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Moving through porous borders: Táticas de mobilidade migratória de brasileiros pelos espaços aéreos Schengen e britânico.

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“Plunct Plact Zum
 Não vai a lugar nenhum!!
 Tem que ser selado, registrado, carimbado
 Avaliado, rotulado se quiser voar!”

Raul Seixas, **Carimbador Maluco**

Introduction

While searching for the keyword ‘migration to Europe’ on the Internet, I decided to see what sort of illustration would come across on my browser once the option *Images* on Google was selected. In seconds a wide range of illustrations evidencing heavy surveillance and unclear migratory routes have rapidly multiplied on the monitor. So, among vessels filled with migrants being tackled by coast guards, a drawing of soldiers with an Euro crest on their uniform indicating “the Exit” to African/Asian refugees in squalid conditions, maps showing rectilinear flows moving from Southern Mediterranean to Europe, or trenches and wires, I found the image below quite suggestive:

Appearing to be a Kafkaesque Castle, the drawing shows part of Europe shaped by concrete and with an EU flag on its top. Echoing out of the only entrance a voice in harsh tone gives the order: “SLOWLY...SLOWLY...take your time...” Perhaps, that lone gate is deliberately located at the Gibraltar



(Source: <http://www.grenzeloos.org>)

strait. If so, as many other images I saw on my computer screen, I wonder if the idea of migration to Europe is normally related to the exactly instant that a migrant meets the ‘entrance gate’ of the *Fortress Europe*. But, how was elaborated the journey taken by that unknown migrant arriving at the gate? What has s/he experienced along the route?

Does a migrant have skills to circumvent the established power monitoring that geographical space? My questions can be corroborated by the fact that this Fortress has its roof smoothly covered by concrete. It seems that nothing happens over there. There are no guards, wires or voices coming from there. According to the drawing, the surveillance apparatus strategically guides the traveller towards the only gate where s/he will be thoroughly scanned and interrogated before hearing if s/he is allowed or not to enter.

Allow me to go further and say that more than representing the actual tense relationship between EU and overseas migrants, this drawing also elucidates how the literature on migration currently reflects on border controls and mobility. In much academic work on migration and border control, the main emphasis of scholars has been on EU surveillance patterns against the entry of economic migrants who can unexpectedly appear in the shores or airports of Europe. Harsh policies applied in the European Union space are presented in much of these studies as a strong process of security against any type of traveller who can put this economic and political union under risk. Migrants, in this academic context, have lost their relevance as actors and became mere unpowered characters susceptible to migration policies (Papadopoulos et al 2008, Pai 2008, Perera 2009, Khosravi 2010).

Studies dedicated to exploring migration mobility, in turn, have strongly concentrated on the beginning and end points of the migration journey, paying specific attention to the decision-making process before the departure or after the arrival in destination countries. The journey itself and the dialogue established between border crossing movements and border crossing reinforcement as an analytical object has long remained understudied (Vila 2000, Mezzadra 2012). Ethnographic studies have failed in identifying the main features of such mobility as they are locked in hydraulic conceptual metaphors used to briefly describe these journeys (Knowles 2011, Mezzadra and Neilson 2013). In that perspective, migration mobility is mistakenly summarised as a mere movement. The burden of meaning and experience lived and produced by migrants in space while they move are discarded (Cresswell 2006, Ingold 2011).

This paper attends to calls for research on migration mobility to be more grounded, more attuned to the mobility features developed by own migrants' experience than focusing on surveillance patterns imposed by EU countries. It argues that migration mobility is a constant process of negotiation between border control and migrants

themselves. I explore, in particular, how Brazilian migrants have journeyed and negotiated their mobility from Alto Paranaíba² to London through borderscapes – airports and ports – located across the Schengen space and the UK borders.

Taking this case study and following the debate on migration mobility, my research adds a distinctive focus on migrant skills. It does so by considering migration mobility as a practice that involves knowledge and skills found in practice action to trick the established power, conceived as passport controls and checkpoints. I demonstrate therefore how the routes connecting Alto Paranaíba to London are designed, who are the main actors behind such mobility and the role played by the countries comprised in the Schengen Area. More than a mere flow, I argue that migrants have to carefully sew alternative paths and risks shortcuts to fruitfully enter the Fortress Europe.

1. Methodology

This research was unfolded through incursions during 2011 and 2012. Along my research journey I have met Brazilians playing different roles along the international migration meshwork that connects Alto Paranaíba to London. In total I have interviewed 25 Brazilians. My two initial key informants – Adriano and Claudio – enabled me, to establish two methodological strategies: 1) meeting Brazilians from Alto Paranaíba currently living in London for more than 5 years. They compose a young adult generation of inhabitants – in their 20s, 30s – who left Alto Paranaíba in search of social mobility³. 2) By using snowball technique, new informants put me in touch with returned migrants,

² Alto Paranaíba is located in Minas Gerais, a Brazilian state recognized by its international migration mobility. Since the 90s a massive number of young adults from Alto Paranaíba have moved abroad in search of economic improvement. The United States, Spain and, recently, the United Kingdom are the main destination. However, there is a dearth of research that examines the migration mobility features of this Brazilian region. While a large number of studies cover some key cities, in Minas Gerais – Governador Valadares and Uberlândia, for instance – and their international networks (Margolis 1997, Assis 2008, Padilla 2006, Siqueira 2009, Machado 2011), little is known about Alto Paranaíba.

³ It was important that my interviewees had been in London for a certain period of time. It allowed them to describe and reflect about their migratory journey and the challenge of living on the borders as an undocumented migrant (Balibar 2004, Khosravi 2010).

relatives and friends, people specialized in border crossing movement⁴ living in Alto Paranaíba. This enabled me to conduct fieldwork in the towns of Quintinos, Tiros, Patos de Minas e Rio Paranaíba for three weeks, in 2013. And that constitutes the *second phase* of this study.

The interview design was inspired by a semi-structured perspective. Most of the time it worked “like a conversation (Atkinson1998:13)”, with an informal and loose approach. I tried to be a good listener. According to Back (2007) to be a good listener is the primary objective of a lived-experience interviewer. Listening to another person’s life story means being a witness and showing care about what the participant is saying (Back 2007). Each one of these people provided me a rich glimpse of how the migratory journey from Alto Paranaíba to London happens.

However, as Pink (2009) accurately observes, I was aware that partaking in other people’s experience of place is not the same as accessing exactly their experience in the world. She points out that the way that people practice, understand, recall and represent their experience sensorially may differ in terms of class, gender, age, and occupation. Some may say that these narratives can therefore be biased and incomplete as “narratives are not transparent renditions of ‘truth’ but reflect a dynamic interplay between life, experience and story Eastmond, 2007: 248).” In consequence, I treat these stories as “part of everyday life... [that] constitute means for actors to express and negotiate experience. For researchers, they provide a site to examine the meanings people, individually or collectively, ascribe to lived experience (Ibid)”.

