

THE PATH OF THE SEA: HUMAN MIGRATION ACROSS THE WESTERN
MEDITERRANEAN

*EL CAMINO DEL MAR: MIGRACIONES HUMANAS A TRAVÉS DEL
MEDITERRÁNEO OCCIDENTAL*

Bob Sutcliffe
bosu@sarenet.es

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ABSTRACT

This article looks at some of the characteristics, causes and consequences of the present day migrations from the southern Mediterranean countries to Western Europe, concentrating on the three Maghrebi countries, Tunisia, Algeria and Morocco, especially the latter. The most detailed sections will zoom in further to look at the vortex of this migration – the Strait which bears the name of Gibril Tarik, who crossed it with an army of 7,000 in 712 D.C. to conquer the southern Iberian peninsular and to found the civilization of Andalus and which today forms both a passage and a barrier between the world wealth and the world of poverty.

Keywords: Migration; Western Mediterranean.

RESUMEN

Este artículo explora algunas de las características, causas y consecuencias de las migraciones actuales desde los países del sur del Mediterráneo hacia Europa Occidental, concentrándose en los tres países magrebíes: Túnez, Argelia y Marruecos (particularmente en este último). Las secciones más detalladas se centrarán en el vórtice de estas migraciones: el estrecho que lleva el nombre de Gibril Tarik, quien lo cruzó con una armada de 7.000 soldados en el año 712 d.C. para conquistar el sur de la Península Ibérica y para fundar la civilización de *Al Andalus*; que hoy en día constituye tanto una vía como una barrera entre el mundo libre y el mundo pobre.

Palabras clave: Migraciones; Mediterráneo Occidental.

JEL Classification: F22; O15; O52; O55.

1. INTRODUCTION¹

Members of the species to which the authors, readers and subjects of this special issue of *Revista de Economía Mundial* belong first migrated as far as the northern coast of Africa at least 60,000 years ago. Recent fossil evidence proves that 30,000 years ago there were members of our species in central Europe. Other hominids had crossed to the European shore 100,000 or more years before that. The history of trans-Mediterranean migrations of modern humans alone would fill an encyclopaedia. This article is a tiny entry in that encyclopaedia and looks at some of the characteristics, causes and consequences of the present day migrations from the southern Mediterranean countries to Western Europe, concentrating on the three Maghrebi countries, Tunisia, Algeria and Morocco, especially the latter; the most detailed sections will zoom in further to look at the vortex of this migration – the Strait which bears the name of Gibril Tarik, who crossed it with an army of 7,000 in 712 A.D. to conquer the southern Iberian peninsular and to found the civilization of Andalus.

This is the place, once better known as the Pillars or Gates of Hercules, where the Mediterranean joins the Atlantic ocean and where the continents of Europe and Africa almost kiss. According to mythology, this gap, at its narrowest only a dozen kilometres wide, was created when Hercules, rather than pass over the mountain at the Western end of the Mediterranean (formed when Perseus had turned the giant Atlas to stone by showing him the head of the gorgon Medusa), simply smashed it with his sword, thus separating the continents of Europe and Africa and opening what would become in our own

¹ I have taken the liberty of borrowing without permission the title of this article from a novel quoted by Mara Leichtman in her sensitive and informative article 'Transforming Brain Drain into Capital Gain: Changing Relationship with Migration and Remittances'. The story's hero must accumulate money to pay a dowry and marry his love Zulicha. There being no work for him in Algeria, 'there did not remain a path for 'Abid to follow to win Zulicha, except the path of the sea'. (*The Price of the Dowry* by 'Abd al-Hamid ben Hadduga).

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day one of the hottest spots along the global frontier between wealth and poverty, power and subordination. The details of these stories are empirically rather shaky; but so also are those relating to the subject of this article. While South to North migration is not mythical it does generate many myths.

PHOTO 1: THE GATES OF HERCULES (LOOKING EAST)



2. THE NUMBER OF TRANS-MEDITERRANEAN MIGRANTS

Wherever there is immigration estimates of the numbers of people involved vary greatly and are manipulated with political motives. These variations exist not only as prejudices of the newspaper-reading public but also in official and semi-official sources of statistics. There is no authoritative and accurate source for the number of immigrants.

Recently published estimates vary between the unofficial one of a French historian, specializing in the Mahgreb, who argues that 10–15 million people of Mahgrebi origin are currently resident in Europe (5–7 millions being Moroccans) (Vermeren 2002, 17) and the more official ones of the OECD/SOPEMI which imply that no more than 3 million Mahgrebis (including 1.5 million Moroccans) were resident in Europe in 2002 (these figures combine resident Mahgrebi nationals with the sum of Mahgrebis who have obtained citizenship of a European country during the ten years prior to 2002) (See OECD/SOPEMI 2005). The maximum estimates of the Mahgrebi part of trans-Mediterranean migration to Europe are, therefore, as much as five times as great as the minimum ones.

In the face of such a huge discrepancy an article on this subject must begin with some commentary on the reasons why estimates are so different and at least suggest a range for the actual numbers of people involved. The first problem here is whether a count of immigrants includes those who are nationals of a particular country of origin or those who were born in it. European countries tend to count foreign nationals while North American and Australasian countries tend to count the foreign born, although European countries are increasingly publishing estimates of both. In the case studies here the difference between the two is due to three factors (referring to the country of residence as CR and that of origin as CO):

- some former colonial settlers from CR, were born in the CO when it was a colony but were always nationals of the colonialist country and now live there;
- some immigrants from CO to CR were born in CO but are now after naturalization citizens of CR;
- some children of nationals of CO in CR were born in CR but are nationals of CO.

In the case of contemporary South to North migration, figures of people born in countries of the South tend to exceed figures of nationals of those countries. In France, where it is easy from the census to distinguish the two, the number of Algerian nationals in France was calculated as 777,332 compared with 1,254,706 Algerian born; for Morocco the equivalent figures are 633,731 and 709,521 and for Tunisia 224,096 and 340,752. These figures include French colonists born in North Africa before 1962.

A second problem is whether, instead of calculating numbers of foreign nationals or foreign born, to estimate those with "origins" in a particular country. This is commonly done by those who see migration not so much of individuals as of cultures or the creation of diasporas. According to this concept, some people who are neither born in nor citizens of a given country may be counted as part of the expatriate community (diaspora) of that country as a result of descent and ethnic or cultural ties. The Fondation Hassan II, a Moroccan state organization charged with maintaining relations with Marocains Résident à l'Étranger (MREs), has in recent years published estimates of MREs in France ranging from 728,333 (probably Moroccan citizens plus naturalized French citizens of Moroccan origin) (Fondation Hassan II 2005) to 1,025,000 (2002 estimate cited in Berriane 2005). If that last figure is anything more than a wild guess then it probably includes children of French nationality born to Moroccan parents in France. These gradations of Moroccanness are similar to the categories to which Mexican immigrants and their descendants are assigned in discussions of migration and assimilation in the USA.

A third problem with many of these statistics is that official figures are for residents with permits and so they exclude the very category of people about whom information is most unreliable and who are in many ways at the centre of political debates and conflicts about migration and its future – immigrants without valid permits or papers to be in the country of residence. Estimates of numbers of non-permitted immigrants are extremely variable and unreliable. No government has a very clear idea of how many people are resident in

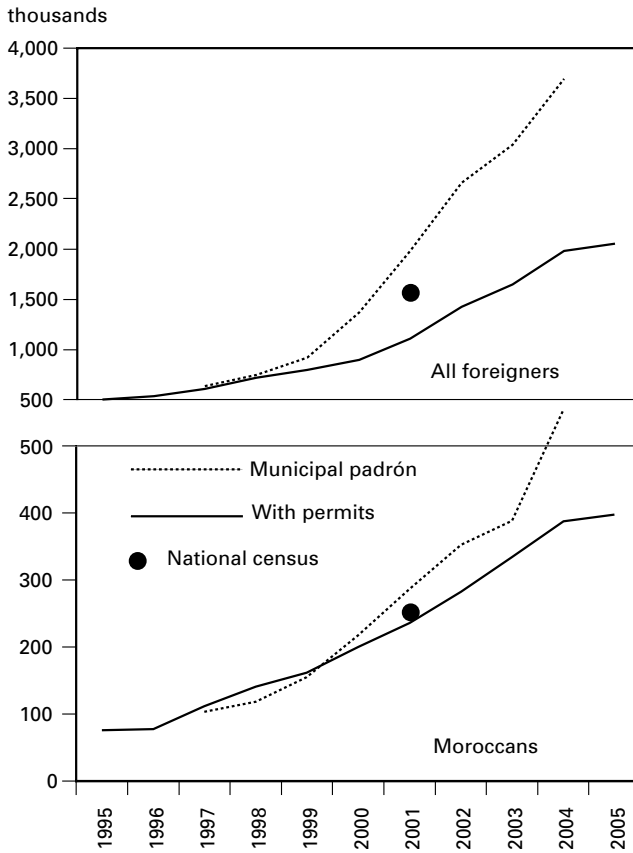
its country without its consent. Nor, of course, does anyone else. Some of the estimates used, however, such as those based on enumerations, or self-registration, rather than on official permissions, include some, but not all non-permitted residents.

A fourth problem regarding numbers arises because there are different official sources of data on immigrant numbers in the destination countries. In Spain, to give a notable example, there are three official estimates of the number of foreign residents and they give quite contrasting results. The last census at the end of 2001 (based on figures collected by the Instituto Nacional de Estadística) suggested a total population for the country which was about one million (over 2 per cent) lower than the population given by adding up people on the municipal registers (*padrones* – compiled by municipal administrations) for the whole country. It has been widely believed that many of these were immigrants without permits. The Spanish government also publishes regular data on the number of immigrants with permits by nationality (supplied by the immigration department of the National Police). According to these, on 31.12.2004 the total number of foreign residents in Spain was 1,977,291 of which 386,958 were Moroccan nationals. According to provisional figures from the *padrón* municipal for 1.1.2005 there were 3,691,547 foreigners of whom 505,373 were Moroccan. If the *padrón* gives the right number then the statistical report on foreigners with residence permits underestimates the number of foreigners as a whole by 87 per cent, and Moroccans in particular by 30 per cent. There is much expert disagreement, however, about the accuracy of the *padrón* in relation to other figures. Many residents do not register themselves in the *padrón*; many others are registered more than once since their name is not automatically removed if they leave one locality and go to another or even leave the country. The evolution of these differences in Spain can be seen in Figures 1a and b. A major divergence has arisen in the last few years between the number of immigrants on the municipal registers and the number with permits. In 2005 the government decided that the municipal register was more accurate and that the difference between the two was to some extent a measure of illegal immigration in the country. As a response it launched the largest regularization programme in recent European history².

² The normalization period lasted from the 7th of February to the 9th of May 2005. During that time a total of 690,679 immigrants requested regularization. In principle all of these had jobs and were already registered in the municipal register (*padrón*). About 88 per cent of these (604,357) were allowed. Of the applications 58.76 per cent came from men and 41.24 per cent women. But the regularized immigrants will acquire rights to be joined by their families and will thus lead to a secondary flow of (possibly majority female) immigrants during the next 2 or 3 years. Four countries produced over 50,000 applications for regularization (in order, Ecuador, Rumania, Morocco and Colombia) and together accounted for about 60 per cent of the total. The Moroccan figure was 85,969 (12.5 per cent of the total) (Ministerio de Trabajo y Asuntos Sociales 2005). About two thirds of the women applicants were domestic workers. One third of the men were construction workers and one fifth worked in agriculture.

The balance of sexes was very different among these national collectives. A majority of Ecuadorean, Colombian, Bolivian and Ukrainian applications were women. The largest majority of men (about 85 per cent) was registered for Morocco. This will increase the male proportion of legal Moroccan residents to something like 70 per cent.

FIGURE 1: DIFFERENT ESTIMATES OF THE NUMBER OF ALL FOREIGN AND MOROCCAN NATIONALS RESIDENT IN SPAIN, 1995–2005



Source: Spain, Instituto Nacional de Estadística, 2005; Spain, Ministerio de Trabajo y Asuntos Sociales, 2005.

The scale of the 2005 Spanish regularization was astonishing and the government which carried it out has been both publicly praised by the United Nations Commission for Human Rights and privately chastised by neighbouring European governments. In three months three quarters of a million people (one and a half per cent of the population of the country), about whom the society was in a state of denial, came out into the light and were, at least for now, legalized. Some, it is alleged in the press, are really the illegal immigrants of other European countries who came to Spain because it was a soft touch. But these seem to have been few and many have been deported during the process. The Spanish regularization was larger in relative terms than the 2.7 million mostly Mexican illegal migrants (about 1 per cent of the US population) who were legalized in the USA in the aftermath of the IRCA act in 1986. Like Spain's 2005 legalization, the IRCA was supposed to be a once for all regularization followed by the strictest possible enforcement of the anti-immigration laws. But it is generally acknowledged in the USA that regularization was in fact the prelude to an acceleration in illegal migration and which has now left the US government (as it does the Spanish government) with a choice between denial, legalization and literally millions of forcible deportations. This is a subject to which I will return.

