



The experience of migration: a subjective approach

A study about migration in the countryside and small towns of the border area between South-Luxembourg in Belgium, Grand-Duchy of Luxembourg and Lorraine in France.

- *Organisation:*

Histoire collective

(a non profit organisation in the South Luxembourg region of Belgium)



- *Sponsors:*



The experience of migration: a subjective approach

- *Methodology and Theoretical Approach*
- *Collaboration and partnership*
- *The geographical dimension*

Methodology and Theoretical Approach

The life story contributes to the psycho-social evolution of the concerned area in two ways:

Methodology and Theoretical Approach

1. The importance of life stories in contradicting stereotypes.

“One life story is enough to show the falseness of stigmatising stereotypical ideas”
(Bertaux, 2005)

2. The process of rebuilding for the interviewee.

The interview process is a dynamic interaction: interviewees are challenged, questioned and encouraged to give explanations.

Methodology and Theoretical Approach

Sources:

- Stories given by selected participants
their subjectivity is one of the essential components of the study.
- *Other sources*
population registries and demographical statistics.

Collaboration and partnership

From the first project “Moi Migrant” to RIDI (Intercultural Relations and the Dynamics of Identity).

- Brief exposition on institutional obstacles
- Methodological debates

Collaboration and partnership

The partners

- **Histoire Collective** – Wallonie (Belgium)
socio-cultural consultants,
- **CAGL** - Wallonie/
socio-cultural consultants,
- **Metz University (ERASE)** -
Lorraine (France)/ academic researchers,
- **CDMH** - Luxembourg/ archivists.



Collaboration and Partnership

Institutional Obstacles:

- Contradictory requirements in the European framework in the project
- => A loss and inefficient use of time
- => A loss of employees
- **Unique position of small organisations: usual difficult conditions contribute to create alternative ways (*working and producing results*).**

Collaboration and partnership

Methodological debates:

- Different approaches owing to distinct institutional and theoretical origins
- Outcome: difficult but enriching experience

The geographical dimension

RIDI

Migrants in the ancient iron and steel basin

- **The migrant communities:** Italian and Turkish
- **The history of the geographical area:** history linked to industrial expansion