In the following section I outline the theoretical framework of my research. My aim, though, is not to provide an exhaustive review of mobility or border studies (for reviews see Urry 2000, Cunningham and Heyman 2004, Cresswell and Merriman 2011, Salazar 2011). Instead I will provide a more focused account, establishing the potential

⁴ Abdelmaled Sayad’s (1997) view of migration as a *‘fait social total’* seems particularly relevant to this research. He says that migration affects not just the receiving society but also the sending society. Complementing Sayad reflection, another important theoretical approach adopted by this study is the one coined by James Clifford (1997), which invites us to think migration not as a practice performed only by migrants, but also by the communities where they come from. So, my purpose is to understand how the international mobility is experienced by Alto Paranaíba’s population in general. Therefore, interviewing and talking to returned migrants, relatives and friends could provide not only a different point-of-view from those who were currently experiencing migration in London, but a full perspective about the migratory phenomenon in that Brazilian area. In this context, the snowball technique that had started in London has efficiently guided me towards this sample, in Alto Paranaíba.

importance of journey within mobility and migrant experience, and of proliferation of border control in EU, after the 9/11.

2. Contextualizing mobility, borders and tactics of border crossing movement.

Mobility has different purposes and consequently can present different features. Salazar and Smart (2011) demonstrate in their study how mobility is characterized by a plurality of border crossers which result in a range of distinct social interactions according to each journey. Tourists, as *trusted traveller*, for example, have been widely discussed in the literature focused on mobility (Urry 1995, 2000; Salazar 2011). According to this field, tourists are treated as rentable mobile people, who travel as consumers and therefore bring economic benefits to the destination place. Côté-Boucher (2008) and Curry (2004) state that these features define them as desirable mobile people. They are legitimate travellers who present a mobility of low risk (Curry 2004). Similar classification is granted to business people and international students who are treated as individuals whose mobility is most of the time unquestionable part of their everyday life in the global world.

On the other hand, migrants – the type of mobile people that this study examines –, refugees, asylum seekers and terrorists compose distinct types of mobile people who have in common the fact of being *treacherous traveller*. As Cresswell reflects (2006), unlike *trusted travellers* who are seen as unremittingly positive, the mobility of migrants is portrayed as a transgressive movement. As a result, studies of migration mobility affirm that governments have assumed the responsibility of controlling the movement of these threatening mobile people through borders to ensure the integrity of territory (Papadopoulos et al 2008, Perera 2009, Salazar and Smart 2011). This phenomenon has indeed gained strength in the post-9/11 period. Riosmena and Massey (2012), for instance, affirm the U.S. governments' security and military policy initially destined to control the entry of terrorists has also extended to entail a clear migration policy component. Likewise the U.S. policy, the EU applied strict security policies which shortly included migrants in the category of unwanted traveller (Balibar 2004, Cordourey 2008).

Verstraete (2010), on the other hand, goes further and observes that these migration policies are actually presented as a process of harmonization and security against any sort

of traveller. In other words, she stresses that “[...] from 2001 onward, the war on terrorism has become a war on tourism as well” (2010: 109). Therefore, the instauration of stringent laws on the border controls which, according to the US and EU governments were originally designed to stop terrorists ended up being also applied to various kinds of mobile people, including migrants (Adey 2004, Curry 2004).

As a result, borders are no longer confined to a geographical dimension serving merely to block or obstruct the global passage of people. Equipped with military apparatuses able to detect and filter treacherous people, borders have become elastic. Following the main argument presented by Mezzadra and Neilson (2013), this study considers border not as sameness fixed spatial category, but as a dynamic process which shapes migrants – including the Brazilians explores in this paper – everyday life experiences. “This seems even more the case after the events of September 11, 2001, when borders became crucial sites of ‘securitarian’ investment within political rhetoric as much as the actual politics of control (Ibid:7).” Depending on the wayfarer and her/his political and economic status, travelling through border controls provide a different treatment. In that sense, I explore airports not simply as non-places or as places of circulation where people make connections (Auge 1995, Urry 1995), but as *borderscapes*⁵ that also produce a sense of exclusion and disconnectedness through their surveillance methods of control.

In order to overcome such border reinforcement, I argue that migrants journey through flexible routes or itineraries. The journey *per se* is a mobility that depends not just on migrants’ skills, but also on the knowledge of people along the route (Ingold 2011). Thus it must be considered in the debates on migratory mobility. So, for this paper, Papadopoulos et al (2008) and Vila (2000) present insightful ideas of how migrants design cunning tactics of border crossing movement to literally escape from regimes of control imposed in the last decade by states. Despite the fact that, since the events of 9/11 there is a broader security discourse explicitly linking questions of migration control to the military complex in order to tidy the external borders, *escape*

⁵ By *borderscapes* I mean a system composed of people and infra-structure that working as corridors leads people somewhere – (Perera 2009, Papadopoulos et al 2008, Mezzadra and Neilson 2013). I employ the notion of border in this paper as a process of negotiation through distinct zones or *scapes* – by analogy to landscapes – where governance sovereignty, power and security are spatialized.

routes attempt to enable migrants to move through minor porosities of the borders and reach the destination place. As a result, migration is not always a direct path from the home society to the host society. Rather, migrants have to tactically move through routes connecting several places to circumvent border controls and arrive in the final destination.

The route journeyed by Brazilians from Alto Paranaíba, for example, is in constant interaction with borders. Thus, they have to play a role of tourist to hide their migratory status before Border Control at the airports where they move through. Here the literature focused on *performance* can help to our understanding. I explore the concept of *performance* as coined by Goffman (1969). He defines performance as “all the activity of an individual which occurs during a period marked by his continuous presence before a particular set of observers and which has some influence on the observers (1969:19).” Framing the theatrical performance that applies to face-to-face interactions, Goffman argues that a given participant has to demonstrate that s/he knows how to behave in the determined stage, and interact face-to-face correctly with other given participants. Alongside the setting – local where the performance is played – the personal front is considered as expressive equipment for the performer. By personal front, Goffman includes clothing, age, racial characteristics, looks, posture, speech, facial expression and bodily gestures among other elements. The impression depends not just on the setting, but also on *appearance* and *manner*⁶. Both actions are part of a *performance*, as delineated by migrants discussed in this paper, and stand as tactics of border crossing movement. These are tactics which actually are not played individually, but rather shared and produced by returned migrants and current migrants.

