play for us?", because nobody played and they were singing the hymns with no accompaniment at all. The thing was, I met all these lovely people and that was great, so I'm very grateful I actually plucked up the courage to go to church.*

Jack: *If it wasn't for that there wouldn't have been any social life at all*

Beth developed friendships through participation and face-to-face interaction with the congregation and these led to her becoming more actively involved with the church. Warner (1998) suggests that involvement in religion can mean more to people away from their homeland, partly because new relations are forged between members of the community. This appears to be an important aspect of the church, particularly for new or more recent arrivals certain of meeting fellow Britons in this space. It has been

shown that in the early stages of relocation, support from other immigrants is often important in cementing friendships and forming social networks (King et al., 2000).

Beth provides confirmation of this as she made friends with people and connected with (predominantly British) social networks that stretched beyond the church:

From that have come all sorts of things; Helen is organising a group to go and do French conversation classes, and we did a sort of flower festival and I helped with that. And then we're having a coffee morning...and we've been meeting every two weeks to sort of sew things and that's more of a gossip quite honestly than getting anything done although we do things and it's great.

Beth has also made links through the church to a sporting group established and run by British people. In another interview, Claire was a regular attendee of church in the UK and when she arrived in France she found her congregation to be a means of meeting people:

When we first came we were like fishes out of water so it was lovely to go to church to meet the people. English people. It was lovely.

These examples indicate the dual role the church plays among Britons as a place to continue worship in a familiar way, and as a site through which to socialise and meet (British) people through extended networks. The church thus provides an "English" space where homeland materialities and ways of doing things are replicated for the weekly services. For those wanting to guarantee meeting other Britons, this is the place to go to where bonds have been created and maintained.

Physical Space

The physical space of the church is relatively invisible. The church comprises the service sheets and hymn books, the congregation when they come together, and various fêtes and festivities, which tend to take place in private homes. Iain confirms that the church has no community buildings:

We don't have any buildings of our own so we always use Roman Catholic buildings; even the vicarage here is rented. So we rely on the goodwill of the French.

The churches used for services are Catholic churches, the use of which is negotiated with local mayors and other religious groups already occupying that space. In some places, negotiating an Anglican religious space or "time" has caused conflict, and I am alerted almost immediately to tensions existing in Valloux⁴³:

Luke: *When it was all starting up there was a big campaign by a small number of English people to get the Catholic Church to allow them to use the Valloux church for Anglican services every two weeks, and it didn't go down very well in Valloux we understand.*

Diane: *Well it split the community virtually*

Luke: *You can imagine how the local Catholics feel - it's a Catholic church! Now there is always the other side of the argument that it's a church and if you want to create relationships between two schisms of the basically Christian faith this is actually a good thing to do, you know. And in the end they did agree to it.*

Chidester and Linenthal (1995:17) argue that some of the most significant aspects of sacred space which comprise contemporary societies are the "hierarchical power relations of domination and subordination, inclusion and exclusion, appropriation and dispossession" where "...sacred space is not merely discovered, or founded, or constructed; it is claimed, owned, and operated by people advancing specific interests" (1995:15). The English church represents a marginal institution in terms of both the size of its Anglican community and its lack of Anglican buildings, resulting in this minority denomination (in France) relying on sharing religious spaces within existing communities.

I ask Iain whether relations with French people have been positive in the villages in which they meet. At first he hesitates "um, yes they have", but I am not convinced by this reply:

⁴³ Valloux is a pseudonym

Fiona: *Only I've heard rumours about Valloux.*

His wife laughs and agrees "yes":

Iain: *Entirely logical difficulties.*

Cathy: *Yes, but they didn't see them as logical.*

And the story unfolds:

Iain: *My predecessor signed an agreement for use of Valloux church that specified that only a male Anglican priest would celebrate the Eucharist [Holy Communion], despite the fact my female colleague was then in training, and then when she was ordained we wrote to all the clergy whose buildings we used, pointing out this was going to happen. I popped in to see the clergy at Valloux and he drew this agreement out of the filing cabinet which I didn't know existed.*

The agreement was formed at the interface of difference between two denominations. In this incident it remained honoured and the church made arrangements to hold its Eucharist services elsewhere⁴⁴. Similar frictions related to the ordination of women have been experienced with the congregation elsewhere, where Cathy describes that they "were beginning to feel unwelcome". Consequently, within the Midi-Pyrénées "two congregations had to move over the ordination of women" to sites which were more tolerant of these practices.

This example illustrates a sense of place characterised by a fragile social order between, broadly speaking, the Roman Catholic Church and the Anglican Church. However, tensions are not as clear cut as this, as the following exchange reveals:

Some of the Catholics did not like a woman being ordained, which is really sad because the four most vocal Catholics in the village are four women who are seething, absolutely seething that Martha can't lead a communion, and they are furious, and they're quite rude about it saying [the priest], he's stopping her take communion and it's wrong". It has been stopped on the understanding that the Pope does not allow it. They are very active women Catholics. That's a sad story.

⁴⁴ In March 2009 all services under the local worship centre moved to a new village where the Curate was "very much on side and willing to accept ministry of women, and will be happy to encourage the people there to accept us", as one interviewee indicated.

Thus, internal differences persist and play themselves out in small communities causing friction between and within disparate groups. There is a sense that relations with some French people are divided by difference, thus creating boundaries within spaces. Across other congregations there has been little evidence of such frictions and the churches establish their structure through negotiations with local curers who are open and welcoming in sharing their facilities with other faiths⁴⁵. This is about bridging the divides constructed through difference.

The physical space of the church is also manifested in events such as a Christmas Carol Service (the church on this occasion was crowded with British and a few French people, and some were required to stand because pews were full), the annual Christmas fête, hosted in the house of a member of the congregation, and summer fête, held at the vicarage. These events were advertised via email and word of mouth to groups such as TWIG and AVF, and through the International School, but relied upon links with members of the congregation. In this way, the physical space of the church remains mostly visible to British persons and to those who are connected to the church's networks.

Cultural space

The Chaplaincy functions to reproduce a British and religious Anglican culture in France. Helen explains what things were like at church before she departed.

Every month you'd have the Brownies and the Scouts go with the flag, like you normally do, and on Mother's Day, Harvest, and everything.

⁴⁵ My lack of religious affiliation takes me into the Anglican Chaplaincy in France relatively unaware of the extent to which relations between Anglicans and Catholics are divided (many of these divisions were highlighted during the Pope's recent visit to the UK). As a result, I approached this part of the research without presuming that there would be visible frictions and those which are highlighted are constructed from what was observed and learnt in the field. This was indicated when asked by a friend why I had only written of two instances (Valloux and Toulouse) where there had been fractious relations, and my response was "this is the extent of the frictions I learnt in the field".

Harvest festivals, Christmas carol services, Mothers' Day, Fathers' Day, and Easter are all celebrated in accordance with these events taking place in the English calendar. Thus, the religious festivals resemble those held in the churches in England. Neither French festivals nor those shared with Britons, but taking place on different dates (i.e. Mothers' Day) are celebrated. There are also bible classes, a Sunday School and youth group in Toulouse, coffee mornings, whiskey and choral evenings, and a choir. In this way, there is little to immediately distinguish this church in France from its services in England.

Religious spaces often extend beyond a place of worship and offer fund-raising or socialising activities to provide a network of functions that reach into the wider community. Ley (2008) illustrates the way in which immigrant churches in Vancouver operate as hubs for the dispersal of services that help newcomers adapt to local conditions. The church operates a service for non-congregational Britons through a system of pastoral care, including assistance to elderly and sick, prison visits, marriages and funerals, but mainly for those seeking to settle into life in France, as Iain indicates, within each congregation:

A team of people visit English speakers in hospital or prison and, suppose you were living on your own and had an accident, they will say "we'll come and cut your grass for you until you're better". We have some people who will help you fill out your tax return, others who will take you along to social services to sort out your carte vitale, that sort of thing, and translation. And some who do practical stuff like putting tiles back on roofs. That's all part of it.

One of the problems that Iain identified with the out reach of pastoral care is that the church is isolated from many British residents:

Finding the people who need pastoral care is really difficult because they don't have to register or anything, we don't have great lists so it has to be word of mouth through regular congregations.

This highlights how the church remains invisible to some British people. The image of the church as a relatively isolated social and cultural institution is reinforced by the

suggestion that only those British people in close contact with congregational networks i.e. with those people who attend church, might be visible enough to receive pastoral support. This is illustrated through funeral services and Iain feels that the church underachieves in this area:

We don't get the huge burden of funerals that you get in England, and that's surprising because there's about 100,000 Brits living here they think and you would expect, if you have a town of 100,000 people in Britain, you'd expect to be doing three or four funerals every week and here we do five or six every year...It's a shame, it's an area where the church really can help and it's not something we're doing much of.

Iain indicates that repatriation plays a role in reducing the number of deaths to deal with in France, particularly those people arriving in the country through their employers. There are also the factors of illness and old age, which are sometimes connected with influencing migration back to the country of origin at a later stage in life, as in O'Reilly's (2000) study of Britons in Spain. Furthermore, French legislation stipulates that bodies must be buried or cremated within six days of death, and Iain feels that "this makes people rush, not consider their options properly and take the first thing that's offered them". What concerns Iain the most is that people require the services of the church but simply do not realise what is available to them. The church is organised to promote its services to the wider British community, and not to French persons. This is a space in which to "bond" with other Britons rather than "bridge" connections to mix with and get to know French people or cultures.

Anglican space

The harvest service ends and we are about to go to the village café, situated behind the church in the *place* (village square). The proprietors are expecting us, for this is the usual meeting place after the service where many of the congregation purchase coffee, (small businesses in the village derive some income from the Anglican congregation, thus offering another perspective held by some of the residents of Valloux). We will

not stay long today as there is a harvest lunch being prepared in the *salle polyvalente* (village hall). However, before we close our service sheets, there is one more set of prayers and I am finally reminded that this is not a service taking place in England. The congregation have their heads bowed and we listen:

We pray...for the governor of the Church of England, Queen Elizabeth and for President Sarkozy and the people of France, in whose country we live.

I tell this story to William who has spent much time in France and he reminds me of France's secular society with a strong separation between the church and the state (with President Sarkozy as the head of the French state):

You'd never hear of them [French congregations] acknowledging the head of state in a Catholic church in France.

The Anglican church recreates a transnational space, drawing upon English practices in French Catholic churches. It can be argued, on the one hand, that the provision of Anglican worship in France, through a well established and organised network, is evidence that national territorial boundaries are porous, to a certain degree. However, at the local level, the English Church has had to negotiate certain frictions where Britons can be understood to inhabit separate and segregated social spaces, recreating their own sense of boundaries between themselves and the societies in which they are embedded. "Societies" is written in the plural for Britons live among other non-French persons, as the following case study highlights.

Geographies of Cricket

The joys of la vie Anglaise...with their church bells, market stalls selling Stilton and Cheddar, and local cricket teams, there are few more heart-warming evocations of 1950s Britain (Allen, 2007).

Cricket became a regular and frequent component of my life during the summer months of fieldwork. I was introduced to someone who played cricket in France, and it was through him that I gained unexpected insight to the geographies of French cricket. Had I not become an ethnographic spectator to the season's league, I might not have seen beyond the media's representation of cricket in France (see above) as a replica of an old-fashioned English way of life, and therefore a strong signifier of diaspora (see p.94) (Safran, 1991).

Sport and national identity are intimately connected, particularly within the media (McNeill, 2004). National sports teams are symbols of the nation and play significant roles in constructing the idea of an imagined community with shared attributes. Hobsbawm (1990), for example, notes that a community of millions seems more real when it consists of eleven named people. Village cricket might be synonymous with England, English people and their attributes, as Hall (1995:193) indicates:

...culturally, a quintessentially "English" game, with its leisurely unfolding, its gentlemanly formality (cricketing whites), its intricately rule-governed and orderly conduct, its tradition of amateurism, its defence to authority (umpires), respect and hierarchy...its attachment to public school codes of sportsmanship...and of course its imaginative "landscaping".

Allen (2007) presents British lives in France as highly Anglicised and situates cricket at the heart of his stereotyped image of "Englishness". From this perspective one might theorise cricket as a bounded space of "Britishness" created within France. However, my direct encounter with cricket suggests something else. Cricket in France illustrates a complex assemblage of people, organisations, materials and environment that reproduces something significantly, but not absolutely, different. This is a site where migrants regularly mediate between scales of difference and it provides an example of transculturation and hybridity. Through analysis of the people, organisations and material artefacts surrounding cricket in France, I explore how Britons become part of a

hybrid process that weakens perceptions of national and EU boundaries, and illustrates a key socio-cultural transaction taking place in France.

