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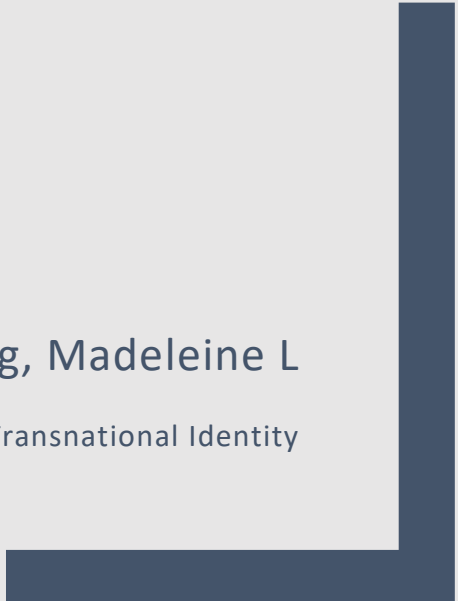
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SELF-PERCEPTIONS OF THE FRENCH COMMUNITY IN MOROCCO

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SIT Morocco: Migration and Transnational Identity



Abstract:

North-South migration is growing trend; however, this type of migration is overlooked in the literature because it is not viewed as urgent or negative. Migrants from the global North are associated with wealth, and are referred to by the term expatriate, which distinguishes them from migrants, placing them in a more positive light. In Morocco, there is a growing community of Europeans. Among them, the French community stands out as one of the largest migrant groups in Morocco. Their presence is an interesting one, as they have a shared history with Morocco and a common language in Morocco, in theory facilitating their integration. This study aims to find out whether the French in Morocco view themselves as migrants or expatriates and their perceived integration in Morocco. 14 interviews, informal group conversations and visits to French Institutions in Morocco were conducted with French citizens. Overall, members of the French community do not identify as migrants, associating the term with negative connotations. Despite having a shared language with Moroccans, they do not view themselves as integrated because their lack of knowledge in Arabic.

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Key Terms:

Darija: Means dialect in Classical Arabic, in Morocco it is the name of one of the local dialects (the most common one). In this paper, I use the term to refer to the Moroccan dialect.

Derb: A close, or a street with no through, typically found in the medina.

Kashbah: The structure in a Moroccan city that is built behind a defensive wall, typically one of the original parts of the Moroccan city.

Medina: The old walled city in a Moroccan city.

Riad: in Morocco) a large traditional house built around a central courtyard. Today, most of them have been converted in hotels.

Ville nouvelle: The part of the city that was built after the medina, in the case of Morocco it was often built by the Europeans.

Introduction:

Migration touches Morocco in a variety of ways: it is a receiving country and a sending country as well as a 'transit country'. Around 10% of the Moroccan population resides abroad, forming a large Moroccan diaspora thus explaining why Morocco is considered a sending country. Some populations settle into Morocco permanently, making it a receiving country, while others use Morocco as a stepping-stone to Europe, waiting there until it is possible to cross the Mediterranean, earning Morocco the name of 'transit country'. Traditionally, when one thinks of the populations settling and crossing the Moroccan State sub-Saharan migrants or refugees spring to mind. This thought is at the forefront of popular belief because these are the groups that are spoken about in the political discourse and literature about migration. However, North-South migration is growing in Morocco, shaped by a growing group of European migrants moving there. This trend is often overlooked in general studies about migration as it is not considered a problem, therefore does not require an urgent, immediate solution. Yet, it is very difficult to overlook the presence of 'North-South migrants' as they have a growing impact on certain areas such as the housing market, tourism, certain business fields, and education. Among these types of migrants, the French community stands out in Morocco.

The French Ministry of Foreign Affairs estimates that there are about 41,129 French citizens registered as permanent residents in Morocco. This number would place the French as one of the largest migrant groups in Morocco. Yet, this group is largely absent from migration research concerning Morocco. There are many reasons that explain this. Primarily, this community is often referred to as expatriates, and expatriates do not necessarily consider being a migrant as part of their identity, thus explaining their absence from migrant research. Furthermore, because expatriates do not face the same economic or physical hardships as the majority of migrants, they are not studied under that lens. Yet, similarly to economic migrants and refugees, expatriates and their children are faced with similar identity questions or may possess a transnational identity, sharing common ground with other migrants.

The French expatriate community in Morocco is an interesting case study. Shared language makes for an easy transition into society. Furthermore, there has always been a draw to Morocco: it has always been viewed as an easy country to live in and has close ties to France. Many French people move here on contracts with French companies. Others move here for retirement, making it seem more like a lifestyle migration, putting them in a more privileged position than economic migrants. There are also some who move here for other, more personal reasons.

The goal of this research paper is to find out how French citizens living in Morocco view themselves, and what their interactions with incumbent Moroccans look like. More particularly, do French citizens living in Morocco consider themselves to be migrants and how integrated are they in Moroccan society.

Literature review:

The word migrant is defined as “any person who moves, usually across an international border, to join family members already abroad, to search for a livelihood, to escape a natural disaster, or for a range of other purposes” according to the UNHCR. Yet, migrant is not the only word that describes a person who has moved away from their homeland: an article in the Atlantic explains that “there’s still another word that can describe that kind of movement: *expatriate*” (Serhan, 2018). Despite this similarity in meaning, the two words are used to describe vastly different population groups. Migrants are generally depicted as a poorer population, often originating from the global “south”¹, moving to wealthier locations to improve their lives. On the other hand, expatriates are painted as coming from the global north, moving for personal reasons rather than out of economic necessity, living luxurious lives overseas and benefitting from high wages, generating the “stereotypical image of the expat is someone sipping a gin and tonic by the pool at sunset” (Serhan, 2018). However, these two words have not always been defined so similarly.

Historically, the term expatriate was used to describe “non-optional migration”: “somebody who has been expatriated is somebody who has been sent abroad” by their country or by a company (Serhan, 2018). Diplomats, embassy workers or company employees who are sent abroad for a defined amount of time fit the traditional definition of expatriate. In spite of this historical definition, the term is used today in a completely opposite manner. Today, expatriate is used as a term by those who feel they are mobile of their own volition, thus have access to self-determination, whereas terms like ‘migrant, asylum seeker or refugee’ are used for those “who have been forced to leave their country” (Serhan, 2018). Wealth can also contribute to these feelings.

Interestingly, the term expatriate is not used by all those in good economic standing who have moved of their own volition to another country. This is again linked to history. Expatriates who were sent to work abroad were “compensated with generous benefit packages that included high wages, housing, and schooling for children” leading to an imagined luxurious lifestyle and a legacy of “high-status migrants” (Serhan, 2018). Some living abroad identify more with the term ‘migrant’ than the term ‘expatriate’ because they see themselves living “more ordinary lives than the luxurious lifestyles” and “have more engagement with the local [community]” (Serhan, 2018).

