Fall 2010

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La ‘Paradoxe Marocaine’
Moroccan-Dutch Citizens in Transnational social space

Deva-Dee Siliee
Migration and Transnational Identity
SIT Morocco Fall 2010
Advisor: Dr. Said Graouid
Introduction

Human mobility has existed in countless forms for many centuries. Yet in our modern world of sovereign territorially defined nation-states, both policy makers and national publics increasingly see human mobility across national boundaries as alarming. The rising movement of people, culture and capital across borders is suggested to pose a direct challenge to the nation-state as the organizing unit around which many areas of human activity revolve. In the age of globalization, academics and politicians are investigating how to understand the question of individuals and entire communities, intent on maintaining strong economic, cultural and social ties across state borders. This contemporary experience of individuals figuratively having each leg in a different country has been theorized under the rubric of ‘transnationalism’, a term coined by American social scientists in the 1990’s who aimed to explain the myriad of cultural, social and economic undertakings of migrants in both their country of origin as their host countries simultaneously. These migration scholars, notably Glick Schiller, Basch, Szanton-Blanc, Portes et al, closely studied the cases of West-Indian, Mexican, Haitian and Filipino migrants, and have argued that the state as defined in classical liberal political theory, is becoming ‘de-territorialized’ as a result of emergent migrant populations whose ‘lives cut across national boundaries and bring two societies into a single social field.’ (Glick Schiller, Basch, Szanton-Blanc, 1992: 1) Transnational public spheres are being formed that stretch the concept and praxis of sovereignty beyond territory unto discursive grounds. The assumption that there is “an immutable link between cultures, peoples or identities and specific places, is directly challenged by migration and the rise of diasporic communities around the world.” (Lavie and Swedenbourg, 1997:1)

As transnational processes such as the emergence of broad networks to sustain transnational modes of living and symbolic communities to strengthen shared identity, are defying the significance of national boundaries, states and scholars are contemplating in what ways membership in a society should be (re)conceptualized and (re) configured. What rights and obligations should pertain to transmigrants vis-à-vis states and vice versa, and what ‘expressions of nationalism’, belonging and identity are catalyzed by forms of transnationality? (Kastoryano, 2002: 693)
The case of the Moroccan communities abroad is a perfect example of how economic, social and cultural networks are formed spanning entire political territories and bridging the distance between two continents. Large family and communal networks between Morocco and Europe are spearheading major socio-cultural and political transformations within Morocco and Europe. In Morocco, the most visible manifestation of this fact happens during the summer vacation, when about 2 million Moroccans residing abroad cross the straits of Gibraltar heading south. The phenomenon known in popular and official discourse as *Opération Marahaba* is quite unique because of the fact that the country starts preparing as soon as spring arrives for the annual welcoming of almost half its nationals living abroad. This phenomenon is what President of the *Conseil de la Communauté Marocaine à l’étranger*, Mr. Driss El-Yazami called “*La Paradoxe Marocaine*”. What is paradoxical to him, is that despite the diversity of Moroccans abroad, in terms of country of residence, migration period and socio-economic status, most individuals still maintain a close relationship with Morocco while still seeking to ‘integrate’ in their countries of residence. A large segment of Moroccan emigrants, “have become transnational in so far as they manage to live simultaneously in two countries, contributing to the nation-building processes of both their countries of origin and those of immigration.” (Salih, 2003:5)

Transnationalism as a research field materialized as a response to scholarship on migration that only focused on studying migrants’ positions within host countries; whether and how they adapt and are in- or excluded. (Vertovec, 2001:574) Departing from “host-society centered incorporation”, the transnational outlook focused on “transcending immigrant identities and commitments” that challenge dominant narratives which argue that adaptation to host-society and transnationality are mutually exclusive processes. (Bouras, 2010:2) Academic literature on transnational actors and how their activities alter the nature and functioning of the state, on individual and collective identities, community consciousness and creation of networks emerged rapidly. However, there has been a strong tendency to see migrants “as free-floating transnational communities whose positions and rights are secured by supranational forces and discourses and whose identities and types of claim are largely independent from the policies of the receiving and sending countries.” (Glick Schiller, 467) Although some
argue that transnationalism underlines the freedom of individuals and ‘the tribulations of the self’ in an effort to construct an identity for oneself apparently disembedded from one’s cultural roots”, there is also a clear sign that states have a stake in catalyzing, shaping or curbing transnationalism. (Giddens, 1991: 187)

Hence, my premise is that we also need to observe how individuals interact with transnational opportunities and limits, and how debates and contestations surrounding cultural and religious differences, integration, dual citizenship and loyalty issues in both home-societies and host-societies, are having an impact upon the way in which Moroccans can envision and create transnational lives. In this research paper, I present accounts of “the history and activities of individuals, taking into consideration migrants own desires, strategies, practices for staying connected around the world and how these ties differ from before”, as a way of learning about the institutional underpinnings of transnationalism and its structural effects. (Vertovec, 2001: 573) In placing actor-oriented approaches against the backdrop of larger structural conditions, I believe we can analyze the manifestation of motivations, meanings and the place of people as their own agents in process of change. To understand transnationalism as it occurs within and has impact upon, the daily lives of individuals and their support networks, I see it as imperative to analytically include the discursive contexts in which transnational activities and transnational identities are forged. Reason why I have chosen to study to what extent the transnational activities and identities of my interviewees are shaped by policy and political discourses in both The Netherlands in Morocco. How do these two states separately but simultaneously affect how Moroccan-Dutch citizens form transnational lives or not? Ultimately, the scope and nature of transnational social spheres are influenced by the historical circumstances from which they arise and by evolving discourses and settings. This paper examines how and why transnationalism came to be perceived as negative in the Netherlands, but is currently placed into a positive light by the Moroccan state.

My research will be based on an analysis of several academic reports which have touched on the topic of changing discourses in both the Netherlands and Morocco. It will be complemented by the narratives of nine individuals comprising of persons who have migrated to build their lives in the Netherlands, second-generation Moroccans who were
born there and transmigrants who commute between the Netherlands and Morocco. I will introduce you to Aziz, Taib, Mohammed, Karim, Hajat, Jia, Mr. N and his son, Mr. Yousfi. All of these individuals proudly claim their Moroccan roots but they also all acknowledge that having a Dutch nationality has impacted their lives tremendously.

These individuals have shared their stories with me through in person semi-structured interviews individually or in a focus group. Two people spoke to me through video conference and phone. Some scholars have maintained (i.e Ruba Salih) that research on transnationalism cannot be accounted for by remaining focused on one single site of intensive investigation, which is why multi-sited ethnography—which acknowledges ‘macrotheoretical narratives and concepts of the world system and aims to follow the circulation of cultural meanings, objects, identities, in diffuse time-space’—has been suggested as the best mode of research. (Marcus, 1995:96) Though I was able to interview people in both the Netherlands and Morocco, I would have liked to conduct more extensive and accurate multi-sited ethnographic research. Participant observation has also been crucial in informing my findings.

In the first chapter of this paper I will look at the emergence of transnationalism as a research field and how scholarship on transnationalism has developed over the years. I will also point out in this chapter why I think one should analyze the impact of public and political discourses on transnationalism. In the second chapter, I will discuss the migration transitions and national transformations of the Netherlands and Morocco. An overview on Morocco’s emigration history will be juxtaposed to the Netherlands’ transition to an immigration country. To understand the two countries national discourses on migration, one must know the development of their migration narratives. Subsequently, I will present an analysis of the politics of integration and culturalization in the Netherlands, and the protocols of Moroccan hospitality towards citizens abroad. Last but not least, I will give the podium to the individuals I have interviewed so that their perspectives can be heard.

Unfortunately, I encountered some inherent obstacles while trying to complete this Independent Research Project. First of all, my research subjects were a select group of people that were decidly hard to find on an average day in Morocco: citizens who have or have had Moroccan and Dutch citizenship. Preferably I would have conducted more
ethnographic research, but this was limited by time and place. Luckily, through a contact from SIT Amsterdam, I was able to interview four gentlemen in the Netherlands during our short visit. Through the generous help of NIMAR and SSR in Berkane, I was also able to speak to four people in Morocco. Furthermore, with the help of a friend, I was able to reach two Dutch-Moroccan females. I only have the stories of 2 women, which is a reflection of both the gendered nature of migration as the limitation of time I faced. In terms of language, most of my informants felt comfortable speaking in Dutch, my first language. Eventhough there were no perceivable inhibitions to communication between me and the participants, the fact that I could only interview people with a good command of Dutch or French did narrow my options in Morocco. A lot of work could still be done to build on this research but I hope to continue this project.
Chapter 1

1.1 Why Transnationalism?

As more international migrants appeared to call two places ‘home’, spreading cultural, economic, political and social experiences across boundaries, some migration scholars felt compelled to discard normative assimilation theory as the framework through which to analyze migration. In 1992, Glick Schiller et al, proposed that “a new conceptionalization is needed that comes to terms with the experience and consciousness of new migrant population…composed of those whose networks, activities and patterns of life encompass both their host and home societies”. (Glick Schiller et al. 1992:1) Since then, several authors have contributed to the emergence of this new social field. People have been migrating for ages, so what discerns this new frame of study?