Diverse participants

It is mid-September and I am spectating the regional final of the National League between two cricket clubs. These are two of the current forty affiliated clubs in the country, eleven of which make up the South West cricket league⁴⁶. Talking about these clubs, Frank confirms; “they are all run by British people”. This is highly evocative of James’ (1963) account of early twentieth-century cricket in the West Indies where all clubs were captained by white people. While Britons take on key roles in organisation, the teams below them are more diverse. According to Rumford and Wagg (2010), cricket has been “Indianized” and non-Western countries (former British colonies) have begun to dominate the economics and politics of the game.

Observing the two teams on this French pitch, one may be inclined to believe that the game is global as Rumford and Wagg (2010) claim, for the players include a range of nationalities: French, British, Australian, Pakistani, Indian and Sri Lankan. Frank confirms that this mix of nationalities is reflective of the one thousand licensed players in France:

One hundred license holders have traditional French names - white persons with “Français de souche”, old century names; About fifty are French with Napoleonic colonial names coming from the DOM TOMs; Four hundred sub-continentals - that’s India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh; Two hundred Anglo names; The rest are made up of other places, South Africa or New Zealand for example.

Accordingly, cricket in France is characterised by a culturally and geographically distinct group of immigrant players from post-colonial territories where cricket has

⁴⁶ The South West comprises teams from Aquitaine, Limousin, Languedoc-Roussillon, Midi-Pyrenees, and Poitou-Charentes.

developed as a national sport (Kaufman, 2005). In comparison, cricket is little known in France and while on average each club has at least one French player, they comprise only 15% of the total number of players. Consequently, cricket in France is dominated by immigrants and provides a relatively rich field of cultural mixing where people from diverse backgrounds unite around a common interest (James, 1963, Terret, 2008) (Figure 7.1).



Figure 7.1 A South West cricket team

Cricket in France can be viewed as an on-going process shaped by migrant networks. In the South West, many of the Asian players work in the aviation industry in Toulouse through *intra-company transfers*. Their *transnational mobility* is reflected in the high turnover of players, which means that in some years up to 80% of a club's membership might be new. However, many of these South West teams would not exist if it were not for British immigrants. Illustrative of this is that half of the cricket clubs were founded by Britons, and where clubs were established by others, Britons played a significant role in their growth and maintenance, as Frank discusses the club in the village of Reille:

Reille is unique as it was set up by a Frenchman. He'd spent a year in the UK on an exchange and got very heavily into cricket, visiting all the grounds. When he arrived back in France he went to the mayor and

asked for a piece of land, then he took the telephone book and called up anyone with an English sounding surname to see if they wanted to play.

Once a club is established, it requires players, organisers, groundsmen, scorers and umpires to function, and Britons fill many of these organisation roles. At the AGM of the *Association des Clubs de Cricket du Sud Ouest* (ACCSO)⁴⁷ for example, three committee members, one guest from France Cricket⁴⁸, and thirteen club representatives were of British nationality - a 100% British representation of clubs in the South West. The readiness of Britons to take on positions of responsibility contrasts to other nationalities who are described as having no interest beyond playing, or no time to give to organisation. Albert tells me that “the others just don’t want to take on any sort of organisation” while Jamie contrasts the working lives of Asian professionals in Toulouse with his own retired status. Connected to this, another player explains why he became involved and what the game means to him in France:

It was just something that seemed appealing. It is, I suppose, a feeling of contributing something to a group of people who want to play, who wouldn't be able to play if I wasn't doing the admin. So it's a very focused piece of social benevolence, I suppose. And there is a buzz surrounding the games, without a doubt, and a buzz surrounding some elements of the admin. and the decision-making stuff that goes on. It's the old management skills that I haven't used in fifteen years that come out.

Cricket has embedded this member in a framework of management tasks and plays a significant role in his daily life. For Albert, cricket provides a site of socialisation and inclusion:

I came in just after it had been set up by two guys who have since had to give up because of business reasons. It had been going for about 18 months and it is now me and one other guy who seem to run it. I am captain, treasurer, secretary all rolled into one. I haven't played cricket seriously since 1990 but it was something to do and as soon as I joined I

⁴⁷ ACCSO was established to oversee and manage cricket in the Sud-ouest, and has no formal designated connection with France Cricket.

⁴⁸ Formed in 1997, France Cricket is the organisation overseeing cricket at the national level. It is an Associate Member of the International Cricket Council (ICC) and is also affiliated with the Fédération Française de Baseball, de Softball et de Cricket (FFBSC), the body recognised by the French government as the authority on cricket.

was given responsibilities. The cricket club keeps me busy and gives me enough of a social life.

As these two examples illustrate, cricket provides a site through which meaningful lives are created. At the same time, the people who produce this site develop a sense of inclusion and openness through the blending of diverse people. Cricket thus stretches beyond the boundaries of France and the EU as it unfolds as a node and assemblage of people caught up in flows that happen to meet in France at this moment in time.

Networked institutions

Part of what makes cricket in France distinctive are the political and legislative circumstances to which the culture of cricket must adapt, and which change how the game is organised and played. These processes might simultaneously reposition Britons at “local” and “national” levels, helping them to settle and integrate as they negotiate the banality of abiding by “French” regulations.

In order to play any sport in France, players must hold a *Certificat d'aptitude à la pratique sportive* (medical certificate), signed by a doctor which states that they are fit to engage in the particular sport they wish to play. Albert laughs about this, describing the system as “a farce” because “you have to try and explain what cricket is to the doctor who probably doesn't know”. The mockery is illustrated when Albert reveals how he relied upon the doctor not fully understanding the demands of cricket when he wanted to play only four weeks after receiving an operation on a broken wrist. Without a medical certificate, teams face penalties, fines and disqualification, and I learn that the world of cricket in France is full of friction as it negotiates working with (or against) these regulations; stories of clashes, arguments and pitch riots reach my ethnographic ears where clubs have knowingly or unknowingly flaunted the rules. This is far from the gentlemanly manners of orderly conduct described by James (1963) and Hall (1995).

Cricket clubs are connected at local level, as they must engage the resources of the local commune to find a pitch and register their team as an “association”. As exemplified by the Reille club, the mayor is often instrumental in identifying open space that can be used as a cricket pitch. In Robert’s eyes, local politics can be quite advantageous for clubs because “there is some competition between mayors” and communes and “having a cricket club looks good” to them. Someone else describes their mayor as “open, integrative and welcoming of foreigners”, and by encouraging a cricket club, a mayor promotes a cosmopolitan attitude. Few clubs are able to claim the pitch as their own territory, and most clubs adjust training and competition schedules and maintenance in order to share the pitch with other sports teams. These various elements of conducting cricket lead to inclusion at the local level by “building bridges of cooperation across difference” (quoted by Sandercock, 1998, in Datta, 2009:354). By way of example, one cricket club began using a new ground towards the end of 2009, alongside other sport activities. Their arrangement to use this existing sporting site was negotiated with the Mairie who set certain conditions, including that the Cricket Club host several training weekends, which will bring money into the local community.

Cricket in France is further conditioned by its positioning within national- and global-scale processes. France Cricket is a member of the International Cricket Council (ICC), which provides funding, but also dictates how that funding must be spent. At the national level, cricket is subject to legislation processes that facilitate, and sometimes constrain, how the sport develops. Negotiating these multiple and often conflicting agendas repositions cricket at the interface of competing trajectories, where cricket must adapt from its predominantly immigrant structure to survive. Frank suggests that organising cricket in France “is not so much about holding cricket together, but stopping it being torn apart”:

The federation [FFBSC] controls the discipline; so politically we are torn between the ICC and the hierarchy of French government. ICC says do this, but we cannot do something without support from the French government. It is a bind.

The ACCSO AGM is dominated by a discussion that provides a prime example. The ICC provides 70% of funding for France Cricket but stipulates that a percentage of this fund should be spent on developing youth cricket, and another percentage on holding a women's cricket competition. While achieving the latter target looks bleak at the AGM, there is more optimism that the former can be achieved.

Many of the South West cricket clubs have independently been involved with local schools to organise event days and lessons that include cricket coaching. However, while they share stories about the enthusiasm of youngsters who participate for a few hours, it is the enthusiasm of the teachers that is sought. One complaint is that cricket has to compete against other sports which receive higher amounts of government funding, in which teachers are properly trained through organised courses, and which are more visible to children because they are played more widely and, significantly, are broadcast on French television. Most teams report that "cricket simply isn't big enough" in France to draw the necessary interest at the local level for sustained involvement. Within the FFBSC, for example, cricket competes for funds against softball and baseball, which leads Frank to argue that "France sometimes makes it hard for us to implement what we need to from the ICC". From another perspective, the ICC does not appear to take into account the different circumstances cricket might encounter in a particular country. Currently, a programme has been established by France Cricket to train sport teachers as cricket coaches, as a means of bringing the game into schools. At the same time, a shortened version of the game "le kwik cricket" is promoted to make it more appealing and practical for schools to teach and play (Sage, 2010). This represents what Pratt (1992) terms a "transculturation" process, referring to the way in

which a practice is transformed through new intersecting trajectories. The result is that cricket is distinctly different in France, and, argues France Cricket, needs to be in order to survive.

This aspect of cricket is therefore intertwined with unfolding processes at ICC level and national level. Furthermore, these young players are hoped to provide the cricketers of the future for, as Frank highlights, the Britons playing are the “traditional old cricket brigade”, players who are, on average, above the age of 40. They represent an ageing population and “the fragility of basing a future on British involvement”. It is also problematic to shape the future of the sport on the more volatile population of Asian players. Following the AGM in 2009, many of the Asian team members had to withdraw from their teams when their business networks redirected them to Asia at short notice. As Albert notes “with the stroke of a pen, Airbus sent them back”, dismantling teams and affecting the 2010 season of cricket. At the end of the season optimism was raised as some of these players began to return to France. In this way, cricket is caught up with migration networks, but seeks to evolve by drawing increasingly on local resources and people, as far as they are able.

Materialities of the “contact zone”

The first innings come to an end in the National League semi-final. The score board notes 190 runs in 40 overs. Several women have been preparing refreshments beneath a marquee and it is now time for tea. Triangular-shaped sandwiches of cheese and pickle, egg mayonnaise, or ham and salad fill the plates of hungry spectators and players. There are slices of quiche, home-made cakes and orange segments, as well as cups of tea or bottled water to rehydrate. The teams stand about in their whites; most of them purchased online, and sent to France, from Surrudge’s, a UK supplier of cricket wear.

These cultural accoutrements liken this moment to a stereotypical English cricket match, but it ignores those elements which make this a hybrid setting not entirely dissimilar, but significantly different to the English village green cricket.

The setting for this midweek cricket match might have been any English village green. Yet both batsmen were French, playing in a field surrounded by vineyards beside a road leading to Pézenas, the town that inspired Molière...training ended with beer and Hérault wine instead of tea (Randall, 2006).

The above newspaper report identifies some of the peculiarities of cricket in France. I could add to these from my fieldwork diary; the teams are as likely to be eating curries, risottos, and baguettes as they are triangular-cut sandwiches. There is a need to move French spectators off the pitch, or picnickers from sitting in front of the site screen, because they are not aware of the rules and regulations surrounding cricket, or the dangers of being hit with the cricket ball. I am not sure what language is dominant on the pitch, probably not French, but it could be either English or Urdu. The scoreboard reads *guichets* in place of wickets, and displays *premiere manche* with the details of the first innings. The pitch itself has to be prepared before the match where the team carries out a Flicx mat which is nailed down to serve as the wicket. This is one of a range of surfaces used that also includes AstroTurf, grass and cork (Figure 72). One club describes having the worst and most dangerous pitch in the South West, as Robert highlights:

At the moment we play at the rugby club which isn't really satisfactory, the surface isn't made for playing cricket..it's lumpy, bumpy and dangerous. We have found another ground we may be able to use but we will have to develop that from a field into a cricket pitch. At the moment we turn up at the rugby club and roll out a mat to play on but we would like to lay a hard core base on the new ground.

