Viewpoints

Migration and the Maghreb

The Middle East Institute
Washington, DC

May 2010

Middle East Institute

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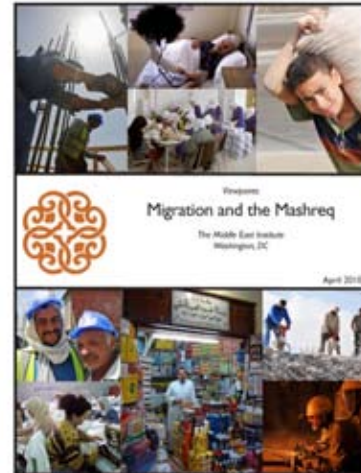
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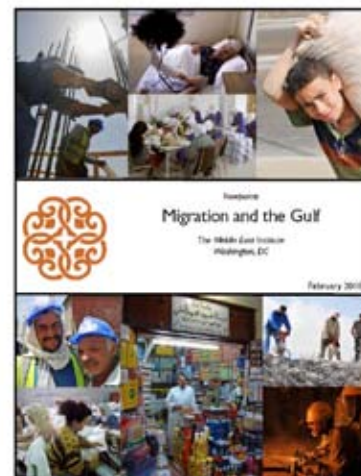
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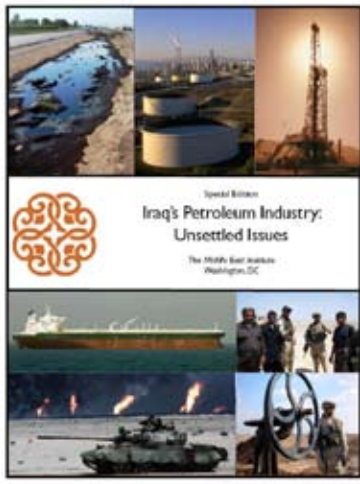
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Viewpoints **Special Edition**

Migration and the Maghreb

Migration and the Maghreb

Introduction

Introduction

The nine essays gathered in this volume cover a wide range of migration issues related to the Maghreb countries: the intensification and diversification of migration from the Maghreb to Europe; the increasingly restrictive European policies and some of the consequences they have wrought; the public policy failures of sending and receiving countries alike to address the underlying social development challenges associated with migration from the Maghreb to Europe; the crushing disappointment and hardships faced by unaccompanied minors seeking to migrate; the manner in which gender relations have shaped women's decisions to migrate and the reasons why women have suffered more and benefited less from the migration experience; the social tension and politicization of migration-related issues in France, which continues to wrestle with complex immigration and integration challenges; the nature and possible implications of the institutionalization of relations with emigrants in Europe that is chiefly the result of the Maghreb countries' dependence on remittances; the risks and hazards faced by the growing number of "irregular" migrants; and the emergence of Euro-Maghreb bilateral cooperation for the removal of unauthorized workers.

This collection, the last in the series exploring *Migration and the Arab World*, concludes the initial stage of the Middle East Institute's Crossing Borders project. The project next examines *The Internationalization of Higher Education and the Middle East*, beginning with the publication in July 2010 of a collection of essays on "Serving the Knowledge-Based Economy."

Patterns and Trends of Migration in the Maghreb

Moha Ennaji

Throughout history, North African countries (i.e., Morocco, Algeria, and Tunisia) have experienced various forms of migration — internal and external, voluntary and forced, individual and collective, and legal and illegal.

The 1950s were characterized by a great demand for North African workers in Western Europe. Because they were badly needed and small in number, these workers were appreciated and protected. By contrast, today the situation has completely changed, following new legal restrictions on migration and the considerable importance of illegal migration.

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The migration of North Africans to Europe began during the colonial period. The initial wave of migrants consisted of those who joined the French army and were forced to serve in Europe. Later, migration varied according to the needs of the host country.

With the outbreak of the First World War, more than a million North Africans, most of them Algerians, were recruited by the French army. The first Moroccans who migrated to France were from the Souss region in the south; they were recruited by the factories in Nantes in 1909.[1] During the First World War, more than 35,000 Moroccans worked in the French agricultural and mining sectors, while about 40,000 (recruited from the Middle Atlas and High Atlas areas), served in the French army.[2]

Thousands of North African migrants fought in the Second World War on the side of France. Many of these migrants took part in France's postwar reconstruction. During the postwar period, there were about 250,000 North African migrants in France — 220,000 Algerians, 20,000 Moroccans, and 5,000 Tunisians.[3]

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The post-independence period was marked by the intensification of migration and the diversification of countries of destination. The main cause of this migration flow was the need for manpower for the post-WWII reconstruction of Europe and the subsequent rapid growth of West European economies.[4]

Although North African workers were recruited mainly as a temporary measure to offset the manpower deficit in Western Europe, many of them settled permanently there due to the poor job prospects in their country of origin. Successive North African governments, especially in Morocco and Tunisia, encouraged emigration, which alleviated
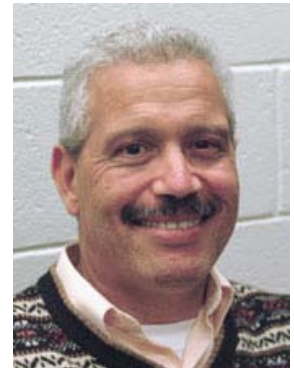
Moha Ennaji, co-founder and President of the International Institute for Languages and Cultures, Fez, is one of Morocco's leading academics. His research interests are language, gender issues, and migration. He is the author and/or editor of numerous books and articles on North Africa.

1. The Souss region continued to send migrants to France, and in 1966, Moroccan migrants from the south constituted 50% of the overall migrant population in France.
2. A. Fadloullah, A. Berrada, and M. Khachani, *Facteurs d'Attraction et de Répulsion à l'Origine des Flux Migratoires Internationaux. Rapport National- Le Maroc*, Eurostat 2000.
3. N. Guennouni, *Rapport Introductif: Migration et Droits dans les Pays du Maghreb*, in *Les Migrants et leurs Droits au Maghreb* (Rabat: Edition la Croisée des Chemins, 2004), p. 25.
4. M. Ennaji, ed., *Migration and Cultural Diversity*. Proceedings of the International Conference on Migration and Cultural Diversity. Fès: Publications of Fès-Saiss Association, 2007.

unemployment and had a positive impact on the balance of payments through migrants' remittances.

The three North African countries signed bilateral agreements with the major countries of destination concerning migrants' rights and obligations. Subsequently, migration towards France and Belgium became more organized as offices of recruitment began to sign work contracts with potential migrants. In 1974, the number of North African migrants reached nearly 1.5 million.[5] In 1973, the Moroccan migrant population in Europe alone totaled half a million.[6] By the mid-1970s, the number of Moroccan migrants per year had climbed to 30,000 from 17,000 in the previous decade, according to the Ministry of Employment report for 1986.

France, Belgium, and the Netherlands created immigration offices of recruitment in big Moroccan cities like Casablanca, Rabat, Fès, and Marrakesh to recruit Moroccans chiefly from rural areas.[7] Over 300,000 Moroccan workers left for European countries, particularly France.

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The mid-1970s marked a turning point, as European policies shifted from recruiting migrants to restricting migration because of the economic recession caused mainly by the oil crisis.

As a result of the more restrictive European policies, family reunion became the only vehicle for those North Africans who sought to migrate there. Migration within the framework of family reunion supplanted individual migration. The practice of family reunion gained approval because it was believed to facilitate the migrant's integration into the socio-economic environment of the host country, reduce money transfers to the country of origin, and stabilize many families in the receiving countries (notably, France, Belgium, Germany, and the Netherlands). Between 1963 and 2000, 336,325 Moroccans joined family members in France alone.[8]

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These restrictions had other important effects — spawning illegal migration, temporary migration, and migration towards North America and the Gulf countries. They also gave rise to women and youth migration. Since 1980, individual women have migrated, especially divorced women and widows, but also married women with or without children in search of a job that could improve their standard of living. Over the past three decades, the number of female immigrant workers in France, for example, has doubled.

Meanwhile, the profile of North African migrants to Europe has changed. Their educational level is higher than was that of their predecessors while the percentage of those who are illiterate is much lower. Correspondingly, the number of skilled workers and professionals among these migrants has increased.

Another result is the spread of the phenomenon of migration in North Africa, as migration affected not only rural areas but also urban ones, and spread to middle class and professional circles. Likewise, many students who finish their studies in Europe generally refuse to return to their home countries.

5. Guennouni, *Rapport Introductif*, p. 25.
6. M. Ennaji and F. Sadiqi, *Migration and Gender in Morocco* (Trenton: Red Sea Press, 2008), pp. 82-84.
7. France created "l'Office National d'Immigration Français," which operated in Casablanca until 1974. Belgium had representatives of "la Fédération des Charbonnages Belges," and the Netherlands had offices of recruitment of immigrants until 1973.
8. Office des Migrations Internationales, OMISTATS, 2000. Today, all European countries have restricted family reunions (e.g., the Bossi-Fini law enacted in Italy in 2002). Likewise, the German law of 2003 stipulates the maximum age of 12 years for family reunion of minors living in the country of origin.

Yet another consequence of restrictions on migration has been the emergence since the 1980s of temporary migration (*migration saisonnière*), particularly in the agricultural, construction, and services sectors. In 2000, Morocco ranked third in providing temporary workers to France, totaling 229,712.[9] Other European countries count on this form of migration because it is cheap and supplies low-skilled labor. For example, Spain signed an agreement on temporary workers with Morocco on September 30, 1999.[10]

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Migration to Europe has been a mixed blessing for North Africa and for the migrants themselves.

Over the years, the flow of migrants to Europe has suited the national strategies of North African governments. Remittances and money transfers have reduced the economic deficit and resolved the problem of high unemployment (15% in 2004).[11] But restrictive European migration policies have taken a toll. These policies, which encourage those possessing specialized training and skills to move to the "knowledge economies" of Europe, have contributed to the "brain drain" and thus have impeded North African development. In addition, with the implementation of the 1990 Schengen restrictions on migration, migratory flows to Europe have sharply decreased, pushing many young people to illegal migration.[12]

> **Restrictive European migration policies have taken a toll. These policies, which encourage those possessing specialized training and skills to move to the "knowledge economies" of Europe, have contributed to the "brain drain" and thus have impeded North African development.**

Yet, there also are some bright spots. First, Moroccan emigrants in Europe have maintained strong links with their country of origin through frequent visits, transfer of funds, and investments. Their attachment to their families and home country is also evidenced by the fact that most migrants own houses in Morocco.