It is worth observing that while Goffman’s contributions are of crucial importance in understanding the performance adopted by migrants to negotiate their mobility through borders, Michael de Certeau’s concepts of *tactics* and *strategies* (1984) provides this study with a model which reveals how this dialogue between border crossing movement and reinforcement occurs in practice. By strategy de Certeau means the calculation of power relationships that a subject with will and power can manage and delimit places

⁶‘Appearance’ may be taken to refer to those stimuli which function at the time to tell us of the performer’s social statuses. These stimuli also tell us of the individual’s temporary ritual state: that is, whether he is engaging in formal social activity, work or informal recreation; whether or not he is celebrating a new phase in the season cycle or in his life-cycle. ‘Manner’ may be taken to refer to those stimuli which function at the time to warn us of the interaction role performer will expect to play in the oncoming situation (Goffman 1969: 21).”

with targets and threats. But there exists an element of creative resistance – defined as tactics – to these structures enacted by ordinary people. Tactic, therefore, is the crafty art of the weak. The individual as a ‘consumer’ acting in the environment has to creatively design an alternative power to circumvent the established power that monitor the geographical space. He argues that tactics are calculation and calculated actions taken by those who present cunning power to navigate through spaces of others. A tactic “must play on and with a terrain imposed on it and organized by the law of a foreign power (1997:37).” Hence, it becomes important to dedicate attention to the tactics of mobility through urban or – in the case of this paper – social spaces. As de Certeau inspired by a Lefebvrian perspective on mobility suggests:

First, if it is true that a spatial order organizes an ensemble of possibilities (e.g., by a place in which one can move) and interdictions (e.g., by a wall that prevents one from going further), then the walker actualizes some of these possibilities. In that way, he makes them exist as well as emerge. But he also moves them about and invents others, since crossing, drifting away, or improvisation of walking privilege, transform or abandon spatial elements (de Certeau 1997: 98).

This theoretical approach leads us to think borders not as a thing, but as relationships produced from *border reinforcement* and *border crossing movement* (Vila 2000, Mezzadra 2012). On one side, the state aims to protect its territory as well its economy against unwanted arrivals. While, on the other hand, the border crossing movement experienced by economic migrants result in struggles and in some cases deportation. Thus, borders work equally as “devices of inclusion that select and filter people and different forms of circulation in ways no less violent than those deployed in exclusionary measures (Mezzadra and Neilson 2013:7).”

Embedded in this theoretical approach, this thesis argues that the mobility of Brazilians from Alto Paranaíba to London is a *tactic of border crossing movement* which starts in the very first airport where they put their feet

3. Dealing with European Borderscapes.

Air travel is the main feature of Brazilians’ journey towards London. Due to the huge distance between Brazil and the United Kingdom, and the geographical obstacles, their mobility is very much dependent on the spaces of airports. However, it is not simply a matter of buying tickets and getting on the plane as Bloch, Sigona and Zetter (2011), for

instance, affirm when discussing migration routes and “strategies” adopted by Brazilians to enter the UK. The interviews conducted with travel agents in Alto Paranaíba and migrants living in London have demonstrated that migrants from this Brazilian area, in order to move without harm to London, seek to organize their mobility through travel agencies. Aware of the high number of deportation Brazilians have faced in European passports, the travel agents know that a tourist can be better received. Therefore, migrants have to perform as tourists across the border controls.

Taking this into account, I explore in this paper the journey from Alto Paranaíba to London through the two main strategies which I observed in my fieldwork: *travelling as tourists* and *arriving in the UK through small airports*. They are not two distinct tactics. Actually, they are interwoven tactics, which complement each other. As my informants have demonstrated, to land in a ‘small airport’ in London, first they have to arrive in some Western European country, member of the Schengen Area. From there, a European domestic flight will enable them to arrive in the UK through Gatwick, Luton or any other British airport as long as it is not Heathrow. And this mobility, through airports only happens, as they say, because they present themselves at the border control as Brazilian tourists. Therefore, both tactics must work together.

3.1 Travelling as a tourist.

The movement in search of economic gains has reached wide proportions in the towns of Alto Paranaíba since the 90s. However, it did not have any travel agencies at the beginning. People who wanted to move abroad had to access travel agencies in cities where a migration industry was better established. Julia, for instance, mentions that her brother had to travel from their town to Uberlândia to organize his trip. ‘He [Marcelo] bought his flight tickets in Uberlândia. There were no travel agencies here during the first time he travelled.’

Cities like Uberlândia, Governador Valadares and Belo Horizonte with established migratory networks to European countries and North America were the main places accessed by inhabitants of Alto Paranaíba. They are well known for a wide migratory industry which provides mobility not just for their own population, but also for people from other Brazilian states (Fusco 2005, Siqueira 2009). According to Fusco (2005),

Governador Valadares, for instance, has become an important node in a vast connection of Brazilian cities from distinct states with people waiting to move abroad.

Soon bogus documents, elaboration of clandestine routes, loaning money and fake tour packages became some of the border crossing services consumed by the inhabitants of Alto Paranaíba. In the 2000s, it started producing its own migration industry which employs people, and establishes links with other Brazilian cities and countries. According to Clarice – a travel agent in Alto Paranaíba – there were 7 travel agencies operating at the same time due to the high demand. ‘These travel agencies belonged to people who lived in the United States. After returning they started these businesses. My husband was one of them. He knew how to travel abroad and how to pass through the Passport control’, she comments. Clarice says that obtaining a tourist visa was not a big issue as long as the migrant was well oriented to sensible behavior at a passport desk of any airport in the US territory. ‘My husband had this kind of knowledge. So, he started selling tickets and tour packages for those who also wanted to go abroad.’

In addition, Clarice says that she tries to prepare the migrant in the best way possible for him/her to succeed at the passport control in any airport localized in the Europe. ‘Tell me, who would on their own leave Brazil, without speaking a single word of English, book a hotel or get a taxi? It is crazy!’, she says. Therefore, her travel agency books hotels or hostels are booked for two or three nights and the travellers are advised not to give any information about who is waiting for them in the UK. If the customer wants they can also provide tickets for local attractions. As mentioned in this excerpt from Lucio’s interview, a current twenty-seven-years-old migrant interviewed in London:

He [travel agent] gave us some tips and also organized the journey... He advised me to not tell about my cousin who was waiting for me in London. He also gave some information about Rome...he said that in Italy we should not get the white taxi, because it is very expensive and we would waste our money. So, he prepared a schedule for us...

In addition, Clarice mentions that ‘we explain everything in minute details. Even what the person has to say at the passport control desk. You know. The questions are normally the same.’ The luggage is also carefully prepared. ‘If you are going as a tourist, you have to carry enough clothes for those days described in your tour package. Nothing else’, Clarice reinforces. The tour package reveals a range of skills that the travel agent must relay for a migrant to succeed in his/her crossing movement. In other words, these

elements – flight tickets, reservations letter from hotel, the luggage and son on – can assure the traveler the best conditions for him/her to perform well as a tourist at the passport control in the US territory.