Thus, the material aspects surrounding cricket in France present a slightly different image of cricket to that created in the opening quotation. Cricket in France is much more than a replication of a "British" space in France as the Anglican church was. It is

a product and illustration of transculturation and hybridity. While British involvement is highly significant to contemporary cricket in the South West, the game is continually fed by global, national and local relations; the individual-networks of players, their social and cultural habits; and engagement with the geographies of mobility in Toulouse and the wider countryside.

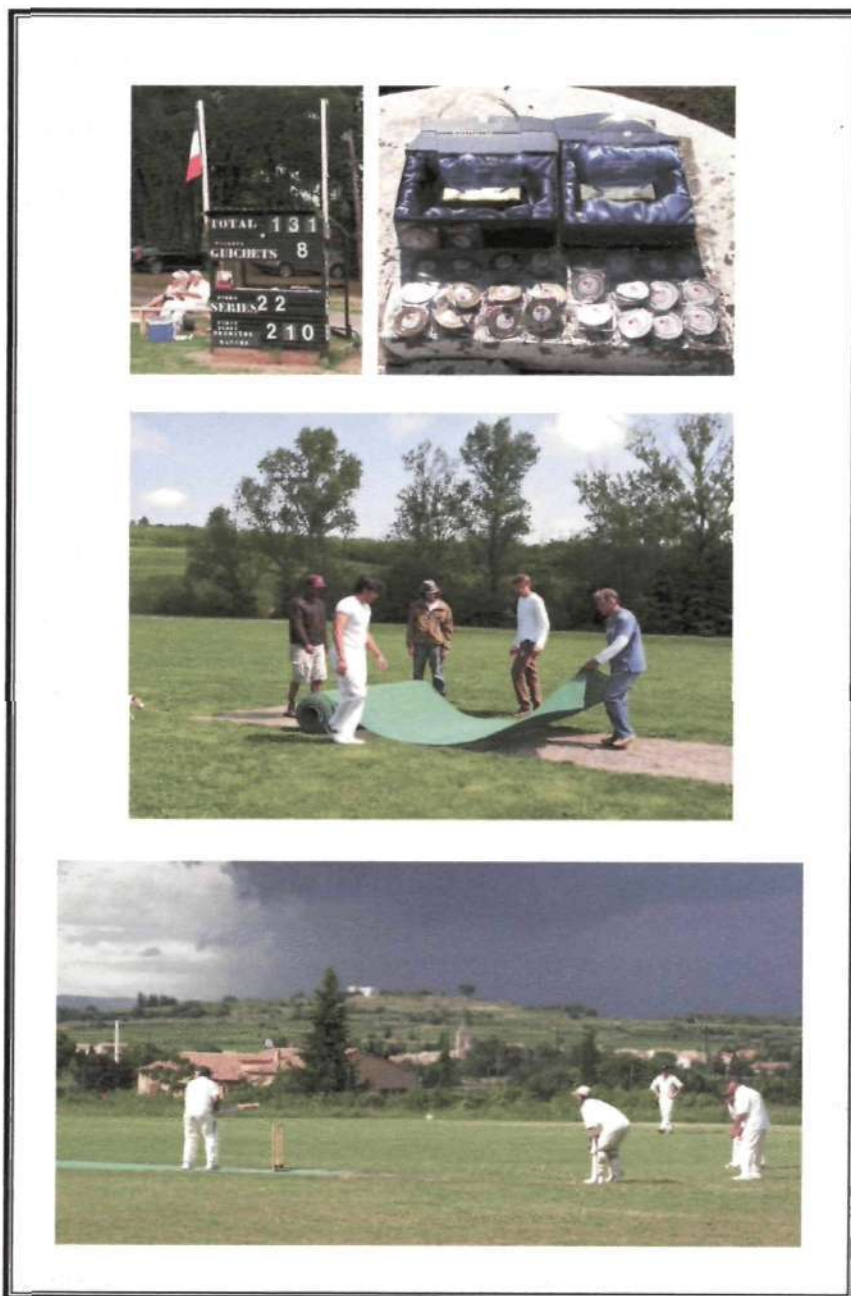


Figure 7.2 Material aspects of transcultural cricket in France

Cricket exemplifies the process of transculturation, referred to by Pratt (1992) as the relations taking place in the contact zone at the interface of encounter between different groups, and which transform these relations into something similar but different. These processes are also evident in James' (1963) cricket memoir *Beyond a Boundary* which shows how cricket evolved throughout the British Empire differently to its evolution on native British soil. As Albert states "cricket in France is unique, quite unlike playing anywhere else". It is a cultural adaptation and produced through the merging of shared interests creating a basis of hybrid space, although predominantly among British post-colonial immigrants in France.

TWIG: the city group

The western fringes of Toulouse are notable as the residential locations of Britons working in the aviation section (Puzzo, 2007). The extensive Airbus complex is situated here, as is the International School of Toulouse, and the "Thomas Green" franchise selling British groceries. This is also the heart of TWIG; its birth place, where most of its activities take place and from which its membership is predominantly drawn. The western side of Toulouse is a significant location in the daily life experience of at least ten of my respondents, and many more people I encountered or learnt of during fieldwork.

Gendered networks

My first encounter with Britons in France was at The Bell public house on the suburbs of Toulouse for a *Beer n'chat*; one of TWIG's monthly events. This was an unusual event on their monthly calendar, firstly because it provided a rare occasion when the husbands and partners of TWIG's exclusively female membership were invited and,

secondly, because this was an evening event and most activities were hosted during the daytime. TWIG was founded in 1985 as *The English Speaking Ladies Group of Toulouse* and caters for English-speaking women. Its founding aims, to provide a place where members can meet and to offer initial support for newcomers, continues to shape the group's objectives twenty-four years on, as the President confirms at the 2009, AGM (Figure 7.3):

Despite our "privileged life" out here in France, some people need help sometimes and TWIG sees itself playing a crucial role of practical support and listening ear.

Over twenty-five years, membership has diversified and the group was renamed TWIG in 2005 to reflect its multinational membership. English, however, remains the dominant language across 204 members representing 22 different nationalities⁴⁹.



Figure 7.3 Voting at the TWIG AGM, 2009

To achieve its goal, TWIG provides monthly or weekly meetings and activities through a range of special interest groups including "The Book Swap", "Gardening Group", "Cookery Group", "Bridge", "Girls Coffee Morning In", "GirlsNiteout" and the "Bien Etre Group". In addition, special events such as the Christmas Fair, via which TWIG raises money for French charities, an annual dinner and dance, and specialised days out

⁴⁹ These figures were given during the AGM, 2009.

provide opportunity for partners and families to participate⁵⁰. My research explored the role and importance of TWIG in the everyday lives of British women living in France. Gender sensitive approaches comprise a small part of a diverse sub-field within migration studies (Kofman, 1999, Silvey, 2004), and this provides one of the broader aspects of migration that this thesis fits within.

My encounter with British members of TWIG indicated that many were the wives of skilled British men working in connection with the Toulouse aviation sector. There is a tendency in migration studies to view these women through the model of the “trailing wife” as those who have sacrificed their own interests for those of their family; a subordinate position that often assumes for western women that life after migration takes on a more traditionally gendered role as child-carer and housewife (Coles and Fechter, 2008). I learnt that of TWIG’s membership, over 50% had dependant children and many had given up jobs or careers (some reluctantly, others happily) when they moved from the UK. Similar to Sally and Wendy (see p.149), these circumstances were connected with a sense of isolation and loneliness, which I (over)heard many times from different voices during my research with TWIG. Heather is one example, and it was such affects that led to the establishment of this social group. She retold her story as part of the 25th anniversary of TWIG (Lemétayer, 2010:18):

When I first came to Toulouse at the end of 1980, I was very unhappy. It was not the first time I had moved away from England and I was not sure that I wanted to repeat the experience, however, circumstances were such that it seemed the right thing to do. We came and...I left my children (then nineteen and twenty two), my cats, my home, my job, my friends and family...my husband was totally immersed in his new position and in any case, didn't really understand how I was feeling, though he did his best. I don't think I have ever felt so bereft, indeed no one knows how near I came to returning to England. When I moved to Toulouse we didn't have easy access to cheap travel, cheap international telephone calls, internet

⁵⁰ The two charities to be supported by TWIG each year are voted on at the AGM. At the 2009 AGM, those charities receiving the most votes were locally-based organisations, which supports TWIG’s objective of giving something back to the local community.

and satellite. I could "get by" in French, but it could be extremely isolating not to be able to share a joke, have a moan about the weather or chat about the everyday, mundane things in life, let alone a discussion about something more serious. Quite by chance I met a girl... She introduced me to several people and I began to make friends and to attend the Anglican Church which further widened my circle of English speaking friends. Life was looking up, but I began to feel very strongly that there was a need for an organisation to help English-speaking ladies to contact each other and to help adjust to life in France.... using the church mailing list as a base, I sent out fifty six invitations to a meeting at my house...Twenty six women came and "The Ladies Group" was formed.

As Waters (2002) describes, for many women, feelings of sadness and negativity gradually pass as they meet people with whom they have shared experiences, and begin to develop confidence and independence. This happened for Heather, through the Church, and also through TWIG, and Liz provides another example; she moved to France with a baby daughter and initially felt very lonely:

- Fiona: *What did you do in response to feeling lonely and isolated?*
Liz: *What I did do was join Mums and Tots which met at the end of the road down here. I joined that quite early on, and made lots of friends. In fact, probably all of my friends I made through that group. It was a lifeline really. I think it probably still is for quite a few people. It certainly was for me...it would have been quite difficult without it I think and we all had the little ones in common really. So it was a good way to make friends.*

Using a mother and toddler groups as a meeting point, Liz was able to develop a social network which helped her to lay down some roots where she lived. A second wave of unsettlement threatened to occur when Liz's two children went to school. While she still met the friends she had made through Mums and Tots, now at the school gates, she found that her daily routine lacked its familiar cohesion while the children were at school and TWIG provided a means of anchoring her life more firmly once again:

After Mums and Tots when the children were at school, I heard about the English Speaking Ladies Group. I remember when I first joined and it was very much older ladies who lunch, kind of feeling, and I felt too young for it at the time...I was a member but I didn't really go along to very much at all for two or three years. Then a neighbour down the road took over as chairman and she was trying to get me to go onto the committee, and as it turned out, that's how I came to be involved. I now

probably do one day a week on TWIG activities so it's been good as something always there to dip in and out of as I need.

It was through a more active role providing a valuable function to the committee that Liz used TWIG as a means of embedding her daily life in Toulouse. For Cathy, TWIG provides a "haven" and "retreat" where she can escape to, away from her husband's work and the demands it also places on her. As her husband goes to fetch a drink of water, Cathy leans across the table to me and lowers her voice:

I find it difficult to do things that I would like to do because we're always so busy, and to find something, a group, that's not all about his work for me.

Cathy talks about her weekly sessions of bridge with TWIG:

We take it in turns to host the lunch, so the group come around for 1230 and get the chinwag over, and a glass of wine and lunch, and we might have cheese and coffee and then we start to play bridge, and then have a cup of tea and a piece of cake in the afternoon. It's quite flexible. It's a mixture; it's social bridge because we're not very serious.

The game might not be serious to Cathy, but the regular event plays a meaningful role in her weekly routine and social life, and is thus a crucial part of life in France for this woman. I ask whether Cathy is involved with any other groups in TWIG.

No. They're a bit cliquy some of the others and I don't go to some of the things because I know it's the same group of people meeting every time and it makes it difficult to be a new person there.

Cathy presents another aspect of her life in France in which she feels excluded from certain (British) spaces. She observes a cohesive identity between some Britons which is difficult to become part of, or which she feels unwilling to become part of. Cathy is not alone in viewing sub-groups of TWIG in this way, for example Rachel also described groups within TWIG as "cliquy" and "difficult" to become part of. This image of a closed and homogenised group of national people not only appears to reinforce a "British" space, but remains distinct and separate within wider gendered and British networks. This emphasises the argument by some feminist geographers that the category of gender is contested and expands beyond the duality of man and woman.

(Bordo, 1990; McDowell, 1992). Within TWIG, there are multiple and contested images of its members which shape socio-spatial relations. Drawing attention to this nuance is relevant in terms of this thesis for it indicates that daily life, and hence "free" mobility, is sometimes negotiated and constructed within a community. Significantly, it is British socio-spatial relations that give Cathy and Rachel a sense of not belonging and causing discontent in their lives in France.

