

NEW MOBILITIES AROUND MOROCCO: A CASE STUDY OF THE CITY OF FES

Final Report for the MacArthur-Funded Project on:
“African Perspectives on Human Mobility”

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NOVEMBER 2010

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CHAPTER 1: A STUDY OF MIGRANTS AND THEIR RELATIONSHIP WITH THE CITY, SEEN THROUGH THE CASE OF FES

1.1 Context of the study

The research subject for the Moroccan team's contribution to the *African Perspectives on Human Mobility* programme was chosen on the basis of the assessment of research into Moroccan migration which emerged from the first phase of the programme. It should be remembered that the report¹ had concluded there was a need to consider the multiplicity of migratory functions operating in the country. Thus this project, *New mobilities around Morocco – a case study of the city of Fes* is part of the global process which, rather than focussing on the one form of migration involving Moroccans which had been studied up until now, includes other forms of human mobility which link the two opposing shores of the Mediterranean, with movement in both directions, and in which Morocco is involved. These are the three forms of mobility now affecting Morocco: *Moroccan emigration abroad*, *Sub-Saharan flows* across Morocco, and *the Europeans*, more and more of whom are choosing to settle in Morocco as “resident tourists”.

The city of Fes was chosen, for, while being an area where migration has been studied little, if at all, it has the advantage of being a recipient of the three forms of migration selected for analysis, and satisfies a certain number of criteria established at the start of our study. Considered to be the most ancient capital of Morocco (its foundation dates back to 789), Fes faced its first wave of migrants from 817-818, as populations driven out of Andalusia were assimilated by the city. It was also the country's political, economic, intellectual and spiritual capital. As a recipient of internal migratory flows, some of which were linked to international migration, from the 1970^s it experienced a demographic explosion which led to poorly managed spatial growth and considerable socio-spatial heterogeneity (Figure 1). Its urban economy is built on industry (with 25,000 jobs, it is the country's third largest industrial centre), which has struggled to move beyond the cottage industry stage, tourism which suffers from very short durations of stay, and a function as a university town, which it has to share with neighbouring Meknes. These economic sectors, to which governmental departments can be added, remain inadequate to respond to growing demand from the urban labour market swelled by continuous demographic growth. Hence the development of an informal sector involving more than 50% of the working population, whose size is explained by the amount of cottage industry. But parallel activities have also swelled the building and street trading sectors, along with various services to the population. Today, the city is experiencing a new dynamism. There has been a certain amount of urban renewal, as the city tries to assume a role which takes it beyond its regional calling, positioning itself as one of the global cities of the 3rd millennium, with urban renewal and medina restoration work, the restructuring of its economic fabric and the organisation of cultural activities at an international level, such as the festivals of world religious music and of Sufi culture. It is within this urban context that the

¹ See country report (<http://www.imi.ox.ac.uk/research/african-perspectives-on-human-mobility-1/morocco>)

three forms of migration which we intend to analyse have developed.

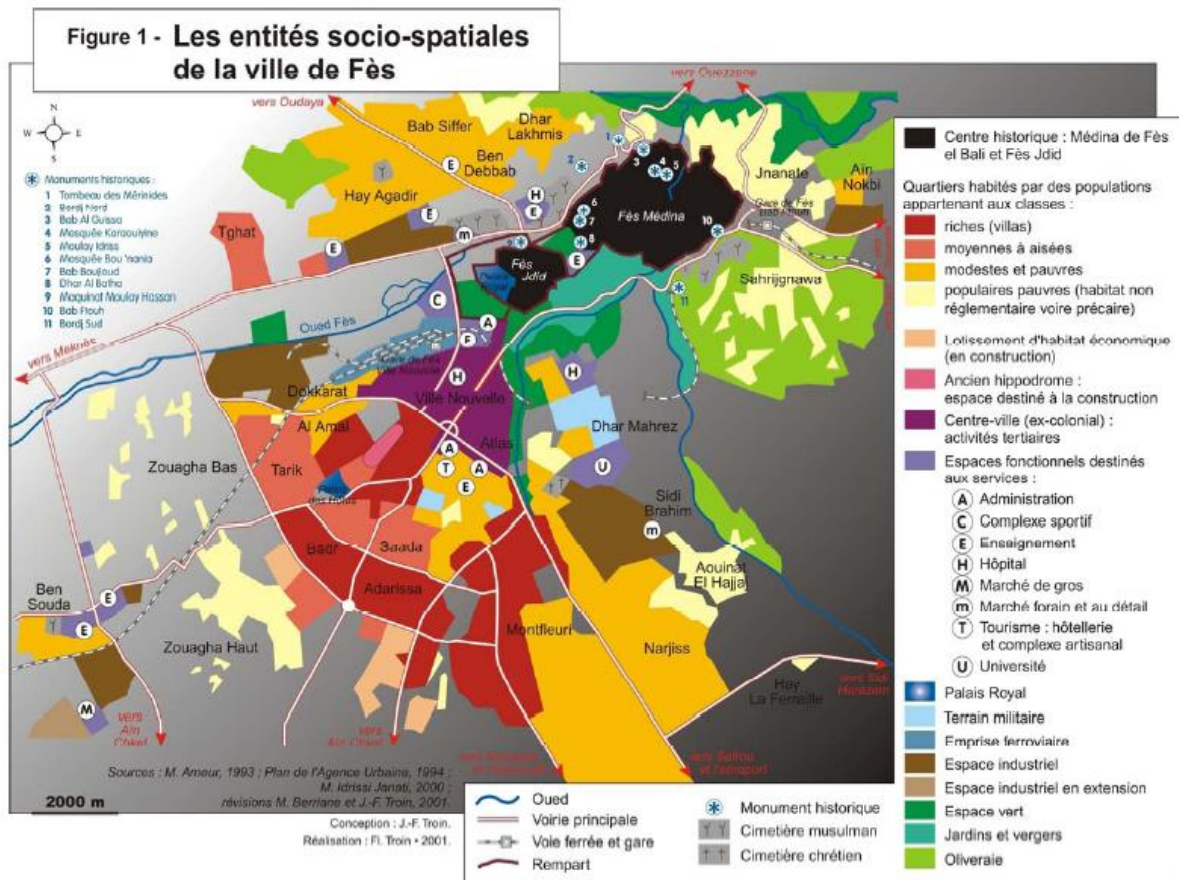


Figure 1. Socio-spatial entities of Fes

In fact, when choosing the geographical area on which to focus our study, we chose a new area which had not yet been studied in order to add a new dimension to our understanding of the phenomenon. The city of Fes is not just being affected by a considerable and long-established emigration movement, but is also receiving a considerable influx of investment, emigrants' families and even migrants themselves when they return. These migrants and their families come from the Prerif area, from the Middle Atlas and Tafilalet areas, and have always been a part of the outward spread of the city of Fes. An analysis of the new forms of Moroccan migration from Fes can therefore be of great scientific benefit.

But the city of Fes is also the recipient of a considerable flow of African migrants and lends itself well to the study of this form of migration. (i) It is at a crossroads on the route taken by Sub-Saharan migrants moving in opposite directions. The first, fed by a number of places in Morocco, is directed to the north (Tangiers) and the northeast (Nador and Oujda), obligatory waypoints on the route to Europe, and a second heads off to the cities on the Atlantic coast, Rabat and Casablanca, from the east and the border with Algeria; (ii) it is not a flashpoint like many border towns, and a study of this migration needs to take place in a calm atmosphere for a meaningful scientific analysis; (iii) when they fall back on Fes, Sub-Saharan migrants are in the process of rethinking their migratory project or at least considering a temporary suspension; (iv) Fes also has an emblematic religious dimension for certain Sub-Saharan populations belonging to the *Tijani* brotherhood. It should also be said that Fes has an historic

place in migration resulting from trade with Sub-Saharan Africa, and that this migration has probably led to family ties which can provide the means for some immigrants to drop anchor in the city.

Finally, the city of Fes is becoming home to more and more European migrants coming to settle in Morocco as part of a recent and original movement which reverses the flows between Morocco and Europe. An initial investigation in preparation for this project revealed that in July 2008, the city's medina was home to some 251 foreigners who had settled there, although the phenomenon did not take hold until 2004, benefiting from the development of low-cost air fares to Morocco and Fes, which means that this is a process which is only just beginning. Apart from the background linked to the appearance of these new dynamics, the main actors present, the ways in which they acquire dwellings, their distribution across the space of the *medina*, and the way in which they use it, the interest of this study will be to dwell on aspects relating to the practices of this new foreign community and its relationship with its new living environment, stressing the effects of this migration on the space and social life of the historical districts of the medina, which have become places for meetings and social activities transformed with the integration of a foreign population by its identity, its practices and its perceptions of the area and society. It would also be worthwhile to look into the perceptions held by those living in the medina of this new phenomenon and how they relate to their new neighbours. Finally, the very future of the social makeup of the old medinas would repay study, looking at the issue of a new society in its embryonic state.

1.2 Theoretical framework

The research in question involves two main themes: The migrations and their recipient – the city in this case. Therefore the theoretical outlines of this research must of necessity include these two dimensions. However, it is not a question of considering them individually, but integrating the two, given that apart from issues relating to the new forms of migration, the main contribution to be made by this research is the way in which the city and these different populations interact. Hence in the final report we shall develop a theoretical framework which revolves around 4 key points:

- Where migration is concerned, we shall look at theories about migratory systems and their traditional extent. We shall compare empirically derived data with the main definitions of the migratory system (Mabogunje, 1970; Massey et al., 1993; Kritiz, Lim & Zlotnik, 1992), checking to what extent the city of Fes as a recipient of Moroccan migration which has come through Europe, migration from the African continent and migration which has originated in Europe, sits astride or at the junction of different *migratory systems* identified elsewhere. We shall also verify the existence and effectiveness for analytical purposes of a “Euro-African” migratory system and the place of a city such as Fes in that system.
- But the influx of various populations, notably Europeans, which further complicates this migratory system, must also be seen in relation to the theories currently being developed, which take concordant observations as their starting point; these theories conclude that today's societies have entered a period of hyper-mobility of people, goods and information, and ask whether we have really entered a new era to achieve “migratory (or mobile) transition”, a kind of step on the way to generalised mobility (Knafou, 2004). This also helps us to see that technological developments are now threatening the analytical categories traditionally used for geographical mobilities,

replacing them with a multiplicity of “mobile practices across space” (Wihtol de Wenden, 2009). Finally, it is by keeping in mind the spectacular progress made in means of transport and communications that we can understand how Sub-Saharan or European immigrants have managed to settle in Morocco, surviving in the case of the former, and thriving in the case of the latter, so far from their country of origin. Thanks to these new modes of transport, and more particularly of communication, these new residents in Fes are no longer sentenced to a life of uprootedness, burning bridges with their areas of origin by settling for good in Fes. The identification and analysis of the indicators of a possible “culture of mobility”: in other words, a set of values, behaviours and fine-tuned by and for mobility (Clifford, 1997) among these new residents in Fes.

- The convergence of these populations and their settlement in Fes, be it for the short term or long term, as new residents of the city must of necessity pose the question of how they develop in this city and the relationships and interactions they weave among themselves and the other residents. Any detailed study of the interactions between the different forms of migration and the city, paying particular attention to an analysis of the effects of this migration on the space and social life of the districts where the various migrants who have been identified settle, can only be done with reference to the theories and models used to explain the development of cities and their social workings. We know from a purely dialectical movement that the city has never ceased integrating and excluding, the reaction of those suffering exclusion often exhibiting itself in the creation of new forms of territory-based solidarity. Here, there is a great temptation to revisit the sociological thinking emerging from research by the Chicago School (Park, Thomas, Frazier and Everett Hughes), looking at the importance of the processes of change and the issue of the foreigner’s place and the transformation he brings forward in society. We are certainly not faced with the same nation state constructions which were an issue at the birth of the Chicago School, nor the same contexts, but the similarity between the two situations can be seen in the ability of these places of arrival for populations from different backgrounds to provoke incessant encounters between various populations. In fact the city can absorb – just as it can raise up – boundaries between different communities which can be kept at a distance or which can willingly keep themselves at a distance, far from the cultural realities which are taken as the norm. It is these boundaries between identity and otherness, often circumstantial or situation-based, but often more impenetrable, which reveal the imbalances (Hily and Missaoui, 2002)². In addition to the search for a conceptual framework for use in the analysis of the contacts between the different populations present in a single area, we shall also concentrate on the relationships between those populations and the city itself, pausing to look at the processes of integration or non-integration of migrants into the city, the effects of that presence on the native populations of the city itself, and particularly their perceptions and aspirations in respect of emigration. It goes without saying that the cultural and religious interactions between those recently arrived populations and the city and between the populations themselves is also present in our approach.

² The city produces a local identity, but also sets up boundaries between collectives from which one keeps one’s distance, or which distance themselves from one, being separated from cultural facts which create a norm.” (Hily and Missaoui, 2002).

Finally, going beyond social aspects, the problem of the development of the city as a whole as an economic organism, urban landscape and territory will be a key part of our deliberations. Here, we shall think about models for the development and growth of cities (Bailly and Huriot, 1999), to verify whether the presence of those new (Sub-Saharan and European) migrants in addition to returning Moroccan migrants or their families has an influence on these models which are used to explain the growth and development of cities.

- The fourth and final theoretical aspect shaping this research is to do with the issue of tourism vs. migration. Our starting point could be the quite surprising discovery of ignorance of the migratory nature of that which is described as a tourist residence, including in European destinations (Spain) where sizeable foreign communities (the British for example) have settled to enjoy a better lifestyle. It would appear that the difference between migrants and residential tourists in definition terms is linked to living standards. Today, with the growing extent of mobilities, the interrelations between tourism and migration have diversified, becoming more complex, and the boundaries between the two phenomena are becoming more and more blurred. In fact, tourism and migration are two forms of a single system of mobilities (Dehoorne, 2002). The concept of spatial mobility in its broadest sense certainly means the group of “displacements across physical space of individuals or groups of individuals, whatever the duration or distance of such displacements,” (Courgeau, 1983). But the migrants’ and tourists’ thinking is developing and diversifying, and the traditional identification outlines have become muddled. As tourists, Europeans find new places to live during their increasingly frequent tourist visits. They become aware of the skills upon which they can capitalise in the host country, with the possible financial advantages and, most of all, the possible improvements in terms of quality of life. The transfer of economic activity and residence, whether partial or total, may lead on from tourism to alternating residency. We then talk of multiple residency or “poly-spatiality” (Viard, 1994) and of “post-migratory mobilities” which occur within a world system consisting of connected regions. Faced with the reality of these multiple living locations, Knafou suggests “*re-visiting the concept of life space*” (Knafou, 2004) to “*consider the continuum of our lives, across both space and time*”. The circulatory itineraries of individuals who accumulate experiences and new spatial skills within an enlarged life space, no longer confined to a routine, everyday space, are now based around several different life spaces.

As the phenomenon grows, definitions are reworked and nuanced to see these populations as migrants who are not like the others: the long-term tourist residency is then referred to as “Well-being migration” (Benson and O’Reilly, 2009) or “Lifestyle migration”. The case of Fes provides fertile ground for the analysis of such interactions between tourism and migration.

1.3 Research questions

1.3.1 *General questions: place of the Moroccan case in relation to the programme*

The research conducted by the Moroccan team fits into the overall programme with four questions:

- To try to redefine mobility and its different forms through the analysis of trajectories,

motivations and differences with traditional long-established models. The study should include strategies, whether individual or collective, which shape these mobilities, the flows of material and symbolic resources used in the transfers, the virtual dimensions, such as images, ideas, information, collective memories, cultural values and the social environment of human mobilities.

- To consider various possible interactions. Interactions between international and internal migrations; interactions between Moroccan and Sub-Saharan migrations. Interactions between foreign residents in the historic centres (medinas) and the people living in those districts. Here, too, research has until now considered these forms of migration in an isolated manner. Here we shall work from the hypothesis that social and spatial interactions are in operation between these different migrations and need to be looked at by the research.
- To revisit conclusions about the effects of migration on the regions of departure, trying to specify, among other things, the relationships between migration and local and regional development. It may seem paradoxical to wish to move beyond the opposition which is no longer an issue between the country of origin and the host country, while at the same time maintaining an attachment to the region of origin. In fact it is a question of considering the links between circulation and the development of the regions concerned in Morocco. In other words, while development by means of migration has up until now been linked to the acts of settling and returning, this time we are going to concentrate more on the link between circulation and development.
- To look at the three forms of mobility now affecting Morocco through the case study of Fes, and use this to study concepts of mobility and identity. Observation and analysis of the “mobility-identity” relationship will focus on the two Sub-Saharan and European forms of migration insofar as this relationship involves the host population through those living in Fes and relationships which may be established with the new arrivals in the city.

1.3.2 Specific questions

Beyond these more general questions, which relate to the main concerns of the project which unites the four teams across the four geographical areas covered by the programme on African perspectives on human mobility, the sub-project in Morocco is also looking at some more specific questions.

1.3.2.1 Study of the forms of migration identified in Fes

Firstly, there are questions relating to the study of different forms of migration identified in Fes across the three populations. This will be achieved through a special analysis of each of these populations, in the form of a series of questions grouped by population.

- Moroccan migration is restricted to those households which do not originate in Fes, but which reside there and currently have one or more emigrant members. This choice of this category originates in the hypothesis that this type of family has moved to Fes in connection with international migration, either before that migration, since Fes is on the emigration route, or after that migration, Fes being chosen as a location in which to settle after or during the migratory project of one of the family members. Through these questions, we shall try to redefine the mobility of emigrants’ families from their

regions of origin, reconstructing their trajectories, and looking at the motivations and strategies, both individual and collective, in which these mobilities play a part. We shall also need to find the interactions between the family's mobility on the one hand and the migratory trajectory of the members in a migratory situation on the other hand. We shall try to determine the place of Fes in the migratory project of the migrant and their family, by asking various questions such as: "Why choose Fes? What were the social, economic, cultural and symbolic deciding factors?" "Who was the prime mover behind the decision to settle in Fes?" "What resources were used?" "Is Fes seen as a new place to live, or as a favourable business environment?" We shall also need to see how emigrants and their families live out their urban existence; namely, how they recreate specific territorialities which bear the hallmark of their regional cultural identity. We shall try to identify the level of integration into their new surroundings, and the means by which they make themselves visible in the city.

- The second aspect of the research concerns nationals from the African countries situated south of the Sahara who are currently resident in Fes. The increasingly abundant literature on this subject basically portrays them as migrants in a state of transit, heading for Europe. In our approach, we shall favour the hypothesis of a temporary or permanent immigration.

The main objective of the quantitative and qualitative surveys organised to target this population is to verify to what extent we are seeing a settled African community in Fes. We also wanted to look at our interviewees' interpretation of their presence in Fes. Do they see the city as a destination in their immigration project, or is it simply a staging post through which they transit on their way to other destinations? Given that Morocco does not see itself as an immigration country in the same way as the European countries, what strategies do they use to extend their stay, prepare for their return to the home country, or move on to Europe? How has this presence resulted in new forms of social organisation, the construction of intercommunity social solidarity systems which enable each individual to have the potential to remain in the host society?

The departure hypothesis requires us to look at the concept of transit which, it must be recognised, is first and foremost political in nature, in that both for the "transit" country and for the European countries, this concept signifies that this visiting population is not led to stay where they are, and this governs the way in which this population is controlled. For those involved, "transit migration" is extremely difficult to define in advance, because the personal migratory trajectories and their destinations are not always clear (Düvell, 2006). It is indeed difficult to define a migrant as being "in transit" on the basis of their future intentions alone.

- The third form of migration identified in Fes concerns Europeans who have chosen to settle there. Here, the categorisation of the forms of migration is crucial, because we are dealing with a population which, up to this point in time, has never been considered to be a migrant population. Our scientific preoccupations where this population is concerned revolve around understanding the choice of the city of Fes compared with other countries and other Moroccan towns, the circumstances behind the decision taken, and the dates. They also concern the forms of mobility towards Fes: trajectory; thinking and approaches; strategies, material and symbolic resources committed; experiences used, form, effect and role of low-cost flights. Relationships with the family and country of origin also have an important place in our questions: whether the family is also present in Fes, contact with the country of

origin (frequency, reasons and types of relationships), any transnational relationships, business activities conducted remotely from the residence in Fes and its economic and symbolic significance. We have tried to establish a typology for residence in Fes (main residence; secondary residence; joint residence, where Fes is the main residence in the same way as another, but with equal importance; retired migrant; tourist etc.). We have tried to ascertain the extent to which Fes acts as a substitute for the country of origin and to sketch out the territorial, social and urban aspects and the relationships developed with the city and its inhabitants (everyday life spaces in Fes, levels of integration into the host territory, the form taken by this territoriality and its possible community dimension). Finally, we look at identity-based impressions and interpretations (Do they consider themselves to be *Fassi*? How are components of Fes city life perceived? How and by what means is integration into the life of the city achieved? Economic plans etc..

1.3.2.2 Relationships with others and the city among three target populations

Firstly, we shall consider the relationships between migrants and the city of Fes. In fact, we shall start from the hypothesis that the three categories of migrants each represent different lifestyles and specific behaviours to which the city and its native inhabitants need to adapt. In fact, starting from the questions cited above, the study was to focus on the links forged between these three forms of migration through interactions with the city and its society. The districts where these different migrants reside are seen as spaces for encounters and sociability which have been transformed with the integration of foreign populations through their particular identities, practices and perceptions of that space and society. What are the human, individual and collective experiences revealed by the strategies developed by those populations? What spatial, economic, religious and cultural interactions, established with society in Fes and the other collectives from abroad, enable these collectives to construct specific territorialities in a city such as Fes?

Finally, we shall try to gain a picture of the relationships with others which can be forged between foreigners in the city. Respondents from the 3 target populations were invited to talk about their perceptions of the others.

1.4 Methodological approach and challenges

1.4.1 A twofold approach: quantitative and qualitative

The decision was taken to use qualitative methods from human sciences, based on field observation and interviews. Those were to be conducted by doctoral candidates supervised by experienced researchers following in-depth training in those methods and the drafting and approval of structured interview guidelines. Those qualitative-type investigations were to be introduced and set in context by the use of quantitative data from specific surveys. However, the essence of the investigations is based on interviews with respondents who were to be identified at different locations, according to the form of migration concerned:

- For Moroccan migration: Interviews were conducted with around forty emigrants' families who had remained behind. These families were identified and sampled from a population which was initially identified through a school and university questionnaire-based survey.

- For African migration, a number of locations were identified: migrant drop-in centres run by charities and NGO^s, construction sites, the areas around university halls of residences and the places where Sub-Saharan students live, Internet cafés, Western Union and MoneyGram branches. A questionnaire-based survey was used to establish the characteristics of that population. Then 40 respondents were selected according to criteria presented below, for the conduct of detailed interviews.
- For European migrants, the same number of respondents, i.e. around forty, were selected from a survey covering more than 200 subjects. The objective was to conduct qualitative interviews to try and find answers to the questions posed above.

1.4.2 The study of three migratory flows: Moroccans, Africans and Europeans

The study of “migratory mobility around the city of Fes” looks at three components of the urban population who are linked to international migration: Moroccans, Europeans and Sub-Saharanans. The intention is to establish profiles of these three categories of the population, their strategies for integration, what kinds of social interaction exist between them and with the urban host society.

The distribution of these three population groups across the urban space in Fes is determined by strategies which take into account the social level and origin of each of the three categories. Thus the Europeans settle in the old medina, and the Sub-Saharanans congregate in the outlying districts in the eastern part of the city. Moroccan families coming from different regions across the country, and who have chosen to settle in Fes after migration abroad, are not confined to one or more specific districts. Their dispersal across the city is in response to other considerations linked to the length of their stay and the opportunities available to them in terms of social mobility and places to live.

But beyond this residency-centred settlement pattern with the emergence of areas in the city which are characterised by the presence of a migrant population, it goes without saying that mobility territories in the city can cross and overlap, with the result that these populations are assumed to come into contact through work, trade, religious practices or simple neighbourhood relations.

In order to identify the possible interactions between these three populations and between them and the city, the twofold qualitative and quantitative approach already emphasised, based on survey methods and semi-directed interviews, is essential.

1.4.2.1 The families of Moroccan migrants resident in Fes:

- a) The school and university survey

The target population

Any approach to Moroccan populations connected with international migration must start with an awareness of the size of that population within the total population of the spatial unit being considered. In the case of this project, it is a population which has come from other regions of the country, whose settlement in Fes is linked to the international migratory experience of one or more family members. The first task was to build up an initial database on this population type, namely the proportion of international migrants in the families, and to see how they were distributed geographically within the city. The next stage, on the basis of

that distribution, was to select a sample of 40 families who were then subjected to semi-directed interviews.

The quantitative survey reached various categories of students according to the criteria of age, gender, place of residence and subject of study.

By conducting the survey among students, we were able to obtain a socially and geographically diverse parent population, which could be used as a basis for determining family profiles and the ratio of international migrants. This population was used for the selection of respondents in the qualitative interview stage.

This was a questionnaire-based survey intended to answer questions about the profiles of their families in sociodemographic and economic terms and in terms of migratory experiences. It took place between April and May 2009, involving 1278 people.

The questionnaire

The questionnaire covered eight main aspects: (See annex)

- Information about the respondent;
- Identification of the location of the survey household's residence;
- Identification of the surveyed household: Size of household, parents' origin, profile of the family head;
- Sociodemographic characteristics of family members: For each family member, the relationship to the respondent, age, level of education, marital status, profession, employment sector, place of work;
- Characteristics of the living environment of the surveyed family and housing conditions: Place of residence, residential mobility, housing type, ownership status, facilities;
- Family member in a migratory situation: For each currently emigrant family member, the relationship to the respondent, age, level of education, marital and professional status before and after emigration, year of migration, type of migration (regular, irregular or illegal), current country of residence, current city of residence;
- Migratory project of a foreign emigrant member within the close family (the closest to the respondent and on which they have the most information). The questions related to the migratory experience and relational life between the migrant and the family;
- Perception of Sub-Saharan and European immigrants in the city of Fes.

The conduct of the survey

The test

To give a clearer idea of the different parts of the questionnaire, and to allow for corrections to its design, the questionnaire was tested on a group of 27 students at the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences at the University of Rabat. Following this test, a number of changes and corrections were made to the final version of the questionnaire.

Recruitment and training of researchers

The recruitment of 7 researchers took place from among degree students at the University of Fes. The survey team, once assembled, received training on the survey within the Faculty of Arts at Fes-Sais, provided by a senior researcher from the E3R team. The objective of this training was also to introduce the general project of which this survey is a part, to introduce the researchers to the work of the survey, and to explain to them the thinking behind the questions selected.

Processing

After checking and sorting, the selected questionnaires were coded and entered using the SPSS software to build up a database.

The four categories of household surveyed

In order to identify the categories of the families which matched our research objective, we based our work on three criteria: (i) the father's place of birth, (ii) the family's current place of residence and (iii) the presence or absence of international emigrants in the family. Thus, of the 1269 families covered by the survey, there were 3 categories of family with or without international emigrant members: (i) families where the father was born and the family lived in Fes, (ii) families where the father was born outside Fes and where the family lived in Fes, (iii) families living outside Fes.

Of the 1269 families covered by the survey, 792 families resided in Fes, while 477 were families living outside the city, but whose children studied in Fes. We are therefore going to concentrate on the 792 families residing in Fes. Of these, 491 have been affected by emigration, with 313 not originally from Fes, the head of the household being born outside Fes and its suburbs.

Looking at the total number of people making up these households, which is **8152** people, it can be seen that **1555** of them have been declared as emigrants abroad, which gives us a total emigration rate of **19%** compared with a Moroccan average of 8.6% (2005). The choice of Fes as a city acting as a recipient of migrants' families is thus fully justified.

Now, if we limit ourselves just to households living in Fes, which number 792, we see that 491 of them are affected by emigration.

But for the purposes of our study, only those families who have settled in Fes, with emigrant members abroad, and where the head of the household was born outside Fes, are of interest to us. The family's establishment in Fes may occur before or after the migration of one or more members. Thus we have **313 households** of migrants not originally from Fes, but who have settled in this city, which corresponds to a total population of 2027 people, 621 of whom are emigrants, which gives a migration rate of **30.6%**.

Finally, the most relevant category for our purposes corresponds to those 331 households. It is from among them that the respondents will be selected for the qualitative interview stage. But the other households are no less important, because they will enable us to establish some very useful comparisons with the target families.

Table 1. Categories selected for analysis

	Number of Households	Number of People	Number of Migrants
Total sample	1269	8152	1555
Migrants' households settled in Fes	491	3066	1009
<i>Target households in our study</i>	313	2027	621

b) The qualitative approach by means of interviews with Moroccan migrants' families resident in Fes:

- The results of this survey were also used as the basis for the selection of some of the families who were interviewed, because we also contacted families not covered by the survey through the resource persons who helped us with our exploratory and survey work.

The objectives

The semi-directed interview is intended to reflect the family accounts of the migratory experience and sociability experienced in the city of Fes. Its aim is to:

- Redefine the mobility of emigrants' families from their regions of origin, reconstructing their trajectories, defining motivations and strategies, both individual and collective, in which these mobilities play a part.
- Find interactions between the mobility of the family and the migratory trajectory of its members in a migratory situation,
- To identify the place of Fes in the migratory project of the migrant and their family. To find the answers to questions such as: Why choose Fes? What are the social, economic, cultural and symbolic deciding factors? Who was the prime mover behind the decision to settle in Fes? What resources were used? Is Fes seen as a new place to live, or as a favourable business environment?
- We shall also need to see how emigrants and their families live out their urban existence; namely, how they recreate specific territorialities which bear the hallmark of their regional cultural identity.
- Identify the level of integration into their new surroundings, and the means by which they make themselves visible in the city.
- Document the relational life between the migrant and their family settled in Fes.
- Try to record the relationships with others which may be forged between those families and the two other populations chosen for the project, along with perceptions of those populations. Here we are looking at Sub-Saharan and Europeans who have chosen Fes as a place of residence for a certain period of time.

Preparation and conduct of interviews

Contacts with Moroccan families were conducted over time alongside the other surveys relating to the student population and the Sub-Saharan population during the months from

May to October 2009. Those families were chosen in accordance with two criteria: having at least one international emigrant in the family and having settled in Fes following an internal mobility process.

Initially, a group of 50 families meeting these criteria was established, and contacts made to obtain agreement in principle to conduct the interviews. Only 40 interviews could be completed.

1.4.2.2 Africans resident in or transiting through Fes

The second aspect of the research concerns nationals from Sub-Saharan African countries who are currently resident in Fes. Here it must be pointed out that we focussed our attention on migrants arriving in Morocco en route to Europe. We did not look, for example, at the case of students who had legally registered in state universities or private schools to continue their studies. However, we did not rule out the possibility of talking to them where they crossed paths with other immigrants.

The wealth of literature on this subject presents the population which interests us here as essentially migrants in transit on their route to Europe. In our approach, as initially presented, we shall favour the hypothesis of a temporary or permanent immigration.

The first survey looking at this aspect had the main aim of checking the extent to which we are dealing with an African community settled in Fes. This is a preliminary assessment to establish the broad profile of this population.

When dealing with the Sub-Saharans, we needed to find the best way to conduct surveys, making sure that we were collecting reliable objective information. This is why the team took time to explore the environment, establish the questionnaire and choose the researchers before finally starting the survey. This is also why we are going to give a detailed presentation of this phase of the research, which was both sensitive and important.

The main mission took place in Fes between 6 and 20 October 2009, but preparation for this major task started back in March 2009. Its main objective was to conduct the field survey among Sub-Saharan communities. But we also took advantage of our travels in the field to move other aspects of the research forward, particularly the identification of Moroccan families with emigrants abroad.

a) The quantitative survey

The objectives of the survey

The aim of the quantitative survey was to collect data on the socio-demographic, economic and migratory profile of Sub-Saharans residing in Fes. This information was used as the database for determining the size of the sample of people selected for the conduct of interviews.

The information collected by the survey concerns the following aspects:

- the socio-demographic characteristics of Sub-Saharan migrants;

- the processes and itineraries of geographic mobility in Morocco before and after the arrival in Fes;
- movement in the urban space of Fes;
- livelihoods, employment opportunities and working conditions;
- the housing situation and lifestyle;
- means of social integration in Fes, socio-cultural interactions, sociability levels;
- prospects of the migratory project; cross the Mediterranean to go to Europe, put down roots in Fes or another Moroccan city, return to the country of origin.

Design and content of the questionnaire

To meet the objectives listed above, a questionnaire was given to the survey target population. In its final version, that questionnaire was subdivided into four modules (see annexed questionnaire):

- The first identified the survey subject on the basis of their situation in the country of origin and their present situation in Morocco. Particular emphasis was placed on the migratory trajectory and spatial mobility within the city of Fes.
- The second looked at the demographic and socio-economic characteristics of immigrants (professional activity, income, housing conditions etc.).
- The third module highlighted intentions of settling in the city of Fes and future migratory projects.
- The fourth module was devoted to an analysis of attitudes, relationships, perceptions and behaviours among the inhabitants of the city (Moroccan or foreign) in respect of Sub-Saharan migrants. Associative, religious, cultural, sporting and leisure activities were also considered, to enable an examination of the extent to which Sub-Saharan immigrants feel integrated into their host city.
- The last module was devoted to the way in which the attitudes, relationships, perceptions and behaviours of the city's inhabitants (Moroccan or foreign) towards them were perceived by Sub-Saharan migrants.

It should be mentioned here that the questionnaire was drafted in two versions: one in French for French-speaking immigrants, and one in English for the English-speaking.

Sample size

Given the characteristics of the population for study, the size of the sample relating to this survey presented a few difficulties, particularly:

- the absence of a database on African immigrants resident in Fes;
- the great mobility of African immigrants during their stay in Morocco, which makes all contact with them somewhat difficult;

- the wariness among certain categories of migrants regarding this kind of study, with every survey attempt being perceived as coming from the Moroccan control services.

Therefore we decided to make do with the “snowball” technique, as the only way of making contact with the respondents, a large number of whom are resident illegally. We therefore have sufficient numbers to establish this initial database.

The survey targeted a population of 400 immigrants. This number was judged sufficient to construct a parent population to be used as a basis for qualitative surveys. Of the 400 selected, 371 people, i.e. 93%, were actually surveyed.

To ensure the representativeness of the sample, a number of criteria were considered: nationality, gender and socioprofessional category (employed, student, unemployed etc.). These variables were entered and analysed as the fieldwork progressed.

The survey field

Given the absence of a geographical survey base with information about the places where Sub-Saharan immigrants are concentrated, and to give greater visibility and ensure the smooth running of the survey in the field, we conducted a prior exhaustive exploration which enabled us to identify those districts which were thought to be characterised by the presence of Sub-Saharan migrants.

Recruitment and training of researchers

Given the specifics of the survey, the profile which researchers had to satisfy was very important. To ensure good quality in the information gathered and the effectiveness of the work in the field, the people from various Sub-Saharan nationalities who collaborated in the team’s survey were recruited on the basis of their qualifications and their prior experience in the area.

To ensure good performance by field researchers, the team, once recruited, received training in preparation for the conduct of the survey. This training was provided by members of the E3R team for two days, stressing the concepts behind the survey and the basic definitions needed for its execution in the field. To make sure that the training had been fully assimilated by all our researchers, the theory training sessions were followed by survey simulations.

Recruitment of the Sub-Saharan researchers took into account the diversity of their geographical origins, and their capacity to communicate with nationals from countries other than their own. For this reason, the ability to use more than one language was a key requirement. Finally, we considered their length of stay in Fes, namely that they had to have been living in Fes for at least two years.

Furthermore, and to conduct the work with the level of discretion required by the social context of the districts in which the Sub-Saharans live, we restricted ourselves to a group of 5 researchers: 2 Ivoirians, 1 Guinean, 1 Nigerian and 1 Malian.

Entry and use of the data

The processing of the data from the field survey was carried out in four successive stages

Checking and additional coding of questionnaires:

The prepared questionnaire was partly pre-coded for all the closed questions, but some questions which remained open, such as places or professions, for example, had to be coded in the laboratory and not in the field. This additional coding work was carried out by three master's degree students, supervised by one of the team members who followed the coding operation closely and provided a link with the inputting team. There was a particular stress on variables relating to towns and cities (town/city of birth, town/city of residence prior to migration etc.).

b) The qualitative survey: interviews

The interviews followed on from the survey and additional activities. In particular, they enabled us to further our understanding of the significance of territorial practices and social relationships engendered by migration. They were designed in such a way as to add to the quantitative survey and give meaning to the information collected.

The process and conditions for conducting interviews

In principle, we chose a sample for the interviews on the basis of the numbers from the first survey. But for reasons of representativeness, we only used those countries where the percentage of survey subjects was more than 3%. This reduced the parent population from 371 people to 304, i.e. 81.9%, distributed across 12 countries rather than 34. The sample to be taken from each country corresponds to roughly 10% of the total number surveyed, i.e. 34 people in total.

Contact with the potential respondents whose profiles matched the established criteria was by way of resource persons living among the Sub-Saharan migrants in Fes. But the first attempts failed because the Sub-Saharan population in a migratory situation in Fes is not very visible. The majority of migrants are in an illegal situation and live in destitution, which means they are not disposed to easy communication. They impose restrictions upon themselves in terms of contact with the outside world, avoid talking to strangers, and avoid going to places far from their district of residence.

