

Over the second half of the 20th century, Morocco has evolved into one of the world's leading emigration countries. However, the systematic study of migration and development in Morocco and the Mediterranean has been largely neglected after a temporary surge of largely pessimistic studies in the 1970s. Empirical work from this region has, therefore, been largely absent from the lively theoretical debate on migration and development.

This study aims to fill this gap on the basis of comprehensive fieldwork in the south-Moroccan Todgha oasis valley. Embedded in an elaborate theoretical framework and based on qualitative research and a survey among more than 500 households, it explores in detail migration-development linkages. This study demonstrates how migration has changed the face of traditional oasis society, and how international migration has significantly contributed to the social and economic development of the Todgha valley.

This challenges the dominant pessimistic perspectives on migration and development. However, several structural obstacles at the regional, national, and international level prevent the (high) development potential of migration from being fully realized. In various ways, however, the study shows that prevalent views of migration and development need fundamental rethinking.

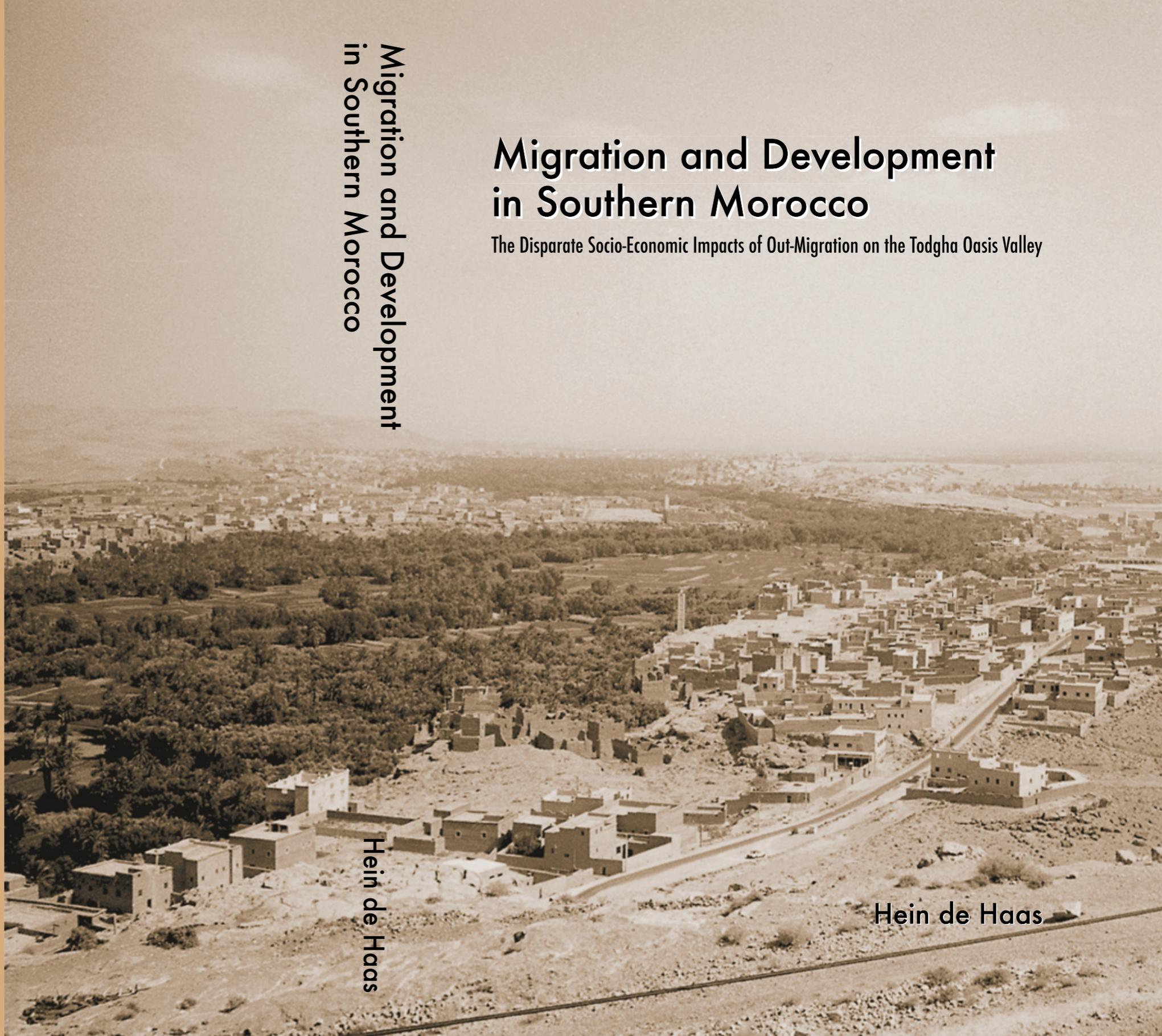
## Migration and Development in Southern Morocco

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The Disparate Socio-Economic Impacts of Out-Migration on the Todgha Oasis Valley

Hein de Haas

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# **MIGRATION AND DEVELOPMENT IN SOUTHERN MOROCCO**

## **The Disparate Socio-Economic Impacts of Out-Migration on the Todgha Oasis Valley**

een wetenschappelijke proeve op het gebied van de Sociale Wetenschappen

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## MIGRATION AND DEVELOPMENT IN SOUTHERN MOROCCO: The Disparate Socio-Economic Impacts of Out-Migration on the Todgha Oasis Valley

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*voor mijn ouders*

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## Note on transliteration

As Hart (1981:viii) noted, the transliteration of vernacular terms and names, whether Arabic or Berber, “poses real pitfalls for the unwary”. In this thesis, I have tried to be as consistent as possible to a simplified and standardized form of transliteration. However, for the sake of understanding, official “French” spellings of established place names kept on from the French Protectorate Period are maintained instead of the official Berber or Arabic transcription (e.g., Ouarzazate instead of Warzazat, Todgha instead of Tudgha or Todoght, Zaouïa instead of Zawiya). The same goes for Arabic words that have found their way into the English language (e.g., couscous).

No diacritical marks for any vowels or (emphatic or non-emphatic) consonants are used in the text, save the *‘ain* (a guttural sound produced by lengthening the glottal stop), designated by a comma ‘, to the left of the vowel which follows it. The Arabic *hamza* has been omitted. In the glossary, however, the *ha*, the “deep” h used in Tamazight Berber and Arabic, which is pronounced with a deep sigh and sounds like a loud whisper, has been indicated with a ħ (e.g., *ħaratin*). In the text, the simple h is used.

The g, typical of Tamazight Berber and Moroccan Arabic, is pronounced as the g in goodbye (e.g., *igurramen*). The kh is pronounced as ch in Bach. In southern Morocco, the j is pronounced as the j in the French *journal* (e.g., *jellaba*). The gh is pronounced as the “French” r in “Paris” (e.g., Todgha, Tinghir).

**Todgha** is pronounced as “Toe”-“dgha” with the “a” as in “ask” but then slightly elongated, and **Tinghir** as “Teen”-“gheer” with both “ee” pronounced as in “teen”.

But once we recognize  
that many ideas that are taken to be quintessentially Western  
have also flourished in other civilizations,  
we also see that these ideas are not  
as culture-specific as is sometimes claimed.  
We need not begin with pessimism, at least on this ground,  
about the prospects of reasoned humanism in the world.

Amartya Sen; *East and West: The Reach of Reason*  
The New York Review of Books, July 20, 2000.



# Introduction

## 1.1. Anti-migrationism in a globalizing world

Migration is an issue that raises high hopes and deep fears. In the West, and Europe in particular, the large-scale immigration of people coming from developing countries is increasingly perceived as a threat. This coincides with a common view that we live in a time of unprecedented migration. However, the popular idea that the late twentieth century is “the age of migration” (cf. Castles and Miller 1993), seems, from a global point of view, to be incorrect. Between 1965 and 1990, for example, the increase in the global international migration stock has almost kept equal pace with population growth. There were periods of equal if not more drastic international migration over the nineteenth and twentieth centuries (Zlotnik 1998:14). For instance, international migration during the second half of the twentieth century was at relatively modest levels compared to the international labor migration that occurred between 1870 and 1914, when more than 50 million people left Europe (Nayyar 2000).

Also if we go further back in history, large-scale population movements (either refugees or labor migrants) over long distances have been common within and between non-Western and Western societies alike. There is also a tendency to overstate the general scale of current international migration. In fact, less than three percent of the world’s population have lived outside their countries of origin for a year or more (IOM 2000:1).

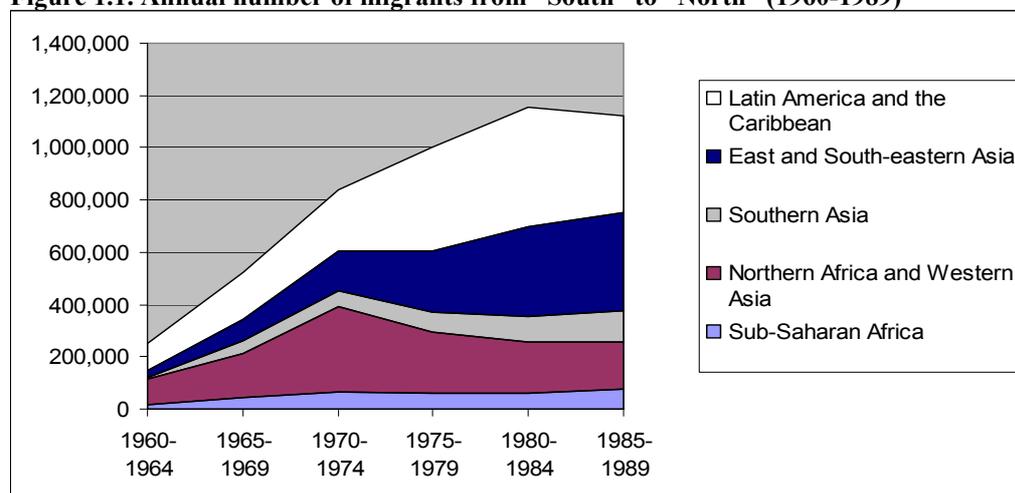
Views that recent international and internal migration are new or unprecedented phenomena should thus largely be rejected on empirical grounds. However, since the end of World War II there have been dramatic changes in the geographical orientation and direction of migration flows. Whereas in the nineteenth and early twentieth century the main global migration flows used to be predominantly North-North (mainly from Europe to North America), South-South (e.g., migration of Indian and Chinese indentured laborers to British, Dutch, French and German colonies), as well as North-South (from European countries to the colonies in the tropical world), South-North migration was very limited. However, this pattern has completely changed in the post-war period, with Western countries facing an unprecedented influx of non-Western migrants (see figure 1.1).

In Western Europe, rapid post-war economic growth and an increasing shortage of semi- and unskilled laborers transformed countries from labor exporters to labor importers. Initially, in the 1950s and early 1960s, most labor migrants originated from southern European countries (Spain, Portugal, Italy, Yugoslavia, Greece) or from former colonies. As of the mid-1960s, most migrant workers came from the southern and eastern Mediterranean countries, notably Turkey and Morocco. Since the 1980s, most southern European countries have become immigration countries themselves. For European societies, this large-scale influx of migrants from mainly non-Western countries was a completely new experience. For

countries like the United States and Canada, and also Australia and New Zealand, large-scale immigration was not a new phenomenon, but the increasing proportion of non-Western immigrants was.

The global post-WWII international migration movements have increasingly become South-South and South-North. While acknowledging that most migration is among developing countries (CDR 2002), an increasing number of developing countries have become firmly integrated within migration systems that link them to rich countries (Schaeffer 1993:43). It is not the relative number of international migrants, but the number of countries involved in international migration that has increased (Zlotnik 1998). Migration patterns also have the tendency to become increasingly diverse and complex: many countries have become both labor importers and exporters. Instead of being colonized, populations of developing countries have emigrated themselves to developed countries, and several non-Western countries, such as the Asian “tigers”, Middle-East oil states, South-Africa, and Nigeria, have become labor importers in their own right.

**Figure 1.1. Annual number of migrants from “South” to “North” (1960-1989)**



Source: UNPD Population Information Network

This reversal of global migration flows implying the settlement of large groups of non-Western immigrants has literally brought “other worlds” to Western nations. This increasing visibility of migration and direct contact with other cultures may partly explain why, in the West, people at least *perceive* that migration has been on the rise in the late twentieth century and that this will remain so in the early twenty-first century. Large-scale migration from the developing to the developed world seems to raise deep fears in the West. Instead of being seen as a useful means towards development—as used to be predominantly the case until the early 1970s—migration is increasingly perceived as a problem and even as an outright threat.

Since the mid-1970s, opposition to immigration in Europe and the US has increased. With the slowdown in economic growth and rising unemployment, migration has come to be perceived as a burden by most of the destination countries (Schiff 1996:2). Increasing numbers of migrants *seem* to be knocking on the rich world’s doors, and are perceived as a threat not only to economic growth and to the welfare state, but also to general social, cultural, and political stability. In the post-9/11 era, popular perceptions that migrants form an internal threat to Western societies seem to have only further increased and the polarization between autochthonous and immigrant population seems to be increasing.

In the late twentieth century, international migration was firmly placed at the top of national and international political agendas. Migration from the developing to the developed world is today a subject of increasing concern. Images of undocumented immigrants

desperately trying to cross the Rio Grande between Mexico and the United States or the Strait of Gibraltar between Morocco and Spain contribute to perceptions that migration is growing at an ever increasing rate. Especially in most European and East-Asian countries that lack a long history of immigration, politicians seem increasingly responsive to public fears of being “engulfed” by immigrants by reasserting the need to control or stem these flows.

In political and academic circles, migration—perceived as “increasingly massive”—is typically seen as the outgrowth of all kinds of human misery, and future scenarios tend to be alarmist:

population pressures, opportunity gradients and conditions of tyranny will have generated waves of migration towards the North and the West, which it will be impossible to contain. Our successors are likely to see mass migration on an unprecedented scale . . . . At the extreme it is not difficult to imagine innumerable immigrants landing on the Northern shores of the Mediterranean and consisting of the hungry and the desperate. Similarly, massive emigration from Latin America to the United States is to be expected, while population pressure in China may seek relief by entering an empty Siberia . . . . the rising of the sea level as a result of the greenhouse effect could greatly increase migration pressures, for example, in Bangladesh and Egypt (King and Schneider 1991:62-3).

In the developed world, such common views have led to an increasing public and also scholarly (Golini 1996:338) call to stop or at least decrease “undesirable” migration. The dominant narratives in most policy and some academic circles seem to be based not only on the assumption that migration is at an all-time high, but also that migration as a phenomenon is a threat to social and economic stability and development. South-North migration tends to be seen as a problematic phenomenon caused by a lack of development (which, it is believed, makes people move) in the countries and regions of origin and as a potential threat to both the sending (e.g., the “brain drain”) and receiving societies. At its best, migration is perceived as a necessary evil to fill in shortages within particular sections of the labor market, and is much less frequently seen as contributing to development. Thus, migration and development are increasingly treated as contradictory phenomena. Rather than migration *and* development, it seems there can be only development *or* migration.

Some scholars have argued that such negative perceptions cannot be dissociated from more fundamental “sedentarist” conservatism in Western discourse, in which migration tends to receive a generally negative press, and in which “population movements, whether haphazard or ordered, are regarded as a threat to stability and a challenge to established lifestyles” (McDowell and De Haan 1997:3, cf. Van der Post 1987:9). Concerns about migration seem to increase if majority groups perceive the settlement of new groups as a threat<sup>1</sup>. As such, this is not a new phenomenon. For instance, large-scale rural-to-urban migration has almost universally been perceived as a threat. Back in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, European *citoyens* and urban-based governments perceived rural

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<sup>1</sup> However, such worries mainly seem to apply to low-skilled and relatively poor immigrants. In Europe, for example, there is little resistance to highly-skilled migrant workers from Japan or Taiwan. In 2000, France invited Moroccan ITC experts and the Netherlands welcomed South African nurses. Furthermore, migration by Europeans to the Americas has also not been perceived as an equally big threat. That the concomitant genocide of native populations was not perceived as a “threat to established lifestyles” reveals the strong ethnocentric component of contemporary thinking on migration. It seems only now that the dominant global migration flows seem to have reversed, and that the settled populations of most developed countries are being confronted with permanent settlement of large groups of immigrants not sharing their culture and religion, that international migration has become a major issue of concern.

immigrants as a threat to their established lifestyles, in similar ways as urban-based elite groups in developing countries perceive them nowadays (De Soto 2000).

Sedentarist notions perceiving migration as potentially destabilizing seem to be partly behind the negativist bias against migration. It is indeed striking that many scientific studies and the overwhelming majority of policy documents seem to aim either implicitly or explicitly at stopping or at least decreasing internal and international migration (Todaro and Maruszko 1987:111). Most policies are implicitly or explicitly negative on migration, and the control and limiting of migration remains a stated goal (McDowell and De Haan 1997). It is intriguing that such migration-decreasing aims are mostly formulated without explaining *why* this would actually be desirable. This exemplifies that migration tends to be put *a priori* in a strongly negative light.

Within the developing world itself, there has been a great deal of concern about internal rural-to-urban migration. The popular perception is that of increasing numbers of poor fleeing rural areas towards the “bright lights” of the city (Harris and Todaro 1970:126). Increasing poverty, population pressure, desertification (cf. Schwartz and Notini 1994), war, and even “globalization” (cf. Diatta and Mbow 1999) seem to have intensified the *rural exodus*. Settling down in slums and often unemployed, rural-urban migrants seem to be destined to live in misery, forming a social volcano of discontent and a potential threat to political stability. This *rural exodus* is also perceived as severely hampering development in the areas migrants leave behind. As with international migration, the aim of policymakers and scholars alike seems to be to stem the migration flow (cf. Epstein and Jezeph 2001).

Large-scale rural-to-urban labor migration within or between developing countries (to the detriment of traditional, predominantly circular, seasonal, and rural-to-rural migration patterns) seems to be a largely late nineteenth century and twentieth century phenomenon. However, while recognizing the historical uniqueness of each specific migration experience, the processes of economic development and “modernization” seem to be universally associated with the increasing concentration of economic and social activities in towns and cities. In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, Europe and North America also witnessed a massive transfer of economic agents from agriculture to urban-oriented sectors. In many ways, development seems to be conditional on rural-to-urban migration (De Soto 2000; McGee 1994:iii; Skeldon 1997:196; Todaro 1969:139;). In this historical light, it is not surprising that the numerous attempts by governments to turn the tide, that is, to stop the *rural exodus* and to “fix” rural populations on their homesteads, typically fail (Bebbington 1999; De Haan *et al.* 2000). Research seems to indicate that rural people mostly have good reasons to migrate to urban areas, where they have a higher chance to find employment and where they have better access to all kinds of public amenities.

Moreover, as with international migration, there has also been a tendency to overstate the magnitude of rural-to-urban migration in the developing world. In general, the most important cause of rapid urban growth is natural population increase, not migration (Skeldon 1997:8-9). Moreover, in most countries, rural populations have continued to grow and have not decreased as a whole. Therefore, the metaphor *exodus* might not be a particularly accurate choice to indicate contemporary processes of rural-to-urban migration.

Within the developing world, the attitude towards international migration is rather ambiguous. There is a rather positive inclination towards migration of lower-educated workers to industrial countries (e.g., migration of “guestworkers”), partly because of the hard currency remittances this generates. However, there is a lot of concern surrounding the human capital flight of higher educated people or the “brain drain” (Adams 1969; Baldwin 1970), which is generally perceived as detrimental to national development—in spite of evidence that there might also be a “brain gain” alongside the “brain drain” (Stark *et al.* 1997; cf. Cohen 2003:9). In any case, this “brain drain” has proven to be notoriously difficult to curb as

long as economic and political conditions in the countries of origin do not show significant improvements.

## 1.2. Turning the tide: aid and trade instead of migration?

As far as European and East-Asian governments have been interested in the issue of migration and development, it has mainly been from the utilitarian perspective of stopping migration, reflecting a fundamental belief that migration and development are processes that are more or less negatively correlated. In the years following the 1973 Oil Crisis and the subsequent economic recession, European governments started to implement increasingly restrictive immigration policies. In addition, they started to experiment with specific measures to discourage family reunification and to encourage migrants to return to their home countries, such as departure bonuses, mother-tongue teaching for migrants' children, training programs before return, and investment programs for return migrants (Abadan-Unat *et al.* 1976; Entzinger 1985; Obdeijn 1993; Pekin 1986; Penninx 1982).

Such return policies typically failed, largely because of the lack of opportunities for economic reintegration in most countries of origin, which continued to suffer from high unemployment, political instability and repression, and unfavorable developmental conditions in general. Moreover, return migrants were generally not allowed to go back to the receiving countries if their investment project failed or if they failed to re-adapt. This made migrants decide to stay "to be on the safe side" (Entzinger 1985:263-275). Return policies did not lead to a significant increase in return migration. Instead, they sometimes had the adverse effect. When the former Federal Republic of Germany, for example, tried to discourage family reunification in the late 1970s, family migration increased, as many migrants feared that, eventually, family reunification might be forbidden entirely (Entzinger 1985:267). Such policies have not contributed to positive attitudes between migrants and residing populations, leading to a climate of suspicion towards Western governments among migrants as well.

During the 1980s, policy makers in Europe started to acknowledge that many "guestworkers" would stay permanently. This led to a shift in policies, in which increasing attention was paid to development aid as a means to promote development and, hence, curb further immigration. The underlying belief was that by addressing the alleged "root causes" of migration (economic underdevelopment and poverty), migration could be reduced. In the same vein, policymakers, pressure groups, and scholars advocating trade liberalization vis-à-vis developing countries typically assumed that this would boost development, and, hence, ultimately lower South-North migration. Trade policy has been considered by both the EU (e.g., partnerships with southern and eastern Mediterranean countries) and the US (e.g., NAFTA) as a means to reduce migration (Schiff 1996:4; Martin 2002:2).

The anti-migrationist aim underpinning aid and trade policies is hardly hidden by policy makers. For instance, in 1994, the European Ministers for Development Cooperation requested the European Commission to investigate the possibility of using development aid to diminish migration pressures (DGIS 1996). In a policy document, the Dutch Ministry for Development Cooperation stated that well-coordinated development policies could, particularly in the longer term, contribute to reducing unwanted migration. The Ministry also pleaded for the establishment of "flexible" employment programs in the countries of origin, and asserted its support for a "general remigration program, aiming at the voluntary return of migrants to developing countries" (DGIS 1996:44).

Similarly, at the Euro-Mediterranean Conference which was held in Barcelona in 1995, the developing countries in the southern and eastern Mediterranean and the EU countries

agreed to “strengthen cooperation in order to ease migration pressure” (DGIS 1996; for other examples see Ghosh 1992a:390) Another example of development programs with a strong anti-migrationist undertone are the French-Senegalese programs to promote the voluntary return of Senegalese, by providing assistance to migrant workers for reinsertion, in the forms of credit funds, training-for-return programs, and so on. These programs aim to

reverse the exodus of the Senegalese. . . . explain to people the problems and hazards of emigration. . . . demonstrate to them [populations in areas with high emigration] that their territory is full of gainful opportunities” which they can exploit in association with Senegalese living abroad (Diatta and Mbow 1999:251)

In order to convince the Senegalese that it is for their own good not to go abroad, and to urge migrants to “return and invest”, they advocate, amongst others, the “publication of a brochure on business opportunities” in Senegal (Diatta and Mbow 1999:253).

Dominant Western perceptions of migration (and development) testify to an ethnocentric view (cf. De Mas 1991). The bulk of the popular and scholarly literature on South-North migration is written from the perspective of the receiving countries. There is a very impressive body of literature on problems of economic, social, and cultural integration of migrants and ethnic minorities in the newly emerging multicultural societies of Western Europe, North America and several Asian countries (cf. Castles and Miller 1993). In comparison, there has been relatively little attention given to the issue of migration and development from the perspective of the migrant sending areas, the only notable exception being the ongoing and controversial “brain drain” debate (Adams 1969; Baldwin 1970; Beijer 1970; Muir 1969; Golub 1996; Oommen 1989; Stark *et al.* 1997). However, the actual developmental impact of migration on migrant sending areas has been relatively ignored over the past decades, in particular concerning migration to Europe.

The relative lack of interest in the developmental causes and impacts of migration from the perspective of migrant sending regions and countries in the developing world has hampered a proper understanding of how the processes of migration and development are reciprocally related. The one-sided focus on the receiving end has also hampered the design of more realistic migration policies, since the developmental roots of migration are largely ignored and therefore misunderstood.

For instance, policy makers and many academics often assume that poverty breeds labor migration, and that economic development would therefore lead to less migration. However, as we will see in chapter 2, the paradox is that economic development initially tends to lead to *more* migration instead of less. Development tends to stimulate migration in the short and medium term as it raises people’s aspirations and actual ability to move abroad. The idea that development leads to less migration is based on the notion that the poorest (“the hungry and the desperate”—cf. King and Schneider 1991:62-3) have the highest tendency to migrate. In reality, the poorest tend to migrate less than those who are slightly wealthier, as they are more restrained by the high opportunity costs and risks which migration involves (Hearing and Van der Erf 2001). This seems particularly true for international migration.

Therefore, alarmist visions of migration and development stem from an erroneous analysis of the problem. They typically ignore how both phenomena are intrinsically connected and how difficult or impossible it is to “turn the tide”. Besides overestimating the ability of governments and aid agencies to promote development, the erratic point of departure of trade and foreign aid policies to reduce migration is that development will lead to significantly decreased migration. Schiff (1994) convincingly demonstrated that in a labor-abundant economy, trade liberalization, foreign aid, and remittances will increase income

from labor and improve workers' ability to cover the costs of migration. Consequently, South-North migration will increase (cf. Martin and Taylor 1996).

Development not only facilitates migration, but is also conditional on the transfer of rural labor to urban sectors within and across national boundaries. In general, migration seems a constituent part of broader processes of development, which can only be stopped under totalitarian conditions (cf. Skeldon 1997:202). Therefore, in an increasingly interdependent and globalizing world, the whole assumption that migration can be curbed to a significant extent seems unrealistic.

Moreover, through the establishment of transnational networks, migration movements tend to gain their own momentum over time, and have, therefore, become notoriously difficult for governments to control. Network connections are a form of social capital which reduce the risks and opportunity costs of migration, and which people draw upon to gain access to foreign employment (Massey *et al.* 1993:448-50; cf. Klaver 1997; Waldorf 1998). Increasing legal restrictions on migration, partly driven by public pressure, are at odds with processes of "globalization", implying increasing flows of capital, goods, and information.

The combination of high and even increasing global income disparities and a lack of political freedom and instability in large parts of the developed world, as well as tight labor markets in specific economic sectors and the aging populations in the developed countries, is not likely to result in a decrease in future migration. Rather, it is likely that undocumented labor migration and refugee movements will persist or increase, facilitated by extensive migration networks, whereas highly skilled laborers will continue to be welcomed (Salt 1987).

### 1.3. The age of remittances

Western-centered perceptions of migration and development tend to ignore the fact that for numerous people living in the developing world, migration is not a threat, but the hope of a better future. Equally, the governments of sending countries have high expectations of the labor they "export", expecting this to result in a flow back of remittance capital. Moreover, they tend to expect that emigrants will invest considerable amounts of money in productive enterprises upon their return.

The fact that internal and international migration is greatly contributing to sustaining the livelihoods of hundreds of millions of people in developing countries is not fully appreciated by policy makers. Whereas policy makers in developing and developed countries alike have been concentrating on designing rural development schemes and return migration programs, numerous labor migrants and their family members have been actively contributing to their home economies by sending remittances.

Migrant remittances have become increasingly important for most developing countries. More and more, people initially migrate individually, leaving their families behind, but sending considerable amounts of goods and money back to sustain them. In the final decades of the twentieth century, the reduction of costs of transportation and communication and the global expansion of banking systems have facilitated the maintenance of intensive, intergenerational links between migrants and "stay-behinds" and the formation of so-called transnational communities. This has facilitated increasing flows of information, goods, and money between migrant sending and receiving countries. These processes have certainly played a major role in the enormous increase of international remittance flows in the past few decades.

Remittances sent back to migrant sending regions play a vital role in alleviating poverty and sustaining and improving livelihoods. As Jones (1998a:4) argued, migrant remittances are a safety net for relatively poor areas, and remittances are freer from political barriers and controls than either product or other capital flows. Remittances are usually destined for relatively “backward”, rural regions that are most in need of development capital, and they more often help preserve rural livelihoods than lead to their demise. However, it should be noted that, as with the process of migration itself, the benefits of remittances are selective, and do not tend to flow to the poorest members of communities (cf. CDR 2002:2; Schiff 1994:15).

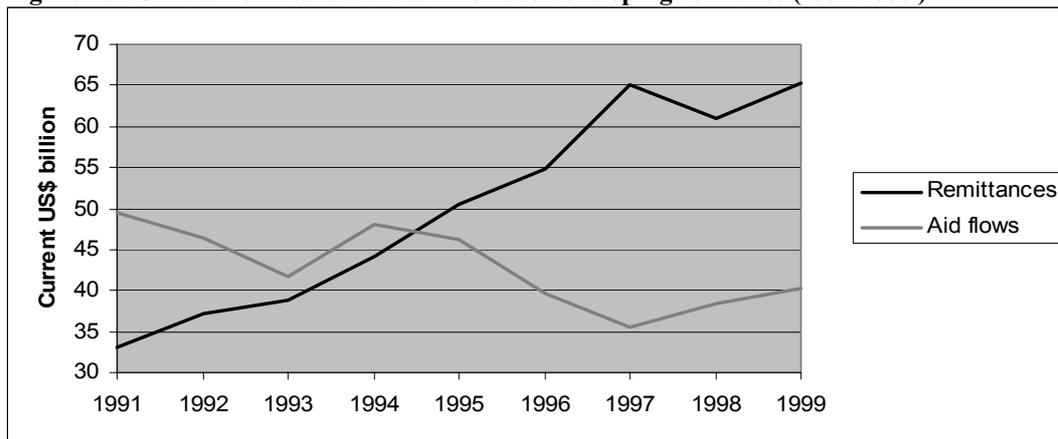
If we are not living in the age of migration, we are certainly living in the age of remittances. Total world remittance credits (the sum of worker remittances, compensation of employees, and migrant transfers) rose from US\$ 2 billion in 1970 to US\$ 28 billion in 1988. In 2000, official estimates of the total value of migrant remittances were in the order of US\$ 100 billion annually, some 65 percent of which go to developing countries (Gammeltoft 2002:1). Since this does not include transfers in cash and kind and remittances sent through informal channels, the actual amount of remittances is likely to be substantially higher.

As figure 1.2 shows, remittances to developing countries more than doubled between 1991 and 1999. In contrast, official aid flows fell through most of the 1990s. Accumulated over the 1990s, officially reported remittances to developing countries have been approximately 20 percent higher than official development assistance (Gammeltoft 2002:2). This may put into a more realistic perspective the argument that development aid is a means to reduce migration pressures (Russell 1992:269). Migrant remittances seem a more effective instrument for income re-distribution than large, bureaucratic development programs or development aid. An important characteristic of remittances is that they tend to flow directly back to the family members of the migrants, and do not have to be distributed through formal bureaucratic hierarchies or be “trickled down” through the economy.

Governments tend to focus on the importance of remittances as a source of foreign currency and their potential contribution to economic growth in modern sectors, such as industry and agriculture. This view coincides with a neglect of the direct importance of remittances at the micro and meso level, that is, the way in which migrants can be agents themselves, who migrate to sustain or to improve their livelihoods, to fulfill their ambitions, to live in better security and health, and to increase the options they have in life.

Migrant remittances have been shown to “play an important role in poverty alleviation for migrant households and sub-national areas of out-migration . . . [and] improve the ability of migrant families to educate and provide health care for their children ” (Russell 1995). Keely and Tran (1989:514) argued that “it is difficult to imagine a mechanism for the transfer of so much capital to so many (and often poor) countries and to the benefit of so many of their citizens”. There is probably no other, more “bottom-up” way of redistributing and enhancing welfare among populations in developing countries than these remittances (Jones 1998b).

It is not the poorest, but typically the higher lower and lower middle income countries, especially those located relatively close to developed countries or with particular colonial bonds, that have experienced the highest international migration rates (Skeldon 1997). Countries such as Mexico, Morocco, Egypt, Turkey, and the Philippines have witnessed out-migration on unprecedented scales, and remittances have become a crucial economic pillar at both the macro and micro level. As a percentage of their GNP, the Middle East, North Africa, and the Caribbean receive the largest inflows of remittances. However, for many low-income countries in Sub-Saharan Africa and South-Asia, remittances are also becoming increasingly important and constitute a much higher share of total international capital flows to poor countries compared to middle-income countries (Gammeltoft 2002:2)

**Figure 1.2. Official remittance and aid flows to developing countries (1991-1999)**

Source: Gammeltoft (2002:17); based on data from IMF Balance of Payments Statistics Yearbook and World Bank: Global Development Finance 2001

It has often been predicted that the surge in remittances would be a temporary phenomenon. From this, remittances are seen as an unreliable source of revenue, which cannot contribute to sustained growth, and which could create a “dangerous” dependency. This argument was partly based on the prevailing assumption that, in the wake of the 1973 Oil Crisis, the era of massive South-North labor migration had largely ended. For instance, in Europe it was expected that most “temporary” Mediterranean guestworkers would return (Pekin 1986). However, this has generally not happened. South-North migration has been more persistent than was expected.

In addition, there has been a tendency to underestimate the durability of transnational and transgenerational family linkages and, hence, remittance flows. Remittances have generally proven to be a much more stable and reliable source of income than more volatile sources of foreign exchange, such as FDI (foreign direct investment) and development aid (Gammeltoft 2002; Keely and Tran 1989). The assumption that migration movements as well as remittance flows will experience a rapid and steep decline in the near future can therefore be rejected (Keely and Tran 1989).

#### 1.4. The migration and development debate

Few would deny the direct contribution of remittances to the livelihoods of families left behind. However, the question of whether migration and remittances can bring about sustained development and economic growth in migrant sending areas and countries has been the subject of heated debate over the past four decades, in which the more pessimistic views have tended to dominate (Hayes 1991; Keely and Tran 1989; Lewis 1986; Papademetriou 1985; Taylor 1999).

Developmentalist “migration optimists” tend to argue that migration leads to a North-South transfer of investment capital and accelerates the exposure of traditional communities to liberal, rational and democratic ideas, modern knowledge, and education. Within this perspective, returned migrants in particular are perceived as important agents of change, innovators, and investors.

On the other hand, structuralist “migration pessimists”—often inspired by dependency theory—have argued that migration and concomitant changes such as growing inequality and individualism lead to the withdrawal of human capital and the breakdown of traditional,

stable village communities and their economies, and the development of dependent, passive, non-productive communities, which become increasingly dependent on remittances. Moreover, they argue that remittances are mainly spent on luxury goods and “consumptive” investments, and rarely invested in productive enterprises. In this perspective, South-North migration is perceived as discouraging the autonomous economic growth of migrant sending countries (cf. Durand *et al.* 1996).

In the 1980s and 1990s, the new economics of labor migration (NELM) emerged as a response to both developmentalist theory (the “migration optimists”) and structuralist theory (the “migration pessimists”). Both approaches seemed too rigid to deal with the complex realities of the migration and development issue. NELM offered a much more subtle view on migration and development, in which both positive and negative development responses are possible. Instead of separating determinants and impacts of migration—which has been common—NELM postulates that the factors determining migration decisions both at the sending and receiving end are also likely to shape remittance and investment behavior (Taylor 1999:64-3).

These improved theoretical insights into migration and development interactions were mainly due to the rise in sound empirical micro-studies, mainly conducted in Mexico. NELM scholars criticized the weak methodological foundations, poor analytical quality, and empiricist character of most prior research, which typically failed to take into account the complex, often indirect, positive impacts of migration and remittances on migrant sending communities as a whole, including nonmigrant households (Taylor *et al.* 1996a).

The sparse amount of pertinent micro-level data has long constrained the fields of international migration research. Although many social scientists have addressed migration in their work, most studies have been largely descriptive-inductive and were not designed to explicitly test hypotheses on migration and development interactions. As a result of this theoretical void and the general lack of a common thread in the debate—or even the absence of a common theoretical debate—most empirical work remains isolated, scattered, and theoretically underexplored. I would therefore advocate a stronger connection between theory and empiry, which can only be achieved if researchers try to design their studies in such a way that they are able to add to the theoretical debate. The breakthrough that NELM has established over the past two decades proves the strong potential of theoretically embedded empirical research on migration and development.

There is now widespread consensus among migration researchers that empirical micro-level studies generally provide richer and more detailed and reliable data than those available from official sources (Fawcett and Arnold 1987:1523-1537; Sabagh 1997). More detailed field studies are essential in enabling us to evaluate existing theories and to offer insights that will lead to their improvement.

## **1.5. Migration and development research in Morocco**

The overwhelming majority of theoretically embedded micro-studies which have recently been published in international, refereed journals are based on NELM-inspired research in Mexico done by (mostly US-based) researchers. Other countries, such as Turkey (cf. Day and İçduygu 1997; İçduygu *et al.* 2001), the Philippines (cf. Rahman 2000), India (cf. Zacharia 2001), Egypt (cf. Adams 1991; 1993), and some countries in sub-Saharan Africa (cf. De Haan *et al.* 2000; Lucas and Stark 1985; Lucas 1987) have received relatively limited attention over the past two decades. With a few exceptions (cf. Adams 1991; 1993, for Egypt) there is a near complete absence of empirical micro-studies done outside Latin America that systematically

explore the developmental impact of migration at the local and/or the regional level. This empirical vacuum hinders the evaluation of hypotheses generated by NELM-and other recent theoretical models for most countries in South-America, Africa, and Asia.

This particularly applies to the Mediterranean region (Massey *et al.* 1998:126). It is remarkable that the issue of migration and development in migrant sending areas in the Mediterranean received extensive attention in the 1970s, but has largely disappeared from the empirical research agenda since then. Most recent studies (cf. King 1996) examining this issue are either very general country-level studies based on secondary (macro-) data or literature reviews based on earlier studies from the 1970s or early 1980s, whereas the migration and development context of the Mediterranean as well as the theoretical debate have radically changed since then.

In the 1980s and 1990s, most European researchers seemed to turn their backs on the migrant sending countries in the Mediterranean. The growing awareness that most guestworkers would not return probably explains why the focus shifted from the sending to the receiving countries. The general focus of recent migration literature on the European-Mediterranean region has been on the “integration” of migrants in the “receiving” countries, the emergence of multicultural societies and transnational identities, and the role of networks in perpetuating the migration process.

Compared to the voluminous literature on integration and multicultural issues, the general lack of interest in the situation of the sending countries is striking, which apparently reflects an ethnocentric bias in migration research (De Mas 1991; Michalak 1997). The broader question of migration and development in the context of Mediterranean-European migration has hardly been addressed through systematic empirical research recently. In the relatively few cases where large research projects have been funded that involve research in sending countries, these mainly concern research on the “root causes” of migration and the role of migration networks (cf. Hearing and Van der Erf 2001). The effects of migration on development in sending areas have received little attention.

Consequently, research emanating from the Mediterranean region has only played a minor role in the theoretical migration and development debate over the past two decades. This especially applies to Morocco, which is surprising regarding its prominent position among the world’s migrant sending countries. Since the late 1960s, Morocco has been one of the main countries of origin for immigrants to European countries like France, the Netherlands, Belgium, Germany, and, and more recently, Italy and Spain. Currently over two million people of Moroccan descent live abroad, and remittances have become among the country’s most important sources of foreign exchange.

In the 1970s, the REMPLD (Re-Integration of Emigrant Manpower and Promotion of Local Opportunities for Development) project marked both the beginning and early climax of systematic research on migration and development in Morocco (Heinemeijer *et al.* 1976, 1977). The project was initiated and funded in 1974 by the Dutch Ministry of Development Cooperation in order to explore the ways in which international labor migration could contribute to development in the sending countries (Van Dijk *et al.* 1978). This was in a time when it was generally expected that labor migration from countries such as Morocco would be temporary, and, consequently, that most migrants would return. Large-scale emigration to Europe, which gained full momentum in the late 1960s, was still very new.

The REMPLD project entailed parallel research in Morocco, Turkey (Abadan-Unat *et al.* 1976), and Tunisia (Koelstra and Tieleman 1976). In Morocco, a team of Moroccan and Dutch geographers, sociologists, and economists carried out the research. The effects of rural out-migration to European countries on two rural regions (the Rif and the southwestern Sous region) were compared through an extensive survey conducted in several villages that included both migrants and nonmigrant households.

The findings of the REMPLOD project gave a thoughtful and comprehensive view of the impact of migration on regional development at a relatively early stage of massive migration from Morocco to Europe. The project revealed that, although migrants showed a relatively high propensity to invest in local enterprises, and did so more than nonmigrants, the investment opportunities for migrants in their regions of origin were very limited. Moreover, migrants were generally lowly qualified and did not tend to return. The conclusion was, therefore, that economic development in the regions of origin was a *prerequisite* for return migration and remittance investment rather than a *consequence* of migration (Heinemeijer *et al.* 1976).

Unfortunately, interest in such elaborate and comparative studies on migration and development largely faded in the 1980s and 1990s. Although numerous regional studies have since been conducted, their empiricist nature and generally weak methodological design do not allow the testing of hypotheses on migration and development relationships. Bencherifa (1993:51) commented that, notwithstanding the relative abundance of studies examining Moroccan migration, the focus has been on the causes and morphology of migration and that the impact of migration on development in the areas of origin has rarely been at the center of attention, having mostly been mentioned “in passing”.

The relatively few studies that have paid more substantial attention to this issue have been rather pessimistic concerning the impact of migration, and seem largely to support the premises of structuralism in general and dependency theory in particular. In this perspective, migration is generally seen as a process that drains rural areas of their most valuable labor forces, causing agricultural decline and an increasing and potentially harmful dependency of these regions on remittances. Therefore, instead of contributing to development, migration rather reinforces under-development according to most of these studies (Aït Hamza 1988; Lazaar 1987; Lebon 1984).

Nevertheless, the pessimistic tone of these studies seemed based more on deductive reasoning than on actual empirical findings able to sustain such conclusions. For instance, hardly any study systematically compares migrants and nonmigrants, although this seems essential in order to be able to assess migration impacts. This poor state-of-the-art seems to hold for Mediterranean migration and development research in general (Massey *et al.* 1998:126).

A general paralysis has unfortunately pervaded thinking on migration and development in the Mediterranean, in which the dominant “truth” that migration does not contribute to “genuine” development in sending areas (cf. King 1996) is not sufficiently challenged by fresh empirical evidence. This makes the debate somehow self-affirmative, leading researchers to repeat conclusions such as “it is a well-known fact that many migrant workers have been able to save considerable sums of money, but if these savings were transferred to their home country they were seldom invested in a productive manner” (Entzinger 1985:268).

As from the late 1980s, however, some new Moroccan studies on the impact of migration and development in migrant sending areas, mainly conducted by geographers, have appeared which have questioned the unilaterally pessimistic conclusions of earlier research. Bencherifa (1991, 1993) injected new life into the debate on migration and development in Morocco by stressing the spatial heterogeneity of migration impacts and by calling for a more subtle view of this issue.

Several mostly regional-geographical studies, which were conducted in the southern oasis of Figuig (Bencherifa and Popp 1990) and in the northern area around Nador (Bencherifa and Popp 2000) seemed to indicate that migration, under certain circumstances, has significantly contributed to processes of local and regional development. Although migrants indeed spend money on basic luxury items and the construction of modern houses,

remittances are also used for the purchase of agricultural land and equipment or the establishment of several enterprises for their families.

However, most research done in Morocco has remained strongly empiricist and seems largely disconnected from the broader theoretical debate on migration and development. Most studies have not been targeted at testing premises of recent theoretical perspectives on migration and development at all. Moreover, as these studies are rarely published in major international academic journals, valuable research results remain largely unknown to the larger academic community. This is both surprising and unfortunate when we realize that Morocco is one of the major labor-exporting countries in the world. Morocco is one of those typical “labor frontier countries” (Skeldon 1997), where migration has affected everyday life of most families and where migration has transformed society.

It is a missed opportunity that the general theoretical debate on migration and development is not “fed” by empirical work conducted in one of the world’s leading emigration countries. Perhaps even more importantly, a better understanding of the developmental causes and impacts of migration from Morocco—located only 13 kilometers off Europe’s south coast—can contribute to the formulation of more realistic policies towards migration and development. It is time to go beyond naïve ideas on “development *or* migration” and instead see migration as a constituent part of development processes. Improving insights into actual migration-development interactions and possible obstacles to migrants’ investments—seen from the perspective of the migrants themselves—will probably be more valuable for policy formulation than unrealistic legalist approaches aimed at “just stopping” migration.

Therefore, it seems desirable to create a better connection between the general theoretical debate on migration and development and the Moroccan experience. Embedding empirical research in a broader, NELM-based theoretical framework will—instead of reinventing the wheel—also provide us with a set of readily testable hypotheses that will guide and focus research.

## **1.6. Aims and structure of this study**

This study attempts to establish a connection between contemporary migration and development theory and the specific Moroccan migration and development experience. This is done through detailed and extensive empirical research in the Todgha valley, a river oasis located in the Province of Ouarzazate and part of so-called “Presaharan” Morocco. This region, predominantly a peasant economy until French colonization, has been characterized by intensive and increasing out-migration to various internal and international destinations over the twentieth century.

This study examines the linkages between labor migration and development, with a theoretical focus on the impact of internal and international labor migration on development processes in migrant sending areas in developing countries. The main aim of this study is to contribute to the contemporary debate on migration and development, which is largely based on insights derived from empirical research conducted in other regions than the Maghreb. The study has been designed to test and refine at least some of the prevailing hypotheses in this general debate, which will be presented in chapter 2. On the basis of data collected among 507 households in six villages in the Todgha valley over the period September 1998-July 2000, it will be explored to what extent current insights into migration and development hold for this study, and in what respects they might possibly need adaptation in the light of this particular Moroccan experience.

Acknowledging that a strict distinction between labor migration and other types of migration cannot always be made, this study will primarily focus on labor migration. However, it will consider family migration—which is closely intertwined with labor migration and often functions as labor migration “in disguise”—and student migration, which is both a precursor to and a consequence of labor migration. The study deals with both internal and international migration movements, assuming that both movements are intrinsically interrelated, and should therefore be considered simultaneously. This study specifically examines the issue of migration and development from the perspective of the sending areas. The migrants’ position at the destination and the internal functioning of migrant networks do not form part of this study, since doing justice to these issues would require at least two additional studies.

Besides contributing to the theoretical debate with empirical evidence from a major labor-exporting country that has hardly played a role in this debate so far, this study also hopes to offer greater insight into the specific characteristics of migration-development interactions in Morocco, which have not before been studied within a NELM-based theoretical perspective. The final aim of this study is to offer greater insight into the factors that explain the spatio-temporal differentiation in migration-development interactions. This study not only aims to study the (positive or negative) impact of migration on development in the Todgha valley as a whole, but also the principles determining the heterogeneity of the interactions between migration and development. As we will explain in chapter 2, this not only pertains to spatial heterogeneity, but also to the differentiated impact migration may have in the different fields of “development” (e.g., education, material and social well-being, culture, agriculture, and other economic sectors), distributional issues (inequality), and temporal aspects.

The structure of this thesis is as follows. In chapter 2, the theoretical debate on migration and development is extensively reviewed. The aim will be to link theoretical perspectives on the causes of migration to theoretical perspectives on the impacts of migration at the sending end. I will argue that it is possible to integrate insights derived from transitional migration theory, the new economics of labor migration, and so-called livelihood approaches into a “structuralist” and “new regional geographical” view on migration and development, in which different development responses to migration are possible within a certain latitude set by structural, constraining conditions. Narrow or vague concepts of “development” have severely hampered a transparent debate on migration and development. I will therefore propose to apply the “capabilities approach” developed by Amartya Sen to the migration and development debate.

Chapter 3 presents the problem statement and research questions of the empirical study in the Todgha valley. The chapter will equally justify, present, and evaluate the research methodologies used. Chapter 4 examines the evolution of migration patterns within and from Morocco over the twentieth century, including the macro-economic interests migration represent for the country, government policies aimed at influencing migration patterns, and the investment behavior of migrants.

In the remainder of this thesis, the empirical results of the fieldwork will be presented. Chapter 5 gives a general introduction to the Todgha valley. Chapter 6 provides an overview of the character, evolution, selection and developmental causes of migration from, to, and within the Todgha. Chapter 7 will analyze what role migration has played in changing oasis livelihoods, and how migration has affected the well-being and capabilities of oasis households. Chapters 8 and 9 will provide an assessment of the way in which migration has affected investment patterns and the effects of migration on regional economic development in general. Chapter 8 will examine the role of migration in transformations in the agricultural sector, chapter 9 will give attention to investments in non-agricultural domains of the regional economy, and will equally look at the impact of migration on the educational levels of

household members. Chapter 10 examines the role of migration in social, cultural, and institutional change, and how migration has affected oasis life in more general terms. Chapter 11 will then summarize and integrate the analyses of the preceding chapters, and will assess to what extent the results of the study have confirmed, refuted, or modified the theoretical insights on the interaction between migration and development that will be presented in the second chapter.



## Migration and development theory

### 2.1. General migration theories

Over the twentieth century, several theoretical perspectives on migration have been developed. However, they have generally evolved in isolation from one another, and show important differences in their level of analysis as well as paradigmatic and thematic orientation. One of the possible reasons for this lack of coherence is that migration has never been the exclusive domain of one of the social sciences, but has been studied by most of them. Differences in paradigmatic orientation and level of analysis have led to widespread controversy on the nature, causes, and consequences of migration. In their highly influential review article, Massey *et al.* (1993:432) stated that popular thinking on international migration

remains mired in nineteenth-century concepts, models, and assumptions . . . . a full understanding of contemporary migration processes will not be achieved by relying on the tools of one discipline alone, or by focusing on a single level of analysis. Rather, their complex, multifaceted nature requires a sophisticated theory that incorporates a variety of perspectives, levels, and assumptions

Over the past decades, several migration researchers have bemoaned the absence of a comprehensive migration theory, and there have been numerous calls to develop just such a general migration theory (cf. Lee 1966; Massey *et al.* 1998; Zelinsky 1971). Among the main reasons explaining why it is so difficult to generalize about the causes and consequences of migration are the diversity and complexity of the phenomenon as well as the difficulty of separating migration from other socio-economic and political processes. Moreover, it is often difficult to combine macro- and micro-level theories of migration. This has led scholars to conclude that there will probably never be a general theory on migration (Salt 1987; Van Amersfoort 1998).

Up to the early 1980s, the debate on migration tended to be polarized, with neo-classical, functionalist views on the one hand and historical-structuralist views (neo-Marxist, dependency, world systems) on the other. Since then, however, under the influence of postmodernism and structuration theory, the debate has become less polarized and has been characterized by increasing synergy between migration theorists from different disciplines and paradigmatic backgrounds. Moreover, there has been increasing recognition of the (eclectic) possibility to combine and integrate different theoretical perspectives on migration, which are not necessarily mutually exclusive (Massey *et al.* 1993). Although it would be naïve to assume that an all-encompassing and all-explaining meta-theory on migration will ever arise, there is undoubtedly more room for theorizing on migration processes and how they connect with broader processes of development.

It seems particularly the above-mentioned fragmentation of migration studies and the related inability to put migration into a broader theoretical perspective of development, and, consequently, to connect both causes and consequences of migration, that has haunted migration studies so far. This chapter will attempt to develop a theoretical framework, which puts migration in a developmental perspective, drawing on and combining concepts from different theoretical approaches. In this, we will elaborate on the main theoretical perspectives that dominated the debate on migration and development over the twentieth century, with a particular emphasis on the impact of labor migration on development in migrant sending areas in the developing world.

Notwithstanding this focus on migration and development in sending areas, we will start this chapter by examining general theories of migration, which mainly focus on the causes of migration and the feedback mechanisms through which population movements are perpetuated. This is a deliberate choice, since if we believe that the causes and consequences of migration are strongly interrelated, the specific circumstances that cause migration will equally affect the “recursive” effects of migration on development in sending areas (cf. Taylor 1999). For instance, it matters whether labor migration is to be seen as a desperate “flight from misery” or a voluntary endeavor by young, ambitious people to acquire sufficient capital to invest in their own enterprise upon return. Without a proper insight into the fundamental causes of migration, assessing its impacts risks becoming a fuzzy affair.

Moreover, general theoretical stances towards migration (e.g., neo-classical and structuralist interpretations) will greatly influence the specific analysis of the localized developmental impacts and the interpretation of empirical results. Only through considering the causes and consequences of migration within a single theoretical perspective—i.e., through incorporating them within a general perspective on migration and development—can we deepen our theoretical understanding of this phenomenon as an integral part of broader development processes.

Secondly, we will discuss specific theoretical perspectives on the impact of internal and international migration on development in migrant sending areas in the developing world, looking at opposing traditional “optimistic” and “pessimistic” views, and analyzing their intimate connections with functionalist and structuralist views on development. Thirdly, we will present alternative, more pluralist and refined views on migration and development that have emerged more recently. We will argue that the “new economics of labor migration” and household-oriented “livelihood approaches”, when put in a single perspective, offer a valuable theoretical framework which is better able to deal with the inherently heterogeneous nature of migration impacts.

Finally, the possible shortcomings of recent approaches will be discussed. We will propose how to overcome some of these shortcomings by putting the debate on migration and development into a broader development perspective, thereby drawing on Sen’s (1999) capabilities-oriented perspective on development, the so-called new regional geography combined with insights from Giddens’ (1984) structuration theory on the recursive relationship between agency and structure. Altogether, this will provide us with an analytical framework, which will serve as a guideline for the remainder of the study.

### **2.1.1. The neo-classical equilibrium perspective**

The first scholarly contribution to migration consisted of two articles by the nineteenth century geographer Ravenstein (1885; 1889), in which he formulated his “laws of migration”. He saw migration as an inseparable part of development, and he asserted that the major causes of migration were economic. Migration patterns were further assumed to be influenced

by factors such as distance and population densities (Skeldon 1997:19). This perspective, in which people are expected to move from low income to high income areas, and from densely to sparsely populated areas, that is, the general notion that migration movements tend towards a certain spatial-economic equilibrium, has remained alive in the work of many demographers, geographers, and economists ever since (Castles and Miller 1993:20).

Although the issue of migration has never attracted substantial attention within mainstream economic theory itself (cf. Bauer and Zimmermann 1998:95; Lee 1966:48; Passaris 1989:525-7), economic explanations have dominated popular and scholarly thinking on migration. At the macro-level, neo-classical economic theory explains migration by geographical differences in the supply and demand for labor. The resulting differentials in wages cause workers to move from low-wage, labor-surplus regions to high-wage, labor-scarce regions. Migration will cause labor to become less scarce at the destination and scarcer at the sending end. Capital is expected to move in the opposite direction. In a perfectly neo-classical world, this process of “factor price equalization” (the Heckscher-Ohlin model) will eventually result in growing convergence between wages at the sending and receiving end (Harris and Todaro 1970; Lewis 1954; Ranis and Fei 1961; Schiff 1994; Todaro and Maruszko 1987). In the long run, this process would remove the incentives for migrating.

At the micro-level, neo-classical migration theory views migrants as individual, rational actors, who decide to move on the basis of a cost-benefit calculation. Supposing free choice and full access to information, they are expected to go where they can be the most productive, that is, are able to earn the highest wages. This capacity obviously depends on the specific skills a person possesses and the specific structure of labor markets.

Neo-classical migration theory sees rural-urban migration as an constituent part of the whole development process, by which surplus labor in the rural sector supplies the workforce for the urban industrial economy (Lewis 1954). By postulating that it “is a well-known fact of economic history that material progress usually has been associated with the gradual but continuous transfer of economic agents from rural based traditional agriculture to urban oriented modern industry” (Todaro 1969:139), neo-classical migration theory is firmly entrenched in “developmentalist” modernization theory (cf. Rostow 1960).

Todaro (1969) and Harris and Todaro (1970) elaborated the basic two-sector model of rural-to-urban labor migration. This “Harris-Todaro model” was very influential and has remained the basis of neo-classical migration theory since then. The original model was developed in order to explain the apparently contradictory phenomenon of continuing rural-to-urban migration in developing countries despite rising unemployment in cities. The model was born out of discontent with vague and “amorphous explanations such as the “bright lights” of the city acting as a magnet to lure peasants into urban areas” (Harris and Todaro 1970:126). Harris and Todaro argued that, in order to understand this phenomenon, it is necessary to modify and extend the simple wage differential approach by looking “not only at prevailing income differentials as such but rather at the rural-urban “expected” income differential, i.e., the income differential adjusted for the probability of finding an urban job” (Todaro 1969:138).

The expected income in the destination area not only depends on the actual (or average) earnings at the destination, but also on the probability of employment. The assumption is that, as long as rural-urban income differences remain high enough to outweigh the risk of becoming unemployed, the “lure of relatively higher permanent incomes will continue to attract a steady stream of rural migrants” (Todaro 1969:147). This model diverged from the usual models as it assumed the existence of two separate rural and urban sectors and unemployment. However, in the light of mounting empirical evidence from developing countries, it is questionable to what extent it is indeed possible to separate the urban and rural sectors. Moreover, and perhaps even less realistically, the model assumed the existence of a

determined minimum urban wage at levels substantially higher than agricultural earnings (Harris and Todaro 1970:126).

Later, the Harris-Todaro model was refined to make it more realistic (Bauer and Zimmermann 1998:97). Modifications pertained to the inclusion of other factors than unemployment that influence the expected income gains that can be achieved through migration. The potential gains in the form of higher wages should be balanced with factors such as the opportunity costs of migration, that is, the costs of travel, temporary unemployment while moving and installation at the destination, and the psychological costs of migration. In fact, as we will see, the opportunity costs and risks associated with migration, particularly international migration, explain why it is generally not the poorest who migrate—i.e., migration is a selective process—and why migrant networks are so essential to lowering the material and psychological thresholds to migration.

Although the Harris-Todaro model was initially developed for internal migration, it can, with some modifications, also be applied to international migration. Borjas (1989; 1990) postulated the idea of an international immigration market, in which potential migrants base the choice of destination on individual, cost-benefit calculations. Todaro and Maruszko (1987) developed a model for undocumented international migration, which takes the Harris-Todaro model as basis, but adds to it the probability of being captured and deported as well as the “illegality tax”.

Further extension of the model is possible by interpreting it within a human capital framework, in which migration is seen as an investment decision. In economic theory, human capital has increasingly been recognized as a crucial factor in the process of economic development in “modernizing” societies (Becker 1962; Sjaastad 1962). Human capital theory assumes that personal assets such as skills, education, and physical abilities are fundamental “capitals” that influence economic production. Human capital theory enables us to theoretically explain the selectivity of migration beyond explanations focusing only on opportunity costs. Migrants are typically not representative of the communities they come from. Considering that individuals are different in terms of personal skills, knowledge, physical abilities, age, sex, and so on, there will also be differences in the extent to which people are expected to gain from migrating, that is, they can expect diverging returns on their “migration investment”.

Differences in expected “returns on investments” will partly explain diverging inter-individual propensities to migrate. Depending on the specific type of labor demand in migrant receiving areas, migrants will be selected depending on their specific skills and educational background. This makes it possible to explain theoretically why the likelihood of migration decreases with age and that individuals with higher education often exhibit a higher migration probability (Bauer and Zimmermann 1998:99). The most important analytical and methodological implication of this is that researchers should not only pay attention to aggregate labor market variables like wage and employment differences, but should also take into account the relevance of individual “capitals” in the migration decision (Bauer and Zimmermann 1998:99). This is not only important in order to correctly assess the nature of the migration process, but also to understand the developmental impact of migration. The notion of migration selectivity is of fundamental importance in determining migration impacts at the origin. For instance, in order to study its consequences on income inequality, it is crucial to know whether migrants are from either relatively rich or poor sections of the population. In order to assess selectivity and migration impacts, empirical studies should therefore take into consideration (i.e., record) the socio-economic characteristics of migrants compared to nonmigrants.

Many of the later refinements of neo-classical migration theory relate to the selectivity of migration. Without denying the importance of expected wage differentials, the likelihood

of particular groups emigrating is also supposed to depend both on the opportunity costs of migration and individual human capital characteristics. This makes patterns of migration selectivity also dependent on the specific characteristics of labor markets determining chances to find employment as well as immigration policies. The combination of such factors may explain the differentiation and dynamism that seem typical of migration patterns.

Neo-classical migration theory can be positioned within the functionalist paradigm of social theory, as the central argument of factor price equalization assumes that economic forces tend towards an equilibrium and also because it largely ignores the relevance of structural constraints. One can wonder whether this is realistic, particularly in the context of developing countries, and this partly explains why the neo-classical approach has been criticized on several grounds.

First of all, place utility and other micro-theories assume that migrants have perfect knowledge of the costs and benefits of migration, which is typically not the case (McDowell and De Haan 1997:9). As we will see, access to information has proven to be a crucial factor in determining actual migration patterns, as are social capital factors such as access to migrant networks.

A second criticism is that neo-classical migration theory is not able to deal with constraining factors such as government restrictions on migration. However, this criticism can be contested to a certain extent, as such constraining factors can be included in neo-classical models as “migration market distortions,” raising the opportunity costs and risks of migration (cf. Todaro and Maruszko 1987). A third, more valid, criticism is that in most developing countries, factor markets (capital, insurance) are typically far from perfect, making access to financial services and capital difficult or even impossible for marginalized groups. This makes actual migration patterns difficult to explain within a neo-classical framework that mainly focuses on expected income.

Neo-classical migration economy has also been criticized for being a-historical and Euro- or Western-centric, supposing that migration (i.e., the transfer of labor from agricultural rural to industrial urban sectors) fulfills the same facilitating role in “modernization” as it did in nineteenth century Europe, thereby largely ignoring specific political, geographical, and socio-cultural factors that influence migration processes. In fact, the structural conditions under which contemporary migration in and from developing countries takes place are rather different. Migration typically does not take place in a social, cultural, political, and institutional void. Approaches that try to deal with such issues will be at the center of the following section.

### **2.1.2. Historical-structural theory and asymmetric growth**

A radically different interpretation of migration was provided as of the 1960s by the historical-structural paradigm on development, which has its intellectual roots in Marxist political economy (Castles and Miller 1993:22-23). Contemporary historical-structural theory emerged in response to functionalist (neo-classical, developmentalist-modernizationist) approaches towards development. Historical-structuralists postulate that economic and political power is unequally distributed among developed and underdeveloped countries, that people have unequal access to resources, and that capitalist expansion has the tendency to reinforce inequalities. Instead of modernizing and gradually progressing towards economic development, underdeveloped countries are trapped by their disadvantaged position within the global geopolitical structure.

As in most fields of social science, historical-structuralism has clearly dominated migration research in the 1970s and 1980s. Historical structuralists have not developed a

migration theory as such, but perceive migration as a natural outgrowth of disruptions and dislocations that are intrinsic to the process of capitalist accumulation. They interpret migration as one of the many manifestations of capitalist penetration and the increasingly unequal terms of trade between developed and underdeveloped countries (Massey *et al.* 1998:36).

Andre Gunder Frank (1966; 1969) was the frontrunner of the “dependency” theory, which hypothesized that global capitalism (and migration as one of its manifestations) contributed to the “development of underdevelopment”. The dependency school views migration not only as detrimental to the economies of underdeveloped countries but also as one of the very *causes* of underdevelopment, rather than as a path towards development. According to this theory, migration ruins stable peasant societies, undermines their economies and uproots their populations.

Another exponent of this historical-structural school of thought is Emmanuel Wallerstein (1974; 1980), whose world-systems theory classified countries according to their degree of dependency, and distinguished between the capitalist “core” nations, followed by the “semi-peripheral”, “peripheral”, and isolated nations in the “external” area, which were not (yet) included in the capitalist system. In this perspective, the incorporation of the peripheries into the capitalist economy is associated with putting a (migration) drain on them.

Historical structuralists have criticized neo-classical migration theory, stating that individuals do *not* have a free choice, since they are fundamentally constrained by structural forces. Within this perspective, migration is not a matter of free choice, but people are forced to move because traditional economic structures have been undermined as a result of their incorporation into the global political-economic system. Through these processes, rural populations become increasingly deprived of their traditional livelihoods, and these uprooted populations become part of the urban proletariat to the benefit of those core areas that rely on cheap (immigrant) labor.

Historical structuralists have been criticized for being too determinist and rigid in their thinking in viewing individuals as “pawns” that passively adapt to macro-forces, thereby largely ruling out individual agency. Moreover, rigid historical structuralism may have been refuted by recent history, as various formerly developing and labor exporting countries have achieved sustained economic growth in the past decades despite (or thanks to) their firm connection to global capitalism (Sen 1999). For most southern European countries and some Asian NICs, the incorporation into global capitalism and, possibly, high labor migration have apparently worked out well, despite gloomy predictions some decades ago (Almeida 1973; Papademetriou 1985).

There is increasing consensus that capitalism as such cannot be blamed for the problems of underdevelopment, but that the specific developmental effects of incorporation of a region or country into the global capitalist system seems to depend much more on the conditions under which this takes place, that is, how the incorporation is embedded into wider institutional structures as well as the internal socio-political cohesion and economic strength of countries and regions. Thus, depending on these circumstances, the incorporation into global capitalism can have both positive and negative effects in different areas of development and on different groups of people within society (Sen 1999; Stiglitz 2002).

In the same vein, (labor) migration cannot automatically be interpreted as a “flight from misery”, not only because it is seldom the poorest who migrate, but also because it may facilitate development in several ways through reverse flows of capital and knowledge. Moreover, if migration were only to the benefit of the exploitative “core”, how could we then explain why immigration is often perceived as a threat, and how could then we explain why employed people voluntarily leave their country (Castles and Miller 1993:23)?

### 2.1.3. The push-pull framework

Both neo-classical and historical-structural theories of migration typically fail to explain why some people in a certain country or region migrate and others do not (Massey *et al.* 1993; Reniers 1999:680), and why people tend to migrate between particular places in a spatially clustered, concentrated, non-random fashion. It can therefore be useful to look at some of the spatial models developed by geographers and demographers over the past decades.

In 1966, Lee bemoaned the fact that since Ravenstein developed his famous laws of migration almost eighty years earlier, no substantial theoretical insights had been added to the field of migration studies. In his attempt to contribute to the theoretical advance of migration studies, Lee revised Ravenstein's laws on migration and proposed a new analytical framework for migration. In his view, the decision to migrate is determined by the following factors: factors associated with the area of origin; factors associated with the area of destination; so-called intervening obstacles (such as distance, physical barriers, immigration laws, and so on); and personal factors.

Lee (1966:54-55) argued that migration tends to take place within well-defined "streams", from specific places at the origin to specific places at the destination, not only because opportunities tend to be highly localized but also because the flow of knowledge back from destination facilitates the passage for later migrants. As we will see, the latter argument fits well into network and chain migration theories explaining the self-reinforcing tendencies and perpetuation of migration.

Lee also stated that migration is selective with respect to the individual characteristics of migrants because people respond differently to plus and minus factors at origin and destinations and have different abilities to cope with the intervening variables (Reniers 1999:681). Therefore, migrants are rarely representative of their community of origin. This is in line with neo-classical explanations of on migration selectivity explained by differences in human capital endowments and the discriminating aspects of opportunity costs.

Although Lee did not apparently invent or employ the term himself<sup>1</sup>, his analytical framework is commonly referred to as the "push-pull" model (Passaris 1989). The push-pull model is basically an individual choice and equilibrium model, and is, therefore, largely analogous to neo-classical micro models. The push-pull model has gained enormous popularity in the migration literature over recent decades (cf. Hearing and Van der Erf 2001, Zachariah *et al.* 2001). Most researchers who have applied the push-pull framework have assumed that various environmental, demographic, and economic factors determine migration decisions. Two main forces are typically distinguished to create the pushes and pulls: rural population growth which caused a Malthusian pressure on natural and agricultural resources, which pushed people out from marginal rural areas, and economic conditions (higher wages) that lured people into cities and industrialized countries (Skeldon 1997:20; cf. King and Schneider 1991:62-3; Schwartz and Notini 1994).

At first sight, the push-pull model seems attractive, as it is apparently able to incorporate all the factors that play a role in migration decision-making. It is frequently suggested that a general view of labor migration could best be achieved using a push-pull framework, because of its apparent ability to integrate other theoretical insights (Bauer and Zimmermann 1998:103). Nevertheless, it is doubtful whether the push-pull framework is of

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<sup>1</sup> The push-pull polarity has commonly, but undeservedly, been attributed to Lee (1966). For instance, Petersen (1958) already used the push-pull terminology, without however specifying its origins, which probably go back to the early twentieth century.

much analytical use, and whether it can be called a theory at all. It is rather a purely descriptive model in which the different factors playing a role in migration decisions are enumerated in a relative arbitrary manner. Its all-inclusive pretensions are also its main weakness. Push-pull models often have the character of ad-hoc explanations forming a depository of factors that “might play a certain role”. The model does not allow for assigning relative weights to the different factors affecting migration decisions, nor does it allow for empirical tests on the role and importance of factors that have been included or excluded. Analyses concluding that “low wages”, “high population pressure” or “environmental degradation” as opposed to better conditions at the destination “cause” migration tend to be so general as to be more or less stating the obvious.

A fundamental weakness of this model is that push and pull factors are generally mirrored in each other. For example, if a researcher states that migrants are lured to the big city or to foreign countries because of the “high wage pull”, she or he always says this in relation to the “low wage push” at the sending end. High urban or foreign wages alone will probably not lure peasants away if wages at home are equally high. It then becomes arbitrary and open to subjective judgment to establish whether the push or the pull is dominant. In fact, the differences in the relative scarcity of labor can be aptly expressed in one single variable, that is, wage differentials.

Push and pull factors then turn out to be two sides of the same coin: together they provide the perception of difference between “here” and “there”, and therefore have limited heuristic value (cf. Wittmann 1975:23, cited in McDowell and De Haan 1997:9). Although the assumption that people tend to move from low to high wage areas might seem logical at first sight, this does not necessarily hold true at the individual level. Whether migration occurs crucially depends on the skills and knowledge of migrants and conditions in the specific economic sectors where they can find employment both at the origin and destination. Such sectoral differences may even explain migration from areas (or countries) with high *on average* wages to poorer areas. Moreover, as we will see later in our discussion on the mobility transition theory and the “migration hump”, the effect of wage differentials on migration rates is by no means linear. This all points to the limitations of equilibrium approaches.

Besides wage differentials, factors such as population pressure, demographic pressure, or environmental degradation have commonly been postulated as direct or indirect “causes” of migration (cf. King and Schneider 1991:62-3; Schwartz and Notini 1994; Zachariah *et al.* 2001:71-9). For example, Farrag (1997:319), recently stated for sub-Saharan Africa that

in addition to landlessness per se, emigration dynamics were clearly influenced by small farm size, marginal ecological conditions that render cash cropping unviable, depleted soil fertility caused by population pressure no limited land and low levels of farm income

Nevertheless, such statements are too general and lack commitment. Apart from the fact that population or migration pressure are relative, difficult-to-grasp and often weakly defined concepts, such factors alone cannot explain why people move. People do not typically move from places “because” they expect to find a “better environment” or “less population pressure”, but because they expect to be able to make a more satisfying living elsewhere. In fact, most migrants tend to move from areas with relatively low population densities and relatively little environmental degradation to environmentally degraded areas with high population densities. People tend to be increasingly concentrated in crowded places—cities, towns, and prosperous agricultural areas—that, however, offer better social and economic opportunities in terms of individual freedom, paid labor, and entrepreneurial activities. This illustrates the limitations and triviality of “push-pull” explanations.

The general problem with these kinds of more or less neo-Malthusian explanations is that they tend to single out environmental factors in relation to population pressure as “causes” of migration. Although environmental factors might indeed play an important role, they should be seen in relation to other political, economic, social, and cultural factors that eventually determine standards of living, the distribution of wealth, and unequal access to resources. Moreover, explanations focusing on natural endowments continue to implicitly perceive migrant sending areas as closed, self-sustaining regions characterized by subsistence agriculture. Even if this ever were true, this closed-regions image is increasingly far from reality in a globalizing world, in which even the most remote regions are becoming increasingly linked to the outside world through infrastructure, trade, and migration, and in which rural economies are also becoming increasingly diversified (cf. Bebbington 1999). Thus, so-called environmental “causes” should not be isolated from the social, political, and institutional factors that determine the access to and use of natural and other economic resources, and which, together, shape the local economic context in which people try to make a living.

In the same vein, population growth, which has often been postulated as a “cause” of migration pressure, is clearly only one component of a complex chain of processes, and can only be applied if the *ceteris paribus* trick is made (Coleman 1999:486-7). Time and again, “population pressure” is (too) narrowly defined in terms of people per square kilometer of farmland, without taking into account potential productivity increases and the income earned in non-agricultural sectors. In fact, the whole gamut of economic conditions and access to various economic resources determines the extent to which different groups within society are able to make what they perceive as a satisfactory living.

Moreover, the propensity to migrate crucially depends on the aspirations of people, an element which is typically ignored by push-pull models—in which needs are assumed to be constant—but is essential in explaining migration. After all, aspirations are typically not constant, and it is often the level of aspiration that determines perceived “overpopulation” in relation to local economic opportunities (cf. Petersen 1958:259). For instance, increased wealth in combination with better education, increased media exposure, and the (concomitant) confrontation with the wealth of other people may increase feelings of relative deprivation, and may give rise to higher aspiration levels and, therefore, *increased* migration. Moreover, a slight increase in wealth may enable people to bear the opportunity costs and risks of migrating. Therefore, decreased wage differentials may in fact lead to increased migration. In general, migration is not a survival strategy, that is, a last resort to escape from extreme conditions of poverty and unemployment. Most labor migrants do not flee, but move deliberately in the expectation of finding a better or more stable livelihood, and to improve their social and economic status (Appleyard 1995:295).

Analogous to neo-classical economic models, push-pull models—at least in the way they are commonly interpreted—can be criticized for unrealistically viewing migration as a calculation by individuals, without paying attention to structural constraints, which imply that people typically have unequal access to resources. The model is a functionalist gravity-model which supposes a tendency towards equilibrium between push and pull factors, an assumption which has been contested by historical structuralists. The push-pull model assumes full and equal access to information and various resources or “capitals”, and humans are portrayed as more or less atomistic individuals that operate in an institutional, social, and cultural void.

Furthermore, it does not take into account how migrants perceive their worlds and relate to their kin, friends, and community members (Cross *et al.* 1998)<sup>2</sup>.

Last but not least, push-pull models are also not able to explain return migration and the simultaneous occurrence of emigration and immigration in many areas, nor do they pay attention to the impacts of migration, and the way it may alter the structural contexts both at the destination and origin. In other words, the push-pull model is a *static* model that is unable to link migration to broader *processes* of development, and therefore seems of little analytical use. By disassociating migration from development, and ignoring the question of how migration and development influence each other over time, it tries to artificially cut off migration from the general process of which it is a constituent part.

Fortunately, there have been attempts by geographers and, more recently, economists which go beyond simplistic explanations supposing a linear, static link between migration and (expected) income differentials, but which instead try to model how development and migration—seen as a constituent component of development—are reciprocally related over time, and how the character and role of migration changes in the course of the development process. These dynamic or—as they will be referred to in this study—*transitional* models, will be at the center of the following section.

## 2.2. Transitional models: The mobility transition and the migration hump

There have been various attempts to link the demographic transition theory to population mobility. The most comprehensive “spatio-temporal” attempt was that by Zelinsky (1971), who postulated his hypothesis of the mobility transition, which was a fusion between the demographic transition theory, the notion of the spatial diffusion of innovations, the economic principle of least effort or economic optimization, and the hypotheses developed by Lee (1966).

The fusion of the spatial with the temporal perspective would seem especially intriguing. Indeed, it is surprising how little effort has been made by geographers to treat the demographic transition as a process diffusing outward through space and time . . . . There are definite, patterned regularities in the growth of personal mobility through space-time during recent history, and these regularities comprise an essential component of the modernization trend (Zelinsky 1971:220-2)

Zelinsky argued that through the development of scientific knowledge, modern man had extended control over his own physiology in the form of death and birth control, resulting in the demographic transition. He preferred to use the term *vital transition*, in which he broadened the concept of demographic transition by linking it to processes of modernization,

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<sup>2</sup> It is important to stress, however, that Lee (1966) himself explicitly stated that people take migration decisions on the basis of *perceived* differences between the origin and destination. Nevertheless, researchers who worked with push-pull models did generally not elaborate on this point. Lee’s writing is in fact subtler than later interpretations of his model. Reading Lee, one wonders how many “push-pull researchers” actually read his 1966 article. Although the push-pull model—as it is commonly interpreted—seems of little use for our theoretical understanding of migration and development linkages, Lee’s insights into the geographical clustering of migration streams through information flows back are still valuable.

economic growth, and increasing mobility. In many respects, this *vital transition* can be equated with what others would name *development*.

Zelinsky (1971:230-1) argued that there has not only been a *general* and spectacular expansion of individual mobility in modernizing societies, but also that the specific character of migration processes tends to change over the course of this vital transition. He distinguished five phases in the vital transition: (a) The pre-modern traditional society (high fertility and mortality, little natural increase if any); (b) The early transitional society (rapid decline in mortality, major population growth); (c) The late transitional society (major decline in fertility, significant but decelerating natural increase); (d) The advanced society (fertility and mortality stabilized at low levels, slight population increase if any); (e) A future “superadvanced” society (continuing low fertility and mortality).

The core of his argument was that each of these phases were linked to distinct forms of migration and mobility, in a process that he designated the *mobility transition*. Based on a review of empirical and theoretical migration literature, Zelinsky tried to integrate different kinds of labor mobility, both internal and international, long-term and circular movement, within one single analytical framework. The different types of migration would peak at different points in the vital transition: Premodern traditional societies (phase a) are mainly characterized by limited circular migration and little “genuine residential migration”. In the early stages of the vital transition (phase b in particular), all forms of mobility (circular, rural colonization frontiers, internal rural-urban, international) increase. In phase c, international migration decreases rapidly, rural-to-urban internal migration slackens but remains at high levels, and circular movements would further increase and grow in structural complexity. At the end of phase c, the *rural exodus* significantly decreases, as the number of those employed in agricultural production approaches the minimum level associated with optimum economic return.

In phase d, rural-to-urban migration continues though at a reduced scale, residential mobility is important, urban-to-urban migration and circular movements increase significantly. Moreover, in this phase countries transform themselves from being net labor-exporting to labor-importing countries, as there is a significant net immigration of unskilled and semi-skilled workers from developing countries next to limited out-migration and circulation of skilled and professional workers. In phase e, most internal migration is urban-urban, residential and circular mobility decreases due to better communication technology, and immigration of unskilled labor will continue.

Zelinsky’s approach was innovative in the sense that it was the first model which saw migration in a spatio-temporal development perspective, and which does not assume a negative-linear relation between development and migration. In fact, it acknowledges that migration tends to increase, in particular in the early phases of development, in which improvements in transport and communication, flows of knowledge, education, a perceived lack of local economic opportunity, and a minimum level of welfare increase both the *urge* and *capability* of people to migrate. Only in the later stages of development, characterized by decreasing population growth and increased welfare, will classical forms of rural-to-urban (the rural exodus) and international migration by unskilled workers decrease, although these will be partly replaced by other forms of migration and immigration. It is a diffusionist model by assuming that the propensity—as a function of inclinations and capabilities—to migrate was initiated in the most developed zones and then progressively spread to less developed zones.

Zelinsky’s mobility transition is a universal model, as it assumes that all societies undergo the same kind of processes. Thus, mobility transition theory is profoundly rooted in modernization theory (cf. Rostow 1960), and that has also been the main subject of later criticism. Its universalistic pretensions are not only its strength, but also its main weakness.

Like neo-classical and “developmentalist” migration theory, the model is a-historical in assuming that there is one single, unilinear path towards development, whereas in reality migration and development do not affect areas in the same way (Findlay *et al.* 1998). For instance, in the Arab oil countries we find mobility systems that are far removed from previous historical experience and even the inevitability of the urban transition has been questioned—for example in parts of sub-Saharan Africa—by some researchers, although others claim that the urban transition is inevitable and universal (Skeldon 1997:40).

Mobility transition theory has also been criticized for its assumption of largely immobile traditional societies, which has turned out to be erroneous. Perceptions that migration is a new phenomenon are based on the “myth of the immobile peasant” (Skeldon 1997:7-8), that is, the implicit assumption in much of (Western) popular and scholarly thinking that pre-modern societies consisted of relatively isolated, stable, static, homogeneous peasant communities, in which migration was fairly exceptional. False notions of stable peasant societies can be associated with a more sedentarist conservatism rooted in Western, or at least European, thinking (cf. McDowell and De Haan 1997:3). Back in the 1950s, Petersen (1958:258) argued that the familiar push-pull polarity implies a universal sedentary tendency, which has little empirical basis.

Skeldon (1997:32) argued that the idea that the Industrial Revolution uprooted peasants from their stable communities for the first time was in fact a romanticized elitist view of peasant life. Historical research on Europe and Japan and in present-day rural developing societies has shown that peasant societies are, and have generally been, highly mobile (De Haan 1999; McDowell and De Haan 1997; Moch 1992; Rubenstein 1992:127). The magnitude and patterns of spatial mobility may have been highly variable across groups and over time, but “migration was very much an intrinsic characteristic of past and present rural societies” (Skeldon 1997:8).

Although such criticism seems valid to a certain extent, this does not necessarily upset the entire mobility transition model. Unfortunately, attempts to deconstruct the mobility transition models and other developmentalist approaches towards migration can easily degenerate into a relativist caricature. Although it is true that migration as such is not new or a singular event—instead, it seems a universal feature of human mankind—its character has, however, fundamentally changed due to revolutionary technological and infrastructural developments and the incorporation of regions and countries within international capitalism. This process of global integration started with European mercantile and colonial expansion—some say even earlier—and further accelerated after the Industrial Revolution. The major advances in transport and communication technology in the second half of the twentieth century have further facilitated this process of “globalization”. The enormous reduction in costs of transportation and communication have facilitated the closer integration of the countries and peoples of the world, and the breaking down of barriers that have facilitated the increasing flows of goods, services, capital, knowledge, and—though to a lesser extent—people across borders (Stiglitz 2002:9).

Beginning in the seventeenth century North Sea countries, and further extending throughout Europe in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the spatial diffusion of development processes has resulted in massive rural-to-urban migration within Europe and North America (cf. Moch 1992). Moreover, tens of millions of Europeans—over 50 million between 1870 and 1914 alone (Nayyar 2000)—migrated to the Americas, or other colonies around the world. In most developing countries, processes of large-scale rural-to-urban

migration and *voluntary*<sup>3</sup> international labor migration over long distances have gained momentum in the late nineteenth and twentieth century, and can hardly be dissociated from the connected and overlapping processes of development, the progressive incorporation of peasant economies into the capitalist economy, and globalization. Although migration as such is not a new phenomenon, contemporary—why not say modern—patterns of migration are in a way unique and fundamentally different from those in pre-industrial societies both in geographical scope and in intensity.

Although the historical conditions under which migration within and from the developing world currently occurs are different from those in the nineteenth century, there is very little that is *unique* about these processes, and it would therefore be unwise to reject “generalizing” transitional models out of hand (cf. Skeldon 1997:40). Notwithstanding the appropriate criticism of Zelinsky’s assumption of stable peasant societies, it would, on empirical grounds, also be erroneous to suggest that the historical evolution of migration patterns in both the developed and developing world can be disconnected from broader development or modernization processes.

Despite the current “taboo” on evolutionary developmentalist models, there seem to be some interesting historical parallels between migration patterns in different countries (e.g., the switch of southern European countries from labor exporters to importers) that fit surprisingly well into the mobility transition model, which seems rather accurate to describe and explain how the character of migration changes over the course of development processes.

For instance, if we look at global migration patterns, it is striking that the countries with the lowest GNP and the highest population growth do *not* exhibit the highest rates of out-migration. Instead, the world’s main labor exporters are typically upper-lower to lower-middle income countries (such as Mexico, North African countries, the Philippines, and Indonesia), which are generally located in a zone that Skeldon (1997:53,144-170) has conceptualized as the global “labor frontier”. Such countries would currently be in phase (b) or early phase (c) of Zelinsky’s model, experiencing high population growth, at least moderate economic growth, urbanization and partial de-agrarization, and high rates of both urban-to-rural and international labor migration.

More recently, migration economists have—largely unintentionally—provided additional evidence for the Zelinsky-based transitional models by uncovering and theoretically explaining the anatomy of the so-called “migration hump” (Martin 1993; 2002; Martin and Taylor 1996). There is ample evidence that, in the early stages of development, an increase in wealth can initially lead to a rise in migration. This is partly linked to the notion of the selectivity of migration: a certain threshold of wealth is necessary to be able to assume the costs and risks of migrating. With increasing wealth and the establishment of migrant networks, an increasing proportion of the population is able to migrate, selectivity of migration tends to decrease, and this process of “development” initially tends to lead to an increasing diffusion of migration across communities.

Only after a longer period of sustained economic growth and decreasing wage gaps with destination countries does labor migration tend to decrease (cf. Martin 1992:471; Martin

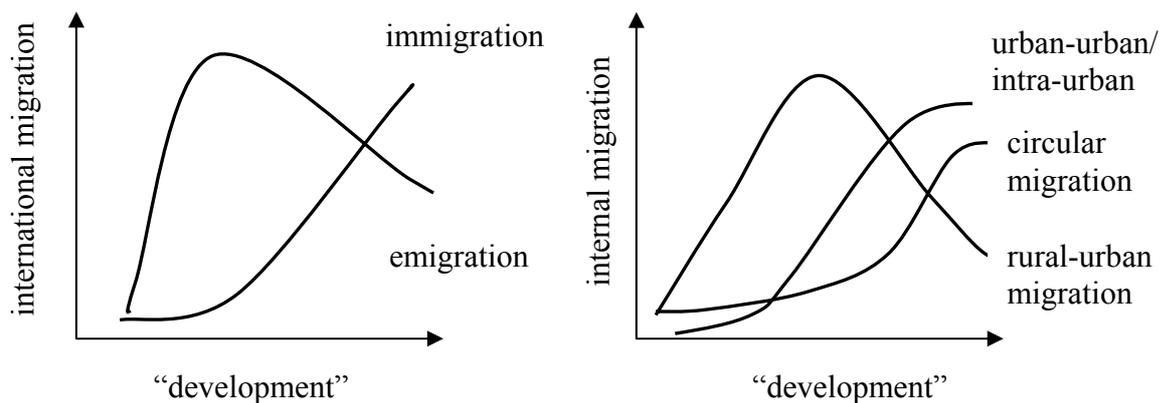
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<sup>3</sup> One notable exception was the slave trade, an extremely violent form of forced migration to be distinguished from contract laborers or other more-or-less voluntary labor migrants. It is believed that more than 15 million people were taken from Africa to Europe, North America, and the Caribbean between the mid sixteenth and early nineteenth century (Nayyar 2000:2). This slave trade “was the largest, enforced, mass migration of labor in human history” (Nayyar 2000:2). Notwithstanding the massive scale of the trans-Atlantic slave trade set up by Europeans, African-European, African-African, and African-Arab slave trade as such is a much older phenomenon.

and Taylor 1996; Rotte *et al.* 1997)<sup>4</sup>. This is what happened in the past few decades with southern European countries such as Spain, Italy, Greece, and, recently, Portugal and Ireland (Baganha 1998; Bodega *et al.* 1995; King 1996)—which used to be located on the “labor frontier”, which has shifted south- and eastward since then—and several south-east Asian countries such as Malaysia and South-Korea. All these countries have transformed from labor exporters into net labor importers (Zelinsky’s phases (d) and (e)).

Therefore, economic development in combination with a parallel demographic transition and decreasing expected income differentials—trends which often occur simultaneously—tend to have a J-curve or inverted U-curve effect on emigration, steeply increasing in the initial phases of development and only later gradually decreasing (Martin 1992). This “migration hump” (Martin 1993; Martin and Taylor 1996) roughly reflects global patterns of migration, and seems, indeed, to confirm Zelinsky’s general model. This is a much more sophisticated approach than push-pull and other equilibrium and gravity approaches that seem to assume that migration rates are linearly dependent on factors such as population growth and income differentials. Figure 2.1 depicts how, according to transitional models, development (Zelinsky would speak of “vital transition”) and different forms of migration are supposed to be generally related to each other.

**Figure 2.1. The effect of development on migration patterns according to transitional models**



Source: Adapted from Zelinsky (1971:233), see also Martin (1993); Martin and Taylor (1996)

Certainly, there is a danger in explaining migration by singling out factors such as demographic and economic development. Although Zelinsky’s general suppositions seem to be valid, countries with roughly the same population growth rates and levels of development tend to show diverging migration characteristics. To what extent migration will occur, and where migrants will go, depends on the interplay between many other variables (cf. Russell 1995), such as income, unemployment, education, political stability, immigration policies, environmental factors, access to information, social capital (network connections) distance, and so on. Jointly, they determine the general level and distribution of wealth, people’s perceptions of “here” and “there”, and, by that, the propensity and capability of people to

<sup>4</sup> Prior research seems to have indicated that emigration tends to decrease significantly if the income differential between sending and receiving countries reaches values between 1:3 and 1:4.5, provided that the emigration country is growing fast and offering hope and opportunity (Martin 1994; Faini and Venturini 1994; Olesen 2002).

migrate. Although countries or regions resembling Zelinsky's categories b and c seem to have a higher *propensity* to experience high international out-migration, the extent to which this occurs seems to vary greatly within a possibilistic range.

This seems enough to reject relativist claims that no general inferences whatsoever can be made on the historical, spatio-temporal development of migration. The attraction of the (adapted) mobility transition model, combined with the migration hump hypothesis, is its capacity to link diverse migration and other aspects of development (economic, demographic) into one spatial-temporal model, which offers a valuable insight into the complex interlinkages between migration and development, and tackles simplistic but omnipresent clichés such as “poverty breeds migration”. Whereas this transitional model concentrates on the spatio-temporal “morphology” of migration and the way development influences migration patterns over time, it is essentially a macro-model, which treats migration as a result of development, thereby largely ignoring the recursive effects of migration on local and regional development both at the destination and origin.

As has been argued, this very inability to connect both causes and recursive effects of migration within a broader theoretical perspective on development has haunted migration research so far. As a constituent component of development, migration is in fact both a dependent and independent variable within the development process. In the remainder of this chapter, we will examine the main general theoretical perspectives that have been developed on the various feedback mechanisms through which migration patterns are both modified and perpetuated over time, and the controversial issue of how migration affects development in sending areas. Subsequently, we will attempt to integrate both sets of theories within one single theoretical perspective on migration and development.