An article by the BBC makes similar comments. The definition of the business expatriate a someone who is “a legally working individual who resides temporarily in a country of which they are not a citizen, in order to accomplish a career-related goal (no matter the pay or skill level) — someone who has been relocated abroad either by an organisation, by themselves or been directly employed by their host country” (Nash, 2017) is applied to other wealthy migrants, regardless of the reason for their migration. It is often believed that because these people “go home when they’ve completed their assignment” and are in the country legally they cannot be considered as migrants. However, this is misleading. A migrant is someone who moves (often to another country), either legally or illegally, for an undetermined amount of time, implying that they (may) return to their home country. Moreover, it is important to note that professionals who work in less privileged positions and often originate from the global South are referred to as “foreign workers or migrant workers” (Nash, 2017). This once again highlights how the use of term expatriate is driven by wealth and country of origin.

Wealth is the most influential factor in the use of the word expatriate. In certain locations, this wealth makes the expatriate’s life a bubble, allowing them to float on the surface of a country,

¹ Here I use the term “south” not in a geographical sense but in an economic development sense.

but never touching the society. In *Living in a Bubble: Expatriates' Transnational Spaces*, Anne-Meike Fletcher describes the lives of German expatriates in Indonesia as a cocoon or a bubble. Fechter conducted an ethnographic study of expatriate communities in Jakarta. There, she observed the 'expatriate bubble life' through living arrangements: the expatriates reside in wealthy housing compounds, with other expatriates and wealthy Indonesians. The interior of their houses "are spacious, air-conditioned, and clean, the surroundings are likely to be bustling, hot, and dusty" and "often exude an air of order and "Western" tastes" (Fechter, 2011, pp. 39). The decorations reflect or attempt to recreate the country left behind. For example, in one expatriate's house Fechter found "rustic Bavarian-style interior decoration, including a wicker basket holding a dried flower arrangement and an antique wagon wheel" (Fechter, pp.44). The inside of the expatriates' houses create a stark contrast with the Indonesian street environment, turning the houses into "shelters" or shields from perceived "local chaos" (pp. 40). The social interactions between expatriates attempt to recreate life in the country left behind. For example, a German expatriate wife invited some friends for coffee and cake, recreating "a proper "coffee afternoon" such as would typically take place among families in rural and suburban Germany" (pp.40). Events such as these create a feeling of "unrealness" or create a bubble effect. This same feeling is reflected in community organizations and networks, as shown by an expatriate Fechter interviewed: "In fact, during the course of one day, I can only speak German and only meet with Germans. If I want to, I can spend my whole time in a German world" (pp. 44). The presence of this bubble is accentuated as the outside world is described as an "otherness" where elements "intrude" into the life of the expats. For examples, the call to prayer of the Indonesian mosque is seen as an intrusion, an ethnic other (pp.41). In fact, these German expatriates view the mosque as an "ethnic intrusion", "spoiling" their lifestyles (pp. 42). The expatriates rarely leave their bubble and experience "real life" in the city. A minority of expatriates studied in this article choose to avoid these networks, preferring to spend time with Indonesians, attempting to fully immerse themselves into this 'ethnic experience'. Overall in this case, the author finds that expatriates do not enter transnational spaces, but rather remain rigid, locked into their networks. Yet, other factors can also shape the expatriate experience.

Language commonalities or barriers also play an important part in expatriate communities experiences. Wiernik et al. explain that language acquisition is seen as a key to a successful expatriate experience as it helps expatriates be considered less as outsiders. Sharing a language with the local population allows expatriates to have an easier time with "locational and interaction adjustment" (Wiernik et al., 2018, pp. 195), thus making their integration easier. It makes interactions with co-workers and neighbours easier and helps the expatriate to be perceived less like an outsider. Wiernik et al. study the way language proficiency affects expatriate outcome from two hypothesis: comfort hypothesis and cultural engagement hypothesis. The comfort hypothesis argues that "language fluency contributes to positive outcomes by reducing the stress and negative experiences associated with not speaking the local language" (pp. 196). On the other hand, the cultural engagement hypothesis "argues that facilitating communication is only one part of the benefit of language fluency for expatriates" (pp. 196). Overall, they find that language is a key factor contributing to expatriates' ability to interact comfortably with host country nationals (pp. 207). But when it comes to job satisfaction or performance it has no impact. This allows them to conclude that while language can certainly help expatriates feel comfortable in their new surroundings, lack of fluency or knowledge in the local language should not be regarded as an insurmountable barrier to expatriate professional success. While this article studies expatriates according to the historical definition (people sent abroad on a contract), it is important to consider when studying the French community in Morocco as French is one of the national languages of

Morocco and is spoken by a large portion of the Moroccan population. A common language between the French and Moroccan will have an impact on the integration of the French community in Morocco.

French migrants have been present on Moroccan soil since the early 20th century, with the start of the French protectorate. When the protectorate began in 1912, General Lyautey – the Resident-General of Morocco between 1912 to 1925 – was fascinated with Moroccan culture and wanted to protect Moroccan culture from being transformed by French ‘colonisation’. He wanted to re-establish the authority of the country’s monarch and introduce modern techniques that had brought prosperity to France (Knibiehler, 1993, pp. 185). In order to achieve this, only members of a zealous and capable elite were encouraged to migrate from France to Morocco. The end of the first world war changed this: As France emerged in 1918 as an old, declining country, crippled by debt with an economy and country destroyed as well as exhausted by the war, Morocco began to emerge as an ‘American Dream’ for the French. It began to be described as a ‘Far-West’ for the French, offering adventure and a new beginning but in a Francophone environment, close to the ‘homeland’. This image of Morocco re-emerged after the second world war, accordingly, explaining the two large periods of French migration to Morocco: the 20s and late 1940s (pp. 196). The migrants part of the first wave were considered adventurers, encountering frontier living conditions, whereas those from the second wave were deemed to be builders, having more economic success as the road had already been paved for them.

This second wave of migrants was very distinct from the first wave of migrants and shaped migration to Morocco during the colonial period. Most importantly, while all of the migrants from the second wave were considered to be French, they did not all come from France. Around 20 percent were from Algeria and had left their country of origin because of poverty and had found employment as agricultural labourers. Their arrival in Morocco was considered as the second step in their exile or overseas adventure. They had the advantage of speaking Arabic, allowing them to communicate with the native populations. However, they had more “colonial spirit” than the other settlers, considering the Arabs as inferior and exercised a sort of “European superiority”, pushing them to take jobs from Moroccans that were often more qualified than them (pp. 186). They considered Morocco to be their “Garden of Eden”, a paradise that they deserved after years of hardship and work. With two World Wars on Morocco’s doorstep, many political refugees from various European countries immigrated to Morocco. Combining these with children born in Morocco to migrants of the first wave, the European population in Morocco went from 80 000 people in 1922 to 360 000 in 1950 to 400 000 on the eve of decolonization (pp. 187). While all of these migrants wanted to help make Morocco into a modern country, many of them never lived in proximity to Moroccans, making it near impossible to talk about a European integration in Morocco.