Meanwhile I attempt in Table 1 to produce a rough but servicable estimate of the size of trans-Mediterranean migration. The overall and comparative estimates in this table have several deficiencies, some but not all of them arising from the general problems discussed above. In the first place, while I have used the most recent available official national figures in the countries of residence, they are of different dates. The figures for France are for 1999 and those for Spain for 2005; the other countries lie between these two extremes. Second, different census methods are used for different figures, as already explained above. Third, many migrants without valid residence permits (the so-called "illegal migrants") are not counted in these figures. We can be sure that the overall figures will be higher than those which appear here. But, fourth, at the same time there are other reasons why some of these figures are too high: for instance, people may be double-registered in the Spanish municipal register and some of those registered, as well as some people with valid residence permits, may have left the country of residence either temporarily or permanently. Fifthly, more people have obtained citizenship in the country of residence than are shown here, but on the other hand some of those included in the figures for naturalizations since 1992 will have died; the over- and under-counting will to some extent cancel out.

TABLE 1: ESTIMATES OF NORTH AFRICAN NATIONALS RESIDENT ABROAD PLUS RECENTLY NATURALISED, RECENT DATE (THOUSANDS)

Country of origin Country of residence	Morocco	Algeria	Tunisia	Mahgreb 3	Libya	Egypt	5 North Africa	% population of CR
Spain	569 (a)	46 (a)	1 (b)	616	0.2 (h)	2 (b)	618	1.5
France (c)	820 (l)	909	284	2,013			2,013	3.4
Belgium	233 (p)	(d)	5	254			254	2.4
Netherlands	273 (q)	1 (g)	1 (g)	275	0.1 (g)	8 (g)	283	1.7
Italy (o)	341	15	69	425	1	41	467	0.8
Germany (h)	80	17	24	121	3	14	139	0.2
Europe 6	2,316	1,003	385	3,704	5	67	3,777	1.4
% pop. in E6	7.7	3.2	3.9	5.2	0.1	0.1	2.6	
Other N. Afr.	199 (s)					333 (j)		
Saudi Arab.	12 (s)					924 (j)		
Other MidEast						657 (j)		
USA (m)	31 (r)	31 (r)	10 (r)		5 (r)	113	190	
Canada (n)	26	20	5		3	149 (m)	37	
% emigrant	9–11	3.5–4.5	4.0–5		0.1–0.2	3–4	2.3–3	

Sources:

- a. Spain, Padrón Municipal, 1.1.2005 2005 figs.
- b. Spain, Extranjería March 2005.
- c. France, 1999 Recensement.
- d. SOPEMI 2004 edition (2005) 2002 figs.
- e. Council of Europe 1999 figs.
- f. ditto 2000 figs.
- g. ditto 2003 figs.
- h. ditto 2002 figs.
- i. Collyer/IOM (which cites Council of Europe 2001).
- j. Harrell Bond and Zohry, 2003.
- k. Salt, 2000.
- l. Fondation Hassan II Atlas.
- m. US Census Bureau 2005.
- n. Canadastats 2005.
- o. Italian National Census (Censimento) 31.12.2003.
- p. Fondation Hassan II Ouvrage 2005, p. 94, excludes naturalized.
- q. Fondation Hassan II Ouvrage 2005, p. 323, includes naturalized.
- r. Estimates based on same relation between foreign birth and declared ancestry as Egypt.
- s. See Table 1. This total does not include Moroccans naturalized in the Netherlands since they are included in the figure earlier in the column in this Table.

Notes:

¹ First estimates from the 2004 update to the French census show that the number of Moroccan born residents has increased by about 10 per cent. This and other updatings could add perhaps 100,000 to the total of Moroccan residents in Western Europe, the numbers for the other Magreb countries also rising a little.

Despite this long list of deficiencies Table 1 does give a blurred but not totally unrecognizable image of the size of trans-Mediterranean migration. Some number upwards of 3 million nationals of the five North African countries are resident in the European Union; this is about 2 per cent of the population of North Africa though less than one per cent of the population of the EU. Europe is the main area of reception of emigrants from Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia and Libya, so the figures of Table 1 are a relatively faithful picture of the overall emigration intensity of those countries. This is not true of Egypt for which the focus of emigration has not been towards Europe but towards the Arabian/Persian Gulf and, to a lesser extent, North America. It is emigration of a very different kind from that from the Maghreb to Europe, and this difference will be detailed later.

These aggregate estimates mean, if they are approximately correct, that the five North African countries as a whole have a somewhat lower rate of out-migration, and a much lower level of in-migration than the world as a whole (see Introduction to this issue). Of course, when the figures are examined in greater detail they show different pictures. In the case of countries of origin Morocco shows greater migration intensity, having at least 9 per cent of the population of the country resident in other countries. At the end of 2003, according to the national census, Moroccans were the most numerous nationality of foreign legal residents in Spain with 20 per cent of all foreigners. On Jan 1 2005, according to the municipal register, Moroccans were still the largest single foreign nationality, with 1.15 per cent of the resident population and 13.7 per cent of the foreign population. They were very closely followed (and on present trends will soon be overtaken) by citizens of Ecuador. Nationals of the three Maghreb countries make up nearly 1.5 per cent of the population of France and nearly one per cent of that of Belgium.

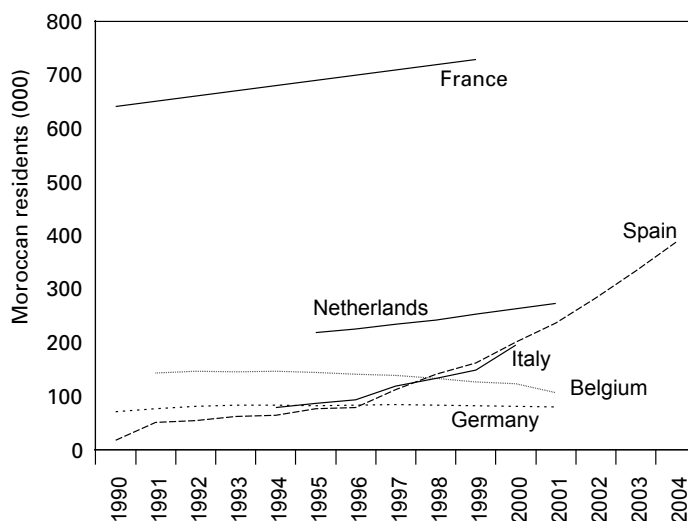
This attempt to compare, select and unite estimates of the numbers of North African emigrants demonstrates, first, that there is very great variation between the 5 countries. Algeria and Tunisia are countries with a significant number of their citizens or natives in Europe but they are not countries of large scale migration. Egyptian migration has been larger but is mostly not, as with the Maghrebian countries, towards Europe but towards North America and the Arabian/Persian Gulf. Libya is an oil producing country with relatively low out-migration but is host to a significant number of immigrant workers. Morocco is the one country of the five with a very significant level of migration, highly concentrated in the Western European countries of the EU. Morocco, along with Tunisia and Libya, is also on a route of migration from sub-Saharan African countries. The numbers of sub-Saharan Africans in the three countries, either waiting to cross to Europe or having been returned from Europe, has not been estimated here because there seem to be no reliable indicators at all about how many people are in this position.

The great variation in numbers and destinations shows that a large number of different migration networks originate or pass through the five North African countries. Egypt is a source of both skilled and unskilled temporary workers to

the oil producing countries of the Gulf. Another axis of that migration network is analyzed by John Willoughby (in this issue). Some of the things he says about migration from India to the Gulf will be echoed in the experience of Egyptian migration to the Gulf, especially in relation to the growing unskilled portion of this migration. But it will not be further considered here.

The discussion of the numbers also reveals the very high levels of uncertainty which surround the estimates. Given that the figures for a given time are so unreliable, those which indicate trends over periods of time are perhaps even more unreliable. But some recent estimates of trends of Moroccan migration to 6 European countries are shown in Figure 2. These series are not necessarily consistent with the figures in Table 1 but they are all based on series which internally use the same definitions; so they may be better indicators of trends than of actual numbers. Their message is that during the last decade and a half a strong upward trend in Italy and Spain contrasts with a stabilization or even slight decline in the number of Moroccan immigrants in France, Germany, the Netherlands, Belgium. Since these figures are for residents of foreign nationality only, the low growth or decline in France, the Netherlands and Belgium is partly due to rising naturalizations.

FIGURE 2: NUMBERS OF MOROCCAN RESIDENTS IN 6 EUROPEAN COUNTRIES, 1990–2004



Sources: Fondation Hassan II, 2005; Spain Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs 1996–2005.

The uncertainty of these estimates, in its turn, is an indication of something more important about the nature of the migrations which we are observing: it is that they are to a great extent outside the control of the governments of both source and destination countries. Obversely, this means that they are flows and networks to a great extent controlled by the migrants who participate in them, individually and through their social groups (families, villages of origin, civil, political and religious organizations). The fact that no researcher or public body can say with any authority how many migrants there are is symptomatic of the fact that no one is in overall control of the process. It is, therefore, characterized by a situation of dual- or multiple-power in which, in the words of Stephen Castles (2004), "formal power of governments and bureaucracies is being subverted by the human agency embodied in networks and transnational communities" (also see Erdem 2006 in this issue). "Control" or "management" are the words which have come to dominate national and international debates about migration. International authorities suggest the need for "managed migration", governments of destination countries are serial introducers of policies, all justified on their ability to control the number of migrants, and pressure is increasingly placed on source countries to control the outflow of their emigrants or transient populations. No sooner was the 2005 Spanish regularization complete than it was declared by the government to be a prelude to a more rigorous enforcement of border controls and Spain agreed with 4 other European Union members to cooperate to keep Europe free of illegal migrants. But no such policies or exhortations have yet had much success.

The North African country with the highest emigration propensity, Morocco, can be compared to some of the other emigrations described in this issue of the journal. At present, it is estimated that about 7 per cent of Mexican citizens reside in the USA; this is lower than the percentage of Moroccan citizens abroad (9–11 per cent). Given the long history of Mexican migration northwards, however, people with Mexican ancestry make up a much higher proportion of the US population than North Africans in any European country, aside from particular neighbourhoods in large cities. Like Mexicans in the USA, North Africans, especially Moroccans, in Europe tend to travel frequently between their country of residence and country of origin, and very often can be considered as people of dual residency. So, in both these cases, the idea that migration consists of a once for all flow from countries of origin to countries of destination is itself a considerable simplification. Turkish migration to Germany also shares some of these characteristics. About 6 per cent of the Turkish population is resident in Western Europe, and in Germany they make up nearly 3 per cent of the resident population (see Erdem 2006 in this issue).

Indian migrants in the Gulf countries make up only a tiny proportion of the Indian population, although migrants from the state of Kerala in the Gulf are a little under 5 per cent of the population of their state and rather more than 5 per cent of that of the Gulf states, which makes them in some ways comparable to the figures for the other migrations mentioned. There are major

differences, however: Kerala migrants to the Gulf, who have fewer social and political rights than their counterparts in Europe or the USA, are more inclined to be temporary migrants rather than residents in the receiving country or dual residents (Willoughby 2006 in this issue).

In all the cases considered the numbers of migrants conceal the fact that from one year to another they are not necessarily the same people. There is much short-term as well as long-term migration, although, as Massey has argued in the case of Mexico, stricter enforcement at the border may discourage migrants from leaving the destination country once they arrive for fear of being unable to return later. Nonetheless the figures for the existing number of migrants is often considerably lower than the number of people who have spent a part of their lives living and working in the destination countries. Migration is, therefore, an experience which influences the society more than would appear from the aggregate figures alone. Massey (1998) reports that two thirds of Mexicans had a member of their extended family who had spent time in the USA. And Willoughby (2006 in this issue) reports that 38.5 per cent of households in Kerala have or have had one member who has migrated to the Gulf States. The case of Morocco is probably similar although I have not found an estimate.

3. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF TRANS-MEDITERRANEAN MIGRANTS

3.1. MEN AND WOMEN

All the North African countries have a male majority in their populations except Morocco where there is a very small female majority (for more detail see Sutcliffe 2005). But, if there are women "missing" from the population as a whole, the bias is far greater in the emigrant population. It can be seen from Table 2 that for all the five North African nationalities women are a minority of the migrants. In the case of Moroccan immigrants women are about one third of the total in Spain, 36 per cent in Italy and a little over 40 per cent in France. Algerian women are an even lower percentage in Spain (where Algerians are much less numerous than Moroccans), and a similar percentage to Moroccan women in France. Roughly the same is true of Tunisian women, although there are very few Tunisians in Spain. For Libya and Egypt the information is very limited and migrant numbers in Europe are very small. The highest proportions of women in the Maghrebi populations of Europe are in Belgium and the Netherlands, a fact which confirms that these are long-established, relatively settled communities which have expanded very little in recent years.

There are some small but telling differences between the different estimates. In the case of Moroccans in Spain the female minority is lowest in the estimates from the *Padrón municipal* which is believed to include many people without regular papers and permissions. In other words, as might be expected, a larger majority of irregular migrants than of regular migrants are men. In France the proportion of women is highest among those born

in North Africa who have acquired French citizenship. Again, as might be expected, the female/male ratio is higher for more established populations rather than recently arrived or unsettled migrants. If the percentage of women is thus considered an indicator of the permanence of the settlement, or of the maturity of the migration process, then the Maghrebian migration to France, Belgium and the Netherlands is seen to be much more established than that to Spain. More detailed indicators of these differences can be seen by comparing the population pyramids in Figures 3, 4, 5 and 6.

A lower proportion of women in a migrant population leads to a natural and common interpretation. Male migrants are seen to be especially concentrated in certain age groups (15–40), often unmarried or at least unaccompanied by their wives and more likely to be temporary migrants. Female migrants tend not to be so concentrated in the 15–40 age groups, more likely to be married and more likely to be long-term settled migrants. The figures in Table 2 confirm some of these stereotypes but they should still be interpreted with caution. It is possible both that some migration of men without female family members can be permanent and can represent a certain escape from family influence, that some women migrate independently of men, seeking work and also escaping family structures and power, and that households with male and female members are not necessarily permanent residents but may be as temporary as some individuals or single sex households.

TABLE 2: FEMALE SHARE OF NORTH AFRICAN MIGRANT POPULATIONS IN SPAIN, FRANCE AND ITALY

	Morocco	Algeria	Tunisia	Libya	Egypt	Maghreb	5 countries
Spain 1 a	33.3 (20–56)	24.0 (9–100)				32.5 (19–57)	
Spain 2 b	34.1	22.1	28.2		20.0	33.2	
Spain 3 c	35.8 (18–56)	21.8 (0–50)	29.0			34.6 (21–56)	
Spain h	32.6	19.9					
France 1 d	44.5	42.3	39.4			42.8	
France 2 e	48.6	48.1	46.8			48.0	
France 3 f	45.5	42.8	41.3			43.8	
Italy g	38.0 (21–48)	25.1 (11–100)	33.3 (17–75)	40.0 (0–100)	30.5 (0–48)	36.4	35.8
Belgium h	45.9	43.1					
Netherlands h	52.0						

Sources:

- a. Padrón municipal by nationality.
 - b. 2003 Anuario de extranjería by nationality.
 - c. 2001 Census.
 - d. 1999 Recensement, Foreign born, foreign nationals.
 - e. 1999 Recensement, Foreign born, French nationality.
 - f. 1999 Census, Foreign nationals.
 - g. 2001 Censimento.
 - h. OECD/SOPEMI 2005, (2002 figures).
- (numbers in parenthesis refer to the lower and upper limits by province (Spain) or province (Italy))

In the countries of the Mahgreb it is well known that there are much greater differences between male and female labour force participation rates than in the countries of Western Europe. The Mahgrebi figures can be clearly seen in columns 2 and 3 of Table 3. In Morocco, for instance, 54.2 per cent of males participate in the labour force while only 18.7 per cent of women do so. What is more surprising to find is that, according to the estimates in Table 3 (taken from SOPEMI), the overall rate of labour force participation of immigrants in some Western European countries is actually lower than it is in the countries of origin. Participation of Moroccans in the Netherlands and Belgium is lower than in Morocco and in France it is only slightly higher; only Moroccans in Spain appear to have a considerably higher labour force participation rate than in their home country. This suggests that the older established Moroccan communities are not in this respect becoming more similar to the host communities; it may even be the opposite although no detailed figures about participation jointly by sex and age group are available to clarify this.

TABLE 3: INDICATORS OF PARTICIPATION IN THE PAID LABOUR FORCE (PER CENT OF POPULATION)

Countries of ORIGIN and Destination	1.Total	2. Male	3.Female	4.Women as % of workers from home country
ALGERIA	27.4			
Spain	54.7			
France	41.5	47.0	7.2	9.1
Belgium	23.6			
MOROCCO	36.4			
Spain	52.4	54.2	18.7	15.5
Netherlands	33.8			36.4
France	39.6			30.5
Belgium	33.5			19.0
TUNISIA	35.0			
France	54.7	51.8	18.0	27.3

Source: OECD/SOPEMI 2005; ILO Laborsta 2005.

Note: the rows labelled by countries of origin show the figures for labour force participation in the country of origin (participants as a percentage of total population); the rows labelled by countries of destination show the same figure for the immigrant population from the indicated country. For instance, the overall participation rate of Moroccans in Spain is 52.4 per cent compared with 36.4 per cent in Morocco.

Some of the literature has suggested that as migration proceeds the number of women migrants has risen relative to men. This would result from progressive family reunion but could also be the result of more women migrating on their own account to seek work or escape from family oppression. There seem to be no data to test the second of these possibilities; Column 4 of Table 3 shows recent figures for the number of women workers as a percentage of all workers but no comparative data are available for previous dates. It is curious to note that, in the case of Moroccan immigrants, the Netherlands and Belgium show similar low rates of overall participation but in the former country there are relatively far more Moroccan women working than in the second. This is an anomaly on which other figures appear to shed no light. During the 1990s

the proportion of women among Moroccan workers in Spain rose from under 15 to nearly 18 per cent (Khaldi 2003, 200) but there is also some evidence that in recent years the proportion of women residents among Moroccans in Spain has declined, but that a growing proportion of them are married (López García 2005, 34, 36).

3.2. AGE AND SEX

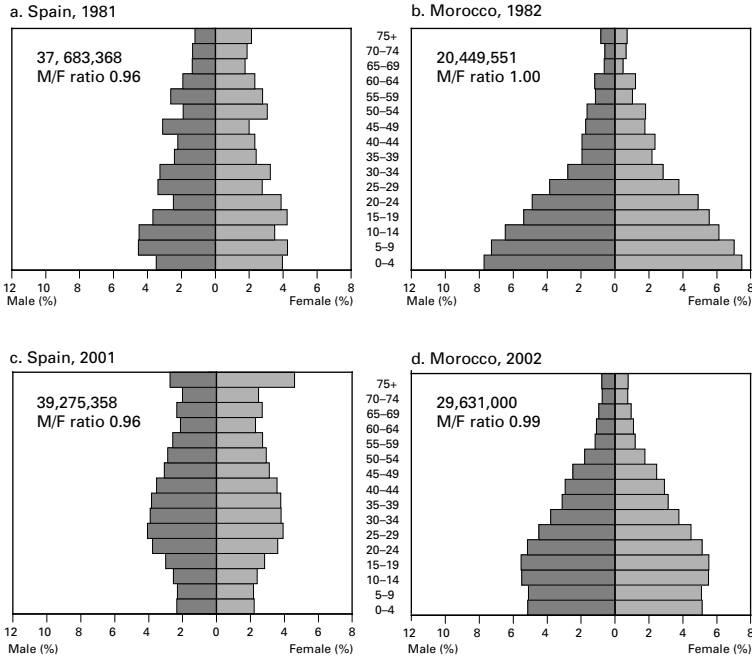
Another approach to ascertaining the social and demographic nature of Maghrebi immigrant communities in Western Europe is to look at the age and sex breakdown in censuses and other general counts of the population. This is done in a series of sex–age pyramids (Figures 3, 4, and 5) which give a picture of the recent evolution of demographic structures of countries of origin and countries of destination and the most recent evidence about them from differing sources.

The first thing which stands out clearly from these pyramids is the way in which parallel demographic changes (greater life expectancy and declining fertility) have transformed the age structure of both the Spanish and Moroccan populations during the last 40 years so that the structure is much more similar now than it was then, and will probably converge further in the future (Figures 3a, b, c and d). The differences which remain, however, have some effect on migration patterns and will be mentioned later in this article. Here, as part of the attempt to identify who are the migrants, much can be learned by comparing the age and sex structure of the population of Morocco and of Moroccan emigrants. Comparing pyramids 3d with 5b, shows that it is men between 20 and 45 who are the most over-represented group among emigrants, attesting to the importance of manual labour, especially in agriculture and construction, as sources of employment for immigrants in Spain. As with the figures in Table 2, the Padrón municipal shows that the disproportionate number of men between 20 and 40 years of age is greater than that shown by figures for permitted migrants; in other words a considerable numbers of these may be immigrants without permits.

The same age and sex structure now seen in Spain was probably also characteristic of Maghrebi immigration in France some decades ago; it has now changed so that, while there is still an over-representation of men, it is much less, and is concentrated in an older age group (those who migrated as young men and have remained in France) (Figures 4a and b). But the tendency towards more settlement and permanent residence also exists in Spain. This shows up in a striking difference between pyramid 3d (the Moroccan population in 2002) and 5b (Moroccans in Spain) in respect of the three lowest age groups (children up to 15 years old). In Morocco each of the three five-year groups is smaller than the one above it (indicating declining fertility) while among Moroccans in Spain the relation is the opposite, indicating not rising fertility among emigrants but rising tendencies not to leave children in the country of origin and to have children in the country of emigration. Among Moroccans in

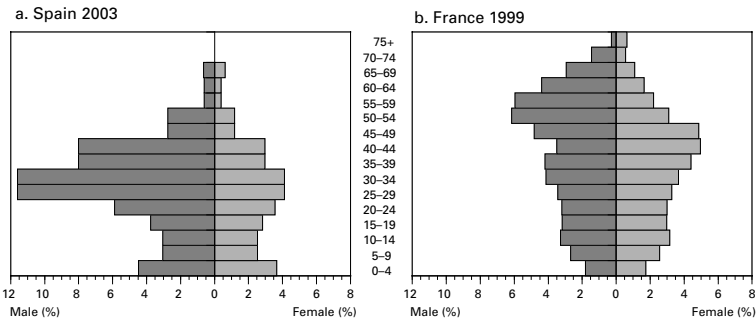
Spain the share of children under 5 in the population is now almost as high as it is in Morocco.

FIGURES 3 A, B, C, D: POPULATION PYRAMIDS FOR SPAIN AND MOROCCO – CHANGES OVER 20 YEARS



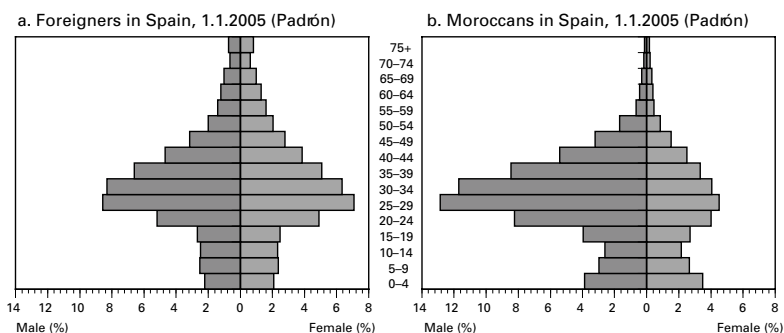
Source: United Nations, Demographic Yearbook.

FIGURES 4 A, B: POPULATION PYRAMIDS OF MAHGREBI NATIONALS IN SPAIN AND FRANCE



Sources: Spain, Anuario de extranjería; France: Recensement 1999.

FIGURES 5 A, B: POPULATION PYRAMIDS OF FOREIGNERS AND MOROCCANS IN SPAIN ACCORDING TO THE PADRÓN MUNICIPAL 2005



Source: Spain, Padrón Municipal 2005.