## **2.3. Internal dynamics and feedbacks: networks and migration systems**

### **2.3.1. Social capital, network theory, and chain migration**

Labor migration may begin for a variety of reasons. Although the truism holds that economic forces—as expressed in expected wage differentials—almost always play an important role as one of the root causes of migration, and people tend to move to places where the standards of living are better, this alone cannot explain the actual shape of migration patterns (Salt 1987:243; Schoorl 1998). There is increasing attention being paid to the role of nation states, institutions, personal networks, and cultural and historical factors in shaping migration patterns. For instance, wage differentials alone cannot explain why many Moroccans particularly migrate to France or to the French-speaking Canadian Province of Quebec, and, for instance, much less to Germany. Former colonial or other historical bonds, or a shared culture or language, tend to have a high influence on the geographical structuring of migration. In some cases, direct labor recruitment has played an important role in initiating migration flows too, but initial migration movements may also (partly) originate in the more or less “spontaneous” settlement of an initial group of migrants. Such factors might explain why the Netherlands has become an important migration destination for Moroccans, although Morocco and the Netherlands have neither colonial nor linguistic bonds. Geographical proximity might also play a role in initial settlement patterns. For instance, it seems no coincidence that most African migrants in Spain are Moroccans, that recent Tunisian migrants

tend to go to Italy, that Albanians migrate to Greece, and Mexicans move to the US. Even in an age of globalization, distance has not lost its relevance.

Once a certain critical number of migrants have settled at the destination, however, other forces come into play. The often coincidental choices made by pioneer migrants or labor-recruiting employers tend to have a great influence on subsequent migration patterns. There is Lee's (1966:54-55) argument that migration facilitates the flow of information back from the place of destination to the origin, which facilitates the passage for later migrants. But there is more to that, as there is evidence that the already settled migrants function as "beachheads" (Böcker 1994), reducing the risks as well as material and psychological costs of subsequent migration. Through the assistance of friends and relatives, new migrants may more easily be able to obtain information and receive active assistance in finding employment and a place to live, in arranging residence papers, or in finding a marriage partner. Therefore, the formation of an established migrant community at one particular destination will increase the likelihood of subsequent migration to that particular place (Appleyard 1992).

In more recent studies, the term *network migration* has usually been used to describe this process of "chain migration". Networks can be defined as sets of interpersonal ties that connect migrants, former migrants, and nonmigrants in origin and destination areas through bonds of kinship, friendship, and shared community origin (Massey *et al.* 1993:448). These social bonds and the feeling of being part of one (transnational) community also explain why migrants tend to remit substantial amounts of money to "stay-behinds"—whereas neo-classical approaches towards migration leave no room for remittances. As the costs and risks of migration are lowered by social and informational networks, once established migration streams tend to gain their own momentum.

Massey (1989) argued that once the number of network connections in an origin area reaches a critical level, migration becomes self-perpetuating, because it creates the social structure to sustain the process (cf. Appleyard 1992). Network effects explain the (often unintended) perpetuation of migration and its continuation irrespective of its original causes (Waldorf 1998). The facilitating role of such "family and friends networks" makes migration notoriously difficult for governments to control. In fact, the majority of migrants from the southern and eastern Mediterranean living in Europe are not "primary labor migrants" but network migrants who came on the basis of their legal right to family reunification.

Network connections are a form of social capital that people draw upon to gain access to employment abroad (Massey *et al.* 1993:448). In the previous sections, we examined the importance of material capital (financial, assets such as land) and human capital (education, skills, knowledge) in determining an individual's propensity and ability to migrate. Social capital is a third, crucial resource in enabling migration. Although network effects play an important role in both internal and international migration, they seem especially important in international migration, due to the generally higher financial and legal obstacles and risks involved in trans-boundary movements, which make migrants even more dependent on such networks.

Social capital in the form of migrated kin has a countervailing effect on legal, political, and financial obstacles to migration, and access to migrant networks tends to diminish the risks and opportunity costs related to migration. At the sending end, the implication of falling costs and risks is that migration, *ceteris paribus*, tends to become less selective—with regards to access of migrants to human and material capital—over time. That is, an increasing share of the population can afford to migrate (Taylor 1986). This is broadly in line with the transitional-diffusionist models examined in the previous section. As we will see, changes in selectivity are also likely to influence the developmental impact of migration at the sending end.

### 2.3.2. Migration systems theory

Network theory is affiliated to another approach known as migration systems theory. The fundamental assumption of this theory is that migration alters the social, cultural, economic, and institutional conditions at both the sending and receiving ends—that is, the entire developmental space within which migration processes operate. Whereas network theory mainly focuses on the vital role of personal relations between migrants and nonmigrants, and the way this social capital facilitates and perpetuates migration processes, migration systems theory goes beyond this point in stressing that migration not only affects the direct social environment of migrants, but restructures the entire societal context in which migration takes place, both at the receiving and sending end. In this, migration systems theory links migration to broader processes of development, and therefore seems particularly relevant to our study.

The geographer Mabogunje (1970), the founder of migration systems theory, defined a migration system as a set of places linked by flows and counterflows of people, goods, services, and information, which tend to facilitate further exchange, including migration, between the places. Borrowing from general systems theory, he focused on the role of information flows and feedback mechanisms in shaping migration systems. He stressed the importance of feedback mechanisms, through which information about the migrants' reception and progress at the destination is transmitted back to the place of origin. Favorable information would then encourage further migration and lead to situations of

almost organized migratory flows from particular villages to particular cities. In other words, the existence of information in the system encourages greater deviation from the “most probable or random state” . . . . In many North-African cities, for instance, it is not uncommon for an entire district or craft occupation in a city to be dominated by permanent migrants from one or two villages . . . . [The] state of a system at any given time is not determined so much by its initial conditions as by the nature of the process, or the system parameters . . . . since open systems are basically independent of their initial conditions (Mabogunje 1970:13-4)

Mabogunje focused his analysis on rural-urban migration within the African continent. Portes and Böröcz (1987) and Kritiz *et al.* (1992) extended this to international migration. International migration systems consist of countries—or rather places within different countries—that exchange relatively large numbers of migrants, and are also characterized by feedback mechanisms that connect the movement of people between particular countries, areas, and even cities to the concomitant flows of goods, capital (remittances), ideas, and information (Fawcett 1989; Gurak and Caces 1992). The end result is “a set of relatively stable exchanges of people between certain nations . . . yielding an identifiable geographic structure that persists across space and time” (Massey *et al.* 1998:61).

Migration systems link people, families, and communities over space in what we might call transnational communities. This results in a rather neat geographical structuring and clustering of migration flows, which is far from a “random state”:

formal and informal subsystems operate to perpetuate and reinforce the systematic nature of international flows by encouraging migration along certain pathways, and discouraging it along others. The end result is a set of relatively stable exchanges . . . . yielding an identifiable geographical structure that persists across space and time (Mabogunje 1970:12)

Network theory can already explain why once a migration system has developed, it tends to operate relatively independently of government policy intervention, thus making migration notoriously difficult to “manage”. Migration system theory adds to that, in line with Lee

(1966), by arguing that migration flows—and counterflows of goods, remittances, and information—tend to be geographically structured and take the shape of spatially clustered flows. This clustered morphology of migration flows can typically not be explained by factors such as unemployment and income differentials. In almost all emigration regions, we often see that particular regions, villages, or ethnic (sub) groups tend to specialize in migration to particular areas, cities, or even city quarters, either within the same country or abroad.

Mabogunje's example of North African cities can be extended to international migration. For example, the vast majority of the international migrants from Figuig, an isolated oasis in southern Morocco, live in particular quarters of Paris (Saa 1998). Many migrants from Laârache in northern Morocco happen to live in London—which is not a “typical” destination for Moroccan migrants at all—and certain villages in the northern Rif mountains are firmly linked to specific German or Dutch cities.

Besides the existence of very specialized migration systems at the micro-level, it is possible to identify several international migration systems at the macro-global level, in which particular regions in the developing world have specialized in migration to particular regions in the developed world. For instance, most of the labor migrants in the EU member states tend to originate from the southern and eastern Mediterranean. Through decades of migration, both sides of the Mediterranean—in spite of official policies aimed at “fencing off” Europe—have become tightly interlinked and interdependent through flows of people, goods, and remittances within what we might call the Mediterranean-European migration system.

Besides increasing trading links, migration plays a key role in strengthening ties between the geographically contiguous countries in Maritime Europe and the southern and eastern Mediterranean. In what is analogous to the intensification of economic and political ties between the United States and Central America (Cohen 2003:26), trade and sustained and increasing migration and remittance flows have drawn large parts of the eastern and southern Mediterranean—and Turkey, Tunisia, and Morocco in particular—inextricably closer to the countries of the European Union.

Fawcett (1989) stressed the relevance of both national and transnational networks. Such networks tend to be closely interwoven, blurring the distinction between internal and international migration (Martin 1992:458; McKee and Tisdell 1988:418). Via a process of so-called *leapfrogging*, international migration is often preceded by internal migrant moves, and returning migrants may settle in other than their places of origin. In a process called *relay migration* (Arizpe 1981), return migration may be followed by the migration of another family member. Unfortunately, most studies only focus on either internal or international migration, whereas they are in fact part of the same process.

The fact that the initial circumstances at both the receiving and sending end are modified by the migration process implies that the causes and consequences of migration should not be studied separately, but as part of the same system and the same process. Migration reshapes the development context at both the origin and destination, which in their turn, are supposed to influence subsequent migration patterns. For example, remittances sent back to family members could alter the economic context in the areas of origin. Levitt (1998) stressed the importance of so-called “social remittances”, which she interprets as a local-level, migration-driven form of cultural diffusion. This flow back consisting of ideas, behaviors, and identities plays an important role in promoting immigrant entrepreneurship, community, family formation, and political integration. It also affects the perceptions and aspirations of people, which are also likely to affect subsequent migration patterns.

This insight into the recursive effects of migration on the entire development context emphasizes the importance of including those who have not emigrated in the analysis, as the effect of migration goes well beyond the people directly concerned. The methodological

implication of this seems to be that the effects of migration cannot be properly understood by studying migrants alone, but also requires considering the wider development context in which migration takes place. As we will see, the very weakness of most migration impact studies is their tendency to study only migrants, whereas a proper understanding of the interlinkages and feedback mechanisms between migration and development necessitates studying entire migrant sending communities, including nonmigrants. Only such an approach will allow us to properly assess—through comparing migrants and nonmigrants—how migration affects the socio-economic behavior of migrants, to study migration selectivity, and to analyze the direct as well as indirect social, cultural, and economic effects of migration on entire migrant sending communities.

### 2.3.3. Discussion

The distinction between network and migration systems theories is not as clear-cut as sometimes is suggested and the two can easily be combined. They perceive that sending and receiving areas are increasingly linked through networks and feedback flows of people, information, ideas, goods, and capital, and point to the important role of social capital in facilitating subsequent migration. The study of migration networks has become increasingly popular in the last two decades, but there is a tendency to accept the arguments of network theories too uncritically. Their weak point is that they do not offer insight into the mechanisms that eventually lead to the weakening and crumbling of networks and migration systems. Following the circular logic of these theories, migration seems to go on *ad infinitum* (Massey *et al.* 1998:48). They do not indicate what are the external, structural factors as well as internal processes that counteract the tendencies that lead to increasing migration through networks (cf. Klaver 1997:45).

As with the push-pull models, there is a tendency to empirically illustrate the important facilitating role of migrant networks without specifying its relative weight vis-à-vis other facilitating and constraining factors that affect migration. Firstly, labor migration movements tend to decrease or cease when the fundamental causes of migration disappear, for example if wage differentials between sending and receiving areas go below a certain level (Martin and Taylor 1996), or if labor demand falls away. Secondly, although migration is indeed difficult to control by government due to network effects, legal and physical barriers to migration do nevertheless have an important influence on the magnitude and nature of migration<sup>5</sup>.

Finally, there may also be internal forces, which may weaken networks over time. Migrants are not necessarily only “bridgeheads” facilitating subsequent migration, but may also become restrictive “gatekeepers” (Böcker 1994), being hesitant or unwilling to assist prospective migrants. Links with kin and friends might weaken over time, and migrants—and their children in particular—might increasingly feel alienated from them. An important inference from network theory was that migration selectivity tends to decrease after the initial stages of pioneer migration, leading to a kind of diffusion of the migration experience over communities. However, the lesson here is that later on selectivity might increase again when migrant networks weaken.

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<sup>5</sup> For instance, increasingly restrictive immigration policies in Europe have led to a sharp decrease of legal labor migration from the southern and eastern Mediterranean, although this has been partly counterbalanced by a rise in family and undocumented migration. Policies have thus been important in changing the face of migration.

Network and migration systems theories primarily focus on the factors that cause, shape, and perpetuate migration. Migration systems theory points to the importance of feedback mechanisms transforming the developmental—social, cultural, political, economic, and spatial<sup>6</sup>—context at both the sending and receiving ends in which subsequent migration decisions are made. Migration systems theory seems useful in describing and modeling processes of spatial geographical structuring of migration streams, and, as a spatio-temporal model, it can be well integrated within the concepts of mobility transition and the migration hump. Taken together, they help us to understand how migration evolves over time—and changes in its nature, magnitude, destinations, and selectivity—and is reciprocally linked to the broader process of development.

However, spatial and spatio-temporal approaches such as push-pull models, transitional migration theories, and network theories do not offer specific insights into the nature of migration impacts on development in sending areas, let alone the heterogeneity of such impacts. Nevertheless, these approaches have demonstrated their utility in increasing insights into the spatio-temporal dynamics of migration selectivity patterns—which are highly relevant to the study of migration impacts—and the close links between national and international migration systems. Moreover, in linking the causes and effects of migration at the origin and the destination, they have pointed to the importance of considering the broader cultural, social, economic, and political context in which migration and development interactions take place.

## **2.4. Migration and development optimists vs. pessimists**

Over the last three decades of the twentieth century, the impact of migration on development in sending areas has been the subject of continuous and sometimes heated debate (Bauer and Zimmermann 1998; Russell 1992:267). In this debate, one can broadly distinguish two radically opposed approaches, that is, the “balanced growth” versus “asymmetric development” theories. Alternatively, one might call them “migration optimists” and “migration pessimists”.

The migration optimists are largely inspired by neo-classical migration economy, and developmentalist modernization theories, which are all affiliated to the functionalist paradigm in social theory. Notwithstanding differences between neo-classical and developmentalist views, they both believe that migration has generally had a positive impact on the development process in sending areas, as migration is believed to generate counterflows of capital (remittances) and knowledge, which are believed to then stimulate development. Through investments and their knowledge, (return) migrants are seen as active agents of economic growth.

Most migration pessimists are affiliated to structuralist social theory, which encompasses neo-Marxist, dependency, world systems, and, to a certain extent, cumulative causation theory. In general, structuralist approaches towards migration and development tend to treat migration as a negative phenomenon contributing to the further *underdevelopment* of the economies of the sending countries and to the undermining of their socio-cultural integrity (Hayes 1991).

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<sup>6</sup> Note that these models use a broad conception of development, which goes beyond the income-focused neoclassical migration theory.

With regards to migration impacts, we can basically distinguish between the impact on national development on the one hand (cf. Taylor *et al.* 1996b), and on local and regional development on the other (cf. Taylor *et al.* 1996a). The debate on the macro-economic impact of migration focuses on issues such as the loss of human capital (the “brain drain”—cf. Adams 1969) or instead gains (the “brain gain”—cf. Stark 1997) through migration and the contribution of migrant remittances to the foreign currency reserve and national economic development of labor-exporting countries. This study examines the impact of migration on development at the level of the local communities and regions migrants originate from. This debate has particularly focused on remittance use by migrants, and is also known as the “investments versus consumption” debate (Martin 1992).

The migration pessimists have clearly dominated this debate over the past decades. Recently, however, the dominant theoretical perspectives have been challenged by the “new economics of labor migration” (NELM) and other pluralist approaches, which put the debate on migration impacts in a broader developmental perspective. In the following sections, we will further discuss these theoretical perspectives on local and regional migration-development interactions.

#### 2.4.1. The dawning of a new era: developmentalist views

Neo-classical advocates of the theoretical model of balanced growth perceive migration as a form of optimal allocation of production factors to the benefit of all, that is, both sending and receiving areas (see section 2.1.1). In this perspective, the re-allocation of labor from rural, agricultural areas to urban, industrial sectors, is considered as an essential prerequisite for economic growth and, hence, as an integral component of the whole development process (Todaro 1969:139). The free movement of labor—in an unconstrained market environment—is eventually expected to lead to the increasing scarcity of labor, which will then lead to a higher marginal productivity of labor and increasing wage levels in migrant sending areas. Capital flows are expected to go in exactly the opposite direction as labor migration, that is, from the labor-scarce to the capital scarce migrant sending areas.

Eventually, this process of factor price equalization will lead to migration ceasing once wage levels are equal at both the origin and destination. This equilibrium model can both be applied at the national and international level. It is important to note that neo-classical migration theory, strictly speaking, has no place for income remittances from migrants to the areas of origin (Taylor 1999:65). It tends to view migrants as atomistic, income maximizing individuals, and does not consider their belonging to socio-economic units such as households and their broader connections to kin and community members. If that were true, there would indeed be no reason to send remittances back<sup>7</sup>. In a strictly neo-classical world, the developmental role of migration is entirely realized through factor price equalization.

Therefore, this rather abstract model gives little insight into the concrete and disparate development impact of migration on the sending areas. Nevertheless, those advocating migration as a means of development in sending areas have generally recognized the importance of remittances, to which they attribute an important role in stimulating local, regional, and national economic growth. In this “developmentalist” view, migrants, and in

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<sup>7</sup> As Djajic (1986) pointed out, earlier neo-classical approaches did rule out the possibility of a gain for nonmigrants, as they did not consider remittances in their models. Their only gain is that the scarcity—reflected in the price—of labor at the origin may theoretically increase as a result of migration. As we will see, historical-structuralist models paid just as little attention to remittances as neo-classical models.

particular return migrants, are seen as important agents of change and innovation, investing remittances in economic enterprises back home. It was also hypothesized that migrants not only bring back money, but also new ideas, knowledge, and entrepreneurial attitudes that they have acquired as a result of migration. In this way, migrants would contribute to the accelerated spatial diffusion of modernization in relatively “backward” areas, and play a mentally and financially positive role in development.

Such visions can be partly associated with the optimistic expectations surrounding the development of poor countries that were prominent in the first 25 years of the post-wwii era. Optimistic views on migration and development were generally rooted in nineteenth and early twentieth century studies on rural-to-urban migration within Europe and United States and on the historical experience with emigration from Europe to the United States, Canada, Australia, and so on. Freshly decolonized countries, it was believed, would quickly follow the same path of modernization, industrialization, and rapid economic growth as other, mostly Western countries had gone through or were—in the case of southern Europe—still going through. Reflecting these expectations, such countries were optimistically called “developing countries”. Capital constraints seemed the major problem developing countries were facing. The optimistic developmentalist model postulated that through a policy of large-scale capital transfer (loans, development aid, and—indeed—remittances) and industrialization, poor countries would be able to jump on the bandwagon of rapid economic development and modernization.

In the same post-war period, large-scale labor migration from developing to developed countries started to gain momentum. As Papademetriou (1985:212) argued, many labor surplus countries became involved in the migration process amidst expectations of the “dawning of a new era”. Governments of developing countries started to actively encourage emigration, since they considered it one of the principal instruments to promote development (Adler 1981; Penninx 1982).

At the macro level, remittances were considered a vital source of hard currency. At the meso and micro level, migration was supposed to lead to the economic improvement of migrants and greater freedom from local socio-economic barriers and constraints (Jones 1998a). Remittances were seen as “an effective response to market forces, providing a transition to an otherwise unsustainable development. They improve income distribution and quality of life beyond what other available development approaches could deliver” (Keely and Tran 1989:500) Moreover, it was expected that labor migrants, who were generally assumed to return after some years, would re-invest large sums of money in industrial enterprises in the region or country of origin. Expectations ran high. As Beijer (1970:102) voiced this development optimism, migrant workers “can also represent a hope for the industrial development of their native land”. In the same vein, Kindleberger (1965:253) argued that “large-scale emigration can contribute to the best of both worlds: rapid growth in the country of immigration . . . and rapid growth in the country of origin” (cf. De Mas and Vermeulen 1993).

Although such development optimism has been tempered since the early 1970s, many politicians and other policy makers continue to see international migration as a major instrument of national economic development. In the Asian and Pacific context, this has also been referred to as the “MIRAB” model (Bertram 1986). This can be seen as a national development model, in which a combination of “migration, remittances, aid, and (government) bureaucracy” is expected to contribute to the economic take-off of developing countries (Hayes 1991; McKee and Tisdell 1988:418). Many labor-exporting countries have developed specific policies to maximize the amounts of remittances sent back and to stimulate investments by migrants (cf. Ghosh 1992b).

Developing world governments have generally been positive towards the emigration of their lower educated citizens, not only because of the hard currency remittances this generates, but also because it supposedly alleviates unemployment, “population pressure”, and political tensions. The attitude towards the emigration of highly skilled people has, at least, been ambiguous. The “brain drain” has been commonly perceived as detrimental to development, as it is perceived to deprive poor countries of their valuable skilled and professional labor resources in which states have invested many years of education (Adams 1969; Baldwin 1970)<sup>8</sup>.

It is striking that visions of the contribution of international migration to development have generally been far more positive compared to internal migration, which has been mostly negatively evaluated. Rural-to-urban migration in particular has been perceived as a threat to economic and political stability, which partly explains the popularity of (unrealistic) policies that aim to curb the *rural exodus*. There seems to be an increasing bias towards international migration in the specialist theoretical literature on migration and development<sup>9</sup>, but internal and international migration rarely seem to be studied in relation to each other. This role of internal migration in development processes is often not properly understood. This is unfortunate, as we have seen that internal and international migration systems are, in practice, closely intertwined.

#### 2.4.2. The migrant syndrome: cumulative causation and structuralist views

As from the late 1960s, the optimistic views on migration and development in sending areas have been increasingly challenged under the combined influence of a paradigm shift in social sciences towards the historical-structuralist view and an increasing number of empirical studies that often did not support optimistic views on migration and development. In historical-structuralist views, migration clearly failed to resolve, or substantially ameliorate, the structural conditions that caused migration (Papademetriou 1985:211). In a historical-structuralist perspective, migration is essentially interpreted as a negative “flight from misery” which contributes little to development. Worse, many migration researchers have argued that migration has even contributed to maintaining and aggravating problems of underdevelopment, and even further deprive the poor:

the evolution into an uncontrolled depletion of their already meager supplies of skilled manpower - and the most healthy, dynamic, and productive members of their populations . . . [and] . . .the often marginal socio-economic gains from the skills and remittances of emigrants (Papademetriou 1985:111-2)

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<sup>8</sup> Although there is no room to elaborate on this issue, it is important to note that unilaterally negative visions of the “brain drain” have been increasingly contested in recent years by researchers who stress the beneficial effects such high-skilled migration may—under certain circumstances, and in the longer run—have on migrants themselves as well as sending areas and countries (Golub 1996; Oommen 1989; Stark 1997; Cohen 2003).

<sup>9</sup> Although the sociological, anthropological, and geographical literature on rural societies in developing countries also pays substantial attention to internal (and international) migration, such studies are generally disconnected from the general theoretical debate on migration and development treated in this chapter. De Haan (1999) argued that, although labor migration is nowadays a central element in the livelihoods of households in large parts of the developing world, development studies have paid insufficient attention to migration, and subsequently tend to ignore migration as a potentially significant factor in development.

At the national level, the importance of remittances has been generally recognized, but there was increasing concern about the brain drain phenomenon. Whereas at the national level the feelings were mixed, the disappointment seemed particularly great concerning the effects of migration on development at the regional and local level. The dominant vision was that, although remittances were sent back, they were rarely invested in such a way that they could contribute to development in the regions and communities of origin. This coincided with the renaissance in Marxist thinking in social sciences. Historical structuralist and center-periphery theories seemed applicable to the study of migration and did not bode well (De Mas and Vermeulen 1993). In fact, these approaches turned the argument of neo-classical and developmentalist approaches upside down: migration does not decrease, but increase spatial and inter-personal disparities in developmental levels. Also in a socio-cultural respect, the effects of migration were increasingly seen as detrimental. From the early 1970s, numerous academic publications seemed to support the hypothesis that migration contributes to the “development of underdevelopment” instead of the reverse (cf. Almeida 1973; Lipton 1980; Reichert 1981; Rhoades 1979; Rubenstein 1992).

Such pessimistic findings seemed to fit into one particular theoretical perspective on migration impacts: cumulative causation theory, which was developed earlier by the Swedish economist Gunnar Myrdal (1957). Cumulative causation theory is analogous to migration systems theory in the sense that it links the process of migration to the dynamics in the broader development context in both the origin and destination. The main difference is that cumulative causation theory is more explicit on the developmental impact of migration on sending areas, and its verdict is clearly negative.

Cumulative causation theory holds that capitalist development is inevitably marked by deepening spatial and personal income and welfare inequalities. By altering the context in which subsequent migration decisions are made, the establishment of migration streams creates de-developing feedback mechanisms—so-called “backwash effects”—in sending regions that make additional movements more likely. Cumulative causation theory suggests that migration sets in motion a vicious circle in which the backwash effects alter the system in such a way that productivity and wealth at the origin is further decreased. Migration, it says, undermines regional and local economies by depriving communities of their most valuable labor force, increasing dependence on the outside world, and stimulating subsequent out-migration. In sum, migration is believed to intensify regional developmental disparities. Although cumulative causation theory was developed well before the revival of (historical) structuralist social theory, and is rather empirical in nature, it seems to fit well in a historical-structural and dependency framework of “asymmetrical growth”, and was taken up again with enthusiasm in the 1970s.

While being a general perspective on development, cumulative causation has been frequently applied to the issue of migration and development. Cumulative causation theory argues that once differential growth had occurred, internal and external economies of scale will perpetuate and deepen the bipolar pattern characterized by the vicious cycle of poverty in the periphery and the accelerated growth of the core region. Although positive “spread effects” also occur—such as increased demand for agricultural products and raw materials trade from the periphery and, though not explicitly mentioned by Myrdal, remittances—these would in no way match the backwash effects. Myrdal argued that, without strong state policy, the capitalist system fosters increasing regional inequalities (cf. Potter *et al.* 1999:56).

Structuralist and cumulative causation theories perceive migration as a process serving the interests of the receiving nations in need of cheap immigrant labor, and which only seems to worsen underdevelopment at the sending end. This “pauperization”, they assume, encourages further out-migration. The latter thought reveals an *a priori* negative perception of migration. Increasing disparities in development are believed to further increase migration. In

this perspective, migrants have no genuine free choice, but are individuals that are involuntarily pushed out of their native regions by structural forces. Thus, migration is perceived as a forced flight from inescapable misery rather than a voluntary choice contributing to development in sending areas.

Radically different from neo-classical and developmentalist theory, cumulative causation and historical structuralist theories do not see migration as a means to development. On the contrary, they argue that migration deprives developing countries of their valuable human and material capital resources, which are exploited for the benefit of industrialized countries (international migration) and urban-based capitalist elite groups within developing countries (internal migration). The productive structures at the origin would be progressively undermined, contributing to “asymmetric growth”—as opposed to the neo-classical equilibrium model of factor price equalization—and the increasing underdevelopment and dependency of the underdeveloped on the “exploitative” developed core countries (cf. Almeida 1973).

From the early 1970s, an increasing number of empirical studies conducted in migrant sending areas suggested that Myrdal’s rather grim predictions of cumulative causation appeared to be coming true (for review articles, see Lewis 1986; Lipton 1980). Dependency, instability, and developmental distortion were resulting in economic decline (Keely and Tran 1989:501). Empirical work revealed various other negative effects of migration not yet mentioned by Myrdal—in particular in the socio-cultural domain. Such negative perspectives on the role of migration were amalgamated into what might be called the “migrant syndrome”<sup>10</sup> view. In the following paragraphs, we will review the main mechanisms through which the migrant syndrome is presumed to have a negative impact on sending areas.

Historical-structuralist theories tend to see migration as a process draining developing countries in general and backward rural areas in particular of their labor and human capital resources. Although the brain drain has attracted most attention, perhaps more relevant in the context of “classical” labor migration from developing countries would seem to be the “brawn drain” (Penninx 1982:793)—the massive departure of young, able-bodied men and women from rural areas (cf. Lewis 1986). This *lost labor effect* is supposed to have a negative effect on local production. Migration is typically blamed for causing a critical shortage of agricultural labor, depriving areas of their most valuable, able-bodied working force (Taylor 1984). Therefore, the lost labor effect is blamed for the de-intensification of agriculture and the decline of land under cultivation (Rubenstein 1992:133). Moreover, migrants are typically young men that are often supposed to be the most significant agricultural innovators (Lipton 1980:7+11). Likewise, other traditional economic sectors, such as craft industries, are supposed to suffer from this lost labor effect.

The second mechanism through which migration is believed to have a detrimental effect on development in migrant sending areas is *increasing inequality* at the community and regional level. This is related to the selective nature of migration: almost all empirical studies confirm that migrants are not representative of the communities from which they originate. Labor migrants tend to be relatively young (15-35 years) and, in many cultural contexts, predominantly male. In contrast to popular perceptions, it tends not to be the poorest and most miserable who leave since a certain threshold of wealth is required to overcome the opportunity costs and risks involved in migrating. However, to argue from “poor villages expel more migrants” to “poor villagers are likeliest to migrate” is to commit a classical “ecological fallacy”, and in practice it is seldom the poorest who migrate, still less migrate successfully” (Lipton 1980:7).

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<sup>10</sup> To be attributed to Reichert (1981, cf. Taylor 1999:64).

Migrants are therefore expected to be from higher lower or middle-income classes. It has also been argued that migrants tend to be the already employed, more entrepreneurial, open-minded, and relatively better educated people within a community (Zachariah *et al.* 2001). As it is already the better-off who tend to migrate, socio-economic inequalities within communities may increase, since the remittances and other benefits of migration thus go disproportionately to the better-off (Lipton 1980). Therefore, migration will not contribute to the alleviation of the poverty of the worst-off. Instead, the gradual undermining of traditional economies would even increase the deprivation of “stay-behinds”.

Perhaps the mostly commonly cited “truth” in the empirical research on migration and development is that migrants fritter their money away on “conspicuous consumption”<sup>11</sup> and invest their money in so-called non-productive enterprises such as housing (cf. Entzinger 1985:268; Lewis 1986). In his wide-ranging and influential review of migration impact-studies, Lipton (1980:12) concluded that recipients use remittances first to pay off debts incurred in financing migration or for education of their children. More than 90 percent of remittances are spent on everyday consumption. Most consumption behavior serves to reinforce status, such as high payments for bride prices and the construction of pompous, luxurious houses. Much “chain migration” depends on education financed by remittances from older siblings. Investments only come in the fourth place of remittance use. Moreover, these would mainly be so-called *consumptive investments*, mainly concerning a capital transfer more than capital creation, such as the purchase of land, or remittances were used to hire workers (e.g., for irrigation maintenance) where once family labor was used, or for labor-replacing mechanization rather than the generation of extra output or the better use of scarce land inputs.

Skepticism about the use of migrant remittances for productive investments has been the common thread of most evaluation of migration and development (King 1996; Lewis 1986; Massey *et al.* 1998; Papademetriou and Martin 1991; Taylor and Watt 1996). Twelve years after Lipton, in his review article on migration, development, and remittances in Mexico, Rubenstein (1992) came to the similar conclusion that most remittance income was spent on day-to-day household subsistence. He also reported expenditure on religious rituals, feasts, marriages, gifts, funerals, and the education of children. A large part of the remittances of migrants would also be spent on the purchase of building lots, the construction, renovation, or enlargement of a house, and the upgrading of household facilities. Many studies mention a lack of creativity and innovation of most investors, which would result in an imitative “me-too” effect, which would render the establishment of, for instance, grocery shops, small restaurants, and trucks, “second rank propositions in an overcrowded sector” (cf. Penninx 1982:802-3).

Such expenses tend to be evaluated as not contributing to development, weakening the local economy, and increasing dependency on the outside world. First, increased consumption and land purchase by migrants were reported to provoke *inflationary pressures* (cf. Russell 1992) and soaring land prices (Appleyard 1989; Rubenstein 1992), from which the already poorer nonmigrants would suffer the most—leading to more inequality. Second, most of the purchased items (e.g., TV sets, household appliances, refrigerators, stylish clothing and fabrics, building materials, ornaments, “modern” foodstuffs, fertilizers, etc.) would not be locally produced, but have to be imported from urban areas or from abroad. This is assumed to have the double effect of “crowding out” traditional, local production, and strengthening the economies of “core areas”, thereby intensifying the process of “asymmetric growth” and

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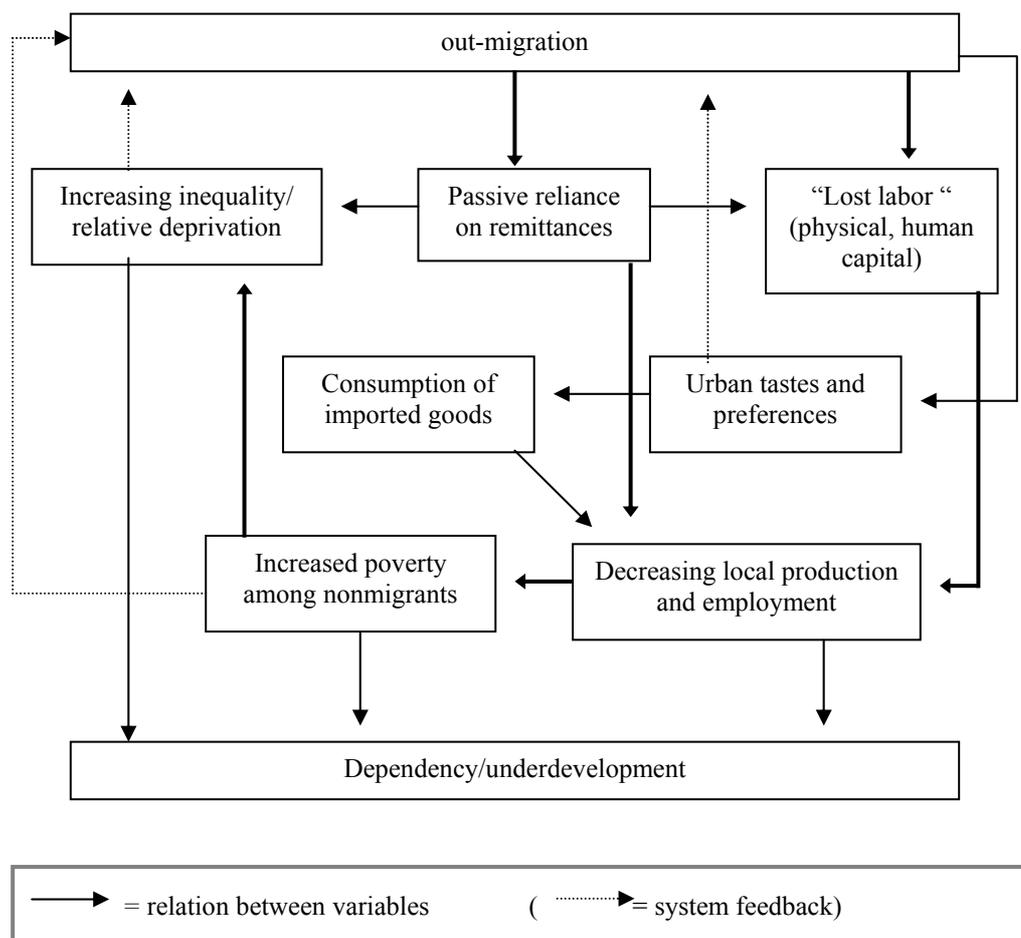
<sup>11</sup> This term was coined by Veblen (1970) to describe the way that the *nouveau riche* consumed particular items in order to denote their new social status.

increasing regional disparities between the core and periphery. Third, the scarce productive investments would be mainly made in urban areas outside the village or region of origin (Lewis 1986; Lipton 1980). This *leakage* of remittance investments out of migrant sending areas is supposed to further exacerbate regional disparities in wealth.

Besides the negative impact of migration on local production, poverty, and inequality, many researchers have also negatively evaluated the socio-cultural effects of migration. The exposure to the wealth of (return) migrants and the goods and ideas they bring with them, are often assumed to contribute to a change in rural tastes (Lipton 1980:12), which increases the demands for imported urban or foreign-produced goods and food, lowering the demand for locally produced goods and increasing the general costs of living for migrants and nonmigrants alike. Migration is held responsible for the loss of “community solidarity”, the “undermining of their sociocultural integrity” (Hayes 1991), and the breakdown of traditional institutions and organizations regulating village life and agriculture (cf. De Haas 1998). The exposure of rural youth to the relative wealth and success of migrants, combined with changing “urban” tastes and material aspirations, is supposed to make the rural way of life less appealing, discourage local people from working in agricultural and other traditional sectors, and encourage even more out-migration, perpetuating the vicious circle of cumulative causation of the migrant syndrome.

So, migration is perceived as draining migrant sending areas of their productive forces, thereby hindering local economic development rather than stimulating it, and increasing their dependency on the “core” and increasing their marginalization. In figure 2.2, the main mechanisms through which the “migration syndrome” is supposed to maintain and deepen underdevelopment in migrant sending areas are summarized in a conceptual framework. It shows how “migration pessimists” believe that these negative feedback effects lead to continuing out-migration.

The main “positive” effect of migration would be the increase in family welfare for migrants themselves, which would, however, only be temporary and therefore “artificial” or “cosmetic”. This one-sided dependency on migrant remittances is considered dangerous, as migration studies have commonly assumed that remittances will decrease in the near future. On the whole, migration and remittances have a detrimental effect on local agricultural and other local productivity, increase intra-community and regional inequality, increase dependency on the outside world, contribute to economic and political instability, and lead to general economic decline (cf. Keely and Tran 1989:500). In Neomarxist terms, migration reproduces and reinforces the capitalist system based on inequality.

**Figure 2.2. Conceptual framework of the “migrant syndrome”**

### 2.4.3. Towards a pluralist perspective

The presented views on migration and development represent two extremes. Most empirical studies should be situated somewhere in between—as they see both positive and negative impacts—although most studies clearly tend towards the more pessimistic views (Taylor 1999). The 1970s and 1980s were characterized by a rapid expansion in the number of empirical micro-studies in various labor exporting countries, especially from around the Mediterranean Sea (notably on Spain, Portugal, Greece, Turkey, Morocco, Tunisia) and Latin America (with an emphasis on Mexico). Most of such micro-studies were carried out by anthropologists, sociologists, or geographers, and tended to support historical-structural views to varying degrees (cf. Almeida 1973; Lipton 1980; Park 1992; Reichert 1981; Rhoades 1979; Rubenstein 1992). This is not to say that most studies are as straightforwardly neo-Marxist oriented as, for instance, Rubenstein (1992), but the number of publications more or less supporting the developmentalist view remained limited (cf. Baucic 1972; Korner 1987; Van Velsen 1959; Yasin 1987). However, even in the heyday of neo-Marxism, there have been empirical studies that stressed the non-uniform, differentiated impact of migration (Abadan-Unat *et al.* 1976; Heinemeijer *et al.* 1976; Penninx 1982). Anthropologists seemed the most pessimistic, and geographers and economists tended towards a more moderate stance (De Mas and Vermeulen 1993).

However, the stream of plainly pessimistic publications seems to dry up towards the end of the 1980s. Notwithstanding some later pessimist echoes (cf. King 1996; Zachariah *et al.* 2001; Rahman 2000), the tone of debate has become undoubtedly more moderate since then. This timing seems not coincidental, as this has corresponded with a general paradigm shift in contemporary social theory, away from grand theories towards more pluralist, hybrid approaches. Most studies from the late 1980s and 1990s seem to have departed from a structuralist stance, and see both positive and negative impacts of migration (cf. Adams 1991; Ahlburg 1995; Cuffaro 1993; Golub 1996; Jones 1998a; Keely and Tran 1989; McKee and Tisdell 1988; Osaki 1999; Stahl 1988).

Notwithstanding these later, subtler approaches, the overall tone of the debate has remained rather pessimistic. To some, it might appear superfluous to extensively discuss structuralist theory, as it is considered obsolete. However, the influence of structuralist thinking on migration and development theory is enormous, and many of its views still pervade empirical studies on migration impacts (cf. Taylor 1999:63). Both explicitly and implicitly, many views derived from cumulative causation theory—which sees migration as a de-developing, destabilizing, and, hence, undesirable, product of poverty, as a *problem* which can and should be “solved” through closed border policies in combination with aid and development programs—still retain currency among academics, left and right wing politicians, and the media.

Nevertheless, there are good theoretical arguments to reject the propositions of the migrant syndrome view. This criticism is not just based on another interpretation of empirical data due to a general paradigm shift in social theory away from structuralist thinking, but there are also a number of theoretical fallacies and internal logical inconsistencies in the pessimistic views on migration and development derived from cumulative causation theory. The first objection is the deterministic and self-affirming nature of the model, which does not give room for heterogeneity in the specific, localized migration impacts. For what reason would positive spread effects (e.g., remittances) never match negative backwash effects under certain conditions?

Second, like other “circular feedback” models—such as migration network theory—the vicious cycle of “pauperization” in the periphery and migration and growth at the core seems to go on *ad infinitum*. This is suspect, since it seems unrealistic to assume that there are no counter-mechanisms which level-off or change the nature of this supposedly *linear* process over time. How far can “under-development” go on without decreasing migration? Cumulative causation and related models implicitly suppose a linear-negative association between development and migration. However, as has been argued earlier, one cannot generally assume a linear-positive relationship between spatial disparities in income and welfare and the occurrence of migration. As empirical evidence supporting transitional migration theories has convincingly demonstrated, the relationship between “development”—whether expressed in terms of the vital transition (Zelinsky 1971) or income disparities—and migration is J- or inverted U-curve like rather than linear. This means that, in cases of extreme pauperization, (international) labor migration is generally not likely to increase, rather to decrease—although in extreme cases increased refugee migration might occur.

Third, there is an inherent contradiction in the two central arguments that “migration pessimists” generally make: On the one hand, they say, migration breeds inequality because migrants come from better-off groups within society. On the other hand, it is argued that further impoverishment of the region of origin leads to more migration. This is logically inconsistent, as the first argument correctly supposes that a certain threshold of wealth needs to precede migration and the second argument supposes a negative-linear relationship between wealth and migration. Thus, the migration pessimists tend to make an imprecise analysis of the causes of labor migration through their ignorance of the inherently selective

character of migration. Therefore, they suggest that increasing deprivation *leads* to increased labor migration *per se*. However, this reflects an erroneous understanding of the role of migration in the development process, which is far more temporally and spatially heterogeneous than the migration pessimists suggest.

A fourth, empirical reason to question the one-sided negative perceptions on migration and development is the increasing body of empirical research that appeared in the 1980s and 1990s indicating that, under certain circumstances, migration has in fact played a positive role in the development of regions and countries of origin. In south-European countries such as Spain, Italy, and Greece and East Asian countries such as Malaysia and South-Korea, remittances have played a significant role in their—successful—national economic development and, in reaction to sustained socio-economic development in their countries of origin, many international migrants have in fact returned to invest money in private enterprises.

Only after a long period of sustained development has out-migration leveled-off and decreased, and these formerly labor-exporting countries have now been transformed into net labor importers or are on the way to doing so (cf. Skeldon 1997). This again provides evidence that transitional migration theories—despite all relativist criticism on evolutionary models of development—seemed to be more realistic and have more explanatory power than the largely circular cumulative causation theory. Apparently, the self-reinforcing cyclical mechanisms of asymmetrical, polarizing development cannot be taken as axiomatic.

So, looking back, does this all mean that the migration optimists were right? The answer is no. In fact, neither the structuralist pessimists nor the functionalists optimists were right, as the variation of migration-development interactions is too high to be able to fit them into deterministic theoretical schemes “predicting” the “development outcome” of migration. Both theories seemed too rigid and general to be able to deal with the complexities and spatial diversity of factual migration-development interactions.

Papademetriou and Martin (1991) rightfully stated that there is no automatic mechanism by which international migration and remittances result in development. Few migration researchers would nowadays contest this general assertion (cf. Russell 1992), but it gives an uncomfortable feeling to leave it simply at that. The main problem surrounding research on migration and development seems to be the absence of an appropriate theoretical framework refined enough to deal with the apparently complex realities of the issue, that is able to deal with the diversity of migration and development interactions, but that does not restrict itself to empiricism and “all is local and singular” relativism.

Findings from different studies are clearly contradictory (Stahl 1988). In some cases, migration seems to have a positive effect on development, in other cases it seems to have no effect or even negative effects. This not just pertains to differences in paradigmatic orientation and research methodology—leading to different interpretations—but also to real, existing differences. There is a growing consensus that migration and development interactions are highly complex and that the nature of migration impacts is highly context-sensitive. “Black and white” theoretical approaches are therefore not appropriate to deal with this issue.

Empirical research has clearly indicated that the “spiraling down” mechanisms of cumulative causation do not always hold true, but also that the perfect neo-classical world does not exist in reality, especially in the developing world. In other words, structural constraints such as highly unequal access to power, markets, education, and other social facilities do matter in the daily struggle of most people in the developing world, and do severely limit their capability to overcome their situation of poverty and general underdevelopment. Hence, discarding the rigidity of the structuralist approaches is not to say that structural constraints do not matter.

Neo-classical and developmentalist perspectives on migration and development tend to underestimate, while structuralist perspectives tend to overestimate the importance of structural constraints. A new, more realistic theoretical perspective on migration and development has to be able to account for the role of structure—the constraining or enabling general political, institutional, economic social, and cultural context in which migration takes place—as well as agency—the (limited) capacity of individuals to overcome constraints and potentially reshape the structural context.

The second half of the 1980s marked in several ways the end of not only rigid historical-structuralism, but also of rigid theoretical thinking in general. In this new era, social scientists, influenced by post-modernist thinking and particularly inspired by Giddens' (1984) structuration theory, sought to harmonize actor- and structure-oriented approaches. Recognition of the interaction or recursive relationship between structure and agency seems essential for the migration and development debate, as this enables us to better deal with the heterogeneity of migration impacts. In such a “pluralist” approach, the results of the structure-actor interactions allow for a greater variety of outcome than would have been allowed from either the single aggregation of individual decision making (Skeldon 1997:18) or from the unidirectional imperatives of structures.

The paradigm shift in social theory has also deeply affected the migration and development debate. Over the 1980s and 1990s, the main contribution to thinking on migration and development came from the new economics of labor migration (NELM) theory, which recognizes the heterogeneous impacts of migration while making an explicit link between the developmental causes and consequences of migration. Finally, there is increasing recognition that insights from different theoretical perspectives on migration and development are not contradictory *per se*, and might well be combined (Massey *et al.* 1993; 1998).

The following sections sketch a theoretical framework for the analysis of migration-development interactions. This framework will place migration in a broader developmental context by combining the integrated insights from the earlier general migration theories, the new economics of labor migration, and so-called household livelihood approaches with the “capabilities” perspective on development introduced by Amartya Sen (1999). This, in its entirety, can be placed within a structuration perspective, which gives room for the recursive and heterogeneous relationship between migration and development.

## **2.5. Coming to grips with migration and development interactions**

### **2.5.1. New economics of labor migration (NELM)**

In the 1980s and 1990s, the so-called new economics of labor migration (NELM) emerged as a critical response to, and improvement of, neo-classical migration theory (Massey *et al.* 1993:436). The new economics of labor migration theory rejects neo-classical models, which were evaluated as too individualistic and rigid to deal with the complex and diverse realities of the migration and development interactions. This new approach has gradually turned out to be a viable alternative to not only neo-classical but also to structuralist approaches, gaining increasing acceptance throughout the 1990s. It was Stark (1978; 1980) who revitalized thinking on migration from the developing world by placing the behavior of individual migrants in a wider societal context and by considering not the individual, but the family or the *household* as the most appropriate decision-making unit. This new approach allows for

integrating factors other than individual income maximization as influencing migration decision-making. In this respect, Stark and Levhari (1982:191-2) argued that

During the last decade or so, the ruling economic explanation for rural-to-urban migration taking place in less developed countries (LDCs) has been the response to intersectoral expected incomes differential. . . . This is somewhat surprising, especially since during the very same period both risk and (especially) risk avoidance have assumed major significance in mainstream economics . . . the way variability in alternative rural earnings and in future urban earnings must figure in migrants' calculations is beyond the grasp of the expected-income hypothesis . . . It is suggested that an optimizing, risk-averse small-farmer family confronted with a subjectively risk-increasing situation manages to control the risk through diversification of its income portfolio via the placing of its best-suited member in the urban sector, which is independent from agricultural production.

The new economics of labor migration models migration as risk-sharing behavior of families or households. Better than individuals, households seem able to diversify their resources, such as labor, in order to minimize income risks (Stark and Levhari 1982). The fundamental assumption is that people or households act not only to maximize income but also to minimize and spread risks. Internal and international migration is perceived as a household response to income risk, as migrant remittances provide income insurance for households of origin. This risk-spreading motive can even explain the occurrence of migration in the absence of (expected) wage differentials. The basic idea is that for the household as a whole "it may be a Pareto-superior strategy to have members migrate elsewhere, either as a means of risk sharing or as an investment in access to higher earnings streams" (Lucas and Stark 1985:902).

Migration is not only perceived as household risk spreading strategy in order to stabilize income, but also as a strategy to overcome various market constraints. The new economics of labor migration places the household in imperfect credit (capital) and risk (insurance) markets that prevail in most developing countries (Stark 1978; 1980; Stark and Bloom 1985; Stark and Levhari 1982; several other articles reprinted in Stark 1991; Taylor 1986; Taylor and Watt 1996; Taylor 1999). Such markets are often weakly developed or difficult to access for non-elite groups. Through remittances, migration can be a household strategy to overcome such market constraints, and may potentially enable households to invest in productive activities and to improve their livelihoods (Stark 1980). While remittances do not play a role in neo-classical migration theory (cf. Taylor 1999), within NELM they are perceived as one of the most essential motives for migrating.

Besides providing a radically different conceptualization of migration as a household strategy aiming at (a) diversifying the household's income portfolio; (b) increasing household income; and (c) overcoming constraints on economic activities and investments in the region of origin, the new economics of labor migration also criticized the very methodological design of most prior migration research. According to Taylor *et al.* (1996a:1),

prior work has been unduly pessimistic about the prospects for development as a result of international migration, largely because it has failed to take into account the complex, often indirect ways that migration and remittances influence the economic status of households and the communities that contain them

This is related to criticism of the lack of analytical rigor, the prevalence of deductive reasoning over empirical testing, as well as the important methodological deficiencies of most studies. NELM scholars claim that most studies on migration impact in sending areas consist of simplified, non-comparative remittance-use studies and rather "impressionistic" assessments

about migration impacts, and are in their very methodological design often not able to capture the complex relationships between migration and development (Taylor 1999).

Over the past two decades, an increasing number of NELM-inspired publications have appeared which seem to corroborate most hypotheses of the new economics of labor migration theory, and which further deepened insights into the complex interactions between migration and development in sending areas (for general overviews, see Taylor *et al.* 1996a,b; Taylor 1999). Also outside the domain of NELM, recent empirical work has challenged most of the previous, predominantly pessimistic views (cf. Conway and Cohen 1998; De Haan 1999). In brief, the impact of migration seems to be far more on the positive side than has commonly been assumed. Recent research showed that international migrant households generally exhibit a higher propensity to invest than nonmigrant households do, which seems in clear contrast to the grim predictions of cumulative causation theory. Moreover, the much-despised consumption as well as investments in “non-productive” sectors such as housing turned out to play, under certain circumstances, a clearly positive role in local and regional economic development, for migrants and nonmigrants alike, and should therefore not be unduly discarded from analyses beforehand.

### 2.5.2. Migration as a household livelihood strategy

The new economics of labor migration (NELM) can be well-integrated within the so-called *livelihood approaches* that have evolved as of the late 1970s among geographers, anthropologists, and sociologists conducting micro-research among poor people in developing countries. Growing awareness of the diversity of the ways in which poor people in poor countries organize their daily living in urban and rural environments, and the creativity they demonstrate there, points to the fundamental role of *human agency*. This empirical variety clearly does not fit into the macro-structural schemes of neo-Marxist, world systems, and dependency theory. Empirical work has contributed to a growing awareness that the poor cannot only be seen as passive victims of global capitalist forces—whose existence they generally did not deny by the way—but try to actively improve their livelihoods within the constraining conditions they live in (Lieten and Nieuwenhuys 1989).

A *livelihood* comprises the capabilities, assets (including both material and social resources), and activities required for a means of living (Carney 1998). It is important to note that a livelihood encompasses not only the income generating activities pursued by a household and its individuals, but also the social institutions, intra-household relations, and mechanisms of access to resources through the life cycle (Ellis 1998). For their livelihoods, people and households draw on five categories of assets (or capital)—natural, social, human, physical, and financial (Carney 1998). Ellis (2000) has placed particular emphasis on the *access* to assets and activities that is influenced by social relations (gender, class, kin, belief systems) and institutions (cf. Cahn 2002), which explains that the relative access to assets and activities is unequally distributed within communities and households.

A livelihood *strategy* can then be defined as a strategic or deliberate choice of a combination of activities by households and their individual members to maintain, secure, and improve their livelihoods. This particular choice is based on (selective) access to assets, perceptions of opportunities, as well as aspirations of actors. Since these differ from household to household and from individual to individual, this explains why livelihood strategies tend to be so heterogeneous.

The emergence of the livelihood concept has meant a departure from rigid historical-structuralist views towards a more empirical approach. It went along with the insight that people—generally, but all the more in the prevailing circumstances of economic, political and

environmental uncertainty and hardship—organize their livelihoods not individually but within wider social contexts, such as households, village communities, and ethnic groups. For most social settings, the household was recognized as the most relevant social group and hence the most appropriate unit of analysis, acknowledging that the “forms of households vary across time, space, and socio-economic groups” (McDowell and De Haan 1997:3).

Concerning rural livelihoods, Bebbington (1999) stressed the need to broaden our understanding of rural livelihoods in the developing world, without automatically restricting the analysis to agriculture or natural resources. In almost all rural areas of the developing world, rural households are diversifying their livelihoods. Rural-based households tend to increasingly draw on multiple activities inside and outside agriculture, and gain additional income through migration. Many rural areas are “de-agrarizing”, and rural livelihoods should therefore no longer be equated with agrarian livelihoods. We should cease to “crunch rural livelihoods into the category of agricultural and natural resource-based strategies” (Bebbington 1999:2021). In this context, migration should be seen as one of the main elements of the livelihood strategies open to rural households, which is often combined with other strategies, such as agricultural intensification and local non-farm activities (McDowell and De Haan 1997:1-3; Ellis 2000; Scoones 1998).

On a global scale, most rural areas are now incorporated into one or several internal or international migration systems, and migration has become a crucial element in the livelihoods of countless rural households in the developing world. Only a few regions have not been incorporated into migration systems, and increasing involvement in migration seems a worldwide trend<sup>12</sup>. It is increasingly recognized that labor migration is often more than a short-term survival or crisis coping strategy—a “flight from misery”. Rather, it is often a deliberate decision to improve livelihoods, enable investments (Bebbington 1999:2027), and help to reduce fluctuations in the family income that has (often) been entirely dependent on climatic vagaries (De Haan *et al.* 2000:28; McDowell and De Haan 1997:18). Migration can generally be seen as a means to acquire a wider range of assets which insure against future shocks and stresses (De Haan *et al.* 2000:30).

This comes very close to the premises of NELM, if we see migration as part of a broader *household livelihood strategy* to diversify income and overcome market constraints. What we see, in a way, is that livelihood approaches meant for sociologists and anthropologists in particular a departure from orthodox, rigid structuralism towards more pluralist approaches (McDowell and De Haan 1997). Neo-classical and developmentalist migration economists moved in exactly the opposite direction. The development of NELM as of the late 1970s—too!—meant a departure from individualistic neo-classical and actor-oriented approaches towards a theoretical perspective that recognized the relevance of both agency and structural constraints to development, resulting in a more realistic, pluralist approach.

Interestingly, NELM adopted a household-oriented approach that was already common in other fields of social science. In this respect, Lucas and Stark (1985:901) stated that economists have begun to address questions of household composition more traditionally posed by anthropologists and sociologists. Furthermore, Lucas and Stark (1985:915) proposed to

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<sup>12</sup> Therefore, most policies aimed at curbing migration flows are like swimming against the tide. Bebbington (1999) argues that this explains why numerous projects aiming at stopping the *rural exodus* have failed. De Haan *et al.* (2000) argued that, instead of designing such costly and potentially harmful anti-migrationist programs, policies should rather look into ways of enhancing the positive effects of migration

extend the recent intergenerational view of the household to a spatial dimension. . . . and dualistic theories of development must be revised: Instead of an urban sector and a rural sector, each with its own populace benefiting from the sectoral-specific speeds of development, the family straddles the two. Classes cease to be only peasants and workers, and a hybrid peasants-worker group emerges. This perception is not new to anthropologists but has not previously been integrated with the economics of the household.

Research on rural livelihoods confirmed the latter argument, and demonstrated that internal and international migrants tend to maintain close links with their areas of origin over a much longer period than has previously been assumed (McDowell and De Haan 1997:1). It is not either migration or activities at the origin, but often both. The important methodological and analytical consequence of all this seems to be that the impact of a migration strategy cannot be evaluated outside its relationship with the other livelihood strategies, that is, the “portfolio” of household activities (Stark 1991). Research attempting to isolate migration and migrants from their wider social context, and other livelihood activities, is doomed to fail.

Migration and employment at the origin should not be seen as mutually exclusive possibilities, but are in fact often combined. Without a household approach, such multiple strategies cannot be captured. This view, which is shared by both NELM and livelihoods approaches, better reflect the realities of daily life for millions of households in developing countries than neo-classical or structuralist approaches.

The livelihood approach seems useful to model and gain insight into the way households live and shape their lives, and how these lives are practically embedded into a broader institutional context. According to (De Haan *et al.* 2000:1), migration is not an

atomistic reaction to economic or environmental pressure, but it is embedded in societal rules and norms. Two kinds of institutions have a significant impact on migration: migration networks and households’ structure and management. These institutions determine the contribution migration can make to improving livelihoods, but this link is by no means direct or simple.

The choice of the household as the primary unit of analysis can be seen as a kind of optimum strategy or a compromise between actor and structure approaches, and most migration researchers now seem to agree that households are the most appropriate unit of analysis of migration in the developing world, acknowledging that the forms of households vary across time, space, and socio-economic groups (De Mas 1990; Lucas and Stark 1985; McDowell and De Haan 1997:3; Penninx and Selier 1992:15; Stark 1978). Such household approaches seem mainly applicable in developing countries where for most people it is not possible to secure the family income through private insurance markets or government programs (Bauer and Zimmermann 1998), increasing the importance of implicit contracts within the family. However, there is a danger of excessively focusing on households, as (unequal) relations within the household and relations with other family and community members are relevant too, and should therefore not be neglected. It might also frequently be that individuals decide on their own to migrate, without consulting other household members. Although the household approach seems to be the best compromise, this means that we should also consider other levels of analysis whenever relevant.

In perceiving migration as a *household livelihood strategy*, we acknowledge that structural forces leave at least some room for individual agency. Under certain circumstances, migration can be a so-called *survival* or *coping strategy*. This is, for example, the case for people fleeing disasters such as wars, droughts, or famines. However, most forms of *labor* migration are typically not a “flight from misery”—a last resort to escape from extreme conditions of poverty and unemployment (cf. Appleyard 1995)—but rather a deliberate

attempt by households to improve their social and economic status. This clearly goes against the premises of cumulative causation and historical-structuralist approaches. Besides directly diversifying family income, migration has at least the proven *potential* to alleviate poverty, and increase income, well-being, and productivity. The extent to which, and where, this happens, depends on the specific development context in which migration takes place.

### **2.5.3. Current insights into migration and development interactions**

In this section, the central hypotheses of cumulative causation-derived pessimist views on migration and development will be critically examined against the background of recent, mostly NELM-inspired research done by economists and research from predominantly geographical researchers on the spatio-temporal dimensions of migration and development interactions. The state-of-the-art insights presented in this section will serve as a set of hypotheses that form the starting point for the empirical part of this study. In this effort to make a synthesis of current insights concerning the role of migration in development in migrant sending areas, we will attempt to integrate insights from earlier theories on migration. Elements of neo-classical, structuralist, transitional, migrant network, and migration systems theory have all offered useful insights into the nature and causes of the migration process, which provide essential input in understanding the temporal-spatial dimensions of migration impacts.

#### *Migration and the propensity to invest in migrant sending areas*

The most common assertion of migration impact studies is that migrants hardly invest their money, but, instead, spend it on consumption and consumptive or non-productive investments. In the past two decades, however, an increasing number of NELM-inspired studies have emerged, which reveal that, in the majority of cases, international migrant households are more inclined to invest than nonmigrant households (cf. Adams 1991; Massey *et al.* 1998; Taylor 1999). This empirical evidence fundamentally challenges the notion that migration automatically puts a drain on sending areas, and seems to point to the contrary—the counterflow of remittances and local investments more than compensates for backwash effects such as the “lost labor effect”. The overly negative assessments of most prior research on migration and development can be attributed to serious deficiencies in the methodological design of such studies, which makes it almost impossible to properly assess migration impacts. Moreover, in their very set-up, they fail to capture the wider effects of migration, which go far beyond migrants and their households only, and which extend beyond economic impacts only. Furthermore, as we will argue, most studies fail to capture the temporal dimensions of migration and development-interactions, which have proven to be of crucial importance.

First, there is the striking fact that the majority of studies that claim to study migration impacts, only consider migrants, and have not included nonmigrants in their analysis. It is therefore difficult to understand the empirical foundations of the broad statements on the behavior of migrants that many studies nevertheless make (Stahl 1988:157). Without a systematic comparison between migrants and the use of a nonmigrant control group<sup>13</sup>, any judgment on migration impact becomes rather shaky (Adams 1991:696). It then becomes

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<sup>13</sup> Controlling for the selective character of migration and taking into account the potentially endogenous character of variables.

difficult to assess whether, for example, investments by migrants are relatively high or low. This casts doubt on the analytical foundation of assertions like “very little income is devoted to productive investments” (Stahl 1988:157). For what does “very little” mean in the absence of a control group?

Second, NELM scholars have argued that it is not enough to make a simple comparison between migrants and nonmigrants, as such a comparison ignores the selectivity of migration, the indirect community-wide effects of migration, and the fungibility of remittances with other sources of household income. In order to find out whether migration coincides with more investment-prone attitudes (i.e., beyond direct income effects), income and selectivity of migration should be controlled for. Only by comparing marginal propensities to invest between migrant and nonmigrant households can valid judgments be made about the relative propensity of migrants to invest (Adams 1991; Russell 1992; Taylor 1999).

It is fundamental that migration impact studies are sensitive to the issue of *migration selectivity*. Thus, in order to properly analyze the relationship between migration and investments—or any other aspects of socio-economic behavior of households—in sending regions, it is important to know *who* migrates. For example, if migrants in a certain area tend to invest far more than nonmigrants, it should not be automatically concluded that “migration leads to agricultural investments”. It might well be that migrants come from relatively wealthy agricultural families, possessing much more land and income from other sources than most nonmigrant households do. In cases where migrants are the relatively better-educated members of their community, such human capital variables may be an equally or more important factor than their migration status in explaining their social and economic (expenditures and investments) behavior. This means that analyses should control for such factors.

Most studies fail to address, or do not seem aware of, the fungibility of household income, which means that it is not possible to “ earmark” migrant remittances (Taylor 1999). The diverse sources of family income are typically pooled in the common household budget, and different income streams can therefore not be separated, let alone be linked to certain expenses. Worse, many migration impact studies have only enumerated remittances and migrants’ activities, and do not consider other sources of income<sup>14</sup>. This makes common assertions such as “remittances are spent on x, y, or z....”, somewhat difficult to sustain. Moreover, migration may have an effect on income from other sources. For example, migration may theoretically lead to lower income from agriculture or other local economic activities, as migrants’ labor has migrated away. On the other hand, non-migratory, local income from other sources may also increase, due to the investments made by migrant households. Thus, in order to rightly assess the effect of migrant remittances on total income, and to be able to evaluate the effect of remittances on the marginal propensity to invest, all sources of household income should be recorded and included in the analysis. This further emphasizes the need for a whole household approach in migration research (cf. Taylor 1999), in which all livelihood activities of all members of the household are considered.

Third, the impact of migration on village communities, regions, or countries has the tendency to change over time. However, most prior research has not been sensitive to the crucial temporal dimensions of migration and development interactions, which has also

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<sup>14</sup> Apparently, many migration surveys contain questions such as “on what have you spent your remittances?” (Adams 1991:695; Bovenkerk 1978; De Haan *et al.* 2000:8). This can easily lead to conclusions such as “most of the remittances are spent on consumption: only 23 percent is used for investment” (De Haan *et al.* 2000:8). This ignores other livelihood activities and sources of income of migrant households. Moreover, such expenditure and investment behavior is generally not compared with nonmigrant households.

contributed to overly pessimistic conclusions. It becomes increasingly clear that development responses to migration take time to fully materialize. Activities, expenditure and investment patterns are likely to change over the course of life (Conway and Cohen 1998:32). The historical experiences from several developed countries, as well as the more recent examples, seem to indicate that the positive links are most clear in the long term. In the short term (i.e., one to two decades), it is difficult to see any “automatic mechanism” by which international migration results in development” (Russell 1995). In a study of the effects of temporary labor migration from five African countries to South Africa’s mines on agricultural production in the countries of origin, Lucas (1987:313) concluded that migration diminishes domestic crop production in the short run, but enhances crop productivity and cattle accumulation through invested remittances in the long run, and increased domestic plantation wages.

We could even hypothesize that the short-term effects of migration on livelihood activities (and development) in sending regions might well be negative due to the direct lost labor effect, and that only at a later stage—when the migrant has more or less settled at the destination, has found relatively secure employment, and the most basic needs of the household “back home” are fulfilled—there comes increasing room for investments. Moreover, in the meantime, the household has had the chance to readjust its local (agricultural) production system (labor allocation, intra-household task divisions) to the absence of the migrant or migrants.

The lesson is that researchers should keep in mind the particular point in time, or “migration stage” in assessing development impacts. It is therefore probably unrealistic to expect any significant developmental spin-off from migration in the following one or two decades after the moment of migration, beyond the direct improvement of the household’s living conditions and well-being. This might have played a role in the studies that were carried out in Morocco and Turkey in the mid-1970s, which tended to conclude that Turkish and Moroccan migrants only invested modestly in the local economy (Abadan-Unat *et al.* 1976; Heinemeijer *et al.* 1977). However, it was only in the late 1960s that large-scale international migration from southern and eastern Mediterranean countries to northern Europe gained momentum. Thus, most of these studies were carried out too early in the migration process to assess their more long-term impact. Most studies on migration and development are “snapshots”, and truly longitudinal research is very rare. As an alternative, it might therefore be interesting to re-study migrant sending areas that were already studied two or three decades ago.

Local development effects seem to take at least two, three, or even more decades to fully materialize, as migrants have to save money before being able to invest. Only when migration matures do investments in economic activities become more likely. We can therefore hypothesize that in the first years following migration, migrant households are primarily focused on filling their most urgent needs and improving their basic well-being (food, health, clothing, primary education, basic household amenities, paying off debts, etc.). In this early stage, household production might even (temporarily) decrease due to the lost labor effect.

At a later stage—after an underdetermined number of years (but mostly within 5 to 10 years) when the migrant is more or less settled and has found stable employment—migrant households tend to spend money on building houses and items such as basic consumer durables and household appliances. Only in later stages do migrants tend to invest their money in commercial enterprises (agriculture, large-scale housing, commerce, and so on), at least if they do not decide to depart once and for all, most usually coinciding with family reunification at the destination. The extent to which investments occur, and *where* and in

which sector they are allocated, fundamentally depends, however, on the household's income<sup>15</sup> as well as the specific development context in the regions of origin.

This hypothesized relationship between household migration stage (related to the family life cycle) and consumption and investment patterns by migrant households in sending areas has been summarized in table 2.1. To a certain extent—and without committing an “ecological fallacy”—this temporal model at the household-level can be translated to the community (village) or even regional levels, taking into account the fact that migration is rarely an isolated act by one individual or household, but that—as transitional migration theory has taught us—the migration experience tends to diffuse throughout communities once localities and regions get linked to the outside world through general processes of development. These include the incorporation in the wider context of the capitalist economy and the modern state, the development of infrastructures, and a moderate increase in living standards and wealth enabling people to bear the risks and opportunity costs of migrating.

Moreover, migration systems and migration network theory have offered us the insight that this community-wide diffusion of migration is further encouraged by network effects, which make migration self-perpetuating and partly independent from its initial causes. However, both internal and external forces explain why migration networks tend to weaken over time, which is associated with a leveling-off or decrease of migration rates. Sustained development—which can evidently not be taken as an axiomatic function of time—at the origin may eventually also decrease the propensity to migrate internally, and, in particular, abroad.

**Table 2.1. Relation between household migration stage, consumption, and investments**

Stage	migration	consumption and investment patterns by migration households
I	Migrant is in the process of settling	Most urgent needs are filled if possible: food, health, debt repayment, education of children
II	Migrant is settled and has more or less stable work	Housing construction, land purchase, basic household amenities, continued education
Three optional outcomes	IIIa	Ongoing stay (Higher) education of children. Diverse investments: commercial housing & land, shops, craft industries, agriculture. Magnitude, spatial and sectoral allocation depending on (i) income household, (ii) macro and (iii) local development/investment context
	IIIb	Return Continuing investments (as IIIa) if the household has access to external income (e.g., pensions, savings or creation of businesses); no significant investments if migration income ceases and is not continued by “relay migration”.
	IIIc	Family reunification No significant investments, besides help to family/community members

Therefore, one could also hypothesize that communities and regions as a whole go through different migration stages, characterized by the “innovators” stage (first pioneering migrants leave), “early adopter” stage (migration spreads throughout the community, aided by network effects) and the “late adopter” stage (migration stabilizes, and may eventually decrease) (cf. Jones 1999). On the basis of these models, one might hypothesize that the full developmental effects of migration can only materialize in the second and, in particular, third stages of

<sup>15</sup> For instance, the income and remittances of internal and international migrant households may differ significantly.

migration, when the majority of migrant households have been involved in migration for several decades.

However, the extent to which this potential is realized crucially depends on the specific investment environment. It is important to stress that there is nothing automatic about this relation. Structuralist theory has rightfully pointed to the fact that structural factors of an economic, political, social, or cultural nature might prevent migrant households from investing, and external remittance earnings may even enable them to withdraw from local economic activities.

#### *The indirect effects of migration on economic development*

Prior research on migration and development has been unduly negative in its assessment of the potentially positive role of consumption and so-called non-productive investments, because they fail to take into account the indirect impacts of migration on local and regional economies (Taylor *et al.* 1996; Taylor 1999). Again, this is partly related to the non-inclusion of nonmigrants in many surveys. Moreover, prior research has tended to analyze only the *direct* social and economic effects of migration, that is, their impact on migrants and their households, whereas remittances may also have a significant impact on nonmigrant households, and may, hence, reshape sending communities as a whole (Taylor 1999:65). Prior research has tended to negatively evaluate consumptive expenses as non-contributive to local economic development. However, consumptive expenses, provided that they are done locally, can have highly positive impacts by providing nonmigrants with labor and income. This seems to be confirmed by increasing evidence that a high local consumption level of migrant households lead, via multiplier effects, to higher incomes for nonmigrant households (Adelman *et al.* 1988; Durand *et al.* 1996).

The same holds true for so-called non-productive investments. For example, prior research has generally bemoaned the high amounts of money spent on housing. Nevertheless, various NELM-inspired empirical studies have reported that construction activities can generate considerable employment and income for many nonmigrants. In this way, the benefits of remittances might accrue to households other than the ones that directly receive them (Taylor 1999:70). This increases consumption levels that may—by easing capital and risk constraints on local production—in turn facilitate local investments by migrants and nonmigrants alike (Stark 1980; Stark and Bloom 1985). In this way, expenditure on housing and consumption may have significant multiplier effects in the wider economy (Djajic 1986; Russell 1992:270; Taylor 1999; Taylor *et al.* 1996a). Consequently, nonmigrants may benefit from migration, even if they do not receive any of the remittances themselves (Djajic 1986).

Migration and remittances have the potential to *increase* income and improve local livelihoods through direct and indirect income effects, “provided that the magnitude of migrants’ remittances exceeds a critical threshold roughly equal to the value of production they would have produced had they stayed” (Taylor 1999:69; cf. Djajic 1986). This means that, in cumulative causation terms, the “spread effects” may well exceed the “backwash effects”.

#### *Narrow and arbitrary definitions of investments*

Besides ignoring the indirect ways in which consumptive expenses and “non-productive investments” expenses can contribute to economic growth, common views on migration and

development also tend to rest on rather arbitrary definitions of what actually constitute “productive investments” (Conway and Cohen 1998:42), reflecting rather narrow views on what actually constitutes development. Moreover, the literature often reveals a lack of comprehension of migrants’ so-called “irrational” investment behavior that typically ignores the specific—far from ideal—social, economic, and legal conditions prevalent in most developing countries.

For instance, there is ample evidence that *education* tends to be high on the list of migrants’ expenditures (Lipton 1980; Russell 1992:275; Stahl 1988:157). Nevertheless, schooling is normally off the list of productive investments in migration research (Taylor 1999:72). This is at least a doubtful proposition, as education is generally considered a crucial investment in human capital, which may greatly stimulate social and economic development in the longer term (Russell 1992:275). From the perspective of a household, spending on the education of children may count as a productive investment and an income assurance strategy for the parents. This is especially important for people without access to formal social security arrangements, as is typically the case in developing countries. However, in spite of its obvious relevance to development, education is mostly neglected in migration studies as an investment goal and as cause of migration<sup>16</sup>.

Housing almost universally occupies the highest rank after consumption on the list of migrants’ expenditures. However, housing construction is mostly downplayed, sometimes even caricatured as non-productive investment in opulent status symbols with no economic utility. However, there is a radically different way to look at it. We have already seen that construction activities may have a positive impact on the local economy in stimulating local employment. But perhaps a more fundamental argument is that the quest to have a clean, safe, and spacious house and basic electricity and sewage facilities seems a universal aspect of human well-being. Furthermore, good quality housing might have potentially important positive effects on health (Taylor 1999:73).

Sometimes, the portrayal of migrants’ economic behavior becomes outright paternalistic. For instance, when discussing migrants’ tendency to invest in housing in Kerala, India, Zachariah *et al.* (2001:83) stated that “the size and quality of houses built by the migrants have very little relation to the needs of their families”. By apparently suggesting that people should stay in their “mud brick huts”, social scientists apply different standards to them than they would probably do for themselves, and typically ignore well-being as an intrinsic element of “development”. Furthermore, there may also be economic arguments which go beyond well-being when investing in housing. In his study on the use and impact of international remittances on a rural area in Egypt, Adams (1991) made an *a priori* distinction between consumption, durables, and investments. However, based on his fieldwork he concluded that

on a practical level the difference between these three types of expenditures becomes blurred . . . . Yet from the standpoint of the individual, housing expenses should be classified as an “investment,” since new and improved housing offers possible future economic returns to the individual (Adams 1991:705)

After concluding that migrants exhibit a higher propensity to invest than nonmigrants, Adams tried to understand their tendency to invest a large proportion of their income in land (agricultural and building) by taking the general investment environment in the study area

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<sup>16</sup> The desire to obtain more education is often one of the very reasons for rural-to-urban and sometimes international migration (Bauer and Zimmermann 1998; De Haas 1998).

into consideration. He concluded that, considering the surge in land prices throughout Egypt, the high rate of inflation, and the lower or even negative returns on other investments, land purchase represented a good investment from the standpoint of the individual migrant (Adams 1991:719-20).

The distinction between consumption and investments is often blurred and the outcome of evaluations on the relative merits of such expenditure typically depends on the perspective of the analyst (Russell 1992:270). Expenditure on items such as land, housing, education, transport, and jewelry can be rational under certain conditions, as they frequently offer better rates of return or are safer stores of value than high-risk investments in, for instance, agriculture or industry (Russell 1992). Researchers should keep in mind that the investment conditions in most developing countries radically differ from most developed countries. Under the prevailing conditions of economic, political and legal insecurity, and malfunctioning markets, investments in items such as housing, land and education can be considered—by people that are relatively poor and do not have access to power—as relatively secure investments in an insecure investment environment. The tendency to classify behavior of migrant households as “irrational” often unveils an apparent inability to comprehend the specific social, economic, legal, and political context in which people make decisions on migration and expenditure.

#### *Migration and inequality in a spatio-temporal perspective*

One of the “truths” of mainstream migration and development research is that migration has a negative effect on income inequality within migrant sending communities (cf. Lipton 1980). On the basis of recent research, however, there seems enough evidence to reject this as a general hypothesis. Although such an effect has been found in various studies (cf. Adams 1989), this mechanism is neither automatic nor inevitable. Besides the fact that nonmigrants might equally profit from consumption and investments by migrant households, there are other arguments to contradict claims that “migration leads to more inequality”, which are strongly related to the spatio-temporal dimensions of migration.

The effect of migration on income distribution and other aspects of wealth is primarily a function of migration selectivity. These selectivity patterns have important consequences for the impact of migration on inequality. If migrants mainly originate from relatively wealthy households, migration is more likely to imply greater inequality in the community of origin, but the reverse seems true if migrants come from relatively poor households. We have seen that, in many instances, pioneer migrants tend to be generally from relatively wealthy households, as migration—analogue to the adoption and diffusion of a new technology through space and populations—initially entails high costs and risks. Although it seems that (pioneer) migrants tend to be relatively wealthy and educated *in general*, this is certainly not always the case. The initial pattern of migration selectivity differs according to destination (e.g., international migration is generally more costly and risky than internal migration), type of work (e.g., lowly or highly skilled; legal or undocumented), and mode of job acquisition (e.g., direct recruitment or “self-help”). This makes it difficult to make sweeping generalizations.

Furthermore, migration selectivity has the tendency to change over time, primarily due to network effects. In the first stages of the development of a (micro) migration system—spatially clustered flows and counterflows of people, goods, and remittances between a particular community or region of origin and a particular destination—selectivity tends to decrease rapidly. Through the development of networks, which diminish the risks and costs of migration (Bauer and Zimmermann 1998:5), and the flow back of information (Korner 1987), less wealthy households tend to gain increasing access to migration labor markets. As a

consequence of this “diffusion”, the initially negative effect of remittances on income equality might be dampened or even reversed (Taylor 1999:79). Thus, the impacts of migration on village income distribution clearly differ for different types of migration and for different periods in a village’s migration history (Stark *et al.* 1988:309) However, Jones (1998b) demonstrated that inequality may again increase at the “late adopters” stage of migration, when selectivity of migration tends to increase again.

Finally, differences in spatial scales of analysis may account for contradictory conclusions concerning the effect of migration on income distribution (Jones 1998b; Taylor and Watt 1996). For instance, one might conclude that, within a certain village or region, migration has contributed to increasing inter-household income inequality. However, comparing the migration sending region as a whole with other, more wealthy and centrally located regions in the same country (or between countries), one often finds that inequality between the regions has actually *decreased* as a consequence of the developmental effects of migration (Taylor *et al.* 1996a). The choice for either of the two scales is not obvious, and partly reflects value judgments, in particular with regard to the weight attached to distributional versus mean income objectives (Stark *et al.* 1988:309). Scales of analysis do also matter when identifying whether so-called extra-regional *leakage* of migrant remittances—a common assertion of migration pessimists—occurs. For instance, it matters whether the village or the wider region in which it is located is identified as “origin”. In the first case, all investments done outside the village are considered as marginalizing and increasing spatial inequalities. In the second case, the analysis will tend to be far more on the positive side.

#### 2.5.4. Discussion

Most recent studies seem to confirm the solidity of the NELM and livelihood approaches, and seem to support the hypothesis that migration is a household strategy to diversify income and overcome local constraints to investments and development. We have also seen that the outcome of analyses concerning migration impact strongly depends on spatial and temporal scales of analysis, stressing the need to put migration and development research within a spatio-temporal perspective. This all challenges the unrealistic determinism of both the developmentalist (“optimist”) and structuralist (“pessimist”) perspectives, and gives rise to a subtle vision, in which, depending on the specific development context, both positive and negative development responses to migration are possible.

One of the additional strengths of this approach seems to be its ability to integrate the various valuable insights from different theoretical perspectives on migration, such as neo-classical migration theory (role of income and unemployment differentials, selectivity); cumulative causation and structuralist approaches (role of structural constraints on agency and exclusion mechanisms); network approaches (decreasing selectivity); migration systems theory (impact of migration on both the origin and destination, “non-random” geographical clustering of migration patterns); and transitional theories, notably mobility transition theory and migration hump theory (migration “diffusion” patterns, non-linear temporal paths of migration, importance of migration stage).

However, NELM has also some drawbacks. First, NELM was developed for international South-North migration, and hardly considers the role of internal migration. In practice, most migration impact studies consider either international or internal migration (Skeldon 1997:39). This is unfortunate, as both forms of migration are often intertwined (McKee and Tisdell 1988; Fawcett and Arnold 1987:1529). There is ample evidence to suggest that internal (rural-urban) migration facilitates, and often precedes, international migration. This

process of “leapfrogging” from the countryside, via towns and cities, to foreign destinations, has been described for many migration systems. Internal and international migration are prompted by the same processes of socio-economic transformation and development (Appleyard 1992:256). Households may pursue multiple migration strategies, and contain both internal and international migrants. The relationship between migration and development is not confined to, nor does it begin with, international migration, and we should therefore consider both internal and international migration within a unified framework (cf. Skeldon 1997:39).

Furthermore, by postulating that migration is a household strategy to overcome local constraints to economic production and development, NELM scholars tend to suggest that migration “thus” contributes to development in sending areas. However, it strongly depends on the specific development context whether and to what extent this developmental *potential* is actually fulfilled. Suggesting an “automatic” mechanism in which migration leads to development—as “developmentalists” have done—would be to ignore the accumulated evidence pointing to the heterogeneous or *disparate* nature of the spatial, temporal, and sector-specific impact of migration. For instance, if the conditions for development in sending areas are very unfavorable, most migrants may decide not to invest, and in such cases the negative (“backwash”) effects of migration might indeed overshadow the positive (“spread”) effects.

NELM also fails to conceptualize why migrants would invest money in sending regions if the development conditions are apparently negative. If one assumes that migration is a strategy to stabilize and increase income because this is not possible locally due to all kinds of developmental constraints, how can one expect migrant households to invest much of their financial resources in such an unfavorable environment? Thus, if the (constraining) conditions in sending areas—that partially explain migration—do not improve over the course of the migration process, one cannot expect that the developmental *potentials* of migration will fully materialize.

NELM’s criticism of the weak methodological foundations, the lack of analytical rigor and the “impressionistic” character of most prior work seems right to a large extent (Taylor 1999). Nevertheless, NELM itself can be criticized for its one-sided emphasis on quantitative methods. It would be erroneous to equate “impressionistic” with “qualitative”, and to infer that quantitative modeling is the one and only “good” methodology, as NELM scholars, however, have tended to suppose. On the one hand, socio-cultural, institutional, political, and environmental conditions play an important role in determining migration impacts. On the other hand, the developmental impact of migration extends well beyond economic and demographic factors to the social and cultural sphere.

Many such non-economic dimensions of development are notoriously difficult or impossible to quantify. The same goes for relevant factors such as the impact on gender relations and the importance of socio-cultural impacts in affecting migration and development patterns. Instead of considering quantitative modeling as the hallmark of “new” migration research, I would rather argue that the choice of a particular research methodology depends on the specific research question. In order to study development-relevant impacts outside the economic and demographic domains, studies on migration and development should also leave room for qualitative, non-survey based, research techniques, which unveil patterns and structures that surveys cannot capture.

Most NELM scholars equally use rather narrow interpretations of “development” with a focus on income and investments. Although some NELM scholars have argued that aspects such as education should be included in migration and development research, this is mainly done in an utilitarian framework, based on the conviction that education is an important human capital asset that is conducive to economic growth. However, this reflects a

particularly narrow concept of development, which ignores well-being and socio-cultural factors. On the other hand, qualitatively-oriented researchers generally ignore or misunderstand the economic dimensions of development. This tendency to separate economic and socio-cultural impacts is unfortunate, as the role of migration in social, cultural, and institutional change is also likely to influence economic aspects of development, and vice-versa. What we need, is a broad and clearly defined concept of development that integrates the different dimensions of development.

## 2.6. Human capabilities, development, and migration

The absence of a foundational debate on development concepts has severely hampered the rigor of the migration and development debate. Historical structuralist, neo-classical, and developmentalist approaches towards migration and development have all tended to focus on income indicators. Migration impact is primarily evaluated on the basis of its impact on investments in productive enterprises and in promoting “modern” economic development, with a particular focus on the production of goods through industrial and agricultural development.

Nevertheless, this choice is arbitrary, since many other items may be added to this list, such as the impact of migration on investments in human capital (e.g., education), gender inequality, birth and death rates, ethnic relations, political change, the environment, and so on. Migration impacts may also differ significantly across these various dimensions of development. Therefore, evaluating “the” impact of migration is far from straightforward, as this depends on the dimensions considered as developmental and the relative weight attached to them. What is seen as developmental, moreover, depends on the disciplinary, cultural, and ideological perspectives of researchers and policy makers, who tend to project their own norms, preferences, and expectations—for instance, on appropriate styles of consumption, housing, and investments—onto the communities concerned.

This brings us to a more fundamental question: what is development? To a large extent, the controversy over whether the effects of migration on development are positive or negative might in fact pertain to important differences in development concepts used, and, closely associated with this, value judgments regarding appropriate styles of consumption and production (cf. Hayes 1991). This points to the importance of giving an explicit definition of development, an endeavor which has been seldom undertaken in migration and development research.

For evaluative reasons, it is essential to conceptualize what development is actually about. In order to integrate the different aspects of migration-affected processes of social and economic change into one single, broad perspective on development, it seems useful to take the development concept elaborated by Amartya Sen as a point of departure. Sen (1999) defined development as the *process of expanding the substantive freedoms that people enjoy*. In order to operationalize these “freedoms”, he used the concept of *human capability*, which relates to the ability of human beings to lead lives they have reason to value and to enhance the substantive choices they have (Sen 1997:1959). The basic assumption here is that the expansion of human capabilities adds to the quality of people’s lives. Sen’s capabilities approach contrasts with narrower views of development that are largely, if not uniquely, restricted to income indicators (e.g., GNP per head) and material growth. Sen argued that income growth itself should not be the litmus test for development theorists, but more the question of whether the capabilities of people to control their own lives have expanded. While acknowledging that incomes can have a high potential to contribute to the expansion of the

real freedoms people enjoy, the relationship between income and development is by no means direct or automatic, making income indicators alone an inadequate indicator of the quality of people's lives (Sen 1999:291,3-5).

Sen argues that *freedom*<sup>17</sup> is central to the process of development for two reasons. First of all, there is the *intrinsic* importance of human freedoms as an objective of development, which has to be clearly distinguished from the *instrumental* effectiveness of freedoms of different kinds in contributing to economic progress (Sen 1999:5,37). The value of freedoms should not only be judged in their income-generating capacity, but should first and foremost be seen as the principal ends of development in themselves. Sen's fundamental point is that freedoms, such as the opportunity to live long and healthy lives, being well-housed and well-clothed, having the right and access to basic education, enjoying the freedom of employment choice, being able to participate in public debate without fear, and so on, are intrinsic developmental virtues in themselves. Second, besides their intrinsic value, increasing individual freedoms (better education, skills, health, security and access to markets and politics) also happens to be very instrumental in promoting economic growth and the further expansion of human freedoms.

Macro-indicators can hide extreme intra-family (in particular gender), inter-community, and inter-regional inequalities. Sen therefore urges us not to focus only on macro-indicators of economic growth or GNP per head, but to look at the internal distribution of capabilities within populations, which are strongly affected by social and cultural factors. Any development assessment should therefore pay attention to *inequality*, which should not be limited to income but also to inequalities in the social, cultural, and political domain, determining the extent to which people enjoy basic capabilities-enhancing freedoms. In this context, Sen pays particular attention to gender inequality.

The human capabilities perspective is an *agent-oriented approach*, as it stresses the capacity and responsibility of individuals to shape their own destiny. An agent can be defined as "someone who acts and brings about change, and whose achievements can be judged in terms of her own values and objectives" (Sen 1999:19). People should not be seen as pawns of structural macro-forces or as "passive recipients of the benefits of cunning development programs" (Sen 1999:11).

Nevertheless, Sen certainly does not ignore that the scope for human agency is often severely limited by structural constraints—especially in developing countries. The extent to which people are really capable to shape their own lives (i.e., to act as free agents) is extremely contingent on the wider institutional and natural environment in which people live. Sen defines poverty as a situation in which people suffer from substantial "unfreedoms". The lives of many poor in the world are characterized by lack of access to meaningful employment, stable and sufficient income, schooling, health care, and social security. This makes them particularly vulnerable to environmental, economic, or political shocks, and deprives them of the basic freedoms to (re)shape their own destiny<sup>18</sup>.

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<sup>17</sup> It is important to note that the concept of freedom or liberty is not unproblematic and that there is no general agreement on the definition of the concept. This point was emphasized by Berlin (1958), who made a basic distinction between "positive" and "negative" freedom. Negative liberty for Berlin is freedom from restraint, that is, being free from the interference of "others". Positive liberty is that which the state permits by imposing regulations that limit some freedoms in the name of greater liberty for all. There is a clear tension between both forms of liberty, but Berlin argued that both kinds of liberty were required for a just society. Equally, Sen (1999) implicitly includes both forms of liberty in his concept of freedom, although the tension is not explicitly resolved.

<sup>18</sup> Here, Sen sees a pivotal *enabling* role for public policy in creating proper contexts for human development.

Representing people as atomistic individuals enjoying free choice and full access to factor markets ignores the (constraining) social and institutional context in which development takes place. Particularly in the developing world, structural constraints severely limit people's capability to increase their freedoms and to contribute to development. It is on this fundamental point that the capabilities approach corresponds with NELM. If we put NELM and related household-oriented livelihood approaches into a capabilities perspective, migration can be seen as a livelihood strategy used by households to overcome such developmental constraints (imperfect markets, unemployment, inadequate government services) in order to access resources elsewhere that will enable them to increase their freedoms. However, as NELM scholars argue, moving to another place is not only a response to developmental constraints, but also a potential means to overcome such constraints and increase the capabilities of individuals and the households that contain them at the origin.

Sen's human capabilities perspective offers a view on development which is broader than views that only focus on income indicators by evaluating the value of processes of social and economic change in terms of their contribution to the expansion of human freedoms. As migration and development are closely interwoven, and because migration is supposed to affect both economic and non-economic dimensions of development, the human capability perspective seems to provide a useful background against which to assess migration and development interactions.