Lyautey’s policies, aimed at conserving Moroccan culture, set the tone for limited opportunities to interact with Moroccans. In order to keep Moroccan culture intact and protect it from European influences, the general instituted a segregation between immigrants and the local population (pp. 187). In order to stop any alteration to the traditional Moroccan city, the European population was forced to build a new city outside of the traditional medina and live there, coining the term “ville nouvelle or européenne”. Architects were brought from Europe, particularly from France, which explains why the newer parts of Moroccan cities have a distinguishable French feel to them. Yet amidst this European city, the migrants borrowed elements of traditional Moroccan life and brought them into their homes: traditional crafts, Moroccan couches... were put in houses to give them an “traditional character” (188). It was also during this time period that the fascination

with the 'Riad' and the indoor secret garden began. The obsession with traditional elements of Moroccan culture was also extended to food. Yet, food was considered to be more of a sharing opportunity. For example, mint tea had an important role as "vector of social relations" (pp. 188). Religion also served as a connector: "the French were touched by Moroccans' piety", reinforced by the universal practice of Ramadan. During this period, many migrants chose to practice fasting in front of Moroccans out of respect. In return, the Europeans were invited to Moroccan religious festivals. The fact that the Europeans also believed in a singular god made these exchanges easier.

Despite moments of sharing and exchanges, the policies aimed at protecting the local population from exterior influence created two societies living side by side, at different speeds and never overlapping. At first, Moroccans were "miserable and left behind" but over time they became "despised, suspected and incensed" (pp. 188). These feelings were exacerbated by policies regarding the schooling system: Arabic was simply offered as a second language, comparable to English, as schools were not preparing their students to live or work in Morocco. This was the case in French schools established in Morocco as well as the national Moroccan schools. As nationalist feelings grew with the second world war and the following years, Arabic began to be taught as a second language at certain schools. Even though all schooling was in French, "Franco Muslim" institutions did not lead to the baccalaureate thus did not allow Moroccans admission to universities in France. Over time, this policy was changed as certain wealthy Moroccans demanded more opportunities for their children. These policies simply highlight at a surface level the two different societies. The fact that it is impossible to consider the European migrant population as integrated during the protectorate further shows how separated the two communities were. The presence of two parallel lives was particularly visible in the cities, through the development of a new city next to the old medina. These two communities never interacted and often didn't speak the same language. The European community never looked to become Moroccan citizens as they would have to convert to Islam. Marriage "was in fact the only road that lead to conversion and integration" (pp. 189). Yet, these "mixt marriages" were looked down upon from by both communities. Even children of the first generations of migrants cannot be considered as integrated because though they spoke Arabic, they remained in the circles that rarely interacted with Moroccans. Europeans that lived in the countryside or in rural areas tended to be closer Moroccans. They tended to speak more Arabic and interacted more. When the push for independence came, they supported Moroccan claims to liberty. Yet, these integrated Europeans were in the minority, with the majority remaining largely not integrated. This lack of integration is shown by the amount of French people who left the country after independence. On the eve of independence in 1960, there were 400 000 Europeans in Morocco, with a majority of these being French. By 1990 there was an estimated 40 000 Europeans that remained on Moroccan soil.

Interestingly, despite a decolonization struggle with the French, relations between Morocco and France remained relatively good. Most of this is attributed to a smooth decolonization process. Demands for independence from France began in 1947, following an empty promise made by Charles de Gaulle promising independence in exchange for support during the second world war. After the war, the Istiqlal party began making demands for independence. As tensions grew, the French exiled the Sultan in an order to placate the situation. This plan failed and hostilities grew until violence began erupting in various parts of the country, most notably in Oujda. Meanwhile, in neighbouring Algeria, demands for independence erupted in a full-scale war. While Morocco had a different political status as Algeria (it was not considered a French region from the administrative perspective), the French were very much aware of the potential ramifications that could occur. The Moroccans rejected French offers to join France as a region with minimal

political autonomy, a weak attempt by the French to compromise. In order to avoid a similar disaster to what was unfolding in Algeria, the French reinstated the Sultan and granted Morocco independence a year later in 1956. While there was an independence struggle, the relative shortness and smoothness of it allowed France and Morocco to remain on friendly terms. This was furthered by an important part of the French independence process which involves remaining economic partners and maintaining good political relations. This is still reflected in today's politics with the French language remaining commonly used and taught at school, despite attempts to change the official language. Additionally, the two countries close economic ties are reflected in the lack of time change that occurred in Morocco: this year, the government opted to stay on daylight saving time all year one, a decision some attribute to remaining in sync time wise with the French economic markets.

While the protectorate period may be over, it is still having a role on French migration to Morocco. Even though the French were a colonising force in Morocco, the relative ease to independence has left a legacy of comparatively benign relations between the French and the Moroccans. This legacy has been passed down through the generations, leaving a generally positive collective memory on both sides, something that is not the case in other former French colonies. Furthermore, Morocco is a site of historical French migration, that was tied to adventure and an opportunity to find wealth, as shown through the two main periods of migration. Not only that, it was tied to adventure, a place of opportunities and of culture and community. These legacies have also been passed down, and Morocco has additionally been associated to a better climate than France, leading to a better lifestyle. Thanks to these pull factors, Morocco has remained an attractive destination in the French imaginary. The French view Moroccan climate as “pleasantly warm and usually sunny unlike their own country” (El Kaidi, 2013). There is also “social and political stability which reins over the country despite the neighboring turmoil and upheavals” (El Kaidi, 2013). These pull factors, combined with a welcoming population, *joie de vivre* and safety for children continues to attract French people from over multiple generations.

Today, the French community still plays a large role in the Moroccan economy. Many French industries have settled in Morocco and employ Moroccan employees. Morocco is one of the favourite destinations for French tourists. Moreover, more and more French people are settling in Morocco. This phenomenon is particularly observable in Moroccan medinas. Today, Moroccan medinas are “invested in by more and more foreigners, who are either passing through or who come to settle in a secondary residence to build an industry or to settle there themselves” (Kurzac-Souali, 2007, pp. 64). Medinas are “urban spaces in mutation thanks to tourism and the the revitalisation of their economic and residential function” (pp. 64), making them attractive to tourists. In particular, the Marrakech medina has been transformed. Generally, the medina is no longer a space reserved only for Moroccans as it was during the protectorate. It is now rather a space where the most amount of interactions between Moroccans and foreigners take place. Medinas are now coveted as an oriental dream and as a place where beauty and authenticity can be found: “Marrakech is both the Middle Ages and modern times” (pp. 67). Europeans are investing into the medina and becoming local economic actors, creating a 15% annual rise of property in the medina (pp. 70). Housing prices are not the only thing that is affected by the increased presence of Europeans in the medina. The increased attraction to the riad has affected daily life, particularly affecting the *derb*. A dead-end street, the *derb* was an important aspect of medina life, creating semi-private space. However, as more riads are being purchased by Europeans and being used in tourism, this semi-private space has become public and has made Moroccan families more closed off (pp. 66). Furthermore, the new arrivals in the medina tend to

build more connections with other members of the foreign community and with those who are in the same social and professional milieu rather than with neighbouring Moroccans. Interestingly, more Europeans are investing in the medina, thus helping rehabilitate it, rather than Moroccans as the one who would be wealthy enough have move to the “ville nouvelle” and adopted a more European lifestyle. Because of this, the Europeans are rather well received as the local population acknowledges their importance in rehabilitating the city. However, a lack of “protection of heritage sites and the favourism of tourism” (pp. 78) has given Moroccans an impression that their heritage is being confiscated by Europeans. This feeling is further accentuated because of the laws that stopped Europeans from settling into the medina during the protectorate, thus making the arrival of foreigners perceived as an intrusion (pp. 80). Some foreigners attempt to create connections with the Moroccan community, seemingly appearing to be integrated, however, the perceived feeling of intrusion into the medina can lead one to question their integration.