3.3. EDUCATION, OCCUPATION AND CLASS

If the number of Mahgrebi migrants is difficult to estimate, their skill and educational level is even more so. The sources available are either census or similar enumerations in the destination countries or sample studies in the countries of origin. Recent literature arrives at widely differing conclusions about the educational level of migrants from Morocco. A widely quoted World Bank research paper studying 24 labour exporting countries (including Morocco, Tunisia and Egypt) concludes that “with respect to *legal* migration, international migration involves the movement of the educated” (Adams 2003, p. 2). This conclusion, arrived at using “a new data set based on OECD and US sources” claims that about 64 per cent of Moroccan and Tunisian migrants to OECD countries aged over 25 have completed tertiary education; it turns out, however, that this figure applies to immigration to the USA (which is not very large in volume) and it is then applied without qualification to all OECD countries. The document cited by the author for his figures (*Trends in International Migration*) is fact gives a very different picture of the percentage of “highly skilled” immigrants. The most recent issue provides the following figures for skill level in 2004:

Country	Number of expatriates	Per cent highly skilled
Algeria	1,302,076	16.4
Egypt	274,833	51.2
Morocco	1,364,754	14.8
Tunisia	371,274	17.7

Source: OECD/SOPEMI 2005, Table II A2.6.

Other writers have also argued that migration of the highly skilled is important in Morocco. Collyer, while arguing that Egyptian emigration has been of more highly educated people than Moroccan, nonetheless concludes, without offering any figures, that in Morocco “the training and qualifications of emigrants have gradually increased over the past few decades. Even amongst clandestine migrants the level of education is typically extremely high.” (Collyer, 2004, p. 29). Lopez Garcia agrees:

“De un lado, se ha elevado el nivel de instrucción entre las nuevas generaciones y una buena parte de los que emigran son personas que cursan estudios de segunda enseñanza, de bachillerato o de Universidad. También no son pocos licenciados en paro los que emigran, de ambos sexos ” (Lopez García 2005, 83).

On the other hand, in supposedly representative samples of Moroccans surveyed in research on the forces causing migration from Morocco by Heering, van der Erf and colleagues the educational breakdown of subjects was over 70 per cent with no education, 14–20 per cent with primary education, 7 per cent with secondary education and less than 4 per cent with tertiary education (van der Erf and Heering 2002, Heering *et al.* 2004). It was found, however, that among migrants actually in Spain the number with primary or secondary education complete was higher than these figures but only 5 per cent of men and 2 per cent of women had tertiary qualifications. Despite this difference between those in Morocco and those in Spain, another study has concluded that in the case of Morocco (unlike Egypt, for example) there is negative self-selection in relation to education levels: in other words the less educated of the sample are especially prone to emigrate (van Dalen *et al.* 2003).

In the year 2000 the Spanish Ministerio de Trabajo y Asuntos Sociales counted as skilled workers less than 13 per cent of the total of Moroccans with work permits, three times the percentage in 1990 but still relatively low (Khaldi 2003, 199). Another recent survey of Moroccan emigration states that “the majority of migrants are unskilled with low levels of education” (Gallina 2004, 17), but again there are no numbers.

At present it seems that good data on the qualifications of migrants is more elusive than on their overall numbers. It is important, as several writers stress, to fight against outdated, and perhaps always false, stereotypes of North African emigrants as uneducated and unskilled; but it is also important to resist an alternative fantasy that they are nearly all university graduates. There is a clear need here for more research on a question which is important both in itself and for what it indicates about the way immigrants are assimilated to the labour markets of countries of destination, and about the disadvantages and discrimination which they suffer.

The income and social status of migrants in their country of destination will depend on their employment, their receipt of social benefits in money and in kind and on other income sources. Skills and education must have a strong influence but so do other factors, especially discrimination. This obviously exists when groups with high qualifications have low socio-economic status but if the group's qualifications are not high that does not mean that there is

no discrimination. Some interesting recent research on the causes of migration uses the International Socio-Economic Index, to compare the occupation status of immigrants from different countries of origin in 18 different countries of destination in Europe. Only Morocco of the North African countries has separate figures. But they are enough to show that Moroccan immigrants on average occupy a very low position in occupation status in Europe compared with other nationalities. Table 4 shows the relative levels for natives, all immigrants, and immigrants from Morocco for first male and then female workers.

TABLE 4: RELATIVE OCCUPATIONAL STATUS (MEASURED IN TERMS OF THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIO-ECONOMIC INDEX (ISEI)), MALE AND FEMALE, NATIVES AND IMMIGRANTS, 4 EU COUNTRIES

Origin Destination	Natives	All immigrants	Morocco	Turkey
MEN				
Belgium	45.0	42.6	35.9	34.9
France	42.9	37.2	34.0	31.8
Netherlands	49.0	44.8	36.8	36.4
Spain	40.5	39.5	28.2	na
WOMEN				
Belgium	45.6	44.0	33.9	32.5
France	42.4	34.1	28.9	33.2
Netherlands	46.8	44.1	na	34.8
Spain	42.0	37.9	23.2	na

Source: van Turbergen 2004.

TABLE 5: SOCIO-PROFESSIONAL STATUS OF MAHGREBI IMMIGRANTS IN FRANCE, 1999 (PER CENT)

Nationality Socio-professional status	Algeria	Morocco	Tunisia	Mahgreb	Total France
Self-employed	3.0	2.3	3.6	2.8	3.6
Professional/managerial	5.0	3.2	4.3	4.1	12.9
Technical and skilled workers	21.0	16.0	20.4	18.6	20.2
Personal service	5.1	4.3	4.8	4.7	2.8
Unskilled workers	10.9	13.8	11.4	12.3	5.0
Retired	14.8	5.0	5.6	9.2	18.1
Unemployed, never worked	2.9	2.6	2.4	2.7	0.6
Inactive	37.1	52.9	47.6	45.5	36.6
Total	100	100	100	100	100

Source: France, Recensement 1999.

Table 5 (with data for Mahgrebi immigrants in France alone) is more difficult to interpret as an indicator of status or class since the categories are not in any clear hierarchy (and are in any case reduced from more numerous categories). But again it draws attention to the very low levels of economic activity among

Mahgrebi (and particularly Moroccan) immigrants. The French census data is in this respect roughly consistent with the ILO's estimate of participation already reported in Table 3, although the ILO suggests even lower levels of participation. In any case, participation is much lower among populations of Mahgrebi origin than among immigrants as a whole or the whole population, despite the fact that the number women (expected to have a low rate of participation) is especially low.

Summarizing these figures for Mahgrebi residents as a whole, a little under 12 per cent were skilled workers, a little more than 12 per cent unskilled and agricultural workers; 13.6 per cent were employees at various levels, nearly 5 per cent were in personal service and 2.7 were unemployed who have never worked; the remaining 54.3 per cent were not economically active (9.2 per cent former workers and 45.5 per cent for other reasons). The Fondation Hassan II study provides evidence that Moroccan populations in Europe, in addition to having low economic participation rates, also suffer exceptionally high unemployment among the economically active. The unemployment rate of Moroccans was 24.5 per cent in the Netherlands (1996–98), 30.8 per cent in France (1999) and 42.5 per cent in Belgium (1998) (see El Bardāi 2003, Athane 2003 and Attar 2003).

Data from the Spanish Ministerio de Trabajo y Asuntos Sociales classifies about 13 per cent of Moroccan workers in the country as skilled. Unskilled workers in agriculture, construction and manufacturing constitute 58 per cent while the remaining 30 per cent are domestic workers, street traders or unclassified (Khaldi 2003, 196).

The evidence about the social and economic status of Mahgrebi communities is very incomplete. But, taken as a whole, it does not suggest in general high levels of economic prosperity. Very few are in highly paid jobs and professions and there is an exceptionally high dependency ratio, due both to low participation levels and high unemployment. This suggests something about the motivation for migration which will be examined later.

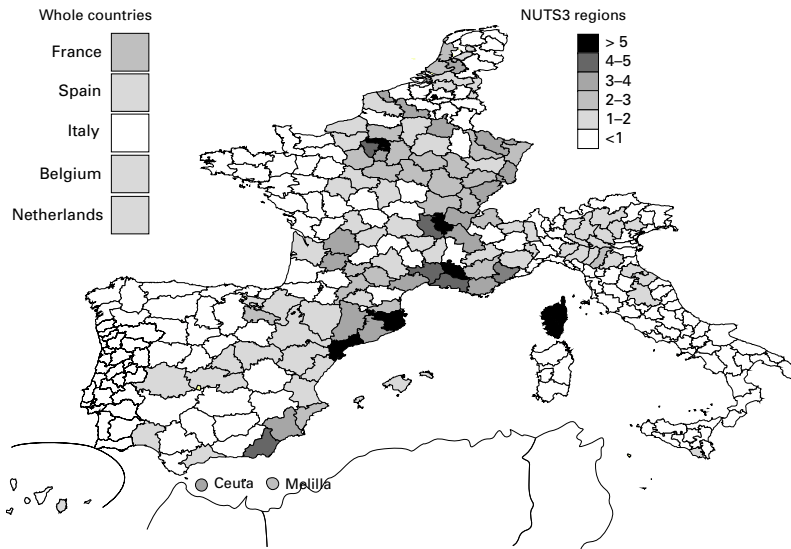
3.4. GEOGRAPHICAL ORIGINS AND DESTINATION

Disaggregating the number of migrants by age and sex has shown that North African migration to Western Europe is a very much less homogeneous phenomenon than it looks at first sight. The same is true of disaggregating by place – where the emigrants go to and where they come from.

Figure 6 shows the heterogeneous distribution of Mahgrebi communities in Western Europe. Two tendencies are visible: the first is the concentration in and around large cities, such as Paris, Lyons, Marseille and Brussels; the second is the high numbers in areas of large scale agricultural and horticultural employment such as Girona and Valencia and some of the northern provinces of Italy. There is also a tendency, more influenced by ease of travel, for Mahgrebis to be concentrated in provinces along the Mediterranean shore. In France and Spain in particular there are still very few Mahgrebi residents in the north-eastern provinces. Those in Belgium, the Netherlands and north-east France are, however, an exception to this.

The net result of this disaggregation is to highlight the great variability in the phenomenon of migration from the standpoint of the country of destination. In fact “country” of destination is in some ways an inappropriate unit of analysis when Mahgrebis constitute more than 5 per cent of the population of 8 of France’s départements (and about one third of the foreign population of the Ile-de-France) and less than one per cent in another 30; or where Moroccans alone form more than 5 per cent of the population of Europe’s capital, Brussels, but only 0.8 per cent of the population of the rest of Belgium (France Recensement 1999; Attar 2003, 102).

FIGURE 6: MAP SHOWING THE PERCENTAGE OF MAHGREBI IMMIGRANTS IN THE PROVINCIAL POPULATION OF BELGIUM, NETHERLANDS, FRANCE, SPAIN AND ITALY, BY NUTS3 REGION, RECENT DATE

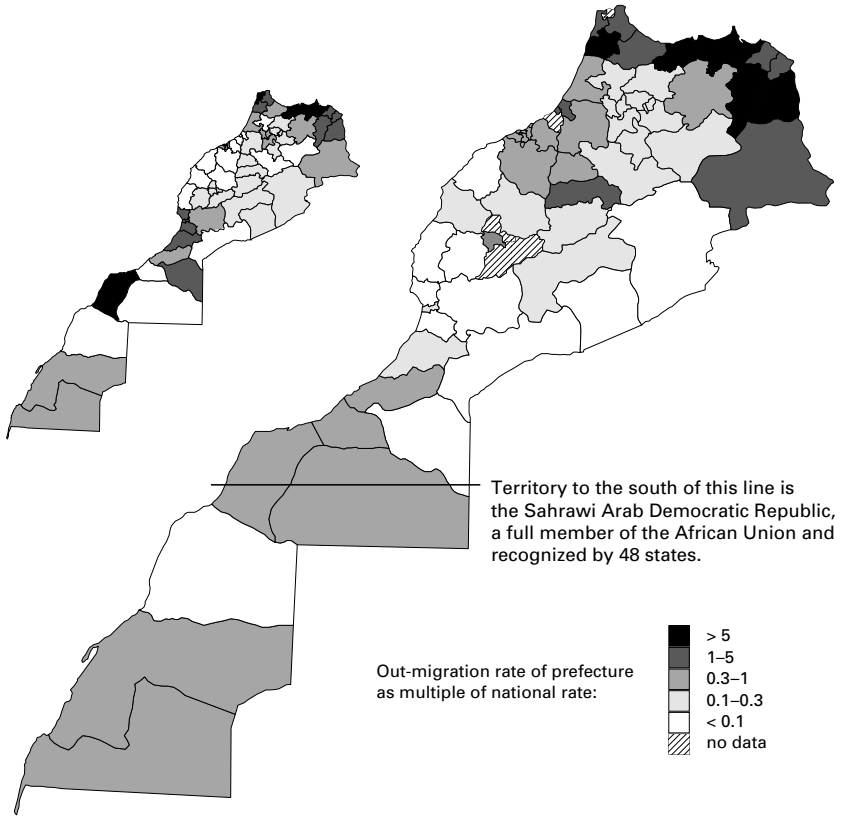


Note: For France and Italy the figures are for Moroccans, Algerians and Tunisians together; for Spain Moroccans and Algerians and for Belgium and the Netherlands Moroccans only. The numbers of Algerian and Tunisian immigrants in countries where they are omitted are not large enough to make any difference to the map.