Within a capabilities perspective, migration is potentially developmental in three different ways. First, as transitional migration theory indicates, a certain minimum level of development is necessary for labor migration to occur in substantial numbers. People need certain freedoms and access to social and economic resources in order to be able to migrate. This relates to the intrinsic value of the very *freedom of moving and working*. Until recently, bonded labor used to be the common fate of many poor across the globe who suffered from persistent denials of basic freedoms to seek wage employment away from their traditional bosses. In this context, Sen (1999:113) stated that

the loss of freedom in the absence of employment choice and in the tyrannical form of work can itself be a major deprivation . . . Even that great critic of capitalism Karl Marx saw the emergence of freedom of employment as momentous progress.

If labor migration then, for instance, offers people new opportunities to break away from their humble position, and to gain an independent—though not even necessarily higher—income elsewhere, this intrinsically liberating value should therefore be considered as “developmental”. While acknowledging the potential intrinsic value of migration as a liberating experience in itself, it is highly important to stress that freedom of mobility also pertains to the freedom *not* to migrate! Therefore, if people move involuntarily because of political conflicts, environmental disasters, or if other people force them to do so (e.g., slave trade, governments resettling people, parents in rural areas forcing their children to work in cities, etc.) migration is a direct expression of a lack of freedom. Such exploitative forms of forced migration may serve the direct economic interests of others, but generally represent a clear decrease in the well-being and capabilities of the migrants themselves.

Second, migration has the potential to contribute to the well-being of people. We have seen that the potential contribution of migration (principally through remittances, but also through transfer of knowledge and values) to enable people to live in more spacious, cleaner, and better aired houses, to be better fed, be better able to pay for medical treatment, to be decently clothed, and to educate their children, have often been dismissed as “non-developmental”. However, in a capabilities perspective, such well-being aspects are intrinsically developmental as long as they increase the capacity of people to be more secure

and live the lives they have reason to value. Such well-being aspects are to be considered developmental virtues in themselves, although they have to be weighed against the considerable psychological and social costs that migration may also entail.

Third, besides the intrinsic and well-being enhancing potential of migration as such, the freedom-enhancing potentials of migration may also have an *instrumental* value in increasing people's capabilities to improve their livelihoods and in contributing to general economic growth and social change, the benefits of which may also accrue to people in nonmigrant households. For instance, healthy, well-educated, and socially secure people are more likely to be more productive, innovative, and prone to invest. Moreover, as NELM has revealed, even consumption and so-called "non productive" investments can have positive, economy-wide multiplier effects that extend well beyond the direct social environment of the migrant's household.

We should nevertheless avoid jumping to the conclusion that migration has "thus" a direct positive impact on the overall well-being of people and their capabilities. The specific impact of migration on development is mediated by other, contextual factors, which explain why there is nothing deterministic about the migration-development relationship. Migration may have widely diverging—positive or negative—concrete impacts on the lives of people, depending on the type and causes of migration, the selectivity of migration, and the broader developmental context in which migration occurs.

Notwithstanding the *potential* of migration to increase well-being and economic growth, the extent to which these potentials are fulfilled is contingent on various conditions. Obviously, the income of migrants is very likely to influence his or her capacity to remit money and goods. In this, the difference between international and internal migrants may be significant. The amount of remittances actually sent back also depends on the strength of the bonds between migrants and his or her family, which tend to be rather culture-specific, and may decline over time. Moreover, all kinds of institutions, such as the quality and reach of the formal banking system and macro-economic and taxation policies, are also likely to have a major influence on remittance and investment behavior.

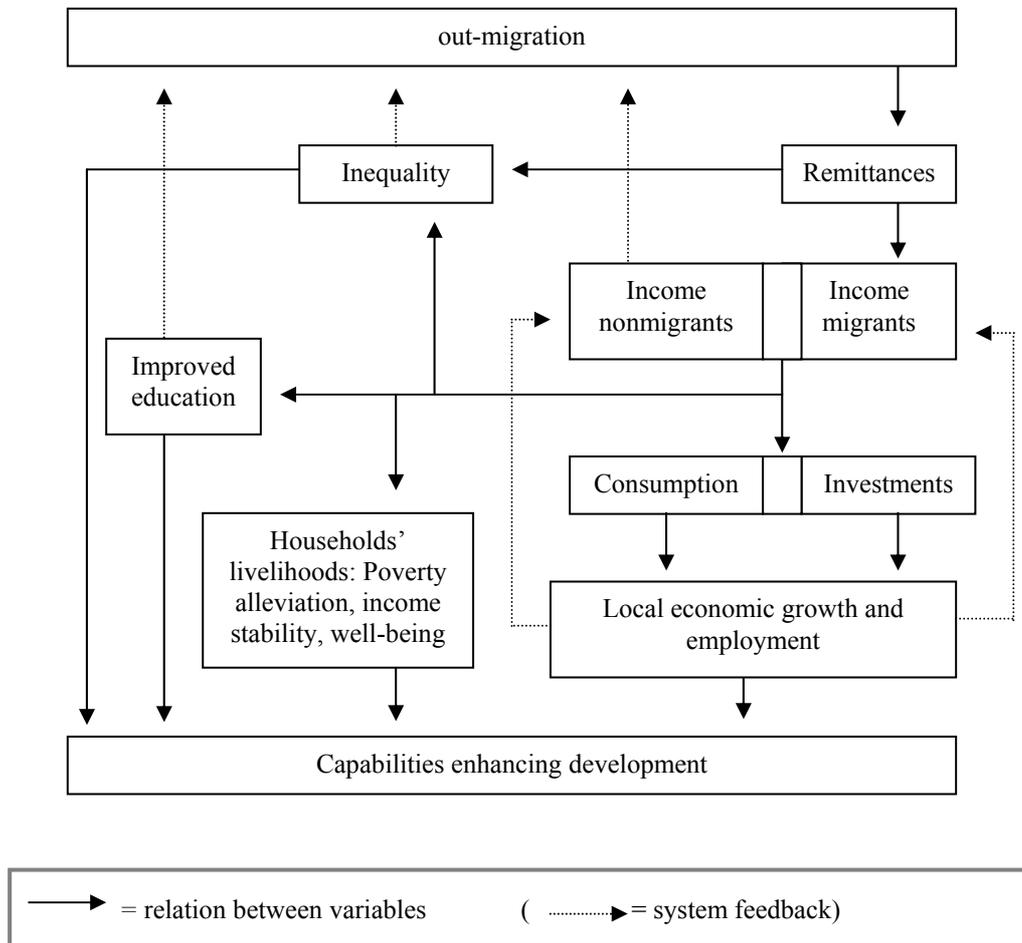
Moreover, the capability-enhancing effects of migration on well-being are not likely to be equally distributed among households and communities. For instance, gender inequality may have a high impact on the intra-family allocation of remittances. This might also bias the further allocation of freedoms and resources among different family members, for instance by favoring male members in receiving education and health care. Therefore, it is also important to ask *who* reaps the benefits of migration.

Sen has emphasized the intrinsic relevance of *social change* to the development process, in particular concerning the distribution of capabilities within populations. Migration has an impact on the cultural, social, and economic domain that reaches well beyond the direct remittance effect. Social and cultural change may alter the allocation and distribution of migration-induced capabilities within communities and households both in a positive and negative sense. For instance, migration is believed to have a major impact on gender relations, and may potentially increase the responsibilities and power of women, either as "stay-behinds" or migrants (Day and İçduygu 1997; De Haan *et al.* 2000; Myntti 1994; Osaki 1999; Taylor 1984; Zlotnik 1993). Moreover, improved access to education, paid labor and migration can significantly improve their position within the "development game".

In sum, it seems useful to evaluate migration-development interactions against the broader conceptual background of Sen's capabilities approach perspective. This allows us to include both (1) the direct impact on people's well-being, its (2) indirect impact on economic growth, and the role of migration in (3) processes of social change (cf. Sen 1997), into one single perspective. The potentially positive impact on human freedoms is neither automatic nor uniform. Under certain conditions, migration may actually decrease the freedoms of

people, and even when its aggregate impacts are judged to be positive, the fruits of migration are not always equally distributed among different members of households and communities. Depending on the circumstances (selectivity of migration, cultural norms, migration stage, and so on) migration may both increase and decrease inequality.

Figure 2.3. Conceptual framework of pluralist migration and development interactions (short to medium-term)



Adopting the capabilities approach does not imply a choice for a more positive or negative vision of development. Rather, it is a choice for a qualitative change towards a broader approach, which includes the reciprocally related social and economic dimensions of development. The choice of this perspective implies that the high *potential* of migration to increase both the material and nonmaterial well-being of people should be acknowledged, and that the impact of migration should be considered as *developmental* as long as it increases the capability of people to live the lives they have reason to value.

If we integrate the main insights offered by NELM and affiliated “pluralist” livelihood approaches into a capabilities approach, we have a conceptual framework depicted in figure 2.3, which shows the various mechanisms through which migration can affect development in migrant sending areas in the short to medium term (one to three or four decades after mass migration), and how this developmental impact may affect migration in its own right.

## 2.7. Space, structure, migration, and development

Migration has at least the *potential* to contribute to development in sending areas. However, the extent to which this developmental potential is realized depends not only on the characteristics of migrants and the type of migration, but also on the cultural, social, economic, legal, political and environmental context prevailing in the sending area. Local, regional, and national differentiation in this general “developmental” context can partly explain the varying degrees to which migration is positively or negatively associated with development in the areas of origin. In addition, if we take account of the generally “lagged” development responses to migration, differences remain important.

Although most NELM studies clearly tend to be on the positive side, negative effects should certainly not be ruled out. Although it is clear that the laws of cumulative causation have no overall legitimacy, the lesson should not be that the “optimistic viewpoint was correct because the pessimistic framework predictions were incorrect” (Keely and Tran 1989:524). The lesson should be that migration research should not fall back into another determinism, but should aim at gaining further insight into the mechanisms explaining the heterogeneity of migration-development interactions.

Hence, research on migration and development should go beyond the crude and simplistic “negative-versus-positive” debate through the systematic inquiry of differentiated responses to migration. These may be heterogeneous across the different domains of development (e.g., poverty, well-being, (gender) inequality, income growth, social relations) and which may differ according to spatial (from the household to nation-wide) and temporal scales (e.g., migration stage). Only through such an approach, which requires good-quality empirical data at the micro-level, does it seem possible to better understand the complexities of the migration and development relationship and to find certain regularities.

The fundamental question seems to be why migration has contributed to development in some communities and much less or not at all in others (Ghosh 1992b:432). Both negative and positive effects are found for both internal and international migration, and this suggests that a better question might be under what conditions migration contributes to development (cf. Jones 1998a:4).

Obviously, this is a question with a high geographical content. As Salt (1987:244) argued, the most significant contributions to migration theory have come from within economics, and one of the results of this seems to be a diminishing awareness of the geographical variability of international migration. However, NELM scholars increasingly pose such geographical questions, possibly reflecting a broader trend of increasing interest in spatial or geographical issues among economists (cf. Krugman 1995)<sup>19</sup>.

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<sup>19</sup> Some would prefer to call this academic imperialism typical of economists. Stated more positively, one could also say that economists have learnt from geographers and other non-economic social sciences by internalizing insights into the relevance of culture, space, and institutions for economic development, and have subsequently started to make their theoretical models more sophisticated and broadened their view on development by—successfully—extending their interest towards issues that were traditionally hardly considered by economists

The current research aim seems to better understand the spatial heterogeneity in migration and development relationships. The search is for a geographical perspective on migration and development that is able to account for spatial variability—acknowledging the differentiation in local responses to the general changes affecting societies—and to model the extent to which both general conditions or constraints and place-specific factors play a role in determining development outcomes of migration.

Such a theoretical perspective should incorporate both agency and structure, and recognize that migration decisions are usually taken within broader social (e.g., household, community) and political-economic (e.g., absent or hardly accessible markets) contexts, which can form constraints (or incentives) for economic development. On the other hand, it does not reduce migrants to passive pawns of forces at the macro-level, and recognizes individual agency, embodied in the ability—within certain margins determined by the structure—of human beings to overcome constraints and to shape their own lives.

In this effort to conceptualize spatially differentiated migration and development interactions it is useful to consider the so-called *new regional geography*. In the mid-1980s, Johnston (1984) called within geography for more emphasis on regional differentiation, without losing more general aims. In doing so, he made an analytical distinction between the *unique* and the *singular*. The unique is defined as something which is peculiar, because there is no other instance of it, but whose peculiarity can be accounted for by a particular combination of general processes and individual responses. The singular is something that is entirely remarkable, because no general statements can be made in reference to it.

Johnston did not propose a return to “traditional” regional geography with its exceptionalist position, focusing on the singularity of places and treating them as separate entities to focus on the singular. Instead, he called for a revival of regional geography through the “study of the unique characteristics of regions that result from the interaction of general economic processes with individual decision-making agents acting in their cultural contexts” (Johnston 1984:443). He stated that regional geography should focus on the unique characteristics of the places, but must not express them as if they were singular, since there is no place on earth that is not influenced by general processes at the world scale in some way.

However, at the local scale, these general processes are supposed to be interpreted through particular cultural lenses. The actual behavior of people is believed to reflect reactions to both the local physical environment and the international economic situation, which are mediated by local institutional structures, and which are influenced by the historical context.

Within this context, regional differentiation is viewed “as a set of individual responses to general imperatives”. However, Johnston warns of the pitfalls of (structuralist) deterministic thinking, as people have a certain power, or agency, to change human societies and their own environments:

We need a regional geography that finds a middle course between, on the one hand, the generalizing approaches which allow for no freedom of individual action, and, on the other, the singular approaches which argue that all is freedom of action. We need to focus on the unique, to portray regional variability as local responses to general conditions, responses that create local environments within which future responses are set (Johnston 1984:447)

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(cf. Lazear 2000). Through this flexibility, economists have clearly taken the initiative in research on migration and development in the final two decades of the twentieth century, whereas geographers and migration researchers from other academic fields have played a relatively marginal role.

The essence of Johnston's theoretical framework is that *uniqueness results from a particular combination of general processes and individual responses*. Johnston's new regional geography seems closely affiliated to Giddens' (1984) structuration theory, as they both aim to reconcile the actor and structural strands of social theory. By linking agency and structure, structuration theory emphasizes that structures, rules, and norms emerge as outcomes of people's practices and actions, both intended and unintended. These structural forms subsequently shape (enable, constrain) people's actions, not by strict determination—as structural approaches tend to assume—but within a possibilistic range.

Although some individual action is routinized and mainly serves to reproduce structures, rules, and institutions, other action has *agency*<sup>20</sup>, serving to change the system and perhaps, in time, remake new rules (Giddens 1984, cf. Leach *et al.* 1999:230). This constant recreation of structures through agency is what Giddens refers to as the *recursive* nature of social life, in which structures are considered as both medium and outcome of the reproduction of human practices<sup>21</sup>.

Like NELM, the livelihood, and the human capabilities approach—which can all be grouped under the umbrella of the structuration paradigm—the new regional geography recognizes the relevance of both agency and structure, and puts both in a spatial perspective: although human beings are constrained by the general context on the one hand, they have the ability, to a certain extent, to transform the very (social, cultural, political, economic, natural) environment that constrains their agency. The concept of uniqueness can also be applied to the relationship between migration and spatially differentiated—unique but not singular—localized development processes. Thus, within certain constraints, migration affects the context in which migrant households make future decisions on their migration and livelihoods and changes the developmental context of places between which people move<sup>22</sup>.

Migration needs to be seen as a constituent component of the broader process of change that is implied in the term “development” (cf. Skeldon 1997:3). General processes of political, social, cultural, economic, and technical change at the macro-level have facilitated increasing mobility and migration, but also have a distinct impact on the local development process itself. Migration should not only be seen as the response by households to changes in the general context—such as the development of infrastructure or the expansion of capitalist

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<sup>20</sup> Giddens (1984:9) emphasizes that “agency refers not to the intentions people have in doing things but to their capability of doing these things in the first place”. This is “why agency implies power . . . . Agency concerns events of which the individual is the perpetrator, in the sense that the individual could, at any phase in a given sequence of conduct, have acted differently. Whatever happened would not have happened if that individual had not intervened . . . . I am the author of many things I do not intend to do, and may not want to bring about, but non the less *do*. Conversely, there may be circumstances in which I intend to achieve something, and do achieve it, although not directly through my agency”.

<sup>21</sup> Giddens (1984:xxiii) argues that the repetitiveness or routinization of day-to-day activities is the material grounding of what he calls the “recursive” nature of social life. By its recursive nature, Giddens (1984:xxiii) means that the “structured properties of social activity . . . are constantly recreated out of the very resources which constitute them”. This recreation happens via “duality of structure”, a central concept in Giddens' structuration theory, which refers to the “structure as the medium and outcome of the conduct it recursively organizes; the structural properties of social systems do not exist outside of action but are chronically implicated in its production and reproduction” (Giddens 1984:374). By integrating agency and structure in the concept of the “duality of structure”, Giddens seeks to transcend the dualism of agency versus structure in social theory.

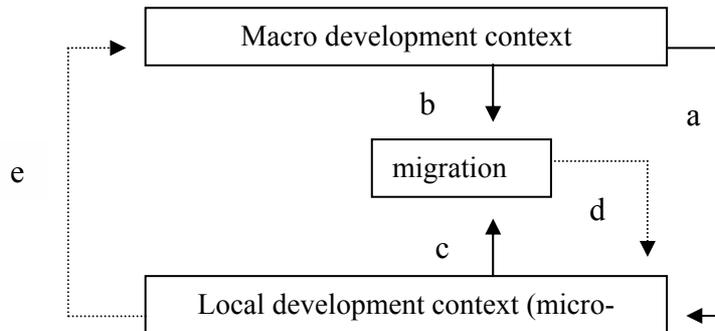
<sup>22</sup> Salt (1987) argued that it is also possible to apply the concept of uniqueness to international labor migration networks: “the migration process itself changes the context in which migrants make decisions about movement and also changes the characters of places—nation states or local regions—between which people move. In sum, regional migration networks should be seen as space-specific responses to more general contextual conditions, but responses that create new local environments in which future decisions are set”.

market economies—but also as a *cause* of social, cultural, economic, and institutional changes in the local development context, in which subsequent decisions on migration and investments are made.

Thus, *migration is not only a factor explaining change, but is an integral part of change itself in the same degree as it may enable further change*. This is why it is more correct to refer to the *recursive* relationship between migration and development instead of the—one-way—impact of migration on development.

This recursive nature of migration and development interactions is depicted in figure 2.4. In the analysis of the factors underlying the geographical differentiation in migration and development relationships, a distinction can be made between (I) the development context at the general, macro level (national, international); (II) the development context at the local or regional level; and (III) the factors related to the migrant and his direct social and economic environment—in most cases the household. These three sets of variables are reciprocally linked through various direct functional relations and feedback mechanisms.

**Figure 2.4. General conceptual framework of recursive migration-development interactions**



- a. The macro-level development context—the above-regional (national, international) whole of economic, political, social, and economic structures—partly determines the local development context, for instance through public infrastructure, social facilities, legislature, taxation, regional development programs and access to markets.
- b. The macro-context also determines the extent to which there are opportunities to migrate and earn a salary elsewhere, either internally or abroad, for instance through immigration policies, income levels and levels of unemployment. This affects the magnitude, nature (undocumented, legal, labor, family migration), and the (initial) selectivity of migration.
- c. The local development context determines to what extent people are able to lead lives they have reason to value and to enhance the substantive choices they have (cf. Sen 1997:1959) through local activities. The extent to which this is possible determines their (i) *aspiration* to migrate. A second way through which the local development context affects the propensity to migrate is the influence of development on the (ii) *capability* to migrate; a certain level of development is possible in order to be able to bear the costs and risks of labor migration. Thus, the propensity to migrate is seen as a function of people's aspirations and capabilities to do so.

- d. In its turn, migration affects the local development context through its recursive effects (system feedbacks) on labor supply, consumption, investments, inequality, social stratification, relative deprivation, culture, institutions, perceptions, and aspirations. The specific nature of this impact is spatially heterogeneous to a large extent, and is contingent on the characteristics of the local development context as set by the behavior of previous actors.
- e. Changes in the local development context—for instance as the result of migration—may eventually affect the macro-level development context.

This insight into the *recursive* nature of the relationship between migration and development obliges us to study migration impact in the context of its wider societal context, and not to artificially attempt to separate migration impacts from general processes of social change. A major weakness of many studies on migration and development seems to be that they attempt to separate causes and effects of migration, whereas both are two sides of the same coin. As Taylor (1999:63-64) argued, this is unfortunate, since the factors influencing migration decisions are also likely to shape the development outcomes in the sending areas. If people leave areas because structural obstacles make them believe they cannot fulfill their aspirations in their places of origin, it is naïve to expect that they will tend to invest massively in those places.

Nevertheless, migration has—not only through remittances, but also through transfer of skills (Stahl 1988) and knowledge, or by enabling social change—the potential to overcome local constraints on development at least to a certain, although limited, extent. So, there is room for human agency. However, if constraints in the general context remain unaddressed, the room for human agency remains limited, and under such circumstances it is unlikely that the potential of migration will be fully realized.

Recognition of the spatial heterogeneity and context-sensitivity of migration-development interactions should, however, not tempt us to stop looking for generalizations. This will certainly lead us down a sterile path of relativism and return us to an exceptionalism that was all too common in geography in the past (Johnston 1984; Skeldon 1997:13). The challenge for migration researchers is to deal with this spatial diversity, and to discern regularities in the complex realities of migration and development interactions. This can only be done via systematic research and comparison should “help us make sense of social structures and processes that never recur in the same form, yet express common principles of causality” (Tilly 1984:146, cited in Skeldon 1997:13). Unraveling such principles determining the spatial heterogeneity of the interaction between migration and development should be the aim of analysis.

Johnston’s geographical framework leaves room for feedback mechanisms. As such, this insight is not new at all. Feedback mechanisms were already described by, for instance, Myrdal (1957), who stated that migration is likely to change the development context at both the origin and destination. However, Johnston’s perspective differs from cumulative causation theory, since it is a possibilistic model leaving room for various local responses to general imperatives. Cumulative causation theory is deterministic, as it presupposes a fixed relationship between migration and development at the origin. It assumes that migration creates more underdevelopment at the origin, which in turn creates more out-migration and, hence, increasing dependency and underdevelopment. Empirical research has clearly proved such automatic mechanisms wrong.

Within a combined NELM, livelihood, and new geographical perspective, there is “possibilistic” room for differentiated responses by households operating in a local context to the opportunities and development potential offered by labor migration. Hereby, it also leaves room for positive local development responses to migration. Moreover, it acknowledges that migration can partly reshape the local social and economic context, creating “feedback loops” to the development context in which future migration and livelihood decisions are set. Therefore, *both negative and positive feedback mechanisms are possible in different domains of development and to varying degrees.*

Migration cannot be “blamed” for a perceived lack of development, as the nature of migration-development interactions is fundamentally contingent on other conditions. It is the very nature of migration-development interactions, and how these are shaped by the localized development context, which will be the subject of the following empirical study.



## Research questions and methodology

### 3.1. Problem statement and research questions

In the previous chapter, we saw that contemporary labor migration within and from the developing world can be seen as a part of a broader household livelihood strategy which serves three general aims. First, labor migration allows households to *spread income risks* through a diversification of their income portfolio. In this, we assume that the migrant leaves other household members behind, who continue with agriculture and other local productive activities. If the migrant does not return eventually, it is often only after many years or even decades—provided that the migrant has obtained stable employment—that family reunification at the destination occurs. Second, migration is a household livelihood strategy to potentially *increase* income. Third, higher and more stable incomes allow migrant households to *overcome local social and economic constraints*, by improving their living conditions (health, nutrition, housing, sanitation, and so on), and potentially enabling migrant households to invest in their region of origin and to allow younger household members to go to school or university.

Such potentially positive effects of migration are seen as “developmental”, not because of their income-increasing capacity *per se*, but because of their capacity to expand the substantive “freedoms” that people enjoy through an increase in *human capabilities*, which relates to the ability of human beings to lead lives they have reason to value and to enhance the substantive choices they have (Sen 1999). Migration potentially allows households in the developing world to escape from the vicious circle of poverty through increasing their capability to shape their own destiny. However, we have also stressed that these positive effects are *potential* effects, and that *negative* effects (increasing inequality, retreat from local production, extreme income insecurity) might equally occur. The fruits of migration might also be unequally distributed within households (e.g., along gender lines) or across communities. Moreover, the impact of migration tends not to be uniform in the various social and economic domains of development.

The degree to which migration itself represents “freedom” for people depends very much on the circumstances under which people move. Migration born out of freedom-increasing development is also more likely to further contribute to development, and if migration is generated by situations of a lack of freedom (“a flight from misery”), it is also unlikely to generate development. Our general hypothesis is that the extent to which the potential of migration to increase the capabilities and freedoms of people is actually realized fundamentally depends on the specific development context in the sending areas in which migration has occurred. In the case of voluntary labor migration—which will be the subject of this thesis—we hypothesize that these effects are potentially high, although the actual impact of migration is neither uniform nor automatic. We still lack sufficient insight into the

mechanisms that explain the spatial and temporal variability in migration and development interactions and the identification of enabling conditions for positive effects on local development.

The principal aim of this study is to gain more systematic insight into the impact of out-migration on socio-economic development in migrant sending areas, based on empirical research in the Todgha oasis valley in southern Morocco. The problem statement has been formulated as follows: *What has been the impact of internal and international labor migration on the social and economic development of the Todgha valley over the second half of the twentieth century?*

It seems useful to briefly discuss the terminology used in the problem statement. First, the problem statement mentions the *impact* of migration on development. However, migration itself is an integral part of broader processes of development in the sense that the migration process alters the very development context from which migration emanates. Because of these recursive effects, migration is both a consequence and cause of development. In its empirical-analytical set-up, this study has operationalized this insight by first studying the developmental background of migration from the Todgha valley before focusing on the recursive impacts of migration on development. Strictly speaking, it would therefore be more accurate to speak of the *role* of migration or the *interaction* between migration and other processes of development, instead of the (one-way) *impact* of migration. Nevertheless, the use of the term *impact* is so widespread, that we will, in practice, not be able to avoid it.

Second, the term *social and economic development* indicates that a broad, capabilities-based concept of development, which includes both economic and non-economic (social—used in a broad sense—is used to indicate this) dimensions. Other key concepts (migration, migrants, household, household head, nucleus) are defined in appendix 1.

This study focuses on migration-development interactions in the second half of the twentieth century, which largely coincides with the post-independence period (1956-2000). Most secondary data on population, migration, and development in the Todgha are only available over this period. This period is of sufficient length to study the more long-term interactions between migration and development, as it covers at least two generations of internal and international migrants. A particular emphasis will be put on the period after 1975, on which primary data have been collected. The study has been pursued through a research methodology which was carried out in six different villages within the Todgha valley involving several methods such as a household survey (standardized questionnaires), a plot-level survey, a “participatory appraisal”, open interviews, and the study of secondary data sources.

The research questions addressed in this study are:

1. What have been the main characteristics and developmental causes of migration patterns from, within and towards the Todgha valley in general, and the research villages in particular, over the second half of the twentieth century?

This question is largely descriptive, and serves to gain a basic insight into migration patterns as they have evolved over the past half-century, including the factors explaining the origin, character, selectivity, and evolution of migration patterns. These issues will be analyzed at the valley, village and individual level, using both primary and secondary data sources, such as government statistics, policy documents, and previous studies. These data will be placed within a general (macro) perspective of Moroccan migration, serving as a general framework in which specific migration patterns from the Todgha-valley are interpreted. The sub-questions are:

- a. How has internal and international migration within and from Morocco evolved over the twentieth century, and what are the developmental causes of changes in these patterns?
- b. What has been the evolution of internal and international migration patterns from, within, and towards the Todgha valley?
- c. To what extent have the different types of migration been selective according to personal, household, and ethnic characteristics? Have there been changes in selectivity patterns over time, and how can these changes be explained?
- d. What (changing) structural factors at the macro and micro level have enabled migration patterns to occur and what structural and network-related factors explain their evolution (change) over time?

Chapter 4 examines the evolution of migration patterns within and from Morocco over the twentieth century and will serve to answer sub-question 1.a. Chapter 5 will give a general introduction to the Todgha valley. Chapters 4 and 5 will allow a better comprehension of the (macro-) developmental causes of the Todgha migration. Chapter 6 will analyze empirical data on the character, evolution and causes of migration patterns from, to and within the Todgha. Together, chapters 4, 5, and 6 will serve to answer sub-questions 1.b-1.d.

2. What role has migration played in changing the livelihoods of oasis households, and what has been the direct impact of migration on income levels and structure, wealth and living conditions?

This question serves to evaluate the NELM-hypotheses that migration is a household strategy to stabilize livelihoods through the spreading of income risk and to actually improve livelihoods. In this analysis, “development” will be conceptualized on the basis of the capabilities approach, and will therefore not only focus on income indicators, but also on actual living conditions. The sub-questions, which will be examined in chapter 7, are:

- a. What household categories can be determined on the basis of the migration characteristics of their members? This classification will serve as basis for the further migration-impact analysis in the study.
  - b. What is the role of internal and international migration in changing household livelihoods, what is their function within the household life cycle, and what ideal-typical “migration trajectories” can be distinguished?
  - c. How does migration affect other (local) livelihood activities of households?
  - d. What has been the direct effect of migration on household income level and structure?
  - e. How has migration affected household wealth and living conditions?
  - f. To what extent can inter-village differences in living conditions and wealth be explained by differences in migration participation and temporal aspects such as migration stage?
3. To what extent and in what way has migration affected the investment behavior of households and how can the spatial and temporal differentiation in this behavior be explained?

This question is crucial to the study as it goes to the heart of the heated debate between “migration optimists” and “migration pessimists”. Do migrant households indeed—as prior research has seemed to suggest—tend to spend their income on consumption and so-called

“non-productive” investments, and withdraw from local production, passively relying on remittances? Or is the NELM hypothesis correct that migrant household tend to exhibit a higher propensity to invest than nonmigrant households? Does migration contribute to economic development or instead put a labor and capital drain on the region of origin? In order to explore these issues in detail, the following sub-questions have been formulated:

- a. How does migration affect the general propensity of households to invest?
  - b. To what extent does migration affect the sectoral<sup>1</sup> allocation of investments, and how can inter-household and inter-village differences in investments preferences be explained?
  - c. What is the effect of the household life cycle or “household migration stage” on the volume and sectoral preferences of investments?
  - d. To what extent have migrants’ investments and consumption (indirectly) affected livelihoods (e.g., activity patterns, occupational status, income) of nonmigrant households?
  - e. What are the main obstacles to investments?
4. What has been the role of migration in the economic-geographical transformations of the Todgha valley?

This is a more general question which aims to assess the role that migration—seen as part of a complex whole of varied factors that affect development—has played in the general development and economic-geographical transformations of the Todgha valley over the past half-century. Because of their significance, changes in the agricultural realm and patterns of human settlement (e.g., housing construction, urbanization) will receive particular attention. This analysis will serve to analyze the extent to which specific locational factors influence both the volume and allocation of investments, and how geographically differentiated migration impacts can be explained. This research question pertains to the wider impact—transcending household and village level effects—that migration has had in changing the regional development context, and to what extent and in what way these recursive effects have, in their turn, affected migration patterns. The following sub-questions have been formulated:

- a. What is the nature of the major transformations that have been taking place in the agricultural and other economic domains?
- b. To what extent can these general processes of economic-geographical development be attributed to the socio-economic effects of migration?
- c. What characterizes the geographical allocation of agricultural and non-agricultural investments and how can this be explained?
- d. Do investment preferences differ across locales (i.e., villages), and to what extent can any such differentiation be explained by geographical differences and differences in the migratory background of villages?
- e. What have been the recursive effects of economic-geographical transformations on patterns of migration from, within, and towards the Todgha valley?

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<sup>1</sup> I.e., the allocation among different investment categories, such as agriculture, housing, education, retail, catering, transport, commerce, and so on.

Chapters 8 and 9 will serve to answer research questions 3 and 4. Chapter 8 analyzes the developmental impacts of migration in the agricultural domain. Chapter 9 examines the impact migration has had in non-agricultural economic domains, including education.

5. To what extent and in what way has migration affected social stratification, gender roles, culture, and institutional change?

The role of migration in social and cultural change is potentially high, and from a capabilities perspective these changes are highly relevant to development, not only because of their intrinsic value, but also because social and cultural changes can affect the local conditions for economic production. Furthermore, social and cultural change might affect the allocation of, and access to, resources at the intra-household level (e.g., gender inequality) and community level (e.g., income inequality). Moreover, changes in attitudes, tastes, preferences, and aspirations might recursively influence subsequent migration patterns as well as the propensity to invest. The sub-questions are:

- a. To what extent and in what way has migration affected pre-colonial patterns of socio-ethnic stratification?
- b. To what extent and in what way has migration led to changes in attitudes, tastes, preferences, and aspirations, and how do these changes affect migration patterns?
- c. To what extent and in what way has migration affected gender roles, women's influence on household decision making, and the well-being of women?
- d. To what extent and in what way has the local institutional environment changed, and to what extent can these changes be attributed to the social and cultural impact of migration?

These questions will be examined in chapter 10, which will also describe how migration has affected oasis life in more general terms, transcending the household-focused analysis of the preceding chapters.

The research questions will structure the data analysis presented in the remainder of this study. Together, the answers to these five research questions will allow us to review current insights into and hypotheses on spatio-temporal migration and development interactions as presented in section 2.5.3. On the basis of this evaluation, more general and fundamental theoretical questions on the developmental role of labor migration will be addressed. To what extent does this study support, falsify, or modify prevailing insights?

Can migration indeed be interpreted as part of a (positive) household livelihood strategy to diversify livelihood, increase income, and to overcome local developmental constraints to investments, or were the structuralists right when they stated that most migrants do not have a veritable free choice and that migration is therefore better interpreted as a (negative) "flight from misery"? In brief, are migrants agents or victims? Or are there elements of truth in both assumptions?

Linked to this discussion on the very nature of migration is the question of whether migrant households can be considered as agents of social and economic development. Do they indeed play an innovative role in breaking down social and economic obstacles to development, or do they rather tend to rely passively on remittances and tend to retreat from local economic activities? How has this affected inequality in the distribution of substantive freedoms and capabilities among different social categories, such as nonmigrants and migrants, women and men, and various ethnic groups? How have the social and economic impacts of migration on development affected subsequent migration patterns? Have the recursive effects of migration stimulated further out-migration in a negative cycle of

“cumulative causation”, or have migration patterns been reshaped or reversed as a consequence of many decades of partly migration-triggered development? Or do both processes occur simultaneously, or change over time, or do different mechanisms apply to internal and international migration? And, last but not least, what are the main enabling or constraining conditions that affect positive or negative migration and development interactions? This study tries to address these vital questions.

### **3.2. Methodological implications of recent theoretical insights**

Before presenting the research methodology, it seems useful to briefly review the implications of the recent shift in recent theoretical insights for the methodological design of migration studies. This seems necessary in order to ensure that the empirical results of the study can contribute to the broader theoretical debate. As has been demonstrated, the poor methodological design and a lack of connection to theory have severely hampered the theoretical progression of the migration and development debate. Among the methodological considerations, the four key issues are (1) the units of research and analysis; (2) scope of the research populations; (3) what data to collect; and (4) what instruments of data collection to use.

#### **3.2.1. A multilevel approach with the household as the basic unit of analysis**

Migration does not take place in a social, cultural, and institutional void. The logical consequence is that migration should not (only) be studied at the individual level, as is typically the case in studies based on census data and other macro-studies. Both livelihood and NELM researchers have therefore strongly advocated the use of the *household* as the primary unit of analysis (McDowell and De Haan 1997; Stark 1991). There seems to be a general consensus on the relevance of the household as the most appropriate management unit in which decisions on migration, consumption, and investments are taken, at least within the context of Middle-Eastern and North African societies such as Morocco (cf. De Mas 1990a)<sup>2</sup>.

However, such a household approach has also been criticized on various grounds. First, there is the risk of a reification of the household, which is often seen as a unit with a clear will, plans, strategy, and aims (Lieten and Nieuwenhuys 1989:8). It is often implicitly or explicitly assumed that the household takes unanimous decisions that are to the advantage of the whole group (Rutten 1987:4). Feminist researchers in particular have argued that this masks intra-household inequalities and neglects the issue of power. As Rodenburg (1997:4-5) argued,

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<sup>2</sup> The use of households as the primary unit of decision-making and research has been criticized in the context of, for instance, sub-Saharan Africa, where individuals within households may have considerable social, economic, and migratory autonomy. Moreover, this fragmentation of households seems to have been increasing over past decades. Although Moroccan family life is also characterized by a certain degree of fragmentation and loosening of ties, the nuclear household can (still) be considered as the primary organizing principle of daily life and decision making, within which the autonomy of individuals is severely restrained, certainly in rural settings. In general, individual socio-economic behavior and migration or life histories cannot be understood without considering the wider context of the household. However, this is neither to suggest that any action is undertaken after consulting household members, nor that household members have equal power. Therefore, this study will pay substantive attention to the internal composition of households and in particular to the position of women. Nevertheless, the household remains the central unit of analysis.

The concept of household strategies presumes that there is consensus and co-operation between household members. It is usually believed that the household pursues one collective goal based on a set of common interests . . . . what is often presented as *the* strategy of a household can also be conceived as the outcome of a struggle for domination between male and female, old and young, powerful and powerless.

Furthermore, there will obviously also be instances in which decisions on migration—as any other issue—are taken individually, without consulting and sometimes even without informing other household members. In Morocco, for example, men often do not always consult their wives and other household members before migrating. In a way, the NELM-assumption that migration is a household livelihood strategy presupposes an equality of power and interests within the households and decision-making on the basis of a consensus between household members. Moreover, non-household members (family, friends) might equally influence decision making. Thus, the ideal-typical image of the household as a (unified) decision making unit can be far from reality.

However, the lesson should not be to reject the household as a central unit of research and analysis altogether, as the household still seems to be the level at which *most* decisions are made. Neither individual nor macro-approaches can offer us the insight that a household-centered analysis can give. Given its proven usefulness in research, the household approach should not be discarded, especially in view of the lack of a viable alternative. A household approach is also useful in overcoming the limitations of both structural (macro) and individual-atomistic (micro) perspectives on migration (Rodenburg 1997:3). The household can be considered a mediator between the demands and opportunities of the labor market and individual decisions to migrate (Rodenburg 1997:3).

While maintaining the household as the primary research unit, migration researchers should also consider relevant processes that play out on other levels. We should therefore adopt a flexible, multi-level analysis. Although the household seems the most appropriate unit of analysis, we should not lose sight of intra-household relations and inequalities. We have already seen that migration tends to be a selective process according to sex and age. Therefore, it is possible, or even likely, that not all members of households will equally reap the benefits of migration. Some household members may even see their labor burden and material insecurity increase, while others will improve their situation. The relative power of household members to influence resource allocation will, in fact, be highly dependent on cultural norms and vested social structures. From a capabilities perspective on development (Sen 1999), therefore, such intra-household distributional issues are highly relevant in assessing to what extent “development” has taken place.

Data on income, consumption, investments, possessions, and agricultural and other enterprises can best be collected at the household level, as income and expenditures are typically pooled in the common household budget, and different (individual or collective) income and expenditure streams can therefore not be separated. However, in order to analyze important aspects such as the selectivity of migration and intra-household gender inequality, it is necessary to have data on variables such as the age, sex, education, and work and migration status of all the individual members of the household. This individual data can be aggregated at the household or community (village) levels afterwards whenever necessary. Trying to do this the other way around is typically not possible.

Social relations with other individuals or households may be important in studying network migration and how the impact of migration on social relations might influence local development responses to migration. The cultural impact of migration should equally be considered, as it affects communities as a whole, and this may equally affect the conditions in

which future decisions on migration and livelihoods are made. Despite their room for agency, migrants or migrant households are not independent actors with free and equal access to resources and markets. Structural factors influence migration patterns and constrain the extent to which migrants (and nonmigrants) will tend to invest in the local economy. Therefore, it is important to consider factors such as the functioning of various institutions, ranging from markets to village councils, the geographical position of a place or region vis-à-vis economic hubs, and—in particular for agricultural development—environmental factors. Together, such factors shape the localized *development context* in which decisions on migration and livelihood activities are made, and which, in its turn, is partly reshaped by the recursive impact of such decisions.

These structural factors are easily ignored if the focus is only at the household or individual level. Therefore, besides household level research, empirical studies should also simultaneously collect community level data at the research sites, which provide another significant level of analysis. As Fawcett and Arnold (1987:1526) stated, migration studies should incorporate individual data, household data, and community or “contextual” data. If necessary, they should also consider development-relevant factors present at the regional, national, and international level. This allows us to analyze the interaction among the different levels of aggregation, which reflects reciprocal influences. Thus, while retaining the household as the primary level of analysis, it also seems indispensable to collect data at other relevant levels.

### **3.2.2. Determining research populations**

Migration systems, cumulative causation, and NELM theories have demonstrated that the cultural, social, and economic impacts of migration are likely to affect migrant sending communities as a whole, that is, both migrant and nonmigrant households. Nonmigrants are also essential as a control group<sup>3</sup> to assess the selectivity of migration as well as migration impact. It is, therefore, necessary to include both migrant and nonmigrant households in research populations.

Most migration studies limit their analysis either to long-distance international migration or to relatively short-distance internal migration. This is unfortunate, as migration systems and migration network theories have demonstrated that internal and international forms of migration are closely interwoven. Internal migrants can become international migrants, internal migration may cause international migration, and *vice versa*. Moreover, households may contain both internal and international migrants. This seems sufficient reason to study both types of migration together, to analyze the relationship between both and to include both internal and international migrant households in empirical studies.

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<sup>3</sup> However, we should be aware that the use of a control group in a “natural” social setting is not possible in a strict sense, as it is impossible to isolate research units from their wider social context. Unlike a “pure” laboratory experiment, members of social categories (e.g., migrant and nonmigrant households) have not been randomly allocated to those groups from an initial research population with equal characteristics (cf. Llobera 1998). As migration tends to be a selective process, migrant and nonmigrant households will also differ on many different characteristics than migration alone. In other words, these factors cannot be held constant, rendering a pure experiment impossible. The more or less endogenous character of such variables makes it difficult to straightforwardly assess the impact of migration on development. In such a comparative natural experiment, statistical analysis should therefore not simply compare migrants and nonmigrant groups, but assess the influence of other variables that might intervene or mediate in migration impacts on development.

### 3.2.3. What data to include

As we have seen in chapter 2, many migration studies attempt to isolate migrant remittances from other sources of household income. However, this is an artificial and simplistic approach, neglecting the fungible character of household income. Different sources of household income are pooled within a common household budget rather than earmarked for specific expenditure. Moreover, if we agree that migration should be considered as a constituent part of general household livelihood strategies, its impact can only be studied in relation to other economic activities and sources of household income. As Taylor (1999) has argued, this obliges us to adopt a *whole household approach*, covering the entire livelihoods of households, that is, all the activities and sources of income of the individual household members.

Within a broad, capabilities-based concept of development, studies on migration and development should assess the role of migration in (1) the direct well-being of people; (2) income growth; and (3) social change. Consequently, we should not only consider income (cash or in kind) or investments in economic activities, but equally the well-being aspects and investments in human capital (e.g., education). Moreover, the analysis of the impact of migration in these different dimensions of development should be sensitive to intra-household and intra-community inequality.

The impact of migration cannot be assessed by simply comparing migrant and nonmigrant households. We have seen that migration tends to be selective on personal characteristics such as sex, age, and human capital (such as education) as well as the household's physical and social capital assets such as income, land possession, and relations with already established migrants. Insight into migration selectivity is indispensable to properly assess the impact of migration on well-being, inequality, and growth. In brief, it matters *who* migrates, to what place, under which circumstances, and why. The methodological consequences are that we should include variables on human, social, and physical capital assets both at the individual and household level in empirical studies.

We have also seen that spatial and temporal scales of analysis may heavily influence the results of analyses (cf. Jones 1998b). In chapter 2, we hypothesized that there might be a relation between the "migration stage" of the household (related to the family life cycle) and at the community level on the one hand and migrants' economic behavior on the other (see table 2.1). In order to test this hypothesis on "lagged development responses", we should not only collect data on location and type of investments, but also on the point in time in which certain investments were made.

Migration network theory indicates that migration has the tendency to become less selective over time, although selectivity might increase again in the longer term. It has been hypothesized that such changing selectivity patterns—over time—might affect income inequality at the community (i.e., village) level. This is another reason to specify the years in which certain migratory and economic acts were initiated or ended. In order to study the role of networks, it seems relevant to assess the extent to which migration streams are geographically clustered (e.g., limited to particular villages or regions) and concentrated within particular families or entire groups. Again, this stresses the need to collect data on the place and time of migration. Ideally, this should involve a longitudinal approach. If this is not possible, retrospective questions should be included in empirical studies.

Furthermore, migration is believed to have a potentially high socio-cultural impact, which might in turn influence intra-household resource allocation or the functioning of all kinds of institutions. Such changes do not only have an intrinsic developmental value in

affecting people's capabilities and freedoms, but might in turn also have a recursive effect on economic production (cf. Sen 1999). This points to the importance of collecting qualitative data revealing (changing) perceptions, ambitions, tastes of people of different sexes, ages, and migratory status. This will increase the degree to which we can understand—in the Weberian sense of *verstehen*<sup>4</sup>—the social, economic, and migratory behavior of people and our ability to shed light on more society-wide processes of cultural and social change. It is not only important to measure what is happening and how people behave, but also to get an hermeneutic understanding of *why* people behave that particular way from within their own viewpoint.

### 3.2.4. The need for mixed methods

We can conclude from the previous sections that, in order to study the complex relationships between migration and development, we need a research design that collects and analyzes data at different levels (individual, household, community) (cf. De Mas 1992). Although the household seems most apt as a central variable, individual and community-level data also seems essential. We should not isolate migrants or the households they belong to, but study communities as a whole at different levels, including internal migrants and nonmigrants. Following a capability-based definition of development and recognizing the relevance of socio-cultural and institutional aspects both as causes and effects of migration, both quantitative (demographic and economic items) and qualitative (social and cultural items) methods seem necessary.

Migration researchers tend to be divided between those adopting a survey-based quantitative approach (mostly economists and geographers) and those adopting a qualitative approach based on interviews and participant observation (mostly sociologists and anthropologists). Unfortunately, there is only a limited amount of data sets from migrant sending regions that contain data taken at both the individual and household level, covering the temporal and spatial allocation of both migration and investments.

Whether it is more accurate to choose quantitative or qualitative methods depends on the specific research question. In general, the structural and cultural dimensions of development are difficult to capture by quantitative research techniques alone, whereas aspects related to the demographic and economic characteristics of individuals or households are generally easier to quantify. In order to investigate the recursive relationship between agency and structure, research on migration and development should therefore ideally combine qualitative and quantitative methods.

Wherever quantitative measurement and analysis is possible, it seems preferable to use these techniques as they allow for more analytical rigor, increase precision, and decrease researcher's bias. Quantitative techniques can be easily used to collect and analyze demographic and migratory data. Data on income, expenditure, investments, and agricultural production can also be easily expressed in quantitative terms. However, problems of reliability are often greater with such sensitive issues. Unfortunately, this argument has often been used to refute quantitative techniques in more general terms. First, the reliability depends on the way the research is conducted in the field. This implies that the reliability can be greatly enhanced by factors influencing the trust of respondents, such as a good introduction in the field and the personal involvement of the researcher in the fieldwork.

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<sup>4</sup> This term refers to the social scientist's attempt to understand both the intention and the context of human action.

Much also depends on the structure of questionnaires. Second, limitations in reliability and measurement validity do not necessarily discredit quantitative research, as long as no unrealistic semblance of precision is suggested in presenting the outcome of statistical analysis. The aim should rather be to detect general trends and make statistically significant inferences.

Although the criticism on quantitative research is often out of proportion, it seems true that some crucial dimensions of migration and development interactions indeed ask for other methods. If we wish to achieve a more hermeneutic understanding of the social world in which people live, to understand *why* they make certain choices such as migrating or investing, how their perceptions and aspirations have changed, why women are sometimes not allowed to migrate, to know how institutions work or why they malfunction, qualitative research methods are essential. The ideal, therefore, would seem to be a mixed approach combining both quantitative and qualitative research.

### 3.3. Research methodology

#### 3.3.1. Background of the study

This study was carried out in the context of the IMAROM research project, which was conducted between 1998 and 2001. The IMAROM project aimed to study the impact of migration and the concomitant socio-economic and political changes on land and water management and resource exploitation in the oases of Morocco and Tunisia. In addition to identifying the enabling socio-economic and biophysical conditions for investments in irrigated oasis agriculture, IMAROM aimed to assess the ecological consequences of current changes in the land and water management of oases (cf. De Haas 2001)<sup>5</sup>.

The IMAROM project entailed empirical research in different research sites located in oases in southern Tunisia and Morocco which included both natural and social scientists (physical geographers, soil scientists, human geographers, sociologists, economists). The Moroccan research sites were located in the Todgha valley (province of Ouarzazate). Among the Tunisian sites, two were located in Mareth, a coastal area near Médenine, and one, Fatnassa, in the continental oasis area of Nefzaoua. I was responsible for co-ordination of the socio-economic part of the research in Morocco. While staying in the Todgha, I simultaneously carried out my Ph.D. fieldwork. Whereas IMAROM was focused on processes of agricultural and environmental change, this particular study focuses on the role of migration in processes of local and regional development in a broader sense. This means that the role of migration in non-agricultural economic sectors as well as social and cultural domains were studied too. Questions related to ecology and sustainability (e.g., land degradation, depletion of water resources), which were central to IMAROM, are not explicitly addressed in this study.

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<sup>5</sup> IMAROM stands for Interaction between Migration, Land and Water Management and Resource Exploitation in the Oases of the Maghreb. This research was designed and coordinated by the AGIDS (Amsterdam Research Institute for Global Issues and Development Studies) institute of the University of Amsterdam, the Netherlands, and funded by the INCO-DC program of DGXII of the European Commission (IC18-CT97-0134). In Morocco, participating institutions included the Université Mohammed V (Rabat) and the Université Mohammed I (Oujda); in Tunisia the Institut des Régions Arides (Médenine); and in Spain the Estación Experimental de Zonas Aridas (CSIC, Almería). In its final stage, the project received support from the CIDIN (Centre for International Development Issues Nijmegen) of the University of Nijmegen, the Netherlands.

The empirical part of this PhD research took place between March 1998 and July 2000, which comprised a preparation period of six months and the actual fieldwork, which took place between September 1998 and July 2000. During this period, I lived in Tinghir, the urban center of the Todgha valley. In the field, I intensively co-operated with Hassan El Ghanjou, a PhD student in geography from the Université Mohammed V in Rabat, Morocco. We elaborated most of the methodologies jointly and during most of the actual fieldwork we lived in Tinghir in the same house and carried out parts of the research together. In the following sections, the general course of the project will be described, thereby elaborating the different research methodologies that were applied.

### **3.3.2. Preparation and selection of the research area**

The first half-year of the study (March-August 1998) was devoted to a literature review, the design of research methodologies, and the selection of research sites. General literature on migration and development was studied in order to develop a theoretical framework as presented in chapter 2. This theoretical study has guided the data collection. Furthermore, specific empirical literature on migration and development in the Maghreb and Morocco was collected.

In March 1998, an orientation trip was made in southern Morocco to select a research area. It was decided to locate this research area in the arid part of Morocco, south of the Atlas Mountains, where population settlements are concentrated in oases located in river valleys or near springs. Two main reasons underpinned the choice to conduct the research in an oasis area. The first reason was practical: this study was part of the broader IMAROM research project, whose main aim was to study the role of migration in the (agricultural) transformation in oases in Morocco and Tunisia. Secondly, most Moroccan oases have witnessed high rates of internal and international migration over several decades, which made them appropriate for the study of migration impacts. An additional advantage of oases is their clear spatial delimitation as a region, and the high internal social, ethnic, geographical, and agricultural diversity that can usually be found within the confines of most oases.

Concerning the choice of a particular oasis, the primary selection criterion was the simultaneous occurrence of both internal and international migration to a rather high degree. A second criterion was the existence of a certain (inter-village) differentiation within the research area itself concerning migratory, agricultural, and socio-ethnic characteristics. Such differentiation allowed us to study factors determining the spatial differentiation in migration-development interactions and to study the relevance of “migration stage” (i.e., temporal aspects) in studying migration impacts.

The Todgha valley fulfilled the above-mentioned criteria. First, it is a typical emigration region, with, however, significant variations in migratory background—both pertaining to destinations as well as “migration stage”—among villages and parts of the valley. Second, the valley (with a length of approximately 40 km including the downstream Ghallil plain) comprises a high differentiation in natural environments between the upstream and downstream parts, shaping rather different conditions for agricultural production. Third, some villages are more isolated than others, measured by their distance to roads and the proximity to Tinghir, the valley’s urban center. It was supposed that the study of several villages located across the valley would enable study of the influence of such locational factors on migration patterns and the spatial and sectoral allocation of investments. A practical advantage was that the valley is relatively small, so that the selected research villages could all be reached from Tinghir within one hour by car or collective transport by *transit* (small vans operated by individual entrepreneurs). A final reason for selecting the

Todgha valley was the availability of scientific and policy documents on the valley. This means that less time was lost in the collection of general baseline data on the valley, so that more time was available for the actual migration research.

Between June and August 1998, a draft questionnaire for the household survey was written. Moreover, the available policy documents, scientific literature, maps, and aerial photographs of the valley were collected and studied (Beaurpère 1933; Raclot 1936; but in particular the research carried out by Büchner 1986) and proved to be very useful in providing much basic geographical and historical data on the region. Other useful sources of secondary data were Bouzid (1992), Steinmann (1993), and Naim (1997)<sup>6</sup>.

### 3.3.3. Preliminary research, participatory appraisal, and household survey

The actual fieldwork started in September 1998 with a general orientation study of the Todgha, which was achieved by transect walks and observations in all parts of the valley, informal conversations with villagers, and interviews with government officials, returned migrants, and peasants. Moreover, secondary data on population and migration were collected from the local authorities in Tinghir. With the agricultural extension service of Tinghir (CMV), general data on agricultural production were obtained (CMV 1996). Information was recorded in a field logbook and transcripts of the interviews were made. This orientation study was completed in November 1998 (cf. De Haas and El Ghanjou 1998). It not only provided a general image of the socio-economic and migratory dynamics and patterns of spatial change in the valley, but was also useful as an informational basis for the subsequent selection of research villages.

During the same period, the household questionnaire was tested numerous times and revised twelve times before drawing up the final version. The length was significantly reduced so that most interviews did not last longer than one hour, in order to prevent fatigue among the respondents. This exercise proved to be instrumental, as it forced the researcher to specify and operationalize the research questions as clearly as possible. Some useful questions had unfortunately to be omitted from the questionnaires as they proved to be too sensitive or difficult to answer. This mainly concerned questions on savings, debts, and expenditures on health care and religious feasts. The final questionnaire consisted of pre-coded and some open-ended questions on the following items:

#### *Individual level*

- a. Demographic structure of the household (age, sex, relationship to household head);
- b. Migration characteristics of oases and individuals;
- c. Educational levels;
- d. Activity patterns (men and women, including migrants);

#### *Household level*

- a. Income characteristics (including agriculture and migrant remittances);
- b. Expenditure and investment patterns;
- c. Ownership of land, water rights, and cattle; agricultural production

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<sup>6</sup> Büchner (1986), Steinmann (1993) and Naim (1997) all examine the impact of migration. Nevertheless, these studies neither consider the issue of migration and development theoretically nor systematically compare nonmigrant and migrant households. Nevertheless, the studies were highly valuable as a basic reference.

For practical reasons it was impossible, and for analytical reasons unnecessary, to study all (64) villages in the valley. One option considered was take a random sample from the entire population of the valley. However, this was difficult to achieve due to the absence of a sound sampling framework. Although lists of households exist at municipality level, they were difficult to access, not complete for all villages, and potentially unreliable. Moreover, the local chiefs such as *shiukh* and *mqaddemin*, who are responsible for compiling these lists, do not use a common household definition. Moreover, in order to study social and ethnic relations at the village level and the functioning of village institutions, it seemed necessary to use qualitative research methods in which the village community was studied as a whole. In addition, in order to study the role of geographical-environmental factors in investments patterns, it seemed desirable to thoroughly study a limited number of sites within the valley instead of opting for a random survey in the entire valley. Therefore, it seemed a better option to select a limited number of villages, which were subsequently studied both as a whole and at the household level.

In November 1998, it was therefore decided to select the villages and households on the basis of a spatially clustered, non-random sample. Among the 64 villages located in the Todgha valley, six villages were selected in order to study in more detail the linkages between migration and development<sup>7</sup>. The villages, located both in the upstream and downstream parts of the valley, were selected non-randomly, in such a way that the survey covered the migratory, agricultural-environmental, and socio-ethnic variability prevailing in the valley. These villages were Zaouïa, Tikoutar, Aït El Meskine, Ikhba, Tadafelt, and Ghallil n'Aït Isfoul (see map 2).

As the research villages were rather small (28-124 households), and taking into account the importance of covering enough<sup>8</sup> households of all socio-ethnic and migratory (nonmigrant, internal migrant, international migrant, return migrant) groups within each village, it was decided not to use sampling techniques for the survey, but to conduct a complete village census. This implies that all households within each village were included in the survey. Before starting the actual survey, the researchers spent at least two weeks in each village, conducting a "participatory appraisal" (cf. Chambers 2002). This participatory appraisal comprised participant observation, informal conversations with oasis dwellers, transect walks in the village and the agricultural fields, and open interviews with peasants in the field and informants such as local *shiukh* and *mqaddemin*, school teachers, and returned migrants. This "participatory appraisal" was also instrumental in decreasing the distrust villagers generally felt towards outsiders.

The next step was the selection of research assistants. The importance of a certain level of trust among the respondents was the main reason for appointing research assistants who originated from the same ethnic groups as the respondents. It was assessed that, in this particular context, the advantages of using "insiders" outweighed the potential disadvantages of such an approach. Strong ethnic rivalries prevail in the Todgha valley, so the research would probably have suffered from appointing "outsider" assistants from other villages or ethnic groups. For each village, an assistant was selected after finishing the introduction in the village. All assistants were young and jobless men<sup>9</sup>, with at least some years of university education.

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<sup>7</sup> In the context of the IMAROM project, 12 villages were studied. The other six villages were studied by geographers from the Mohammed V University Rabat (cf. De Haas 2001).

<sup>8</sup> "Enough" in the sense that statistical inferences can be made not only on aggregate, but also at the village level.

<sup>9</sup> Hardly any indigenous women with higher education live in the valley. This may change in the near future, as more and more girls are following higher secondary education.

The surveys were carried out in the period December 1998-July 1999. In total, 507 households in six villages were enumerated. Before starting the survey, a complete list of all households in the village was drawn up with the assistant. In principle, household questionnaires were conducted with the household head. In many instances, however, the household head was absent or had migrated. In that case, the questions were asked to another person, in most cases a brother, the head's spouse or an adult son. This means that other people had to supply information about the absent person. As Schoorl (1998:19) stated, such "proxy" information can be of a low quality, despite the respondent's best intentions, and this implies that questions on attitudes or opinions of the migrants cannot be included in the survey. In order to partly tackle that latter problem, open interviews were conducted with migrants on temporary return during summer holiday.

Assistants were appointed to carry out the survey (see section 3.4.2). During the first days, the assistant and researcher carried out the interviews jointly. Once familiar with interviewing, the assistants carried out most of the remainder of the survey alone. The researcher visited the village every one or two days, and regularly participated in interviewing. All completed questionnaires were checked by the researcher, and in case of doubt on the reliability of certain answers, respondents were revisited.

After verifying information, questionnaire data was stored in an SPSS database. I decided to do the data entry myself, and not by assistants, in order to reduce data entry errors. A data entry form was used (with limited value ranges on variables) in order to further decrease data entry errors. Two databases were set up: one for the household-level data, another for demographic and migratory data that was recorded at the individual level. This allowed maximum flexibility in analyzing data and constructing new variables by aggregating data from the second data-file at the household level, in which the household number functioned as a key variable.

### 3.3.4. Open interviews, plot-level research, and participant observation

In the period June-August 1999, I conducted open interviews with 20 migrants who returned during the summer holidays. The goal of these interviews was to gain further insight into their migration histories, their motives for migrating, their experiences, and future plans concerning migration and investments. It also offered me the chance to better understand *why* migrants and their households make certain migration and livelihood decisions which might be regarded by some as "irrational", but for which there is almost always an explanation in the wider social, cultural and economic development context. This also offered me the chance to gain further insight into their perceptions of the Todgha as a place to concentrate activities and investments, and structural obstacles which might explain why migrant households do *not* invest in certain economic sectors. Since quantitative surveys tend to be largely blind on such topics, the open interviews had an important added value. The respondents were not selected on the basis of a sample, but through chance meetings. As the primary goal of these interviews was rather to gain insight into the experiences and perceptions of migrants to help to develop a categorization (typology) of migration and livelihood strategies, questions of statistical representation were less relevant here.

Between September 1999 and January 2000, additional plot-level research was conducted, involving interviews with all peasants cultivating plots within a specific sub-sector of the oasis, so as to gain more insight into agricultural practices. Although this part of the research was primarily designed for the IMAROM project, the results of this research also seem instrumental in assessing the impact of migration on land use and cropping patterns. The

questions mostly pertained to (a) cropping patterns (actual land use); (b) intensity level of agriculture (input factors such as pesticides, fertilizers, HYVs); and (c) irrigation methods and patterns. In the last phase of the research, February-June 2000, supplementary research was conducted in the Ghallil, an alluvial desert plain which had recently been colonized by farmers through the installation of water pumps. This research was done in order to gain additional insight into the role migration plays in agricultural innovation. For that purpose, basic data were collected on all farms in the plain and interviews with several farmers were conducted.

It is important to stress that, besides the more formal parts of my research (household survey, plot survey, open interviews), I used (participant) observation throughout my stay in the Todgha. I noted down these observations and experiences in a field logbook on a daily basis. Through living in the valley for almost two years, my daily visits to the villages, and intensive contacts with oasis dwellers, I learned more about the daily lives, perceptions, aspirations, and problems of people, and in particular of the preponderant place migration had in their minds. The experience of staying in the Todgha taught me better why, for what reasons, and with what intentions people migrate, and what explains their livelihood strategies. Participant observation also taught me to comprehend the nature and intensity of ethnic rivalries in the valley; the jealousy nonmigrants feel towards migrants; how corruption and lawlessness affect the daily life of people and can drive people to despair; how media and education affects the perceptions and aspirations of people; how lack of trust towards the state and its institutions affects the behavior of people; what it is to be young, ambitious, but at the same time without prospects; why some young and frustrated youth seek refuge in ethnic or religious extremism; and how a combination of exposure to education, media, and the relative wealth of migrants has literally “mobilized” the mindsets of young men and women.

Staying among, observing, and interacting with the Todghawis also taught me to comprehend why people tend to invest, for instance, so massively in economic sectors such as housing, or why some migrants have preferred to invest in the education of their children in Morocco instead of taking them to Europe. This daily interaction and observation offered me insights that I would never have been able to obtain by a survey alone. Moreover, this insight into people’s motives helped me to structure and explain the expected and unexpected outcomes of quantitative data analysis, and to formulate certain new hypotheses on migrants’ behavior.

### **3.3.5. Students’ research on institutions and gender relations**

In 1998, an MA student conducted valuable background research on trends in migration and remittance flows between Morocco and Europe (Müller 1998). In 1999, two MA students carried out supplementary research in the Todgha valley on behalf of the University of Amsterdam and the IMAROM project. A student in cultural anthropology (Corine Otte) carried out fieldwork in the Todgha valley from February to May 1999. She studied the changing relations between social actors and the role of traditional institutions relating to water management in Tadafelt, one of the research villages. From June to August 1999, a student in human geography (Aleida van Rooij) carried out research on the effects of migration on the position of women household decision-making processes. The MA theses containing the findings of both studies have been published as IMAROM working papers (Otte 2000; Van Rooij 2000). Both studies have provided supplementary—largely qualitative—data on important aspects that had originally not been addressed by the PhD research. Their research

has provided a useful input for this PhD research, and has been particularly instrumental in the analysis of the socio-cultural impact of migration (chapter 10).

### 3.3.6. Data analysis, literature study, and reporting

The period between September 2000 and March 2001 was used to analyze data and to draw up the final report of the IMAROM research in collaboration with other research partners (cf. De Haas 2001). This report contained a general description of the Todgha valley and a basic analysis of migration impacts on investments in the Todgha valley. Part of this final report was based on an earlier, general report on the Todgha by De Haas and El Ghanjou (2000a). This latter report forms the basis for some sections of chapters 5 and 8. In the period April–July 2001, a second review of the international theoretical literature on migration and development was made to update the first review made in spring 1998. On the basis of this review, the theoretical chapter 2 was drawn up. The period August 2001 – November 2002 was largely dedicated to more detailed data analysis (using SPSS) and the writing of the empirical chapters and the conclusion of this thesis.

## 3.4. Problems encountered and appraisal of methodology

### 3.4.1. Conflicting interests: respondents' trust vs. contacts with local authorities

Taking into account the political culture of Morocco, it is virtually impossible to carry out a large-scale empirical study in a rural area over a period of two years without being in regular contact with the local authorities. After arriving in the area, it was an obligatory step to inform the local *qaid* and *pasha* (government-appointed heads of the valley's rural and urban districts) about our stay. Not respecting this rule would have embarrassed these authorities and would have seriously impeded the progression of the research. After the local authorities had verified whether we had indeed obtained a research permit from the Ministry of the Interior, we received their full collaboration, and were provided with basic information and policy documents on the valley and Tinghir. Moreover, the *qaid* convened all the heads of the sub-districts (*shiukh*) for a meeting, informing them of our research and summoning them to collaborate. Following the same logic, before starting research in a particular village, it was obligatory to inform the *shikh*—the sub-district head—and the *moqaddem*—the village head. On the instructions of their superiors, these officials co-operated with our research and provided us with useful basic information.

Although this cooperation of local authorities might seem positive, these good contacts also constituted a potential threat to our research. This concern was related to the interest we had in the trust of respondents towards us. A too close association with local authorities might harm the research, as people in this rural, Berber-speaking area, tend to distrust the *makhzen*, the civil servants and functionaries associated with the central state-apparatus directed from Rabat<sup>10</sup>. In addition, most high officials of the local authority as well as police and *gendarmerie* originate from other, predominantly Arab regions, and are

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<sup>10</sup> Large parts of rural Morocco, including the Todgha valley, used to be autonomous or semi-autonomous from central state power. Although the rebellious tribes of the interior have been largely pacified since French colonization, the *makhzen* are still seen by many as “intruders” who are to be distrusted.

therefore considered as *berraniyin*, or “outsiders”, who are often distrusted. The *shiukh* and *mqaddemin*, though natives of the region, are equally distrusted. They are generally seen as the eyes and ears of the *qaid* and *pasha*, as they are expected to report back information on the behavior of villagers to their superiors. This also applied to us. As the *qaid* and *pasha* always happened to know exactly where we had been the previous days or even hours, we could not avoid the impression that our activities were closely watched.

Thus, too close an association with the local authorities entailed the risk that our respondents would associate us with the *makhzen* as well. Our biggest fear was of being seen as tax collectors, especially relating to the reliability of questions on income and investments. Therefore, we tried to minimize contact with the local authorities. When circumstances obliged us to pay a courtesy visit to a *shikh* or *moqaddem*, we tried to meet him discreetly outside the village in order not to be seen together with him. However, this strategy was not successful in all instances, especially when we accidentally met such a “chief” in his village, and were then subsequently obliged to drink tea at his house. It was therefore not always possible to escape.

It is difficult to assess exactly to what degree this harmed the quality of the research. Interestingly, the level of trust towards me, the foreign researcher, seemed higher in comparison to my colleague, the Arab Moroccan researcher, as the latter was always incriminated as being somebody representing the (distrusted) government. As a foreigner I was a “real” outsider, and therefore less suspected of “spying”, and found it easier to gain access to people and collect information. The advantage of the Moroccan researcher, obviously, was his better knowledge of Moroccan society and his better command of Moroccan-Arabic<sup>11</sup>.

The long preparation phase that preceded the actual research in the village did not turn out to be a waste of time. Instead, spending a significant amount of time in informal settings and showing interest in people seems to have increased trust and facilitated the household survey. Also the assistants played an important role in explaining the purely scientific nature of this research—and stressing that we were no tax-collectors!—and thereby convincing people to co-operate. This resulted in a non-response rate of less than 5 percent in all villages. Furthermore, this preparation phase also provided valuable, qualitative data at different levels. Despite all these precautions, some data, especially on income and investments, should be handled very prudently. As it is likely that some respondents have under or over-reported incomes and expenditures, the exact figures in the tables give an unrealistic semblance of precision. However, the fact that the differences between the different household categories are very distinct and that these patterns are largely repeated across the research villages as well as the villages studied by the Mohammed V University (cf. Bencherifa and El Ghanjou 2001), seems to suggest that the data can be used for generalizing purposes and to detect general trends.

### **3.4.2. Assistants: informants, stakeholders, and gatekeepers**

During my first weeks in Tinghir, I was the center of interest. Everybody, especially youngsters, wanted to talk to me. Despite the modest flow of tourists visiting the valley and its magnificent gorges, it is rare that foreigners stay for more than a couple of days. It was

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<sup>11</sup> Although the Todghawis speak Berber as their native language, most adults understand and speak Moroccan Arabic, and many educated people speak French too. As I speak French and Moroccan Arabic, I was able to interview most people myself without interpreters.

also clear that many hoped to collaborate with me. Nevertheless, the selection of assistants was not a straightforward affair at all. First of all, they needed to have a sufficient educational level and motivation to work seriously. It took a lot of time to identify the people that fulfilled these conditions. Furthermore, many wanted to help us, but refused to work as paid assistants. Whereas some seemed to find this denigrating to their status as ex-university students, other seemed hesitant because of the obligations this would involve.

Interestingly, some proposed to work for free. In retrospect, one of the reasons behind this seemed to be that some hoped for more than just a temporary job as a research assistant. Many young men had put their hopes on me in order to escape from their joblessness and frustrated aspirations. I have received countless implicit or explicit requests for help in getting a job at a Dutch company or a scholarship to a Dutch university, or it was expected that I could lend a helping hand to get a visa to migrate to Europe. This confronted me with the fact that migration was not only an abstract research topic, but that migration forms a genuine obsession for many assistants and friends, who longed to leave to the other side of the Strait of Gibraltar themselves! In this sense, the course of interaction between researchers and assistants happened to be an interesting source of information in itself.

In order to avoid creating false hopes, I clearly stated that I intended to pay them for their work and that I would prefer to see them as employees rather than as friends. This was in order not to create a kind of “debt” in the form of expectations amongst assistants that I would help them to go abroad. Despite this, some assistants and other “friends” kept putting high hopes on me. In practice, it was therefore impossible to create a certain distance and the desired formal employer-employee relationship between the assistants and me. The disadvantage of this was that it was often difficult to be direct and clear when things went wrong, they did not keep an appointment, or the quality of work was not satisfactory, as you cannot be too harsh towards a “friend”, certainly not in a cultural context where criticism tends to be expressed indirectly. Some assistants feigned that they considered the payment not as their right, but rather as a kind of “favor” offered by me (their “patron”), which was “really not necessary”, as “they were my friends after all”.

In a way, some of them fostered a sort of patron-client relationship in which the professional dimension of our contact—which I tried to stress—was deliberately mixed up with the friendly contacts. Therefore, the feeling remained that they would be rewarded by me at the end of the research. Whereas most assistants had been of great value as enumerators and key informants during the research, the relationship with some of them deteriorated at the end of our stay in the field because of their disappointment. This produced problems at the end of the fieldwork, when two assistants refused to continue their work, apparently because they were clearly disappointed by the fact that I could not (in their opinion, I could, but I did not want to) offer the expected compensation. They clearly had expected more. This endangered the completion of the research in some of the villages.

It then became clear to me how dependent I had become on the assistants. They were not only informants providing us with all kinds of information, but also gatekeepers who could shut the door to that same information if I—seen as the gatekeeper to Europe—would keep the door closed towards a better life abroad. Some of them presumably started to spread negative rumors on my co-researcher and me. I also discovered that there existed competitions and patron-client relationships among the assistants. In this, one assistant we met at the beginning of the fieldwork played a particular role. He had become the most important informant as he had an excellent knowledge of the entire valley. Most of the other assistants were equally contacted through him. Towards the end of the research, we discovered that he exacted commission payments from the salaries of other assistants, as, according to him, they owed their job to him. This “patron” assistant presented himself as our big friend and was the gatekeeper towards assistantship and close relationships with the

person who was considered for a period as the hope of young and ambitious—but jobless—Tinghir.

When this assistant—who tried everything to emigrate—became disappointed towards the end of the research, his bitterness grew. This led him to an alleged attempt to secretly organize an assistants' strike against my co-researcher and me, thereby asking for the loyalty of his “clients”. In order to mobilize the other assistants, he spread the rumor that we received much more money from the IMAROM project for project assistance than we paid to the assistants. As a consequence, one other assistant suddenly refused to co-operate further. The only reason he gave for this, was that he “did not have time”, which was highly implausible regarding his joblessness. Only after long talks did we discover what apparently was going on. Afterwards, the relationship was partially restored, which allowed us to complete the fieldwork.

This all happened in the final three months of the fieldwork. After good co-operation for more than one year and a half, things suddenly deteriorated. I strongly had the impression this was no coincidence, as some assistants felt that we—the researchers—would leave soon without rewarding them. For some, their friend had turned out to be a selfish individual who would leave the ones that helped him so much back in their hopeless situation after having exploited them. In general, the impossibility of separating the professional from personal relationships complicated the research. Although the assistants were well paid according to Moroccan standards, I was also aware that I indeed profited from their joblessness, and that this temporary job did not provide a long-term solution for their problems. This had been the main reason why I initially tried to stress the “professional” side of the relationship. However, regarding their often-difficult personal situation, it was impossible not to pay personal attention. In practice, it was therefore impossible to rule out all kinds of implicit expectations.

This all happened at the end of the stay in the field, so that it did not significantly harm the research, despite the increasing amount of time I lost in maintaining and restoring the demanding relations with assistants. Nevertheless, the above-mentioned problems left a certain feeling of bitterness on both sides. This experience exemplified again that it was impossible to maintain an artificial distance between them and me. Inevitably, during my stay I increasingly became more part of the social setting I studied. In the first phase, this increasing familiarity with people, cultural codes and the language improved my access to respondents and probably also the research quality. In the last phases of the research, however, my ongoing “integration” became an obstacle to data collection, making social interaction more problematic and less frank.

Assistants and “friends” clearly had their own interests and expectations, and they had expected much more than I could offer. Through my daily contacts—and problems—with them, I was directly confronted with this state of despair of many young Moroccans, and in this way it became very tangible what a “culture of migration” (see chapter 10) means in practice. It was therefore impossible to establish a formal employer-employee relationship. The intensive, lively, and sometimes emotional contacts with the assistants over a period of almost two years was also a valuable participatory experience, which taught me a lot about the difficult world many young Moroccans live in. This participation and interaction made me comprehend *why* even well-educated sons and daughters of relatively wealthy families dream of emigrating to the European “paradise”.

### **3.4.3. Gender bias, reliability, and validity**

The research was heavily male-biased, not only because all researchers and assistants were male, but also since most respondents (and migrants) were male. In order to partly tackle this

problem, data was collected on all individuals within each household. Through statistical analysis (e.g., of gender gaps in educational level), it was therefore possible to make some gender-sensitive analyses on migration impacts. In order to gain more insight into the position of women, and how migration affects possible changes in their status, a female Dutch student carried out a qualitative research in one village within the Todgha valley (Taghzout), comparing migrant and nonmigrant wives (cf. Van Rooij 2000). Furthermore, secondary data from another, earlier study by Steinmann (1993) on changing women's roles in the Todgha was included in the analysis.

We have already discussed the importance of trust among respondents, and the lack of reliability that profound distrust among respondents might engender. This seems in particular true for sensitive questions on income and investments. A long introduction into the villages and the employment of local assistants were the principal means used to decrease such risks. In order to further decrease the risk that respondents provided incorrect information, a number of test questions were included in the questionnaire which allowed the cross-checking of answers to different questions. As stated above, some too sensitive or difficult-to-answer questions harmed the course of interviewing as many respondents found the large number of such questions embarrassing. Therefore, it was decided to omit some of these questions. Therefore, the stated goal of a "whole household approach" has not been entirely achieved. Questions on personal and demographic characteristics are generally less sensitive. The major problem was that many elderly do not know their exact age. Therefore, the actual age might differ by some years from that reported. However, this has probably not seriously affected the overall outcome of the research.

Another problem was related to the temporal dimension of the research. In order to gain insight into the effect of household life cycles and "migration stage" on economic behavior, the dates of important migration moves and investments decisions were recorded. However, going progressively further back in time, answers tend to become less accurate. It was therefore necessary to maintain a reasonable balance between the interest of being accurate and the interest of gaining insight into temporal processes.

For major investments, it was decided only to record investments made as of 1975. This latter year was chosen as it coincides with the so-called *Massira*, the Green March<sup>12</sup>, which is the most important historical event in post-independence Morocco. This event is so significant that most people clearly remember whether things happened before or after the Green March. For migration moves, those occurring before 1975 were also recorded, as most people still remember such major events. Moreover, the great wave of migration to France and other European countries took place in the late 1960s and early 1970s, which would be missed otherwise. Although it is probable that some answers might have deviated from actual dates, there seems no reason to suppose that this fundamentally influenced research results.

There were also questions on the spatial allocation of investments and migration destinations. Generally, such questions did not raise significant problems. The major problem was how to code migration destination in case of multiple migration moves. In that case, the place was mentioned where most of the time was spent. Furthermore, international migration moves were given "priority" over internal migration moves. Migrant seasonal workers with no fixed destination were coded as "itinerant".

Local land measures were used to record land possession, which were converted into hectares later on. In one village (Tadafelt) the problem was that land possession is expressed in the amount of water rights (i.e., the number of hours a person is allowed to irrigate within

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<sup>12</sup> During the Green March, Morocco invaded the "Western Sahara", which was colonized by Spain up to 1975, and which Morocco considers part of its national territory.

one irrigation cycle). Although water rights are generally strongly correlated with land possession, this is not a perfect match. Nevertheless, as there was no alternative, water rights were used as a rough indicator of land possession.

Concerning agricultural production, only the figures over the last years have been recorded. As with land, farmers' estimates were recorded in local measures, which were converted into kilogram units later on. In order to estimate the monetary value of non-commercialized agricultural production, price surveys were conducted on the local markets of Tinghir and Taghzout throughout the year. On the basis of this, a mean price was calculated for each agricultural product.

After completion of the research, the *measurement validity* was assessed through comparing migration data with census data and general valley-level figures provided by the municipality on population, population growth, migration, literacy, gendered school enrollment, and access to sanitary facilities and public amenities such as electricity and drinking water. As we will see in the empirical chapters, the survey data seem largely in line with the secondary data, and the inter-village data largely reflect patterns of spatial variability found at the inter-municipal level (see section 5.6). This all seems to indicate a fairly high criterion validity<sup>13</sup>. Furthermore, when the survey data were compared with those collected by the Université Mohammed V (Rabat) in other Todgha villages (cf. Bencherifa and El Ghanjou 2001), both databases revealed the same general trends—and gross income and investment indicators were even remarkably similar—suggesting that researcher's bias probably did not substantially distort the research results.

Another question pertains to the *external validity* of this study: to what extent can the results of this study be generalized to other populations and to what extent is this relevant to the aim of the research? Concerning the latter question, this typically depends on the type of research question. This study analyzes a theoretical problem by comparing different groups (i.e., household migration types) in heterogeneous settings. The primary goal of this study is to evaluate hypotheses and review insights from prevailing theories on migration and development in migrant sending areas. The research results bear relevance to the general debate on this issue, which make them theoretically “generalizable”. Consequently, the question of external validity is less relevant, as the primary aim of this study is not to make generalizations on migration volume and patterns for Morocco in general, but to respond to an analytical question about the relationship between migration and development in sending areas.

Nevertheless, the results from the six village studies can be generalized to a certain extent to the whole of the Todgha valley. As we have argued, validity checks through comparison with secondary demographic and agricultural data at the valley level (from the municipality and earlier studies) and with other villages studied by the University Mohammed V seem to suggest that the aggregate village data largely reflect migration and development patterns in the rest of the valley. When presenting data at the village level, we will, in combination with primary and secondary data collected at the valley level, attempt to generalize for the Todgha as a whole. This is why the statistical significance of measures of association and correlation has been calculated (see appendix 2). Moreover, in order to properly understand patterns of migration and development interactions found at the village level, it is necessary to interpret this in a larger context, requiring valley-level data. The goal of this effort will be to detect general trends in migration and development patterns across the valley, and to assess to what extent the spatial heterogeneity in these interactions can be

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<sup>13</sup> Criterion validity involved the comparison the results of empirical studies with established indicators of the same concept (Seale and Filmer 1998:134).

explained by local differences in the geographical environment, migration patterns, and migration stage. In this sense, it is an explicit goal to interpret and link the results of the six village studies into a broader, valley-level context. To a certain extent, indeed, we will make generalizing inferences for the entire valley on general migration and development patterns that characterize the valley. However, we do by no means pretend that *exactly* the same migration and development patterns will repeat themselves in other villages. The goal is, indeed, to detect general trends.

While this study examines the effect of internal and international migration on development in the regions of origin, this is done for a specific social and natural environment, that is, oases. Oases have a number of characteristics in common concerning their agricultural, historical, ethnic, and migratory background (cf. De Haas 1998). This study is on migration and development in this specific environment, and claims to bear some relevance to other Moroccan and Maghrebi rural regions of out-migration, and oases in particular. The minimum pretension is at least that the (modified) hypotheses emanating from the conclusions of this study can be readily tested in other, similar environments of out-migration.

In retrospect, it would have been better to include one sub-survey in the urban center of Tinghir. Now, the survey only bears direct relevance to the rural parts of the valley, which primarily reflects our own “popular” view of the intrinsic “rurality” of oases, ignoring how this oasis valley has been partly de-agrarized and urbanized. This is unfortunate, as Tinghir is not only growing rapidly in numerical terms, but is also increasingly becoming important as a focus of economic activity for the entire valley and surrounding areas. Many villagers work in Tinghir or set up their businesses there. Fortunately, the questionnaire contained questions on the location of investments, so that we have an idea about the extent to which villagers relocate their activities towards Tinghir. Furthermore, we have collected secondary data sources on the town and collected primary data on market activities. Nevertheless, the study would have been more complete with a separate household survey in Tinghir, especially because the town contains many immigrants originating from areas outside the Todgha.



# Morocco as a “labor frontier” country

## 4.1. Introduction

This chapter describes and explains the evolution of migration patterns within and from Morocco over the twentieth century. The analysis will focus on the economic and political processes at the national and international level (i.e., changes in the structural conditions), which explain how traditional patterns of (largely circular) migration have been extended and radically transformed over the past century. The chapter will equally show how the Moroccan and European states have attempted to influence migration. This chapter will equally examine the vital macro-economic interests migration and remittances represent for Morocco, and how and why government policies aimed at increasing remittance transfers and migrants’ investments have evolved over the past decades. Finally, on the basis of an analysis of economic and demographic factors within the theoretical framework of transitional migration theory, it will attempt to make some tentative predictions on future migration and remittances patterns.

This general framework will serve to better comprehend the (macro-) developmental causes of the specific migration patterns from, towards, and within the Todgha study area (research question 1). This chapter aims to gain insight into how structural political and economic factors at the macro-level affect specific migration and development patterns. Such structural factors at the macro-level would have been lost out of sight if we had uniquely focused on the Todgha, and will potentially play an important role in our explanation of migration and development interactions found in this particular region.

## 4.2. Moroccan migration history

### 4.2.1. Pre-colonial population mobility

Pre-modern rural societies tend to be portrayed as being more or less isolated, stable, self-sufficient, and immobile. However, Morocco’s pre-colonial history exemplifies that pre-modern societies can, in fact, be highly dynamic and mobile. Historically, Morocco’s population history has been characterized by continually shifting patterns of human settlement. Nomadic or semi-nomadic groups traveled large distances with their herds between summer and winter pastures. While some nomadic tribes settled down and became peasants, other sedentary groups became nomadic or settled down elsewhere. Apart from livestock breeding, most nomadic groups were important in maintaining economic and

political links between rather distant population centers. Sedentary populations were rarely totally self-sufficient, and partly relied on trade with nomads, and the opposite.

Conflicts between numerous sedentary, *transhumant*, and nomadic tribal groups over natural resources—land, water, pastures—and the control over trade routes were the rule rather than the exception. This strife is associated with the regular uprooting, movement, and resettlement of people. Ever since the eighth century AD, the urban-based sultanic dynasties—the *makhzen*—have attempted to gain control over the independent Berber and Arabic tribes of the mountains and the deserts of the interior. Although the *makhzen* have never been successful in permanently pacifying the autonomous tribes of Morocco's vast hinterland, the continuously shifting alliances within ethnic groups, *zawiyas* (religious lodges), and *qiad* (tribal chiefs) the *makhzen* engaged in, strongly influenced inter-tribal balances of power, commercial relations, and patterns of mobility (Park 1992).

Islam has been another factor in stimulating mobility over larger distances ever since the eighth century (cf. Netton 1993). Besides the *hajj*, the numerous marabutic pilgrimages (*mussems*) prevailing within the entire Maghreb and West African cultural realm, mobility related to religious schooling of pupils and students at *medersas* and Islamic universities, as well as the peregrination of religious teachers has put people into contact over large distances. Perhaps even more than Muslims, Moroccan Jews have been highly mobile both within Morocco and internationally. Their extended networks enabled them to travel and to settle elsewhere, and Jews played a vital role as intermediaries and commerçants in the trans-Saharan trade as well as in establishing contacts and trade relationships between Moroccan sultanates and European countries from the sixteenth century onwards (Bellakhdar *et al.* 1992; Kenbib 1999).

The establishment and growth of imperial cities in western Morocco (Rabat, Marrakech, Fes, Meknes) attracted merchants and migrants from rural Morocco, although the magnitude of this migration was not comparable to present day rural-to-urban migration. Furthermore, the *makhzen*'s strategic economic interests in the Trans-Saharan caravan trade required them to establish military strongholds and trading posts in the interior—which sometimes developed into large towns, such as Sijilmasa located in the southern Tafilalt oasis, which attracted people from both within and outside present-day Morocco (Lightfoot and Miller 1996). Southern oases were commercial and migratory junctions, which attracted many merchants and migrants. The diverse ethnic composition of oases—with their blend of Sub-Saharan, Berber, Arab, and Jewish influences—testifies to a long history of intensive population mobility. However, when trade routes were relocated, or warfare, droughts, floods, and epidemics ravaged oases, population groups could be uprooted again to become nomadic or resettle elsewhere.

Far into the twentieth century, the slave trade constituted an important form of forced migration within and to Morocco (Becker 2002; Ennaji 1997; 1999). One category of slaves originated from sub-Saharan Africa, and was traded through the Trans-Saharan trade. In contrast to what is commonly believed, not all (black) slaves originated from sub-Saharan Africa but were also captured in rural Morocco itself. Violent abductions of children, particularly young females, were commonplace in Morocco (Ennaji 1999). This was particularly the case in the southern oases, with their sizable population of *haratin*. Food shortages and general economic depression often led to the selling of generations of children, daughters in particular, into marriage and lifelong enslavement (Ennaji 1997). There were probably several hundred thousand slaves in Morocco in the nineteenth century. Some men were used in the sultan's army or in the militias of powerful tribal chiefs in the countryside. Others were sold to rich feudal families as domestic servants or concubines. Slaves equally worked in craft production and the state bureaucracy as well (Ennaji 1994; cf. Lovejoy 2000).

Especially in the southern oases, slaves worked the land, and could be crucial in sustaining oasis agriculture (De Haas 1998; Ennaji 1997).

One could discuss at length whether forms of mobility associated with nomadic livelihoods, warfare, and slavery should be defined as “migration”<sup>1</sup>. Nevertheless, pre-colonial Morocco was also characterized by other forms of mobility, which certainly fall within this category. Centuries-old circular migration patterns existed between relatively densely populated, climatologically and agriculturally marginal areas—such as the northern Rif Mountains and the southern oases—and the relatively more wealthy and humid regions located in western Morocco. Many migrants worked as agricultural laborers, who left their village only during agricultural peak seasons in western Morocco, to return afterwards. Distinct rural-to-rural and rural-to-urban migration patterns were maintained by occupational specialists, such as well and *khattara* diggers, specialists in traditional architecture, certain trades, and crafts (cf. Büchner 1986).

The phenomenon that people leave traditional peasant communities to work elsewhere and then return after a while is a well-known phenomenon in Moroccan mountain and oasis areas (De Mas 1991). Such “circular migration” served to partially alleviate poverty and food shortages in the villages of origin, especially in periods of crisis. Risk spreading seems another explanatory factor for the occurrence of circular migration: De Mas (1990a) argued that households in climatologically and ecologically uncertain areas do not prefer to deploy the entire work force in a high-risk sector such as agriculture.

Circular migration generally involved the migration of one adult man—typically the father or eldest son—leaving his wife and children in the care of the extended family. Other household members had to stay in order to ensure agricultural production (De Mas 1990a). Most migrants only left during certain seasons or for a couple of years. The normal pattern was that they returned, although permanent settlement at the destination occurred too. Upon the return of a migrant, there was often another household member (e.g., the eldest son of the migrant) who took over the place of the first. Arizpe (1981) used the term “relay migration” to indicate such a process in which households try to maintain a continuing stake in migration in the interest of their survival. From this perspective, circular migration can be interpreted as a strategy which enables households to stay at home and continue their agricultural livelihoods. As Heinemeijer *et al.* (1977) put it aptly, Moroccan migration has predominantly been a livelihood strategy of “partir pour rester”.

#### 4.2.2. Migration under colonial influence (1830-1962)

Until the second half of the nineteenth century, international migration from Morocco was mainly limited to a relatively small number of merchants from the city of Fes relocating to the West Africa coast and Egypt at the end of the eighteenth century, and to the United Kingdom (Liverpool and Manchester) and France (Marseilles) in the nineteenth century (Abu-Haidar 1999:39; Ben Ali 1996:346)<sup>2</sup>. The French colonization of Algeria in 1830 heralded the beginning of a period of economic and political restructuring which was to create completely new migration patterns within the Maghreb region. The increasing possibilities for wage labor at the farms of French *colons* and in the northern Algerian cities such as Algiers and Oran,

<sup>1</sup> According to our definition in appendix 1, most of such forms of mobility can be considered as migration.