Second, migration has changed from being provisional to permanent, which in turn, has pushed many European countries to adopt integration policies.

Third and related, a large number of Moroccan migrants enjoy legal status in Europe. According to El Manar Laalami, at the beginning of 2000, about 1.2 million Moroccan migrants had legal residence in one of the then-15 countries of the European Union (EU). And between the years 1990-1999 almost 300,000 Moroccans obtained EU citizenship.[13]

Fourth, laws on migration — which were previously about the regulation and management of international migration — have become more focused on the protection of migrants' rights. The rights of migrants are included in many national and international agreements, the most important of which is the 1990 international accord on the protection of all migrant workers and their families. Other national and international institutions deal with migration issues. The most recent of these institutions is the special report of the United Nations (UN) on the rights of migrants.

Today, large numbers of North African migrants are present in all European countries to various degrees of intensity. The Moroccan migrant population in Europe is illustrative. The exact number of Moroccans in Europe is difficult to pinpoint given the important number of naturalized Europeans and the growing numbers of illegal migrants. For 2002,

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9. OMISTATS (Paris: International Migration Office, 2000).
10. M. Khachani, "*Des Liens entre Migration et Développement*, " paper presented at the International Conference on "Migration and Cultural Diversity," July 1-3, 2004, Fès, Morocco, p. 21.
11. Official data of the Department of Statistics (2004).
12. R.V. de Erf and L. Heering, *Moroccan Migration Dynamics: Prospects for the Future,* No. 10, Geneva: IOM (International Organization of Migration) Publications, 2002.
13. M. El Manar Laalami, "Attitudes et Opinions," in *Les Marocains Résidant à l'Etranger* (Rabat: INSEA, 2000), pp. 105-138.

the Ministry in charge of Moroccan Migrants put the figure at over two million. Indisputably, the EU, especially France, is the primary destination of Moroccan migrants. North African migration has become part of the economic structure and social fabric of Europe.

Migration and Social Development in Morocco

Shana Cohen

A Moroccan friend of mine recently commented that she hoped that migrants returning from work abroad — men and women who had developed expectations concerning quality of life and political freedom — would in turn push Morocco to change. The problem, she admitted, was that highly skilled Moroccans often did not want to return or sought to leave at the earliest opportunity because of a lack of job prospects. "Unfortunately," she lamented, "The Moroccans who leave become too separated from Morocco, in terms of work, language, society, or just how they see themselves."

Her comments sum up the conflicting trends that characterize the relationship between migration and social development in Morocco. Migrants are valued because of the education, skills, and experience they have gained in foreign universities and workplaces and what these assets could do for the country. Yet, the lack of a supportive infrastructure for the work that particularly high-skilled migrants may want to do — such as launch a business based on technological innovation, conduct scientific research, start social projects, practice law, or teach — can deter migrants from returning or making any commitment to the development of the country, even from afar. At the same time, the inadequacy of public services and limited job opportunities continue to push unskilled or semi-skilled men and women to consider migration as the only hope for a better quality of life, for both themselves and their children.

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The continued lure of migration arguably reflects a failure of public policy and public sector institutions in Morocco and of the strategies European aid agencies have pursued to deter men and women from pursuing illegal immigration. In brief, by failing to arrest the deterioration of public education and the health sector, policymakers have also substantially limited the economic and social value of knowledge. They have simultaneously stymied innovation through a lack of public sector support, and constrained prospects for social mobility among low-income families eying migration as their only chance at a better life. The opportunity to alter these trends — through party participation, unions, associations, and the media — is arguably shrinking, leaving little hope for a different direction in the future.

Today, over 3.3 million Moroccan citizens, or approximately 10% of the country's population, live outside of Morocco. Moroccans have emigrated all over the world, but the primary destination remains Europe, particularly France, Italy, Spain, Belgium, and The Netherlands. The number of people of Moroccan origin living in France rose from 1.1% of the total immigrant population in 1962 to 12.1% of the total immigrant population in 1999, the year of the last French census.[1] The most recent data (2007) account for 1,131,000 Moroccans in France and 547,000 in Spain as compared to 100,000 non-resident Moroccans in the United States and 60,000 in Canada.[2]

Pursuing the opportunities presented by the large emigrant population, over the past

1. http://www.insee.fr/fr/themes/tableau.asp?ref_id=NATCCI02124&reg_id=0
2. Marocains de l'Extérieur, Observatoire CMRE, Fondation Hassan II, 2007, cited in "*Étude sur la contribution des Marocains Résidant à l'Étranger au développement économique et social du Maroc*," Organisation pour les Migrations Internationales et Ministère Chargé de la Communauté Organisation Internationale pour Marocaine Résidant à l'Étranger, June 2009, p. 11.

two decades, the Moroccan government has established institutions and organizations to address the specific needs and/or demands of non-residents and facilitated financial transactions and savings. The institutions include the Hassan II Foundation for Non-Resident Moroccans (established in 1990 under King Hassan II), which provides support for non-residents while in Morocco and promotes cooperation on economic, social, and cultural affairs. The Ministry for Non-Resident Moroccans — an office created in 1990 — offers advice on investment, manages cultural and educational events, and encourages social action among non-residents. Like the Hassan II Foundation, the Ministry offers grants to projects involving non-resident Moroccans. In 2007, King Muhammad VI created a new agency, *Conseil de la Communauté Marocaine à l'Etranger*, as a four-year experiment to encourage greater interest among non-residents in their country of origin. Finally, the Moroccan government has implemented specific supportive measures for non-resident investment, such as the MDM Invest (Marocains du Monde) fund, which provides 10% of the capital needed for business projects costing between one and five million Moroccan dirhams (MAD).

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While the Moroccan government has worked hard to cultivate an attachment among non-residents for their country of origin, European aid agencies have concentrated their efforts on convincing Moroccans not to consider illegal immigration to Europe. They have supported Moroccan non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in offering microcredit, information technology (IT) training, and other vocational programs intended to raise incomes and increase job opportunities in Morocco.

There are two problems with the efforts made to attract emigrant investment and deter illegal migration. First, the impact of all of the programs remains virtually unknown. In the spring of 2006, the Ministry of the Interior claimed that illegal migration had dropped 65% from the previous year. This decline, however, was due to stricter border controls. With evaluation of social projects in general in Morocco still underdeveloped, most reporting is based on project attendance rather than changes in individual behavior.

Perhaps the far more difficult issue is that the policies and projects concerning migration, while typically connected to a speech of the King, have not been situated within a coherent strategy of social cohesion that relates all Moroccans, resident and non-resident, to the development of the country. The approach of the Moroccan government has been to create a combination of possible avenues for increasing contact between non-residents and Morocco. The various agencies propose activities, whether cultural events or summer education programs for children of non-residents, while the government creates financial incentives to promote business.

However, my own research and a study conducted by the World Bank on mobility out of poverty in Morocco (2007), indicate that ultimately it is the improvement of public institutions and the creation of a larger role for the state in supporting research and development that will make the difference in connecting migration to social development. By using the public sector to confront migration, the government would necessarily also be linking the different groups to collective welfare. The World Bank study reported that young people expressed ambivalence about migration as a means to confront poverty. The study states: "While most interviewed youth acknowledged that migration offers the most realistic opportunity for upward mobility, many resented parental pressure to migrate and feared the costs, hardships and dangers, especially of illegal migration. They were concerned about the brain drain from their communities, and complained about the absence of opportunities to remain at home and contribute to the economic improvement of their own communities."[3]

This author's interviews with high-skilled migrants living in Europe reveal the same basic complaint — that the state has neglected endogenous development. A PhD in engineering remarked that "I can't go back there. There isn't the technol-

3. Marocains de l'Extérieur, Observatoire CMRE, Fondation Hassan II, 2007.

ogy or the facilities to work with, and I don't want to teach in a public university. I know if I go back, I will have to change careers completely." The problem and its solution for both ends of migration seem to be making participation in social development easier and more rewarding. In political terms, it means relating the material possibility of enacting change to the experience of "being" Moroccan and furthering the progress of the country as a whole.

Unaccompanied Minors from Morocco to Spain: To and From Tangier

Núria Empez Vidal

"There is no way back, cross or die"
(A young boy from the rural area living in Tangier while trying to cross to Spain).

Some of the last decade's most riveting sets of images in the international press has been the arrival of young North African boys crossing the Straits of Gibraltar trying to reach the shores of southern Spain. Most have been Moroccans, making the trip by hiding under trucks or buses on ferries from Tangier, in northern Morocco, or in over-loaded *"pateras"* — small, precarious speed boats run by professional smugglers.

However, for some of the boys, the migration process does not begin in Tangier. Rather, it begins months or even years before making this treacherous journey, when they leave their homes in rural areas in the center and south of Morocco and move to Tangier with the aim of crossing to Spain. They make the street their place and way of living, organize themselves according to their places of origin, and become the most vulnerable of the migrating boys.

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THE SOCIAL CONTEXT OF CHILD MIGRATION IN MOROCCO

Many factors push these boys to migrate, whether directly or indirectly. Everything in Moroccan popular culture publicizes migration to Spain: TV, newspapers, Moroccans living in Europe who come in the summer to show off their success, and peers. None-theless, families are the primary forces. Families want the best for their sons, but they also see a boy's successful migration as a way to guarantee security or help in their col-lective future. Boys who do not make it to Spain or who are sent back by immigration authorities are commonly met with disdain by their families, who cast them as failures and refuse to accept them back as full members. Unless a boy has managed to reach Europe and preferably also has obtained papers, he is seen as not having been serious about crossing, as having wasted his time on the streets, and as having failed to support his family if he is sent back.

Data from CERED in 2004 show that Morocco's population has nearly tripled in the last four decades. In 1960, Morocco had a total population of 11,635,000. By 2003, the population had climbed to 29,520,000. Morocco has a young population. In 2003, the 0-14 year-old age group represented 30% of the total. If we relate these data to the high rates of unemployment and high school dropout and also the history of internal migra-tion, we can get a better grasp of the meaning of the large number of boys and young men without a secure future who seek to enter Spain.