In our first attempt to find potential respondents, we were barely able to interest 3 people: an Ivoirian, a Guinean and a Nigerien. This enabled us to initiate a snowball process, which allowed us to have a population for interview comprising people who were mobilised over time as we moved forward with the interviews. This method allowed us to meet the quotas fixed at the start: 34 interviews, with an additional 5 people as a safety measure in case interviews could not be completed successfully. But the distribution of cases for interview does not match the sample exactly. For example, we were unable to achieve the required number for each nationality, nor as many female subjects as we had intended. In this regard, we can say that there was a great deal of instability noted in the case of the women, particularly those coming from English-speaking countries such as Nigeria or Ghana. As well as travelling a great deal, they refuse to allow themselves to be interviewed. As far as nationality is concerned, the quotas fixed for certain countries were not covered, for reasons to do with the unavailability of people. We therefore decided to extend our population across other countries which would not have been chosen for the initial sample. This was the case in particular for Gambia, Guinea-Bissau, Guinea-Conakry, Benin, Chad, Sierra Leone and the Central African Republic. This brings the number of countries involved in the interviews to 19 countries instead of 12.

We know that statistical representativeness is desirable in a qualitative survey, but given the floating nature of the population studied, it became necessary to adapt to the adverse conditions in the field.

Thus it goes without saying that what matters most are the socio-demographic profiles, travelling experiences, and life experiences in Fes imparted by those who decided to respond to our request for an interview.

Interviews were conducted on the basis of a guide put together by the team and tested in advance. They were carried out face-to-face by 4 members of the team: two junior researchers (doctoral students in geography and anthropology) and two senior researchers. The interviews were recorded in their entirety following prior agreement from the respondents. Their views were treated with the utmost discretion in accordance with the ethical code which generally applies to the world of social scientific research. I.e. the names of the interviewees were not stored, and certain information considered to be sensitive for their security was not recorded.

Finally, to ensure that the reliability of the interviews could be guaranteed, they were conducted in a flat sub-let by the team to some Sub-Saharan migrants. This enabled researchers to familiarise themselves with the reality of life for Sub-Saharan migrants in flats shared by several co-tenants.

Interview themes

The interviews revolved around themes which were meant to enable us to move forward in our understanding of the relationships between Sub-Saharan migrants and their surroundings in the city of Fes (for more detail, see annexed interview guide).

Profile of the migrant and their family

- The migrant: nationality, age, gender, marital status, profession and activity in the country of origin;
- family of origin: age, marital status, level of education and socioprofessional activity of members comprising it;
- family members and/or friends in a migratory situation in Morocco, in Europe (types of relationships maintained);
- social background to the migration in the country of origin.

Migratory experience between the country of origin and Morocco

- reasons for migration, role of family and friends in realisation of the project, migratory itinerary, length of stay in the different locations in Morocco, conditions of stay (dwelling, livelihood, relationships with others).

The choice of Fes when settling

- reasons which encourage Sub-Saharan migrants to come and settle in Fes;
- the role played by Fes in the migratory geography of Sub-Saharan migrants in Morocco.

Social relationships forged in Fes:

- regular travel; search for livelihood; accommodation; religious practice; sport and leisure

Advantages drawn from these relationships, considering the degree of integration into new contexts imposed on the migrant.

The idea, through themes 3, 4 and 5, is to infer from what the migrant says, through their words, metaphors and expressions, their assessment of their time spent in Fes. The perceptions that they have built up of the city and society of Fes. To make out the images they had of Fes from those imposed by their life experiences.

Long-distance relationships

- the telephone and Internet as means of remaining in contact with family and friends in the country or abroad.

1.4.2.3 Westerners (Europeans and Americans)

The third form of migration received by Fes is that of the Westerners (Europeans and Americans) and a few other nationalities who have chosen this city as a place of residence. Seen up until now as tourists, or as best as people involved in residential tourism, these populations have never been identified as migrants in statistics from official bodies or researchers. We took the decision to see them as immigrants who had settled in Fes. We would like to point out here that official statistics put the number of foreign nationals living in Morocco at 60,000, and the French consular departments have put forward an estimate of 900 French nationals settled in Fes.

a) The quantitative survey

To gain an idea of this population, we used an empirical approach, compiling a systematic list of the 251 residences in the medina which had been bought by foreigners, who were then asked to complete a questionnaire given to them.

The aim of the survey among new inhabitants, some of whom were running guesthouses, was to analyse their profile, the ways in which they arrived, their motivations, the procedures they went through to buy their dwelling in the medina and their perception of the area.

b) The qualitative approach: interviews conducted among Westerners resident in Fes

On the basis of the first survey, respondents were selected to take part in the qualitative phase of the investigation, based on the criterion of a number of variables judged to be important, such as nationality, length of settlement in Fes, gender, age, route, the nature of the migratory project, and the place of residence in Fes. The people to be interviewed were targeted so as to ensure a diversity of profiles, routes and migratory situations.

In all, 18 interviews were conducted among people with a permanent residence in Fes. In choosing this sample, the aim was more to provide understanding than to estimate magnitudes and measurements. Thus the exemplary nature of cases was considered most important in this qualitative phase. The representativeness we sought was more typological, to give a sufficient variety of cases, oriented in such a way that the various categories of foreigners had an opportunity to be part of the sample. This exemplary nature of the cases made it possible to draw the broadest conclusions. In fact the number of interviews to be conducted was not established at the start of the field survey. Rather, it was halted once it became clear that the amount of material collected was sufficient for the needs of the research and once it was seen

that the frequent repetitions in the responses were adding nothing new to our understanding of the profiles of those to whom we talked.

In general, those representing this group of people were happy to take part in the exercise. This being the case, so that we could meet these interviewees, we started by going through a resource person with whom we have been establishing a certain familiarity for more than two years, and who is close friends with a lot of foreigners in Fes. This was an Englishman who owns a small café located in a small side street in the medina, but which works as a multi-ethnic meeting place, frequented by foreign residents, tourists and young people from Fes. Some of the people interviewed led us on to other people to interview, through a fairly classic “snowball” process.

The interview method was based on a semi-directive interview guide designed to give way to a conversational style, which was still guided, but which gave the interviewees great freedom in the conduct of the interview. Following this, in certain cases, we grouped the information together under certain themes for use in analysis. The interviews were conducted either at the interviewee’s home or in a café.

The language problem meant that we had to start by interviewing French speakers (French and Belgian nationals). Then 6 interviews were conducted with English and American nationals, including: an interview in English, translated into French by a doctoral student at the Free University of Brussels; 3 interviews in French; two interviews in Arabic, translated into French by the researcher.

Interview themes

History and form of mobility to Fes

It was a question of getting the interviewee to discuss their route (thinking and approaches; strategies; material and symbolic resources mobilised; experiences used, form), stages on the route to Fes (places or towns, whether in Morocco or elsewhere), the reasons for this mobility, conditions, background and dates of the decision taken to settle in Fes, prior knowledge of Fes, means of access, mediation, the impression gained of the city, relations with the country of origin and other countries, any business activities conducted remotely from Fes, how the interviewee describes their form of residency (types: residence: main, secondary, joint residence, retired migrant, tourist migrant etc.), the substitution of Fes for the country of origin etc..

Territorial, social and urban aspects

Here the attention is shifted to the daily lives and relations in the city: What relationships are forged with the city, how they have been constructed, the spaces frequented in everyday life in Fes, the reasons and frequency of visits to those spaces, the place of the country in this relationship, levels of integration with the host territory, this territoriality’s adjustment to take on a community dimension, residential mobility and the reasons behind it, relationships with those living in Fes and the conditions under which they are built up, relationships with Sub-Saharanans.

Local impact and dynamics

In this chapter we focus on the possible effects of the presence of these European populations in Fes: the creation of businesses and economic or cultural projects, the aims of those projects, the results obtained, added value for the city, its economy and its population.

Impressions and ideas of identity

Finally, the respondent is invited to give their view of the impressions and ideas they have formed of Fes and its inhabitants: do they consider themselves to be *Fassi*, what do they see as the components of *Fassi* citizenship, do they refer to any of these elements in their way of life in Fes, and by what means do they see themselves being integrated into Fes?

CHAPTER 2: THE FAMILIES OF MOROCCAN MIGRANTS: NEW CITY DWELLERS ARRIVING IN FES PARTLY THROUGH INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION AND IN THE PROCESS OF INTEGRATION?

The results of the survey concerning a parent population comprising families of students covered by a general survey. Within this population, for the purposes of the analysis, we isolated families not originally from Fes, with one or more members having emigrated abroad³.

2.1 Social origins of Moroccan migrants going abroad from Fes

The social origin of the emigrant provides information, among other things, about the reasons behind the start of migration. Explanations for migration have often suggested a solution to socio-economic problems experienced in the country and regions of origin. Therefore, in theory, it should originate among the most disadvantaged categories of society. In the current context of emigration, it would appear that the social profile of prospective leavers has tended to diversify, and while the economic reason is still the main factor behind emigration affecting families in difficulties, the search for a life elsewhere is a choice which is no longer subject simply to material constraints.

The approach to this new, highly nuanced migratory reality, is built on an analysis of the situation of the emigrant's home family, through the socio-professional level of the head of the family and the socio-professional status of the emigrant prior to departure.

It has been very difficult to gauge the economic situation of the family through the notion of revenue because the target interviewees, young people, were ignorant of this type of information, which is reserved for parents, and questions about revenue levels were generally not always well received. However, we were able to describe the socio-economic situation of the families of origin through the head of the family, their level of education and their profession, or the size of that same family, or alternatively through the type of dwelling occupied by the household.

2.1.1 Families of origin

Large families

The families of origin of our emigrants are quite large families, with the average household size being 6.4 persons; this lies between the average size of families in rural areas (6.6) and

³ Cf. Chapter I, section on methodology.

families in urban areas (4.8), and is slightly above the overall average (5.2)⁴. Households comprising fewer than 5 persons represent just 12.8%, while the category of families with between 5 and 9 persons represents the majority of households surveyed, at 80%.

Illiteracy rates among heads of household still significant

If we look at just three levels of education – primary, secondary and higher⁵ – the results obtained from our survey and relating to the level of education of the head of the household are well below the average achievement at the national scale, according to the 2004 population census, with the exception of higher education. Percentages for the national average and our sample are 39.7% and 19.6% respectively at primary level, 45.7% and 29.2% at secondary and 11.3% and 16.6% at higher level. However, even though it is characterised by a high level of illiteracy, the level of education among heads of families affected by emigration does not mean that these families belong to marginal sectors of society. If we only categorise those in our sample of heads of households who have not progressed beyond the level of Qur'anic schools as “illiterate”, this category still accounts for 35.1%. The remainder, a large majority, have gone through modern schooling and can thus read and write. More than 16.6% have even got as far as university. We are therefore not just dealing with families belonging to those social classes which are in difficulty.

More or less economically integrated households.

According to the father's sector of activity, emigrants generally come from families where the father is either employed in public administration (36.9%) or commerce (17.5%); the services, in the broadest sense of the term, employ the majority of these heads of families, i.e. 69.5%, compared with 14.8% involved in agriculture and 13.7% in industry. It would therefore appear that the households of origin of our sample of emigrants are relatively well integrated into the economic fabric.

Predominance of the traditional type of detached housing

The type of housing most represented among the families is the traditional type of detached house (53.8%). This is a type of dwelling which predominates in Moroccan towns and cities and corresponds to detached houses which are constructed in new districts on developments with or without proper planning permission, consisting of between one and three floors, sometimes incorporating commercial premises or a garage.

This form of dwelling, to which Moroccan families generally gain access on the basis of collective self-finance, represents a social level towards the bottom end of the Moroccan middle classes. Moreover, the proportion of flimsy dwellings (shacks) is extremely low, at 1.7%. Finally, 91.0% of households surveyed and affected by the phenomenon of migration own their own homes, compared with just 6.1% who rent.

To summarise, the type of dwelling and status of home occupancy, added to household sizes and the characteristics of the head of the household combine to lend considerable nuances to the typical socio-demographic profile of Moroccan families who have settled in Fes and are affected by migratory flows abroad.

⁴ Demographic and socioeconomic characteristics of the population. National report, RGPH – 2004, High Commission for Planning.

⁵ We have deliberately avoided comparison across other categories (illiterate, pre-school, Qur'anic school) due to problems with the definition of those categories, which are not the same.

Fewer and fewer differences between migrants' families and non-migrants' families

Moreover, the results of the survey have enabled us to establish a comparison between families with emigrant members and those which have not been affected by migration. This has helped us refine our profile of migrant families.

We have seen, in this respect, that any differences between these two categories of household, if they exist, are certainly not clear-cut (Table 2). There are certainly more illiterates among heads of households at the origin of migratory flows, but there are also more heads of households who have progressed to higher education among the latter.

Table 2. Summary comparison of socio-professional profiles of households of migrants and households with no migration

Category	Indicator	Households with migration (% of sample)	Households without migration (% of sample)
Level of education of head of household	Illiterate	19.6	10.3
	Higher	16.5	12.8
Sector of activity of head of household	Agriculture	13.7	14.8
	Industry	10.5	13.7
	Services	12.8	10.3
Profession	Craftsman	8.3	7.9
	Trader	17.2	17.6
Type of dwelling and occupancy status	Shack	1.7	1.6
	Renting	6.1	9.5
Size of household	1 to 4 members	12.8	13.7
	5 to 9 members	79.9	83.3
	10 or more	7.3	12.7

It can also be seen that there are few fathers of families employed in the industrial sectors in households which have not sent out emigrants, but the two categories generate almost the same levels for those employed in the agricultural sector. Looking now at the size of the household, we were expecting large families to be strongly represented in the category of households with migration, this household profile corresponding more to the model of the family in difficulty and thus needing to move to look for supplementary resources. In the event, we were struck here by the similar profiles of the two categories of family, with families unaffected by emigration being even slightly larger than those sending out emigrants.

To summarise, it is no longer the poorest households with socio-demographic profiles most indicative of difficulties which are seeing members depart through emigration. This shows the effects of the tightening of borders which has resulted in emigration becoming more and more selective, involving households with the resources needed to allow the increasing costs of that emigration to be covered.

Finally, it would appear that the hypothesis by which migration would appear to affect first and foremost those households in socio-economic difficulties in accordance with the traditional “pull-push” concept no longer holds water. While emigration abroad is on the whole still motivated by economic difficulties, it would appear that it has a tendency to affect

households from different layers of society in broadly the same way. Far from being individualised within Moroccan society by marked socio-economic characteristics as was the case in the past, the profile of families sending out emigrants today cuts across different social categories, whose distinguishing feature is the fact that they belong to the lower end of the middle classes, at a level above that of the poorest classes.

So we can see a certain diffusion of migratory activities across society, albeit with a strong representation of vulnerable families, but with the appearance too of families with no particular social distinction, being neither poor nor rich.

2.1.2 Socioeconomic profile of departing migrants

As described by classic literature on migration (Berrada, 1993, Bonnet and Bossard, 1973, Bossard, 1979, GERA, 1992, Hamdouch et al., 1981), the profile of the Moroccan emigrant in the first phases of this migration was dominated by illiterate adult males of rural origin. Recent research has shown that this profile has changed considerably, becoming more complex at the same time, following various alterations including those to the sociodemographic parameters of emigration candidates. Apart from the effects of the family reunification phenomenon, and the birth of new generations of Moroccans in a migratory situation, there is the contribution made by new forms of emigration, including irregular ones. The survey in Fes was an opportunity to check this development.

Emigration at an extremely young age, single people and predominantly male

When family members declared as emigrants by their families are broken down by age, the youth of this population is striking. The 18-29 age group is quite high, since it represents 30.7% on average of the total sample surveyed. It should be remembered here that declarations do not cover children born in the migrants' host country, but only the emigrants themselves. This age group is even higher in recent destinations such as Italy and Spain (33.3% for the average of both countries), and falls in traditional destinations, where the pyramid seems more balanced: those under 30 make up 30% in countries such as France, Belgium or Germany. By contrast, the 50+ age group is 23.8% in traditional destinations and just 8.3% in new destinations. This introduces significant differences between emigration which was organised towards the traditional emigration countries and emigration directed over recent years to the new southern destinations, where the demographic profile of emigrants is evidence of recent emigration, dominated by those falling into the category of young people of working age, with those at retirement age under-represented.

Distribution by marital status of emigrants from Fes upon departure shows a predominance of single people, at 61.7% of total emigrants, but with a clear difference between men and women. While 69.6% of the former are single, just 44.4% of the latter are single. This shows that, while for men emigration tends to involve young, particularly single people, among women, the proportion of married women would suggest that the migratory project continues to depend upon marriage.

Moreover, the total cohort of emigrants identified across all countries consists of 68.7% men on departure, but this proportion rises to 69.3% for new destinations such as Spain and falls slightly for the traditional destinations: 67.3%.

These slight differences compared with traditional destinations for Moroccan emigration shows once more the specific nature of Moroccan migration to new destinations. It is certain

that the slight under-representation of women in the countries of southern Europe can be explained by the fact that this is a new destination for Moroccan emigration, which initially receives men only, whether married or single. But it is the arrival of a large number of single men which explains this demographic imbalance to a large extent. However, women are not absent from this migration, since they account for around 31% of the group of migrants covered by this survey. In fact, even for these recent destinations, the feminisation of Moroccan emigration has started, and this level reveals that a change is already under way in the demographic profile of Moroccans in Spain and Italy. family reunification. Today's acceptance of mobility among women in a society which has until now been quite illiberal in terms of the circulation of women, is the result of sociocultural transformation imposed not only by greater openness to others, but also by the pressure of material needs, which weigh heavily on family life. Against a backdrop of crisis, women have also joined the world of work and have started taking on the same responsibilities as men towards the family, both in town and in the country. Hence, just like men, women are tempted by emigration, whatever their family status.

Thus we are witnessing a relative demographic transition affecting Moroccan migration in these recent destinations, which manifests itself in various ways, such as the tendency to bring families together through family reunification, the ageing of the first cohort of emigrants, and the rise of a new generation born in situ.

Less and less illiteracy and extreme vulnerability on leaving

Emigration abroad as a solution to the socioeconomic problems experienced within the country of origin has long been the lot of the most underprivileged levels of society. In the current context of emigration, the social profile of prospective leavers has tended to diversify a little, and the search for a life elsewhere now appears to be a choice which is no longer subject simply to material constraints. We can see how this new migratory reality presents itself through the level of education of emigrants and their socio-professional status prior to departure in the case of Fes.

In contrast to the situation which used to prevail in the past, by now more than 82% of our emigrants were already able to read and write when they decided to emigrate, with 40.1% having been educated to secondary level and 31.8% to higher level, compared with 10.1% educated to primary level and a little over 2.8% not having gone beyond Qur'anic schooling.

The nuances found between the emigrants according to their host country reveal a great deal about the different stages of these migrations. Emigrants who have reached university level make up 30.2% in the traditional destinations, whereas they account for just 24.6% in the new destinations.

The level of education is a criterion which reveals much about the new trends being followed by Moroccan emigration, which can no longer be identified with educational failure, and which is no longer a survival strategy restricted to the illiterate and less educated. The issue of education in fact goes beyond simple questions about the state of a community in terms of literacy and levels of skill in reading and writing, but instead there is a need to consider issues such as social success, the ability to adapt to changing situations in the labour market and the capacity to compete in an open market which is subject to the forces of globalisation.

Moreover, we have developed a habit of putting forward the extent of unemployment, under-employment and vulnerability in a general way to explain the causes of emigration.

Here too, the results coming out of our surveys in Fes have caused us to add considerable new detail to this kind of explanation. In fact, out of the total number of emigrants reached through the investigations conducted in Morocco, 23.2% were declared unemployed prior to leaving, 46.4% were actively employed and 0.4% were housewives, while 30.0% were considered to be students.

These data are supported by the qualitative interviews. Some emigrants from towns had been educated to an advanced level upon leaving and prior to leaving Morocco occupied posts in public administration or private companies. However, it must be stressed that in some disadvantaged urban districts, the declared activity often turned out to be a low-paid job in an informal sector, commerce and services, or in agriculture and construction. In these cases, the people interviewed explain the emigrant's decision to leave by their attempt to free themselves from the stranglehold of poverty in which they are held despite their status as an employed person. Thus, while a large majority of emigrants, whether in a situation of real or disguised unemployment, are trying to get out of certain destitution, there are more and more people opting for emigration when they do not really need it. Those people say that their motivation is a desire for both spatial and social mobility and self-affirmation. This is not yet the dominant trait of recent Moroccan emigration, but these are real trends which need to be considered in later analyses.

2.1.3 Migratory experiences of emigrants from Fes

The importance of the traditional destinations and the emergence of new destinations

It is well known that Moroccan emigration has seen some very marked development over the last twenty years in terms of its origins and its destinations. The biggest change in Moroccan migration in the 1990^s was the extension of the migratory phenomenon, initially limited to the outlying regions experiencing difficulties and the rural areas, to the whole of the Moroccan territory, and particularly the cities, including the city of Fes. Alongside this extension of the area of origin nationally, we also saw a broadening of the destination areas, with the appearance of new countries such as Spain and Italy. Our case study fits into these changes. As a city which is average in size but highly significant in history, Fes has also been affected by the emigration movement. But, as we have seen, it also has a part to play as the recipient of some of the effects of that migration, either through investment or through the influx of migrants' families who have remained in the country and come to settle here. But while this emigration is still directed towards the traditional destinations such as France, it is also at the same time being directed more and more towards new destinations.

The three countries which now head the list of host countries for Moroccan emigrants are France, Spain and Italy, and they are also to be found in our sample. France takes in 42.5% of our migrants, Spain 16.1% and Italy 13.5%. It should be remembered that official estimates show that these three countries receive 42.0%, 17.6% and 11.0% respectively of Moroccan migrants. Where Fes is concerned, there are no notable differences between the sample of all emigrants and the sample of emigrants whose families are not originally from the city. Finally, we should like to point out that the importance of these 3 countries demonstrates that international migration among Moroccans leaving Fes matches the new pattern of Moroccan migration which is emerging from ongoing changes. This can be seen with the appearance of the new countries in southern Europe (Spain and Italy), which should in principle be evident in the size of the relatively recent flows, but at the same time the traditional destinations – in this case, France – are still dominant.

Very recent emigration

Emigration by members of the families interviewed in Fes adheres to the same timing pattern as Moroccan emigration in general. A major feature is its recent nature. It shows a continuous progression from the middle of the 1960^s. But unlike traditional emigration regions such as the Sous, the Eastern or the Central Rif, it had a low profile during the 1960^s and 1970^s. It only became evident from the 1980^s, becoming more pronounced in the 1990^s and exploding at the start of the present century in 2000. Fes is therefore one of those regional cities which have been affected by emigration over their most recent phases of development, at the same time as Morocco's Atlantic seaboard and, most particularly, the plains of the interior such as the Tadla. One of the reasons why the city has become more prominent is actually linked to internal movements. Those can be explained by the displacement of the families of people who have emigrated abroad from rural areas falling within Fes's sphere of influence (Rif, Prerif, Middle Atlas etc.) towards the city. Coming from other regions, those emigrants and their families now declare Fes to be their city of residence, even though their roots are elsewhere. This can indeed be seen in the appearance of the new destinations mentioned above.

The graph obtained from the data in our survey to illustrate this progression is marked by considerable fluctuations (Figure 2). The years of rising frequency are marked by peaks corresponding to the pivotal years at the beginning and end of each decade, 1969-70, 1979-80, 1989-90 and 1999-2000. The years of falling frequency are not as regular, but they correspond to some of the periods of political tension created around the migratory question, the 1973 oil crisis, the economic crisis of the mid-1980^s, the first Gulf War in the early 1990^s and the terrorist attacks of the early 2000^s. In addition, it should also be noted that the peaks at the ends of the decades can partly be explained by the fact that some respondents do not remember the exact year of their relatives' emigration and therefore mention the decade rather than the year. We were forced to include these declarations at the end of the decade.

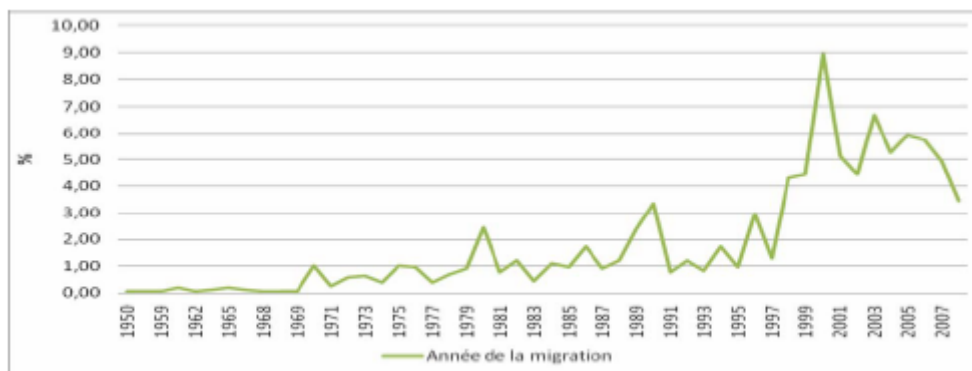


Figure 2. Year of immigration; Source: E3R Survey (2009)

The reliability of these data can be appreciated by comparing our graph (Figure 2) with another one obtained from surveys which did not include the city of Fes (Figure 3), which shows the unchanging aspects of the phenomenon. Finally, we would like to point out that the data collected have enabled us to cross-reference these dates of emigration with the different destination countries, which offers the possibility of comparing the arrivals in the new southern European destinations with those in the traditional countries for Moroccan

emigration and to check the hypothesis that substantial differences exist between the two migratory models.

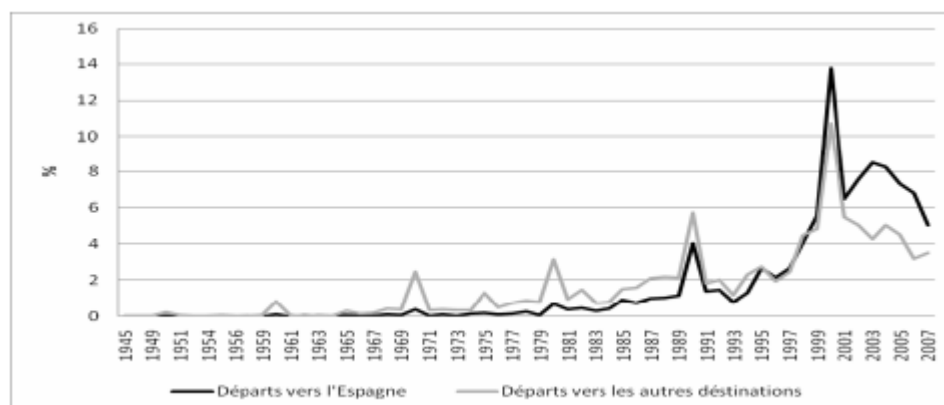


Figure 3. Year of migration of Moroccans to Spain and Andalusia; Source: E3R Survey (2009)

In the final analysis, the results of the survey conducted in Morocco show that it was at the start of the millennium, i.e. after 2000, that flows became large. Of all those emigrants for whom we have a date of emigration, 57% left from 2000 onwards. This figure clearly bears witness to the increase in the volume of migration since 2000, contradicting all talk of a slow-down, or even a halt, in emigration after the closure of Europe and controls on flows at that continent's southern borders.

2.2 Migrants' families and relationship with the city of Fes

2.2.1 A strong presence in the new suburban districts of the city

It should be remembered that the direct approach of conducting a door-to-door household survey was discarded for a number of reasons. The nature of the subject and the questions asked at the start required a method which had to rely essentially on investigations of a qualitative nature. But we would have been unable to start these interviews without having an idea of the general characteristics of this migration and most particularly its extent within the city of Fes. Since the main part of the work had to be conducted through interviews, we could not afford to embark on door-to-door work, which may have lasted several months, with the risk that we would not have gone to those districts where the family profile we sought was well represented. For these reasons, the quantitative survey was seen as a quick and effective method of producing information intended to provide answers to these initial questions.

The random sample from among the students, chosen as shown above, seems to be representative of the main districts receiving families affected by international migration and is relatively well distributed across the urban space. A map of the city districts combining both administrative criteria and socioeconomic criteria from a summary of knowledge accumulated about the city and the knowledge of the field by the members of the team to whom we conveyed our results confirms this (Figure 4).

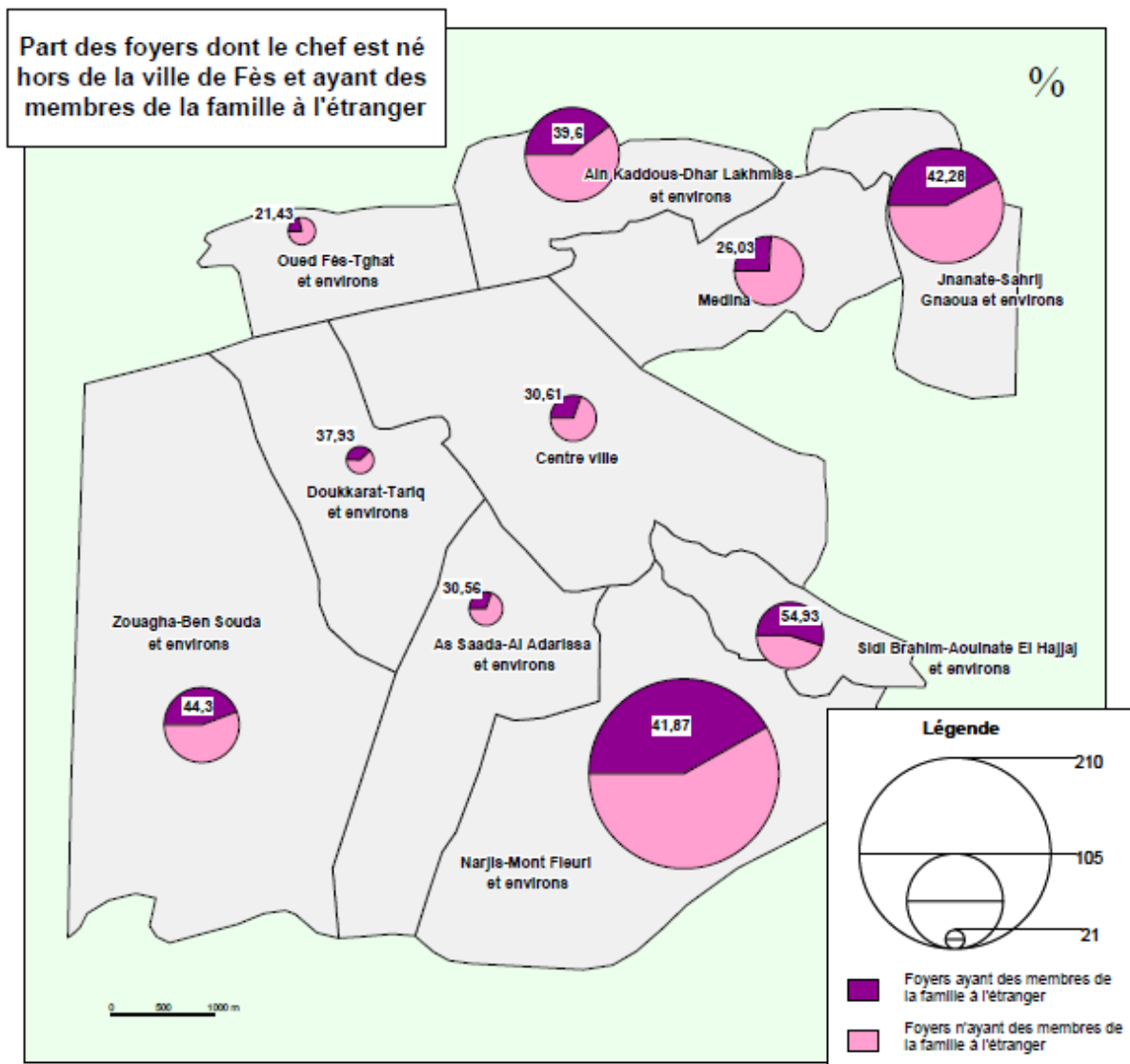


Figure 4. Distribution of households impacted by international migration

Looking at the map, it is noticeable that this distribution matches the socio-spatial realities of the city. The families most represented within our sample are concentrated in the conurbation's suburban districts. The new districts of Montfleuri-Narjis, Ouinat El Hajjaj, Jnanate and Sahrij Gnaoua or Dhar Lakhmiss, which provide the majority of our sample, correspond to the city's new extensions comprising developments of modest or low-cost dwellings, in which emigrants tend to settle. These places, with a high incidence of families covered by the survey, are socially and economically opposed to a number of under-represented places comprising mostly residential districts in the average to luxury bracket, the south-eastern sector, and the districts in the central area known as the "new city".

The medina which, under the social and economic dynamics of recent decades, has been the scene of intense population mobility, is also represented. The departure of native-born inhabitants is compensated by the new arrivals of populations from diverse geographical origins, who found the medina to be a route for integration into the city, either by working in a trade or commerce, or simply by living there. In addition, the medina area has become

enlarged and now also takes in working-class residential districts with housing reflecting a modern urban style.

Finally, our households are barely to be found among the so-called rich districts (villas) or the middle- or upper-class districts, or in the modern city centre.

Another striking feature is the high residential mobility of these migrants' households. It emerges from the majority of interviews that families, once arrived in Fes, or once established, change their district of residence as much as five times in the space of twenty years. This mobility is often explained by the search for districts which are seen to be better than the previous ones. This probably constitutes a process of setting down roots and integration through places of residence. Now that mobility may be related to progression in the migratory project of emigrant family members, and a parallel may be drawn between the success of migration in Europe and residential betterment in Fes.

2.2.2 A strong presence of people from the Rif and Prerif

Of the 1269 households identified, just 332 heads of households (26.16%) were born in Fes and its immediate suburbs; in other words, more than 73% of households have arrived in Fes through internal migration. This matches what is known about this city's development, whose urban explosion (a 3.8% growth rate between 1971 and 1982) can mainly be explained by the flows of internal migration.

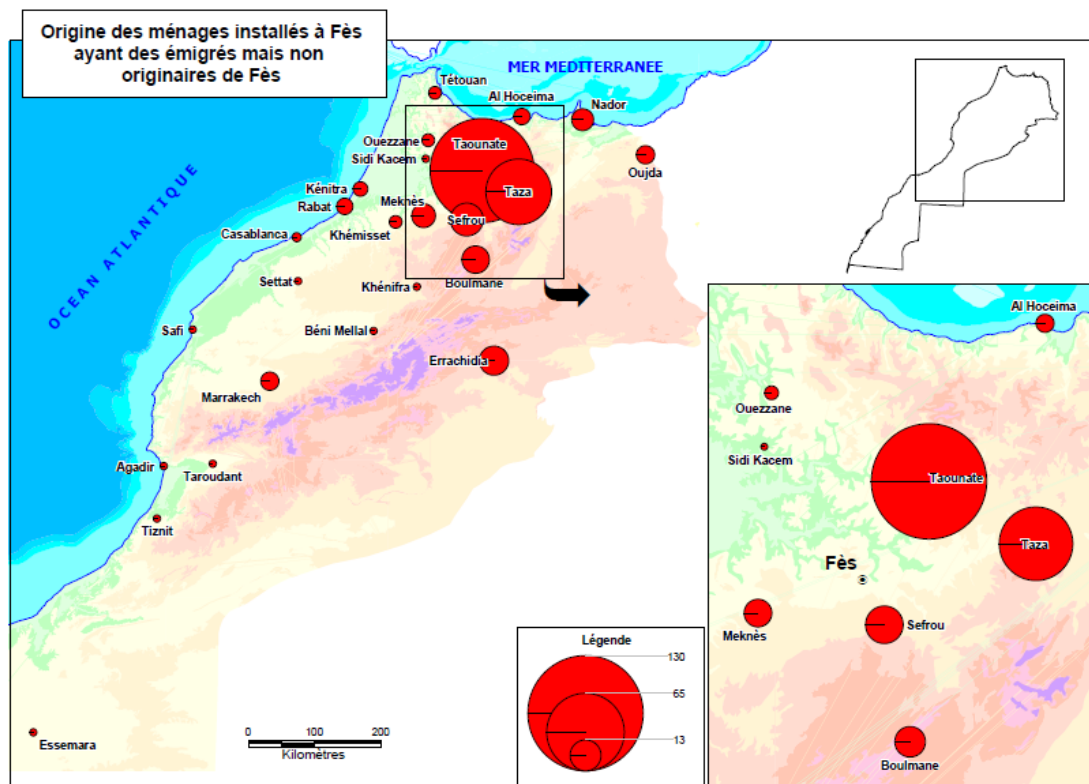


Figure 5. Birthplace of heads of household living in Fes

The data collected confirm what is known about the strong attraction exerted by the city on the regions of the Prerif, since the province of Taounate comes top of the list, providing

30.5% of the places of birth of heads of households, followed by Taza. But when we isolate those households whose head was born outside of Fes and which have one or more emigrant members abroad, Taounate's share rises to 40% (Figure 5). The links between international and internal migration are evident here.

The fact remains that this relationship is nothing like what has been observed in other countries such as Mexico, for example, where internal migration from the countryside to the city occurs before emigration abroad, the one being a kind of preparation for the other.