Overall, a smooth independence process has allowed France and Morocco to maintain good diplomatic relations. This combined with a variety of pull and push factors have allowed Morocco to keep an allure of attractiveness. French remains a commonly used language, making the integration process easy for migrants. Interestingly, the history of French migration refers to the settlers as migrants. However, as seen through current articles, migrants from the global north tend to refer to themselves as “expatriates”. The article of houses in the medina alludes to this French community as migrants but never uses either term. Considering the important historical migration to Morocco as well as the strong current economic impact the French community has on Morocco, it is interesting to study whether they consider themselves as migrants or expatriates. Furthermore, factoring in the common language, it is interesting to study their integration.

Methods:

In order to study whether the French community in Morocco identifies as migrants or expatriates as well as to assess their integration into society I conducted 14 interviews and a focus group with members of the French community. In order to find out whether they identify as migrants or expatriates, I will be interviewing a wide variety of people ranging from retirees as well as students living here for 6 months to a year. I will also be interviewing French citizens who are working in Morocco on a contract provided by the French government, expatriates by definition, in order to find out more about their experience.

I phrased my questions in order to find out about the person's self-view – what they consider their title to be – and about their interaction with migrants. Essential to this second part is finding out whether the individual remains within French language channels and circles or whether they branch out into Morocco circles.

To complement my research, I visited the French Institute of Tangier and the *Lycée Français International Alphonse Daudet* in Casablanca. These are spaces where the French expatriate community hosts events or interacts with Moroccans. I also conducted interviews with Moroccans who interacted with the French expatriate community in different settings (professional environment, school, university, sport centre). These allowed me to study the French community from a deeper angle.

Ethics:

As I conducted interviews, ethics were important to consider going into the project and during it. To begin, I was not working with a vulnerable community: all the people I interviewed were adults. Furthermore, I did not ask them about triggering topics, such as sexual assault or the physical hardships faced during migration. Yet, that being said, it was important to respect the interviewee. The individuals that I interviewed had full knowledge of the research I was carrying out. Because there was no language barrier, oral and informed consent was required before proceeding with the interview. When I conducted the interview, they chose the time and the location. Furthermore, their requests of being recorded or not were respected. Finally, none of the names of the interviewees are mentioned below.

Results:

I conducted 14 interviews with French citizens and Franco-Moroccan respondents. The interview consisted of 10 questions that would allow my respondents to shed light on the various facets mentioned above. More particularly on the question of status and wealth, being a migrant or an expatriate and the differences that come with these terms, and their integration.

Interview 1&2 (2 people interviewed at once):

We are both French and retired. Since 2007 we have been coming from France with our camping car in November and spend 4-5 months in Agadir (until March).

What attracted them to Morocco: We first came because some friends of ours were doing this and they invited us to follow them for two months in 2007 and we loved it so much we decided to continue.

Migrant or expatriate: Neither, we are tourists. We just come here to visit.

Local visibility and contact: We have a lot of contact and visibility with the locals through businesses. I (He) also work a bit (helping with IT set up) and I like to speak to people. We find Moroccans to be very welcoming and they speak lots of languages so it's easy to communicate with them. I go everywhere without reserve and I feel safer than I do in France.

Adaptation to Morocco: Very easy because Moroccans were so welcoming.

Who do expatriates frequent: I would say they spend half of their time with Moroccans and the other half with expats. The people we know like the locals.

Friend circle: There aren't any Moroccans (except for 1) but that's because we spend time with other people who come for the winters like we do, they're mostly French or German or from another European country.

Perception: I (He) think Moroccans have a very good impression of us, probably because we insert some money into the economy. It also helps that we're viewed as rich here, unlike back in Normandy.

Integration: He thinks he is well integrated, people like the fact that he speaks Darija and is open and friendly with them. She also feels integrated and welcome but she is a bit more reserved.

Interview 3:

I have been coming to Morocco for the past twenty years but have been living here for three. I am a retired French woman, on an invalidity pension. My ex-husband is Moroccan and we met here over 20 years ago. During our marriage we would come to Morocco 4 times a year to visit his family. My daughter is Franco Moroccan and lives in Tangier.

What attracted them to Morocco: To me, it was too difficult to live in Paris. The quality of life was terrible there in comparison to Morocco. In Morocco the climate is much more attractive, with more light and warmth: here there is a guarantee of at least 340 days of sunlight out of the 365 days of the year. There is also more of a community here. People are friendlier and smile more. In comparison to Paris, Tangier is like a village: everything is 5 minutes away (my daughter, the stores, the French Institute) as opposed to 45 minutes away. You don't need a car to get around.

Migrant or Expatriate: I am not a migrant because my daughter is Franco Moroccan and I have known Muslim/ Moroccan culture for 20 years I don't have the impression of taking the plunge and of being in a country that I don't know. I've also lived in Morocco a lot before this. My Moroccan roots, through my in-laws, explain why I do not feel like a migrant.

Local visibility and contact: I have a lot of contact with Moroccans. I speak a lot so people know me in the neighbourhood because of my chattiness. Things here are not like in Paris, where no one

smiles at anyone. Here people smile a smile that you want to return. There are colours that make life joyous. We are welcomed by people who are very welcoming and friendly. Because of this my address book is full. Overall, I've had a positive contact with the Moroccan community. I only have one negative: I try to make things (respondent is referring to textiles) to not get bored, and because of my past experiences I try to make pillows and 'jilabas' here. But when I interact with people here they say yes out of politeness but it's not a real one, so it makes it difficult to work with people when I'm not getting a definite truthful answer from some of the shopkeepers I am buying things from.

Adaptation to Morocco: my adaptation was easy. Thanks to my Moroccan husband we came here 4 times a year to visit family, so I already knew the customs and people here. My one problem is with religion. I find it difficult because I am an atheist and it permeates every aspect of life here.

Who do expatriates frequent: I think that all the (francophone) expats mix well with Tangier life and society.

Personal friend circle: Many francophones, a lot of people who speak Arabic but they have completed tertiary studies and are from a certain milieu. I would say that there are as many expatriates as Moroccans.

Moroccan's perceptions: Overall I think Moroccans have a positive perception of us (the French). For example, my maid prefers working for Europeans because there is less mistreatment.

Integration: I don't speak Arabic or Darija enough to know how well integrated. It's also hard to tell because people are so smiley and welcoming. It's probably a superficial integration. Not with regards to my family, but for others our connection doesn't go deeper because of religion. For example, I don't do the Ramadan. So in my opinion that doesn't make me integrated. But I partake in the iftar with my family and they are fully aware that my daughter and I don't fast. I'm probably better integrated with the elites, because they are the ones who speak French so I have more interactions with them than with those from other milieus.

Interview 4:

I'm in Morocco for 6 months for my studies. I have been here for 3 months so far. I am doing a masters on politics in Middle-East North Africa and I took a class on Morocco which I loved. I saw this internship offer (the one I am currently working at) and it seemed perfect to complement my studies.