Most of the unaccompanied Moroccan minors in Spain come from Tangier and its sur-rounding region. Tangier, the provincial capital, has a population of about 500,000; the province itself (formed by Tangier-Tetouan-Larache), has a population of 2.3 million. In the last 30 years, Morocco has experienced enormous migration movements from the rural areas to the cities. In many cases, families came from rural areas further south to urban areas in the north, driven away by droughts in the 1980s. This exodus is still ongoing. In rural areas, there remain high rates of illiteracy and unemployment; rural

jobs are limited and badly paid. Like other cities, Tangier has received most migrants from internal rural to urban migration. Tangier also is absorbing people from other parts of Morocco or even from other countries of Sub-Saharan Africa who want to migrate to Europe. The distance to Europe — Tangier to Algeciras — is just 14 kilometers. Tangier is well known for its smuggling (of people and goods) "industry." It is also a place from which "irregular migration boats" (*pateras*) leave. Since the implementation of Spain's "*Sistema Integral de Vigilancia del Estrecho*" *(SIVE)*[1] in 2002, the number of boats leaving from this area has declined, prompting people to take riskier routes, such as through Mauritania and even The Gambia.[2]

In Morocco, anyone who is trying to migrate in an irregular way calls himself "*harraq,*" derived from the classical Arabic word, *harq*, which means "to burn," as in "to burn ties." When used to describe children, the term "*harraq*" implies that these children are in the street as a temporary position in time and space. They are seen as in a temporary street situation — as having a purpose or "calling" — and from whom much good might come in the future. Possibly hoping to capitalize on the success of some of the children who reach and remain in Spain, even the Moroccan port police, who are supposed to take these boys into custody or evict them from the port, often turn a blind eye to them. No one identifies a boy who is serious about his migration as a "street child," in the sense of leading an undisciplined, idle life of petty crime. His goal is not to live on the street but to leave the country. For those boys who have not yet succeeded, however, life on the street may be necessary to survive.

Many boys trying to leave Morocco live in the port area of Tangier. The first impression upon arriving in the area — the border and all of the organization (formal, non-formal, and informal) around it — is of a graphic representation of the rest of society: an enormous variety of people all interacting in the same space, ranging from fishermen and tourists to port workers, police, street children, truck drivers, and *harraq*. Though all occupy the same space, though for different purposes, often one group is invisible to the others.

For would-be child migrants conditions in the port are extremely hard. They form informal support groups, and they divide the port into different areas inhabited by groups of boys from the same neighborhoods or towns. They also need certain skills to survive: knowing how to obtain water and food, how to find a safe place to sleep and, most important, how to integrate themselves with a group of other would-be migrants so that they can gain group protection. They are not allowed to enter the port, so they have difficulty entering and leaving it. They must contest not just security police but one another for the spaces — especially for spaces under trucks — in which to live and from which to try to migrate. They are exposed to the weather; they must avoid the police and security services; and every day they must struggle to obtain food and shelter, and to try to get onto a ferry to reach Europe. Many of these boys suffer abuse from adults or other boys, including sexual abuse. They also suffer from maladies associated with their living conditions: skin diseases, malnutrition, high fevers, and sunburn. In addition, they suffer from accidents, being beaten by the police and security guards, getting bitten by guard dogs, fractures from falling from the walls around the port, drowning, getting run over by vehicles, or getting hit by boat motors. According-

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ing to my records from discussions with the children and port workers, 14 deaths occurred from such causes during my fieldwork in Tangier port between May and October 2006. None were reported in the local press.

Since March 2006, there has been a bus that deports rural children suspected of trying to migrate irregularly from Tangier and deposits them in the rural areas, sometimes irrespective of where their families live. Although those who are sent away usually return the next day, this is a way of discouraging them from attempting to migrate. Despite such

1. Integral Vigilance of the Straits System.
2. José Pérez de Lama, "*Notas sobre emergencias en el Estrecho de Gibraltar* (Eurafrica)," 2005, http://thistuesday.org/node/118.

conditions, some of these boys refer to the effort to migrate as a job where you must check in every day. Most of these boys maintain intermittent relations with their families; some even undertake short visits between migration attempts, though they almost inevitably come back to the port to avoid the shame of having failed to reach Spain — and because this is their job.

UNACCOMPANIED RURAL CHILDREN IN TANGIER

The majority of the boys that I met during my field work explained that they had started their migratory processes at about the age of 14-15 years old. The idea to migrate had formed days or even months before my conversations with them, as the result of discussions among a group of peers. In most cases, parents had been unaware of the first instance of their son's attempts to migrate. With some meager savings, they started the journey to Tangier. Once there, they headed for the port, where some of the most experienced boys explained to them the ways to survive (i.e., how to hide from the police, get food, where to sleep, how to try to get into a truck bound for Spain, etc.). The extremely severe conditions cause some of the boys to return and to abandon the idea of migrating. While those who decide to remain in Morocco face many difficulties, only a small fraction of those who attempt to leave realize their dream of crossing to Europe. Some of the rural children organize their lives into alternating periods in Tangier port where they try to cross to Spain with periods back home where they visit family and rest.

CONCLUSION

Unaccompanied child migration from Morocco to Spain is arguably a case of globalization and migration laws gone awry. It has an impact on Europe, in how it organizes institutions to handle these children, and on Moroccan families, whose efforts to cope with poverty through the migration of children affect ideas about the meaning of children and migration. Changing Spanish and EU laws have made migration a very different phenomenon than it was just a decade or two ago. For Moroccans, it has placed increasing emphasis on children as the bearers of this burden, and it has made it increasingly difficult for them to return, even if "successful," for anything except short visits. They are separated from their families at young ages not just by a spatial distance but also by an emotional distance, in that they cannot reveal the extent of their struggles.

The first stage of the migratory process for boys from rural areas begins when they leave their homes and move to Tangier, thereby becoming unaccompanied minors in their countries of origin while waiting to cross the shores. These minors face the struggles of living on the street and making street life their way of life. This phenomenon — of internal minor migration — deserves more careful scrutiny than it thus far has received.

Considering the Gender Dimension of Moroccan Migration: A "Win-Win" Approach to North/South Migration in the Mediterranean

Fatima Sadiqi

The concepts of "justice," "equity," "democracy," and "identity" are more and more recurrent in the Euro-Mediterranean and global rhetoric on migration; yet, these are very seldom applied with a gender dimension in mind. This is a serious deficiency in a region where power is unbalanced not only among countries but also among sexes. Identity is a matter of choice — a choice that is linked to the *freedom* to choose. In general, women have less freedom to choose because more women than men are poor, illiterate, and culturally marginalized. In a world where political and economic events are moving faster everyday with the advent of globalization, it is urgently necessary to take gender issues into consideration when dealing with migration. A gender approach to migration can help to foster a "win-win" approach to North/South migration. In this essay I focus on Morocco and deal with two relevant aspects: 1) the overall situation of women in Morocco and 2) the ways to achieve a "win-win" approach to migration.

THE OVERALL SITUATION OF WOMEN IN MOROCCO

Moroccan culture is characterized by a gendered superstructure. The larger factors that influence gender perception and gender role assignment are linked to the social organization where women are largely disadvantaged. But these women do not constitute a socially homogeneous group. The social variables that explain Moroccan women's heterogeneity are: 1) geographical origin, 2) class, 3) educational level, 4) job opportunities, 5) language skills, and 6) marital status.[1] These variables are obtained on the basis of social oppositions and have a direct influence on gender perception, political awareness, self-awareness, independence, critical assessment, and fashioning modes of resistance. Social variables carry significant social meanings and attest to the fact that in Moroccan society, women are not given the same social choices. The choices given to women depend on their positioning within each social variable: urban, rich, educated, working, married women have more social choices in Moroccan society than rural, poor, non-working, illiterate, and unmarried women.

The biggest problem facing Moroccan women is illiteracy, a fact attested statistically and sociologically. Statistically, women constitute the largest illiterate portion of the Moroccan population. The illiteracy rate among Moroccan women in general is 60%[2] (48% in urban areas and 95% in rural areas).[3] The rural population represents around 48.6% of the Moroccan population according to the latest official statistics.[4] About 37% of girls attend school. The percentage of women who are economically active is 27%.[5] This figure applies to formal employment which is why it is fairly low in world terms. These data are good for showing the nature of social change. Sociologically, women's illiteracy is basically due to their low-income socioeconomic status. Moroccan women's illiteracy

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1. See Fatima Sadiqi, *Women, Gender, and Language in Morocco* (Leiden and Boston: Brill Academic Publishers, 2003).
2. Cf. Bureau des Statistiques, Rabat, Morocco, 1999.
3. Cf. Bureau des Statistiques, Rabat, 1994.
4. Cf. Bureau des Statistiques, Rabat, 1994.
5. International Labour Organization, *Key Indicators of the Labour Market*, 2008.

is also a result of a trans-cultural inequality whereby men's educational achievement is privileged over women's. Morocco's illiterate women are aware of this condition of subordination and resent it, but the patriarchy has offered them few alternatives.

Illiteracy is prevalent in both cities and rural areas, but it is in the latter where it is most blatant. In the Moroccan countryside, access to education is not always easy for girls, as they are less likely to be permitted to travel to school (even on foot or by public transport) or to attend public boarding schools, especially in rural, mountainous, and semi-desert areas. Illiteracy excludes a large portion of Moroccan women, especially in rural areas, from positions of decision-making, the written media, and similarly powerful domains.

Given these facts, men benefit more than women from the positive aspects of migration, such as resources, enterprise, housing, investments, and education. Women, on the other hand, are hit harder by negative aspects of migration, such as the disintegration of the family nucleus and traditions, poverty, and illiteracy.

In the case of very young couples, it is often the case that women push their husbands to emigrate in the hope of joining them later. Such young wives are often left behind with the husband's family which is assumed to "keep an eye" on them. It is often the case that the parents-in-law assume full control of the remittances sent by the emigrant husband. The first phases of marriage are often phases where the struggle between mother-in-law and daughter-in-law over 'control' of the husband is at its highest. In the case of older wives with children, the wife usually benefits from the remittances if she lives in an urban area, a fact which gives her a new function in the family: the management of financial resources. Thus, the migrant's remittances increase the direct resources available in different ways and according to the status of the woman in the family.

Another type of migration which has an effect on women is circulatory migration. This particular migration includes the return of migrants or their descendants during holidays. These circulatory migrants have had a complex effect on young women in Morocco since the 1980s. In fact, while their "motivating" effect is very apparent (young and less young Moroccans are impressed by the cars and other commodities they bring), the Islamophobia which characterizes the milieus in which they live in Europe has the effect of importing increasingly conservative views of Islam. In other words, the fact that these migrants approve of the veil and Islamic practices contributes to making religion more conservative in the country. As a result, the apparent "emancipator" aspect of the female migrants does not always coincide with feminist ideals in Morocco.

