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Migration and Digital Storytelling: Indexical Narratives of Concealment and Confession

الهجرة والسرد الرقمي: قصص واعترافات بمؤشرات خفية

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Digital stories of clandestine migration and asylum-seeking have exemplified the moments of the twenty-first century. The continuous waves of mass migration and mobility towards the Western metropolises and the rise of social media platforms as a detrimental virtual space are considered global markers of interconnections that forged a special interface between the (trans)formation of migratory experience and digital dwelling via networks. This study explores how YouTube vlogs provide digital storytelling techniques that inform a digital community. This virtual medium has sparked the interest of numerous illegal Algerian migrants to narrate the dangerous crossings in the Mediterranean Sea and via the Balkan countries to find a safe haven in Europe. In this regard, YouTube vlogs became a virtual potential for asylum as illegal migrant subjects strive to find a room of their own in the host nations. Stances of concealment and confession are highly expressed using idioms in the Algerian vernacular.

الكلمات المفتاحية: ملخص

السرد الرقمي

منصات التواصل الاجتماعي

الهجرة السرية

مدونات الفيديو.

يقدم السرد الرقمي أمثلة حية تروي معاناة المهاجرين وطالبي اللجوء خلال القرن الواحد والعشرين. كما تشكل منصات التواصل الاجتماعي مساحة افتراضية لسرد الرحلات المستمرة للهجرة السرية نحو العواصم الغربية. تدل هذه الأخيرة على العلاقة الترابطية التي شكلت واجهة خاصة بين التجربة التي عاشها المهاجرون وكيفية نقلهم لهذه التجربة عبر الشبكات الرقمية. يهدف هذا المقال إلى دراسة التقنيات التي تم استخدامها في سرد قصص كل من المهاجرين غير الشرعيين و طالبي اللجوء عبر مدونات الفيديو الحديثة على منصة YouTube. أثارت هذه الوسيلة الافتراضية اهتمام العديد من المهاجرين الجزائريين حيث استخدموها في سرد السبل الخطيرة كقوارب الموت لمرور البحر الأبيض المتوسط والمخاطر المتعلقة بعبور حدود دول البلقان للعثور على ملاذ آمن في أوروبا. بناء على هذه المعطيات، أصبحت مدونات الفيديو على YouTube تشكل فضاء افتراضيا يلجأ اليه المهاجرون غير الشرعيين للتعبير عن ما يواجهونه من تمييز وصعوبات في الاستقرار في الدول المضيفة. كما يستعين المدون المهاجر بالفاظ من اللغة العامية الجزائرية لها دلالات ثقافية تحمل في طياتها اعترافات وتجارب بمؤشرات خفية.

1. Introduction

Asylum-seeking and clandestine migration become astounding phenomena nowadays. Apart from reflecting the unstable conditions of displacement and informing the reservoir of illegal trajectories, they exemplify the extent of flexibility and mobility that characterizes the contemporary era of globalization. According to Appadurai (1996), the conflation of mass migration with the rise of high-tech technology and global digital networks forged a disjuncture and transformative space that goes beyond traditional borders. Concepts of selfhood, identity, location, nationhood and imagination are called for revision. Myriad studies have emphasised the transformative agency that social media exhibits today in offering traditional literary narratives a sense of immediacy and intimacy that has not existed before (Alinejad, 2019; Williams, 2006). This study aims to explore how the experiences of migration and asylum-seeking are represented in the digital space via social platforms. It examines how vlogs on YouTube are considered a digital vehicle that reshapes the metaphors of travel storytelling. By taking four Algerian emigrant vloggers as a case study, it provides insights into the metamorphic significance of illegal migration in a digital space and examines how the latter offers a cross-boundary mode of articulation where imagined communities are reconstituted virtually and migrant subjects are given a range of ability to meet and act in a non-conformist way using a kaleidoscope of idioms that evoke stances of concealment and confession regarding their state of migrancy. The evoked stances linguistically demonstrate how stories of clandestine migration seem to be more appealing to Algerian youth.