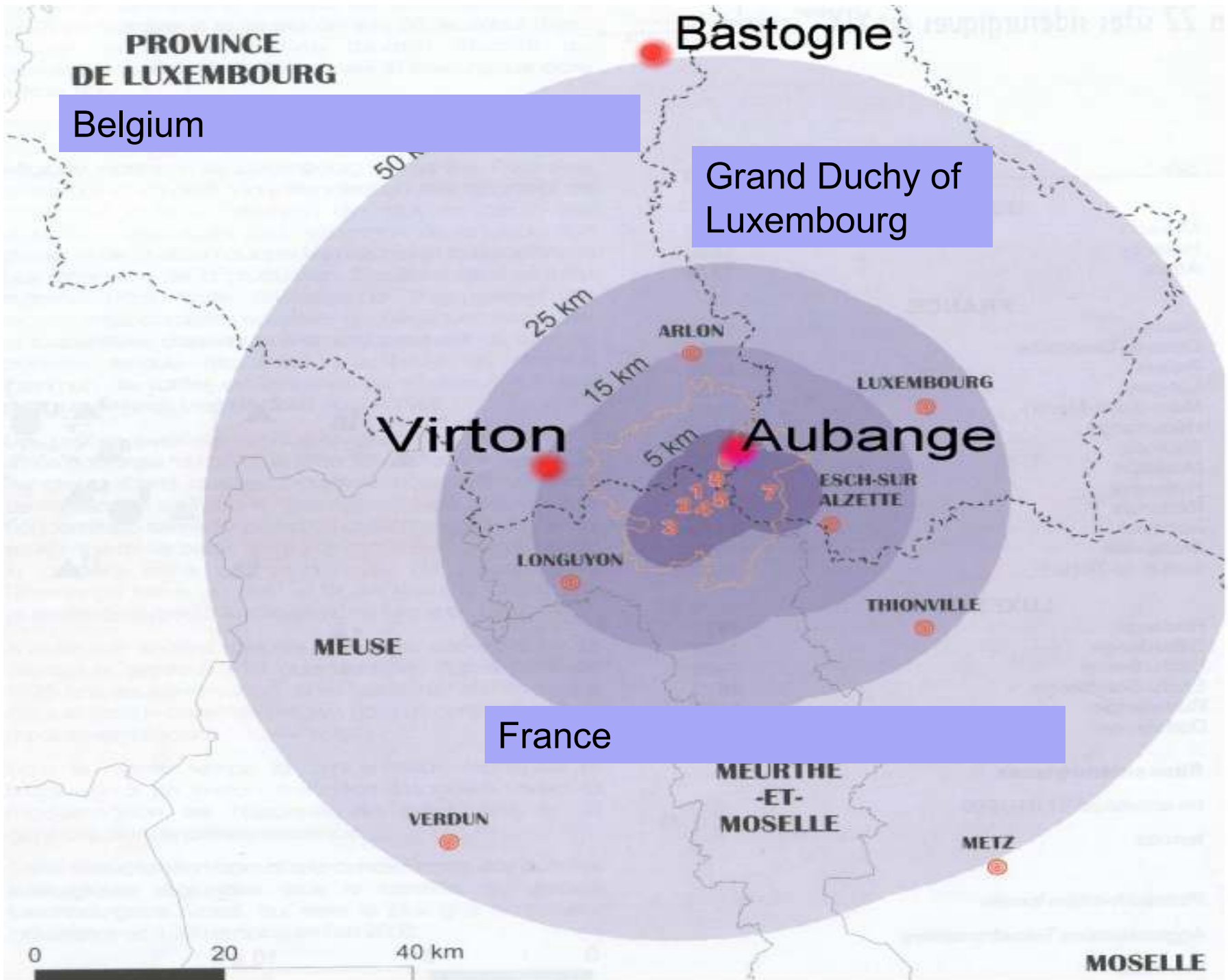
This area was one of the most important iron and steel industrial sites in the world.

The geographical dimension



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J. Daloze - asbl Histoire collective
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Migrants in the ancient iron and steel basin

Migrants in the ancient iron and steel basin

- **The local population:** disinterest of local rural population for the industry
(study centred on small towns and rural areas)
- **History of the migration:** call to foreign workers
- **History of the establishment of the migrant communities:** first, separation of foreign workers from the local population because the different location of the activities

The geographical dimension

Migrants in the ancient iron and steel basin

The Italian migrants in Aubange (since the 30's)

- **First generation:** after a very hard course, good socio-economic integration
- **Second generation:** increase in socio-economic status, sometimes thanks the education
- **Third generation:** look to an immediate profit

The geographical dimension

Migrants in the ancient iron and steel basin

The Turkish migrants in Virton (since the 60's)

- A more recent migration
- Employed in the wood industry
- Discussion about integration: pace of integration / potential obstacles

The geographical dimension

Migrants in the ancient iron and steel basin

Turkish migrants: local population perception

- Idea of closed community
- Minor racial conflicts
- Climate of mistrust
- Building of houses by Turks without planning permission
- Lack of action by the local government

This lack of action does not help to create peaceful coexistence between the two populations.

Conclusion

- Different types of migrants
- First arrivals' capacity for survival and for adaptation to their new environment
- Notion of the family legacy

Considerations

The familial legacy

The family's history of migration frozen in time. It is a story that does not change and is subject to a selective process of recall.

+ : The family legacy was useful to help the migrants survive and integrate while keeping their identity.

- : However this very same legacy is rigid and does not allow the necessary suppleness for adaptation to different ways of life.

Considerations

Familial legacy and life's story

- The familial legacy freezes the history;
- The life's story encourages to use the subjectivity to bring the story alive.

Some experiences lived during the enquiry show the interest of this processe for a dialogue between parents and children.