Observations in Morocco have already highlighted this distinctive feature (Berriane, 1995 and 1998). The growth of cities can be largely explained, we know, by internal migration. Using the data, analyses and estimates of the CERED⁶, the contribution of internal migration to the urban growth of cities such as Nador, Al Hoceima, Chefchaouen, Tetouan and Tangiers was calculated to be 26% in the 1960s, 40% in the 1970s and 45% in 2000. Within this context, international emigration has a partial role to play in intensifying these internal migratory flows. This is the tendency of emigrants from the Rif to invest their savings in urban property, accompanying this investment with the transfer of the family who has stayed in the country to the city.

This investment in urban property by an emigrant of rural origin can also be due to the desire to transfer the family to the city when it is still living in the original rural setting. When the family travels with the emigrant, the choice of the city when building a house for the final return to the country is due to the same thinking. This means that, chronologically speaking, the settlement of the emigrant's family can occur after or during the course of the migratory plan. The general pattern which emerges from the literature is a triangular itinerary linking the original rural setting with the host urban setting after a journey which always includes international emigration.

This makes the migratory systems of those regions with high emigration even more complex. Sustained by international emigration, this internal migration falls outside all the classic patterns of rural exodus. It is no longer a poverty-driven migration. It is a migration motivated essentially by the search for better living conditions and a certain comfort and quality of life for the family and children who have remained in the country. It is also migration with the aim of finding satisfactory conditions for investing the money saved during emigration. Flowing out from the Eastern Rif, these flows do not stop at the nearest cities or small developing centres, but leave the emigration hubs to go into other regions, with a preference for the cities of the North West, recreating by so doing the relational life which used to link the North East to the North West. So they are retracing the old routes which linked the Eastern Rif to the Tingitane peninsular and the major regional conurbations such as Fes.

The same pattern emerges from the findings of interviews conducted in Fes with households with emigrants. In the majority of cases, the origins of the family fathers were located in the Nador or Al Hoceima regions of the Central or Eastern Rif, or in the regions of Taounate or Taza in the Prerif. One particular case is that of a family where the father and mother were originally from the Kbdana region of the Eastern Rif and where the father's parents came to settle in the environs of Fes. The current head of the family, who was interviewed by us, emigrated to Germany in 1969 at the age of 15. Upon returning to the country in 1978 to start

⁶ Centre for Demographic Study and Research, part of the Moroccan High Commission for Planning.

a family, he spent a while in Casablanca before coming to settle his family in Fes, which is close to his region of origin.

There are a number of examples to illustrate this relationship between the region of origin – generally the Touanate region – the city of Fes and international emigration. Sometimes the decision to choose the city of Fes is not just in response to a desire to be close to the region of origin, but also harks back to a desire to set down roots in a city which is known for its ancestral city culture. Hence the value of probing the degree of integration among these new city dwellers and their relationship with the city.

CHAPTER 3: THE SUB-SAHARANS: AN IMMIGRANT OR 'TRANSIT' POPULATION?

The presence of Sub-Saharanans in Morocco is nothing new. It has a long history, during which Fes has played a key economic, cultural and religious role. These relationships tailed off during the 20th century due to the colonial period, which provided something of an interlude.

Independence and the search by African countries to establish links between themselves and to engage in a unification process with the creation of the Organisation of African Unity was to restore Morocco to new cooperative relationships with the sub-Saharan countries. These links made it possible to open the way to new mobilities, particularly for students and tourists on pilgrimage, and for people settling for variable lengths of time, or even permanently, in certain cities. The presence of these nationals from countries south of the Sahara, which was initially quite discrete and unnoticed, was to become a striking feature of migration in Morocco, taking on the dimensions of irregular migration to Europe.

The first flows of irregular Sub-Saharan migrants heading for Europe and transiting through Morocco dates back to the late 1980^s. Their arrival in Morocco was mostly by air. This is why their presence was most visible in Casablanca, a favoured place of arrival through the international airport, which has connections to various African capital cities, to Rabat – a capital city with a university and the offices of various diplomatic missions – and to Tangiers, a port with sea links to the ports of Algeiras and Tarifa.

But Fes, which for a long time had remained on the fringe of these flows, has itself also become affected over the last few years by the presence of people originating in the Sub-Saharan countries who do not belong to the student category and who are not in Fes on pilgrimage to the Zawiya Tijaniyya. Is Fes gradually becoming a hub taking in Sub-Saharan populations in a migratory situation?

This is the question that we asked ourselves at the beginning of this work. But while the fact of migration in Fes might well be established, we cannot limit it solely to indications of a larger or smaller number of foreign people in the city. It is necessary to look at whether that presence has made its mark on the space, activities and social relationships in the city. Moreover, considering the size of these flows, there is also the question of whether we can talk about the regularity of flows and whether, with the interaction between the countries of origin and Morocco, we can talk about the construction of an African migratory field focussed on different Moroccan cities, against the backdrop of competition in which Fes would also have a part to play.

First of all, we need to sketch out an historical appraisal of Morocco's function in the African migratory field. In our second point, we shall look at the flows of Sub-Saharan migrants heading for Fes, their demographic and socioeconomic profiles, along with their origins and the social realities which have produced this form of migration. Our third point deals with

migratory experiences, the types of immigration and itineraries which have led them to Fes. Finally, we shall look at the workings of social and spatial interactions between the Sub-Saharan migrants as a body and the other inhabitants of Fes, both Moroccans and foreigners.

3.1 Morocco's place in the African migratory field

It is commonly acknowledged that the population of Morocco is the result of a mixing of populations from diverse origins, with the African element constituting one of the main components.

According to historical studies, this movement of Sub-Saharan populations to Morocco was marked by certain continuity during the pre-colonial period, during the time when the Sahara was an area for travel and trading links, and at the same time provided a route for Islam to penetrate from the north into the various territories of West Africa. The population movements which occurred in the wake of these links were of two kinds: one was spontaneous, arising from mobility among men for the purposes of trade or pilgrimage, and the other was of a forced nature, in relation to military conquest and the slave trade (Benachir 2005).

This is why we consider Morocco's involvement in the movement of Sub-Saharan populations not to be a recent fact, nor circumstantial, but a structural factor imposed by geography and history.

With the taking of Timbuktu in 1893-94 and In Salah in 1899, the Moroccan/Sub-Saharan transit area was marginalised and movements were hijacked by other destinations and drawn away to the dynamic centres of the Sub-Saharan colonial economy or the outskirts of the Algerian and Tunisian Sahara.

In the case of Morocco, the presence of Spanish colonisation in part of the Sahara led to a break between the North and the South, and as a consequence it became isolated from Sub-Saharan Africa.

The birth of nation states following the independence of African countries gave a migratory dimension to population movements in the modern sense of the term. The mobility of populations was to become subject to the constraints of borders and travel visas. And that mobility becomes possible or impossible according to political relations between countries.

It could even be said that management of the mobility of people by governments was subject to the weight of political understandings or conflicts between states in the region.

It was against this backdrop that the Morocco of the first few decades after independence was to be opened up to immigration by nationals from "friendly" African countries, particularly Senegal, settling for periods of varying length, as students, tourists on pilgrimage or travellers seeking out opportunities.

Over the past three decades, the migratory flows of Sub-Saharans to and through Morocco has taken on a new dimension, characterised by their number, the illegality of their entry and their increasingly visible presence. In addition, and in association with the migratory restrictions imposed by European countries, a certain number of migrants are looking to settle for a longer period. But the lines are often blurred between the intention to stay until better opportunities

present themselves and the decision to put down roots in Morocco. This, at least, is what we have been able to observe through an analysis of the Sub-Saharanans settled in Fes, as a group.

3.2 The geographical origins and social profiles of the Sub-Saharan migrants of Fes

In the geography of the Sub-Saharan presence in Morocco, Fes has become a host city for irregular migrants. Its importance is reflected in the growing numbers of those who choose to settle here and the diversity of their origins.

3.2.1 *The diversity of countries of origin and predominance of West African countries*



Figure 6. Map of origin countries of Sub-Saharan migrants to Fes

The current state of knowledge about the phenomenon means that it is difficult for us to give even an approximate estimate of the number of Sub-Saharan migrants present in Fes, nor of the moment when the city started to feature in the migrants' plans.

The survey conducted among a population of 371 Sub-Saharanans settled in Fes (see survey protocol in chapter 1) showed that their geographical origins are extremely diverse. We were able to find references to 34 Sub-Saharan African countries (Figure 6), represented by speakers of French, English, Spanish and Portuguese.

Table 3. Distribution by country and general region of Sub-Saharan migrants in Fes; Source: E3R Survey (2009)

Region	Number of countries	number of persons	%	Average per country
<i>West Africa</i>	17	314	84.64	18.5
<i>Central Africa</i>	4	39	10.51	9.7
<i>East Africa</i>	6	12	3.23	2
<i>Southern Africa</i>	4	6	1.62	1.5
Total	31	371	100	11.9

Of 371 Sub-Saharanans surveyed, it can be seen that the majority of them are from countries in West Africa, with a much smaller proportion from Central Africa, while East Africa and Southern Africa are poorly represented.

By considering the weight of each country in relation to the average, a distinction can be made between four categories of countries:

- ✎ Countries with a large presence in Fes, greater than 8%: Ivory Coast, Mali, Senegal, Cameroon, Guinea;
- ✎ Countries with a moderately large presence (>3%, <8%): Congo-Brazzaville, Niger, Nigeria, Burkina Faso, Ghana, Liberia;
- ✎ Countries with low representation (>1%, <3%): Togo, Benin, Gambia, Gabon, CAR, Chad, Comores
- ✎ Countries with very low representation (<1%): Angola, South Africa, Zimbabwe, Botswana, Uganda, Ethiopia, Djibouti, Sudan, Somalia, Kenya, Rwanda, DRC, Cape Verde, Mauritania, Guinea-Bissau, Sierra Leone.

On the one hand, this concentration of migrants from West Africa can be explained by the role played by the linguistic factor, which makes it easier for migrants in an irregular situation to fit into a student environment. Over West Africa as a whole, those countries where French is the official language are the best represented, i.e. 79.3% of the nationals from this region. On the other hand, for many Africans from West Africa, particularly the Senegalese, Fes is also well-known as the location of the tomb of Sidi Ahmad Tijani, founder of a Muslim

brotherhood which has a considerable presence in Sub-Saharan Africa and thus offers the possibility of taking advantage of certain community links to settle there.

As it happens, the first to take advantage of this solidarity are migrants from the French-speaking countries, who have the advantage of communicating in a language which is spoken in Morocco. They can also count on student compatriots in the main university cities, and they belong to the Muslim religion with its tradition of brotherhood and networks, which facilitate contact. Finally, nationals from some of the countries, such as Senegal, have the advantage of not requiring a visa to enter Morocco.

While we may suppose that these factors have had a role to play in making Fes attractive to Sub-Saharan migrants and have contributed to sustaining these flows for some time, there are some important nuances that need to be made. At the start, nationals from certain African countries were led to Fes by chance encounters and circumstances, and not by any rational choice of preferred destination.

3.2.2 Sociodemographic profile of Sub-Saharan migrants in Fes

The immigration of Sub-Saharanans into Europe, in its illegal form, involves populations made up of both men and women belonging to the youngest age groups. The preponderance of young people can largely be explained by their specific living conditions, which work as push factors, encouraging them to leave. In countries where unemployment and under-employment are endemic, it is the youngest age group which is most affected. In countries affected by political instability and war, it is often the young people who are forcibly conscripted into the army or militias; meanwhile, young women also find themselves exposed to gender-based violence. Furthermore, given the harsh travelling conditions and the size of the risks encountered, particularly when the route is through the desert, it is indeed only the young people, with few ties to their country, who are likely to attempt the journey.

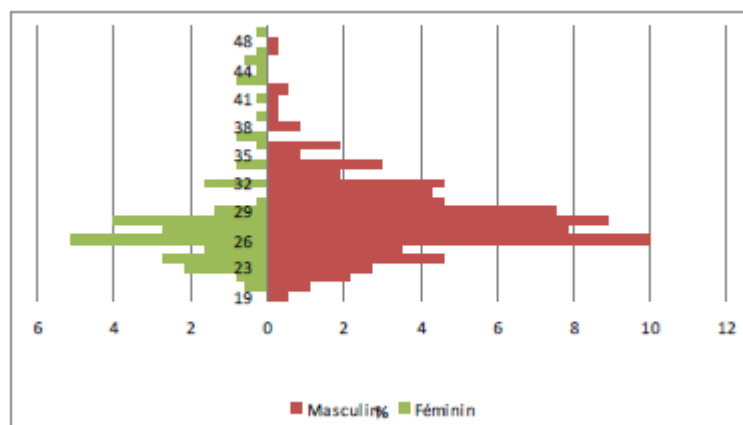


Figure 7. Age distribution of Sub-Saharan migrants to Fes; Source: E3R Survey (2009)

A young, male-dominated population

The distribution by age of Sub-Saharanans in Fes shows a predominance of those age groups between 20 and 35 years old, i.e. 338 people, making up 91% of the survey population; those aged over 35, i.e. 38 people, account for just 8.3%. The ages at the extremes of the scale are 48 for the oldest and 19 for the youngest.

The predominance of emigrants of working age, the mean age on arrival in Fes being 28, can be explained by the fact that this is a population on the move and seeking out opportunities outside its country of origin.

It is also an essentially male population, with women making up 27% of the total number. They can be found in the 20 to 30 age group, which accounts for 77.4% of them. The sex ratio is 263 over the population as a whole, and ranges from 248 for the under-30^s to 308 for the over-30^s. Women are therefore more numerous among the younger people.

Single status, cohabitation and children born during the journey

A breakdown by marital status of Sub-Saharan migrants before embarking on migration shows a predominance of single people, who make up 65.5% of the total, but there is a variation between men (66.9%) and women (59.8%). This difference is greater in the case of married people, at 4.9% compared with 12.2% for men. However, divorced Sub-Saharan women are more numerous, at 16.7% compared with 0.3% for men. The greatest characteristic of this group is the practice of cohabitation, involving 15.4% of the survey population.

The marital status after departure changes in a great many cases; thus it can be seen that the proportion of each marital status is lower except for the case of cohabitation, which has seen a rise of five percentage points, i.e. 20.2%, particularly among women.

However, we remain sceptical about the institutionalisation of these partnerships, insofar as these are often non-lasting relationships, and sometimes simply based on circumstances.

This supposition was confirmed by the interviews, where this kind of relationship has been used to establish links of mutual solidarity. These relationships are not entered into exclusively by irregular migrants alone; there are also cases of mixed relationships, e.g. between an irregular migrant and an officially registered Sub-Saharan student. A number of these relationships entered into on the way, or once settled in Fes, result in children being born, some of whom are not acknowledged by the father. Of the 371 people surveyed, 175 said they had children to care for before leaving their country, i.e. 47.1%, but only 20.6% said they were married, compared with 42% single people and 17% divorced or widowed individuals. In addition, 22 people (12.6%) said that their children lived in Morocco, while the others said they had left them in their own country with family members, or had simply abandoned them.

The number of children living in Fes with their parents has reached 82, only 16 of whom were born to migrants arriving in Morocco prior to 2005. Of those children, 40% live with married parents, 30% with cohabiting parents, and 29.1% in single-parent families (where the parent is either single, divorced or widowed, and generally the mother).

Unmarried mother status, though not included in the survey, is clearly in evidence. This poses problems of a different kind, particularly what status to accord to those children born outside the institution of marriage as legally constituted in Morocco. What will be the fate of those children born during their parents' travels who, once reaching school age, will need to face the issue of finding a school place? This situation is illustrated by the case of an Ivoirian mother. Having reached Baccalaureate level, this young woman entered Morocco through Casablanca airport in 2004. She lived initially in Casablanca, where she met her future husband, with whom she was to live in Rabat for about 4 years. She has one child from him,

aged 4 years, who lives with her in Fes where she has been living since 2009, after separating from her husband. She is currently experiencing financial difficulties in paying for her child to attend a private school, since there is no state educational provision in Morocco for children of this age⁷.

Literate migrants with an elementary level of education

Among the Sub-Saharan community Fes, those who say they have received an education account for 92.7%, compared with 6.2% without any education. But while people with an average level of education, not having progressed beyond secondary level, account for 76.7%, those migrants educated to university level make up a remarkable 14.02% of the total.

Table 4. Levels of education among Sub-Saharanans in Fes; Source: E3R Survey (2009)

Level of education	Gender of survey subject				Total	
	Male		Female			
	Number	%	Number	%		%
<i>None</i>	21	7.81	2	1.96	23	6.20
<i>Primary</i>	83	30.86	38	37.25	121	32.61
<i>Secondary</i>	125	46.47	46	45.10	171	46.09
<i>Higher</i>	37	13.75	15	14.71	52	14.02
<i>Other</i>	3	1.12	1	0.98	4	1.08
Total	269	100	102	100	371	100

In addition, we see that school education is more widespread among women than among men, and that they account for a higher proportion of those educated to primary and higher level.

The level of education therefore indicates a community comprising men and women who have gone through school and aspire to finding a job which will enable them to establish a purpose for their lives in Fes.

The level of education says much about the social origins of the migrants settling in Fes. For it is generally accepted that advanced levels of education in Africa, despite the efforts made by certain countries in respect of development, literacy and education, remain one of the distinguishing features of the socially advantaged urban environment.

3.2.3 Social origins of the Sub-Saharanans: similarities and differences in emigrants' social origins

If we present the social origins of Sub-Saharanans as a homogeneous group, then we run the risk of overlooking the diversity of the social situations to be found in each country, in its twofold urban/rural aspects. Indeed, talking about the original social environment is an attempt to reconstruct the context in which the migrant used to live, with the aim of understanding the factors which pushed them to choose emigration. But it must be said that the realities of life

⁷ Interview 2. Ivoirian woman

often have many aspects and are complex, and it would be unrealistic to claim that they can be identified and understood with all their social ramifications from the survey data alone. This is why we have also drawn on elements from the interviews.

To deal with this aspect, we based our work on the areas relating to the economic activities in which the immigrant and head of the family were engaged prior to departure, and the level of family cohesion through the relationship between the head of the family and the immigrant.

3.2.3.1 *A huge variety of social situations in families*

The activity in which the head of the family is engaged is one criterion which illustrates the economic and social stratum from which the immigrant originates.

A breakdown of jobs done by the head of the immigrant's household is dominated by commercial and service activities, at 35.7%, as well as administrative jobs in the public and private sectors. Agriculture employs barely 10.8%, while the others are paid workers not in fixed employment (11.9%) or pensioners (5.9%).

Very few declare their parents to be unemployed or not working. Does this mean that Sub-Saharanans in Fes have come from the middle classes compared with the background of poverty which affects the majority of families?

This is a difficult question to answer given the lack of reliable data on the incomes of the families of the emigrants surveyed. But we can see that, even where the head of the family is engaged in paid work, the family's living standards cannot be all that much better.

There are two criteria which give us an idea of the difficulties facing families. Firstly, there is the level of financial dependency among family members. Using data from the survey, we can gain an idea of these difficulties from two areas. Firstly, the size of the immigrants' original households. While it is 9.9 persons on average, there are 36.9% of households with more than 10 persons. Next, the level of family cohesion, considering the status of the head of the household. It is likely that the head of the household's socioprofessional status will not reveal the family's real social situation, especially where the parents have been separated by divorce or by the death of the father or mother. When the mother works and she has sufficient income, her position can become more important than that of the father.

Table 5. Member acting as head of the household in the survey subject's family; Source: E3R Survey (2009)

Status	Number of persons	Occurrence %
<i>Father</i>	227	61.2
<i>Mother</i>	69	18.6
<i>Brother</i>	24	6.5
<i>Sister</i>	8	2.2
<i>Uncle</i>	20	5.4
<i>Survey subject</i>	23	6.2
Total	371	100

In fact, 61.2% of families from which the surveyed immigrants come are led by the father, who is still alive, compared with 18.6% by the mother, 8.7% by the brother or sister, 5.4% by the uncle and 6.2% by the survey subject himself or herself. The absence of the father in around 40% of cases is an indicator of a difficult family situation. This absence can sometimes be due to the death of the father, or his separation from the immigrant's mother. Sometimes the death or remarriage of the mother shifts the burden of keeping the household going to the brother or uncle.

The interviews are full of examples of broken families, obliging young people to seek a way out, firstly by trying to adapt to the job opportunities on offer in African cities, and then subsequently by considering emigration.

Polygamy can be one situation where, in spite of the relatively substantial income, families can become vulnerable. "N", a trader in Douala, with his wife, a hairdresser, earned enough to get by. Then it emerged that his father was a polygamist, and his mother was forced to return to her village, meaning that N had to support both women.

*"I was selling new and second-hand women's clothes in the central market in Douala. My wife's a hairdresser. Since 1997, my mother has returned to her village. It's my father who stayed in Yaoundé. He is retired now, having been a building contractor. Now he couldn't cope with so many wives, and poverty set in. Now he has nothing. When you're working there with your family around you, the whole time you feel you can't watch someone suffering when you have a little to spare and you could actually be doing something."*⁸

The situations from which Sub-Saharanans in Fes have come hark back to the social structures which are characteristic of Sub-Saharan African countries. These are societies riven by glaring inequality. But while we accept that people from well-off families choose alternative and safer routes for emigration, Sub-Saharanans seeking to travel to Europe illegally will tend to be from those social categories which, while having unequal incomes, must still belong to the same working-class world. The descriptions given by the emigrants we interviewed of their families helps in forming an idea of the differences between them. These differences can be explained by the amount of material resources available and whether they live in an urban or rural setting.

There are rural families who still earn their living from agriculture and whose incomes are supported by the work of the children, helping work the fields or moving away to earn money in town. The situations described during the interviews are varied, and correspond to different levels of development in production systems and market integration. For the parents of "S", who have land on the outskirts of Ouagadougou, the yams and potatoes they produce are sold, but the income is insufficient to pay for S's continued studies⁹. At the other end of the scale, the parents of "B" in Congo-Brazzaville, not far from the border with Cameroon, are involved in a joint agriculture and forestry venture:

⁸ Interview 3. Cameroon

⁹ Interview 20. Burkina Faso

“You know, in our village there are two areas of work: there is hunting and the land; the one who sells meat to eat and the one who works the soil, the one who provides the extra things, you understand me; it’s the women who stay to work on the fields, and the men go out into the bush, into the forest; the forest is really big, every time you go there it’s as if you’ve never been before; you can’t know the interior of the forest, its huge. The maize and cassava which are produced are sold to Cameroon, whose border is 7 km away from the village; because we can’t sell it at home, you have to go over to Cameroon to try and sell it, to get a bit of money, to buy a bit of salt or soap”¹⁰.

But with the limitations presented by this production system, it is a family where one of the interviewee’s brothers is a doctor in Brazzaville.

Urban families are either recently settled in town or have put down their roots there several generations earlier. The cases presented show that immigrants have come from the same social backgrounds, but with a difference in incomes and in the way the family unit is managed. The parents of “M” from Abidjan are traders: the father is a coffee and cocoa merchant and the mother has a clothes wholesaling business covering Ghana, Guinea and Ivory Coast. But by no means does this mean that he is considered as belonging to the affluent classes in the city. But in terms of income or the children’s level of education, this family is nothing like the family of “J”, originally from Cotonou in Benin. J’s father is a former “*Soladou*”, namely a craftsman working with iron and aluminium, who was employed by a French-owned company. He was earning a living, but “after a dirty trick” he left his work and divorced from J’s mother.

“She (the mother) has a small business, sells cigarettes, sweets and peanuts. She has a little fund of her own, Dad isn’t with her. They’ve separated since then. Mum lives on her own, Dad’s still at home in the house, Mum rents a little room, and that’s where she lives in Cotonou.”¹¹

3.2.3.2 Before leaving, immigrants were engaged in urban occupations

A breakdown of Sub-Saharanans by activity type prior to departure is very suggestive of the social situations from which they have come. These are migrants who were working in an urban setting, even though many of them are of rural origin and have recently arrived in town. Those who say they were working prior to departure account for 60.7%, of whom 33.2% are women. Although we know that unemployment and underemployment among young people are structural problems in the economies of Sub-Saharan Africa, within the survey population those who were not working through unemployment made up barely 2.7% of the total, and 36.9% were not working because of school.

Among those actively employed, 5.7% belonged to the agriculture and husbandry sector, and 30% were involved in commerce or the service sector. This proportion rose to 45% among women.

¹⁰ Interview 4. Congo

¹¹ Interview 5. Benin

Among the service activities declared are small jobs as hairdressers, cobblers, dressmakers, and traders are often retailers with no fixed business premises. They are more like itinerant traders than real shopkeepers. The area of business may often be centred on a town and constitute an occasional activity, or it may extend to distant buying and selling locations with a certain stability of trade.

Take the case of the young man who had become an occasional trader in clothes in Cotonou:

“I stopped studying, and I haven’t been to school for two years. I stopped school in the 4th year, and I learned a trade in refrigeration and air conditioning. With the life I was living, I stopped work and decided that I’d make my own way. I was a bit of a lad; when I had a bit of money, I’d spend all my time going out, drinking beer, going to nightclubs. I don’t want to go to work anymore, I want easy money. The boss was being a real nuisance at work; he used to hit me, it was really annoying, and I decided to stop. When I go to the market, I buy a djinn for 1000 fr and sell it on for 2000 fr, along with trousers, jumpers, shoes. If I buy something for 500 fr I sell it on for 1000 fr; if I buy shoes for 1500 fr, I sell them on for 2500 fr, so there’s a lot of profit.”¹²

The case of an itinerant trader working between Ndjamena and the Chad/Cameroon border:

“I haven’t studied much. I went to secondary school until the 3rd year, then I was involved in trade in Chad. I bought little things like salt, sugar, tobacco, cigarettes, and sold them on the border with Cameroon. That’s to say, just before the border. There’s a little town, let’s call it a village, “Lama”. I’d go to Ndjamena to buy goods and then set off to Lama at the border. I’d travel by bus. I had roughly 25,000 to 30,000 CFA as capital, which wasn’t much. For each week and each journey, I could make 5,000 CFA”¹³.

In Africa, commerce and services seem to be the sectors where activities are dominated by the informal market, and serve as an outlet for a large proportion of the under-employed populace whom the structured economic sectors are unable to accommodate. The most highly qualified of the jobs done in the country of origin, at 12.7%, were those of mechanic, electrician, hotel owner or haulier; meanwhile, those who had occupied stable posts such as administrative employees were very few, at 2.7%.

Those actively employed are generally educated, at 93.8%, of whom 41.7% have been educated to secondary level, and 0.4% to higher level.

It would therefore appear that the Sub-Saharanans in Fes were not the poorest of the poor. This is a category of urban dwellers, some of whom were originally from the countryside, who have taken on board the concept of the makeshift economy. Which should set them apart from the majority of young people from the Sub-Saharan African countries where, in 2005, around 62% of the population was aged less than 25, and three out of every five unemployed people

¹² Interview 5. Male from Benin

¹³ Interview 6. Male from Chad

were young, and an average 75% of young people lived on less than two dollars a day (World Bank, 2009).¹⁴

Table 6. Types of activities undertaken before leaving and level of education; Source: E3R Survey (2009)

Type of activity	Level of education					Total	%
	<i>none</i>	<i>primary</i>	<i>secondary</i>	<i>higher</i>	<i>other</i>		
Commerce and Services	9	49	56	4	1	119	32.1
Electromechanics and transport	3	21	19	2	0	45	12.1
Building and civil engineering	4	11	5	0	0	20	5.4
Agriculture and husbandry	2	11	8	0	0	21	5.7
Civil servants and private sector employees	0	5	3	2	0	10	2.7
Students and pupils	0	21	70	43	3	137	36.9
Other	3	3	3	1	0	10	2.7
Unemployed	2	0	7	0	0	9	2.4
Total	23	121	171	52	4	371	100

But even though they are engaged in an activity which enables them to build up a nest egg, young Sub-Saharanans are sometimes bound by commitments to their families, whom they have to help. To embark on the migratory adventure, the candidate for emigration needs a minimum of family support. For this support to turn into material assistance, the family must first have the resources. This is not always the case.

3.3 Migratory experiences

For some decades, African international migrations to Europe have been partly illegal. The routes they take and the resources they use distance them from the traditional forms of migration. These are migrations built up from individual experiences and which, over time and space, combine into a mass phenomenon. In migrants' planning, Europe remains the main destination, and Morocco takes on a function as a transit place, or a safe haven in the case of failure.

3.3.1 Emigration not always motivated by economic factors

The migratory project which is meant to lead the migrant to Europe is perhaps discussed with the family, but it remains an individual adventure basically motivated by economic factors. These factors are the reason behind the departure of 30% of Sub-Saharanans in Fes, who say

¹⁴ Africa Development Indicators 2008/2009: Youth and Employment in Africa. The Potential, the Problem, the Promise. World Bank document. P.1

they have left the country because there is no work, or because they are escaping misery. In fact, among the economic reasons, there is also the aspiration to a better life in Europe. This applies to more than 50% of migrants. But material reasons are not the only ones, because it is also possible to find those fleeing persecution in countries where there is war, essentially for Ivoirians, or it is due to family problems, or simply because they have a taste for adventure and travel. Thus the objective economic factors sometimes appear insufficient to explain the migrant's commitment to the realisation of their plans.

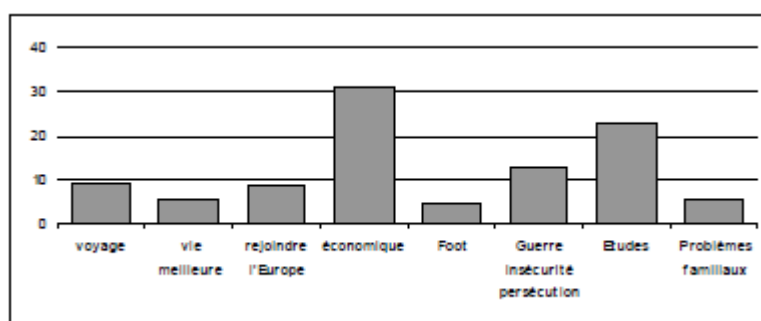


Figure 8. Reasons for leaving; Source: E3R Survey (2009)

3.3.2 *Clandestine emigration directed towards Europe*

Europe is generally the planned destination among those Sub-Saharanans surveyed, i.e. 61.7% of those questioned. The countries most mentioned are Spain (38.8%), France (9.6%) and Italy (8.3%). Those who say they planned to come to Morocco first account for 36.6%.

The ways in which Sub-Saharanans arrive in Morocco are generally irregular. And even in cases of those who have an entry visa, following its expiry they too find themselves in an irregular situation. In the absence of any reliable official data, it would be difficult to give an exact figure for the number of Sub-Saharan migrants in Morocco, whether in a regular or irregular situation. A recent survey (AMERM, 2007) estimates the number of Sub-Saharan migrants having arrived on Moroccan territory illegally to be between 10 and 15 thousand people. The annual number of Sub-Saharanans transiting through Algeria, a portion of whom end up in Morocco, was estimated to be 20,000 in 2005 (Khaled et al., 2007).

The results of the survey conducted in Fes enable us to give an approximate indication of the proportion of immigrants having entered the country in an irregular manner. Of the 371 people surveyed, 223 (i.e. 60.1%) arrived in Morocco via the airports of Casablanca or Fes. Those would be people with visas. Meanwhile, of those entering over a land border, representing 39.1% (148 people), 121 crossed the Moroccan-Algerian border at Oujda, and 13 came over the border with Mauritania.

In fact the illegal flows of Sub-Saharan migrants to Europe would appear to be relatively small compared with migrants arriving in Europe by other routes.

3.3.3 *Illegal migrants or marginal travellers*

The term “illegal migration” tends to be used in a more general sense, rather than being used as an analytical category to identify a group of migrants with a specific well-defined profile. Indeed, not all Sub-Saharan arriving in Morocco do so in an illegal manner, insofar as many of them have an entry visa and they arrive by air in Casablanca. It is by extending their stay beyond the authorised period that they find themselves breaking the law. Others are not fortunate enough to follow the same visible itinerary, but once they leave home, as they cross the first border, they are treated as illegal migrants. Pian, quoting sociologist Elie Goldschmidt, says “it’s in the course of their journey that they find themselves transformed into “illegal migrants”, whether or not they are in an irregular situation in the legal sense” (Pian 2009, p. 12). The illegal migrant label seems to go hand in hand with living a marginal existence in the areas they cross and in their places of temporary residence.

Indeed, throughout the length of their journey, the migrant is not treated like a normal traveller.

3.3.3.1 *At the borders*

Crossing the various borders is not easy, and the migrant, even when carrying papers, is liable to mistreatment by border agents and border escorts. An entrance fee is commonly demanded, and this places a heavy burden on the budget set aside for the migratory project.

“Crossing the border, in Chad, which is my country, wasn’t a problem. With Cameroon, I negotiated and talked to someone; I told him I don’t have a passport, and he told me to give him money (10,000 CFA). I arrived in Nigeria (...) I handed over some Naira, perhaps it’s a lot, I don’t really understand it (...). I changed 7,500 CFA into Naira; I can’t remember how much I got; lots of banknotes. I got to the border with Niger; there too I negotiated with some young people on motorbikes. They put me on the back of their bike and got round the barrier; I gave them 50,000 CFA. We got to the Niger-Algeria border; there the Tuareg take you across the border in cars like military vehicles (...) I paid 2,500 Dinars. The car left us in Tamanrasset, then we caught a bus to carry on with our journey; we got to Oran, and we took a car to Maghnia.”¹⁵

In order to continue, migrants find themselves forced to prolong their stay in the transit areas and find work. The variable lengths of time they spend there enable them to build social links with the communities of migrants who have gone before them, but they have to remain marginalised in comparison to the local community. This marginalisation during the transit situation is imposed on them by the places where the migrants are forced to tuck themselves away as they wait to continue their journey. These are places whose territorial limits have been built up by migrants and which have weak connections with other places. The journey from the country of origin to Morocco is punctuated by transit stages, and in each one marginalisation takes on a new form of expression, imposed by the characteristics of the place.

From the Sub-Saharan countries, land routes to Morocco across the desert follow 3 main routes: Mali-Mauritania, Mali-Niger-Algeria, Niger-Algeria. These routes are punctuated by staging towns: Bamako, Segou, Gao and Kidal, in Mali; Niamey, Agadez, in Niger; Tamanrasset, Oran, Algiers and Maghnia in Algeria.

¹⁵ M (male from Chad)

But the most frequently used route is the one which passes through Niger and then Algeria. The route via Mauritania seems secondary in the case of the Sub-Saharanans we met in Fes. In our description of the routes to Morocco we shall limit ourselves to those most frequently used. Niger, where Agadez in particular is a major staging post, from which flows head off either to Algeria and then Morocco, or to Libya.

In Agadez, migrants are generally just passing through, and their stay is brief: just long enough to join up with a convoy leaving for Tamanrasset. The wait is usually in a border escort's home, and generally it is the Tuareg who take care of Sub-Saharanans. The passage through Agadez often emerges in migrants' tales as a difficult phase of the journey. It is a border town which acts as the gateway to the Algerian desert, where migrants without links to any other Sub-Saharanans who have already settled there try to get through as quickly as possible to reach Algerian territory.

The city of Tamanrasset is a first staging post in the Algerian desert. Sub-Saharanans, when interviewed, see it as a place where they review their situation and think again about their migratory routes: whether to head for Algiers or Oran. It is also a city where some try to build up a little nest egg by doing a little work, having being fleeced in the desert, and, at the same time, to establish contacts so that they can have false refugee certificates made up, or find someone who is prepared to loan them papers so they can continue their journey.

*"I worked in Tamanrasset. I did that for almost two weeks, digging out foundations on a building site. But it was difficult, because labour is much cheaper. It's hard to find, and because they know you're an illegal migrant they don't pay well (...) The police too, that's another thing there, because you always have to be on your guard, ready to run, because you're always being hunted down (...) There you need to have a pass, even if it isn't your own, if you want to get through."*¹⁶

The city of Maghnia is the last staging post in Algeria before reaching the Moroccan border. This is a city charged with symbolism for the migrants, insofar as this is where they spent the first few days of the community life they had missed during a number of days, or even weeks, wandering alone in the desert, and where they experienced circumstantial meetings. They all mention the Ghetto staging post in Maghnia, which comprises a series of encampments through which migrants travel on the way to Morocco. This is a territory constructed by the migrants on the fringes of the city, and over which they have established a kind of authority where the migrant is subject to laws imposed by the elders.

Crossing the border into Morocco near Oujda happens at night, in convoys guided by migrants who have become familiar with the lie of the land.

As one listens to the Sub-Saharanans' interviews and traces their route across the desert, one becomes aware of the force of the motivation which drives them to choose emigration as a solution to escape the unacceptable situation in which they find themselves.

¹⁶ Interview 3. Male from Cameroon

3.3.3.2 Routes to Fes

The direction of migratory routes to the countries of North Africa, and Morocco in particular, is a modern-day recreation of the commercial and religious relations which have always linked the countries located on either side of the desert.

But in this case, the mosaic of Sub-Saharan countries from which the Sub-Saharan we met in Fes have originated indicates that their presence is linked to a recent development in the Sub-Saharan migratory situation in Morocco. Because not only has the phenomenon spread to include countries located deep in the heartlands of the African continent, where the relationship with Morocco is incidental and based on recent migratory developments, but also because the geographical distribution of Sub-Saharan migrants in Morocco is not subject to the attractiveness of the key locations on the international migratory routes.