Statistically, women constitute the largest illiterate portion of the Moroccan population. The illiteracy rate among Moroccan women in general is 60%

Moroccan women who migrate also experience the negative impact of migration. In addition to those who migrate to join their husbands or other family members, more and more single women are migrating. Female migration must always have existed alongside male migration, although no official figures relating to it are available. It is important to note in this respect that the Moroccan national media (TV, newspapers, etc.) occasionally report that one or more young Moroccan women are among the dead when small boats carrying clandestine migrants from Morocco to Spain sink. These women are, in general, very young, unemployed, and single. Further, the media also reports on the abominable conditions of clandestine migrants and shows pictures of young men and women living in shantytowns around agricultural areas in Spain. The women who spoke to the reporters often said that they migrated because they wanted to support their aging parents and younger siblings. Research in this particular area is sorely needed.

WAYS OF ACHIEVING A WIN-WIN APPROACH TO MOROCCAN MIGRATION

Win-win strategies are of two types: those that relate to migration and those that deal more with the "superstructure"

of gender relations.

Win-Win Strategies Related to Migration

The win-win strategies that relate to migration mainly include calling upon the media to provide documentation. There is a real deadlock at the level of mentalities on both sides of the Mediterranean and the media is still party-affiliated and largely perceived as male public space in this region of the world. As a result, women are not, generally speaking, depicted as agents. They neither own the media nor are they decision-makers in it. All this translates into the fact that women migrants are still neglected.

Offering more documentation on the interface between women and migration in Morocco is important. It promotes communication between the two shores of the Mediterranean Sea and informs researchers and policymakers of the places where the problems exist and suggests ways to address these problems. There is indeed a terrible lack of information on this topic in the sending and receiving countries. This renders the problems associated with migration more complex and the remedies more complicated. These may be obtained through the creation of mobile units and agents of development to implement field work.

Another issue that the media needs to address is religion in its relation to migration. More work is needed on images of Islam, women and Islam, Islam and human rights, and gender and human rights.

Win-Win Strategies Related to the "Superstructure" of Gender Relations

Giving voice to all women broadens their choices and democratizes approaches to alleviate the problems of migration. The illiteracy problem needs to be considered. For example, we need more use of TV as a means to reach all women, especially the illiterate. All women, especially those who are illiterate (who happen to be the poorest), need to have access to useful information. Radio and TV commentaries, sketches, and comedies can be helpful. Also badly needed is documentation in the field of women, migration, and the media.

CONCLUSION

The gender dimension cannot and should not be omitted from any serious analysis of migration in the Mediterranean region. Integrating gender issues into such analysis can help pave the way for ameliorating some of the migration-related and deeper structural problems in the Mediterranean region.

"Gender Relations" as a Factor in Determining Who Migrates and Why: The Case of Tunisia

Ibtihel Bouchoucha

Migration is a longstanding phenomenon in Tunisia.[1] Out of a population of ten million, an average of 30,000 Tunisians — primarily young people — emigrate each year. The main reasons for their departure are the low standard of living, unemployment, and the lack of job opportunities. Although traditionally migration had been an exclusively male phenomenon, in recent years female emigration has become increasingly important. Nevertheless, there are quantitative and qualitative differences between male and female emigrants.

The results of the Youth Survey in Tunisia (1996, 2000, and 2005) show that both sexes intend to leave the country and live elsewhere.[2] In addition, the results of 2005 show that no significant differences between the two sexes in terms of international migration intentions. However, the statistics on international migration show that the level of migration of young women is very low, not only compared to male migration but also to the level of their desire to migrate. In addition, although women are more likely to leave than their male counterparts, their participation in economic migration remains relatively limited. Female migration takes place largely to effect family reunion and marriage, while male migration occurs mainly to secure employment or to improve living conditions.

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For years, the migration literature considered migration as a male phenomenon. Only since the 1980s has female migration started to attract researchers to the field of migration.[3] The recognition of women's migration has highlighted the effect of non-economic factors on the decision to migrate and on the reasons for migration.[4] According to some authors — beyond the social, economic, and institutional situation in the origin place (e.g., job opportunities, inequality in the labor market, etc.) — gender relations are an important factor in explaining the decision to migrate as well as the main reason for migration. Gender relations are defined as a set of social representations, roles, perceptions, ideologies, and behaviors of women and men.[5] They determine the roles of women and men, as well as the opportunities and the constraints specific to each sex which can influence their migration behaviors.[6] Therefore, gender relations determine who migrates and for which reason s/he does so.

1. Habib Fourati, "Consultation de la jeunesse et désir d'émigration chez les jeunes en Tunisie 1996-2005," CARIM Analytic and Synthetic Notes, No. 47, 2008, http://cadmus.eui.eu/dspace/bitstream/1814/10091/1/CARIM_AS%26N_2008_47.pdf.
2. Habib Fourati, "Consultation de la jeunesse et désir d'émigration chez les jeunes en Tunisie 1996-2005."
3. Hania Zlotnik, "*Théories sur les migrations internationales*," in Graziella Cazalli, Jacques Vallin, and Guillaume Wunsch, eds., *Démographie: analyses et synthèse. Les déterminants de la migration* (Paris: Éditions de L'Institut National D'Études Démographiques, 2003), pp. 55-78.
4. Thomas J. Cooke "Family Migration and Relative Earning of Husbands and Wives," *Annals of the Association for American Geographers*, Vol. 3, No. 3 (2003), pp. 278-94.
5. Jacques Veron, *Le monde des femmes: Inégalités des sexes, inégalités des sociétés* (Paris : Éditions du Seuil, 1997).
6. Annie Bidet-Mordrel and Jacques Bidet, "Les rapports de sexe comme rapports sociaux," *Actuel Marx*, No. 30 (2001), pp. 13-42.

The objective of this research is to show the role of gender relations among young Tunisian emigrants (i.e. women and men between the ages of 18 and 35). Using data from the National Labor Force Survey (2005-2006), we try to study in particular the influence of gender relations on the decision to leave as well as on the main migration reasons. The main hypothesis is that gender relations determine the decision to migrate. Women and men may have the same desire to migrate, but this does not mean that they have the same probability to migrate. Indeed, migration of both sexes is still influenced by the traditional social model. According to this model, men are more likely to migrate, and they do so principally for economic reasons. However, female emigrants are valued only within a socially accepted context.

*REASONS FOR MIGRATION: DIFFERENCES BETWEEN WOMEN AND MEN*

The statistics on migration of the National Labor Force Survey (2005-2006) have disclosed a large gap between females and males in Tunisia. These differences illustrate the important influence that gender relations have on the migratory behavior of men and women. Male migration is much higher than that of women. (The number of male emigrants between 2005 and 2006 is three times that of women.) Thus, although female migration for economic reasons is considerable (31%), it is usually dependent on the family. Nearly half of women have migrated to marry or to join the family. However, male migration is driven mainly by the desire for employment. These differences between women and men show that the reason for migration is mainly related to the roles of the two sexes. The main reason for migration is an indicator of social roles of women and men. According to the traditional division of male and female roles, men migrate to find a job, and women eventually join them to assume their roles as wives.

Reason of Migration By Sex, Tunisia 2005-2006

For both sexes, the majority of migrants are single. Whatever their marital status, males migrate mainly for economic reasons. However, females migrate principally for family reasons — this trend is even more pronounced when they are married. Nevertheless, a significant number of unmarried women migrate for studies and for work. These initial descriptive results reveal that the autonomy of women in migration is not yet effective.

Women and Men According to Their Reason for Migrating and Their Marital Status Before Migration, Tunisia 2005-2006
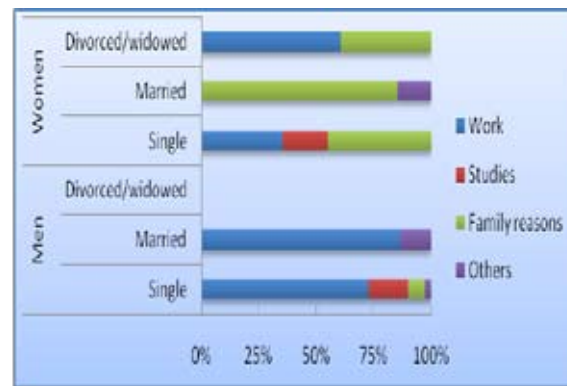

Women and Men According to Their Reason for Migrating and Their Activity Before Migration, Tunisia 2005-2006
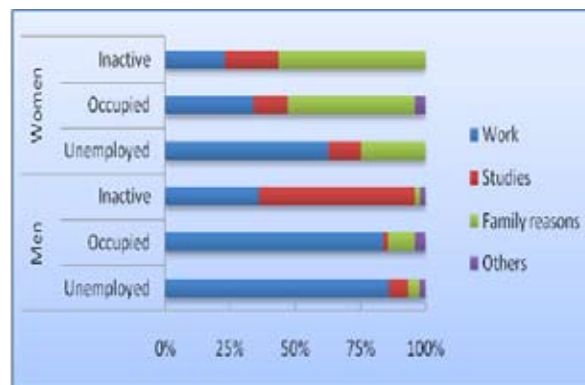
Whether employed or not, the proportion of men who migrate for family reasons is low. The migratory behavior of men is the same independent of their status, except of course in the case of students, who migrate mainly to continue their studies. Migration for the purpose of studying is relatively high among unemployed persons — 60%. Thus, we should mention the importance of the migration of unemployed persons (26% of male migrants are unemployed before migration). However, female migrants are mainly inactive (48%) and occupied (38%). Unemployed women constitute just 14%, and they migrate mainly for economic reasons (63%). In contrast, employed and inactive women migrate principally for family reasons. Thus, it seems that having a pre-migration activity does not have a major effect on females' reasons to migrate. Except for unemployed women, female migration for economic reasons is not significant, compared to men.

It also seems that education does not have a major effect on the probability to migrate and on males' reasons for migrating. In fact, only 14% of male migrants are highly educated — migration for economic reasons is important regardless of educational level. However, for women, highly educated migrants constitute 34% and are more likely to migrate for non-family-related reasons. Migration for family reasons remains important even for those women who are highly educated. Nevertheless, highly educated persons are more likely to migrate for studies.