However, migrants themselves also play an important role in this tactical mobility. Laerte, another travel agent, explains to me that performing as a tourist demands from the traveller some skills. ‘That is why we can help. We have an idea about the type of people the European and British border control wants. So we do our best to give what they want. But the person who is travelling has to follow the script. Otherwise s/he returns and has lost his/her money.’ In that sense, both the travel agent and the migrant have to work together to hide the economic reasons behind the migrant’s displacement and bring up a tourist character who affirms to be travelling to Europe ‘in search of culture and some rest.’

According to my informants, it does produce a considerable market in Alto Paranaíba. Paula, for example, says that rather than buying a package tour from a travel agency in her home town, she decided to deal with a travel agency in the neighbouring town, Tiros. According to her, this decision was taken after the neighbouring town’s travel agency enabled her friends to get into the United States. For Paula, that shows the efficiency of the service sold by the travel agency, even after the 09/11. ‘I remember that my friends went to New Jersey after 2000...it was quite difficult to cross the migration [control] in the airports of the United States.’ She also commented several times that the travel agency which she dealt with had package tours cheaper than the ones in her home town. In fact, interviewing people from different towns of Alto Paranaíba has suggested that the tour package and the prices may vary according to the travel agencies; and this information is passed on by word of mouth amongst those who are interested in buying this kind of service. That is an important element for them, as money is a sensible issue.

Paula finally says that the travel agency where she bought her tour package also had a key differential: it provided all the facilities to safely move her into London. By facilities, Paula meant *absolutely everything*, including appropriate clothing for the journey and an appointment at a hairdresser. ‘They take their clients to do their hair and their nails, everything.’ She believes that the travel agency provides this sort of service because it helps the migrant to look more like a tourist. ‘I think when you live in Brazil, coming to Europe or to the United States...when you go to any travel agency, they sell an image of how you have to arrive at an airport in Europe... so, they want to dress up the

men with a suit, tie and shirt, while the women have to come also well dressed, with high heels, wearing makeup and having neat hair.’ Paula’s interview evidences the elaboration of this *stereotype traveller* as a tactic used by the travel agencies and their customers in Alto Paranaíba.

Besides, travelling to London is never a lonely mobility. Moving with a *dummy classmate* or a *dummy girl/boyfriend* is a tactical manoeuvre used by the travel agents in order to reinvent this mobility always in pairs to Europe. The European tour therefore tends to be arranged for two people and it can be two males/ females or a couple. According to those who experienced this sort of trip, this tactic is a good idea, to reinforce the idea of two friends or a couple travelling as tourists. Moreover, they say that moving in twos also enables them to get support from each other in case of being interviewed at the border control. Murilo, in interview, tells me that he came with a girl from his town. ‘we were not friends, we just knew each other, but as Laerte knew we both were planning to come to London, he suggested for us to come together.[...] We came as a couple on holiday across Europe...we combined a speech and then we came [...] She was afraid of travelling alone. So, I could give some sort of support,’ Murilo recalls. In that context, two males/females would represent classmates travelling on holiday from a hypothetical university, or a couple would represent partners also on vacation. It helps to calm down, and deal with the uncertainties that may appear in front of the passport control.

So, the tactic of presenting themselves as tourists is carefully prepared by the travel agency. They have to wisely operate this temporary role to move smoothly through the borderscapes and re-use their strategies to manipulate and tabulate the spaces where their journey is going to lead them. Like de Certeau argues, the “way of operating” adopted by those who have to circumvent the institutionalized rules and ways of control is a cunning form of re-using the rationalized space that does not favour them. “[...] they introduce into it a way of turning into to their advantage that obeys other rules and constitutes something like a second level interwoven into the first (for instance, *la perruque*) (Certeau 1984:30).”

Following this argument, *appearance* and *manner* are two important components in this way of operating. Looking and behaving, in other words, performing like a Brazilian traveller in the airport is a way of operating. As *la perruque*, they create a character who intends to operate as the "legitimate" one. Goffman stresses that the term performance

refers to the activities of an individual “which occurs during a period marked by his [or her] continuous presence before a particular set of observers and which has some influence on the observers (1969: 19).” In the same vein I argue that migrants from Alto Paranaíba when they enter an airport have to intentionally behave as a tourist who is ready to travel to Europe on holidays. The airport setting involves air company desks, electronic airport schedule boards indicating flight departure and arrival, waiting chairs, baggage trolleys, and the shopping and eating areas supply the “scenery and stage props for the spate of human action played out before, within, or upon it (ibid:19).” Amongst this scenery, are the other travellers, their relatives, and airport staff who are also interacting and circulating in the whole picture. The tourist performance must give the impression that s/he, migrant, incorporates values of the social group, the tourist, within s/he takes part. The interaction face-to-face, the speech as well as the clothes and luggage have to show that s/he incorporates correctly the values of that social group within s/he takes part.

The others travellers and airport staff have to believe that s/he is also part of the very play that is going on there. Using Curry’s definition of a *stereotype traveller*, which affirms if it is accepted that there is a connection between a person’s appearance and his or her status, it is also accepted that there is “a connection between the status and the proper place in airports and airliners of passengers, airline and airport personnel, and the general public” (2004: 479). In other words, the travel agencies and the migrant aim to produce an image of a Brazilian tourist travelling to Europe on holiday: middle class, wearing expensive clothes and good-looking (Padilla 2006, 2008, Margolis 1994). Those stereotypes of a Brazilian tourist are interpreted by them as the set of symbols that the traveller might have to have in order to prove that they belong to the space of the airport and the aeroplane (Curry 2004).

3.2 The *Small airports*

Aware of the large number of Brazilian migrants who have been deported every year at Heathrow airport⁷, migrants and travel agents emphasize that crossing the borders as a

⁷ They say that such type of information can be obtained from countrymen who were refused entry at the airport, and also from the news which is normally presented on the main Brazilian television channels.

tourist consists in a movement through other European countries before landing in the United Kingdom. As I argued before, the travel agents in Alto Paranaíba carefully bear in mind that since 9/11 “world airports and airline passengers, which represent the mobility of modern society, are being intensely scrutinized using a range of surveillance techniques (Bennet and Regan 2004: 450).” The use of technologies to discover treacherous travellers has been widely used by the British government as well as other European governments under the banner of protection and national security. In that sense, airports and their passport controls participate as borderscapes which are in charge of filtering trusted travellers from unwanted travellers (Papadopoulos et al 2008, Perera 2009).

During Adriano’s interview he explained to me that avoiding Heathrow airport was a piece of advice given by the travel agent who organized her package tour. He, in fact, confirmed that his travel agent recommended him to arrive in Britain through any airport located outside of London, where the queues are smaller. Like Adriano, other informants were also advised to arrive in the UK using the same tactic: avoid Heathrow airport and land in the UK through a domestic flight from European airport hubs located in the Schengen space. That tactic would enable them to land in airports like Luton, Gatwick, Stansted or London city, for instance. They are, as they define, the *small airports*, where their border controls are less restricts, as there are no flights coming from Brazil.