Space, time and the global economy has been dramatically reconfigured in the last three decades by transnational processes, including migration. What separates transnationalism from previous migration studies frameworks was that it took into account novel phenomena based on “high intensity of exchanges, new modes of transacting, and multiplication of activities that require cross-border travel and contacts on a sustained basis.” (Portes et al, 1999: ) New technological advances and subsequent transformation of communication and transportation options have, as Castells argued, brought about the emergence of ‘the network society’, in which “place is devaluated, but new social space is created in which meaningful exchanges and routinized interactions in the dominant structures of society take place.” (Castells 2000 cited by Kivistö, 2003:8) Hence the reason transnational activities were not in evidence in previous waves of migration as they are now.

Upon scrutinization of transnationalism as new scholarship, Steven Vertovec found that one of the conceptual pitfalls of transnationalism, is that the concept is applied too comprehensively. Transnationalism takes place within almost all arenas, so often a host of processes and interpretations become mixed up. In *Conceiving and researching transnationalism*, Steven Vertovec proposes six conceptual premises upon which to examine transnationalism: social morphology, type of consciousness, mode of cultural reproduction, avenue of capital, site of political engagement and (re) construction of
place and modality. (Vertovec, 1999) Relevant to my research are the propositions of transnationalism as social morphology, referring to the creation of a social formation spanning borders in which migrants can maintain contacts with country of origin, and type of consciousness. I will build on these conceptualizations of transnationalism that center on “the multiplicity of involvements that transmigrants sustain in both home and host societies (...) transmigrants take actions, make decisions, and develop subjectivities and identities embedded in networks of relationships that connect them simultaneously to two or more nation-states.”(Schiller et al 1994 cited by de Bree, 2008:8) What binds people into these social forms and networks, is a common consciousness build on multiple identities that link people to one or more nation. (Basch et al, 1992:11) This consciousness of multilocality enables the formation a community of people both ‘here’ and ‘there’ that share the same ‘routes’ and ‘roots’. (Vertovec,1999:450) Moroccan-Dutch citizens evidently envision themselves as part of an imagined community and get involved in forms of “solidarity and identity that do not rest on an appropriation of space where contiguity and face-to-face contact are paramount.” (Ferguson, Gupta, 1992: 9) Within this engendered transnational social space of Dutch-Moroccans, socio-cultural enterprises oriented towards the reinforcement of national identity abroad and to maintenance of individual, family and community ties, are continuously transforming relationships and means of cultural production. In my interviews with Moroccan-Dutch respondents I have tried to locate the parameters of this transnational local space, so as to measure the consequences of these transnational contacts. My questions directed the respondents to speak about processes such as identification with and belonging to a country or community, the collective enjoyment of cultural events and goods, the meaning of having dual citizenship, etc. Their stories also gives us insight on how individuals are positioning themselves vis-à-vis a dominant discourse that sees maintenance of transnational links as contradictory and undesirable.

Traditional assimilationist theory holds that migrants gradually come to abandon the cultural practices, language, and values of their home countries, and that successive generations eventually lose their cultural distinctiveness and become incorporated into the mainstream society. By interpreting my informants opinions and reactions on the political and national discourse held in Holland and in Morocco, I want to make
projections on what directions Moroccan-Dutch transnationalism will take, especially with the maturing of the second generation.

1.2 Discursive practices: policy and political discourse

Since language is a vehicle for creating realities, assessment of the way in which social and psychological circumstances are produced and re-produced in certain discursive practices, needs to start with an observation of the discourse that has been used to describe the realities within the supposed transnational field between Morocco and the Netherlands. I approach the concept of discourse in the Foucauldian sense, by looking at the politics of meaning: how discourse– as an ensemble of ideas, concepts, and categories through which meaning is given to social and physical phenomena, and which is produced and reproduced through an identifiable set of practices– serves to shape people’s social lives by way of established rules and norms. (www.hajer.nl) The aim of looking at public and political discourse, is to see how ‘truth’ is socially constructed and how discourse negotiates who participates and how a participant is to form part of a discussion. (www.hajer.nl) The events in the public and political arena discussed later in this paper are no exceptional phenomena, but reflect a pattern of practices. By critically looking at policy changes, one finds evidence that the crafting of policy is not only about facts and figures, but about presenting images and meanings that convey power; power defined as a dynamic of control and lack of control between discourses and the subjects, constituted by discourses, who are their agents.” (Wheeldon, 1987: 113) Political discourse shapes policy that a country will conduct and the legislation that it will craft to impose rights, duties and limitations on immigrants in society since this discourse often balances normative, descriptive and strategic beliefs on the nature of a problem, frame of reference through which policy solutions are devised and strategies to achieve policy aims. (Fermin, 1997:230)

Policy conflicts are thus often the result of discourse coalitions that are battling each other for the acceptance of their perspectives or frameworks of meanings. (Fermin, 1997:7) One of the features of dominant discourse is the power to interpret issues, conditions and events. There is power exercised within discourses in the ways in
which individual subjects are constituted and governed and in the similar ways in which individual respondents make sense of and react to events. (Weeldon, 1987) As a result, dominant public and political discourse also has a bearing on the social construction of identities as an expression of economic and political links, and on continuing unequal political and social outputs. (Fermin, 1997: 8)

In the case of the Netherlands, supposed changing ‘knowledge’ on minorities from migrant background has had a tremendous effect on altering the social context in which certain practices emerge as permissible and desirable. Jan Rath in ‘Minoritization: social construction of ethnic minorities’, points out that “the dominant ideologies in the Netherlands that surround the minority paradigm, have succeeded in attaching meaning to the construction of ethnic minorities as a social and cultural collective based on certain characteristics, such as non-conformity.” (Rath, 1991 cited by Fermin, 1997: 8) This minority paradigm builds itself on phenotypical markers of race, religion, culture and national origin. The construction of migration and the presence of minorities as a problematic issue—particularly the presence of Moroccans in Dutch society—does not logically flow as an outcome of immigration or immigrant characteristics, but is a consequence of the way Dutch society has seen and constructed itself. In the case of Morocco, the emphasis on ostensible permanent religious and cultural ties and the reality of permanent citizenship has also determined the way ‘Moroccan-ness’ is conceptualized and manifested.

Chapter 2: Migration Transitions and National Transformations.

2.1 Contemporary Moroccan migration to Europe

Morocco has long been the labor reservoir for Europe and surrounding areas. Migration patterns emerged during the pre-protectorate period, as individuals engaged in seasonal and circular migration to neighbouring Algeria, which was at that time a French colony. (de Haas, 2007: 5) In successive decades during the 20th century, migration continued in waves, with a number of migrants leaving through Algeria to assist the French army during World War I and II, and to work in mines and factories in France. (de Haas, 2007: 5) This emigration was quite small compared to the post-war exodus
(1962-1972) of people heading to Europe to take jobs in the steel and mining industries. The demand for low skilled labourers in rebuilding efforts, propelled the onset of Moroccan migration to new European destinations such as The Netherlands (1969), Belgium (1964) and West-Germany (1963), through labor contracts between the Moroccan kingdom and these West-European countries. In the last two decades, we have seen the addition of Italy and Spain as host countries of Moroccans, and the amount of Moroccans residing in these two countries has risen to a significant number.

Although sociological conditions of various waves of migrants make it impossible, to offer a unique universal explicative theory of migration, Moroccan residence in Europe has not occurred randomly. The Moroccan state had a strong hand in carving itineraries from specific places to specific places depending on the region of origin of migrants and local circumstances. (de Haas, 2005: 9) Some parts of Morocco—such as the berber speaking Rif region—were notoriously rebellious to the sultan’s commands and continuously showed their overall discontent with conditions in Morocco. To combat dissidence, Morocco directed European nations to recruit there. International migration thus did not take place in a social-economic and political void, it was instrumental in curbing ethnic and political tensions in the country. Economic and social preconditions stemming from the legacy of colonialism heavily impacted the direction and nature of large scale out-migration. (de Haas, 2005:7) The living standards of migrants before departing also play a role; the duration of migration depends on whether migrants originate from rural or urban areas, whether the migrant is head of household, literate or illiterate, since migrants originating from rural area stay twice as long than urban migrants. (Sadiqi, Ennaji, 64) To understand the spatial organization of Moroccan residence in Europe it is thus crucial to take historical precedents into account.