Women and Men According to Their Migration Reason and Their Level of Education Before Migration, Tunisia 2005- 2006
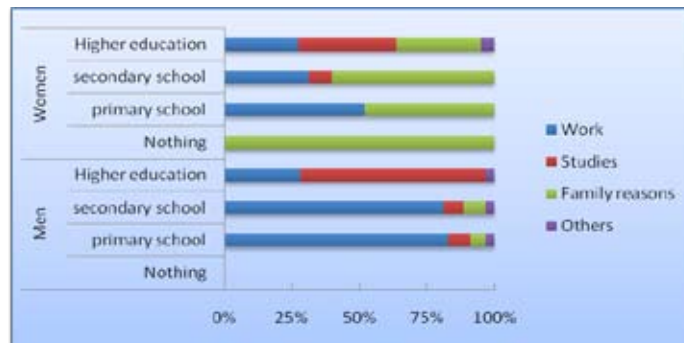
The probability to migrate:

To study the effect of gender relations on the probability to migrate we develop logistic regressions for both sexes (model 1), for women (model 2) and for men (model 3).

		Model 1: Total		Model 2: Female		Model 3: Male	
Sex	Female	*Ref*					
	Male	3.65***	(0.52)				
Activity	Unemployed			*Ref*		*Ref*	
	Occupied			1.49	(0.61)	0.69**	(0.11)
	Inactive			0.73	(0.29)	0.49***	(0.10)
Marital status	Non married			*Ref*		*Ref*	
	Married			0.32***	(0.12)	0.54**	(0.13)
Higher education	Non high educated			*Ref*		*Ref*	
	High educated			2.43***	(0.65)	1.02	(0.20)

Logistic regressions of the probability to migrate (Odd ratio)
The sex variable is highly significant. The results show that men are more likely than women to migrate. In addition, for both sexes, the variable of marital status is significant and confirms that, for women and men, the probability to migrate is higher among non-married persons. For men, the activity before migration has an effect on the probability to migrate. In fact, the variable is significant, and the results show that the probability to migrate is relatively higher for unemployed men. In contrast, for women, the activity before migration is not significant. However, the high educational level is significant for women but not for men. The results demonstrate that education has an important effect on the probability to migrate. Highly educated women are more likely to migrate than men.

CONCLUSION

The analysis shows that the migration of women and men is influenced by the tradition and the social values that determine the roles of women and men. These social stereotypes influence the migratory behavior of both sexes and determine their reasons for migrating. The migration of women and men is impregnated by their responsibilities and social roles. According to their reproductive role, women migrate for family reasons, while men migrate mainly to work, as they are responsible for their families. Women — especially those who are married — migrate mainly to join their families or their husbands. In addition, migration for economic reasons, as well as for studies, concerns mainly the

unmarried.

We must also highlight the effect of marital status on the probability to migrate. Indeed, the results show that single women are more likely to emigrate. Furthermore, regardless of their qualifications, women, especially those who are married, emphasize their reproductive role. For this reason, married women, even if they are highly educated and employed, migrate mainly for family reasons. These results showed that the choice of the migration reason is influenced by the socio-economical and familial context in which the decision of migration is developed.

Traditional values have played an important role in the decision of migration of women and men in Tunisia. The probability of migration and the reasons for migration of both sexes are controlled by their social roles and the traditional and cultural norms defined by their society of origin.

Immigration from the Maghreb: France's Quandary

T.V. Sekher

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Migrants from the Maghreb, particularly from Algeria, Morocco, and Tunisia, have dominated the worker flows to France. The labor recruitment tradition in the Mediterranean region can be traced to the World War I, when France brought workers from its colonies in North Africa to address its domestic labor shortage. At the time of Algerian independence from France in 1962, it is estimated that 350,000 Algerians were registered in France. The modern labor recruitment of migrants from the Maghreb countries began in the 1960s.

France remains the principal destination in Western Europe for most migrants from the Maghreb. The National Institute for Statistics and Economic Studies (INSEE) estimated in 2006 that there were 3.5 million foreign nationals living in France, 1.1 million of whom were from the Maghreb — primarily from Algeria and Morocco.[1] Yet, the official figures hardly capture the increase in migration, because they do not include, for example, the sizeable number of Algerian-born naturalized French citizens.[2]

Unlike many European countries, France has a long history of immigration, starting from the middle of the 19th century. What differentiated France from other countries was its willingness to accept foreigners as settlers and as citizens. In general, the French policy makers of the post-World War II era had great confidence in the ability of the French society to assimilate and integrate the immigrants. However, during the 1970s many started questioning the logic behind the liberal immigration policies of the French government and the ability of the society to assimilate migrants from Islamic countries, particularly from the Maghreb.

After World War II, France permitted undocumented immigration in order to promote economic growth. The increasing number of "irregular" migrants generated a certain amount of opposition by trade unions. In 1972, the government of President Georges Pompidou issued two administrative memoranda, collectively known as the Marcellin-Fontanet circulars, which put an end to the practice of "regularization" whereby undocumented workers came to France, found employment, and then obtained the necessary paperwork. Under the new regulations, potential immigrants were required to obtain the commitment of employment prior to their arrival in France or face expulsion. These decrees heralded the dominance of administrative control measures.

The early 1970s also marked the beginning of an ongoing debate in France over immigration policy. The millions of Maghreb immigrant workers becoming permanent citizens in France led to a serious reconsideration of the French government policy regarding immigration and integration.[3]

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1. Algerian migration in particular is mostly directed towards France. By 1994, there were an estimated 620,000 Algerians in France. International Organization for Migration (IOM), *World Migration Report 2000* (Geneva: International Organization for Migration, 2000).
2. The National Institute for Statistics and Economic Studies (INSEE, Institut national de la statistique et des études économiques), which is in charge of statistics in France, has a very particular concept of immigration; for example, in the under-18 group, INSEE includes only those born abroad.
3. See R. Brubaker, *Citizenship and nationhood in France and Germany* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard

The emergence of the extreme right-wing National Front (FN) party under the leadership of Jean-Marie Le Pen sharpened the dilemma facing France regarding African immigrants. Suddenly, immigrants were portrayed by many as villains responsible for the economic and cultural decline of French society. Immigrants were accused of stealing jobs from French citizens. Muslim migrants were considered incapable of assimilating in French society and adapting to French values.

In general, the argument of the anti-immigrant lobby was that the acquisition of French citizenship is a privilege and not a right. *"Etre Francais cela se mérite"* (to be French, you have to deserve it), proclaimed Jean-Marie Le Pen's National Front. Under pressure from the FN, the center-right parties also supported the idea of denying automatic acquisition of French citizenship by "outsiders." A series of administrative measures followed in that direction.

Since the beginning of the 1990s, there have been dramatic changes in France's immigration control strategy, ranging from new visa regimes and restrictions on hiring foreign workers to more stringent labor market regulations.[4] France's acceptance of the notion of a "threshold of tolerance" and the subsequent policy decisions based on it not only served as a justification for stricter immigration control, but also led to an increase in the number of detentions, expulsions, and police atrocities against foreigners.

In recent years, the controversy over the wearing of the *hijab* has received international attention. A ban has been in force since 2004 when the government passed a law prohibiting the wearing of conspicuous religious symbols in public places. Members of Parliament, ranging from communists to conservatives, are of the view that wearing the *burqa* "is contrary to the values of the Republic." Recently French President Nicholas Sarkozy made it clear that "the *burqa* is simply not welcome in France" and "it hurts the dignity of women and is unacceptable in French society."[5] According to French government statistics, only an estimated 2,000 French Muslim women have chosen to wear the *niqab* (facial veil) in public. The government decision to introduce a new law banning full-face veils is seen as an outcome of the tide of Islamophobia sweeping across Europe, but this has caused tension with those who believe that the bill to ban veils violates the cardinal principles of the French constitution, which guarantees liberty, equality, and fraternity.

> **The emergence of the extreme right-wing National Front (FN) party ... sharpened the dilemma facing France ... Suddenly, immigrants were portrayed by many as villains responsible for the economic and cultural decline of French society.**

Many French people have expressed discomfort with the growing number of Muslim migrants in their midst, and some politicians have exploited this xenophobia. French Interior Minister Charles Pasqua, for example, once stated categorically that "France has been an immigration country; but she wants to be no longer."[6] Many right-wing leaders have argued that France is being transformed, if not destroyed by African immigrants. In the early 2000s, right-wing candidates capitalized on anti-immigrant sentiment to win a number of seats in municipal elections. In 2002, the National Front's Le Pen placed second in the presidential elections. Although right-wing groups have been unable to consolidate their gains since then, the immigration issue remains very much alive.

University Press, 1992); G. Freeman, *Immigrant Labor and Racial Conflict in Industrial Societies: The French and British Experience 1945-1975* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1979); J.F. Hollifield, "Ideas, Institutions and Civil Society: On the Limits of Immigration Control in France," in G. Brochmann and T. Hammar, eds., *Mechanisms of Immigration Control: A Comparative Analysis of European Regulation Policies* (Oxford and New York: Berg, 1999); and D.G. Papademetriou and K.A. Hamilton, *Converging Paths to Restriction: French, Italian and British Responses to Immigration* (Washington, DC: International Migration Policy Program, 1996).

4. Under the center-left government of Prime Minister Lionel Jospin (Parti Socialiste, PS) in the late 1990s, some of the restrictive "Pasqua Laws" (i.e., immigration regulations) were withdrawn or toned down. However, since 2002 there has been a return to a more restrictive immigration policy.

5. Quoted in, for example, Steven Erlanger, "Sarkozy Wants Ban of Full Veils," *The New York Times*, April 21, 2010.

6. James F. Hollifield, "Republicanism and Immigration Control in France," in Wayne A. Cornelius, Takeyuki Tsuda, Philip L. Martin, and James F. Hollifield, eds., *Controlling Immigration: A Global Perspective,* second edition (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2004), p. 199.

Algerians have been at the forefront of the immigration controversy and racial conflicts in France. The Algerian population is often discussed in relation to a host of problems, including adaptation, unemployment, and poverty. Despite their limited economic means, Algerian migrants are pursuing their own integration strategies to better fit into the mosaic that constitutes the host society. While deriving support from traditional norms and values, they are not averse to transforming them in ways that facilitate their integration and that of their families.

