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Motivations to Migrate: Migration from Morocco and the “Failure” of Rural Development During the Eurozone Financial Crisis

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Motivations to Migrate

Migration from Morocco and the “Failure” of Rural Development
during the Eurozone Financial Crisis

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SIT: Migration and Transitional Identity (MOM)
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Abstract

EU's closing borders are impeding a fifty-year pattern of Moroccan migration to southern Europe to find work, prosper and provide for their families back home. Moroccan NGOs, as well as the Spanish and Italian governments, have recently invested in rural development initiatives aimed at increasing employment opportunities in Morocco and deterring workers from migrating. Yet Moroccans keep risking their lives and continue to migrate illegally every day as these initiatives are proving to be ineffective.

This study examines the current conditions for Moroccan migrant workers amidst tightening European Union borders and a narrowing European frontier for employment. The Eurozone financial crisis, as well as right-wing anti-immigrant politics, has made it increasingly difficult for Moroccans to migrate to Europe to find employment. Young Moroccan migrants without visas and working papers are therefore forced to enter Europe illegally, and often dangerously, in search of work. Furthermore, while migrants who hold proper documentation are able to migrate freely, they are faced with a weak European job market and dwindling wages.

This study further aims to explore the particular motivations of Moroccan migrant workers and determine whether or not domestic development initiatives will ever satisfy these motivations. The results show that rural development projects are not effective in stopping migration from Morocco to Europe, although they do aid in providing means and opportunities for Moroccans who chose not to migrate. This outcome is relevant to the Moroccan government, receiving EU countries, private investors and developers, as well as the rural Moroccan population; it can be used as a model for the Western Mediterranean region to better adapt and grow to meet the challenge of closing borders and economic recession.

Introduction and Migration in the Western Mediterranean

During my first trip to Oulad Ghanem in March 2013, the small village or *douane* where the field-based research for this study was completed, the images of drowning migrants in the Strait of Gibraltar were all too clear in my mind. Throughout my first few weeks living in Morocco, I had witnessed countless news reports of Moroccan and sub-saharan migrants drowning in the Mediterranean en route to Spain. What is even more disturbing about this tragedy is that Spanish naval boats often circle these migrants and refuse aid because they want to avoid dealing with the problem. These drowning migrants are being left to die; “3,285 dead bodies were found on the shores of the Straits of Gibraltar between 1997 and 2001” (Schuster, 2005).

While living with a Moroccan family in the village and hearing firsthand accounts of migrants’ incredibly dangerous journeys into Europe, these images became more vivid because of the personal attachment I soon gained with the migrants; these were *real* human beings who risked their lives migrating due to a variety of social and economic pressures. Furthermore, after attending a conference on migration to the EU held in Amsterdam in February 2013, I was able to easily align this fatal pattern of South-North migration within the issues of EU border control, immigration, and right-wing politics. I noticed an unsustainable cycle of illegal migration and closing European borders due to the Eurozone financial crisis.

In the following subsections, this study explores the (1) historic trend of Moroccan migration to Europe, (2) Eurozone financial crisis, right-wing anti-immigrant politics, and closing borders, and (3) rural development as the prevalent and dominate “remedy” to the changing patterns of the region.

Moroccan Migration to Europe

The historic pattern of migration from Morocco to Europe, dating back to the eighth-century Islamic conquests to Spain, remains a prevalent feature of Moroccan society today. Since Morocco's independence from France in 1956, Moroccan migration has been largely characterized by labor migrants, as well as students who study abroad, as "migration is an important socio-economic process and has thus intrinsically influenced the country's development and the livelihoods of the migrants and their families" (Bilgili and Weyel, 2009: 6).

It is useful to examine the post-colonial migration patterns as a series of "waves", each with its own specific set of migrants and reasons for traveling north (Bilgili and Weyel, 2009: 13, Eddouada, 2013 & Bouras, 2013). The 1960s were largely characterized by Moroccan labor migrants who were invited as "guest workers" to help rebuild Europe after the second World War. They were "welcomed with flowers" but were granted residency and employment under the assumption that their employment would be temporary (Bouras, 2013). Nevertheless, these workers stayed and the 1970s were characterized by a period of "family reunification", as the workers' families migrated North to live permanently in Europe. After a period of female migration in the 1980s, it became increasingly difficult for Moroccans to migrate and settle in Europe, as a EU visa was required for border entry (Eddouada, 2013).

Furthermore, it is of widespread belief that the Moroccan government favors migration, temporary residency and permanent settlement in Europe because of the benefits it provides in the Moroccan state in the form of remittances and human capital (de Haas, 2007c: 4 & de Haas and Plug, 2006). Approximately 4 million Moroccans currently live abroad, more than 10% of Morocco's population, the largest population of Moroccans living abroad in history (Eddouada, 2013). However, governmental and monarchical institutions in Morocco, such as the Council of

the Community of Moroccans Abroad (CCME) and Ministry of Migration, have been created to ensure that Moroccans remain culturally-connected with the state in order to guarantee a steady flow of remittances, especially from later-generation Moroccans (CCME, 2013). According to the CCME, yearly remittances from this community abroad amount to over 59 billion MDh (7 billion USD annually), roughly 7% of Morocco's GDP and accounting for 25% of all bank deposits (CCME, 2013).

Finally, while numbers of migrants are decreasing and return migrating from Europe is growing, it is important to realize that Moroccans are not showing signs of a *lower desire* to migrate (Bilgili and Weyel, 2009: 29). In a recent study by the European Training Foundation, it was found that 42% of Moroccans "declare intention to emigrate" (ETF, 2012). Furthermore, the results in the finding sections of this study show that migration to Europe still remains the most feasible way to secure a better livelihood and future in Morocco, a mindset that does not currently seem to be fading among Moroccan youth, a concept later explored in the findings of this study.

The European Union and its Closing Borders

As Moroccans continue migrate, or attempt to migrate, to Europe for employment and financial aspirations, the receiving countries, as well as the European Union as a whole, has experienced these challenging effects of this influx of immigrants within its borders. Beginning in the 1990s after the visa requirement for immigrants, EU borders have become more difficult to enter. Since then, only migrants with a valid visa or working papers are technically able to live and work in Europe, although it is relatively simple for illegal migrants to obtain residency status through finding employment once they have crossed illegally (Bilgili and Weyel, 2009: 19).