<sup>2</sup> We will neither examine the important immigration waves of tribal groups to Morocco following Arab-Islamic conquests as of the seventh century, nor the immigration of important numbers of Muslims and *Megorashim* Jews following the *reconquista* of the Iberian peninsula, as this is clearly beyond the scope of this study.

attracted a rising number of—mostly seasonal—migrants originating from the northern Rif mountains and southern oases in the second half of the nineteenth century (cf. Büchner 1986; Fadloullah *et al.* 2000:51).

In 1912, the French-Spanish protectorate over Morocco was formally established. While France gained control over the heartland of Morocco, the Atlas mountains, and the oases south and east of the Atlas, the Spanish protectorate was limited to the deep south (the “Western Sahara”) and the northern zone, which mainly consisted of the Rif mountains. Although it would take an armed struggle of more than twenty years to subject the rebellious tribes of the Rif and tribes such as the Aït ‘Atta in the southern Presaharan region to colonial rule, colonization almost immediately affected patterns of both internal and international migration. Road construction, other infrastructure works and the rapid growth of towns and cities shaped new and growing markets for unskilled wage labor, which attracted increasing numbers of rural-to-urban migrants. Rural population growth and the falling costs and risks of transportation further stimulated this new form of internal migration. Throughout the twentieth century, internal rural-to-urban migration remained high, and created increasingly strong spatial linkages between the rural and urban spheres.

The colonial era also marked the beginning of labor migration to France. During the First World War, an urgent lack of manpower in France led to the active recruitment of Moroccan men for the army, industry, and mines (Obdeijn 1993). They were predominantly recruited in the southwestern Sous region, near Agadir and Tiznit. Between 1914 and 1918, more than 35,000 Moroccans left to France, and between 34,000 and 40,000 joined the French army (Muus 1995:198). The workers were especially recruited in areas that had shown strong resistance against the French, as it was expected that this would curb internal political unrest. After the end of war, most migrants returned to Morocco. However, international migration increased again after 1920 due to the flourishing French economy. In 1929, on the eve of the world economic crisis (Great Depression), more than 20,000 Moroccan migrants worked in France. Again, most workers were sent back to Morocco after the onset of the global economic depression of the 1930s (Obdeijn 1993).

In the Second World War, labor shortages again led to the recruitment of Moroccan men in the “French zone”. About 126,000 Moroccan men served in the French army during the Second World War and in the subsequent wars in Korea and French Indochina (Bidwell 1973), most of whom returned to Morocco after the end of war. Following the Second World War, Moroccan labor migration to France slowly gained ground. As France stopped recruiting Algerian workers during the Algerian war of independence (1954-1962), migration from Morocco and Tunisia was boosted. Between 1949 and 1962, the Moroccan population in France increased from about 20,000 to 53,000. Most worked in the mines or in the steel industry (Obdeijn 1993).

Despite modest direct migration to France, migration to Algeria, which had already started in the nineteenth century, remained the most important form of international migration throughout the colonial period. Despite its predominant character, migration to Algeria turned out to be the first leap in subsequent migration to France. In fact, many early Moroccan “guestworkers” in France were directly recruited in Algeria. In this way, Algeria remained an important “springboard” for Moroccan “leapfrogging” migration to France until Algerian independence in 1962. Regions in northern Morocco, located in and around the Rif Mountains, were dominant in early international migration to Algeria. In the late 1930s, the number of Moroccan migrants to Algeria was estimated at about 85,000 each year, of whom 35,000 originated from the region of Oujda-Nador and 20,000 from the region of Taza (Obdeijn 1993). It was estimated that in 1950 about one third of the male adults in the region of Nador participated in this type of migration (Fadloullah *et al.* 2000:51).

Besides the proximity of the Rif to Algeria, the preponderance of migration to Algeria can be partly explained by the fact that the Rif fell under the Spanish protectorate, which limited the opportunities for internal migration to the large cities in French Morocco. About 40,000 Riffians found employment in Franco’s army during the Spanish civil war and afterwards in auxiliary troops in Spanish Morocco (De Mas 1991:113). Apart from soldiers and a small group of merchants, labor migration from Morocco to Spain was negligible. Until the 1960s, Spain itself remained a source of labor migrants to northern Europe and even to Algeria (López García 1999; Mansvelt-Beck 1993). Circular migration to Algeria came to a definitive stop in 1962 following the closure of the Moroccan-Algerian border (Heinemeijer *et al.* 1976:89; Muus 1995).

The fact that most of the Rif area fell under the Spanish protectorate, also explains why migration to Europe from this region has always exhibited a distinct pattern compared to “French” Morocco. From the north, relatively few people migrated directly to France. This remained so in the post-independence period, when migrants from the Rif were concentrated in destinations outside France, such as the Netherlands, Germany, and, as of the 1980s, Spain. This exemplifies how colonization has had a major influence on later migration patterns.

During the entire protectorate period (1912-1956), Moroccan migration came to the service of French and, to a lesser extent, Spanish colonial interests. Depending on the labor demand in France and Algeria, migrants were recruited or sent back (Belguendouz 1987:43; Muus 1995; Obdeijn 1993). In the years following independence in 1956, Moroccan migration remained mainly limited to France. Nevertheless, this migration was only modest compared to the developments in the period 1963-1973, which dramatically changed the face of Moroccan migration.

#### **4.2.3. The great migration boom (1963-1973)**

Rapid post-war economic growth in northwestern Europe created increasing unskilled labor shortages in sectors such as industry, mining, housing construction, and agriculture as of the 1950s. This triggered an increasing flow of “guestworkers” from poorer countries around the Mediterranean. Until the early 1960s, most were recruited in southern European countries such as Spain, Portugal, Italy, Yugoslavia, and Greece. When this migration stagnated, attention focused increasingly on southern Mediterranean countries such as Turkey, Tunisia, and Morocco. (West) Germany, France, Belgium, and the Netherlands concluded agreements with Morocco on the recruitment of guestworkers in 1963, 1964, 1964, and 1969, respectively (Obdeijn 1993). This was the onset of a spatial diversification of Moroccan migration to Europe, which used to be exclusively directed towards France.

The system of formal recruitment was only important in the first years of labor migration. Administrative obstacles, long waiting lists, and the accompanying bribery incited people to migrate as “tourists”. Migrants were often assisted by already-migrated relatives or friends, who often acted as intermediaries between employers and potential migrants (Reniers 1999:683). As there was a high demand for migrant labor, those “spontaneous” settlers were generally welcomed and did not initially experience too many problems in finding work and accommodation. Although the attitudes of the host societies towards migration became more restrictive and negative as of the 1970s, most migrants succeeded in obtaining permanent residence papers through a series of legalization campaigns in the Netherlands (1975), Belgium (1975), and in France (1981-1982) (Muus 1995:199).

Numerically, spontaneous settlement and recruitment by companies has been more important than formal labor recruitment by agencies. For instance, in 1976, only 13 percent of

the Moroccans living in the Netherlands had migrated through formal recruitment, 43 percent through personal relations (“networks”), and 24 percent through direct recruitment by companies (Shadid 1979:165). Another, more recent study demonstrated that only 3.5 percent of the Moroccans in Belgium had been recruited through official selection (Reniers 1999:684).

In 1965, about 30,000 Moroccans were living in Europe, almost exclusively in France. In 1972, this number had increased tenfold to almost 300,000 (Muus 1995:1999), increasing further to over 400,000 only three years later. In this relatively short period, Morocco became firmly incorporated into the Mediterranean-European migration system (see section 2.3.2), and the foundation was laid for the permanent establishment of a large Moroccan Diaspora in Europe. Although France remained the primary destination for Moroccan workers, accounting for two thirds of the total migrant stock, Belgium and the Netherlands, and to a lesser extent Germany, developed as increasingly important secondary destinations. A small minority worked in other European countries, and in 1972 about 15,000 migrants were working in the Arab oil countries (Bonnet and Bossard 1973). In Europe, most Moroccan migrants tended to live in a relatively limited number of large cities, often concentrated within certain quarters (cf. Ben Ali 1996:348). Migration flows tended to be spatially clustered, as migrants originating from the same village, region, or town often predominantly lived in one or two specific cities (or even quarters) in Europe.

A distinct pattern of out-migration was that of Moroccan Jews, who formed a sizeable community until the mid-twentieth century. In the second half of the nineteenth century, Moroccan Jews started to migrate to Gibraltar, London, Manchester, or Marseilles, principally for economic reasons (Kenbib 1999:233). Nevertheless, this migration was relatively limited compared to the mass migration that followed the creation of the state of Israel in 1948. On the eve of this migration, Morocco’s Jewish population amounted to over 250,000 (Kenbib 1999). Between 1948 and 1956, 90,000 Jews had already migrated. After independence, migration continued, although a sizeable community stayed in Morocco. However, after the Six-Day War of 1967, which further increased tensions between Jews and Muslims in Morocco, most Jews decided to leave the country. Presently, only about 5,000 Jews remain in Morocco (Zafrani 1998).

Between 1948 and 2000, over 250,000 Moroccan Jews migrated to Israel. Estimates of the number of Jews of Moroccan descent living in Israel vary between 400,000 (Jeller-Goldenberg 1999:241) to 700,000 (Maroc Hebdo International, 25-31 January 2002). Although most settled in Israel, others migrated to France (Paris), Canada (Montreal), Latin America, and Spain. Although most Jewish migration might not be labor migration in the classical sense, it cannot be perceived as purely political or refugee migration either. Also in this case, it is difficult to separate political and economic causes of migration. Although tensions between Jews and Muslims existed, and Jews felt increasingly uncomfortable in Morocco after the Six Day War 1967, Jews did generally not have to fear life-threatening persecution in twentieth century Morocco. The lack of sufficient economic prospects in Morocco, which equally pushed other non-Jews to migrate, has certainly played an important role too.

#### **4.2.4. Family reunification (1973-1990)**

In many respects, colonial and post-colonial patterns of internal and international migration can be seen as a continuation and extension—though in a modified form—of older patterns of circular migration (cf. Ben Ali 1996:346; Chattou 1998:235; De Mas 1991; Obdeijn 1993).

Not only the host societies, but also the majority of the migrants themselves expected that their migration would be a temporary affair (Entzinger 1985:275). Standing in an ancient tradition of circular migration, most migrants themselves intended to return after a certain amount of money has been saved that would secure their livelihoods by buying some agricultural land, constructing a house, or starting their own enterprise.

The 1973 Oil Crisis heralded a period of economic stagnation and restructuring, resulting in rising unemployment and a structurally lower demand for unskilled laborers. Consequently, northwestern European countries closed their frontiers to new labor migrants. However, contrary to expectations, most migrants did not return, but ended up staying permanently (Obdeijn 1993). The Oil Crisis radically changed the political-economic context in which migration took place, both in Morocco and in Europe. More than European countries, Morocco suffered from the high oil prices and the global economic downturn. As result of the same Oil Crisis, the economic situation in Morocco deteriorated, and the country entered into a period of increasing political instability and repression. This further reduced the trust of migrants in the future of their country, and made return migration an increasingly unattractive and risky option.

Many migrants feared not being able to return again to the receiving country if their return migration was not successful (e.g., because of business failure or difficulties in social re-adaptation). The discontinuation of this “return option” through the increasingly restrictive immigration policies on the one hand, and the grim political and economic prospects in Morocco on the other, explain why many migrants decided to stay on the safe side, that is, in Europe. Therefore, paradoxically, the recruitment freeze stimulated permanent settlement instead of the reverse (Obdeijn 1993). In fact, return migration rates among Moroccans have been among the lowest of all migrants groups in Europe, which might be explained by the particularly unfavorable political-economic conditions prevailing in Morocco in the 1970s.

In the 1970s, it was generally expected that the growth of immigrant populations would soon come to an end. In reality, exactly the opposite happened. Moroccan migrants in particular massively opted for family reunification. Policies to stimulate return migration largely failed, as they could not remove the structural disparities in economic and political conditions between Morocco and European countries. Another “perverse” effect of the increasingly restrictive migration policies seems to have been that, because many migrants feared that family reunification might eventually be forbidden completely, family reunification was actually only stimulated (Entzinger 1985:267). It was mainly through family reunification that the total population of Moroccans in the main destination countries (France, Belgium, the Netherlands, and Germany) further increased from 400,000 in 1975 to almost one million in 1992 (OECD 1992 cited in Muus 1995:202).

In a way, the increasingly restrictive immigration policies interrupted the traditional, circular character of Moroccan migration. Family reunification heralded this shift from circular to permanent migration, apparently turning “partir pour rester” into “partir pour quitter” for many migrants (cf. De Mas 1990a; Kagermeier 1997). Notwithstanding their initially “temporary” intentions, most migrants ended up staying. Although the social imagination of many Moroccan migrants is haunted by the “myth” of an eventual return to their homeland (Boudoudou 1985), most have been unable to realize this dream. Simultaneously confronted with severe social, political, and economic constraints and uncertainties in Morocco, as well as the increasingly restrictive migration policies in Europe, most opted for family reunification. In this way, most former guestworkers have become permanent migrants.

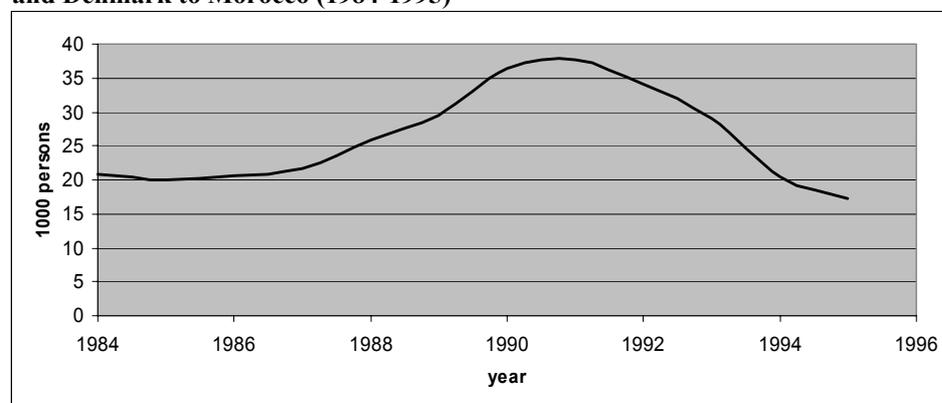
Although the majority of labor migrants that arrived in northwestern Europe during the 1960-70s migration boom ended up staying permanently, the late 1980s and early 1990s

were characterized by a wave of return migration of relatively elderly, retired, or jobless Moroccans. Between 1985 and 1995, some 314,000 migrants returned to Morocco from France, the Netherlands, Belgium, Germany, the UK, and Denmark (see figure 4.1). Between 1985 and 1989, an average of 23,000 migrants returned to Morocco each year. Between 1990 and 1994, an average number of 32,000 Moroccans returned annually. This return migration wave reached its peak in 1991 with 38,000 return migrants. Since 1994, return migration has fallen to less than 20,000.

#### 4.2.5. Diversifying migration patterns (1990-2000)

Whereas family reunification in northwestern European countries was largely complete at the end of the 1980s, family formation gained significance as a major source of new migration from Morocco over the 1990s. For most Moroccans, marrying a partner in Europe has become the only option to enter the classic destination countries (France, Belgium, Netherlands, Germany) legally (Muus 1995:201)<sup>3</sup>. It is striking that, for various reasons, large proportions of the second generation Moroccan descendents prefer to marry a partner—preferably kin—from the country of origin (Hooghiemstra 2003; Lievens 1999; Reniers 2001)<sup>4</sup>. Moreover, the countries in northwestern Europe continue to attract a share of undocumented migrants, who are attracted by the continuing demand for cheap labor in sectors such as agriculture, housing building, cleaning, and diverse service jobs (cf. Zorlu 2000). They often manage to obtain residence permits through marriage with a Moroccan or European partner they meet in the destination country.

**Figure 4.1. Return migration from France, the Netherlands, Belgium, Germany, and Denmark to Morocco (1984-1995)**



Source: SourceOECD

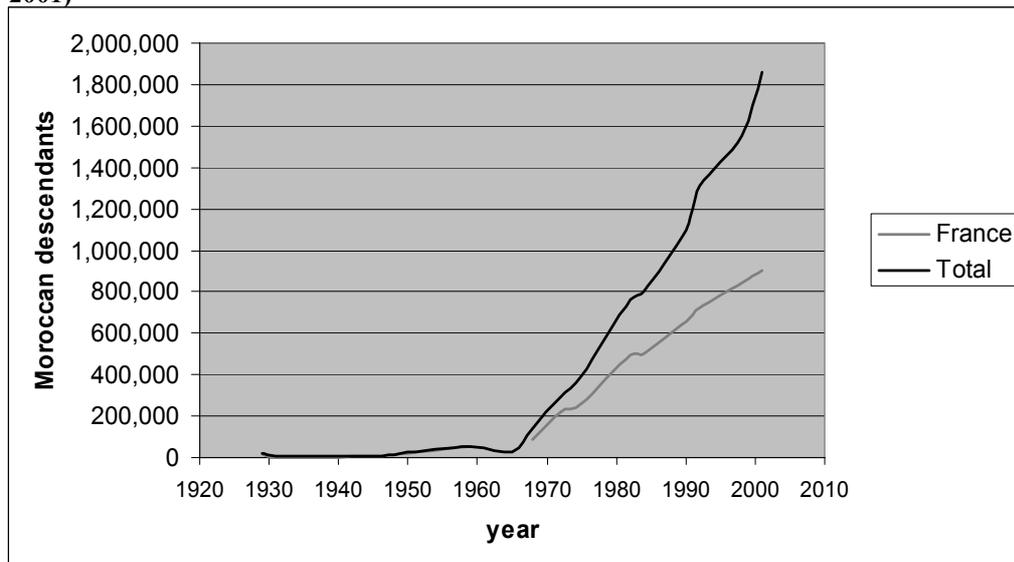
Although the migration of Moroccans to northwestern Europe seems somewhat lower than in the 1960-1990 period, immigration has continued at much higher than expected levels (see figures 4.2 and 4.3), which is largely due to the persistence of family formation. Between 1995 and 2000, the average annual net out-migration was 44,000 (1.5/1000), and this only

<sup>3</sup> The high demand for such marriages is reflected in an enormous increase in bride prices (Obdeijn 1993).

<sup>4</sup> For instance, among the “second generation” Dutch of Moroccan descent (either born in the Netherlands or migrated before the age of 6), 56 percent of the men and 62 of the women have married a partner who lived in Morocco prior to marriage. For the first generation, these percentages are 78 and 68 percent, respectively (source: CBS Netherlands; for a detailed empirical study on the high popularity of “network marriages” among Turks and Moroccans in the Netherlands, see Hooghiemstra 2003).

concerns documented migration (source: UNPD). This exemplifies the significance of migrant networks in perpetuating already started migration movements. In the classic destination countries (France, Belgium, Netherlands, Germany), Moroccan communities have continued to increase over the 1990s. Besides through natural increase, it was mainly through family formation that the Moroccan population in those four countries increased from approximately one million in 1992 to more than 1.3 million in 1998 (see figure 4.2). At the same time, return migration remained low (De Mas 1990b). There is also an increasing tendency towards naturalization, especially among the second generations (Berrada 1990). All in all, this underscores the permanent character of Moroccan migration to Europe.

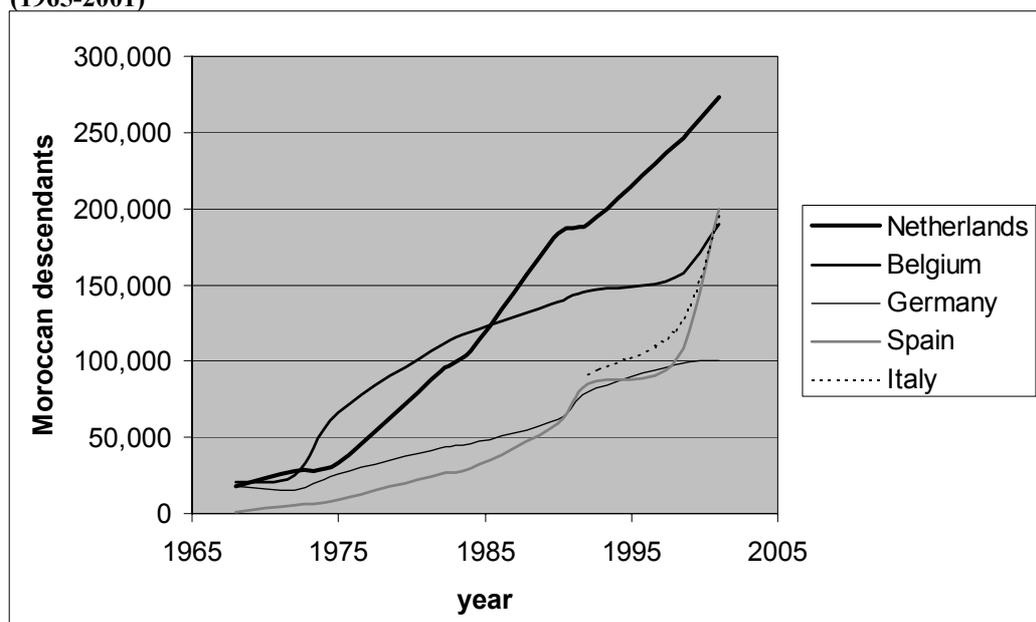
**Figure 4.2. Expansion of population of Moroccan descent in Western Europe, specified for France (1965-2001)<sup>5</sup>**



Source: National statistical services of mentioned countries; El Mansouri 1996:85; Basfao and Taarji 1994

The increasing reliance on family migration—either through family reunification or family formation—has been one of the strategies through which Moroccans have continued migration to Europe, in defiance of increasingly restrictive immigration policies. One of the other consequences of increasingly restrictive immigration policies has been a significant increase of undocumented or “illegal” migration. Another significant development has been the diversification in migration destinations (Kagermeier 1997). South-European countries, and Spain and Italy in particular, have emerged as new destination countries for Moroccans since the mid-1980s (López García 1999; Mansvelt-Beck 1993; Obdeijn 1993). These countries used to be labor exporters themselves until the 1970s. However, the rapid economic growth these countries have experienced has created labor shortages in particular sectors, and this explains why they have become labor importers themselves. In southern Europe, Moroccans typically find employment in agriculture and housing, although a significant number of migrants also earn a living as merchants (Huntoon 1998; Mansvelt-Beck 1993).

<sup>5</sup> This figure is based on estimations of residents of Moroccan descent, whether nationals or non-nationals, including second and third generation descendants, living in France, the Netherlands, Belgium, Germany, Spain, and Italy. Consequently, the figure also includes natural growth, not only net immigration. Therefore, such data on immigrant stocks should not be interpreted as migration rates. Registration methods vary between countries, so statistics are not perfectly comparable, and do not include undocumented migrants.

**Figure 4.3. Expansion of population of Moroccan descent in main destination countries outside France (1965-2001)**

Source: National statistical services of mentioned countries; Basfao and Taarji 1994

Until Italy and Spain introduced visa requirements in 1990 and 1991, respectively, Moroccans could enter easily as tourists, after which many of them overstayed and became *de facto* undocumented migrants. However, most of them have been able to obtain residence papers through a series of legalization campaigns. A recent survey demonstrated that among migrant workers in Spain who reported illegal entry or overstay, the proportion reporting to have been successful in their attempts to attain legal status is two thirds or more (Hearing and Van der Erf 2001:6; Schoorl *et al.* 2000:xix). This pattern of more or less spontaneous settlement and legalization afterwards largely resembled Moroccan migration to northwestern Europe until 1973. In this way, Moroccan communities gradually gained a firm and legal foothold in Spain and Italy.

The establishment of visa requirements has not stopped migration, but has rather led to the increasing reliance on undocumented migration to southern Europe. Various economic sectors, horticulture in particular, seem to rely so heavily on cheap, “illegal” migrant labor, that they cannot survive without it. On several occasions in the 1990s, both Italian and Spanish governments were compelled to grant legal status to most undocumented migrants, further contributing to a spectacular increase in the legally residing Moroccan populations in those countries (Bodega *et al.* 1995; cf. Carella and Pace 2001; López Garcia 1999). The long coastlines of Spain and Italy make it relatively easy to illegally enter those countries. Moreover, there is a high demand for unskilled labor, especially in the relatively large informal sectors of these countries, Italy in particular. This makes it relatively easy to find work given local demand for low-skilled, low-paid workers. It has become increasingly difficult to find natives willing to do such jobs. This explains why high rates of native unemployment coexist with continuing immigration (Huntoon 1998; Mansvelt-Beck 1993).

Especially in the case of Spain, the geographical proximity to the North African coast made it easy for potential immigrants to travel back and forth to Morocco, and this initially made it easy to stick to traditional patterns of circular or seasonal migration. However, the tightening of immigration policies put an end to this option and stimulated the permanent settlement of migrants. The fact that many recent migrants eventually succeeded in remaining in Europe has contributed to the perception among prospective new migrants that it is worth

the trouble to migrate illegally. This seems to have further stimulated undocumented migration in recent years. In some respects, Spain and Italy have become the new lands of hope for young Moroccans.

Despite increasingly stringent immigration regulation and intensified border controls, a large and probably increasing number of Moroccans manage to enter Europe each day. Located at only 13 kilometers from the Moroccan coast at its narrowest point, the Iberian Peninsula is visible from Morocco. Moreover, the two Spanish enclaves of Ceuta and Melillia on the northern Moroccan coast literally represent “Europe in Africa”. This makes Spain the main entrance towards Europe for new, undocumented immigrants from both Morocco and other African countries. Spain is a gateway to the EU through which most migrants have to pass on their way to other destinations, as well as an increasingly popular destination in itself (Huntoon 1998). Migrants usually enter either in *pateras*, small fisher boats chartered by smugglers, hidden in cars and trucks, or carrying false papers. A true “migration industry” has developed in southern Spain and northern Morocco, in which migrant traffickers exact high prices from would-be migrant workers<sup>6</sup>.

Over the 1990s, border controls around the Strait of Gibraltar have become increasingly intensive. This has incited migrants to cross the Mediterranean from other, more eastern places on the Moroccan coast. Although the distance to cross is larger, the sea is generally calmer and less patrolled than the Strait of Gibraltar. In recent years, migrants have explored totally new crossing points to Europe, such as the Canary Islands located about 56 miles northwest of Morocco’s coastal Tarfaya region. An increasing number of Moroccan migrants enter Europe via Tunisia and then southern Italy, which, with its long coastline, is increasingly becoming what has also been called the “soft underbelly” of Europe (Fadlollah *et al.* 2000:113-5).

Between 1980 and 2000, the combined Moroccan population officially residing in Spain and Italy has increased from about 20,000 to 400,000. With this, Spain and Italy have taken over the position of France as the primary destination for new Moroccan labor migrants (Fadlollah *et al.* 2000:99). To this, an unknown but undoubtedly large number of undocumented migrants should be added. In recent years, even Portugal has emerged as a migration destination for Moroccans.

Until recently, the overwhelming majority of Moroccan labor migrants were men, and most female migrants came as family migrants. However, this pattern has recently altered through an increasing number of single or divorced women who migrate independently to work in southern Europe. Most independent female migrants seem to find employment as domestic servants and in other service jobs in Spanish and Italian towns (Costanzo 1999; López García 2001; Mansvelt-Beck 1993). There is also increasing trafficking in Moroccan women working as prostitutes in Europe (Migration News, January 2001).

Since the 1980s, an increasing number of Moroccans have migrated to Libya and the oil-rich Gulf Countries. Whereas the Gulf countries are the dominant destination for international labor migrants from countries such as Egypt, international migration from Morocco has remained overwhelming oriented towards Europe. Most Moroccan migrants to the Gulf worked there on the basis of temporary contracts (Moulali 1992). In 1992, 120,000 Moroccans were working in Libya, and an approximate 15,000 in Saudi Arabia. Nevertheless, due to political tensions following the second Gulf War (1990-1991), these numbers have decreased since then to an unknown level.

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<sup>6</sup> At the end of the 1990s, an illegal crossing of the Mediterranean cost between US\$ 600 and 3,000, and sometimes even US\$ 4-5,000 (Fadlollah *et al.* 2000).

Table 4.1 gives an overview of the Moroccan population currently living abroad. At the end of the 1990s, France housed the largest population of Moroccan descent with an estimated 840,000 individuals. The second largest community of Moroccans lives in the Netherlands with over 250,000 Moroccans. According to official statistics, Belgium, Spain, and Italy had Moroccan communities of approximately equal size, that is, between 150,000 and 200,000<sup>7</sup>. Germany is the sixth destination with about 90,000 people of Moroccan descent. Smaller, but significant communities exist in Sweden, the United Kingdom, and Austria. Outside Europe, the United States and the Canadian Province of Quebec have attracted relatively small numbers of mostly educated and relatively wealthy migrants, in contrast to most labor migrants in Europe.

**Table 4.1. Estimates of population of Moroccan descent living outside Morocco (1998-1999)**

Western countries	Population	Middle East/North Africa	Population
France	840,000	Libya <sup>8</sup>	120,000
Netherlands	252,000	Algeria	100,000
Belgium	155,000	Tunisia	24,000
Germany	98,000	Saudi Arabia	15,000
Spain	200,000		
Italy	195,000	<i>Total Arab Countries</i>	<i>259,000</i>
UK	25,000		
Scandinavia	10,000	Israel	400-700,000
US	25,000		
Canada	40,000		
<i>Total Western</i>	<i>1.84 million</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>2.5-2.8 million</i>

**Sources:** INE Spain; ISTAT Italy; CBS Netherlands; Statistisches Bundesamt Deutschland; Danmark Statistik; Statistics Norway; Abu-Haidar (1999); Obdeijn and De Mas (1999)

Including other European countries, North America, and the Arab oil countries, the total number of Moroccans abroad—including naturalized residents of Moroccan descent—amounted to almost 1,800,000 in 1993 (Obdeijn 1993). In 2000, this number had risen to approximately 2 million. This is an increase of almost 7 times since 1972, on the eve of the Oil Crisis, when it was generally expected that migration would soon come to an end. This means that out of a total population of 30 million, 6.5 percent of all Moroccans are living abroad. It should be noted that this number also includes the increasingly important second and third generations, which are often born in Europe<sup>9</sup>. Nevertheless, besides natural growth and the increasing reliance on family migration which often functions as labor migration “in disguise”, new “primary” labor migrants continue to cross the Mediterranean on a daily basis, nowadays laying the foundations for a new and permanent Moroccan Diaspora in countries such as Italy, Spain, and even Portugal.

<sup>7</sup> It should be noted that the actual figures in Spain and in Italy might be far higher, as many migrants to these countries are undocumented migrants.

<sup>8</sup> Data from Libya, Algeria, Tunisia, and Saudi Arabia are from 1992. More recent data are not available, although the number of Moroccan migrants to those countries has probably dwindled following the second Gulf War (1990-1991). Nevertheless, emigration to these countries has increased again in more recent years.

<sup>9</sup> Estimates of the number of Moroccans in Europe vary considerably, depending on definitions and methods used (cf. Sabagh 1997). Some statistics only count non-naturalized residents as “Moroccan”; others include all residents of Moroccan origin. In this study, we stick to the latter definition as much as possible. We do so because second and third generation “migrants” turn out to be major factors in perpetuating migration through family formation.

Morocco has become one of the leading labor exporting countries to Europe and Moroccans form, with the Turks, one of the largest and most dispersed migrant groups in Europe. In many rural areas—in the Rif Mountains, the Sous valley, and many southern oases—between one fifth to more than half of all households have at least one member who has migrated abroad (cf. Schoorl *et al.* 2000:xv). After comparing Ghana, Senegal, Turkey, and Egypt—which are all known as labor exporting countries—Schoorl *et al.* (2000:xv) concluded that Morocco had the strongest migration tradition, and that migration had become an “all-pervasive phenomenon” in this country. Several studies seem to corroborate that Morocco is among the world’s leading large labor exporting countries. Giubilaro (1997:59) demonstrated that—after comparing the Maghreb countries and Turkey—Morocco is the only country to show a recent increase in the total absorption of national labor by the foreign labor market, mainly due to an increase in the flow of irregular workers to Europe.

It is noteworthy to mention that over the 1990s Morocco increasingly developed into a migration transit country for migrants from sub-Saharan Africa to Spain and further into Europe (Barros *et al.* 2002). The destination of such people is mostly Tangiers, where they wait for the possibility to cross the Strait of Gibraltar. However, an unknown number—but probably several thousands of migrants from countries such as Senegal and Mali—seem to live in several Moroccan cities like Tangiers, Casablanca, and Rabat on a semi-permanent basis, where they work in irregular jobs in the service sector. For many sub-Saharans, Morocco is a relatively wealthy and easily accessible country. This might herald an era of increasing African migration to Morocco and the coexistence of immigration and emigration typical of “transitional” countries.

### **4.3. Regional differentiation in international migration participation**

#### **4.3.1. The historical migration belts: Rif, Sous, and the oases**

There are distinct patterns of geographical clustering and “specialization” concerning the origins and destination of international migrants. Migration from particular regions within Morocco is focused on certain countries, regions, or even cities within Europe. These patterns seem to be partly reproduced and reinforced by migrant networks. The northern Rif Mountains, the southwestern Sous area, and the southern river oases located in the pre-African fault between the Saghro and High Atlas (mainly Dadès, Todgha, Ferkla), have been the earliest and most renowned “expulsion zones” of international migrants (see map 1). The provinces with the highest international migration rates are Agadir (Sous), Ouarzazate (which comprises most oases), and the northern provinces of Al Hoceima, Nador, and, to a lesser degree, Oujda (Refass 1990:228). The Rif, the Sous, and the southern oases form the principal “migration belts”, where ancient traditions of internal, largely circular and seasonal labor migration have been continued, extended, and transformed in the twentieth century following colonization, state formation, and modernization.

Several factors explain why international migration has predominantly occurred from these regions. First, it has been argued that in Morocco the most intensive out-migration has typically occurred in rural regions characterized by low rainfall (Bencherifa 1996:404) and high population densities in relation to limited agricultural resources (Fadloullah *et al.*

2000:53)<sup>10</sup>. Nevertheless, it should be mentioned that these areas—with the possible exception of parts of the Rif—are not among the most marginal in Morocco. For instance, oases that have heavily participated in international migration are relatively prosperous oases located in fertile river valleys. More peripherally and agriculturally marginal oases (e.g., the Bani and mountain oases) tend to be far less involved in international migration (cf. De Haas 1998).

Second, the fact that these regions had already established ancient traditions of circular migration within Morocco and to Algeria appears to have greatly facilitated their participation in new forms of rural-to-urban and international migration to Europe. Third, recruiters and employers in Europe generally preferred illiterate people, as they were seen as hard working, non-plaintive, and not prone to “subversive” activities such as trade union membership. Finally, the Moroccan government actively stimulated labor recruitment from these regions. It saw migration as an instrument to decrease tensions in these poor, generally Berber speaking, rural areas, which had a rebellious reputation vis-à-vis the power of the predominantly urban, Arab-speaking *makhzen*. This was particularly the case for the Rif, where violent rebellions had occurred on several occasions before and after independence (Obdeijn 1993, Reniers 1999:684).

According to (Fadloullah *et al.* 2000:51), nowhere else in Morocco is migration as rooted in social life to the same extent as in the northern Rif mountains and the surrounding areas. The Rif was among the first regions to participate in labor migration to France in colonial times, mostly via Algeria (Heinemeijer *et al.* 1976:90).

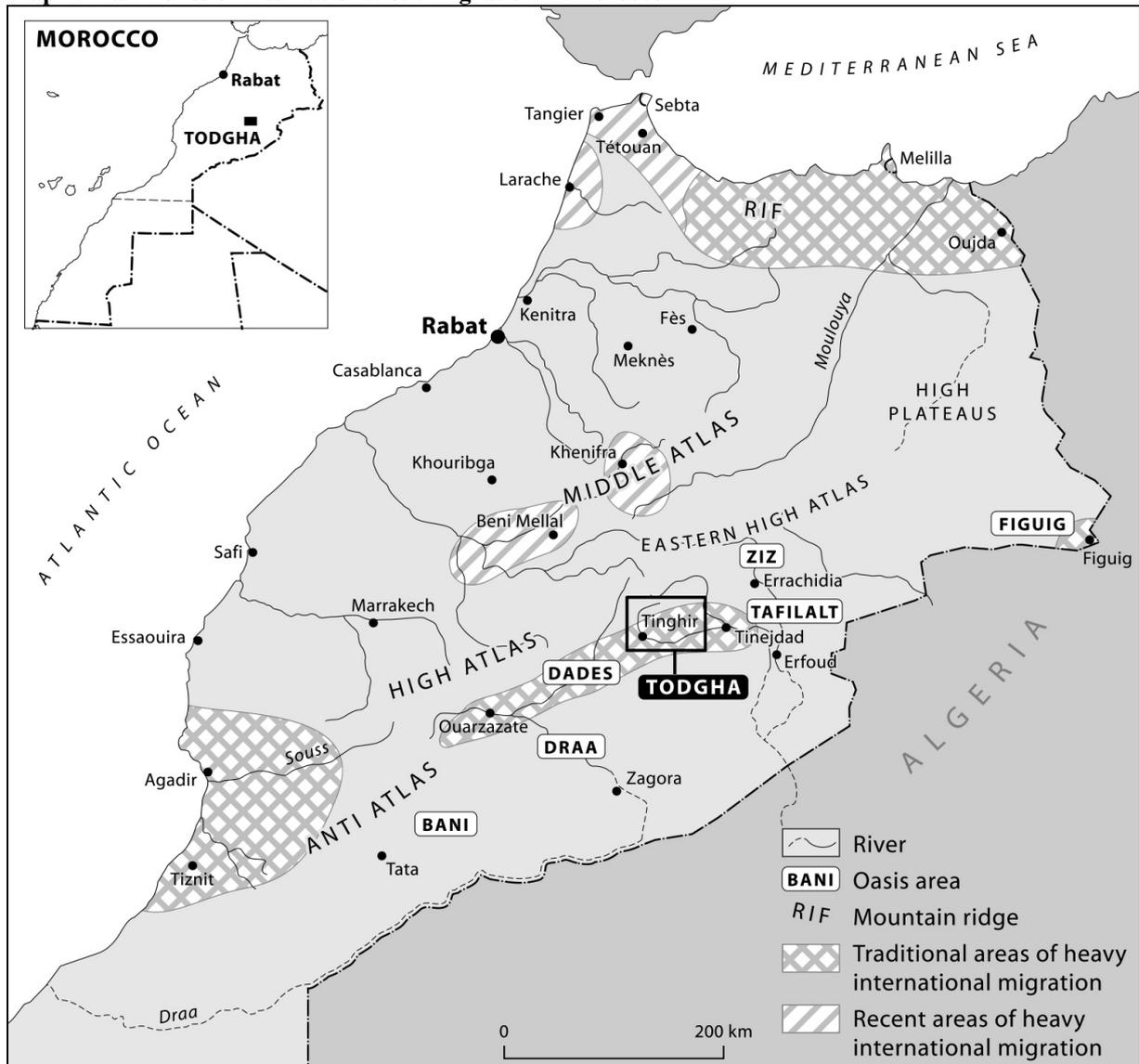
Direct migration to France and internal migration to central Morocco was limited, however, as the north was part of the Spanish protectorate, and therefore had developed little links with central Morocco and France. As of the late 1950s, the Rif entered a period of deep economic crisis, which resulted in a rebellion against the Moroccan state in 1958-1959. After the definite closure of the Moroccan-Algerian border in 1962 following political-military tensions between the two countries, new migration destinations were increasingly explored in northwestern Europe (De Mas 1991), where high economic growth led to an increasing shortage of unskilled labor.

Since the 1960s, the Rif mountains and surrounding areas in the north have concentrated on migration to the Netherlands, Belgium, and Germany. The large majority of Moroccans in those three countries are from the north. For instance, more than three quarters of Moroccan migrants in the Netherlands originate from the Rif mountains (provinces Nador, Al Hoceima, Taza, Chaouen and Tétouan) and the region around Oujda and Berkane (Maroc oriental) (De Mas 1990b; Haleber 1990:139). France is also an important destination, but less than in other regions, which can partly be explained by the absence of historical colonial links. A smaller but significant migration stream existed from the Rif towards Spain. Before 1986, migration to Spain was weak, but gained considerable ground afterwards. Until the 1980s, the vast majority of Moroccan immigrants in Spain originated from northern Morocco (provinces of Tétouan, Tangiers, Laârache and Chaouen).

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<sup>10</sup> Similar migration patterns were observed in Tunisia, where both internal and international migration is the oldest and the strongest in the southern, arid parts of the country (Michalak 1997). The fact that migrants tend to come from relatively marginal areas seems to contradict the hypothesis that it is generally not the poorest who migrate. However, to go from arguing that “poor regions expel more migrants” to “poor people are likeliest to migrate” is to commit a classical “ecological fallacy” (cf. Lipton 1980). First, *within* the Moroccan “migration belts”, there is a distinct pattern of spatial differentiation of migration participation, in which relatively opened-up places with better links to the outside world (e.g., infrastructure) participate more intensively in migration. Second, within migrant sending communities, it is seldom the poorest who migrate (cf. Schiff 1994).

Map 1. Main zones of international out-migration in Morocco



Both geographical proximity and colonial bonds between the Rif and Spain can explain this spatial pattern. Not unimportantly, many Riffians speak Spanish as a second language instead of French, as is the case in central and southern Morocco. Although migration to Spain has started to become more diverse in its origins, and now also attracts migrants from central and southern Morocco, Riffians and other northerners seem still in the majority (López García 1999).

The southwestern Sous region, comprising the Sous valley, the city of Agadir and the nearby Anti-Atlas Mountains around the towns of Tiznit and Tafraout, shares with the Rif a strong tradition of strong out-migration which goes back to pre-colonial times. Since early colonial times, this region has provided labor migrants and soldiers to France. Migration to Algeria was far smaller due to the long distances. In contrast to the Rif, migration from the Sous has remained overwhelmingly oriented towards France. Much more than Riffians, many Soussi have migrated internally, and more than any other ethnic group within Morocco they have spread out over virtually the entire country. Known for their strong work ethic and sense

of solidarity, Berbers from the Sous are especially active in commerce, and have come to dominate retail trade in the majority of Moroccan towns (cf. Fadloullah *et al.* 2000:51).

The river oases located in the valleys between the High Atlas and Saghro south and east of the Atlas mountains form the third principal zone of circular and seasonal migration. Since the late nineteenth century, these traditional patterns were extended and modified due to French colonization of the Maghreb. Twentieth century migration from the oases was both directed at the cities of Atlantic Morocco (Casablanca, Marrakech, Rabat, Agadir) as well as foreign destinations. Several southeastern oases—which were located relatively close to Algeria—participated in migration to Algeria as of the end of the nineteenth century. Some oases—mostly located north of the Drâa valley—such as the Dadès (Aït Hamza 1988, Rijbroek 1997), Todgha (Büchner 1986), and Figuig (Bencherifa and Popp 1990) became heavily involved in international migration to Europe as of the 1960s. This migration has been predominantly oriented towards France, although there have also been distinct pockets of migration to the Netherlands and Belgium. In the relatively peripheral and marginal oases located along the Bani mountain south of the Anti-Atlas (De Haas 1998), the mountain oases in the Saghro and Anti-Atlas, and the larger Drâa (Mter 1995) and Tafilalt oases, international migration is relatively weak compared to other oases.

#### **4.3.2. Spatial diffusion of contemporary international migration**

Although almost every region and town in Morocco has participated in international migration over the twentieth century to some extent, the majority of migrants have come from the Rif, Sous and the southern oases. Moreover, many migrants who migrated abroad from towns in fact originated from these rural areas. The city was but the first stage in their migration careers, from where they “leapfrogged” to Europe. Although the more centrally located regions and the cities along the Atlantic coast started to participate more intensively in the migration to France and other countries in the second half of the 1960s (Bonnet and Bossard 1973), the numbers remained relatively small, and most rural areas outside the ancient migration belts continued to mainly focus on internal, rural-to-urban migration.

In the late 1970s and the 1980s, this situation changed, as a diffusion process occurred in which the international migration experience spread to regions outside the traditional migration belts (Bencherifa 1996). Over the past two decades, several new sending areas have emerged (Fadloullah *et al.* 2000:xiv). In particular, the regions around Khenifra, Laârache, and the Tadla plain have become firmly integrated within the Mediterranean-European migration system, and thereby become focused on specific destinations.

Migration from the region of Khenifra—an agro-pastoral region located in the Middle Atlas—used to be largely internal. Since the 1970s, this region has increasingly participated in migration to France, and more recently to Italy and Spain (Fadloullah *et al.* 2000:51).

Until the end of the 1970s, migration from the region of Laârache (south of Tangiers) was mainly oriented towards the regional towns or the big cities on the Atlantic coast such as Casablanca and Rabat. Since the 1980s, this region has witnessed increasing migration to the United Kingdom—not a typical migration destination for Moroccans at all, and a true “specialty” of the region. This community of about 25,000 people has mainly settled in East London (Abu-Haidar 1999:39). Besides the UK, nearby Spain has become an increasingly popular destination, besides Italy and France. Of the current migrants from this region, one third is living in the UK, and 44 percent in Spain (Fadloullah *et al.* 2000:52,99-100).

From the early days of the protectorate, the Tadla plain south of Khouribga was an important provider of internal migrants to the nearby metropolis of Casablanca—Morocco’s

largest city and the country’s economic capital—and to smaller, regional towns, such as Settat and Berrechid. International migration only really gained ground in the 1980s. This region has specialized in migration to Italy, where the majority of migrants live. Most others have migrated to Spain (Costanzo 1999:43; Refass 1999:100).

#### 4.4. The diffusion of internal migration and micro-urbanization

Notwithstanding the high levels of international migration from Morocco, there seems no doubt that internal migration has remained more important in numerical terms. However, despite some exceptions, little systematic research has been recently published on internal migration. Even less than is the case for international migration, few thorough studies and reliable data on internal migration are available (Refass 1988:187). Consequently, the significance and role of internal migration in broader processes of development remain largely unknown.

However, several earlier studies throw some light on the huge significance of rural-to-urban migration, and the crucial function of internal migration as a precursor to international migration (cf. Noin 1970; Laghaout 1989). Furthermore, it is possible to make some tentative inferences about the significance of internal migration by studying urbanization trends. Figure 4.4 indicates that in the post-independence period, the urban population has increased much faster than the rural population, even though birth rates have remained higher in rural regions. Over the 1990s, Morocco’s rural population has stagnated around 12.8 million. The urban population, on the contrary, has been on a constant increase. In 2000, 55.2 percent of the Moroccan population were living in an urban environment (cf. Fadloullah *et al.* 2000:8,26).

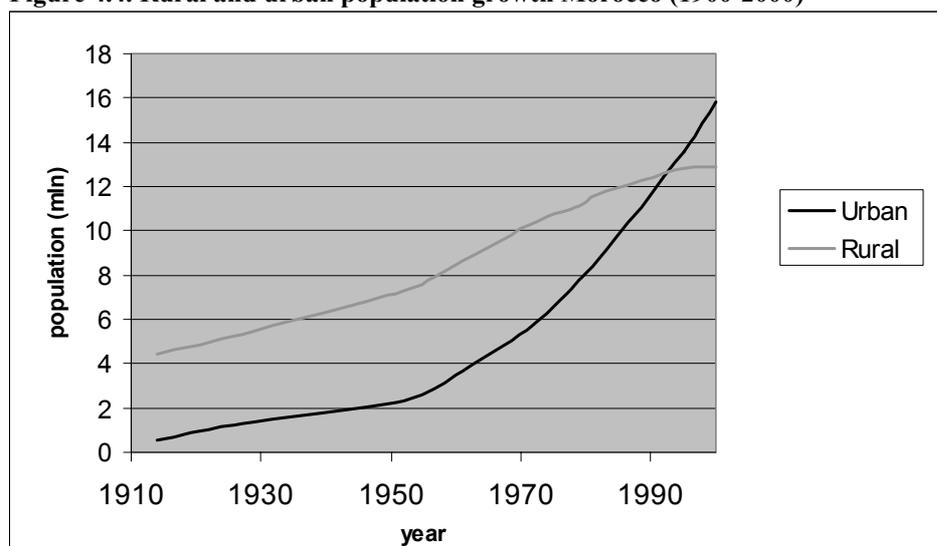
This differential in rural and urban population growth only partly reflects the effects of urban-to-rural migration. A closer look at internal migration patterns exemplifies that what is happening is more complex than the oft-evoked image of a massive “rural exodus” to the big cities on the Atlantic coast (cf. Mohr 1986). In fact, the term “rural exodus” is misleading, since it conceals increasingly important processes of intra-regional migration and the partial urbanization of the rural space. Moreover, the term evokes an apocalyptic image of true rural depopulation in absolute terms. On the contrary, most “rural” regions have witnessed a net population increase, mainly due to the growth of small and medium-sized provincial towns (cf. Koubry 1995).

On the one hand, the population of all provinces, including the predominantly “rural” provinces of the interior, is in fact growing. This can be explained by the fact that urbanization, de-ruralization, and partial de-agrarization are *general* processes that are occurring within rural Morocco. De-agrarization is the process by which “rural” populations increasingly gain additional incomes outside the traditional agricultural sectors. Previously, such livelihood diversification was primarily achieved through migration. However, the development of numerous centrally located villages into small or medium-sized urban centers is increasingly offering non-agricultural employment within the so-called “rural” provinces (cf. Agoumy 1988; Berriane 1996; 1997; Bounar 1993; El Maoula El Iraki 1999). This diffusion of micro- and meso-urbanization—which has been presumably encouraged by decentralization policies (Kagermeier 1989) and significant improvements in road and electricity infrastructure over the past two decades—over the so-called “rural” interior of Morocco, has also affected patterns of internal migration (cf. Berriane 1996).

Likewise, an increasing number of internal migrants do not settle in the “traditional” destination cities such as Casablanca and Rabat, but in rapidly growing smaller and medium-

sized towns near to or within the “rural” provinces themselves. Examples of such growth poles are Nador, Al Hoceima, Taza in the north, and Agadir and Tiznit in the southwest, and Ouarzazate in the south. If we focus more on the regional level, numerous smaller but rapidly growing towns have sprouted. Since the 1970s, the growth rates of small and medium-sized towns (5,000-50,000) have been larger than those of large cities (in particular over 100,000 inhabitants) whose relative growth seems to be slowing down. The growth rate is highest in towns with 20 to 50,000 inhabitants (Kagermeier 1989:118-9).

**Figure 4.4. Rural and urban population growth Morocco (1900-2000)**



Source: Direction de la Statistique Maroc, Noin 1970

Short-distance internal migrants to such provincial towns are not only attracted by the generally better job opportunities, but also by the better services and public infrastructure (schools, adequate health care, electricity) available in such towns (cf. Giubilaro 1997:45). Due to this process of “de-ruralization” and urbanization at the regional level, rural-to-urban migrants increasingly remain in the provinces of the interior.

Definitions of “urban” and “rural” are ambiguous to a certain extent, as this primarily reflects the administrative status of a district more than anything else. In Morocco, a *commune rurale* can acquire the status of an urban *municipalité* with one stroke of the pen of the Minister of the Interior. Part of the high urban growth rate is the result of the administrative redefinition of previously rural districts which have evolved into truly urban or semi-urban areas over the past few decades. However, such urban districts often include surrounding villages which are rather rural in character.

There are important regional differences in rural population growth. In regions with relatively favorable conditions for agriculture (e.g., Settât, Laârache), rural populations tend to grow, whereas they are growing slowly, stagnating, or, in some cases, even decreasing in areas with more unfavorable ecological conditions (e.g., Nador, Khenifra, and Tiznit) (Fadlollah *et al.* 2000:36). In the latter regions, where agriculture offers little prospects, more people tend to migrate to the large cities of northern Morocco or to regional towns.

With regards to southern Morocco, the populations of small oases located along the Jebel Bani mountain between Fom El Houssaine and Fom Zguid, as well as oases south of the Jebel Saghro mountains, seem to be stagnating compared to the relative growth in oases such as the upper Drâa, Dadès, Todgha, and the Tafilalt. The latter oases not only seem less marginal in ecological-agricultural terms, but are also endowed with better infrastructure and, hence, accessibility. The populations of these less marginal oases seem to be more oriented

towards international migration compared to the marginal southwestern oases, which are predominantly involved in internal migration. Moreover, in the latter areas, relatively prosperous and lively economic and/or administrative centers seem to be developing, such as Ouarzazate, Zagora, Kelâa Mgouna, Boumalne de Dadès, Tinghir, Errachidia, and Erfoud, which attract an increasing number of internal migrants from within and outside the regions. In addition, the increasingly popular tourism in the Presaharan region contributes to the economic development of these towns, and in particular Ouarzazate and Erfoud.

Besides a well-educated minority of civil servants and private sector professionals, internal migrants tend to work as day laborers in housing construction, the retail or street trade, and various other service jobs (e.g., catering, gardening, parking lot attendants) in towns (cf. De Haas 1998; El Meskine 1993). Agricultural laborers mostly work in commercial agriculture on the western Atlantic coast, the fertile areas around Fes and Meknes, the Sous valley, or some regions along the northern coast.

Over the past decades, education has become an increasingly important cause of internal migration. An increasing number of young Moroccans are studying at universities or other higher education establishments. This means they have to move to cities, in which they often stay after completing their education. In remote villages, the absence of nearby secondary schools tears many children away from their families, who go to live in urban-based boarding schools from the age of 12. Such student migration means a very early confrontation with the outside world, and is often but the first step in their migration careers (De Haas 1995; 1998).

As with international migration, an increasing number of—single, married, or divorced—women migrate alone, thereby breaking with traditional, patriarchal norms hindering female mobility. Four main categories of female migrants can be distinguished. The first group consists of female students at higher education establishments. The second group consists of professionals working as civil servants (e.g., teachers) or working for private companies. The third group is that of divorced women looking for work in the towns and cities. The divorce rate in Morocco is high and an increasing number of households are female-headed (Hajjarabi 1995:109, see also sections 10.4.1 and 10.4.2).

The fourth and perhaps the biggest group of internal female migrants is that of young domestic workers. This generally concerns a less voluntary, often forced forms of migration. In Morocco, it is common practice among middle and high-class families to engage *bonnes* as nannies and housekeepers. The circumstances under which they have to work are often arduous. Most *bonnes* are very young. One survey indicated that of all domestic workers, 27 percent are under 10 years and 73 percent are under 12 years (ILO 1996). They are mostly recruited by their prospective employers in rural areas, either directly, or through intermediaries. Some girls are forced to work by poor parents who “sell” their daughters to human traffickers. The practice of adoptive servitude, in which families adopt young girls among poor rural families and use them as indentured domestic servants, is socially accepted practice. Their salaries tend to be irregular and very low (Hajjarabi 1995:109).

Although families might treat such domestic child servants fairly or even help them with later schooling, such girls are vulnerable to exploitation or sexual abuse. Some girls that allegedly flee their adoptive families end up in prostitution (News Central Maroc, 24 December 2001). Adolescent girls are trafficked for sexual exploitation, internally as well as to foreign destinations. Teenage prostitution has been estimated to involve tens of thousands of girls. Forced prostitution is prevalent, particularly in cities with large numbers of tourists (either those from Western or Arab oil countries) and near towns with large military installations (Dept of State 1999).

Although about three quarters of Moroccan child workers are female (Dept of State 1999), poverty also drives young boys away from their families to work on farms, as street traders, cigarette vendors, shoe polishers, car washers, parking lot attendants, and so on. The numerous boys who swarm the streets of Moroccan towns are often without any familial support, are vulnerable to exploitation and frequently end up as beggars, in prostitution or in delinquency. Many boys and girls who have been sent out by their families to work elsewhere often hardly receive a penny of the money they earn. They can expect their fathers to arrive on payday to collect their salaries, leave a small allowance, and return to the village (Crawford 2001:23).

This harsh reality confronts us with the “downside” of migration and development. The latter forms of more or less forced migration show that not all forms of migration should automatically be interpreted as “developmental”. In section 2.6, we argued that if people do not have the choice *not* to migrate—that is, if they are forced to move—it is more likely that it will perpetuate their poverty instead of expanding their capabilities. Their powerless position implies that most of the benefits of their labor will accrue to those who are exploiting them. By exposing them to arduous labor, mental and physical exploitation and depriving them of a happy childhood and education, these types of migration are born out of a situation of “unfreedom” and are likely to perpetuate or even deepen the poverty of the migrants themselves.

## **4.5. Migration and remittances as a national development strategy**

### **4.5.1. Links between migrants and their households**

Originally, Moroccan guestworkers in Europe were expected to return to Morocco. In the tradition of circular migration, this was not only the expectation of governments, but also the intention of most migrants themselves. Studies have revealed that the social imagination of Moroccan migrants is haunted by the idea of eventual return to their homeland (Boudoudou 1985), although it has been argued that migrants from rural areas remain more focused on the country or origin than those with an urban background (Van Amersfoort and Van der Wusten 1975:48-9).

However, for many migrants, this expectation of one day returning has turned out to be a myth. Compared to other immigrant groups, return migration is low among Moroccans, who are also in the lead concerning the number of naturalizations in the destination countries (Fadloullah *et al.* 2000:56). Whereas a large share of migrants from Morocco has ended up staying permanently, return migration has certainly not remained a myth for all migrants. High net figures of in-migration conceal the fact that each year, tens of thousands of migrants actually do return to Morocco. Besides “real” returnees, an increasing number of retired and unemployed migrants are “commuting” between Europe and Morocco, living for a part of the year in both countries.

It seems an implicit assumption of mainstream migration literature that it is mainly return migrants who play an important role as development actors. While extensive attention has been paid to the role of return migrants in development, the role of still-abroad migrants has been relatively neglected. Because of their physical absence, still-abroad migrants are considered less relevant, and, for this reason, have even been excluded from surveys (cf. Adams 1991). However, there are strong indications that this assumption is largely erroneous, and that still-abroad migrants may play an important role in development in migrant sending

areas. Many migrants initially leave their families behind. This situation of multi-locality might last for many years or even decades. This implies that migrants send remittances back, which will increase the potential capability of the household left behind to consume and invest in various economic activities, which does not necessarily require the physical presence of the migrant or household head. Therefore, migration is likely to affect development even in the absence of the migrant him- or herself. Their role in local and regional development is therefore less visible, but not necessarily lower, since still-abroad migrants in particular are responsible for remittance transfers. The consolidation of transnational linkages emphasizes the significance of Diaspora relations for migrant households at home and abroad (cf. Connell and Conway 2000).

Moroccan migrants seem highly attached to their country of origin, which is exemplified by their yearly return during the summer holidays, which has gained massive proportions<sup>11</sup>. Furthermore, non-return should not be equated with a lack of commitment to the origin. The development of means of communication and increasingly easy transport links have helped diminish perceived distances (Cammaert 1986). The strong links that exist between migrant communities are exemplified by the unexpected high rate of family formation (Lievens 1999). Although networks were expected to weaken with the growing up of second and third generations, the high popularity of “network marriages” indicates that this presumed disintegration has proceeded less rapidly than was once expected (cf. Saa 1998; Hooghiemstra 2003). Moreover, the recent occurrence of “genuine”, primary labor migration to Spain and Italy has created the basis for the development of new Moroccan communities in Europe.

In the same vein as international migration, strong links seem equally characteristic of the relationship between internal migrants and their community of origin (Iraki 1995). El Meskine (1993) argued that the rural-to-urban takes place in a veritable “espace relationnel”, corroborating Lucas and Stark’s (1985:915) general observation that more and more households, constituting a hybrid “peasants-worker” group, straddle both the urban and rural sectors in developing countries. Moreover, feelings of (“class”) solidarity among migrants from different regions living within the same city tend to be sparse, indicating that they remain strongly oriented towards their family and household at the origin for a long time (Iraki 1995)<sup>12</sup>.

#### 4.5.2. Migration politics and remittance policies

Throughout the post-independence period, the Moroccan government has actively stimulated international out-migration for both political and economic reasons<sup>13</sup>. International migration

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<sup>11</sup> A survey conducted in 1975-1976 indicated that about 64 percent of international migrants visit Morocco each year (Berrada 1990). More than two decades later, this situation has not changed much. According to a recent survey, three quarters of the international migrants have visited Morocco at least once in the past two years (Fadloulah *et al.* 2000). Between 15 June and 15 August 1993, 848,000 people and 159,000 cars entered the northern harbors of Ceuta, Tangiers, and Melillia (López García 1994). This is excluding arrivals by airplane. In 2001, about 1.2 million migrants visited Morocco on holiday.

<sup>12</sup> There are indications that single or divorced migrant workers adjust to city life with greater ease and, hence, maintain less intensive contacts with home (Iraki 1995; cf. Choldin 1973).

<sup>13</sup> Although international migration was stimulated, the opposite was true for internal rural-to-urban migration, which was perceived as a threat to political and economic stability. The rural “exodus” was perceived to lead to the decline of agricultural production and contributing to urban overpopulation. The Moroccan state has therefore aimed, largely in vain, at curbing internal migration.

was seen as a “safety valve” to decrease poverty and, hence, prevent political tensions. This was also the main reason why Morocco stimulated migration from regions with the reputation of being rebellious against the central government. This mainly concerned the mountainous and/or arid regions in the extreme north, south and east of the country, which largely coincide with that part of the country which the French called “le Maroc inutile”. Throughout Morocco’s history, the independent tribes of the interior have remained largely autonomous from the *makhzen*, the state-related and largely urban-based class associated with the sultan’s power. Although these tribes often nominally recognized the (religious) status of the sultan for certain periods, they remained largely autonomous in practice and generally refused to pay tribute to the sultan. It was only under French rule, that the independent tribes of what the colonizer called the *bled es-siba* (“land of dissidence”) were “pacified” after a military campaign of two decades. On the eve of independence in 1956, this pacification was only two decades old.

The post-colonial Moroccan state inherited the political-military infrastructure installed by the French, which enabled the *makhzen* to effectively control all the tribes of the interior for the first time in history. The tribes and their chiefs of the interior—who played an important role in the struggle for independence—were sometimes reluctant to submit to the sultan’s power. A combination of political discontent and grinding poverty resulted in several insurrections. The Moroccan government quickly recognized the possibilities that a migration policy could have in terms of relieving tensions by promoting emigration from these economically and politically marginal regions, and in particular from the notoriously turbulent and underdeveloped Rif region (Reniers 1999:684)

Besides a political instrument, migration was increasingly seen as a tool for national economic development. In the 1965-68 Three-Year Plan, the utility of migration was primarily seen through the skills and knowledge that migrants were expected to acquire through work and education abroad. It was expected that this experience would be beneficial for national industrial development (Heinemeijer *et al.* 1976:23). Migrants, whose stay abroad was considered as temporary, were explicitly seen as innovative agents of development. In this “developmentalist” era, migrants were seen as actors who would help Morocco in its economic take-off. The Five-Year Plan 1968-72 largely suppressed the education argument and emphasized the quantitative aspects of migration in relieving pressures on the labor market and the positive monetary effects of remittances. This shift in attention can be explained by the increase in unemployment and increasing deficits in the balance of payments Morocco witnessed in that period (Heinemeijer *et al.* 1976:23).

The belief that migrants would be particular actors of change, importing new ideas, attitudes, and skills, gradually faded. Partly, this was the result of disappointing experiences with migration and development programs. The Moroccan government has implemented a series of policies, sometimes in cooperation with “receiving countries” in Europe, in order to stimulate the participation of returned migrants in the development process through investment-stimulating programs. Such programs have generally failed, partly through bad implementation, partly due to a lack of commitment among migrants and feelings of distrust vis-à-vis government agencies (Fadlollah *et al.* 2000:32; Fellat 1996; Obdeijn 1993). Moreover, research seemed to indicate that migrants were not willing to invest in productive enterprises, and that most money was spent on housing construction and consumption; expenditures that were generally evaluated as negative. This contributed to the rising pessimism about the utility of migrants in the development of their regions of origin.

With regards to migration and development policies, it seems useful to distinguish between policies that aim to stimulate remittance transfers and policies that specifically aim to encourage investments by migrants. Over the past two decades, the emphasis on remittances

as a tool for national macro-economic development has gained increasing emphasis. General policies to increase remittance transfers seem to have been relatively more successful than specific policies aiming to stimulate investments by migrants, which—following the disappointing experiences in the 1970s—were largely abandoned at least until the renewed investment-stimulated policies of the 1990s.

Since the late 1960s, Morocco has encouraged the creation of a network of consulates, bank branches (i.e., the *Banque Centrale Populaire*), and post offices to facilitate the transfer of remittances. Since the early 1980s, remittance transfer via banks has progressively replaced postal orders as the primary means of money transfer (Refass 1999:98). Since the end of the 1980s, new monetary policies have been applied in Morocco, involving the lifting of restrictions on exchange and on the repatriation of money, which have probably contributed to a renewed increase in remittances after a period of relative stagnation (Giubilaro 1997:30). Since 1995, migrants have been allowed to open foreign exchange banking accounts with Moroccan banks (Fellat 1996:316), which have established an increasing number of foreign offices in European cities with sizeable Moroccan communities. Remittance transfers are further encouraged through fiscal policies favoring migrants (Refass 1999:98). Moreover, currency devaluations have increased the value of remittances and encouraged migrants to remit money (Giubilaro 1997:30).

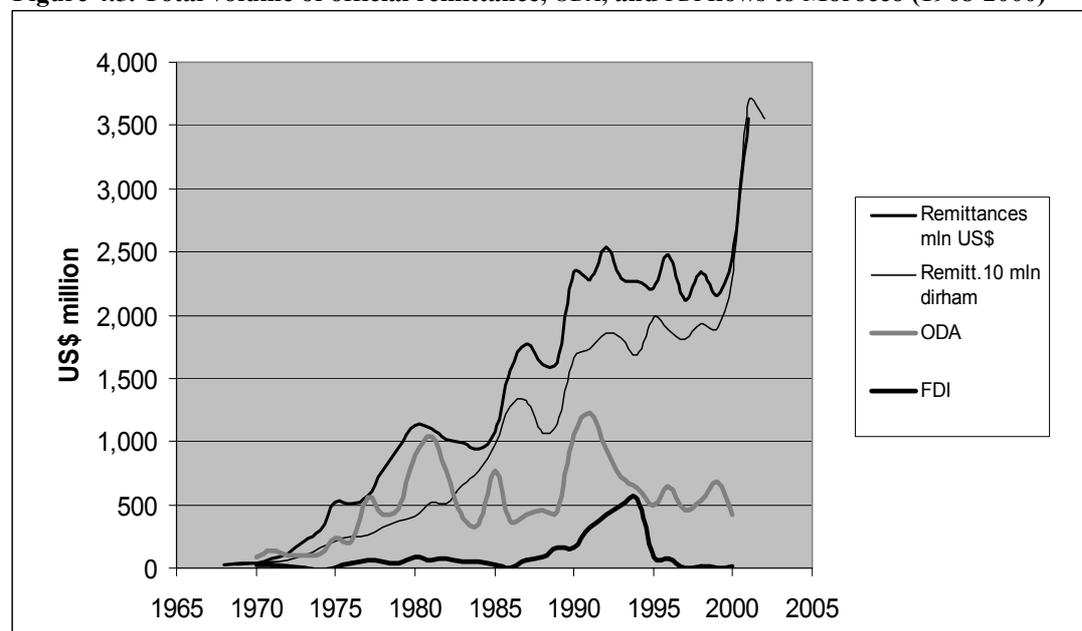
Through the likely effect of these fiscal policies, low inflation, and the absence of large black markets for foreign exchange, Morocco has been relatively successful in directing remittances through official channels. In neighboring Algeria, for instance, most remittances are sent through unofficial “parallel” channels as the official exchange rates do not reflect those on the black market (Mezdour 1993). Nevertheless, much money is handed over personally and migrants take many goods (e.g., electronics, household appliances, furniture, cars, car spare parts, clothes) to Morocco as gifts or as merchandise (Refass 1999:100). It is estimated that in Morocco transfers in kind represent one quarter to one third of official remittances (Refass 1999:102). Remittances constitute the most direct impact of migration, and are a tangible expression of the strong links between migrants and their origins. Ever since the 1970s, there have been warnings by scholars and policy makers that remittance payments will decrease in the near future. However, these predictions have not so far come true, corroborating the general hypothesis that remittance transfers generally do not decrease as migration matures. Despite some relapses, remittances have surged from 200 million dirham (23 million US\$) in 1968 to over 18.5 billion dirham (2.1 billion US\$) in 1992 (see figure 4.5).

Over the 1990s, however, a stagnation has occurred in remittance transfers at levels of around 2.3 billion US\$. It was often thought and feared that this would herald a future decline in remittances. Some researchers explained this by the combined effect of unfavorable development perspectives in Morocco and the integration in the host countries of the “second generation”, which would be less inclined to remit money (Fadloulah *et al.* 2000:58; Mezdour 1993:189). It seemed that the great age of Moroccan migration had ended, and that the aging migrant population in northwestern Europe—who either practiced family reunification or returned—represented a declining potential in terms of remittances.

However, contrary to expectation, migration to the classic destination countries has persisted at far higher rates than expected after the completion of family reunification, which was mainly due to the rise in family formation. Although it might be true that second generation might be less inclined to remit, there has been a general underestimation of the strength of transnational links between Morocco and the settled migrant communities in Europe. Moreover, new and large migrant communities have been established in Spain and Italy over the 1990s, which are likely to increase significantly in the coming decades (Carella

and Pace 2001), and which are likely to increase the future potential for remittance transfers. In 1990, more than two thirds of remittances came from France, 9 percent from the Netherlands, and only 4.5 percent from Italy (Berrada 1994).

**Figure 4.5. Total volume of official remittance, ODA, and FDI flows to Morocco (1968-2000)**



Source: Office des Changes Maroc, IMF Balance of Payments Statistics Yearbook (annual)

To some extent, the sudden and spectacular surge in remittance transfers, to levels of well over 3.5 billion US\$ in 2001, seems due to the introduction of the Euro. This may have led migrants to deposit their ready money in Moroccan banks or to convert it into dirhams while on holiday in Morocco. However, other Europe-oriented emigration countries such as Tunisia and Turkey did not show a similar increase in remittance transfers. Moreover, the volume of remittances remained stable in 2002. A study by Müller (1998) demonstrated that whereas remittances from classic destination countries such as France and the Netherlands seemed to stabilize or decrease in the 1990s, remittance transfers from new southern European destination countries showed a steep increase. Therefore, it can be hypothesized that the increase is the partial effect of the steep increase in remittances from Spain and Italy (partially due to legalization programs) and to a lesser extent the Arab oil countries, the USA, and Canada, which more than compensated for the relative stagnation in remittances from northwestern Europe.

It is always difficult to predict how migratory, macro-economic, and political developments will affect future remittance transfers. However, based on prior experience it seems likely that remittances will remain a vital source of income (for Moroccan households) and foreign exchange (for the Moroccan state) in the near future.

Over the 1995-1999 period, Morocco was the sixth largest remittance receiving country in the world after India, the Philippines, Mexico, Turkey, and Egypt (Gammeltoft 2002:10). In 2001, it occupied the fourth place. In per capita terms, Morocco is even the largest remittance receiver of these six major labor exporting countries, although smaller countries such as Jordan, Yemen, Albania, El Salvador and several island states have higher per capita remittance transfers (Buch *et al.* 2002).

The macro-economic significance of migrant remittances is considerable. While remittances represented 6.4 percent of Morocco's GNP over the 1990s on average (thereby

occupying 14<sup>th</sup> place in the world ranking), remittances represented 20.1 percent of all imports in goods and services (Buch *et al.* 2002). Remittance transfers contribute to income growth and poverty alleviation directly and indirectly. Teto (2001) concluded that without remittances, the percentage of the Moroccan population living below the poverty line would increase from 19.0 to 23.2 percent<sup>14</sup>.

For the Moroccan state, remittances are crucial as a source of foreign exchange and have become a vital element in sustaining Morocco’s balance of payments. Over the past two decades the value of remittances has not only proved to be substantially higher than other international resource flows such as official development assistance (ODA) and official aid and foreign direct investment (FDI), but its relative importance as a foreign exchange resource has only increased due to a significant decrease in other capital flows over the 1990s (see figure 4.6).

In 1991, the value of official remittances represented 84.5 percent of the total amount of foreign investments, development aid, and private loans received by the country. In 2000, the value of remittances was already 16 times higher than these flows, which have all shown clear decreasing trends over the final decade of the twentieth century. The many warnings that migration researchers have pronounced on the unstable nature of remittances (i.e., that the reliance on remittances is a particularly “dangerous” kind of dependency) have not been supported by the facts.

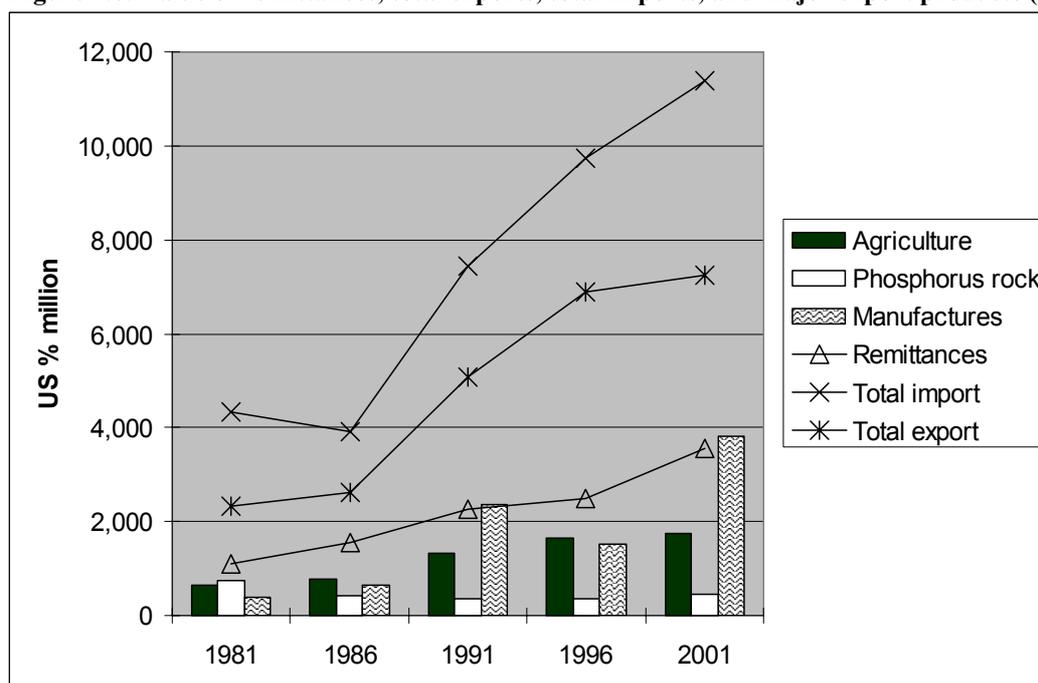
Fluctuations in remittance income are generally inferior to income from other sources of foreign exchange, and thus remittances represent the most stable capital inflow over time (cf. Giubilaro 1997:31). Foreign direct investments (FDI), for instance, have often been referred to as the hope for the nation’s future by adherents of the “Washington consensus”. However, despite a temporary increase in the mid-1990s, FDI is not only far lower, but also more volatile than remittance transfers. Whereas official aid flows (ODA) were almost equally as high as remittances over the 1970s, their volume lagged behind in the 1980s and 1990s, and only represented one fifth of remittances in 2000 (see figure 4.5). The strong transnational and transgenerational social bonds between international migrants and “stay-behinds” explain why remittances were the most reliable and sustainable source of foreign exchange over the 1980s and 1990s.

Figure 4.6 indicates that, from the perspective of the Moroccan state, migrants are to be considered as a major “export product”. In 2000, remittances represented one quarter of total exports of goods and services. Besides tourism and the exportation of phosphates, remittances are the most important source of foreign exchange. As figure 4.6 indicates, the revenues of remittances dwarfed those of phosphates, Morocco’s main primary export commodity, throughout the 1980s and 1990s. During the same period, remittances were also higher than receipts from agricultural exports, that other pillar of the Moroccan (export) economy. Remittances have also remained higher than receipts from the expanding Moroccan tourism industry (2.8 billion US\$ in 2001).

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<sup>14</sup> In urban environments, this increase would be from 12.0 to 16.6 percent, and in rural environments from 27.2 to 31.0 percent (Teto 2001). The actual contribution of migration to poverty alleviation is probably higher, as only international remittances transferred via official channels are included in such estimates. In regions with high migration participation rates, the contribution to poverty alleviation can be far higher than these overall figures indicate. On the basis of a World Bank study on Morocco (Report 11918-MORC, 1994), Schiff (1994:15) stressed that because most Moroccan migrants do not belong to the group below the poverty line, remittances benefit relatively non-poor households rather than the poorest. This explains why the direct contribution of remittances to poverty alleviation is relatively limited. However, the indirect contribution of remittances to poverty alleviation might be higher through income multiplier effects.

Figure 4.6. Value of remittances, total exports, total imports, and major export products (1981-2001)



Source: IMF Balance of Payments Statistics Yearbook (annual); World Bank (Morocco at a Glance)

From the onset of migration, the Moroccan government has pursued policies in which it attempted to maintain a tight control on migrant communities in Europe. The Moroccan state explicitly addresses all people of Moroccan descent as its subjects<sup>15</sup>, and even actively discouraged their integration in the receiving countries until the early 1990s (Obdeijn 1993). Through a network of Moroccan embassies, consulates, mosques, and associations such as the “Amicales”, Moroccan migrants were discouraged from organizing themselves in trade unions or from participating in the political processes of the countries that were considered as their temporary residencies by the Moroccan state. Such integration-discouraging policies seemed to serve a double goal. First, the government wanted to prevent Moroccan migrants from organizing themselves politically, and thus from becoming a potential factor of political opposition “from outside”. Second, integration was perceived as endangering the vital remittance transfers.

However, these “repressive” policies were not only increasingly criticized by European governments—which perceived them as running counter to their “integration policies”—but also seemed to alienate the migrant population from government institutions. In the early 1990s, the Moroccan government finally recognized that such policies had more or less failed, and had had the important negative consequence of increasing feelings of distrust among migrants vis-à-vis Moroccan state institutions, and had probably chased away potential investors instead of attracting them. The Moroccan government therefore changed course through adopting a more positive attitude towards the integration of Moroccans abroad. This shift was influenced by a general change in macro-economic policies that placed

<sup>15</sup> Moroccan nationality is inalienable. This means that even Moroccans who obtain citizenship of their country of settlement cannot relinquish their Moroccan nationality, so that they acquire double nationality. For the Moroccan state, each person whose father is Moroccan remains Moroccan until death. In order to stress the “Marocanité” of migrants—whether first, second or third generation—they are officially called MRE: *Marocains Résidant à l'Étranger* (Moroccan Residents Abroad). Despite the recent change in policies, the Moroccan government maintains its claim that Moroccan nationality is inalienable, and pursues active policies to foster links between migrants and their country of origin.

a high priority on attracting remittances and stimulating migrants’ investments as a tool for national economic development. This also led to a renewed hope in the positive role migrants may potentially play in encouraging investment. Consequently, migrants were no longer approached as indolent remittance senders that should be kept quiet, but increasingly as potential businessmen who should be convinced to invest in Morocco, which has subsequently been presented as a land “full of opportunities”.

Urged by the fear that the vital remittance transfers and migrants’ investments might decrease—with potentially disastrous consequences for the national economy—Moroccan officials seem to be increasingly aware that policies should be developed in order to create a fertile economic, social and political ground for investments by Moroccan migrants and other investors. There seems to be the increasing recognition that more positive strategies are needed—that increase instead of decrease trust—in order to stimulate both remittance transfers and investments by migrants. In particular among new generations of better educated and informed Moroccans, the patronizing attitude of the Moroccan state towards migrants seemed to alienate them rather than bind them closer to their country of origin.

There also seems an increasing awareness of the need to reduce obstacles to investment, such as the complexity of regulations, problems of corruption, and excessive red tape (Kaioua 1999:124-5). The priority put in restoring the confidence of migrants in the Moroccan state and in convincing migrants to invest in Morocco has probably played an important role in a number of recent policy measures to combat corruption among border and police officials and among officials in general—who tend to harass migrants and “cream off” their wealth (cf. Strijp 1997). At the end of the 1990s, Moroccan television, which is watched by Moroccans throughout Europe via satellite, had regular broadcasts on investment opportunities, in which successful entrepreneurs and other Moroccans openly discuss problems of corruption and bureaucracy that they say are hindering investments. Ten years earlier, this would have been unthinkable.

In 1990, the Moroccan state established the *Fondation Hassan II pour les Marocains Résidant à l’Étranger*. The aim of this foundation is to foster and reinforce the links between Moroccan migrants and Morocco through assisting them in various ways both while in Europe and during their summer holidays in Morocco, and to inform and “guide” migrants on investment opportunities. Examples of its activities are: the reduction of the long delays and harassment migrants used to experience at the borders in the sea ports of Tangiers and Sebta (Ceuta in Spanish) and, to a lesser extent, at the various airports; the retrieval of custom documents via the internet; and accelerating various administrative procedures.

Moreover, in 2002 the new Moroccan king Mohammed VI announced a series of policy measures aimed at easing administrative procedures for obtaining business permits, in particular through the creation of so-called “guichet uniques”. Obviously, it remains to be seen whether these attempts to promote Morocco as a fertile ground for investments targeted at the migration Diaspora are successful, both in terms of image building and genuine improvements in the general investment conditions. In any case, it seems a more positive and viable strategy than the policies of the past (cf. Leichtman 2002).

#### **4.6. Morocco as a labor frontier country**

In order to put Moroccan migration into a broader theoretical and geographical perspective, and to be better able to predict future migration patterns, it is useful to draw on transitional-geographical migration theories developed by Zelinsky (1971) and Skeldon (1997). In the

past few decades, Morocco has become a typical example of what Skeldon (1997:145) called a “labor frontier country” (see section 2.2). Skeldon (1997:52) argued that

there is a relationship between the level of economic development, state formation and the patterns of population mobility. Very generally, we can say that where these are high, an integrated migration system exists consisting of global and local movements, whereas where they are low the migration systems are not integrated and mainly local

In his attempt to make a global regionalization for migratory movements, Skeldon (1997:52-53) distinguished the five following “development tiers”: the (1) old and (2) new core countries (e.g., Western Europe, North America, Japan) characterized by immigration and internal decentralization; (3) the “expanding core” (e.g., eastern China, southern Africa, eastern Europe), where we find both immigration and out-migration and internal centralization (i.e., urbanization and rural-to-urban migration); (4) the “labor frontier” (e.g., Morocco, Egypt, Turkey, Mexico, the Philippines, and, until recently, Spain and Italy), which are dominated by out-migration and internal centralization; and the so-called (5) “resource niche” (e.g., many sub-Saharan countries, parts of central Asia and Middle America), with variable, often weaker forms of migration.

Evidently, Skeldon’s regionalization is inspired by, and an adaptation of, Zelinsky’s (1971) mobility transition theory and also seems in line with the “migration hump” model. What all these models have in common is that they suppose a clear, though non-linear relationship between economic and demographic development and the occurrence of mass international labor migration. The argument is that levels of international out-migration seem the highest in labor frontier countries, where an increasing number of young individuals can afford the risks and costs associated with international migration and who tend to have increasingly high professional, material, and psychological aspirations that are unlikely to be fulfilled in their own countries. Moreover, such countries generally have a relatively well-developed public infrastructure (road, electricity, media, schooling system), which facilitates the integration of regions into national and international economic and informational networks.

If we compare African countries, Skeldon’s general argument seems valid. Indeed, the Maghreb and other North African countries typically show higher levels of development in relation to both economic and social standards, and equally tend to show higher rates of out-migration than most (poorer) countries in sub-Saharan Africa. This shows that, as we have argued in chapter 2—and despite all the postmodernist criticism—transitory migration theories are remarkably adequate to functionally explain the changing character and function of migration over the course of the development process.

The highest rates of out-migration tend not to occur in the least developed countries, but rather in countries that have attained a certain level of development. However, in order to explain this, it seems important not to focus only on the material (e.g., income growth, technical progress, infrastructure) side of development—as transitory theories tend to do—but to broaden our view of how development influences migration by including socio-cultural processes. For instance, the rising aspirations and increasing feelings of relative deprivation associated with development also explain why people tend to move particularly from this part of the world. As Giubilaro (1997:29) argued, in general, such development tends to give rise to both social and economic changes. “Development” not only provides households and individuals with the material means to bear the costs and risks of international migration, but also tends to coincide with increasing education and information, which tend to raise aspirations. Both increased capabilities (through better access to material and social capital) and higher aspirations (cultural capital) tend to reinforce the propensity to migrate. It

therefore is not only difficult, but also undesirable, to separate the reciprocal, mutually reinforcing social and economic dimensions of migration and development.

Morocco has also a number of demographic characteristics in common with other “labor frontier” countries, which seem to provide additional explanatory value to the question of why migration propensities are so high. Morocco is in full demographic transition, witnessing a still rather high but decreasing population growth, with sharply falling birth rates, and a steep increase in the number of young adults (Courbage 1996; Sabagh 1997). In Morocco, annual rates of population growth reached a peak in the early 1970s, and have started to decline since 1982 (Schoorl *et al.* 2000). This decline has mainly been the result of decreasing fertility rates (Courbage 1996). Family planning policies, introduced by the Moroccan authorities in the 1960s, have contributed to a sharp fall in fertility rates, from almost 6 in the second half of the 1970s to 3.3 in 1996 (Schoorl *et al.* 2000:43). Except for Tunisia, this decrease is sharper than in other North African and Middle Eastern countries (Courbage 1994).

However, as with most demographic processes, the full effects of such declines in fertility on population growth are only felt in the longer term. Despite declining fertility rates, Morocco’s population is still overwhelmingly young. The number of young adults that are entering the labor market each year has increased dramatically. Simultaneously, Morocco has witnessed a time of economic stagnation since the 1970s. In the 1980-90s, public spending cuts and general austerity measures following IMF-instigated and “Washington Consensus”-inspired structural adjustments programs have further hit employment growth. The combination of these factors has increased unemployment. While unemployment rates were low in general during the 1960s and 1970s, they started to rise in the following two decades, and have stabilized at high levels in the past years. In 2001, unemployment was at a level of 13.0 percent. With a rate of 19.5 percent in the same year, urban unemployment was far higher than rural unemployment rates (Direction de la Statistique Royaume du Maroc). Rising unemployment and austere budget cuts to social programs have led to popular unrest (White 1999) and have increasingly boosted migration pressure.

Unemployment has severely affected young people under the age of 25 and first-time job seekers, women in particular. Unemployment has rapidly increased among young graduates, who used to enjoy practically guaranteed employment in the public service until the early 1980s, but who can now hardly find jobs (Giubilaro 1997; Richards 2003; White 1999). This explains why more and more well-educated Moroccans wish to migrate. Simultaneously, there has been an increase in “under-employment” (Giubilaro 1997).

In Morocco, the discrepancy between population growth and labor demand growth is particularly high. For instance, after comparing Algeria, Tunisia, Morocco, and Turkey, Giubilaro (1997:58) concluded that in the period 1990-1995, the rate of domestic absorption—defined as total entries into national employment / total labor supply—was 71 and 78 percent in the first two countries, respectively, and 39 and 46 percent in Algeria and Morocco, respectively. This combination of high demographic growth largely exceeding labor demand seems largely responsible for the high and persistent migration pressures.

Both Zelinsky (1971) and Skeldon (1997) suggest that, *in general*, high population growth, concomitant processes of modernization and urbanization, and high international migration are processes that tend to occur simultaneously. However, this does not suggest that high population growth is *automatically* associated with high international migration. Although this seems generally the case, population growth is obviously only one component of a complex chain of processes (Coleman 1999:486-7). Actual migration pressures are mediated by the level of social, political, and economic development which determine to what extent expanding populations can build their desired futures within their own country. Future economic development is always difficult to predict, as it depends on a number of uncertain

factors, such as the volume of direct foreign investments, the international political and economic state of affairs, internal economic policies, and political stability.

However, even from the most optimistic perspective, pressure on the Moroccan labor market is not expected to decrease in the coming years (cf. Giubilaro 1997:65). It seems almost certain that in the years to come Morocco will not be able to offer sufficient opportunities of economic integration for the increasing numbers of young people entering the labor market. Moreover, the economic prospects for Morocco as a whole seem less positive than for most other countries in the southern Mediterranean. As Coleman (1999:501) argued, it would therefore be erroneous to expect any important reductions in migration from the Maghreb in general—and Morocco in particular—to Europe in the short or even medium term following the steep decline in fertility.

Persistent economic disparities, in particular the low current and projected level of wages and the high level of unemployment, will ensure substantial migration pressures for the near future. It is therefore generally expected that the propensity to migrate from Morocco will remain high for the coming one or two decades at least (Fadlollah *et al.* 2000:xxiii; Giubilaro 1997:64). Moreover, the increasing influence of the media and improving educational levels will have the likely effect of increasing the socio-cultural incentives (rising aspirations, feelings of relative deprivation) to migrate (cf. White 1999). In the same vein, it can be expected that urbanization and rural-to-urban migration will remain strong (Giubilaro 1997:29), although migration to the largest towns seems to be slowing down and there seems to be a certain “decentralizing” shift of migration streams from large cities towards medium-sized towns.

Communities of Moroccans in Europe are likely to increase in the near future for three reasons. First, the process of family reunification has started only recently in Spain and Italy. In the coming decades, this will probably lead to a considerable increase of Moroccan communities, as has been the case in northwestern Europe. Second, the ongoing process of family formation through new marriages by second generation migrants with Moroccan “stay-behinds” is likely to further increase the ranks of the established migrant communities in northwestern Europe. Third, unemployment and the general lack of prospects among young people will continue to push new migrants abroad, either legally or illegally. The existence of extensive migrant networks and the long, southern European coastline make these migration movements notoriously difficult to control. Moreover, as long as a demand for migrant labor in particular sectors of the European economy (e.g., agriculture, housing construction, domestic labor, but also in higher functions in the commercial, IT, medical, or educational sectors) remains, people will have a strong economic rationale to take the risks and social, economic, and psychological costs of migrating.

Only in the longer term (i.e., at least two decades from now) will the current decline in fertility rates lead to a considerable decrease in the number of young people entering the labor market. This may eventually lead to declining international migration, as is predicted by transitional models. To what extent this will happen, depends on future economic growth and political stability, factors which are notoriously difficult to predict. However, for the near future at least, migration pressures are likely to remain strong. In the same vein, remittances, even in case of stagnation or future decline, are likely to remain one of the pillars of the Moroccan economy in the coming one or two decades. Moreover, the increasingly self-conscious and emancipated migrant communities are likely to remain an crucial factor on which Morocco’s future social, political, and economic development partly depends.