Emigration in later decades continued via the paths that had previously been established as family and community networks emerged linking particular Moroccan areas to certain European destinations. In fact, “spontaneous settlement and informal recruitment has been more important numerically.” (de Haas, 2005:7) In 1976, just 13 % of Moroccans living in the Netherlands had migrated because they had been offered labor contracts from the Dutch state; 43 % had migrated through personal contacts, and 24% through direct recruitment by companies.” (de Haas, 2005:7; Shahid,1979:165)
Although residence in Europe was initially meant to be temporary, a majority of guestwork migrants stayed and were later joined by their families during the period 1973-1989. (de Haas, 2005:8) The context in which migration took place was significantly altered by several occurrences: the oil crisis of 1973, two failed *coup d’états* against King Hassan II, ensuing political repression in Morocco, and the restriction of immigration by Western European countries. While migrants themselves, sending country and receiving countries all assumed that migration would be circular, the reverse happened. Paradoxically, the recruitment stop and new barriers to enter Europe brought about permanent settlement and not re-migration. (de Haas, 2005: 8) Permanent migration was further spurred by family reunification. Family reunification, family formation, natural increase, undocumented migration and new labour migration combined to bring the Moroccan population in Europe up to around 3 million individuals. (de Haas, 2007: 7) The outcome of these consecutive decades of mass departure from Morocco, is that migration has become deeply “embedded in the repertoire of people’s behaviours, and the values associated with migration have become part of the community’s values. (Wissen, van der erf, heering: 325) Currently we still see that especially youngsters still consider migration as their way out and a key to success in life.

2.2 The Netherlands as an Immigration country

Given the Netherlands’ relative freedom and wealth, it has long been a haven for migrants and refugees.\(^1\) After the Second World War, however, the scope and nature of immigration changed entirely. With the independence of Indonesia in 1945, large numbers of Dutch-Indonesian repatriates arrived of whom more than half was Eurasian.\(^2\) The other large group from Indonesia were Moluccans who came to the Netherlands while the Dutch negotiated with Indonesia to allow an independent Moluccan state, but who were ultimately forced to create a life in the Netherlands as their ideal free republic remained a fiction. The Dutch colonial empire continued to unravel in the 1970’s, when Suriname declared its independence in 1975. Anticipating economic and political instability, a first wave of Surinamese chose to settle in the Netherlands and in 1980 a

\(^1\) [http://www.focus-migration.de/typo3_upload/groups/3/focus_Migration_Publikationen/Laenderprofile/CP11_Netherlands.pdf](http://www.focus-migration.de/typo3_upload/groups/3/focus_Migration_Publikationen/Laenderprofile/CP11_Netherlands.pdf)

\(^2\) Idem.
second wave arrived prior to the introduction of a mandatory visa. With the arrival of Dutch-Antilleans from the former colonies due to the deteriorating economic situation on the islands during the rest of the 80’s, Dutch society saw a large transformation.

It is in this context that Moroccan migrants arrived to the Netherlands. Like other European countries at that time, the Netherlands was still welcoming and actively recruiting post-war immigrants, as there was dire need for cheap labor to boost economic growth and to contribute to the rebuilding efforts. Following France and Belgium, the Dutch government signed a recruitment agreement with Morocco, Turkey, the former Yugoslavia and Southern European countries in 1969. At the same time that guestworkers from Spain and Portugal were remigrating back to their countries when these joined the EU, the Moroccan (and Turkish) population in the Netherlands was rapidly increasing due to family reunification, family formation and childbirth. The process of family reunification was initially opposed because of an existing housing crisis, but later family reunification regulations were loosened. Currently immigrants and their direct descendants constitute almost 20% of the total population, and in the big cities the percentage can reach up to half. There are about 349,000 Moroccans in the Netherlands, of which 167,305 are first generation Moroccans and 181,700 are second generation Moroccans. (www.cbs.nl) There are approximately 681 Moroccan organizations in the Netherlands and they consist predominantly of religious organizations. (approximately 171, or about 25%)

Chapter 3: National policies, political discourses and citizenship issues

3.1 Morocco and state-sponsored transnationalism
That the management of emigration– and the impact of emigration– can be on the daily agenda of many states is often ignored by discourse on migration management. (Gamlen, 2006:3) In scholarship, there is often the assumption that ‘diasporic management policies cluster around geopolitical peripheries’ and that “states using diasporic policies are poor:

3 Idem.
4 Idem.
5 Idem.
6 http://www.scp.nl/dsresource?objectid=20909&type=org
responding to inferior positions in an asymmetrical world system”. (Gamlen, 2006:3) Diasporic management discourse is quite varied and a typology has yet to be developed in order to perform comparative research on the way states choose to interact with their citizens abroad. On the one hand it is suggested that “diaporic engagement policies should not be seen as part of a unitary, coordinated state strategy”, thus the vacillation to use the term ‘policy’. (Gamlen, 2006:4) The second argument, is that “whether as state strategy or not, diaspora engagement policies (re)produce citizen-sovereign relationships’ and inherently transnationalize governmentality.” (Gamlen, 2006: 5) According to Gamlen, Foucault’s typology of power mechanisms, provides a good yardstick to gauge in which ways states are seeking to exercise control over their emigrant communities. On the one hand, ‘there is institution building that puts into place the “objective capacities” that make possible the exercise of power, while symbolic nation-building establishes a “relationship of communication”. (Gamlen, 2006, 6) The capacity of a country of origin to engage in diasporic management policies is first and foremost contingent on the existence of an “imagined or discursive cohesive transnational community, founded on the notion of a common national identity towards which policies can be directed.” (Gamlen, 2006:6) There are various ways through which states can connect with their communities abroad, i.e by actively mobilizing expatriates to advance interests, organizing conferences and conventions, educational programmes on home-state language and culture, celebration of national holidays and cultural events abroad. In this way, states have a influential hand in forging transnational public spheres and producing ‘communal mentalities’ and shared identities linked to the homeland. To create a governable community, discourse on belonging is essential. (Gamlen, 2006:7)

From the beginning of mass-scale emigration to Europe, the kingdom of Morocco send a clear message to its departing subjects to remain primarily committed to their country of birth. The political establishment after independence spurred on and facilitated emigration with the prospect of cultivating the experiences of nationals abroad and reaping economic benefits. (de Haas, 2007: 4) Yet, because of fear of political opposition from abroad, the Moroccan government severely condemned active political participation in host-society. To keep abreast on developments, it funded spying associations in friendly disguise known as ‘Les Amicales.’ The late King Hassan II also made direct
attempts to instruct citizens abroad. In the 1986 local elections in the Netherlands, he called for Moroccan citizens not to participate. (Bouras, 2010:21) In this regard the King made a clear statement that it opposed ‘adaptation’ to the Netherlands.

What’s interesting in the last two decades, however, is that ‘the nature of links’ between Moroccan individuals residing elsewhere and the state has shifted from one of control, towards active courtships in order to conserve a bond. (de Haas, 2007:4) This somewhat drastic change was a result of the realization on behalf of the Moroccan authorities that their emigrants were increasingly perceiving that the Moroccan state only had an eye out for their remittances. (de Haas, 2007:3) As such the relationship of Morocco with its citizens abroad did not start off too positively. The Moroccan state had expectations that a relationship with its emigrants would bring back new ‘ideas, attitudes, skills’ and that these individuals would be development actors. (de Haas, 2007:13) This expectation was not fulfilled; more structural changes were needed before involvement in terms of investment could be possible and the transfer of knowledge was ignored altogether. Paradoxically, the state did succeed in receiving a growing amount of remittances every year, and to keep this up it supported the building of networks of consulates, post offices and bank branches abroad and in Morocco. (de Haas, 2007:13) The state recorded an increase from $23 million in 1968 to $2 billion in 1990 in remittances, and in 1991 remittances represented 84.5 percent of the total amount of foreign investments, development aid, and private loans received by the country. (De Haas 2003)

By establishing several government offices next, such as Le Ministère de l’Émigration and Le Ministère chargé de la Communauté Marocaine à l’Étranger and other institutions, the Moroccan state continued to strengthen lines of communication. In 1990, King Hassan II established Le Fondation Hassan II pour les Marocains Résidant à l’étranger, an institution dedicated to helping Moroccans who reside abroad to overcome difficulties they were facing as a result of their emigration. It was a first mayor foundation to solely focus on further developing fundamental ties with individuals abroad. The organization is subdivided in several teams (education, cultural exchange, sport & youth, research) in order to provide a variety of services. A target group is
Moroccans in precarious living conditions; the organization provides legal advise and support to individuals, even with issues specifically related to the country of residence. Through *Opération Marahaba*, Morocco has labored to make transportation facilities better and entrance procedures flexiber, and has consequently been succesful in stimulating annual visits of its migrants back to Morocco as tourists. The state has also facilitated that residents abroad can follow Moroccan developments from the comfort of their homes with the establishment of public satellite channels, such as Al Maghribia ("the Moroccan"), a public satellite channel started in the early 2000’s with programs presented in Arabic, French, and Tamazight (Berber). They often have programs especially dedicated to citizens abroad. (de Haas, 2007: 25)

In December 2007, King Mohammed VI produced a Royal Dahir in which he sets up *Le Conseil Consultative de la Communauté Marocaine à l’étranger* or Council for the Moroccan community Abroad, known as CCME. This ‘transnational’ consultative organization, was brought to life to assess how to best capitalize on the relationship with the different communities abroad. In the Royal Decree creating CCME, his majesty dictates that:

“the kingdom has always attached the utmost importance to ensuring that Moroccan nationals, wherever they may be, exercise all rights and obligations inherent in their citizenship,” and that “in keeping with the kingdom’s commitment to enhance the strong ties binding its citizens, an efficient institution with the ability to perform different tasks such as to conduct consultations and to help shape policies related to immigration and Moroccan expatriates affairs will be created.”