These illegal migrants rely on *harags* or professional smugglers to aid in transport across the Mediterranean for a cost of roughly €1,000 (Interviews in Oulad Ghanem, 2013). However, the danger of this method of travel was revealed through the interviews and personal stories shared in this study.

There are more than 750,000 Moroccans currently living in Spain, an increase of almost 9% from 2008 (INE, 2011). Although border control policies and stricter visa requirements can aid in halting the flow of legal migrants, mitigating the “problem” of illegal migration has become an intrinsic feature of EU political rhetoric for the last two decades. The EU has an “official policy of managing migration flows” because of the economic, political and social implications of a growing immigrant population in Europe (Schotel, “*La Mer Mortelle*”, 2013). Since the 1995 Barcelona Euro-Mediterranean Conference, which proclaimed a “Euro-Moroccan partnership”, the European Union has been aiming to strengthen the southern Mediterranean sending countries in order to quell migrant flows into Europe (Barcelona Declaration, 1995). The Declaration aims to “promote conditions likely to develop good-neighbourly relations among themselves and support processes aimed at stability, security, prosperity and regional and subregional cooperation.”

While Morocco and other sending states certainly benefitted from the economic and development aid pledged through this partnership, it is fair to assume that Europe’s main incentive in promoting this agreement was to end illegal migration, as the European partners view this as a security and economic threat to the EU (Eddouada, 2013). Furthermore, French President Nicholas Sarkozy’s *Plan for the Union of the Mediterranean* also had similar aims. It is important to note that these initiatives were not solely aimed at Moroccan migrants, rather geared

towards mitigating illegal sub-Saharan migration, as many African migrants use Morocco as a final stop before crossing into the Mediterranean into Europe (Bilgili and Weyel, 2009: 19).

Additionally, the current Eurozone financial crisis has had a tremendous effect on border control and immigration reform in Europe as unemployment rates continue to rise. In 2007, before the crisis in Spain, for example, 1.9 million Spaniards were unemployed, 8.6% of its population. However today, that number has risen to 27.2% or 6.2 million people (Joy, *et.al.*, *CNN*: April 25, 2013). Additionally, the EU unemployment rate has climbed to a record high of 12% (Riley, *CNN*: April 2, 2013). This economic recession (1) makes it increasingly difficult for Moroccan laborers to secure employment and stable wages in Europe and (2) creates an anti-immigrant sentiment in Europe, as Europeans are struggling to find work as well. Additionally, with the inclusion of Romania in the EU in 2007, labor migrants from Morocco and other sending countries have been pushed out of work for these Eastern European laborers. As of May 2012, “unemployment among Spain’s estimated 783,000 Moroccan workers is just over 50 percent – roughly twice the national rate” (Karam, *Reuters*: February 17, 2012, Thorne, *Christian Science Monitor*: October 22, 2012).

Amidst this economic crisis, European right-wing anti-immigrant politicians have painted Moroccans and other migrant populations as the scapegoats for economic and unemployment woes, advocating for stricter border controls and deportation of some immigrant populations (Bouras, 2013 & Smith-Spark, *CNN*: May 9, 2012). Migrants who legally reside in Europe now find themselves subject to the “growing power of right-wing groups [and are] threatened physically by racist thugs and legally hemmed by restrictive legislation (Ennaji, 2009: 19).” Additionally, rampant Islamophobia has made life difficult for migrants living in Europe, as well

as arriving migrants, to work and earn the wages they originally migrated to obtain. Because of this amalgam of economic, social and political factors, as well as the heated sentiments against immigrant populations in Europe, borders have, by default, become agents of “low-level warfare” and the EU has created a “scene of exclusion” for incoming migrant populations (de Genova, “*La Mer Mortelle*”, 2013).

Rural Development as a Remedy

In a proactive attempt to avoid aggressive border control policies on Europe’s southern shores, the EU has been implementing solutions in sending countries to incentivize populations to avoid migrating out of such countries in search of employment opportunities, an aim similar to the Barcelona initiative discussed above. EU Politicians are “confronted with the inability to manage (read curb) migration by legal and repressive means, [and] politicians, academics and development NGOs have advocated development aid as a means to curb future immigration” (de Haas, 2007a: 11). In 2002, the “European Commission began to launch initiatives aimed at addressing migration pressures” and designed programs where “development assistance has been channelled into alleviating migration pressures in sending regions” observed in the development strategy for Morocco, particularly the MEDA program (Boswell, 2005: 14 & 22).

In recent years, the Spanish and Italian governments have been investing in rural development and aid initiatives in efforts to mitigate migration by providing opportunities in Morocco for potential migrants in search of employment and wages. de Haas explains that:

“In Morocco, for instance...Of the total MEDA aid budget of 426 million euros for 2000-2006, 115 million euros (27%) are being spent to ‘break out of the circle of weak growth, unemployment, poverty, and migration’ through support for intensifying border controls, the control of irregular migration and the development of rural areas” (de Haas, 2005a from de Haas, 2007a: 12).

Spain, for example, pledges funds and support to various development initiatives in northern Morocco organized by the Association de Development Local (ADL) based in Chefchaouen. The ADL organizes development projects to boost employment, access to education and healthcare, and infrastructure initiatives throughout entire Rif region (ADL, 2013). They also promote literacy workshops and small business development. Italy also pledges resources for similar enterprises in the southern regions of Morocco, as well as in the town of Fqih Ben Saleh, a migrant-sending hotspot near Oulad Ghanem. This study aims to determine whether these initiatives have the potential to address migrants' motivations and satisfy them.