2. Digital Storytelling and Death Trajectories Towards Europe

The theoretical insights of migrancy are deemed to be crucial in investigating how the phenomenon of illegal immigration informs a narrative of dislocation, concealing uncertainty and confession. Other than that, they also locate how the experience of asylum-seeking in itself reconstitutes migrant selfhood through a series of transformations. This section is devoted to providing a review of the literature on the

origins and evolution of the space of dislocation and the urgent need for migration. It also casts light on the formation of illegal migrant subjects and their digital articulations, which implies mobility and transformation (Everett, 2009).

2.1 Clandestine migrant stories and digital spaces

The drive to migrate from the locality of nativity to a dwelling of mobility has characterised human activity since antiquity. Nowadays people from the African continent continue to migrate towards Europe due to social and economic injustices and aspiration for a better life (Czaika & Reinprecht, 2022, p. 50). Still, this drive is frequently marked by voluntary action since migrants from North Africa have the agency to opt for or decline such a choice. Nekby (2006) has genuinely distinguished between two types of migration that occupy contemporary moments. "Migration onwards" is a process by which the migrant assumed a constant state of emigration from his/her transit to another country that is deemed to provide a better standard of living. It commonly typifies migrants of African and Asian origins, who are deeply motivated by improving their economic status. The second type, however, is coined "return migration" or "immigrant emigration" (p.199). It reflects the tendency to fulfil the aspiration of returning home for resettlement and encountering people of the nativity.

Regardless of the variety of drives and forms that shapes migration during the 20th and 21st centuries, it still informs the literary panorama of travel writing and storytelling. For instance, as stated by Siebert (2006), Beur's travel writing has resorted to the experience of the second generation of Maghrebian immigrants to revamp the orientalist sentimental boundaries of the genre that carry imperialist tendencies in their seeds. Tropes of unbelonging, cultural instability, identity crisis and quest for home recreation have transformed the genre drastically and reshaped the representation of France, national identity and belonging in general. Literary voices, luring Tassadit Imache's *Algérie, Fille et Garçon* [Algeria, girl and boy] (1991) and Roshd Djigouadi's *Il Aura Pitié de Nous* [He'll have mercy on us] 2004, have created a literary texture that hybridised styles and voices to depict an authentic

representation of exile and illegal migration. They exemplify how a young focalisation might identify with the kernel of the narrated experience. Embedded in French discourse, the authenticity of representation might be hard to be achieved because the multiplicity of voices is not guaranteed. In this respect, the rise of social media has provided the literary community with a new medium that refigures the genre of travel storytelling profoundly.

Digital storytelling emerges as a visible manifestation of social media. It was coined by Atchley to describe the use of multimedia (audio-visual aids) to assist performance; today it is used to delineate any act of storytelling that is expressed by any digital medium including blogs, vlogs, video games and even hypertexts (Williams et al., 2006, p. 2). Digital storytelling is deemed to be a suitable medium to narrate the thematic concerns of clandestine migration in the Maghrebian context for two reasons: stories of migration of the first generation to France were marked by a mythical configuration in the social imaginary in North Africa in the sense that Europe is associated with positive images (Souiah et al., 2018). Furthermore, digital spaces offer a supportive and motivating infrastructure that migrants use efficiently to navigate their ways towards Europe (Preiss, 2022). From another perspective, it provides raw material about the language and culture of origin (LCO) for French-speaking immigrants (Boussiga, 2022). In this regard, illegal migrants have found support and solidarity in the third space, which forms a digital community of migrancy. Hence, virtual sites of empowerment, solidarity and self-transformation have replaced physical sites of alienation and othering in the host communities (Everett, 2009; Ponzanesi, 2020).