The Council shall have a mandate to give its opinion on basic trends and general policies aimed at enabling Moroccan expatriates to remain committed to their Moroccan identity, encouraging Moroccan expatriates to join institutions get involved in various areas of national activity. Although the name of the Council speaks of ‘a community’ abroad, the President of the Council personally clarified that as a first step, the Council is actually trying to increase awareness that there are Moroccan *communities* abroad.

In the comparative research of various countries diasporic engagement policies assembled by Gamlen, Morocco seems to be quite far along in terms of symbolic capacity building and institution building. The state grants nationals abroad civil and social rights (some welfare protection and tourism services), and is considering
complementing these with extensive political rights since various scholars in migration research have argued that complete membership in home-society have a positive impact on transnational activity. (Itzigsohn 2000, Goldring 1998 cited by Gamlen, 2006:10) Morocco’s specific diaspora engagement policies have been quite succesful because they have also been instituted with more general political and economic reforms, which have improved civil liberties and secured more macro-economic stability. (de Haas, 2007:48)

3.2 The king’s faithful subjects

Following Foucault’s classification, Gamlen asserts that “if institution building aims to construct objective capacities to realize relations of power, and symbolic nation-building policies aim to produce a relationship of communication, the extension of rights and the extraction of obligations– the transnationalization of citizenship– constitutes ‘finalized activities’, or ‘specific effects’ of the exercise of power.” (Foucault 1982 cited by Gamlen, 2006: 10) One of the ways in which Morocco has been succesful in ‘exporting its sovereignty abroad’ is through its citizenship policy. The Moroccan nationality cannot be discarded and is unquestionably transferred generationally. The national ideology embraces the king’s role as the uncontested ‘Commander of the Faithful’ and addresses all people of Moroccan descent as subjects. In fact, by not allowing the renunciation of citizenship, the Kingdom claims loyalty to God, country and the King. (Bouras, 2010:11) The kingdom ipso facto uses ‘subject-making’ procedures that precede legal residence, and surpasses naturalized citizenship based on the civic model.” (Ong 1996; Hardt and Negri 2000 cited by Gamlen, 2006:11)

During the anniversary of the 32nd Green March Day, His Mayesty Mohammed VI affirmed the following in his official speech;

“The democratic, development-oriented process I am spearheading requires the participation of all Moroccans, wherever they may be, in a spirit of strong commitment to our national identity and to responsible citizenship. My regular field visits and my tireless efforts to make sure my citizens at home enjoy a dignified life are equaled only by the special importance I attach to the conditions of our beloved fellow citizens who live abroad. I am keen to help them fulfill their legitimate aspirations and to strengthen the bonds they have with the homeland, especially family
bonds and spiritual and cultural ties. A gradual, comprehensive approach will be adopted to ensure their full-fledged, democratic participation in all aspects of public life, and to defend their rights and dignity in their host country.”

The official discourse of Morocco conveys that its borders lie where its citizens are. This ideology of inalienability of citizenship is built, as heard in the His Majesty’s speech, on cultural, religious and personal domains. This is not just the opinion of the political elite, most people in Morocco share this presumption. Although there has been increasing talk on what it means to be a (good) Moroccan, and what should be conditions for citizenship, there are very few voices proposing a different scenario. Related to the matter of foreign-born Moroccans, scholars in transnational research have often wondered if transnational processes will continue with the second generation or if they will wither away. Well aware of this threatening possibility, the Moroccan state has appointed the CCME with the task to explore the best way to reach out to second-generation Moroccans. In a first attempt to realize this objective, the CCME organized the first Forum of Moroccan Youths of the World in July of this year. In the press release for the forum, the Council mentions “from now onward, the Moroccan young generations abroad, mainly in the old immigration countries such as France, Belgium, and The Netherlands, are likely to hold important positions among all Moroccans in the world.” (www.CCME.ma.org) The purpose of the forum was to better know “the young generations of Moroccans with their plural life and aspirations –explicitly mentioning mixed marriages as one of the factors making matters more complex- in order to assess what realistic and concrete policies can be proposed to help Moroccan youth living overseas to establish a strong relationship at the institutional, social and cultural level.” (www.CCME.ma.org) The forum was set up as a platform for an exchange of ideas, to provide space to assess the diversity of skills and to facilitate an exchange of expertise and experiences among Moroccan youths active in different fields locally and globally. It was also organized to inform, “what the criteria and fields are that would enable Morocco (both at the level of government and civil society) to positively intervene while taking into consideration the question of dual belonging of the young generations.” (www.CCME.ma.org) The press release also includes the powerful statement that ”no country
can give up its youth even if they live out of its borders and are naturalized”. Although this statement fits into Morocco’s discourse on sovereignty, it basically ignores the opinions and desires of foreign born Moroccan youth on whether they would like to engage with the country their parents were born in or not. When it comes to the second- and third generations, de Haas argues that ‘transnationalized citizenship’ can result in conflicting sovereignty claims. (de Haas, 2007) This in part has been the case with second generation Moroccan Dutch nationals. In 2004, the Dutch government requested Morocco to stop the automatic transfer of citizenship, and in 2005 the request was reformulated requesting that 3rd generation Moroccans be enabled to renounce Moroccan citizenship. Both requests were refused by the Moroccan state. (de Haas, 2007:46)

The phenomenon of Islam as a transnational public space is one that encompasses migration but also extends beyond it. Bowen argues that “transnational Islam creates and implies the existence and legitimacy of a global public space of normative reference and debate, and that this public space cannot be reduced to a dimension of migration or of transnational religious movements.”(Bowen, 2004:879) The Moroccan state has had its own way of transnationalizing Islam. It has been working through the Ministry of Islamic Affairs and through the Fondation Hassan II to answer the needs of Moroccans abroad and of securing that Moroccans residing outside of the national borders maintain their Maliki roots and do not turn to fanaticism and extremism. It has done so through the sending of money and imams, and continues to train imams abroad. In her research on Moroccan women and transnationalism, Ruba Salih, finds that Islam is not the universalist project its presented as, neither can it be clearly separated from the private sphere. (Salih, 2003:145) Islam is a political and public subject of discussion which opposes several constituencies in several countries.

3.3 The evolution of Dutch minority policy

Due to the global economic enterprises of the previous Dutch empires, the country was open very early to outside influences, and many people see the Dutch standard of tolerance as stemming from this historical necessity to accommodate various ideologies, religions, cultures and ways of living. To circumvent clashes and to ensure the collective well being of the country, the Dutch resorted to the model of pillarization,
which organized society ‘vertically’ into different segments (or groups), notably The Catholics, Protestants, Socialists and Liberals. Individuals converged around the ideological pillar of their choice, and had access to their own institutions, organizations, schools, media outlets and trade unions. As such “class-based and religious cleavages” were bridged through a system of politics by accommodation, using concessions and compromise to reach agreements.  