## 4.7. Conclusion

The present chapter has shown how colonization, the incorporation of Morocco’s formerly semi-autonomous tribal hinterland into the modern (colonial and Moroccan) state and the capitalist economy, urbanization, and the development of infrastructure have allowed the evolution of new, intensive, and increasingly complex and reciprocal patterns of internal and international migration. These radical changes in the political and economic macro-context explain how Morocco has become firmly integrated within the Mediterranean-European migration system, in which it nowadays occupies a prominent place. With about two million people of Moroccan descent living in Europe, Moroccans form not only one of the largest, but also one of the most dispersed migrant communities in Western Europe.

Migrant networks explain why policies aiming to curb migration have had only limited or even countervailing effects, and that both internal and international migration has continued at high levels over the past decades. Increasingly restrictive immigration policies have nevertheless had their influence on migration strategies, characterized by an increasing reliance on family migration and undocumented migration, as well as a partial shift in the geographical orientation of migration, in which Spain and Italy have evolved into the principal destination countries over the 1990s. Taking into account demographic and economic determinants, and drawing on insights from transitional migration theory, it is likely that migration pressures and actual migration from Morocco will remain strong in the coming one or two decades.

Over the twentieth century, the Rif, Sous, and southern oases constituted the main belts of international out-migration in Morocco. Over the past fifteen years, there has, however, been a spatial diffusion of Moroccan migration to Europe. Many more Moroccan regions are now heavily involved in international migration. Nowadays, the social, cultural, and economic effects of migration are intensely felt in most of Morocco.

Nobody would disagree that migration has fundamentally transformed Moroccan society in general and rural areas in particular. Migration has become an all-pervasive phenomenon, not only fundamentally transforming national, regional, and local economies, but also fundamentally affecting the lives, perceptions, and aspirations of both migrants and nonmigrants. However, there is by no means a consensus as to what extent these changes constitute “development”, the opposite, or something in between. Moreover, acknowledgment of the vital role of remittances for the national balance of payments and for national economic-political stability in general, offers little insight into the concrete impact of migration on development in migrant sending areas.

In the literature, this latter issue has been the subject of widespread controversy, in which the pessimistic perspectives have tended to dominate. From this viewpoint, remittances may help temporarily shore up economies, but do little to alter their fundamental weaknesses and promote sustainable development (cf. Keely and Tran 1989:524). Whereas some researchers have argued that migration has significantly boosted development in migrant sending areas, the majority tend to perceive migration as a development-undermining process by arguing that it increases dependency on external income and leads to the disintegration of regional economies and societies. However, the number of recent, theoretically embedded empirical studies on the concrete effects of migration on regional development in Morocco has remained very limited. In the following chapters, we will examine this question in more detail through an empirical study in one of Morocco’s many migration regions: the Todgha valley.



## **An oasis in a changing world**

### **5.1. Introduction**

This chapter aims to provide a general geographical and historical overview of the Todgha valley and to sketch how changes in the macro-political and economic context that occurred over the twentieth century have deeply affected this region in southern Morocco. It will first draft the ethnic composition of the Todgha valley, thereby showing how spatial settlement patterns of the main ethnic groups of the Aït Todoght and Aït ‘Atta have been historically linked to access to vital water resources, and whereby the upstream-living Aït Todoght have monopolized access to river water. Second, the chapter will examine intra-community socio-ethnic stratification and how this stratification has been linked to the management of the irrigation infrastructure. Third, the widely varying ethnic and geographical characteristics of the six research villages located throughout the valley will be briefly reviewed.

Furthermore, the chapter will describe how the integration of this tribal area into the colonial and Moroccan state and capitalist economy has led to a radical economic, cultural, and social restructuring and reorientation of oasis life. Former economic, social, and political systems based on subsistence agriculture, barter between nomads and oasis dwellers, caravan trade, and a caste-like hierarchy between ethnic groups living in oases have collapsed. Simultaneously, regional integration into the capitalist economy, and the “pacification” of the oasis by the modern state, and the concomitant development of social and physical infrastructure has boosted population growth, improved wealth, health, education, and access to information.

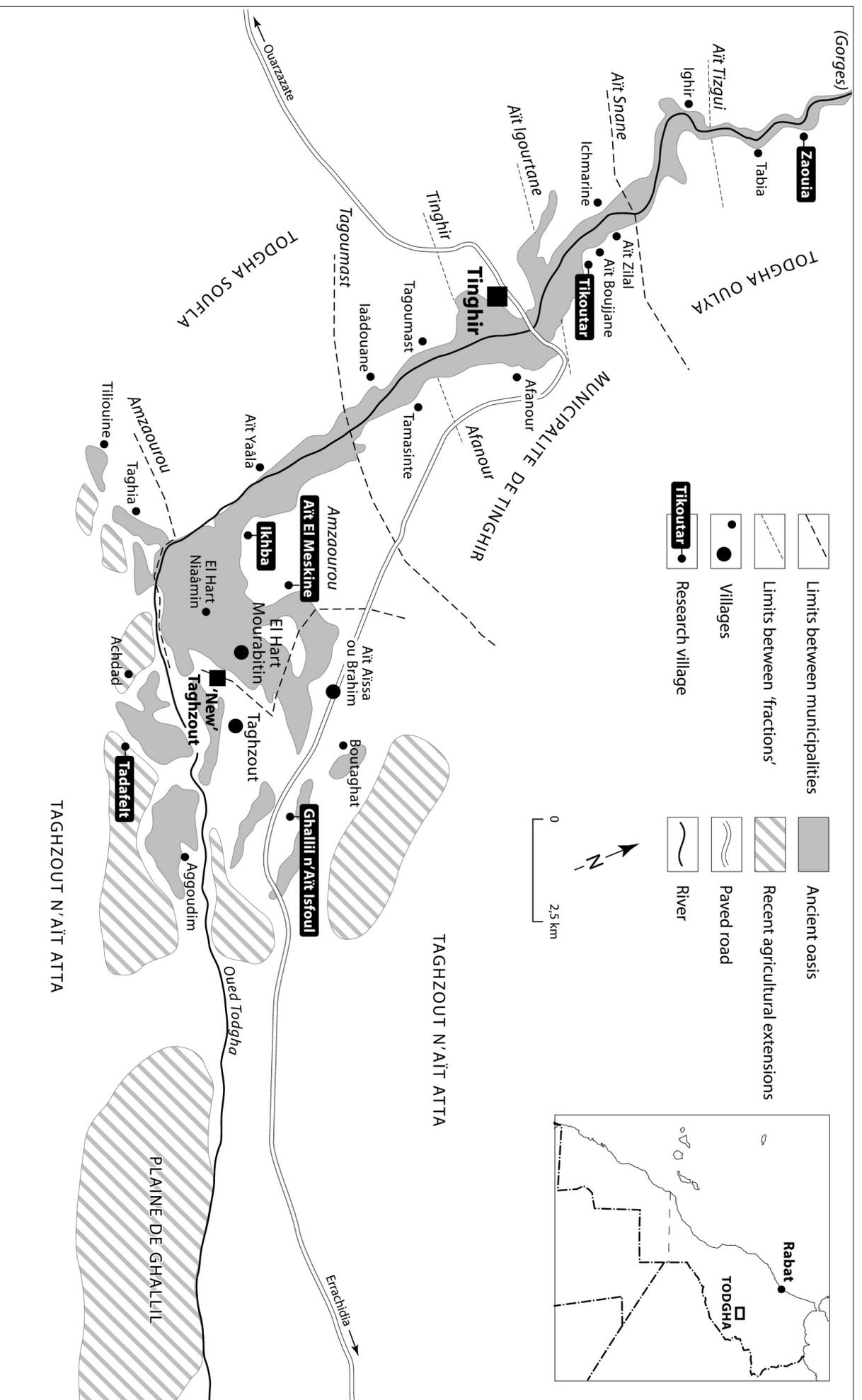
### **5.2. Geographical introduction to the Todgha valley<sup>1</sup>**

The Todgha is an oasis river valley located on the southern slopes of the High Atlas Mountains in Morocco. In spite of the arid conditions south of the Atlas climate divide, the melt- and rainwater originating from the High Atlas Mountains continuously recharges aquifers that, in turn, feed numerous springs and rivers. This explains the existence of a concentration of oases south and east of the Atlas in the so-called Presaharan region. Situated approximately 170 km east of Ouarzazate and 160 km west of Errachidia, the Todgha is located between Morocco’s largest oasis regions: the Drâa valley and the Tafilalt. These are the two principal catchment basins south of the High Atlas, to which all smaller rivers drain. The Todgha is part of the Tafilalt catchment basin.

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<sup>1</sup> Sections 5.2 and 5.3 heavily draw on information collected by De Haas and El Ghanjou (2000a).

Map 2. Todgha valley, administrative divisions, and research villages



Source: Adapted from Büchner (1986) and Naim (1997)

For Moroccan standards, the Todgha is a medium-sized river oasis, with a total cultivated area of almost forty km in length and varying in width from 100 m near the Gorges du Todgha in the upper valley to about 4 km downstream. It is situated at a relatively high altitude, between 1,420 m near the sources and 1,100 m in the downstream Ghallil plain. With an average annual precipitation of 143 mm in Aït Boujjane (1,340 m), hot dry summers and relatively cold winters, the climate is of the cool Saharan type (El Harradji 2000).

The region in which the Todgha is located comprises three geo-morphological units. The mountainous area north of the valley makes up part of the High Atlas, and forms the most elevated relief surrounding the Todgha. Located south of the Todgha is the Jebel Saghro, a mountain chain which is a continuation of the Anti Atlas. The pre-African fault is the depression between these two mountain chains.

From its sources some twenty kilometers north of the village of Tamtetch, the main affluent of the Todgha<sup>1</sup> winds its course steeply through the High Atlas for about forty kilometers southwards through a mostly dry river bed, until reaching the steep Gorges du Todgha. The canyon reaches here its narrowest point, with rock-faces towering some 300 meters above the riverbed. At this point is also the main source of the Todgha (Sidi Mhamed ou 'Abdellah), whose significant flow is perennial<sup>2</sup>. At this point, the Todgha starts running above ground. The Todgha oasis begins immediately downstream of the gorges, near the village of Zaouïa Sidi 'Abdelali. From here on downstream, while the Todgha follows its winding course in a predominantly southeastern direction, the valley becomes gradually wider.

Near Tinghir, the Todgha leaves the High Atlas. At this point, the valley widens after which the Todgha continues its course eastward through the plain located in the pre-African fault between the mountain chains of the High Atlas and Saghro (see map 2).

From its sources in the gorges, the ancient oasis of the Todgha stretches out on both banks of the river. Upstream, several dams divert the perennial river water into a complex system of irrigation channels that irrigate the permanently cultivated fields. Further downstream, the flow of the Todgha gradually decreases, until the stream goes subsurface in the lower Todgha. In the lower Todgha<sup>3</sup>, therefore, traditional *khattara*<sup>4</sup> techniques are employed to tap underground water to complement the scarce surface waters.

Further downstream, east of the ancient oasis, the Ghallil stretches out over an area of about ten kilometers on the right bank of the Todgha. This semi-desertic plain, formerly used as collective pastureland, has been increasingly colonized for relatively large-scale agriculture since the late 1970s. Likewise, numerous smaller agricultural extensions have emerged in formerly desert land adjacent to the villages in the lower Todgha. On this newly colonized

<sup>1</sup> The Todgha has several affluents located north of Tamtetch. The main affluent is known as Akka n'Taghfist. Between Tamtetch and the gorges the Todgha is known under the local name Akka n'Ighenjaoune.

<sup>2</sup> The average discharge of the Todgha measured at Aït Boujjane (near Tinghir) is 0,7 m<sup>3</sup>/s. Actual levels in the upper valley must be higher and is relatively stable throughout the seasons, although inter-annual variations depending on precipitation occur. Annual flows are estimated at 11,5 Mm<sup>3</sup> at the Aït Boujjane station for a surface of 705 km<sup>2</sup>, to which should be added 9,7 Mm<sup>3</sup> which are derived into irrigation channels upstream of Aït Boujjane. A flow of 12,4 Mm<sup>3</sup> is calculated for Imiter, the downstream tributary of the Todgha near the village of Taghia, for a surface of 895 km<sup>2</sup>. Further downstream, annual flows are estimated at 33,9 Mm<sup>3</sup> at Ghallil (El Harradji 2000).

<sup>3</sup> Throughout this study, a distinction between the lower and upper Todgha will be made. The upper Todgha refers to the most elevated and water-rich part of the Todgha northwest of Tinghir. This upstream part is largely hemmed in by mountains, and has access to river water all year round. From here on downstream, water becomes increasingly rare (see figure 5.1). The upper Todgha largely coincides with the municipalities of Todgha El Oulya and Tinghir, and the lower Todgha those of Todgha Es-Soufla and Taghzout n'Aït Atta.

<sup>4</sup> The *khattara* is an ancient, sophisticated technique consisting of tunnels and shafts enabling the drainage of underground water resources for irrigation (see section 8.2.1).

agricultural land—and in large parts of the ancient, traditionally water-scarce oasis of the lower Todgha—peasants are largely dependent on the use of diesel engines to pump up the underground water.

East of the Tisdafin Mountain (Jebel Asdaf in Arabic), the Ghallil plain comes to an end. Conventionally, this landmark is considered as the end of the Todgha valley, although geographically it continues its course further eastwards toward the oases of Tinejda, where the Ferkla and Todgha meet to form the Gheris, which, besides the Ziz, is one of the main tributaries of the large Tafilalt oasis.

In 2000, the valley housed approximately 70,000 inhabitants living in 64 villages and the booming town of Tinghir. The villages are located on both banks of the Todgha River, generally on an elevated spot amidst or directly adjacent to the agricultural fields that belong to the village. The typical form of habitat is the *ighrem* (pl. *igherman*)<sup>5</sup>, the traditionally fortified oasis village of southern Morocco, characterized by a dense, concentrated adobe habitat located within a common, defensive wall. In recent decades, the majority of oasis dwellers have left this traditional habitat to settle in new houses in *extra-muros* extensions, which has contributed to the rapid demise of these traditional, fortress-like villages.

### **Box 1. Toponymy and founding myths of Todgha and Tinghir**

The inhabitants of the Todgha have their own legends on their origins. The most common legend is that of an ancestor called Aâd, who, once upon a time, came to live in the valley. Aâd had two children, a girl, Touda, and a boy, Chedad. Before the death of their father, Aâd divided the greater valley between his children. The upstream part was granted to his daughter and the downstream part to his son. These names were corrupted to become part of the names Tinejda ('belongs to Chedad') and Todgha ('belongs to Touda').

Others believe that "Todgha" (its official Arabic name) or "Todoght" (its name in Tamazight Berber) is related to the term *tadrut* or *tudrt*, which means "life" in Tamazight Berber. This would refer to the Todgha river, which is literally the source of life for the valley's inhabitants. The Todgha valley is also known as "the valley of Tinghir", which is the name of the administrative center of the valley.

The name "Tinghir" is composed of *tin*, which means "belonging to", and *ighir*, which has the double meaning of shoulder and mountain. This name allegedly refers to the strategically located mountain dominating Tinghir and the lower Todgha, on which the former *qasbah* of *pasha* El Glaoui is located. The old *ighrem* of Tinghir is located at the foot of this mountain.

## **5.3. Ethnic strife and spatial segregation**

### **5.3.1. Oases as ethnic crossroads**

The Todgha has been an ethnic crossroads for many centuries. This applies to oases in Morocco and the Maghreb in general, located as they are on the geographical and historical crossroads between sub-Saharan and northern Africa. Its perennial sources, its agricultural resources, and its location on an ancient trading route have all given a certain economic and strategic importance to the Todgha valley. Although the traditional livelihoods of oasis dwellers were primarily based on subsistence agriculture, limited seasonal and circular migration, barter with nomad tribes, and long-distance trade formed sources of additional

<sup>5</sup> In Arabic, the name for *ighrem* is *qsar* (pl. *qsar*).

income. In particular, exchanges with nomads allowed sedentary oasis populations to diversify their diet.

The age-old struggle for dominance of the valley and the resulting armed conflicts between ethnic groups are reflected in the diverse ethnic composition of the valley. Given the rarity of water resources in this arid environment, population groups have fought for control over the source of the Todgha as well as the agricultural land irrigated by this water. The contemporary settlement pattern of the different ethnic groups should therefore be explained in the light of this historical struggle for the control of these vital and scarce resources

The population of the Todgha is composed of two principal ethnic groups living in distinct parts of the valley: the Aït Todoght in the upper Todgha and the Aït ‘Atta in the lower Todgha. These two ethnic groups live in neatly segregated zones of the valley. Internally, however, the Aït Todoght and Aït ‘Atta are far from homogenous entities, and are subdivided into numerous ethnic and territorial groups. Nevertheless, at the valley level, the main antagonism has been between these two major groups. Although the Aït Todoght and Aït ‘Atta speak largely identical versions of Tamazight Berber, they have distinct ethnic identities, which is reflected in a taboo on intermarriage between these groups. In the lower Todgha especially, tensions between the Aït Todoght and the Aït ‘Atta are still intense, and regularly result in open hostility and violent conflicts, particularly concerning the control and division of land and water resources.

Figure 5.1 depicts how the spatial settlement patterns of ethnic groups coincides with the relative claims they have on land and water resources. There is a clear association between ethnic affiliation and access to agricultural resources. Whereas the Aït Todoght live in the water-abundant but narrow and land-scarce upper and central parts of the valley, the Aït ‘Atta are concentrated in the open, land-abundant, but traditionally water-scarce, lower Todgha.

### **5.3.2. The Aït Todoght, children of the valley**

The upper and middle parts of the Todgha, the water-rich heart of the valley, are inhabited by the Aït Todoght<sup>6</sup>, literally meaning “children (or people) of the Todgha”. From Ighir in the upper Todgha until Aït El Mesquine some sixteen km further downstream, the Aït Todoght control much of the water and the fertile parts of the valley. The six most upstream villages of the valley located near the gorges are part of the Aït Tizgui. Affiliated as they are to ethnic groups living in the surrounding High Atlas, they are considered as Aït Todoght neither by others nor by themselves<sup>7</sup>.

The origins of the Aït Todoght are not clear, and almost certainly diverse. In spite of earlier suggestions that their origins can be traced back to the Maâquil Arab and the Zenata Berber tribes (Spillman 1931:211), it is more likely that the Aït Todoght do not have one single origin as such, and are the product of the immigration of diverse ethnic groups over many ages, which have all amalgamated into the present Aït Todoght.

Compared to the Aït ‘Atta and the other ethnic groups living near to the Todgha, it is among the Aït Todoght that the “tribal” dimension is the least strong. Rather than forming a homogeneous group, the Aït Todoght constitute a patchwork of different population groups. The Aït Todoght neither share a commonly imagined ancestor, nor have a sense of strong tribal unity. Their identity is first and foremost determined by the geographical space they

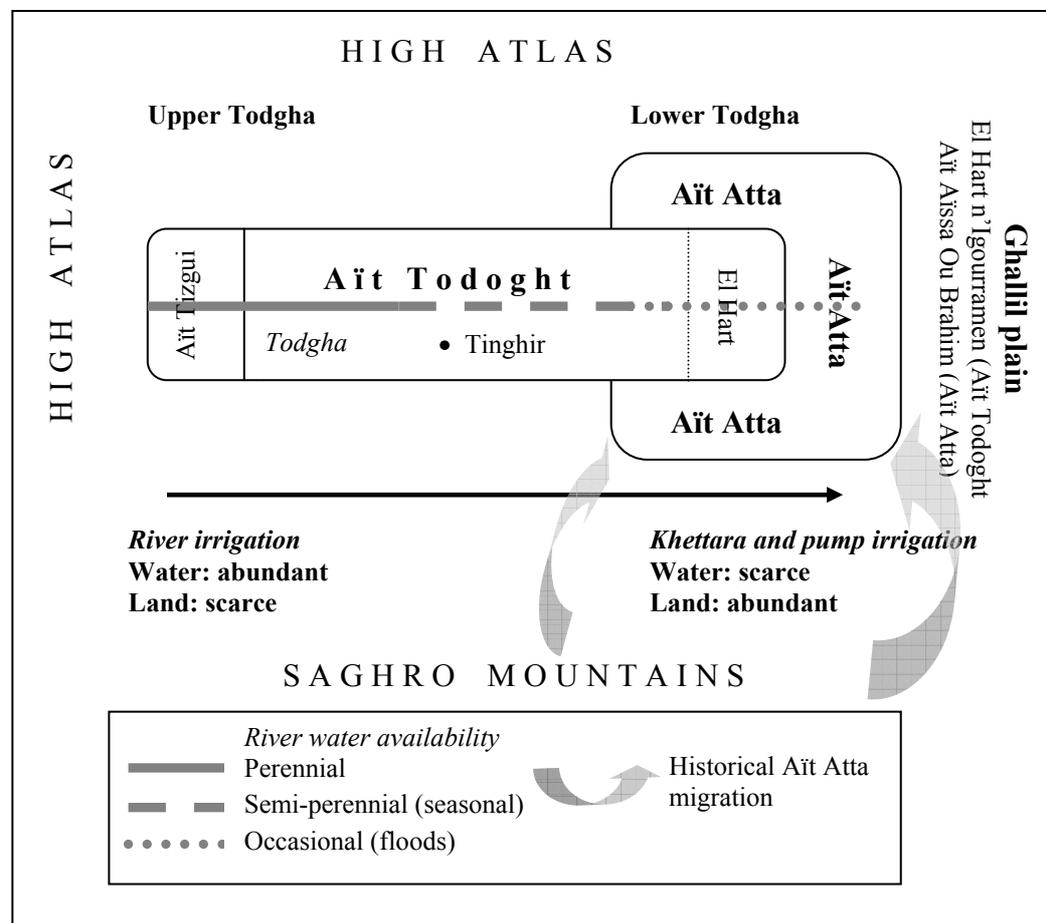
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<sup>6</sup> Ahl Todgha in Arabic.

<sup>7</sup> For practical reasons, however, the Aït Tizgui will be included when speaking of Aït Todoght in the remainder of this study.

share and defend, that is, the Todgha in general and the village in particular. This seems reflected in the name of the group, which does not refer to a common ancestor or the like, but to a geographical entity<sup>8</sup>.

Figure 5.1. Schematic ethnic and resource map of the Todgha valley



The Aït Todoght are highly stratified internally, and are made up of several ethnic sub-groups who live side by side in distinct territorial units, that is, the *igherman*. The main dimension of internal ethnic stratification is based on complexion. As in most of southern Morocco, a clear ethnic distinction exists between the generally light-skinned *imazighen*<sup>9</sup> (literally, the “free ones”), and the generally darker-skinned *haratin*<sup>10</sup>. Although the *haratin* indeed have a darker

<sup>8</sup> In Morocco, ethnic groups with a common ancestor and a strong common identity often have names referring to a common (imaginary) ancestor. This is the case for the Aït ‘Atta, which refers to the myth that all Aït ‘Atta descend from a historical person called Dadda ‘Atta (Hart 1981). In contrast, the name ‘Aït Todoght’ is primarily a reference to a geographical space. As we will see, the territory of the Aït Todoght exactly coincides with the land irrigated by the surface waters of the Todgha.

<sup>9</sup> The term *imazighen* is also used to indicate North African Berbers in general.

<sup>10</sup> *Haratin* is the name under which this ethnic group living in most areas of the southern Maghreb is commonly referred to in scientific literature. In order not to create unnecessary confusion, this is also the term that will also be used in this study. Nevertheless, it is important to bear in mind that use of this term is taboo (cf. Ensel 1999). “Black” southerners themselves do not generally like to be addressed as *haratin* or “blacks”, and generally prefer to identify themselves—depending on their mother tongue—as “Berbers” (such as in the Todgha and many other Moroccan oases) or Arabs (such as in parts of the Tafilalt and Drâa). In contrast, white inhabitants of the Todgha (both Aït Todoght *imazighen* and Aït ‘Atta) generally do *not* consider the *haratin* as Berbers, as, to them, “real Berberness” is not only linked to language but also to having a white skin, the alleged proof of “pure” Berber descent.

complexion than *imazighen* in general, variations in complexion within both groups are high, probably reflecting a high degree of ethnic mixing in the past.

Traditionally, the *haratin* occupied an inferior position within oasis society and are generally looked down on by the *imazighen*. Both groups generally live side by side within the same villages, though spatially segregated in distinct “quarters”<sup>11</sup> and socially segregated in different lineages. There is a general taboo on marriage between white and black lineages. Such stratification and segregation between white and black population groups is typical of most Moroccan oases.

In addition to the mixed villages, there are also a number of mono-ethnic villages in the Aït Todoght territory, which are uniquely inhabited by either *imazighen* or *haratin*. A separate sub-group among the Aït Todoght is formed by the two large villages of El Hart n’Igurramen (officially known as El Hart Mourabitine) and El Hart Niâamine, which are located at Aït Todoght’s frontier with Aït ‘Atta territory, and which are uniquely populated by *haratin*. These two villages form a kind of ethnic enclave between the generally mixed villages of Aït Todoght of the upper Todgha and the uniquely white Aït ‘Atta of the lower Todgha. Although the *haratin* of El Hart are generally considered as being part of the Aït Todoght, they form a distinct sub-group, who speak a different Tamazight dialect and who generally do not intermarry with other Aït Todoght.

According to older scientific literature, popular Moroccan knowledge, and local traditions among non-Black populations, the *haratin* are descendants of former slaves imported from West Africa through the caravan trade, especially during the reigns of the Saadian and Alawite dynasties. This descent is often emphasized by non-*haratin* as a proof of their inferior, humble status. However, in spite of this popular belief, it is more likely that the presence of *haratin* in southern Morocco is very ancient.

The presence of *haratin* in the Moroccan oases has been described even before the great age of trans-Saharan slave trade, and their presence might actually date back to before the arrival of most other population groups in southern Morocco (cf. Ensel 1999; Bellakhdar *et al.* 1993). In this light, the *haratin* might well be the original Black Berber population of southern Morocco<sup>12</sup>. At a later stage, other ethnic groups—generally tribes with strong (semi-) nomadic and warrior traditions—gained military control over the oases and often reduced the indigenous black population to marginal subsistence farming, sharecropping and, in some cases, servitude.

The *ismakhen*<sup>13</sup>, descendants of slaves that were transported from sub-Saharan Africa through the caravan trade, have to be distinguished from the *haratin*, who—despite their generally humble position as small subsistence farmers and sharecroppers—are of free descent. Levi-Provencal (1927) suggested that, at a later stage, the *haratin* of El Hart would have mixed with escaped slaves from sultan Mulay Ismaïl’s famous black army, although there is no convincing evidence for this assertion. It is also known that many *haratin* of the south were enslaved (Ennaji 1999), and that many descendants from slaves might, therefore, in fact originate from within Morocco.

If these hypotheses are correct, it is also likely that the *haratin* of the Todgha formed an ancient population of the Todgha valley, but were marginalized by population groups that

<sup>11</sup> In mixed villages, the *haratin* generally live in a central quarter of the *ighrem*. The dominant *imazighen* do not tolerate their presence near the gates, since this would imply the possibility that the *haratin* would have to defend the *ighrem* (and thus the *imazighen*) first in case of an outside attack. Such a situation is perceived as dishonorable for the *imazighen*.

<sup>12</sup> Like nomadic and other sedentary groups, Moroccan *haratin* can be either Berber or Arab-speaking. Language is a feature of ethnic identity that runs right across the divisions based on complexion and religious status. In the Todgha, however, *all* ethnic groups speak Tamazight Berber.

<sup>13</sup> Singular form *ismakh*. ‘*Abid* in Arabic (sing. ‘*abd*).

arrived later. Despite their generally inferior status, the *haratin* of the Todgha generally do not conform to the image of landless slaves or sharecroppers. Most *haratin* in the Todgha possess at least some land and have direct access to the river water resources of the Todgha, although generally less so than most Aït Todoght *imazighen*<sup>14</sup>.

Four villages of the Aït Todoght (especially Tinghir, and to a lesser extent Taourirt, Aït Ourjidal, and Asfalou) used to have a sizable Jewish population. These communities disappeared in the 1950s due to migration to Casablanca, Israel, and France<sup>15</sup>. Their economic role in oases has often been important. Like other ethnic groups, Jews lived in separate quarters of the villages, and occupied distinct professional classes, and were, besides subsistence farming, especially active as traders, silver-, goldsmiths, and other artisans.

Religious status is another feature of social and ethnic identity among the Aït Todoght. The first group possessing a particular religious status are the *igurramen*. These are believed to descend from a local saint (*salih* in Arabic, *marabut* in French), or from families of followers close to this *salih*, which adopted his identity in the course of time. Their (ascribed) descent from a holy man endows *igurramen* with *baraka* (sacred blessing and miracle-working ability) and, hence, a religious superiority over ordinary Muslims. *Igurramen* can be *imazighen*, *haratin*, or Jewish in origin. This religious status runs right across the classification based on complexion. *Igurramen* can be both black and white. Some villages of the Todgha are uniquely inhabited by *igurramen*<sup>16</sup>; sometimes they live as a separate lineage in a village of non-*igurramen* inhabitants.

Even higher in religious status are the *shurfa* who claim to be descendants of the prophet Muhammad. In the Todgha, *shurfa* are not numerous, and their social role seems relatively limited compared to other regions in Morocco. However, they have played a role as *fqihs* (Coranic teachers), intermediaries in religious affairs and political conflicts as well as *'aduls* (traditional religious notaries). Todgha's *shurfa* mainly live as separate lineages and in distinct quarters in the villages of Aït Zillal, Aït Yaâla, and Aït Mhamed. In contrast to *igurramen*, all *shurfa* in the Todgha are white.

### 5.3.3. The Aït 'Atta of the lower Todgha

It seems certain that the Aït 'Atta were the last ethnic group to settle in the Todgha valley. In his classic study of the Aït 'Atta, David Hart (1981:3-16) argued that the origin of this large tribal confederation can probably be traced back to the mid-sixteenth century. From their heartland in the Saghro Mountains, this semi-nomadic tribe began its conquest of the surrounding plains and oases from the seventeenth century onwards. Thanks to their sound internal political and military organization the Aït 'Atta succeeded in dominating large areas of southeastern Morocco, either by direct conquest or by exacting "protection agreements" (*ra'aya*) from sedentary (*haratin* or *imazighen*) oasis dwellers, a process by which they often acquired land and settled down in the oases.

<sup>14</sup> As Moseley (1995) argued, attempts to represent south-Moroccan *haratin* as property-less ex-slaves are denied by the significant intercommunity variations in access to land, water, market opportunities, internal stratification, and political power.

<sup>15</sup> The presence of Jews in southern Morocco dates back more than 2,000 years. The Jews of southern Morocco are part of the so-called *plishtim* group. They form the most ancient Jewish population group of Morocco, and they are believed to have immigrated from Palestine from the sixth century BC onwards (cf. Zafrani 1998).

<sup>16</sup> Zaouïa Sidi 'Abdelali near the gorges in Tizgui and El Hart n'Igurramen (also known as El Hart Murabitin) in the lower Todgha are the most important *igurramen* villages of the Todgha. The tombs of their *salih*s are still the center of a yearly *agdud*.

Traditionally, the Aït ‘Atta—who believe themselves to be descendants of the 40 grandsons of a historical-mythical person Dadda ‘Atta (Hart 1981)—pursued semi-nomadic livelihoods combining sedentary settlement and agriculture in oases with transhumant livestock keeping, in which men moved with their herds between summer and winter pastures<sup>17</sup>. This is in contrast with the Aït Todoght, whose livelihoods are sedentary.

Internally, the Aït ‘Atta are divided up into five main socio-political units (*khums*), which, in turn, are further subdivided into numerous clans, subclans, lineages, and sublineages (*ighsan*). Aït ‘Atta socio-political organization is segmentary. Although conflicts and warfare occurred between contesting lineages, they tended to unite in face of a common enemy. It appears that the Aït ‘Atta settled in the Todgha at a relatively late stage. When the first Aït ‘Atta settled in the Todgha is not completely sure, but based on Hart’s description, they probably did not settle in the Todgha before 1750-1800. Corresponding with Hart’s (1981:214-5) general description of Aït ‘Atta’s expansion, oral traditions from both Aït ‘Atta and El Hart report that the settlement of Aït ‘Atta at the downstream fringe of the oasis was enabled by the conclusion of protection agreements with the villages of El Hart.

In exchange for protection from attack from hostile ethnic groups (such as the Aït Morghad, but mainly against other lineages of the Aït ‘Atta itself<sup>18</sup>), the *haratin* of El Hart allowed some Aït ‘Atta lineages to settle at the fringe of the ancient oasis. This enabled them to settle in a ring or a crescent-like collection of villages at the water-scarce, land-abundant downstream fringe of the ancient, river-irrigated Todgha oasis, more or less encircling and “protecting” the villages of El Hart in a spatial pattern resembling a crescent (see figure 5.1).

By extorting *ra’aya* from the sedentary Aït Todoght, the mighty Aït ‘Atta of the Saghro have gained some influence in the Todgha over the past two to three centuries as they have done in many other oases in southern Morocco. However, in spite of their purported ethnic superiority and their reported military strength in southern Morocco over the past centuries, Aït ‘Atta power has remained relatively limited in the Todgha. This is illustrated by the fact that the Aït ‘Atta have never gained access to the surface waters of the Todgha river, which has remained a strict Aït Todoght prerogative.

The Aït ‘Atta only succeeded in settling along the fringes of the traditional oasis. Although it is possible that they acquired some Aït Todoght territory through protection agreements, they were systematically excluded from access to river water. In the lower Todgha valley, where the Aït ‘Atta settled, the river bed of the Todgha is normally dry, and the Aït ‘Atta were not allowed to tap the water from dams located upstream, as the Aït Todoght villages in the lower Todgha (El Hart, Amzaourou) do. The fact that the Aït ‘Atta only succeeded in settling in the ecologically marginal, water scarce, sections of the valley, far from the green heart of the valley dominated by Aït Todoght, seems to highlight their relatively weak position.

Hence, the Aït ‘Atta were obliged to dig laborious *khattara* systems to tap underground water resources in order to irrigate their fields. This was a dangerous work of specialists, which they normally let other people do. As the sources of most *khattaras* are on Aït Todoght territory, the Aït ‘Atta themselves were dependent on maintaining good relations with their neighbors.

In contrast to the internally diversified Aït Todoght, the Aït ‘Atta villages are mono-ethnic white *imazighen*, with each villages belonging to one particular Aït ‘Atta sub-lineage, the only exception being the presence of some *ismakh* families. The Aït ‘Atta tend to consider themselves as superior to the Aït Todoght in general and the *haratin* in particular. Aït ‘Atta generally claim to be “pure whites”—in contrast to the “mingled” Aït Todoght—which they

<sup>17</sup> In French geography, such livelihoods are known as *transhumance*.

<sup>18</sup> The dominant contesting Aït ‘Atta lineages in the lower Todgha are the Aït Isfoul and Aït Aïssa Ou Brahim.

see as proof of their “pure” Berber descent. The Aït ‘Atta also tend to be proud of their warrior ethos and tend to consider the sedentary Aït Todoght as a dishonorable people “without history”<sup>19</sup>.

In their turn, the Aït Todoght tend to look down on the Aït ‘Atta, who they often portray as primitive nomads, lacking the “civilization” of the sedentary *imazighen*. As we will see in subsequent chapters, the Aït ‘Atta have long clinged to their traditional, largely self-sufficient pastoral-rural livelihoods and their “glorious past”. In comparison, the Aït Todoght were less isolated both in geographical and in political terms. They were more confronted with the outside world and were more prone and able to modify their traditional livelihoods by participating in labor migration from the early twentieth century onwards. Their earlier incorporation into wider economic and migratory networks explains how they have become generally wealthier and more “modernized” than most Aït ‘Atta, which seems to increase their sense of superiority.

Hart (1981) stated that the general relationship between the Aït ‘Atta and their *haratin* clients was that, in exchange for their protection, the *haratin* worked for the Aït ‘Atta as agricultural workers, well diggers, and sharecroppers. However, according to oral sources from both Aït ‘Atta and *haratin*, such a relationship has not existed in the Todgha valley. For digging their *khattaras*, for example, the Aït ‘Atta of the lower Todgha employed—and still employ—people from other regions, such as the Drâa (cf. Otte 2000). This further corroborates the argument that the south-Moroccan *haratin* did not universally form a property-less class of serfs and slaves, and that—although they occupied a low status in general—their relative status in fact varied from oasis to oasis.

Relations between the Aït Todoght and the Aït ‘Atta continue to be tense. Relations between the Aït ‘Atta and the *haratin* of the El Hart villages in particular are openly hostile. On this ethnic frontier, mutual resentment is extremely pronounced. Conflicts over land and water in particular regularly result in violent clashes (cf. Aït Hamza 2002), suggesting that former protection arrangements were neither uncontested nor completely voluntary. As recent as 1998, a violent conflict occurred between Tadafelt and the neighboring village of El Hart Niâamine (Otte 2000:73). According to inhabitants of El Hart, land was only given to the Aït ‘Atta for the duration of the protection. The Aït ‘Atta, in their turn, do not even consider the thought of rendering land to people who they tend to consider as their (former) clients. Even nowadays, there is a strict taboo among the Aït ‘Atta on selling any land to *haratin*, which is considered as a highly dishonorable act.

### 5.3.4. Traditional socio-political organization

Before colonial times, the basic unit of socio-political organization within each *ighrem* was the so-called *ighs* (pl. *ighsan*), or the ethnic lineage consisting of a group of extended families all sharing one common ancestor. Depending on their population size, most villages comprise two to eight *ighsan*. Each *ighs* is composed of several extended family groups. Although membership of lineages is based on patrilinear descent, Hart (1981) has demonstrated that, through a traditional admission procedure, immigrant outsiders could become member of an *ighs* and, hence, the village community.

The villages in the Todgha are politically independent of each other. The geographical “extension” of an *ighs* is mostly restricted to one village, and rarely comprises several

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<sup>19</sup> It is known among the Aït ‘Atta that a famous American anthropologist, David Hart, wrote a book on them (Hart 1981). They tend to see this as proof that they—as opposed to the Aït Todoght—are a “real” people with a glorious history.

villages. There is no strong inter-village solidarity between ethnic groups sharing the same complexion. For example, *haratin* of different villages do not organize themselves at the valley level against *imazighen* in general. Regardless of their specific ethnic background, people primarily identify themselves strongly with the village they inhabit. Especially among the Aït Todoght, the notion of identity is strongly territorialized. The village is, thus, after the *ighs*, the second and most important level of socio-political organization.

Both among the Aït ‘Atta and the Aït Todoght, all *ighsan* within a village jointly make up the *taqbilt* (*jema’a* in Arabic) or the traditional village council. More precisely, this is the council of village notables, and is normally composed of representatives (*ayians*) from each *ighs*. Traditional institutions like the *taqbilt* have sometimes been idealized as strongly egalitarian and even as a form of proto-democracy. However, it is important to stress that the *taqbilt* was by no means “democratic”, since power was strongly linked to land possession and, thus, strongly hereditary. In general, only land- and water-possessing men could become *ayian* in the *taqbilt*, which was clearly dominated by a limited number of wealthy *ighsan*. These groups with vested interests determined the rules of, for example, new land and water divisions, in which the wealthy groups were clearly at an advantage (cf. Otte 2000). The traditional oasis system was based on a caste-like ethnic hierarchy in which sharecroppers and the landless—often *hartani* and *ismakh*—provided the physical labor to maintain the irrigation infrastructure and till the fields. Only large land and water-owners could gain the political influence to become *amghar*.

Each year, the *ayians* of a village’s *taqbilt* elect a chief (*amghar*), who is usually responsible for (1) settling conflicts between families and lineages over land, water, and other issues; (2) ensuring the maintenance of the irrigation system; (3) collecting contributions for collective activities in honor of the village’s saint; (4) implementing sanctions and fines; (5) allocating so-called *habus* land (see chapter 8) to villagers willing to cultivate this “religious” land; (6) organizing the next *amghar* election; and (7) representing the village’s interests vis-à-vis other villages (see Otte 2000). In some villages, in addition to a supreme *amghar*, the *taqbilt* elects each year a special land and water chief (*amghar n-tamazirt*), who is specifically responsible for all agricultural affairs.

The Aït ‘Atta of the lower Todgha lacked an institution encompassing all villages in the Todgha, as the villages belong to different sub-lineages within the Aït ‘Atta. Although the Aït ‘Atta did have well-organized political-legal institutions for the tribe as a whole, political organization at lower levels went along segmentary rather than territorial lines. Thus, the Aït ‘Atta villages of the lower Todgha only have their “Attaness” in common, and do not feel strong bonds with the Aït ‘Atta from other Todgha villages if they are not from the same lineage. As a consequence, an ‘Attawi has closer social and political links with another ‘Attawi from the same lineage living in the Saghro Mountains or the Drâa valley than with an ‘Attawi from another lineage who lives in the village next to him.

The heterogeneous Aït Todoght equally lacked a strong central organization, although their sense of identity is far more territorialized and strongly linked to the Todgha as a geographical unit than among the Aït ‘Atta. In the absence of central power at the valley level, conflicts between villages over, for instance, the control of water and land resources were frequent, and occasionally resulted in armed conflicts between villages or groups of villages (cf. De Foucauld 1885:222). Despite their internal diversity, the Aït Todoght, as will be demonstrated in chapter 8, needed to coordinate irrigation at the valley level, as they use water from the same source. Moreover, they had a shared interest in defending their villages, fields, and irrigation works against foreign intruders in order to secure their monopoly on the abundant and perennial surface waters of the Todgha.

**Box 2. Collective and bonded labor in traditional oasis society**

The village institution of the *taqbilt* fulfills a crucial function in traditional oasis agriculture in its function as a land and water board as well as a tribunal. *Tuiza* is the norm through which the *taqbilt* organized the collective maintenance of the main (collective) irrigation channels. Moreover, it organized the collective maintenance of the vital irrigation system, for which each household was obliged to provide a worker. *Timiwult* is the law of the *amghar*, according to which people who do not participate in collective works are fined. Nowadays, a fine normally consists of a salary for one worker or the obligation to provide a meal for a group of workers.

Before, the date harvest was also collectively controlled. The *taqbilt* decided on harvest times and this was done collectively. For individual farmers, it was not allowed to harvest their dates individually, under threat of punishment. Over the past decades the support for this system has decreased, and has been abolished in most *igherman* of the Todgha. Nowadays, only the necessary maintenance of dams, irrigation channels, and *khettaras* is collectively organized. The decline of these collective arrangements are partly explained by increasing “individualization” (of households vis-à-vis the village community) and the coincident installation of individual water pumps.

Slavery was a general phenomenon in traditional oasis society that only disappeared in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. *Gulfa* was a feudal system of forced labor for rulers such as *qiad* and *pashas*, which existed well into the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Notorious in this respect is the forced labor many Todghawis had to do for Pasha Thami Glaoui of Marrakech and his family clan, who collaborated with the French and who dominated much of southern Morocco during the protectorate. On the mountain top near Tinghir (where the current hotel Saghro is located) the Glaouis constructed a *qasba*, which is now ruined. Todghawis were forced to contribute to the construction of the *qasba* and to work as servants. The elderly remember this forced labor as extremely harsh.

Confronted with a common enemy, the different villages of the Aït Todoght united in defense of their territory and the sources of the Todgha, protected by the fortress-like habitation of the villages supported by a chain of watch-towers (Beaupère 1931:217; Büchner 1986). In this way, the Aït Todoght have been successful in defending the valley’s important land and water resources against the *makhzen* and invading tribes, in particular the Aït ‘Atta. All in all, the Aït Todoght have remained relatively independent of “protection” and the exaction of tribute by conquering tribes. Reviewing the ethnic map of Morocco, the Todgha indeed appears as a rectangular ethnic enclave among the large tribal confederations of southern Morocco.

#### 5.4. Population characteristics of the research villages

As we explained in chapter 3, the villages have been selected in such a way that they cover the migratory, agricultural-environmental, and socio-ethnic variability in the valley (see table 5.1). The first research village, *Zaouiïa Sidi ‘Abdelali* (hereafter *Zaouiïa*), is the second-to-last upstream village in the Todgha, just downstream of the Gorges du Todgha, in the section where the narrow valley is hemmed in by steep mountains. Counting approximately 124 households and 870 inhabitants, *Zaouiïa* is a relatively large village. Strictly speaking, the inhabitants of *Zaouiïa* are no Aït Todoght, but belong to the Aït Tizgui, an ethnic group affiliated with tribes inhabiting the High Atlas Mountains north of *Zaouiïa*. Most inhabitants of *Zaouiïa* are white *igurramen*. The *igurramen* of *Zaouiïa* are believed to descend from a *salih*

called Sidi ‘Abdelali, whose tomb is located in the village. According to local tradition, the three *ighsan* of the village represent the descendants of the three sons of the *salih*. On the *mulud*, the birthday of the prophet Muhammad, an *agdud* (pilgrimage) is held in the village.

**Table 5.1. General characteristics of the research villages and the Ghallil plain**

Village	Ethnicity	Municipality	Population	Households	Av. hh size
Zaouïa	Aït Tizgui (white <i>igurramen</i> , some <i>haratin</i> families)	Todgha El Oulya	871	124	7.02
Tikoutar	Aït Todoght ( <i>haratin</i> and <i>imazighen</i> lineages)	Tinghir	766	105	7.30
Aït El Meskine	Aït Todoght ( <i>imazighen</i> , recent immigration <i>haratin</i> families)	Todgha Es-Soufla	538	71	7.58
Ikhba	Aït Todoght ( <i>imazighen</i> lineages only)	Todgha Es-Soufla	546	62	8.81
Tadafelt	Aït ‘Atta ( <i>imazighen</i> lineages only)	Taghzout	869	117	7.43
Ghallil n’Aït Isfoul	Aït ‘Atta ( <i>imazighen</i> lineages only)	Taghzout	208	28	7.43
Ghallil Plain	Aït ‘Atta ( <i>imazighen</i> ), El Hart n’ <i>Igurramen</i> ( <i>haratin</i> ) and outsiders	Taghzout	NA	270	NA

**Source:** Household survey

Although Zaouïa is predominantly *imazighen*, some *haratin* families inhabit the villages. As their number is too small to form a separate *ighs*, they have been incorporated into the *imazighen* lineages. Nevertheless, they are not considered *igurramen*, and they do not marry with white members of the *ighs* to which they formally belong. The *igurramen* from Zaouïa have close historical-religious links with villages in the Saghro and Atlas Mountains, such as Tamtetoucht, Alnif, Aït Yahia n’Kerdous, and Taghzout n’Aït Yaâza. Due to their “holy” status, the inhabitants of Zaouïa received agricultural land as religious donations. Out of respect for the *baraka* of the *salih* Sidi ‘Abdelali, this land was donated to his alleged descendants. This explains why many households in Zaouïa possess land in those villages.

The second research village, *Tikoutar*, is an Aït Todoght village located near Tinghir. With approximately 105 households and 770 inhabitants, *Tikoutar* is a medium-sized village. The population of *Tikoutar* consists of *imazighen* and *haratin*, and is divided into eight mono-ethnic *ighsan*. The ethnic cleavage within the village is a continuous source of conflict, and the ethnic dimension dominates local politics. Despite these internal problems, the villagers perceive themselves as a single unit in case of conflict with neighboring villages. In Zaouïa and *Tikoutar*, river water is abundant and available all year round enabling lush agriculture all-year round, although land is scarce and extremely fragmented.

The third research village, *Aït El Meskine*, also an Aït Todoght village, is located in the central part of the lower Todgha, on the boundary separating the two *haratin* villages of El Hart and also close to Aït ‘Atta territory. With approximately 71 households and 540 inhabitants, Aït El Meskine is a relatively small village. All four *ighsan* of the village are *imazighen*. Recently, some *haratin* of the neighboring El Hart villages joined the ranks of the inhabitants of Aït El Meskine to work as sharecropper (*akhemmes*), agricultural or construction workers, which they sometimes combine with guarding the houses of migrant families that have left the village. Located downstream, Aït El Meskine historically has limited access to river water only in the winter half year. Nowadays, agriculture in this relatively wealthy village is therefore exclusively based on motor pumping, in which peasants

have invested massively. Most plots lay fallow in summer. Plot sizes are bigger than in the upper valley, and allow for limited mechanization.

The fourth research village, *Ikhba*, is located next to Aït El Mesquine, and counts three *ighsan*, who are *imazighen* according to the villagers, although there is strong *haratin* influence too. Just like in Aït El Mesquine, several *haratin* from El Hart have settled in Ikhba. Compared to Aït El Mesquine, Ikhba is more difficult to access by road, and seems more oriented towards Tinghir than Aït El Mesquine, which is primarily oriented towards Taghzout as its commercial center. With an approximate number of 62 households and 550 inhabitants, Ikhba is somewhat smaller than Aït El Mesquine. Compared with the adjacent village of Aït El Mesquine, Ikhba is poorer in socio-economic terms. Its agricultural situation is rather comparable to that of Aït El Mesquine, although peasants have invested less in motor pumping. Both Aït El Mesquine and Ikhba are part of a group of downstream Aït Todoght villages named Amzaourou. Although formally *imazighen*, upstream Aït Todoght tend to consider them of mixed descent due to alleged *haratin* influence from neighboring El Hart villages. This seems true for Ikhba in particular.

The two other research villages are located on Aït ‘Atta territory. The fifth research village, *Tadafelt*, is located within an isolated spot on the right bank of the Todgha, along a mostly dry tributary of the Todgha—the Asif n’Tadafelt. The population of Tadafelt is split up into five *ighsan*, which are all Aït ‘Atta. Tadafelt is also among the most marginal and poorest oases in the Todgha. With 117 households and approximately 870 people, it is a relatively large village and comparable in size to Zaouïa. As with all Aït ‘Atta villages, Tadafelt has no access to river water, and agriculture is largely based on *khattara* irrigation, although some peasants have installed motor pumps in ancient oasis and recently colonized land outside the ancient oasis. Plots are relatively small and fragmented and do not allow for mechanization.

The sixth research village, *Ghallil n’Aït Isfoul*, is located north of the paved road at the downstream end of the Todgha. The small village contains approximately 8 households and 210 people, living in five different *ighsan*. Formerly based on *khattara* and flood irrigation, the traditional irrigation infrastructure is now heavily degraded. The village is in an acute water crisis, and agriculture is only possible by pumping. Both *Tadafelt* and *Ghallil ‘Aït Isfoul* are almost uniquely *imazighen*.

As a new agricultural colonization zone, settlement patterns on the Ghallil plain are entirely different from the traditional oasis. *Igherman* or other forms of concentrated village settlements are lacking here, as settlers live scattered over the plain next to their agricultural plots. In 2000, about 270 households were living on the plain. Their origins are highly diverse. About one third of all settlers originate from El Hart n’Igurrmen, 5 percent are Aït ‘Atta from Aït Aïssa Ou Brahim, and another 5 percent came from other Aït Todoght villages. About one half are Aït ‘Atta from the Saghro mountains, and 7 percent originate from other places outside the Todgha (cf. De Haas and El Ghanjou 2000b).

## 5.5. An oasis valley in a changing political-economic context

### 5.5.1. Pre-colonial history

Moroccan oases have historically been important junctions and halting-places in an extensive network of trading routes, which linked oases with one another and with more distant areas located in and outside present-day Morocco. It was, in particular, through the trans-Saharan caravan trade—in which salt, gold, and slaves were most important—that intensive contacts between southern Morocco and the Sahel zone were fostered. The caravan trade linked all the important population centers in North and West Africa. These age-old contacts have partly contributed to the highly diverse population of southern Morocco today.

Until French colonization, the Todgha valley belonged to the so-called *bled es-siba* (see chapter 4.5.2), the part of Morocco's *hinterland* that was largely controlled by tribes and where the state had only marginal political influence (Beaurpère 1931; Büchner 1986; Raclot 1936). Apart from some short periods in history, the Todgha has remained largely independent from sultanic state power. From their capitals in the west and north of the Atlas Mountains, the sultans had difficulties controlling most of the interior of the country. Although the Todgha remained largely beyond the control of central state power, it was the subject of a number of *harkas* (military campaigns) by the sultans, usually in an effort to gain control over trading routes and collect tribute. Nevertheless, these *harkas* never had a lasting influence. As in the remainder of southern Morocco, nomad or semi-nomadic tribal confederations tried to control the oases by extorting *ra'aya* (protection) agreements from the sedentary populations. However, as we have seen, even the rapidly expanding and powerful Aït 'Atta did not succeed in gaining total control of the Todgha.

Historical sources indicate that the *ighrem* of Tinghir, which is centrally located in the Todgha valley, used to be one of the more important trade centers of the central Moroccan Presahara, at least until the end of the nineteenth century (De Foucauld 1885:224; Beaurpère 1931; Harris 1895:313 cited in Büchner 1986:129). Tinghir was located along the trading route that ran through the pre-African fault between the High Atlas and the Saghro mountains, and which linked the Tafilalt—one of Morocco's most important oasis areas and the region of origin of the current 'Alawite dynasty—with the imperial city of Marrakech, which was much frequented by caravans. Immediately west of Tinghir, this route crossed the Todgha River at the same location as the bridge where the paved road currently crosses the valley.

The independence of the Aït Todoght—who neither belonged to, nor were allied to, any of the large contesting tribal confederations (e.g., Aït 'Atta, Aït Sedrat, Aït Yafelmane, Aït Morghad) dominating the Presahara—boosted trade and made Tinghir the commercial center of not only the Todgha, but also of parts of the Saghro and High Atlas mountains surrounding the valley. The *suq* (market) of Tinghir had the status of ethnically neutral territory, and local market law forbade people to fight or take up arms (cf. Ubach and Rackow 1923:128-134 cited in Büchner 1986:132). This all contributed to the attraction of Tinghir as a market place.

### Box 3. Marabutic founding myths

*Marabutism* is a central characteristic of Maghrebi and West-African popular Islam. The tombs of *marabuts* or *salihs*, which are located all over the Todgha valley, used to be venerated by the village's populations. Nevertheless, this practice is declining now under the influence of orthodox and modernist Islam. Besides the village *salihs*, some *salihs* have a regional importance, and are the subject of an annual *agdud*, which attract thousands or tens of thousands of pilgrims. Many *igherman* have founding myths in which the village's *salih* plays a central role as either the alleged founder of the *ighrem* or as a person who endowed the *ighrem* with his *baraka* (divine benediction). The founding myth of Aït El Meskine illustrates the latter case. It also shows how crucial water is in the lives of oasis dwellers.

When Sidi Mohammed El Meskine arrived in Aït El Meskine the *ighrem* existed already. Although he did not found the *ighrem*, it now bears his name. Before coming to Aït El Meskine he lived Aït Aritane, another village in the valley. One of his daughters was so beautiful that the young villagers climbed to the top of the mountain near the village in order to watch his daughter in the courtyard of his house. Therefore, he decided to go to a place where there were no mountains nearby, so that his daughter would not be annoyed. He chose Aït El Meskine because of its location in the middle of the plain.

Sidi Mohammed El Meskine was a shepherd until the end of his life. He had a great knowledge of Islam and encouraged villagers to practice the religion. Moreover, as several events attest, he possessed *baraka*. For example, shepherds usually feared the wolves, as they preyed on their flocks. Yet Sidi Mohammed El Meskine did his prayers without guarding his flock and, in fact, the wolves actually came to guard his flock while he was praying! This was the first sign of his *baraka*.

One day, he took a stick and hit the dry soil. Instantly, water welled up from the ground, and continued to flow—villagers are still able to indicate the exact place of this event. The creation of this well was the second sign of his *baraka*. However, this abundant source of water in this desert valley aroused the jealousy of inhabitants of the large neighboring *igherman* of El Hart n'Igurramen and Aït Aïssa Ou Brahim, who took up arms to conquer the well. In order to repel this danger, Sidi Mohammed El Meskine stroked the top of the well with the flat of his hand. The water immediately stopped, but it continued to flow under the ground, as it has continued to do so ever since. This was the third sign of the exceptional *baraka* of Sidi Mohammed El Meskine.

Thanks to the benediction of God and the intervention of Sidi Mohammed El Meskine, people believe, Aït El Meskine has shallow and abundant groundwater. Previously, this water was extracted through the use of the *aghrur*. These days, people use water pumps. Even during the great drought of the 1980s, when large parts of the Todgha suffered from a lack of water, water was abundant in Aït El Meskine. In many Todgha villages, the tradition of the *agdud* has largely disappeared. However, in Aït El Meskine this tradition is still alive. Villagers say that the respect for this tradition is the very reason why in Aït El Meskine there is still abundant groundwater, while other *igherman* suffer from falling water tables and the “death” of wells and *khetaras*.

### 5.5.2. Incorporation into the colonial state and administrative reforms

The signing of the Fes treaty in 1912 marked the formal beginning of the French and Spanish occupation of Morocco. Whereas Spain gained control over the northern Rif area, France gained control over most of the rest of the territory including the southern oases. However, it took two decades of bloody war to defeat the numerous inland tribes, who did not intend to respect the treaty signed by the sultan, thus rebelling against central power. Resistance was at its fiercest in the northern Rif mountains and southern oasis and desert areas, and it was only in the 1930s that the colonial powers gained effective control over these zones.

In January 1931, the French conquered Agdz in the upper Drâa valley after many years of military stalemate. This was an important advance, as in this way they made an important breach in the “Atlas front”. In the same year, the colonial army advanced from Ouarzazate and Ksar-es-Souk (present-day Errachidia) in the direction of Todgha, and occupied the valley on the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> November 1931, without meeting any significant resistance (Büchner 1986). In January 1932, the French army conquered Zagora in the Drâa valley. However, the Aït ‘Atta were the last Moroccan tribe to resist the French. Some Aït ‘Atta of the lower Todgha left their villages after French occupation of the valley, and moved to the Saghro Mountains to join other Aït ‘Atta in their struggle. In the Bougafer war of 1933, the Aït ‘Atta were eventually defeated in their native Saghro mountains.

Following the conquest of the Todgha and the surrounding areas, the French rapidly established a modern administrative structure by creating a *Bureau des Affaires Indigènes*, which fell under the authority of a French officer. The colonial authority created the Annexe de Tinghir, an administrative unit comprising the Aït Todoght and Aït ‘Atta, and largely comprising the Todgha. An unpaved road was constructed which crossed the Presahara in a southwestern-northeastern direction (the current paved road P32), linking Tinghir to Ouarzazate and Errachidia, with further connections to Marrakech and Meknes. The location of the road more or less coincided with the course of the old caravan trading route between the Tafilalt and Marrakech. Equally, a road was constructed running through the upper Todgha between Tinghir and the Gorges du Todgha near Zaouïa.

Shortly after French conquest, the colonial authority established services such as a post office, a tribunal, a primary school, and a health clinic in Tinghir. The choice of Tinghir as an administrative center had important implications, as it strengthened its position as the center of the valley and further boosted its growth (Büchner 1986). It also clearly put at an advantage villages located close to Tinghir or along the newly constructed roads, which then had better access to work, public amenities, and schooling located in Tinghir. Elements of the ancient Aït Todoght elite of Tinghir became associated with the colonial authority. Hence, the Aït Todoght profited most from the new economic opportunities offered by the colonial presence, the incorporation of the Todgha into the capitalist economy, and migration. The Aït ‘Atta not only had an anti-colonial and rebellious reputation, but most of their villages were also relatively isolated compared to the Aït Todoght.

The colonial authority tried to reinforce the traditional commercial position of Tinghir, which had been suffering from the colonial conquest. Probably in the late 1930s, a new market place was created (the current “old *suq*”). The ancient elite as well as many of Tinghir’s Jews exploited the commercial opportunities of Tinghir’s favorable location and its new position as an administrative center. They capitalized on new developments, and established new businesses outside the old *ighrem* in a newly established quarter (Büchner 1986:134).

Colonial rule meant a definite end to the political autonomy of the valley and its incorporation into a central state. With this “pacification”, the *siba* period came to an end.

Central state institutions and representatives began to hold effective power and enforce formal state law. This had fundamental implications for traditional socio-political organization (see also chapter 10). After independence in 1956, the administrative structures established by the French remained largely intact. The area was firmly incorporated into the structure of the central Moroccan state under the crown of the ‘Alawite king—who inherited the administrative and military infrastructure established by the French, and who now had all the tribes of the interior under firm and permanent control for the first time in history.

Nevertheless, and partly under influence of sustained population growth, the territory of the Todgha underwent two administrative reforms after independence. Following an administrative reform in 1958, the territory of the Todgha municipality was administratively split up into two so-called *communes rurales* (“rural municipalities”)—one for the Aït Todoght and one for the Aït ‘Atta—which were governed by a state-appointed *qaid* (administrator) governing a so-called *qaidat*. Administratively, each municipality was subdivided into so-called *fractions* (administrative sub-districts). These administrative subdivisions were established by the French and were—except for some minor changes—largely maintained in the post-colonial era. A *fraction* generally comprises a group of villages. Each *fraction* is headed by a *shikh*. The *shikh* in turn supervises several *mqaddemin*, who are appointed chiefs responsible for one to three villages.

Although a *fraction* is an administrative unit in the first place, the geographical delimitation of *fractions* generally followed existing ethnic boundaries. In order to prevent unnecessary conflicts, a *fraction* never comprises two distinct ethnic groups. According to this principle, the Aït Tizgui villages—including Zaouïa—in the most upstream part of the valley have their own administrative *fraction*. Going further downstream, the following Aït Todoght *fractions* have been defined: Aït Snane, Aït Igourtane, Tinghir, Tagoumast, Afanour, Amzaourou, and El Hart. In the same vein, the Aït ‘Atta territory was subdivided into the *fractions* of Taghzout, Aït Aïssa Ou Brahim, and Achdad.

In 1992, the administrative situation changed for the second time since independence. In that year, Tinghir received the status of *municipalité* (“urban municipality”), which was a recognition of its rapid development into a town over the post-independence period. The rest of the Todgha was split into three *communes rurales*. Map 2 displays current administrative divisions. In the upper Todgha, the *commune rurale* of Todgha El Oulya (literally meaning “upper Todgha”) comprises the *fractions* of Aït Tizgui and Aït Snane. The research village of Zaouïa is part of this administrative unit. The newly created *municipalité* of Tinghir not only comprises the actual urban center, but also the surrounding *fractions* of Igourtane, Afanour, and Tagoumast. Villages located in these *fractions*, such as Tikoutar, are increasingly integrated into the urban economy of Tinghir. The expanding town is beginning to absorb villages that previously lay beyond its outskirts.

Downstream of Tinghir, the *commune rurale* of Todgha Es-Soufla (literally meaning lower Todgha) was created, comprising the villages of the El Hart, Aït M’hamed, and the Amzaourou *fractions*. Both Aït El Meskine and Ikhba fall under Todgha Es-Soufla. The already existing *commune rurale* of Taghzout n’Aït ‘Atta, which governs all Aït ‘Atta villages, was extended with the villages of Achdad, Tadafelt, and Taghia, which were formerly part of non-Todgha administrative units. Both Tadafelt and Ghallil n’Aït Isfoul are part of Taghzout n’Aït ‘Atta. The Ghallil plain falls under the joint authority of the *shiukh* of Todgha Es-Soufla and Taghzout n’Aït ‘Atta, as both Aït Todoght and Aït ‘Atta have recently settled in this agricultural frontier zone.

The three *communes rurales* remain under the authority of one single *qaid*, and the *municipalité* of Tinghir is governed by a state-appointed *pasha*. The colonial sub-division in *fractions* was largely maintained. The offices of the *qaid* and *pasha* are located in the *qaidat* in Tinghir, which is the former *Bureau des Affaires Indigènes*, a large compound where the

*forces auxiliaires* are equally quartered. Each municipality has an elected council (the modern *jema'a*) and a president (*rais*), although these councils have only limited power compared to the *qaid* and *pasha*. The latter are—on behalf of the Ministry of the Interior—responsible for the “security” of the Todgha and their inhabitants.

The traditional village councils were left intact as such, but lost most of their jurisdiction through the imposition of the state’s administrative and legal structures. The *taqbilt* and *amghar* are allowed to regulate internal village and agricultural affairs as long as this does not provoke conflict, political unrest, or affect more general interests. As a local civil servant stated:

As long as the relations between the villagers in the valley are good and the village can solve their problems internally, there is no need for the government to interfere in their affairs. Then, there is peace in the valley. Only if the relations between villagers are bad and the villages cannot solve their problems, the government will interfere and take over the duties and responsibilities of the *amghar* and *aiyans* (Otte 2000:110)

The *taqbilt* is “tolerated” as long as it works well and conflicts do not escalate out of control. Nevertheless, it now lacks any formal status and its status among villagers is declining. The *moqaddem* now represents state power in the village, and has become mightier than the traditional *amghar*, who lacks any formal power basis. The presence of the *moqaddem*—the “eyes and ears” of the *qaid* and *pasha*—is the very symbol of the loss of local political autonomy. The *qaid*, *pasha*, and modern municipal council decide on all important affairs. In case of conflict, people can now take matters to court if they do not agree with the decisions made by the *taqbilt* or *amghar*. As we will see, the incorporation of the Todgha into the political and legal infrastructure of the colonial and Moroccan state has gradually undermined the functioning of traditional village institutions, with sometimes negative consequences for traditional oasis agriculture.

## 5.6. Regional development and spatial differentiation

### 5.6.1. Population growth and the expansion of Tinghir

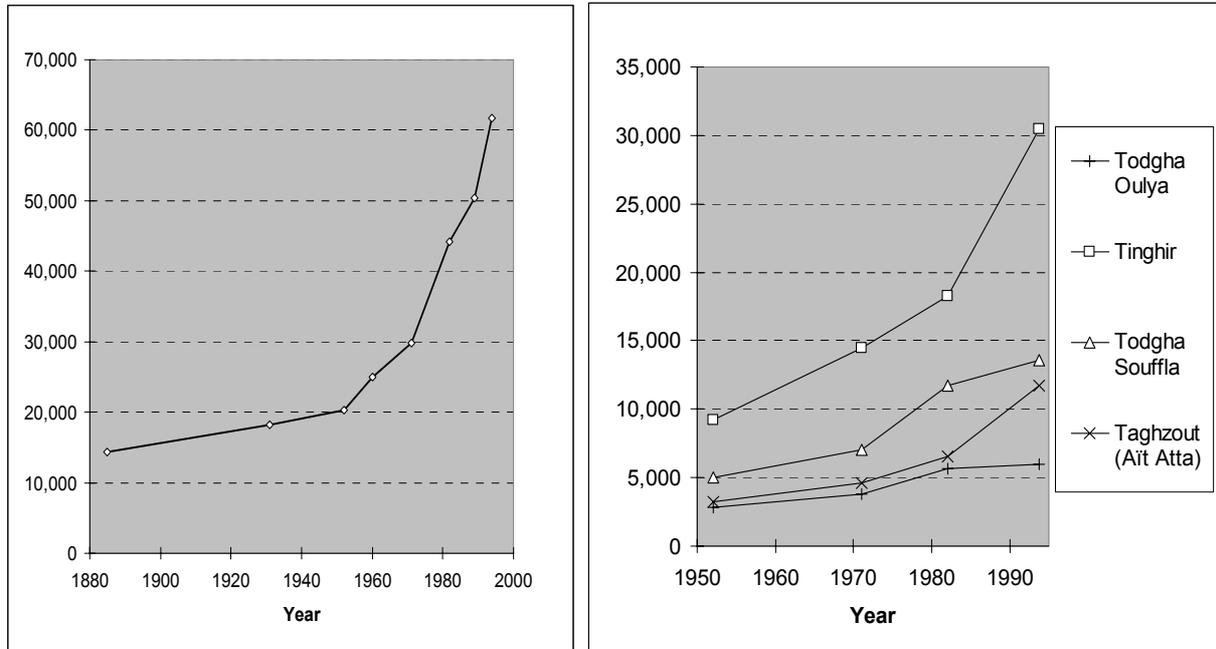
The Todgha valley and especially its center Tinghir have witnessed high population growth over the twentieth century. Rough estimations dating back from 1885 and 1931, assess the total population of the valley at 14,300 and 18,216 people, respectively. From 1952 on, however, there are more accurate data. As figure 5.2 clearly shows, the initially slow growth has accelerated since the late 1950s. Between 1952 (20,258 inhabitants) and 1971, when the population reached 30,000 people, there was an increase of almost 9,500 people. That is, almost 50 percent growth in twenty years.

In the 1980s and the 1990s, the population growth seems to have further accelerated, as the next 50 percent increase was reached only 11 years later, in 1982, to increase further to 61,713 in 1994. Based on the growth rate between 1982 and 1994, the total population reached an estimated 70,000 in 2000<sup>20</sup>. This means that, from 1952 to 1994, the population of

<sup>20</sup> Supposing linear growth, the population has reached 70,000 in 2000, and will reach 85,000 in 2010, and 100,000 in 2020. If we take the different growth rates of the four communities separately into account, population estimates are even higher, which can be explained by the rapid growth of populous Tinghir. Considering the rapidly falling birth rates in Morocco, growth might also slow down in the longer term, although this also depends on the future evolution of in- and out-migration, which is difficult to predict.

the Todgha has tripled. This spectacular population growth seems primarily due to the combined effect of high birth rates and rapidly falling mortality rates due to improved hygiene, nutrition, and medical care. Taking account of the significant out-migration from the Todgha over the past decades, one would not have expected such high population growth. However, this ignores the fact that the Todgha, and Tinghir in particular, has also become a *destination* for internal migrants<sup>21</sup>.

**Figure 5.2. Population development of the Todgha and municipalities, 1885-1994**



Sources: Calculations based on De Foucauld 1885; Beaurpère 1933; Büchner 1986; National Censuses 1960, 1971, 1982, 1994<sup>22</sup>

Despite the demise of traditional commercial networks (exchange between nomads and sedentary populations, long distance and trans-Saharan trade), Tinghir has retained and reinforced its position as a regional trading center in modern-day Morocco. Between 1952 and 1994, the actual urban center grew from 3,000 to 13,000 inhabitants. The entire municipality, including the villages that (virtually) became amalgamated with Tinghir, counted over 30,000 inhabitants in 1994 and—based on the ongoing construction of new quarters since then—was probably near 40,000 around the year 2000. It serves about 70,000 Todghawis and an unknown number of people in the wider surroundings.

This rapidly growing desert town serves as a commercial interface between its hinterland (Todgha, Saghro, adjacent sections of the High Atlas) and the large cities of western Morocco. Throughout the second half of the twentieth century, the weekly market (on Monday) of Tinghir has witnessed a rapid growth, and had to be moved twice to a larger place (Büchner 1986). Currently, Tinghir boasts one of the biggest markets of the Presaharan region. Monday is a very busy day in Tinghir, when a large part of the population of the entire valley and surrounding regions (Tamtetoucht and Ait Hani in the High Atlas, Aït ‘Atta villages of the Saghro) visit its weekly market.

<sup>21</sup> In the following chapter, we will further analyze processes of in- and out-migration.

<sup>22</sup> Besides official census data, data from the municipality of Tinghir have been used. The figures include the population of the entire valley, that is, the actual municipalities of Todgha El Oulya, Todgha Es-Souffla, Taghzout n’Aït ‘Atta, and the municipality of Tinghir.

Besides the weekly market, the number of handicraft shops, coffeehouses, small restaurants, grocery shops, butchers, and other commercial enterprises has been growing rapidly. Its commercial functions—combined with the presence of many banks and a small hospital—makes Tinghir one of the more important central places in the Presahara. At the commercial level, it can compete with other regional centers such as Ouarzazate, Zagora, Errachidia, and Erfoud (cf. Büchner 1986). In contrast to its commercial functions, Tinghir's location is marginal in administrative terms. The Todgha valley falls under the authority of the Annexe de Boumalne, which itself falls under the authority of the Province of Ouarzazate. The Todgha is located in the eastern extremity of this Province, 169 km east of its capital, Ouarzazate. This is a major inconvenience for many people, since many administrative services are only found in Ouarzazate, requiring a two to three hours bus or taxi drive.

### 5.6.2. Development of infrastructure and transport links

In the early 1970s, the main road linking Tinghir to Ouarzazate and Errachidia (P32) was paved, as was the road between Tinghir and the Todgha gorges (road 6902). This meant a further opening up of the Todgha to western Morocco. At the valley level, it also entailed a radical improvement of the accessibility of many villages within the Todgha located near the two paved roads, that is, the villages around Tinghir (in particular the cluster around Afanour on the other bank of the Todgha), the upper Todgha (in particular on the right bank where most of the road is located), as well as the Aït 'Atta villages located along the P32 to Tinejdad and Tabsebest (Aït Aïssa Ou Brahim, Ghallil n'Aït Isfoul, and Tabsebest). However, many villages in the lower Todgha can still only be reached via dirt tracks. Especially the Aït 'Atta villages on the right bank of the Todgha, such as Tadafelt, remained relatively isolated.

Shared taxis operate between Tinghir and regional towns such as Ouarzazate, Boumalne, Errachidia, and even Marrakech. Since the liberalization of the Moroccan transport sector in the mid-1990s, the number of bus companies linking Tinghir with other parts of Morocco—for prices lower than that of the CTM state bus company—has dramatically increased. It is now possible to take direct buses to major Moroccan towns on a mostly daily basis. There are even a number of bus companies which maintain direct bus routes between the Todgha and major migration destinations such as Montpellier and Paris.

The urban center of Tinghir is becoming increasingly physically linked with surrounding villages (notably Taourirt, Aït Boujjane, Tikoutar, Tagoumast, and Afanour). More and more Todghawis work, trade, and meet other people in Tinghir. Intra-valley transport between Tinghir and the numerous villages is provided by an extensive network of shared taxis and privately operated delivery vans, locally known as *transits* (derived from their Ford Transit prototype) which operate on a “fill-up-and-go” basis. There are daily transport links to Tinghir from virtually all surrounding villages. Transport between Tinghir and villages located in the surrounding High Atlas and Saghro mountains is maintained by trucks and pick-ups, which regularly commute between Tinghir and its hinterland.

The development of road infrastructure and the radically improved semi-public transport links have radically improved the accessibility of the Todgha from western Morocco, decreased transaction costs and further embedded the Todgha within wider economic networks. This has also further facilitated labor migration and other forms of mobility, and has boosted tourism by Moroccans and foreigners to the scenic upper Todgha and its gorges.

At the valley level, the development of road infrastructure seems to have increased the already growing orientation of the villages towards Tinghir, further strengthening its position

as Todgha's administrative and commercial center. In comparison to the Aït Todoght, most Aït 'Atta villages have remained politically and economically marginalized<sup>23</sup> since their defeat against the French and the gradual demise of their predominantly semi-nomadic livelihoods. Moreover, they became relatively isolated in infrastructural terms, as the newly constructed roads bypassed most Aït 'Atta villages, with the exception of the villages of the Aït Aïssa Ou Brahim *fraction* as well as Ghallil n'Aït Isfoul. For basic administrative services, markets, schooling, health care, and so on, the Aït 'Atta have to travel to Tinghir over largely unpaved roads.

This situation only improved in the late 1980s and 1990s, when the state established a market place—where the Thursday weekly market is held—some administrative services, a post office, and a secondary school (*collège*) at an empty area near to the ancient village of Taghzout. This “New Taghzout” is located on the ethnic frontier between Aït 'Atta and the El Hart villages (see map 2). These interventions have boosted the development of Taghzout into a modest, secondary commercial and administrative center, and the proximity of the new facilities have decreased the relative isolation of the Aït 'Atta and other lower Todgha villages. The semi-urban structures of Taghzout seem to be growing together with those of Aït Aïssa Ou Brahim, which is another growing Aït 'Atta center located along the paved road to Errachidia<sup>24</sup>.

### 5.6.3. Public amenities, sanitary facilities, and the educational revolution

In 1994, 58.5 percent of all Todgha households received electricity, either through a direct connection to the state network, or through a connection to a village generator (see table 5.2). In the late 1990s, a large-scale state-dependent electrification schedule (PERG—Programme d'Electrification Rurale) was implemented in the Todgha valley. This led to the electrification of the entire upper Todgha in 1998, and of almost the entire lower Todgha in 1999 and 2000. All research villages are now connected to the national electricity grid.

Table 5.2 shows that access to drinking water is mostly limited to Tinghir and the villages in its immediate surroundings. The research villages primarily rely on private or collective wells as a source of drinking water. Concerning sanitary facilities, table 5.2 demonstrates that, in 1994, the municipality of Tinghir witnessed the highest spread of in-house lavatories, showers, and baths, whereas Taghzout had the worst facilities.

Looking at the presence of these facilities in the research villages in 1998 (see table 5.3), we can witness the same general patterns<sup>25</sup>. The Aït 'Atta villages of Tadafelt and Ghallil n'Aït Isfoul have the worst in-house sanitary facilities. Aït El Meskine scores highest on these variables. For instance, 97 percent of the households in this village have a lavatory compared to 51 percent in Tadafelt. The comparison of tables 5.2 and 5.3 suggest that the

<sup>23</sup> The Aït 'Atta have been relatively marginalized in three respects: (1) Agricultural, as they have been historically excluded from access to surface water resources from the Todgha; (2) Political, as they had a rebellious reputation and were therefore often distrusted by the *makhzen*. Moreover, in order to accentuate their *status aparte*, they were allowed to maintain some of their traditional judicial structures after independence (Hart 1981; Otte 2000); (3) Infrastructural, as the paved roads bypass most Aït 'Atta villages, although Aït 'Atta living in the Saghro are far more isolated than in the Todgha. In combination with their cultural pride, “inward-looking” attitude, and distrust of the outside world, this seems to explain why the Aït 'Atta have remained relatively isolated.

<sup>24</sup> The local authority plans to construct a new road linking Tinghir to Taghzout via the right bank of the lower Todgha and to construct a second bridge over the Todgha near Tamasint.

<sup>25</sup> Comparison between tables 5.2 and 5.3 shows that the spatial variability in the survey data largely reflects that of official data available at the municipal level. This indicates a fairly high criterion validity (see section 3.4.3).

number of households having basic sanitary facilities has increased over time, although this hypothesis cannot be solidly confirmed with these data.

**Table 5.2. Public amenities and sanitary facilities in the municipalities of the Todgha (1994)**

Municipality	Percentage of households with facility			
	Electricity	Drinking water	Bath and shower	Lavatory
Todgha El Oulya	36.1	0.5	10.9	41.6
Tinghir	73.6	48.6	30.9	65.4
Todgha Es-Soufla	50.1	1.2	20.6	40.4
Taghzout n'Ait 'Atta	37.7	1.3	9.4	34.0
Total	58.5	25.4	22.9	52.1

Source: Own calculation based on the 1994 national census

**Table 5.3. Sanitary facilities in the research villages (1999)**

Village	Municipality	Percentage of households possessing item					n
		Lavatory	Shower	Private well	Electric pump <sup>26</sup>	Motor pump	
Zaouïa	Oulya	72.4	26.8	24.4	17.1	0.8	124
Tikoutar	Tinghir	70.5	39.4	85.7	41.3	8.6	105
Aït El Mesquine	Soufla	97.2	55.7	87.3	4.3	80.3	71
Ikhba	Soufla	69.4	13.9	87.3	13.9	37.5	62
Tadafelt	Taghzout	51.3	13.7	30.8	8.6	19.8	117
Ghallil n'Aït Isfoul	Taghzout	55.2	17.2	69.0	10.3	24.1	28
Total		69.2	28.0	58.1	17.5	24.0	507

Source: Household survey

For modern medical services, the Todghawis largely rely on Tinghir, where a small public hospital, private doctors, dentists, and several pharmacies are located. Most people who can afford to prefer to visit private doctors, who have a better reputation than those in the public health services. As the hospital is small, underequipped, and understaffed, it is only appropriate for simple standard treatments. For more complex treatment and major surgery, people are dependent on the public hospitals and private clinics in Ouarzazate, Goulmima, Errachidia, and western Morocco.

The first primary schools in the Todgha were established during colonial times in Tinghir and a small number of villages. Since then, the number of primary schools has increased steadily. Nowadays, there is a primary school within, or in the direct vicinity of, almost any village. The extension of the schooling infrastructure has contributed to the increasing generalization of primary education over the past few decades.

Until the late 1970s, there was no secondary school in the Todgha valley. This meant that pupils had to stay at public boarding schools (*internats*) in Boumalne de Dadès or Errachidia to attend secondary school. In 1977, the first secondary school, Zaïd ou Hmed was established in the new Hay Bougafer quarter at the eastern fringe of Tinghir. It comprised a *collège* (lower secondary school), a *lycée* (upper secondary school), and a boarding school for pupils from distant villages. In 1984, 1988, 1997, and 2000 new secondary schools were opened in Taghzout, Afanour (north of Tinghir), Aït Oujjana (upper Todgha), and Tinghir, respectively (see table 5.4). This has enabled a dramatic improvement of educational levels amongst the youngest generations, and also, increasingly, among girls<sup>27</sup>.

<sup>26</sup> Small electric pumps are generally installed at family compounds for pumping drinking water from wells. Diesel motor pumps are mostly installed for irrigation, but the pumped water is *also* used for domestic purposes. Many households that possess a water pump store water in small, concrete "water towers", in order to maintain pressure on in-house water supply systems.

<sup>27</sup> For an analysis of the relationship between education and migration, see chapter 9.

**Table 5.4. Years of establishment of secondary schools in the Todgha valley (2000)**

Year	Location	Name of school	Level
1977	Tinghir	Zaïd ou Hmed	Since 2000 only collège
1984	Taghzout	Moulay ‘Abdellah ben Housain	Collège and lycée
1988	Afanour	Sidi Mohammed Ben ‘Abdellah	Collège and lycée
1997	Aït Oujjana	Brahim Benou El Adham	Collège and lycée
2000	Tinghir	Salah ou Din El Ayoubi	Collège and lycée

Source: Délégation de l’Enseignement Secondaire Ouarzazate

#### 5.6.4. Inter-village differentiation in isolation and wealth

Notwithstanding the general trend towards the opening up of the Todgha region as a whole vis-à-vis the outside world, important intra-valley differences remain with regards to the relative isolation of the different villages. Table 5.5 summarizes the distances from the research villages to the paved road, secondary schools, markets and Tinghir, where most services and facilities are located. On the basis of these distances, an “isolation index” has been calculated<sup>28</sup>. Scores above zero indicate an above average isolation; scores below zero a below average isolation. The data reveal that Tikoutar is by far the least isolated village, due to its close proximity to Tinghir—the valley’s center—and paved roads. Second in place is Aït El Meskine. Ghallil n’Aït Isfoul, Ikhba, and Zaouïa are relatively more isolated.

Tikoutar is at a walking distance from Tinghir, and this village in particular seems to be becoming increasingly integrated into Tinghir’s urban economy. Located in the upstream extremity of the valley, Zaouïa appears to be marginally located at first sight, which seems to be corroborated by its second highest place in the isolation index. However, it should also be noted that the village’s proximity to the touristy Gorges du Todgha gives it some distinct economic advantages. The daily stream of tourists to the canyon landscape has contributed to the development of a small-scale “tourist industry”, which has created some local employment opportunities in the small hotels and restaurants located in and close to the Gorges.

**Table 5.5. Approximate distance to services, facilities, and isolation index, by village**

Village (km)	Second. school	Paved road	Market	Tinghir	Isolation index
Zaouïa	8	0	14	12	0.24
Tikoutar	1	1	4.5	2.5	-0.91
Aït El Meskine	3	2	3	12	-0.43
Ikhba	4	5	4	13	0.16
Tadafelt	4	7.5	4	26	0.85
Ghallil n’Aït Isfoul	6	2	6	17	0.10

Source: Author’s fieldwork

Tadafelt is clearly the most isolated research village, which is due to its difficult accessibility via unpaved roads. It should also be noted that Aït El Meskine, Ghallil n’Aït Isfoul, and Ikhba, would score slightly higher—and Tadafelt far higher—on the isolation index if distances to the “market” from these lower Todgha villages were not calculated vis-à-vis the relatively small weekly market in Taghzout, but to the valley’s main market in Tinghir, and that Zaouïa and Tikoutar would score far lower. In other words, the establishment of the new

<sup>28</sup> The isolation index has been calculated as follows. All values in kms have been converted into standard z-scores. Per village, the mean z-score was calculated. In this, the variable ‘distance to paved road’ has been given a double weighting, regarding the importance of this factor for costs and time of transport. The scores indicate how many standard deviation units a case is above or below the mean (cf. Heinemeijer *et al.* 1976:103).

center in Taghzout has decreased the relative isolation of lower Todgha villages as compared to two decades ago.

In order to measure intra-valley spatial differences in relative wealth and living conditions, an index of “wealth indicators” was calculated at the household level (see table 5.6). The data show that the Aït ‘Atta villages of Ghallil n’Aït Isfoul and—particularly—Tadafelt are worst off. The upper Todgha village of Zaouïa scores just above average, whereas households in the centrally located villages of Tikoutar and Ikhba are relatively well equipped. Aït El Meskine seems the wealthiest village. Although the number of cases is too small to make sound statistical inferences, it seems that the isolated villages also tend to be less wealthy than the centrally located villages.

**Table 5.6. Index of wealth indicators at household level by village**

Village	Scores on index of wealth indicators on household level <sup>29</sup>					Total	Mean	<i>n</i>
	0-1	2-3	4-5	> 6				
Zaouïa	28.2	25.8	14.5	31.5		100.0	3.84	124
Tikoutar	22.1	24.0	18.3	35.6		100.0	4.51	104
Aït El Meskine	2.8	23.9	23.9	49.3		100.0	5.53	71
Ikhba	17.7	43.5	16.1	22.6		100.0	3.76	62
Tadafelt	46.2	34.2	12.8	6.8		100.0	2.01	117
Ghallil n’Aït Isfoul	46.4	21.4	10.7	21.4		100.0	2.96	28
Total	27.3	29.1	16.2	27.5		100.0	3.73	506

Source: Household survey

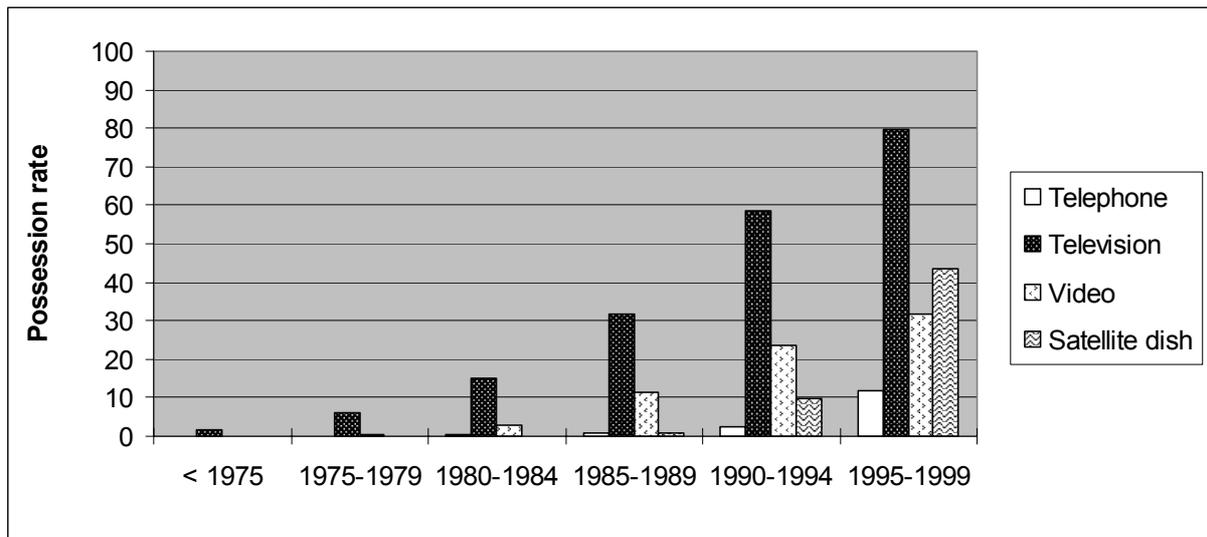
### 5.6.5. The media revolution

During the last decade of the twentieth century, the Todgha valley has gone through a veritable “media revolution”, which has meant increasingly easy and relatively cheap access to communication devices and national and international media. Electrification, decreased prices<sup>30</sup>, and increased wealth has increasingly facilitated the use of televisions, videos, and so on. Figure 5.3 illustrates the rapid diffusion of communication devices in the Todgha. For instance, while only 10 percent of all surveyed households possessed a television in the early 1980s, this was the case for about 80 percent of all households in 1999. Since the mid-1990s, satellite dishes have mushroomed throughout the valley, exposing an increasing share of households to an unprecedented range of Arab and Western television stations. From almost zero in 1990, more than 40 percent of all households possessed such a satellite dish in 1999.

In recent years, the ONTP, the national telecommunications organization, has been extending the fixed telephone network. Almost the entire Todgha El Oulya, Tinghir, and central parts of Taghzout and Todgha Es-Soufla now have access to fixed telephone services, which only used to be available in Tinghir and a number of villages along paved roads. Although most households have no private telephones, *téléboutiques* (privately run callcentres) can now be found at several places in the upper Todgha on the road from the gorges to Tinghir, as well as in Aït Aïssa Ou Brahim and Taghzout.

<sup>29</sup> This index has been calculated on the basis of the household survey data with regards to the possession of durable consumer goods: electric or motor pump, drinking water, telephone, television, video, satellite dish, refrigerator, food processor, washing-machine, electronic iron, water heater, bicycle, moped, car, and delivery van (*transit*). Each item in possession was counted as a score of 1, each item not in possession as a score of 0. The index is the sum of all scores.

<sup>30</sup> Prices of consumer electronics have fallen due to increasing smuggling from the Spanish enclaves of Melillia and Ceuta in the North, as well as the large-scale trade in second hand goods from Europe, largely driven by migrants. Luxury consumer goods and household appliances are also brought from Europe as presents.

**Figure 5.3. Diffusion of telephones, televisions, videos, and satellite dishes in the research villages**

Source: Household survey

With the introduction of cheap cellular phones by a private telecommunications company (Méditel) and the ONTP, wireless telephony also became accessible for large sections of the Moroccan population in 1999 and 2000. In parallel, a network of GSM transmitters was established in the Todgha valley, reaching almost full coverage in 2001. Telephony has become increasingly widespread among the local population and even relatively poor families now possess cellular phones<sup>31</sup>. In 1999 and 2000, the first internet cafés were set up in Tinghir.

## 5.7. Conclusion

French colonization and the concomitant incorporation of the Todgha valley into the political-economic context of the modern state and the capitalist economy, radically improved transport links with the outside world and fundamentally altered the economic context of the Todgha valley at the macro-level. On the one hand, this has entailed the end of tribal autonomy and the demise of traditional economic systems and nomad-peasant trade relations. Moreover, the dramatic population increase has further decreased the already limited carrying capacity of traditional oasis agriculture. These processes have played a role in undermining traditional livelihoods, which were predominantly based on subsistence agriculture. On the other hand, these political-economic transformations have also created new livelihood opportunities within, but in particular outside, the valley through migration.