2.2 Vlogs and the performance of “(dis)content”

Of the most lucid illustrations of digital storytelling is the growing interest in YouTube video services by means of vlogs. A vlog is a creative space that combines the use of video service, audio-visual tools and blogs (Anil, 2016, p. 129). It allows the opportunity to share one's daily activities with a massive audience across the globe. Many studies have shown that young people are driven more by virtual influencers rather

than celebrities and many feel that vloggers, especially those who provide content about migrancy, show more empathy than acquaintances and friends in the real world (International Organization for Migration [IOM], 2018). Recently, numerous Algerian migrants have joined YouTube to share their experiences and views about the encounter with Europe. A kaleidoscope of content that portrays the tragedies and the admiring sites of adventure generated by the journey to Europe has attracted a plethora of Algerian young people as keen followers of emigrant vloggers. YouTube channels such as Raid Vlogs (2022), Malik Germany (2021) and Rafik Chaoui (2022) have shortly reached a range subscription between 400.000 and 700.000 followers marking this content as one of the fastest-growing types of vlogs on YouTube. These vlogs cross the geographic boundaries and call for a revision of Anderson's concept of imagined communities as they exemplify how digital spaces make the members of the Algerian diaspora meet and share their experiences, views, wishes, fears and disappointments via a set of networks (Ponzanesi, 2020). In other words, as explained by Alinejad and Olivieri (2020), digital networks have transformed physical distance into virtual proximity forging a new mode of affection and belonging. They created a cross-border space via translational connections and navigations.

3. Research Method

The study relies on a qualitative method since it is suitable for an in-depth exploration of a constantly evolving social phenomenon in the Mediterranean region. More precisely, a content analysis design is adopted as a research instrument to provide key insights about the use of vlogs as a medium of storytelling that informs the diversified experiences of illegal migration and asylum-seeking. The content of four Algerian vloggers is selected for scrutiny to identify their focus, conceptual framework and attitudinal representations regarding their experience of migration, other Algerian experiences and their cultural as well as ideological messages to the Algerian audience. To do so, figures of thoughts or tropes and stances are regarded as conceptual markers or artistic medium through which an observer may grasp how the figure of the refugee or the asylum

seeker is transformed into a continuously emerging digital community. Idioms expressed in local lexica are collected and carefully examined to consider how they evoke stances of concealment and confession over the experience of migrancy.

4. Results

By the examination of the content of four Algerian emigrant vloggers, the results are divided into two sections. The background of the migrant vlogger aims at providing informative data about the experience of migration that the vlogger, usually male, has experienced and the technical video shots used to engage the audience in his storytelling. The second section, however, reveals how the migrant vlogger relies on different techniques regarding storytelling and video shots to create an aesthetic stance about the Algerian experience of migration and living in the Arabo-Islamic dwelling. It is artistically coded into tropes, symbols and metamorphic representations that reconstitute an Algerian network across myriad borders. Idioms in the Algerian vernacular are used by vloggers as codes that support the evoked dialogic stances regarding the experience of migration.

4.1 The Algerian migrant vlogger and death trajectories

Based on the conceptual analysis of migrant vlogs, it is important to notice that the Algerian emigrant vloggers started their content with an immersing discourse that made the audience engaged with the story of their journey to Europe. Through an episodic video told from a selfie video shot and an illustration of images from the trip, the audience feels the authenticity of the experience. The results show that there are three waves of illegal migration in the North African context. The first wave is historically related to the 1990s up to 2000. The second wave started in the first decade of the twenty-first century reaching its peak between 2006 and 2012. The third wave has started intensely since 2014. The case study shows that successful Algerian emigrant vloggers, who lead the digital narrative of the refugee figure belong to the second and the third waves.

The vloggers of the second wave made their endangering journey to Europe between 2006 and

2010. Based on their narratives, it is important to notice that illegal migration was chiefly oriented to Eastern countries in North Africa. Many young Algerians usually headed to Tunisia as in the case of Rafik Chaoui, or towards Libya, in the case of Khaled El Fakir (2020), to look for smugglers that might passionately send them via small boats powered by an electric outboard engine with 20 horsepower. Many smugglers used Sfax and Tripoli as key sites for launching the boats towards Italian islands that are close to the coast such as Lampedusa, then, migrants moved in disguise under a lorry or in shipping containers that were geared towards Cecilia, Naples and later a train or bus was needed to cross from Italy to France. It is important to note that France was the main destination for the second-wave migrants because most of them longed for family support to start their process of relocation safely. Figure 01 below demonstrates what is known as the trajectory of death by crossing the Mediterranean Sea in a small boat designed for fishing and leisure.