Starting the 1960’s the situation changed rapidly as society integrated as a result of growing secularization and as other political and social orientations emerged. Nevertheless, given the appeared success of this vertical structuring of society based on a mosaic vision of convivance, ‘pillarization’ served as the blueprint for the ethnic minority and ‘integration’ policy to be devised later on. Not surprisingly then, the Dutch went on to endorse the multiculturalist project, since it in many ways resembled the pillarist approach. (Scholten, Holzhacker, 2009: 82)

The first versions of minority policy designed by the Dutch government in the early 1980’s encouraged new immigrant groups to maintain their own cultures, to start their own organizations, media outlets and places of worship; practically to start their own pillar. Additionally, government financing was provided to ensure educational provisions according to language and culture. (Vasta, 2006:5) Both political consensus and scientific research supported the notion that to aid the emancipation of ethnic minorities and increase individual socio-economic participation, group structures and cultural identity formation had to be supported. (Scholten, Holzhacker 2009: 82) Via the policy of “Onderwijs in Eigen Taal and Cultuur”, the government financed Islamic schooling in Arabic for the children of Muslim guestworkers. As Nadia Bouras mentions in her paper, “shifting meanings of transnationalism: analysing academic and political discourse on contacts, with a case study on Moroccan migrants in the Netherlands (1965-2000), one of the Dutch government’s central policies in the 70’s was to subsidize organizations of ethnic minorities. (Bouras, 2010:18) This was the result of a genuine belief in the multicultural trajectory at that time, but it was also because it was thought that organizations of migrants would better know their own concerns. The Netherlands embraced the pluralist perspective and the idea that by “maintaining group- specific facilities, the social and cultural emancipation of groups would be enhanced which would

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benefit individual social and economic participation.” (Bouras, 2010:19) This way the government could also hold “communities responsible for the acts of individuals”. (Proceedings Lower House through Bouras, 2010:19) The outcome was that these organizations –acting as middle man between state and individual–, served to strengthen ethnic and cultural identity and group integrity. (Vasta, 2006:5)

Soon the size of migration flows as the nature and diversity of these flows called for more reflection on the Netherlands as an immigration country. In 1979, the Scientific Council of Government Policy advised that it was about time the Netherlands instituted policy that dealt with the permanent settlement of these migrants. The result was the formulation of the Ethnic Minorities Policy of 1983, which led to the implementation of several legal-political, socio-economic, and cultural policies with the aim of conceding equal rights to ethnic groups. A new citizenship law was passed in 1985– replacing the old one of 1892– that facilitated granting Dutch-born children of migrants between the ages of 18-25 citizenship. Having flexibler naturalization procedures was a deliberate policy of the government to level the playing field, and to subsequently reach better ‘integration’.Labour market programmes, special training courses and education programmes were all developed to bring minority groups up to par in terms of access to jobs and education. (Vasta, 2006:6) Significant consideration was also given to Islam as a new force of influence. There was awareness that the ‘institutional framework of immigrants differed from the customary organisation of church-state separation. The Dutch state still insisted on not intervening in religious affairs, but proposed to increase the training of imams in the Netherlands.

Still, ten years later indications were that these aims had not been achieved; minorities’ labour market performance trailed behind ‘natives’, educational achievement was poor and socio-spatial segregation threatened to become the norm. Attention in the 1990’s suddenly shifted to stressing the individual responsibility to “familiarize with Dutch language, culture and society”. (Vasta, 2006:7) The 1998 Civic Integration of Minorities Act made this trend compulsory. The diversion from previous approaches was quite radical. Individuals from minority groups had to learn Dutch or face possible sanctions, and would have to turn to mainstream– no longer ‘ethno-specific’ – services.

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8 [http://www.focus-migration.de.typo3_upload/groups/3/focus_Migration_Publikationen/Laenderprofile](http://www.focus-migration.de.typo3_upload/groups/3/focus_Migration_Publikationen/Laenderprofile)
(Vasta, 2006:7) After the millennium, the parameters of political and public debate changed entirely as a consequence of local and global events. Rising public disapproval of what appeared to be the failure of individuals of minority background to find their way in Dutch society gave the political establishment leaning to the right a license to drive an anti-immigrant and anti-asylum agenda. The Netherlands became the first country to demand immigrants to pass a pre-arrival Civic Integration test (Preparation Abroad), in which they test prospective newcomers on knowledge of Dutch language and culture.

(Alternative voices, 2010:56) More recently, it has increased the income and age requirements in a deliberate attempt to restrain migration, specifically family formation trends under the second generation. This trend is seen as undermining all efforts. The Netherlands reversal on immigration and minority policy might be the most dramatic in the EU, and it is both acknowledged and resisted by Moroccan-Dutch citizens.

3.4 The Politics of integration and the culturalization of citizenship

For long the perception was that given the Netherlands’ experience with consensual politics, institutional structures were already in place to accommodate minorities. As immigration from different parts of the globe to the Netherlands continued, and as families of guest workers became more visible in Dutch society as a result of family reunification procedures, the public became more aware of the permanent presence of the immigrants they had previously viewed as temporary visitors. Concerns arose on how to maximize benefits of immigration both for Dutch society and the newcomers themselves. (Scientific Council for government policy, 2001:5) Attention suddenly turned to these ‘ethnic’ minorities, their position within society and what to do with the changing national makeup. As soon as it became clear that the Dutch socio-ethnic landscape had permanently changed, it was not long before ‘the immigration issue’ became politicized in the public and political arena.

One of the key people to bring the ‘integration’ debate to the forefront of political concerns at the beginning of the ‘90’s was VVD- leader Frits Bolkestein. In fact, he would have a heavy hand in framing what integration would come to mean in the following decades. To clarify, the term integration as used by the Dutch should not be

9Dutch policies use ‘ethnic’ qualifications to classify minority data, i.e Western/ non-Western
confused with integration “referring to the process of mutual accommodation between majority and minority groups.” (Rodríguez García 2006). In actuality what is implied in the Netherlands is assimilation (or acculturation), and it is precisely this notion of assimilating to majority culture, that Bolkestein raised in 1991. In an article in one of the most widespread read newspapers De Volkskrant he wrote that ‘integration of minorities must be tackled strongly’.\(^{10}\) He was very critical of the policies enacted during the previous decade, which he saw as “too liberal and too culturally relativistic”.

(Fermin, 1997: 1) He expressed that migrants should no longer focus on keeping their identity, but on ‘integrating’ into larger society. He was also among the first to explicitly mentions Islam as a potential threat to social cohesion and to European fundamentals of society. Though previously other politicians (Ruud Lubbers in 1990) hinted at a different approach to minority policies, it was Bolkestein’s invitation to have an open debate on integration that was accepted by other political parties. Political consensus of the 80’s that supported multiculturalism, appeared a thing of the past. In the end of the 1990’s, public discourse became more inflammatory. Well known journalist Paul Scheffer gained everyone’s attention with his book ‘the multicultural drama’, in which he claims that the Dutch have been to generous towards immigrants by not insisting that they learn Dutch language, culture and history. (Vasta, 2006: 1)

The most influential political rhetoric on the issue of integration however, came from Pim Fortuyn. During his run for elections in 2002, he launched an effective offensive against liberal policies that had not led to ‘integration’ and propagated the argument that Islam was an obstacle in the path towards ‘integration’. His statements further molded public consciousness towards the idea that there was huge problem with ‘integration’, that social cohesion was severely threatened and that a clash of civilizations was imminent. (Scholten, Holzhacker, 2009: 82) Pim Fortuyn’s murder shocked Dutch society profoundly. Two years later, the killing of filmmaker Theo van Gogh, this time by a Dutch-Moroccan Islamic radical, caused another mayor societal upheaval.

Subsequent the murders of Fortuyn and Van Gogh, discursive developments went on to suggest ways of “conceiving of immigration, integration, and security that were

\(^{10}\) my translation.
radically new for the Netherlands — a difference that far-right populist politicians like Wilders and Rita Verdonk repeatedly emphasized in terms of — honesty.” (Hajer, Versteeg, 2009:3) Directly after the murder, Integration Minister Rita Verdonk placed the violent acts of the killer Mohammed B. into the cadre of Islam, framing the religion as backward and violent. (Hajer, Versteeg, 2009:3) At present, there is a continuation of this anti-immigrant, anti-Islam and pro-nationalist trend by Geert Wilders and his populist Party of Freedom. Following victory in municipal elections in March 2010, he declared “We’re going to take the Netherlands back from the leftist elite that coddles criminals and supports Islamisation (and) still believes in multiculturalism.” (Hajer, Versteeg, 2009:3) Wilders has advocated for a complete halt to immigration from Muslim countries, stopping the building of mosques and deportation of criminal youths with dual nationality.’ (Alternative voices, 2010:52)

The change in discourse on migrants and minorities over these last two decades, represents the surge of dominant normativity that is seeking for cultural explanations for the marginalized situation of minorities. The hegemonic image that is influencing the national mindset is that the ideal society is homogeneous, so that the presence of minority groups and diversity itself is problematized and abnormalized. (Fermin, 1997: 8) Consequently, the perception of an increasing “uncomfortable” diversity has lead to growing mistrust and even outright hostility towards minorities in the Netherlands. Even though reports show that integration has been relatively succesful, and is improving for many groups, certain discourses and policies create a different idea and undermines the efforts of immigrants to feel as if they belong. Popular debates stereotype Moroccan youth as the perpetrators of crime and the media’s use of racialized terms has added fuel to the fire. (Alternative voices, 2010: 56) Eventhough youth involved in criminal activities are often born in the Netherlands, in media publications they are only referred to as Moroccans. As a result, many people in the Netherlands still see Dutch-born youth from immigrant heritage as outsiders. (Alternative Voices, 2010:56) Dutch society largely perceives that Moroccans fail to integrate because they are unwilling to let go of their ethnic identity. (Emma van den Hout, 2006: 2) It is true that most Moroccan immigrants and their offspring self-consciously preserve a distinct identity. But scientific evidence has also shown that non-acceptance and/or social
exclusion from larger population and social institutions can push individuals to do so. (Vasta, 2006:18)