TWIG was portrayed to me a number of times as a stereotyped image of "expat ladies who lunch". Beneath this label I learnt that TWIG was sometimes viewed as a group of ladies who did not work and spent their time drinking coffee, chatting and dining together while bemoaning French life. This is similar to the images that clubs or groups of people receive in other migrant communities, for instance the "Jumeirah Janes" of Dubai (Walsh, 2008). However, there were elements of this image that appeared to be fairly accurate. TWIG provides a regular calendar of activities (including a group who take lunch together once a month) that mainly take place during the mornings and early afternoons and which correspond with school hours. This time-table therefore makes it difficult for people who are working full-time, or even part-time, to participate. Bianca, for example, told me that she could only participate in events that took place on Tuesdays, which was her day off each week. She had had to request a half-day's leave from her employer to attend the AGM. However, many of the members had given up jobs or careers when they left the UK and were no longer employed in France. Some had encountered barriers to working by finding that their qualifications were not recognised, or they lacked language skills or experience in the French sector. Furthermore, the husband's salary (and relocation package from MNC) provided sufficient income, to make it unnecessary for many of these women to seek work and a second household income. Consequently, TWIG did provide a social setting for people

not working, and was used as much by women interested in filling their lives with leisure activities and socialising, as an essential "lifeline" to help many cope with loneliness and boredom.

Many of TWIG's activities are not unique to this group and can be sought elsewhere in Toulouse. Thus, what makes TWIG special is the English language contingent and the shared experiences between members. The women attending share the experience of being "newcomers" in Toulouse (often from the UK) and share many values and interests. For example, many of these women's children attended the same school, they watched the same British programmes on television, and read the same books and English-language newspapers. These elements provided the topics of conversation between women at TWIG events. TWIG therefore, functions to a certain extent as an expatriate-style club to serve foreign residents and provide social and recreational support and networks for British women (and other nationalities) (Beaverstock, 2008). As we saw from Heather's thoughts above, TWIG provides a place for people to share a joke, have a moan about the weather, or chat about everyday mundane things in life; children, health, food, cooking, and shopping. In this way, TWIG enables women to share the mundane aspects of daily life which are meaningful to them in the negotiation of their lives in Toulouse.

TWIG provides a transnational social space in Toulouse. Not only is it comprised of a range of nationalities who bring their own networks and socio-cultural practices to bear, such as the cookery group's Zimbabwean meal inspired by a Zimbabwean member of TWIG, but through engagement with other clubs such as Americans in Toulouse, Open Door (the association of international women's groups) and Expat Women (a global association helping women living overseas). Furthermore, TWIG maintains

connections with the UK through its classified advertisements page in their quarterly magazine, Grapevine. These pages are filled with adverts that support small businesses run by British people, or catering specifically for British people (see for example Figure 7.4). Many such businesses draw upon resources in or from the UK. Furthermore, each Christmas, TWIG take orders from British customers for Tesco products and they then organise a van to bring the shopping to France. These items are distributed to the customers and surplus items are valued products in the tombola at the Christmas Fair. As a result, I left the Fair with a 520 gram jar of Cross and Blackwell's Branston Pickle, and some "Tesco's Finest" mince pies.



Figure 7.4 An example of a small 'British' business: selling English Christmas cards at the TWIG Christmas Fair

Analysing the role of TWIG in servicing the needs of Britons in the Midi-Pyrénées I present a gendered and urban focus. TWIG provides an example of a node in a network of skilled migration, family migration and EU free mobility, and would probably not exist if it were not for the flow of migrants into, and through Toulouse (Voigt-Graf, 2004). However, it is important to note that not all members live in a more urbanised environment and are not necessarily the wives of skilled British migrants. For a

substantial number of British women, their mobility and settlement are enacted in the transnational social space of TWIG as part of their daily lives; members expressed how important the group was as a “lifeline” enabling them to meet people, and how it *provided leisure activities and friendship with people of similar backgrounds, tastes and values in their daily lives which have been reshaped by mobility.*

I refer to TWIG as a transnational social space on the western fringes of Toulouse for it is constantly reconfigured through its mix of nationalities, and the social and cultural practices that different migrants bring to the group. While TWIG does not consciously create a British identity, it has a particular relationship to France which is somewhat disconnected. Such relations are produced by the dominant English-speaking members who regularly come together. Many of the activities they engage in, have no particular reference to being in France, and where such activities do, they relate to providing support for migrants in a foreign country (French language lessons and workshops where speakers give talks and open discussions on practical aspects of living in France such as taxation, inheritance rights, money and savings). What is more, a number of activities and visits are tailored towards sight-seeing so that Britons are very much gazing upon certain scenes and objects as consumers rather than immersed peoples in an ordinary way of life (Urry, 2000). To members of TWIG, regular meetings, coffee mornings, lunches and activities held among other English-speaking persons, often in one another’s homes, is an ordinary part of their weekly routines. In many ways these activities are suggestive of a diasporic community formed around the recreation of the homeland between TWIG members in France. Despite being a transnational social space in the city, TWIG is rather separate from its surroundings and its identity is shaped by migrant networks and their homelands. It builds a union among foreign adult women in Toulouse, but not necessarily with French women, thus constructing a

distinction between us and them: In contrast, a key site through which interaction took place between British and French persons was at "local" events.

"Local" Life

Living in a small rural community, the weekly market held in the village *place* became a regular fixture in my research diary. Once I had purchased my baguette, and some fruit and vegetables, I would sit beneath the stone arcades with a coffee to observe the comings and goings. Faces, voices and people became familiar to me there and, through this site and others, I began to appreciate the value of local scales of activity (based upon the hamlet, village, commune or town *quartier*) to Britons resident in the nearby area⁵¹.

Diversity

Hannah lives in a small village and when she and Thomas decided to make France their primary residence in 1997; she was concerned how she might fit into the "local":

When I first came here and presented myself at the Mairie, I asked "what's the feeling about a Brit. buying a big old house and living in this quite small community?" and the mayor just opened the yellow pages and said "look down at all those names; there's Spanish, there's Dutch, there's Belgium, there's all different origins, this has always been a place where people transit through from medieval times". So he said, "don't worry about it". And I just thought that was a very interesting take on it; very open-minded.

As the EU's spaces are reshaped by flows of people, so are many of the small towns and villages throughout its territory (Bossuet, 2006, Clout, 2006). According to the mayor above, this commune has been a meeting place for intersecting flows of people

⁵¹ I do not suggest that these 'local' sites and scales are mutually exclusive. While there are administrative boundaries associated with villages, communes and quartiers, other boundaries are socially constructed, differentially porous and often intersect.

throughout its history⁵². Among my respondents, Laurence and Allen portray their villages in these ways, as do the Turners:

Christine: *There's us, the Shires, and the Evertons as full time Brits. Then there's quite a few part timers in the community - a couple of fellas who live in London have also owned a house here for fifteen years, another couple live in Scotland, another English couple part time and then there are two or three Dutch couples here full time.*

Malcolm: *We were told that 20- 25% of the houses here are non-French owned and quite a big percentage of housing stock is holiday homes for French, Parisians like. Just in the local village, there's South Africans, teachers from Paris, British and there are Belgians.*

Christine: *The long term villagers are quite proud I've overheard them comparing how many foreign families they have compared to somewhere else.*

If this relative diversity is taken as a starting point then new residents should represent nothing unusual to the commune, and they should be able to participate "freely", at the local level, in the relational openness of a place made and remade through the multiplicity and dynamicity of its users (Ingold, 1995). This notion echoes the concept of cosmopolitanism that Beck and Grande (2007) argue may help European citizens to unite.

For over half of my respondents, the "local" represents an important scale and location through which a sense of belonging can be formed as a result of close social relations with other people (often described to me as a "local community") and participation in "local" events. The finding connects these British migrants with those living in the Lot département (Benson, 2010b), and Britons elsewhere (Torresan, 2007)⁵³. For the Turners, the "local" represents a meaningful scale of socialisation and inclusion:

⁵² The commune is the lowest division of French administration and, according to the 1999 census, 380 inhabitants is the median number although these vary enormously. Within the study site, for example, one commune had 167 inhabitants, another 12,775, and a third, 51,199.

⁵³ This also contrasts with examples of Britons failing to integrate into local society see, O'Reilly, 2000 and Rodriguez et al. 1998

Christine: *I want to be in a village where you've got an active community, for me that's important. We both want to be integrated within the village community for ourselves.*

Malcolm: *Yes and we go to different village events; they play boules on a Friday night, so that introduces us and keeps us in touch with other villagers [and] people who are on holiday on the campsites. It's another way of networking.*

They couple seek to create a sense of belonging by actively participating in an imagined "local" community where local, to them, is defined by the co-presence of people in the village. From this perspective, the Turners evoke the village as an "ethnoscape" (Appadurai, 1990); as a site inflected and shaped by different sorts of actors flowing through on a more permanent or more temporary basis. Their sense of belonging is therefore claimed through the recognition of intersecting flows of people (transnationalism) in a particular site and their ability to negotiate their social lives across axes of difference (nationality, cultural and residency status, which have previously defined boundaries between people). According to Jeffrey and McFarlane (2008:421), these attributes would suggest that the Turners display a degree of cosmopolitanism as they are involved in crossing symbolically defined boundaries and claiming a degree of cultural versatility.

Village events present key socialising opportunities throughout the year, where Britons are involved in the organisation of various occasions or participate by attending diverse events. The Turners, for example, run the *buvette*, the sandwich and drink stall at the annual *vide grenier*, (car boot sale), Alison and Steve operate a weekly market stall in their town from May until September where they sell cakes and "have met so many people and made so many friends". The Milners locate themselves with the "movers and shakers" of the village who organise and participate in events, and they are renowned for their role in the village history association. Another Briton, Olive,

describes how local events are about enhancing social relations and getting to know people:

It's sort of networking really at suppers and dinners and meetings and you get involved with different groups of people

Place matters as village events become meaningful sites through which to negotiate a sense of belonging and inclusion, and overcoming barriers of difference (Cohen, 1982). Although Laurence describes his village as “culturally diverse”, comprised of French and northern European residents, he observes a division within that imagined community:

In some ways there are two levels because there are the historic families, and they have a sort of closed society between themselves at times, which is invisible. They have a life of their own going on and communications of their own going on, which we are not part of...many of them were at school together, certainly their families have known each other for generations, they're intermarried; the wife of the man down in the field there is the sister of the carpenter up in the village, their son lives in a new house they built on the farm there. So there are these family and long-term ties which create a level of closed community that we're not always shown or invited into.

However, the division between a two-tier society that Laurence identifies, is bridged during the organisation and running of village events when people gather together, revealing how this constructed barrier is dynamic and created through sets of social relations that are constantly performed (Liepins, 2000):

On the other hand, when the village gets together, when we decided this summer we were going to do a night market, I went and talked to the mayor about it, and we got together a committee which included a number of people who were mainly French, and we did this thing together. The night of the market, 90% of the helpers were French people, because that's what the village population is.. [there's] never the slightest suggestion that newcomers to the village, whether French or foreign, aren't welcome. It is entirely assumed that everybody in the village goes. And the mayor comes around and says hello to everybody.

This example illustrates the significant role that place-based “local” events have as practices that recreate the notion of “community” and foster social linkages, across symbolic borders, and between co-inhabitants (Maffesoli, 1991). I could discuss further

illustrations of bonding ties between Britons and their co-inhabitants across a range of events in different villages. However it is significant to indicate that there is geography to these local social practices that help Britons to establish roots and a sense of belonging. Most of the examples are from events taking place outside of Toulouse. As I learn of the value of village fêtes (Figure 7.5) and *vide greniers* in more rural communities, and the jovial social occasions that unite the inhabitants of various *quartiers*, I ask about the practice of such events in interviews with people living in Toulouse. Liz's response is typical in highlighting an absence of such activities in their lives:

There's nothing really. Someone at the end of the road hosted a barbeque one evening, a few summers ago, and all the street were invited to his barn, and we went to that but we didn't know many people.



Figure 7.5 An annual village omelette fête

Local activities for Liz involved a mother and toddler group, which took place in a building at the end of her road. I attended a TWIG coffee morning at a member's home located on the edge of Toulouse and, as a car pulled into the shared driveway in their cul-du-sac (of roughly ten houses), Hazel looked up and commented about the neighbours:

We hardly know them. I wouldn't recognise any of the neighbours if I saw them in Toulouse. There's a lady who runs sometimes and another lady walks her dog but that's it. It's sad really. But I've got all you girls to keep me smiling.