Figure 1

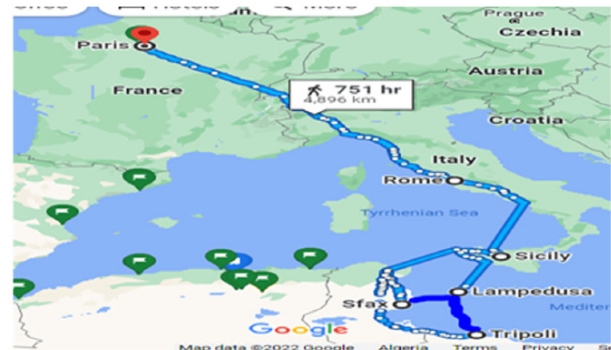


Figure title: Demonstration of the First Death Trajectory to Europe from the East

Source: Original

The third wave of illegal migrants entered Europe after 2014. It is important to locate how the migration journey implied the necessity to rely on different trajectories to Europe to escape surveillance and detention. Figure 02 shows how numerous Algerians transformed their touristic pretext trip to Turkey into a journey towards Western Europe by a multi-national boundary cross via the Balkan countries up to Italy or Germany before moving again to France. Some Algerian migrants prefer to settle down in Switzerland, Germany, Italy or Netherlands to escape

police surveillance and deportation in France. Figure 02 demonstrates the long trip from the Turkish frontiers, Edirne, up to Western Europe moving via the dangerous locations of the Balkans. It implies a deadly exhaustive walk and shortcut rides moving through Turkey, Greece, Albania, Bosnia or Serbia, Croatia, Italy or Slovenia up to France. There were many tragic casualties as several migrants drowned in the rivers or were murdered by accident or in conflict with other migrants from different countries. Death trajectories are metaphorically referred to the risk and the readiness that migrants reveal to face the former whether via the sea or the long exhaustive route. In this respect, clandestine migration is deeply associated with several perils.

Figure 2

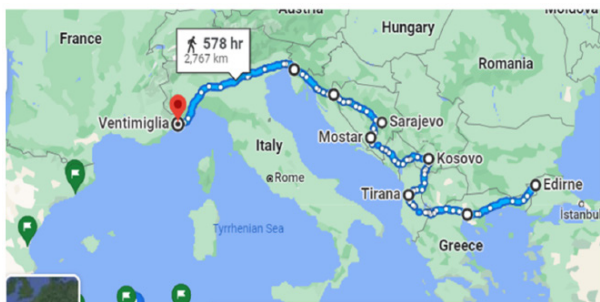


Figure title: Demonstration of the Second Death Trajectory to Europe via the Balkans

Source: Original

Recently, many migrant stories have manifested across the digital space to inform the audience about a new trend toward the use of rigid inflatable boats with 300 horsepower. Many Algerian emigrants confirmed that they paid about 600,000 DA for a clandestine cross to Spain. The third death trajectory appeared less dangerous compared to the previous ones because of the efficiency and speed of the rigid hull boat. Trips from Oran or other cities on the West coast of Algeria towards Almeria, more precisely to Los Negras, are made in three to four hours. Before illegal migrants are captured smugglers may lead their way to Barcelona via different means of transportation. Figure 03 demonstrates the third trajectory of death below.

The third trajectory via Spain ends as well in France moving through the following sites: Las Negras, San

José, Almeria, Alicante, Barcelona, Girona, Cerbère, Perpignan, and then the destination to Paris via different ways. Many illegal migrants and vloggers justify the choice of France as a safe haven for Algerians because of familiarity with the language and the family factor. As a postcolonial diaspora, the community of Algerian emigrants was formed in France during and after the French colonization. Many illegal migrants are attracted to France because they have family relatives or friends and they are familiar with the French language, which makes the process of relocation much easier compared to other European countries. Having said that, the Algerian vloggers that are selected are based in the following countries: Two live in France, Rafik and Khaled, one is in Italy (Raid) and Malik is based in Germany. They belong to the second wave of illegal migration.