Although immigrants may eventually become citizens as in the past, the government rhetoric and policies send the wrong message to Maghrebians. Despite having become citizens and sharing their adopted country's history and language, they will be denied equal status and unwelcome in their host country. Because of certain cultural attributes, they will remain, by definition, "outsiders." On the other hand, the critics of French immigration policy argue that it is necessary to create the conditions for being French and Muslim at the same time. Multiculturalism as a state policy is being slowly abandoned in France, according to some observers.

The immigration policies of the French government, particularly during the past two decades, have sent confusing signals to migrants from the Maghreb. As France pursues its complex domestic policies on immigration, for which the preoccupation with "unwanted" workers from the Maghreb is paramount, migrants can easily become pawns in the political game. The problem of alienation of migrants from the Maghreb is compounded by the fact that most of them live in impoverished neighborhoods. Though the French authorities have announced many initiatives, including financial incentives, to encourage return migration, these measures have proven to be unsuccessful. The French society and politicians are also divided on how to treat the immigrants in the context of economic crisis, the rising incidence of acts of terrorism, and racial conflicts on the one hand, and human rights, constitutional provisions, and French ethos on the other. The Muslim dimension of France's immigrant population has made the immigration challenge even more complicated. A French poet once remarked, "We wanted only workers, but finally we got human beings!" This statement aptly summarizes France's dilemma.

The Changing Status of Maghrebi Emigrants: The Rise of the Diaspora

Michael Collyer

When large-scale emigration from Morocco, Algeria, and Tunisia began, around the time of their independence, international migrants were overwhelmingly from the poorest and most marginalized parts of the Maghreb. Emigrants were often encouraged to leave as a way of reducing unemployment and political instability in their home regions. But once they were overseas they were either viewed with suspicion or ignored by the state. There were, of course, notable exceptions even at the time.[1] However, despite varying approaches to emigration since then, by the late 1990s all three countries had officially recognized the importance of their emigrant communities, established institutional means of maintaining contact, and actively solicited their engagement for investment on a regular basis. This essay explores the reasons behind the rise of the diaspora as a political and economic force in the Maghreb and the ways in which these three states have chosen to engage with their citizens overseas.

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Immediately after independence, emigrants were seen principally as potential political opponents. This was probably most true in Algeria, following the bitter conflicts in France between supporters of the ruling National Liberation Front (FLN), which formed the Algerian state upon independence and rival Algerian National Movement (MNA),[2] a situation which continued to the end of the FLN state in 1988. To a lesser extent, this was also the case in Morocco during the repression of the *années de plomb* from 1958-88[3] and in Tunisia during the Habib Bourguiba regime from 1957 to 1987. The geographical concentration of emigrants from the Maghreb in Europe increased their governments' concerns about their potential influence. Each government established organizations for emigrants known as *amicales*. Officially, these organizations were to provide cultural and social support for emigrant workers, and many of them fulfilled this role. Unofficially, they were linked to interior ministries, and in the case of Algerian *amicales*, directors were appointed directly from Algiers, with the aim of keeping track of the activities of emigrants.[4]

In Algeria the conflict of the 1990s prolonged this period of suspicion of emigrants, and the relationship between the Algerian state and the emigrant community remained tense.[5] In Tunisia the transition from Bourguiba to Ben Ali did not result in a substantial change in political freedom in the country, though Tunisians had begun returning from Europe in more significant numbers than Algerians and Moroccans, and the skills they had acquired led to a positive influence on the economic development of the country.[6] In 1988 the Tunisian government became the first to create an institutional link with emigrants, creating the *Office des Tunisiens à l'Etranger*. In 1990, the Moroccan govern-

1. The unilateral decision by the government of Algeria in 1973 to ban migration to France following a series of racist attacks on Algerians is one example.
2. B. Stora, *Ils Venaient d'Algérie: l'immigration algérienne en France 1912-1992* (Paris: Fayard, 1992).
3. Z. Daoud, *Maroc: les années de plomb, 1958-1988, chronique d'une résistance* (Paris: Editions Manucius, 2007).
4. M. Collyer, "Transnational Political Participation of Algerians in France," *Political Geography,* Vol. 25 (2006), pp. 836-45.
5. P.A. **Silverstein**, *Algeria in France: Transpolitics, Race and Nation* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2004).
6. J.P. Cassarino, *Tunisian New Entrepreneurs and Their Past Experiences of Migration in Europe: Resource Mobilization, Networks, and Hidden Disaffectation* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007).

ment followed, establishing the *Foundation Hassan II pour les Marocains Résidants à l'Etranger* with the aim of reinforcing links between Morocco and the emigrant community. This also marked the symbolically significant transition from the old label of *Travailleurs Marocains à l'Etranger*; from Moroccan *workers* abroad to Moroccan *residents* abroad, a change in emphasis that was also in use in Tunisia.[7] Four years later, the Algerian government opened the *Commission des affaires étrangères et de la communauté algérienne à l'étranger*.

The main motivating factor for these changes was the growing economic dependence on remittances. Although migrants may have a range of positive developmental impacts, such as through return migration, remittances have tended to drive public policy in this area. This was most obvious in Morocco, which lacked Algeria's oil or Tunisia's thriving economy and had recognized the significance of remittances earlier than its neighbors.[8] In 1972 a survey in France had found that 89% of Moroccan emigrants sent money home.[9] With the exception of small decreases in the early 1990s, remittances to Morocco have continued to grow, year on year, reaching a new high of over $5 billion in 2007, the last year for which figures are available, making it the fourth most significant remittance receiver in the world, in absolute terms.[10] In the same year, Algeria received $2.1 billion and Tunisia received $1.7 billion.[11] This represented 9% of GDP in Morocco, 1.6% in Algeria, and 5% in Tunisia, though this data only includes remittances flowing through official channels, so the totals are likely to be even higher.

Relations with emigrants are now firmly institutionalized in all three countries. This includes ministerial representation. In Morocco, the position of Minister Responsible for the Moroccan Community Resident Abroad has been in place since the mid-1990s. Since 2007, that position has been occupied by Mohammed Ameur. In 2007, the Moroccan government also established a Council of the Moroccan Community Resident Abroad, made up of 50 members elected directly by the emigrant community and a president appointed by the King. This Council has a consultative role in the development of legislation. In Algeria, Djamel Ould Abbes has been Minister of National Solidarity, The Family and the National Community Abroad since 2007. Algeria also established a 56-member Council of the National Community Abroad, for which elections were held in 2009. On the model of the Moroccan system, these elected representatives meet with a number of appointed representatives to examine new legislation. In Tunisia there has been a Minister of Social Security, Solidarity, and Tunisians Abroad since 2005, though Tunisia lacks the elected consultative councils in place in both Algeria and Morocco.

> **Remittances to Morocco have continued to grow, year on year, reaching a new high of over $5 billion in 2007 ... making it the fourth most significant remittance receiver in the world, in absolute terms ... This represented 9% of GDP in Morocco.**

The essential aspect of all of these institutions is their locations within government. The official state relationship with emigrants is now tremendously different from the system of *amicales*, which had been attached to interior ministries and tasked with observing and controlling emigrants. The current relationship with emigrants is managed by elected independent councils and ministerial-level figures who report directly to the prime ministers in Algeria and Morocco and who have full ministerial status in Tunisia. These institutions were established to assure the welfare of emigrants and to allow them a measure of direct involvement in the affairs of the state. Developments in one state have clearly had some influence on neighboring states, but all respond to the realities of migration faced by all three. The growing recognition of the economic dependence on emigrants in the Maghreb has transformed the institutional structures in both symbolic and practical ways.

7. L.A. Brand, *Citizens Abroad: Emigration and the State in the Middle East and North Africa* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006).
8. H. De Haas and R. Plug, "Cherishing the Goose with the Golden Eggs: Trends in Migrant Remittances from Europe to Morocco 1970–2004," *International Migration Review*, Vol. 40, No. 3 (2006), pp. 603-34; M. Collyer, M. Cherti, T. Lacroix, and A. van Heelsum, "Migration and Development: the Euro-Moroccan Experience," *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies,* Vol. 35, No. 10 (2009), pp. 1555-70.
9. M. Charef, *La Circulation Migratoire Marocaine: Un pont entre deux rives* (Rabat: Edition Sud Contact, 1999).
10. Office des Changes, "*Envois de fonds effectués par les MRE*" (2010), http://www.oc.gov.ma/FluxFinanciers/MRE_Annee.asp.
11. United Nations Development Program (UNDP) Human Development Report, Algeria and Tunisia (2009).

Irregular Migration in Arab Mediterranean Countries

Philippe Fargues

Half a century of outward flows of workers and members of their families to Europe, the Gulf States, North America, and Australia had accustomed Arab Mediterranean countries to regard themselves as sources rather than as hosts of international migration. Due to widening gaps in well being and security, however, their southern and eastern neighbors started to look at these countries in a different way — as richer and safer places than their own and a possible stopover *en route* to the West. Gradually, Arab Mediterranean countries became magnets for migrant workers and asylum seekers from countries struggling with development and often torn by civil and military conflicts. In contrast with their long practice of dealing with their own expatriate citizens, governments were not prepared for large-scale immigration of non-citizens. For lack of specific tools and, more often than not, in the absence of will to accept and integrate new comers, "irregularity" grew in parallel with immigration.

Migration is irregular as soon as entry, stay, or employment is unauthorized. It occurs not only when migrants violate regulations on the movement, settlement, and access to labor of their host countries, but also when a change in regulations affects the migrants' situation, sometimes without them knowing that they are infringing the law. It hap-

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Table 1: Irregular immigration into Arab Mediterranean countries (most recent data in 2010)

Country	Immigrant stocks			Ratio irregular / regular
	Total	Regular (1)	Irregular (minimum)	
Algeria	105,000	95,000	10,000	0.1
Egypt	362,500	262,500	100,000	0.4
Jordan	992,273	392,273	600,000	1.5
Lebanon	702,315	302,315	400,000	1.3
Libya	1,449,065	449,065	1,000,000	2.2
Mauritania	32,963	22,963	10,000	0.4
Morocco	72,348	62,348	10,000	0.2
Palestine	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Syria	742,218	42,218	700,000	16.6
Tunisia	45,192	35,192	10,000	0.3
Total AMC	4,503,874	1,663,874	2,840,000	1.7

n.a.: Not available
Sources: (1) Non-citizens or born-abroad residents according to most recent official records (census, permits of stay, survey); see Fargues, Ph. (ed.) Mediterranean Report 2008-2009, *Appendix 7, p. 486. www.carim.org*

pens, for instance, if protectionist measures are suddenly taken that reserve to citizens a number of informal activities that were so far unregulated, unrecorded, and therefore *de facto* accessible to foreigners without work permits. In Jordan, for example, between one third and one half of the more than 200,000 Egyptian workers employed mostly in agriculture were made irregular by new legislation on labor in 2007.[1] Among the esti-

1. Mohamed Olwan, "Irregular Migration in Jordan — A Policy of No Policy," *CARIM Analytic and*

mated 4.5 million immigrants that Arab Mediterranean countries host at present, 2.8 million or more (63%) are actually or potentially irregular migrants (Table 1).