Morocco's historic culture of migration to southern Europe is being interrupted by closing borders and anti-immigrant politics, largely due to the recent Eurozone financial crisis. This study aims to determine whether current rural development projects, external aid and increased employment opportunities in Morocco are capable of deterring migrants workers from migrating to Europe in search of work. To answer this question, the motivations for these workers to migrate must first be understood. Interviews and field observations were obtained in the *douane* of Oulad Ghanem, in the province of Fqih Ben Saleh, approximately 24 km northwest of Beni Mellal, a region where this historic pattern can be easily observed. After analyzing these findings in the results of this study, the effectiveness of rural development initiatives in satisfying these workers' original motivations for migrating was analyzed. It is expected that these development initiatives will be proven insufficient in satisfying these migrants' needs and aspirations for traveling to Europe to find work, although they are important for providing means and opportunities for Moroccans who do not migrate as well as returning migrants who are in search of work.

The terms and language used in this study reflect the overall environment of migration in the western Mediterranean. The “subjects” used were Moroccan males ages 18-50 who have migrated from Oulad Ghanem, a Middle Atlas town of in the state of Fqih Ben Saleh. The majority of migrants traveled to Spain and Italy, a destination of 36% of all Moroccan migrants (ETF, 2013). The term “rural economic development and aid” refers to any economic support implemented in this region of Morocco for the purpose of providing opportunities, resources and employment for potential future migrants in order to mitigate migration. The “Eurozone crisis” refers to the economic recession in the European Union since 2008 and its effect on migrants and the availability of employment in Europe. Finally, “right-wing politics” refers to the anti-immigrant, exclusionary politics present in many EU states as a result of the Eurozone crisis and rising unemployment rates.

Literature Review

The primary literature being examined in this study is the work of Hein de Haas. de Haas is the co-director of the International Migration Institute (IMI) in the Department of International Development at the University of Oxford. He also contributes original work to the Compass Center for Migration Policy and Society at the University of Oxford. de Haas focuses on migration issues from Morocco to southern Europe, while also including case studies from the Mexican-American border as well. The bulk of his major work on migration was written before the Eurozone financial crisis began to affect Moroccan migrants, and as such, he did not incorporate much of the economic and political changes currently present in the western Mediterranean migration environment, a specific goal that this study aims to accomplish.

At first glance, it may seem that the purpose of this study is to *support* the claims made by Hein de Haas in “Turning the Tide? Why Development Will Not Stop Migration” (2007) using interviews with Moroccan migrants, their families and those who have not migrated from the rural Moroccan village of Oulad Ghanem. However, in this essay, de Haas maintains that it is ineffective to assume that:

“migration and development are negatively and linearly correlated processes and, hence, each other’s substitutes. Following this logic, migration can be reduced by addressing the alleged ‘root causes’ of migration, such as economic underdevelopment, poverty and unemployment...However, there is no empirical evidence that aid and trade policies have had any significant effect on reducing people’s propensity to migrate. There are a number of practical and more fundamental reasons why ‘development instead of migration’ programs are bound to fail” (de Haas, 2007a: 13).

Hein de Haas’ universal dismissal of ‘development instead migration’ is rather naïve and quite simplistic, and the results of this study support otherwise. While no solution will ever be sufficient in completely arresting this ‘universal feature of humanity’ (de Haas, 2007a: 4), this study finds that rural development initiatives can certainly *soften* the waves of Moroccan migration, as will be proven in later sections of this paper. This study shows that rural development helps mitigate migration to some extent because it is sufficient in providing work and wages for a certain segment of the population of Moroccans who might have otherwise chosen to migrate. Nevertheless, Hein de Haas debunks these rural development initiatives as solutions to migration in Morocco because:

“the more fundamental reason why ‘development instead of migration’ policies...are unlikely to curb migration is that they are based on an inaccurate analysis of the developmental causes of migration [such as] the outflow of poverty, crises and general misery” (de Haas, 2007a: 28).

In this excerpt, de Haas refutes the claim that migration is a result of economic motivations, a central finding of this study. Through interviews with subjects, the results of this study indicate that economic reasons were in fact the most *prevalent* factor in motivating Moroccans to migrate to Europe; Moroccans migrated because they wanted to boost their standard of living and find a stable source of income to improve their livelihood in Morocco. Hein de Haas, however, would categorize the economic motivations gathered in this study as “inaccurate assumption that (absolute) poverty breeds migration” (de Haas, 2007a: 25).

However, in a later paper titled “The Impact of International Migration on Social and Economic Development in Moroccan Sending Regions”, de Haas changes his rhetoric and eludes to the very same economic motivations for migrating that were reached in this study. In his second paper, de Haas cites economic motivations for migrating by explaining that “the simple fact that salaries in Europe easily exceed Moroccan salaries by five to ten times...seem to justify the strong desire to migrate” (de Haas, 2007b: 33). He also asserts that:

“throughout Morocco, migration has offered new opportunities to earn an external income independent of the constraints set by traditional peasant society. Formerly landless, and hence powerless, men now earn wages that allow them to buy land and gain increasing influence in local affairs” (de Haas, 2007b: 28).

Various findings from other organizations, authors and scholars also support the claim that economic motivations are key in reasons for Moroccan migration to Europe. The European Training Foundation published that “Economic situation is the main declared reason for migration” (ETF, 2013). Furthermore, *In and Out of Morocco* author David A. McMurray illuminates economic reasons for migrating as migrants are generally “poor young men from the countryside who dream of returning wealthy and well-respected...they are not there to start a new life abroad, but to improve on the old life back home” (McMurray, 2001: 153).

Hein de Haas' two contradicting analyses of the motivations for Moroccan migration to Europe serves as the fundamental motivation for conducting this study. While one paper is correct in asserting that rural development is not a "safety-net" solution to stop all migration, it makes this claim based on a flawed understanding of migrants' motivations. de Haas' 2007b paper seems to clarify these claims, but it begs an answer to his original question: can development help in stopping migration in the longterm?

Methodology, Fieldwork and Interviews

Throughout this study, personal, often violent and heart-wrenching journeys and stories of Moroccan migrant workers were shared with me during the interview period in Oulad Ghanem. Many of the young men interviewed left home in their teenage years to venture into a new land where the language, customs and laws were completely different, almost always for the purpose of providing economic support for their family back home. Some were stuffed into the bumpers of garbage trucks in order to hide during dangerous border crossings while others were left alone in a hotel room with 20-30 other men living in treacherous conditions for up to six months.