Migrant or expatriate: A bit of both. Yes, I don't have the same culture as Moroccans, there are some strong differences between French and Moroccans, in language etc. So I feel like a foreigner. But not migrant in the sense that I'm going to stay for many years. Also I'm not a migrant because I chose to come here, I wasn't forced to or subjected to the migration. But I would say I'm a foreigner rather than an expat or migrant.

Contact: In my everyday life I spend a lot of time with other French people because it's hard to meet Moroccans who don't view us as wealthy people who come and who consume a lot and are disconnected from reality. I am not that type of French person. I am a student so I can't consume a lot and I'm connected to reality because of it. I've met one guy and girl who are Moroccan. My colleague is French, and she put me in the group of French expatriates directly after I arrived.

Adaptation: I had a positive contact, through work with people who are very educated and open. I live in the Kasbah, so that neighbourhood is pretty conservative. At first it was pretty positive but then I began to live my life like I do in France and when I went out at night after 8/9 pm it was slightly more negative.

Friends: My friends are mostly French people or other foreigners here. I only have 2 Moroccan friends.

Who do expatriates frequent: In the group I spend time with, there are the younger ones and the ones who are over 30. The older ones clearly live only between expats whereas we try to interact with others.

Perception: I know that French expats are always between themselves, no matter where. I can't tell if it's because they have a hard time integration or if it's a language thing (example of family from London). In Morocco it's hard to integrate because there are big differences with way of life and quality of life and cultural differences so maybe it reassures them to remain in their perception of the world.

Language streams: language plays a big role. Here in Morocco a lot of people speak French but the ones that do are more open and have more education and a different style of life. I don't really speak Arabic. And I would say only 50% of people here speak French well.

Integration: I would say that I am integrated. I can do some things with Moroccans because I speak with my Darija. And I was very interested, I asked a lot of questions and now I understand more about how society works.

Interview 5:

I have been in Morocco for 3 months and intend to be here in 5 total. I am a university student.

What attracted them to Morocco: I did an internship in Egypt 2 years ago and I really liked living in the Middle East (even though this isn't the Middle-East), and I wanted to go back to an Arab country. I ended up here randomly, I wanted to go to Lebanon but they didn't take me and I saw an internship offer here so I decided to come here.

Migrant or Expatriate: Migrant? No. Because the term migrant is extremely negatively connotated and connotated to the people who cross borders illegally or for economic reasons. I'm not an economic migrant, I have the means to come here and I can circulate freely wherever I want. But it's an interesting question. I would say I'm a student, not an expat.

Local Visibility and contact: I don't have a lot of contact with the Moroccan community. I think it's because at the internship we are only 2 interns, and we are both French. So we don't have any other colleagues. We have had the opportunity to meet other people at meetings and I would say I have 3-4 Moroccan friends.

Adaptation: Good. It was a bit particular, especially in terms of my internship because we don't have an office, my adaptation was made progressively made through my work. With my colleague we adapted ourselves as a group of 2 and we found out about each other and about the city at the same time.

Who do expatriates frequent: They spend more time with other Europeans.

Friend circle: More European students than anyone else.

Integration: No, because I don't really know Darija and I think that there are specificities to Moroccan culture that make it hard to say that you are properly integrated. And as a French woman I don't know these specificities. But in terms of getting along with the locals I think I have no problem there.

Other: I don't speak Darija.

Interview 6:

I have been in Morocco since September. But I came 2 years ago for 8 months because my school has a partnership with a school in Casablanca, so I am expected to spend 2 years in France and 2

years in Morocco. I'm back for an internship to complete my second year in Morocco. I'm working with a local organization.

What attracted them to Morocco: I was interested in Morocco 5 years ago when I chose this program. I thought it was a good experience, as it would allow me to have a real change and gain more life experience than going to another European country. Climate wasn't a decisive factor for me.

Migrant or Expatriate: I guess I might be a migrant. I'm definitely not an expat because there is this idea behind that term that you're earning money in another country which I'm not. But yes, I am French, so I guess I am different than migrants, but I would not use the word expat.

Local Visibility and contact: In Casablanca, I have friends and a boyfriend who are Moroccan. Here I spend more time with other foreigners, I know a couple Moroccans through work and a little bit through my everyday life.

Friend circle: It's hard because the demographics of my friends changes on the location. In Casablanca I spent more time with only Moroccans than I do here. But I would say there is an equal proportion of both overall.

Perception: It's hard to generalize. I think there are some who don't care, they're people like others. For others I think they think of the French as people who come and enjoy the benefits Morocco has. It's also hard to tell because of the history of the protectorate.

Integration: Yes and no. In Casablanca, thanks to my boyfriend and friends I feel like I am integrated. In Tangier, not so much. I'm leaning towards yes, but not completely.

Other: I speak a little Darija.

The following series of interviews were conducted at the *Lycée Français International Alphonse Daudet* in Ain Sebaa, Casablanca. The student body of the school is mostly Moroccan. The staff is split between French on a contract provided by the French government and Moroccans.

Interview 7:

I am a Franco-Canadien teaching English in the *collège* part of the school (grades 6,7,8,9). I have been in Morocco since September 2018. Before arriving in Morocco I was working in Congo.

What attracted them to Morocco: I got to choose to move abroad to teach as well as to choose the country. I chose Morocco because I had already lived in Egypt and I like Arab culture. The Congo was good too but it was quite far from my family in France and had a difficult climate: it was really hot. My wife and I also wanted to go to a developed country where everything worked which wasn't the case in the Congo. In the Congo I worked at a school where the students were practically all French and there were no locals, unlike here where almost 95% of the student body is Moroccan. So overall, it was personal reasons concerning the country, my family and my professional development.

Migrant or Expatriate: I am not a migrant. I am expatriate because I am a French employee with a contract.

Local visibility and contact: I haven't spent much time in Morocco (only 9 months) so I haven't had much contact, but compared to Congo, I have the impression that I know Moroccans more because here I work with more Moroccans. There is very good contact between colleagues. Everything is going well and we have many cultural exchanges. We are both (both groups) interested in learning more and the Moroccans are very welcoming. The welcome I've received here is crazy: I was telling a taxi driver (in Fez) that I was working in Casablanca and he told me he wasn't going to welcome me because I was in my new homeland.

Adaptation to Morocco: Because of this good first initial contact, my adaptation to Morocco has been easy.

Who do expatriates frequent: Generally, yes, expatriates tend to frequent other expatriates more. We are living in the same place and receive similar receptions. This is especially true between nationalities. There is this need to be with people with whom you can have the same references.

Personal friend circle: Personally I'm not looking to be surrounded by French people (in reference to expatriate frequentations). I want a cultural exchange, which is something I find at work: exchanges between French and Moroccans. In my friend circle, it's 50% French people, 50% Moroccans.

Moroccan's perceptions: I don't know. Too early for me to tell.

Integration: Also too early for me to know. In my opinion integration only happens after a long time. Take my father: he is Canadian and lives in France, but it took him a very long to become French.

Language: I speak a little Darija. I have background in Meseri (Egypt's dialect)

Ramadan: I will not be partaking, because it feels like cultural appropriation to me and feels wrong in my opinion to fast if you are not muslim. That being said, I'll respect the law and be polite.