Just like the development of road infrastructure and transport facilities, the increasing access to schooling and various media seems part of a broader process in which the valley is becoming increasingly integrated into wider social, cultural, economic, and political structures, both at the national and international level. Through schooling and the “media revolution”, Todghawis have become increasingly exposed to the outside world and, hence, to other lifestyles, standards of living, cultures, and role models. We will see that whereas infrastructural development and increased opportunities of wage labor in other parts of the country and abroad increased the *opportunities* for labor migration, these more socio-cultural

<sup>31</sup> Cellular phones did not appear as an item in the questionnaires, as they were introduced massively only as of 1999.

changes “mobilized” the mindsets of people, increasing their aspirations and their actual *propensity* to migrate.

Compared to surrounding areas, the Todgha oasis valley has a relatively well-developed infrastructure and public amenities. Especially in the late 1980s and 1990s, the relatively marginal parts of the valley have been increasingly opened up, with an almost completed electrification, an expanding drinking water system and extensive telephone network, and the establishment of a market and administrative services in Taghzout. Over the past decades, the number of primary and secondary schools has rapidly expanded and spread over the valley. In the 1990s, a veritable media revolution took place. Road connections and transport facilities to destinations outside the Todgha have also been improved in the past decades. Nevertheless, significant intra-valley differences have remained concerning the isolation and availability of public amenities. Especially the Aït ‘Atta villages in the lower Todgha seem relatively isolated and deprived of public amenities.

As we will see in the following chapter, these processes have culminated in the increasing importance of labor migration from, within, and to the Todgha. Traditional migration patterns have been drastically modified, extended, and partly replaced with new forms of “modern” migration. We will also explore whether there is an association between the level of development at the local level and the occurrence and intensity of migration.



## The Todgha mobility transition

### 6.1. Introduction

Within the framework of the information given in chapters 4 and 5 on the structural transformations that set a wholly new development context, in which new and extended forms of Moroccan migration could emerge over the twentieth century (research question 1.a), this chapter will first describe the evolution of migration patterns from, within, and to the Todgha valley over the twentieth century (research question 1.b). Besides describing general, valley-wide trends on the basis of secondary data, it will provide more details on (shifting) migration destinations, the characteristics of migrants, and the selectivity of migration on the basis of the household survey conducted in the six research villages. As migrants are rarely representative of their communities of origin, it is important to pay attention to migration selectivity in order to come to valid judgments on migration impacts (research question 1.c).

Whereas subsequent chapters will elaborate extensively on the recursive effects of migration on development in the Todgha (represented BY arrow (d) in figure 2.4), this chapter will specifically look at the other side or direction of the migration-development interaction: How have general processes of development enabled, shaped, or constrained particular forms of migration (see arrows (b), (c), and, indirectly, (a) in figure 2.4)? What changing structural factors at the macro and micro level have enabled migration patterns to occur and how and to what extent do such factors explain their evolution over time (research question 1.d)? Therefore, based on the theoretical framework elaborated in chapter 2, we will perceive migration as a constituent part of the development process in a larger sense. In this perspective, we will try to explain changes in migration patterns from modifications of the development context in the Todgha, Morocco, and at the destination.

Besides the general development context, research question 1.d also pertains to the way migration has created “intermediary structures” such as networks (cf. Doornik *et al.* 1997:67-68; Van Amersfoort 1998), and how these structures have affected migration patterns over the past decades in terms of numbers, destinations, and selectivity. Under conditions of increasingly restrictive immigration policies, social capital in the form of migrant networks are a crucial resource through which people gain access to foreign employment. Bearing this in mind, we will specifically look at how kinship ties determine people’s propensity to migrate, and to what extent this entails inequality in access to internal and international migration.

Through analyzing whether and to what extent intra-valley spatial differentiation in the isolation and “development” of the different research villages has influenced the level of involvement in different types of labor migration, we aim to assess to what extent transitional migration theories (see section 2.2) were right in arguing that it is not absolute poverty, but rather development that breeds migration. In fact, it is an attempt to assess whether

transitional macro-models of the “mobility transition” (Zelinsky 1971) can be applied at the regional scale. In this, we aim to examine how the different types of internal and international out-migration, immigration, and intra-valley migration interact over time or over the course of the development process. Our hypothesis is that integration into the state and the capitalist economy as well as infrastructural improvements (see chapter 5) have enlarged the capabilities and increased the willingness of many oasis dwellers to migrate internally and abroad. If this holds true, one can expect that relatively isolated and impoverished villages or ethnic groups will exhibit a lower or postponed (“lagged”) propensity to migrate.

## 6.2. Regional integration and transforming migration patterns

### 6.2.1. Pre-colonial migration

There is a tendency to see the present time as the “age of migration” (cf. Castles and Miller 1993), and to perceive “traditional” peasant societies as static and unchanging, in which population movements were rare. However, historical research has indicated that many pre-modern societies have, in fact, been highly mobile (cf. De Haan 2000; Skeldon 1997:7-8). This certainly applies to oases. Instead of being isolated islands in desert seas, they used to be firmly integrated within long distance trade networks. As contact zones between the Mediterranean and tropical African world, oases have witnessed strong population movements, either through slavery, conquest, or more voluntary forms of migration.

Due to their vital agricultural and commercial function, oases attracted people from near and far. A quick look at the ethnic composition of oases demonstrates that they are the very products of migration. Diverse population groups originating from North Africa, sub-Saharan Africa, and the Arabian peninsula (*haratin*, *ismakhen*, *imazighen*, Jews, and Arabs) have been known to settle down in oases, where they either still form distinct endogamous population groups or amalgamated within settled populations, as has probably happened with the Aït Todoght<sup>1</sup>. In the Todgha, the last important pre-modern migration movement towards the oasis was that of the pastoralist Aït ‘Atta, who descended from their heartland in the Saghro mountains to settle in the lower Todgha from the late eighteenth century onward. In fact, this migration wave has continued until the present time, as Aït ‘Atta from the Saghro are still settling as “frontier farmers” in the Ghallil plain or in the new neighborhoods of Tinghir.

Besides being poles of attraction, oases have also been emigration regions since ancient times. Historical sources indicate that migration from the Todgha valley did exist in earlier centuries. Throughout southern Morocco, the Aït Todoght were known as specialists in the digging and maintenance of *khattara* irrigation systems (Monts de Savasse 1950:6, cited in Büchner 1986:111). There is evidence that people from the Todgha worked as specialists on the *khattara* systems of Marrakech at least from the Almohad period (1140-1269), where they probably were organized in a guild and lived in a distinct neighborhood (Deverdun 1956:87). Berque (1954:149, cited in Büchner 1986:111) mentions the employment of Aït Todoght as *khattara* diggers in a village in the western High Atlas. The Aït Todoght were also known as specialists in the construction of traditional adobe buildings (*igherman* and *qasbat*) in other regions (Büchner 1986).

The position of Tinghir as a market place on the (caravan) trading route between the Tafilalt oasis region and Marrakech gave rise to a local class of ambulant traders, who

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<sup>1</sup> Also in the case of apparently homogeneous tribes such as the Aït ‘Atta, it is known that they are, in fact, a conglomerate of different tribes, who united into one confederation in the mid-sixteenth century (Hart 1981).

operated as far as the Moulouya region in northeastern Morocco (Büchner 1986:112). It is also likely that the Aït Todoght worked as harvest workers in more humid regions—which is another pre-colonial form of seasonal migration—although there are no historical sources to prove this. The existence of such ancient migration patterns indicates that pre-colonial livelihoods were not *exclusively* based on agriculture. Nevertheless, it seems safe to assume that subsistence agriculture used to be the (one and only) pillar of traditional oasis livelihoods, and that other sources of income (barter, trade, migration) were only of secondary importance.

### 6.2.2. Internal and international migration under colonial rule

Although the French did not gain effective control over the Todgha until 1931, colonization of North Africa had started to influence migration patterns far before. The occupation of neighboring Algeria in 1830—one century earlier—and the growth of industrial activities and establishment of farms by French *colons* (settlers), created an increasing demand for laborers, especially in the region of Oran and Sidi Belabes. This created new migration flows to Algeria not only from the northern Rif mountains, but also from the oases located in southeast Morocco. The Todgha started to participate in this migration from at least the turn of the twentieth century, and probably even before (Büchner 1986:113).

Migration to Algeria was the first type of “international labor migration”<sup>2</sup> from the Todgha, which brought many Todghawis into contact with the French well before the establishment of colonial rule in the valley. It either concerned seasonal migration by agricultural laborers or circular migration by young men, who used to return to their families after a period that varied from a couple of years to several decades. Algeria remained the principal destination for Todgha’s international migrants until the 1950s. However, migration towards Algeria came entirely to an end with Algerian independence in 1962. A distinct form of permanent out-migration was the departure of almost the entire Jewish community of the Aït Todoght, which counted at least 150 households, in the 1940s and the 1950s to Israel and other destinations (see also section 4.2.3).

New forms of internal rural-to-rural and rural-to-urban migration evolved following the establishment of the French protectorate in 1912. Initially, the new forms of migration were an extension and intensification of older patterns of seasonal and circular migration. However, migration gradually tended to become more long-term and migrants tended to migrate further away and, increasingly, abroad. In colonial times, two forms of internal migration prevailed. The first was seasonal migration to agricultural areas in northern and western Morocco, such as the Moulouya, the Middle Atlas, the Gharb, the Tadla, and Doukkala. In 1954, an estimated 1,300 Todghawis, or 6.4 percent of the total population, participated in this type of seasonal migration. Like Algerian migration, this in fact concerned a continuation of older, pre-colonial migration patterns, which were, however, intensified due to the increased demand for agricultural labor at the modern farms established by *colons*.

The second type of internal migration was the movement to the cities located on the Atlantic coast, notably Casablanca and Rabat. This region increasingly developed into the industrial and urban heartland of modernizing Morocco, which attracted an increasing number

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<sup>2</sup> The case of Algerian migration clearly demonstrates that the distinction between internal and international migration can be arbitrary. In geographical, historical, and cultural terms, eastern oases such as Tinghir are closer to some western parts of Algeria than to western Morocco, and in pre-colonial times, official state borders did not exist, which made it fairly easy to travel. On the other hand, Algerian migration can be considered as the first type of migration that brought the Todghawi into contact with the capitalist economy and the phenomenon of wage labor and which was eventually the springboard for migration to Europe.

of migrants. Modern rural-to-urban labor migration started in the early 1940s, and rapidly increased afterwards. More than seasonal migration, this rural-to-urban migration was a deviation from pre-colonial migration patterns. In comparison to seasonal migration, this migration was relatively long-term, with most migrants settling on a semi-permanent basis in new quarters or slums of the swelling cities. From the Todgha, rural-to-urban migration was particularly directed at Rabat-Salé<sup>3</sup>. Migrants from the Todgha tended to settle in certain quarters. Significant concentrations of Todghawis can be found in (former) slums, but also in currently upgraded popular quarters such as Takkadoum and Yacoub El Mansour in Rabat and Tabriquet in Salé (Büchner 1986:108-9).

This geographical clustering of migration flows between the Todgha and particular urban areas seems in line with the premises of migration system theory. The presence of established Todgha communities in these quarters, led subsequent migrants to also settle in these quarters where community members could offer them practical and moral support. It is a continuation of an older North African migration pattern of almost organized migratory flows from particular villages to particular cities, in which entire districts or craft occupation in a city could be dominated by permanent migrants from particular regions (cf. Mabogunje 1970:13-4).

What was new was that an increasing number of such rural-to-urban migrants ended up settling *permanently* in the cities, thereby breaking with traditional patterns of predominantly circular migration. The transfer of family members to the city generally marks such a shift from circular to permanent migration. In this way, an increasing number of households were entirely “lifted up” from the Todgha. As we will see, this (predominantly) rural-to-urban migration further increased in the post-colonial era, to the detriment of historically rooted seasonal migration of harvest workers.

On the eve of independence in 1954, an estimated 1,326 Todgha migrants were staying in Algeria, representing 6.6 percent of the total population of the Todgha. Only 22 migrants (0.1 percent) worked in France. An estimated 1,294 Todghawis, representing 6.4 percent of the total population, participated in seasonal migration. About 1,108 people representing 5.5 percent were involved in circular and more permanent forms of internal migration to the coastal cities (Büchner 1986). In sum, 18.5 percent (3,750 people) of the total population were involved in some kind of migration. This is almost equal to the total number of 3,804 households enumerated in the 1952 census. We can therefore safely state that back in the 1950s, a sizable proportion of the households in the Todgha were already affected by migration. This confirms that labor migration is by no means a very recent phenomenon.

## **6.3. International migration in the post-independence era**

### **6.3.1. The “Golden Age” of international migration**

The late 1960s were characterized by a revolutionary shift in previous patterns of international migration. Remunerative labor migration to France and, to a lesser extent, other northwestern European countries, became accessible to an increasingly large number of Todghawis. This period marked the beginning of an era in which migration to Europe would increasingly dominate the valley in social, cultural, and economic terms.

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<sup>3</sup> Salé and Morocco’s capital Rabat are two cities located at the southern and northern side of the Bou Regreg river. However, they form one, integrated metropolitan system and are therefore mentioned together.

Until the mid-1960s, international migration to Europe (i.e., France) was of a limited character, both before and after Moroccan independence in 1956. The first Todghawi who went to France were soldiers recruited into the French army. Dozens, or maybe even hundreds, fought in the Second World War on the European fronts. Between 1948 and 1952, about twenty Aït Todoght were recruited to work in the coalmines of the French northern departments of Nord and Moselle. Some of these early migrant workers left to work in the automobile industry (D'Achon 1952). A second wave of migration to France occurred after Algerian independence in 1962. The departure of virtually all *colons* led to a rapid economic downturn and disappearing employment opportunities for Moroccan workers. The conditions for Moroccan workers further deteriorated following the 1963 border war between Morocco and Algeria. Although most migrants returned to Morocco, several Todghawis were invited by their employers to work in France (Büchner 1986:120). Others went from Algeria to France on their own initiative, where most found work in the construction sector, industry, or agriculture.

In a way, Algeria was the platform from which early Aït Todoght labor migrants “leapfrogged” to France. This Algerian-French migration heralded the later boom in international migration of the late 1960s and early 1970s, in which the Todgha took full part. The combined effect of Algerian independence and the economic boom in Europe caused a radical reorientation of international migration patterns, which became almost exclusively oriented towards France and—in a later stage—other European countries.

From the early 1960s French recruitment agencies had started to directly recruit so-called “guestworkers” in the Todgha valley. Workers were primarily selected on their health and physical strength. According to respondents who participated in these selections, speaking French or having a diploma were grounds for rejecting prospective workers. European employers generally preferred illiterate, docile employees, since educated workers were seen as potential troublemakers or trade union activists.

Official recruitment by companies or recruitment agencies was only important in the starting phase of this European migration boom. However, an increasing number of labor migrants began leaving for Europe on their own initiative. Many “network migrants” acquired labor contracts through family or friends who already worked in France. Migrant networks equally facilitated housing and access to other facilities for newcomers. Moreover, an increasing number of “adventurers” went on their own initiative on a tourist visa without already having secured a job. The high demand for unskilled laborers in Europe and the loose immigration policies meant most of these “anarchic” migrants succeeded in finding jobs and obtaining residence permits.

Table 6.1 offers further insight into the decreasing importance of direct employer recruitment. Among the surveyed migrants who departed in the 1960s, more than half left through direct labor recruitment. In the 1970s, this share dropped to 16 percent. In the same period, the percentage that acquired a labor contract through family and friends rose from 42 to 72 percent. With rising unemployment in northwestern Europe and increasingly restrictive policies largely preventing the inflow of new labor migrants, the percentage of migrants who did not have concrete prospects to work (i.e., a labor contract) before leaving rose to over 60 percent after 1980. Most recent labor migrants have entered Europe through network or undocumented migration.

Between 1954 and 1975, the number of Todghawis working in France rose from 22 to 2,504, representing 7.4 percent of the valley’s entire population (see table 6.2). The most important departure took place in the late 1960s and early 1970s, with a peak in the period 1968-1970. This migration boom marked the definitive incorporation of the Todgha valley into the Mediterranean-European migration system. Table 6.2 indicates, however, a marked

spatial differentiation in migration participation, with the *fractions* of Aït Snane (13.4 percent) and Amzaourou (11.6 percent) participating most intensively in international migration, and the Aït ‘Atta exhibiting the lowest participation rates. Tinghir’s low participation rate (4.1 percent) can probably be explained by the fact that the urban center of Tinghir is a destination for intra-valley and regional migration itself. Consequently, an increasing share of its population consists of immigrants from within and outside the valley.

**Table 6.1. Mode of recruitment of international migrants by period of departure**

Year of departure	Direct recruitment	Labor contracts	Without contract	Total	<i>n</i>
<1960	12.5	12.5	75.0	100.0	8
1960-1969	52.5	42.4	5.1	100.0	59
1970-1979	16.4	72.1	11.5	100.0	61
1980-1989	0.0	39.1	60.9	100.0	23
1990-1999	0.0	35.4	64.6	100.0	82
Total	18.0	46.4	35.6	100.0	227

Source: Household survey

**Table 6.2. International migrants as percentage of the total population (1954-1998)**

Municipality	<i>Fraction / group of fractions</i>	1954	1975	1982	1998
Todgha El Oulya	Tizgui	7.25	9.24	-	5.61
	Aït Snane	8.35	13.39	-	6.81
Tinghir	Igourtane	6.86	9.68	-	-
	Tinghir	6.23	4.09	-	-
	Tagoumast	8.95	8.65	-	-
Todgha Es-Soufla	Amzaourou	13.23	11.64	-	6.56
	El Hart	5.02	5.38	-	2.98
Taghzout n’Aït Atta	Taghzout n’Aït Atta	1.94	4.53	-	8.57
Total Todgha		6.55	7.41	6.66	6.02

Sources: Own calculations based on *qaidat* Tinghir; Büchner 1986; National Censuses 1971, 1982, 1994<sup>4</sup>  
 “-” = not available.

In the 1960s and 1970s, most labor migrants settled in France. Nevertheless, a smaller number of Todghawis migrated to other countries and to the Netherlands in particular. Some villages, like Aït El Mesquine, have a relatively high number of emigrants in the Netherlands. Some of these initially were internal migrants staying in Morocco’s big cities, where they made use of official Dutch labor recruitment. In this case, internal migration served as a “springboard” for “leapfrogging” international migrants. Others migrated from France to the Netherlands and other European countries. A minority obtained labor contracts for Libya and Middle Eastern countries (Saudi Arabia, Iraq) in Rabat (Büchner 1986:120). However, the latter form of migration was generally seen as a secondary option, since salaries were lower and social and legal circumstances for migrants relatively poor.

The migration boom appeared to come to an abrupt end in the mid-1970s. In the aftermath of the 1973 Oil Crisis, countries in northwestern Europe drastically changed their immigration policies. Economic recession and growing unemployment explain why labor

<sup>4</sup> As the estimates of the total number of international migrants from 1975 and 1998 date from non-census years, the percentages have been calculated on the basis of inter- and extrapolated census data. Growth rates per *fraction* were not available. Since population growth rates in the different *fractions* differ, this may have created some inaccuracy.

recruitment quickly ceased. From then on, regulations for obtaining visa and residence permits became increasingly restrictive<sup>5</sup>.

### 6.3.2. The unforeseen persistence of international migration

With the end of official labor recruitment and the gradual tightening of immigration requirements, the possibilities for legal labor migration to northwestern Europe dropped drastically after the mid-1970s. However, in contrast to expectations, this did not lead to the end of migration to Europe. First, there was a huge increase in family reunification, which started in the late 1970s and which gained massive ground in the 1980s. The decision to settle permanently generally coincided with family reunification, which entailed the departure of the worker's entire family from the valley. The process of family reunification was largely complete towards the end of the 1980s. With family reunification, migrants cut their most intensive ties with the valley, and more or less "disappeared" from the valley.

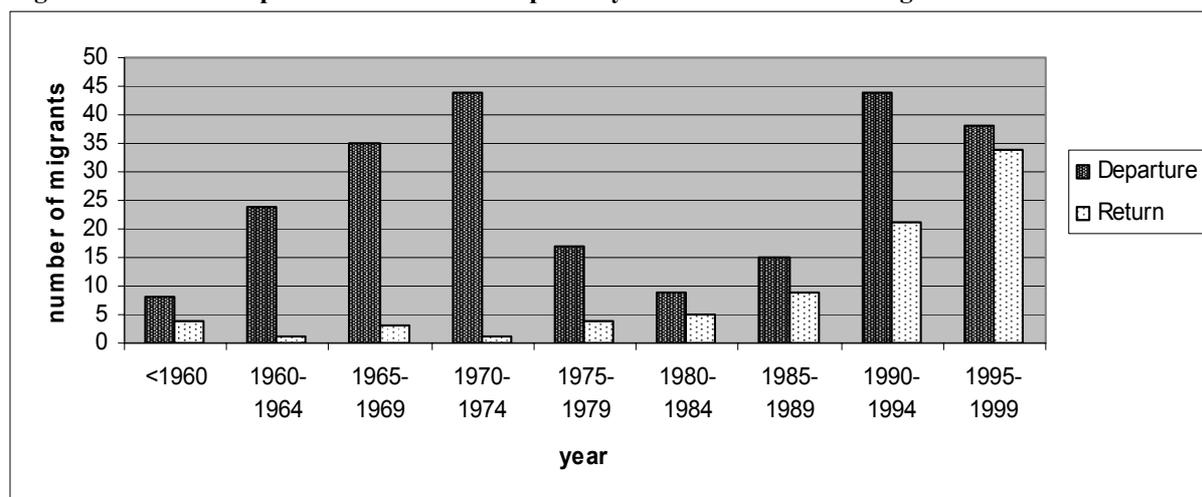
Figure 6.1 displays the years of departure and return of all international migrants among the surveyed population<sup>6</sup>. It shows that the 1965-1974 decade was indeed a "Golden Age" of international migration. It also shows that international *labor* migration witnessed a steep decline immediately afterwards. Relatively few new international labor migrants left in the 1975-1989 period. This period was clearly dominated by family reunification.

The drop in labor-migration in the 1980s, which is clearly visible in figure 6.1, exactly coincided with the period when family migration peaked. Labor migration participation rates for all Aït Todoght decreased between 1975 and 1998 (see also table 6.2). Through family reunification, many migrants and their families departed definitively from the valley. The definite departure of many migrants and family reunification seems to explain why migration participation in the upper and middle Todgha has declined<sup>7</sup>. The figure equally shows that most international returnees returned in the 1990s, during which return migrants started to approach retirement. However, the figure probably underestimates considerable return migration over the 1980s, since return migrants tend to be in their fifties and sixties, and many among them will therefore already be deceased.

<sup>5</sup> In 1976, however, the Dutch government recruited 48 migrants from the Todgha (Büchner 1986:124). This was the last known official labor recruitment in the Todgha.

<sup>6</sup> Migrants who have reunified their families in Europe or have died are not included in the survey. As they have effectively "disappeared" from the oasis, it is neither possible to estimate their exact number, nor to obtain precise data on their migration history. The presented data are therefore almost certainly biased towards recent migrants, and probably underrepresent migrants who left in the 1960-70s. Consequently, figure 6.1 should not be interpreted as a precise estimation of migration rates in the displayed 5-year periods, but rather as an attempt to detect major trends or "shocks" in migration. Supposing constant migration rates over the past decades, one would have expected a gradually rising line due to the "disappearance" of older migrants through family reunification and death. Against this expectation, the figure shows a very steep decrease in the 1975-1984, which makes it probable that indeed few new international labor migrants left during this period. In contrast, after 1984, labor migration seems on the increase again, which is mainly the effect of the departure of new primary labor migrants to Spain and Italy.

<sup>7</sup> It is important to note that there are no data on yearly migration rates. The migration statistics of the *qā'idat* of Tinghir count the number of male migrants residing abroad who have left their families behind. Those who transferred their family to Europe normally disappear from the statistics. The majority of the Aït Todoght "Golden Age" migrants have currently (almost) reached the age of retirement. Consequently, the number of first generation migrants who work in France without their families is rapidly decreasing. The same statistic "invisibility" problem applies to Todghawi who participated in family formation. As they are reunited with their partners in Europe, they will also disappear from the statistics. These processes partly explain the decline in the number of international migrants in the official migration statistics. These days, people do continue to leave each year, but this happens in a more or less hidden way, and remains invisible in statistics.

**Figure 6.1. Year of departure and return of “primary” international labor migrants<sup>8</sup>**

Source: Household survey

However, notwithstanding a certain decline, international labor migration did not come to a virtual stop after the Oil Crisis, as was generally expected at that time. Between 1975 and 1989, labor migrants continued to move abroad. In several ways, the expectations that international migration would be a temporary phenomenon (cf. Büchner 1986) were not realized. Even more surprising was the unexpected revival of international labor migration that occurred in the 1990s.

Although formal labor recruitment came to an end after the mid-1970s, the Todghawis managed to adopt alternative strategies to migrate abroad. Several factors seem to explain the persistence of international labor migration. First, some migrants applied a migration strategy which has been referred to in the literature as “relay migration” (cf. Arizpe 1981). In this case, the migrant does not decide to reunify his entire household (i.e., his wife and children) at the destination, but to let only one or two unmarried sons come over before their age of legal adulthood<sup>9</sup> in what can be called “partial family reunification”. These sons then take over their father’s function as the migrant breadwinner after his remigration. In this way, the household maintains its “stake” in the international migration market. By passing the baton (i.e., the right to residency and work in Europe) from father to son, a new generation of labor migrants can be created via legal ways.

As soon as such relay migrants marry a girl (relay migrants are typically men) from the Todgha and found their own family, a new migration household is created. By marrying a migrant, spouses also become potential migrants. This points to family formation as the second factor explaining the persistence of migration from the Todgha. This is the migration following the conclusion of new marriages of nonmigrants with migrants or, increasingly,

<sup>8</sup> “Primary” labor migrants are migrants who obtained their residence permit on the legal basis of their work. Although people who migrate through networks claim residence permits on the legal basis of family reunification or formation often intend to work. It is therefore important not to artificially distinguish labor and family migrants. Such labor migrants “in disguise” can therefore be labeled as “secondary” labor migrants. However, family reunification normally implies the total disappearance of the household from the Todgha, which means that such households cannot be interviewed. Furthermore, the distinction between primary and secondary migration is useful in the sense that primary labor migrants are more likely to settle in new destinations and to be the creators of new migrant communities abroad, whereas secondary migrants tend to follow the beaten track. Thus, in a way, the occurrence of primary migration is an indication of the degree to which new future potentials for network migration are created.

<sup>9</sup> Adult children generally do not have the right to immigrate to European countries on the legal basis of family reunification.

migrants' children residing in Europe. Complying with an ancient tradition of endogamous marriages, spouses tend to be members of the same community, *ighs*, or family. Since family reunification of the first generation primary labor migrants was virtually complete by the late 1980s, family formation became the dominant form of family migration to northwest Europe in the 1990s.

Although family formation often implies rapid migration of the spouse to Europe, this is not necessarily the case, especially if the nonmigrant spouse is female. If the spouse and children remain behind, this implies the creation of a new migration household in the Todgha. Nevertheless, in case of recent family formation, most tend to follow their spouses rather quickly (i.e., within five to ten years) after marriage. This contrasts with earlier circular and international migration, in which the members of the migrant's households often stayed behind for several decades. Another novelty is that it is not only women, but also men who now migrate in the context of family formation, as both migrants' daughters and sons tend to marry with partners in Morocco.

Family migration has become virtually the only way to enter north-west European countries (i.e., France, Netherlands, Belgium, and Germany) legally. Access to legal residency and thus to relatively well-remunerated work has increasingly become the prerogative of migrants' children. This has coincided with a considerable rise in bride-prices. Although this practice seems to be declining now, many migrants wish to give their daughters to nonmigrants in marriage. Although migrants' sons are generally freer in choosing their spouse, many end up marrying a girl from their village of origin too, under strong social pressure from their family and communities of origin.

Material motives, in fact, play an important role too in explaining why many Todghawis aspire to marry a migrant. Both relay migration and family formation are migration strategies based on kinship. Nevertheless, it is often difficult to clearly distinguish family and labor migration, as family migration is also a means to gain access to the European labor market and social security systems. Especially if the "family migrant" remits money back to his family, he or she has become a *de facto* labor migrant.

Besides relay migration and an increasing reliance on family formation—which are both manifestations of network effects—there are two other factors that explain the relative persistence of international migration, that is, the increasing importance of undocumented migration and the diversification of migration destinations. In this process, Italy and Spain have emerged as new, relatively easy-to-enter destinations attracting many new primary labor migrants, in particular among the Aït 'Atta.

### 6.3.3. Intra-valley differentiation in international migration patterns

The most remarkable development of the past three decades has been the increasing involvement of the Aït 'Atta in international migration (see table 6.2). Over the same period, the migration participation rate among Aït Todoght has started to decline. At the turn of the twenty-first century, the Aït 'Atta villages had the highest percentage (8.6) of labor migrants abroad. This is almost double the 1975 rate<sup>10</sup>. Whereas the Aït Todoght have largely relied on family migration, most recent primary labor migrants are Aït 'Atta. Due to the delayed nature of Aït 'Atta migration, they have had to adopt different migration strategies, as the legal conditions for migration to northwestern Europe changed drastically as was noted above. The

<sup>10</sup> Actual figures might even be higher, as the numerous undocumented migrants among the Aït 'Atta do not appear in official statistics, as long as they are not legalized.

restrictive immigration policies of traditional destination countries such as France and the Netherlands have made it difficult for prospective migrants lacking access to established migrant networks to enter these countries legally.

It is striking that undocumented migration is predominantly an Aït ‘Atta affair. Moreover, there has been an increasing popularity of southern European countries (Spain and Italy in particular) as new migration destinations. Although most new labor migrants seem to enter southern Europe overstayed after having entered these countries on a tourist visa, many have eventually succeeded in obtaining residence papers. The series of legalization programs in Spain and Italy seem to encourage others to leave for Europe. Although most undocumented migrants seem to go to southern Europe, a minority migrate to north-west European countries.

Table 6.3 shows the period of departure of international migrants from the research villages. It clearly shows that Aït El Meskine has the oldest involvement in international migration. Sixty percent of all surveyed migrants left the oasis before the 1970s. In Tikoutar and Ikhba, most migrants left in the 1970-1989 period. In the more isolated villages of Zaouïa and Tadafelt, the majority of the surveyed migrants left in the 1990s. Nevertheless, the migration histories of the latter two villages are quite different. Whereas Zaouïa had already participated in the first wave of migration to Europe, the Aït ‘Atta village of Tadafelt hardly participated in international migration before the 1970s.

**Table 6.3. Period of departure of international migrants by village**

Village	Period of departure			Total	<i>n</i>
	Before 1970	1970-1989	Since 1990		
Zaouïa	33.9	23.7	42.4	100.0	59
Tikoutar	34.5	49.1	16.4	100.0	55
Aït El Meskine	60.0	15.6	24.4	100.0	45
Ikhba	32.0	44.0	24.0	100.0	25
Tadafelt	2.4	23.8	73.8	100.0	42
Ghallil n’Aït Isfoul	50.0	50.0	-	100.0	8
Total	33.8	31.2	35.0	100.0	234
<i>Correlation with isolation index</i>	-0.628	-0.303	0.665		
<i>Corr. with distance to Tinghir</i>	-0.512	-0.347	0.601		

**Source:** Household survey (C=0.466\*\*)

Complying with the general pattern for the Aït ‘Atta, Tadafelt has only started to participate intensively in international migration in the past two decades. About three-quarters of the surveyed migrants left in the 1990s alone. Migration figures from Ghallil n’Aït Isfoul do not conform to this pattern: it started to participate early in international migration. Although the historical reasons for this are not clear, the fact that Ghallil n’Aït Isfoul is less isolated than Tadafelt might have played a role in facilitating access of the villagers to labor recruitment campaigns held in Tinghir. The comparison between tables 5.5 and 6.3 reveals that there is no one-to-one correspondence between the degree of isolation and maturity of migration, although peripheral villages of Zaouïa and Tadafelt tend to have relatively recent migration histories.

Nevertheless, if we calculate the correlation between the isolation index developed in chapter 5 with the relative timing of migration, we see that with increasing isolation, villages have become involved in international migration at a relatively late stage. Nevertheless, the correlation is insignificant due to the low case-load. The correlation ratios with the variable “distance to Tinghir” (one of the four components of the isolation index) are almost identical to that of the isolation index.

### 6.3.4. New strategies, new destinations

Table 6.4 illustrates how international migration flows from the research villages have shifted in geographical orientation over the final two decades of the twentieth century. In the 1960-1980 period, France attracted over 90 percent of all surveyed migrants. Attracting only 3-5 percent of all migrants, the Netherlands was the second most important destination, while southern Europe hardly played a role at all. In the 1980s, the proportion of migrants residing in France fell to 63 percent. In the same period, Italy and Spain jointly attracted around twenty percent of all migrants. This percentage further rose in the 1990s. While migration to Italy decreased in relative importance, migration to Spain boomed, accounting for one third of all new departures. At the end of the 1990s, some migrants even went to Portugal. Figure 6.2 gives an overview of similar shifts in international migration patterns on valley level.

**Table 6.4. Destination of current and returned international labor migrants by period of departure**

Country	Period of departure (%)					Total
	<1960	1960-1969	1970-1979	1980-1989	1990-1998	
France	12.5	91.5	91.8	62.5	22.0	61.5
Netherlands	-	3.4	4.9	-	17.1	8.1
Spain	-	1.7	-	8.3	32.9	12.8
Italy	-	-	-	12.5	7.3	3.8
Portugal	-	-	-	-	4.9	1.7
Other European	-	-	1.6	-	3.7	1.7
Algeria	87.5	3.4	1.6	-	-	4.3
Arab oil countries	-	-	-	16.7	12.2	6.0
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100
<i>n</i>	8	59	61	24	82	234

Source: Household survey (C=0.733\*\*)

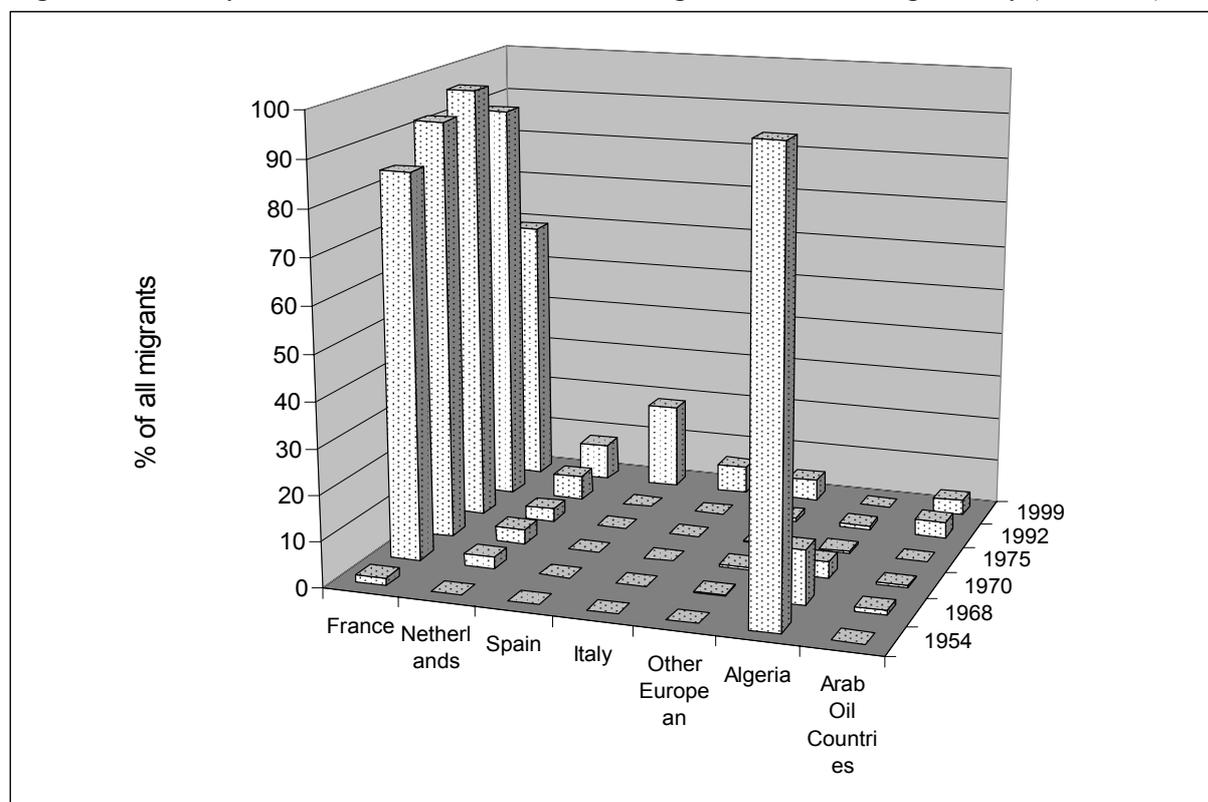
Together, southern European countries attracted about 45 percent of all surveyed migrants in the final decade of the twentieth century. In the same period, migration to the Arab oil countries attracted 12 percent of the surveyed migrant population. After having diminished in the 1980s, labor migration to the Netherlands revived in the 1990s, accounting for 17 percent of all surveyed migrants. This growing spatial diversification and orientation towards other countries led to a dramatic fall in labor migration to France, which was the destination of only 22 percent of all migrants in the 1990s. With this, it lost the position of primary migration destination, which it had held since 1962.

The increasing migration to southern European countries seems strongly related to the easy immigration regulations—at least until the mid-1990s—in comparison to northwestern Europe and the high demand for unskilled labor in agricultural, construction and other sectors. However, it is more difficult to explain why migration to France fell while migration to the Netherlands revived. Several respondents explained this by the more advantageous economic situation and relatively low unemployment in the Netherlands. In comparison to “Fransa” and other destination countries, “Hoolanda” is generally perceived as the wealthiest country with the best social security system and is therefore the most attractive destination in material terms, which compensates for the fact that it is also the most distant destination.

Table 6.5 reveals the destinations of current international migrants in the research villages. The table clearly shows that the villages with the oldest and strongest international migration history are predominantly oriented towards France. The table also shows that the Ait ‘Atta villages have hardly participated in migration to Algeria and the Arab oil countries. Zaouïa contains the highest proportion of migrants to the Netherlands, and Ikhba is the most involved in migration to the Arab oil countries. Compared to other villages, Tadafelt shows

the most deviant migration patterns. 55 percent of current labor migrants from Tadafelt live and work in Spain, 14 percent in Italy, and 10 percent in Portugal, compared to only 17 percent in France. This seems to confirm the earlier observation that recent migration to southern Europe is predominantly an Aït ‘Atta affair.

**Figure 6.2. Country of residence of international labor migrants from the Todgha valley (1954-1999)<sup>11</sup>**



Source: Household survey and own calculations based on 1952 and 1971 national censuses, French army's archives in Paris-Vincennes cited in Büchner (1986:117)

**Table 6.5. Destination country of currently abroad and returned migrants by village**

Village	Country (%)									Total	n
	France	Nether- Lands	Spain	Italy	Portu- gal	Other Europe	Algeria	Arab Gulf			
Zaouïa	48.3	25.0	1.7	0.0	0.0	5.0	10.0	10.0	100.0	60	
Tikoutar	76.8	0.0	7.1	3.6	0.0	1.8	7.1	3.6	100.0	56	
Aït El Mesquine	93.3	2.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	2.2	2.2	100.0	45	
Ikhba	68.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	20.0	100.0	25	
Tadafelt	16.7	4.8	54.8	14.3	9.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	42	
Ghallil n'Aït Isfoul	87.5	0.0	12.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	8	
Total	61.4	8.1	12.7	3.8	1.7	1.7	4.7	5.9	100.0	236	

Source: Household survey (C=0.670\*\*)

Within France, migrants from the Todgha are concentrated within a small number of cities. The Paris region is the primary destination, attracting one third of all migrants to France.

<sup>11</sup> For the total number of migrants in 1998, the relative distribution per destination was not available from official figures, and has been derived from the household survey. As the household survey does not pretend to be fully representative of the entire valley (see section 3.4.3), it should be considered as a rough estimate, which aims to detect the main trends in migration—i.e., the growing importance of countries outside France as new destinations—instead of pretending to give an exact, numerical assessment.

Minor destinations in northern and central France are Strasbourg, Nancy, and Blois. However, two thirds of all Todgha migrants live in southern France. The second most important destinations are Montpellier and Nice, which both attract almost one quarter of all migrants<sup>12</sup>. Toulon accounts for 8 percent of all migrants, and Lyon, Nîmes each for 2-3 percent of all migrants to France. Other destinations in the south include Cannes, Saint-Tropez, Marseilles, Grenoble, and Toulouse.

The surveyed villages are generally “specialized” in migration towards one or two European cities. The majority of migrants from Zaouïa stay in Paris and its suburbs, whereas the majority of the migrants from other villages stay in southern France. The tendency towards southern cities such as Montpellier and Nice is particularly strong among the Aït ‘Atta villages of Tadafelt and Ghallil n’Aït Isfoul. Within the Netherlands, most migrants have settled in Amsterdam and its suburbs. A small concentration of migrants from Aït El Meskine can be found in the Amsterdam suburb of Diemen. Some Aït ‘Atta migrants from Tadafelt, however, have settled in the town of Alkmaar<sup>13</sup>.

It is less clear where recent migrants to Spain, Portugal, and Italy have settled, as many migrants have not settled down in one particular place, or because their interviewed relatives did not know where they exactly lived. However, within Spain, most migrants seem to go the agricultural areas in Catalonia (in or around the cities of Barcelona and Girona), but recently also to “cashcropping areas” in Andalusia around places like El Ejido. In Italy, most seem to go to the southern agricultural areas (Mezzogiorno). In Portugal, most seems to find employment in construction work in Lisbon and also Porto.

In order to detect differences in “migration stage” between villages, table 6.6 analyzes the relative “recentness” of participation in international migration. The table confirms that migration from Tadafelt is relatively recent compared to other villages, with an average length of stay abroad of 8 years. Aït El Meskine and Ghallil n’Aït Isfoul seem to have the oldest migration history. In both villages, more than 40 percent of all currently abroad and returned migrants have stayed at least 30 years abroad. Table 6.6 again confirms the intermediate positions of Tikoutar and Ikhba, and that Zaouïa has the second highest proportion of recent migrants after Tadafelt. Furthermore, it is striking that Ghallil n’Aït Isfoul has not sent international migrants in recent years. The reason for this is not clear.

**Table 6.6. Length of stay abroad of current and returned international migrants**

Village	Length of stay in years (%)					Total	Mean	n
	0-4	5-9	10-19	20-29	≥30			
Zaouïa	36.2	15.5	10.3	25.9	12.1	100.0	13.8	58
Tikoutar	16.7	18.5	14.8	37.0	13.0	100.0	17.4	54
Aït El Meskine	13.3	11.1	4.4	24.4	46.7	100.0	23.6	45
Ikhba	4.0	24.0	24.0	24.0	24.0	100.0	19.1	25
Tadafelt	35.7	38.1	14.3	11.9	0.0	100.0	7.9	42
Ghallil n’Aït Isfoul	0.0	0.0	28.6	28.6	42.9	100.0	25.9	7
Total	22.5	19.9	13.0	25.5	19.0	100.0	16.4	231

**Source:** Household survey (C=0.483\*\*; η=0.445\*\*)

The village level data reflect general migration patterns in the valley, with relatively centrally located and Aït Todoght villages intensively participating in early migration to Algeria and France, and isolated villages—of which Tadafelt is a typical example—showing a recent

<sup>12</sup> For the Todgha as a whole, Montpellier and, to a lesser extent, Nice are the most important destinations. During the summer holiday season, this it is easy to observe as Tinghir abounds with cars carrying license plates from those regions.

<sup>13</sup> Tadafelti went to Alkmaar to work in the local milk factory.

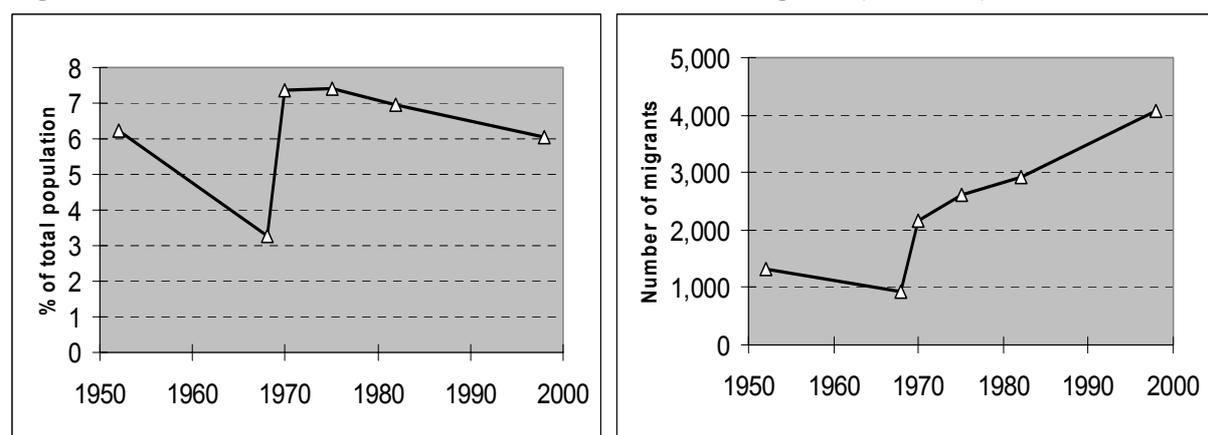
increase in migration to new destinations in southern Europe. More in general, we can witness a diversification of migration strategies (relay migration, family formation, undocumented migration) and migration destinations over the past two decades of the twentieth century, in which France has lost its former dominant position as the principal destination for new labor migrants. However, due to significant migration in the “Golden Age” of migration, France remains the prime country of residence of currently abroad and family migrants.

### 6.3.5. General overview

Figure 6.3 shows the evolution of the number of primary labor migrants from the entire Todgha valley residing abroad (i.e., migrant stocks) over the second half of the twentieth century. It clearly shows that after Algerian independence, international migration decreased for a while, before rapidly increasing again in the late 1960s and early 1970s. The combined effects of relay migration, family formation, and undocumented labor migration to traditional and new destination countries explain why international labor migration did not come to a virtual end after the 1973 Oil Crisis, and even showed a certain intensification in the 1990s due to the increasing involvement of Aït ‘Atta in migration to Spain, Italy, and other countries.

The figure shows that the number of migrants has been constantly increasing since the international migration boom in the late 1960s. If we look at the number of labor migrants abroad as a percentage of the total population, we see that this has only slightly decreased since the 1970s. In fact, throughout the second half of the twentieth century, labor migration has remained remarkably persistent. According to official statistics, international labor migrants accounted for 6.0 percent of the total population of the Todgha in 1998<sup>14</sup>. Thus, although labor migration among the Aït Todoght has decreased due to their increasing reliance on family reunification and family formation, this effect has been largely counterbalanced by the sharp rise in international migration to new destinations among Aït ‘Atta.

Figure 6.3. Absolute and relative number of international labor migrants (1954-1998)



Sources: Own calculations based on *qaidat* Tinghir; Büchner 1986; National Censuses 1971, 1982, 1994

<sup>14</sup> It should be noted that the actual migration participation rates for the whole valley are possibly lower than this estimation, as data for the center of Tinghir were not available for 1998. The estimated migration participation rate for Tinghir in 1998 has been derived from the migration participation rate among the entire Aït Todoght. However, it is likely that the participation rate in international migration in Tinghir has decreased more rapidly than in the other *fractions*, as Tinghir is an immigration destination.

## 6.4. Internal migration

### 6.4.1. The generalization and diversification of internal migration

Notwithstanding the international migration boom in the second half of the twentieth century, internal migration has continued to play an important role. As with international migration, however, there have been changes in the nature of internal migration and migration destinations. First, the importance of seasonal migration of agricultural laborers (mainly harvest workers) fell drastically in the decades after independence. Between 1954 and 1975, the share of Todghawis participating in seasonal migration dropped from 6.4 to 0.7 percent of the total population. In the same period, the relatively long-term rural-to-urban migration to cities dropped from 5.5 to 3.4 percent, but remained almost stable in absolute numbers (Büchner 1986). The relative decrease is possibly related to exceptionally high and accessible international migration in that period, which might have siphoned off many potential internal migrants.

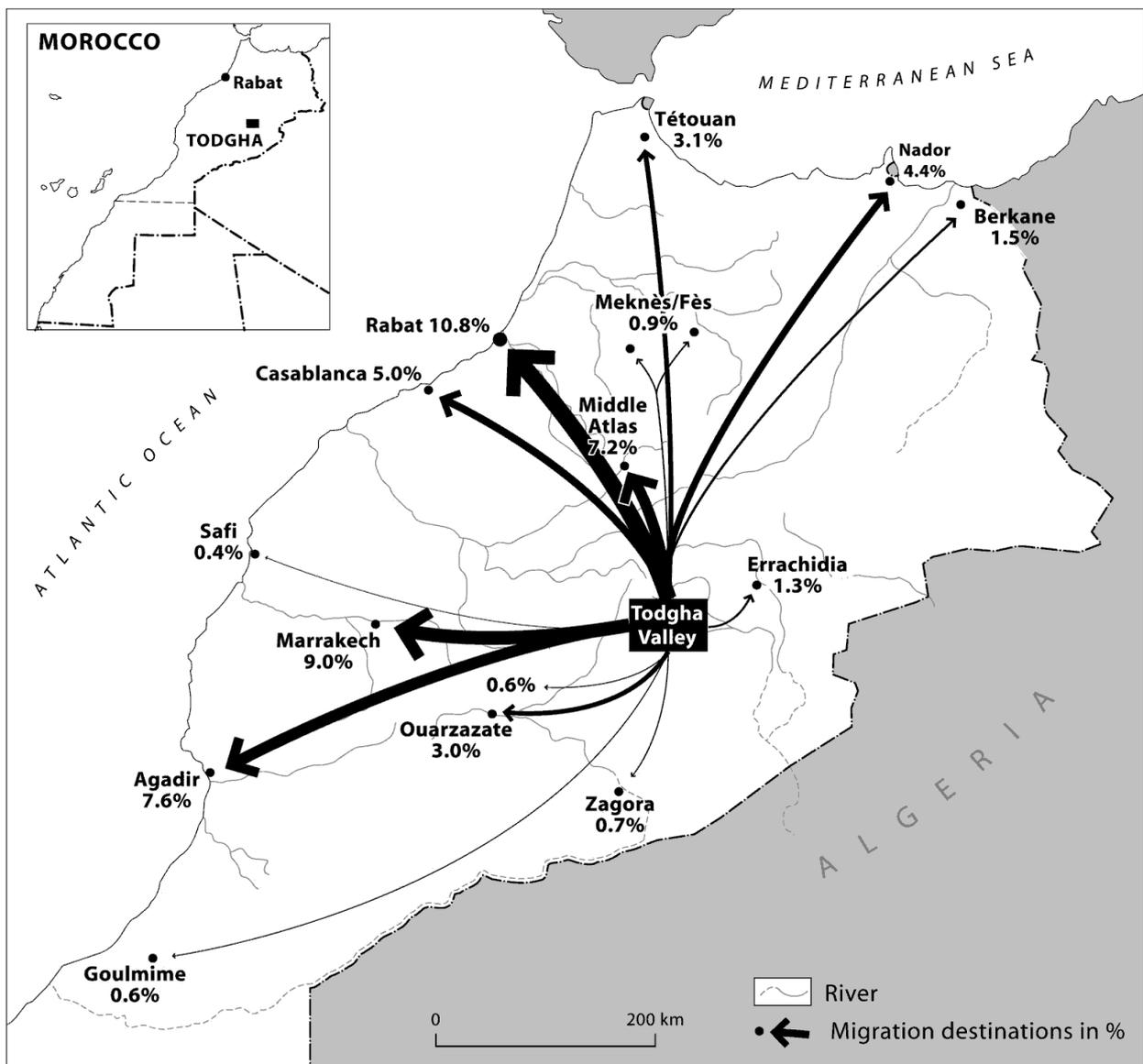
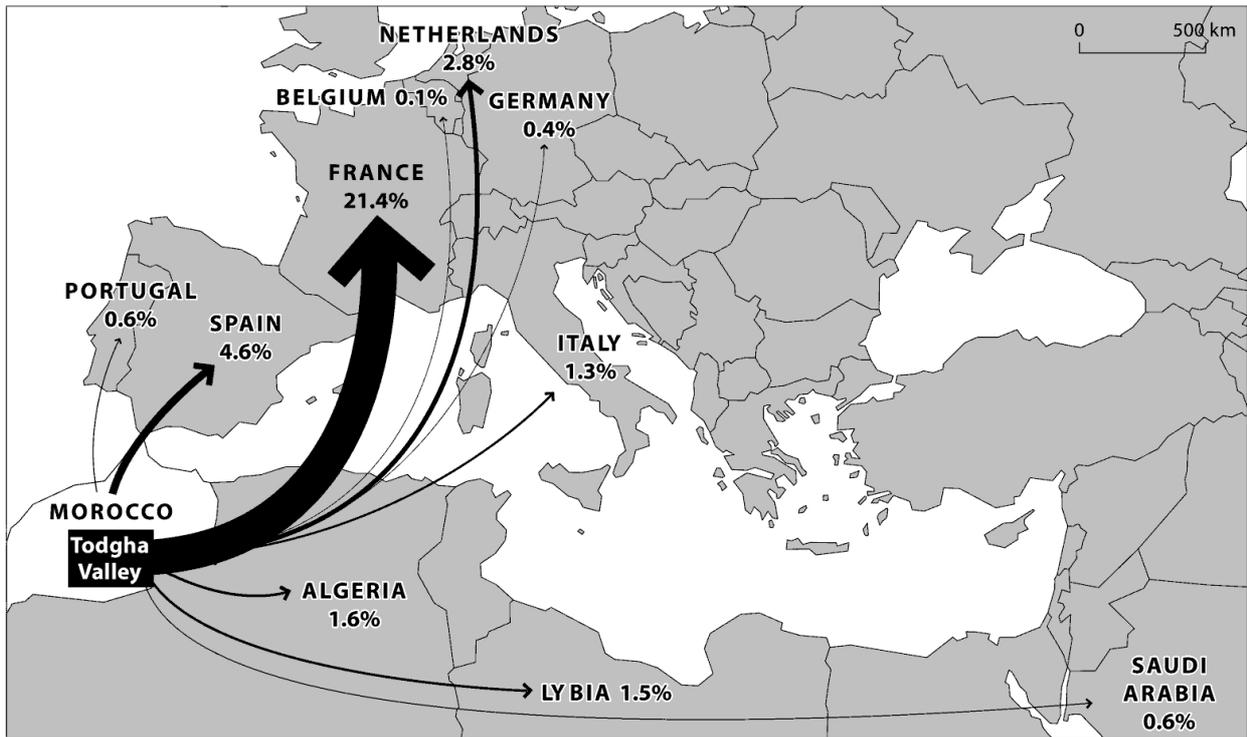
No secondary, valley-wide data are available on the evolution of internal migration between 1975 and 2000. In 1999, internal migrants represented 7.7 percent of the surveyed population. Although we should remain prudent about using the village data to make valley level generalizations, this possibly indicates that internal migration has remained important in the post-independence period, and has possibly even increased in recent decades. Internal migration has become a common experience for most young men—and, increasingly, women—and has become the rule rather than the exception. Less than one third of households (29.4 percent) have *never* participated in internal migration, and many households contain several current or returned internal migrants. Besides a diversification of internal migration motives—with education playing an increasingly important role—there has also been a diversification in migration destinations.

Table 6.7 shows the destinations of current and returned internal migrants in the research villages, and indicates that the large cities in western and southwestern Morocco attract about fifty percent of all migrants. Although Rabat-Salé is the most important destination with about 15 percent, it is striking that Casablanca and the southwestern cities of Marrakech and Agadir also attract considerable numbers of migrants. Compared to the period before 1970, these southwestern cities have grown in importance as migration destinations.

Furthermore, migration to nearby destinations within the Province of Ouarzazate (notably the rapidly expanding town of Ouarzazate, the provincial capital) and Errachidia has recently increased. The proportion of current migrants within southern Morocco (16 percent) has almost doubled as compared to returned migrants. The main reason for this increase seems to be the rapid development of various smaller and medium-sized towns within the Presaharan region. These include oasis centers which are more or less comparable to Tinghir, such as Ouarzazate, Zagora, Kelâa M'Gouna, Boumalne de Dadès, Tinejdad, Errachidia, and Erfoud. This process of micro- and meso-urbanization in southern Morocco (see section 4.4) has created non-agricultural employment opportunities, notably in the construction and service sectors.

The Middle Atlas has traditionally been an established destination for seasonal harvest workers, construction workers, and well diggers from the Todgha. The relative proximity of this relatively humid region probably plays an important role in this historical preference. Moreover, the Todghawis feel ethnically and culturally close to the Middle Atlas. For instance, they both speak similar versions of Tamazight Berber. Although important ethnic differences remain, the Middle Atlas is generally considered as far less “strange” than

Map 3. Principal international and internal destinations of the surveyed population (in % of all migrants)



western, predominantly Arab, Morocco, which is literally perceived as “another world”, especially among older generations.

**Table 6.7. Main destinations of current and returned internal migrants**

Destination	Internal migrants (%)			Destination	Internal migrants (%)		
	Current	Return	All		Current	Return	All
Casablanca	9.7	3.9	7.7	Boumia	3.1	1.3	2.5
Rabat-Salé	18.4	13.2	16.6	Aghbala	1.0	3.3	1.8
Marrakech	15.3	11.2	13.9	Azaghar	0.7	3.3	1.6
Agadir	10.8	13.2	11.6	other Middle Atlas	3.1	9.2	5.2
Other west-Morocco	1.4	4.6	2.5	<i>Middle Atlas</i>	8.0	17.1	11.1
<i>West Morocco</i>	55.6	46.1	52.3	Fes/Meknes	1.4	1.3	1.4
Province of Ouarzazate	9.4	4.6	7.7	Nador	6.9	4.6	6.1
Errachidia	2.4	1.3	2.0	Tétouan	3.8	6.6	4.8
Other south-Morocco	3.8	2.6	3.4	Berkane	1.0	4.6	2.3
<i>South Morocco</i>	15.6	8.6	13.2	other north Morocco	2.8	4.6	3.4
Itinerant	4.9	6.6	5.5	<i>North Morocco</i>	16.0	21.7	18.0
				Total	100.0	100.0	100.0
				<i>n</i>	288	152	440

Source: Household survey

However, there has been a decrease of migration towards the Middle Atlas since the 1950s (Büchner 1986). This seems to be corroborated by the fact that whereas 17 percent of the returned internal migrants went to the Middle Atlas, this is the case for only 8 percent of current migrants. The main explanation for the declining importance of migration to the Middle Atlas seems to be the decreasing need for harvest workers due to agricultural mechanization and the more rapid economic development in the cities of western and northern Morocco. It seems that migrants who do not intend to migrate far away now generally prefer to migrate to the urban centers within the provinces of Ouarzazate and Errachidia, where they can find employment too. The northern cities of Fes and Meknes attract only a few migrants from the Todgha.

In addition to the traditional destinations in the Middle Atlas and at the Atlantic coast, the boomtowns of the Rif region have also become increasingly important destinations. Towns such as Nador, Berkane, Al Hoceima, and Tétouan, which are located in or around the Rif Mountains, attract around 18 percent of all internal migrants. In the 1950s and 1960s, migration to these cities was negligible. Migration to the northern cities is a recent phenomenon, and can principally be explained by the extremely rapid growth of these cities. In particular, the construction boom has created a high labor demand, which has attracted people from more distant regions since the 1970s. Interestingly, the growth of these cities has been propelled by the investments of international migrants from the Rif (cf. Berriane 1996, 1997). In this way, investments by international migrants who left the region have generated a counterflow of internal migrants to the region.

It should be stressed that not all internal migrants have a fixed destination when they leave. Although migrants generally know their destination on departure—generally a place where they already know family or friends who can help them—they might change plans in case they cannot find suitable work or experience other problems there. However, most eventually settle, at least temporarily, in one particular town. Nevertheless, there remains a category of truly itinerant migrants, especially ambulant traders. Although such itinerant migrants probably used to be rather numerous, they currently represent only about 5 percent of all internal migrants.

Table 6.8 shows the historical evolution of internal migration from the research villages. Besides confirming the general trends described above, it shows more clearly that the most important recent shifts are the declining importance of migration to the Middle Atlas and the increased importance of migration to Marrakech and Agadir. One third of all migrants who left between 1995 and 1999 went to these southwestern cities, whereas Casablanca, Rabat, and Salé have remained relatively stable, attracting about one quarter of all migrants.

**Table 6.8. Destinations of internal migrants by year of departure**

Period	Destination (%)					Total	<i>n</i>
	Casablanca/ Rabat/Salé	Marrakech and Agadir	South Morocco	Middle Atlas	North Morocco		
<1980	20.0	8.9	15.6	33.3	22.2	100.0	45
1980-1989	31.3	18.8	10.4	20.8	18.8	100.0	96
1990-1994	21.7	42.5	9.2	3.3	23.3	100.0	120
1995-1998	27.3	33.3	19.3	5.3	14.7	100.0	150
Total	25.8	29.9	13.9	11.4	19.0	100.0	411

Source: Household survey (C=0.375\*\*)

#### 6.4.2. Intra-valley differentiation in internal migration patterns

As table 6.9 indicates, there are significant differences between the research villages concerning the spatial orientation of migration. Zaouïa distinguishes itself from other villages by its strong migration orientation to regions north of the Todgha, that is, the Middle Atlas and the cities in northern Morocco. It is also the only village with a sizable migrant population in Fes and Meknes. Possible explanations for this preference might be the historical function of Zaouïa as a religious-marabutic center and its close links with tribes living in the Middle and High Atlas mountains. Also in geographical terms, Zaouïa is located in the Atlas rather than in the southern Presahara. During the yearly pilgrimage, pilgrims coming from the Atlas used to visit Zaouïa to venerate the the saint Sidi ‘Abdelali. What also seems to play a role is that the *igurramen* of Zaouïa possess land in those areas, which they originally received as religious donations.

Internal migrants from Tikoutar are concentrated in Marrakech and Agadir. No less than two thirds of all internal migrants from Aït El Mesquine live in Rabat/Salé. Despite its proximity to the latter village, only 18 percent of migrants from Ikhba live in Rabat-Salé. Ikhba has the highest concentration of migrants working in northern Morocco. Internal migration from Tadafelt is predominantly oriented to the southern part of the country, with 40 of all migrants working in Marrakech and Agadir and no less than 26 percent in the provinces of Errachidia and Ouarzazate. Only 7 percent of all migrants from Tadafelt work in the Middle Atlas or northern Morocco. Of all the research sites, internal migrants from Tadafelt tend to travel the least far. Migrants from Ghallil n’Aït Isfoul, in contrast, tend to work in Rabat.

For many migrants, internal migration functions as a precursor to international migration. International migrants tend to migrate within Morocco before going abroad. Interviews and conversations revealed that youngsters aiming to enter Europe illegally via Spain—and lacking money or network contacts to access alternative ways to migrate—often leave their homes to work in the towns or the agricultural plains of the North as day laborers. They do so with the explicit aim of saving enough money to pay smugglers for the “illegal” crossing of the Mediterranean. Others try to obtain work or tourist visas legally with European embassies and consulates in large cities.

**Table 6.9. Destination of current internal migrants by village**

Village	Destination (%)					Total	<i>n</i>
	Casablanca/Rabat/Salé	Marrakech and Agadir	South Morocco	Middle Atlas	North Morocco		
Zaouïa	14.1	12.5	18.8	21.9	32.8	100.0	64
Tikoutar	26.7	40.0	13.3	6.7	13.3	100.0	30
Aït El Meskine	66.7	23.1	5.1	2.6	2.6	100.0	39
Ikhba	17.5	32.5	5.0	5.0	40.0	100.0	40
Tadafelt	27.0	40.4	25.8	3.4	3.4	100.0	89
Ghallil n' Aït Isfoul	58.3	8.3	16.7	8.3	8.3	100.0	12
Total	29.6	28.8	16.4	8.4	16.8	100.0	274

Source: Household survey (C=0.536\*\*)

### 6.4.3. The recent rise of student migration

Another, and relatively new form of internal migration, is the increasing number of young Todghawis studying in the big cities of Morocco, most notably in Marrakech and Agadir<sup>1</sup>. This form of migration played a minor role before 1980, and only started to gain momentum after the first secondary school in Tinghir—which was established in 1977—started to turn out certified pupils. However, it was only after the establishment of several new secondary schools and the generalization of education in the 1990s that student migration really gained ground. The household survey indicated that virtually nobody above 40 had migrated internally with the primary objective being to study. For the 35-39 year olds, 3 percent had left the Todgha to study. About 5 percent of the 30-34 year old internal migrants are studying, while this is the case for about 22 percent of the 25-29 year olds, and 38 percent of the 20-24 year olds! Although student migration is predominantly internal, each year some succeed, against all odds, in enrolling at French, Dutch, and sometimes German universities. As higher education enrollment has become one of the scarce means with which to obtain residence permits, some prospective labor migrants seem to revert to this strategy in order to enter Europe.

One could argue at length as to whether to consider student migration as “true” migration. However, this debate seems less interesting than to acknowledge the increasing significance of this type of mobility as well as the fact that student migration is often closely interwoven with, and functionally related to, internal and international labor migration. First, several international migrants who have not opted for family reunification and left their household members in Morocco send their sons to university in order to build a better future in Morocco (for further analysis, see section 9.5). Second, it frequently happens that two or three brothers working as internal labor migrants in town enable their younger brother(s) to continue their studies in the same town in which they are working.

Third, student migration often evolves into labor migration. Besides the fact that some students work part-time or during summer holidays, most students end up working or looking for work in the towns or cities as the employment possibilities for highly educated people in the Todgha are limited. Moreover, the experience of moving to and living in a big city for several years has a fundamental impact on tastes, perceptions, and aspirations, which makes it difficult to readapt to living in the Todgha. Student migration can therefore be seen as the first

<sup>1</sup> Admission procedures for Moroccan universities and other institutions for higher education tend to place students as closely as possible to their region of origin. Consequently, most students from the Todgha study in Marrakech and Agadir. Some attend the teacher training college in Ouarzazate, and a minority study in other towns such as Rabat.

step towards long-term labor migration, since most do not return definitely, and end up staying in towns or moving abroad.

The recent rise of student migration is a good example of how development and migration can be reciprocally and positively correlated. The incorporation of the Todgha into the modern state and the concomitant development of an education infrastructure has not only contributed to changes in mentality and rising aspirations among younger generations, but the establishment of secondary schools has also created an increasing demand for subsequent higher education. Therefore, improved education—which is highly “developmental” beyond any doubt—seems to have increased both the aspirations and capabilities of people to migrate. This seems in line with transitional migration theory discussed in chapter 2, which predicts that social and economic development, in its initial stages, tends to lead to an increase of out-migration instead of the reverse.

One of the reasons for extending the number of schools in rural areas is to prevent young pupils and entire families from moving to urban areas, in the context of the national policy to slow down the *exode rurale*. In the short-term, the establishment of schools may indeed help to stem the tendency of people to migrate to the regional towns in order to allow the primary and secondary education of children within the household. However, in the longer term, the effects of better education seem to increase migration both indirectly (socio-cultural change) and directly (the search for higher education and qualified jobs). Whether and why this should actually be considered as a negative development—as seems to be the dominant opinion among policy makers—is quite a different matter.

## **6.5. Significance of internal and international migration in the research villages**

Table 6.10 reveals to what extent the surveyed villages have been involved in internal and international migration. At first sight, percentages might appear quite low with international migrants, international return migrants and internal migrants representing 3.9, 2.3, and 7.7 percent of the total population, respectively. However, these migrants form 11.4, 3.6, and 22.0 percent of the *active male population* (age 16-65), respectively. Another 11.0 percent are returned internal migrants. The fact that nearly half of the total active male population has been involved in some kind of migration gives a taste of the all-pervasive character of this phenomenon in the Todgha.

Table 6.10 reveals that the villages of Aït El Meskine and Tadafelt are the most heavily involved in current international migration, with around 14 percent of the active male population staying abroad. All other villages have around 9-10 percent of their active population working abroad. However, if we look at international return migrants, inter-village differences become more clear-cut. Tikoutar, Zaouïa, and Aït El Meskine have the highest proportion (i.e., 4 to 6 percent) of returnees. The same figures are around 1-2 percent for the other villages. For Tadafelt, this probably reflects the relatively recent character of international migration in this Aït ‘Atta village. For Ikhba and Ghallil n’Aït Isfoul these low percentages are more difficult to explain. It might be the combined effect of the relatively lower migration from these villages (Ghallil n’Aït Isfoul in particular) and a relatively strong tendency among returnees to resettle in Tinghir or in places within or outside the Todgha.

If we add up current and returned international migrants, it becomes evident that Aït El Meskine has participated most intensively in international migration. Zaouïa, Tikoutar, and Tadafelt have exhibited lower, but comparable levels of participation in international

migration. It is important to note that the first two villages have older migration traditions than Tadafelt, which counts many men who recently migrated to Spain and other destinations, and very few return migrants. Ikhba and Ghallil n'Aït Isfoul have participated less heavily in international migration.

**Table 6.10. Migrants as percentage of the total and active male population, by village**

Village	% of total population and (males between 16-65 year)					<i>n</i>
	International 1	Returnees	All internat.	Internal	Total	
Zaouïa	3.4 (10.0)	3.4 (4.6)	6.9 (14.6)	8.9 (23.9)	15.8 (38.5)	870
Tikoutar	3.8 (9.7)	3.6 (5.8)	7.4 (15.5)	4.3 (11.7)	11.7 (27.2)	768
Aït El Mesquine	5.4 (14.8)	3.0 (3.7)	8.4 (18.5)	7.3 (19.6)	15.7 (38.1)	537
Ikhba	3.3 (9.9)	1.3 (1.9)	4.6 (11.8)	7.3 (22.4)	11.9 (34.2)	547
Tadafelt	4.3 (13.5)	0.6 (1.9)	4.8 (15.4)	10.5 (34.0)	15.3 (49.4)	869
Ghallil n'Aït Isfoul	3.4 (8.6)	0.5 (1.4)	3.8 (10.0)	5.8 (14.3)	9.6 (24.3)	208
Total	3.9 (11.4)	2.3 (3.6)	6.2 (15.0)	7.7 (22.0)	13.9 (37.0)	3,799
<i>r. isolation index</i>	-0.196 <sup>x</sup>	-0.695 <sup>x</sup>	-0.642 <sup>x</sup>	0.857 <sup>*</sup>	0.269 <sup>x</sup>	
<i>r. distance to Tinghir</i>	0.100 <sup>x</sup>	-0.798 <sup>x</sup>	-0.603 <sup>x</sup>	0.777 <sup>x</sup>	0.229 <sup>x</sup>	

Source: Household survey (C=0.374\*\*)

The correlation ratios between the isolation index and the relative occurrence of several types of migration reveals a strongly negative relationship between the isolation index and the level of return migration. If we interpret return migration as an indicator of relatively “mature” migration, this corresponds with the findings derived from table 6.3. A relatively high level of isolation has generally retarded involvement in international migration. Furthermore, the positive correlation between the isolation factor and the occurrence of internal migration suggests that villages that have participated less in international migration have concentrated relatively heavily on internal migration. Nevertheless, as we will see, international and international migration are not negatively correlated and, in particular in the longer term, tend to form “communicating vessels”.

Comparing the data at the village level with the official migration statistics from 1998 presented in table 6.10, we see that the data do not always correspond. This might be partially the result of the non-random nature of the village sample or due to differences in data collection and household definitions<sup>2</sup>. Whereas 6.0 percent of the total population stayed abroad in 1998, according to official statistics, this is 3.9 percent of the total population of the surveyed villages. However, if we include 2.3 percent of returned international migrants, this share increases to 6.2 percent.

However, the intra-valley spatial differentiation in migration participation detected in both data sets is similar. While Aït Todoght villages such as Aït El Mesquine, Ikhba, Zaouïa, Tikoutar, but also Ghallil n'Aït Isfoul, reached the height of their “international migration cycle” in the 1970s, Tadafelt only became significantly involved in international migration after 1980. With this, it clearly followed the general pattern of isolated Aït ‘Atta villages, whose populations started to explore migration paths in (southern) Europe only relatively recently. Put in the terminology of transitional migration models, Tadafelt entered its “early adopters” phase of its “mobility transition” only recently, which is possibly related to the relative poverty and isolation that characterizes this village.

<sup>2</sup> In collecting information for official migration statistics, no strict and a generally “looser” household definition seems to be used. The *mqaddemin* and *shiukh*—who often have little if any formal education—themselves draw up lists of households and migrants in their villages. It seems that these lists tend to comprise a number of households that have departed from the valley altogether, due to family reunification, which have not been included in the survey for this research. Nor have international return migrants been separately recorded from current migrants. This might also explain the higher migration participation rates found in official statistics.

Looking at internal migration, we see this is even more clear-cut than for international migration. With one third of all active men living and working outside the village, Tadafelt is most involved in internal migration. Zaouïa and Ikhba both score relatively highly with about one quarter of the active male population having migrated internally. Aït El Meskine, Ghallil n'Aït Isfoul and, in particular, Tikoutar are far less involved in internal migration. Tikoutar is the only village where international migrants exceed the number of internal migrants. This might be related to the fact that Tikoutar is at a walking distance from Tinghir. Many villagers work in Tinghir, and do not need to migrate in order to find a job. Due to this proximity, the advantages of living in Tinghir are less evident than for inhabitants of more distant villages.

Considering the total number of migrants, we see that Tadafelt is currently the most heavily involved in migration. In contrast to other villages, migration, and international migration in particular, is of a predominantly recent character in this village. Zaouïa and Aït El Meskine are the second most involved in migration, the main difference being that Zaouïa counts a relatively large number of internal migrants and that Aït El Meskine has intensively participated in international migration. Ikhba equally has a relatively old tradition of international migration, but has participated less than Aït El Meskine, and is more active in internal migration. Tikoutar and Ghallil n'Aït Isfoul score lowest, which is mainly due to their low involvement in internal migration.

It is important to observe that internal and international migration are not negatively correlated. Villages, lineages, and households with many international migrants do not contain proportionally lower percentages of internal migrants, and vice versa<sup>3</sup>. Moreover, adopting a temporal perspective, both types of migration seem positively related. To a certain extent, they even form “communicating vessels”. Especially in the longer term, internal and international migration seem to be positively rather than negatively correlated.

First, internal and international migration seem to be part of the general process in which regions are integrated into broader economic and political contexts. Second, both forms of migration often reinforce each other over time. The very process of internal migration tends to facilitate subsequent international migration in material, mental and informational terms. Internal migration often functions as a first stage and precursor to international migration. We have seen that many international migrants first moved to the coastal cities of Morocco, from where they “leapfrogged” to Europe. Although such migrants have been enumerated as “international migrants”, they were internal migrants before. Conversely, international migration may lead to internal migration through its effects on family relocation, student migration, and urban-based investments (see chapter 9). This corroborates the theoretical notion that internal and international migration are part of the same general development process that has increased mobility.

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<sup>3</sup> At the village level (n=6), the (insignificant) correlation ratio between current internal and international migrants is 0.17. However, the low absolute number of villages should make us extremely cautious. At the level of the lineage (ighs; n=35), the (non significant) correlation between internal and total international migrants is 0.05. At the household level, the correlation between the number of internal and international migrants is -0.13, and is significant at the 0.01 level. This slightly negative correlation probably reflects the distinct place of internal and international migration within the household lifecycle. In fact, international migrants tend to start their “migration career” as internal migrants.

## 6.6. Activities, migration duration, and return migration

### 6.6.1. Activities of internal and international migrants

There is a remarkable degree of stability in the activity patterns of migrants over the past decades. Table 6.11 shows the professions of internal migrants from the Todgha in 1954. As we can see, almost 40 percent of internal seasonal migrants worked as construction workers, either in traditional adobe architecture or in the modern construction sector. In the same year, 10 percent gained their living as street or ambulant traders. The phosphate industry in Khouribga attracted 6 percent of the migrants. The remaining 34 percent mainly worked in the service-oriented sector in the big cities, notably Rabat. About 10 percent of the non-seasonal migrants were working as agricultural laborers, sharecroppers, *khetgara*, and well diggers, mainly in the rural plains of western Morocco.

**Table 6.11. Professions of internal, non-seasonal migrants from the Todgha (1954)**

Traditional sector	%	Modern sector	%
Well diggers	2.2	Phosphate industry Khouribga	6.0
Adobe brick layers	19.0	Construction workers	19.6
Other traditional crafts	1.6	Agricultural laborers for <i>colons</i>	2.4
<i>Akhemmes</i> (sharecropper)	5.7	Diverse (Rabat in particular)	33.2
Ambulant trade	9.7		
<i>Fqih</i> (religious teacher)	0.3		
Water carrier	0.2		
Total	38.7		61.3
<i>n</i>	429		679

Source: French army's archives in Paris-Vincennes cited in Büchner (1986:116)

Almost four decades later, the surveyed internal migrants in the research villages were still predominantly working in construction and diverse jobs in the informal service sector (guards, domestic servants, gardeners, catering, and so on). As table 6.12 demonstrates, workers in these sectors account for over 50 percent of all surveyed internal migrants. The overwhelming majority of internal migrants do semi- and unskilled work in the informal sector and they tend to earn irregular wages of between 40 and 70 dirham<sup>4</sup> per day.

An importance difference with the 1950s is the number of migrants who primarily migrate for education purposes. Accounting for 22 percent of all internal migrants, they form the second internal migrant category. A relatively wealthy and highly skilled "elite" comprising teachers, other civil servants, and private-sector professionals form a third category of internal migrants. Representing only 7 percent of all internal migrants<sup>5</sup>, they enjoy relatively stable jobs and earn higher salaries compared to other internal migrants, who mostly survive on the basis of uncertain and badly paid jobs in the informal sector.

International migrants, even more than nonmigrants and internal migrants, tend to be concentrated in the construction industry, in which more than half of them are working. About 15 percent work in agriculture (particularly those working in Spain and Italy), and 14 percent in diverse service jobs. However, important differences exist according to the

<sup>4</sup> In 1999, the average value of 1 US\$ was equal to 9.8 dirham.

<sup>5</sup> Civil servants and professional workers only represent 2 percent of the surveyed active nonmigrant population. This seems to reflect the low demand for such personnel in Todgha's economy, which is primarily oriented towards semi- and unskilled jobs. However, the survey is not representative in the sense that it has not surveyed urban households living in Tinghir town. It might well be that there is a greater proportion of professional workers or civil servants among its population.

destination country. Among French migrants, 60 percent work in construction, whereas no one in the Netherlands is working in this sector, where migrants are more oriented towards the service sector. Half of all southern European migrants work in agriculture, and almost all others in the construction sector. Migrants to Libya and Saudi-Arabia, finally, predominantly work in services and construction.

**Table 6.12. Current primary activity of males (16-65) by migration status (1999)**

Primary activity	Migration status (%)					Total
	Nonmigrant	Current Internal	Current International	Returned internal	Returned international	
Agriculture	16.2	5.0	14.7	9.8	14.0	12.7
Construction	13.7	27.9	51.5	25.6	25.6	22.9
Commercial	9.1	6.5	1.5	6.8	14.0	7.6
Industrial	9.6	5.7	6.6	7.5	2.3	7.9
Civil serv/professional	1.1	6.9	0.0	7.5	0.0	2.9
Service sector	15.5	24.4	14.0	18.8	4.7	17.3
Student	24.0	22.1	2.9	3.0	0.0	17.9
Other	1.3	0.0	0.0	0.8	2.3	0.8
Not working	9.5	1.5	8.8	20.3	37.2	9.9
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
<i>n</i>	613	262	136	133	43	1,187

Source: Household survey (C=0.442\*\*)

Among the surveyed international migrant population, no one is working as a civil servant or professional worker, reflecting their generally low education or, in case of recent migration to southern Europe, “illegal” status. Migrants working in the “classic” destination countries such as France and the Netherlands often have relatively well paid and stable jobs, and those migrants without a job (9 percent) tend to receive social security benefits. Nevertheless, recent, often undocumented migrants in southern Europe generally live and work under more difficult circumstances, although payment is still superior to what they could have earned in Morocco.

Construction was and remains the most typical occupation of migrant workers from the Todgha, although a shift from traditional to modern construction has occurred. The first explanation for this pattern seems to be the high demand for high semi- and unskilled labor in the construction sector, which has been booming at a rapid rate ever since the colonial era. Yet, the orientation towards the building industry might also be partly attributed to the historical specialization of Todghawis in traditional adobe construction (cf. Büchner 1986).

Table 6.13 reveals the activity patterns of current internal migrants, differentiating between destination regions. It confirms that over half of all migrants to northern Morocco are primarily active in the construction industry of the booming migrant towns in this region. The declining share of migrants to the Middle Atlas are primarily active in agriculture (sharecroppers, agricultural workers, or on own land), reflecting traditional patterns of seasonal migration to this region. Migrants within southern Morocco form a very diverse group, in which service sector workers, students, and traders dominate. Furthermore, the table reveals that half of all migrants to Marrakech and Agadir are students, whereas most others work in the service sector and construction. The large coastal cities of Casablanca and Rabat-Salé form the only destination with a relatively large share (10 percent) of civil servants and professional workers. Other migrants to this region are primarily active in the service or construction sectors.

**Table 6.13. Primary activity of current internal migrants (all ages) by migration destination**

Primary activity	Destination (%)					Total
	Casablanca/ Rabat/Sale	Marrakech and Agadir	South Morocco	Middle Atlas	North Morocco	
Agriculture	2.5	1.3	6.7	30.4	2.2	5.1
Construction	23.8	27.8	11.1	13.0	54.3	27.1
Commercial	2.5	0.0	15.6	8.7	4.3	4.8
Industrial	5.0	3.8	2.2	8.7	10.9	5.5
Civil s/ profess.	10.0	3.8	8.9	4.3	2.2	6.2
Service sector	33.8	12.7	33.3	8.7	23.9	23.8
Student	15.0	49.4	20.0	8.7	2.2	23.1
Other	5.0	0.0	0.0	8.7	0.0	2.2
Not working	2.5	1.3	2.2	8.7	0.0	2.2
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
<i>n</i>	80	79	45	23	46	273

Source: Household survey (C=0.585\*\*)

### 6.6.2. Length of stay and migration duration

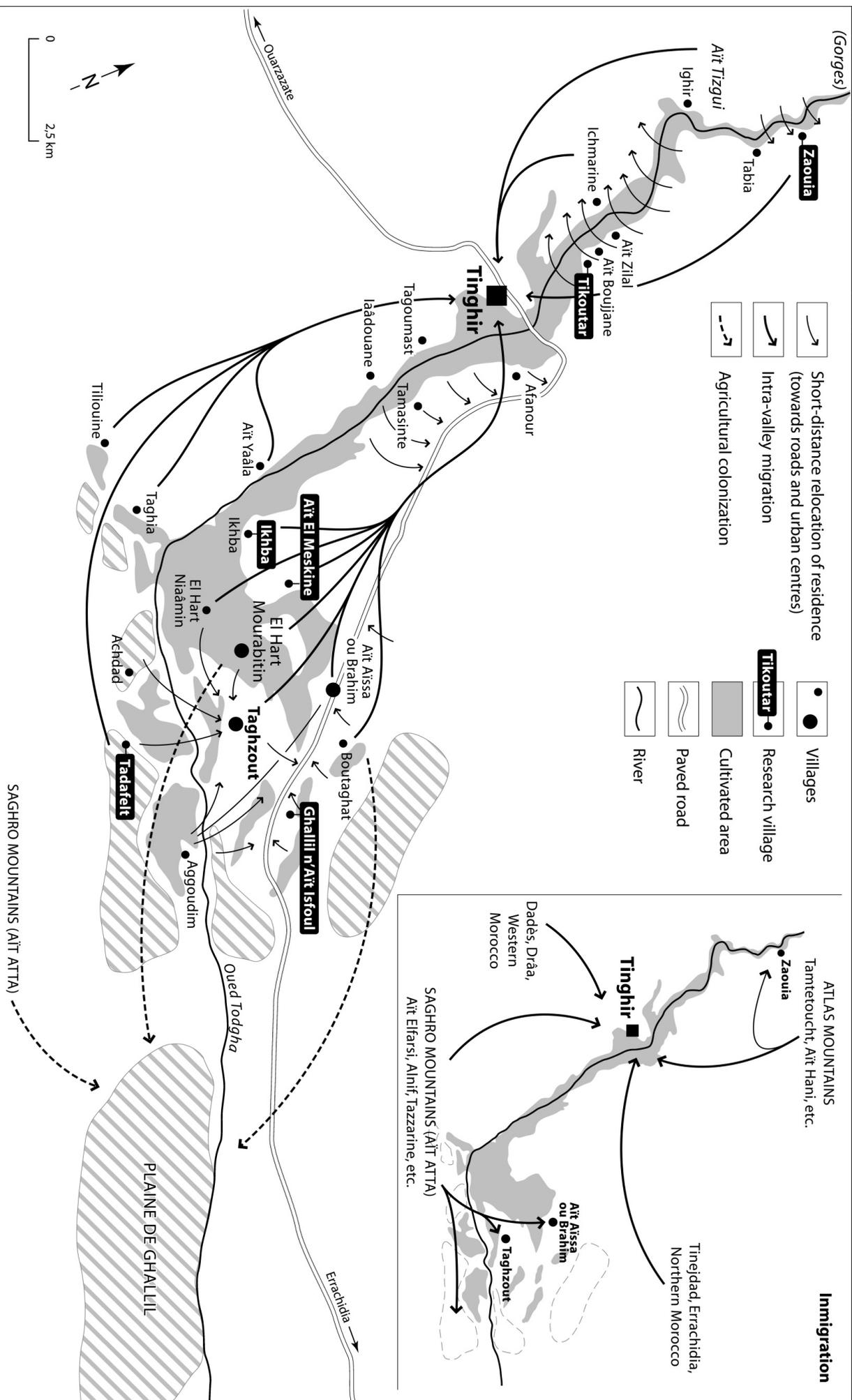
Internal migration generally involves less risks and costs than international migration. Internal migration also allows for a far greater deal of flexibility than international migration. Some internal migrants remain away for years, others return several months per year. This mainly depends on the availability of jobs. Most internal migrants work in the informal sector, and their jobs are generally of the irregular type.

In traditional seasonal migration, which persisted in the colonial era, migrants stayed in the Todgha during agricultural peak seasons (harvest of dates and other fruits as well as ploughing in autumn, and cereal harvest, threshing, and date pollination in spring). Outside this period, they looked for work in the large-scale cereal-growing areas of the western fringe of the Middle Atlas or in the Moulouya Plain. Nevertheless, this seasonal migration seems to have lost almost complete ground to more long-term, rural-to-urban migration. Table 6.14 displays the number of months that migrants have stayed away over the last 12 months (for current migrants) or during the last year of migration (for returned migrants).

Although internal migrants tend to come back for longer periods per year, their average stay outside the Todgha is 8 months, and less than one third stay away for less than 6 months. Reasons to return can be unemployment, social obligations, or other economic activities at home, notably in agriculture. Among international migrants, the mean number of months they stay abroad annually is somewhat inferior to 10. This figure is lower than expected, as summer holidays generally last between 4 and 8 weeks, and certainly not all migrants return each year.

The high average stay in Morocco can be explained by the long period spent in Morocco by a category of relatively aged international migrants who still officially reside abroad, but who no longer work. This group of unemployed, disabled, or retired migrants generally lives on social security benefits, and some of them tend to commute between Europe and Morocco, where they stay for longer periods. Some of these truly “transnational commuters” are active in trade activities in which they bring consumer goods or cars from Europe, and take back from the Todgha local products such as olive oil. Other migrants give people rides back to Europe or smuggle undocumented migrants across the Gibraltar Strait in their *transits*.

**Map 4. Immigration and intra-valley migration**



Although numerous international migrants gain an additional income by trading goods and transporting people during summer holiday, this has become a veritable way of life for some—generally older—migrants. A number of *transits* commute between the Todgha and Montpellier on a weekly basis<sup>1</sup>.

**Table 6.14. Number of months of absence during last year of migration**

Return migrant type	Absence in months during last year of migration (%)						
	0-3	4-6	7-9	10-12	Total	Mean	<i>n</i>
Internal migrant	10.6	19.2	38.4	31.8	100.0	7.8	292
International migrant	3.3	6.0	14.7	76.0	100.0	9.8	150
Returned internal migrant	9.1	15.2	33.9	41.8	100.0	8.0	165
Returned international migrant	3.4	8.0	17.2	71.3	100.0	9.6	87
Total	7.8	14.0	29.5	48.7	100.0	8.5	694

Source: Household survey (C=0.354\*\*;  $\eta$ =0.313\*\*)

Notwithstanding the predominantly non-seasonal character of contemporary migration, the total duration of internal migration tends to be relatively short compared to international migration. Table 6.15 shows that over half of returned internal migrants have returned within six years of departure. The number of internal migrants who stay more than 19 years in another town or city without reunifying their families is limited to about 10 percent. Lengths of stay vary considerably and can be very irregular, and principally depend on whether and for what period work is found. Just like international migration, access to relatively stable employment may eventually lead to family reunification, that is, the transfer of the entire household to town.

The average stay of international migrants is generally much longer. Over 70 percent of the international return migrants stayed more than 7 years abroad, and the average stay abroad lasts 18 years. Those who return earlier are generally migrants to Arab oil countries and undocumented migrants to southern Europe who were either expelled or did not find satisfactory employment.

**Table 6.15. Total migration duration of internal and international migrants**

Migrant type	Total length of stay (%)						
	0-3	4-6	7-18	≥19	Total	Mean	<i>n</i>
Current internal migrant	37.5	17.9	36.5	8.1	100.0	7.5	285
<i>internal without students</i>	34.8	12.4	42.4	10.5	100.0	8.5	210
Current international migrant	17.4	17.4	22.8	42.3	100.0	15.7	149
Returned internal migrant	24.7	32.0	30.7	12.7	100.0	8.2	150
<i>without students</i>	29.5	17.1	36.2	17.1	100.0	9.4	105
Returned international migrant	13.4	14.6	19.5	52.4	100.0	17.7	82
Total	27.2	20.6	30.0	22.2	100.0	10.8	666

Source: Household survey (C=0.413\*\*;  $\eta$ =0.403\*\*).