According to my informants, they say that the majority of European domestic flights – coming from countries located in the Schengen space – carry UE citizens. As a result, the “all other passports” queue for non-EU travellers is shorter, and there are not many overseas migrants trying to cross. This tactical mobility adopted by migrants from Alto Paranaíba takes advantage of the borderless zone created by the Schengen Agreement between Member States of the European Union. This treaty allows the 26 countries in the Schengen Area to operate like a single state with external border controls for mobile people travelling in and out of the area, but with no strict internal border controls. Thus, border checks are done only occasionally and custom controls are not required. Such agreement allows the airside zone for flights within Schengen countries to be classified as a Clean Zone (Codourey 2004).

By taking advantage of such porosity, journeying to London does not consist of a direct flight to London. The travel agents provide a range of optional trajectories connecting other European Union countries before landing in British territory. According

to Claudio and Adriano, the customer can decide if s/he wants a package tour which includes two or three countries and then the rest (buying coach and flight tickets, booking hostels, and preparing the speech which will be used at passport control) is organized by the agents. Claudio says that, ‘they give the options, but it is up to you. You can choose the countries that you want to travel through. Then they [travel agents] make the schedule, including hotel bookings and flight tickets, and give you the price.’ Looking carefully at the itineraries journeyed by my informants has evidenced how airports based in the Schengen area can be understood as tactical hubs which provide safe mobility towards the British border.

Travel agents recommend the dummy pair do not go straight from Brazil to the United Kingdom, and never have London as the last stop in their journey. Instead, they are given the choice of making flight connections to European airport hubs where the travellers will receive passport stamps on their passport reinforcing their image as Brazilian tourists. In that context, airports in Spain, Portugal, Holland and Italy, for instance, are the places where the flight connections can happen. London, then, is represented as just a tourist city where the travellers will spend a few days in their tour around Europe. The aim of this mobility is to show to the passport control at any British airport that the dummy pair is actually in transit, and they will continue their travel to other countries in the EU. ‘We would have passports like tourists have. They (border officers) would check we had a visa from Portugal and after London we would go to Spain...they would think we were tourists. It would make it easier to get into London,’ Claudio explains to me.

In the following section, my intention is to demonstrate how such tactics of border crossing movement described above are practiced by these migrants. I examine how they re-use “the way of operating” as a tourist to start the process of negotiation of border crossing movement which begins either at the Brazilian international airports of Rio de Janeiro city or São Paulo city.

4. Journeying as a tourist through the porosities of Fortress Europe

In order to understand the mobility undertaken by my informants, during the interviews, I decided to ask if they could describe to me how the journey was made from Alto Paranaíba to London. The process of crossing the passport control and presenting

themselves as tourists were remembered very precisely. Denise and Lucio, for instance, gave me the day and the time of their flight tickets, and described thoroughly the time spent in the airports between each flight. ‘We departed from Galeão [International airport in Rio de Janeiro city] at 9 pm on 12th March 2006. We arrived in Madrid and got a connexion [European domestic flight] at 2 pm to Rome [...] We arrived in Rome at 5 pm and stayed in a hotel,’ from the top of his head Lucio thoroughly gives me his time schedule after 6 years. In addition, the mobilities presented to me were not the same for all of my informants. Instead, a multiplicity of routes using other European airports was taken by these migrants, composed of distinct combinations of places with the same purpose: avoiding a direct flight which would land at Heathrow airport, and arrive first in some country inserted in the Schengen space.

4.1 Dealing with Biometric Data

Since 2006, the Brazilian passport has become machine-readable in order to comply with the ICAO Document 9303 standard. Such document contains the current International Civil Aviation Organization's specifications for machine-readable passports, visas and ID cards (“travel documents”) used in crossing the borders. So, it means that the holder's personal identification – fingerprints, signature and photography – are digitally stored in the passport database, and can be accessed at check-in points through a two-dimensional bar code. As a consequence of 09/11, the Brazilian government had to include such security technologies in this Federal document in order to meet the standards imposed by the US government and lately by the EU government (Dias 2012, 2013).

Reflecting again on the tactic of border crossing movements which try to build a stereotype traveller based on the image of a Brazilian tourist travelling to Europe on holiday, the biometric technology comes as a way of operating that attempts to eliminate the identification of the passenger according to his/her appearance and status. Curry (2004) says that the *era of stereotyping* in airports has been rapidly replaced by the *age of profiling*, and this policy is directly connected to 9/11. The airline staff and the security agents engaged in the process of profile reading attempt to gauge whether the identity stored in the database matches perfectly with the traveller. “The move from symbolic to interactive profiling involves what one could describe as a process of ‘fleshing out’ the

identity that the symbolic profile has attempted to discern (Curry 2004: 485).” This new biometric system of authentication ties access codes to the bodies of travellers. Travellers are no longer identified as a whole, the algorithmic logic of a database and the information stored in it replace features of the individual in a biometric system of control. Mobile individuals are increasingly integrated into a collective electronic database; a collection of data arranged for easy and speedy search and retrieval. “Transnational spaces of airports continue to face different patterns of mobility that are also concerned with the biometric pattern match (Coudorey 2008: 2000).”

In fact, in order to map mobility, *Smart Borders* are spread out along the circuits “constructing an apparatus that may follow individuals over multiple lines of displacement, and verify their identities at various locations on those lines” (Côté-Boucher 2008: 146). So, in the *age of profiling* where e-passports carry and transmit electronic information about their holders, the process of border reinforcement at the airports is not fixed anymore. It moves with the traveller. Attempting to identify passengers and thus prevent unpredictable risks, governmental security agencies create networks in which the exchange of information becomes circular, involving data sharing in bulk.

In other words, the high technological strategies developed by national governments to monitor travellers, in airports, through e-passports shows an attempt to tabulate traveller bodies through their own biometric data. The replacement of the *era of stereotyping* by the *age of profiling* aims to eliminate any doubt in airports. Increasing the security and border control at airports, enable governments to strategically delimit these spaces of circulation. The power of knowledge gives to national government the opportunity of managing through a Cartesian attitude any possibly threat or target at their airports. According to de Certeau (1984),

It would be legitimate to define the power of knowledge by this ability to transform the uncertainties of history into readable spaces. But it would be more correct to recognize in these “strategies” a specific type of knowledge, one sustained and determined by the power to provide oneself with one’s own place. Thus military or scientific strategies have always been inaugurated through the constitutions of their “own” areas [...]. In other words, a certain power is the precondition of this knowledge and not merely its effect or its attribute. It makes this knowledge possible and at the same time determines its characteristics. It produces itself in and through this knowledge (de Certeau 1984:36).