Over the course of two separate research trips to the village, it was difficult to withhold feelings of personal attachment and identification with the subjects after hearing their stories. Furthermore, it was even more difficult when these subjects were my hosts, providing me with food, shelter, translation services, and even transportation. However, these emotions were effectively managed throughout the entire research period in order to ensure accurate and objective data and analysis.

By conducting interviews with Moroccan male migrants ages 18-50 and their families, students, as well as some Moroccans who are currently employed domestically, the results effectively aided in determining whether rural development will actually dismantle this ingrained “culture” of migration (de Haas, 2007: 31). For quite some time, Oulad Ghanem and its surrounding region has relied heavily on migrant workers and the remittances they send home. Some even attribute this ingrained pattern of movement to the region’s historic trend of a migratory, nomadic agricultural lifestyle dating back to the 12th century Berber population in Middle Atlas (Anbi, 2013a).

The purpose of interviewing migrants was to gather information on (1) why Moroccans leave Morocco for Europe, (2) the effect of this migration on their standard of living in Morocco and (3) what, if anything, would have kept these men *in* Morocco to work. These interviews were also designed to gather information on these migrants’ methods of migration into Europe, especially if they were smuggled across the Mediterranean or entered illegally by any other means. Migrants’ families were also interviewed in order to understand the increased standard of living as a result of migration, as well as some social and economic pressures that perpetuate this culture of migration and often force men to make the journey north. In addition to migrants and their families, interviews were also conducted with individuals who chose/were able to stay in Morocco to live and work. These interviews in particular illuminate factors and opportunities that increased the appeal of working and living in Morocco for this population.

Subjects were chosen within Oulad Ghanem during a three-day interview period based on recommendations from advisors, local contacts and villagers. Because of the qualitative, decisions-based nature of the hypothesis and expected results, random sampling methods were

determined to be unnecessary. Over the course of the interview period, interviews were conducted with 9 subjects. As stated above, any villager who migrated, had family members who have migrated, or are currently employed domestically were considered as potential subjects for inquiry. Subjects were interviewed in the classroom of the local association/elementary school.

All subjects gave written consent and agreed to the terms of the study. They were all informed that they could terminate the interview at any point and that they would be receiving no form of compensation. Additionally, a roundtable discussion with Moroccan migrant workers was also incorporated into the findings of this study, and verbal consent was given by these subjects at the time of discussion during a preliminary visit to Oulad Ghanem. Furthermore, all subjects were given pseudonyms for the purpose of their protection under anonymity.

The Study Limitations section below explores the caveats and limitations of this study.

Findings and Analysis

The findings of this study illuminate various economic, non-economic, and education-based motivations and factors for Moroccan migration to southern Europe. After analyzing the responses from 9 interviews, as well as two roundtables with male migrants and the women of the village, the results support the original hypothesis that rural development will not aid as a solution to mitigating migration for Moroccan workers. Furthermore, the prevalence and importance of economic factors are strongly supported by the findings of this study. Various themes and patterns among these migrant workers and those who chose not to migrate are explored in this section, all generated from the interviews and field-based research completed during this study.

Economic Motivations

Throughout the preliminary roundtable discussion with migrants held during the March 2013 visit, as well as throughout all of the research conducted during the interview period in Oulad Ghanem, it was evident that economic motivations were the most important, determining factor in motivating Moroccan migration. The results in this section directly contradict the assumptions and conclusions of Hein de Haas (2007a) and illuminate an unsatisfying Moroccan economic environment as the driving force behind migration North to the EU.

Mohammed, a migrant who left in 2003 and returned five years later as a result of a weak job market and low wages due to the Eurozone crisis, explained that migrants:

“follow the work; when there is work in Europe, people go to work there. Then you come back to Morocco to get by until you can afford to make it back for 9 or 10 months to work again. People here migrate for work. It’s the only way to secure a good future here; you must work hard there to secure a good future in Morocco.”

Mohammed’s responses elude to a strong economic motivation to migrate, namely, for work and wages. Additionally, the circular pattern of migration that Mohammed describes aligns with the notion of migration as a “long-term project” to benefit one’s livelihood in Morocco (Gubert and Nordman, 2008). Furthermore, when asked if there were enough opportunities in Morocco that might have made him stay, Mohammed said that he could have remained in Morocco to work without ever migrating to Europe, however, his “life [in Morocco] is much better because of [his] migration to Spain. One day of work here earns you about 6€, while in Spain, you could easily make 50€ [doing the same, or even easier, work abroad]” before the crisis. The rural development initiatives in Morocco are therefore sufficient in *providing* jobs, but Mohammed’s responses, as well as later findings, indicate that migrants are unsatisfied by the

wages these jobs provide. Migration is therefore necessary to earn enough money to secure a higher standard of living in Morocco, a clearly economic motivation.

In another interview with Mustafa, an administrator at the Oulad Ghanem local association, he explained that there are certainly enough jobs here in Morocco to keep people from migrating. Nevertheless, despite the current opportunities available to somewhat deter migrants:

“immigration will never stop. People leave for money, to get a better life, for education, and there are many types of immigrants who go for a variety of reasons. Still, immigration for money only, it probably is impossible to stop. These people who migrate want to live an incredible, European life.”

He explained the motivations of these economically-driven migrants as if they were impossible to satisfy by living and working in Morocco. “In this country, many men who are between 18-30 want to live for free. They don’t want to work. They don’t want to study. They don’t want to do anything, but they want to live easy and with money. The only solution for them is to go to Europe!” Mustafa also explained that a major problem is that “the parents of these students are illiterate. They have no idea of the necessity of their students to continue their education. They also need money, so they actually look for money to be able to send their children to Europe.”

Another subject, a *hanoot* (small store) owner named Abdelkarim, confirmed Mustafa’s assertion by saying that “if there was more work in Morocco, it would help slow migration. But migration will *never* stop.” The availability of jobs in Morocco to help mitigate migration is insufficient in providing the livelihood that these migrants are in search of, so they look to the European frontier for work and better wages. Still, Abdelkarim explains that “there is certainly

work here but they don't want to work here. For Morocco to become a country like America and Europe, we need them to stay here."