Sources: Author’s calculations based on Spain: Padrón municipal 2005, France: Recensement 1999, Belgium and Netherlands: Fondation Hassan II 2003, Italy: Censimento 2001.



FIGURE 7: OVER- AND UNDER-REPRESENTATION OF PREFECTURES OF ORIGIN AMONG MORROCCAN RESIDENTS IN SPAIN (2002) COMPARED WITH BELGIUM (1995)



Source: Author's calculations using material in López García and Berriane 2004; for Belgium Reniers 1999.

Note: the statistic mapped is the share of the (Moroccan) prefectural population resident in Spain (Belgium) as a multiple of the national figure.

The geographical heterogeneity of the pattern of migration is just as great when viewed from the standpoint of the country of origin. Thanks to the information contained in the most recent edition of the Atlas of migration from Morocco to Spain it is possible to assign the emigrant population to whichever of Morocco's 71 prefectures they come from.

The authors of the Atlas, on the basis of a detailed questionnaire, assigned a total of 176,681 Moroccan residents in Spain to their prefecture of origin, although incompleteness of the data means that some prefectures have to

be amalgamated. These data are for the year 2002. At that time the Spanish government's estimate of the resident Moroccan population (with residence permits) was 298,275 (MTAS Anuario Estadístico de Extranjería 2002, published 2003) so the authors have managed to secure data from a very large sample of resident Moroccans; there is no reason to suppose that their large sample is biased with regard to place of origin. The Moroccan prefectures can be ordered according to a simple index of migration propensity (share of resident Moroccans in Spain from a province divided by the share of the Moroccan population in that prefecture). The value of the index, therefore, represents the ratio of the prefecture's migration propensity to that of the whole nation. I have used this form of the index to make the results comparable to a calculation done by Reniers (1999) for Moroccans in Belgium. My results for Moroccan migrants resident in Spain can be seen in Figure 7 and compared to Reniers' results (copied in an inset to the same figure).

The first impression given by the map for the prefectural origins of Moroccan residents in Spain is the enormous range between different areas of the country. The highest migration propensity (Jerada in Oriental province, with a value of 9.0 times the national average) is 211 times as high as in the lowest prefecture (Assa-Zag in Guelmim – Es-Semara province) with a value of one fortieth of the national average). The second clear message of the map is that the prefectures on the Mediterranean coast are more likely sources of migrants to Spain than any other areas of Morocco. Third, if the two maps are compared there is a striking similarity between them. The provinces which had the greatest propensity to produce Moroccan residents in Belgium in the 1990s were by and large the same ones which had the greatest propensity to produce Moroccan residents in Spain a decade later.

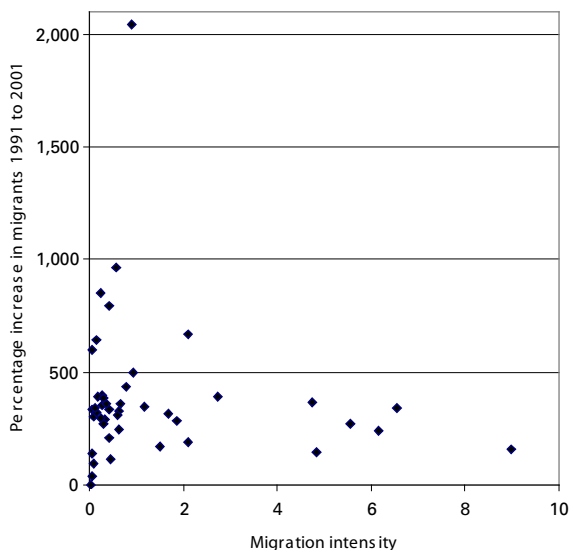
Would a similar pattern of geographical concentration be found in other destinations? In the case of Germany, the residence of a relatively small number of Moroccans, the pattern is even more biased towards migrants from the North than in Spain or Belgium. The prefecture of Nador was the original home of three quarters of the Moroccans in Germany in 1975; by 1993 this percentage had fallen but was still over 40 per cent while that prefecture houses only 2.4 per cent of the Moroccan population (Berriane 2003, 34). For other countries, I have not been able to discover how much the pattern is repeated; as far as I am aware, no present-day surveys exist for France, the Netherlands and Italy, the other major destinations, although one study in the Netherlands finds that "85 per cent of the Moroccan immigrants come from the Northern Riff Mountains" (van Heelsum 2003). There are some reasons why there may be differences. Some of the networks which have produced the modern pattern of migration to Spain may have been forged during the colonial period when the northern provinces which show such high propensities were under Spanish rule. The central and southern provinces were under French rule until 1956. During the migrations of the 1960s and early 1970s, "whereas for other regions of Morocco, France took in three-quarters of the emigrants, it received only one-third of the Berber emigrants from the north" (Reniers 1999,



685, referring to Bossard 1979). It is possible that this pattern remains true in France but sufficiently detailed information is not to my knowledge available.

If we compare the figures given for two dates in the Atlas we can see that the strong regional differences in the pattern of Moroccan migration to Spain have abated a little in the last decade. Figure 8 compares the migration intensity of Moroccan provinces (as shown in Figure 8) to the percentage increase in the number of emigrants between 1991 and 2001; each point represents one Moroccan prefecture. It can be seen that the largest increases were from prefectures of relatively low migration intensity; and that none of the provinces of highest migration intensity were among those with the fastest growth. But there was no sea change: many of the prefectures with highest growth represented relatively small absolute numbers. The pattern of migration to Spain, along with Italy the fastest growing destination for Moroccan migrants, remains regionally very unequal. In one sense, therefore, migration from the Moroccan prefectures of Jerada, Nador or Larache to the Spanish provinces of Girona and Tarragona is a more real phenomenon than migration from Morocco to Spain, and certainly much more real than the almost non-existent phenomenon of migration from the Moroccan prefectures of El Jadida or Asazag to the Spanish provinces of Avila or Zamora. In another sense, however, they are all the same since between Jerada and Girona, just as between El Jadida and Avila lies the same institutional frontier – the Spain–Morocco border.

FIGURE 8: CHANGES IN MOROCCO-SPAIN MIGRATION BY PREFECTURE, 1991-2001



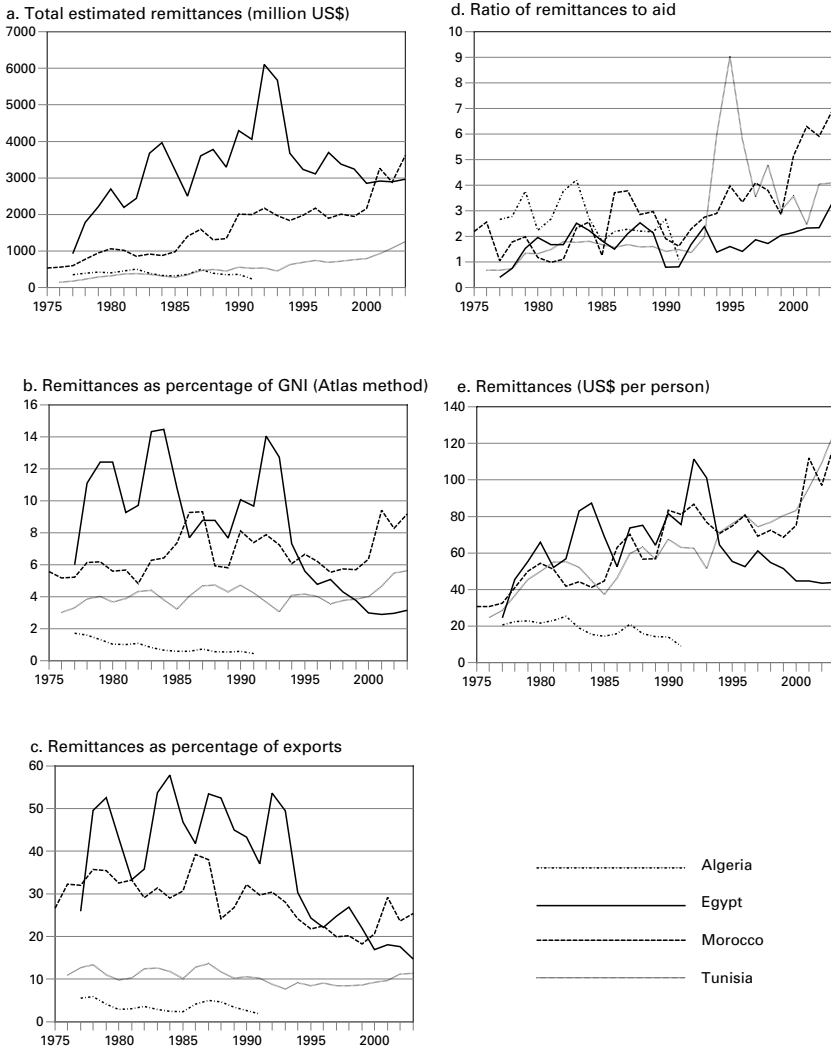
Source: Author's calculations based on data in López García and Berriane 2005.

4. THE FLOW OF MONEY AND THE FLOW OF PEOPLE, BANKS AND FERRIES

4.1. REMITTANCES IN AGGREGATE

Much of the recent discussion of North African, and particularly Moroccan, migration to Europe has emphasized the role of remittances. Figure 9 shows the estimates made by the World Bank of migrants' remittances since 1975 for the three Mahgrebi countries and for Egypt. Both Morocco and Egypt receive large quantities of remittances in total (Fig. 9a) but in Morocco and Tunisia they are much more important in relation to the population (Figure 9e); in these two countries remittances amount to about \$120 per annum per inhabitant. Egypt's erratically moving remittances are in decline, reflecting the economic situation of the Gulf region as the main destination of Egyptian migrants. In Morocco and Tunisia, however, remittances are still rising in importance both absolutely and in relation to national income, exports and development aid (Figures 9a, b, c, d). For Algeria no reliable data on remittances exists since 1991.

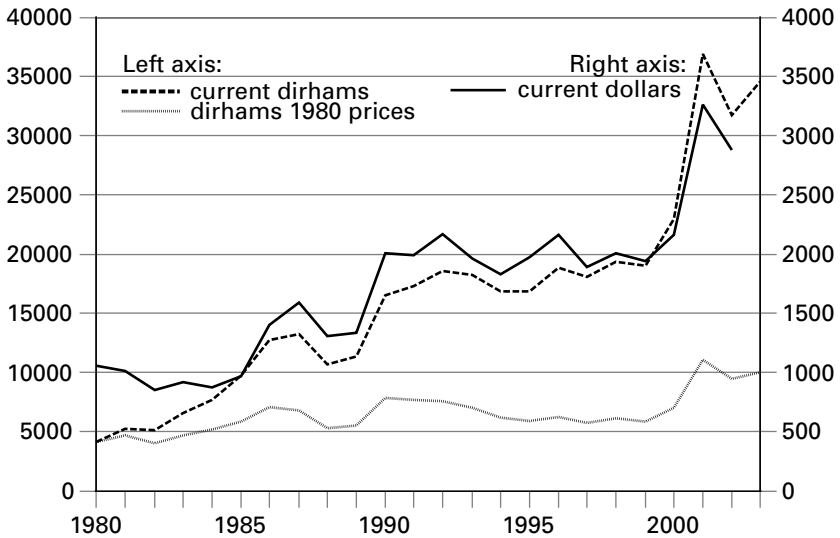
FIGURE 9. A, B, C, D AND E: MEASURES OF MIGRANTS' REMITTANCES AND THEIR IMPORTANCE



Source: World Bank, *Global Development Finance 2005*.

Moroccan national data allows a more detailed analysis of the flow of remittances. In Figure 10 the dashed and continuous lines show the strong rise of aggregate remittances in dirhams and dollars respectively and against the right and left axes respectively.