And the development of this situation can be seen as the result of two converging factors: (i) the first is to do with the application of new restrictive European policies on illegal immigration, which have led to the abandonment of the migratory projects of a great number of Sub-Saharan migrants who saw Europe as their destination when leaving their country; (ii) the second is the opportunity presented to Sub-Saharan finding themselves stuck in Morocco to be able to travel around and stop in different places, drawing on the communal support which was developed during the journey, or anchoring themselves in the communities already in existence in Morocco.

This influx has a great deal to do with the restructuring of migratory routes and life plans which occurs after entering Morocco by land or by air, and the failure of the first attempts to cross the border into Europe.

For not only do the majority of arrivals in Fes follow on from the migrant's arrival in Morocco in an illegal manner, but also because Fes only starts to appear in the migrant's planning or route following a longer or shorter stay in another city, particularly Rabat, Casablanca, Oujda, Nador or Tangiers.

Interviews show that before arriving in Fes, the migrants first stop off in other places, where they stay for various reasons, but basically to try their luck at the sea crossing. However, comparing the time taken to arrive in Fes according to the date of arrival in Morocco, one realises that the newer the migrant, the less time he or she will spend wandering around before deciding to settle in Fes.

It is worth making a distinction between the three categories of migrants according to their arrival in Fes.

- ✎ Migrants who have come to Fes after trying to cross the border in Spain, which has meant spending several months, or even several years, in a location close to the border, near to Tangiers, Ceuta or Nador. This is the case for one Liberian migrant who arrived illegally in Morocco in 1999, but who only decided to come to Fes in 2009:

“I spent more than 3 years in Tangiers, and made many attempts to get over the fence into Ceuta (...) but then I said to myself it wasn't worth taking risks (...) I went to Rabat (...), I stayed there for 3 months (...) I came to Fes for a rest. There's no peace when you're in Rabat; there's no good places. A friend, a

Liberian that I met in the Embassy, lives here in Fes; he told me the cost of living is lower here, and I came to Fes to make a living alongside him."¹⁷

This is also a situation found among Sub-Saharanans who arrived in Morocco by air, with their papers in order. "M", a Guinean, who arrived by air in Casablanca in 2004, settled there for 2 months, left for Tangiers to try to cross the border, had himself arrested and returned to the Algerian border; he entered Morocco once more illegally and headed for Rabat, where he spent 6 months. An encounter with a Senegalese student from Fes enabled him to come and settle here and find work in a call centre¹⁸.

- ✎ Migrants arriving through Casablanca airport with a proper visa, who do not go to the border with Spain. They spend some time in Casablanca and Rabat before deciding to come to Fes. This is the case with one Ivoirian woman, who arrived in Casablanca in 2004, where she spent the best part of a year. She then went off to Rabat, married and had a child. After separating from her husband, she decided to come and live in Fes in 2009.
- ✎ Migrants entering illegally across the Moroccan-Algerian border. Without heading to the border with Spain, they come directly to Fes. This is the situation essentially found among Sub-Saharanans who have recently arrived in Morocco. "K" is a Senegalese woman, who was unaware of the possibility of entering Morocco without a visa, which led to her travelling secretly. Once she had arrived in Oujda, where she remained for less than a month, she decided to come to Fes.

*"I caught a bus. On the way, I got talking to Congolese girls I bumped into, and I explained my situation to them. They felt sorry for me and explained there were a lot of Africans in Fes. 'Perhaps if you come, people can manage to find you a way out of your situation.' That's where the girl gave me the number of someone, and when I arrived I called the woman, who took me away, helped me and was kind to me. She also talked to the woman to tell her I was coming."*¹⁹

During our exchanges with the Sub-Saharan migrants as part of the interviews or at various meetings, the expressions most often used to refer to their act of migration are "to set off on the journey", or "to set off on the adventure". Indeed, they distinguish themselves from the traditional migrants, whose migratory experience follows more or less established routes, to meet the objectives of a project involving the whole family. The different thing about these migrants is that they are travellers relying on their own resources, and sometimes those of their close family, with a low degree of control over the end result of the migratory project on which they are embarking, not following routes which have been mapped out in advance, forging relationships 'on the hoof' as circumstances dictate, with few opportunities to integrate into the territories they cross or in which they try to settle. In the literature on Sub-Saharan migrants, the term "adventurer" is frequently used (Pian, 2009). But beyond the meaning given to the term and identified through observation, we feel that there are also

¹⁷Interview 7. Liberian male

¹⁸Interview 2. Ivoirian male

¹⁹Interview "K". Senegalese woman

aspects of the Sub-Saharan migrants to whom we have spoken during this study which bring them nearer to the ‘vagabond’, as understood by Zygmunt Bauman (Bauman, 2010).

3.4 Social interactions between Sub-Saharan migrants and the host society

Fes is a fallback option, which is only mentioned to the migrant once they have arrived in Morocco and have to choose to head either for the country’s interior or to move on to the boundary of Melilla or Ceuta. As a fallback solution, it is also a city which offers opportunities for migrants who are exhausted by their journey to regroup, but it does not offer any prospects of a lasting settlement. The dates when immigrants settled in Fes are recent, and some have not yet had time to put down roots in the city, and they have varying familiarity with the places they frequent.

3.4.1 The period of arrival in Fes

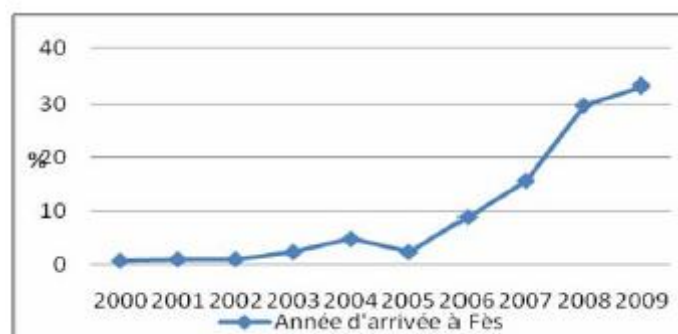


Figure 9. Arrival of migrants to Fes by year; Source: E3R Survey (2009)

Having long been overshadowed by Casablanca and the border towns, Fes has only begun to emerge as a place where Sub-Saharan migrants settle since the year 2000. According to data from the survey, no arrivals were recorded prior to that date.

Graphical analysis has shown that the rate of arrivals by Sub-Saharanans in Fes went through a slow period, with a slight rise in 2004. After the drop in 2005, flows grew again with a continuous increase from 2006 onwards.

But the remarkable thing is that the changing pace of arrivals in Fes mirrors the general trends in the date of arrival in Morocco, with something of a time lag. Looking at Sub-Saharan migrants with reference to their date of arrival in Morocco and their settlement in Fes, it can be seen that the earliest entered Morocco before the year 2000, but in Fes they account for barely 1.9% of the total, compared with 24.3% arriving between 2000 and 2005 and 73.8% arriving between 2005 and 2009. The arrival in Fes of those same migrants took place during the same periods, but with a variation in frequency. Thus the arrival of the first migrants dates back to the year 2000, representing a mere 0.8% of the total, compared with 10.8% between 2000 and 2005 and 88.4% between 2005 and 2009. More than $\frac{3}{4}$ of migrants covered by the survey therefore appear to have arrived in Fes over the last 5 years, and 37.5% over the course of 2009 alone.

Whereas, at the start, the arrival of Sub-Saharan migrants in Fes took place long after their entry into Morocco, there is now less time between entry in Morocco and settlement in Fes. This change can be explained by a sort of variation in the migratory geography of Sub-Saharanans in Morocco, related to two issues. The first is to do with events covered in the media problematising the presence of Sub-Saharan migrants in Morocco. The year 2005 was indeed notable for an attempt by several hundred Sub-Saharan migrants to force their way into Ceuta on the night of 28-29 September 2005. The result of this was a hardening of border controls which made entry into Europe more and more difficult. Given that returning to cities where there was already a considerable Sub-Saharan presence, such as Rabat, Tangiers or Oujda, had become risky, Fes was to become a city to which people could fall back and await better opportunities. Furthermore, the concentration of Sub-Saharanans in cities such as Rabat, Casablanca or Tangiers made living conditions more difficult, with greater pressure on jobs or assistance etc.. These issues have had more and more effect on recently-arrived migrants, resulting in them choosing to go to Fes first.

In order to tackle different aspects of Sub-Saharanans' integration into the city, we have concentrated on 3 aspects of life: places of residence, work and religion.

3.4.2 *The distribution of Sub-Saharanans across the city*

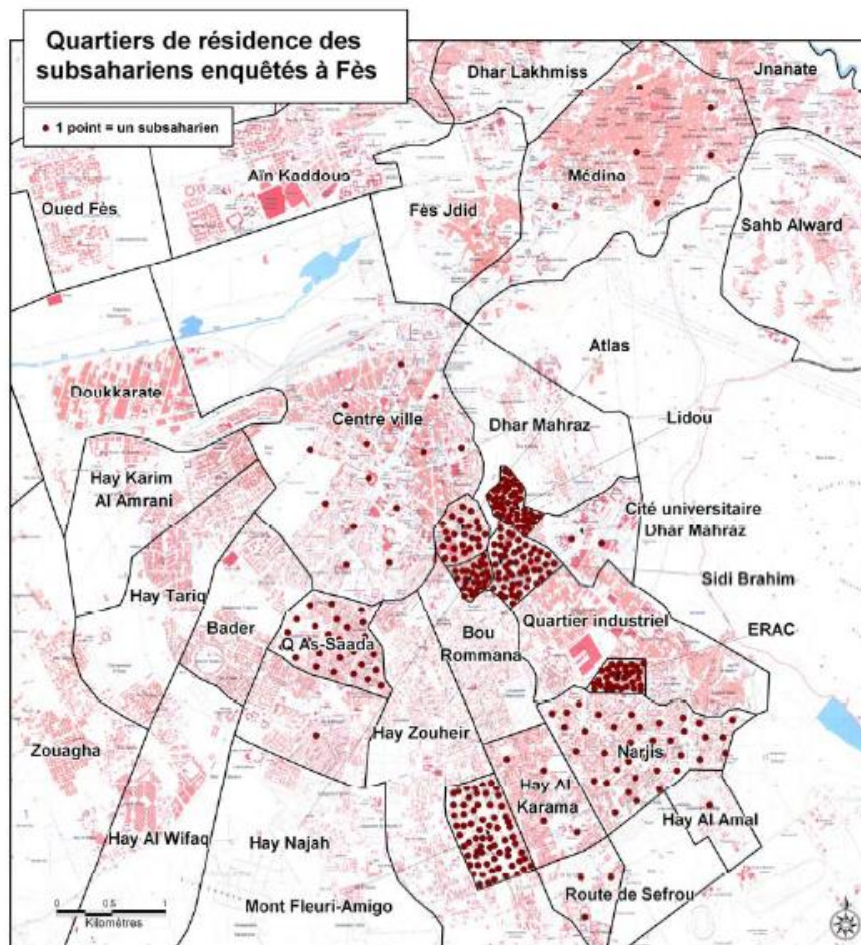


Figure 10. Distribution of Sub-Saharan migrants per neighbourhood; Source: E3R Survey (2009)

The settlement of many Sub-Saharan migrants in Fes was not planned in advance. In the majority of cases, it occurred following an encounter with a compatriot or Sub-Saharan “brothers” familiar with Fes, having stayed there as students, in some cases, or as pilgrims or travelling migrants, in other cases.

Inclusion into the settled community takes place at a distance. With an address in Fes, the migrant is sure of having somewhere to stay upon arrival. If we accept that the prime hub for the Sub-Saharan community is composed of pilgrims and students whose activities have made their mark on two areas of the city – the Dhar el Mehraz campus and surrounding districts for students, and the medina around the Zawiya Tijaniyya for pilgrims – it could be supposed that migrants when they settle will be guided to those same areas. But the reality of the geographical distribution emerging from the survey results provides an opportunity to verify this hypothesis in the case of the student areas, although with some nuances, considering two elements: (i) the rented accommodation on offer takes demand into account, resulting in an increase in the rental value of apartments in the districts nearest to the university; (ii) the emerging trend for greater autonomy among Sub-Saharan migrants when choosing their accommodation, which can be seen in a gradual spread to more and more marginal districts in respect of the university district hub.

Concentration in the working-class districts in the south-eastern sector of the city

The survey results reveal a high concentration of migrants in districts located in the city’s south-eastern sectors. The districts of Monfleury, Sidi Brahim and Saada are home to 40.4%. These districts lie further out from the districts of Lido, the Dhar El Mehraz student halls of residence and Erac, where 26.7% live.

Two groups of districts which play a satellite role are located at each end of this central band. In the north, there is the area made up of the city centre, Adarissa, Atlas, Annajah and Assaada districts, which are home to 16.2% of the migrants surveyed, and in the south there are the districts of Narjiss, Al Karama, Douar Dalou and Al Amal, with 12%. The Medina is notable for the small number of Sub-Saharans choosing to settle there, at just 1.2% of the total number.

A distribution which reflects the geography of the city

Without a doubt, the spatial distribution of Sub-Saharans in Fes can be seen to mirror the geography of the city which is characterised by a twofold social and spatial fragmentation. Social, in that the city’s economic system has produced inequalities between several categories of residents, and spatial, being determined primarily by the topography of the site on which the city has been built, further entrenched by urban planning which has heightened differences in terms of facilities and healthy living environments between the poor and rich districts.

The districts where Sub-Saharans are concentrated emerge as places which are accessible to classes with modest incomes, and which allow new arrivals to find accommodation easily. These districts, located close to the university campus, and not far from the city centre, and where rents are acknowledged to be modest, are hubs where Sub-Saharan students prefer to settle.

The Lido, Dhar el Mehraz and Erac districts are located alongside the Dhar el Mehraz plateau which is characterised by outdated accommodation, despite there being a few recently built high-rise buildings. These places are close to the military barracks, the campus and the

industrial district, where the working classes rub shoulders with the middle classes. But they all share a space where they have put down roots after moving there for reasons of study or work. This residential function has developed in line with the demographic growth of Fes, whose population has risen from 769,000 in 1994 to 946,000 in 2004, which is an annual growth rate of 2.10%. This is currently a city of a million inhabitants. This growth has essentially been fed by internal emigration, given the economic, administrative and service roles it plays within the region. A consequence of this has been the extension of development, essentially in the form of unregulated housing. The Monfleuri district, for example, comprises illegal developments which have sprung up on agricultural land between 1970 and 1990. The R+2 dwellings (ground floor plus two floors above) have not only made it easier for social categories who are less established in the city to own a home, but they have also increased the rental offer at lower prices than in the city centre.

Other places have been transformed into shanty towns taking in the poorest social categories, as is the case in Aouinat el Hajjaj to the south of the Sidi Brahim industrial zone.

These are districts which, in spite of the State's efforts to do away with slums and restructure districts which have been illegally developed for housing, continue to develop spontaneously under the effects of demographic pressure and the existence of spatial segregation caused by the growing cost of land and the tendency towards selective urban development which differentiates between rich districts reserved for the traditional middle classes and the city's new elite on the one side, and the modest or poor districts with their attached new private developments intended for new residents moving into Fes. One such district is Narjiss; located south of Sidi Brahim, recently built and very much in the mould of a suburban district, provided with services, banks, pharmacies, post offices, retail outlets and modern supermarkets. This district is home to a middle class comprising white-collar workers and civil servants, but also a number of international migrants' families.

The parts of the city where the Sub-Saharan migrants live are poorly integrated with the city centre. The public transport which is available imposes expenditure which the migrant would rather devote to food. In fact, very few of these people travel into the city centre. A large number of the Sub-Saharan migrants we interviewed are unaware of the existence of the medina, and live a separate lifestyle. For several of them, with an elementary level of education, the space they frequent is limited to the room where they cohabit with other Sub-Saharan migrants, or the street on which their home is located, and where they go to buy things, telephone or visit the Internet café. Those who feel free to move around have the privilege of an education, which helps them to pass themselves off as students, and to go to spaces which are open to the public, such as going to a café or night club, for example, or going to play football with Moroccan people.

3.4.3 Migrants facing the problems of unemployment and underemployment

Sub-Saharan migrants, whether employed or independent, have difficulties finding work. 197 (i.e. 53.1%) of them say they are or have been engaged in paid work since their arrival in Fes. This sector of the population is widely affected by under-employment, and devotes itself to activities with low demands in terms of qualifications.

Table 7. Activities undertaken by Sub-Saharanans in Fes; Source: E3R Survey (2009)

Activity	Commerce	Small Jobs and Services	Domestic Work	Labourers	Call Centres	Other	Total
<i>Number of persons</i>	44	45	16	15	59	18	197
<i>%</i>	22.3	22.8	8.1	7.6	29.9	9.1	100

This basically means activities for survival which are undertaken on the margin of the organised employment sectors.

Thus those working in commerce are essentially sellers or retailers of products imported from their countries of origin or smuggled goods. They generally have no premises and their profit margin is often split with a number of other individuals. The situations described in some interviews reveal a certain joining of forces between Sub-Saharanans with varying residency status and material possibilities on the one side, and Moroccans on the other. Thus a trader whose residency papers are not in order has merchandise brought in by a Sub-Saharan student, and to sell it on he leaves it with a Moroccan grocer. Alternatively, he might rely on a small network of Sub-Saharan retailers.

Others, with a little bit of money behind them, with papers enabling them to travel within Morocco, occupy themselves by selling on smuggled goods from the border towns of Oujda, Tetouan and Nador.

Those engaged in small jobs and services work mostly as cobblers, tailors, mechanics, joiners, builders or hairdressers. The women work as maids, work in the catering industry, or specialise in braiding hair.

In addition, of those who describe themselves as day labourers, the majority of Sub-Saharanans who work are employed, at 58.8%. The others describe themselves as independent, particularly traders, with 34 out of a total of 64, and cobblers.

Only 60.9% of these activities are permanent. But here it is more permanency in terms of the activity they undertake, namely how they make their living, because regularity of employment, especially for those who are employed, is rare. 38.6% of workers are taken on for periods of less than a fortnight, with 60.9% working on a day-to-day basis. Those taken on for a month make up 35% of the total, whereas those whose period of employment is not specified, since they have to work on a task-by-task basis or on commission, make up 25.7% of the total.

Those taken on for a month at a time basically comprise those who work in call centres, who make up more than 50% of that category, i.e. 48 people out of 80.

The salaries they receive vary, and depend not only on the activity in which they are engaged, but also its regularity. The declared amounts reveal salaries of 80 dh per day, which is 20% less than the minimum wage which, in Morocco is capped at 2200 dh. More than 50% of workers taken on a month at a time say that they are receiving pay of between 1200 dh and

2000 dh. Salaries do not exceed 4000 dh per month, even among those working in call centres where the working day can be as much as 16 hours a day²⁰.

In fact, the salaries declared in the survey, taken at face value, do not reflect the working conditions, nor the amount of time spent at work, nor the nature of the tasks demanded of workers. In addition, these are gross salaries, without any social security contributions on the part of employers. This is black market labour, with many irregularities.

The interviews have much to say about this, as in the case of “K”, a Senegalese woman employed by a middle-class Fes family to work in their home for one year for a salary of 1300 dh, but who actually only received 300dh; the remainder was, in principle, being deposited by the employer in a bank account in her name, but she was unable to access it after being dismissed. Her working day started at 8 o’clock in the morning and finished at 6.30 pm every day of the week, including Sundays:

“When I arrive in the morning, I set the table straight away, her husband has his coffee and cornflakes and then goes. After that, the wife comes down, has her breakfast and tells me about my tasks for the day (...). They go off, but I stay in the house (...). At about midday I finish my housework and set the table for lunch for them all, when they come and eat with their children (...). I clear the table, do the washing up and tidy up. After that I go down into the garden, I clean, sweep, remove the rubbish, then I go down into the cellar, then I do housework. After that, I do the cleaning in the husband’s gym room; then at about 6 o’clock I finish there and collect my things together to go home.”²¹

In the call centres, the work in which a large majority of Sub-Saharan migrants are involved, both those educated to university level and students, is a recent activity in Fes. The city is in fact becoming a base for international call centres. In addition to the existence of a workforce suited to call-centre activities, thanks to the presence of the university, the attractiveness of Fes for this new kind of activity resides in the property prices, which are still relatively low compared with cities such as Rabat and Casablanca.

Job offers in this sector are aimed at university graduates with language skills, particularly in French. But given the modest salaries, between 1800 and 2800 dh per month, and the language handicap for many Moroccan students, this is an offer which seems more advantageous for students and Sub-Saharan migrants educated to university level.

We do not have any statistics on the number of Sub-Saharanans employed by the call centres, but judging by the numbers of those surveyed who claimed to be working there, it is reasonable to judge that the attractiveness of Fes for migrants educated to university level is a confirmed trend.

Sub-Saharan migrants who work do not enjoy the benefits of current employment legislation in Morocco. These are people seeking work who are not in a regular situation vis-à-vis the authorities. In addition, Fes, like cities in developing countries, can only offer small jobs in

²⁰ Sub-Saharan interview 2

²¹ Sub-Saharan interview 8

the informal sector to a large part of the working population. Sub-Saharan migrants find themselves in a situation which, if not actually worse, is at least similar to that of the majority of Moroccan migrants flocking to Fes from the surrounding regions. However, a distinction can be made. Unlike young rural Moroccans settling in Fes, some Sub-Saharan migrants have a level of education which enables them to engage in new activities falling within the sphere of communications and IT.

Since Fes lost its role as an industrial centre for textiles from the 1980^s, it spent many years establishing a role for itself in the creation of employment in a tertiary sector dominated by commerce and craft. The city is currently in the process of repositioning itself in areas to do with information technologies and the culture and tourism industry, in addition to the modernisation of sectors which have been at the basis of its traditional reputation, namely commerce and crafts.

Sub-Saharans in Fes, for reasons to do with their characteristics as travellers seeking ways out of Morocco to get into Europe, are not always led to put down roots in the places to which they move. But strangely, again for Sub-Saharans in Fes, they find themselves in a destination which has not been chosen for its role as a competitive centre in terms of job opportunities, and consequently as an attraction for international migrants.

There are few older people who have settled with a family. Their absence from the survey population is not due to an underestimation, but rather to a sociological reality concerning the Sub-Saharan community in Fes.

In response to the shortcomings of Fes where job opportunities are concerned, Sub-Saharans have developed a system of solidarity between individuals facing the challenges of day-to-day survival. This solidarity is formed around accommodation, but also extends to food. Without necessarily being of the same nationality or belonging to the same communities of origin, those renting a single apartment or room will share all their expenditure. In cases where the migrant does not have the means to contribute, they are looked after until they manage to gain an income through working, begging, or receiving money from relatives or friends.

3.5 Interactions between Sub-Saharan migrants and the city across the religious field

“Then at Casa, there, the Cameroonian I found in Tangiers who sent me to Casa to come to Fes, he told me that in Fes, when I’m going to come to Fes, the majority of the black people I’m going to find are students, that it’s a religious city; he told me good things about Fes, so, well, as I don’t really know the other cities, I said to myself that for us black people, Fes is really just right.”²²

For this young Burkina Faso national arriving in Morocco, the choice of Fes as a city in which to settle was linked to two aspects of the city: the presence of a Sub-Saharan student community who could come to his assistance and the religious character of the city of Fes.

²²Sub-Saharan interview 42

Underpinning this religious criterion was probably the hope that residents of Fes, known to be pious compared with the residents of other Moroccan cities, would be more welcoming and offer him more help. It is interesting to note the importance accorded by this young eighteen-year-old to the religious aspect when choosing the city where he is going to settle, albeit temporarily. But his words show most of all that the religious city of Fes is a very widespread image of Morocco in Sub-Saharan circles.

But this image of Fes as a city of religion is nothing new among Sub-Saharan populations. The city is not only perceived as Morocco's spiritual capital, but it has also played a role as a centre of religious learning for the communities of West Africa. A former crossroads on the trade routes between Sub-Saharan Africa and Europe, Morocco's spiritual capital was also an important religious centre for the literate people of North Africa and West Africa, who came to deepen their studies of theology and exchange views with Moroccan experts. From the middle of the 19th century, it also became a centre of pilgrimage for those who belonged to the Tijaniyya brotherhood of West Africa, who came to gather around the tomb of their spiritual guide, buried in this city's historic district. The spiritual flourishing of Fes, like its role as a trading crossroads, thus helped to create trans-Saharan mobility and to attract Sub-Saharans.

But unlike the Tijani pilgrims and theologians who still come to Fes, the group of Sub-Saharan migrants which interest us here has chosen Fes as a destination for other reasons. The Sub-Saharan community present in Fes is not only multi-faith but religion does not seem to have a major role to play in their original reasons for migration. However, we have observed that during the migrants' journeys and their stay in Fes, religion can take on a much more central value in the migrant's daily life. The worship times are not only central moments in the migrant's daily life, but the places of worship also represent prime places for social interaction. For some, migration comes to be reinterpreted as a spiritual voyage. For others, it can lead to conversion.

In the first two parts, we shall analyse the different functions performed by places of worship for Sub-Saharan migrants. Perceptions of places of worship in the city of Fes and the place occupied by religion among migrants also depend on the time that the Moroccans have spent in Morocco or Fes. While for migrants who have arrived only recently, or are just passing through, the churches and mosques are impersonal places, for migrants who have been settled in the city for a few years, and for students, these places take on a social role. This is why the first part looks in particular at migrants passing through, while the second part concentrates more on migrants who have settled in Fes. In the last part, we shall concentrate on describing the profiles of two migrants living out their religion in different ways in Fes.

3.5.1 Places of worship, spaces for interaction with the "others"?

3.5.1.1 Going to church to seek help

Some Christian Sub-Saharan migrants whom we met during the interviews have been attending churches in the city since arriving. They hope to meet fellow believers there who can help them. They hope to receive the most help from European and American churchgoers in particular.

In fact, churches are one of the few places where Europeans and Sub-Saharanans meet. Apart from in police stations where, on renewing their residency papers, Sub-Saharanans²³ may bump into Westerners who have come for the same reason, or in the supermarket²⁴, meetings involving direct contact between Sub-Saharanans and Europeans are limited to church.

Unfortunately, this hope of meeting a generous European in church often leads to disappointment. Europeans in Fes rarely go to church. In addition, as a French migrant explains, “there is a Mass on Saturday evening for foreigners and on Sunday there is a Mass for Africans, which is sung”²⁵. And when Westerners attend Mass with Sub-Saharanans, they avoid making contact with them. The Europeans we interviewed therefore display an unfamiliarity with this foreign population which, according to them, live completely different lives, with very specific problems.

When, in some cases, Europeans help their Sub-Saharan fellow believers, this help is limited to a bit of charity. Thus a migrant originating from Liberia says that since her arrival in Fes, she would go to a Catholic Mass every Sunday in the hope of meeting Europeans who could find her work. Although she often manages to speak to them at the end of the Mass, she has still been unable to find work²⁶ and her efforts have simply brought in a little money. The hope of gaining help from Europeans in church are reflected in the words of one Congolese migrant:

“Don’t you meet any Europeans in church?”

No. And if you do meet them, what will they give you? They’ll give you nothing.

Don’t you have anything to do with the Europeans here in Fes?

No, apart from some Americans in church in Rabat once. The Americans are kind (...). They help you because they feel sorry for you. When you tell them about your problems, they’ll help you there and then. They might even give you five euros; the Americans are very kind.”²⁷

But while Europeans try to keep their distance from the Sub-Saharanans, church staff play a central role for some Sub-Saharan migrants. One young Ivoirian who hopes to embark on a career as a footballer in Fes, but who has no source of income for the moment, has secured the support of his church pastor²⁸. Each time he has nothing left to live on, he will go to see his pastor. The Catholic church staff also play the same role. One French migrant in Fes, who only goes to church for the main festivals, says that all she knows about the situation regarding Sub-Saharan migrants has come from the city priest who looks after them.

²³European interview 6

²⁴European interview 6

²⁵European interview 6

²⁶Sub-Saharan interview 23

²⁷Sub-Saharan interview 36

²⁸Sub-Saharan interview 15

“Now those people mix very, very little. They live in the extreme outskirts, in the Ville-Nouvelle, as far as I’m aware. The only place where you might cross paths, if you’re a believer, is in church. These people are often very devoted Catholics, so they go to Mass every Sunday. Although I’m not a practising Catholic, I’m on good terms with the Father at the Catholic church, and Italian called M. So that’s where you’re likely to meet them (...). I’ve seen them in church when I’ve been to the Mass at Christmas, and I often discuss them with M because they have specific problems which other people don’t have. There’s a big problem with rejection by the Moroccans, by the people of Fes, very much so. (...) And then, those people who come to visit M are often here illegally, or those who have been picked up, who have got out of prison, who are going to be taken to Oujda and sent away.”²⁹

The predominant image in this lady’s mind and among other Europeans in the city is that Sub-Saharanans in the city, with the exception of the students, live lives of great precariousness and illegality. This is the image of the Sub-Saharan migrant begging in the street.

But even when Sub-Saharanans do not use Mass as an opportunity to ask for charity, the relations with their European fellow believers remain very distant. This is probably due to the fact that this is a meeting of two entirely different worlds. Sub-Saharan African students and migrants attend churches which are often very young, have very diverse ecclesiastical traditions – both historical churches and Pentecostal or Revivalist churches – and often come from an underprivileged social background. European visitors are chiefly European retired people or on foreign placements (Baida & Feroldi, 2005).

But not only do Europeans have a stereotypical view of Sub-Saharanans in Fes, the Sub-Saharanans too have their own idea of Europeans. They say that churches are attended by three different groups: “students, tourists and adventurers”.³⁰ Christians who are neither adventurers nor students are, in their eyes, tourists. This perception speaks volumes about the image that Sub-Saharan migrants in Fes have of Europeans and the lack of communication within churches.

3.5.1.2 *In Mosques, even greater impersonality*

Although Mosques less frequently play a social role, Muslim migrants also attend them in the hope of building up contacts. But these places of worship have proven to be even more impersonal than churches. However, the times of prayer in the mosque are very special parts of the day.

“ – Every day I get up at four, at midday, at four in the afternoon, at seven in the evening, at ten in the evening. I go to the mosque. There’s a mosque, the Erac Mosque, near to us. That’s where I go to pray. (...) They [the Moroccans] can’t do anything for me because they refuse to help us. (...) No. They don’t ask you anything. No, and I don’t even want them to.”³¹

²⁹European interview 14

³⁰Sub-Saharan interview 15

³¹Sub-Saharan interview 19

Despite the underlying hostility which this young migrant feels towards Moroccan society, and which is present throughout the whole interview, it can be said that this account gives a good representation of the role attributed by migrants to the mosques in Fes. In the account given by this 18-year-old Burkinabé, we can see both the importance of prayer in the mosque for him and his disappointment in the face of the Moroccans' behaviour. This young migrant was interviewed a few months after his arrival in Fes. Having found no work, he was living at the expense of other migrants. The times of prayer at the mosque seem to be key moments in his day, and help him give structure to his empty days. Moreover, the mosque, impersonal as it is, is for him a place of retreat in the face of the promiscuity of the place where he lives. This role played by the mosque is often encountered among migrants who have no work and wander begging around the city streets.³² These are places for the daily prayers which probably enable a bit of structure to be given to their daily lives. However, for those who are already established, the mosque is mostly attended on Fridays. This is the case for one migrant who has been living in Fes for two years, and who says:

“I'm a Muslim. I pray at home except on Friday, when I go to the mosque. Every Friday, I go to the mosque.”³³

But even for migrants who have been living here for a long time and who are relatively settled, the mosque is still seen as quite impersonal. This impression can be found, for example, in an interview conducted with a man from the Central African Republic, who avoids going to the mosque unless it is necessary.

“ – At the start, I prayed a lot in the mosque, but I've been very disappointed with the mosque for the past three weeks; they stole my shoes there. I wasn't very happy about it, and I don't want to lose my shoes every day. I saw the person who stole my shoes, but I was finishing my prayers, and before I'd finished giving the “Salaam”, he'd left.

- Even Friday prayers?

- That's mandatory, so I go there in slippers”³⁴

Unlike churches, where people meet with the “others”, even if this contact remains superficial, mosques are simply places of prayer. These places of worship play an even smaller social role for migrants. Integration into the district, or indeed into the city, is therefore not easily achieved by attending the mosques. This perception of mosques is particularly to be found in accounts given by migrants who have yet to settle fully, and who are even more keenly aware of a need to adhere to their worship and the mosques. But in general, it can be seen that places of worship in Fes, which could be favoured places for interaction between different communities, whether between Sub-Saharanans and other

³²Sub-Saharan interviews 22 and 26

³³Sub-Saharan interview 32

³⁴Sub-Saharan interview 39

foreigners in the city or between migrants and the Moroccan host society, are places where the communities cohabit rather than communicate.

However, these places have a central role to play in the lives of certain Sub-Saharan migrants, which is not only religious, but social too. Hence some places of worship stand out from the others as favoured places for Sub-Saharan migrants in Fes.

3.5.1.3 “African” or ethnically mixed places of worship?

Sub-Saharan communities settled in Fes or in transit therefore have certain expectations regarding the city’s places of worship. Churches and mosques alike are far from being intercommunity meeting places. They are perceived by migrants passing through as impersonal places. However, for migrants who have settled in Fes for the duration and who have found paid work or, alternatively, who are students, attending these places of worship is valuable in another way. Sub-Saharan migrants have made these places that they visit regularly and where they go to meet other fellow believers their own. The two city churches for Christian migrants and the zaouia of Sheikh Ahmad Tijani for Tijani Muslims are representative of this ownership.

a) The church as a place of joint action: taking ownership of places of worship?

For some settled migrants, churches play a very important social role. They are not just places for the celebration of religious festivals such as Christmas and Easter (or even New Year’s Eve), but also venues for cultural activities such as choirs³⁵. Attending these churches seems to satisfy a need for leisure activities and creates such a social environment for migrants that they also attract Muslim Sub-Saharanans, who sometimes have no opportunities to attend celebrations or choir performances³⁶.

This suggests that Christian and Muslim migrants alike find the church in Fes to be a place where they can recreate an atmosphere that reminds them of home. In one interview on the similarities and differences between the churches in Morocco and the countries of origin, one Guinean migrant explains:

“It’s pretty much the same. (...) Only, here it’s a white priest, a white pastor; otherwise it’s pretty much the same. (...) It’s Africans. It’s even Africans who lead the church, and there’s just the pastor who isn’t African, but there is also a Congolese pastor who comes to preach in Fes.”³⁷

This Sub-Saharan presence in Fes has done much to transform the churches. Originally set up to meet the needs of the Christian community, essentially French and secondarily European under the protectorate, and then to support western expatriates in Morocco, the churches in Fes are now more African than European. The Sub-Saharanans are the most numerous members of the faith, and the most active among the believers; they are even seen as the pillars of

³⁵ Sub-Saharan interview 18

³⁶ Sub-Saharan interview 18

³⁷ Sub-Saharan interview 44

church activity.³⁸ What does the life of the believers in a cosmopolitan community combining different traditions generate in terms of new forms of religious life? Has the presence of these communities already managed to reshape Morocco's churches, helping to change them and create a new form of African church?

The phenomenon of Sub-Saharan immigration being studied here is only just beginning, and therefore too recent for us to observe deep transformations in the churches in the city of Fes as a result of this strong African presence. But in the meantime, it could be supposed that these places would tend to help create a spirit of community more among Sub-Saharans in Fes than between them and the other Christian communities in the city.

b) The zaouia of Ahmad al-Tijani: a mosque unlike any other

While mosques in general are not attractive welcoming places, their role being simply to serve as a venue for collective prayer, in Fes there is one mosque, or to be more precise, one zaouia, which stands out from the rest and plays a more central role in the lives of migrants. This is most particularly the case among Muslim migrants belonging to the Tijaniyya brotherhood, the majority of whom are Senegalese. But this may also be the case for other Sub-Saharans in the city, who may not necessarily be Tijanis, for whom the zaouia may be a place of both spiritual and cultural refreshment.

A place of celebration

Indeed, although visits to the zaouia are primarily made by those belonging to the Tijani way and the Senegalese, these are not the only people attracted to the place. The mausoleum plays the role of favoured place of worship for the majority of Muslim Sub-Saharan migrants. Due to its distance from the districts where the majority of those migrants live, it is somewhere which is visited for the biggest occasions such as religious festivals, which are an opportunity to gather and meet one another.

"We celebrate the Mawlid at home; you go off to pray at the medina³⁹ then you come back. I pray when I'm in a group, because I don't like to travel on my own to go and pray; if I manage to find five others, then we'll go together to pray, because it's a long way away."⁴⁰

The month of Ramadan is another popular time to visit the zaouia. A young Ivoirian tells how he prefers to go to the zaouia at the hour of breaking fast, because officials at the zaouia offer a meal to visitors. Our interviewee, who tries to go there once a week during the month of fasting, emphasises the special atmosphere experienced at those times:

"I like everything; I like the time of sharing when you go down there. It revives your faith: you are with God himself. During Ramadan, it's a very special time. You have to spend that time there because it's very important."⁴¹

³⁸<http://www.diocesarabat.org/?q=l-eglise-aujourd-hui>

³⁹The zaouia is in the medina in Fes.