As noted in the Study Limitations section of this paper, one caveat of this study was the season in which the bulk of the interviews and research were conducted, as many migrants had already returned to Europe to work until summer or were busy working in Oulad Ghanem and could not be reached for interviews. Therefore, the roundtable conversation conducted in Oulad Ghanem during the March 2013 visit was incorporated into the results and analysis of this study, as economic motivations for migrating were integral in each of the five participants' responses.

Omar, a migrant who travelled to work in Italy during the early 1990s explained that "[migrating] is about improving your economic situation [in Morocco]. Otherwise, we would never have left; that's why we keep one foot here and one foot there." Omar explained that he never wants his children to "resort to" migrating to Europe, rather he wants to ensure that they have a good education in Morocco to secure a good future in which they do not have to migrate. During the roundtable, another migrant named Ayoub had just returned from his first period of employment in Spain. He explained that he left because of "poverty in Morocco" and migrating from Morocco was the only way to significantly improve his standard of living in Morocco. Still, even with the poverty, he explained that the:

"quality of life is better here; people are like machines over there, but Morocco has no future for me. There is not enough work [here] and the work doesn't pay much. I definitely need to continue working in Spain."

During the interview period, a high school student named Ahmed also identified similar economic motives which he believed were most integral in appealing to Moroccans' aspirations to migrate. He explained that "people migrate because they want to have money. Europe is where

that happens. the poverty here forces them to try to transform their life and become rich back home after working in Europe.” Interestingly enough, when asked if he wants/has plans to migrate and work in Europe, Ahmed explained that he wants to “finish [his] studies in Morocco, work and live here.” Nevertheless, although he has “no desire to migrate”, he too explained that his life would be “better after working [in Europe]”.

Non-Economic Motivations

In addition to the financially-based motivations explored above, the study also yielded non-economic motivations for migrating as well. The findings below also show that (1) the appealing qualities of the host country as well as (2) the status gained upon return to the village after migrating to Europe provoked Moroccans to migrate as well. The motivations below illuminate these two major categories of non-economic motivations that were given by subjects during the interview phase of this study.

During Mohammed’s interview session, he made it unquestionably clear that economic factors were the key motivating factor that pushed Moroccans to migrate to Europe, as most were in search of a more stable, rich life. However, he also explained that “the people are different there too. They have *liberty*; people just say and do whatever they want and nobody cares. Here, people have to act a certain way.” Abdelkarim shared a similar perspective as well, as he commented that “life is better over there. The most important thing those people have is their liberty. [Here], we have to respect the King.”

Furthermore, during a visit to Amsterdam, Moroccan journalist and scholar Fouad Laroui noted that many Moroccans who emigrate are in search of “emancipation, [as] the goal of politics should be the *individual*. That is a symptom of true modernity” (Laroui, February 2013).

Still, the non-economic aspirations to “enter into democracy” that Fouad introduced are also closely aligned with economic opportunities, as “democratic regimes happen to be the most prosperous” (Moudden, February 2013). Therefore, even when these motivations to enter can be characterized as “non-economic”, they likely still represent *some form* of financial reasons for migrating.

Another major non-economic factor which provoked the motivations of Moroccans to migrate was the social status and mobility attached to successfully migrating, as there is a tangible “social hierarchy dictated by migration” (Anbi, 2013a). The pressures and social expectations of young Moroccan males force many to migrate. These migrants are often seen as “heroes” who provide for their family by migrating and working in Europe. They are famous in the village and their success story is the model for waves of future migrants (Anbi, 2013b). de Haas explains that:

“Migration is not only an attempt to secure better livelihoods, but also a clear avenue of upward social mobility. For instance, besides its economic and wellbeing value, the construction of a house is also an expression of the newly acquired social status. Likewise, the renovation or construction of mosques and *hadj*, the Muslim pilgrimage to Mecca, not only fulfills an intrinsic, religious function, but also adds to the social prestige of the migrants” (de Haas, 2007: 27).

Furthermore, in a piece examining gender, family networks and the culture of Moroccan emigration, it is believe that “within this culture, migration is considered to be the only way to improve one’s standard of living, that is, those who stay are losers, those who leave are winners” (Heering, *et.al.*, 2004: 335). These same motivations for migrating were reinforced during a conversation with the women of the village during their literacy class during the March 2013 visit to Oulad Ghanem. During this roundtable session, the women explained that “it is

better to have a husband in Europe than have a husband who lives in the village, because money is the best gift” (Roundtable with Women of Oulad Ghanem, March 2013). Furthermore, none of the women talked about missing their sons or husbands, just about the money they send home and their success abroad. These conversations illuminated that the ability to migrate and have mobility is prime and highly valued by the village, a clear method for improving ones’ social status. Nevertheless, the way to satisfy this non-economic motivation is likely through higher wages, an economic driver of migration.

A Broken Education System to Blame?

While the both the economic and non-economic motivations explored above were prevalent themes gathered from the interview sessions during this study, the results also indicated that it can be useful identify the education system in Morocco as the true root cause of this ingrained culture of migration. Mustafa, a subject who was fluent in Darija, French, Spanish, Dutch and German, has three nephews studying at universities in the United States. He is involved with education at the Oulad Ghanem association and *madrassa* or school. He explained that the biggest cause of migration was not the financial or social aspirations explored in the two sections above, and thus economic solutions will not aid in mitigating migration. Instead, he believes that it’s a job of the Moroccan state and its education system to stop the ingrained culture of migration:

“There are many problems here because the young people are not ‘cultivated’ correctly. Life here is truly good. [Migration] cultivates in the minds of Moroccans; students all think that life is better over there. 99% leave for money and work, 1% for studies. But in actuality, it’s all to change their lives from that of Morocco, which I understand. I like the immigrants who live there to study and change the world. But it’s too easy to go just for the money.

I hate the immigrants like that [because they aren't] working for their country.”

Still, as young students see successful migrants return from Europe, regardless if they left for the purposes of education or employment, Europe innately becomes more and more attractive. These Moroccans are thus not contributing their effort or intelligence to benefit their home country and are waiting to “make it” abroad, because:

“Here in Morocco, the children don't want to continue their studies. Why? Because they see students end their studies early, go to Europe for 3-4 years, come back to Morocco with money, a car. Even students who complete their studies still go to Europe and eventually come back successful. So what's the benefit to [staying and finishing your] education? Education in Morocco is equally as good, it is very, very good. It's really the same. They go to Europe to study and often want to end up staying there. That's the problem...”