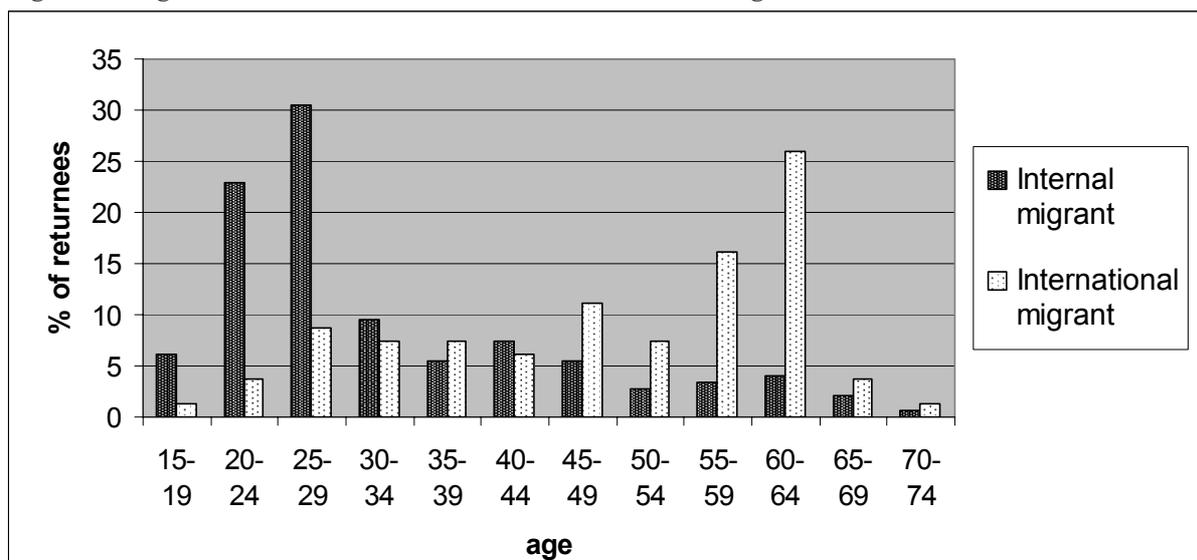
### 6.6.3. Return migration

Figure 6.4 displays the age on return of internal and international return migrants. The age profile of internal return migrants is clearly far younger than that of their international

<sup>1</sup> Such “commuters” seem to be primarily migrants living in southern France. The relatively short distance from Morocco to Mediterranean cities such as Montpellier and Nice (e.g., about one day’s travel from Gibraltar compared to at least two days to northern France, Belgium, and the Netherlands) might partly explain this phenomenon.

counterparts. While the mean age of all return migrants is 38, it is 32 for internal returnees and 48 for international returnees. However, if we take the mode as measure of central tendency, we come out at the 25-29 and 60-64 age categories, respectively, as the typical age on return. This confirms that internal and international migration occupy distinct places in the household life cycle (see section 7.3.1). It is not possible to make a precise assessment of the proportion of internal and international migrants who eventually return, since we do not know the number of migrants who have entirely left the Todgha due to family reunification. These migrants have literally gone out of sight.

**Figure 6.4. Age on return of internal and international return migrants**



Source: Household survey ( $\eta=0.502^{**}$ )

For Morocco as a whole, the majority of international migrants to Europe have eventually reunified their families at the destination. This also seems to be the case for the Todgha. Nevertheless, a substantial proportion of international migrants has not decided to reunify their families and have eventually returned. They make up 3.6 percent of the total research population. In addition, we must mention a substantial group of semi-returnees or “transnational commuters”, especially in France, who were described in the previous section. Two thirds of the current returnees returned in the 1990s (see also figure 6.1). However, early return migration has probably been much higher than the tables indicate due to the death of earlier returnees. Nevertheless, there seems to be a recent increase, which corresponds with the aging of the first generation migrants who left to Europe during the migration boom of the late 1960s and early 1970s.

Three decades after the Oil Crisis, the first generation of European migrants is approaching the age of (pre-) retirement. Those who reunified their families in Europe generally do not return, not in the least because their children (who were mostly raised and educated in Europe) and spouses (who generally enjoy more rights and “freedoms” abroad) often oppose the idea. The limited social and economic opportunities in Morocco and the integration<sup>2</sup> of migrants’ children in Western European society explain why the expectation of return has turned into a myth for most migrants. However, the minority who did not decide to

<sup>2</sup> Despite the fact that the “integration” of Moroccans is seen as problematic by many Europeans, it should not be ignored that, in Moroccan eyes, migrants’ children have become westernized to a large degree. The overwhelming majority of the “second generation” youth, who generally speak better French or Dutch than Berber or Arabic, feel so alienated from everyday Moroccan society that they cannot imagine living in Morocco.

transfer their families during the family reunification wave in the 1980s, returned in the late 1980s and 1990s. Early return migrants generally came from Algeria, and ten percent of recent returnees have worked in Libya and, to a lesser extent, Saudi-Arabia. Migrants to Arab oil countries are generally not allowed to stay and work on temporary contracts.

## 6.7. Immigration, intra-valley migration, and demographic effects

### 6.7.1. The Todgha and Tinghir as migration destinations

In the preceding sections, we have seen that out-migration to both internal and international destinations has been a constant feature of the Todgha valley over the twentieth century. However, it is important to observe that people are not only leaving the region, but that the Todgha has also become an increasingly important *destination* for migrants from other regions. Furthermore, there are distinct patterns of *intra-valley migration* linked to spatially differentiated economic and infrastructural development across the valley.

The concentration of services, public amenities, and economic activities in Tinghir has attracted an increasing number of people from outside the Todgha. These immigrants generally settle down in the new quarters southwest of central Tinghir (e.g., Bougafer, Wafa, Tichka). Recently, the semi-urban cluster around Aït Aïssa Ou Brahim and Taghzout has developed into a secondary destination, in particular for Aït ‘Atta from outside the Todgha.

The majority of these immigrants seem to be Aït ‘Atta from the Saghro Mountains south of Tinghir (e.g., Aït El Farsi, Alnif, Iknouen). The migration or “descent” of the Aït ‘Atta from the Saghro mountains to the Todgha valley has deep historical roots, and the Aït ‘Atta immigration is in fact a continuation of a historical migration wave that started several centuries ago (see section 6.2.1). Increasing numbers of Aït ‘Atta from the Saghro are now settling in the new quarters of Tinghir—which almost form Aït ‘Atta enclaves in Aït Todoght territory—in the semi-urban cluster of Aït Aïssa Ou Brahim and Taghzout, or as agricultural pioneers in the Ghallil plain. Non-Aït ‘Atta immigrants tend to come from the High or Middle Atlas (notably Aït Hani, Tamtetch, Imilchil, Rich, and Midelt) or from other oases such as Tinejdad, the Tafilalt, and the Drâa valley. Although their origins are diverse, the majority of immigrants speak Tamazight Berber, which facilitates their integration in the Todgha. This ethnic affiliation might well be one of the reasons why they choose the Todgha as their destination, in the same vein as Todghawis show a historical preference to migrate to Tamazight-speaking areas in the Middle Atlas.

Most immigrants are unskilled or low skilled and tend to work in the same sectors as nonmigrant Todghawis (i.e., construction, informal service sector, small manufacturing industries, and so on). However, among the newcomers are also prostitutes (mainly from the Middle Atlas), beggars, and a category of street kids who gain their marginal living as shoepolishers and cigarette vendors (mainly from the Drâa valley), and young men working as tourist touts. The relatively educated professionals working as civil servants, schoolteachers, *gendarmes*, and in other highly skilled jobs (such as the engineers working in the nearby mine of Imiter) make up an entirely different category of immigrants. Often coming from western Morocco and speaking Arabic, they tend to form separate communities of *berraniyin* (“outsiders”) in the Todgha displaying relatively urban and “modern” lifestyles in this rather conservative society.

A minority of immigrants do not settle in Tinghir, but in or around some of the villages. These are often ex-nomads from relatively distant regions such as Aghbala,

Tazzarine, and the Drâa. The immigrants often work for relatively wealthy villagers—among whom many international migrants—as agricultural laborers, well diggers, and guards. In some villages, such as Zaouïa in the upper Todgha and Boutaghat in the lower Todgha, immigrants have settled in the ancient, small, but relatively cheap *ighrem* habitat, which have been largely abandoned by their original inhabitants. Such re-occupation of *igherman* by relatively poor immigrants is also taking place in the historical center of Tinghir.

Besides migration from other areas to Tinghir, processes of *intra-valley migration* are further contributing to the urban growth of Tinghir and, to a lesser extent, the Taghzout-Aït Aïssa Ou Brahim cluster. The availability of public amenities and the employment opportunities attract people from more isolated villages to Tinghir, with its construction activities, various services (shops, restaurants, coffeehouses, hotels, *téléboutiques*), automobile repair shops, and the numerous workshops of carpenters and welders. Many villagers earn an additional income in Tinghir.

In villages located near Tinghir or along paved roads, such as Tikoutar, workers tend to commute between the villages and Tinghir. This is increasingly turning the villages around Tinghir into “dormitory villages”, where most adult men are absent during daytime. People who live in more distant villages, such as Zaouïa or Tadafelt, tend to stay overnight in Tinghir, obliging them to stay with family, rent an apartment, or construct a house. In the longer term, this often leads to the permanent settlement of the migrants and their households in Tinghir. Besides employment, living in Tinghir has several other advantages, such as the concentration of shops and markets and the presence of banks, administrative services, water and sewage systems, secondary schools, medical services, and direct road connections to Errachidia and Ouarzazate.

### **6.7.2. Immigration, intra-valley migration, and population growth**

Unfortunately, there are no valley-wide empirical data available on immigration and intra-valley migration. Nevertheless, on the basis of an analysis of spatially differentiated population growth within the Todgha, we can at least formulate tentative conclusions on the direction and magnitude of these migration flows, and the extent to which out-migration has affected population growth. In section 5.6.1, we saw that the population of the Todgha valley more than tripled over the second half of the twentieth century. It seems that these high growth rates cannot be attributed to natural increase only. In particular because the Todgha has been a region of out-migration too, the fact that the valley shows an above-average growth can only be explained by a significant counterflow of immigrants.

Between 1982 and 1994, the mean annual population growth of the Todgha was 2.8 percent, as compared to 2.2 percent for the entire Province of Ouarzazate (1.1 percent in rural areas, 9.2 percent in urban areas). Table 6.16 highlights the significant intra-valley differences in population growth. Although all four municipalities doubled their populations at least between 1952 and 1994, the municipalities of Tinghir and Taghzout have shown far higher growth rates than Todgha El Oulya and Todgha Es-Soufla. The two latter municipalities reached the peak of their population growth, and have witnessed a slowing down in population growth since 1982, especially in Todgha El-Oulya, where the population has virtually stagnated.

The high population growth of Tinghir and Taghzout should primarily be seen in the light of the attraction of the urban and semi-urban centers located in these municipalities for migrants from relatively remote villages within and outside the Todgha. Between 1982 and 1994, the growth of the municipality of Tinghir was 230 percent, and given its sheer size, the

rapid urban growth of Tinghir contributed most in absolute numbers to the total population increase. With more than 30,000 inhabitants in 1994, the municipality of Tinghir accounts for half of the population of the entire Todgha<sup>3</sup>.

**Table 6.16. Population growth in the municipalities of the Todgha (1952-2000)**

Municipality	Year					
	1952	1971	1982	1994	2000 (projected)	% incr. 1982-1994
Todgha El Oulya	2,804	3,774	5,686	5,953	6,087	112.30
Tinghir	9,226	14,498	18,247	30,471	36,583	230.27
Todgha Es-Soufla	4,976	7,054	11,686	13,594	14,548	173.19
Taghzout n'Aït Atta	3,252	6,091	8,481	11,695	13,302	259.62
Total Population	20,258	31,417	44,100	61,713	70,520	204.64

Sources: Own calculations based on national Censuses 1971, 1982, 1994; and Büchner 1986<sup>4</sup>

An even more spectacular growth has been realized in Taghzout n'Aït Atta, with an increase of 260 percent in 42 years. This population growth cannot only be explained by the development of the semi-urban cluster around Aït Aïssa Ou Brahim-Taghzout, but also by the agricultural colonization of the Ghallil plain, which has entailed immigration of Aït Todoght and Aït 'Atta from the Saghro. Moreover, the highest fertility levels in the Todgha are found among the Aït 'Atta (see table 6.17).

Todgha El Oulya and Todgha Es-Soufla, on the contrary, are characterized by stagnating population growth, in particular since 1982. Migration to these rural municipalities is very limited, and the natural growth seems to be largely counterbalanced by migration to Tinghir and destinations outside the valley. The phenomenon of almost zero growth in Todgha El Oulya can probably also be explained by the combined effects of relatively low fertility, the lack of space for house construction, and the high land prices in this narrow part of the valley. This has stimulated people to construct new houses in Tinghir or other locations in the lower Todgha.

An analysis of the population growth at the village-level reveals the following general trend: The closer to Tinghir, the more rapid the population growth. The slowest growers are Tizgui and the more marginal Aït 'Atta villages, such as Ghallil n'Aït Isfoul and Taghia. The most rapid grower is the actual urban center of Tinghir (312 percent between 1952 and 1994). In the 1982-1994 period, the differences in growth between different parts of the valley have become more pronounced than before. "Rural" areas such as Tizgui, Aït Snane, and Amzaourou witnessed almost zero or negative growth, compared to mean annual growth rates of 16.0 percent for Tinghir center and 6.6 percent for Taghzout. This clearly reflects national patterns of slowing rural growth, accelerating urban growth and, in particular, the process of "micro-urbanization" of the rural space (see section 4.4).

Over the past century, immigration, emigration, and intra-valley migration have occurred simultaneously, and this has contributed to the rather spectacular growth rates of the

<sup>3</sup> It should be noted that the municipality of Tinghir also comprises neighboring villages, which are being "swallowed" more and more by expanding Tinghir. These villages account for more than half of the population of Tinghir.

<sup>4</sup> Administrative divisions have changed over time. In this table, we have used the current administrative boundaries. Data from older censuses were available at the village or at least the *fraction* level. It was therefore possible to recalculate these data on the basis of current administrative divisions. Although the villages of Achdad, Tadafelt and Taghia belonged to other, non-Todgha, municipalities during the 1971 (1,523 people) and 1982 (1,965 people) censuses, their population in these years has been included in order to properly assess population growth. Population estimates for 2000 have been based on extrapolations based on the 1992-1984 population growth rates within each municipality.

municipality of Tinghir. At the valley level, immigration has at least kept equal pace with out-migration over the past half century. In conclusion, with half of the population living in urban or semi-urban environments, and the function of Tinghir as “migration interface”, it would not be appropriate anymore to refer to the Todgha as a typically “rural” region or as a region of out-migration only.

### 6.7.3. Demographic transition and migration

The population of the Todgha is predominantly young. According to the 1994 census (see table 6.17), about 44 percent of the total population were under 15 years old. However, the population of the lower Todgha municipalities of Todgha Es-Souffla and, in particular, Taghzout n’Ait Atta is clearly younger than in the upper Todgha. In the same vein, the approximate fertility rates are significantly higher at levels of around 6 children per woman, compared to 3.5 in the upper Todgha communities. From this spatial gradient in fertility levels, it can be hypothesized that the demographic transition is relatively less advanced in the poorer, isolated, and generally “less developed” lower Todgha as compared to the upper Todgha.

Throughout Morocco, birth rates drastically fell in the final two decades of the twentieth century, and the country continues to be in full demographic transition (see section 4.6). The age pyramid of the entire surveyed population indicates a rapid drop in birth rates over the past decade (figure 6.5). This confirms that the demographic transition has also affected the Todgha, which corroborates empirical evidence from other regions in Morocco (cf. De Haas 1998; Taouil 2001).

**Table 6.17. General demographic characteristics of the Todgha (1994)**

Municipality	Todgha El Oulya	Tinghir	Todgha Es-Souffla	Taghzout n’Ait Atta	Total
Population	5,953	30,471	13,594	11,695	61,713
Households	819	4380	1735	1606	8540
Mean household size	7.27	6.96	7.84	7.28	7.23
<i>Age structure</i>					
< 15 year	38.3	43.1	47.3	47.9	44.5
15-59 year	53.1	50.8	45.6	44.8	48.7
≥60 year	8.6	6.1	7.1	7.3	6.8
Fertility (children per woman)	3.52	3.85	5.29	6.16	4.57

**Source:** Own calculations based on the 1994 national census; *quidat* Tinghir

A comparison of data from the 1994 census (table 6.17) and the 1999 household survey (table 6.18) seems to give additional evidence of a progressing demographic transition, although we should remain prudent in comparing two different research populations. In 1999, 34 percent of the surveyed population were under 15 years old, as compared to 44 percent for the entire valley in 1994. Whereas in 1994, well over 40 percent of the population were under 15 years old in all municipalities except for Todgha El Oulya, this proportion was less 40 percent in all surveyed villages in 1999—even including Tadafelt. Simultaneously, the number of young adults has significantly increased over the 1990s.

Table 6.18 also reveals that villages with the most ancient international migration traditions (Aït El Meskine and Tikoutar in particular) tend to exhibit the oldest age profiles, that is, seem more advanced in their demographic transition. This seems to corroborate transitional migration theory and Zelinsky’s mobility transition theory in particular, which

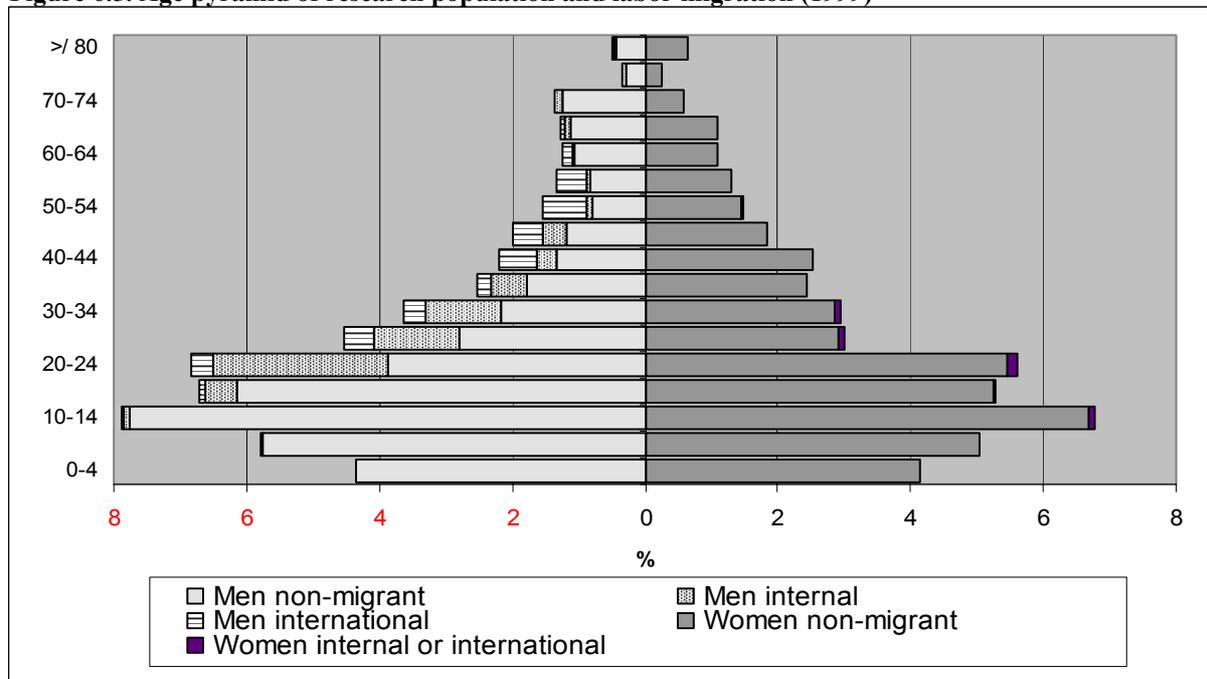
makes a direct connection between the “vital” and demographic transition and the occurrence of particular forms of migration. However, we do not know exactly to what extent the relatively old age profile is also the *effect* of sustained out-migration and family reunification in particular, which generally implies the departure of families with young children.

**Table 6.18. Age structure of research villages including labor migrants (1999)**

Village	Age group (%)			Total	n
	< 15 year	15-59 year	≥ 60 year		
Zaouia	33.5	55.8	10.7	100.0	871
Tikoutar	31.1	59.5	9.4	100.0	766
Aït El Meskine	28.9	64.6	6.5	100.0	537
Ikhba	37.0	57.1	5.9	100.0	546
Tadafelt	39.4	52.8	7.8	100.0	868
Ghallil n’Aït Isfoul	30.4	63.8	5.8	100.0	207
Total	34.0	57.7	8.2	100.0	3,795

Source: Household survey

**Figure 6.5. Age pyramid of research population and labor migration (1999)**



Source: Household survey

The age pyramid in figure 6.5 reveals that a large part of the adult male population is absent due to labor migration. It displays the typical age structure of regions of heavy out-migration, which are generally characterized by a population structure in which women and children dominate. It also shows that labor migration is largely reserved for men. Most women who migrate do so in the context of family reunification, and disappear from the statistics since “departed households” have not been included in the survey. Reflecting a national trend, the age pyramid also seems to indicate a rapidly decreasing birth rate over the 1990s,

Within the Moroccan context, it has been argued that the massive out-migration of young people and subsequent family migration may cause a considerable slow down in demographic growth at the regional and local level (Kerbout 1990). Nevertheless, the oft-used term “rural exodus” is clearly misleading in the case of the Todgha. Like most “rural” areas in Morocco, the Todgha has witnessed a net population increase over the past century. As the previous section indicated, permanent out-migration (largely through family reunification or

formation at the destination) has been counterbalanced by natural population growth, return migration, and immigration.

## **6.8. Who migrates? The selectivity of migration**

### **6.8.1. Introduction**

As was argued in chapter 2, the question of *migration selectivity* is of fundamental importance to any analysis of migration and development. In order to assess the impact of migration, it is important to know whether and to what extent migration is a selective process, and to what extent this selectivity has changed over time. Migrants are rarely representative of their communities of origin. Both within the international and Moroccan context, it is commonly assumed that migrants form the “most motivated, most dynamic and youngest” (Lahlou 1996:331) sections of the population of origin. Thus, according to this hypothesis, male, single individuals between 20 and 35 years of age have the highest propensity to migrate both internally and internationally (Bauer and Zimmermann 1998:113; Hearing and Van der Erf 2001; Lipton 1980). Individuals with higher education exhibit a higher migration probability in internal migration. For international labor migration from rural areas, insignificant or significantly negative selection effects are found (Bauer and Zimmermann 1998).

Based on the assumption that a certain threshold of wealth is generally required to bear the risks and opportunity costs of migration, both internal and international migrants do not tend to come from the poorest households measured in terms of land possession and income prior to migration (Bauer and Zimmermann 1998; Ghatak and Levine 1994; Hearing and Van der Erf 2001). Moreover, there is growing awareness that access to migrant networks is an essential factor in internal and, particularly, international migration decisions (Bauer and Zimmermann 1998; Hearing and Van der Erf 2001:7). It has been often presumed that migration becomes less selective over time due to network effects, although selectivity might increase again in the “late adopters stage” of migration (Jones 1999).

In this section, we will assess whether actual migration from the surveyed villages complies with the above-mentioned hypotheses on selectivity. First, we will examine the extent to which tribal affiliation and membership of a particular *ighs* (the ethnic lineage at village level) affects migration participation. Second, we will analyze to what extent migration has been selective concerning gender, age, and education. Third, we will see how “traditional wealth”, as reflected by land possession prior to migration, has affected the participation of individuals in internal as well as international migration.

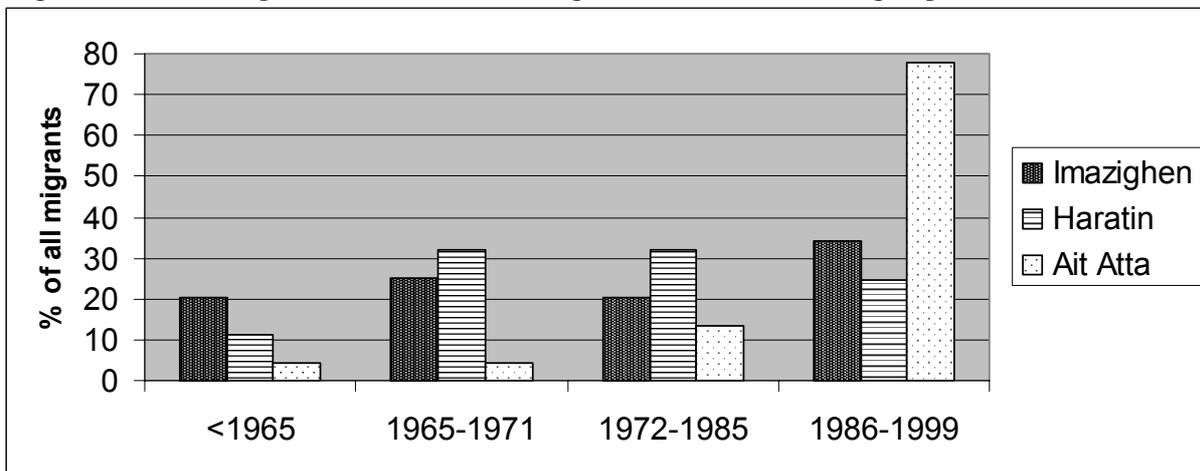
### **6.8.2. From nomads to migrants: The Aït ‘Atta mobility transition**

Migration from the Todgha is characterized by a strong ethnic differentiation, whereby, until recently, the Aït Todoght have participated far more intensively than the Aït ‘Atta in both internal and international migration. Members of this semi-nomadic tribe hardly participated in Algerian migration. The Aït Todoght were predominantly involved in the migration boom of the late 1960s and early 1970s. Although they partly caught up in the 1970s, it was only in the 1980s and 1990s that the Aït ‘Atta started to participate more intensively in international migration.

Table 6.2 already indicated that the Aït Todoght participated most intensively in migration to Algeria. In 1954, the mean migration participation rate for the Aït Todoght was 8.2 percent, with percentages varying from 6.2 percent for Tinghir and 13.2 percent for the Amzaourou *fraction*. In contrast to these relatively high figures is the low migration participation among the Aït ‘Atta, with only 1.9 percent migrants in Algeria, and no migrants in France at all. In the following two decades, the Aït ‘Atta caught up to a certain extent, with their participation rate rising to 4.5 percent in 1975, compared to 8.5 percent among the Aït Todoght (excluding El Hart)<sup>5</sup>. The less isolated villages along the main road, such as Aït Aïssa Ou Brahim and Ghallil n’Aït Isfoul, in particular accounted for this increase. Only few people from more remote Aït ‘Atta villages (such as Tadafelt) migrated abroad.

The survey data seem to confirm this image. Figure 6.6 shows the period of departure of international migrants within the research population, differentiated for the main ethnic groups of *imazighen* and *haratin* (both within the Aït Todoght) as well as the Aït ‘Atta<sup>6</sup>. First, the figure exemplifies that *imazighen* and, to a lesser extent, *haratin*, migrated relatively early, and that 78 percent of the surveyed Aït ‘Atta migrants moved abroad after 1985.

Figure 6.6. Year of departure of international migrants within main ethnic groups



Source: Household survey ( $\eta(\text{year of departure dependent})=0.326^{**}$ )

The differences between Aït Todoght and Aït ‘Atta become more significant if we analyze this at the household level. Figure 6.7 displays the year of departure of the first international migrant within all the households participating in international migration. In this way, we exclude network and intergenerational (relay) migrants and focus on the year in which households first became involved in international migration. It confirms that *imazighen* exhibit the most mature international migration history and that the Aït ‘Atta migration boom is comparatively recent.

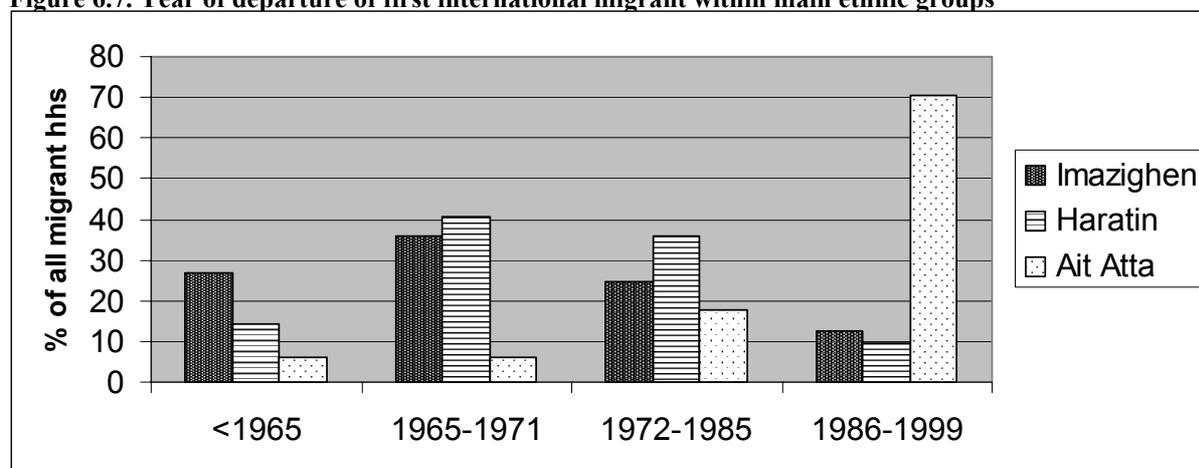
Generally, the same pattern seems to hold for internal migration. In 1954, only 0.7 and 2.7 percent of the Aït ‘Atta participated in seasonal and rural-to-urban migration, respectively, compared to 7.6 and 6.5 percent of the Aït Todoght (see table 6.19). Therefore, both internal and international migration were low among the Aït ‘Atta. This further corroborates the hypothesis that internal and international out-migration constitute “communicating vessels”, in particular in the longer term. Instead of being negatively

<sup>5</sup> To calculate these percentages, the numbers of migrants were divided by interpolated population figures, based on the mean annual growth rate between the 1971 and 1982 censuses.

<sup>6</sup> These percentages have been calculated through dividing the number of migrants by the interpolated population figures of the class medians (1960, 1968, 1979, and 1989).

correlated, both forms of migration seem positively correlated, and part of the same development process leading to a general increase in mobility.

**Figure 6.7. Year of departure of first international migrant within main ethnic groups**



Source: Household survey;  $\eta(\text{date of first departure dependent})=0.478^{**}$

**Table 6.19. Participation in internal migration by ethnic group (1954 and 1975)**

Ethnic group	Seasonal (harvest) worker		Long term rural-urban	
	1954	1975	1954	1975
Ait Todoght	7.61	0.70	6.52	3.37
Ait 'Atta	0.68	0.61	2.68	3.31
Total	6.39	0.69	5.47	3.36

Source: Büchner 1986

In 1975, participation in internal migration was almost equal between the two groups. This was in the time before international migration gained momentum among the Ait 'Atta, and this might support the hypothesis that internal migration is often a precursor to international migration. This illustrates the importance of adopting a "temporal" perspective in migration analysis. The data from the household survey presented in figure 6.8 equally point to the relatively late participation of Ait 'Atta in internal migration, although the association between ethnicity and year of departure is less strong compared to international migration.

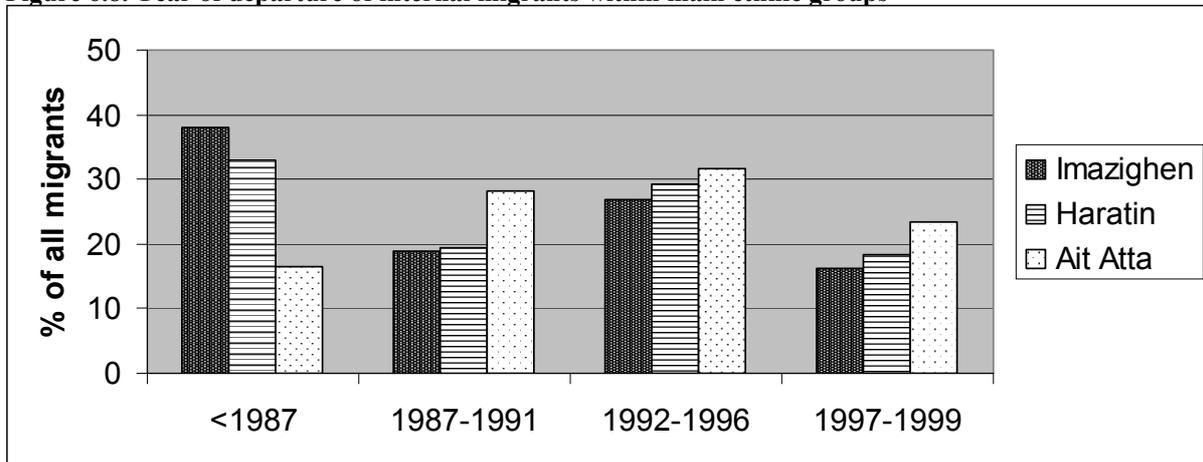
In contrast to the Ait 'Atta, the Ait Todoght started to participate in both internal and international migration at an early stage. As we have seen, it is only since the 1980s that the Ait 'Atta have caught up, and now seem to participate even more intensively in labor migration than other groups. The low number of international return migrants<sup>7</sup> also indicates that Ait 'Atta migration is still in the build-up phase or, in Jones' (1999) terms, the "early adopters" stage of its migration cycle. This confirms the general image that the Ait 'Atta are at an earlier phase of their "migration transition" and are currently experiencing a "migration hump" (cf. Martin and Taylor 1996), with many people leaving and few return-migrants. Furthermore, the Ait Todoght and Ait 'Atta have developed rather distinct migration itineraries, with the Ait Todoght focusing on destinations in northwestern Europe and the Ait 'Atta focusing on "new" destinations in southern Europe.

The question is now how to explain this inter-ethnic difference in migration history. First, it seems that there is some kind of relationship between the relative isolation of most Ait 'Atta and their "lagged" participation in contemporary forms of labor migration. As has

<sup>7</sup> International return migrants represent 0.6 percent of the total population among the Ait Atta, against 3.5 and 2.1 percent among *haratin* and *imazighen*, respectively.

been argued before, most Aït ‘Atta remained relatively isolated compared to most Aït Todoght, which “opened up” to the outside world earlier (see chapter 5). It seems that the infrastructurally and politically marginalized Aït ‘Atta held on longer to their traditional semi-nomadic livelihoods.

**Figure 6.8. Year of departure of internal migrants within main ethnic groups**



Source: Household survey ( $\eta(\text{year of departure dependent})=0.176^{**}$ )

Second, as Monsaingeon (1947:1) argued, the stronger tribal cohesion and inward orientation among the Aït ‘Atta might partly explain their low propensity to participate in “modern” labor migration. What might have played a role too is the hostile attitude of many Aït ‘Atta towards non-Aït ‘Atta in general, and the colonial state and Moroccan *makhzen* in particular. Third, the generally low level of development and high incidence of poverty probably played an important role in explaining the initially low migration participation among Aït ‘Atta. This would be in line with the argument of transitional models presented in chapter 2 that the relationship between poverty and migration is non-linear, and that a certain level of social and economic development is generally required to migrate. Before the 1970s, most Aït ‘Atta seemed too poor and too isolated to migrate.

This sustains the idea that the poorest most isolated are not prone to migrate, but those with access to certain material resources, information, and political power. In the same vein, areas that are isolated in infrastructural terms do not exhibit the highest migration rates. From this, it can be hypothesized that the Aït Todoght were in a relatively advanced position in contrast to most Aït ‘Atta.

From Zelinsky’s (1971:230-1) perspective of the “mobility transition” (see section 2.2), one could argue that, until the late 1970s, most Aït ‘Atta were still in the phase of the “pre-modern traditional society”, and most Aït Todoght in the phase of “early transitional society”. In terms of Martin and Taylor (1996), the Aït ‘Atta are in an earlier phase of their “migration hump”. However, as has been argued in chapter 2, the fundamental weakness of Zelinsky’s model seems to be the assumption that pre-modern traditional societies were non-mobile. Certainly among the semi-nomadic Aït ‘Atta, mobility has always been a constituent part of their livelihoods. However, as has also been argued in chapter 2, there is a fundamental distinction between traditional types of migration and present-day forms of migration based on wage labor and remittances, which are strongly linked to the process of modernization and capitalist expansion.

Thus, what the Aït ‘Atta are experiencing is the transition from a pre-modern form of mobility (*transhumance*, settlement, and resettlement through tribal warfare and conquest) to a strikingly different form of mobility—labor migration—which is a modernist phenomenon

*per se*. In this sense, Zelinsky's model—in a modified form—still seems to have considerable analytical strength in interpreting and understanding the incorporation of traditional peasant societies into modern (internal and international) migration systems. Zelinsky's model and related transitional approaches can help to comprehend the spatially and ethnically differentiated evolution of migration in the Todgha. In this perspective, the Aït Todoght of the upper and middle Todgha were incorporated into modern migration systems at an earlier stage than the Aït 'Atta of the lower Todgha.

### 6.8.3. Kinship and the unequal access to migrant networks

We have seen that by differentiating on ethnic background, patterns of migration vary considerably. This points to the importance of networks in migration. The vast majority of prospective migrants already know someone at the destination. Consequently, the “coincidental” destination of pioneer migrants from a particular community tends to determine to a great extent the destination of later “chain” migrants. In a predominantly tribal area such as the Todgha, people tend to gain access to migration networks kinship bonds. This is not only the case at the tribal level (e.g., the strongly differentiated migration patterns of Aït 'Atta and Aït Todoght), but also at the level of the lineage and extended family.

It seems primarily the presence of migrants within the extended family and, to a lesser extent, the lineage and village, which determines the chances of prospective migrants to migrate successfully. Migration networks seem especially crucial for international migration, which involves increasingly higher costs and risks due to the increasingly restrictive European immigration policies. As social organization and trust is mainly based on kinship ties, it is also the main channel for obtaining assistance in obtaining residence papers, housing, and work. Moreover, migrants, including their children, tend to prefer to marry partners within their own extended family or the own ethnic lineage.

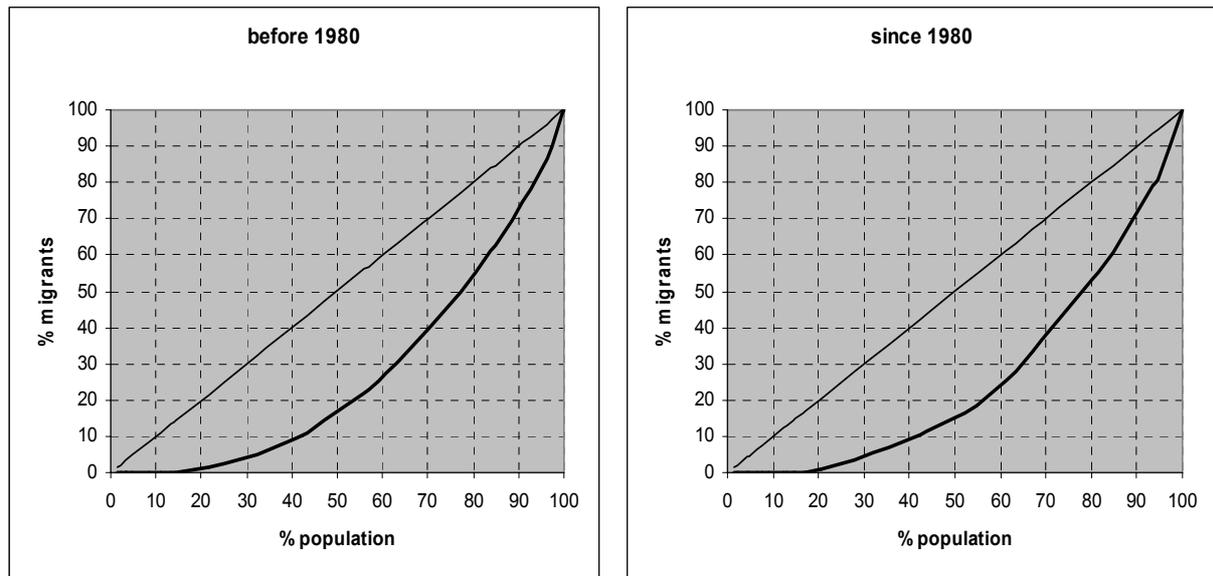
It is therefore not surprising that the data analysis reveals a high differentiation in migration participation between different lineages (*ighsan*, see chapter 4) within the same village. Some (extended families within) lineages are far more heavily involved in migration than others are, and migrants from the same lineage tend to be concentrated in specific destinations. Especially for international migration, the participation rates per lineage are widely diverging. For instance, whereas both in Aït El Mesquine and Ghallil n'Aït Isfoul, only two lineages account for more than one third of all villagers working abroad, five lineages do not count any international migrants at all. Out of the 35 different lineages within the villages, only 7 comprise more than 50 percent of all current international migrants.

In figure 6.9, Lorenz curves have been drawn. They show the distribution of international migrants at the lineage level, differentiating between migrants who left before and since 1980. The figure shows the degree of inequality of the frequency distributions of the cumulative percentages of the total population of all lineages (x-axis) plotted against the cumulative percentage of all international migrants (y-axis). The graph clearly shows that the relative distribution of international migrants over lineages is unequal. Only four (out of 35) lineages representing 6 percent of the total population account for more than 21 percent of all the international migrants who have left since 1980. On the other hand, 14 lineages representing 17 percent of the population do not contain any international migrants at all, and the 50 percent of the population concentrated in the “migration-poor” lineages account for only 15 percent of all international migrants.

On the basis of network theory, one would predict the increasing diffusion of international migration participation over the past few decades. However, the figure shows

that the distribution of international migration participation measured at the lineage level did not become less unequal after 1980. For migration before 1980, the Gini index is 0.463, for migration after 1980 the Gini index is 0.471. Thus, inequality in access to international migration has not decreased. The “international migration capital” has apparently remained concentrated within certain lineages. The importance of such kinship networks has become even more important due to the increasing legal barriers to migration.

**Figure 6.9. Lorenz curves for participation in international migration at lineage (*ighs*) level before and since 1980**



Source: household survey (Gini index: 0.463 (before 1980) and 0.471 (since 1980))

Although kinship networks are of great help in migrating, they also tend to be exclusionary. This points to the so-called “downside of social capital”, put forward by Portes and Landolt (1996) to criticize uncritical and fashionable applications of the concept of social capital as a “key to success and development”. As the authors argue, popular views now portray social capital as wholly beneficial with no significant downside, and thereby naively assume that social capital can resolve the classic dilemmas of collective action. However, social capital also has possible negative implications. Membership of a community brings demands for conformity, which may be asphyxiating to the individual spirit, and tight social networks and obligations may undermine economic initiatives through pressing social obligations to support family and community members. However, for the present analysis the most relevant “downside” of social capital is that “the same strong ties that help members of a group often enable to exclude outsiders” (Portes and Landolt 1996:3).

In the arena of migration research, social capital in the form of access to migrant networks tends to be invariably seen as an unmixed blessing facilitating the migration of more and more community members. However, such reasoning not only becomes circular as migration seems to go on *ad infinitum* (Massey *et al.* 1998:48, see section 2.3.3), but also ignores internal socio-ethnic differentiation within migrant sending communities. In the Todgha, migration networks may be to the benefit of people belonging to lineages and extended families containing international migrants, but they also entail the exclusion of those outside these groups. The predominantly kinship-based access to migrant networks implies that although current migrants may indeed act as “bridgeheads” for prospective migrants within the same family and lineage, they also act as “gatekeepers”, who are unwilling to assist non-kin or only agree to do so in return for a high (bride) price (see section 2.3.3.).

Moreover, lineages—and extended families within them—tend to keep the “migration capital” within their own group through endogamous marriage<sup>8</sup>. Thus, kinship-based access to migrant networks also leads to inequality in access to such networks. This also explains why the supposed “diffusion” of migration over village communities—as predicted by migration network theory and transitional models—remained largely limited to particular lineages and extended families within them who monopolize access to international migration systems.

#### 6.8.4. Gender, age, and migration

The desire to emigrate is no longer only the reserve of men, but it has also contaminated more and more young females who, regarding the state of fragmentation of the majority of families, and the atmosphere surrounding the current debate on the feminine condition, no longer hesitate to go abroad (translation from Fadloulah *et al.* 2000:95).

As this quotation illustrates, independent labor migration by women is highly frowned upon by large sections of Moroccan society. Until recently, independent migration by women—except for a limited number of students to France and some other countries—was very limited. However, over the 1990s, female migration was no longer exclusively a corollary of male migration. Although the vast majority of women still migrate within the scope of family reunification or formation, one seventh of the Moroccan women surveyed by Fadloulah *et al.* (2000:95) migrated because of work.

The proportion of independent female migrants from Morocco seems to be on the rise, both internally and internationally (Fadloulah *et al.* 2000; Hnaka 1999; Refass 1990:225). The majority of these independent female migrants seem to be single or divorced (Costanzo 1999; Hnaka 1999). This is a remarkable development, as Moroccan women have to overcome important economic, social, and cultural obstacles to migrate on their own. This is possibly related to the increasing education of women and their partial social and economic emancipation in Moroccan society.

Until recently, virtually all labor migrants from the Todgha were men. Women were generally not allowed to migrate independently, and only migrated in the context of family migration. However, recently a small but increasing number of women have been participating in internal labor migration. Independently migrated women make up 3 percent of all the surveyed internal migrants (see table 6.20), but the actual number is probably higher due to underreporting. Although internal migrant women work as civil servants or schoolteachers, most work in unskilled industrial or service sector jobs in the towns and cities. Moreover, with the improving education of women, an equally small but increasing number of female student migrants left the valley over the 1990s.

Some respondents reported that one of their daughters worked as a domestic servant in the large cities. Such migration of domestic servants is a widespread phenomenon in Morocco (see chapter 4). Nevertheless, sending unmarried daughters away to work in this occupation is generally considered *hshuma* (shameful), which may have caused considerable underreporting—so the actual number of female labor migrants may be higher. Nor do we know the number of divorced or widowed women that have entirely left the Todgha with or without their children.

As in Morocco in general, the number of independent female labor migrants from the Todgha seems to be increasing. Independent *international* labor migration by women is still a

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<sup>8</sup> Endogamous marriage—within the lineage—is still the dominant form of marriage in the Todgha, although “simultaneous exchange” of marriage partners between members of different lineages also occurs.

rare phenomenon in the Todgha. The 8.5 percent of international migrant women reported in table 6.20 are either students, or migrants' children who recently married nonmigrant men, who had not yet joined their spouses in Europe.

**Table 6.20. Gender and independent migration participation**

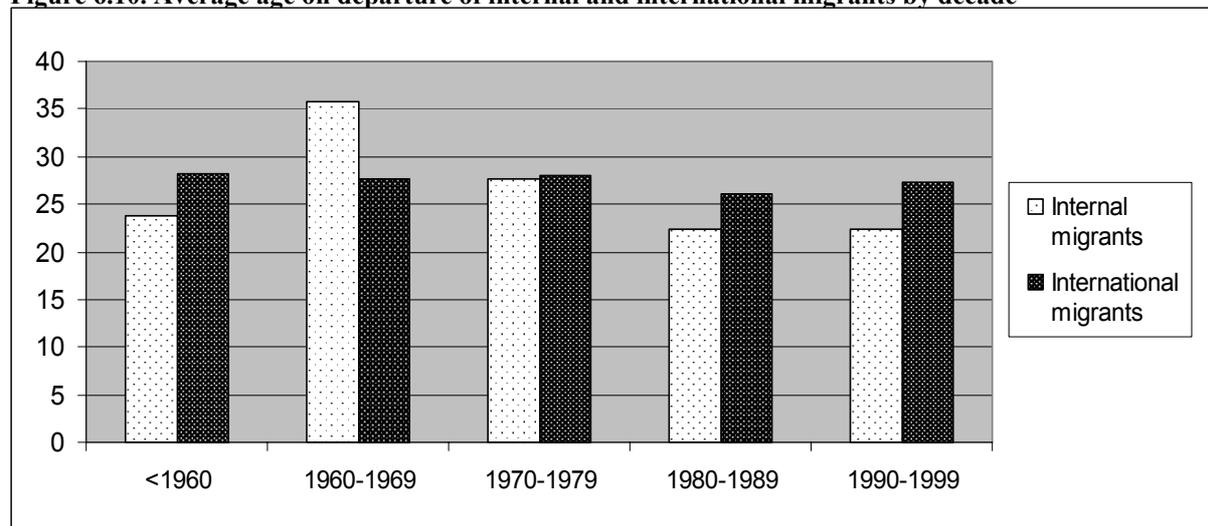
Migration status	Male	Female	Total	<i>n</i>
Internal migrant	97.2	2.8	100.0	282
International migrant	91.5	8.5	100.0	165

Source: Household survey

Migrants all over the world tend to be predominantly young. The migrants of the Todgha are no exception to this rule, although there are differences according to migration type and period of departure. Figure 6.10 demonstrates how the average age on departure of migrants (above 15 years) has evolved throughout the post-colonial era. The data reveal that internal migrants have generally migrated at a significantly lower age (23.3 on average) than international migrants (27.4 on average). This can be explained by the fact that the economic, social, and legal obstacles to internal migration are relatively low, and this is in line with the assumption that internal migration often precedes the "leapfrogging" to international destinations.

However, one notable exception to this pattern occurred over the 1960s and the early 1970s, when internal migrants tended to be *older* than international migrants. This might possibly be explained by the fact that this was the period of direct labor recruitment, which made it relatively easy to migrate *directly* from the Todgha abroad. Moreover, the exceptional circumstances of the shortage of unskilled labor in Europe and permissive immigration regulations (residence papers were easy to obtain) probably lowered the costs and risks of migration to such an extent that migration became accessible for broad sections of the population.

**Figure 6.10. Average age on departure of internal and international migrants by decade**



Source: Household survey ( $\eta(\text{age on departure dependent})=0.222^{**}$ )

From figure 6.10 and table 6.21, we can infer that the average age on departure of international migrants has remained remarkably stable over the past decades at levels of between 27 and 28 years. Nevertheless, there have been some changes in the internal age distribution. The proportion of international migrants under 20 years old has slightly increased in recent years, largely to the detriment of the 20-29 age group. Almost fifty percent

of all international migrants were in their twenties on departure, and only 7 percent were older than 40. This corroborates earlier observations by Refass (1995:208), who stated that more than half of the international migrants from Morocco were between 20 and 29 years old. However, the mean age on departure has hardly changed over time and the differences are insignificant. This seems not to be in line with observations by Fadlollah *et al.* (2000:xv,74) who argued that recent international migrants from Morocco tend to depart at a younger age than before.

**Table 6.21. Age on departure of international labor migrants by period of departure**

Age on departure	Period			Total
	Before 1970	1970-1989	Since 1990	
10-14	1.3	1.4	5.1	2.6
15-19	11.5	11.1	15.2	12.7
20-24	24.4	29.2	16.5	23.1
25-29	24.4	19.4	25.3	23.1
30-34	16.7	22.2	17.7	18.8
35-39	11.5	13.9	12.7	12.7
40-44	9.0	1.4	5.1	5.2
> 45	1.3	1.4	2.5	1.7
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
<i>n</i>	78	72	79	229
Mean	27.9	27.3	27.3	27.5

Source: Household survey ( $\eta(\text{age on departure dependent})=0.037^{\wedge}$ )

Table 6.22 shows that the average age on departure for internal migrants has significantly decreased from 32 in the 1960s to 23 in the 1970s and 1980s, after which it has remained stable. However, figure 6.10 (in section 6.8.4) already revealed that the age on departure before the 1960s was at the same level as now. Thus, it seems that this increase in average age on departure in the 1960s was temporary. The relatively easy access to international migration in the late 1960s migration boom, which temporarily absorbed a large number of migrants, might possibly explain this temporary increase in the age of departing internal migrants. If this hypothesis is correct, only the relatively older lacked the aspirations and energy to move abroad.

**Table 6.22. Age on departure of internal migrants by period of departure**

Age on departure	Period of departure			Total
	Before 1970	1970-1989	Since 1990	
10-14	2.9	11.8	4.0	6.2
15-19	11.8	23.6	35.8	30.3
20-24	14.7	31.5	36.1	33.1
25-29	17.6	15.7	10.9	12.9
30-39	14.7	4.7	7.3	7.1
$\geq 40$	38.2	12.6	5.8	10.3
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
<i>n</i>	34	127	274	435
Mean	31.8	23.1	22.5	23.3

Source: Household survey ( $\eta(\text{age on departure dependent})=0.278^{**}$ )

Looking at the current age of migrants (table 6.23), we can see that the average age of current international migrants is 41 years as compared to 30 years among internal migrants. This highly significant difference is far more clear-cut than the 4 years age difference *on departure*, and reflects the fact that international migrants tend to stay away for much longer periods. One third of current internal migrants are between 20 and 24 years old, and more

than 65 percent are between 20 and 25 years old, while more than 50 percent of international migrants are over 40 years old.

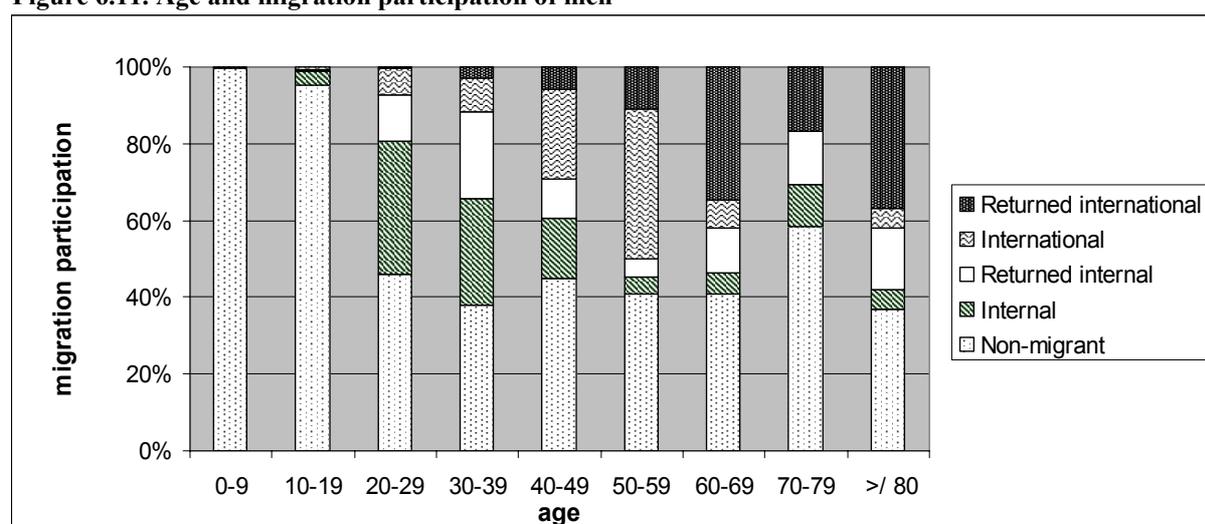
**Table 6.23. Current age of current international and internal migrants**

Age group	Migrants (%)		
	Internal	International	Total
10-14	1.7	1.3	1.6
15-19	6.6	2.7	5.3
20-24	35.8	10.1	27.0
25-29	17.7	12.1	15.8
30-34	15.6	10.1	13.7
35-39	7.3	5.4	6.6
40-44	3.8	14.1	7.3
45-49	4.9	10.7	6.9
50-54	1.4	16.8	6.6
55-59	0.7	11.4	4.3
>60	4.5	5.4	4.8
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0
<i>n</i>	288	149	437
Mean	29.8	40.9	33.6
Std. Deviation	12.3	13.1	13.7

Source: Household survey ( $\eta(\text{age dependent})=0.385^{**}$ )

Figure 6.11 illustrates the high incidence of migration among Todghawi men. All the age cohorts between 20 and 70 contain more than 50 percent current or returned migrants. It equally confirms that young men are mainly involved in internal migration compared to relatively older men, who are more involved in international migration. These data also appear to suggest that there is a persistent, but decreasing participation in international migration among younger generations. Since people tend to migrate abroad in their late twenties, it is not very useful to compare the 20-29 cohorts with older cohorts. Nevertheless, also when comparing the 30-39 cohorts with older cohorts, the differences in international migration participation remain too large to be explained by age alone.

**Figure 6.11. Age and migration participation of men**



Source: Household survey

The decreased participation in international labor migration can be explained by the increasingly restrictive immigration policies in Europe and the increasing reliance on family

migration among the Aït Todoght. The increased costs and risks of international migration explain why relatively more people remain “stuck” in internal migration, being unable to make the move to Europe, or to “leapfrog” abroad from the towns and cities. Nevertheless, the data also reveal that the overall tendency to migrate (internally or internationally) has not decreased, and has remained constant at levels of around 60 percent.

### 6.8.5. Educational selectivity of migration

It is generally assumed that the better educated are more prone to migrate. Table 6.24 indeed seems to suggest that internal migrants are better educated than nonmigrants, and that international migrants, returnees in particular, are the worst educated: About 41 percent of international and 72 percent of international returnees have never received any formal education.

**Table 6.24. Educational level by migration status of men older than 15 years**

Migration status	Educational level (%)						Total	Mean <sup>9</sup>	n
	No education	Coranic school	Primary	Lower sec.	Higher sec.	Higher			
Nonmigrant	20.9	4.5	31.8	26.2	16.0	0.6	100.0	1.34	664
Internal	15.8	2.2	30.8	15.8	3.3	32.2	100.0	2.01	273
International	26.8	14.5	42.0	7.2	6.5	2.9	100.0	0.88	138
Returned internal	14.6	6.0	32.5	16.6	4.0	26.5	100.0	1.83	151
Returned international	46.9	22.2	24.7	3.7	1.2	1.2	100.0	0.41	81
Immigrant	7.1	14.3	21.4	21.4	14.3	21.4	100.0	1.93	14
Total	21.2	6.4	32.2	19.5	10.1	10.6	100.0	1.44	1,321

**Source:** Household survey (C=0.493\*\*;  $\eta$ (level dependent)=0.341\*\*)

Internal migrants are also significantly better educated than nonmigrants. However, education is a partially endogenous variable, as increasing numbers of Todghawis migrate to the cities in order to follow higher education. In order to analyze the selectivity of *labor* migration exclusively, table 6.25 lists education per migration group excluding students. It appears that the differences between internal migrants and nonmigrants and measures of association decrease, but that there remain significant differences, in particular in higher education.

Whereas 1 percent of nonmigrants have followed higher education, this is the case for 11 percent of internal migrants. This can be explained by the fact that most higher educated people cannot find jobs in the Todgha, and therefore tend to migrate internally. This further underlines the difficulty of separating education and labor migration; all higher educated internal migrants were initially student migrants. Internal migration tends to be *positively* selective for education, although this mainly pertains to a relatively small group of civil servants and higher educated professional workers. International migrants in particular tend to be older than nonmigrants and internal migrants. In order to analyze whether international migration is indeed *negatively* selective for education, it is of course necessary to control for age, since older people tend to be less educated than younger generations.

<sup>9</sup> The mean level of education is calculated by attributing values to different levels of education, ranging from 0 for “no or Coranic” to 4 for higher education.

**Table 6.25. Educational level by migration status of men older than 15 years, excluding students and ex-student migrants**<sup>10</sup>

Migration status	Educational level (%)						Total	Mean	<i>n</i>
	No education	Coranic school	Primary	Lower sec.	Higher sec.	Higher			
Nonmigrant	27.1	5.8	39.8	22.4	4.1	0.8	100.0	1.00	513
Internal	20.7	3.0	41.4	20.7	3.0	11.3	100.0	1.37	203
International	27.6	14.9	43.3	6.7	6.0	1.5	100.0	0.81	134
Returned internal	20.6	8.4	44.9	19.6	3.7	2.8	100.0	1.07	107
Returned international	46.9	22.2	24.7	3.7	1.2	1.2	100.0	0.41	81
Immigrant	9.1	18.2	27.3	18.2	9.1	18.2	100.0	1.64	11
Total	26.6	8.1	39.8	18.3	3.9	3.3	100.0	1.01	1,049

Source: Household survey ( $C=0.355^{**}$ ;  $\eta(\text{level dependent})=0.252^{**}$ )

Table 6.26 indicates that, when controlling for age, the initial differences largely vanish. Within the age group of 60 years and older, 89 percent of internal and international migrants have never attended school, compared to 98 percent among nonmigrants. Within the 45-59 age group, it seems to be the internal migrants who are worst educated, with 50 percent never having attended school. The 30-44 year age group is the first cohort in which a substantial proportion of men have attended more than primary school only. Within this category, differences between migrant categories become somewhat more clear-cut. About 30 percent of international migrants have never attended school, compared to about 20 percent both among nonmigrant and internal migrant men. Furthermore, 33 percent of internal migrants (excluding students) have attended at least lower secondary school, compared to about 20 percent among nonmigrants and international migrants. But again, differences remain small and insignificant.

The 15-29 age group is the only cohort in which international migrants are significantly better educated than nonmigrants. Compared to internal migrants, international migrants seem concentrated in secondary education, and internal migrants in higher education. Nevertheless, also in this cohort, internal migrants—even when excluding students—form the best educated group.

Looking at the relationship between the period of departure and education (see table 6.27), we can see that international migrants who left before 1970 tend to be slightly better educated than internal migrants, although the difference is insignificant. On the contrary, among those who left between 1970 and 1989, internal migrants tended to be clearly better educated than international migrants. Whereas only 28 percent of internal migrants had never attended primary school, this was the case for 46 percent of international migrants. In the same vein, about 23 percent of the internal migrants had attended secondary school or higher, compared to only 4 percent among international migrants. Among those who have migrated since 1990, the differences have become far smaller, although the proportion of international migrants that has never attended school is still higher than among internal migrants.

Thus, when controlling for age, international migration is hardly selective for education. With the possible exception of the youngest generation, we cannot say that international migrants are better educated than nonmigrants. Although it is true that the education of international migrants has dramatically improved over recent decades, this seems

<sup>10</sup> Ex-student migrants are internal return migrants who migrated internally with the main motive of obtaining better education, and who have not worked. People who initially migrated to study, but who are now working outside the Todgha, have in fact become labor migrants over time, and have been included in the table as labor migrants.

to merely reflect a *general* improvement in schooling among Todghawi men<sup>11</sup>. Internal migration, however, is positively selective for education.

**Table 6.26. Educational level by migration status of men older than 15 years, without students and ex-students, within age groups<sup>12</sup>**

Age group	Migration	Educational level (%)					Total	Mean	<i>n</i>
		No or Coranic	Primary	Lower sec.	Higher sec.	Higher			
15-29	Nonmigrant	7.1	43.1	43.1	6.3	0.4	100.0	1.50	239
	Internal	9.5	42.9	34.1	3.2	10.3	100.0	1.62	126
	International	6.5	48.4	29.0	12.9	3.2	100.0	1.58	31
	Total	7.8	43.4	39.1	5.8	3.8	100.0	1.54	396
30-44	Nonmigrant	22.8	56.9	11.4	5.7	3.3	100.0	1.10	123
	Internal	18.3	49.2	16.7	5.0	10.8	100.0	1.41	120
	International	30.2	50.9	5.7	9.4	3.8	100.0	1.06	53
	Total	22.3	52.7	12.5	6.1	6.4	100.0	1.22	296
45-59	Nonmigrant	58.8	40.0	0.0	0.0	1.3	100.0	0.45	80
	Internal	50.0	50.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	0.50	30
	International	58.9	41.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	0.41	73
	Total	57.4	42.1	0.0	0.0	0.5	100.0	0.44	183
≥60	Nonmigrant	97.6	2.4	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	0.02	82
	Internal	88.2	11.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	0.12	34
	International	89.7	10.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	0.10	58
	Total	93.1	6.9	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	0.07	174
Total		34.7	39.8	18.3	3.9	3.3	100.0	1.01	

Source: Household survey<sup>13</sup>

**Table 6.27. Educational level by migration destination of men older than 15 years, excluding students and ex-students, by period of departure**

Period of departure	Migration	Educational level (%)					Total	Mean	<i>n</i>
		No or Coranic	Primary	Lower sec.	Higher sec.	Higher			
Before 1970	Internal	82.1	17.9	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	0.18	28
	International	78.2	21.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	0.22	78
	Total	79.2	20.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	0.21	106
1970-1989	Internal	27.7	48.9	18.1	3.2	2.1	100.0	1.03	94
	International	45.7	50.0	2.9	0.0	1.4	100.0	0.61	70
	Total	35.4	49.4	11.6	1.8	1.8	100.0	0.85	164
Since 1990	Internal	16.7	43.1	25.3	3.4	11.5	100.0	1.50	174
	International	27.7	40.0	15.4	13.8	3.1	100.0	1.25	65
	Total	19.7	42.3	22.6	6.3	9.2	100.0	1.43	239
Total		37.1	40.1	14.3	3.5	4.9	100.0	0.99	509

Source: Household survey<sup>14</sup>

<sup>11</sup> Educational levels among women are very low compared to men. The gender gap in education and its relation with migration will be discussed in section 9.5.4.

<sup>12</sup> In order to have sufficient case-loads, current and returned migrants within both migration types have been grouped into one category, and immigrants have been categorized as nonmigrants.

Age category	15-29	30-44	45-59	≥60
Contingency Coeff.	0.262**	0.214 <sup>x</sup>	0.108 <sup>x</sup>	0.165 <sup>x</sup>

<sup>14</sup>

Age category	Before 1970	1970-1989	Since 1990
Contingency Coeff.	0.043 <sup>x</sup>	0.281**	0.257**

This conclusion for the Todgha valley seems to be in line with earlier research in other parts of Morocco. For instance, Heinemeijer *et al.* (1976:90) found that international migrants from the Rif and Sous regions tended to be only marginally better educated than nonmigrants.

Other studies seem to suggest that recent international migrants are better educated than before (Costanzo 1999), and that Morocco is increasingly witnessing a “brain drain” of its most educated citizens (Hnaka 1999:159-65). Unfortunately, many such observations are general impressions that are not based on a systematic comparison between migrant and nonmigrant groups. Although there is no doubt that the mean level of education among Moroccan migrants has significantly increased over the in past decades (Refass 1995:209), this seems to be primarily the result of a general increase in education in Morocco, not of a change in selectivity.

The patterns found in the Todgha seem to reflect a more general Moroccan pattern. A recent study conducted in the regions of Nador, Tiznit, Khenifra, Laârache, and Settât revealed that even though recent migrants tended to be better educated than “older” migrants, migrants generally have the same level of education as nonmigrants (Fadloullah *et al.* 2000:xvi, 83). However, their analysis did not control for age. Interestingly, Morocco seems to deviate from patterns found in other migrant sending countries (e.g., Egypt, Turkey, and Ghana), where international migrants indeed tend to be better educated than nonmigrants (Schoorl *et al.* 2000:xvi)<sup>15</sup>.

This non-selective character of international migration is possibly related to the fact that Moroccan international labor migrants predominantly work in low-skilled jobs. As we have seen, possessing a certain level of education or French language skills were even grounds for recruiters to reject prospective migrants during the period of direct labor recruitment. Moreover, at the time it was generally easier and more attractive for higher educated Moroccan youngsters to obtain stable, relatively well-paid government jobs in Morocco. However, this cannot explain why current international migrants are only slightly better educated. What might play a role is that the likelihood of migration seems to be increasingly determined by access to migration networks and other factors such as material wealth, and that education only plays a secondary role in determining the actual possibility to migrate abroad.

There seems to be no prior empirical evidence on the educational selectivity of *internal* migration in Morocco. This study revealed that internal migration is *positively* selective for education. However, it should be noted that internal migrants are a very diverse group, consisting of both professional workers and lowly skilled manual workers.

### 6.8.6. Migration and household wealth

In line with education, it is commonly hypothesized that migrants tend not to originate from the poorest households, due to the risks and opportunity costs associated with migration. Thus, according to this hypothesis, migrants predominantly originate from upper lower or middle sections within sending societies<sup>16</sup>. In order to evaluate whether this is also the case in

<sup>15</sup> Schoorl *et al.* (2000) came to the interesting observation that in the Senegalese and Moroccan study areas, where educational levels are lower than in the other countries studied, international migrants and nonmigrants are equally less-educated, whereas in Ghana and Egypt, where general educational levels are higher, international migrants tended to be better educated than nonmigrants.

<sup>16</sup> Schoorl *et al.* (2000) suggested that international migrants from Morocco, and recent migrants in particular, tend to be from relatively wealthy households—although no empirical evidence was given for this. A recent econometric study on the effects of migration on income growth and distribution in Morocco as a whole

the Todgha valley, it is necessary to choose an indicator for household wealth before migration. Adams (1989:50) argued that the best proxy for this seems to be land possession, since land tends to be positively correlated with overall household economic status in rural societies. In oases, the socio-economic status and influence of households used to be largely determined by their access to local agricultural resources<sup>17</sup>. Therefore, we took land possession before migration as a rough indicator of household wealth before migration.

Without any doubt, the significance of land possession as an indicator of household wealth has decreased over the past decades through the diversification of oasis livelihoods that has involved increasing income from non-agricultural and migratory (remittance) activities. Nevertheless, it was practically impossible to assess household income prior to migration, which means that there is no good, reliable alternative for land possession. Moreover, land possession remains an important status symbol, and a true “honorable” Todghawi is expected to possess land as the very symbol of belonging to the region. Since landlessness is considered as “shameful”, and is an indicator of extreme poverty, it still seems valid as a general indicator of household wealth to a certain degree.

Table 6.28 demonstrates that the incidence of landlessness is 22 percent among nonmigrant households and 19 percent among internal migrant households, compared to only 4 and 2 percent among international and returned migrant households. This pattern is generally repeated within the research villages. It is only in Tadafelt that we find a certain deviation from these patterns, with 11 percent of international migrants coming from households without land. However, this rather seems to reflect the higher incidence of landlessness in this village in general of about 33 percent among nonmigrants and internal migrants. Only a few international migrants are from landless households. This confirms the hypothesis that the poorest groups within communities are generally not able to migrate.

**Table 6.28. Landlessness before migration by household migration status, by village**

Household migration status	Proportion of households without land before migration (%)							<i>n</i>
	Zaouïa	Tikoutar	Aït El Meskine	Ikhba	Tadafelt	Ghallil n' Aït Isfoul	Total	
Nonmigrant	26.2	4.7	38.9	17.4	34.4	15.4	21.6	171
Internal	18.4	7.7	11.1	0.0	32.6	0.0	18.9	127
Indirect international	40.0	0.0	0.0	20.0	0.0	0.0	8.1	37
International	0.0	0.0	0.0	7.7	11.1	0.0	4.0	101
Returned international	4.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.5	65
Total	17.1	2.9	11.3	10.0	25.0	7.4	13.8	502

Source: Household survey<sup>18</sup>

Table 6.29 analyses the association between household migration status and the land possessed by the household of origin before migration. Since the mean size of agricultural holdings differs significantly between the villages, a land possession index has been calculated<sup>19</sup>. It shows that there is a positive and significant association between land

concluded that the middle and higher income classes profited relatively more from remittances than the poorest groups (Teto 2001).

<sup>17</sup> In the Todgha, both land and water are important. However, as the possession of water rights is generally linked to the possession of land, we can confine our analysis to land possession.

<sup>18</sup> For a definition of household categories, see section 7.2.

<sup>19</sup> In order to make the data comparable at an inter-village level, the absolute size of the agricultural holding has been converted to standard *z*-scores at the village level. The scores indicate how many standard deviation units a case is above or below the mean. Scores above zero indicate an above average isolation, scores below zero a below average isolation. “Low” means a below average score, “middle” an around average score, and “high” an above average score, all measured at the village level.

possession and participation in international migration. In contrast to education, internal migrant households score *lower* on mean land possession than nonmigrant households, although the difference is insignificant. In order to gain more insight into the significance of differences between group means, a multiple comparison test (using the Bonferroni procedure) was performed, which found that internal migrants score significantly lower than current and returned international migrant households. All other differences are insignificant. Thus, the main dividing line is clearly between internal and international migration.

**Table 6.29. Land possession before migration by household migration status**

Migration status	Land possession (before migration) index (%)					
	Low	Middle	High	Total	<i>n</i>	Mean <i>z</i> -score
Nonmigrant	42.7	29.8	27.5	100.0	171	-0.066
Internal	37.0	38.6	24.4	100.0	127	-0.180
Indirect international	27.0	27.0	45.9	100.0	37	0.103
International	19.8	31.7	48.5	100.0	101	0.220
Returned international	21.5	35.4	43.1	100.0	65	0.305
Total	32.7	32.9	34.3	100.0	501	0.023

Source: Household survey ( $C=0.241^{**}$ ;  $\eta=0.183^{**}$ )

Table 6.30 examines whether there have been changes in selectivity on land possession prior to migration over the past decades<sup>20</sup>. The data presented in the table seem to indicate that selectivity for land possession has slightly decreased over time. This would corroborate the hypothesis that migration becomes less selective for wealth due to network effects, besides the fact that land possession has become less important as an indicator of household wealth. However, the association is weak and insignificant. Likewise, the Bonferroni multiple comparison test found no significant differences between any of the groups' means.

**Table 6.30. Land possession of household before migration by period of departure of international migrants**

Migration status	Land possession (before migration) index (%)					
	Low	Middle	High	Total	<i>n</i>	Mean <i>z</i> -score
until 1964	31.3	21.9	46.9	100.0	32	0.532
1965-1971	34.7	36.7	28.6	100.0	53	0.248
1972-1985	38.6	31.8	29.5	100.0	44	0.198
since 1986	23.1	38.5	38.5	100.0	42	0.196
Total	32.3	32.9	34.8	100.0	171	0.275

Source: Household survey ( $C=0.185^{\wedge}$ ;  $\eta=0.130^{\wedge}$ )

This analysis corroborates the common hypothesis that international migrants are typically not from the poorest (i.e., landless), but from relatively wealthy households, although the differences are not particularly large. Landlessness, in particular, is negatively associated with participation in international migration. This is in contrast with earlier research done in the Moroccan Rif and Sous regions (Heinemeijer *et al.* 1976:90), which concluded that international migrant workers were *not* from a particular—poor or wealthy—section of the population. However, the analysis showed that *internal* migration is not selective for mean land possession before migration. This is likely to be related to the high risks and opportunity

<sup>20</sup> In order to do this analysis, *z*-values have been recoded again based on the frequency distribution of this variable within the group of (current and returned) international migrants. Hence, the categories in tables 6.29 and 6.30 are not comparable.

costs associated with international migration, which are higher than for internal migration, and have increased over the past decades due to increasingly restrictive immigration policies in Europe. Materially poor people lacking access to migrant networks can, therefore, generally not afford to migrate abroad.

## **6.9. Discussion and conclusion**

Over the course of the twentieth century, the Todgha valley has been progressively integrated into the modern capitalist economy through its incorporation into the colonial and Moroccan state and the concomitant development of infrastructure. This has enabled an increasing proportion of its population to work in Morocco's developing coastal cities as well as in foreign countries. These structural transformations have created a wholly new development context in which the character of pre-modern seasonal and circular migration patterns were fundamentally transformed and in which new and extended forms of labor migration could emerge.

It is not possible to understand or describe the evolution and selectivity of migration patterns from, within, and to the Todgha valley over the twentieth century without taking into account the broader development context at the regional and national level. The analysis confirmed our hypothesis that migration is not only a factor affecting development, but primarily an outgrowth and constituent part of the development process itself. The patterns and relationships found largely comply with the hypotheses of transitional migration models inspired by Zelinsky's mobility transition theory (see section 2.2).

The "mobility transition" of the Todgha started at the end of the nineteenth century, when an increasing number of Todghawis started to migrate to neighboring Algeria, which had become a French colony in 1830. This first form of "modern" migration associated with capitalist development and colonization was, in fact, an extension of earlier forms of seasonal and circular migration within Morocco. Algeria remained the most important "foreign" migration destination up to the 1950s. With formal the establishment of the French protectorate over Morocco in 1912, rural-to-urban migration from the Todgha to the coastal cities—in particular Rabat—rapidly gained ground, leading to the demise of traditional patterns of circular and seasonal migration.

In the 1960s and 1970s, however, the combined effect of Algerian independence and the economic boom in Europe caused a radical reorientation of international migration, which was overwhelmingly oriented towards France, with a particular emphasis on the cities of Montpellier, Nice, and Paris. Countries such as the Netherlands and Belgium also attracted a limited number of migrants. For the Todgha, this was the veritable "Golden Age" of migration, in which many people migrated, and laid the foundations for a large Diaspora in Europe. This migration boom marked the definitive incorporation of the Todgha valley into the Mediterranean-European migration system.

The 1973 Oil Crisis heralded an era of increasingly restrictive immigration policies in Europe. However, this did not lead to the expected dramatic decrease in international migration. The 1980s and 1990s were characterized by a diversification of migration strategies as well as destinations. The Todghawi expatriate networks have played a facilitating role in perpetuating migration from the valley to France, the Netherlands, and Belgium through family reunification and family formation. Migrant networks are important channels that give access to the European employment market and social security systems. In addition, there has also been a considerable increase in undocumented migration and a shift towards new migration destinations in southern Europe, in particular Spain.

Meanwhile, internal migration has remained important. It seems even more important than some decades ago, as the costs and risks of migrating internationally have increased. Internal migration has been facilitated by major improvements of road infrastructure and means of transport, as well as by the increasing number of young Todghawis following higher education in the large cities. Internal migrants typically work in the construction or (informal) service jobs. There is also a distinct, relatively wealthy and educated “elite” of internal migrants that includes students, civil servants, and private-sector professionals. In addition to the traditional destinations on the Atlantic coast (e.g., Rabat, Casablanca), the boomtowns of the Rif (e.g., Nador, Tétouan, Berkane), the southern cities of Marrakech and Agadir and destinations within the Presaharan region have all become increasingly important. In both internal and international migration we have witnessed the increasing diversification in destinations, strategies (legal, undocumented, network), and official motives (work, family, study).

Labor migrants from the Todgha tend to be young and male. Internal migrants are clearly younger and tend to stay away for shorter periods than international migrants. In contrast to the common hypotheses in the migration literature, international migrants from the Todgha are not better educated than nonmigrants of the same age. Internal migrants tend to be the best educated. On the other hand, international migrants tend to come from relatively “wealthy” households—measured in terms of land possession before migration—whereas both nonmigrants and internal migrants score on a lower level.

International migration is primarily accessible for people with access to largely kinship-based migrant networks. Moreover, a basic level of wealth is increasingly needed to move abroad—for instance, to pay for bride prices, the increasingly complex, costly, and uncertain visa application procedures, or sums to be paid to smugglers to cross the Strait of Gibraltar. Education does not seem to play an important discriminatory role here. Although internal migration requires less costs and risks, and is hardly selective for household wealth, network connections seem to play an important facilitating role too in determining the likelihood of internal migration and destinations.

Besides a small (business) elite, which does not see the need to migrate, most nonmigrants tend to be from relatively poor and badly educated sections of the communities of origin. This corroborates the hypothesis derived from transitional migration theory that a certain threshold of wealth or development is necessary for migration to take place, since this provides the prospective migrant with the capabilities to bear the risks and opportunity costs of migration. Migration is a prerogative rather than a last resort. The poorest—in terms of access to material, human and social capital—are forced to stay as they simply cannot afford the costs and risks associated with migration.

The analysis has shown that village communities tend to “specialize” in particular migration destinations both within Morocco and abroad. Even neighboring villages (i.e., Ikhba and Ait El Mesquine) witness very different migration patterns. This is in line with migration network theory and migration systems theory, which state that migration between particular places tends to reinforce itself once migration communities have been established at the destination. Therefore, migration flows tend to be strongly geographically clustered. Apparently, such clustering occurs at different levels. Whereas the Todgha valley *as a whole* is “specialized” in certain destinations (e.g. Rabat, Agadir, Montpellier, Nice, and Amsterdam), there are patterns of sub-specialization and “micro migration systems” at village and lineage level.

On the other hand, the analysis revealed the inherently dynamic nature of migration systems. Due to economic-geographical and political changes at the macro-level, migration from the Todgha has seen strong shifts in spatial orientation. This points to the inherent weaknesses of migration systems and network theories, which tend to ignore (1) external,

structural factors both at the migration origin and destination as well as (2) the internal dynamics of networks and exclusionary dimensions of social capital. Such factors may counteract the tendencies that are supposed to lead to increasing migration and decreasing selectivity through networks (see chapter 2).

Changes in the legal and economic-geographical context at the macro-level (e.g., changing immigration policies, accelerated development of new boomtowns such as Nador and Agadir, or economic growth in south-European countries) can lead to the (partial) breakdown of established migration systems and interrupt the circular logic of “migration—declining risks and opportunity costs—more migration”. This explains why migration does not always tend to progressive geographical clustering and well may deviate from established patterns. What we have seen in the Todgha over the past two decades is, in fact, a growing diversification in both internal and international migration destinations. The diversification of international migration destinations seems to be the combined effect of economic development in southern European countries (Spain, Italy, and, to a lesser extent, Portugal) and the increasingly restrictive immigration policies pursued by the “classic” destination countries in northwestern Europe, which have increased the costs and risks of international migration. For internal migration, this seems primarily due to the process of micro-urbanization of the rural space, the rapid rise of new boomtowns in the Rif and within the Presaharan region itself (Ouarzazate, Errachidia), as well as the accelerated development of Marrakech and Agadir. Internal migration seems to react relatively quickly to the creation of such new labor markets, since internal migration is far less constrained by political and legal factors.

Notwithstanding the proven existence of patterns of geographical clustering of migration flows and the importance of migration networks in this process, there are countervailing forces at play that stimulate migrants to move to new destinations if the perceived advantages (i.e., less risks and financial and psychological costs) of knowing families and friends at the destination are lower than the perceived advantages (i.e., higher chance of finding work, higher wages) of trying one’s luck in relatively unknown places. Logically, it is especially groups such as the Aït ‘Atta that lack an established tradition of international migration and who therefore generally lack access to large, established migrant networks, who are more prone to migrate to new destinations. The recent movement of Aït ‘Atta to Spain illustrates this other, more volatile and unpredictable side of migration.

The existence of social ties between migrants and “stay-behinds” reduces the financial and psychological costs as well as risks of migrating. Networks are of vital importance in perpetuating migration to Europe and the “bride migration”—which often constitutes labor migration “in disguise”—largely explains the persistent influx of new migrants to the classical destination countries in northwestern Europe. On the other hand, the common hypothesis that migration tends to become less selective over time in terms of household wealth or ethnic affiliation due to the growing importance of network effects, is not sustained by the survey data. This seems related to the limited extent to which migration has spread over communities across the boundaries of extended families and lineages (*ighsan*) involved in international migration. Instead of the diffusion and decreasing selectivity of international migration, as assumed by migrant network theory, there is persistent selectivity of international migration, in which groups lacking access to kinship-based migrant networks are largely excluded.

Some other recent studies have equally pointed to the existence of such exclusion mechanisms in stressing that migrants are actually hesitant and restrictive in offering “network support” to people back home, especially when it concerns non-relatives (cf. Strijp 1997; Zorlu 2000:956). Moreover, network assistance is generally not “free-of-charge”. In

case of marriage migration, for instance, there is literally an increasingly high (e.g., bride) price to be paid.

There is only poor diffusion of the migration experience across the boundaries of socio-ethnic groups, that is, the extended families and the lineages that contain them. Although non-kin community members and friends may occasionally play a role in providing “migration assistance” too, kinship networks are still the basis of social organization and mutual trust as well as a source of information and help for migrants. Kinship-based migration networks are also dominant in determining the choice of destination. This phenomenon is reinforced by the traditional preference for endogamous marriage, through which “migration capital” remains within the same group.

Therefore, migration networks can be to the advantage of people belonging to the same extended family or lineage, but seem to be exclusionary for people not belonging to such groups. This, clearly, is an example of one of the “downsides” of social capital (cf. Portes and Landolt 1996). Those who are excluded from kinship-based migrant networks and lack financial resources may find increasingly high obstacles to migrating in their way. Here, the constraints of the increasingly restrictive immigration policies on the European side and the exclusionary character of migrant networks clearly counteract the migration enabling forces of network formation.

In sharp contrast with the popular image of rural depopulation, migration from, towards, and within the valley is occurring simultaneously. Within the research villages, natural population growth rates have been partially offset by the emigration of entire households as a consequence of family reunification. Despite this, the population in most villages more than doubled between 1952 and 1994, and the population of the Todgha valley as a whole has more than tripled over the past half century. It is important to stress that the Todgha is no longer only a region of departure for internal and international migrants, but has also become a *destination* for internal migrants. Moreover, processes of intra-valley migration have contributed to the process of urban clustering within the Todgha valley. The growth has been highest in Tinghir, whose urban center is now one of the fastest growing in Morocco’s southeast, attracting people not only from villages within the valley but also from more marginal and poorer regions in the south.

The coexistence of migration towards the Todgha, intra-valley migration, and the persistence of migration from the valley to Morocco’s economic heartland as well as Europe, highlights the fundamental complexity of contemporary migration systems. It is, therefore, not possible to classify regions such as the Todgha as either “emigration” or “immigration” regions. They are both.

Schemes dividing regions, countries and the world into (peripheral) sending and (central) destination areas generally do not reflect the complex, multi-layered spatial reality of migration systems. Moreover, such classifications typically change with the geographical scale of analysis. Whereas the Todgha may be the “periphery” vis-à-vis Europe and large cities located in the North and West, it is, in a sense, a “core” area or “migration interface” for internal migrants from other, more isolated, and marginal areas such as the Saghro and the High Atlas. At the intra-valley level, Tinghir, Taghzout-Aït Aïssa Ou Brahim, and the Ghallil plain are attracting people, whereas smaller and relatively remote villages are mainly sending people. Moreover, important counterflows exist in the form of return migration from and towards the valley.

Moreover, towns such as Tinghir play a role as migration junctions. Many migrants do not directly migrate to their eventual destination. Migration often follow a “leapfrogging” pattern, in which rural migrants first move from their village to smaller towns such as Tinghir. The professional experience, education, practical knowledge, social contacts, and financial resources they can acquire in such towns then potentially enable them to subsequently

migrate towards larger Moroccan cities or Europe. Moreover, such a first stage also confronts migrants with other lifestyles and higher standards of living, which might affect their feelings of relative deprivation and increase their own aspirations of gaining a better living elsewhere. Therefore, it makes little sense to explain migration between particular areas by a set of static “pushes” and “pulls”, not only because push and pull factors are generally mirrored in each other (see section 2.1.3), but also because such explanations tend to ignore that needs are not constant, but determined by people’s perceptions and aspirations. Push-pull models typically fail to explain how a region can both send and receive migrants, and why migrants return.

The present analysis seems to confirm our central hypothesis derived from transitional migration theory that a certain level of development rather than absolute poverty breeds internal and international labor migration. Integration into the state and the capitalist economy as well as infrastructural improvements enlarged the capabilities and increased the desire of many oasis dwellers to migrate internally and abroad. Interestingly, the analysis of intra-valley differentiation in migration patterns highlighted that relatively “traditional”, isolated, and impoverished villages and ethnic groups (Aït ‘Atta in particular) exhibited far lower and delayed propensities to participate in wage labor migration. Therefore, to a certain extent, transitional macro-models of the “mobility transition” type (Zelinsky 1971) might indeed be applicable on a regional scale.

Migration can be seen as a function of (1) the individual *capability* to migrate both in terms of access to material (e.g., money, land) and human (e.g., knowledge, skills) capital; (2) the socio-culturally determined *aspirations* to migrate, which are influenced by factors such as relative deprivation, awareness of opportunities elsewhere, access to schooling, and media exposure; and (3) *the institutional framework* facilitating or constraining migration, such as networks, immigration regulations, and the employment situation, at both the origin and the destination. The fundamental point is that both the capabilities and aspirations to migrate are positively influenced by development—at least in its initial stages. The importance of both material and non-material factors in determining people’s propensity to migrate demonstrates that we should see development within a “capabilities” perspective.

Transitional models are right in assuming that “development” processes of technical progress, increases in wealth, and the incorporation of regions in wider political-economic networks, lead, certainly in the initial phases of such development, to a general increase in mobility and out-migration. In later stages of regional-economic development (as predicted by Zelinsky at the country-level), migration patterns tend to grow more complex, and that is what we are starting to witness in the Todgha. Instead of a sustained *rural exodus*—as predicted by cumulative causation, dependency, and push-pull theory—processes of economic development in the region are also attracting people from other regions. The weak point of both static and transitional migration models is that they largely ignore how perceptions and knowledge not only influence the capabilities, but also the aspirations to migrate, which are generally boosted through decreasing isolation, improved education, and increasing exposure to the outside (capitalist) world. Only by considering differences in aspirations, can we explain why some people leave the Todgha while, simultaneously, others move in.

In net terms, migration has not “creamed off” the valley’s population due to the countervailing effect of migration into the valley. Out-migration has not put an absolute “labor drain” on the Todgha, at least at the valley level. Apparently, there are forces at work that simultaneously “push” some people to leave the valley as much as “pull” other people to move to the valley. The simultaneous occurrence of emigration and immigration from and towards the Todgha can be explained by regional differences in access to social, human, and material resources or “capitals” enabling people to migrate, as well as (spatial) differences in aspiration levels. Both migration from and to the valley are part of the same general process

of development. In the same vein, we have concluded that internal and international out-migration are not negatively correlated phenomena, but rather tend to be “communicating vessels” in the longer term, since they are part of the same development process leading—in its social, cultural, and economic dimensions—to a general increase in mobility .



# Household livelihoods, migration, remittances, and wealth

## 7.1. Introduction

The previous chapter analyzed the historical evolution of migration patterns from, to, and within the Todgha valley in general and the research villages in particular, as well as the selectivity of this migration on ethnic, age, gender, and wealth characteristics (research question 1). Now that we have gained more insight into the structural, developmental origins of migration, the remaining chapters will focus on the recursive impacts of migration on development in the Todgha (arrow (d) in figure 2.4). This chapter will analyze the role that labor migration has played in changing the livelihoods of oasis households as well as the direct impact of migration on household income levels and structure, wealth, and living conditions (research question 2). This analysis will enable us to test the NELM-derived hypotheses presented in chapter 2 that labor migration is a household livelihood strategy to (1) minimize and spread income risks and (2) gain access to higher earnings streams.

Up to now, the primary unit of analysis was the individual migrant. However, in order to study the impact of migration on development, we have to consider the wider socio-economic and institutional environment in which migration processes take place. In chapters 2 and 3, we argued that South-North labor migration should be conceived as part of broader household livelihood strategies and, hence, the result of a decision-making process at the household rather than the individual level (see sections 2.5.1 and 3.2.1). Therefore, the household will be the central unit of analysis in our study of the effects of migration on livelihoods, remittances, investments, and socio-economic development in the Todgha valley. In order to facilitate such an analysis, we will start by developing a household migration typology in section 7.2 (research question 2.a). Five household migration categories will be defined, which serve as a basis for the analysis in this and the remaining chapters.

In order to come to a better understanding of the role of internal and international migration in household livelihoods, section 7.3 distinguishes ideal-typical “migration trajectories” that internal and international migrants tend to follow within the household life cycle (research question 2.b). By analyzing the role of individual migrants within a broader household context, and by putting it into the temporal perspective of the household life cycle, we will better comprehend the behavior of individual migrants in terms of household livelihood strategies. Section 7.4 will elaborate on the direct effect of migration and remittances on other livelihood activities (research question 2.c) as well as income levels and structure (research question 2.d). Section 7.5 analyzes the direct impact migration has had on household wealth and living conditions (research question 2.e). The section will equally examine the extent to which inter-village differences in living conditions and wealth can be

explained by factors other than migration participation, like temporal aspects (e.g., migration stage), the indirect economic spread effects of migration and remittances, and locational factors (research question 2.f).