⁴⁰Sub-Saharan interview 17

⁴¹Sub-Saharan interview 41

An African place

During the interviews, we tried to find out what makes this place different from the others. The city of Fes is home to a multitude of mosques and sanctuaries, some of which, such as Moulay Driss, are well-known. However, it is the zaouia of Ahmad al-Tijani which attracts the greatest number of Sub-Saharanans. This is strongly linked to the importance of the Tijaniyya brotherhood in West Africa and the large number of pilgrims from that region visiting the place. And it is through that function as a place of pilgrimage that the zaouia stands apart from the other shrines and mosques. In fact, it is the visitors/pilgrims who attract Sub-Saharan migrants to this place more than the actual mosque or tomb.

“It’s good over there, and there are a lot of people who come. We’ve even seen Africans who have travelled specially from Senegal and Mali on that day.”⁴²

“- I know there are great Imams who come. There are prayers. Imams coming from all countries: Burkina, Ivory Coast, all over really.

- And why do you want to go?

- Well, perhaps I can meet a caring Imam who will do something for me. You never know.”⁴³

From these two interview extracts – the first with an Ivoirian and the second with a Burkinabé – we can see that the zaouia is a central place for these migrants who live in Fes. It is a place for meeting West African pilgrims and hence a way for migrants to reconnect with their homeland. Even if the homeland is not necessarily their country of origin, but a broader concept including all countries of West Africa.

While being a mosque for the biggest occasions, the zaouia is also seen by these migrants as an important shrine. The miracles of the saint who rests at its centre have taken on a key role for the lives of the migrants. The existence of the tomb of the founder of a brotherhood which has spread across Africa has indeed made this mosque a very special place of worship, and made Ahmad al-Tijani a saint of great virtue. This is reflected in an interview which we conducted with a Malian student who tried to explain to us what makes this shrine different from the others:

“There is a saint who sleeps there, so you cannot compare one mosque with another where there was a saint. Sheikh Ahmad Tijani is ours, he is a saint of the Muslim religion. He can be a go-between between you and God. So I tell you, you go, you ask, you make your wish. Now do it with all your heart. Even if you’re not a Muslim go there and make your wish; insha’Allah, if God is willing, it’ll come true. (...) At home, Mum’s a real believer, not like me; before I even came here she said to me, ‘Go to Fes. If you go to Fes they tell me there’s a saint there, Sheikh Ahmad Tijani, go and pray there.’”⁴⁴

⁴²Sub-Saharan interview 18

⁴³Sub-Saharan interview 19

⁴⁴Sub-Saharan interview 16

For this young Malian student, the saint has become, among other things, a point of reference because it links him to home, to his mother who recommended he go there to pray at his tomb. So this is a saint who has a value for the society of origin. To some extent it is the family which gives him his value. But the importance of Sheikh Ahmad al-Tijani is also great for other migrants, some of whom only discover him once they are in Fes.

So the zaouia draws people not just because of its Sub-Saharan visitors/pilgrims, who give a taste of home, but also because of its saint. Sheikh Ahmad al-Tijani is the saint of Fes favoured by migrants when they have a wish they want to be granted. Hence the zaouia has become a place which, like the churches, has taken on an African feel. Saint Sheikh Ahmad al-Tijani has become the saint of the Sub-Saharan. And like the churches, the zaouia also attracts non-Muslim migrants, who also come to revere Ahmad al-Tijani.

Paradoxically, the Moroccan mosques and zaouia are not accessible to non-Muslims. In the case of the zaouia, a Moroccan guardian is posted in front of the entrance to the mausoleum every day, carefully checking visitors to the zaouia to make sure that no European tourists slips in among them. But the Sub-Saharan, being the zaouia's greatest clientele, seem to be able to go there without any problems. Membership of a particular ethnic group then becomes the chief selection criterion.

For that reason, Christian migrants can also come and go freely. In this respect, we were able to gather an account of a visit to the zaouia by a Christian Ivoirian. This man not only managed to get into the zaouia but was even able to ask a blessing on behalf of family members from the saint, and was able to get inside the tomb.

“It’s big there. I went for the blessings, I got into the tomb. The people prayed, then we sat around the tomb like this (...) I was with a Muslim friend. We went together; he came from Rabat. (...) When we got there, they prayed. There were other Africans who came too; they prayed, they had blessings, things like that. You pray, then you say your wishes. When you leave, there’s a man sitting the other side. You put your hand in his, you give him five dirhams and then he also gives blessings for you. After that, you go out of the door, and you see another man sitting on the other side, so you approach again. He also gives you blessings.”⁴⁵

One might wonder whether this very particular perception of Sub-Saharan in the zaouia has an impact on the number of visits to that place. While these people perceive a certain hostility on the part of Moroccans in the districts where they live, they are seen in and around the zaouia as pilgrims. Can we say that there is a reversal of value systems in this part of the city, given that the “Sub-Saharan” is labelled as a pilgrim?

But this is not to suggest that the zaouia is a place which is only visited by Sub-Saharan. On the contrary, some of our interviewees were introduced to the place by Moroccan acquaintances. It was a Moroccan client who talked to her Ivoirian hairdresser about the miracles the saint could do, encouraging her to visit that place.⁴⁶ One Burkinabé mechanic

⁴⁵ Contribution from an Ivoirian migrant during Sub-Saharan interview 44

⁴⁶ Sub-Saharan interview 18

visited the zaouia for the first time with a Moroccan work colleague.⁴⁷ Another went along with a Moroccan family from his district to break the fast in the zaouia.⁴⁸ So the zaouia is a place which attracts Sub-Saharan migrants of all faiths, but it is also a place which is visited by Moroccans.

3.5.2 Religion in migration: reaffirming differences or building bridges with the host society

In the final analysis, the general impression to emerge from observation of places of worship and the interviews with Sub-Saharan migrants who have settled in Fes is that these places do not contribute in any way to the integration of the communities into the host society or the discovery of other migrant groups. Sub-Saharan migrants attend these places of worship independently from their religious allegiances and churches, along with the zaouia, are places which attract Sub-Saharan migrants, thus contributing to their labelling as “Sub-Saharan places”. While the zaouia has long been a place shaped by Sub-Saharan cultures, the Christian Sub-Saharanans have learned to make the churches in the city their own, imposing their own style on them. Let us now consider the profiles of two different migrants living out their religion in completely different ways. The first is a Tijani Muslim, who has fallen back on his home community, while the second is a Christian who, through staying in Morocco, has been discovering the Muslim religion.

3.5.2.1 Living as a Tijani migrant in Fes

“B” is a 20-year-old Senegalese migrant. At the time of his interview, he had already been staying in Morocco for a year. Having stayed in Marrakech and Casablanca, he decided to come to Fes. Leaving his job in a call centre in Casablanca, he decided to leave the economic capital to try his luck in Fes. B’s migratory project was aimed at reaching Spain, but in the meantime he derived little satisfaction from his job in Casablanca and, seeking new meaning for his migration, left for Fes. For B, who is Tijani, the move to Fes was due both to its proximity to Spain and also its role as a pilgrimage site. But his migration to Fes was influenced less by the spiritual character which his migration could take on, and more by the strategic aspect of finding fellow countrymen there.

“(…) They told me that Fes is closer for getting into Europe, and in real terms it was from Casa that I started to get an idea on what steps to take to get into Europe. (...) In fact, what motivated me to come to Fes was the fact that I’m a Muslim and a Sufi; I knew there’d be a lot of Senegalese people here at the zaouia of Sheikh Ahmad Tijani. So I told myself that when I got here it wouldn’t be hard for me. When I was in Casa I saw some TV documentaries about the Senegalese community here in Fes, and that’s why I came to this city. (...) Because in Senegal, for us as Tijanis, we all dream in Senegal of visiting this ... this ... So, I keep telling myself that, since I’m not going to stay here for long, while I’m in the city where the mausoleum is, then it’s an opportunity to go there a few times. Spiritually it gives me the strength to ... set off on the right foot.”⁴⁹

⁴⁷ Sub-Saharan interview 42

⁴⁸ Sub-Saharan interview 41

⁴⁹ Sub-Saharan interview 33

B ascribes great importance to the Senegalese community. This is his prime motivation for coming to Fes. Although he is a Tijani, the actual presence of the zaouia here is of less interest; of greater interest is the Senegalese community which the zaouia draws to the city. While wanting to take advantage of his stay to visit his saint, B is going more in order to visit Senegalese spaces. He lives with some fellow countrymen and spends all of his time with them. He will worship in his community.

Despite the fact that he thus finds himself at the place of origin of the brotherhood to which he belongs, he mostly goes to Senegalese religious places and helps organise Tijani-only “dhikr” nights. This practice, which is widespread in Senegal, has been important to the whole Senegalese diaspora worldwide. So in Fes too, as in other Moroccan cities, evenings of religious chant are held. These evenings are not organised separately for different brotherhoods. Murids and Tijanis alike (the two largest brotherhoods in Senegal) meet together to commemorate the Prophet.⁵⁰

Migration may therefore help to bring migrants from the same origins together and to establish different religious traditions. The zaouia and worshipping practices it offers cannot take the place of the practices which are anchored in the Senegalese brotherhood communities.

In Morocco the practice of holding “dhikr” evenings certainly exists in the Moroccan Tijaniyya tradition too, but this Moroccan “dhikr” practice does not have the same importance as in the Senegalese Tijaniyya. Being Tijani in Morocco and in Senegal are two completely different things, and belonging to the Tijaniyya does not allow any kind of bridge-building between the Moroccan and Senegalese Tijani communities, but rather it helps to consolidate the Senegalese culture of brotherhood. But it must not be forgotten that this example applies to the Senegalese alone. It is highly probable that other communities who are not present in such great numbers in Fes and are not in the habit of organising evenings of religious chant do not experience this same consolidation of their community through religious practices, and that multicultural “Sub-Saharan” communities have a bigger part to play in their lives.

3.5.2.2 *Integration and renunciation of religious identity*

While B falls back on his national community in Fes, “Br” has used his stay in Morocco to discover the Muslim religion and to convert to it. Aged 22 and living in Morocco since 2008, this Ivoirian migrant converted to Islam a year after coming to Morocco. Through his accommodation and his work in a call centre, he was able to forge friendships with Muslims of different nationalities. Meeting Sub-Saharan and Moroccan Muslim friends and his day-to-day living with them had a great part to play in his conversion. But the role of initiator into the Muslim religion was played by a Cameroonian friend, who gradually introduced him to Islam.

“Well, I wasn’t a Muslim in my home country; I was a Christian. With the help of my friends, I have a lot of Muslim friends, whether they’re Moroccan or African. Many, many of them. I even took part in the fast for Eid, you see, because I was with them. (...) When you’re with people every day, you see them pray. You decide

⁵⁰ Sub-Saharan interview 33

to ask them “why do you pray” because you can say, “well, I’m a Christian, he’s a Muslim.” He explained it to me. (...) The explanation is that there’s no prophet but Mohamed. There are no other religions, you see, other than the Muslim religion, and the Muslim religion is a good religion. And when they told me that, it wasn’t tit-for-tat. (...) I’m telling you, I’ve been here for three years. They didn’t trick me. I said, OK, no problem, I’ll join. But I took my time. (...) You need to take time to look into it yourself, and not just join like a puppet when they say come on. You get me? (...) I’ve got a friend. His name’s “A”. You see, the way he lives made a big impression on me. (...) He’s a Cameroonian, a Peul. (...) He’s helped a lot of people with his faith. He’s helped a lot of people. You see people who can’t even manage to get food, and he’s ready to open his door to feed them. You see people without any money and he’s a student, but he’s even ready to sacrifice the little bit of loose change he gets to look after those people, because he’s someone who’s really made an impression on me. (...)”⁵¹

From this account, one has the impression that belonging to a cosmopolitan community through Islam was a key element in his conversion. Although it was his Cameroonian friend who had a major role to play in his discovery of Islam, his conversion has allowed him to become closer to both Sub-Saharan and Moroccan Muslims. It should be pointed out that this young migrant has a fairly open attitude towards the host society. He says “it’s very important to be able to work with those around you”.⁵² This attitude must also have been a key element in his conversion. Similarly, his conversion must have helped with his integration into the district. For example, it is quite normal for this man to go along with his Moroccan neighbours to the zaouia.

“We would set of with Moroccans in their car. We came back together because we live in the same district and they regularly go there at the breaking of fast, and it’s them who say to us, “Come on, let’s go.” They’re nice people. (...) A father and his children.”⁵³

In the final analysis, religion, be it Muslim or Christian, is important for Sub-Saharan migrants settled in Fes. But assiduous attendance of churches or mosques does not necessarily translate into establishment or integration within the migrant community or the rest of the city’s population. Sub-Saharanans’ membership of a Christian church does not enable the development of a collective conscience between Sub-Saharanans and Europeans, even though the two communities belong to the same religion: interactions between the two communities, even though they take place in church, remain very limited and superficial. Relations between Sub-Saharan Muslims and Moroccans through religious activity seem deeper, because relations are not limited just to contact within the Mosque. But even though the proximity (neighbourhood or work) works more in favour of these interactions, one cannot fail to observe that religious celebrations sometimes remain very tightly linked to communities, with Sub-Saharanans organising their own dikhr evenings among themselves.

⁵¹Sub-Saharan interview 41

⁵²Sub-Saharan interview 41

⁵³Sub-Saharan interview 41

In this multi-community religious country, the Tijaniyya zaouia seems to be a special case. The attractiveness of this place can be explained with reference to an imagined “Sub-Saharan” community of people from one’s own homeland. This home community includes the whole of Africa and is no longer limited to just Senegalese or Tijani people, but attracts Sub-Saharan migrants from different origins and faiths. Here, religious practices are closely linked to ethnicity, and seem to be a source of both spiritual and cultural refreshment.

While migration can take on a spiritual meaning for a Tijani adventurer, the Sub-Saharan presence in Fes can also contribute to the transformation of the significance of a shrine such as the zaouia, which has become Africanised, particularly in terms of religious practice. This same Africanisation affects the ecclesiastical institutions much more clearly, which, while extending a welcome to the most needy, see themselves being transformed and “Creolised” by migrants from different Christian traditions and origins.

Finally, in spite of the lack of establishment of the majority of Sub-Saharan migrants in Fes, who are more mobile than sedentary, they contribute in different ways to a transformation of the religious lie of the land in the city and the country. While these transformations are more recent where churches are concerned, it is reasonable to assume that the zaouia has already been shaped by Sub-Saharan actors on their travels over the past century.

3.6 Conclusion

This chapter started with a question about the role played by Morocco in the African migratory field. A number of writings present it primarily as a transit country which, driven by events, has become a host country. Without a doubt these are elements of an irrefutable truth confirmed by observations made in Fes. However, we feel that the terms “transit country” and “immigration country” cannot necessarily be understood with reference to the same root causes. For, while the notion of immigration harks back to the existence of a real attraction which can be objectively observed through the country’s economic growth, the notion of transit seems to be linked to an effect of circumstances in which some countries find themselves involved in immigration due to their geographical position along migrants’ routes.

Two things emerge from the historical look at the links forged between Morocco and Sub-Saharan Africa and are worth stressing here: (i) Morocco has seen waves of people coming from Sub-Saharan Africa well before the economic and political deregulation caused by globalisation; (ii) The anthropological and cultural blending to which these waves have given birth is an indication that Moroccan society has in the past had a much better developed capacity for assimilation in the past than in the current age, although it has to be admitted that assimilation has also occurred against a background of violence. For it must be said that assimilation was made possible in a situation where reference to the moral principles of Islam and equality between peoples and races made it possible to attenuate the horrors of slavery.

But what is remarkable is that the presence of an Afro-Moroccan element has not served as fertile ground where new Sub-Saharan populations choosing or finding themselves obliged to settle in Morocco can put down roots.

Quite the contrary, for their presence receives a negative interpretation, based on judgement criteria and terminology connected with the image which has been created of the Sub-Saharan against the backdrop of a European approach characterised by restrictive migration policies.

The presence of these nationals from countries south of the Sahara, which was initially quite discrete and unnoticed, was to become a striking feature of migration in Morocco, growing to become significant irregular migration to Europe.

It is in this context that Fes began to play a role as a hub receiving Sub-Saharan immigrants looking for a more peaceful environment where it is possible to go unnoticed, passing themselves off as students or pilgrims by proxy. For it must be said that the city of Fes, despite its historic past, has lost its cosmopolitan sparkle, compared with Casablanca, Rabat or Tangiers. The presence of a student community and the religious function fulfilled by the Tijaniyya zaouia seem to be determining factors in this attractiveness. It is also through these two aspects of the city that Sub-Saharan migrants manage to find the cracks through which they can try to integrate into the city. Their relations with *Fassi* society have yet to go beyond the mercantile trade dimension, the offer of housing and a few precarious and poorly-paid jobs. Sporting and religious activities give rise to opportunities for forging links with the Moroccans, but not only do these links remain confined to the place which has brought them about – the mosque or football pitch – but they only involve a minority of people. Opportunities for Sub-Saharanans to meet other foreigners in the city, particularly Europeans and Americans, are the churches which are attended on Sundays or feast days. But despite the similarity arising from religious membership, the two populations view one another according to judgemental criteria which make it difficult to establish lasting ties. Their situations are riddled with social and cultural inequalities which make it impossible to overcome the barriers which separate them, with the Europeans in their stylish homes and *Riads* in the old medina, and the Sub-Saharanans in their poor districts on the fringes of the city.

The perception of Fes among Sub-Saharanans is partly founded on the historical, spiritual and trading roles played by the city over the centuries, as well as being a haven for students. It is because of these links that Fes is seen as a city to which it is possible to travel without any need for valid papers, and in which it is also possible to settle without any risk of losing one's own identity, as an extension of African soil, society and identity. But at the same time, it is seen as a city which does not offer Sub-Saharanans any prospect of self-fulfilment on the economic front, and which does not give them the opportunity to express their creative, cultural and sporting skills.

If we understand a migratory field to be what G. Simon (1981) defines as the entire space structured by migratory and relational flows, and which B eteille (1981) also describes as a space in which migrants build one or more networks and where competitiveness in terms of attractiveness emerges between different urban centres, it could be said that Fes has been integrated at a late stage into a migratory field by capturing part of the flows destined for other cities. But if we take into account the intentions expressed by the Sub-Saharanans we have interviewed, the city does not seem to constitute a final destination. Three prospects have emerged, and none of these includes putting down roots in Fes: the return to the country of origin, in acceptance that the migratory project has failed; the ongoing desire to continue with attempts to enter Europe illegally, but with the least possible risk of losing one's life in the process; and finally, setting off to find better opportunities of work in another Moroccan city, in Casablanca or in Rabat. The planned departure for another city would help to finance emigration to Europe or a return to one's own country.

CHAPTER 4: THE WESTERNERS: RESIDENT TOURISTS OR IMMIGRANTS?

4.1 A recent and spectacular phenomenon

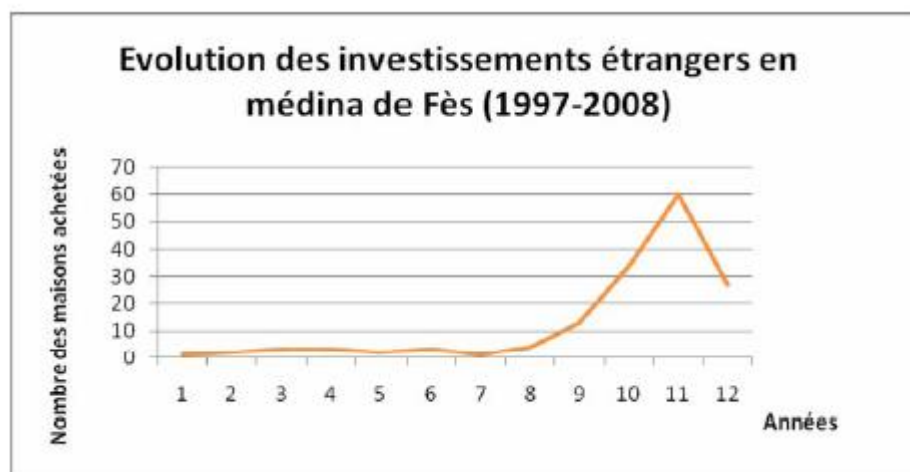


Figure 11. Growth of investment in residential properties in the medina (1997-2008)

Based on the findings of a quantitative survey conducted in June-July 2008, it would appear that, for a number of foreigners, owning a *riad* or traditional house in the medina in Fes has become a fashion phenomenon, as has happened in Marrakech or Essaouira.

Among those foreigners who have moved into the medina, the French are the most numerous group, making up 50% of foreigners. They are followed by the British at 17%, the Americans at 9%, and then the Spanish and Italians, with about 3% each. In addition, at 2% or less for each nationality, there are the Algerians, Irish, Australians, Germans, Dutch, Canadians, Swiss and Norwegians. Other nationalities are represented by individual residents, such as an Indian woman, a Columbian man, a Venezuelan woman, a South African man, a man from New Zealand, and Austrian woman, and Iraqi man and a Palestinian family.

Qualitative investigations conducted during 2010 have added to and updated this information. The percentages remain almost the same, with a slight rise in the proportion of English and Americans, compensating for a slight fall in the relative proportion of French nationals. But on the whole, while Europeans remain the majority, they are not the only ones to have moved into the city and its historic district.

The move by foreigners to buy old residences in the medina in Fes has seen rapid growth over less than two decades. But it must be pointed out that these data only cover house purchases, because to this we must add investment to set up estate agencies and the purchase of premises converted into café-restaurants.

Foreign settlement has gone through different stages, and it is possible to identify three major phases in the inclusion of the medina as a place to live.

4.1.1 Up to the end of the 1990s: isolated cases

It was at the end of the 1990^s that the phenomenon of purchasing traditional houses in the Moroccan medinas started appearing, although hesitantly at first. The first traditional house sold to a foreigner was in the medina in Fes in 1997. It was purchased by an American man with a passion for traditional houses and seen by the *Fassis* and other foreigners who came to settle here later as a “pioneer”. He had been to other Arab countries, living in Cairo for five years, before deciding to settle for good in the medina in Fes. His real passion for buying and restoring old residences drove him to buy another the following year in the heart of the medina, so that he could turn it into a holiday rental property. In the space of nine years, that American had already bought five houses in the medina, taking great delight in restoring them and helping to preserve this unique heritage. He was also to go on to play a role as mediator, guide and, indeed, inspiration for a number of foreigners, particularly Anglo-Saxons, who wanted to move into Fes⁵⁴.

Two years were to elapse following the purchase of the first residence by a foreigner in the medina before the first French nationals were to arrive in 1999 – attracted, they said, by the rich tourist potential and the strong cultural image – to invest in guesthouses. So they bought a fine *riad* covering approximately 700 m² for a million dirhams (excluding renovation work) in the Tala’a Kbira district, which they renovated in strict adherence to local traditions. Those French nationals were also described as pioneers in the guesthouse business. Through this, they have been mentioned in the majority of tourist guides.

4.1.2 From 2000 to the end of 2006: an expansion phase

With Marrakech being seen as saturated and expensive in the early 2000^s, Fes was to take its place, becoming the up-and-coming destination for tourists. Between 2000 and 2003, stagnation in movements was seen, linked to the effects of the war in Iraq in March 2003 and the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001. But from 2004 onwards, developments picked up again, and a major trend to buy traditional houses emerged. This continued through 2005 and 2006, seeing an increase which reached a peak towards the end of 2006.

This unprecedented taste for old houses among foreigners developed against the backdrop of a huge promotional campaign for Morocco in Europe towards the end of 2003, but also thanks to the air transport deregulation policies. Fes was then to attract more and more foreigners living in the medina as owners or tenants. The purchase of residential accommodation in the medina in Fes thus extended to the Moroccan middle classes, a new section of foreign nationals, and different Western countries.

4.1.3 From 2007 to the present: a fall and then stagnation

The great move to buy, as seen in the previous period, continued in 2007, with a trend to stabilise, before coming to a virtual halt towards the end of 2007. Estate agencies specialising in selling *riads* and homes in the medina have reported a considerable drop in the number of

⁵⁴ Interview 18

property transactions. “Up to 2007, we were selling one or two houses a week. But now we’ve only completed two sales in six months,” says the owner of the first heritage restoration and estate agency in Fes to be run by foreigners. In the meantime, the high demand for traditional accommodation from foreigners has caused a re-evaluation of property prices in the medina in Fes. Prices have soared, doubling in the space of year from the start of 2007. In some cases, inflation has been put at more than 100%, and sometimes there is a mismatch between the price and the actual value of the property. “The prices no longer had any meaning, because they were not based on reality [...]” said the chairman of the association for the protection of heritage and authenticity in Fes. Prices have become like those in Marrakech. As a result, foreigners prefer to buy in Marrakech, because this is a safer investment for them, especially for guesthouses.

In fact the property market in the medina in Fes fluctuates quite significantly compared with those in other cities which have experienced the same phenomenon. For example, the taste for finding new destinations, leading to an increase in property prices, was closed linked to the liberalisation of air transport policies and Morocco’s commitment to an “open skies” policy. The opening of direct and low-cost air routes to Fes has increased demand. But, by contrast, Ryanair’s decision in 2008 and 2009 to axe direct low-cost flights from London to Fes was to generate a significant drop-off in the numbers of Anglo-Saxon customers and a fall in prices. “I have a friend who is a real estate agent in England, he had bought in a month, before this cheap airlines has stopped their flights to Fez, 30 houses in the medina, now he don’t buy anything, and I think this is not good.” said one English resident in the medina. “When the low-cost Fes-London route opened up in 2006, our business increased straight away. More than 60% of our customers were from London. And when Ryanair axed this flight, our business dropped. But now the flight from London has just started up again, and we’re seeing the same thing. All our customers come from London,” added one American woman, who has been the owner of a *Riad* in the Medina since 2002⁵⁵.

In addition, unlike Marrakech, connections from Casablanca are less well organised, and sometimes passengers need to wait several hours before they can continue to Fes, as in this account by a Belgian man: “Back then, it was Royal Air Maroc. But now Ryanair is king here. (...) So now, I’ve completely abandoned Royal Air Maroc, because it’s so inconvenient. Getting to Belgium is such a performance. With Royal Air Maroc I have to go Fes-Casa, Casa-Lille, Lille-Tournai. But with Ryanair I can fly Fes-Charleroi direct; at Charleroi I’m already in Belgium, and it’s easy to get there, with a flight time of three hours maximum. But with Royal Air Maroc, I had to wait in Casa, then get to Lille, and there’s no direct flight to Charleroi. So I’ve completely abandoned Royal Air Maroc in favour of Ryanair”⁵⁶.

2008 has been described as the crisis year in terms of foreigners dashing to buy traditional homes. This crisis was linked in particular to the global economic crisis. However, house prices continued to rise throughout 2008, although less significantly than in 2005/2006.

We have tried to check in an indirect manner whether the demand for the medina in Fes has remained strong since that date. In the absence of any reliable official statistics, we have tried to monitor the process of renovation within the medina driven by foreigners by means of an indirect indicator: applications from non-Moroccans to the municipality’s planning

⁵⁵ Interview on 21 May 2010.

⁵⁶ Interview with J-P, a Belgian male living in the Medina in Fes since 2000. 3 May 2010.

department for permission to renovate and develop old houses. The planning department is a very precious source of information, because, in addition to the number and date of the application, it includes the name and forename of the owner, their nationality, the exact address of the owner's residence and the address of the plot covered by the application, along with the type of work. The outcome of this documentary research bears witness to this resumption, showing that the phenomenon seen in 2007 is still very much alive, with the graph showing that applications from foreigners are running well above those from Moroccans (Figure 12).

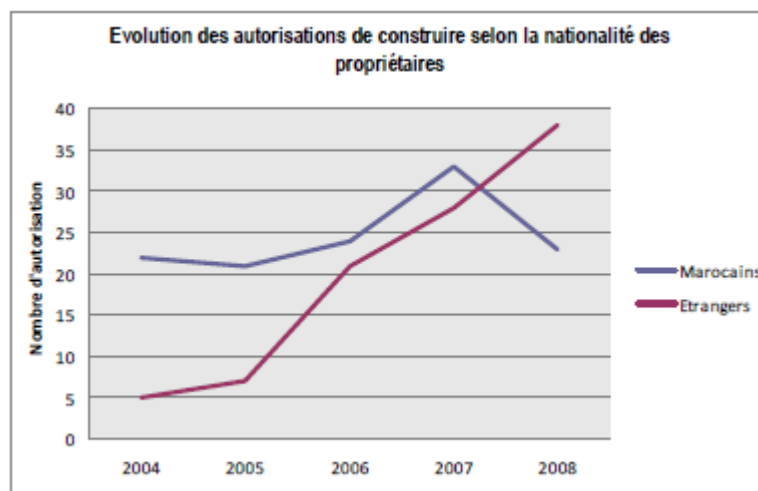


Figure 12. Growth of building permits for redevelopment in the Medina; Source: Municipal government of Fes-Medina

However, prices for traditional houses have stagnated since 2009, in the face of the slight downturn in purchases among foreigners. A number of estate agencies have closed down, and a large proportion of those houses are now up for sale once more.

4.2 Attempt to explain the phenomenon

“There are new arrivals (the English and the Americans) and the French are now in a minority. People turn their noses up at Marrakech. Whether they’re tourists, or foreigners who want to come in and settle in Morocco, people all have the same reaction when it comes to Marrakech: ‘Certainly not Marrakech.’ And then, I think there’s also the character of Fes. (...) There are also the weeks of promotional advertising – for Fes particularly in France, which has encouraged the French to discover the world of Fes. And then there’s also the introduction of low-cost flights between Fes and Marseille which have made it easier to explore. Now, the first wave and the second wave of arrivals were two quite different things. Over the last two years, people coming to set up shop here haven’t come because they love Fes, but to do business. These are really the kind of foreigners settling in Fes now. And that’s also been important.”⁵⁷

⁵⁷ Interview with the Vice-Chairman of the Fes guesthouse proprietors’ association. 6 May 2010.

The great mobility of Europeans and Americans travelling to Fes in particular and the Moroccan medinas in general has been helped – quite apart from the wealth differential and exchange rate which has had an effect on property prices, which have become very tempting – by increasingly open access by air, strong promotion of the medinas and foreign investment in Morocco, and a remarkable taste among the media for old houses and the *riads* to be found in these Moroccan medinas and a certain saturation of Marrakech as a destination. Finally, the interview above also reveals the differences between the successive waves of foreigners showing an interest in Fes.

4.2.1 Cultural tourism driven by medinas

For a decade or so, Morocco, in addition to the stress placed on its seaside attractions, has started to develop a cultural offer. Alongside, the tourist demand evolves as a result of the profound sociocultural changes experienced by post-industrial societies. This has translated into a new approach by tourists who have become more interested, among other things, in authenticity, discovery of others, the way others live, their culture and traditions. From here, cultural tourism has become attractive to more and more customers. Moreover, towards the end of the 1970^s, across the Arab world in general, there emerged a new way of looking at cities, through the lens of heritage.

Moroccan tourism professionals and officials are now aware of the importance of developing that form of tourism. The 2010 vision as set out for non-coastal destinations is the *Plan Mada'in*, with the creation of Regional Tourism Development Programmes (PDRT), with the aim of repositioning the Moroccan cultural product. This tourism largely relies on the “imperial cities” product, supported by the “medina” component.

The tourist promotion of the medinas also has a part to play in boosting their image, with advertising campaigns highlighting their authenticity, the fascinating elements they comprise and the heritage-based credentials of some of them. The medina, apart from its calling which is linked to souks and shopping, also conjures up in the minds of tourists an image of a space which is impregnated with myth and unique otherworldliness.

4.2.2 Media fascination and the buying frenzy among foreign buyers

The attraction of life in the medina for foreigners is linked to aspects of its originality and the pictures this conjures up in the imagination of the western tourist, heavily impregnated with the legends of the east, its charms and its secrets.

As a result of this, the Moroccan medinas, and particularly the *riads* and traditional houses to be found in cities such as Marrakech, Essaouira and Fes, have benefited from great international media exposure which has helped the wide-scale spread of the phenomenon of foreigners buying houses in the medina.

Television has been an exceptional tool for promoting the medinas, with its direct impact on the number of Europeans who have decided to settle in Morocco. But the role played by the printed press has also been a determining factor in the media exposure of Morocco's medinas and their attractiveness for foreign buyers. Indeed, when asked, “How and when did you get the idea of coming and settling in Fes?”, one Frenchman, who has been the business owner of a Riad in Fes, replied:

“The idea of coming and settling in Morocco first came to me 3 or 4 years ago. In fact, it was a plan worked out with some friends. We’d each seen a number of programmes on TV about the Riads, particularly in Marrakech, at quite affordable prices. Indeed, there were these programmes showing foreigners who have bought places in Marrakech, Riads in particular, which are magnificent places where they come to take their holidays with their friends and their families. So you see, these programmes present it that way: accessible. It’s all very attractive; it’s not expensive; living is easy in Morocco; the weather’s good, it’s sunny, and so on. You know the sort of programme. And then there was also an article I’d read in Le Monde, and there it was talking about retirement. French retired people who, in fact, were coming to live here in Morocco, basically for six months a year, particularly in winter, because the weather’s nicer in Morocco. (...) And so, we said to ourselves: ‘Why not us?’ We could buy a riad too.”⁵⁸

The Internet has a large part to play in selling the medina and its accommodation to a wider public. It is the essential tool for various private actors. Broadly speaking, it brings together those who own accommodation, particularly for tourist use, but also the estate agencies which specialise in the sale of *riads* in the different medinas around Morocco, renovation firms, blogs by new owners etc.. Exposure on Web pages with videos, sounds and pictures enables Internet users to be immersed in the atmosphere of the medina as an urban space, as is explained in these two personal accounts:

“I came for the first time as a tourist in December 2005, on holiday, and just by chance I came across an article on the Internet written by D.A., and in fact I think there are a number of us who started off like that. Now D.A. had written this article; he was really passionate about the Medina, safeguarding its heritage and all that. If you go to his website, which is called houseinfez.com, there’s a lot of information about Fes, and the little house he rents.”⁵⁹

“It just turned out to be Fes. (...) In fact, I started my Arabic studies in Syria. (...) After that, I continued in Switzerland, but it was quite basic. But, because it’s a language that fascinates me, I looked for a really good school on the Internet. I wanted to go somewhere I didn’t yet know. In fact, I wanted to go to Yemen, but the political climate was difficult. And then, I saw a lovely Riad in Fes on the Internet, and I said to myself: ‘That could be a good way of combining living and studying Arabic; relaxing a bit in this lovely Riad in the Medina in Fes.’”⁶⁰

Apart from the influence of the sounds and pictures to be found on Web pages, film productions have also exercised a significant attraction over foreigners. A number of films made in Morocco and/or about Morocco, which have given direct or indirect media exposure to cities such as Casablanca, Marrakech and Fes, have had an impact on the thinking of some of the people we met: “I had no impression of Fes or Morocco. It was only things that I’d read

⁵⁸ Interview 1, 20 April 2010.

⁵⁹ Interview with an English male who, since 2006, has been passionate about buying and renovating traditional houses in the medina in Fes. (Interview 16, 3 June 2010).

⁶⁰ Interview with a German female living in the Medina in Fes since 2007 (Interview 7, 27 April 2010).

on the Internet. I also saw the film *Casablanca*, and a Hitchcock film, which started in Jamaa Fna (in Marrakech)”, said one American woman who has been living in Fes since 2002⁶¹.

Literature and artistic production have had a similar direct impact on a number of Europeans who have chosen to settle in Fes, as found in the account given by an Italian man who describes himself as a traveller, writer and artist:

*“You know, Fes is quite a magical city. There are already writers who have fallen in love with Fes, like Paul Bowles, who has written a magnificent book about Fes: *The Spider’s House*. Then there’s Leo Africanus. There are also painters who have loved Fes. And so, if there’s a writer, like Paul Bowles⁶², who has loved Fes, someone who was very sensitive, intelligent, and all that, I said to myself: ‘Me too. I’m going to love Fes,’ and it’s true.”⁶³*

The same reason was put forward by an Englishman living in Fes since 2006, when he told us:

“Once I’d had the idea of buying a house in Fes, I spent every evening on the Internet reading up on its history, how the houses were built, the architecture etc.. I also read a lot of books which talked about Fes, like the books by Paul Bowles. So it’s mostly from the Internet and books that I got my information.”⁶⁴

Similarly, in answer to the question: “What was your mental image of Fes before coming here the first time?”, the answer given by a French woman living in Fes since 2004 was as follows:

“Majorelle, the pictures of Majorelle, that was it. Pictures particularly by Majorelle, but by the orientalist in general.”⁶⁵

On the other hand, with its festivals and international conferences, such as the International Festival of Sacred Music⁶⁶, and the International Congress on Civilisations and Cultural Diversity⁶⁷, Fes has become a cultural place with great media exposure on a universal scale.

To sum up, the mental images of Fes, driven most often by an orientalist view, and exported by all these means of communication, have played a part in the current reconstruction of Morocco’s oldest city, partly transforming it at the same time. Having played an unquestionable role in this migration by Europeans and Americans, these mental images have

⁶¹ Interview 15, 21 May 2010.

⁶² Paul Bowles is an American composer, writer and traveller who lived in Morocco during the 1940^s. He was the author of a number of works on Morocco, and Fes in particular, such as “*The Spider’s House*” (1955) and “*Tea in the Sahara*” (1944); this work was adapted for the screenplay of a film of the same title where Paul Bowles himself was the narrator. He died in Tangiers in 1999.