Figure 3

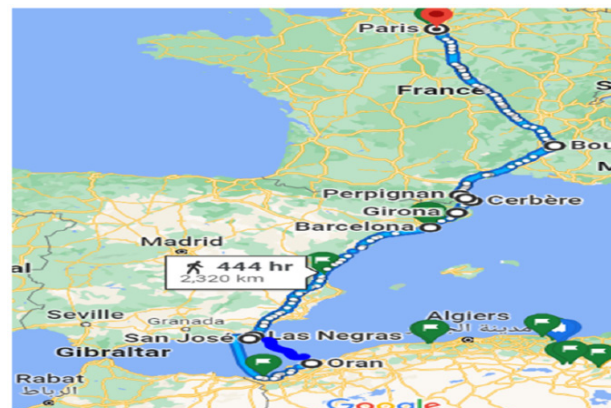


Figure title: Demonstration of the Third Death Trajectory to Europe from the West

Source: Original

4.2 Digital stances of concealment

Technically speaking, Rafik and Khaled have engaged in a series of episodes that tell their stories of migration from Algeria to the host country. In a selfie mode, they rely on a first-person narrative using visual demonstrations such as pictures to engage the audience in their narratives of confession. On the other hand, different types of vlogs are used to include different trips across Europe where the focus is more on the European landscapes as sites of attraction and beauty for the Algerian emigrants. A first-person video shot is employed to offer the audience a genuine focalisation of the virtual explorers of Europe. The

drone is also used to capture the fascinating landscapes of different European countries. The vesta generated by drones is believed to increase the emotions and the attention of the audience (Manas-Viniegra et al., 2020). This technique is also used by Raid Vlog and Malik Germany equally, instead of telling their stories, they prefer to tell other migrants' stories with a guiding tone or advice and adaptive tips for new illegal migrants, yet they metaphorically hint at their experiences, which expressed a stance of concealment and reluctance to tell one's story of migration. This section is devoted to going beyond the personal experience of vloggers in order to reveal how different narratives and vlogs evoke common digital migrant tropes that deeply shape the Arabo-Islamic audience including the community of Algerian immigrants in Europe.

4.2.1 The duality of the boat and the route as an index of uncertainty

The vloggers under study have told numerous stories of illegal migration. They have deeply explored the different motives of migrants, the conditions in the home country and the purpose of the journey to the host country. Regardless of the variety of the illegal migration trajectories, all the stories are located in a debate about the safest cross to Europe. In this regard, Algerian emigrants approach temporality and spatiality from a diasporic perspective in terms of maritime navigation or a long tiring cross-boundary road to Western Europe. Results showed that the illegal migrants forged a social imaginary where the boat, the road and mobility act as indispensable markers of survival and transformation. Testimonies demonstrate that border crossing via sea or land is proved to be dangerous and many young people died in the attempt of reaching a safe haven. Stories over the Mediterranean Sea evoke the boat as a chronotope of change, yet they admit its danger and communicate an alternative code to attempt crossing borders via the Balkan route because of its higher safety rate compared to the former. On other hand, migrants who undertook the trajectory of Balkan countries for months and even years walking the mountains and hiding in very inhuman conditions in shipping lorries and tourist buses to sneak into the borders

affirm the dire conditions of this long exhaustive road. This communicates to the audience in a way the alternated wish to attempt the other way around. This raises controversy and ambivalence, but it indicates how the boat and the route act as chronotopes for the (trans)formation of the illegal migrant in the vlog discourse.