In the case of the migrants from Alto Paranaíba, their migratory mobility starts being mapped at the check-in desk at one of these two Brazilian airports when the biometric database stored in their passports is read on the computer system, and they are registered as having left Brazilian territory. The data indicating the check-in, the fly destination and the biometric profile is safely stored on the e-passport holder. At this point, the journey is traced by each passport control where the traveller has eventually to pass through. As Ceyhan (2008) asserts, this procedure enables authorities across international airports to identify people with certainty and to trace their movement and itineraries. Therefore, border controls at airports can certainly access the historical itineraries of mobile people through the passport analysis, and try to eliminate possible uncertainties to provide security for their national territories.

However, unlike de Certeau who sees structures of power as "producers", while individuals are "consumers", I argue that power does not come before the struggle. Taking the argument defended by Papadopoulos et al in the book *Escape Routes* (2008) which considers that the subversion of imperceptible subjectivities trigger social transformation, and to complement Curry's (2004) observations, discussed above, this paper sees the dialogue established between border crossing movements and border crossing reinforcement as a continuous process. "Strategies of subversion emerge in these spaces and push the state to transform itself beyond the coordinates of the existing social compromise (Papadopoulos et al 2008: 13)." In other words, alike migrants who have to reinvent their mobility, border controls must to also readapt its own power to new *ways of operating*. "New social subjectivities and new social actors now emerge as a productive force, an imminent force which the modern nation state can no longer negate; national sovereignty is challenged. But this challenge, in turn, triggers its own response (ibid: 18)." The new biometric system of authentication can efficiently read the bodies of travellers; however, it cannot yet rationalize their movement.

4.2 It's time to go!

The aeroplane crosses the Atlantic Ocean and it takes approximately 10 hours to reach the European continent. Inside, the migrants share space with tourists, business people and students. So, it carries different mobile people with distinct goals whose passports have been already checked and registered at one of those two international

Brazilian airports. According to Auge (1995), these travellers have all been playing their carefree momentary role as passengers since the process of departing; however it does not mean that they do not move under constant surveillance (Wilson and Weber 2008). The aeroplane that departs from Brazilian soil has its movement monitored by radar, and the border agencies are aware of the expected travel to the Schengen area of all persons. Unlike small boats loaded with migrants who challenge the waters of the Mediterranean Sea and sail anonymously to the shores of Lampedusa or the Aegean islands (Papadopoulos et al. 2008, Garelli 2012), the aeroplane carrying migrants from Alto Paranaíba reaches the European boundary in an area inside the actual territory. The European airport hub is a transit area where internal, national and European regulations are applied to foreign travellers. As Codourey reflects,

On one side this space promises overcoming the violent legacies of the nation-state, while at the very same time undergoes a process of effective border fortification and cultural homogenization. Moreover, increasingly the border condition turns into a space itself: the airport's so-called transit area or air side is in fact a jurisdictional enclave inside the territorial boundaries of a nation. Various laws, rules and agreements that apply to passengers, depending on nationality or travel status, regulate this zone (2008:193).

Hence, at this stage, travellers are again all split and classified by their passports or identity cards at a border control in order to identify their type of mobility. Aware of the fact that “the single biggest entry route from migrants into the EU is via international airports” (Frontex 2012), the European Union has increased the surveillance at its airports in order to monitor and filter the circulation or “flow” of people in its territory. Since 9/11, Europe has clearly aimed to guard its territory at its airports with the help of sophisticated information technology employed by agencies such as Frontex, which is responsible for co-ordinating the activities of the national border guards in ensuring the security of the EU's borders with non-member states. These *Smart Borders* focus on implementing “efficient and effective border checks at their external borders, which are of a comparable level, thus guaranteeing that no weak spots in the borders can readily be identified (Frontex 2012).”

Surveillance technology is promoted as the crucial barrier to fortify permeable borders and monitor border crossing movements through the EU territory. Therefore, at the airports based in the Schengen area, every traveller is submitted to a process of filtering through a *Smart Border* which is diffused along corridors. Checking passports is

the first stage. Long narrow passages distinguish citizens of the European Union from citizens of other regions in two queues according to their passports: the “EU passport” queue for those who hold a burgundy coloured passport issued by the 27 Member States of the European Union and the “all other passports” queue for travellers holding foreign passports.

A *SmartGate* system for passengers with e-passports, where a scanner and a camera check the biometric passports, speeds up the European queue, while the “all other passports” group are submitted one by one to an unpredictable interview conducted by a border officer. Meanwhile 3D baggage scanners, metal detectors, and a team of detector dogs carefully check the arrival luggage. According to Curry (2004) and Wilson and Weber (2008) this wide technological system of security attempts to filter out treacherous/high risk travellers from trusted travellers and then lead them to a further search by border agents. The purpose is to uncover the real purpose behind the traveller’s journey and define if he/she might be a potential treacherous/high risk traveller.

Everyone from global terrorists and alleged international criminals, to those seeking a receptive location to lodge a claim for refugee protection and forced into illicit modes of travel, or people merely attempting to travel without a valid visa, is thereby subsumed under the immigration fraud label, justifying a further widening and deepening of the surveillance apparatus (Wilson and Weber 2008:133).

As Curry (2004) and Adey (2004) stress, airports and their border controls as spaces of surveillance render as filters in which all sorts of mobile people have to negotiate their mobility through the gates. “Henceforth, it is at the borders, at airports – where movement and distinct spatial boundaries coexist – where undesirable mobilities may be distinguished from the desirable. This is increasingly achieved by surveillance” (Adey 2004:502). The literature that focuses on *Smart Borders* and systems of security in airports covers several types of mobile people. But those studies pay very little attention to migrants, who also have to negotiate their mobility with border agents and smart control along the airport’s space.

Presenting reservation letters from hostels or hotels and their tourist itinerary proving they are guests on a short-term basis and explaining why they are passing through that specific country are the reinventions made by migrants from Alto Paranaíba to secure their border crossing movement. However, according to my informants, the passport

control located in the airports of Schengen space is normally quick, and once the officers know that they are heading to other countries there are only a few routine security questions. 'It is nothing very serious. They just ask what we are doing here, how long we going to stay, what is the next country,' Gisele recalls.