⁶³ Interview 5, 22 April 2010.

⁶⁴ Interview 2, 21 April 2010.

⁶⁵ Interview 14

⁶⁶ Also worth mentioning are the *International Festival of Sufi Music*, the *Festival of Amazigh Culture*, the *Festival of Culinary Arts*, the *International Bridge Festival*, the *International Festival of University Theatre*, the *International Festival of Professional Theatre*, the *International Festival of Expressive Dance*, the *international Jazz in Riads festival*.

⁶⁷ Also worth mentioning is the *International Congress on the Union for the Mediterranean*.

led to a renewal, supported by increased appreciation, of the identity of this medina. We shall return to it later.

4.2.3 Multiple personal motivations

How do those foreigners who have settled in Fes justify their decision to migrate? The answer to this question forms part of an important analytical dimension which looks back over the reasons which lead citizens from countries in the north to choose to migrate to a country in the south, with great openness to differences. According to the personal accounts by the people we interviewed, migration to a country in the south – Morocco in this case – enables them to fulfil a shared aspiration, to live life at a better pace. Moreover, this main reason is most frequently just an expression of a multiplicity of personal motivations which sometimes converge, given the plurality of the profiles and social trajectories of these migrants. These personal motivations can be categorised into three groups: economics, the “mid-life” crisis and networking.

4.2.3.1 The economic challenge and the quest for better living conditions: a transverse motivation

The challenge to take advantage of the economic opportunities offered by a country on the southern shores of the Mediterranean in certain niche sectors, compared with countries on the northern shores, is one major and inescapable reason which has driven Europeans and Americans to leave their country of origin and come and try their luck in Morocco. These economically-motivated departures are intimately linked to the cost of living and an economic situation presented as quite unattractive in the northern countries, compared with that in Morocco, which remains very encouraging for small and medium-sized investment.

The trend, which has grown considerably over more than a decade, accelerated following the global financial crisis at the end of the 2000^s. This main reason is often linked to another non-secondary motivation: the desire to flee the stressful daily grind of life in Europe, and to “enjoy a better quality of life in Morocco”, along with the welcoming nature of the people living there. In this regard, the reasons cited for migration coincide perfectly with the area of origin: the northern countries. Those countries are perceived by some interviewees as countries of rejection, while Morocco is seen as a place where “you live well”, particularly upon reaching retirement age.

Seen from this viewpoint, migration is perceived and experienced as an alternative, a lasting solution to a socioeconomic situation defined as “misery” or “poverty”, and to a way of life in the country of origin which is described as “bleak”. In fact, the majority of people interviewed feel there are better opportunities for self-advancement in Morocco compared with their countries of origin. Thus, in answer to the question, “You have chosen to settle in Fes; why?”, the answer from a young French-English couple (aged 40 and 35), who have recently moved in, having lived in England and then Australia, was as follows:

“Why the choice of Fes? For economic reasons. It was an opportunity for us to open a business in the medina, which wasn’t possible in Europe, to match our financial conditions. So it was more than anything for economic reasons that we chose to come here to Fes. It was a real challenge being here, but the

opportunities were attractive. In Europe, where we've lived, or in Australia, the opportunities are not as big as they were here in Fes."⁶⁸

That same economic factor, alongside the quality of life and the climate in Morocco, were behind the choice made by a French family of five: the father, the mother and their three sons (19, 13 and 6). This is what the mother told us:

*"(...) The economic factor too. Because Fes is still a city where you can still invest with limited capital. That was the case with us; we didn't have a lot of money. (...) Then, compared with France, this is where we feel right. You can always talk to someone. All day you're talking to customers and neighbours. But in France it's not like that; in France you don't even know your neighbour. You're always seeing in the news about people who die in their houses, and no-one notices until weeks later. In France, people have become too selfish, too individualistic. But in Morocco, there's warmth. Perhaps it's the climate too. I couldn't have motivated myself to go off like that to the North Pole. It helps to have the sunshine a few times in the year, that's for sure. But I have to say that it wasn't the climate that made us come. It's nice that it's like that, but we wouldn't have come just for the climate."*⁶⁹

Similarly, an American woman (aged 38), who has been running a guesthouse in Fes since 2002, explained why Europeans have settled in Morocco as follows:

*"(...) Before the crisis, there was a bit of hysteria over the property market in Europe. People, the French, the English, had started perhaps to think and to say 'I'd love to buy a little place in the south of France, in Italy, in Spain, for my retirement or my holidays.' But the prices when up so high that people were saying, 'Oh! It's impossible. It's too expensive.' Now there were some people who were attracted to Morocco by the prices, others by the culture and the architecture, and others by both of them."*⁷⁰

One Italian man (aged 40), having chosen to settle in Fes in 2007, and to invest in a restaurant business, adds:

*"It's very easy to travel here. It's very attractive economically. Because Europe has become much too expensive."*⁷¹

These two deciding reasons are generally tied in with other reasons of a more personal nature.

4.2.3.2 The "mid-life crisis"

⁶⁸ Interview 3.

⁶⁹ Interview 8

⁷⁰ Interview 16

⁷¹ Interview 5

The desire to embark on a new life after one's fiftieth birthday was put forward as a main reason by some older people. In this case, immigration into a country in the south is not necessarily an emancipation phenomenon driven by material profit or social mobility. The words of a Frenchman who was 50 years old when he migrated to Fes in 2008 speak volumes:

*"Now that was really a life choice, I said 'Look, I'm 50 and I really want to have another life.' I was a civil servant, a manager, I'd faced off the competition for my job, I had responsibilities, and I was coasting in a way. I could carry on living an easy life to retirement, without any difficulties, because I'd gone through all the necessary steps to climb the ladder and I had virtually reached the top. For me, it had become tedious; and that's what they call the mid-life crisis. And I think I must have gone through that; and then you want to say: 'I need to live another life, live another existence, discover another country, another culture.' I believe that's what finally happened. (...) So after travelling through your career you arrive at a crossroads in your life, etc. etc., and then, there you are."*⁷²

This reason, which partly explains this singular drive for foreigners to migrate to Morocco, and Fes in particular, was also cited by another interviewee, a Frenchman aged 62, settled in Fes since 2003:

*"Why Morocco? It's a personal story. It was to discover Morocco. At the time, I was working in maritime transport and I discovered Saïdia; it's a magnificent place. And all of a sudden I'd bought a house down there where I could spend a few weeks each year; it was very nice. I really liked the town, the lifestyle and the climate. But then, when I started thinking about coming to retire here, I realised that living in Saïdia all year round wasn't going to be possible. And the only city which had really touched me and moved me at that time was Fes. And when I started thinking that perhaps I might move to Morocco for good, Fes became an obvious choice. I came to Fes. I looked and I bought a house in 2003. And then for years I shuttled between Fes and Paris, and then one day I'd had enough of Paris. And there and then I left Paris for good, three years ago."*⁷³

Similarly, the reason quoted by a Frenchman aged 51 to explain his decision to come to Fes to invest in a small café-restaurant was determined by two reasons which came together: the economic factor and the mid-life crisis:

"I came to prepare my retirement. I'm fifty. (...) I'm separated. My wife went off, for various reasons, when our eldest was just four years old. So I brought up my two children all on my own. Once I'd reached the age of 48, I'd seen my children fly from the nest, I was all alone and I was fed up with my humdrum existence... I worked as a chef for a big American nightclub. So my life was: commute – work – commute. That was my life. Then, one morning I said: 'I'm fed up with this; I'm going to change my life. I've got a few savings, that'll be enough for me to move to Morocco.' (...) So, in July 2008, I already wanted to settle in Morocco. Because one year earlier I'd been to Portugal to find out how it was, but Portugal

⁷²Interview 1

⁷³Interview 13

didn't grab me; it was Morocco; that's Maktoub (chance). My aim isn't to become a millionaire in Morocco, after... It's the quality of life here, that's what's important for me; the lack of stress compared with what we have at home. (...) I left France disgusted at the system we have at home. France doesn't suit me any more. It's a life of ... 18 hours a day. I was tired. No more desire to live in France. (...) My adoptive father had a café-restaurant in France. And at the time, 40 years ago, that was something. But today, someone who has a little café/restaurant in France, he's oualou, he's nothing. In France, this gulf has opened up between the rich and the poor, and it's so big. I had a few savings in France. There's no big secret: I had 80,000 euros in savings, that's capital I'd inherited, and I realised that if I continued to stay like that, I'd eat up all my capital without doing anything else. Without being able to do something in France.”⁷⁴

The new migration to another African country by a French woman who had lived for 22 years in Ivory Coast and then returned to France in 2002 at the age of 51 was determined, firstly, by the need to survive. From what she says, it was just another logical step in her life. Added to which, this personal motivation also had a philosophical component linked to the mid-fifties crisis and the search for a better lifestyle. Moreover, being a single woman, her migration to Morocco was certainly part of a new departure strategy, but for a definite period:

“The deciding factor for me was that I had no prospects in France. (...) I was coming from the Ivory Coast, due to events, and I found myself in France in 2002, and I couldn't see myself staying in France in any case. I was 51. I still have a few good years ahead of me, I hope, and I needed to eat just like everyone else, so I had to work. (...) Yes, the deciding factor was that I had to earn a living. And then, I was free. My son is grown up, so he doesn't need me anymore.”⁷⁵

4.2.3.3 Migration leads to migration..., or the construction of a small family network

For other European immigrants who have come to settle in Fes, the decision to leave was not explained by economic considerations, nor by Europe's economic problems, nor by problems to do with the “mid-life crisis”. This was the case for one Belgian man who suddenly decided to drop his professional activities to come and settle for good in the Medina in Fes, following one of his daughters. She had got to know a *Fassi* whom she had met on a tourist visit to Fes, within the circle of friends of a Belgian friend working at the French Consulate in the same city, and whom she had married. Following that marriage, the daughter left her job in Belgium for good to come and live with her husband – and friend – and settle in Fes. The father's immigration to join his daughter is part of the construction of a little family network and appears, from the following account, to be the logical follow-on from another migratory experience.

“I've been here for ten years, and the only reason, the fundamental reason why I came here to Fes, is that one of my daughters has married a Moroccan man, a

⁷⁴ Interview 4

⁷⁵ Interview 6

*Moroccan doctor, who was living in Ville-Nouvelle, and now lives in a Riad just next door. So, she's Belgian, of course, because she's my daughter; he's Moroccan. My wife and I – my wife of that time and I are divorced, and I've remarried a Moroccan woman now – want to be here nearby, not to interfere in her private life, but simply to be there to talk to if, if she should ever need someone, alongside her. (...) We bought this house, just to live here, that's all. We didn't have any inclination to do any kind of economic work, nothing like that. So the real decision that brought us here was to be able to talk to our daughter. At the start, we didn't choose Fes, we chose our daughter (...) who had a good job in Belgium and then left Belgium for good to stay permanently here, and didn't want to go back to Belgium despite what we'll call the 'difficulties of living as a couple'.*⁷⁶

4.3 Choice and mental images of Fes

Whatever the motivations which have driven these western residents to leave their countries and settle here in Morocco, the question of the choice of Fes still needs to be answered. Here, too, the diversity of routes and trajectories reveals a multitude of motivations. In order to pin them down, we can look at the content of their interviews in an attempt to decode the mental images that western residents have formed of Fes, and particularly its medina. The aim is to understand the significance of Fes to these foreign migrants, the meaning it has for them, and the place it holds for them within the network of Moroccan cities. Decoding these mental images which they have constructed of Fes seems relevant. It gives a clearer understanding of the thinking and the range of reasons which have underpinned the choice of that city. Judging by the answers from the foreigners we interviewed, when asked: "Why choose Fes? And what does this city represent for you?", the city evokes a range of mental images and meanings.

4.3.1 Fes: an impromptu choice

For a number of people within our corpus of interviews, Fes called to them simply *by chance*. In fact, there are many of the interviewed people who have come to Fes as tourists, or for other reasons (study, professional meetings) and after their stay have decided to settle there and establish a tourist business. When the mobility of these foreigners was conceived, it did not involve Fes, but rather the Mediterranean area or another country in the Arab world. It was only after visiting Fes for one reason or another that this city emerged as a place to stay and invest.

The choice of Fes by chance was guided by received mental images which had been interiorised and re-used by these foreigners. In these images, "the history and authenticity of Fes, the beauty of the place, its majestic Riads, its magic, its mystery, its urban way of life, its treasures hidden behind the walls, its geographical position, the opportunities" it offers, the dynamism of its tourism sector, the peace it inspires... these are the cornerstone. This is far from being an exhaustive list of the meanings that Fes holds for these foreigners.

4.3.2 Fes: investment opportunities

In the eyes of a number of foreigners, the choice of Fes was determined by the opportunities offered by that city in terms of investment in tourism. Those opportunities boil down to the

⁷⁶ Interview 10

geographical position of the city close to Europe, the dynamism within its tourism sector, the richness of its craft industry, the possibility of buying a beautiful home at a reasonable price and, consequently, an “affordable” investment cost, clearly lower than in other Moroccan cities such as Marrakech. These advantages of Fes combine with the convenience of its airport with its low-cost flights linking it to a number of European cities at affordable fares, which makes travelling easy for these new investors and their clients.

4.3.3 Fes: UNESCO heritage

Quite apart from the economic advantage of Fes which is highlighted by these foreigners to explain their choice, another element has also been put forward to justify their decision to invest in that city and settle there: the heritage-based dimension of Fes, as a *site preserved by UNESCO*, to quote from a number of them.

This heritage-based quality is omnipresent in the words of the people who were interviewed, and people frequently go from identifying “Fes, spiritual or religious city” to “Fes, UNESCO heritage site”. Indeed, a large proportion of our sample, when interviewed, say that one of the reasons which drove them to choose the Medina in Fes to settle and to invest is the mediaeval aspect of its urban fabric, the uniqueness of its architecture and the splendour of its *Riads*. This is an attitude which confirms the potency of the image of Fes portrayed by the media.

On this subject, it is worth pausing to look at the semantic slippage of this term. The large-scale move for foreigners to buy old residences in the medina presented as a “rush for the *riads*” has been accompanied by a watering-down of the meaning of the word “*riad*”, which is now used to describe all houses in the medina. Initially, *riad* meant a form of house with an interior garden, which was often adjacent to the house or sometimes in the inner court. The existence of the *riad* in Morocco dates back at least to the 12th century. Its form is reminiscent of that of a house with a patio and, “the *riad* is a high-walled enclosed garden; rectangular, with two accommodation blocks at each end, facing one another. Taking the form of a *Dar* whose courtyard has been stretched to make room for light, trees and flowers, with just the two sides remaining, it is simply an expression of the need for space. It is rather like a house expanding into a sigh” (Gallotti, 1926, p. 12).

According to A. Touri,

“The term Riad masks a somewhat complex reality in Morocco. The most direct and broadest definition is that which talks of a garden contained between walls which enclose the parts of the building intended primarily for occasional use for pleasure and generally located on both of its shorter sides. This definition has greater weight when the planted area is divided into plots, generally of equal size, by elevated paths, intersecting at right angles. From this, the meaning has widened to apply even to houses where the very presence of a garden – provided that this is large enough (generally approaching a third of the total area), and organised in line with the layout described above – is enough to justify their description as a Riad.” (Touri, 1987, quoted by El Ouarzazi, 1999).

However, it appears that in Fes the word “*riad*” is not used to refer to a whole dwelling, and the word *riad* is defined as “an enclosed internal garden”.

It would therefore appear that, by virtue of this foreign demand, we have seen a vulgarisation of the term “*riad*”, which was until just recently restricted and directly linked to its residential,

medina-based context. Indeed, it now seems that *riad* – if one is to judge by the front pages of certain newspapers, magazines, periodicals and books, along with television programmes, tourist advertising and brochures – has become the word used to sell a dream and a certain degree of orientalism and exoticism. Becoming commercialised in the context of an influx of foreigners into the traditional homes in the medina, the word *riad* has now become a fashion word, expressing an outward show of wealth. In the imaginations of western tourists, the *riad* evokes the idea of an eastern way of life which harks back to the world of the *Thousand and one Nights*. It surprises / intrigues / excites curiosity / stimulates enchantment (Saigh Boustia, 2004, p.159). Finally, this semantic slippage can also be found among Moroccans too, especially those who do not live in the medina, for whom a traditional house has become a *riad*, the term tending to mean “the foreigner’s house”.

4.3.4 Fes: authenticity inspiring peace

This heritage-based dimension to the medina in Fes combines with the authentic character of its urban landscape, the way of life of its population, their culture and traditions, and the “beauty and harmony of the place”. In the eyes of these foreigners, this attraction of heritage, culture and spirituality makes Fes a “place to live which inspires peace, tranquillity and refreshment”. As a result, it means that many visitors can be attracted to keep the city’s economy alive, particularly the small and medium-sized tourist enterprises.

This is one of the unique features of Fes, which has also enabled these foreigners to gain a territorial and emotional foothold in the city. We shall return to this later.

4.3.5 Fes: the mysterious

While the choice to leave the country of origin and settle elsewhere has been justified, as we have seen earlier, by a multiplicity of personal reasons – which hinge around one shared aspiration, to live a new life elsewhere – the realisation of that desire in the city of Fes was guided by other mental images of the medina, which were constructed by these resident tourists – after the event, in the majority of cases – after they had been won over by its “charm” and “magic”. There is a “magnetic attraction” which this city seems to have exerted on them during a tourist visit, while reading, or while watching a documentary. According to the majority of these foreigners, the medina seems to transport them to another world. It is referred to as a place of magic, myth, spirituality, *joie de vivre* and ongoing fascination. This is one fact that unites almost all of the foreign migrants, and which largely explains their decision to invest and settle here in Fes – over the long term for the majority.

4.3.6 Fes: two lifestyles

Beyond its international reputation which is linked to its labelling as world heritage and its strong cultural image, the medina in Fes also arouses a series of images and ideas in the minds of foreigners who settle there. Interviews with new residents reveal that the choice to settle there was made in response to a search for a change of scene and a new lifestyle in a place which encourages a traditional lifestyle, unlike living in the new city. So one idea which is frequently encountered among the interview subjects is that of finding elements of an older way of life within the medina, where old values have been carefully preserved, where the stress-free lifestyle dominates, where they are close to cultural sites, shops and markets. These images hark back to the urban structure of Fes, which is characterised by the territorial dichotomy between the medina and the new city. This spatial reality seems to be present in the social mind-sets of western migrants. Having neither the same history nor the same

function, these two cities do not have the same symbolism as far as these foreigners are concerned.

4.3.7 Fes: the kindness of the locals and the image projected by the city

For some foreigners, apart from the various motivations already mentioned, the welcome and friendship extended by the residents of Fes, but also the perception of the urban society, the living environment and the atmosphere which come from the old city, seem to have played an essential part in the attraction of the city for these new residents. Human and neighbourly relations have broadly been referred to by these new residents in the medina as a characteristic aspect of life in the old urban fabric, with its human warmth which has been lost in the West.

4.3.8 Eight similar accounts

One of the aims of our research was to analyse the relations between immigrant populations in Fes and the local residents, so we have been keen to flesh out the mental image that the city's people have of these Westerners. To illustrate these mental images and ideas more completely, we would like to offer eight personal accounts as a reference base, which seem representative of the general views gathered during the qualitative survey. These accounts are arranged in the chronological order in which these foreigners settled. We have chosen this methodological approach to prove the similarity of the kinds of choices made and mental images constructed, in spite of differences of age, nationality, gender, date and reason for settling.

4.3.8.1 1996: The American pioneer who came as a tourist

The first account is from the pioneer of western residents in Fes: an American. He was the first foreigner to stay in Fes. It was in January 1996, and he was 47 years old. It was his second stay in an Arab country, having lived for five years in Egypt, where he was an English teacher at the American Cultural Center in Alexandria and at the American University in Cairo, before becoming director of a UNESCO programme for refugees from Sub-Saharan Africa in Cairo. This is how he describes his first contact with the city:

“In 1995, just by chance, I came to Fes on a tourist trip, in summer. In Fes, it was love at first sight. I’ve never seen a city like Fes. I was in Cairo at the time; I’ve visited Jordan, Syria, Alep, but the Medina in Fes is more beautiful. And so I decided to stay here. I don’t know why. But I fell in love with Fes. I quickly came to love the place and its people. I was also passionate about the architecture and the traditional art. So I went to the American Center here in Fes to find a job. (...) The Medina in Fes is an Islamic city. Compared with Cairo, Fes is a living medina. It’s better here than in Cairo, particularly in terms of the traditional houses, the traditional architecture, the craft industry. The first day I was in Fes, I found that it was like Roman towns like Pompeii. There’s the same geometry, the same architecture, and virtually the same materials. In addition, what I liked in Morocco was the law which allows foreigners to buy a house in the Medina. In Egypt, five years ago, foreigners were banned from buying a house. Today, it’s possible. What’s more, in Fes it feels much safer than in Cairo. In Cairo, it’s dangerous to live in Khan Khalil.”⁷⁷

⁷⁷ Interview 18

4.3.8.2 2005: The German woman who came on an Arabic course

The second account is from a German woman, who has owned a guesthouse since 2005:

“The first time I came to Fes was in September 2005, and the aim was to learn Arabic. (...) I didn’t know Fes. But in 2005 it was the year when the BBC had made a documentary about Fes. (...) And then, in 2005, there was a very special atmosphere here in Fes. We were in the cafés, and all the foreigners wanted to buy a place in Fes. So it was very difficult not to be aware of what was happening. I was excited at what was happening here. (...) I was astonished by what you could find hidden away within the walls, the jewels, the riches. The first thing was this attraction of Fes. The second thing, of course, was the beauty of the houses. When you go into an old house, and there’s still the sculpted Guebs (plaster), the wood, the Zillij and all those things, you cannot fail to be impressed. And at some point I said to myself: “instead of learning the vocabulary, I’m going to look around for a house to buy.” And even when I had returned to Zurich in Switzerland, where my work was, this magnetic attraction to Fes continued to make sense. Even though I was in Zurich, in a different world, I could feel Fes coursing through my veins. It’s spiritual really. I don’t know what happened. And it was so strong that I said to myself: ‘Why not give it a go?’ (...) I came at the end of December 2005, between Christmas and New Year, and I found a house. In fact, I never thought of buying a Riad. In my mind, I’d never considered that. That happened when I was in Fes. This Fes which had bewitched me, when Marrakech hadn’t. I’ve never liked Marrakech. It’s a city which leaves me cold. So, the choice of Fes was by chance. I think it’s the city which chose me too.”⁷⁸

4.3.8.3 2006: The Englishman who came looking for a second home

The third account is from an Englishman (55), who moved to Fes in 2006, when he converted a little traditional house into a café, in a little side-street in the medina:

“At the start, I was looking for a place which wasn’t too far from England, just a few hours’ flight away, but with a different culture from the English culture, where I could have a holiday home. On this basis, Morocco appealed to me a lot, and Fes particularly. When I started looking into buying a house, I only looked in Fes. Previously, two years earlier, I’d found out about Marrakech, but the price of a house there was too high. From a financial point of view, Fes offered the only opportunity, given my small budget. But the reasons were not financial alone. Fes is a city which has been classified by UNESCO as a heritage site, with a rich craft industry. Fes came out well in all my research. Fes is an extraordinary city. Its medina is magnificent. It’s mediaeval.”⁷⁹

4.3.8.4 2007: The Italian man who came to look into opening a café-restaurant

⁷⁸ Interview 7

⁷⁹ Interview 2

The fourth account is from an Italian man (40) who moved to Fes in 2007, where he invested in a café-restaurant in the Medina:

“First of all, I must say that I chose Morocco for its geographical situation. Very close to Europe. It’s really close to Spain. Because it was better than Brazil. And Algeria and Tunisia have gone out of fashion and are almost dangerous. So, for me, it had to be Morocco. Morocco’s a good place; super cool; opening up its airspace; which brings in the tourists, gets the country buzzing. I had the idea of buying a house in Morocco and then I found Fes. I soon ruled out Marrakech because it was over-developed and the prices weren’t attractive any more. Another thing that’s different between Fes and Marrakech is the people. In Marrakech, the people aren’t genuine enough, perhaps. They’re only interested in the tourists. Before, I didn’t even know that Fes existed. I came across Fes just by chance on the Internet. Because I was looking for houses in Essaouira and Marrakech, and I found they were too expensive. After that, I found Fes, and I said to myself: “What’s this city here?” After that, I did some research, and I found that it was good; a city full of history. In Fes there are more opportunities than in other places. And then, after that, people like the city. People like the Medina. It’s still very much alive, even if it is 1200 years old. People feel good there. Fes still has this slightly mystical side to it; religious; real. Which is also good if you want to set up a business. The houses cover a lot of ground. It’s very pretty. I love the decoration.”⁸⁰

4.3.8.5 2007: The French-English couple who came to set up a restaurant

The fifth account is from a young French-English couple who moved to Fes in 2007, where they converted a house into a restaurant:

“Why choose Fes? For economic reasons. It was an opportunity for us to open a business in the medina, which wasn’t possible in Europe, to fit our financial situation. So, the reason for setting off was economic. When we arrived in Fes, we found the Medina, which seemed magical and surprising, interesting, extravagant and different from anything we’d experienced before. A different culture. We’d looked round other cities. Marrakech is too developed. The cost of living is much higher than in Fes. Property prices are very high too. And with Fes there’s also the unique religious character which attracted us. In 2007, this was our first visit to Fes and even to Morocco. It was the first time for both of us and we didn’t know anything about Fes. It seems surprising. We’d got to know the Medina through the press or television and the idea we had of Fes before coming was that it is one of the world’s three religious centres and a mediaeval city which is part of UNESCO. (...) And so, knowing that the Medina in Fes is part of UNESCO, we said that Fes ought to be something extraordinary. (...) So that was an additional factor that made us come to Fes. The fact the Fes is a UNESCO site, and UNESCO sites bring in a lot of tourists and visitors.”⁸¹

⁸⁰ Interview 5

⁸¹ Interview 3

4.3.8.6 2007: The Frenchman who came to be with his Moroccan wife

The sixth account is from another Frenchman who moved to Fes in 2007, after marrying a Moroccan woman:

“My desire for five years had been to change my life and then, one fine morning, I made up my mind... One year earlier I’d been to Portugal to find out how it was, but Portugal didn’t grab me; it was Morocco, and Fes turned up just by chance. In 2007, it was my first time in Morocco. I came here as part of a trip that a friend of mine had organised. I’d been invited by my friend to come and spend a week in Meknes, at his brother’s house. And that’s where I met Myriam, whom I married. After the wedding I was at her uncle’s house, who lives just near here. I told him I’d had an idea about setting up a little project in Morocco, and three days later he found me this house. I didn’t know Fes. I’d simply heard people talk about Fes as the third tourist city in Morocco. I didn’t know the history at all. I’d been to Meknes, then Tangiers, I’d been to Rabat, to Mohammedia, because deep down I would have liked to be by the sea. But I love Fes. It’s Maktoub (chance). Ah! Yes! Chance decided it should be here, in Fes. Otherwise, it could have been another city. But I’m happy here. Fes, too, is a beautiful city. It’s the authenticity. It’s not like Tangiers or Rabat where cars drive in the medina.”⁸²

4.3.8.7 2007: The French couple who settled in Fes with their 3 children

The seventh case is of a French couple (42 and 45) who have chosen Fes to set up a restaurant and have moved there with their children.

“We discovered Fes through a Franco-Moroccan friend who was living in France at the time and invited us to visit his family who live here in Fes; we fell in love with Fes, the quality of life in Fes. In Fes there’s a quality of life you don’t find in Casablanca. Fes remains a city where the Fassi are still typical Moroccans, full of kindness. We received a truly extraordinary welcome. At the start, from our friend’s family, and then from all the Fassi we’ve met. The kindness shown by these people is really impressive, and you can see that it comes from the heart. So we fell in love with this lifestyle. That was a number of years ago; we’d come once a year on holiday. And then, after that, we took a definite decision two years ago to come and live here. We said: ‘This is where we must live our lives.’ We left our jobs in France and said: ‘We’re going to do what we know.’ My husband used to run a restaurant with his parents in Brittany, so we opened the same thing here. There was the economic factor too. Because Fes remains a city where you can still invest with limited capital. That was the case with us; we didn’t have a lot of money. Whereas the prices have become unaffordable in Marrakech or Casa. Even in Rabat it’s still too expensive. But Fes is still within a reasonable budget. So, for us, it was obvious: if we were going to come and live in Morocco, it would be in Fes.”⁸³

⁸²Interview 4

⁸³Interview 8

4.3.8.8 2008: The Frenchman buying a business: a Riad

The eighth account is from a Frenchman (50) who moved to Fes in 2008 after buying a fine Riad to run as a business:

“(...) Before moving to Fes, I went on a bit of a tour of Morocco, and when I came to Fes, I very soon found that this Medina was the most authentic of the lot, and I fell under its spell. So that’s what motivated my choice of the city. And then, since this was to be a business, I also needed the city to offer at least a certain potential for tourist development because, obviously, a business needs to turn over. (...) I found Marrakech wasn’t very attractive. There’s a bit of a feeling of insecurity there. (...) But Fes is a city where you can feel a craft industry, where you feel there is life, where the local residents work, the little markets and so on. (...) And I really made up my mind to settle in Fes when I came to this Riad. It’s a majestic Riad. That was the clincher.”⁸⁴

4.4 Western residents and the medina area

4.4.1 Socio-territorial dynamics caused by international migration to Fes

Being almost entirely aimed at international tourism, the investment projects developed by European and American foreign migrants settling in Fes are territorially-based and economically fruitful. Centred for the most part on guesthouse accommodation and café-restaurants, these projects operate as small enterprises which are anchored territorially due to fact that they revolve around the whole traditional economic fabric in Fes. In fact, these foreigners are not isolated. They represent a component which, although certainly not great in number, still has an undoubted determining role to play in the operations of local actors. Some of them describe themselves as “citizen, *Fassi* and in love with the Medina”, with all that means in terms of a sense of responsibility or belonging to the local community. But all the projects are seen by those running them as local development projects. They are perceived as making a contribution to job creation and, as a consequence, to the reduction of unemployment; they are presented as helping to keep the craft industries going, saving and boosting the Medina through the restoration of the traditional residences which have been bought, and bringing in tourists. The outcome of this is that projects are intended to divert significant financial resources into the local economy, not only into the historic city, where the majority of these foreigners have settled, but into the whole of Morocco’s spiritual capital. The following two first-hand accounts – the first by a Frenchman and the second by an American man – give quite a clear indication of this perception.

The Frenchman who has invested in a guesthouse says this:

“I think that all the foreigners who have bought a Riad and who turn it into a guesthouse are helping maintain the medina. On top of which, it creates jobs. I have 9 employees. It’s a little business. We’re keeping the craft industry and shops going in the Medina. In a way, we’re helping to keep the buildings in good condition because, unfortunately, not all Moroccan families have the resources to

⁸⁴ Interview 1

maintain their heritage, which explains why the Medina is in a poor state. That problem seems obvious to me. And then, I think that when you buy a Riad or a guesthouse, you're in love with the Medina to some extent. And so you try to share this love for the Medina; you're not there just to make money. We try to share this respect we have for the heritage with our guests. However, I don't know how we're viewed by the Moroccan population! All I know is that when I have foreign guests here I share this love for the Medina with them; I encourage them to explore the Medina in a way which shows respect for the local people and the heritage. So I think that I'm making a modest contribution to this work of protecting this Medina, restoring it and helping people discover it. And my staff, the majority of whom live in the Medina, are aware of that, because they themselves live in houses or Riads in the Medina and say that their families don't have the resources to maintain it. I think that helps boost the Medina and, in any case, and judging from what they say, because a lot of Fassi families have left the Medina or hope to leave the Medina, but don't have the money. And I think that the fact that foreigners see it in a positive light, that's a boost to the Medina. So, for them too, it's a way of saying: 'yes, indeed, it needs to be protected.' After that, of course, it's a question of resources. But I think that by seeing it in a positive light, that also enables Moroccans living in the medina not to be overlooked, to say: 'yes, we're here, we exist...' Now I know people, for example my accountant, or the bank manager; they are people who grew up in the Medina, but then they left to study abroad and, after returning, they have settled in the new city; but now they're saying: 'it's a shame, it's a shame.'"⁸⁵

The second account comes from the “pioneer” of the foreigners who have settled in the Medina in Fes, an American man:

“In my way of thinking, I love restoring traditional things. I've bought 5 houses in all. The idea of buying houses and renovating them, that's an investment for me. (...) One other thing: here in Fes, there's a big problem: there aren't a lot of professional experts on restoring traditional houses. And I've built up some experience in restoration. I've taken on a carpenter to do the restoration work on the houses I've bought. Today he's a huge expert because he's built up a lot of experience. And thanks to that experience, he's become highly sought-after. He's the one who restored the Mederssa Attarine. It was a contract worth 300,000 dh. So, my idea is to train up a new generation of master craftsmen. On my sites I've had a number of craftsmen and apprentices. I've trained apprentices in looking after woodwork, and after that they've gone on to work on site for other foreigners.”⁸⁶

Although a lot of this socio-territorial activity driven by these new actors in *bottom-up* local development comes under the informal sector, it has many sides to it. Its driving force has also influenced the dynamism of the housing market and the “gentrification” of the Medina.

⁸⁵ Interview 1

⁸⁶ Interview 18

4.4.2 A unique and complex property market

The purchase of old houses by foreigners in the medina in Fes fits in with the globalisation of exchanges, of practices and of people, supported by the political will of the Moroccan government to encourage foreign investment and visits by tourists. Indeed, Morocco has introduced a number of reforms to simplify and slim down administrative procedures to develop and promote investment in the country, headed by investment relating to the tourism sector.

Outline law n°18-95, which established the investment charter⁸⁷, says in Article 16, in relation to the payment of exchange regulations: “Physical or legal persons of foreign nationality, whether resident or not, along with Moroccan physical persons living abroad, making investments in Morocco financed by foreign currency, shall benefit where said investments are concerned, in respect of the exchange regulations, from a convertibility regime which guarantees them full freedom to transfer profits net of tax, without any limitation on amount or duration; the transfer of the product of the transfer or total or partial liquidation of the investment, including capital gains tax.” Other tax advantages have been introduced alongside this law, including those permitting retired Europeans who have acquired permanent resident status to enjoy an average 30% reduction in tax.

In order to meet a growing demand for traditional homes in the medina, to encourage it and to keep ahead of the trend, the property market in Fes has been significantly transformed. Property transactions, following a long-established tradition, used to take place through the *samsar*, roughly equivalent to a broker, who was an agent with a wide-ranging knowledge of the available housing stock in a district, and who plays a role as commercial intermediary and negotiator between the vendors and the buyers of property. Thus the buying or renting of homes in the medina in Fes had long been transacted through use of his services, with estate agencies being either rare or even totally absent from the scene.

With the appearance of the first buyers of houses in the medina, signs and notices started to appear, either attached to or written on the walls or doors of homes. As the demand increased, specialist agencies came into being. They were located in the medina or the new city, and specialised in the sale of traditional homes in the historic centre. They became an increasingly familiar sight in the narrow streets of the medina in Fes. New agencies appeared, but grocers and craftsmen also changed careers, seeing the profit to be made from a craze such as this for the old houses, and becoming estate agents. Barely had a foreigner set foot in one of the narrow streets of the medina in Fes than they would immediately be approached by someone speaking a host of languages, asking if they would like to buy an old house in the medina.

Specialist agencies can be identified by the various services they offer. More than being simple housing intermediaries, they have adapted to the high level of demand by developing varied and unique services to offer. As an example, take the agency which first opened its doors in 2005 in the new city, run by an art historian and interior decorator with an expertise in French *objets d'art*. It has a potential offer of 116 *Riads* and traditional homes and has sold some 110 of these to date. Much more than a simple estate agency, this company offers pre-sales and after-sales services to its clients, who are mainly foreign tourists, from purchase, to advice, and then the restoration and removal of rubble, and interior decoration. With materials being transported by donkey, the restoration work can take up to two years. “Turn-key” house

⁸⁷ Promulgated by Dahir n° 1-95-213 of 14 Joumada II 1416 (8 November 1995).

purchase solutions have been developed for foreigners, particularly through the establishment of partnerships with local notaries and *samsars*. The Internet has been used extensively to sell these homes to a wider public. But despite all of this, the *Samsar* remains a feature of the new property market landscape, due to his expertise in the area.

The purchase price of traditional houses in Fes is the result of a number of variables. The price of a *Riad* in Fes is not set according to the floor space, but according to the number of heirs. They should all receive enough money from the sale to be able to afford a new apartment in the new city. A traditional house covering 80 m² could, according to an estate agent, be worth 20,000 euros, or even 300,000 euros for the most luxurious. Other variables affect the purchase price; namely, the condition of the house, with 10% of houses in the medina in Fes being in ruins, which means they change hands for nothing, while others have a high architectural and historic value, which is reflected in the prices. The position and view also have a role to play in determining the purchase price. Accessibility and the proximity of parking places, bus stations and taxi ranks, can also result in purchase prices for homes being higher in some districts than in others.