Interview 8:

In Morocco since September 2008, French teacher in the *collège*

What attracted them to Morocco: After 4 years in Congo, my husband (respondent above) wanted to move closer to France but remain abroad. I was attracted by Moroccan culture and Muslim culture because after 2 years in Egypt I discovered I liked classical Arabic and the dancing as well as the music. It was also a good opportunity to be closer to our family and to experience a new culture. I also like oriental fairytales and literature because of the cultural literary image it creates.

Migrant or expatriate: I am not a migrant. Expatriate is what we use in the French community. I consider myself a foreigner here, but migrant has negative connotations or more of a connotation with economic migration. But here I'm not migrating for economic needs.

Contact: I've had limited contact with the Moroccan community, even though my husband and I are not looking to stay within the French community. I've only been here for less than a year and all I've done is work so it wasn't exactly the ideal thing. We've had very good encounters with co-workers: 50% French 50% Moroccan. We get along very well, but most of our Moroccan contact or interaction takes place at work (including the school's administration). We live in a neighbourhood where there are not many expats. But our relations with neighbours and shop keepers are more basic or just friendly.

Adaptation to Morocco: It was a bit of a shock for me, mostly because I was aggressed in the first week here. Someone stole my bag while I had my baby in my arms. It hurt my neck and kind of cooled my excitement about Morocco (it was the 7th day here). Apart from that it's been very easy, because everyone speaks French, and it's less complicated to get around in than the Congo.

Who do expatriates frequent: In the Congo, the Whites (it was linked to skin colour), only spent time with each other. The only Congolese around were the drivers and the nannies. Money created barriers and violence. Here there are more mixt marriages, different environment and interactions aren't as uneven/ unequal.

Friend circle: I don't want to meet French people except at work. I will not join the groups that only interact with each other. That being said, it's too early to really know about my friend circle. My friend circle is maybe more French, even though I know about the same amount of French and Moroccans. Most of my friends or acquaintances are colleagues. Although I say more French in

my friend group because I spend more time with them on weekends, but maybe that could be because Moroccans are seeing their families then.

Perception: I have no idea.

Integration: It's too early for me to know. Plus, I don't speak Darija well enough to interact more. Additionally, my negative experience at the start really made me scared and stressed so I was afraid to reach out at first (this has changed now). But mainly because I don't speak the language I am not integrated. There are also huge cultural differences as far as women are concerned between the two countries (Morocco and France) even though we are so close geographically and historically,

Additionally: I will not fast during Ramadan, but I won't smoke out of respect for my colleagues.

Interview 9:

I am Franco-Moroccan thanks to a French mother and Moroccan father. In the 60s there was a wave of Moroccan men who went to study in Europe, in particular France, married Europeans and came back, mostly with French women but there were some of other nationalities). Growing up, I studied at the Mission Française (One of the French schools in Rabat) and then I went and did my university studies in France. I came back after for various personal reasons. Most people of my generation came back to Morocco after varying amounts of years. It is more rare to find some who have stayed permanently in France. I also married a Moroccan (with a basque grandmother). I speak Darija, not classical Arabic, because for children of a mixt couple it's harder to speak Arabic because you can study it at school but at home we mostly speak French. For my children it's the same thing: my husband and I only spoke to them in French, because my ex-husband was also a product of the French educational system. We only spoke Darija with the Moroccan staff at the school.

In terms of French community, I was never in the exclusive French community, the one that is always closed off. My mother is fully integrated into Moroccan society, as is the case for many women who married Moroccans.

Friend circle: I have many different friends. Some are exclusively Moroccan, others are mixt couple (one Moroccan, one European). I would say that there are as many as each other.

Who do expatriates frequent: I think expatriates spend more time with each other. For example, some of the European women married to Moroccans will try and find other women in the same position as them and become friends with them.

Contact: Overall there is a good contact between the two groups, with no problems. I think there is a group, definitely a minority, who has kept the colonizer attitude and that's reflected in their actions. For example, there is an exclusive French club in Casablanca that has an immense property (downtown) which the French government helped remain open even though the Moroccan government would like to have access to the terrain. In that club there are some French people who have been here for a very long time, since the protectorate and they have the "colonizer spirit" but once again, they are a minority.

Integration: I think the French community is integrated into Moroccan society.

Role of language: That being said (referring to integration) language plays an important role, and sort of creates two different communities. But there are those who are making the effort to learn Darija and the exchanges that happen between the two communities points to some integration.

Interview 10:

I am a preschool teacher, this is my second year in Morocco, on a 3 year contract here with the possibility to renew my contract.

What attracted them to Morocco: My husband is Moroccan (born in France to Moroccan parents), so we had prior knowledge on Morocco. We had always wanted to lived abroad for a while and wanted something completely different (culturally). Morocco was a good fit because the weather is nice, there is excellent purchasing power, and also because it's my kids' first time abroad I wanted it to be a francophone country.

Migrant or expatriate: At the start no, I did not feel like a migrant, but some of the circumstances make it seem like yes, especially when we encounter some problems, especially with the administration. In our interactions we are in a position where we are always asking for things and we encounter some difficulties that can place us in the illegality here. Some of the looks that we get reinforce this feeling, but that's only occasionally. My husband's Moroccan origins also help me feel like I am not a migrant here but at times that's not true: it helps with communication, even though French is widely spoken here. But his identity is difficult to manage because he is from Morocco but he is not Moroccan. People view him more as someone who has emigrated and thus has money because that's how people perceive the Moroccan population abroad and so some fake their relations with us.

Local visibility and contact: I interact with Moroccans every day at work. Outside of work, I have interactions that are useful (groceries, coffee shop, neighbours).

Adaptation to Morocco: At times it was complicated, especially concerning morals. I had to change the way I dressed and did things. By living here more things are revealed to you than when you are simply a tourist. There are some large differences in attitudes and ways. In France there is this history of fighting for our rights and freedoms, which is something that exists less here. But I don't see things in deep detail and people accept my ways because I am not Moroccan. I find this especially true concerning the topic of women in the street.

Who do expatriates frequent: They clearly spend more time with other expats. There is a large French community who lives here in isolation, only going to places that are known as meeting places for expats. I guess spending time with other French people is maybe an occasion to find our cultural habits again.

Friend circle: It's complicated to create a friend circle here. I can make friends but mainly I don't want to mix work and personal life. Also it's hard because after a while, our habits and morals don't match (something you notice after a deep connection). It has nothing to do with religion, my husband and children are muslim, but it's mostly concerning ways of thinking and attitudes.

Perception: They view the French as people who come to benefit from the great things their country has to offer and also come for the purchasing power.

Integration: I don't know how integrated I am. I've picked up the customs and some actions – I can now anticipate reactions, what is feasible, not feasible, possible and not possible.

Interview 11:

I have been teaching for 2 years in Morocco. Before Morocco, I was in Paraguay.

What attracted them to Morocco: I chose Morocco simply because it was close to France. My children are at university in France and I wanted to be close to them.

Migrant or expatriate: I'm an expatriate. But what is the difference? Yes, I've migrated but migrant (the way we hear it) has a more negative connotation, even though it's exactly the same thing. I

guess I could consider myself a migrant. But when you read it online it is always attributed to a movement where one has no agency.

Local visibility and contact: It's quasi-inexistent. I have made Moroccan acquaintances, but very few. There isn't really an exchange. With my colleagues it's only professional relations. I live in isolation.