The attractiveness of the European frontier for education and employment is something that the Moroccan state must actively begin to dismantle and counteract because this “brain drain” holds no future for development and modernity in Morocco; the smart Moroccan students are leaving for better opportunities in Europe, while the uneducated are leaving to work and returning with nothing to offer to benefit Moroccan society. Furthermore, because of the crisis, many migrants return home looking for *any* job in Morocco, which is a major obstacle for high school and college graduates looking for a job as well.

Mustafa explains that there are two major problems that the state needs to address in order for Moroccan education to improve enough to actively keep students engaged and enrolled in the system. First, the state should make it much more difficult, if not impossible, for a potential migrant, or any student for that matter, to leave school before the age of 18. “The students leave school without a problem. It's not illegal here to leave school whenever you want.” Second, he eludes to the problem of employment and explains that “there are a lot of

obstacles to finding a job after school. A smart student will be a good worker. They go together, but only if there are opportunities available for the student.” In order to mitigate this pattern of migration, Moroccan education must be shaped and implemented with the specific goal of keeping students in school and later employed in Morocco. Instead, Ahmed explained that these young Moroccans are “sitting in cafes and on the side of the road, waiting to leave.” This problem is similar to observations made by Moroccan sociologist Rahma Bourqia, who commented that “the young have to potential for the development of the country,” however their incentive to work is lacking (CSP, 2004).

Conclusion

The findings of this study conclusively prove that economic factors were integral in motivating migration from Morocco to southern Europe. These results are contrary to the conclusions reached in Hein de Haas’ “Turning the Tide? Why Development Will Not Stop Migration” regarding the primary reason Moroccans migrated. Furthermore, de Haas also asserted that rural economic development will never mitigate migration because it is ineffective in satisfying the root desires to migrate. However, the results of this study conclude that while economic development and aid is in fact inefficient in fully stopping migration, it certainly appeals to a segment of the population and provides these potential migrants with employment and wages which enable them to remain in Morocco rather than migrating.

The interviews and observations presented in the findings section of this study prove that rural economic development certainly stands as an alternative to migration, as many non-migrants responded that they were able to stay and live in Morocco because of the opportunities at home. However, rural development seemed to fail to provide a certain level of income and

increased standard of living which migrants desire, an aspiration that can only be obtained through migrating to work in Europe; rural development rather suffices to provide for a certain percentage of the population that is satisfied by the opportunities in Morocco. This conclusion also reinforces the original hypothesis that economic factors are most integral in motivating migration to Europe. Recognizing this “insufficiency” was integral in the analysis of the findings in this study because it provided a reason why rural development was not working: the jobs are present in Morocco, but the wages are not.

While the omnipotent pattern of South-North migration is easily identifiable, a solution is not. This study was integral in proving that economic factors were key in motivating Moroccans to migrate, however the large-scale “failure” of rural development in arresting migration leaves room for a new, innovation method for mitigating migration. After analyzing the responses from the subjects interviewed, as well as exploring literature on this topic, it is clear that migration isn’t stopping; instead politicians, border control institutions, and development organizations must find a combination of solutions to work to mitigate the trend of migration in the western Mediterranean.

The results of this study can be used to discover a solution to mitigating migration by employing the newfound knowledge of the importance of economic motivations within the pattern of Moroccan migration. Case studies from other states have proven that the strongest and most wholesome solution to economic development is political modernization through a series of “-ations”, such as democratization and commercialization. (Przeworski, *et.al.*). These types of initiatives have already begun in the Moroccan state, however progress and noticeable effects are slow as this is a longterm solution, especially given the current structure of the Moroccan state.

Another solution, one often implemented by European states, is harsher border control policies.

However, Hein de Haas explains that these policies actually “push migrants into permanent settlement” because of the increased “financial and human costs and risks of migration” (de Haas, 2007a: 7).

Recently, European governments also have looked to return or circular migration as a type of self-remedy, “so that migration paradoxically becomes a medicine against migration” (de Haas, 2005b). de Haas explains that the EU actually encourages return or circular migration, as it brings the development and remittances, in the form of wealth and human capital, back to home to the sending state on each return voyage. The Moroccan state favors this as well because it is seen as “free development” and easily manageable laissez-faire politics (Anbi, 2013a).

Nevertheless, this cycle of “self-development” breeds problems for Europe, as “alleviating absolute poverty and some degree of ‘development’ in the form of increasing income, education and access to information not just enable, but also motivate more people to go abroad” (de Haas, 2007a: 19). Rather than managing legal migrants through this pattern of circular migration, Europe will actually end up with *more* unwanted migrants because of the (1) ease of legal migration and (2) image of success portrayed during each and every return visit. de Haas explains that:

“South-North migration is an outflow of the progressive incorporation of societies in wider, often global, economic, political and social contexts, as well as increases in wealth and access and exposure to education, information and images, which increase both the capabilities and aspirations to migrate” (de Haas, 2007a: 26).

Furthermore, only those who obtain working papers and visas are privy to this pattern of circular migration, and those who aren’t must resort to illegal migration, arguably the biggest

concern of the EU because of associated security threats. Illegal migrants will therefore come to Europe in hopes of finding work and legal status.

The findings of this study indicate that boosting education and infrastructure is in fact the best solution to mitigating migration, as Mustafa explained Moroccan youth need to be “cultivated and taught to *invest* in Morocco”, a concept explored in the findings section of this study (Interviews in Oulad Ghanem, 2013). It was observed that external economic aid through infrastructure and rural development provides jobs and low wages to Moroccans who chose not to migrate, a short term solution. However, development in the form of education holds the key to longterm mitigation of migration. On the last day of interviews, a university graduate named Youssef explained that in Oulad Ghanem, it is the “mentality that needs changing. Here, people think that everything is a problem, but they don’t do anything to fix it. If people want development good things, Oulad Ghanem will develop, and this is true for the whole country.” Youssef then pointed to the local organization and elementary school, as well as the milk and carpet cooperatives. He said “three years ago, these projects were just a dream. Now they make our village a better place for our children to live and grow.”