Three different and often intermingled motivations explain irregular migration in the region (Table 2): 1) the search for employment among migrant workers who are not eligible, or do not apply, for regular documents; 2) the search for asylum among people who have a well-founded fear of being persecuted in their country of nationality and are in need of protection, but cannot (or sometimes do not wish to) be recognized as refugees in their country of asylum and are therefore *de facto* refugees; and 3) the search for a passage among in-transit migrants initially *en route* for a further destination which they cannot reach for lack of entry visa.

Table 2: Actually or potentially irregular migrants in Arab Mediterranean countries by category (most recent available data in 2010)

Country	Workers	Refugees (1)	Transit
Algeria	> 10,000	95,121	> 10,000
Egypt	> 100,000	10,439	n.a.
Jordan	> 100,000	519,477	n.a.
Lebanon	400 - 500,000	22,743	n.a.
Libya	1.0 - 1.2 million	4,754	> 10,000
Mauritania	< 10,000	861	± 30,000
Morocco	± 10,000	1,878	> 10,000
Palestine	n.a.	0	n.a.
Syria	< 10,000	707,422	n.a.
Tunisia	< 10,000	161	n.a.
Total AMC	1,650,000	1,362,856	> 60,000

(1) Non-UNRWA refugees
Sources: migrant workers: population censuses and national surveys; refugees: UNHCR; transit migrants: various surveys (see Fargues 2009)

Libya is the largest receiver of irregular (as well as regular) international migration in the region. Like the Gulf States, oil and gas wealth has transformed the country into a major destination for migrant workforce. However, several economic downturns — as a consequence of international sanctions (1992-1999) or low oil prices (early 2000s) — have translated into job destruction and unemployment among migrants so that many of them lost their right to residence. Detention camps were set up and hundreds of thousands deported in 1995 and between 2003 and 2005, mostly to Sub-Saharan countries.[2] As if visa policy was subordinated in Libya to foreign policy, Arabs had been first exempted from entry visas in the name of Pan-Arabism, then Africans in the name of Pan-Africanism, before both suddenly required visas in 2007, when the government changed its stance on migration in a strategic shift to please Europe and cooperate in the "fight against illegal migration," a *leitmotiv* of EU migration policies. Libya remains the largest receiver of Sub-Saharan migrants and a number of them, coming from unsafe countries, could claim their right to be recognized as refuges. But Libya, not a party to the Refugee Convention of 1951, prefers to consider all foreigners as migrant workers, since it is unwilling to adopt any legislation on asylum that would contain a non-*refoulement* rule and prevent its government from deporting a number of undocumented migrants.

Syria and Jordan come next, each with more than half a million migrants in potentially or actually irregular situations, a majority of whom are Iraqi refugees of the most recent wave that fled Iraq under US occupation between 2005 and

Synthetic Notes 2008/60, www.carim.org.
2. Human Rights Watch (HRW) 2006, *Libya Stemming the Flow: Abuses Against Migrants, Asylum Seekers and Refugees*, Vol. 18, No. 5(E) (2006).

2008. These countries, which are not signatories of the 1951 Refugee Convention and already host the largest Palestinian refugee population, have welcomed Iraqi refugees as "guests," i.e. temporary visitors expected to return soon to their homes. Confronted with huge numbers, however, they both started to tighten the conditions of entry and stay set for Iraqis, putting many of them in a situation of latent irregularity. Numbers at stake are not reliable. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) has repeatedly published estimates of more than two million Iraqi refugees worldwide, out of which between 700,000 and 1.2 million would be in Syria and 500,000-750,000 in Jordan. However, given the emergency situation, no census of the Iraqi refugee population was ever conducted, and there are clues that published numbers have been significantly inflated.[3] If this were not the case, how could one explain that "only" 180,000 expatriates voted in the Iraqi elections of March 2010 despite a reportedly high turnout? How could one reasonably believe that in Syria, where the vast majority of Iraqis are reported to live in the Damascus area,[4] one out of every three to four persons in the capital city is an Iraqi refugee? In Egypt, Iraqi refugees were commonly estimated at 100,000-150,000 until a statistical survey of 2008 found a much lower count of 17,000.[5]

> **Libya is the largest receiver of irregular (as well as regular) international migration in the region. Like the Gulf States, oil and gas wealth has transformed the country into a major destination for migrant workforce.**

While Lebanon also hosts a sizeable Iraqi refugee community, the largest group of irregular migrants in the country is formed by the possibly 400,000-500,000 Syrian workers employed without a regular work permit and who make up one third of its total workforce.[6] Syrian workers had been in Lebanon since the 1950s; however, their number increased owing to the civil war of 1975-1990. The massive emigration of Lebanese citizens that took place during the conflict left a vacuum in the labor market. Exercising tight military control over Lebanon, Syria facilitated the establishment of its own citizens there, in disregard of Lebanese labor legislation.

Egypt is a destination for migrants from the Nile Valley and the Horn of Africa; Sudanese are Egypt's largest non-national community. However, no one can tell how many of them live in the country, except that their number lies somewhere between a few tens of thousands and millions. The reason is that Sudanese typically reside in Egypt without being re-registered as foreigners, by virtue of the freedom of circulation and residence that linked the two countries for almost two centuries. It stopped between 1995, when Egypt imposed visas on Sudanese after a failed attempt by a Sudanese to assassinate its President, and 2004, when the two countries signed an agreement restoring the freedom of movement, residence, and work. However, because the agreement was never fully implemented, many Sudanese migrant workers or refugees in Egypt are still in irregular situations, despite the *de facto* tolerance that protects them from deportation.

Countries of the central Maghreb (Algeria, Morocco, and Tunisia), as well as Mauritania do not have large numbers of irregular migrants compared with Libya and the Mashreq. Most of these migrants — in the tens of thousands, maybe more in Algeria[7] — come from Sub-Saharan Africa.[8] They form a mixed population of undocumented workers attracted by the local labor market (especially in Algeria), unrecognized refugees and migrants in transit. The last category overlaps with irregular migrant workers, since transit often takes a long time and migrants have no choice but to earn an

3. Philippe Fargues "Work, Refuge, Transit: An Emerging Pattern of Irregular Immigration South and East of the Mediterranean, *International Migration Review*, Vol. 43, No. 3 (2009), pp. 544–77.
4. Patricia Weiss Fagen, *Iraqi Refugees: Seeking Stability in Syria and Jordan*, Institute for the Study of International Migration, Georgetown University (2007), p. 19.
5. Philippe Fargues, Saeed El-Masry, Sara Sadek, and Azza Shaban, *Iraqis in Egypt. A Statistical Survey in 2008*, The American University in Cairo and Information and Decision Support Centre (2008), http://www.aucegypt.edu/ResearchatAUC/rc/cmrs/reports/Pages/Indepthanalyses.aspx; http://www.aucegypt.edu/ResearchatAUC/rc/cmrs/Documents/Iraqis%20in%20Egypt%20Provisional%20Copy.pdf.
6. Choghig Kasparian, "*Les migrations irrégulières au départ, vers et à travers le Liban*," *CARIM Analytic and Synthetic Notes 2008/54*, www.carim.org.
7. Ali Bensaad, "*Les migrations subsahariennes en Algérie*," *CARIM Research-Report 2008/1*, www.carim.org.
8. Hein de Haas, *Irregular Migration from West Africa to the Maghreb and the European Union: An Overview of Recent Trends*, IOM Migration Research Series No. 32 (2008).

income and find a job without a permit.[9] In the same way, it is not always possible to distinguish them from refugees, as they may come from the same countries and travel alongside asylum seekers to form what UNHCR terms movements of "mixed migration."[10] Transit migration through Arab Mediterranean countries has not been growing as much as it has been shifting from one country to the other over the last decade. When a route closes because controls tighten, another — usually longer and riskier — opens: transit first peaked in Morocco[11] at a few cables' length away from Europe, then in Algeria and Mauritania, and lately in Libya.

The growing category of irregular migrants points to a deficit in international law. As non-citizens, migrants usually enjoy fewer rights than citizens. But irregular migrants are denied even the right to reside, i.e. to be where they actually are. They must hide and live in limbo, with limited freedom of movement, no legal protection, poor access to basic rights, and high exposure to exploitation, destitution, and deportation. Whether they had arrived as undocumented workers, unrecognized refugees, or migrants in transit, they merge into one single, disadvantaged, and unorganized group. In the developing economies of Arab Mediterranean countries, they form the cheapest and most tractable workforce to take on jobs which nationals are no longer willing to accept. From the rare surveys among irregular migrants, it does not emerge clearly whether they consider the situation found in the host country to be better or worse than the one left behind in the home country. The only certainties are that irregular migration has brought a pool of flexible manpower profitable to local employers and that there is no reason why this should recede. As sources and hosts of irregular migration, Arab Mediterranean countries know the two sides of the coin. For this reason, they would be in the best position to push the idea of an international migration law onto the global agenda.

9. Franck Düvell, "Crossing the Fringes of Europe: Transit Migration in the EU's Neighbourhood," *Compas WP-06-33*, University of Oxford (2008).
10. UNHCR, *Refugee Protection and Mixed Migration: A 10-Point Plan of Action* (2007), http://www.unhcr.org/protect/PROTECTION/4742a30b4.pdf.
11. Association Marocaine d'Etudes et de Recherches sur les Migrations (AMERM) *L'immigration subsaharienne au Maroc*, Rabat (2008).

An Overview of North African Countries' Bilateral Cooperation on the Removal of Unauthorized Migrants: Drivers and Implications

Jean-Pierre Cassarino

Since 1965, when Bourguiba's Tunisia signed with Austria its first bilateral agreement on the repatriation of its own nationals, North African countries' patterns of cooperation on readmission or removal have changed dramatically.[1] Actually, readmission has acquired mounting importance in their bilateral and multilateral talks on migration management.