Pedro also says that the border control at Malpensa airport, in Milan, presented few questions with reference to their travel journey. He travelled with a friend and according to their itinerary, they would spend three days in Milan, then go to London where they would spend four days and finally land in Paris. That would be the last European capital before flying back to Brazil. 'We were lucky because my friend had lived in Spain before and because of that he could speak Spanish. The officer asked questions regarding the motives we were in Europe, how much cash we had. So, he said that as both of us had got a place at university our parents decided to pay a trip to Europe. It was a sort of gift'. In fact, Pedro and his friend 'stayed in Milan as a proper tourist', after crossing the passport control at Malpensa airport. He says that they 'had time to sightsee the city, there is a beautiful cathedral there. So, we went there. We had a good time'

The few days they have as a tourist is a time that should be well spent. That is the chance to visiting the European continent before heading to the United Kingdom, where they will probably spend years living without migratory status. 'You have to understand. In my case, I barely had gone out of Alto Paranaiba. That was a dream for me. To be honest, I was not scared at all. I faced that as a game. After all, we were in Amsterdam' Gisele describes her feelings during the time spent in the Schengen area. Lucio, for instance, and his dummy girlfriend stayed for three nights in Rome, all the time spent between the hotel's room and walking in the city. During his interview, he managed to show me pictures that he took while he wandered in Rome.

'My 'girlfriend' [gesturing air quotes] did not want to sightsee. She spent most of the time on the hotel, watching TV. I met a Brazilian there. He was also a tourist, but a truly one. We decided to walk and take pictures.' Nonetheless, as he said, 'we tried not spending much money in Italy, because we knew that we should show a good amount [of money] in the UK [Border Control].' Eventually, Lucio said that the tension took control of him on the last day. According to him those four days in Rome before heading to London became unbearable. Waiting for the peak moment of the journey, the negotiation of their crossing at the UK border control was the main stress point. Thus he woke up at

7a.m. and desperately started packing his luggage while calling out to his dummy girlfriend to get ready and head for the airport.

... I started organizing my luggage and told her (his dummy girlfriend) that it was time to go... we left the hotel at 9a.m. for the airport in Rome, it was the Fiumicino airport...we got there around 10:30a.m. to head for London at 11p.m[...]. So we spent the whole day sleeping on the benches... the boredom was horrible. The flight was delayed and we left at midnight and arrived in London at 1:30 a.m.

Reflecting on the migratory mobility of migrants from Alto Paranaíba to London, the first leg of their journey finishes after crossing the first passport control in the Schengen area⁸. Therefore, I argue that reaching a European Member State of this treaty shows the chance that these Brazilians will succeed in their journey, as they have reached the continent. From this stage of their journey, the last European country they passed through is the return point in case of being refused permission to enter the UK. In the following subsection I will explore the process of negotiation at an UK passport control. While migrants like Adriano and Claudio successfully crossed such border, Mauro and his dummy traveller mate were initially refused permission to enter the UK and had to fly back to Spain, the country in the Schengen space where they were coming from. At this point, before saying more about cases of success and failure, I want to clarify that my intention is showing how the tactic of travelling through the Schengen space before landing in the UK provides a good support for these travellers.

3.3 Answering the riddles at the Border Control

The idea of arriving in the UK through small airports does not eliminate the risk of passing through a border control. The negotiation, therefore, happens again in this last

⁸ In addition, attempting to overcome the surveillance at the airports and the fear that control them, these migrants seek to move rapidly through the routes that connect to London. So, they have chosen package tours which enable them to make an only-connecting flight at a European airport hub and transfer to a flight to the UK. Arriving in London quickly not only provides the opportunity to conclude their journeys, but also saves money. Claudio, for instance, says that he and his *dummy classmate* arrived in Europe through Barajas airport, Spain, and after 6 hours they caught a flight to London. The travel agent advised them to arrive first at Lisbon where they would spend two nights before heading off to London, and then to Madrid. Nevertheless, Claudio persuaded his dummy classmate to arrive in Spain and from there to go to London through a domestic flight. The reason for changing the itinerary was ‘fear of deportation in the first country [Portugal]. We hear stories that the Portuguese people are very mean to Brazilians. [Moreover] I did not have enough money to spend there as a tourist. So, I said we’d better go straight away to London and see what happens.’ They landed at London city airport and headed to the passport control.

leg of their journey: the key distinction is of between mobile people through the queues as “UK/ EU passport” and “All other passports”, filling in the landing card for the UK border control and an interview at passport control. However, that is the right time to show their passport stamps that were thoroughly collected in the Schengen space. These stamps alongside the flight ticket to the next country evidence to the UK Border Control that these tourists are in Britain just for few days. That is time enough to visit the National Gallery and the British Museum, perhaps take some pictures of touristic spots on the Thames River, such as the Big Ben and then leave the country.

Adriano comments that after copying what other travellers were filling in their respective landing border card, he and his dummy girlfriend manage to find the line that they should queue in order to be interviewed. ‘Well...after waiting for 40 minutes in the “not European citizenship” queue, the officer only asked me how many nights we were planning to stay. I said 5 nights...then he asked something else...I did not get. He made a sign with his hand showing that there was no problem... he stamped my passport and I got in....’ He says that his travel agent had taught him a few answers in English. The airport as a borderscape can be seen as a setting which moves along with the performers. The traveller’s passport registered all his/her itinerary. The questions enable the immigration officer to match the traveller discourse with his mobility.

As Goffman denotes, “it is only in exceptional circumstances that the setting follows along with performers (1969: 19).” As a result, performing as a tourist demands from these young Brazilians from Alto Paranaíba an attentive mental and corporal exercise capable of maintaining their role consisting enough during the entire journey. Therefore, once more they have to bear in mind the possible questions and correct answers which they were taught by the travel agents in their towns due to the fact that the British authorities also use the interview as a strategy to identify and ascribe legitimate and illegitimate identities to those moving across borders (Wilson and Weber 2004). As it happens with the mythological merciless and treacherous meeting with the Sphinx, the interviewees explained in detail how they answered the riddles and thus escaped from suffering the tragic fate of deportation for those migrants who cannot answer: deportation. Côté-Boucher (2004) notes that the interviews, actually, present a confessional aspect of the inspection upon arrival at a port of entry, “border apparatuses deploy spaces of examining and interrogating travellers, emphasizing gaze and inciting speech as means of surveillance (Ibid:145)”.

Claudio recalls the queue for “All other passport”, while the ‘the European queue was full. So, we waited shortly and then a man [migration officer] called us. He saw our passports; I think he saw the stamps too. Then he asked in English. I said we could not talk. After a while somebody speaking Portuguese came to help. Well, we said what we wanted to do in the UK.’ Claudio says that they would spend only three days in London and then return to Madrid, where they would stay for four more days, before returning to Brazil — one week’s holiday. ‘I think the plan worked. They allowed us to pass through..,’ Claudio concludes.

It is clear that the border controls in the UK can also refuse permission to enter the British territory. As Claudio tells me, ‘I know people whose entry was refused. It is not easy. I think luck is very important at this stage. I mean if you get a tough staff, you can be fucked. All money and time invested just gone.’ During my fieldwork in London and in Alto Paranaíba I interviewed four migrants whom have were refused entry into the UK. Curiously, the tactic of traveling first to European cities in the Schengen area works as migratory platforms for some of these young migrants. In the case of being deported from the UK it is the place where they will return. Thus, it gives them the opportunity to reorganize their journey from that European city to London.