Study Limitations and Caveats

Regardless of the plethora of measures taken and preparations made to ensure a smooth, accurate, and informative research experience in Oulad Ghanem using human subjects, problems and issues still arose. During conversations and interview sessions with human subjects in the village, numerous communication barriers were encountered, as migrants and their families spoke a melange of Moroccan Darija, French, Spanish, Italian and English. Before coming to the village, these communication barriers were expected but not effectively prepared for. While this

was the first of a handful of small issues, it was easily addressed by finding an English translator in the village, who refused any sort of payment or compensation—he merely wanted to *practice* using his English with Americans. All interviews were also recorded for future reference or to rectify translation issues that might have been encountered.

The second issue involved the season in which interviews were conducted, as many migrants continue to work in Europe during April in hopes of earning enough to return for the full summer, for “the July-August holiday season” (de Haas, 1998; 2003). While there were certainly enough subjects to interview during the time of visit, had more migrants been in the village during the research period, a focus group or a survey/quantitative analysis might have been possible because of the larger sample size. Nevertheless, Oulad Ghanem was canvased quite well and interviews were successfully conducted with migrants, their families, domestic workers, and students.

The final major issue encountered revolved around the general “openness” of subjects and bystanders in Oulad Ghanem. At some points during the interviews, it was believed that subjects were hesitant or reserved in some of their answers. While all subjects were reassured that a) all real names would be changed, b) they were able to refuse to answer the question, and c) the interview could have been suspended and discarded if they desire, it was clear that some individuals were unable to give their fullest responses when it came to issues within the Moroccan state for fear of insulting the King. Another issue regarding “openness” was experienced when trying to secure interviews with female subjects, as none seemed willing to share with a male interviewer.

While the issues that arose certainly changed the nature and demeanor of the interview process, they did not significantly alter the original preparations made for the research in Oulad Ghanem. The preliminary visit to the village was effective in shaping this studying and preparing for the environment and interview phase.

Recommendations for Future Studies

After completing the field-based research, interviews and analysis of this study, an amalgam of new, unexplored questions arose. This study can be used as a basis for further research on the overall topics of migration, development, education, Morocco's relationship with the EU, migrant integration and identity in Europe, border control policies, gender roles as well as a variety of other topics.

In regards to education in particular, it might be useful to research what initiatives and steps need to be employed in order to use education to mitigate migration. The interview responses and research conducting in this study elude to a general conceptualization of "increased educational development", however a future study can yield specific points where change needs to be implemented.

Additionally, while keeping within the realm of motivations of Moroccans to migrate, a pertinent future study might be to research and compare the different sending regions of Morocco, as they all vary considerably, particularly based on *destination*. Perhaps these different sending regions have a different set of motivations, and while this study can be useful to make general assumptions and conclusions for the Middle Atlas region where Oulad Ghanem is located, further research needs to be conducted to analyze the motivations and make specific

recommendations for other regions, particularly the Rif and sous, two popular sending zones for Moroccan migrants.

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Appendices

A. IRB Consent Form - English

LETTER OF CONSENT

You are invited to participate in a research study conducted by Alexander Djaha, from the Center for Cross Cultural Learning, SIT Migration and Transnational Identity program in Rabat, Morocco.

The purpose of this study is to explore the causes and motivations for Moroccan migration to Europe and if development in rural Morocco will aid in curbing migration. You were selected as a possible participant in this study because of your experience/history as a migrant worker or as someone who has been able to find work in Morocco rather than migrating to Europe.

If you decide to participate, you will agree to take part in an interview no longer than one (1) hour and thirty (30) minutes. Please note that you can terminate or pause the interview at any time.

Please note that all names and places will be changed to protect to subject. You will also be able to receive a copy of the final study if you wish. It cannot be guarantee that you personally will receive any benefits from this research.

Any information that is obtained in connection with this study and that can be identified with you will remain confidential and will be disclosed only with your permission or as required by law. Subject identities will be kept confidential by giving all subjects pseudonyms

This study is being funded by a federal agency which requires that data be collected in a form that may be analyzed for differences between men and women and races or ethnic groups.

Your participation is voluntary. Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your relationship with the Center for Cross Cultural Learning. If you decide to participate, you are free to withdraw your consent and discontinue participation at any time without penalty.

If you have any questions about the study, please feel free to contact the Program Director Dr. Souad Eddouada, Souad.Eddouada@sit.edu or advisor Abderrahim Anbi anbisociologue@hotmail.com. If you have questions regarding your rights as a research subject, please contact the IRB. You will be offered a copy of this form to keep.

Your signature indicates that you have read and understand the information provided above, that you willingly agree to participate, that you may withdraw your consent at any time and discontinue participation without penalty, that you will receive a copy of this form, and that you are not waiving any legal claims.

Signature

Date

B. IRB Consent Form - Arabic

رسالة من أجل

الموافقة على إجراء مقابلة

أنت مدعو للمشاركة في دراسة علمية ميدانية يجريها الطالب "Alexander Djaha" الذي يتابع دراسته، بمركز تواصل الثقافات، بالرباط بالمملكة المغربية، في برنامج "الهجرة والهوية العابرة للحدود الوطنية".

إن موضوع هذه الدراسة، يهدف؛ إلى الوقوف على أهم الأسباب والعوامل، التي تدفع بالمهاجرين المغاربة، إلى التدفق نحو أوروبا. أيضاً، نسعى إلى البحث في فرضية التنمية القروية بالمغرب، كعامل أساسي للاستقرار والحد من الهجرة.

لقد تم انتقاءك، كمشارك في هذه الدراسة، بناء على تجربتك وتاريخك؛ كعامل مهاجر أو كواحد توقف في إيجاد عمل بالمغرب بدلاً من الهجرة إلى أوروبا.

إذا قررت أن تشارك في هذا البحث، فإنك بذلك، توافقون على إجراء مقابلة، لا تتعدى مدتها الزمنية ساعة ونصف.