Thus, "local" events bringing inhabitants of a village or commune together appear to be more abundant outside of Toulouse and represent a geographical distinction in the meaningful social lives of Britons in France.

Transculturation

Adopting the lens of transculturation processes and hybrid spaces, village events can be conceptualised as transnational social spaces that emerge through the interaction and co-presence of different cultures and people. Events can take on new formats as different people become involved and as new activities are added to the agenda. For example, the Turners used to organise a December wassail in their home in the UK and thought that it would be a nice idea to do the same when they moved to France. The event normally involved bringing people together to sing Christmas carols and Christmas songs while indulging in homemade mulled wine and mince pies. In France, the Turners adapted the event slightly by introducing a mix of French-language and English-language songs, and it is through them that I find myself singing about "le petit renne au nez rouge" one December evening in a candlelit village hall:

The first year we did it, it went down really well in the village, we had French people ringing up could they come and we had to say sorry we've got no more space. And so they wanted us to do it again last year, and we weren't going to do it this year, we were keeping quiet, but then we were asked by the deputy mayor to organise it.

This is one example of the way in which the "local" is remade by its users and in which it becomes more culturally diverse socially and materially (Hall, 1995, Pratt, 1992). In one village market, Annette sells scones and Victoria Sponge that she calls "typical English cakes", and they provide another representation of the cultural diversification visible in this part of France, as is the curry stand run by a British woman at a popular

weekly village market. These might be small instances and minute changes, but their valued meaning to Britons and French people is not proportional; "Bless our curry evenings" claims Clive. Annie provides another example of the way in which the "local" is remade by Britons. She is a keen gardener and describes how "gardening has been the bonding game" in enabling her to "make friends" and "settle into a "normal life here" in France. Annie joined a French horticultural society, ran a small business selling gardening tools for a while, and opened her beautiful "English-styled" garden to the public to raise money for charity. It was through her reputation as a gardener that she was approached by the mayor:

The mayor invited me to go onto the party where they choose new trees for the village. You see they were cutting down the Plane trees...But what were they going to plant in their place? So I was invited to go to the meetings and there must have been about twenty to twenty-five people there and the mayor said "give me a name of a tree you think would work here". In the end we decided to have a vote on the tree and then when everyone had gone I went up to him and said "the English community", which is about 10% of Villenau, "would like to pay for the trees" and he said that was wonderful. And then when we went to the ceremony to celebrate the liberation of Villenau in August they played God Save the Queen, and I thought that was very flattering and the mayor said "because of your contribution".

Six Judas trees line the road through the village, representing collaboration between the villagers and the mayor, and paid for by the village's British households. This example shows how Britons co-create the places they inhabit and become an integrated part of the materiality and identity of certain locations, simultaneously nurturing their own sense of belonging somewhere. Where I saw or learnt how Britons had remade places, this was predominantly achieved in a positive manner rather than as the result of places shaped through conflict, and it can be concluded that there is little sign of Britons failing to live relatively harmoniously alongside their neighbours in this part of France. This illustrates the co-presence of different nationalities, but does it suggest a European society in the making (Diez Medrano, 2008) or cosmopolitanism?

“Us” and “them”

There remains a reoccurring distinction between “us” and “them” that constitutes a line of division between British and French people, revealing socio-cultural frontiers to “free” settlement and why there are few Britons among my respondents who could be described as typical cosmopolitans with open values and versatile behaviours.

In terms of people and place, most of my respondents assumed a classical view of the world as shaped by nation-state-societies with (state) territories containing a nationalised set of people, distinct cultures, traditions, and ways of doing things. This perspective led to respondents valuing stability and respecting what they thought of as essential French attributes in their daily lives, and has been illustrated to an extent in earlier chapters through respondents’ desires to “do things the French way”. A similar attitude reveals that geography matters in Britons’ socio-cultural lives too.

Gerald and Barbara value tradition and stability and they express their belief that they should respect such elements of “local” life if choosing to live in France. Their perceptions distinctly shape their behaviour. The couple owns a house with land that stretches into the forest and which had been used for many years by the local *chasse* (an association of hunters). Gerald and Barbara describe themselves as “anti-hunting” but do not feel eligible to assert their standpoint and prevent such practices from happening on their land. I ask why?

In England we wouldn't have allowed that sort of thing to have come on our land We would have said no. But in France we felt well this is their tradition and they've been hunting here. I don't want to be an English person coming in and saying we forbid you to hunt. So although we're against hunting as such we allow it to happen on our land because I don't want to upset the local population. It's something they've always done and it would be a bit hard to say sorry I'm the land owner now you can't do it anymore

Barbara and Gerald defer their actions to the local hunters by continuing to allow them to hunt on their land through the belief that certain boundaries need to be respected. The boundaries that this couple construct are two-fold; firstly they reinforce a perception of France and the local area as holding a particular essence where things should continue to be done as they have been. It is this stance that partly prevents them acting on their anti-hunting sentiments. Secondly, their behaviour reveals the perceived boundary between "us", as new and foreign residents, and "them", those who have lived in the vicinity for a long time. In this way, Barbara and Gerald position themselves on the edge of the local (hunting) society, reluctant to influence what they see as tradition and a way of life. Such sentiments can be familiar feelings for new arrivals in an area, particularly where different nationalities encounter one another (Day et al., forthcoming). These processes also reveal how socio-cultural differences can be perceived and act as barriers against integration on the ground between EU citizens. It might not be coincidental that Barbara and Gerald's friendship networks in France are shaped by relations with other British residents and newer French residents who are also incomers to the area. Their story and sentiments become familiar as others reveal similar narratives related to hunting, voting, gardening, and life in general.

Perceived boundaries of difference also underlie alternative modes of interaction by shaping how Britons might seek to integrate in a more assimilative fashion. In socio-cultural terms, assimilation refers to the way in which people adopt the cultural ideas and practices of the nationally dominant culture to become more similar (Alba and Nee, 1997). Olive is quite specific about how she performs her sense of belonging in her village by stepping outside of her "normal" persona:

I don't want to be seen as somebody who's just bought a house and plonked myself here and doesn't want to give anything back to the community, doesn't want to make an effort. I'm not a church-goer at all, not even vaguely, but they're trying to raise money to repair the little

church up the road so I've got myself on the restoration committee for the church and I've been along and paid my year's membership to be on that committee and I've given them a mass donation for it. And I've even been to a mass at it and I'm not a Catholic but everybody in the village goes to it and it's being part of the community.

Despite a shared goal with Barbara and Gerald to seek a harmonious relationship with local people, and not upset an established pattern of life, Olive takes a more involved and active route in recognising boundaries of difference. She negotiates inclusion by replicating the practices of the French people around her. This is not the type of integration that the EU visualises in its discourse of "unity in diversity". Instead, the EU favours an interpretation of integration as "a dynamic, two-way process of mutual accommodation" (cited from the European Council, 2004, in Joppke, 2007:3), where migrants and citizens come together and respect or adopt one another's cultural practices. What Olive describes is a one-way process of acculturation, in an attempt to forge distinct socio-spatial relations bringing her into closer contact with French people (longer-term-residents seen to be culturally and historically rooted)⁵⁴.

Both examples reveal socio-cultural boundaries created through a constant distinction between "us" and "them", which have differential impacts on the way in which lives unfold in France around these national distinctions. For some people this leads to more isolated lives where Britons are both reluctant to disrupt established French routines, and resist mixing in British groups which could be seen or interpreted by French societies as a rejection of French ways of life. This overall feeling of not wishing to change or influence anything was given as a moral justification by three couples who do not engage in group activities.

⁵⁴ It is necessary to note that Olive engages differently in multiple friendships and social networks and her behaviour with people in her village does not prevent her being part of other networks and communities simultaneously (Olive also participates in the multinational AVF and in private networks with British persons) (Silk, 1999)

For people like Olive, who want to immerse themselves in “French” life and belong through participation and assimilation, the innovation of EU citizenship brought a distinct opportunity for Britons living in France to vote and stand in local level elections. This political measure of inclusion is also a fundamental part of the socio-cultural lives of six of my respondents and I explore the meanings, practices and spaces of this particular aspect of engaging with “local” life.

Local Political Participation

Becoming part of the *conseil communal* (local council) is perhaps the most inclusive form of engagement with local life (Collard, 2010). Four respondents were part of the *conseil communal* while two others stood unsuccessfully in the 2008 elections, and two further respondents express a desire to stand for election in future mandates. This is an expression of their EU citizenship and a visible sign of the heterogeneity of “local” sites in France. Not only does such involvement give visual and vocal representation to British people in the area, it also provides a social and political link between older and newer residents which crosses boundaries of nationality in the “contact zone”. The following people are illustrative of the above links. Starting with Hannah, she explains how her place on the council was a strategic move by the mayor to recognise the diversity among residents of the commune:

The mayor actually had quite a lot of foresight and there were more and more Brits coming to our particular commune and he thought proportional representation that we ought to have somebody who was a Brit on the local council. We're about 1000 in the commune and there were about twenty British permanent families, so it was about 8% (2001/2002). So bearing in mind our council has fifteen people, they certainly could do with one of the Brits. on there, it just eases the interface between the two nationalities...and I'm the point of contact, I'm just the interface.

The mayor mediated Hannah's encounter with local politics by approaching her, in the first instance, to gauge her interest in participating. Initially, Hannah was reluctant until the mayor explained how her identity could be key to influencing local relations:

I did suggest to the mayor why don't they pick my husband, he's far more a political animal than I am. And he said no, because I think that would have been more controversial. There was quite a lot of excitement, in inverted commas, about how this would be seen. Bearing in mind it's a rural community, bearing in mind people are quite suspicious, people don't like change or are frightened of change. Being a woman, obviously I'm probably not going to make any waves; therefore it would be easier for people to accept

Hannah achieved a majority vote despite recording the lowest number of votes among the elected candidates. Hannah feels that this is more a reflection of the local desire for things to continue as they are already known than for change. The mayor echoed her thoughts in 2008 when Hannah came to the end of her first term in the *conseil commune*⁵⁵:

I'd found a replacement for myself, a lady over the way who's very keen to do it...then it turned out that the mayor said to me "look, it's taken everybody seven years to get used to you, so don't rock the boat now"

This example highlights the way in which Hannah provides an interface between older residents and newer ones that also cross boundaries of nationality. With the mayor's encouragement, Hannah comes into contact with local residents and begins to challenge the boundaries that could divide them. She offers an example of the way in which she has influenced decisions and brought about change although she summarises how practices are generally slow and "nothing much does change":

Hannah: *I can say things on a council meeting such as "why don't you shut down that polling station, it seems a waste of manpower", and then everybody looks askance and says "you can't say that". And everybody agrees with what I've said but they don't dare say it because it would be too political since they've all been living there years and years.*

Fiona: *Being newer to the team you feel you can voice these opinions more easily?*

⁵⁵ A term is normally served for six years but the 2001 term was extended to seven years owing to 2007 being the year in which national elections were held

Hannah: - *Yes and because [as a foreigner] you can also get away with not conforming. You can do things and people will forgive you, and they say "oh it's because they're British they obviously do it like that". So for them to say "well she doesn't understand", it actually brings the subject to the table without anybody accusing "it was him" or "it was her" that is really anti that polling station. It doesn't matter for me.*

Although things are slow, the key aspect is that something does change, and Hannah draws attention to a type of role she can perform in being the "outsider" among a group of "insiders". Being slightly detached from village history, Hannah describes a sense of power in being able to challenge the status quo without the repercussions that others on the team might feel. This provides a distinct example of a British person appropriating local political space and, in the process reshaping relations that might have remained unchallenged for many years.

Mayors are key actors in forging social relations at the commune level (Le Galès, 2002, McNeill, 2001). George's involvement in local politics was another strategic move by his local mayor:

I said I couldn't bring much to the party, I'm a foreigner, I don't know much about the area and what I do is only skin deep. "Yes" they said, but if you come onboard it'll persuade some others to come on too...so they had a bit of outside blood which I think the village needed. Things weren't done so much for the good of the village but for the good of themselves.

Material spaces are constructed through the examples of Wendy and Mark. In the former instance, Wendy joined her *conseil commune* on the outskirts of Toulouse, in 2008:

The mayor came to me and he said they were looking for somebody, plus they're building a new school and I've been involved with teaching. So he asked me for that and he also felt that because there were so many British people in the village now, that it would be nice for them to have a spokesperson, and there I was thinking he was after the British votes.