FIGURE 10: MOROCCO: TOTAL REMITTANCES 1980–2003 (MILLIONS OF DIRHAMS/DOLLARS)



Sources: *WDI 2004* (dollars); Maroc, Office des Changes (dirhams). (http://www.oc.gov.mar/MRE_annees.htm)

The evolution of total remittances in current dollars and current dirhams is similar, confirming that the original source is the same (the Moroccan Office des Changes) and showing the relative stability of the exchange rate since the mid-1980s. And they have risen steeply. Deflating the total by changes in the Moroccan retail price index shows, however, that in real terms it has not risen so much; it has hardly doubled in 23 years. This means that it has grown more slowly than the number of emigrants, so real remittances per emigrant have been falling, although they have risen per inhabitant of Morocco, growing much faster than the total population (2.4 times compared with 1.6 times). A more detailed breakdown of the evolution of remittances per head is given later. While the importance of migrants' remittances is increasingly emphasised in the development literature, and while Morocco is one of the half dozen countries for which remittances are most important, it is clear that they are no magic potion.

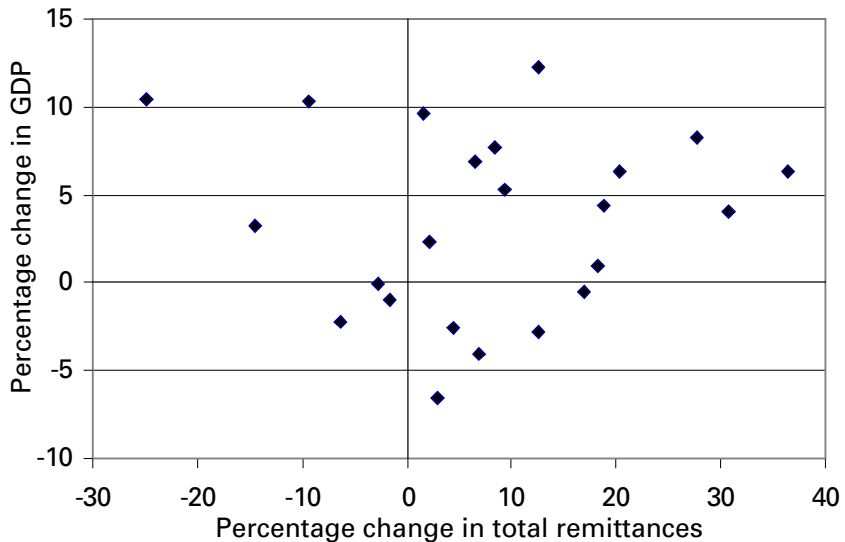
The prevailing opinions about remittances have followed to some extent the prevailing opinions about migration. To begin with the development and related literature mostly ignored the issue and then began to produce occasional pieces of work which were markedly hostile to migration, being based on the firm traditional idea that development meant betterment for people in the places (or at least the countries) where they lived. It was not until millions of



migrants from developing countries, in the absence of adequate development, took matters into their own hands by emigrating that social scientists began to take a more favourable view of migration as a means to individual and perhaps even community betterment. And, more recently, especially in the last 5 years a sharp new about turn has taken place and migration is being opposed, not only by governments but by social scientists with a range of political positions. Two ideas about remittances became conventional as part of the early hostility to migration: first, that they were not very significant in size and would in any case tend to wane rapidly as migrants settled into their new communities (see Garson and Tapinos 1981); and second that they tended to be spent on consumption which was deemed to do no good for development, possibly increase inequalities and to be actually bad for development by causing inflation. More recently, the tide of prevailing opinion turned again. By 2004 the World Bank devoted a large part of its annual *Global Development Finance* to extolling the importance of remittances, emphasizing their role in financing foreign exchange deficits and arguing that means must be found by which they could be mobilized for development purposes. Other writers have stressed the positive effects of remittances on the incomes of poor households. Adams and Page (2003) found that they played a major role in poverty reduction. But not surprisingly, there is already a backlash to this. In particular, Chami *et al.* (2005) at the IMF (using panel data from 113 countries) strongly conclude that there is a negative correlation between remittances and economic growth and therefore argue that remittances are counter-cyclical payments to maintain household consumption in bad periods but that they are not a plausible source of capital for development (as the World Bank seemed to have been suggesting).

Jacques Bouhga-Hagbe (2004), like Chami *et al.*, finds that changes in remittances and changes in Moroccan GDP are negatively related. These findings, however, are not consistent with the published figures for remittances and Moroccan GDP usually published (from the Office des Change and World Development Indicators). Using those figures the relationship appears as in Figure 11. The correlation coefficient of these two series is 0.0 (or 0.2 if a one-year lag is introduced). There is not much evidence here of a tendency for migrants to compensate for fluctuations in the Moroccan economic situation. Bouhga-Hagbe also finds, more plausibly, that remittances are closely related to French wage rates (a proxy for the income of Moroccan emigrants) and to activity in the Moroccan construction industry (which is often financed by emigrants' transfers).

FIGURE 11: MOROCCO: RELATION BETWEEN PERCENTAGE CHANGE IN REMITTANCES AND GDP, 1980–2003
(EACH POINT REPRESENTS ONE YEAR)



Sources: World Bank, *Global Development Finance 2005*, *World Development Indicators 2005*.

As to the contribution of remittances to development in Morocco, different studies have arrived at contrasting conclusions. All stress that a major portion of remittances is used to supplement basic consumption. Bourchachen concludes that because of this 1.2 million Moroccans escape poverty thanks to remittances (Bourchachen 2000). Others stress that remittances have increased inequality. In some places they have become a substitute for maintaining and improving agricultural production (Leichtman 2000) but in other places they have been invested in agricultural improvement (Haas 1998). Many studies highlight the tendency to spend remittances on building and improving homes. Migrants from rural areas often use remittances to build or buy houses in the city. Many have used foreign savings to set up small businesses, especially in the service sector. All of these studies may capture part of the truth about remittances, but the whole truth remains elusive³. The inconclusiveness is part of what Collyer rightly describes as “the overwhelming difficulty of saying anything comprehensive about the relationship between migration and development, such is the complexity of the interactions and the multiplicity of variables involved” (Collyer 2004). One of the problems of the debate, however, is that it judges the achievement of something which its protagonists do not intend to achieve. There may be a few eccentrics who migrate in order to help develop their country. The vast majority, however, migrate for reasons to do with their



own and their families' welfare, in a broad sense of that word. Most of the debate about migration and development, however, focusses on its effect on the development of countries of origin or on its economic and social impacts on the countries of destination (and often specifically on their existing residents). Too little of the discussion centres on the needs of the migrants themselves who are frequently simply left out of the equation.

4.2. REMITTANCES PER EMIGRANT

The amount of money remitted by emigrants to their families in countries of origin depend obviously on the number of migrants and on the amount each one transmits. The detailed data published by the Moroccan Office des Changes shows aggregate remittances by country of emigration. If these are combined with the estimates of the relative size of the Moroccan community by country of destination, outlined in Figure 2, then it is possible to see how much the number of migrants and the amount of remittances coincide. Table 6 shows the variations in the implicit remittance propensity of different Moroccan emigrant communities.

TABLE 6: RELATION BETWEEN DISTRIBUTION OF MOROCCAN MIGRANTS AND DISTRIBUTION OF THEIR REMITTANCES BY COUNTRY (EUROPE 5)

	Migrants (thousands)	Remittances (million dirhams)	per cent of migrants	remittances %
Spain	569	3188.6	25.4	11.8
France	820	15385.0	36.7	56.9
Belgium	233	2062.4	10.4	7.6
Netherlands	273	2031.9	12.2	7.5
Italy	341	4379.7	15.2	16.2
Total	2,236	27047.6	100	100

Sources: See Table 1 and Maroc, Office des Changes 2005.

There is less correspondence between the percentage of migrants and the percentage of remittances in this table than has been remarked by other researchers. In particular Moroccan migrants in France seem to be considerably more inclined to send remittances than those in Spain. This may partly be an illusion since the figure for migrants in Spain is for a more recent date than for France. More recent figures would eliminate a part of the difference, but not all of it. There may be other reasons for different rates of remittance from different communities. The low rate in the Netherlands might be seen as the result of the longer established nature of the Moroccan community there. But this is unlikely since the rate is higher from Belgium and much higher for France, both of them with long-established communities. One would nevertheless expect the Moroccans in Spain, the newest overseas Moroccan community, to have a high rate of remittance. The fact that it is particularly low may be due to various

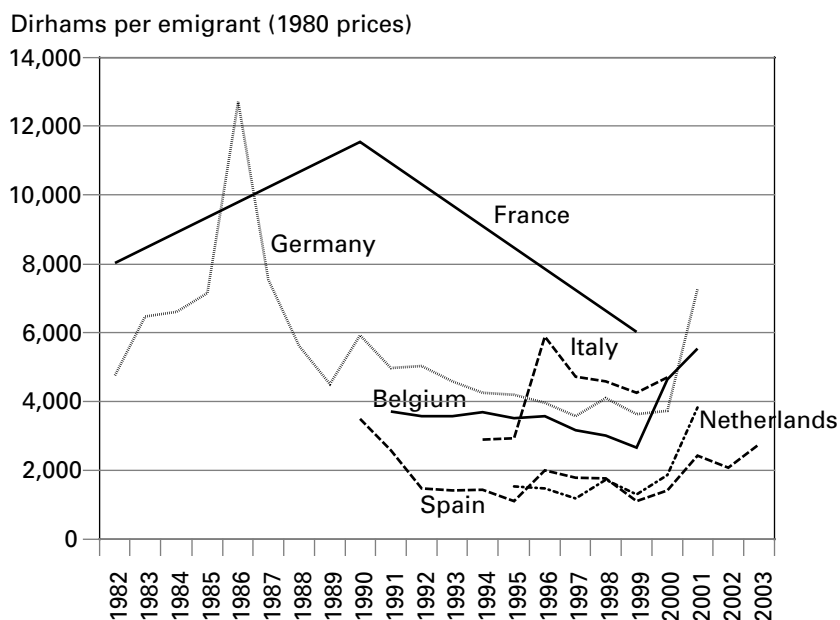
causes. It may be that Moroccans in Spain have lower rates of pay than those in France. That is probable given the rapid expansion of immigration to Spain in recent years and to the fact that quite a high proportion of the immigrants has been in very low paid jobs and especially exploitable. But the other side of this is that the male majority among Moroccans in Spain is much higher than in France which suggests that labour force participation rates (and so numbers of wage earners, if not wages) may be greater.

These figures are shown in Table 6 for the latest year. In addition, the Office des Changes also publishes an annual series since 1982, attributing total remittances by the country from which they came. This can be compared to the estimates of changes in the Moroccan emigrant population shown in Figure 2 to give a very rough estimate of changes in the amount remitted per emigrant. This is shown in Figure 12 adjusted for inflation (deflated by the Moroccan price index).

In 2003 total reported remittances reported were about \$3.6 billion, about \$120 per head of the population. But it is not, of course, distributed equally either territorially or in any other way. If we assume that the remittances are distributed by province in about equal proportion to the provincial origin of Moroccan migrants in Spain, then in the province with the highest emigration propensity, Oriental in the North, would receive a little more than £1 billion of remittances with a population of 1.9 million. This would mean more than \$600 per head of population in a province whose income per head is calculated in US\$ as \$1241, in other words an increase of 50 per cent per person in GDI per head. This may be exaggerated since PPP income is estimated to be 3 times that calculated in exchange rate terms. Moreover, within Oriental province there are major differences between prefectures in migration propensity. In the prefecture of Jerada, a number equal to over 5 per cent of whose population is resident in Spain alone, the migration propensity is more than twice that of Oriental province. It would not be surprising if remittances there were larger than locally generated income.

This, however, is speculation. What is known is that overall levels of remittance from Europe have been maintained over a long period and from some countries of residence are rising not only as monetary aggregates but also in real terms per head. This itself is remarkable given the evidence about the economic situation of Moroccan emigrants in Europe – their low level of economic participation, low occupational status and high unemployment (see Section 3). But even the figures seen above are a significant underestimate of the amount remitted. This is because they omit both transfers which are not known to the monetary authorities (many of them being carried as cash) and non-monetary transfers. Remittances in kind are a central element in the relationship between Moroccans at home and abroad and they are crucially related to the movement of people.

FIGURE 12: ESTIMATES OF REMITTANCES PER EMIGRANT, 1982–2003



Source: as Figure 2 and Maroc, Office des Changes 2005.

4.3. PASO DEL ESTRECHO

Remittances in kind are almost impossible to estimate but casual observance of the phenomenon of the Paso de Estrecho is enough to show that they likely to be very important. And they may be relatively more important for those migrants who are resident closer to home. Photo 3 gives an impression of the volume of traffic and the remittances in kind characteristic of the Paso.