Even before research on transnationalism commenced, scholarship on Moroccan presence in Dutch society brought to the fore the troublesome aspects of their residence in the Netherlands. Several Dutch authors that studied Moroccan migrants referred to ‘social and financial commitments towards families left behind in Morocco’ and the resulting position between ‘two worlds’ as a barrier to assimilation. (Bouras, 2010:3) Dutch politicians are becoming more and more critical of transnational links with home country. Last year, the Minister of Integration wrote in his Integration Memorandum that it “gives him ‘an uneasy feeling’ when Moroccans and Turks live in rented houses in disadvantaged neighbourhoods, while they own houses in their countries of origin.” (Trouw, 14 November 2009 cited by Bouras, 2010: 30) According to Bouras, the implicit message is that migrants and their children should choose for the country they settled in”. (Bouras, 2010:2)

Whereas conventional definitions of citizenship primarily rests on membership in a political community, there is increasing tendencies in several European states, including the Netherlands, to accentuate cultural particularities as a precondition to citizenship. Growing importance is attributed to recognition of national and cultural heritage, loyalty, language and feeling at home. There is significant contestation of dual nationality, which *de facto* relates to transnationalism. This coincides with Kastoryano’s reasoning *In Citizenship, Nationhood, and Non-Territoriality: Transnational Participation in Europe*, that despite dual citizenship and the encouragement of transnational activity by the very nature of the European Union, the demand for “equal recognition as citizens remains within the framework of the legitimacy of the state of residence and citizenship.” (Kastoryano, 2005: 693) As we have seen in the Netherlands, legitimacy is increasingly shifting in support of cultural arguments. This cultural framing of migrants tells us more about the Netherlands ‘self-conception’, than about the migrants within its borders.
Chapter 4: Transnationality at the crossroads: perspectives from the Netherlands and Morocco

The lives of migrants engaged in transnationalism are defined by complexity and multiplicity. This complexity arises as they try to make sense of their own presence in Dutch society, their connection with Morocco and Moroccans worldwide, but also as a result of discourses that surrounds them. By questioning my participants on several topics I tried to see whether their identities and activities transcend their place of residence to include their place of descendence. At the suggestion of Appadurai, the emphasis will be on the ‘lived local experience’ of my interviewees, since it is not the flow of different things that is significant, but the meaning that is attached to them by the people.

4.1 The individuals: Between Agadir and Amsterdam
On a chilly Friday night in October, I met my first interviewees in West-Amsterdam. They were four Moroccan friends from Agadir, by the names of Aziz, Karim, Mohammed and Taib.

Aziz was born in Agadir and lived in Morocco until he finished high school at 20. In 1984, he left for France and stayed there for 4 months. He went to the Netherlands on a trip from Brussels with fellow students, and there is where he has been residing ever since. He stayed because his visa didn’t allow him to continue to Germany or Scandinavia, where he ultimately wanted to go to work in the hotel business. Once in the Netherlands, he went to work in the flower industry, where a lot of other migrants were working.

Mohammed first left for Tunisia in 1991. During that period people were emigrating more eagerly. After being denied a visa for France twice, he took another path through Tunisia, Czech Republic, Germany until he got to France, where his two brother were living. A short stop in the Netherlands to visit friends turned into his end stop. After two weeks in Amsterdam, his friends helped him get a job in the restaurant industry. After 1 year, he married a Dutch woman and now he has two kids.

Taib packed up and left abruptly to France when he was 30, but he did not spend much time there. He soon met a Dutch woman and moved to the Netherlands to live with
her and to study electrical engineering. Although their union did not work out, he stayed there.

Karim had initially left for France, with a plan to later visit a friend in Germany. Like with the others, the Netherlands was not the end choice at the onset. After 2 weeks in France and 3 weeks in Germany, he got a visa to the Netherlands. In less than a year, he met his future wife.

The only two women I was able to interview were Hajat and Jia. Hajat is the neighbour of one of my best friends, who I had met once this past summer. She is 25, works in a clothing store and has lived all her life in The Netherlands. Her parents’ roots are in Tanger, a place she knows through stories and family vacations. Jia is the girlfriend of a friend of mine, who I only got to speak to through phone for a couple of questions. Her parents live are commuters between Marrakech and the Netherlands, so Jia visits at least once a year.

During a two day visit in Berkane I got in contact with Mr. Yousfi, and Mr. N and his son M. through SSR, a Dutch organization that aids remigrants with legal issues. Mr. Yousfi was born in Algeria in the 1950’s. When he was younger he used to work as the driver of the ‘qaid’, a prestigious job for his age at that time. He first moved to Paris and later received French nationality. He started a relationship with a Dutch woman and moved to the Netherlands. He remigrated back to Morocco about two years ago with his Dutch wife, but all his children still live in the Netherlands. Mr. N. moved to the Netherlands at the request of friends and ended up spending twenty years there, he has two children in the Netherlands. I had a chance to speak to his son who was in Berkane to celebrate Eid-El Kebir with the family.

4.2 Identity, Belonging and Culture

It was interesting to see the different answers of my informants when describing themselves as having a Moroccan, Dutch or Moroccan-Dutch identity. Aziz, Karim, Mohammed and Taib primarily described themselves as being Moroccan. They were born and raised in Morocco and all came to the Netherlands at an older age, so that has had an impact on their lived experience. I also think the siting of the interview played a large role. Vis-à-vis the rest of the Dutch community, their Moroccan identity stands out.
The case would have been different had they had been in Morocco maybe. This explains why Mr. Yousfi, for example, fully embraced being Dutch even though he is a remigrant. Mr. N on the other hand stated that he feels equally Dutch and Moroccan: “I lived there for 20 years. I learned so much there, I grew so much there, so the relationship stays. I feel at home there too”. The three respondents that were born in the Netherlands, Hajat, Jia and Mr. N’s son also all called themselves Moroccan-Dutch. Mr. N’s son, who was on vacation in Berkane for Eid, added that “I have received fundamental life values from both Dutch society as from my Moroccan background, I am not one without the other”. Jia explicated that she still feels very close to Moroccan culture which makes her feel Moroccan.

As Ruba Salih suggested in her book, *Gender in Transnationalism* (2003), it is important to understand how ‘shared cultural or social identities are contructed and decontructed by migrants themselves’. Identity for my respondents seems to be equated with something you feel inside or something that others attach to you. Under identity is mainly understood, a way of being that relates to your environments, to practices you adhere to and to particular beliefs you may have. Mohammed for example mentions that he has observed certain characteristics of Dutch conduct and has always thought to himself “that doesn’t go with me, that is not for me”. In the same way he believes that “there are elements of Moroccan culture that will not leave me”. When I asked him for examples, he gave the example of hospitality, of respect for elders and family. So difference from ‘others’ play a role in identification but so is choice of cultural and social activities. The three second-generation Moroccans I interviewed see the gap between being Dutch and Moroccan as really large, but they are neither just one or the other. In order to include all aspects of their lives, they see the need for a dual identification with an imaginable transnational community. To sum up, the identity of an individual that has migrated is subjective and flux, affected by generation, coming of age, sense of belonging and history of interaction with host society. If a person’s identity is often derived from membership in a social, ethnic, religious or cultural group and from the emotional significance invested in this membership, migrants and their descendants often have multiple identities or plural allegainces to different groups; they engage in processes of seeking collectivity and inclusion into different communities through indirect or direct
participation.

Eventhough these subjects were are living in the Netherlands, what people would think about them in Morocco was never far of their minds. Taib speaks about how he has struggled with that. “That notion of worrying about what people think of you and what they are going to say is something that is part of the Moroccan mentality”. People that have migrated or come form migrant background could also see themselves as part of a ‘transnational communities on the basis of a shared history, traditions and values. (Kivisto, 2003: 14) Identities are seen to be generated in, and constructed through, a kind of internal (self-attributed ) and external (other-ascribed) dialectic conditioned within specific social worlds. This holds for both personal and collective identities, which should be understood as always closely entangled with each other  (Vertovec, 2001:577)

At times of cultural events and special holidays, that is when most people felt like they were closes to their Moroccan identity. All of the gentlemen I interviewed agreed that the celebrations of specific holidays was very different living in the Netherlands than in Morocco. Aziz shares that “When I went back after 26 years during Ramadan, I was surprised at the atmosphere, the sharing, people all eating at the same time, and then is when I realized how different it is to celebrate in The Netherlands.” According to Karim it is harder to follow the prescriptions, he joked on how he constantly has to repeat that he is doing Ramadan to his colleagues offering coffee. Aziz invoked how people ask him jokingly about how his ‘hunger strike” is going. Mohammed said that the experience has drastically improved, however, and that they can increasingly approximate the ‘authentic experience’, the one they would presumably have in Morocco. “Before you had to look hard to find the right butcher, and stand in line. Now I don’t have to make special arrangement to find a sheep”, said Mohammed. These occurrences also have an effect on people sense of belonging.