Mauro, for instance, failed in one of his journeys to London. In his house, in Alto Paranaíba, he says that he had travelled three times to the UK. In all travels he travelled with a tour package bought from Laerte’s travel agency. ‘The first time I travelled from São Paulo [city] to Amsterdam and from there to London. The second time it was from São Paulo [city] to Madrid and then to Bristol. My last trip was from São Paulo [city] to Dublin, then to Wales and London.’ In his second journey, Mauro mentions that, after spending three days with friends in Móstoles with some countrymen, he and his dummy classmate travelled to Bristol. However, the tactic of performing as a tourist did not work as planned. ‘The man [passport control officer] asked us a few weird questions. It was hard to understand him. Then he split us to different rooms. He gave me a phone. Somebody was translating our conversation into Portuguese. The translator asked me how much money I had, and if I was employed in Brazil.’ In fact, Mauro says that the UK border control was aware that was his second time in the UK.

I said that I was a musician. I was actually a musician... then, I gave an estimated valor of my salary. I do not have a fixed salary. After that he accused me of having contradictory answers.

Therefore he was not sure of my real intentions in the UK. They guided me to a small room where they took photos and my fingerprint. I was treated like a thief. The same happened to my friend. After that we were left in a room to wait for the first flight out of the UK...The first plane that came, they put us on it. I had no clue where we were going. Then I asked one of them, and he replied Malaga, but I did not get it. Perhaps his accent... To be honest, I do not really know. Actually, I did not know where Malaga was. I thought we would fly back to Madrid.

After landing in Málaga–Costa del Sol Airport, Mauro and his dummy classmate headed to the passport control again. There they finally understood where they were. ‘Then the officer asked me what we were doing in Spain again. I said that we were not allowed to enter the UK, and he asked me if we were really going on holiday.’ Unsure about the migration officer’s intentions and afraid of being send back to Brazil, they kept performing as tourists. ‘He [officer] asked if we had money and I said we had enough money for our holidays. Actually it was not that much. He saw it and said that was the reason why we did not enter the UK.’ However, to their surprise the officer ‘gave back our passports and said: You can come to Spain. Spain does not have problems with Brazil. So, we did.’ The money left was enough to buy coach tickets to Móstoles, where their friends could host them again. However, two months later without a job they decided to return to Brazil. In 2007, two year after being deported from Bristol airport Mauro would try to get into the UK again, but this time through its shoreline.

So far, the interviews explored in this paper show how worried these young Brazilians were about keeping their migration mobility hidden. Rather than seeing it as a space without *anthropological meaning* – as Auge (1995) suggests –, airports for migrants gain shape and name and are filled with feelings. Thus, it is a movement characterized less by “freedom” and flows, as by loss, fear and deprivation through borders, which play different symbolic roles among mobile people. Quoting Balibar reflections,

[f]or a rich person from a rich country, a person who tends towards the cosmopolitan [...], the border has become an embarkation formality, a point of symbolic acknowledgement of his social status, to be passed at a jog-trot. For a poor person from a poor country, however, the border tends to be something quite different: not only is it an obstacle which is very difficult to surmount, but it is a place he runs up against repeatedly, passing and repassing through it as and when he is expelled or allowed to rejoin his family, so that it becomes, in the end, a place where he resides (2002:83).

According to the extracts presented above, they expressed concern about the money they were carrying, as they cannot spend more money than is necessary on their journey.

This decision is related to the fact that they need to show a good amount of money at British passport controls in order to reinforce their image as tourists. Besides, through both Adriano and Mauro's interview, I also intended to show that they have feelings of tension and uncertainty which accompany them on their journeys. They are aware that the route which provides connectedness from Alto Paranaíba to London is fragile and can fail if they do not present themselves as acceptable mobile people – tourists – at the right moment. Côté-Boucher (2004) emphasizes that it is not just unpredictable mistakes made by mobile bodies that can be seen as the reasons for failing the border crossing movement. The smart border control apparatus should be taken as relational rather than an efficient mechanism. Along various points of border control in airports, some mobilities may be interrupted; while “others may be simply surveyed through the analysis of the travelling records of airline passengers (Ibid:146).” Thus, the strategy for filtering mobile people through border controls works with probabilities.

In that context, connecting places, removing failed options, contacting people throughout the journey, defining and redefining routes according to personal circumstances are some of the tactics that the interviewees have explained to me in order to clarify how they journey towards London. In a sense, there is more than one single route and the elaboration of it can take a different shape. Each one arrived in London through a different airport, but adopted the same tactic: coming as tourists and avoiding Heathrow airport by accessing small airports which also enable them to travel through countries located in the Schengen space.

Conclusion

This paper has explored how migration mobility is a skilled movement involving choices and negotiation with people and places – mainly represented by airports – along their journeys in order to overcome the multiple border controls.

The mobility made by these migrants has demonstrated that airports are surveillance spaces which have different meaning and function for distinct mobile people. While desirable mobile people such as international students, tourists and business people have accessed airports as spaces of circulation which enable them to connect distant geographical locations within a short space of time, migrants are included in the transgressive mobile group who have to negotiate their mobility at passport borders.

Thus, from these cases, this article argues that airports work as spaces under strict regulations rather than mere spaces of flow or non-places (Urry 2000, Auge 1995). As a result the reinvention of border crossing movement is the main strategy adopted by them in order to overcome the *Smart Borders*. Travel agencies and their package tours gain a significant meaning in this process of escape routes (Papadopoulos et al. 2008).

These private retailers, which belong to migrant pioneers who have returned to the region and seen in this business a profitable opportunity to sell their migratory experience, provide package tours — which combine flights, transfers and accommodation — to one or two European countries, where the locals have emigrated, plus the United Kingdom. The purpose is to build a stereotyped image of tourists travelling on holiday to Europe and who are going to visit London. Therefore, migratory mobility is camouflaged as tourist mobility which enables them to move as desirable mobile people.

Moving in pairs – as a dummy couple or dummy classmates – from their towns in Alto Paranaíba to Belo Horizonte would be, then, the first leg of their journey. From the Minas Gerais capital, the migrants have two options for leaving Brazil: either from Guarulhos airport in São Paulo or Galeão airport in Rio de Janeiro city. From these airports the journeys presented in this chapter took distinct directions, but with the same purpose: to reach the Schengen area before landing in the UK. According to the interviewees, the migrants and the travel agents project a journey which is going to reach London through the fringes. In other words, the mobility is traced by substituting airports into the package tour which are less monitored “small airports” than Heathrow airport, which is considered the airport with the most surveillance in the UK. Based on that, I showed how these non-standard routes are *tactics of border crossing movements* in order to overcome the border controls of the Schengen area and particularly of the United Kingdom, which have been reinforced since 9/11.

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