4.2.2 The zombified asylum seeker

Results revealed how endless stories of migrancy are marked by different techniques of disguise and hiding in ships and lorries to cross the European border. The process from illegal migration to asylum-seeking however has revealed how many young Algerian people were subject to different conditions of abjection and dehumanization. Many smugglers have manipulated illegal migrants into crowded boats, which evoke the imagery of slaves as cargo to the metropole. Many broken boats and lost destinations culminated in the drowning of many Algerian migrants. The drowning figure also echoes the imagery of slaves who were thrown into the ocean and the sea during the triangular trade. From another perspective, many young migrants drowned in rivers in Balkan countries, while other migrants died under lorries or were locked to death in a shipping container. Not to mention migrants that are locked in prisons in North Africa and European countries once trapped crossing the borders. By borrowing the concept of zombification from Toivanen (2019), Algerian migrants' stories of dislocation from their home to Europe contribute to the metamorphosis of the asylum seeker figure into a haunted zombie, whose identity loss, confinement and death are common transformative features.

4.2.3 The archetype of Europe as a caring white mother

Across the boundaries of Balkan countries, many illegal migrants narrated the encounter with a German nurse named Rose, who volunteered in a refugee camp in Greece. She is a medical volunteer in NGO in the Greek city of Thessaloniki. The latter offers medical and humanitarian aid for the refugees who found themselves homeless and deprived because of the long exhaustive route from Turkey to Greece.

Many Algerian migrants cross the Turkish borders via the forest walking the distance of 402 Km to Thessaloniki, where they headed to the camp longing for medical and humanitarian aid. Many Algerian migrants told stories about Rose's hospitality and care and emotional support. She affirms the positive vibe that she offers to the asylum seekers as follows:

When they struggle with the pain, I hold their hand; when they need a hug, I give it to them. This close-body, maternal contact simply isn't possible for younger volunteers. The men see me as an elderly person with more experience. I often remind them of their mothers and, for that, they respect me. (Human Aid Now, web)

The German medical volunteer earned the name "Mama Rosa" for she displays maternal qualities and support. Many migrants associated Greece with the door of Europe, where mercy, safety and human values are the common dominating qualities. Mama Rosa is constituted in the imaginary space of the illegal migrants as the embodiment of these values. Thus, medical volunteering brought about a migratory archetype that depicts Europe as a good caring white mother taking care of the migrant subject who has been deprived of his/her source of wealth and humanity because of local villains.

4.2.4 The cemetery of migrants

Whereas Greece represents the humanitarian door of Europe, Turkey and Bosnia are associated with vulnerability and cruelty. Firstly, many migrants perceive Turkey as a site of surveillance, manipulation and hostility. A young migrant tells his story about poor nourishment and low-wage long hours of work. The encounter with the Turkish landscape is metamorphically represented in a tattoo engraved on his chest stating: "para yok, hayat yok", which means no money, no life in the Turkish language. In other words, it signifies the impossibility of a livelihood for illegal migrants in a growing capitalistic system in one of the most developing countries in West Asia or East Europe. Secondly, Bosnia is depicted as an ambivalent site that conflates the harmony of the Muslim community with the uncertainty of mobility.

Many young migrants sneaked into zombified locations, which they call in Arabic "El kherba". It means a deserted house, squat, cave, or building ruins, which are considered safe dwellings that asylum seekers use for shelter and temporary stay. Many crimes have been recorded in refugee camps, Bosnian towns, or zombified dwellings. Many illegal migrants symbolized Bosnia as the cemetery of the migrant subject because of the difficulty to cross the Croatian border safely to the European Union, which urged migrants to stay in Bosnia for months and even years. The fact of being deprived of resources made the asylum seeker witness a metamorphic mechanism toward criminality, theft, delinquency and beggary.