But as we have already stressed above, apart from the fluctuations, property prices in Fes do not follow the same pattern as in Marrakech. They have risen sharply and in the space of a year, unlike in Marrakech, where this rise took longer. While property prices are extremely high, there has also been a slump. During our interviews, people told us about the cases of nine guesthouses which are to be sold due to the project's lack of profitability⁸⁸. "Fes isn't like Marrakech; there's no real tourist activity or leisure facilities backing up the desire to turn the city into a tourist destination," explains one French tourist who has recently settled in the medina. Finally, unlike Marrakech, demand from the old middle classes of Fes and their descendants for these houses which are now seen as part of their heritage has clearly had an effect of the prices which are holding up well.

*"Land values in Fes have exploded rapidly, which means that nowadays a small house covering just 50 m² is one million DH, or 100,000 euros. And if you add on another 100,000 euros for renovation work, that's 2 million dh. (...) And as for the factors behind this, I think it's a combination of small factors. Seeing what has happened in Marrakech, the people of Fes have put up their house prices. They've been riding the wave, and it's really taken off. I can remember 2004/5, when prices were doubling every 4 months. (...) You've also got a unique thing in Fes, where there are lots of Moroccans on the market buying Riads, which isn't happening in Marrakech."*⁸⁹

4.4.3 Varied forms of use

The houses bought by the foreigners represent a variety of investment methods, dictated by different intentions. Of these, there are two fundamental ones: houses for private occupation, and houses for use as bed and breakfast accommodation for commercial or cultural purposes.

⁸⁸ Information given to us by the director of the association for the safeguarding of heritage and authenticity in Fes.

⁸⁹ Interview with the Vice-Chairman of the Fes guesthouse proprietors' association. 6 May 2010.

4.4.3.1 *Traditional houses: residences for private use*

The majority of old houses bought in the medina in Fes are used for personal accommodation. However, it is worth differentiating between those serving as the main residence and those which are secondary or holiday homes. Investment in a main residence is by foreigners residing and working in Morocco. Their decision to move to Morocco has been governed by a good job opportunity for some, generally teachers, architects, guides, company managers etc., or where people have several residences in the medina, one of which is for personal use. For others, it is quite simply the desire to forge a new life for themselves. These are people who are generally quite young (30 years and older), or retired people with financial assets, who have decided to drop everything and come and settle in the medina. These also include tenants who rent, but they are a less significant proportion, generally using what is known as an *emphyteutic lease*. This is a very long-term lease, most often over 99 years⁹⁰. The property is generally rented by people who do not have the necessary means to purchase the house.

However, these houses are often secondary or holiday homes. Hence foreigners buy houses which they leave empty and only visit once or twice a year. This type of use as a second home is most common among retired or older people (50 years and older), but it may also be found among young buyers whose jobs allow them a certain degree of mobility. Or by people making investments for the future. This category of foreigners most often use their homes for commercial purposes while they are absent, renting them out to other foreign tourists who want to immerse themselves in the atmosphere of the medina.

4.4.3.2 *Traditional houses: residences for commercial and cultural use*

There is another kind of use made of the traditional houses bought by foreigners in the medina in Fes. This is to do with the conversion of these residences for the purposes of making money, adapting them for use as guesthouses, or as cafés or restaurants. They may also be used as premises for cultural institutions. This allows some of them to cover their purchase and restoration costs.

In fact, more and more residences in the medina in Fes are being used as a new form of tourist accommodation for the area, namely guesthouses⁹¹, which started to emerge in the late 1990^s.

According to statistics from the Regional Delegation for Tourism in Fes, there are currently (May 2010) 54 licensed and classified guesthouses in Fes⁹². Further guesthouses (twenty or so) have been licensed but not classified. They do not fulfil a certain number of obligations in terms of services offered to clients, safety standards or employment rights for employees, as imposed by the law on the classification of guesthouses. It should also be anticipated that there are other undeclared guesthouses in Fes which operate secretly in the sector, offering the same services. In June 2008, through the local authorities, we were able to identify some 13 undeclared guesthouses. Today, the number of such guesthouses is estimated at between 150

⁹⁰ But which may extend to 999 years in some countries, conferring on the leaseholder real rights over the leased property, with a responsibility to improve the property in exchange for a modest rent. The leaseholder is a near-owner of the leased property.

⁹¹ Under law n°61-00 concerning the status of tourist establishments, article 2: "The guesthouse is an establishment constructed in the form of an ancient residence, *riad*, palace, kasbah or villa and located either in the medina, or on tourist routes, or at sites of high value to tourism," in: Tourism law, first edition, 2004, p.135.

⁹² This figure remains very modest compared with Marrakech, where the number of foreign guesthouses was estimated at 110 ten years ago (Esher, 2000).

and 200 by the Vice President of the Association of Guesthouse Owners in Fes⁹³. Owners hire them out over the Internet or directly from their country by handing the keys over to the tenant, or by entrusting the house to a Moroccan person who, once the clients are in situ, looks after their accommodation.

Another way in which old houses in the medina in Fes are used by foreigners is through their conversion into cultural cafés and restaurants. Of the 18 people interviewed, 8 related their experiences of converting houses into cafés or restaurants. The first of these cafés is run by a young Englishman who dropped everything in London to realise his dream of opening a restaurant in Fes. His idea came from the fact that he had felt a need for a recreational facility in the medina. The café opened in 2007 in a small side street in the Tala'a Kbira district, 200 m from Bab Boujloud, a popular shopping street, and soon became a part of the medina's economic fabric. In addition to the food and drink which generally draw their inspiration from Moroccan cuisine, this café is the site of a rich and varied library; it also serves as an exhibition space, café-concert venue, also hosting yoga sessions and various other activities. Quite intentionally, it is decorated in a simple style, drawing on the special features of the local craft industry and traditions. Its owner has already started work on a second café along the same lines, with the same name and the same logo, in the hope of establishing a chain.

4.4.4 Where heritage industry meets urban renewal

The territorial impact of the process of foreigners buying up *Riads* in the medina in Fes is significant. Evidenced in the restoration of a number of ancient residences and the renovation of their neighbouring areas, this dynamic has played a key role in the process of boosting the medina as a heritage industry site. In fact, the way in which questions about the future of the medina in Fes have arisen since its inclusion in the list of "World Heritage Sites" in 1981 may, in many respects, be seen as emblematic. On the one hand, Morocco's signing of the Convention on the protection of world cultural and natural heritage, agreed in 1972 by the UNESCO General Conference, had the effect of creating a group of obligations regarding the conservation and handover to future generations of all heritage objects. Moreover, the gulf between the talk and the actions implemented by the authorities in the area of heritage has been astounding. In the initial period following independence (in the 1960^s), the Moroccan state seemed to exhibit a kind of "abandonment" of urban areas. The effects of this absence by the State (particularly in terms of planning) have been long-term: Moroccan cities have grown in an uncontrolled manner, which has, among other things, encouraged the degradation process in ancient districts, and the "proletarianisation" of their populations. It is not unusual for residences of great architectural value to collapse – often resulting in deaths – under the combined effects of damp, abandonment, lack of maintenance, overpopulation, and the over-use of existing infrastructure (water, drainage, shared access areas etc.)⁹⁴. Then, against a backdrop dominated by security concerns (the 1970^s/1980^s), the State has intervened through a process of "authoritarian" urban planning, based on principles taken from imported "modern" models. In this sense, the heritage-based preoccupations of the first Urban Development Blueprint for Fes (1976), guided by the UNESCO mission, were just empty

⁹³Interview 13. In view of our knowledge of the field, this figure seems an exaggeration.

⁹⁴This situation has suggested that the whole structure is in danger of collapse in the near future, a finding which has handed defenders of the "Haussmannisation" process in the medina a partial justification of their thinking.

words⁹⁵, while the second Urban Development Blueprint for Fes (1981) was inspired by a *Neo-Hausmannian* concept of city planning, ideology and technology, which set out a way of “re-thinking the city”, particularly the historic city, purely in terms of large-scale clearings and the relocation of craft activities. Moreover, the heritage-based focus had stirred up two opposing views, the one being conservative, the other being rather anti-backward-looking, giving rise to a row which, from the 1960^s onwards, fed into lively discussions about issues of modernity, tradition, identity, the past and the future.

Abandoned by its elite and marginalised by the authorities, the medina in Fes became, with the flows of rural migrants – the majority of them poor – an area of poverty and extreme *foundoukisation* or *oukalisation*⁹⁶ - as understood by Claude Chaline (1996) – to such an extent that one household could be found per room in a number of districts.

Within this situation, the talk about the medina in Fes, despite being called a “World Heritage Site” by an international actor (UNESCO), has become more a tale from the past than a lively debate about what is lacking at present: “Fes is no longer in Fes”, people might say; whereas classic literature, and particularly poetry, talked of “Fes and everything in Fes”⁹⁷. The city of the past *par excellence* is now something of a two-faced *Janus*: it is a “treasure”, but a lost treasure. It represents cultural and architectural heritage, blessed with its physical and symbolic attributes, but at the same time, in a kind of role-reversal, this same medina gives the impression of an urban environment perceived by the local actors from both ends of the social spectrum as unfit for habitation and poisonous. As a result of its degradation, this negative turn to the image of the medina of Fes translated into the emergence of new symbolic territories: the smart districts of the new city, which have marginalised those in the medina of Fes (Idrissi Janati, 2001b).

It was not until the mid-1990^s that a *Plan for the Rehabilitation of the Medina in Fes*⁹⁸ saw the light of day, with the assistance this time of another international actor, the World Bank⁹⁹, while the safeguarding of the medina in Fes – as heritage of local, national and universal importance – imposed itself not just as a wish but as an imperative unanimously expressed by a number of local actors, following on from a protest by the local population against plans to force a road development through the medina, resulting in a threat from UNESCO to declassify the medina if the Moroccan officials continued to modernise its structure through *Hausmannisation* (Idrissi Janati, 2000). Uniting the concepts of “Heritage” and “Tourism”, this rehabilitation plan recommended that the medina be opened up to private, national and international investment, to guarantee a certain level of profitability. Its implementation gave rise to a renewal of the urban landscape in the historic district of the city of Fes: restoration of

⁹⁵ The aim of the first Blueprint for Fes was to link the heritage issues arising from the medina within the urban development of the city as a whole. In this sense, the multidisciplinary team who prepared this SDAUF had recommended a plan for the medina aimed at improving living conditions for its residents, while preserving their heritage. In response to the UNESCO policy, this plan was brought into effect with the launch of an international campaign to save Fes, following an appeal sent out on 9 April 1980 by Mokhtar M’bo, Secretary General of UNESCO at that time.

⁹⁶ Terms defining an increased density of building within the medinas.

⁹⁷ Meaning: all the beauties of the Earth come together in Fes.

⁹⁸ The World Bank, Kingdom of Morocco, Group eight, *Plan for the rehabilitation of the Medina in Fes*, 1996.

⁹⁹ This was the first time in Morocco that this lender was to become involved in a project concerning an historic area classified as a world heritage site, following its involvement in spontaneous building development in the 1970^s and 1980^s.

historic monuments, renovation of facades, modernisation of the water supply and drainage networks, increased public lighting etc..

It was against this backdrop that the great mobility of Europeans and Americans towards Fes was to take place, driven, in particular, by the new Investment Charter (Law n° 18-95), granting tax advantages to foreigners who had acquired permanent resident status.

Underpinned by thoughts of heritage and “a love for the mysterious medina in Fes”, investment projects from the majority of these Westerners were centred on work to restore and renovate traditional houses along with their surrounding sidestreets. Through this process of “imported heritage industry” (Yerasimos, 2006 p.305), there has been a move across the population as a whole to reclaim objects which bear witness to the past as their own heritage. The notion of “Heritage” seems to have become popularised and the process of appropriating and ascribing value to any heritage object has become something of a cultural phenomenon within local society. One of the developments which sets Fes apart from the other cities, particularly Marrakech, is the fact that the medina in Fes is increasingly being occupied by *Fassis* returning to their city of birth. These people are buying back and renovating (their) ancient residences. This has, in fact, been one of the characteristic phenomena of this medina over the last five years.

As part of this same process, and in parallel with the phenomenon of guesthouses managed by foreigners, the concept of “host family accommodation” has been developed by the Regional Tourism Council in Fes, as part of spiritual and cultural tourism. This is a “first” for the country as a whole. Under the *Ziyarates Fès*¹⁰⁰ scheme, families in the Medina in Fes open up their houses to tourists, giving them a chance to experience social traditions, which until then had been difficult to access, and to extend their stay. By linking community tourism, heritage protection and human development, and working for a North-South intercultural dialogue, this innovative project, the aim of which is also to improve and diversify the range of tourism products on offer, has given host families a source of revenue which enables them to maintain their homes – some of which are masterpieces of traditional architecture – to maximise their potential, to improve their living conditions, and to stay on in the medina. Hence there has been a deconstruction and reconstruction of the image of this historic city in the eyes of the people who live there. From an area of “rurality” and “incivility” (Idrissi Janati, 2002), the medina in Fes is currently in the process of becoming a highly valuable heritage asset.

This *bottom-up* heritage industry has given the area a place in the gentrification process to which the medina in Fes has been exposed for a decade.

4.4.5 The first-fruits of a measured gentrification

One of the consequences of residential tourism by foreigners on the social and territorial landscape of the medina in Fes is its openness to gentrification from the outside, which is still faltering, but real all the same. Indeed, the sociodemographic changes brought about by these foreigners moving in is starting to create a certain amount of local contrast between districts

¹⁰⁰ This pilot project in Morocco was governed by an agreement between a number of local partners including the local authorities, the Fes Regional Tourism Council, the Social Development Agency and the Union of Associations in Fes Medina. Complete training for host families in the “tourism trade” was introduced, along with a support fund to assist families in furnishing the rooms being rented out. A *Ziyarates Fès* quality mark, with an official sign, is issued to families belonging to the network, making it possible to differentiate between “informal” family lodgings and those selected as part of the project.

inhabited by this new population, which is generally foreign and of higher social status, and the others.

The socio-spatial configuration of the districts which have been caught up in the phenomenon of guesthouses and café-restaurants has been changed following the departure of the *Fassi* and the purchase of their homes by foreigners. These are the districts which are distinguished by their architecture, their history and their geographical location close to the gates of the Medina: Ziat, Batha, Douh, Talla Kbir, Talla Sghira and Arssat Lamdelssi, in particular. The choice of location has led to a reclassification – visible, albeit partial – of these districts relative to those less popular with incomers (East, Southeast, Northeast of the medina).

This change has also affected social life in these districts. The partial upheaval of their population matches a change in the social practices of the incomers. In fact, while the local population tends to live its life in the district's social spaces (sidestreets, ovens, steam baths, mosques, standpipes etc.), the lives that the foreigners tend to lead are split between their own private spaces and places outside of their district of residence. They spend their daily lives almost exclusively in their homes, and their relationships with neighbours are kept very narrow. We shall return to this later.

Besides, in contrast to what has happened in Marrakech – where the medina seems to have become a fragmented space (Kurzac-Souali, 2009) – this new dynamic, introduced from elsewhere, has not had a major effect either within local society or in the historic city of Fes.

In fact, while the process of exogenous gentrification has been substantial in Marrakech (Kurzac-Souali, 2006 and 2009), it is far from being identical to that in the medina in Fes. The latter still resembles a place of traditional city living, an area of *fassi* urban life, despite the city's growing tourist credentials. Under the current state of affairs, the foreign presence and its cohabitation with the local population does not seem to pose a problem where identity is concerned.

4.4.6 Dynamism within craft activities

The process of bottom-up local development supported by the foreigners settling in the medina in Fes has initially been evident in the dynamism of the craft activities sector. Indeed, the use of the craftsmen's knowledge by these foreigners, particularly for restoration work, has been the driving force behind the renaissance in a number of craft activities. Over the course of the last decade, it has allowed an accumulation of considerable know-how in restoration work and, as a result, the training and reproduction at the local level of a new category of master craftsmen, the majority of whom are young, and some of whom have become small-scale developers in the restoration field¹⁰¹. In this regard, activities such as wood-carving and plaster sculpture, brassware, pottery, ceramics, traditional weaving, copper and leather working etc. are increasingly popular. They are the focus of creativity and innovation, particularly in terms of products. The market for the consumption of these products has grown, driven in large measure by tourism. The effect of this, even over recent years, has been the “industrialisation of crafts” in the Medina in Fes, widely described by a number of researchers (cf. Guerraoui D., & Fejjal A., 1988 pp. 6-8). At the heart of the system

¹⁰¹ Cf extract from interview 18

of production on which the whole economic life of the medina of Fes is based, these craft activities, through their dynamism, are increasingly contributing to the creation of wealth and jobs and to the socioeconomic rise of the conurbation as a whole.

4.4.7 Opening up local opportunities

The investment projects set up by foreigners settling in Fes have also involved a process of using the local labour potential. The following accounts give us an idea of the extent of this process and the effects it has brought about.

“As for the added value of my project for the population, that’s obvious. I have five employees, so I give them work, money, security and all that sort of thing. (...) I have three cleaning ladies and an assistant manager. Two of the three cleaners are married, the third is divorced. We’re like a family. The three women have been with me for five years now, and the assistant manager for a year and a half, and I think they’re happy here. They get a good wage. And then there’s the tips; each month there’s about a thousand dirhams of tips each. That’s on top of the CNSS¹⁰². For example, the divorcee is 25, and her daughter is 5 or 6 years old; she earns a lot more money here and pays for her daughter’s private school. The manager is saving his money for a future project. He has a small plot of land, and he wants to do something all his own; it’s good. I encourage my employees to seize every opportunity, because I know full well I won’t be staying here for long, and after I’ve gone they’ll need something to keep their lives going.” This was said to us by an American woman living in Fes since 2002¹⁰³.

Her words are echoed in those of a Belgian man who has owned a guesthouse since 2001:

“There are a number of aims behind my project. One is to contribute to the country’s economy by creating jobs. I’ve been using my son-in-law’s house, the Riad next door to here, as well as this one for quite some time. And we have 23 people working in the house. I’m proud of that, for me it’s a sort of pride, I can’t hide it, the fact that I’ve secured 23 jobs for 23 people who were out of work. (...) By that, for example, I’m saying that I’m not the one who runs the house, I don’t run the house. I’m its owner, I oversee everything and everybody, but I allow each of them to exercise a lot of autonomy in their work. I think each one of them has the right to be proud, to be responsible for their own work, to accomplish it.”¹⁰⁴

4.4.8 Boundaries of sociability: migrants with low mobility in the city

In what ways do foreign migrants explore the city and make their presence felt in the host territory of Fes? What are the patterns of their daily movements and leisure activities? Which areas show signs of this mobility and the social exchanges arising from it? In other words, has the migration of foreigners to Fes produced new areas of social life there?

¹⁰² Social security fund.

¹⁰³ Interview 15

¹⁰⁴ Interview 10

Reading the views expressed by the people we interviewed, it emerges that the urban daily life of the majority of these migrants is characterised by a certain monotony. Their territoriality is chiefly centred on their activity: the running of a guesthouse or restaurant, for the majority of them. They have “very little time to rest” or “time off”. So the daily activities of some of them do not seem to be structured by the usual time markers: work time, free time, meal times, sleep time. It is in the Riad or restaurant that they spend the entirety of the day, being there twenty-four hours a day.

Hence the visibility of these migrants within the social life of the city of Fes is not a dominant factor. Their daily movements consist basically of going shopping, and the public places they visit show little variety.

The spatial range of the movements of some foreigners around the city is limited to the geographical proximity of the medina. It works on the territorial basis of the district of residence. As a result, the possibility for this category of migrants of developing routes around the new city, of increasing the number of places they frequent, of broadening their places of reference outside of everyday life, and of creating new networks of acquaintances is insignificant. This is a territoriality model in which the city where one lives is reduced down to the district of residence. This is the case with a Frenchman (64, unmarried) who has owned a guesthouse in the medina since 2007. When asked: “Which places do you frequent in Fes?” he replied:

“I don’t go to the new city. I’m always in the medina. Everything you need is here. I go into the new city when I have to go to the Wilaya offices, for official paperwork. I don’t go there every day; just two or three times a month. Because here, in the medina, you’ve got everything you need. In the medina, I often go to Bab Boujloud, because there are people and sunshine. That’s where I do my shopping; that’s where my bank is. Sometimes I go across the medina, but otherwise Bab Boujloud is my district; Bab Boujloud has everything.”¹⁰⁵

For other migrants, the spatial range of their mobility in the city is relatively split between the two “cities” of Fes: the old city, the medina, and the new city – the former European city. However, the places frequented by this category of migrants are almost identical. In the medina, it is the souks. This is a particularly commercial attraction. In the new city, it is the central market, around which the modern centre of Fes has crystallised, with its wide boulevards (Mohammed V and Hassan II) and the big supermarkets: Marjane, Métro and Acima. These are, in fact, the places most frequented by virtually the entire sample we interviewed. For some, journeys to the areas of the modern centre – with its luxury shops, light, shop windows etc. – are also made for the purposes of diversion and to escape a certain social *habitus* which is specific to the medina. The places visited in the centre are, in particular, certain cafés and restaurants. Beyond these places – with the exception of the restaurant at a Tennis Club, located on the outskirts, whose owner is the former French tennis player Henri Leconte, which is a hot-spot for meeting others for the majority of people interviewed – no place seems to have any importance in these foreigners’ spatial concerns. The city, as seen by these foreigners, is therefore a discontinuous city, characterised by a scattering of the places they frequent, beyond which nothing seems to exist.

¹⁰⁵ Interview 9

Thus, in answer to the question: “Where do you spend your daily life in Fes?”, a Frenchman who owns a guesthouse replied:

“My daily life is essentially the Riad, basically. And then, after that, there are the places where I go regularly. For example, every day I go to the central market in the new city to do my shopping for the Riad, every morning. I use the central market because it’s convenient: I call them and say “I need this and that.” The Boy gets it ready; I turn up, collect the boxes and it’s all done. So it’s quick. And then, that also gives me a chance to get out, go for a little walk, have a coffee, buy the paper, or have a little sandwich somewhere. It’s a little outing for me. Then I have my accountant who’s in the new city. The insurance company’s in the new city too. So I tend to combine the need to go shopping with my administrative tasks. Then, there are places to meet people, like the restaurant which is just next door, which is (...) run by a French woman. And then you often get invitations to see someone or other. Because life is very much focussed inwards on the Riad. Because you have to welcome the tourists, and that’s what’s special about guesthouses. (...) So it’s an activity which needs you to be available a lot of the time. There are people who arrive in the morning; others arrive in the afternoon; others arrive in the evening. You can be working at any time.”¹⁰⁶

These words are echoed by a French woman:

“I go into the new city. There’s a restaurant which supplies us with some very good stuff. (...) I also go sometimes to eat in a fish restaurant. But all these things I’m talking about are very rare. I have a German friend, and I go with her to the cultural centre, which puts on events. You know, that’s about all really, for my outings. When it comes to the shopping, it’s Aisha (an employee) who takes care of that. And I go to the supermarkets: Marjane, Métro and occasionally Acima. But my life’s very unusual. It’s a life without much room for anything else. It’s not an unhappy life, but it’s a life that revolves around work. You know, when you’re caught up in this kind of job, it doesn’t leave you much time to do anything else.”¹⁰⁷

While it allows them to meet tourists from all over the world on a daily basis, this type of profession can, at the same time, be a distraction for some. This is something which emerges from an account from a Belgian man (64), living in Fes since 2002 and owner of a guesthouse:

“Myself, I live here a lot in my guesthouse. We work really hard here, bringing in the tourists. It’s here in the Riad that everything happens; I’m here virtually non-stop. I leave the Riad to go home with my wife to sleep; she works with me here in the Riad. We have very little time to rest or time off. Our work is really our whole life. And at the same time, it’s a constant pleasure, because I have daily encounters with people from all over the world.”¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁶ Interview 1

¹⁰⁷ Interview 6

¹⁰⁸ Interview 10

For some migrants, walking from their home, in the Medina, to the places they frequent in the new city has a major significance. Structuring the majority of their journeys, this way of getting about and taking shortcuts is seen as *courageous*. It leads as a consequence to a certain familiarity with the places crossed. This is the case with one Frenchman (52) who has been living in the medina since December 2008, where he bought a little house, the ground floor and first floor of which have been converted into a café-restaurant, and the second floor into private accommodation:

“I go out with my wife (a Moroccan woman), and we like going up to the new city. We have dinner in a little restaurant when the mood takes us; we go for a walk in the new city; it makes a change from the medina. We often go (on foot) to Batha. If you’re not brave you take a taxi; if you’re brave you go into the new city on foot. You go through the Jewish quarter (a working-class district). You buy one or two things. You take it easy, you don’t get worked up. Then you come back here on foot. On the way back you also go through Fès Jdid (the Jewish quarter) at 11 o’clock or 12 o’clock at night, without any trouble. We’ve never had any problems with anyone. No-one’s ever spoken to us. So, you walk home without any problems. That proves how safe Fes is.”¹⁰⁹

Jogging and going for walks in the open spaces located on the edge of the built-up area are part of the ways that certain migrants, particularly the younger ones who do not live in the medina, move about and explore the city. This is a very popular activity in spring and summer. Aïn Chekaf forest (in the southeast of Fes) is the most attractive location for this kind of activity. This is true of a French woman (aged 39) living in Fes since 2007, where she lives in a district of the new city. Her house also serves as the head office of the Moroccan “solidarity” tourism intermediation company, which she runs. She said:

“I need to go for a walk every day in the forest, in nature. Every day, when I get up, that’s the time to take a walk in the countryside, in Aïn Chekaf. There are no cars, nothing. I can walk for two hours and there’s not a single house, no buildings, nothing. I’m the only Westerner who comes here to walk her dogs in the morning. And it’s great. After that, I’m often in the new city, because that’s where I live and work. Because the majority of my friends are in the new city. As for the medina, that’s the professional side of things. All the families I work with are in the medina. I visit the medina too for my shopping, because I love the souks. After walking, I either start work in the house, or I go down to the medina, or I go out of Fes. So my day is shaped by my work.”¹¹⁰

4.5 Western residents in Fes: north-south immigrants?

For various reasons set out at the start of this work, we have decided to look at these new residents in Fes not as tourists, but as real immigrants. It remains therefore for us to decipher

¹⁰⁹ Interview 4

¹¹⁰ Interview 12

this situation and grasp the perception among these Westerners who have settled in Fes of their situation and plans. While the term “migrant” is infrequently used, it is evident from the interviews that the way in which these new residents live in Fes harks back to various characteristics which are often seen among migrants living in a host society. From our analysis, it appears that the migratory situation of these Westerners seems to have more than one meaning for them.

How do foreigners in Fes see their migration? What social concept of themselves and others have they constructed out of their migratory situation? How can we describe the ways in which they fit culturally into the host area? And what is their migratory perspective?

When answering these four interrelated key questions, it is important to note from the interviewees’ accounts their use of the words “migrant” or “foreigner”, and also “traveller, citizen of the world, cosmopolitan” or “mixed”. Moreover, these terms cover a multitude of realities. The boundaries of meaning between each of these terms will, in fact, change from one person to another. In fact, when these foreigners speak, these terms will refer either to a varied migratory experience, in which settling in Morocco is just one stage in a migratory journey which is far from complete, or to a permanent move evidencing a break with the past. On the other hand, as an expression of a symbolic social division, these ways of stating oneself to be in a migratory situation are, most often, combined with other terminologies which have been used in a deeper way, which hark back to images which have been constructed by these foreigners of their own and other people’s identities out of their migratory situation.

This question of identity has been posed at the same time as that of integration into the host society. This is a question which has emerged during interviews as one of the most sensitive subjects for the majority of people interviewed and which is even considered, among some of them, to be a determining factor in their migratory perspective.

Looking at the interpretations formulated by these interviewees in answer to these four questions helps us to gain a greater understanding of the reality of this phenomenon of foreign migration in Fes. Although each of these foreigners has a different migratory life story, we have all the same endeavoured to group them into analytical categories. The methodological objective is to construct a set of examples which will make it possible to draw broader conclusions. These categories can be presented as follows:

4.5.1 Cosmopolitan travellers..., or “New World Nomads”

To the minds of some interviewees, settling in Morocco is seen as a purely enriching journey. Through the fact of having travelled a great deal, these people describe themselves in terms of their capacity to fit in here or elsewhere. In fact, the experience of travel is, to their eyes, a resource which enables them to develop relationship networks anywhere in the world, without any difficulty or “fear”. This idea is particularly developed among the new generation of foreigners in Fes, aged between 35 and 40, and mostly comprising Anglo-Saxons, Italians, Germans and French people from outside of France. In some cases, these may be the descendants of cosmopolitan families, with an individual migratory trajectory which most often fits into that of their family. Unlike the generation of retired people, of whom the majority are French nationals who have settled in Morocco for good, this new generation has simply migrated to Morocco for a set period of time. In this case, the host territory – in this case, Fes – does not feature as a lasting place to stay, but simply as a stopping-off point on the

way to a new destination, most usually on the international scale. In fact, the accounts given by this category of migrants reveal cases of mobility which these days seems to symbolise a new variant of the international migratory phenomenon, which some sociologists see as the heart of contemporary modernity. These are people with an immense desire to migrate constantly, without becoming fixed anywhere, and who, in the words of Alberto Melucci (1989), become “nomads of the present time”. As a result of this, these young nomads resist becoming absorbed by the culture of the host society. They remain attached through family links to their country of origin and its distinctive cultural, linguistic and religious character. Apart from travel, digital technologies, the Internet and the telephone emerge as playing a significant role in maintaining these relationships. In fact, this is an attachment to the difference of their culture of origin which, moreover, does not rule out a certain partial assimilation of the culture of the host society.

In addition, the particular meaning ascribed by this new generation to their migratory situation in Fes governs the images they construct of their identities and those of the others – the *Fassi*, in this case. Thus the ways in which these migrants describe their social identity reproduce the traditional way of identifying oneself and others in Fes, whereby *Fassi* refers to a specific category with a strict genealogical criterion, namely belonging to a paternal line originating in this city from its foundation in the latter years of the 8th century. As part of this system, these migrants have consequently invented other descriptive expressions to refer to their migratory situation, such as: “*Adopted Fassi*” or “*New Fassi*”. These particular concepts seem to have been nurtured by ideas of identity and ways of labelling oneself and others, which can be found in the minds and speech of the residents of Fes, expressing symbolic divisions in society.

The question of local identity in Fes brings into play a number of deeply original historical, social, cultural and political realities (Idrissi Janati, 2002). Although the population of Fes was originally Amazigh, Arab families have over time become the majority. Coming to Fes between the 8th and 17th centuries from Kairouan, Tlemcen, and cities of Andalusia, these families brought with them their craft techniques, ways of life, moral systems, arts, skills, urban institutions and, in short, all their experience of city life, “of which the Berbers,” says Roger Le Tourneau (1949), “had only a partial idea.”¹¹¹ Constituting a *de facto* intellectual, artistic and commercial elite, these Arabs rapidly transformed Fes into a city with a strongly urbanised way of life. This image of a perfectly “civilised” city, as depicted by historian Ibn Khaldoun in his *Discourse on Universal History (Al-Moqaddima)*¹¹², was largely enriched by the arrival of the Jews, particularly those being chased out of Spain in the 16th century, and then by the establishment of direct contact, from the mid-19th century, between *Fassi* traders and Europe, most notably England. During the centuries of city life, the frequent unions between these different elements – distanced from their origins, the majority of whom

¹¹¹This rift between the Arab city dwellers and the Amazighs may be explained by the fact that Islamisation of the Maghreb, as has been stressed by certain historians, was accompanied by the birth and development, particularly along the major caravan trade routes, of a considerable number of towns and cities, including Fes. The close link between Islam and trade has enabled an expansion of the economies of these towns and cities, which has created a socio-economic rift between the towns and the countryside, where the production techniques and capabilities have developed very slowly. On this point, see, among other works, Ali Oumlil: “Ibn Khaldoun and the urban society”, in Abdelwahad Bouhdiba and Dominique Chevallier (under the direction of), 1982: *La Ville Arabe dans l’Islam*. CERES-Tunis, CNRS-Paris, pp. 39-44.

¹¹²The City, according to Ibn Khaldoun, is firstly seen as the end-point of a natural evolution in human society, moving from subsistence production at its most elementary level to complementary production and, finally to production of the superfluous, at which stage civilisation (*al-hadâra*) appears, the opposite of which is *al-badawa* (rural life).

ultimately came to establish a family line in Fes – were the models, in the eyes of some writers, of the typical *Fassi*.

Describing the *Fassi* character, Roger Le Tourneau, who lived in Fes from 1930 to 1941, writes:

“The personality of the Fassi appears very strong. [...] The Arab has brought his nobility, the Andalusian his refinement, the Kairouanais his dexterity, the Jew his acumen, the Berber his tenacity; this alloy of aptitudes has been supplemented by an unwritten, but precious, social rule: the Ka’ida (rule, model). [...] To live peaceably together, these men [...] have made a huge effort at establishing a moral code and have managed to create a way of life which is very much their own: rich, nuanced, applicable to all activities in life from the way in which one eats and receives guests to the highest intellectual relations. Such an effort is called civilisation: one should recognise that it is very advanced, and not lacking in refinement. It is natural that city-dwellers who have achieved a certain degree of civilisation should be proud of themselves. The Fassi are no exception to this rule: they will happily stress their glorious past, their excellence of their urban organisation, the skill of their craftsmen, the perfection of their culture. [...] Compared with the rural populations who surrounded them and the other cities in Morocco, Fes then had an undeniable superiority in all respects. [...] The feeling of superiority felt by the Fassis was perfectly justified.”¹¹³

At the time of the Marinids (1258-1465) – along with support for the return of the official rite of the Idrissids, or *Malikism*¹¹⁴, which had been marginalised and fought by the Almohads (Amazigh dynasty of 1147-1269) – the Arabs, along with the so-called *Shurafa’* or *Al-Ashraf* lines (descendants of the Prophet), were to benefit once more from preferential treatment. Not having the same religious foundations as their predecessors, having imposed themselves without the assistance of an independent ideology or having sought legitimisation of their regime, these new Sultans of Fes (the Marinids) encouraged *cherifism* (holiness, based around *Sufism*, mysticism), just as they reinvigorated the Arab component of *Fassi* identity. Through this ideological strategy (Kably, 1986), the Marinids gratified the *Shurafa’* with respect and honour¹¹⁵. This privileged position reserved for the *Shurafa’* by the Marinids was to persist, with dynasties such as the Saadis and then the Alaouites (1660 to present) claiming to be Arab descendants of the Prophet. This historical division of Fes society according to ethnic-tribal origin between the *Fassis*, particularly the *Shurafa’* and the non-*Fassis*, left a particular mark on this city. The former established legal protection for their rights in the city, introducing strict genealogical checks (Cigar, 1979). Thus, although other terms to express identity have appeared within the urban population of Fes – bearing witness to an ongoing reworking of identity labels, particularly with the process of pauperisation and the rise of the Islamists – the word *Fassi* still functions in the genealogical sense, expressing an identity category with strict boundaries, by virtue of which no process of absorption of outsiders into the historically constituted “*Fassi* community” will succeed. This system of social conceptions of oneself and others, which often pits “the law of the city” against rural migrants, leads to deep-rooted

¹¹³ Roger Le Tourneau, 1949, pp. 205-206.

¹¹⁴ Instigated by Malik Ibn Ana, Imam of the Medina, Malikism is one of the four rites (*madahib*, plural of *madhab*) in Islam.

¹¹⁵ It is important to point out that the written history of the Idrissids was largely a Marinid construction. In fact the earliest texts used as the original sources for the history of Fes only date back to the Marinid era.

rivalries. Through an inversion of values, it gives rise to a position under which the word *Fassi* becomes a metaphorical description with strong connotations.

It is in fact on the basis of this idea of permanence in identity – as explored by Martine Abdallah-Preteceille (1984) – that this new generation of foreign migrants in Fes has forged its own sense of identity. Two accounts speak volumes on this matter. The first comes from an Italian man, aged 40, who has lived in Italy, Spain, France and Moscow, before coming to settle in Fes in 2007, where he runs a café-restaurant in the medina. However, he is not going to live in Fes forever:

“It must be said that not everyone is like me. I’ve travelled a lot, and now I’m in Fes. To be honest, I could live anywhere. (...) I really didn’t have any qualms (about Fes). I found it an attraction: coming from somewhere else, not knowing anyone, not speaking the language, I find that exciting. It’s like creating a new life from square one. (...) I’m a traveller more than anything else. A traveller living for the time being in Fes, because I was attracted by this city. Things are dressed up differently. The mentality is completely different; so you can possibly be enriched. Now I’m not a businessman. For me it has always been interesting to get to know a culture that I don’t know. That’s enriching. I’m here now, but a year from now maybe not; I don’t know. (...) Fes is my house. It’s my present. It’s a place which will always stay with me. Now my idea is to start something elsewhere, in Casablanca or in Europe, to know something else. (...) This is my main residence. I have my residency papers. I’m resident in Morocco. But I remain myself. I’m very comfortable here, but my city is still Barcelona. I’m not Moroccan; that’s obvious. I’m still Italian. An Italian who has experienced a bit of the world. Who has experienced a bit of Arab culture, appreciates it and also appreciates the Moroccans. (...) Straight away, I have to say that the religious side of things bothers me a bit. And here, there’s a bit too much religion about. I remain an Italian with a European spirit, if you like. But I believe in Europe and I remain European. I don’t see myself as Moroccan. I see myself as a traveller. A traveller who appreciates Moroccan culture. (...) I love Russia too, I’ve lived there. I have universal values. In every country I visit I look for what is best and, if I like it, I take it. Particularly spiritually, but sometimes even materially. Now I’ve loved couscous; I’m going to hold onto that, I’m certain, I’ll hold onto the couscous. (...) Here, my way of living has become a bit mixed. I’ve balanced out everything I’ve experienced in Italy, Spain, England, France and Russia. That’s it. (...) But am I Fassi? No, I’m still myself. I can’t claim to be Fassi because I’m not Fassi. I go around with Fassis; I understand the Fassis; the Fassis understand me. Perhaps I’m an adopted Fassi? Maybe. There are plenty of open doors for me in Fes; the Fassis have a lot of time for me. I’m very involved in Fassi social and cultural life, in fact. My friends are all Fassis. Fassi families. (...) I’ve read this book called “Fes, or the nobility of Islam”¹¹⁶. It’s a very old book about Moroccan culture and Islam, and which says that the nobility comes from the people of Fes. Now that remains one of the Fassi characteristics. Fassi civility... it’s from having roots in the city of Fes. The majority of Fassis are Arabs who were in Spain and who arrived following the Spanish Reconquest in 1492; that’s

¹¹⁶ In fact, the book’s title is: “Fes, ou le Bourgeois de l’Islam” by Jérôme and Jean Tharaud.