Since joining, Wendy attends weekly meetings and has been involved with the development of the school as well as a project on playground provision, both based on

her previous experience of working with children. In the latter case, Mark became part of a city council, representing over 50,000 people, through his involvement with cycling provision and welfare. Like Hannah, he also believes that his more detached form of identity, generated through his non-French origin, allows him to make a more valued contribution to his role:

I have experience from elsewhere, which they don't tend to have here, they tend to live very locally. I do feel very much part of the place but on the other hand I still move around the town like a tourist; I think I see things differently to people who were born here... when I go places I have a different eye, I bring back some interesting stuff usually, and they appreciate that locally

Mark represents a living example of Schutz's (1944) "conceptual stranger" for he utilises both the local knowledge of the person on the street and the overview of the cartographer; the "Britannique" living in France for thirty years who is amazed by, what he terms, "the exotica" of the country as much as Britain and elsewhere. Mark is a rare example among my interviews as he situates himself across multiple spaces and consciously shapes his projects around this diversity, providing a political link with elsewhere:

They do seem to appreciate I have access to a lot of foreign documents, I know what's going on in Denmark or Holland or Germany and Switzerland, which French people can't access so easily because most of them don't speak English and I think they've realised I sometimes pick up on some interesting things. I'm pretty good at getting documentation and fairly open to what is happening elsewhere.

As well as taking on the characteristics of the "stranger", Mark also displays a somewhat cosmopolitan attitude of a willingness to engage with divergent cultural experiences and to speak from these different influences (see Hannerz, 1996). He uses this experience to "get by", as suggestive of the cosmopolitan attitude expressed by Datta (2009) (see p.208). Mark is a free moving EU citizen, but he also relates his experiences as if he is free of any particular national baggage. He might also be what Favell (2003a:313) describes as the "perfect European", someone who "presumably,

would have both effective nationally specific know-how, and a transnational ease of convertibility, that would enable him or her to operate in all circumstances successfully”.

Research reveals that the degree to which social integration takes place is not only dependent on the immigrant, but also on the extent to which the community-in-place is willing to accept the immigrant (see Vergunst, 2009). Mayors are therefore significant actors in producing open places in terms of their cultural versatility, but success is also influenced by the degree to which the community-in-place is willing to work actively with new residents, a comprehensive analysis of which remains beyond the scope of this particular thesis. Social spaces emerging at the local level are therefore best analysed in terms of the heterogeneous relations and interactions between actors and intermediaries that are linked through networks (Liepins, 2000).

Transnational social spaces

Addressing the third research objective, this chapter has presented four group activities to provide a partial view of sorts of meaningful boundaries spaces some Britons engage as part of their social lives in France. Following the concept that migrants not only experiences places, but also shape them in multiple ways (see p.45), the socio-cultural focus of this chapter is underpinned by the notion that European integration provides opportunities for EU citizens to form social groups transcending national affiliations (Diez Medrano, 2008). Thus, free mobility in this sense refers to people moving, settling and interacting in ways that transcend their historically rooted cultures towards “an ever closer union”.

In this chapter, migrants have been shown to reconstitute social relations and cultural patterns through participation in group activities. For example, the slightly different game of cricket unfolding in France; the wassail held in a French village each Christmastime; and the small changes that Britons have brought to the local political scene. These elements are small but subtle indications of transnational experiences as ideas, people and places merge and become shaped by the meeting of flows at particular moments in time. On the whole, the meeting and linking of various flows involving Britons in France is harmonious rather than opposing or conflicting.

What also emerges in an analysis of these groups is an ongoing demarcation of barriers in relation to historically-rooted and more mobile populations. The differences do not necessarily lie between Britons and French, as distinct ethnic groups, but between foreign residents (including French persons from other departments) and rooted French persons. This illustrates a tension between mobility and settlement in a Europe supposedly without internal frontiers.

The four groups explored above are key sites for some of the Britons encountered during fieldwork, but they present only a partial view of the complexity and diversity of formal networks constituting the everyday leisure experiences of Britons in France. The focus adopted here does not seek to deny the value of less formal interactions taking place within France, for example between Britons and their neighbours, or key relationships between Britons and other individual acquaintances, however, such insights remain beyond the scope of this thesis.

Furthermore, each group is presented above as relatively separate from other activities. However, it was sometimes the case that Britons were members of two or more of these

groups, while other Britons engaged in groups not mentioned above, and participated in none at all. Some of the views of non-participants have been included in this chapter, so as not to exclude them entirely. The Nashs (p.216) and Rachel (p.236) provide two such examples, but as the focus of this chapter rested upon the spaces emerging through adult group activities, further insights remain potential topics of future research.

Individual sites of group activities become increasingly meaningful to the researcher when viewed as nodes that form a part of a broader network. Each group represents a node constructed by processes through which Britons create and sustain multi-stranded social relations connecting places, peoples, experiences and material geographies of "here" and "there". Furthermore, each node is linked to other nodes by these flows (of people, cultural ideas and processes) and which, together, form migrant transnational networks (Voigt-Graf, 2004). Some of these findings are raised again in the following and concluding chapter to this thesis to consider what they mean for the reconceptualisation of space under contemporary conditions of mobility and flows.

Chapter Eight

Conclusions

This study has focused on the human experience of transnational mobility in an era when flows and networks are said to spread around the globe with greater ease of mobility. Through a case study of Britons residing in France, I have sought to explore the extent to which intra-EU migrants move, settle and experience life “freely” in the EU; a space where internal frontiers are, supposedly, being progressively reduced in order to allow EU citizens to move freely between member states. This EU context exemplifies the types of tensions that migrants encounter as they attempt to move through the world conceptualised, on the one hand, as “space as flows” and, on the other, “space as places”. In this thesis, intra-EU migrants are shown to encounter and (re)produce boundaries of difference through their daily lives which hinder and/or facilitate their movement and integration, thus revealing the persistence and preservation of the nation-state-society model, despite the EU’s efforts at building a borderless single market and a broader sense of being “European citizens” in an “ever closer union”.

Through an assemblage of personal stories-so-far, this thesis adds empirical strength to the debates and issues exploring processes of transnationalism from below (as practised by ordinary citizens through their daily lives as opposed to dominating elite groups), as called for by such authors as Conradson and Latham (2005b), Favell et al. (2006), Smith and Guarnizo (1998). Equally, this empirical analysis complements and diversifies existing work on the phenomena of British migrants in France (see Buller, 2008), and intra-EU migrants (Ackers and Dwyer, 2002, Favell and Recchi, 2009, King, 2002, King et al., 2000), showing how Britons are significant actors in the continual construction of space; in this case in relation to French and EU territories (Favell, 2009,

McNeill, 2004, Pries, 2001). These findings are discussed below in relation to my aims and objectives, before limitations of this particular and partial way of “telling about society” are considered (Becker, 2007).

In order to explore the extent to which migrants move freely in a world increasingly conceptualised in terms of mobility and flow, this thesis established four objectives (see p.18-19). These have been discussed in earlier chapters and are evaluated here.

European space of transnationalism?

The main theoretical objective of this thesis was to be informed by geographies of transnationalism and to develop empirical insights to the transnational character of the EU. The thesis argues that transnationalism provides a framework to re-examine processes of EU integration simultaneously transcending and “anchored in” its member states.

The rhetoric of a borderless world in which the nation-state is declining in significance is one of the academic products of globalisation processes and theories (Massey, 2005). Global mobilities have been shown to deconstruct the fixed essences of territories and boundaries, as they have been understood in social science (Castells, 1996, Urry, 2000). Cheap travel, instantaneous virtual communication, dual nationalities, post-national citizenship, global capitalism, and state legislation have aided the movement of certain people across and around the globe. However, focusing solely on these macro-processes generates accounts of unfettered human mobility “from above”, and it is now well established that such views remain disconnected from the experiences of people actually moving (Favell et al., 2006). In an attempt to recapture the “human face” of mobility, migration studies have effectively refocused on geography, and promote transnationalism as a conceptual framework to reclaim the spatial configurations of state

territories, borders and policies (Mitchell, 1997, Pries, 2005). As the main theoretical objective in this thesis, I have used transnationalism, as a conceptual midpoint between more fluid and more situated geographies, to provide a conceptual means for rethinking migration and how nation-state-societies are being reconfigured, rather than annihilated, under contemporary processes of globalisation and European integration.

The thesis is thus informed by transnationalism from below, and seeks to redress top-down theories of global mobility. The primary actors in my empirical analysis are intra-EU migrants who are seemingly “free” moving individuals in an integrating EU. Rogers (2000) asks whether there is “A European space for transnationalism?” and I argue that there is. Rather than prioritising analysis that searches for flows in a denationalised and seamless space, I argue that it is more helpful to approach the EU as a transnational space, which recognises the continuing significance of the state territorial system in which the institutionalisation of the EU is occurring (Dijkink and Mamadouh, 2006). Simultaneously, “trans” captures both how these borders can be crossed via movements and the increasing harmonisation of cross-border activities. My thesis reveals the differential borders that both hinder and facilitate migration and depict a more complex configuration of geographical and societal spaces than provided in either an imagined “Europe of flows” or an EU of nation-state places. This thesis illustrates how flows and fixities are relevant to understand the EU, as lives are shaped between efforts to eliminate borders and obstacles connected with the nation-state organisation of life, such as welfare regimes and the cultural and national borders distinguishing between “us” and “them”. This intermingling of more fixed and more fluid aspects reveals how transnationalism is a valuable perspective for rethinking the EU as a quasi-single market and quasi-community of European citizens.

“Ordinary” transnationalism from below

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Continuing with the fourth objective, the qualitative and ethnographic methods employed in this thesis are those that adhere to the call to recognise a “human face” of mobility (Favell et al. 2006) and to refocus analysis on “ordinary” transnationalism (Conradson and Latham, 2005b). These recommendations provide advocacy for my investigation into the mundane aspects of life among a cohort of migrants in an ethnographic fashion (Ley, 2004, Marcus, 1995).

As with many issues of population migration, macro-level processes can be grasped effectively at the human level through micro-level analysis. Drawing upon the personal experiences and subjectivities generated as part of this research, it is clear that the above theoretical and methodological calls are substantiated. Britons moving to reside in France encounter a wide range of political, legal, material, symbolic and imagined borders which, on the whole, disrupt their supposedly unfettered mobility. This perspective suggests that at both EU level and wider scales, geography’s spatial concepts can provide valuable tools for thinking through some of the more embedded notions of macro-processes, and complex modes of mobility.

One of the limitations arising in the way that I describe society “from below” is that analysis leans towards methodological individualism (Nimrod, 2010). In critiquing approaches that have denied the autonomy of individual migrants, I have attempted to balance these narratives by focusing on the beliefs and actions of adult migrants (individuals, families and households) as my unit of analysis. However, in doing so, the thesis risks presenting migrants as the only reliable source through which social processes can be explained. Reflecting critically on the thesis, it appears that certain elements would support such a critique. For instance, Chapter Five explores how

individuals consider their prospective migration through rational choices. In adopting this approach, there is a risk that decisions are presented without considering individuals as politically and socially situated subjects (see p.66) (Duncan, 1982). In another way, this ethnographic approach explores how migrants "make sense of events and render [them] "true" in their own terms". For example, it was not a priority of this research to check whether migrants were accurate or not in describing how pensions operate across borders, for I was more interested in how pensions were *perceived or understood* to operate, as befitting a hermeneutic research approach (see p.101). The outcomes are twofold. Firstly, the thesis risks presenting the assumption that macro-level processes are always reducible to individual actions and fail to acknowledge that institutions are powerful actors too. Secondly, by presenting empirical analysis "from below" this research relies upon theorising how the EU and nation state frame the contexts within which EU citizens move. This is particularly evident in Chapter Five (i.e. how policies enable migration) and Chapter Six.

Bearing this weakness in mind, the thesis presents conclusions which seek only to assess the degree to which mobility is experienced as, or perceived to be, "free" at the human level, and not to make wider claims relating to the impact of the existence of borders "from above". Future research could provide a more comprehensive analysis, where it also seeks to engage empirically with the policies through which EU mobility is enabled (to differing degrees, and reflecting how these specifically enable or hinder migration by interviewing migrants). In this way, research would balance the typologies of "above" and "below" much more fruitfully, to consider the relational power dynamics between them, as Smith and Guarnizo (1998) claim.