Adaptation to Morocco: It was complicated. I found it difficult for Europeans to settle (between the papers and the administration). For a single woman it's also complicated, especially if you assume your independence, people show you that they don't agree through their actions and how they speak to you. Maybe Casablanca is a particular city, it's not a place where you get integrated easily.

Who do expatriates frequent: I don't know because I don't know many expatriates. What I've noticed more is that people tend to remain in their social ranks and they're isn't really any mixing between social classes.

Friend circle: My friends here are only Moroccan.

Perception: I have the feeling that they are stuck between two ideas. They want to have a clean slate and leave the protectorate years behind, which leads them to reject everything French. But at the same time, Moroccans have a golden vision of France and of everything that is French attracts them but often this perception of France is not even true to reality. When I first came here, there was French more French in the street and in adds. But over the past 2 years you see more and more Arabic. It's like Moroccans want to take back their identity, which I completely agree with, but it's sad in terms of language because people used to be almost naturally bilingual, something that isn't true today.

Integration: Yes I'm integrated. It's a very welcoming place and Moroccans want you to participate in everything.

Additionally: I don't fast during Ramadan but I respect the law.

Interview 12:

I have been teaching in Morocco since January 2019.

What attracted them to Morocco: Before Morocco, I taught in Tunisia and after that job ended I wanted to continue teaching abroad and there was a position available here. It was good because it was close to France (which is where my kids and husband are). It was a good work opportunity and the weather here is nice.

Migrant or expatriate: I am not a migrant because I feel at home here. I consider myself a global citizen, I have travelled a lot since I was young. Speaking the language would make things easier. I don't speak Arabic but I have a culture that is close to Moroccans, I feel close to them on the cultural and human angle. And most Moroccans speak French.

Local visibility and contact/ Adaptation to Morocco: My adaptation is going very well. I have an easy contact with Moroccans. They are very warm, direct, helpful, welcoming, people who like France and French culture which facilitates interactions and friendship.

Who do expatriates frequent: Personally, the expatriate community doesn't interest me. If I'm working abroad, I want to meet and speak to locals, to understand what/ how they think/ their aspirations, it allows me to have a real reflection on what education is and what are French values. I find that it's through contact with foreigners that we can know ourselves better and know what we want. No comment on the global (expatriate) community.

Friend circle: It's a bit early for me to know here, but I'm hoping it will be only Moroccans. In Tunisia, it was only Tunisians. Back there it made me so happy to see my kids becoming so close with Tunisians as well.

Perception: Women and Men are not perceived/ looked at in the same way. Especially for women because your perception relies on the whether you are with or without a husband and/or kids. In Tunisia it was definitely easier with kids. Here it might have been easier with my husband. But overall Moroccans have a positive view of French people and want to work with them. This is especially true in my workplace.

Integration: Economically, we are so different so it's hard to be integrated with everyone because money creates distance. With a community that is more similar socio-economically, it would be different but I'm unsure if we can speak of integration. Instead, I'd say we can speak of positive links.

Interview 13:

I have been in Morocco since 2012, I started with 7 years in the South and now I have been in Casablanca since September 2018.

Attraction to Morocco: my husband is Franco-Moroccan (born in France to Moroccan parents). He knew about Morocco, I didn't, but there was an opening for the two of us and we wanted to live together (which we were doing at the time in France). I had heard that Morocco was very welcoming and I haven't been disappointed with that aspect.

Migrant or expatriate: It's difficult to know because Morocco and France, their history is so tightly linked they are like close friends. I don't have the feeling of being in a completely different country. We can find the French aspect in the administration, in the history, so I don't have the feeling of being a complete stranger. Having a Moroccan husband was reassuring: upon arrival: he spoke the language, knew the social codes. If I had been with a Frenchman who didn't know the culture it would have been difficult but it was easier with my half Moroccan husband. His parents also go back and forth a couple times in the year.

Adaptation: At the start I was in the south, Darla. The first couple months were tough. It was not very touristic. I felt weird. I felt the look of people on me, I didn't feel very at ease. I didn't go grocery shopping alone, I didn't go out alone, I covered myself more than usual. Acclimatization happened later, and after 4 months it was better. I realized I been fixating on the looks and making myself uncomfortable because of them when it reality there was no need to. But people were very welcoming and always invited me in with open arms. Once I got over my reticence, it was fine.

Contact: in my employment, practically only Moroccans at the school (working and clients). We were awaited. They were very excited at our arrival. On the personal level: we had more relations with the French community at the start than with Moroccans but little by little we became closer with Moroccans

Who do expatriates frequent: It depends where. In Darla, the French people spent more time together. More of a need to find culture again, to find the things we've left being in France, we needed to find each other on the weekend. But as we built ties and friendships with the local community, it took time, but there was a balance and we spent more time with Moroccans. Once you become at ease, you start interacting with more Moroccans. So, I would say 50 percent with each community.

Friends: In this place (Casablanca), our colleagues are often also expats so they are the first contacts we make in a new place. Naturally we orient ourselves towards that community but then Moroccan contacts begin to happen.

Perception: depends, are we talking about personal or general community. We need to be careful to place each other on the same power level and get to know each other before making up our minds

Integration: I am but not completely. I probably need to take more time to integrate more.

Additional: I understand more Darija than I speak. I don't read or write it. I took classes. Once again I could have done more. With regards to Ramadan, my husband fasts. I try to accompany him during this moment because it's special. Even if I didn't have this I would try and be really careful because it's a really special moment. We get together for Iftur and it's really great and special.

Interview 14:

I have been teaching in Morocco for 7 years. I was in Darla from 2012 and this is my first year in Casablanca.

Attraction to Morocco: before I became a teacher I always said I wanted to teach in Morocco because it's the country of my parents. I moved abroad to be with my wife (we lived separately in France).

Migrant or expatriate: I am not a migrant because I know Morocco culturally. To me it's not even a real expatriation, because generally when we are expatriates (maybe this isn't true in a developed country that is similar to France) there is a language/ cultural barrier. For me here there are no barriers. In Darla, it was different because there was a different dialect but it wasn't that different.

Contact: We live and work and in two different parts of Casablanca. I have contact with Moroccans at the market and at the gym, but it remains very superficial. There are no real connections or no real friendships. Maybe a bit more with my neighbor but it still remains very superficial. In Darla I became friends with student's parents and French people in Darla. At the start when you don't know anything you orient yourself towards things/ people that you know. But looking back, with my wife if we had stayed in France we don't know if we would have become friends with people like that. They have different opinions and world analysis than us. Expatriation pushes us to get closer to people who are similar to us culturally and geographically.

Who do expats frequent: yes, expats tend to spend time with more expatriates at first. The language definitely helps this, especially in Morocco where the local language is hard to learn. But after, sometimes we see that people who have a sort of colonialist attitude: they speak French, they think of themselves as superior. They employ Moroccans. But that was mostly true in Darla.

Friends: a bit early to know, but we do get closer with our colleagues before becoming friends with people outside of the school.

Perception: French from France are placed on a different level than everyone else, especially in terms of teaching and work. They are respected as soon as they arrive.