5. Discussion

5.1 Solidarity between reality and virtuality

Contemporary travel and exile narratives are deeply preoccupied with the trajectory and the representation of the refugee figure. The transition of border crossing pictured the conscious progress of the hero towards maturity or loss, which contributes to the narrative of (trans)formation. The vlogs on YouTube have amplified the narrative of transformation by adding an audio-visual experience that makes the audience deeply immersed in the stories of the migrants. A plethora of stories have been recorded on vlogs informing the audience as well as providing tips and advice to guide the illegal migrants in their transitory dwellings. This form of solidarity is evinced by the discourse of the YouTube platform as it opens a digital communication that connects Algerians, whether migrant or local, together beyond any borders. This cross-spatial digital dwelling has a massive impact on the continuous rise of mass migration to Europe through "the fast boat". In this regard, vlogs contribute to the formation of a digital migrant community that is located across geographic boundaries. They strategically provide different forms of solidarity as they reduce the impact of alienation and abjection in the host country. Furthermore, as noted by Latonero and Kift (2018), they have provided a digital reservoir for crossing physical borders and informed different trajectories for refugees since 2014.

5.2 Metaphors of the mythical desire for return and zombification

Crossing the European border has an impact on the identity and lifestyle of illegal migrants. Many asylum seekers find refuge in vlogs animated by the members of the digital space. Words such as “El Ghorba” and “El Harga” are used to delineate the process of alienation, deprivation, surveillance, and loss that migrants experienced in the host country. Participants in the third-person video mode have moved to the metaphorical dimension to admit the difficulty of the situation. Idioms are literally translated into English to preserve local authenticity and cultural significance. They are used as an indirect device to express stances of loss and concealment over their stories of migration:

- “El Ghorba is luck.”
- “France is a woman.”
- “El Ghorba can offer you a great chance or make you cry deeply, or even kill you.”
- “El Ghorba is like a candle, it may light up or dim forever.”
- “El Ghorba loves somebody who is hard to be defeated.”
- “We have arrived in Europe due to the prayers of our beloved parents.”
- “El Harga is really hard, you could even die and burn the hearts of your parents.”
- “Step by step and we’ll become something special dear team.”
- “Life would sometimes make you happy or make you sad, but words of God are the only ones that would make you perfectly happy.”

Tropes of uncertainty and loss are deeply evoked and the aspiration to marry a European woman is succinctly expressed. Religious discourse is highly used to create a spiritual source of resilience and resistance against the inhuman conditions imposed on them. For instance, religious discourse is located in a form of maternal prayers associated with a deep longing for establishing a legal form of stay via marriage

and returning home as a migrant hero to join the family and send their parents to Mecca as a mythical reward and marker of success and satisfaction. In this respect, returning home as a hero is a mythical desire in the Algerian migrant imaginary. Thus, even though migrancy has been transmuted into a digital space, its content still echoes the first wave of Safran’s (1991) classification depicting asylum seekers as “strangers within the gate” and evokes the trope of home return as a constant myth that still animates the migrant subject in the twenty-first century. It also signifies, using the words of Nekby (2006), how “migration onwards” might be transformed into a “return migration” to fulfil satisfaction and pride in the local community.

6. Conclusion

In essence, migration vlogs become a very effective medium in the twenty-first century. They embody the third space that has once been theorized in cultural studies (Rutherford, 1990). They give form to the “virtual community” that they describe as much as they compensate for the alienation and melancholy experienced in the host community (Antonijevic, 2004). Moreover, they rely on different audio-visual shots that bring authentic perspective and raise compassion and intimacy for the audience (Alinejad, 2019). Tropes of solidarity between Algerian emigrants and locals across geographical borders are evoked. They constitute a specific stance that marks the rise of a digital Algerian community that is located across a virtual network. The representation of Europe is ambivalent in the sense that it is viewed as a subject of admiration and a source of wealth and comfort before it turns out to be a site of disillusionment and despair. In this respect, migration vlogs depict how the image of Europe is constructed as a fantastic site in the migrant imaginary that is ruined by reality. Thus, stories of clandestine migration and asylum-seeking imply a narrative of confession, concealment and (dis)content. In articulating the fragmented world of the illegal migrant, vlogs became a digital asylum for those who have not found a safe haven in Europe.

Conflict of Interest

The author declares that he has no conflict of interest.

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