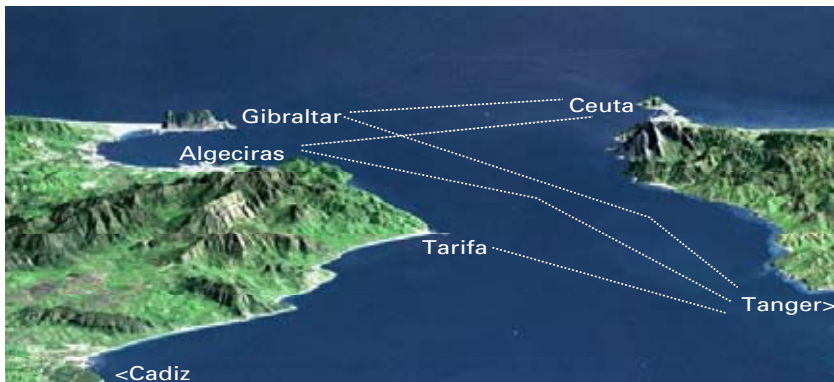
The continuous flow of people between Morocco and Europe is one of the distinguishing features of Moroccan migration. Every year, especially during the summer months, a high proportion of Moroccans resident in Europe return to their home country for stays of up to a few weeks. While use of airlines for this travel is increasing, the great majority of travellers go by road in cars, vans and small trucks, using one of the numerous ferry crossings. During the 1980s this annual flow of migrants began to overburden the infrastructure of Spain, the country through which most of them travelled. The problems prompted the building of new roads, rest and parking facilities, and port facilities at the embarkation ports and ferries.

The crossing has come to be planned by the Spanish authorities as the equivalent of a military operation. It is grandiosely called “Operación Paso de

Estrecho” and lasts from June to September, in two phases Operación Salida and Operación Retorno. The Coordinador General of the Operación regularly reports, in ever more detailed and self-congratulatory annual reports, that it has been a great success, proudly claiming in the 2004 report that instead of people waiting for the boats, the boats now wait for the people. The involved 2004 OPE 606,286 vehicles containing 2,525,138 passengers in 7,511 boat trips. 5,561 passengers were given medical assistance during their journey by the Spanish authorities. Another 5,103 received social assistance (which is often a euphemism for an inspection of documents)⁴. Most of the boats go from Algeciras at the Northern side of Hercules’s Gate and arrive at Ceuta or Tanger (Figure 13) and other ferries leave from ports further east.

Ferries from Algeciras to Ceuta and Tanger (the northern and southern points of the strait) leave at least every hour during the day and cost the foot passenger either 11 or 18 euros, depending on whether it is a fast (40 minutes) or slow (90 minutes) ferry. In the enclave of Ceuta you are still legally in Spain (one of two particles of the European Union which are in Africa) so to get to Morocco you have to cross the land border. It is a bit more expensive to take the Ferry Rápido, a catamaran from Tarifa to Tanger but you arrive directly in Morocco.

FIGURE 13: FERRY ROUTES ACROSS THE STRAIT OF GIBRALTAR



Source: NASA.

PHOTO 2: FERRIES IN THE STRAIT OF GIBRALTAR



The Paso, however, is something which shows much of the uniqueness of the North African (and particularly the Moroccan) immigration to Europe. In the first place, the geographical closeness of the place of origin and place of residence of migrants, as well as the relative ease and cheapness of travel, means that few emigrants completely break their link with home. They are not emigrants in the sense that nineteenth century Europeans in America were emigrants. Their lives occupy an enormous space encompassing their home towns, possibly other places in Morocco en route, their place of work or residence in Europe and the transport facilities and infrastructure in between. Their living space occupies part of at least two and often more countries. Their normal annual lives involve several crossings of international frontiers. Secondly, the manner of the annual Paso has great material significance. In particular because most migrants returning for their summer break in Morocco arrive in a vehicle piled high with goods acquired in Europe to be left in Morocco (see photo 3).

PHOTO 3: VEHICLES, WITH REMITTANCES IN KIND, WAITING TO BOARD A TRANS-MEDITERRANEAN FERRY



PHOTO 4: SPANISH ROAD SIGN. EVEN IN NORTHERN SPAIN THERE ARE ROAD SIGNS IN ARABIC



5. PUSH, PULL AND STOP

Economists assume that the objective of migrants is to increase their economic welfare. The economics of migration began with an emphasis on the economic possibilities facing individuals regarding income and employment. Later it has been complicated in many ways. The concentration on individuals gave way to seeing the family as the decision making and optimizing unit (the so-called “new” economics of migration); this has been extended by ever more complex analyses of the family and the interrelations of its members. Others have seen migration as a form of escape from the family. These sophistications of the individual or the unified happy family model of migration have served to introduce a strong gender focus into the debate. In either case, the dimension is much more sociological than the early view of migration. The nature of the methodology of all this discussion can be summarized (and is sometimes explicitly known as) “push and pull” effects: in other words those economic and social forces which drive migrants to leave their countries of origin and those which attract them to their countries of destination.

Added to this microeconomics (or micro-socioeconomics) of migration is a macro-economics of migration which examines the effects of migration on economic stability, growth and development, and particularly analyzes the impact of migrants’ monetary remittances to their home countries, viewed both from the point of view of their effect on development and from their significance as a monetary flow, sometimes large enough to affect rates of inflation, interest rates and exchange rates.

To many observers neither the micro- nor the macro-economics of migration are enough to explain the actual patterns of migration prevalent in the world. A significant part of what drives actually existing migration does not seem to be captured by them. As a result attention has been increasingly concentrated on institutional aspects of migration, in particular the nature of the international

social networks which are an essential part of real world migration processes and which explain why the most travelled migratory routes are not those which the purely economic analysis of push and pull effects would predict, and which also explain the durability of migration patterns even when economic and social circumstances change in both origin and destination countries.

All these theoretical ideas, and empirical work based on them, are greatly expanding our knowledge of the nature of the processes of migration. But I contend that there are some aspects of existing methodology which do not aid understanding and which need to be reconsidered and revised. The most fundamental of these is the shared assumption that migration requires an explanation. There is a very strong tradition in social science to “explain” not what is regarded as normal but what is regarded as exceptional. In this field the standard view (sometimes as an unconsidered instinct, sometimes as a strongly held prescriptive opinion) is that migration is abnormal and needs to be explained, while spending one’s life in the community and place in which one was born is natural and needs no explanation. The social sciences are replete with such ideas: for instance there is an abundance of theories of homosexuality but hardly any of heterosexuality. The idea that migration is abnormal is no doubt influenced by the existence of a period of history from the end of World War I to the 1960s when at least non-forced migration was virtually forbidden, as well as by feelings of hostility towards immigrants which have built up in more recent years. This negative view of migration has a deep influence on the study of the phenomenon. Many analyses of migration are written with the implicit or stated objective of finding ways to reduce it. Indeed much contemporary migration research has been financed by public bodies in destination countries with exactly that idea in mind. But if we are interested primarily in the aspects of migration which can be reversed, then we will inevitably fail to see much about its nature.

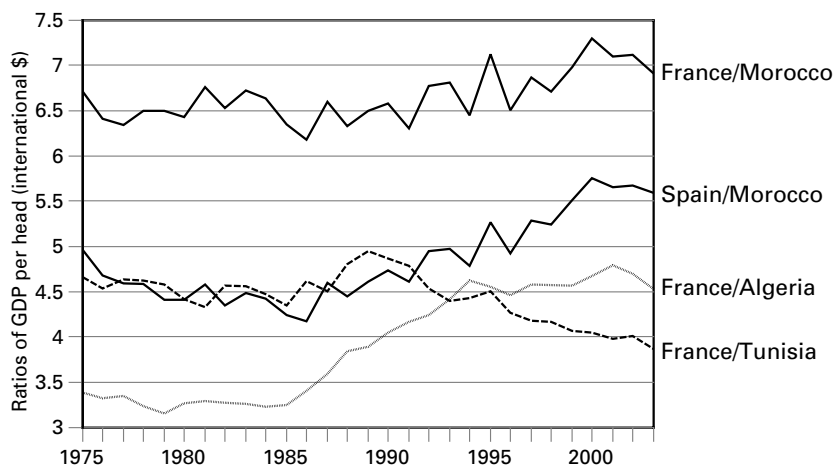
A second common but also negative aspect of the study of migration is that it implicitly assumes that there are few legal or physical obstacles to migration. This is a natural result of the fact that early theories of international migration were extensions of prior theories of intra-national migration and therefore contained no consideration of the crossing of frontiers. But while goods and capital increasingly cross international frontiers with the same lack of difficulty as birds or butterflies, this is far from true for human beings. Crossing borders often requires documents, money and a great deal of daring. Since on the whole there is tendency to tighten frontier controls then increasingly the numbers and nature of migrations is influenced by the crossing of borders, in other words “stop” in addition to “push” and “pull”. The increasing concentration on networks as an influence on migration is in part a recognition of the problems of border crossing; one of the essential functions of many networks is to facilitate this difficult activity. It has been calculated that “the 25 richest countries are probably spending US\$ 25–30 billion a year on immigration enforcement and asylum processing mechanisms” (Martin 2003), a similar order of magnitude to the amount transferred as overseas development aid. But there is very little

serious analysis in the literature of the extent to which border controls actually influence the quantity and kind of migration and the ability of migrants to gain their objectives.

This final part of the article discusses the relationship between some of these theoretical points and the empirical information about present-day Western Mediterranean migration outlined in the earlier parts. It is clear that powerful push and pull factors must have been at work to create the considerable population with Mahgrebi origins which is now resident in Europe. The comparison of some national averages gives a clear suggestion of the possible incentives. Average Western European material living standards have been considerably higher than those in the countries on the opposite side of the Mediterranean.

In Figure 14, this gap (or step, as it is sometimes called) is measured as the ratio between the purchasing power parity level of income per head in certain European and certain North African countries. The gap is very wide indeed: 5.6 for Spain/Morocco compared with 4.1 between the USA and Mexico, the same figure between Germany and Turkey and 4.6 between Saudi Arabia and India. Between 1985 the gap has grown between both France and Spain and Morocco and, as is well known, migration, especially to Spain, has also grown during this period. This difference in income levels seems an obvious element of any explanation of Mahgrebi citizens, let alone those from further south, taking the path of the sea. On the other hand, as has already been argued, Morocco (like most countries) is regionally heterogeneous, including in income levels. The national income per head of the most prosperous province is estimated to be 25 per cent higher than in the poorest province (UNDP Morocco 2003). It would be reasonable to expect that the incentive to emigrate from poor provinces was greater than from rich ones. In fact, however, regional disaggregation reveals no relationship whatever between provincial income and provincial migration intensity (see Figure 15). Of course, neither the national nor the provincial income gap across the Mediterranean is an incentive in itself; it depends on the expectations of the income which will be received in the country of destination. In this case we have seen that there is evidence that Mahgrebi immigrants in Europe are among the groups with lowest occupational and socio-economic status (see Section 3)⁵. It seems, therefore, that a large amount of migration has taken place even though the gap in incomes between Morocco and Moroccans in Spain or France is much less than the gap in GDP per head between both countries.

FIGURE 14: RATIO OF GDP PER HEAD IN INTERNATIONAL DOLLARS BETWEEN NORTH AND SOUTH MEDITERRANEAN COUNTRIES, 1975–2003



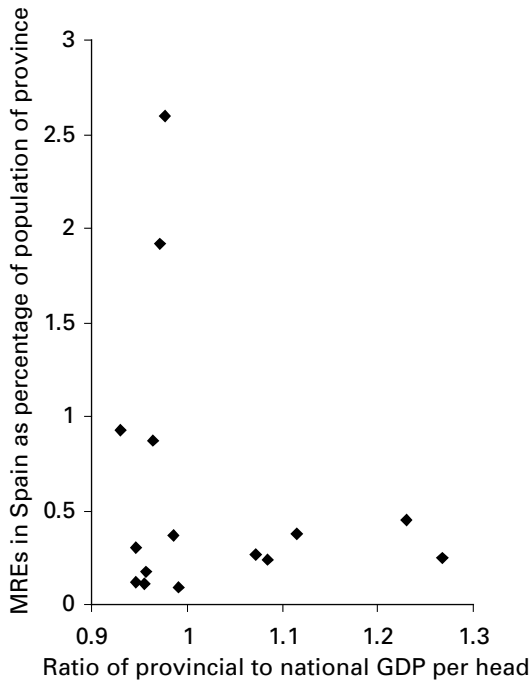
Source: World Bank 2005.