As Franco-Moroccan I needed to prove myself. In Darla people were shocked that the principal of the French school was half Moroccan. But overall a positive image.

Integration: Here I am not. In Darla I was integrated. I had acquaintances, I spoke with people, I was invited to their house for dinner. But here that hasn't happened yet.

Language stream: Yes French helps the French communicate and interact with Moroccans. But again, it depends where you are because some people speak more Spanish (it's dependent on the region). But you need to be careful because mastering a language better than others can put you in a dominant position.

Analysis:

Within the French community abroad there is a general consensus on the negative connotation of the word migrant. Many of the respondents' associate the word migrant with someone who "has no agency", or someone who has been "forced or subjected to the migration". They also associate the word migrant with "economic migration", so many respondents do not feel like a migrant because they can "circulate freely" and are not in economic necessity. Many associates their legality in Morocco to them not being a migrant as in their opinion, a migrant is someone "who cross(es) borders illegally". Yet, a small number of respondents when asked the question felt that "they might be a migrant", when considering a definition of a migrant as someone who moves from one location to another. In particular, one respondent reflects:

"I'm an expatriate. But what is the difference? Yes, I've migrated but migrant (the way we hear it) has a more negative connotation, even though it's exactly the same thing. I guess I could consider myself a migrant."

For the most part, the respondents had simply never thought of their status in that way before. However, in light of the perception migrants had in everyday discourse, their French identity made it difficult for them to identify as such.

However, while the majority the of respondent did not as migrants, many did not identify as expatriates. For some, this was attributed to their personal connections to Morocco, for example, marriage to a Moroccan, or having a Moroccan background. For others, they self-identified as a foreigner, rather than an expatriate because behind that term "there is the idea [...] that you're earning money in another country" and benefitting from it. Therefore, in their opinion, the term expatriate embodies a wealth that they don't seem to have and a lack of interaction with the Moroccan community, which was not applicable to many respondents. That being said, as many of the respondents were on a contract provided by the French government, working in a French institution meaning that they identified as an expatriate: "I an expatriate because I am a French employee with a contract". But this association with the term expatriate is more linked to having a contract, rather than to wealth. Regardless, even though "expatriate is what we use in the French community", the majority of the respondents didn't identify with the term. They prefer to identify as foreigners rather than migrants or expatriates.

Language played an important role in the French community experience in Morocco. Many respondents attribute an easy adaptation to life in Morocco to the widespread use of French: "they speak lots of languages so it's easy to communicate with them", especially because "here in Morocco a lot of people speak French". Moreover, the French community attributes their connection they have with the Moroccan community to their shared history:

"Morocco and France, their history is so tightly linked they are like close friends. I don't have the feeling of being in a completely different country. We can find the French aspect in the administration, in the history, so I don't have the feeling of being a complete stranger."

This shared history has also led to some similar cultural norms. Moroccans are also very welcoming, making French adaptation to Morocco easy. One respondent states: "I have an easy contact with Moroccans. They are very warm, direct, helpful, welcoming, people who like France and French culture which facilitates interactions and friendship". These exchanges and warm feelings are possible thanks to the shared language between the two communities.

Nonetheless, even with French shared between the two communities, the respondents explain that a lack of Arabic hinders their integration into Moroccan society. When reading to interview responses, virtually all people interviewed believe themselves to be integrated: "Yes I'm

integrated”. They attribute their integration to Morocco being “a very welcoming place and Moroccans want you to participate in everything”. However, many of them after saying that they are integrated, rephrase: “I am, but not completely. I probably need to take more time to integrate more.” For the majority this lack of integration comes from their lack of knowledge in darija: “I don’t speak darija well enough to interact more” and “because I don’t speak the language I am not integrated”. Even though French is an official language, its use is not as common as one would imagine. A respondent who has been here for two years observed that “over the past 2 years you see more and more Arabic” and that people are less bilingual. Another respondent agrees, saying that “I would say only 50% of people here speak French well”. A different respondent makes a comment that is seconded by many of the other interviewees: “I’m probably better integrated with the elites, because they are the ones who speak French, so I have more interactions with them than with those from other milieus”. Most respondents have more interactions with those who speak French as they can communicate with them. However, the respondents explain that these Moroccans are often wealthier or have pursued more education and are not necessarily representative of the rest of the population.

Some respondents go further, pointing to cultural differences as an explanation to their lack of integration. A woman explains that “There are also huge cultural differences between the two countries [...] especially for women”. Another respondent thinks “that there are specificities to Moroccan culture that make it hard to say that you are properly integrated. And as a French woman I don’t know these specificities”. For those who deny their integration, they explain that it’s because they don’t know enough people, or because it’s not a deeper connection. One respondent with a Moroccan family believes it to be “probably a superficial integration. Not with regards to my family, but for others our connection doesn’t go deeper because of religion.” because religion is present in almost every facet of life. Wealth is another factor that dictates relations between Moroccans and the French community. A French Moroccan respondent explains: “the French are placed on a different level than everyone else, especially in terms of teaching and work. They are respected as soon as they arrive”. A French respondent attributes this to Moroccan’s having “a golden vision of France and of everything that is French”. This vision “fake people’s relations with us”, because they perceive anyone who comes from Europe to be wealthy. Another respondent thinks that that Moroccans believe this because so many people come to Morocco and consume, but this image is not applicable to all.

The French community believes that Moroccans view them positively, a feeling that is seconded by the Moroccans I spoke to informally and interviewed. A French Moroccan, who grew up in Morocco, believes that “there is a good contact between the two groups, with no problems” even though there is “a group, definitely a minority, who has kept the colonizer attitude and that’s reflected in their actions”. This respondent believes the French community to be integrated into Moroccan society, shown by those who learn some darija, but claims that language does play a important role and “creates two different communities”. The short survey I conducted early this semester, on Moroccan Impressions of the French expatriate community, showed the same positive image. Overall, from their responses it seems that the French community is moderately integrated into Moroccan society. This positive image is reinforced by the presence and actions of French cultural centers. There is an estimated 40,000 students in French schools in Morocco. The *Lycée Alphonse Daudet* in Casablanca is a good example of this, with practically the entire student body being Moroccan. Furthermore, French institutes promote French culture and Francophonie through cultural events but also promotes local culture. They are an example of true cooperation between the both communities.

Conclusion:

Overall, the French migrant community perceives the term expatriate to be associated with wealth. They also associate the term migrant with very negative terms, forced economic migration and lack of agency. I found that neither of these terms is used by members of the French community when describing their status in Morocco. Rather, they self-describe as foreigners, with a couple of them considering the term migrant as a possible describer but rejecting it because of the lack of agency and poverty associated with it.

Language helps their adaptation and integration in Morocco, as French is commonly spoken in Morocco. However, the lack of Arabic within the French community means that they only interact with a certain sphere of the Moroccan population. Members of the French community view themselves as generally well integrate but often express a disappointment at not learning more Arabic as it hinders them from communicating with the rest of the population. These types of interactions imply two societies living together, with some overlap but dictated by language ability.

Considering that most of the respondents interviewed in this paper have been in Morocco for a short amount of time, it would be interesting to extend these questions to French people who have been here for multiple generations, and incorporate some questions about the impact of the protectorate on their identity and relations with Moroccans.

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