Fes. Fassi civility is this originality; this authenticity. The Fassis have a pure side to them. The Fassis are, perhaps, pure. Whereas the others are a mixture."¹¹⁷

The second account is from a French woman (39), descended from a family of migrants, who sees her move to Fes in 2007 in much the same way as the previous speaker. Born to a Polish father, who had since emigrated to France, and an Austrian mother who lived in Morocco before settling in France, this French woman sees herself as having been born into a cosmopolitan family. After a childhood split between the country where she was born, France and Austria, and language study visits to Germany, England and Israel, she left her country of origin after the Baccalaureate to travel for ten years around India, Japan, Taiwan, Malaysia, Indonesia, Nepal, Australia, New Zealand, the United States, Canada and the Caribbean. After returning to France to study for a degree in project engineering, she decided to set off once more. She feels that her mobility around Asia, Europe and the United States has enabled her to acquire a certain amount of skills which she has been able to reinvest at the age of 36, setting up a "solidarity" tourism intermediation company in Morocco, without being heavily influenced by this country which she is discovering for the first time.

*"I used to travel; I'd work where I was. I'd live with people, in families. This enabled me to learn quite a few languages too. I worked a lot as a teacher of French or English. I did a lot of work in tourism and agriculture too. It was the kind of work that I manage to find easily abroad. (...) Everywhere, all over the world, I need to experience things. (...) And I think that all of that – having travelled a lot – has really helped me to settle in well in good conditions in Morocco. Because if I hadn't had this experience before, I think I might perhaps have got a bit out of my depth, and I'd have lost myself to my surroundings. Here I've kept a bit of a distance from being overly influenced by the country. (...) For now, I've set up a project, and after five years I'll see if things are working out as I wanted or not, and whether it would prove fulfilling for me to stay on. It's now been two and a half years, so I'm half-way through. Two and a half years from now, I'll take stock and see if it's still as fulfilling for me or not. (...) Then, personally, I know there are two times in the year when it's extremely difficult for me to live here in Morocco. They're the last fortnight of Ramadan, and Eid, where people kill and slit the throats of the sheep. I find that really difficult to live with. So I go back to France to take a breather and have a break from Morocco, and then I'm back in top form. (...) Now, as someone who lives in Fes, I'm Fassi. Because I love the place; I feel good here. Having said that, to say that I'm Fassi and I satisfy all the criteria of local Moroccan living... I wouldn't go that far. So, I'm Fassi as someone living in Fes, yes, but I don't live in the way that your average Moroccan woman does."*¹¹⁸

4.5.2 Foreigners turned new Fassis

Unlike this first category of foreign migrants in Fes, there is a second category for whom settling in Fes is for life. These are people, of French or Belgian nationality for the most part, who have tried to mix in with society upon arrival and to find a place for themselves without

¹¹⁷ Interview 5

¹¹⁸ Interview 12

any plans to move on. Indeed, in the eyes of these foreigners, a number of things have come into play since their arrival in Fes to allow their full integration into the host society and to change their migratory situation including, among other things, the learning of the Arabic dialect called *Darija*, marriage to a Moroccan woman, conversion to Islam, forging friendships with Moroccans, and getting involved in activities of a charitable nature.

Directed by permanent residence in the host city, these factors have consequently had a part to play in the invention of a new identity. In fact, this category of migrants see themselves as *Fassis* or “*new Fassis*”. Coming from a different angle from the genealogical meaning of the term *Fassi* as mentioned above, this idea of identity seems to be derived from a sociological reality, with those born outside the city of Fes claiming the “right to the city”, defining themselves as *Fassis* by virtue of living in Fes or having interiorised certain characteristics of the traditional model of *Fassi* urban life, following their process of socialisation in that city. This sociological reality is one of the effects of the change which has affected Moroccan urban society as a whole, and which is characterised in particular by the marginalisation of the traditional elites and the appearance of new elites (Idrissi Janati, 2001b).

This is a meaning of the term which stresses the role played in the construction of identity by the process of “symbolic interactionism” – in the sense used by the Chicago sociologists – which is a progressive, evolutionary process whereby one’s self-image is acquired through participation in social life. Indeed, in the eyes of this category of foreign migrants, the socialisation factor has largely prevailed over that of regional belonging in the construction of one’s self-concept. A break – complete, according to some – with their environment of origin, success in their professional life, the broadened social relationship networks, marriage to an original *Fassi* person, acquiring the *Fassi* accent, all of these, according to this category, are factors which encourage the process of acquiring *Fassi* identity. Within this identity-based meaning, *Fassi* citizenship is not reserved simply for the original people of Fes. In its process-based dimension, it is acquisitional and not hereditary, global and not archaeological – as understood by Michel Foucault.

Within the context of a local area, and more specifically the medina of Fes, this reconstruction of one’s self-concept in the case of some foreigners was not undertaken without a certain feeling of rejection or contempt for the way of life and/or social relationships in their country of origin; the latter are now rejected in their way of thinking, and seen as inferior, loaded with negative judgement, compared with the way of life and social relationships in Fes. This being the case, and although the majority of these migrants shut themselves away in their own private sphere, maintaining a low profile in public spaces, migration to Fes becomes, in their words, a value which has enabled them to become upwardly mobile.

Here are the accounts of three people who were interviewed and sum up the underlying thinking of such a migratory situation. The first comes from a Frenchman, whose mother was originally from Marseille, and whose father was of Maghrebian origin. Having divorced, he came to settle in Fes at the age of 50 in 2008, to prepare for retirement. Having opened a café-restaurant in the medina, he married a young Moroccan woman, aged 30, then converted to Islam, for which reason he changed his given name:

“Today, I’m Muslim, and I’m called Yassin. For me, when Moroccans say to me “you’re welcome in our home,” I say to them, “thank you for welcoming me to your home”. I’m at home. I feel at ease. I haven’t been to France since October 2009. France doesn’t suit me anymore. Apart from my two sons and a few friends,

I've got bugger all in France. (...) My life is here. I don't feel any need or desire to go to France. I'm happy here in the medina with my wife and her family. In fact, I'm a bit Fassi, through the acceptance of the people around me, my neighbours, who accept me. That's already a sign of integration, the fact that all's well with my neighbours. I'm an adopted Fassi; I wear the Djellaba and slippers, they call me So I feel I've been included by kindness, sympathy and simplicity. (...) We'll be here in Fes for another 5 or 6 years; after that, I'll sell up and buy a plot of land by the sea and I'll build a little house, bit by bit, for my retirement, so I can live the quiet life and end my days in Morocco."¹¹⁹

His words are echoed by those of a French woman (45) living in Fes with her husband and three children (19, 13 and 6):

"Three years ago, we said: 'This is where we must live our lives.' Then we found an area and an apartment to live in. So, by default, we don't have any more desire to move, we're happy here because the people here are so kind. But in France it's changed so much over recent years. (...) This is our main home; that's for certain. This is where we live all year round, and this is where we want to live. So when we've earned a bit of money, here is where we want to invest it. All the same, we have our family in France. But that's less of a tie. (...) What matters in life is those you live with, and where you live. Since we arrived, my husband hasn't gone away. (...) The present's here, the future's here, and it's with the Moroccans that we live. That's what we wanted. (...) We're starting to learn Arabic bit by bit. The children are doing better than we are, because they have lessons at school. Our thirteen-year-old is learning Arabic as a second language. He's starting to manage very well. Our 19-year-old has a Baccalaureate in economics. He was in France, but now he's come back to work with us. In my heart, I'm a Fassi. And when you listen to the children talking, they're Fassis, even in their vocabulary, because they've got the Fassi accent. They're Moroccan, my children. They've got the Moroccan accent. (...) Oh yes, I'm a Fassi, because I believe I've really learnt the Moroccan mentality; the way of life in Fes. On top of that, we feel we fit in well in Fes. And that's also why I feel Fassi. I behave like a Fassi. It's true, I have my residency papers; I don't have Moroccan nationality. Perhaps one day. It's true, they don't give it away just like that. It's only after six months that you can have Moroccan nationality. But why not? (...) In everyday life, I wear a Caftan. We've invested a lot of heart here and, for us, Fes is a long-term thing; that's a certainty, until death."¹²⁰

The third case is that of a Belgian man who settled in Fes with his wife in 2000, at the age of 56. At the start, it was just a wish to be there, with his wife, for their daughter, who had married a Moroccan, lived in the medina in Fes, and did not want to return to Belgium. After two years, he invested in a guesthouse, then married a Moroccan woman following his divorce from his Belgian wife, who found that life in Fes did not suit her:

¹¹⁹ Interview 4

¹²⁰ Interview 8

“When we came here, my daughter was expecting a baby, and like any self-respecting grandfather, I was constantly holding the baby in my arms in the medina. After that, there was a connection between the people in the Medina and me; that was ten years ago now. And immediately there was this warmth that I felt and this contact, this desire to welcome us. Coming here, my only plan was to live in the house I’ve bought as “retired people”. It’s the size of the house that drove our daughter to suggest we set up a guesthouse, because there were very few guesthouses in Fes at the time. I decided to settle here for good. (...) My wife went back to Belgium because she didn’t know how to fit in, she didn’t want to fit in. I’ve fitted in completely, I’ve blended in, I’ve converted, so I’m now a fully-fledged Muslim. I’ve divorced and married again since then to a Moroccan woman. And my real family is the one I live with now. I immediately felt myself to be Fassi, and I’ve virtually lost my Belgian nationality. (...) I don’t even need any cemetery other than the traditional cemetery in Fes, because now I’m a Muslim. I’ve let myself blend in with the people of Fes. I’ve also adopted the way they dress. I speak a bit of Arabic, and I’m not seen as a foreigner at all by the whole population in the medina. To them, I’ve become just like them.”¹²¹

This situation seems to hark back to the French model which has increasingly developed a republican approach whereby migrants in France are pushed towards complete assimilation of French culture and the renunciation of the specific cultural practices of their country of origin. Whereas in the so-called “Anglo-Saxon” countries, for example, the tradition is more inclined towards integration of migrants who still broadly retain their own identity which, even though it sometimes becomes artificial, is more to do with invention than reproduction. This is what emerges from the third category of foreign migrants in Fes, which is largely made up of Anglo-Saxons.

4.5.3 Identity crisis or double identity

This category of foreign migrants in Fes is represented by American and English nationals whose way of thinking and explaining their migration are identical, although the migratory strategies and challenges are mixed. The thoughts expressed by these migrants are part of a self-concept resulting from the combination of two distinct identities, referring back to two different identity-forming strategies: the one claiming to belong to the host city, Fes, and the other attached to the geographical place of origin, either the United States or England. This “complex” and “straddling” *identity illusion* (Bayart, 1996) will take place, even if the residence in Fes is seen as the primary, permanent place of residence.

Moreover, by adopting ideas, lifestyles and practices which they discover in the host society, these Anglo-Saxons behave as though they are mediators and intervene to “correct” certain ideas and thoughts preconceived by the society from which they come about the host society – in this case, Morocco.

The first personal account is from a 38-year-old woman who has lived in London and who, after living in Fes for eight years, describes herself as a *Gawrya* (foreigner) living through an “identity crisis”. Her words also bear witness to the fact that this migration by foreigners to

¹²¹ Interview 10

Fes is a sexually differentiated phenomenon, which is not without consequences for social relationships and the use of space. Thus she tells us:

“I’m American and it’s strange, because when I say: ‘OK, I’m going home,’ I also wonder: ‘But where is my home? Here in Fes, over there in London?’ I don’t know. I’ve completely lost any concept of home. So, at home in the United States, my parents don’t live in the house where I lived. So when I go to visit them, I sleep in the guest suite, which isn’t my bedroom. That’s not home. But I feel comfortable there, because it’s my language, I know how things work, where to find things. But I’m not close to the people. There’s always something there, a wall between me and them. It’s the same thing here. I feel comfortable here. I have a little difficulty with the language. But there’s always something there between me and the Fassis. So now I’ve lived here long enough, but I know I’m foreign. I’ll never be a Fassi; and, what’s more, I don’t feel like an American, but I know I am an American. So it’s an identity crisis for me. I’m caught between two worlds. But not really on the Moroccan side. I’m foreign. I’m Gawrya; I’m caught between here and the United States. (...) Especially now, when I’m looking for a place of my own, and I don’t know if it will be here, in the United States, in another country. I don’t know, but I’m looking. Generally I live here and I feel comfortable here. But I’m not going to stay here forever. It’s just like a place to stop along the way.”¹²²

The second account is from the first foreigner to have stopped in Fes, in January 1996. This American man is the son of a family originally from Russia. Today this “pioneer” – in the words of his fellow citizens – owns five houses in the Medina in Fes. He has invested a great deal in the restoration and resale of the houses. To his way of thinking, this is “an investment for retirement” and a fascinating work which has allowed him to build up experience in buying and enhancing traditional houses in Fes; experience which he describes in his articles which have been published on his website, created in 2003, and which he has made available to a number of foreigners who have contacted him seeking advice and/or help in buying and/or restoring a house in the medina in Fes. He has been mentioned, in fact, by the majority of those interviewed. Involved in voluntary activities, he is also sought after by those who live in his district. Drawing his inspiration from a book by Amin Maalouf¹²³ – a Lebanese novelist and journalist who has lived in Europe and lays claim both to Western and Eastern culture – this lover of traditional Moroccan art describes himself as a “citizen foreigner” with a double identity: one Moroccan, the other American. Having no connections any more with his country of origin apart from his father and sister, whom he visits once a year, he has planned and prepared his retirement in Fes. Moreover, his stay in Morocco is likely, he says, to be overturned one day by possible expulsion – an event experienced in March 2010 by some of his evangelistic compatriots supposed to be involved in proselytising Moroccan children. His words speak volumes:

“Fes is my house. In the United States, in Chicago, I don’t have a house any more. Here I feel like a citizen. It’s my country. It’s my city. I have my residency papers. I’m a citizen. I pay my taxes and I have responsibilities. (...) I’m not a Fassi. But in my heart, I’m a Fassi. I love Fes. People say to me: ‘You love Fes

¹²² Interview 15

¹²³ Amin Maalouf, *Les Identités meurtrières* Original ed. Grasset, 1998/ Livre de poche, 2001.

more than the Fassi.’ At the same time, I’m an American; I was born in the United States; my passport is American. I’m a foreigner who lives in Fes. I’m an American who lives in Fes. I’m a foreigner because I’m not from here, but I’m not an immigrant (...). I don’t have any connections with the United States any more, and at the same time I don’t want to change my nationality. I’m a mixture. It’s not an identity crisis, it’s more like a double identity. (...) Today I have no intention of leaving Fes, but I know – and it’s strange – that I could end up being expelled one day by the police. It’s possible. It’s happened this year to a number of foreigners. Certainly, I’m a Christian, but I’m not... devout.”¹²⁴

This feeling of worry was expressed by other interviewees, like the account below. This obsession dates back to March 2010, when twenty team members from the *Village of Hope* – an orphanage which looks after about thirty abandoned children and which is located in a small town in the Moroccan Middle Atlas (Aïn Leuh) – were expelled from the country. Having lived in Morocco for ten years as volunteers, the staff at that orphanage (adoptive parents for the most part) comprised a majority of evangelists from western nations. They were accused of “proselytism¹²⁵ targeting the children in the orphanage and failure to follow adoption procedures”, according to a statement from the Moroccan interior ministry. At about the same time, in Fes, Marrakech, Casablanca, Rabat, Tangiers and Essaouira, the Moroccan police arrested tens of other Christians suspected of proselytism. Officially, 27 of them were expelled, the majority being American, Dutch and English.

4.5.4 “Citizen of the world”... The global dimension of migration

“Citizen of the world” is the way in which some foreigners living in Fes describe themselves. This is another category of migrants whose self-concept vocabulary systematically refers not to the country of origin, nor to the host country, but to the “global”. In this self-concept system, citizenship is seen as a symbol of a shared identity devoid of any ethnocentricity and any excess of geographical regionalism. Here, particularity gives way to universality. The fact that the networks into which these migrants integrate themselves spill out beyond the close confines of the aforementioned identity communities bears witness to this fact. Their initial plan is to get rid of the diversity of identities, to wipe the slate clean of such concepts by forging a new unifying, extra-social and extra-territorial identity, referring to “human globalisation” (Withol de Wenden, 2009).

This is the case with one French woman who, in her eyes, comes from a family of migrants – “nomads”, even – with a “mixed culture”. Her grandmother is of Vietnamese origin and her grandfather was born in France. He served in the air force in Cambodia and then in Vietnam, where he married her grandmother, then in Morocco, where her mother was born, before returning to settle in the suburbs of Paris, where she herself was born. Having studied for a degree in foreign languages (English and Spanish) at the Sorbonne, she went to work in Mauritius, before returning to the Banque de France in Paris, going on to work as the assistant to the branch manager of a company making equipment for moulding plastic bottles. Having got “fed up with dreary France” and having “a desire for the East”, she left her work in 2004

¹²⁴ Interview 18

¹²⁵ According to Article 220 of the Moroccan penal code, proselytism is forbidden in Morocco.

at the age of 35 to come and settle permanently in Fes with her son (4), since Lebanon, her first choice, “wasn’t stable”. To her mind, this mobility to Morocco signifies a “migration” with a view not only to finding a new life somewhere else, but also “to bring something” good to the host society. This, she says, is characteristic of “this new wave of immigration here in Fes, which is much more about wanting to share, to mix, compared with the first wave, which came to make easier money and which was much more opportunistic, with one or two rare exceptions.” She says that the enabling factor for her integration into the host society – Fes in this case – was her boy, who was signed up for the local school in the medina, who speaks perfect Arabic, who is learning the Qur’an, who goes to the mosque “to pray just like any Muslim”, and who plays in the street with his Moroccan friends. This integration was consolidated with her election – by a majority – to membership of the district association, and with her opening up her premises (a café-restaurant in the medina) free of charge for the activities of a couple of associations, one for street children in Fes, and the other for handicapped children. Expressing her ownership of everyday areas and the construction of her citizenship, this charitable work bears witness – in her eyes – to her commitment to “a value which France has lost”, namely “district life”. At a stroke, she has stopped being perceived by a number of *Fassis* as “a foreigner”. However, she does not identify herself as a *Fassi*. Similarly, she does not miss France “in the slightest”. Having lost her mother in September 2009, she has “no desire to return to France”. She does not feel French, except linguistically. Any future departure from Morocco will not necessarily lead to her returning to her country of origin. In fact, she does not have a “feeling of belonging to a place”. In her words, she is a citizen of the world. The conception this migrant has of her migratory situation seems to open up onto a new debate about the recent development of the migratory phenomenon across the world. Moreover, this self-concept, which is part of multiculturalism and a global view of existence, is determined by a religious register: Christianity, which has no historical roots in Morocco. This is what emerges from her words:

“I’m a fan of Fes, but I know full well that I’m not at home here, even though I feel at home; I’m a guest, and we exchange. I see myself as a guest; in other words, although I feel I’m at home, I’m not at home. It’s just a feeling. When I’m in France, I’m no longer at home; I feel out of step with the others. And here, I don’t feel Fassi. No, I have no sense of belonging, in fact. I’m a citizen of the world. The aim is not total integration, that doesn’t interest me; I’m me. (...) For the moment, I don’t intend leaving Fes, no. But that will come one day. That’s for certain. I can feel it. I know it could end tomorrow. You feel that; you can’t put it into words. I know it will end one day. This growing hostility among young people towards foreigners, that will grow even more, the fact that there has been a rise in a more radical Islam despite the will of the king. Then look at my Colombian friend. Last Thursday the police turned up at eight in the morning. He was accused of endangering national security, because he was accused of proselytism. They gave him 48 hours to leave. I’ve had the religious police here twice, checking the books in my library. But it’s not a problem. I come from a family of migrants, so I know full well what it is to pack your bags. I’m a Christian. I’ve been baptised; I was very little and I didn’t have any say in it. Here there’s been a hardening of attitude against anything that’s Christian or Catholic, after the Aïn Leuh affair. But my boy goes to the mosque, perhaps because he feels comfortable

there. Afterwards, he won't go, it's not a problem. People are afraid of what they don't know; he will know and he'll be able to choose what he wants."¹²⁶

¹²⁶ Interview 14

CHAPTER 5: GENERAL CONCLUSION: FES – A COSMOPOLITAN CITY IN THE MAKING?

As the former capital of Morocco, Fes is better known in scientific literature for its cultural heritage and its socio-spatial transformations in connection with the rather complex relationship which it has built up with its surrounding area. To date it has not been the focus of any study in relation to international migration. The reason we have chosen it as our field for investigation to check our hypotheses is that it lends itself well to this analysis. Due to its location and its history, it is now the place where three communities linked to migration converge. Firstly, there are the Moroccan families which are not originally from the city, who have arrived following internal migration from the mountains and hills of the Prerif. But those families are also at the same time involved in international migratory movements as a result of migratory projects being enacted by some of their members. Then there are the Sub-Saharanans, presented as being in transit towards Europe, and for whom Fes is just a staging post, but one which has a tendency to become a place of residence. And then finally there are the western individuals or households who have chosen Fes as a place to build a new life, or to live out an episode in their life.

What can we retain from this analysis of the relationships between these three populations and the city of Fes?

- 1) **Integration into the city** can be looked at through the residential behaviours of each of these groups.

The Moroccan families of emigrants have a tendency to head for the new developments in the outlying districts in the south-eastern zone of the city. They demonstrate very high residential mobility, with each of the families interviewed having moved through at least two or three districts. The choice of the south-eastern quarters can be explained by the fact that these districts have the possibilities offered by residential developments for households seeking access to property ownership. This access to property ownership remains one of the major objectives of international migration. But it emerges from the interviews that the choice of these districts can also be explained by the need among populations from the same regions of origin to regroup.

Sub-Saharan migrants favour two types of district. Firstly, they are encountered in the districts surrounding the University. This choice of location can be explained by a search for solidarity with the African students present in large numbers in Fes. When those students have come from the same countries or regions, forms of assistance and solidarity develop between the students who are legally present, on the one hand, and the migrants – often illegally present – on the other. But sometimes the choice of these districts as places to live, due to the strong presence of African students, allows Sub-Saharan migrants to melt into that population to become less visible. One next encounters them in the districts around the periphery of the city

centre, where they occupy a number of shabby residential blocks. The prospects of cheap rent and the proximity of subsistence activities in the city centre explain this choice.

European and western residents favour the historic centre because this is the prime motivation behind their immigration into Fes, especially as this historic centre has held little attraction for the other two populations. For Moroccans, this was sometimes the first stopping place on arrival in the city of Fes, where old residences were occupied in an extremely dense fashion, which has driven their deterioration. With the large middle-class families of Fes having abandoned their ancient residences, the literature has often talked of a ruralisation of the medina. During the course of this phase, which has now been reversed, the ancient centre was not held in high regard by Moroccan families. Meanwhile, the Sub-Saharanans had to deal with a certain amount of rejection by the population of the ancient centre.

This behaviour by the residents is by no means set in stone, and there are dynamics which need to be highlighted. In some cases, the districts where the families of Moroccan migrants live and those where the Sub-Saharanans live can coincide. But at the same time, the residential mobility of the Moroccans can sometimes be correlated to that of the Sub-Saharanans. Thus some districts on the edge of the city centre, having been abandoned by the families of Moroccan migrants in favour of developments on the outskirts of the larger city can be taken over by the Sub-Saharanans. The fact remains that the redeployment of the three population groups is strongly linked to the economic opportunities offered by the city. Europeans, on moving into the medina, take advantage of the opportunities it offers for tourism-based activities. Sub-Saharanans, or at least those of particular nationalities and social categories, profit from the opportunities offered by new employment opportunities in the communications industry, with more and more companies choosing Fes as a location for their call centres. Moroccans, meanwhile, seize the opportunities offered by small-scale retailing, services and property investment.

- 2) Findings about the relational life with the city** and inclusion/exclusion processes must take into account the very recent nature of the arrival of the three populations, since in all three cases we have seen the significance of the year 2000, which saw an acceleration in arrival and settlement trends. This means that the processes are only just beginning, and it is possibly too early to try to draw any conclusions.

The fact remains that the isolation in which each of these three groups lives, turning their backs on one another, is most striking. While the Sub-Saharanans live in isolation, within this community we can find a host of other circumstantial communities based on the affinities of the moment. These communities come together around work (call centre) and through great competition over the work. They can gather around particular skills (football and music) or on the basis of social affinities founded on differences in material resources. Finally, they may group around similar beliefs: the Muslims, the *Tijani*, the Christians, the Evangelicals.

Moroccan families of rural origin arriving in Fes and involved in external migratory movements differentiate between themselves on the basis of ethnic or geographic origin. They may have two opposing views regarding the host society. This might be a distancing from the native *Fassi*, evidenced by the value they attach to their rural origins. But there may also be a strong attitude of identifying with the *Fassi*, with a marked move to distance oneself from new arrivals who are seen as non-*Fassi*. For these populations, there are two possibilities for coming into contact with the Sub-Saharan populations: the university area or musical and sporting environments.

Meanwhile, the Europeans organise themselves into communities based on socio-economic levels and cutting across the different nationalities. Relationships with their Moroccan neighbours are limited to merely utilitarian, professional or commercial aspects. Other relationships exist, concerning property or renovation transactions. There are affinity-based encounters with the rich, westernised categories of Moroccan society who have access to the same leisure facilities. But the prevailing impression is that the Europeans as a group engage in voluntary isolation. It is significant that even places such as churches, where opportunities for Europeans and Christian Sub-Saharanans to meet are frequent, do not translate into more or less durable relationships, with the Europeans having very little interest in the Sub-Saharanans.

Finally, of the three population groups, it is the Sub-Saharanans who have the broadest range of opportunities to live in relation with the others through religion, be it Muslim or Christian, or through sport, music, work etc.. But these opportunities give rise to few interactions.

- 3) Beyond the case of Fes, the research tackled **the problem of the function fulfilled by Morocco in the Euro-African migratory system**. In the case of the Sub-Saharanans, a number of writings present Morocco primarily as a transit country which, driven by events, has become a host country. Meanwhile, in the case of the Europeans, the issue of their presence as immigrants has yet to be resolved. Without a doubt these are elements of an irrefutable truth confirmed by observations made in Fes. However, we feel that the terms “transit country” and “immigration country” cannot necessarily be understood with reference to the same root causes. For, while the notion of immigration harks back to the existence of a real attraction which can be objectively observed through the country’s economic growth, the notion of transit seems to be linked to an effect of circumstances in which some countries find themselves involved in immigration due to their geographical position along migrants’ routes

Two things emerge with reference to the links forged between Morocco and Sub-Saharan Africa and are worth stressing here: (i) Morocco has seen waves of people coming from Sub-Saharan Africa well before the economic and political deregulation caused by globalisation; (ii) The anthropological and cultural blending to which these waves have given rise is an indication that Moroccan society has had a much better developed capacity for assimilation in the past than in the current age, although it has to be admitted that assimilation has also occurred against a background of violence.

But what is remarkable is that the presence of an Afro-Moroccan element has not served as fertile ground where new Sub-Saharan populations choosing or finding themselves obliged to settle in Morocco can put down roots.

Quite the contrary, for their presence receives an interpretation based on judgemental criteria and terminology connected with the image which has been created of the Sub-Saharanans against the backdrop of a European approach characterised by restrictive migration policies.

The presence of these nationals from countries south of the Sahara, which was initially quite discrete and unnoticed, was to become a striking feature of migration in Morocco, growing to become significant illegal migration to Europe.

Relations with *Fassi* society have yet to go beyond the mercantile trade dimension, the offer of housing and a few precarious and poorly-paid jobs. Sporting and religious activities give

rise to opportunities for forging links with the Moroccans, but not only do these links remain confined to the place which has brought them about – the mosque or football pitch – but they only involve a minority of people. Opportunities for Sub-Saharanans to meet other foreigners in the city, particularly Europeans and Americans, are the churches which are attended on Sundays or feast days. But despite the similarity arising from religious membership, the two populations view one another according to judgemental criteria which make it difficult to establish lasting ties. Their situations are run through by social and cultural inequalities which make it impossible to overcome the barriers which separate them, with the Europeans in their stylish homes and Riads in the old medina, and the Sub-Saharanans in their poor districts on the fringes of the city.

The perception of Fes among Sub-Saharanans is partly founded on the historical, spiritual and trading roles played by the city over the centuries, as well as being a haven for students. It is because of these links that Fes is seen as a city to which it is possible to travel without any need for valid papers, and in which it is also possible to settle without any risk of losing one's own identity, as an extension of African soil, society and identity. But at the same time, it is seen as a city which does not offer Sub-Saharanans prospects of self-fulfilment on the economic front, and does not give them the opportunity to express their creative, cultural and sporting skills.

The presence of Western foreigners in Fes has come about through buying residences in the medina at a rate which has slowed over a decade. But those who were interviewed reveal a multiplicity of motivations all coming together in one shared aspiration, to experience a better pace of life. Moreover, this main reason is most frequently just an expression of a multiplicity of personal motivations which sometimes converge, given the plurality of the profiles and social trajectories of these migrants. These personal motivations can be classified into three groups: (i) Economic, in relation to the cost of living; the situation in Morocco is presented as attractive compared to the country of origin, and migration is seen and experienced as an alternative, a lasting solution to a difficult socioeconomic situation. (ii) The mid-life crisis is given as the main reason by some older people. In this case, immigration to a country in the south is not necessarily something which will generate material profit or social mobility. (iii) For other European immigrants who have come to settle in Fes, the decision to leave was not explained by economic considerations, nor by Europe's economic problems, nor by problems to do with the "mid-life crisis". Immigration is dictated by the need to reconstruct a family network following the migration to Fes by a family member.

Through their personal projects, foreigners develop a different idea of Fes. The multiple attractions of the city are interpreted differently and put into images. But there is a difference between the tourist who, struck by the charms of the city, its mystery and its people, decides to settle there, and the investor, who evaluates the city's attractiveness in terms of its advantages as a location for profitable investment. It is with reference to these images which they themselves form of the host city across the full range of its anthropological and cultural characteristics that these people will identify themselves as migrants, travellers, cosmopolitans or nomads. These images suggest an existential dimension and sit alongside those painted by the Sub-Saharanans when talking of themselves as adventurers or vagabonds.

It is on the basis of this difficulty in establishing a stable identity for themselves within their new environment that these two groups of immigrants form themselves into groups, in a city where each group rarely has much to do with the other.

If we understand a migratory field to be the entire space structured by migratory and relational flows, which B eteille (1981) also describes as a space in which migrants build one or more networks and where competitiveness in terms of attractiveness emerges between different urban centres, it could be said that Fes has been integrated at a late stage into a migratory field by capturing part of the flows destined for other cities. But if we take into account the intentions expressed by the Sub-Saharanans or Europeans whom we interviewed, it can be seen that the city does not appear in the same way in the life prospects of each group. Among the Sub-Saharanans, three prospects emerge, and none of these includes putting down roots in Fes: the return to the country of origin, in acceptance that the migratory project has failed; the ongoing desire to continue with attempts to enter Europe illegally, but with the least possible risk of losing one's life in the process; and finally, setting off to find better opportunities for work in another Moroccan city, in Casablanca or in Rabat. The planned departure for another city would help to finance emigration to Europe or a return to one's own country.

Among the Europeans, the vision they have of their future in Fes is an expression of more individual aspirations. For the constant traveller, Fes is just one staging point in their life. By contrast, other foreigners look to put down roots where they are and mix in with the native society. A third group of immigrants keep themselves in an ambivalent situation in respect of their identity, claiming both to belong to the host city and to be attached to their geographical origins. Finally, there are those who claim a universal identity for themselves, rejecting attachments to their place of origin and to the host country.

The city of Fes has been described in terms of its attractiveness for immigrants from both the south and the north. Not only do these immigrants belong to categories which cannot be compared to the traditional image of the migrant who is either stable or part of a circulatory category, but also Fes cannot yet be compared to the metropolises in the immigration countries.

In the meantime, Fes operates more and more as a "hub" between the African migratory system on the one hand and the Euro-Mediterranean migratory system on the other, which should suggest a revision of our perception of how the migratory systems in the region work, or at least the place of Morocco in these regional systems.

4) Fes: a cosmopolitan city?

At this stage of the analysis, it should be remembered that of all the cities of Morocco, Fes is perhaps the one which has experienced a cosmopolitan past with reference to the Arab-Muslim civilisation, which has made it a melting-pot for the mixing of populations from various origins. The first immigrants were Andalusians, Muslims and Jews, driven out of Spain in the 9th century, who chose to settle here and take advantage of the links forged by the city with the main cities in Andalusia. Helped by the commercial links maintained by the *Fassi* middle classes with the countries of the Sudan, Fes was to become a hub for various trade flows, including the slave trade. This global dimension to the city, confirmed in the 19th century with the process of opening up to the capitalist economy, giving rise to the arrival of European traders and businessmen, was to shrink under the Protectorate, with the main economic focus of the country being shifted to the coast, and the emigration of middle-class families to Casablanca. Unlike the coastal cities, Fes spent almost the whole of the 20th century turned in on itself, without any claim to be open to areas outside its regional neighbourhood. That area served as a reservoir of migrants of rural origin.

But in spite of this self-imposed economic and cultural isolation, *Fassi* identity survived. On the one hand, it was sustained elsewhere by families who emigrated, and on the other hand it was adopted by immigrant populations arriving in Fes in more recent times. It is with reference to this identity that local actors are now working to reposition the city within its traditional functions, in relation to culture, tourism, craft and commerce, which would appear to be the economic base onto which new functions, essentially information technologies and private higher education, can be grafted. This has made Fes attractive once more to foreign populations, of which Sub-Saharan migrants are one.

Quantitative surveys and qualitative interviews conducted in Fes among Sub-Saharans have enabled us to observe and analyse that population from the angle of the links it has forged with the city, the routes of integration for those who decide to end their migratory travels there, the difficulties encountered in those integration attempts, the precariousness of daily life, the perception of the city among those Sub-Saharans compared with other cities such as Casablanca and Rabat, and the difficulties experienced by Fes in integrating them. The talk coming from the city's elite, either from a local level or from external positions, tries to sell Fes as a city which has achieved a mix of cultures and which shows itself to be cosmopolitan.

Finally, a consideration of the findings within this project has led to issues of otherness, coexistence and living together, which are encountered in the major cities on the southern shores of the Mediterranean, through contemporary dynamics relating to a process of cosmopolitanism and the reconstruction of identities, within the context of international migration, residential tourism and globalisation.

In Fes, these dynamics, which had not been encountered until roughly ten years ago, are becoming an increasingly major consideration in the public sphere, giving rise to new urban situations. They could be seen both as practices for the integration and assimilation of a recently-immigrated foreign population, particularly from Europe and the United States, but also from Asia and Australia, and as a measure by which the local society can reconstruct its images of Self and Others, rethink its relationship with the universal, and open itself up to pluralism and difference.

In fact, for more than a decade, the city of Fes, particularly its medina, has become an important hub in the geography of north-south mobilities within the European-Mediterranean area. It is increasingly seen as a recipient of migrants – predominantly European and American – from various generations, who have come to settle here in a recent movement, reversing the south-north immigration flows.

Having a cosmopolitan dimension, this migratory phenomenon is marked by the growing diversity of trajectories, socioprofessional profiles, marital and migratory situations and perspectives among these migrants.

Moreover, these foreigners are not isolated. They represent an element which, although certainly not great in number, still has an undoubted determining role to play in the operations of local actors, through the localisation of their investment projects.

Experienced as a way of setting out on a new footing, embarking on a new direction in life in the south, or existing between the here and the elsewhere, forging new identities of a cosmopolitan nature, this international migration has turned Fes into a circulatory territory. It

has opened up the social and territorial landscape of this medina to a gentrification which, although faltering, is still very real, giving it a new status both socially and symbolically.

Following on from the international migratory flows, these new socio-territorial configurations operating in Fes, as well as their cultural and economic impact, may be studied as a process of cosmopolitanisation of the city. Moreover, given the specifics of the urban history of this city of Fes, the way in which this process has imposed itself can, in many respects, be seen as emblematic.

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