The incentive of income is, however, not independent of the probability of employment and the type of employment available. According to Moroccan government figures the rate of unemployment in Morocco in 2003 was about 12 per cent, although no informed observer believes that it is so low. Unemployment was highly concentrated in urban areas and among people aged between 15 and 34 years, the years of highest economic participation. The rate of unemployment both of men and of women between 15 and 24 in urban areas was even in official figures about one third. Since this is the age group which seems to be most represented in recent Moroccan migration, to Spain at least, it is reasonable to suppose that it has been a strong push factor. Nonetheless, once again when the figures are disaggregated by province, there is no statistical relationship between regional migration intensity and either the percentage of urban population, or the provincial unemployment rate, or the provincial rate of economic participation any more than there is with the relative level of regional income.

It appears, therefore, that the unequal regional pattern of Moroccan emigration almost certainly has other powerful determinants that are not to be found in obvious economic differences. This is not to say that labour market considerations do not play a part in explaining the flow of migrants. If they had stayed in Morocco it is reasonable to suppose that unemployment would have been much higher in that country. In any case the unemployment rate is probably underestimated, partly due to many forms of disguised unemployment and

partly because the very low level of economic participation is in part a reaction to the lack of employment opportunities. Emigration, however, does not seem to provide these opportunities since the rate of economic participation of expatriate Moroccan communities is not generally higher than that in Morocco itself. Government and international statistics estimate the overall level of participation at between 34 and 36 per cent of the population in Morocco (Maroc en Chiffres; UNDemographic Yearbook 2002). While it is much higher than this in Spain, it is even lower in Belgium and the Netherlands and not much higher in France (see Table 4). It also seems that a high proportion of the low numbers who are economically active can expect to be unemployed although many who are unemployed or inactive according to these definitions may be active in informal sector activities.

FIGURE 15: RELATION OF PROVINCIAL AND PREFECTURAL MIGRATION INTENSITY TO VARIABLES OF RESIDENCE, EMPLOYMENT AND PARTICIPATION, MOROCCO 2003



Sources: UNDP Morocco 2003; Maroc en Chiffres.

Note: scatters of three other variables (rural/urban residence, regional unemployment, and labour force participation rate) are just as uncorrelated with the regional rate of emigration to Spain.



The facts that the large numbers of Moroccans in Western Europe live on average at the lower end of the European income distribution and with relatively low economic status and with very few if any steps towards such goals as increasing economic independence for women may make many wonder why it has been and continues to be a relatively popular option. Certainly it is hard to explain with reference either to the overall economic aggregates of income and employment, or by regionally disaggregating these.

There is, however, another picture. For a very large number of the emigrants life is not a question of living in Morocco or in Europe, but rather of living in both simultaneously⁶. Ruba Salih, in a study of Moroccan women migrants in Italy concludes:

“For some families, life “here” and life “there” become therefore complementary. For other Moroccan families, however, transnationalism may paradoxically involve mutually exclusive choices. Indeed, annual visits to Morocco imply sacrifices in Italy. These aspects are salient in Moroccan women’s narratives that often revolve around the tension embedded in managing the family’s budget. For many of them, transnationalism means struggling to distribute resources evenly between Italy and Morocco, satisfying children’s needs in Italy and relatives’ expectations in Morocco, operating a balance between the desire to display their success in Morocco and the concrete requirements of everyday life in Italy” (Salih 2001, 669).”

For many, especially those who propose to spend least time in Europe, even low paid employment or precarious informal sector activities, may, given an extremely frugal life style, provide resources for substantial transfers of remittances to those parts of the family who reside, at least for now, in Morocco. Many Moroccan families are particularly good examples of the growing phenomenon of the multinational family. They function economically by frequent redistribution of their members between family sites to take advantages even of small economic opportunities. They are vehicles for major flows of finance and transfers in kind from Western Europe to the country of origin. The network within which this still unorthodox social life operates are partly family ones and partly regional ones. Regular flows of migrants in both directions are often better understood as flows from one region (province or even village) to another, rather than one country to another. So in this sense too the simple traditional idea that society is a kind of Russian doll with the individual in the centre, enclosed in the family, enclosed by the town, province and country in turn is broken down. Many families break out of nations; their geographical boundaries may be larger than those of a whole country. In the words of Salih “transnationalism allows women to construct a ‘home’ which includes in a continuum both Italy and Morocco” (Salih 2001, 668). Migrant households and families evolve in this milieu. They develop new forms of cooperation, interconnection and complementarity of members. Some of them give new opportunities for independence and authority to those who were previously denied it (for example, women who, with male-biased

migration, become the majority in families or towns or countries where men have always been the majority). Within the same milieu new forms of authority and authoritarianism may also develop, as well as forms of escape from family interdependence into a new independence. Negotiating this great expansion of families and communities can be extremely difficult. It means finding ever new ways of selling labour power, or other ways of making a living, maintaining freedom in relation to two or more state powers, frequent, long and arduous journeys, dealing with harsh economic conditions and fluctuations of economic fortune, dealing with hostility and racism from established communities, with problems of language and cultural difference.

Some migrants succeed spectacularly in this experimental environment; and some fail altogether. But the great majority, as the data presented here on the stability in the number of migrants and the flow of remittances show, adapt, innovate and survive economically and culturally.

If migration can in some ways best be understood as migration from one family seat to another, or from one village, city or province to another, there is one aspect of it which can only be seen as migration from one national state to another and that is the problem of the frontier and how to cross it. Mahgrebi migrants to Europe have benefitted from a degree of freedom of movement which allows them to arrive legally in the first place and then to move back and forth between their two countries of residence. To do so they must cross frontiers and the degree of freedom to do so has become one of the central political issues of our age. The recent political history of almost every European country (and perhaps also the USA) shows that the degree of openness is probably the most divisive of all political issues. The overall trend of policies is to tighten the control of frontiers, something which creates problems both for new migrants and for multinational families. The latter find that states construct a fence of fluctuating height and crossability across their living space.

A country such as Spain has, almost inevitably, two policies towards its national frontiers, the most conflictive and permeable parts of which are the Strait of Gibraltar and the stretch of sea between Africa and the Canary Islands. It must maintain its openness because some of its employers demand cheap labour, or because its resident immigrants want the right to family reunion, or the freedom to visit their country of origin, or because it wishes to allow the flow of tourists in both directions and because to stop all these things completely would involve violating a hundred accepted codes of "civilized" behaviour. On the other hand, it needs to close its frontier because some of its people feel threatened by the competition or pressure of immigrants, because its allies press it to stop unwanted immigrants using the country as a pathway to other parts of Europe, or because it fears the growth of social conflict.

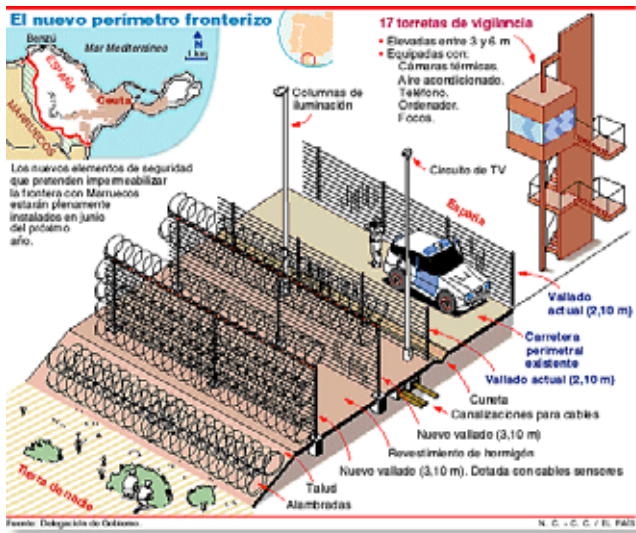
It is, therefore, like all European countries at the present time, mired in a deep contradiction. The imperfect solution, almost bound to fail, is to divide those who enter its territory into two rigidly distinct groups – those with and those without permits, the legal and the illegal, the "with papers" and the



“without papers”. No sooner had the present Spanish government accepted in 2005 that it had lost part of this battle and as a result legalized almost one million “illegal” residents, than it declared that that was the end. From now on there would be no more regularizations and the borders would be policed with total rigour, just as the US government had said in 1986 and is now saying again. The minister in charge of migration agreed with five other European governments to impose a new more rigid border control policy and to expel more illegal migrants in joint special charter flights to avoid the problem that regular airline passengers are becoming increasingly resistant to travelling with migrants who are being forcibly removed from Europe (*Financial Times* 2005; *El País* 2005; *The Guardian* 2005).

Contradictory though it is, there is no doubt that the Spanish and other European governments are very serious in their intention to tighten the borders. One step towards this objective was the construction in 1999 of a new perimeter fence in the “barbed-wire baroque” style along the border between the Spanish enclave of Ceuta and Morocco (see Figure 16). This has closed the porousness of part of the border but, despite all the expense, it seems almost laughable when hundreds of thousands of Moroccans and others cross this border legally every year and when the rest of the border is long and ill-defined, consisting of the beaches of northern Morocco and southern Spain and the sea between them. The forbidding Ceuta fence is an exemplary rather than a real frontier (see Erdem 2006 in this issue for a parallel case in Turkey).

FIGURE 16: THE CEUTA FENCE (PERÍMETRO FRONTERIZO)



Source: *El País*, 17.08.1999.

Passengers who cross the Strait legally do so in modern and comfortable ferries, the trip is short and usually pleasant and safe and, aside from some occasional bureaucratic trouble at the frontiers, it is not a difficult passage – as long as you have the requisite papers (passport, national identity document, visa, work permit as appropriate).

If you do not have these documents there are alternative crossings. For a price, false documents can be purchased or legal documents may be borrowed from someone who is not currently using them. Otherwise, along the coast between the southern Gate and Tanger, or further south along the coast of the Western Sahara, you need to find the owner of a patera (a small and often not very stable boat; see Photo 6). To carry you (along with an excessive number of other passengers) during the night, avoiding if possible the controls of the Spanish authorities, he was charging in 1998 about €1000 (by now probably about €2000).

PHOTO 5: DETAIL OF THE CEUTA FENCE



Source: Website of Centre for International Borders Research, Queen's University, Belfast (<http://www.qub.ac.uk/cibr/PGStudies01.htm>).

The Spanish authorities have devoted increasing resources (largely from the Guardia Civil) to intercepting the patera traffic. In 2002 they established the SIVE (Integrated System of External Vigilance), an elaborate network of radar, cameras, land and sea platforms and helicopter stations along the southern Spanish coast, to stop illegal immigrants arriving by sea. Initially this was expected to cost about 1.5 billion euros. In the years 2003 and 2004 they intercepted 942 and 740 boats respectively, and detained 19.2 and 15.7 thousand occupants and 225 and 283 patera owners or organizers. 13 and 14 boats were wrecked and 101 and 81 bodies were found; another 109 and 60 people disappeared while 406 and 339 were rescued. These detentions were distributed about half and half between the Canary Islands (about 200 km. from the Moroccan coast at the shortest point) and the Strait of Gibraltar. (Ministerio de Trabajo y Asuntos Sociales 2005) Official figures for 2005 showed a 25 per cent fall in the number of immigrants arriving in pateras since, the authorities claim, thanks to the SIVE, more pateras are being intercepted before they reach the shore. Nonetheless, the early part of 2006 saw a new increase in the number of pateras leaving the Mauritanian coast and bringing larger numbers of immigrants from West and Central Africa to the Canary Islands. The government of Mauritania (where the press claimed that 1 million migrants were waiting to embark) declared itself unable to curtail the flow; it was offered help by the Spanish government which in turn appealed for help from the rest of Europe. This new route is longer and riskier and will no doubt result in more shipwrecks and deaths.

PHOTO 6: LANDING FROM A PATERA ON THE SPANISH COAST



Many of those who go missing in the Strait or off the north-west African coast are never accounted for in figures and the total number of those who die annually must be substantially more than those reported. The deaths, though

not directly willed by the authorities, are an inescapable and necessary part of the policy of deterrence of illegal immigrants. Well publicised shipwrecks, arrests and drownings are, like the fence, part of the policy of demonstrating that the frontier, open to millions of people, is firmly closed to those who have not been selected. The Strait of Gibraltar, like the Rio Grande in the case of the USA, confronts Europe with a Herculean quandary: can freedom and democracy within the continent be consistent with draconian control at the borders? Or will the tightening of frontiers be obtained by restricting the freedom and democracy of all?

The Gates of Hercules remain a place of historic drama because, as well as being the unconsummated kiss between continents, it is a consummate frontier between two nation states, Morocco and Spain. Pedro Duque (Spain's first astronaut) remarked during his maiden space flight that "from up here you can't see any frontiers". The crossing of the strait (Paso del Estrecho), however, in some ways like the Mexico–USA border, has become a microcosm of the interrelations between North and South in the world, in particular between Europe and Africa, and even more in particular between Spain and Morocco, as well as a vortex in the struggle between different concepts of development, globalization and human rights.

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