من أجل حماية حقوقك؛ فإنه يحق لك:

إنه أو إيقاف المقابلة في أية لحظة

سوف يتم تخيير الأسماء والأماكن، التي سوف تترد في حديثك، بهدف حماية الموضوع وحماية حقوقك. كما، يحق لك الحصول على نسخة من هذه الدراسة، إذا رغبت في ذلك.

لست منك أية ضمانات، تضمن لك تحقيق أية منفعة من وراء هذه الدراسة.

كل المعلومات، التي سوف تدلون بها، ستظل سرية. كما أنه لن يتم الكشف عنها إلا بموافقتك، طبقاً للمحددات القانونية، سيتم الاحتفاظ بسريّة الأسماء والهويات والأماكن والمواضيع، المترتبة عن هذه المقابلة من خلال منحه أسماء مستعارة للجمع.

هذه الدراسة ممولة من طرف "الوكالة الفيدرالية" التي تسعى إلى جمع البيانات والمعلومات، بهدف تحليل التباين القائم بين الرجال والنساء والأجناس أو الجماعات العرقية.

إن مشاركتك تطوعية، ولكم القرار النهائي في المشاركة من عدمه، كما أن قراركم بعدم المشاركة سوف لن يؤثر على علاقتكم بمركز تواصل الثقافات. إذا قررت المشاركة، فأنت حر في سحب موافقتك أو التوقف عن المشاركة في أية لحظة دون أن تعرضك ذلك إلى عقوبات.

إذا رغبت في المزيد من المعلومات حول هذه الدراسة، يرجى التواصل مع مديرة البرنامج الدكتورة سعاد الدواة من خلال البريد الإلكتروني: Souad.Eddouada@sit.edu

والأستاذ المشرف على الدراسة: الدكتور عبد الرحيم عنبي من خلال البريد الإلكتروني: anbisociologue@hotmail.com 0661507332

إذا كانت لديكم أسئلة بخصوص حقوقكم في موضوع للبحث، يرجى الاتصال بهيئة الأيرادات الداخلية، سيتم منحكم نسخة من البحث بهدف الإطلاع والحفاظ عليها.

إن توقيك يدل على أنكم قرأتم وفهمتم المعلومات الواردة في هذه الرسالة، مما يبين على أنكم توافقون بمحض إرادتكم على المشاركة، يحق لك سحب هذه الموافقة أو إنهاء المشاركة في أية لحظة، دون تعرضك لأي عقوبات. يمكنكم الحصول على نسخة من هذا البحث إذا رغبت في ذلك. كما أنه لا يمكنكم التنازل عن أية قواعد قانونية.

الإمضاء.....

التاريخ.....

C. Interview Guide - English

INTERVIEW GUIDE

Migrant Workers

1. Please share your story of migration.
2. Why did you choose to migrate to Europe?
3. What do you believe is the most important factor that caused you to migrate?
4. Does the danger of migrating illegally weigh heavily into your decision to migrate?
5. How has your life changed as a result of migration? Is your life better or worse?
6. How has your family benefited as a result of your migration?
7. What factors/opportunities would have enabled you to stay in Morocco instead of migrating?
8. What should be done to mitigate migration?
9. What should be done to increase employment opportunities in Morocco?
10. Is your overall goal to keep working in Europe or to settle in Morocco?
11. Do you want/will you encourage your children to migrate to Europe for work?

Domestic Workers

1. Please explain your current employment status in Morocco.
2. Why did you choose to stay to work in Morocco rather than migrating to Europe?
3. What factors/opportunities enabled you to stay in Morocco? Does having this job enable you to stay?
4. Do you feel pressure to migrate to Europe for work?
5. What is your perception of Moroccan migrant workers?
6. Does the danger of migrating illegally weigh heavily into your decision not to migrate?
7. Do you believe your life would be better or worse as a result of migration?
8. What should be done to mitigate migration?
9. What should be done to increase employment opportunities in Morocco?
10. Do you believe you will ever migrate to Europe?
11. Do you want/will you encourage your children to migrate to Europe for work?

D. Interview Guide - Arabic

دليل المقابلة

العاملون بالمهجر

1. من فضلك شاركنا قصتك مع الهجرة؟
2. لماذا اخترت الهجرة إلى أوروبا؟
3. في اعتقادكم ما هو العامل الأساسي الذي دفعكم إلى الهجرة؟
4. ألم يؤثر خطر الهجرة غير الشرعية على مستوى قراركم بالهجرة؟
5. هل غيرت الهجرة مستوى حياتكم؟ سواء للأحسن أو للأسوأ؟
6. هل لكم أن تحدثونا عن مدى تأثير نتائج هجرتكم على مستوى أسرتكم؟
7. ما هي أهم العوامل والفرص التي تمكنت من البقاء في المغرب بدلاً من الهجرة؟
8. ماذا يتوجب على المسؤولين القيام به للحد من الهجرة؟
9. ماذا يتوجب على المسؤولين القيام به للرفع من فرص العمل في المغرب؟
10. ما هو في نظرك الحل الأمثل أن تواصل العمل في أوروبا أو البقاء في المغرب؟
11. هل تشجع أبناءك في المستقبل على الهجرة إلى أوروبا؟

العاملون محلياً

1. من فضلك وضعكم في العمل الحالي بالمغرب؟
2. لماذا تفضل البقاء والعمل في المغرب على الهجرة إلى أوروبا؟
3. ما هي أهم العوامل والفرص، التي تساعد على البقاء في المغرب؟ هل وجود ميل هذه الوظيفة يساعد على المكوث من؟
4. هل تشعر بضغوطات من أجل الهجرة إلى أوروبا بهدف العمل؟
5. ما هو تمثيلك للعمل المهاجري بالمغرب؟
6. هل لخطر الهجرة غير الشرعية أثر على مستوى قراركم؟
7. نتيجة لعدم هجرتكم هل تعتقد أن لهذا القرار أثر سلبي أو إيجابي على حياتكم؟
8. ماذا يتوجب على المسؤولين القيام به للحد من الهجرة؟
9. ماذا يتوجب على المسؤولين القيام به للرفع من فرص العمل في المغرب؟
10. هل تعتقد أنك لن تهجر إلى أوروبا؟
11. هل تشجع أبناءك في المستقبل على الهجرة إلى أوروبا؟