When I asked my participants about when they started to feel at ‘home’ in the Netherlands, all men were quick to point how complex it actually is to label one place home. Aziz tells me that he believes he started feeling at ‘home’ when he achieved some personal milestones: “When I had a family life of my own, that’s when I started feeling at home. My relationship, my children, they make me feel at home. You get it suddenly, you don’t notice when it happens but it comes to you.” Karim reiterated that thought: “All of
sudden you realize it. For example, you are driving back from Germany and you see the border sign that says the Netherlands, and without reflection you that relief associated with arriving home. And that’s when you say, Oh, I feel at home there! It takes a long time before you get that feeling”. Trying to feel at home is not something they made an effort to do.

Mohammed mentions that when he arrived his thoughts were only on his mission of making a living in Europe and on achieving stability first. He did say that he started feeling more at ease in The Netherlands when he accomplished some personal and professional goals. This pressure to achieve a level of success was also an outcome of transnational concerns; primarily the concern of helping your family. Karim painted a clear picture: “It is as if you are a tree and you plant yourself somewhere. You have to cultivate yourself and wait a couple of years until you start growing. When you ultimately feel as if you are well planted and you can bear fruit, then you have to start sharing the fruits with your family back in Morocco.” This is a great example of how belonging is mediated between discourses, institutions and subjects (Davids and van driel cited by de Bree, 48 2005:5) Karim, for example, started to feel at home after approximately 5 years; “When you speak the language, you understand people and then you can defend yourself.” The identities of my respondents play out and position them in the course of their everyday lives within and across each of their places of attachment or perceived belonging, since their feelings of belonging are non-static and non-fixed.

4.3 Transnational contacts: the role of friends and families

Except for Aziz and Mr.Yousfi, all other men who migrated knew a friend or a family member in Europe. Karim stated that, “You go where your friends are”, so going to Europe had been a certainty for him. Having a network that could provide moral support while preparing for the journey was important, but it was especially on arrival in the country of destination, in this case The Netherlands. Karim arrived in Amsterdam around the same time as Taib did and they became close friends; “We were lucky to find each other” they shared. Aziz mentions that, “We make friends among us. If you tell them you have just arrived, people will give you information or money; there was plenty of support. My experience is that after when you want to give back people will tell you to
pass it on.” Mohammed also said that it was crucial knowing people with paperwork that were able to help him. The existence of networks creates a transnational public sphere that connects individuals in Morocco with Moroccans abroad, but also that binds Moroccans residing in the same country. The importance of family also has a role in maintaining transnational links with Morocco. “Keeping a relationship with your mother in Morocco is a must,” expresses Taib. In his opinion, this is contrarily to the Dutch who do not feel the need to place family at the core of their lives. The responsibility to keep family links influences the decision of my Moroccan-Dutch interviewees in the Netherlands, to visit Morocco as often as possible.

However, Technological advances are changing the way individuals connect with people in their network. Aziz says that “A couple of years ago, I couldn’t reach my mother. I had to call a shop or a butcher in Morocco. That message would take perhaps a day or two to reach her. Now, I pick up my phone and in two minutes I have her on the line and I can speak to her for hours. We can even speak about what was on tv yesterday.” A better example could not have been given to illustrate how mass international communication has transformed the meaning of place. The basis for the emergence of transnationalism on a mass scale, was availability of air transport, long distance telephone, fax, electronic mail form. “The greater the access of an immigrant group to space-and time compressing technology, the greater the frequency and scope of transnational activity. “ (Glick Schiller et al, 1994:224) In Aziz’ personal experience, this meant that he felt less like an emigrant. He even puts it in historical perspective: “Before on Sundays, from 7-7.15 you had 15 minutes of news for Moroccans on Dutch channels such as Nederland 1. I remember tuning in cause it was the only thing I could understand.. that is the way I could finally get some news. Now with satellite tv, I don’t feel like an emigrant..I have access to so much.” This access is what creates new relationships and uproots old ones. Hajat commented that she always chats with cousins in Morocco, so that when she goes back she doesn’t have to feel as if part of some of her familymembers are strangers.
4.4 Transnational Livelihood strategies

When I met with Mr. Yousfi, he had been back in Morocco for 2 years. He had spend 28 years in the Netherlands and was married to a Dutch woman. Nevertheless, it seems that through yearly visits and investments in property Mr. Yousfi, kept effective ties with Morocco. In 1980, he built a house in Berkane, where he spent his childhood. Almost twenty years after he had another house built in Saidia, where he currently lives with his wife. Mr. Yousfi relied on what Salih calls ‘transnational livelihood strategies that stretches resources and social status to country of origin’. (Salih, 2003:67) Transnational strategies can also be used as security. When things were not going so well in the Netherlands for Mr. Yousfi, the option of return was readily available. A crucial motivation to return were thus pull factors related to transnational belonging. The desire to engage in transnational practices in order to live more fulfilled lives can be a result of a continued transnationals consciousness. However, this does not necessarily translate into being part of transnational community of Moroccans in The Netherlands. For Mr. Yousfi, engaging with other Moroccans in the Netherlands was never a priority.

4.5 The Second Generation in the Netherlands

When I asked Hajat about what she thinks of the way Moroccans are portrayed in the Netherlands, she immediately states that it has made her more insecure. “It doesn’t affect me all the time of course, but sometimes it does. Even though I was born and raised here, I can feel insecure in certain surroundings, like when I am only surrounded by Dutch people, I feel as if I have to prove myself. I start worrying about what they might think of me, sometimes I start paying attention to how I speak.” I thought the mentioning of speech very interesting in Hajat’s case. A very politicized issue has been the bad command that immigrants have of the Dutch language. On whether feeling different has meant feeling more Moroccan she answers that she thinks it certainly has. She asserts that it has led her to identify more and more with a transnational community of Moroccans. ”When I am with my family and among other Moroccans, I feel like more myself.” The feeling of being more Moroccan in the Netherlands, and her conscious seeking of contact with Moroccans places Hajat in the middle of a transnational social space. The self-questioning on identity and belonging, besides being a process mediated by outside
influences, remains something private. Though one must be careful not to make generalization, my expectation is that like Hajat, many more second generation Dutch are feeling this way. The contrarily, that second or third generations would completely disregard their Moroccan descendence could also be the case. The Central Bureau for Statistics performed a quantitative research to find out why Moroccan youth do not want to move to Morocco. The three main reasons were “I like it here” “I see no future in country of origin”; “I have no connection with country of origin”.

Interesting to note is the opinions of my older respondents on the position of the next generations. Aziz states that he really feels bad for the dilemma that Moroccan youth are facing in the Netherlands. According to him, they are facing an identity crisis as a result of being in two cultures. He even mentions the example of his own children. Other people consistently tell these kids that they are Moroccan, but they don’t know necessarily what it means to be Moroccan. “They start asking why people notice that they are different.” Mr. Yousfi felt entirely ‘Dutch’ during his time there, he owned two café’s, married a Dutch woman, but still shares that his 19 year old son “Always felt a bit out of place..he always felt a bit more Moroccan.” Children of Moroccan migrants are shoved an identity that they are not sure if they should be proud of, given what they hear and see around them about Moroccans. The participants that I interviewed who were born in Morocco, but whose children are born in the Netherlands also shared the insight with me that they do think that their children will consider themselves primarily as Dutch persons. Mohammed mentions that, “Ultimately our education was completely different then theirs.” Karim also believes that his children mostly see Morocco as a vacation country. Although it is documented that children often push their families to seek for social recognition in countries of residence, my respondents also affirmed that their children seek to know more about Morocco as a way to be able to feel connected to their parents or grandparents.

4.6 Dual Citizenship

The question of citizenship opens the way to ‘negotiations of identities between states and immigrants’ (Kastoryano 2002). Having dual citizenship opens up an avenue for increased transnational activity. However, citizenship also has meaning on its own and relates to feelings of being at home. Mohammed gives an interesting opinion on having Moroccan citizenship: “Even if you don’t use your Moroccan paspoort, you can keep it in corner in the closet, but you won’t do away with it. It is just a piece of paper, but from inside it feels different.” To Aziz, Karim, Mohammed and Taib, the Moroccan paspoort is more valuable than the Dutch passport, and if they would have to choose they would all choose for the former. Aziz states that he thinks the king has done well to insist that Moroccan keep dual citizenship. He believes that the Netherlands should not pressure Morocco to give up on its citizens. “I don’t like that the Netherlands puts systematic pressure to choose between one or the other, I don’t like the way the Netherlands is bullying Morocco.” Aziz fervently believes that the Moroccan nationality is something to be proud of; “You don’t get a Moroccan nationality easy if you are a foreigner.”