Readmission is the process through which individuals (e.g., unauthorized migrants, rejected asylum-seekers and stateless persons) are removed from the territory of a country, whether in a coercive manner or not. Readmission has become part and parcel of the immigration control systems consolidated by countries of origin, transit, and destination. Technically, it requires cooperation at the bilateral level with the foreign country to which the readmitted or removed persons are to be relocated, for readmission cannot be performed without its prior agreement to cooperate and to deliver travel documents or *laissez-passers*. Substantially, readmission permeates both domestic and foreign affairs. Practically, it is aimed at the swift removal of aliens who are viewed as being unauthorized.

It is important to stress that, despite their being framed in a reciprocal context, readmission agreements, or treaties, contain mutual obligations that cannot apply equally to both contracting parties: first, because they apply predominantly (and as expected) to the nationals of the source country; and second, because the contracting parties do not have the same structural, institutional, and legal capacity for dealing with the removal of unauthorized aliens, whether these are identified as nationals of the contracting parties or as third-country nationals transiting through the territory of a contracting party. These are the main reasons for which readmission agreements are characterized by "unbalanced reciprocities." Moreover, whereas the interest of a destination country sounds obvious ("unwanted migrants have to be effectively removed"), the interest of a country of origin may be less evident, above all when considering that its economy remains dependent on the revenues of its expatriates living abroad (whether legally or not), or when migration continues to be viewed as a safety valve to relieve pressure on domestic unemployment.

These aspects have made the cooperation on readmission a rather thorny issue in current migration talks, particularly with North African countries. However, despite the resilience of contrasting interests and asymmetric costs, North African countries have become involved in patterns of cooperation on readmission with some of their neighboring European counterparts. This overview specifically sets out to account for this paradox with reference to a series of explanatory factors.

A MEANS MORE THAN AN END IN ITSELF

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1. In this overview, North African countries refer to Algeria, Egypt, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco, and Tunisia.

If we follow the conventional wisdom, we may believe that states negotiate and conclude readmission agreements as an end in itself. However, readmission agreements are rarely an end in itself, but rather one of the many ways to consolidate a broader bilateral cooperative framework, including other strategic, and perhaps more crucial, policy areas such as security, energy, development aid, and police cooperation. Often, the decision to cooperate on readmission results from a form of rapprochement that shapes the intensity of the *quid pro quo*.

There are various examples which support this argument with reference to North African countries. In February 1992, Morocco and Spain signed a readmission agreement in the wake of a reconciliation process which materialized following the signing of a Treaty of Good-neighborliness and Friendly Cooperation on July 4, 1991. Morocco's acceptance to conclude this agreement was motivated by its ambition to acquire an advanced status in its political and economic relationships with the European Union (EU), which it eventually obtained in October 2008. Likewise, in January 2007, Italy and Egypt concluded a readmission agreement as a result of reinforced bilateral exchanges between the two countries. Among others, such reinforced exchanges have allowed Egypt to benefit from a bilateral debt swap agreement, as well as from trade concessions for its agricultural produce and, additionally, temporary entry quotas for Egyptian nationals in Italy. Importantly, the rapprochement between Italy and Egypt was key to integrating the latter into the G14[2] while acquiring enhanced regime legitimacy at the international level. Similarly, the bilateral agreement on the circulation of persons and readmission concluded in July 2006 between the United Kingdom and Algeria, while still not in force, is no exception to the rule. This agreement, limited to the removal of the nationals of the contracting parties, took place in the context of a whole round of negotiations including such strategic issues as energy security, the fight against terrorism, and police cooperation. These strategic issues have become top priorities in the bilateral relations between the United Kingdom and Algeria, particularly following the July 2005 London bombings and the ensuing G8 meeting in Gleneagles that Algeria also attended. The Swiss-Algerian agreement on circulation and readmission, which entered into force in November 2007, also resulted from a *quid pro quo* based on preferential trade concessions.

All these case studies show that readmission weaves its way through various strategic policy areas. The abovementioned bilateral agreements are standard insofar as they explicitly address the cooperation on readmission, while laying down the national and international standards and norms that need to be respected to protect the rights and safety of the removed individuals.

THE DRIVE FOR FLEXIBILITY

Past experience has shown that incentives alone could not secure the conclusion of readmission agreements or their concrete implementation even when such agreements were concluded. For example, the 1992 Moroccan-Spanish standard readmission agreement has never been fully implemented owing to its disruptive impact on the domestic economy and its unpopularity among Moroccan society.

Faced with the uncertainty surrounding the concrete implementation of the cooperative agreements, some EU Member States, particularly those affected by migration flows originating in North Africa (e.g., France, Spain, Italy), set out to devise flexible arrangements while opting for different ways of dealing with readmission. These include exchanges of letters, memoranda of understanding, or other types of arrangements (e.g., police cooperation agreements and pacts).

Unlike standard readmission agreements, these arrangements are flexible insofar as they do not require a lengthy rati-

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2. The first G14 meeting took place in L'Aquila (Italy) in July 2009. It comprises the world's most wealthy and industrialized countries (G8) plus the G5, i.e., the group of emerging economies (Brazil, China, India, Mexico, and South Africa), and Egypt.

fication process, and renegotiation can easily be performed with a view to responding to new situations. Their main rationale is to secure bilateral cooperation on readmission and to avoid reneging as far as possible. Readmission is embedded in power relations that can shape the intensity of the *quid pro quo*. Following their proactive involvement in the reinforced police control of the EU external borders, North African countries have become gradually aware that they could play the efficiency card in the field of migration and border management, while gaining further international credibility. There can be no question that this perceptible empowerment has had serious implications on the ways in which the cooperation on readmission has been addressed, reconfigured, and codified, leading to the conclusion of (flexible and less visible) patterns of cooperation. The agenda remains unchanged, but there has been a shift in priority actions with regard to North African countries. Actually, the operability of the cooperation on readmission has been gradually prioritized over its formalization.

The dramatic increase in the number of cooperative agreements[3] linked to readmission (whether standard or not), and involving (empowered) North African countries, cannot be isolated from the prioritization of flexibility and the drive for operability.

IMPLICATIONS

This prioritization process has led to the flexible reinterpretation, if not serious breach, of internationally recognized standards and norms. The most emblematic case is perhaps the way in which the Italian-Libyan cooperation on readmission has developed over the last five years. In April 2005, the European Parliament (EP) voted on a resolution stating that the "Italian authorities have failed to meet their international obligations by not ensuring that the lives of the people expelled by them [to Libya] are not threatened in their countries of origin."[4] This resolution was adopted following the action of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and various human rights associations denouncing the collective expulsions of asylum-seekers to Libya that Italy organized at that time.

A few years later, neither the April 2005 EP resolution nor the intense advocacy work of migrant-aid associations nor the action of the office of the UNHCR have contributed to substantially reversing the trend. To the contrary, Italy has broadened and reinforced its bilateral cooperation with Libya in the field of readmission, raising serious concerns among human rights organizations and the UN institutions regarding the respect of the *non-refoulement* principle enshrined in international refugee standards on the one hand, and the safety of the readmitted persons to Libya on the other.

The reinforcement of the bilateral cooperation became perceptible in May 2009 when Italy set out to intercept migrants in international waters before they could reach the Italian coasts to subsequently force them back to Libya. Hundreds of would-be immigrants and asylum-seekers have been forcibly subjected to these operations. In September 2009 Human Rights Watch (HRW) published a detailed report[5] on the dreadful conditions and ill-treatment facing readmitted persons in Libya. Despite the ill-treatment evidenced in the HRW report, the European Council called on the then Swedish Presidency of the EU and "the European Commission to intensify the dialogue with Libya on managing migration and responding to illegal immigration, including cooperation at sea, border control and readmission [while underlining] the importance of readmission agreements as a tool for combating illegal immigration."[6]

> **The dramatic increase in the number of cooperative agreements linked to readmission (whether standard or not), and involving (empowered) North African countries, cannot be isolated from the prioritization of flexibility and the drive for operability.**

3. These agreements are accessible at: http://www.mirem.eu/datasets/agreements/.
4. European Parliament (2005) *European Parliament Resolution on Lampedusa,* April 14, 2005, Text adopted P6_TA(2005)0138.
5. Human Rights Watch, *Pushed Back Pushed Around: Italy's Forced Return of Boat Migrants and Asylum Seekers, Libya's Mistreatment of Migrants and Asylum Seekers* (New York: Human Rights Watch, 2009).
6. European Council, *Brussels European Council*, October 29-30, 2009 Presidency Conclusions, December 1, 2009, p. 12.

The need to respond to perceived threats does not only rest on operable means of implementation that are often antonymous to transparency and to the respect of international commitments. It also rests on the subtle denial of moral principles or perhaps on their inadequacy to judge what is right and wrong. Such a denial does not stem from the ignorance or failure to recognize the value of international norms relating to migrants' rights, asylum-seekers, and the status of refugees. Rather, it stems first and foremost from the *prioritization* of operable means of implementation. The predominant search for operability does not only undermine human rights laws. It may also alter the understanding of the notion of effectiveness. What is effective has become first and foremost operable, but not necessarily in full compliance with international standards.

CONCLUSION

There is no question that incentives to cooperate have induced North African countries to become more responsive. However, this does not tell the whole story. There are additional explanatory factors that need to be considered to understand why all the North African countries have become involved in cooperative patterns on readmission, despite the unbalanced reciprocities that characterize them. First, the abovementioned drive for flexibility has been conducive to reinforced patterns of interdependence with their European neighbors on which North African countries will continue to capitalize as countries of origin and of transit. All the more so as they realize that their cooperation, be it effective or not, allows their European neighbors to show to their constituencies that they have the credible ability "to combat illegal migration." Second, as readmission continues to stand high in states' current policy priorities, all North African countries have become aware that this prioritization allows their coercive regulatory capacity to be expressed when needed while acquiring enhanced regime legitimacy at the international level.

It is because of these drivers that the abovementioned asymmetric costs inherent in cooperation on readmission could be overcome in the bargaining process.

Finally, it is under these circumstances that cooperation on readmission has been branded as a lesser evil. It has enabled states to tackle a common international challenge or (perceived) threat to their immigration and asylum systems while making them perhaps less careful about their own relative gains in cooperation on readmission and undeniably far less sensitive to the reasons for which those who are viewed as illegal or undesirable left their homeland, let alone their dreadful conditions. The Italian-Libyan pattern of cooperation on readmission is perhaps the most emblematic case. Admittedly, readmission constitutes more a means than an end in itself.

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