British migrants in France

Addressing the first objective, this thesis has analysed the nature of British residency in the Midi-Pyrénées in terms of who these migrants are and how they come to be in this part of France. The individuals and their multiple experiences presented in this in-depth qualitative research reveal that there is no typical British migrant in France (see also Scott, 2006). Instead, diversity is characteristic of whom the British are in France, and the processes and decisions involved in how they come to be there. In this way, this thesis builds upon the existing impression that earlier works generate of British migrants and migration to France (Buller, 2008).

One of the contributions this work offers to current literature on British migrants in France is the snapshot provided of a more urban-based British population. This thesis provides particular reference to their migration motivations, the specific channels and MNCs through which they migrate (currently the topic of a Ph.D. thesis by Bundy in Toulouse), and some of the social networks engaged by these British residents of Toulouse. My work also introduces a gendered perspective of the lives of (some) Britons in France, a perspective hitherto missing from this sub-field (Kofman, 2000, Walsh, 2008). If the claim that there are more Britons living in French cities than in rural areas is accurate, then this work provides a fundamental avenue for future research. The urban focus in my thesis offers comparative material with Scott's (2006) Britons in Paris and of Britons in cities elsewhere (Dubai, Singapore and Australia, for example). In terms of comparing and contrasting a more rural and more urban population, I have resisted this, to a large extent, in order to avoid reinforcing conceptual boundaries and a dualism between rural and urban (Hoggart, 1990). However, I acknowledge that some fairly distinct patterns emerge, principally in terms of the residential geography between migrants moving in relation to specific forms of

employment, in contrast to those consumer-driven migrants seeking more rural landscapes and better ways-of-life. These patterns are linked to broader networks of employment and markets, and wider research into migration suggests that such patterns will have implications for social networks as I suggest in Chapter Seven (see Beaverstock, 2005, Scott, 2007). The geographical diversity of Britons in France also provides the possibility of testing theories that have been applied to current studies of Britons in France; for example in terms of exploring the boundaries of lifestyle migration, or the extent to which economic migrants might become lifestyle migrants at later stages of their stay in France. Three Toulouse-based migrants (one man and one woman) expressed a desire to move from a more urban to a more rural environment in France at some stage in the future.

Buller's (2008) review of British residential migration to rural France offers three suggestions for future research: Firstly, to situate contemporary migration in global trends and local decisions and to consider the impact of different temporal and spatial contexts on migration rates. Buller (2008:60) relates this mainly to the view that "periods of economic downturn and international tension engender a refuge in nationalism" and thus "a decline in British interest in acquiring French property". Secondly, to explore the concept of return migration among this population, and thirdly, Buller (2008:63) argues that "we still know relatively little about the longer term experiences of migrants, how they negotiate the day to day realities of living in rural France on a permanent basis". This thesis partially addresses the third of these gaps in the literature by asking how individuals negotiate their experiences and develop a sense of belonging. It also allows some reflection on the first of Buller's suggestions for future research, as a result of situating British migrants in the context of the supranational EU.

In relation to global trends, Buller (2008:60) suggests that “growing residential internationalism finds itself replaced by strongly nationalist sentiment in moments of crisis and tension.” More recently, he notes that “the aftermath of 9/11 and the reluctance of the French government to join the Bush-Blair coalition and invasion of Iraq led to an identifiable, though limited, decline in British interest in acquiring French property.” The data generated through empirical research suggests that national sentiment is fairly strong among Britons in France. There is much evidence to suggest that Britons seek to embed themselves at the level of the nation-state when they settle in France, a process that has been shown to involve detachment (in politico-legal, and social terms) from the UK and to re-establish those connections within France; in essence, a process of renationalisation. Further research might therefore explore how Britons in France react in moments of global instability if they already view their lives as embedded in nationalist terms. Eliza, for example, addresses her concern that the EU could break up by securing her national citizen status in France, and therefore embedding her more deeply in French national society. Here, the question of identity and attachment might differentiate itself from legal notions of belonging, i.e. through EU citizenship status.

Drawing upon Buller’s third recommendation, this thesis begins to exemplify the ways in which individuals negotiate their daily lives. Although the questions were asked at the scale of the EU, findings are extremely relevant because they reveal the different degrees to which Britons seek a sense of attachment at the local scale. Thus, even at the scale of intra-EU migration, France remains a key territorial context, institutional level, and socio-cultural arena for the way in which life unfolds for Britons who reposition themselves within French territory. These findings also connect with arguments made

in Benson's (forthcoming) book that for Britons in France, life after migration is driven by the search for what are perceived as authentic ways of (French) life.

A British Diaspora?

Some of the findings in the thesis recall the concept of diaspora as it was described in Chapter Two (see p.92). Earlier, attention was drawn to the difficulty of defining a diasporic community because of the range of definitions and characteristics that different researchers apply. Drawing on Safran's (1991) list of characteristics relevant to a diasporic community, it is possible to assess the extent to which Britons in France may constitute a diaspora.

Safran notes that a migrant minority might be classified as a diasporic community if they are dispersed from a specific origin. This is partially true in terms of Britons encountered in France, the majority of whom arrived directly from the UK. However, these Britons are far from a homogeneous group and comprise English, Welsh and Scottish persons. In addition, on one occasion, an interview was organised with a British couple who, it turned out, were from the Isle of Man (and therefore classified as British, but not part of the UK). Thus, while the UK is a general origin for these people, further distinctions between Wales and Scotland, for example, suggest that it would be difficult to qualify Britons as a diaspora on this term.

Some Britons in France have been shown to remain separate from their host society, which is one of the characteristics that Safran identifies as evidence of diaspora. This thesis shows that there is a strong feeling of difference between "us" (new-comers) and "them" (long-term French residents), and sometimes a belief that Britons in France will never be wholly accepted into French life. There is evidence that also suggests the

contrary, that while Britons might feel separate, they make every effort to overcome that separation, particularly in terms of participating in local village events. Once again, the British experience in France is far from homogenous and requires further analysis of these patterns as they relate to age, gender, class or familial status, for example.

Perhaps one of the strongest characteristics against identifying Britons as a diaspora is their lack of desire to return to the homeland itself. In a similar way to Britons in Spain (O'Reilly, 2000), those in France often described having escaped the UK in their search for a better way of life. Even among non-lifestyle migrants in Toulouse there was rarely any acknowledgement of a desire to return, although some Britons would have been aware that this was probably inevitable when *secondee* contracts come to an end. Migration is not a finite process and among those interviewed, there were three older couples who expressed an expectation to move back to the UK at some point in the near future; in order to live closer to their families (children and grandchildren). These familial reasons cannot so easily be classified as part of the myth of return, because they are just as likely to take Britons elsewhere depending where their families may be. The Turners, for instance, consider a future move to Australia, where their daughter and granddaughter now live.

Associated with the myth of return, Safran distinguishes between migrants and their descendents. Although the thesis has not explored second-generation migration or interviewed the children of adult migrants, eight parents explained that their children had chosen to return to the UK to pursue university education, with more than half of these remaining in the UK after graduation. In comparison, only two parents had children at, or who had attended, a French university. Many factors are inevitably involved with the decisions of these young people, but they suggest a further avenue for

research, into the aspirations and feelings among children and young people born to British parents and who have spent part, or all of, their lives growing up in France.

A further key way in which Britons might be considered a diaspora is in terms of continual relations, practically and vicariously, with the UK (Safran, 1991). There is much evidence to suggest the deliberate maintenance of British culture in the lives of Britons in France, collectively and individually, and from above and from below. Chapter Five drew attention to the international customer service team Sophie works for, and which provides an English language service for clients under the management of a British person. This is one example of a service industry supporting a collective commitment to a British culture and identity. It could also be argued that making use of this and other banking services is a practical relation to the homeland. More than this, however, the shared memories of the UK and British culture evoked through certain group activities are part of ongoing relations that migrants maintain with the homeland. Here, it is possible to draw upon a range of examples: the Tesco products at TWIG's Christmas fête; the stall selling English language greeting cards; the Anglican Chaplaincy and its recreation of harvest festivals and Brownie parades in church; the Secret Panto Society, which was formed because a group of parents in France felt that their children were "missing a big part of British culture" at Christmastime. A pantomime is a relatively unknown form of entertainment in France, and therefore something that recreates the British homeland. These and other activities reveal active connections to the homeland, although to what extent they are maintained deliberately, as connections to serve a certain purpose, has not been explored here.

As the concept of transnational migration reveals, migrants are increasingly understood to create and sustain connections across borders to two or more nation-states

simultaneously. In this way, it appears to be quite ordinary to maintain continual relations with the UK. As a result, the extent to which Britons can be considered a diasporic community requires deeper investigation. What is more certain is that almost all those encountered during fieldwork identify, first and foremost, with being British citizens in France. While the homeland is not a place where they aspire to live, it remains a place that many believe they can return to, for as Hannah expresses about her family's move to France, "if it doesn't work out, and if we don't like it, we can always move back" to the UK. The concept of diaspora thus provides a further avenue for research of Britons in France, along those lines suggested in Chapter Two. (p.92).

Britons as intra-EU migrants

Objectives two and three set out to explore some of the political, legal, social and cultural boundaries that migrants perceive as they move between the UK and France. These are considered in relation to Britons as intra-EU migrants.

Britons in France are a key cohort of intra-EU migrants, particularly in terms of thinking how EU space is being remade in Western Europe as a result of mobility driven by consumption-motives (Recchi, 2008). As much as there is no average British migrant in France, there is no typical intra-EU migrant. King (2002) notes this diversity in his "new map of European migration", but it is sometimes missing from both qualitative and quantitative accounts (Braun and Arsene, 2009). Despite research exploring other categories of intra-EU migrant (as retirees and students, for example), Eurostars are presented as the "ideal type" of free-moving citizens and research has explicitly sought to link their movements with EU mobility policies and opportunities to seek employment beyond the nation-state.

In addition to moving for work, study and relationship reasons, Favell presents a distinct group who seek mobile and denationalised lifestyles outside of nation-state norms and rhythms (Favell, 2008a). While denationalisation is a central component of the type of lifestyles Eurostars wish to adopt, they are not the classical lifestyle migrants for whom work and employment are less significant than other factors (Benson and O'Reilly, 2009).

There are two fundamental and interlinked aspects in which Britons in France differ from the "Eurostar" type. Firstly, many Britons engage in mobility that is driven by consumption-led motivations, and secondly, that these motivations are shaped by a desire to live in a particular place that is defined in terms of a confined territory with specific attributes – a directional move. For British lifestyle migrants seeking a particular way of life (quiet, calm, civilised and perhaps embedded in what are perceived to be local traditions) and a particular setting (open green space, small-village, and constructed with natural local building materials, for example), France is often perceived as an idyllic setting (Sharp, 1999). As expressed in Chapter Five, French society and their ways of living are sometimes perceived as "civilised", as if the place in question has a fixed meaning and character. In this way, purchasing property in such a location is more than just buying a house, it is about consuming, and recreating, a particular image of rural France. Thus, for a significant cohort of intra-EU migrants (and we might postulate that other lifestyle migrants are the same throughout the EU), the opportunity to renationalise, adopt a particular lifestyle, and belong somewhere else is a major motivation leading such people to take advantage of free mobility. This perspective appears to contradict the assumption that free mobility will enable a denationalised mode of living.

In terms of consumption-driven migration, this thesis supports the more quantitative data presented by Recchi (2008) to indicate that “family and love” decisions, as well as “quality of life” are common reasons why people migrate within the EU. This has consequences for practices and socio-spatial relations unfolding in the EU. Unlike Favell’s (2008a) Eurostars seeking a denationalised lifestyle, Britons, through their search for a better quality of life, seek to renationalise into “French” (not European) society and space, as they perceive it. There is a contrast between the reluctant adaptations made by so-called Eurostars to national systems, almost as a last resort, and the open acceptance or desire to adapt as expressed by some of my interviewees. McNeill (2004), proposes that the “New Europe” can be viewed as a “consumer landscape”, a perspective that lends credence to the theory that the EU project will continue to be built upon consumerism. Populations of intra-EU migrants could form a significant component of such theories.