It appears that most of my interviewees did not perceive having dual citizenship as a ‘loyalty’ matter; they all had built relatively successful lives in the Netherlands in spite of the fact that they passionately embraced being Moroccan, and what that meant in the eyes of the host-society.

When I asked Mr. N about how he feels on not being able to lose his Moroccan citizenship, he reiterated what Aziz had posited. He is glad he was able to keep his Moroccan nationality, and states that the Moroccan nationality is something to be proud of. Perhaps more surprisingly, so did his son, who was born in the Netherlands. He completely agreed with his father and stated that having dual citizenship, and dual identities equaled being ‘richer’. He expressed that, “The richness I have received, nobody can take that from me.” On the other hand receiving a Dutch passport after 3 years in the Netherlands, did play a role in making the majority of them feel at home in the Netherlands. For Karim, it meant that, “When you get a Dutch paspoort, then you feel a bit Dutch, cause you rights like the others.”
4.7 To integrate or not to integrate?
According to Mr. Yousfi, “Living in a country does have an effect on you. For the sake of living a better, more inclusive life, you do have to learn and know something about the country you are living in.” On the one hand, my Moroccan-Dutch respondents found that their religion and culture keeps them connected to Morocco, but on the other hand they also thought that this makes it more difficult for them to be considered as full citizens in the Netherlands, a topic that Mr. N touched on. When I asked Karim whether a strong bond with Morocco could be an obstacle to integration, he said that what he does believe to be a barrier to integration is the attitudes of the Dutch themselves. He spoke about how he often experiences stigmatization. “For us to integrate, the Dutch also have to become blind to ethnicity, cause the first thing they see is your appearance, I am still judged by that. I will never look Dutch, so I don’t think I can escape that.” Karim points out to the process of ‘othering’ that takes place on a daily basis in the Netherlands. He does not have Dutch appearance and sees that as a permanent obstacle in other’s identification of him as a Dutch person. The question that appears to be unanswered to my interviewees—despite Dutch politicians’ consistent use of the term— is what does ‘integration’ really mean? The experience of feeling ‘integrated’ is there, but the other sentiment is that others in Dutch society are always questioning and measuring to what degree you are ‘integrated’.

4.8 State-sponsored Moroccan Transnationalism: a reality?
Of all my informants Aziz was the most outspoken and positive on the role of Moroccan institutions in allowing and encouraging transnational activity. “It matters a lot that Morocco does so much to welcome us. I am proud of that. We are superior than other immigrants in the world, because of that bond we have with our country, Morocco. It is not just the passport, we are different, we have something more.” You can’t compare us with Surinamese, or even the Algerians. Morocco has something special that other countries do not have. He talks about how happy he is that a huge step forward has been made. We have been working at it hard this past 10 years. What stuck out to me, is that when I asked him about whether Morocco’s direct involvement had an impact on his life he answered using plural: Yes, we are happy and thankful! I think Moroccans love it. I
like it, I get attention from my country, that is beautiful. I hope that we don’t lose, that Morocco also reaches a standard level and that we could go home with pride. I am happy that things are being done. Morocco now even has a minister for people abroad. I have met this man and he had a message to spread to 4 million people abroad, that is a lot of work but Morocco knows it needs to invest in its citizens abroad in order not to lose them, cause that would be sad.” Though Aziz seems to believe that all people who still describe themselves as Moroccan must feel that way, Karim had an entirely opposing view: “I left because of the state, it is the Moroccan system that I didn’t like. Still the state doesn’t do anything for me.” “I don’t see they are organizing a lot, I haven’t seen them, I don’t hear them.” His opinion is that it is all bureaucratic policies that serves the elite and that in the Netherlands he doesn’t see an impact of Morocco’s engagement policies. Taib also conveyed that the state bothered him more than it helped him. ‘You only see the state when it comes to paperwork, for example when you want to name your kids’’. The different ways in which the participants reacted underlines that the state does not have always have an impact in engaging Moroccan-Dutch in transnationality. The difference between when it does or does not, can be a larger matter such as the impact of Dutch government narrative over Morocco’s discourse on eternal belonging, but it could also be the result of personal motives. Thus I do not dare draw conclusions.

4.9 Reaction to political discourse in The Netherlands

Mr. Yousfi’s opinion on negative political discourse in the Netherlands is that is getting a bit out of hand; “They have to stop that before things get out of hand”, especially the media needs to stop targeting they youth. There are Dutch youngsters that misbehave too, they just make things bigger when Moroccans are involved”. Yet political issues never played a role in his decision to move back. It was for economic reasons more than anything. He had been running a café for years, but because of deteriorating business and the rising cost of living he had to close it. Consequently, his income was not enough. ‘The stick’ in driving him back to Morocco, his home country, was not an increasing unwelcome feeling.

For the four men in Europe, the hostile climate towards Moroccan (and muslims in general ) was definitely leading them to consider returning to Morocco.
Aziz believes that immigrants will soon stop coming because of the way Europe is changing: “You can already see people going back, some Turks are already leaving.” If we could get the same life that we have here, we would go too. In Taib’s opinion, the Netherlands is not the same country it used to be anymore. Times have changed drastically and he definitely does not feel welcome there anymore. Going back to Morocco is not a manner of if, it is a manner of when. Of all the respondents he was the one the most clear about stating a direct correlation between reason for return and changing political discourse in the Netherlands. However, Karim is the one to bring up Wilders a few times: “His ideology is so dangerous. All he does is provoke people and push them in a corner”. He sees Dutch politics, currently led by Wilders, as waging a war on Islam. Karim also believes that people in the Netherlands are increasingly fearing Muslims as a result of misinformation. They don’t try to see the other Islam, they don’t know that Islam actually means “La paix’. Though Moroccan Dutch are able to construct their lives and maintain membership in both countries, politics of cultural difference have also resounded in their lives. They have created lives in the Netherlands, and their homes are there, but the fact that they identify with a transnational community
Conclusion

The stories of these individuals taught me that there are multiple ways in which individuals can engage in transnationalism. The case of Morocco shows that a state can also devise or shape transnational processes and provide legitimate incentives to encourage transnational activities. At the same time, the Netherlands has been also been a influential in framing the debate; discussions on whether integration can happen if migrants and their families are living part of their economic and social lives across borders is affecting how individuals think about their position in the Netherlands. I would posit that instead of interrupting the link with Morocco, the Dutch political discourse has been most succesful in leading people, especially youth, to seek comfort and strength in a transnational community. Transnational activity in effect is not curbed, transnational consciousness appears to be fortified. The ‘Paradox Marocaine’ continues as individuals of mutual heritage are bonding in their country of residence in order to buttress their position in their claim for the right to make a living there according to their wishes. Fact is that migrants desire to partake in certain practices that might not be the practices of the majority, but that they see as necessary to live a more fulfilled life. Within nation-states the struggle for equality that citizenship entails is extended to different domains, often turning negotiations of interest into negotiations of identity (Kastoryano, 2005:693)

One should also not assume that those with stronger social ties will be more transnationally active than those with weaker connections nor that the actions and identities of those with more indirect ties are less influenced by the dynamics within the field than those with direct transnational ties. Individuals within transnational social fields combine ways of being and ways of belonging differently in specific contexts, so that the construction of self and home between two countries occurs differently for each individual, and this also decides how this contraction impacts the ones in the individual’s surroundings, particularly in the case of children. (Levy, Glick Schiller, 2004)

Eventhough individuals might be moving towards non-national sources of identity, the creation of diverse common identities is still likely.

The global shift in demographic within nation-states, with societies becoming increasingly multiculturalist, inter- religious and inter-racial will continue to add levels of complexity. Definitions of national culture and consciousness will continuously have to
adapt. I presume that discussions surrounding what is distinctively Dutch or European, and what is Moroccan and by extension Muslim, will continuously take place. The meeting of images and multicultural realities is a place where power, identities are negotiated and renegotiated; a place where essentialization of the individual should become more scarce. The notion that Muslims or Moroccans cannot ‘integrate’ will be challenged, and surely by individuals within the transnational social space between Morocco and The Netherlands. Publics would perceive the issue of integration in a different way had they been offered another narrative; a different framing of the subject could have given individuals more the opportunity to choose.

I believe it is important to construct consciousness not only in the context of the state but for what it means to be human. This means setting the focus on a civic nation wherein ethnic or religious distinction are present but not dominant. The idea of a nation based on equal individual rights, regardless of origin, and with equal recognition of all cultural traditions in the public sphere. An inclusive consciousness needs to be formed through education that encourages participation and representation within the nation-state, but one that embraces difference in unity. I concur with Tariq Modood (2007), in that “The plurality, then, is ever present - and each part of the plurality has a right both to be a part of the whole and to speak up for itself and for its vision of the whole."

12 [http://www.opendemocracy.net/faith-europe_islam/multiculturalism_4627.jsp](http://www.opendemocracy.net/faith-europe_islam/multiculturalism_4627.jsp)
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