There is also an element of immobility about Britons in France, as defined in terms of their directionality. Van der Velde and van Naerssen (forthcoming) describe how “migrant social network studies have shown how a migrant can be mobile (in that s/he moves at all), but may be at the same time considered as ‘immobile’ regarding certain destinations (in the sense that s/he does not want to live there)” (see Massey et al. 1998). For example, a British person may decide to migrate to France (mobile) without considering other countries (immobile). In this way, migration flows of Britons to France are highly directional for many Britons are specifically focused on moving to that particular territory. This holds consequences for the types of spaces, borders and identities imagined in an integrating Europe. These (im)mobility characteristics have been observed elsewhere in Europe. For example, the European Integration Consortium (2009) indicates that many migrants from the 2004 Accession Countries favoured the

UK and Ireland, while migrants from the 2007 accession states were focused on moving to Spain or Italy. On the other hand, these patterns differ to Favell's (2008a) Eurostars, and thus offer an alternative means of comparison between Britons and other intra-EU migrants.

Connected to this, the example of Britons as intra-EU migrants overlooks a potentially crucial perspective. Following Anthias' (1992) argument that migrant behaviour can only be understood with reference to historical, social and geographical context, it is clear that I have neglected to consider the relationship between the UK and France in this thesis, as independent of the EU framework. Taking this into account, the case study reveals a weakness in its design for it only focuses on one group of national citizens in one destination. If we situate migrants in historical, social and geographical ways, it becomes clear that different nationalities construct and maintain different ethno-historical linkages with places (see for example, Yeoh and Willis, 2005), and therefore would develop a different set of cultural imaginings about France and Europe. The implication is that diverse nationalities are likely to enact different ways of encountering life there. This is identified by Dugot et al. (2008) who explain how migrants arriving in the Midi-Pyrénées region from Spain and Italy were in search of work, while those migrants arriving now from northern Europe tend to be more highly qualified and with more resources, that reduces the need for work. It follows that focusing on one national group of persons and how they experience mobility provides only a partial account of the complexity that is involved. For example, while in the field a diverse range of immigrants were encountered (Parisians, other intra-EU movers (Dutch, Portuguese, and Italians) as well as third-country nationals (Moroccans, Algerians and Asians)). The focus on one population in this thesis was a deliberate choice at the outset of this project and shaped by practical constraints arising from the

researcher's limited language abilities and preference to only conduct research in English.

Despite this limitation of focusing on one national group, Britons in France are exemplary models through which to understand some of the current concerns, problems and benefits of "free" mobility, or to compare and contrast them with existing understandings concerning intra-EU migrants, consumptive-driven migration, specific business networks, and directionality.

Another EU?

With the development of the Single Market and the lowering of various barriers that have impeded free movement, migration within the EU has been internalised at the theoretical level (Skeldon, 2006). However, as examples of Britons moving and settling in France illustrate, borders related to the nation-state organisation of economic, political, social and cultural life persist, and highlight how migration remains *international* in many respects.

Geographical difference underpins the lives of Britons in France. Firstly, for many Britons, moving to France is about making a choice to live in that particular country; a territory defined through its difference to the UK (i.e. economically, socially and aesthetically), and its essentialised characteristics (i.e. perceptions of a better lifestyle, more civilised people, recognition of family values and imagined rurality). Secondly, settling into life in France means legitimising one's residency by connecting oneself with the different and various states systems, notably health care, social services and taxation. Although these are deemed to be different and cause much frustration, difference is accepted and negotiated as a "normal" part of moving to another country (an acceptance of borders). Thirdly, difference is a constant organising principle

between people— between “us” and “them”, and more generalised ways of doing things such as hunting, eating and socialising. These cultural differences also tend to be accepted by Britons, although there are different ways in which they are negotiated, and showing that one respects these differences is often injected with a moral opinion of being the right thing to do.

Geographical differences of this nature are formed on the basis of the nation-state-society model. Britons view their lifeworlds from the confines of constructed territories and boundaries and, in doing so, maintain and reproduce the nation-state as a meaningful scale in which everyday life is lived. Geographical differences translate into boundaries and these impact the extent to which mobility is perceived to be “free”. Thus, obstacles are part of the structural reality of living outside one’s country of national belonging and, at the empirical level, challenge the vision of Europe as a space “without internal frontiers”.

These findings connect to the concept of a bordered “space of belonging” developed by van Houtum and van der Velde (2004). It refers to the importance for people to belong somewhere or to feel at home in a particular locality. His concept implies that mental distance is created between places on either side of an imaginary or existing border (Newman, 2006). On one’s own side of the border a space of belonging is constructed with ease and comfort, and relations with other inhabitants are likely to exist in the form of “we” in “here”. In contrast, the other side is not a space of ease and comfort, and is associated by “them” in “there”. The notion of space of belonging is connected to the idea of the nation-state in this thesis, where people belong to sovereign states with territorial limits. For Britons in France, it appears that their moves across the border are part of a broader process of establishing a space of belonging in a new territory and

settling into life “there” (renationalising). On the whole, from the perspective of these migrants, France is viewed as a distinct territory separate to the UK, and not necessarily considered as part of an open and integrated Europe.

Despite Europe envisaged and treated as a space of nation-states by most Britons in France, these intra-EU migrants have been shown to play a role in Europeanising the nation-state, that is to widen the scope of national citizens’ political, economic and social activities and thus transnationalise the spaces they give shape to. If we accept Favell’s (2009:167), argument that Europe has “been made, unmade, and remade through the movements of peoples”, Britons in France must be considered as part of this process.

Chapter Seven has revealed that Britons in France create and give shape to a range of hybrid and transnational spaces. For instance, none of the groups examined as case studies were exclusive in terms of their national membership. All groups cross-cut national differences, to varying degrees. It is therefore possible to think of these social sites as “contact zones” (Pratt, 1992) where the co-presence of subjects previously separated by geographic disjuncture, leads to their trajectories now intersecting. The concept emphasizes how Britons and spaces become (co-)constituted by their relations with others, through co-presence, interaction, understanding and practise. For example, Albert’s “ordinary” social life in France is shaped largely through his involvement with cricket and thus with an Asian population also living there. This contrasts with Olive’s impression of life as a constant adaptation to “French” ways of socialising, or with Liz’s everyday life shaped by her British friends through the church.

These contact zones emerge as transnational spaces and nodes in broader networks, produced through the social and cultural practices of individual members (for example, eating Indian cuisine at a cricket match) and engagements with broader local, national and global networks (for example, cricket influenced by the economic networks of Asians in Toulouse). Thus, Britons in France engage in transnational social spaces as part of their ordinary and everyday lives in France, and are intimately part of a process generating hybrid spaces that stretch beyond French borders and beyond the EU. This connects with Massey's (1994) concept of progressive space (p.50) where some relations are seen to be contained within a place, while others stretch beyond it through migrant networks, thereby tying the particular locality (a site in France) into wider relations, processes and places. In these ways, Britons are part of a process of remaking places and societies in an integrating Europe.

Global Mobilities

This thesis aimed to explore the extent to which migrants move freely in a world conceptualised as a space of places and a space of flows. In an era shaped by global processes and complex mobility patterns, empirical analysis at the micro-level, investigating the actual lives of mobile citizens, indicates that metaphors of mobility are not the only relevant means of describing processes, migration and the lives of migrants. Beneath a veneer of flows and borderless spaces, lies a complex array of negotiations that migrants encounter in their personal, political, social and economic lives as they attempt to settle somewhere, and find themselves having to adapt to nationalised routines. By focusing on the EU, this research has examined a context believed to provide the best indication of how easy it is to move one's life to a post-national or cosmopolitan level and of the practical benefits, barriers and pitfalls of a life lived outside the place where one is historically embedded (Favell and Recchi, 2009). What emerges is the persistence of the nation-state-society model in everyday life, even in a

context where integration enables mobility and cross-border harmonisation. It is also significant that some migrants might not want to be free movers, but will seek a more stabilised life that is grounded in a specific place and space of belonging. In shaping a new sense of belonging in France – legally, politically, socially and culturally - migrants have been shown to generate cross-border connections between the UK and France to construct develop transnational spaces (Pries, 2005).

Within this empirical work, the type of migrants who experience migration more easily are those moving through the internal labour markets of MNCs. In terms of politico-legal boundaries, MNCs smooth the transition between states by removing many of the administrative obstacles in their path. While MNCs may also support some of the more personal aspects of settlement, for instance helping migrants to find accommodation and schools for their children, socially, these migrants tell a different story as they become exposed to the same socio-cultural barriers as other migrants in this thesis. In terms of migration connected with labour mobility, Britons in France are little different to the highly-skilled migrants explored in the literature (see Chapter Two), and thus connect intra-European migration to more global networks of migration.

Critical reflections

Recalling Becker's advice that every version of social scientific analysis is always partial and just one way of "telling about society", I reflect here upon some of the limitations constructed via the way I have chosen to research the lives of Britons in France. Having already considered methodological individualism, and the weakness of focusing on only one national group of migrants, I now consider how my methods have shaped this study and limit the value of this research, with particular reference to generalisability and transferability.

Generalisation is a common feature of extensive social scientific research, where the researcher seeks to establish patterns and regularities across a range of events or places. However, as expressed in Chapter Four, generalisability is not always suited to more qualitative-based work, because it often draws upon a smaller number of cases, thus making generalisations unreliable. Replacing generalisation with transferability, this becomes the bench mark for evaluating more qualitative social scientific accounts. The concept relates to the capacity of the research findings to be transported to another set of conditions and the success of this is often measured in terms of contextualisation; the appropriate choice of sites where one case study is able to stand in for other cases. As far as Britons in France are concerned, these intra-EU migrants are part of a north-south migration pattern that has been identified in Western Europe. Thus, they may be similar to other populations such as Dutch or German migrants in Mediterranean countries. The breadth of this thesis, in terms of the range of issues explored, is a strategic means by which to compare Britons in France with other populations across a range of political, economic and social issues.

In terms of the transferability of the EU context, to what extent is an understanding of mobility in this region applicable to other regions, or global mobility more generally? If this context is found to be different, what can one learn from it more broadly? Two perspectives are significant here; the EU as a politico-legal entity in its own right, and the EU as an integrated part of global mobility patterns.

Firstly, taking the EU as part of a global pattern of migration, it is evident that what occurs within the EU is also part of a broader picture. Rachel, for example, moved from the UK to the USA and then to Toulouse. Not only did her migration trajectory extend beyond the EU, but the decision to return to Europe was judged against the conditions

encountered elsewhere in the world, in a different regional context. In this way, the EU becomes a source of comparison as part of a wider global perspective. Furthermore, empirical results indicate that among Britons in France, labour migration can be an important factor of mobility. Despite the move between the UK and France being of fairly short distance, these migrants are part of complex networks. For instance, Owen, working for a bank in France, is part of a network of financiers moving between countries and international and offshore banking centres; London, Geneva, New York, Hong Kong, and the Bahamas, for example. By repositioning Owen and other economic migrants in global networks, it is possible to unite the micro-scale with macro-scale processes. In this way, Owen's migration is seen to be embedded beyond the scale of the EU, for it is not only European integration that has shaped his experience. Thus, connecting the EU into a global framework helps to situate the significance of seemingly small or micro-level analysis.

In the second instance, the EU is viewed as an entity in its own right. Here it becomes evident that the EU has some key structural features that make it different to other regions politically, historically, economically and socially. These include the welfare state, educational patterns, forms of equality/inequality, cultural practices, population structure, family structure, the role of women, and class relations, for example. Thus, it is less plausible to argue that the EU is able to stand in for other regions. However, the EU is instructive as a case study on migration, in terms of its politico-legal supranational structure enabling free mobility. In this way, the EU illuminates some general dynamics relating to processes, and meanings of migration and space caught between a space of places and a space of flows, and thus sets out broader propositions about the extent to which global mobility can really be considered "free".

This thesis ends with a topic that featured in the media between 2009 and 2010, as the French government asked what it meant to be French. Besson, the French minister of Immigration, Integration, National Identity and Mutually-Supportive Development, 2009-2010, led a number of debates on national identity and in early January, Besson (Hewitt, 2010) claimed that:

France is not a people, nor a language, nor a territory, nor a religion; it is a conglomeration of peoples who want to live together. There is no French-born, there is a blending of France.

This statement embraces the perspective of everyday lived space made and remade through an assemblage of co-present peoples. It brings forth the tension evoked in this thesis between stabilities and mobilities, and between places and flows, in reconceptualising Europe as simultaneity of lived and meaningful spaces for ordinary citizens:

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