## 7.2. Household migration typology

The survey was designed to include migrant and nonmigrant households. In order to analyze the impact of migration, a comparison between nonmigrant and different types of migrant households is essential. As there are several ways in which households can be involved in migration, the basic migrant/nonmigrant dichotomy is overly simplistic. After all, households can contain current as well as returned, internal, and international migrants, at the same time. On the other hand, it is important to limit the number of categories in order to allow meaningful statistical analysis.

Unequivocal definitions of household and household membership have been used in order to determine whether migrants are part of households. In general, migrants, either married or unmarried, living on their own without having established their own households at the destination, have been considered part of the household of origin. For a detailed definition of household and household membership of migrants, see appendix 1.

Table 7.1 summarizes the migratory composition of all the surveyed households based on the migratory status of the living individuals they contain. It demonstrates that the majority of households are, or have been involved in, either form of migration. Only 29 percent of all households have *never* participated in any kind of migration. Another 10 percent of all households only contain returned internal migrants. Households that currently contain internal migrants represent 27 percent of the population. Households that contain at least one current international migrant account for 21 percent, and 13 percent of the households contain returned international migrants. Among all households, about 12 percent contain several types (e.g., internal and international) migrants.

**Table 7.1. Household migration categories based on migration participation of members**

Household migration categories	<i>n</i>	%
Never migrated	149	29.4
Returned internal	51	10.1
Current internal	137	27.0
Current international	71	14.0
Current internal and current international	25	4.9
Current and returned international	9	1.8
Returned international	40	7.9
Current internal and returned international	25	4.9
Total	507	100.0

**Source:** Household survey

In order to reduce the number of household categories, we have classified these households following the general rule that international migrants take precedence over internal migrants, and current migrants take precedence over returned migrants. Households containing both internal and international migrants were considered as international migrant households. The rationale for applying this rule is the assumption that international migration has a more significant socio-economic impact than internal migration.

Households containing both current international migrants and returnees were classified as current international migrant households. The fact of currently having migrants

abroad means that the household maintains its stake in the international migration market, which is associated with an orientation towards Europe and the high propensity to family migration. The perspective of households that contain only returned international migrants seems rather different, in the sense that they are expected to be more oriented towards Morocco.

It was also decided to classify households that only contain returned internal migrants as nonmigrant household, as returned internal migrants generally do not receive remittances. In contrast, the fact that returned international migrants generally do receive considerable amounts of remittances—due to their pension claims and access to European social security systems—was a reason to include them as a distinct category. An additional theoretical reason for doing so is to test the common assertion in the migration literature that returned migrants play a particularly important role in local development, more than still-abroad migrants.

In this way, four basic household categories have been identified: (1) *Nonmigrant households*, which have never been involved in international migration and are not currently involved in internal migration, were classified as nonmigrant households; (2) *Current internal migrant households* (to be referred to as *internal migrant households*) contain members currently living outside the Todgha, but exclusively within Morocco; (3) *Current international migrant households* have at least one member of the household currently living and working abroad; (4) *Returned international migrant households* contain at least one member who has been involved in international migration but who has subsequently returned home, and do not contain current international migrants.

This basic classification was further refined by treating households with international migrants who had left less than one year ago as nonmigrant households. Furthermore, the preliminary analysis revealed the existence of households that are not directly involved in international migration, but which have close family members working in Europe. Migrants often financially support such family members, sometimes aimed at helping them set up their own enterprises. This mostly concerns the brothers (sometimes parents) of the international migrants, who have established their independent nuclear households, but who are financially supported by their kin abroad. In one fifth of the cases, this concerns widows of deceased international migrants who still receive social security benefits or pensions from Europe. These households have been classified as (5) *indirect international migrant households*. The distinction of this category will better allow us to study the effects of migration on households that are not involved in migration themselves. Inclusion of this category is also a recognition of the links that many “disappeared” migrant households still maintain with family members in the Todgha valley. These five categories will be used as a reference for migration impact analysis.

Table 7.2 shows the relative distribution of the five household migration categories across the six research villages. It shows that one third of all surveyed households are nonmigrant, one quarter internal migrant, 8 percent indirect international migrant, one fifth international migrant, and 13 percent returned international migrant. In sum, two thirds of all the surveyed households are involved in some type of migration, and 40 percent are involved in international migration. These data reveal the pervasiveness of migration in the Todgha valley. It also shows the relevance of household level analysis. Whereas “only” 14 percent of the surveyed population consist of internal, international or returned international migrants (see section 6.5), these forms of migration have directly or indirectly affected 66 percent of the surveyed households!

Notwithstanding the generally high prevalence of migration, there are significant inter-village differences in household migration participation. The spatial differentiation revealed through the individual-level analysis in chapter 6 is generally reflected at the

household level. Again, Aït El Mesquine—with 60 percent of all households involved in international migration—is clearly the most migration-influenced village within the sample. After Aït El Mesquine, Tikoutar is the second most international migration-affected oasis, followed by Ikhba, Zaouïa, Tadafelt, and Ghallil n’Aït Isfoul, respectively.

**Table 7.2. Migration participation at the household level by research village**

Village	Household migration status (%)					Total	<i>n</i>
	Non	Current internal	Indirect international	Current international	Returned international		
Zaouïa	34.7	30.6	4.0	13.7	16.9	100.0	124
Tikoutar	41.9	12.4	9.5	18.1	18.1	100.0	105
Aït El Mesquine	25.4	12.7	12.7	29.6	19.7	100.0	71
Ikhba	38.7	22.6	9.7	21.0	8.1	100.0	62
Tadafelt	28.2	39.3	5.1	23.1	4.3	100.0	117
Ghallil n’Aït Isfoul	46.4	25.0	7.1	17.9	3.6	100.0	28
Total	34.5	25.0	7.5	20.1	12.8	100.0	507

**Source:** Household survey

The data furthermore confirm that upper and middle Todgha villages tend to have more ancient international migration patterns (see chapter 6), reflected in the high percentage of returned international migrant households. Tadafelt has a low number of international returnees, reflecting the relatively recent character of international migration. More than other villages, Tadafelt and Zaouïa are oriented towards internal migration. Furthermore, Tikoutar has a relatively high proportion of nonmigrant households. As has been argued in chapter 6, this can possibly be explained by Tikoutar’s proximity to Tinghir, where many “commuting” oasis dwellers work.

In contrast to the analysis of individuals’ participation in migration (aggregated at the village and lineage level) presented in chapter 6, the household level analysis seems to suggest that internal and international migration are inversely proportionally related phenomena: Villages with many internal migrant households tend to contain few international migrant households, and *vice versa*. However, this impression is deceptive, since internal migrants exist within international migrant households, and many international migrants were internal migrants before migration. The negative association found between internal and international migrant households is therefore largely the result of the very definition of household categories in which international migration takes precedence over internal migrants. Almost 30 percent of current and returned international migrant households (representing 9.8 percent of all households, see table 7.1) comprise current internal migrants. Moreover, internal and international migration tend to be functionally related over time (see also section 6.5). As will be further demonstrated in the following sections, internal migration is often the precursor to international migration, and international migration may, in turn, be the cause of internal migration.

### 7.3. Household life cycle, migration strategies, and migration trajectories

#### 7.3.1. Migration trajectories and the household life cycle

The data presented in chapter 6 indicated that, in the longer term, internal and international migration tend to be positively correlated “communicating vessels”. Both forms of migration

tend to occupy distinct places within the household life cycle. The latter assumption seems to be corroborated by the fact that two thirds of internal migrants are unmarried, compared to only one fifth of all international migrants (see table 7.3). Considering the position of migrants within the household (see table 7.4), 49 percent of international migrants are household heads themselves, whereas 69 percent of internal migrants are the son of the household head, and only 18 percent the head himself. Furthermore, in section 6.6.3, we saw that the average age on return is 32 for internal returnees and 48 for international returnees, and that the modes were in the 25-29 and 60-64 age categories, respectively.

**Table 7.3. Marital status of current internal and international migrants**

Migrants	Marital status (%)					Total	<i>n</i>
	Single	Married	Divorced	Widowed			
Internal	63.7	33.6	2.1	0.7		100.0	292
International	20.0	78.0	2.0	0.0		100.0	150
Total	48.9	48.6	2.0	0.5		100.0	442

Source: Household survey (C=0.391\*\*)

**Table 7.4. Position within household by migration status of individuals above 15 years**

Relation to household head	Migrants (%)					Total
	Nonmigrants	Internal	Returned internal	International	Returned international	
Head	14.5	18.6	37.0	50.0	75.9	20.9
Spouse	24.8	0.0	2.4	0.0	2.3	18.1
Child	39.1	70.0	47.9	32.9	11.5	41.9
Child in-law	8.0	1.1	0.0	3.4	0.0	6.1
Brother/sister	3.8	6.8	9.7	10.3	5.7	5.0
Grandchild	2.1	2.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.7
Other	7.7	1.4	3.0	3.4	4.6	6.3
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
<i>n</i>	1,741	280	165	146	87	2,419

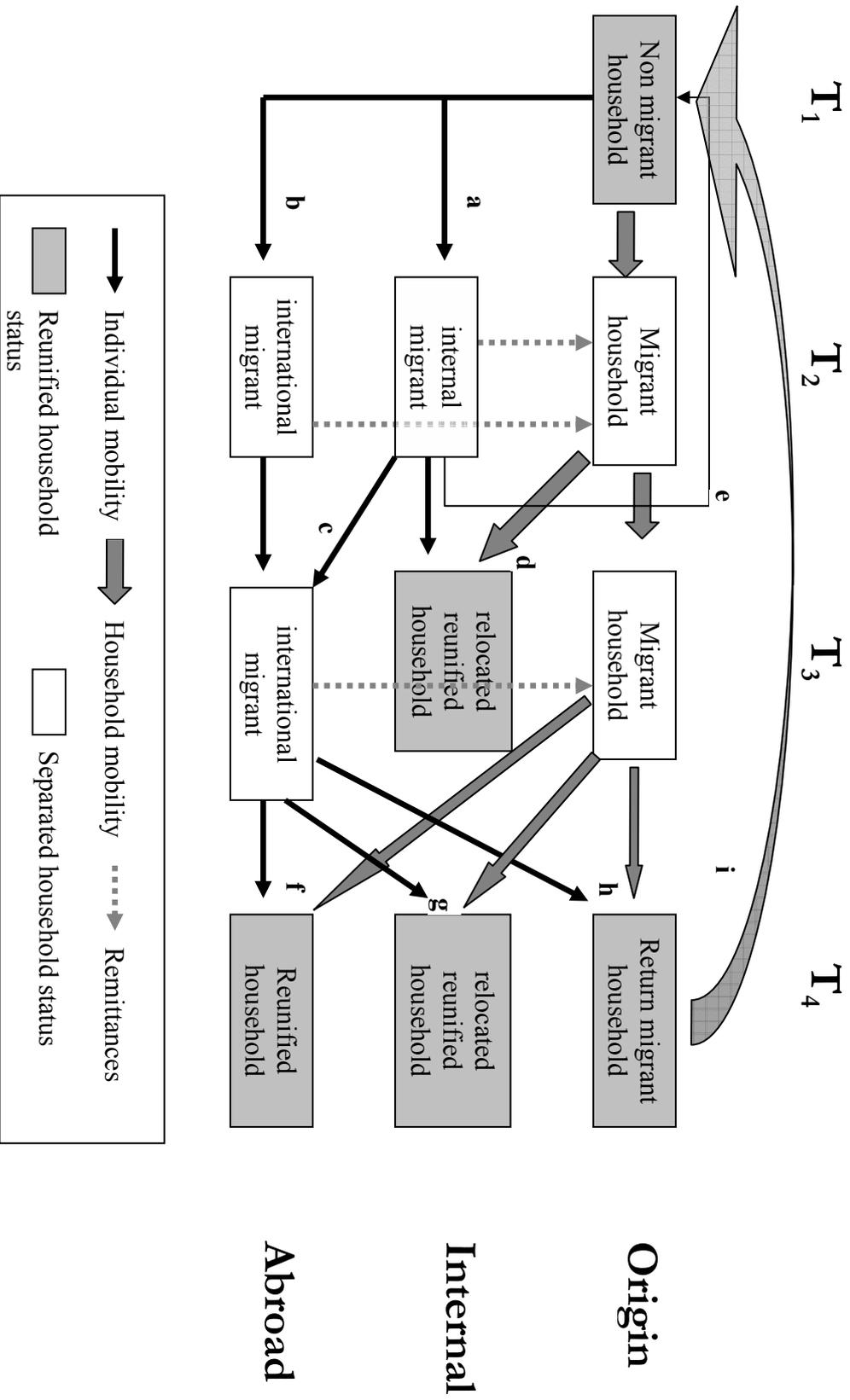
Source: Household survey (C=0.437\*\*)

Figure 7.1 is an ideal-typical graphical representation of the different migration trajectories or “migration careers” that households can pursue. The underlying assumption is that these trajectories are linked to the different phases of the household life cycle.

At  $T_1$ , the household consists of young parents with young children. At a later stage,  $T_2$ , there is more room for income diversification and migration with the growing number of adults in the household. The typical internal migrant is the grown-up son who moves to town (*arrow a* in figure 7.1) to gain additional family income. On average, this migration lasts 7 to 9 years (see section 6.6.2). Doing often irregular, badly paid work in the cities is generally considered as a temporary stage, upon which to go further or return.

The critical age at which internal migrants and their households decide what to do afterwards lies somewhere around the age of 30, which more or less represents the threshold between  $T_2$  and  $T_3$ . This is the age of marriage for men and the age of return for the majority of return migrants. The ultimate ambition of most internal migrants is to gain access to international migration through saving enough money either to obtain a passport, a visa, and other paperwork, or to cross the Gibraltar Strait illegally, or through “network marriages”. Normally, and certainly nowadays, considerable financial resources are needed to fulfill the dream of going abroad for those lacking access to “social migration capital”. In chapter 6, we saw that, against all odds, each year many Todghawis succeed in “leapfrogging” (*arrow c*) to Europe, legally or illegally.

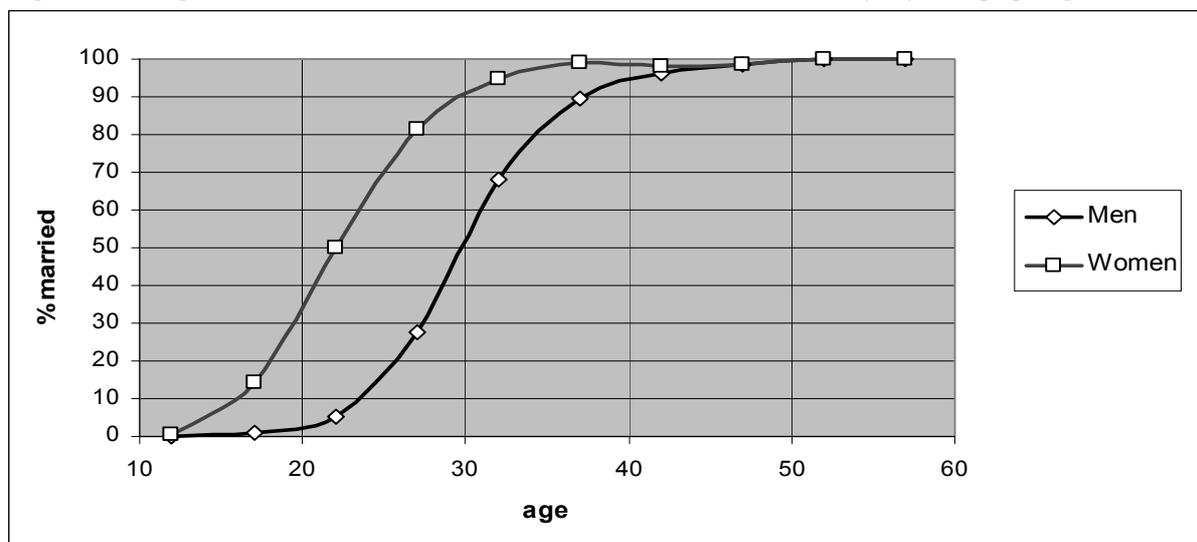
Figure 7.1. Ideal-typical household migration trajectories within the household life cycle



Others move directly to Europe (*arrow b*). In the 1960s and early 1970s, such direct international migration was achieved through direct recruitment, the procurement of labor contracts through family or community members, or spontaneous migration. Nowadays, such direct migration is achieved either through marriage migration (family formation) or through undocumented migration. Nevertheless, as such migration often involves rather high costs, such migrants tend to be relatively old compared to internal migrants—and often have already migrated internally.

Internal migrants who do not migrate abroad, but who have succeeded in finding more or less stable employment in towns and cities, may go on to live separated from their newly married spouses, but generally end up transferring their wife and children (*arrow d*) after suitable housing has been found. In this case, the entire household functionally disappears from the oasis. If internal migrants do not succeed in migrating overseas or finding stable employment in the towns or cities, many return to the Todgha (*arrow e*). This moment of return migration generally more or less coincides with marriage. Nowadays, the typical age of marriage for men lies between 25 and 35 (see figure 7.2). The money saved during migration often serves to pay for the bride price, festivities, and other costs associated with marriage. In line with ancient traditions of circular migration, many internal migrants return to set up their own families. However, they may migrate again for longer or shorter periods if not enough money can be earned locally. However, staying away from one's family is generally considered as undesirable, and the proportion of internal migrants above 40 years is very limited. When their own children grow up, the cycle of migration may start again.

**Figure 7.2. Proportion of men and women who are or have been married by 5-year age group**



Source: Household survey

International migrants tend to stay away much longer than internal migrants. Whereas returned international migrants stayed away 18 years on average, this is 8 years for returned internal migrants (see chapter 6). Although migrants typically move abroad with the intention of coming back, most international migrants tend to stay away for (almost) their entire working age ( $T_2$  and  $T_3$ ), provided that a permanent residence status has been acquired at the destination. Once they have accepted the *de facto* permanent or long-term character of migration, many international migrants tend to reunify their families in Europe (*arrow f*). This family reunification moment generally lies 5 to 15 years after the initial separation, and

entails the factual disappearance of the household from the oasis<sup>1</sup>. However, households that settled in Europe often fulfill a function in enabling “stay-behinds” to migrate through marriage migration, which is partially a form of labor migration “in disguise”.

Despite the magnitude of family reunification, a considerable proportion of Todgha migrants have continued to live in Europe alone, while maintaining their families in Morocco via remittance transfers. There are several reasons for not reunifying families at the destination. Most respondents said that they feared that their wives and children would become too “westernized” and lose their religious faith in Europe. Many migrants also argued that—back in the 1970s and 1980s, when migrants were confronted with rising unemployment and racism in Europe—they estimated that their children would have a better future in Morocco in the expectation that higher education would procure them secure, civil-servant jobs. However, other reasons might play an important role behind this official, socially acceptable discourse. Failure to fulfill the legal (i.e., status as a permanent resident) and financial (i.e., sufficient income) conditions for family reunification also seem important reasons, which most migrants are, however, not willing to admit. Other, more personal reasons opposing family reunification are marital conflict or estrangement, divorce, or marriage to a second wife in Europe or Morocco.

Long-term international migrants who do not cut ties with the household of origin typically return towards the end of their working age, at T<sub>4</sub>, in their fifties or early sixties, to form returned international migration households (*arrow h*). Subsequently, their children may start the cycle again (*arrow i*). Some migrants return far earlier, often with the intention to invest their money in their own enterprises (see chapter 9). Most of the international migrants who left in the late 1960s and early 1970s migration boom had either reunified their families or returned home at the turn of the century. However, classic distinctions between permanent and return migration are becoming increasingly blurred. We have witnessed the emergence of transnational Todgha communities that maintain intensive contacts with either side of the Mediterranean. As we have seen in section 6.6.2, a sizable number of retired and unemployed migrants are “commuting” between Europe and the Todgha, living for a part of the year in each place. They often combine this commuting with commercial activities.

As indicated in section 6.3.2, some migrants have opted for the strategy of “relay migration”, in which only one or two sons move to Europe in order to maintain the family’s stake in the international migration market. Finally, some international migrants decide to relocate their households from their village to Tinghir or towns elsewhere in Morocco while abroad or upon their return (*arrow g*). As will be further argued in section 9.2.5, such relocation is often a flight from asphyxiating social pressures to share remittance-derived financial wealth with family and community members and the conflicts this often entails between migrants’ wives and the extended family.

In conclusion, internal and international migration seem to fulfill distinct functions in the household life cycle. Internal migration tends to function as a (potential) precursor to international migration. The presented patterns of migration trajectories demonstrate that internal and international migration are complementary and mutually reinforcing rather than mutually exclusive phenomena, as internal migration may shape the mental, social, and material conditions for international migration.

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<sup>1</sup> Therefore, “disappeared” households do not appear in the survey. Besides the practical impossibility of interviewing such households, family reunification implies an explicit choice to live in Europe, and generally coincides with cutting the most intensive ties with the region of origin. Nevertheless, even many “reunified” migrants might support family members who are not part of the households. Therefore, the category of “indirect international migrant households” has been distinguished (see section 7.2). Although migrants’ children living in Europe rarely return to settle in the Todgha or elsewhere in Morocco, they often tend to marry with “stay-behinds” (see sections 4.2.5 and 6.8.3).

### 7.3.2. Migration and household composition

Table 7.5 reveals that households with international migrants tend to be larger than other households. Current international migrant households count 9 people on average, and 57 percent of all households within this group are larger than 7 people. The smallest households are nonmigrant households, with only 29 percent of households exceeding 7 people, and an average household size of 6.2<sup>2</sup>. Internal and indirect international migrant households score on almost average levels. These results seem in line with evidence from other parts of Morocco that international migrants tend to originate from relatively large households (De Haas 1995; Fadloulah *et al.* 2000:63; Heinemeijer *et al.* 1976).

**Table 7.5. Household size by household migration status**

Migration status	Household size (%) <sup>3</sup>				Total	<i>n</i>	Mean
	1-5	6-7	8-9	≥ 10			
Nonmigrant	37.7	33.1	17.1	12.0	100.0	175	6.2
Internal	24.6	27.0	22.2	26.2	100.0	126	7.8
Indirect international	31.6	18.4	26.3	23.7	100.0	38	7.6
Current international	11.8	31.4	27.5	29.4	100.0	102	9.0
Returned international	20.0	24.6	32.3	23.1	100.0	65	8.0
Total	26.5	29.1	23.1	21.3	100.0	506	7.5

Source: Household survey (C=0.269\*\*; η=0.283\*\*)

Table 7.6 demonstrates that only 15 percent of nonmigrant households are of the extended, polynuclear type, compared to 28 percent for internal and indirect international migrant households, and around 43 percent of international migrant households<sup>4</sup>. It is important to note that there is a general tendency towards the nuclearization of households in Morocco, in particular among the youngest generations (see also sections 9.2.2. and 9.2.5). Therefore, the higher incidence of nuclear families among internal and nonmigrant families might also be the result of the generally younger age of the parents in such households. If we control for the age of the head of the households, we indeed see that “older” households tend to contain more nuclei (see table 7.6). However, the current and returned international migrant households remain significantly larger on average, except for “old” returned international migrant households.

Two hypotheses can be formulated to explain the high prevalence of relatively large, extended households among migrants. A first factor seems to be the higher tendency among migrants to maintain extended family structures in order to guarantee the “safety” of their wife and children, who are given in custody to the migrant’s parents and/or brothers. If this hypothesis is correct, migration is the cause—rather than the result—of a large and extended family structure.

The second, alternative hypothesis is that migrants tend to come from families which are relatively “mature”, since most migrants are young adults (sons of the household head) and therefore from families which are at a more advanced stage in their life cycle. On the

<sup>2</sup> The multiple comparison of group means (using the Bonferroni procedure) revealed that nonmigrant households are significantly smaller than internal, as well as current and returned international migrant, households. Other mean group differences are insignificant.

<sup>3</sup> The variable household size includes the migrant.

<sup>4</sup> The multiple comparison of group means (using the Bonferroni procedure) revealed that nonmigrant households have a significantly smaller number of nuclei on average than current and returned international migrant households. Other mean group differences are insignificant.

basis of his migration research in the Moroccan Rif region, De Mas (1990a) established a link between the “household life cycle” and the occurrence of migration. De Mas argued that the number of adults in the household primarily determined the likelihood of international migration. In general, households in a rather advanced stage of their life cycle (i.e., those with adult sons old enough to work outdoors) were most likely to be involved in various economic sectors, including migration. In Agadir-Tissint, an oasis in the Province of Tata, De Haas (1995) equally found that migrant households contain comparatively large numbers of adults.

From this, it can be hypothesized that with the increase of the number of adults, the household is better able to spread income risks and to afford (i.e., share) the high costs and risks of migration. Furthermore, households involved in internal migration, which generally implies less costs and risks, tend to be smaller and “younger” than international migrant households. Nonmigrant households tend to be the smallest.

**Table 7.6. Nuclear and extended household structure by household migration status**

Migration status	Number of nuclei <sup>5</sup> within household (%)									<i>n</i>
	1	2	3	/>4	Total	Age household head			Total	
						< 45	45-59	≥ 60		
Nonmigrant	85.1	12.1	2.3	0.6	100.0	1.09	1.13	1.40	1.18	174
Internal	72.2	18.3	7.9	1.6	100.0	1.20	1.24	1.77	1.40	126
Indirect international	73.7	21.1	5.3	0.0	100.0	1.13	1.16	1.73	1.32	38
Current international	58.8	22.5	14.7	3.9	100.0	1.50	1.44	2.07	1.65	102
Returned international	55.4	33.8	10.8	0.0	100.0	1.50	1.46	1.59	1.55	65
Total	71.9	19.2	7.5	1.4	100.0	1.19	1.28	1.67	1.39	505

**Source:** Household survey ( $C=0.295^{**}$ ;  $\eta=0.251^{**}$  (within categories: < 45: 0.307; 45-59: 0.224; ≥ 60: 0.258))

The empirical evidence from this survey seems to confirm this hypothesis. Table 7.7 shows that the age of the household head—which is taken as a first proxy for the household life cycle—is the lowest among nonmigrant households. Among migrant households, it is clearly the highest among returned international migrants<sup>6</sup>. Although the mean ages are almost equal for current internal and international migrant households, the proportion of household heads with an age below 45 is higher among internal migrant households. It should be noted that—as has already been indicated in chapter 6—among 49 percent of international migrant households, the head is the migrant himself, whereas this is the case for only 18 percent of internal migrants.

Table 7.8 reveals the numbers of adults—which is taken as second proxy for the household life cycle—within the household migration categories. It reveals that migrant households indeed contain significantly more adults than nonmigrant households, and current international migrant households contain significantly more adults than internal migrant households<sup>7</sup>. This all seems to confirm the hypothesis that only with the maturing of the households is there significant involvement in internal and, in particular, international migration.

<sup>5</sup> For a definition of nucleus, see appendix 1.

<sup>6</sup> The multiple comparison of group means (using the Bonferroni procedure) revealed that the mean age of the household head of returned international migrant households is significantly higher than all other household categories. All other differences between group mean are insignificant.

<sup>7</sup> The multiple comparison of group means (using the Bonferroni procedure) revealed that nonmigrant households contain significantly less adults than all other household categories, and that current international migrant households contain significantly more adults than internal migrant households. All other differences between group mean are insignificant.

**Table 7.7. Age of the household head by household migration status**

Migration status	Age of the household head (%)					
	<45	45-59	≥60	Total	Mean	<i>n</i>
Nonmigrant	45.1	27.7	27.2	100.0	49.2	173
Internal	24.2	41.1	34.7	100.0	53.3	124
Indirect international	21.1	50.0	28.9	100.0	53.0	38
Current international	17.8	53.5	28.7	100.0	53.5	101
Returned international	9.2	20.0	70.8	100.0	63.6	65
Total	27.9	36.9	35.1	100.0	53.2	501

Source: Household survey (C=0.368\*\*;  $\eta$ =0.317\*\*)

**Table 7.8. Number of adults within household by household migration status**

Migration status	Number of people above 15 years old, including migrant (%)						
	1-2	3-4	5-6	≥7	Total	Mean	<i>n</i>
Nonmigrant	36.6	38.3	18.3	6.9	100.0	3.61	174
Internal	11.9	31.0	33.3	23.8	100.0	5.14	125
Indirect international	23.7	21.1	36.8	18.4	100.0	4.87	38
Current international	8.8	19.6	32.4	39.2	100.0	5.98	101
Returned international	9.2	24.6	38.5	27.7	100.0	5.43	65
Total	20.4	29.6	28.9	21.1	100.0	4.80	503

Source: Household survey (C=0.394\*\*;  $\eta$ =0.389\*\*)

Thus, nonmigrant households tend to be relatively “young” households that are in the early phase of the family life cycle (see T<sub>1</sub> in figure 7.1). Therefore, it is likely that part of these households will participate in (labor or student) migration in the near future when children reach adulthood. Consequently, a nonmigrant household is a potential future migrant household. This confirms the notion that the vast majority of the Todghawis were, are, or will be involved in some kind of migration. Therefore, household size, structure, and life cycle seem to be determinants of migration, rather than the other way around. Moreover, this analysis further corroborates the idea that internal and international migration are complementary, mutually reinforcing, processes, which both occur at distinct points within the same household life cycle.

## 7.4. Livelihood diversification, remittances, and income structure

### 7.4.1. Sectoral and spatial livelihood diversification

Over the twentieth century, oasis households have progressively moved away from predominantly agricultural livelihoods to an increasingly diverse portfolio of activities and sources of income. Stimulated by population growth and increasing aspirations, this diversification process has been enabled by the increasing possibilities to gain an additional non-agricultural income, initially mainly through migration, but in recent decades increasingly within the Todgha valley itself. Following the argument of the new economics of labor migration, migration is a household livelihood strategy not only to diversify and spread income risks, but also to *increase* income, which can potentially contribute to better living conditions and well-being. In this section, we will analyze to what extent the data from this survey support these hypotheses.

As table 7.9 indicates, only a small minority (6 percent) among all households are active in only one economic sector and 1 percent have no economic activity at all. The first group mainly consists of exclusively agricultural households, while the latter group consists

of either passive receivers of remittances (mainly indirect international migrant households) or extremely poor and landless household that have to live on charity. 58 percent of oasis household depend on three, four, or even more economic activities simultaneously.

While the average number of economic activities per household is about three, it tends to be higher among internal and, in particular, international migrant households. About 45 percent of all international migrant households are active in four or more economic sectors<sup>8</sup>, compared to 14 percent among nonmigrants. This is an indication that migrant households do not tend to rely solely on remittances and subsequently withdraw from other, local economic activities—as has been argued by the “migration pessimists”—but instead tend to continue or even extend the number of economic sectors in which they are active.

**Table 7.9. Degree of livelihood diversification by household migration status**

Migration status	Number of economic activities outside household work (%)						Total	Mean	<i>n</i>
	0	1	2	3	≥ 4				
Nonmigrant	1.1	8.6	47.4	28.6	14.3	100.0	2.51	175	
Internal	1.6	2.4	27.6	39.4	29.1	100.0	3.03	127	
Indirect international	5.3	13.2	21.1	21.1	39.5	100.0	2.87	38	
Current international	0.0	2.0	30.4	22.5	45.1	100.0	3.36	102	
Returned international	0.0	6.2	30.8	26.2	36.9	100.0	3.05	65	
Total	1.2	5.7	34.9	29.2	29.0	100.0	2.91	507	

Source: Household survey ( $C=0.374^{**}$ ;  $\eta=0.270^{**}$ )

Looking at the type of economic activities (table 7.10), it is striking that members of current international and indirect international migrant households seem to be more frequently involved in agriculture than other household types. On the contrary, nonmigrant households have the lowest involvement in agriculture. This seems to run counter to the idea that international migrant households would become passive remittance receivers and, in general, the pessimistic predictions on the impact of migration on agriculture. One third of all households are active in the construction sector, and the same percentage in the service sector. Construction seems particularly important for current migrant households.

There is a strong labor division between men and women, in which most adult men either work in the expanding non-agricultural sectors in the Todgha, or have migrated outside the valley. The quasi totality of women work in the household and agriculture. The de-agrarization of men’s activities seems to have increased the agricultural burden of women, in addition to their housekeeping and child-rearing activities<sup>9</sup>.

Contemporary oasis livelihoods are increasingly characterized by multi-activity and multi-locality, in which we can witness a general diversification and partial de-agrarization of activity patterns, especially among young men. This applies both to migrant and nonmigrant households, although migrant households tend to have more diversified livelihoods than nonmigrant households. From being the main pillar of the oasis economy, agriculture has become just one of the many, though still significant, elements of contemporary oasis livelihoods.

This justifies Bebbington’s (1999) argument that we need to broaden our view of rural livelihoods in the developing world, which can no longer be equated with agrarian livelihoods only. In a globalizing world, in which even the most remote regions are becoming increasingly linked to the outside world through infrastructure, trade, and migration, rural

<sup>8</sup> The following sectors have been distinguished: agriculture, agricultural labor, construction, commerce, industry, civil servant / professional, and “other”.

<sup>9</sup> For further analysis of gender and migration, see section 10.4.

economies are also becoming increasingly diversified, and households increasingly draw on a variety of local and migratory economic activities.

**Table 7.10. Economic activities by household migration status**

Economic activities	Household migration status (%)				
	nonmigrant	internal migrant	indirect international	current international	returned international
Agriculture <sup>10</sup>	45.7	51.2	78.9	57.8	47.7
Construction	32.6	51.2	23.7	67.6	33.8
Commercial	18.3	23.2	13.2	14.7	24.6
Industrial	13.1	15.2	5.3	26.5	24.6
Civil servant/professional	5.7	11.2	2.6	2.0	10.8
Service sector	24.0	44.8	39.5	40.2	35.4
<i>n</i>	175	125	38	102	65

Source: Household survey

### 7.4.2. Migration and remittances

If migration were a livelihood strategy to diversify and increase the income of the households left behind—as we have assumed in chapter 2—we would expect migrants to send considerable amounts of remittances back to their households, and that their incomes would be substantially higher than those of nonmigrant households. It is notoriously difficult to measure remittance transfers. First, many remittances are sent in kind instead of in cash, typically in the form of gifts during return<sup>11</sup>. Second, some cash remittances are transferred through non-official channels. Third, data collection on remittances seems particularly sensitive to underreporting<sup>12</sup>. Fourth, banks are not willing to give detailed information on remittance transfers.

Notwithstanding these obstacles, the current survey has attempted to measure as accurately as possible all cash remittance flows. Nevertheless, taking into account the above-mentioned pitfalls, the figures presented in tables 7.11 and 7.12 should not be seen as exact accounts, but rather as estimates in order to detect general patterns. The data indicate that international remittances tend to be far more important than internal remittances in terms of their mean contribution to household income. Whereas households involved in international migration tend to receive between 2,000 and 3,000 dirham<sup>13</sup> per month, internal migrant households receive an average of 860 dirham in remittance payments. Table 7.12 reveals that 10-20 percent of the households without internal migrants nevertheless receive internal remittances from non-household members. For the total population, the average household received about 1,090 dirham per month in international remittances and 326 dirham in internal remittances.

In sum, total international remittances are three times as important as internal remittances in terms of absolute income. Most internal remittances are transferred through

<sup>10</sup> It should be noted that the figures in table 7.10 mainly represent the activities of men. Most women have important agricultural duties, which are seen as an integral part of their household tasks. Therefore, most women have not reported agriculture as a distinct activity.

<sup>11</sup> It is estimated that in Morocco transfers in kind represent one quarter to one third of official remittances (Refass 1999).

<sup>12</sup> Particularly in a Berber region such as the Todgha, people tend to distrust outsiders and might have associated this survey with the State's bureaucracy. Notwithstanding all the methodological precautions taken, some respondents might have underreported actual earnings and remittance transfers out of fear of tax collectors. See chapter 3 for further discussion on such reliability issues.

<sup>13</sup> In 1999, the average value of 1 US\$ was equal to 9.8 dirham.

informal channels—many poor households do not have a bank account—whereas most international remittances are transferred through formal banking systems. It seems primarily due to international migration that all major Moroccan banks have branches in Tinghir (cf. Büchner 1986).

**Table 7.11. International remittances by household migration status**

Migration status	Amount of cash international remittances per month in dirham (%)					Total	Mean	<i>n</i>
	No rem.	<1400	1400-2100	2100-4000	>4000			
Nonmigrant	100.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	0	170
Internal	100.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	0	127
Indirect international	0.0	55.6	13.9	13.9	16.7	100.0	1946	36
Current international	2.0	20.8	30.7	26.7	19.8	100.0	2971	101
Returned international	29.7	4.7	18.8	14.1	32.8	100.0	2721	64
Total	63.9	8.8	9.6	8.2	9.4	100.0	1090	498

Source: Household survey ( $C=0.714^{**}$ ;  $\eta=0.646^{**}$ )

**Table 7.12. Internal remittances by household migration status**

Migration status	Amount of cash internal remittances per month in dirham (%)				Total	Mean	<i>n</i>
	No rem.	<800	800-1199	>1200			
Nonmigrant	90.6	4.7	1.2	3.5	100.0	123	170
Internal	31.7	20.6	25.4	22.2	100.0	859	126
Indirect international	81.6	10.5	5.3	2.6	100.0	138	38
Current international	87.3	2.0	2.9	7.8	100.0	200	102
Returned international	87.7	7.7	1.5	3.1	100.0	128	65
Total	74.1	9.0	8.0	9.0	100.0	326	501

Source: Household survey ( $C=0.502^{**}$ ;  $\eta=0.413^{**}$ )

### 7.4.3. Migration and income structure

Table 7.13 reveals the income structure of households by showing the most important sources of household income per household migration category. The table indicates that the vast majority of households have various sources of income outside agriculture, either from migration or from local non-economic activities. The number of households that completely rely on subsistence agriculture is small (4 percent), and seems to be disappearing, reflecting the general tendency towards diversification of economic activities and risk spreading. This corroborates the earlier observation that it would be erroneous to consider the Todgha any longer as an exclusively rural and agricultural region.

One quarter of all households live on a combination of local agricultural and non-agricultural income. Half of all nonmigrant households live on such a combination, and one quarter of this group live on non-agricultural income only. In terms of local cash income, non-agricultural sources of revenue seem dominant.

Three quarters of internal migrant households live on a combination of internal remittances and local sources of income, while remittances seem most important in their contribution to total income. All categories of international migrant households tend to live primarily on international remittances, although they usually have additional sources of income. About 10 percent of international migrant households have simultaneous income from international and internal remittances. The remittances received by indirect international migrant households tend to be somewhat lower, and other sources of income relatively more important, than among current and returned international migrant households. About one quarter of returned international migrant households do not receive remittances. This mostly concerns migrants to Algeria and the Arab oil countries—who do not enjoy pension or social

security rights—or migrants who failed to find work or undocumented migrants who were expelled from Europe within a few years.

**Table 7.13. Sources of income by household migration status<sup>14</sup>**

Sources of monetary income	Household migration status (%)					Total
	Non	Internal	Indirect intl	Interna- tional	Returned intl	
No source of income from own labor	1.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.6
Only agricultural	12.0	0.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	4.3
Agriculture>local non-agricultural	4.8	1.6	0.0	0.0	0.0	2.0
Agriculture<local non-agricultural	44.0	21.0	0.0	1.0	19.4	23.0
Only local non-agricultural	27.7	8.1	0.0	0.0	3.2	11.9
Internal remittances<local	4.8	25.0	0.0	0.0	3.2	8.4
Internal remittances>local	4.8	43.5	0.0	0.0	1.6	12.9
Internal and intl rem.<other sources	0.0	0.0	5.6	1.0	0.0	0.6
Internal and intl rem.>other sources	0.0	0.0	11.1	11.0	8.1	4.1
International rem.<other sources	0.0	0.0	36.1	15.0	11.3	7.2
International rem.>other sources	0.0	0.0	47.2	72.0	53.2	25.0
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
<i>n</i>	166	124	36	100	62	488

Source: Household survey

Table 7.14 gives an overview of the monthly household income for different migration categories. This includes internal and international migrant remittances, locally earned salaries, income from renting, and agricultural income<sup>15</sup>. The table clearly reveals a positive association between participation in international migration and household income. Internal migrant households earn only slightly higher average incomes than nonmigrants, although the proportion of extremely poor households (earning less than 1,000 dirham per month) is far higher among nonmigrants. This confirms the hypothesis that, also in the case of internal migration, it is not the poorest who migrate, as they cannot afford the risks and costs of migrating, although it might also be the partial effect of the income-stabilizing effect of income diversification through migration—it is difficult here to disentangle causes and effects.

About 63 percent of nonmigrant and 54 percent of internal migrant households earn less than 1,700 dirham per month, whereas this is the case for 25 percent of the indirect international migrant households. About 65 percent of international and 72 percent of returned international migrant households earn more than 2,600 dirham a month. The average income of households directly involved in international migration is more than double that of nonmigrant and internal migrant households, a difference that largely reflects the income effect of cash remittance transfers. Returned international migrants are a relatively wealthy group, as most have built up pension rights in Europe or receive social security benefits. This explains why almost half of the households in this group have incomes above 4,500 dirham.

In general, income inequality is high by all standards with a Gini index of 0.486 at the household level. There is a high variation in income within migration categories, which is particularly high among nonmigrants (see standard deviations in table 7.14). Although

<sup>14</sup> The “<” and “>” signs indicate which sources of income is highest.

<sup>15</sup> Subsistence production is not included in these figures, which only include cash income from the sale of agricultural produce. In chapter 9, we will give estimates of the market value of all (commercialized and non-commercialized) agricultural produce, which lie at around one third of the total monetary income. However, it is important to note that the inclusion of subsistence production does not decrease but rather increases income inequality, as agricultural production levels of international migrant households tend to be higher than those of nonmigrant and internal migrant households.

nonmigrant households are generally the poorest, it is important to note that even within this group almost one fifth earn more than 2,600 dirham. These are generally households containing local schoolteachers, other civil servants, and some wealthy businessmen. Nevertheless, more than 40 percent of nonmigrant households must live on less than 1,000 dirham per month. The income distribution of internal migrant households is bipolar, indicating that this category is composed of distinctive richer and poorer households. The relatively wealthy internal migrant households generally contain migrants working as civil servants in other parts of Morocco.

We have seen that migrant households tend to be larger than nonmigrant households. If we calculate the per capita income (see table 7.14), we therefore see that the income ratio between international migrant and nonmigrant households drops below 2, and that internal migrant households are even poorer than nonmigrant households, though not significantly. The daily per capita cash income is 15 dirham or approximately 1.5 US\$. Nevertheless, the differences between households with and without access to international migration resources remain large and highly significant. There is clearly a positive effect of participation in international migration on household income. However, such an association is largely absent for internal migration. This is possibly linked to the fact that internal migrants generally have the same kind of jobs and only tend to earn slightly higher wages than nonmigrants.

**Table 7.14. Total monthly cash household income by household migration status**

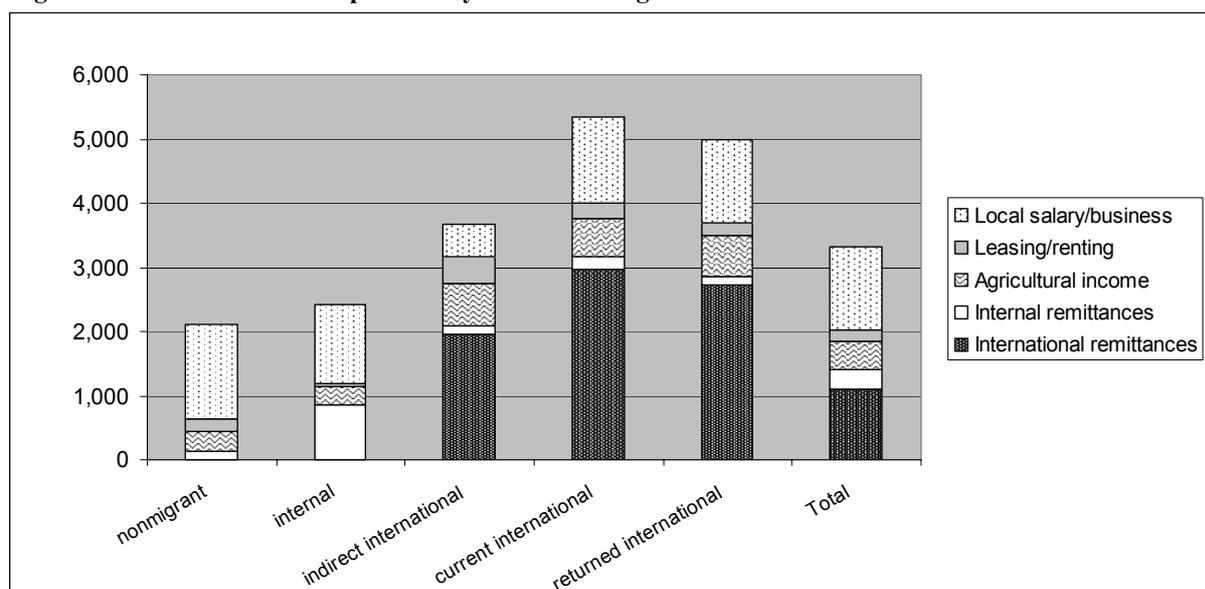
Migration status	Cash income per month in dirham (%)					Total	Mean	<i>n</i>	\$ /capita /day	Stand. Dev
	0-1,000	1,000-1,700	1,700-2,600	2,600-4,500	> 4,500					
Nonmigrant	37.0	26.7	17.6	11.5	7.3	100.0	2,113	165	1.11	1.89
Internal	18.5	33.1	17.7	19.4	11.3	100.0	2,399	124	1.01	0.85
Indirect international	8.3	16.7	22.2	25.0	27.8	100.0	3,709	36	1.60	1.29
Current international	3.0	6.0	26.0	29.0	36.0	100.0	5,373	100	1.96	1.43
Returned international	3.3	8.2	16.4	26.2	45.9	100.0	5,080	61	2.10	1.40
Total	18.9	21.0	19.5	20.0	20.6	100.0	3,347	486	1.46	1.52

Source: Household survey ( $\eta=0.349^{**}$ ; Gini-index=0.486)

If we look at the average income composition for each household category (figure 7.3 and table 7.15), we can see that remittances account for 43 percent of the total income of the surveyed households. Among households involved in international migration, remittances account for 56-59 percent of the total cash income. For internal migrant households, remittances represent about one third of their total income.

It is striking that international migrant households tend to have higher local cash earnings than other households, in particular from agriculture. Mean agricultural cash incomes of households involved in international migration are about twice as high as in nonmigrant households. Indirect international migrant households tend to have a relatively high income from leasing land and houses. Internal migrant households, on the contrary, tend to have lower local earnings than nonmigrants.

Table 7.15 also indicates that, on average, agricultural cash income represents only about 13 percent of household cash income. This proportion does not show much variation across the household categories. Most of the agricultural production is still destined for the household's own consumption, and only a small proportion of the harvest is traded. Despite the fact that the relative importance of agriculture has drastically decreased due to population growth and the rising importance of local non-agricultural activities and migration, we will see in the following chapter that agriculture nonetheless still plays a vital role in sustaining oasis livelihoods.

**Figure 7.3. Mean income composition by household migration status**

Source: Household survey

**Table 7.15. Income composition and income level by household migration status**

Migration status	Mean monthly household cash income in dirham (%)						Total	n
	Agriculture	Leasing land and houses	Other local	Internal remittances	International remittances			
Nonmigrant	320 (15.2)	194 (9.2)	1,472 (69.8)	123 (5.8)	0 (0.0)	2,113	174	
Internal	281 (11.7)	47 (2.0)	1,225 (50.8)	859 (35.6)	0 (0.0)	2,399	127	
Indirect international	661 (18.0)	416 (11.3)	516 (14.0)	138 (3.8)	1,946 (52.9)	3,709	38	
Current international	578 (10.8)	242 (4.5)	1,349 (25.3)	200 (3.7)	2,971 (55.6)	5,373	102	
Returned internation.	639 (12.8)	215 (4.3)	1,276 (25.6)	128 (2.6)	2,721 (54.7)	5,080	65	
Total	430 (13.0)	186 (5.6)	1,286 (38.8)	326 (9.8)	1,090 (32.8)	3,347	506	

Source: Household survey

This analysis leads us to the following conclusions. First, contemporary household livelihoods seem increasingly diverse and multi-local. The economy of the valley is becoming increasingly open and de-agrarized, and migrant remittances are nowadays a major source of income. Second, although remittances are an important source of cash income, they “only” represent one third of the total income of the surveyed population. Therefore, the image of the Todgha as a region more or less passively relying on migrant remittances—as structuralist “migration pessimists” often tend to portray migrant sending areas—seems false. Along with remittances, other sources of income have grown in importance too.

Third, the fact that international migrant households also tend to have higher incomes from local sources indicates that migrant households do not tend to retreat from local economic sectors, as has been argued by the “migration pessimists”. To what extent this higher non-migratory income is associated with investments by international migrant households will be explored in chapters 8 and 9.

Nevertheless, the economic situation seems completely different and clearly less rosy for internal migrant households, who seem to have lower incomes from other sources than nonmigrants. The data point to a fundamental difference in development impacts between internal and international migration. Apparently, besides a small category (10-20 percent) of households containing civil servants or professional workers, most internal migrant households do not succeed in increasing their income through migration. Therefore, only the

“risk spreading” argument can theoretically explain their migration. As far as income characteristics are concerned, internal migrant households are more analogous to nonmigrant households, confirming the earlier observation that the main dividing line is between households with and without access to international migration resources.

## 7.5. The impact of migration on wealth and living conditions

The higher incomes of households involved in international migration are mirrored in the higher possession rates of luxury consumer goods, such as video recorders, satellite dishes, refrigerators, washing-machines, mopeds, bicycles, and so on. An index of wealth indicators has been calculated in order to summarize the level of household wealth (for calculation and composition of this index, see section 5.6.4). This wealth index can be considered as a relatively reliable proxy of household income. Moreover, it seems a better indication of past or “accumulated” income than cash income over the last year.

Table 7.16 shows that the relationship between migration participation and the wealth index largely reflects patterns found for household income. Households involved in international migration tend to have far higher scores on this index than other households. This seems directly related to the generally higher incomes of international migrant households. Not surprisingly, there is a significant correlation ( $r=0.472$ , significant at the 0.01 level) between household income and scores on the index of wealth indicators. As was the case for income per capita, internal migrant households do not score higher on this index than nonmigrant households. They even score slightly lower.

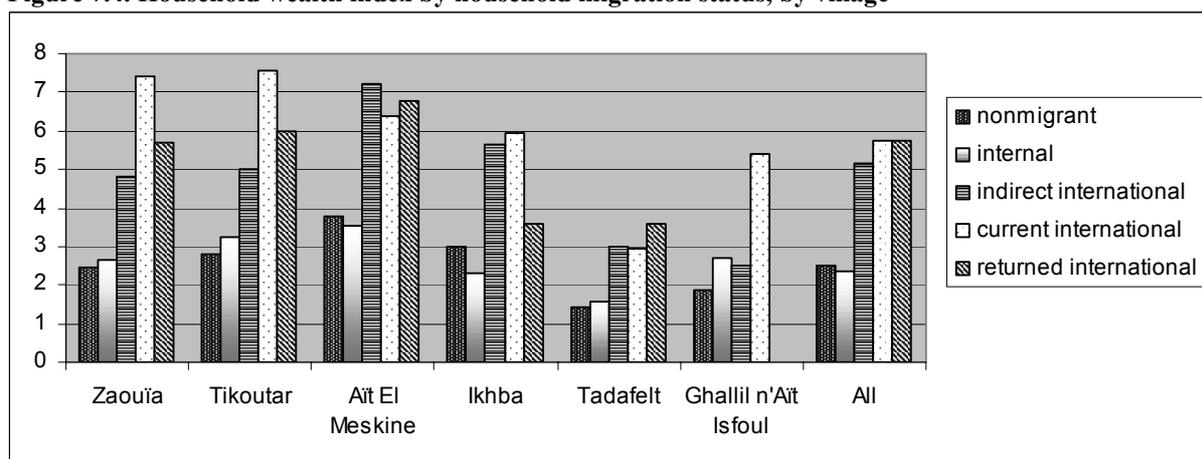
**Table 7.16. Index of wealth indicators by household migration status**

Village	Scores on index of wealth indicators per household				Total	Mean	<i>n</i>
	0-1	2-3	4-5	> 6			
Nonmigrant	38.9	33.7	16.0	11.4	100.0	2.51	175
Internal	40.2	36.2	13.4	10.2	100.0	2.35	127
Indirect international	18.9	13.5	21.6	45.9	100.0	5.16	37
Current international	7.8	23.5	14.7	53.9	100.0	5.75	102
Returned international	6.2	20.0	21.5	52.3	100.0	5.72	65
Total	27.3	29.1	16.2	27.5	100.0	3.73	506

Source: Household survey ( $\eta=0.510^{**}$ )

Figure 7.4 demonstrates that the general relationship between migration participation and household wealth is generally reproduced within the research villages. There is a remarkable difference in wealth between household categories, with the major dividing line running between households with and without access to international migration resources<sup>16</sup>.

<sup>16</sup> Results of Bonferroni multiple comparison of group means for both income and wealth indicators indicated significant differences in scores between (1) nonmigrant and internal migrant households on the one hand, and (2) current, indirect, and returned international households on the other. Within these two groups, differences between group means are insignificant. This confirms that the new (socio-)economic divide runs between households *with* and *without* access to international remittances.

Figure 7.4. Household wealth index by household migration status, by village<sup>17</sup>

Source: Household survey

However, it is striking that nonmigrant and internal migrant households tend to score higher in villages such as Aït El Meskine and Tikoutar than in other villages in general and the Aït 'Atta villages in particular. For example, nonmigrants in Aït El Meskine have roughly similar scores to international migrants in Tadafelt. In chapter 5 we already found that Aït Todoght villages generally had higher scores on this wealth index than Aït 'Atta villages. Apparently, the general level of household wealth is higher in some villages than in others, regardless of migration participation. This may be possibly related to the indirect positive economic effects that sustained participation in international migration may have had on villages as a whole, including nonmigrant and internal migrant households. In particular in Tadafelt, international migration households tend to score relatively low compared to other villages. This might be the result of the more recent character of international migration from this relatively isolated Aït 'Atta village. This would comply with the hypothesis that the full effects of migration seem to fully materialize only after several decades of sustained out-migration.

Similar to the possession of consumer goods, a strong positive association exists between participation in international migration and the general conditions in which households live (see table 7.17). For example, almost three-quarters of returned international households live in a concrete house and 94 percent have a lavatory in their house, compared to only one third and 57 percent of all nonmigrant households, respectively. Likewise, international migrant households tend to have access to private drinking water facilities (well and pump) far more frequently than other households.

As for household wealth, an index has been calculated for living conditions<sup>18</sup>. Figure 7.5 shows the average scores of household categories on the index of living conditions within the research villages. We can see that patterns for the whole population are generally repeated within the research villages. Households involved in international migration tend to live in better conditions than nonmigrants. The correlation ratios between the index of living conditions on the one hand, and household income and wealth index on the other hand, are 0.398 and 0.761 (both significant at the 0.01 level), respectively. Even when controlling for

<sup>17</sup> The score of the Ghallil n'Aït Isfoul for returned international migrants is missing, as the case-load was only 1. In subsequent figures, data on Ghallil n'Aït Isfoul are also missing several times for the same reason.

<sup>18</sup> In order to calculate this index, each item in possession (mentioned in table 7.17) was counted as a score of 1, each item not in possession as a score of 0. The index is the sum of all scores.

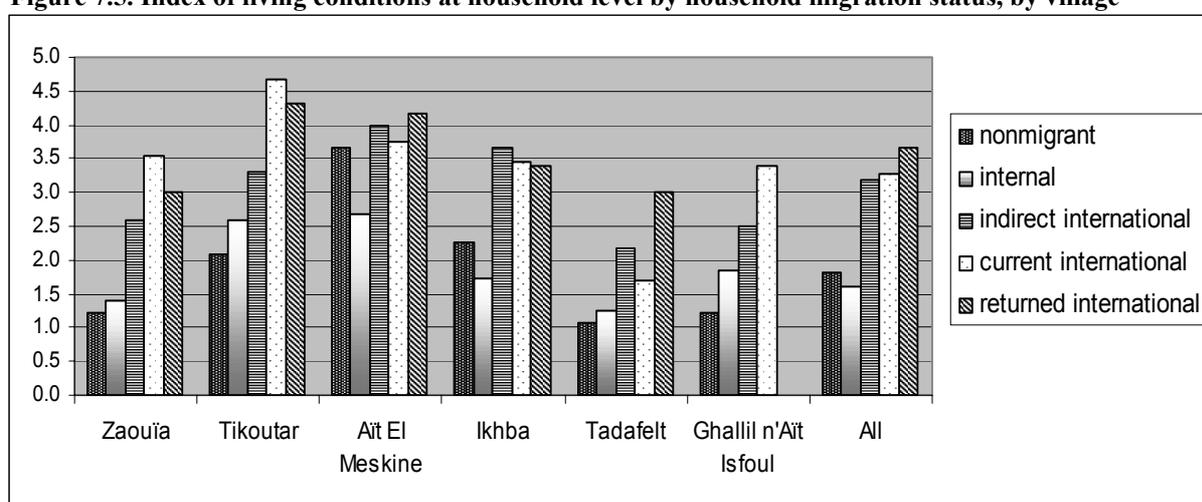
income, analysis of variance indicates that positive associations remain between household migration status and living and wealth indexes, especially in the highest income category<sup>19</sup>.

**Table 7.17. Living conditions by household migration status**

Migration status	Percentage possessing item in house (%)						Mean score index
	Concrete house	Lavatory	Shower	Private well	Electric pump	Diesel pump	
Nonmigrant	35.6	56.6	14.9	50.6	8.6	16.1	1.8
Internal	27.8	59.1	13.4	43.3	7.1	11.8	1.6
Indirect international	52.6	78.9	37.8	78.9	26.3	47.4	3.2
Current international	62.7	81.4	47.5	66.7	30.4	37.3	3.3
Returned international	73.8	93.8	52.3	78.5	37.5	32.3	3.7
Total	45.3	68.6	27.5	57.7	17.7	23.7	2.4

Source: Household survey ( $\eta = 0.487^{**}$ )

**Figure 7.5. Index of living conditions at household level by household migration status, by village**



Source: Household survey

Therefore, variance in both dependent variables cannot be explained by current income levels alone. Past income (“accumulated income”) and income stability presumably play an important role too. From this, it can be hypothesized that it is the fact that international migrant households have not only higher but also more stable incomes, which explains why they score higher even when controlling for income. Concerning living conditions, significant differences remain between villages. Nonmigrant households in villages such as Tikoutar and, in particular, Aït El Meskine tend to live in similar or even better conditions than international migrant households in Tadafelt.

In chapter 5, we saw that significant intra-valley differences exist concerning habitation, sanitation, and general living conditions. In general, the inhabitants of Tinghir and the upper Todgha live in better conditions than the inhabitants of the relatively poor and isolated villages of the lower Todgha. In the upstream villages, most houses are concrete, two to three storey buildings. In the downstream villages of El Hart and Aït ‘Atta, most houses are

<sup>19</sup>

Income	$\eta$ wealth index	$\eta$ Living cond. index
0-1699	.219	.166
1700-3749	.385	.298
$\geq 3750$	.474	.491

adobe constructions. In the upper Todgha, houses also tend to be relatively luxurious, often having modern hygiene facilities, such as lavatories, showers, and kitchens.

Although households involved in international migration tend to live in better conditions, the *general* level of wealth and living conditions is higher in certain villages, in particular Aït El Meskine and Tikoutar. These are also the villages with the highest and most longstanding participation in international migration. It is possible that nonmigrant and internal migrant households have indirectly profited from consumption and investments by international migrants in the local economy, which may have provided them with employment and additional income. In line with the premises of the new economics of labor migration theory, we can hypothesize that there is a certain diffusion of migration capital over migrant-sending communities as migration matures, which explains why the benefits of remittances might partly accrue to other households than those which receive the remittances directly.

Aït El Meskine is a particular case, since nonmigrant households have almost equal scores to international migrant households. This seems partly related to the fact that several nonmigrant households guard and live in houses built by international migrants. In this village, relatively elevated living conditions have become increasingly generalized, which might explain why no clear association is found.

Internal migrant households seem to live in roughly equal conditions to nonmigrant households. In some villages, such as Aït El Meskine and Ikhba, their situation is even clearly worse than that of nonmigrants. We should be aware of the potentially endogenous character of the variables “village” and “household migration status” in determining migration impact on wealth and living conditions. As the majority of established international migrants tend to come from less isolated and better equipped villages (i.e., Aït El Meskine, Tikoutar), the apparently high association between migration status on the one hand and wealth and living conditions on the other might in fact be explained by economic-geographical factors (i.e., location of the village).

If we assume that a certain threshold of wealth and development is necessary for migration to occur, the better living conditions and wealth observed in a particular village should not automatically be attributed to migration. After all, within the perspective of transitional migration theory, initially higher wealth and development are also one of the very *causes* or enabling conditions of migration. Consequently, the higher wealth and living conditions of households involved in international migration are not necessarily the exclusive results of migration. The analysis of migration impact is further complicated by the fact that we have no exact data on non-landed wealth and living conditions prior to migration.

Nevertheless, the presented data seem to suggest that there is a clear impact apart from initial migration-enabling conditions. The positive association between international migration participation on the one hand and wealth and living conditions on the other hand, are generally repeated at the village level—with the exception of living conditions in Aït El Meskine. Nevertheless, it is certainly true that the wealth and living conditions in centrally located Aït Todoght villages are better than in isolated (predominantly Aït ‘Atta) villages. Although this partly reflects their more central location, it might also be related to the recursive effect of investments by international migrants, which might, for example, provide local employment and income for fellow, nonmigrant villagers (see chapters 8 and 9).

In order to analyze the temporal dimension of the impact of migration on wealth and living conditions, tables 7.18 and 7.19 display the relationship between the length of the stay abroad and household wealth and living conditions. The tables clearly demonstrate a strong and positive association: The longer international migrants stay abroad, the more their households back home accumulate consumer goods and the more they tend to live in better

conditions with regards to housing and sanitation<sup>20</sup>. This might also explain why international migrant households in Tadafelt, where most international migrants left recently, score relatively low on the indexes of wealth and living conditions. Apparently, the largest improvement in wealth and living conditions is made in the first two decades of migration.

**Table 7.18. Household wealth by length of stay abroad of international migrants**

Years abroad	Scores on index of wealth indicators per household						
	0-1	2-3	4-5	> 6	Total	Mean	<i>n</i>
1-14	15.8	40.4	24.6	19.3	100.0	3.6	57
15-28	7.0	14.0	17.5	61.4	100.0	6.2	57
>29	0.0	11.3	15.1	73.6	100.0	7.2	53
Total	7.8	22.2	19.2	50.9	100.0	5.6	167

Source: Household survey ( $\eta=0.480^{**}$ ;  $r=0.490^{**}$ )

**Table 7.19. Living conditions by length of stay abroad of international migrants**

Years abroad	Scores on index of household living conditions					
	0-1	2-3	$\geq 4$	Total	Mean	<i>n</i>
1-14	35.1	45.6	19.3	100.0	2.2	57
15-28	3.6	35.7	60.7	100.0	3.9	56
>29	3.8	21.2	75.0	100.0	4.1	52
Total	14.5	34.5	50.9	100.0	3.4	165

Source: Household survey ( $\eta=0.554^{**}$ ;  $r=0.537^{**}$ )

The more pessimistic perspectives on migration and development tend to assume that migrants spend most of their money on consumption. In order to test this hypothesis, table 7.20 displays the association between household migration status and monthly expenditure on food, housing, and various public and semi-public services (electricity, water, telephone) per month. It shows that migrant households indeed tend to spend more on daily consumption than nonmigrants<sup>21</sup>.

**Table 7.20. Daily consumption expenses by household migration status**

Migration status	Monthly expenses on food, housing, and public amenities in dh							
	0-653	654-999	1,000-1,399	$\geq 1,400$	Total	Mean	% tot. income	<i>n</i>
Nonmigrant	39.3	28.9	18.5	13.3	100.0	837	39.6	173
Internal	27.8	22.2	25.4	24.6	100.0	1,009	42.0	126
Indirect international	18.9	27.0	27.0	27.0	100.0	1,173	31.6	37
Current international	8.8	18.6	29.4	43.1	100.0	1,388	25.8	102
Returned international	9.4	23.4	42.2	25.0	100.0	1,250	24.6	64
Total	24.9	24.3	26.1	24.7	100.0	1,069	31.9	502

Source: Household survey ( $\eta=0.344^{**}$ )

Nevertheless, the increase in daily consumption is not very large, and far smaller than the increase in income. Poorer, nonmigrant households spend a larger share of their total expenditure on daily consumption. Engel's law also seems to apply in this particular context: the income elasticity of demand for food and other primary products and services is relatively

<sup>20</sup> Bonferroni multiple comparison of group means revealed that differences between group means for both household wealth and living conditions are significant between all "years abroad" categories, with the exception of the difference between the 15-28 and  $\geq 29$  categories, which is not significant.

<sup>21</sup> Bonferroni multiple comparison of group means revealed that nonmigrant households consume significantly less than all other categories except for internal migrant households. Internal migrant households score significantly lower than current international migrant households. All other differences between group mean are insignificant.

low. With rising incomes, the share of expenditure for food and other products actually declines. This seems to refute the hypothesis that migrant households overindulge in consumption. In subsequent chapters, we will examine how remittance income has effected households' investment behavior.

## **7.6. "Partir pour rester"**

Over the twentieth century, migration has become an all-pervasive phenomenon in the Todgha valley. Nowadays, most Todghawi households have been in some way affected by international and internal migration. More than 40 percent of all the surveyed households are involved in international migration. 25 percent are involved in internal migration, and several households are involved in both types simultaneously. Only one quarter of all households have not been affected by some kind of migration. The analysis further corroborated the hypothesis that internal and international migration tend to be complementary, mutually reinforcing "communicating vessels" rather than mutually exclusive or negatively correlated phenomena. Internal migration tends to shape the mental, social, and material conditions for international migration. Both types of migration tend to be positively correlated, and tend to occupy distinct places within the household life cycle.

Increasing labor migration has coincided with a general diversification and the increasing multi-locality of livelihoods of oasis households. Although agriculture remains important as a source of cash and in kind income, its role has changed from being the pillar of the oasis economy to today being just one of the various sources of income. Nowadays, there are only very few households that base their livelihoods uniquely on agricultural resources. Most households rely on three or more sources of income at the same time. Although migration has played a pivotal role in the diversification of household livelihoods, this diversification should not be seen as the exclusive result of migration. After all, local income earning opportunities outside agriculture have increased as well.

Many prior studies have depicted migrant sending areas as being largely dependent on migrant remittances. Some authors have stated that remittance-enabled increases in standards of living are therefore "artificial" and create a temporary, and therefore "dangerous", dependency on external sources of income. Cumulative causation theory and structuralist theoretical perspectives tend to see such dependency on the outside world as detrimental to the economy and social cohesion in the regions of origin.

Nevertheless, for the Todgha, the image of a region more or less passively relying on migrant remittances is not matched by empirical findings. There is no one-sided dependence on migrant remittances, which "only" represent one third of the entire cash income of the surveyed households. Even in this region of heavy participation in international migration, local activities are still more important than remittances as a source of income, and local employment opportunities in both agricultural and non-agricultural sectors have been increasing. Moreover, those households involved in international migration tend to have higher local, non-migratory revenues than nonmigrants. This goes against the pessimistic hypothesis that migration causes the retreat of migrant households from local economies. Instead of developing a one-sided dependence on remittances, the Todgha economy is rather going through a process of economic diversification, in which migration plays a central, but certainly not exclusive, role.

After almost a century of international migration, the argument that remittances would only be "temporary" is difficult to sustain (see also section 4.5.2). Remittances have probably been a more reliable and stable source of income than income from local labor and

agriculture. A future decrease in remittance transfers to the Todgha might occur due to the maturing of migration and the ageing of the first generation Europe-bound migrants. On the other hand, we have seen that new migrants continue to leave, through family migration or to new destinations in southern Europe. In this way, resident Todghawis firmly keep their stakes in the international migration market for the near future at least.

It would also be erroneous to depict migration as the unique cause of livelihood diversification. Migration is part of a broader strategy by many oasis households to diversify and improve their livelihoods. Migration should furthermore be seen as an integral part of a broader process of the political, infrastructural, economic, and social integration of the Todgha valley into national and international systems, and the concomitant increasing flows of products (e.g., trade), money (e.g., remittances), people (migration), and information (e.g. education, the media revolution) between the Todgha and the outside world.

Nevertheless, it is particularly through migration that these mutually reinforcing processes associated with “globalization” have materialized and become more concrete for the average oasis dweller. In many respects, migration has literally brought the Todghawis into the modern world, and the modern world to the Todgha. The incorporation of the Todgha into the modern state and the capitalist economy have fundamentally enlarged the opportunities for resident oasis households to diversify and potentially ameliorate their livelihoods by having one or more members gain an additional income elsewhere—that is, to pursue multi-local livelihoods. This central place that migration occupies in the daily lives and perceptions of people—migrants, nonmigrants, policy makers, and migration researchers—might explain why migration is often seen as a kind of independent “cause” of change, instead of a constituent part of broader development processes.

Besides enabling increasing labor migration, processes of “globalization” have also increasingly facilitated the flow back of remittance transfers through the development of banking and money transfer systems firmly linking Todghawis across Europe to their native land (see also section 4.5.2). More in general, the enormous reduction in costs of transportation and communication has increasingly facilitated the fostering of close links between migrated Todghawis and “stay-behinds”. This emergence of transnational Todgha communities might explain why so many children of migrated Todghawis tend to marry nonmigrant kin “back home”, thereby “refreshing” migrant communities and maintaining migration systems between the Todgha and cities like Montpellier, Nice, Paris, and Amsterdam.

In general, migration seems to have contributed to poverty alleviation and the general improvement of living conditions in the valley. It would be an illusion to think that the entire Todgha population (70,000) could make a decent living out of agriculture alone (cf. Büchner 1986). We should not ignore the fact that—despite an almost universal tendency to romanticize the past—in pre-colonial times, large sections of oasis populations used to live in abject poverty and sometimes under conditions of physical “unfreedom”. For them, the new opportunities of the twentieth centuries were a liberation. It was particularly through migration that many poor households have been increasingly able to spread income risks, increase their incomes, and increase their general well-being. In many ways, migration has enabled many households to *stay* in the Todgha and to improve their livelihoods *in situ*.

Labor migration is not so much a thoughtless or desperate flight, but more a deliberate move to overcome local social and economic constraints. This is why Heinemeijer *et al.* (1976) stated that the paradoxical aim of most (Moroccan) migrants is “partir pour rester”; to migrate in order to enable other household and family members to stay. This valuable insight, which was in fact a NELM-hypothesis *avant-la-lettre*, still seems valid. Although for many migrants the wish to return often turns into a myth, it still seems the intention of most migrants to finally return to Morocco. During their absence, they tend to foster strong social

and financial links with their households of origin, and even when they decide to settle at the destination, their commitment towards their families in their village tends to remain high.

The higher prosperity of households involved in international migration is reflected in their higher standards of living. International migrant households generally live in more luxurious houses, more often have basic hygienic facilities such as lavatories, showers, and water pumps, and tend to possess more consumer goods such as satellite receivers, TV sets, and washing machines, as well as means of transport such as motorbikes and cars. The absence of significant differences between nonmigrant and internal migrant households with regards to standards of living reflect their almost equal average incomes.

The literature tends to disparage the tendency of migrants to purchase consumer goods and to construct new, concrete houses. Such investments in “status symbols” are generally dismissed as “consumptive” and “non-developmental”. However, it is not clear on what moral basis many researchers seem to contest the legitimacy of such expenses. After all, decent housing, health, and basic luxury seem universal attributes of basic well-being—for Western academics as well as Moroccan oasis dwellers. Especially considering the arduous conditions in which most oasis households used to live, investments in decent housing, basic sanitation and consumer goods seem a logical priority. The advantages of spacious houses, lavatories, private wells and water pumps, certain household appliances (e.g., washing machines, food processors, and so on), and means of transport (e.g., mopeds) and their contribution to general well-being are quite obvious. In addition, such facilities are generally seen as decreasing the workload (of women in particular) and improving a family’s health.

To some, the advantages of TV sets, video recorders and satellite dishes might seem less obvious. However, instead of morally rejecting the desire to possess such items, it is more useful to try to comprehend *why* people are so eager to purchase these items. In a society where there is limited freedom of speech, good newspapers are hardly available and many people are illiterate, satellite television is the prime source of information about what is going on in Morocco and abroad. Besides entertaining people, television meets a real need in informing people. Especially the introduction of satellite television—through which people can receive non-censored channels both from the Western and Arab world—in the late 1990s has meant a considerable improvement in information provision. From a “capabilities perspective” (Sen 1999), these migration-induced improvements in general well-being and information provision are constituent parts of development.

However, this contribution of migration to livelihood improvement seems mainly limited to international migrant households. Internal migrant households find themselves in the same situation as nonmigrants, and—with the exception of a small group of civil servants and private-sector professionals—most internal migrant households have not been able to significantly increase incomes through migration. Doing irregular, lowly paid jobs, they have to survive on a day-to-day basis, leaving their households behind in high financial insecurity. Internal migrants do not earn more than nonmigrants, and in per capita terms, they even earn less.

Nowadays, the main socio-economic dividing line lies between households with and without access to international migration resources. At first sight, the net result of international migration seems to be increasing inequality between these two groups. Nonmigrant and internal migrant households earn less than half of the cash incomes of international migrant households. Moreover, in chapter 6, we have already seen that it is generally not the poorest who migrate abroad. This tendency towards sustained inequality between international migration “haves” and “have-nots” seems to be reinforced by the largely kinship-based access to migration networks.

From a capabilities perspective on development, such inequality is clearly *not* developmental. However, if we enlarge our historical and analytical scope, there are two

reasons not to jump to the conclusion that migration has “thus” led to increasing inequality. First, traditional oasis society used to be inherently unequal, with its caste-like socio-ethnic stratification. Inequality based on access to international migration resources has been partly superimposed upon traditional forms of inequality (by birth) based on ethnic affiliation, complexion, and land possession. There are no objective, scientific standards to determine which form of inequality (“feudal” or “capitalist”) was worse. Nevertheless, feudal society in its very essence was based on the lack of freedom of large sections of the population, and therefore—reasoning from the axioms of the capabilities-perspective—inherently less developed. Marx also saw the transition from feudal to capitalist society as a major advance and liberation from the chains of bonded labor (cf. Sen 1999:113).

Second, the fact that internal and nonmigrant households have relatively low incomes does not mean that some of the benefits of international migrant remittances do not accrue to them through indirect channels. On the one hand, 7.5 percent of all surveyed households do not contain migrated members, but receive international remittances on a regular basis. This group of indirect migrant households seems particularly sizable in villages with a long-standing tradition of international migration. On the other hand, it is possible that non-remittance receiving nonmigrant and internal migrant households have profited *indirectly* from consumption and investments by international migrants.

The unequivocal relationship between participation in international migration on the one hand and income and standards of living on the other is repeated at the village level. Nevertheless, nonmigrant and internal migrant households are clearly better off in villages such as Tikoutar and Aït El Mesquine, which have a much longer history of intensive international migration than in a village like Tadafelt, where international migration gained momentum only recently. There seems to be circumstantial evidence that nonmigrant and internal migrant households reap some of the benefits of international migration. We can therefore hypothesize that there is a certain diffusion of migration capital over migrant sending communities as migration matures. Other circumstantial evidence that international migration has contributed to a *general*, community, and even valley-wide increase in income and employment is the fact that the Todgha itself has become a destination for internal migrants.

Our hypothesis is that the accumulated effects of a century of migration and remittance flows have contributed to a *general* increase in income and economic activities through multiplier effects. In the following chapters, we will further analyze whether consumption and investments by international migrants have contributed to the diversification of the local and regional economy, and whether they have created income earning opportunities for nonmigrants, for example in the housing and agricultural sectors. Although inequality persists between households with and without access to international migration resources in terms of income, wealth, and living conditions, both the direct and indirect effects of migration seem to have contributed to poverty alleviation and the general improvement of employment, income and living conditions in the research villages and across the Todgha valley<sup>22</sup>.

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<sup>22</sup> Although the aim of this study was not to do an econometric analysis of the effect of international migration on income distribution (cf. Adams 1989), this is a desirable exercise for future research in order to test hypotheses presented in this section.

## 7.7. Conclusion

Referring to the theoretical framework presented in chapter 2, we have hypothesized that labor migration is a household livelihood strategy in order to (1) minimize and spread income risks; (2) gain access to higher earnings streams; and to (3) overcome local (credit and insurance) market constraints, which may enable households to invest in productive activities and, hence, to improve their livelihoods. The analysis in this chapter, which has focused on the direct impact of migration on income levels and income structure, wealth and living conditions (research question 2), enables us to test the first two hypotheses.

In general, the preceding analysis seems to confirm the first hypothesis. Migration has become one of the major livelihood strategies used to diversify income and spread income risks. Migration seems to be a constituent part, rather than an independent factor, of a broader trend towards the diversification of livelihoods of oasis households. Risk spreading is both achieved through diversification of local activities and migration. The aim of risk spreading in order to secure and stabilize income can also help to explain why people migrate internally. This desire to keep several “irons in the fire” explains why people migrate internally, despite the often-difficult circumstances in the towns and cities and the only marginally better earnings. Moreover, internal migration potentially increases the chances of gaining access to better paid jobs—which are mainly found in the larger towns and cities—and, in particular, the far more lucrative international migration market through “leapfrogging” to Europe. Thus, internal migration increases the *potential* for livelihood improvement and the capability to gain access to international migration systems.

The second hypothesis, that migration enables households to gain access to higher earning streams, only seems to apply to international migration. Households involved in international migration tend to have far higher incomes than other households. This is primarily through the effect of remittances, although these households also tend to have higher local earnings—especially from agriculture—than other households. Average incomes of internal migrant households are almost equal to those of nonmigrants. Nevertheless, the percentage of extremely poor households is far higher among nonmigrant households than among internal migrant households. This seems to sustain the hypothesis that one of the reasons to diversify income through migrating is to protect the household against income shocks. However, this is also the partial effect of the fact that the poorest households are simply not able to migrate.

The third hypothesis, that migration enables households to overcome local capital constraints in order to invest in agricultural as well as non-agricultural sectors, will be at the center of the following two chapters.



## Migration and agricultural development revisited

### 8.1. General introduction to oasis agriculture

Until French colonization, irrigation agriculture constituted the main source of subsistence for the Todghawis. However, due to processes of livelihood diversification, in which migration played a pervasive role, the traditional position of oasis agriculture has been challenged. The relationship between migration and agricultural development in Morocco has been generally evaluated in a negative way, with many arguing that migration has contributed to the demise of traditional agriculture in migrant sending areas. The dominant “pessimistic” hypothesis is that migration has led to local agricultural labor shortages. Migrant households have, therefore, tended to partially or entirely withdraw from agriculture. The absence of many able-bodied—migrated—men has led to widespread agricultural neglect and decline or even abandonment of agriculture (De Mas 1990; Ferry and Toutain 1990; Kerbout 1990:55). This process has been further stimulated by an increasing aversion to small-scale peasant agriculture. Such hypotheses seem to fit into the cumulative causation theory and structuralist perspectives on migration, which see migration as detrimental to local economic structures.

Moreover, the few (return) migrants who *do* invest in agriculture, do so not out of rational economic motives such as stabilizing and increasing incomes, but because of the strong emotional attachment aging migrants feel towards agriculture. If investments occur, this therefore mainly concerns “ritual” (De Mas 1990) or “sentimental” (Bencherifa 1991) agriculture, in which the migrant practices a kind of “hobby farming” (Bencherifa and Popp 2000:142) without making profits or even making a loss.

This line of reasoning runs counter to the new economics of labor migration theory, which hypothesizes that migration enables migrant households to overcome local market constraints and to invest in local agriculture in order to heighten agricultural production, and, hence, improve their livelihoods. This chapter will examine to what extent and in what way migration has affected the investment behavior of households in the agricultural domain, as well as how spatial and temporal differentiation in this behavior can be explained (research question 3). Is the NELM hypothesis correct that migrant household tend to exhibit a higher propensity to invest than nonmigrant households? Has migration indeed stimulated agricultural development or is it rather associated with agricultural decline due to the effects of “lost labor” and the passive reliance on remittances?

Furthermore, this chapter will examine the nature and causes of the more general agricultural transformations in the Todgha, thereby focusing on the social and economic role of migration in this process of change vis-à-vis other factors of geographical, economic, and institutional nature (research question 4). We will thereby pay attention to processes of

institutional change both at the valley and village level, the role of the market economy and comparative advantages, and technological innovations.

We will try to answer these questions by systematically comparing agricultural practices and the agricultural investment behavior of the different household migration categories defined in the previous chapter. However, in order to comprehend the causes and nature of recent agricultural transformations, we will first look at the main characteristics of traditional oasis agriculture.

### **8.1.1. General characteristics of oasis agriculture**

In the arid zones of the Maghreb, population settlements and agriculture have traditionally been concentrated in places and regions where water is relatively reliably available, notably river valleys, *fums* (gorges in mountain chains), and wells. Over many centuries, the inhabitants of these regions developed sophisticated techniques to capture surface water or to extract groundwater, and to exploit these water resources for irrigated agriculture. In this way, oases emerged. Oases can be defined as agricultural areas in arid environments where agriculture is normally not possible without irrigation. Oases were not only agricultural production centers, but also trading centers linking distant regions, with a crucial military and political importance, from which several sultanic dynasties originated (De Haas 2001).

Depending on the specific natural environment in which they are located, the water sources they use, and the irrigation techniques employed, three main oasis types can be distinguished: river, groundwater, and source oases (De Haas 2001). Most large-scale oasis systems are located along perennial or semi-perennial rivers, whose water resources are directly tapped for irrigation in fields that are normally located on their fertile sediments, either on the banks of the rivers, or on alluvial plains or deltas. In agricultural terms, such river oasis systems are relatively prosperous, thanks to a more or less guaranteed flow of water and regularly occurring floods, which bring down fine sediments to the fields, thereby maintaining soil fertility. Within Morocco, the largest river oases are the Drâa and Tafilalt-Ziz basin in Morocco, but several smaller-scale river oasis systems exist, including the Todgha valley. A typical feature of river oases is the existence of a large number of different oasis villages, located on the banks of the riverbed, and following the river like a green ribbon through the desert land.

Although the general classification distinguishing river, groundwater, and source oases seems valid, it should be stressed that in many cases a combination of water gaining techniques can be found. For example, villages in the relatively water-scarce downstream parts of the Todgha compensate for the fact that they have limited or no access to river water by employing additional techniques to extract groundwater, such as *khetaras*. In the second half of the twentieth century, motor pumps became increasingly important as a new, alternative technique to overcome problems related to water scarcity in the Todgha. This fundamentally changed the technological basis of oasis agriculture.

Despite the large variety of oasis types, most traditional oases have a number of characteristics in common (De Haas 1998). The maintenance of intricate irrigation systems has traditionally demanded high labor inputs while the scarceness of natural resources, high population pressure, and the need for diversification and risk-spreading has generally necessitated the cultivation of two or even three vegetation layers. The upper layer generally

consists of the date palm—itself the very symbol and pillar of lowland oasis agriculture<sup>1</sup>. The second layer consists of smaller fruit trees bearing figs, almonds, olives, and pomegranates. The third and lowest layer consists of alfalfa (the main fodder crop) and annual crops such as cereals (barley, wheat, sorghum) and diverse vegetables. As a result of patterns of land-tenure inheritance and high population densities, plots tend to be very small.

In reality—depending on natural resource availability, the techniques employed, and micro-climatic conditions—there is a high diversity of oasis production systems. The above-mentioned ideal type of triple-layered oasis agriculture is generally found in river oases with relatively abundant and reliable water resources (Larbi 1989:18), such as the upper Todgha. In ecologically marginal oases, the second layer of fruit trees and sometimes also the third layer of annual crops are largely absent. In general, unfavorable natural circumstances, in particular pertaining to water supply and soil properties, tend to coincide with a decreasing diversity of crops and a lower intensity of agriculture.

Traditional oasis systems are characterized by a symbiosis between animal husbandry and tillage. Animal husbandry is one of the principal elements of traditional oasis agriculture, which is dependent on the utilization of manure for the maintenance of soil fertility (Tisserand 1990:237). In exchange, the oasis system produces fodder to feed the animals. In addition to fodder crops—notably alfalfa—cultivated in all oases, the presence of animals also enables peasants to exploit the vegetable products that are not consumed by humans, such as plant parts, weeds, and palm leaves. Besides maintaining soil fertility, animals also play an important role in transport, water extraction, and ploughing. Thus, animal products are an important element in maintaining soil fertility as well as for optimizing biomass uptake in the human food chain. Livestock husbandry (milk, meat, eggs) contributes to the diversification of the nourishment of oasis populations and provides them with hides and wool. The possession of a flock also represents a certain capital and insurance in times of environmental stress.

In all oasis societies, peasants established close links with nomadic tribes living in the deserts surrounding them. Nomads and semi-nomads exchanged products with sedentary oasis dwellers, thereby complementing their respective livelihoods. Therefore, traditional oasis livelihoods were not exclusively based on subsistence agriculture. Besides long-distance trans-Saharan trade (which was mainly to the benefit of elite groups), barter played a certain economic role. Economic and political interdependency between sedentary oasis populations and nomadic tribes was generally strong. Moreover, the latter often extorted protection agreements from sedentary populations, forcing them to pay tribute in exchange for defense against attacks from other nomadic groups. In the Todgha, such “hostile interdependence” existed and still persists between the Aït ‘Atta and some groups among the Aït Todoght, such as the *haratin* from the El Hart villages (cf. Otte 2000:31).

In contrast with what is commonly believed, the distinction between nomadic and sedentary life is not very sharp (De Haas and El Ghanjou 2000a). Many oasis dwellers were also active in nomadic activities for at least part of the year. The Aït ‘Atta are a good example of such a semi-nomadic group, whose *transhumance* livelihoods used to be based on a combination of sedentary agriculture and pastoral activities. Moreover, throughout the history of the Maghreb, nomadic groups have settled in existent oases or created new ones—as happened in the lower Todgha with the settlement of Aït ‘Atta—becoming partly or entirely sedentary in the process (Ensel 1999; Hart 1981).

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<sup>1</sup> Oases located at high altitudes are a special case as the cold conditions mean date palms—which require a hot desert climate—do not thrive. Therefore, oases such as the upper Dadès valley consist only of fruit trees and a layer of annual crops (Aït Hamza 1995; Rijbroek 1997).

Another general feature of traditional oasis agriculture is the largely collective nature of water management, which was regulated by the traditional village council, or *taqbilt*<sup>2</sup> (see section 5.3.4). Collective land and water management is the main *raison d'être* of *taqbilts*, which function as land and water boards responsible for organizing and maintaining irrigation systems, the distribution of water among peasants, and enforcing customary law.

Maintenance of the irrigation system, and the distribution of irrigation water among a large number of different individuals, villages, communities, and tribal groups usually living together in river basins requires a high degree of “collective” socio-political organization. The maintenance of irrigation systems often requires collective action, to which the entire oasis community is obliged to contribute (Ouhajjou 1996). The *taqbilt* was also responsible for settling frequent disputes among peasants regarding land and water resources, and to defend the collective “resource interests” of the village vis-à-vis other villages.

A strong ethnic hierarchy was fundamental to the functioning of traditional oasis systems (cf. Beaumont 1989:126). Oasis agriculture and maintenance of the agro-hydraulic infrastructure tended to be highly labor-intensive and depended on the availability of bonded labor (De Haas 1998). This labor was generally provided by slaves, serfs, or *ikhmmesen* (sharecroppers) from ethnically inferior groups such as the *haratin* or *ismakhen* (De Haas 1998; Ensel 1999). The existence of bonded labor provided by slaves or other socially inferior groups was a condition for the maintenance of the irrigation systems and the very survival of traditional oasis systems (Beaumont 1989:126).

Labor was organized either on the basis of slavery or through patron-client relations, often combined with sharecropping arrangements in which *ikhmmesen* only received a small share of the harvest (usually one fifth) in exchange for their labor. This sharecropping system could only exist on the basis of unequal power and labor relations, which were justified by ideologies in which certain ethnic groups (e.g., “black” populations) were seen as inferior (cf. Ensel 1999). Within traditional oasis society, socially inferior groups were obliged—because their livelihood options beyond agriculture were limited—to contribute to the maintenance of the irrigation systems and cultivate the fields of the dominant, land-owning classes (cf. Tellegen and Wolsink 1992:32). As we have seen in chapter 5, the latter groups also tended to dominate the *taqbilt* village institution.

### 8.1.2. Oasis ideal types and oasis myths

The literature on oasis agriculture often refers to the oasis “ideal type”, represented by agriculture in three vegetation layers. Cultivation in several vegetation layers is supposed to optimize agricultural production on a limited surface with limited water resources. The literature on oasis agriculture often presumes a so-called “oasis effect”, which refers to a subhumid micro-climate created by the two high tree layers, favoring the growth of annual crops, by protecting them from the strong radiation, low humidity and high temperatures of the Saharan climate (cf. Riou 1990; Larbi 1989). In this way, the oasis would be a rather “ideal” agricultural system, optimizing production in this arid environment.

However, this hypothesis should be seriously called into question, and seems in fact a myth (Crossa-Raynaud 1990:319-20). First, the ideal-type of three vegetation layers is generally not found in water-scarce oases, such as the lower Todgha. Second, where two or three vegetation layers indeed exist, the competition for light, nutrients, and water is

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<sup>2</sup> *Taqbilt* literally means tribe or clan (from the Arabic *qabila*). The term is commonly used in Tamazight Berber to refer to the *ighrem*'s “council”, or *jema'a* in Arabic.

enormous. For instance, empirical research has demonstrated that the planting of alfalfa in a date palm grove entails a significant decrease in date yield (Skouri 1990:333). From the objective of pure production maximization, traditional oasis agriculture therefore seems “irrational” (De Haas 1995).

Moreover, the wrong starting point of the “oasis effect” hypothesis seems to be the climatic conditions prevailing in high summer. The extremely harsh summer conditions only prevail during three or four months of the year. The winter half year (October - April)—and not the summer—constitutes the main cultivation season for annual crops, especially cereals, in most oases. In wintertime, the temperatures and light intensity are not extreme at all, and shade seriously reduces yields.

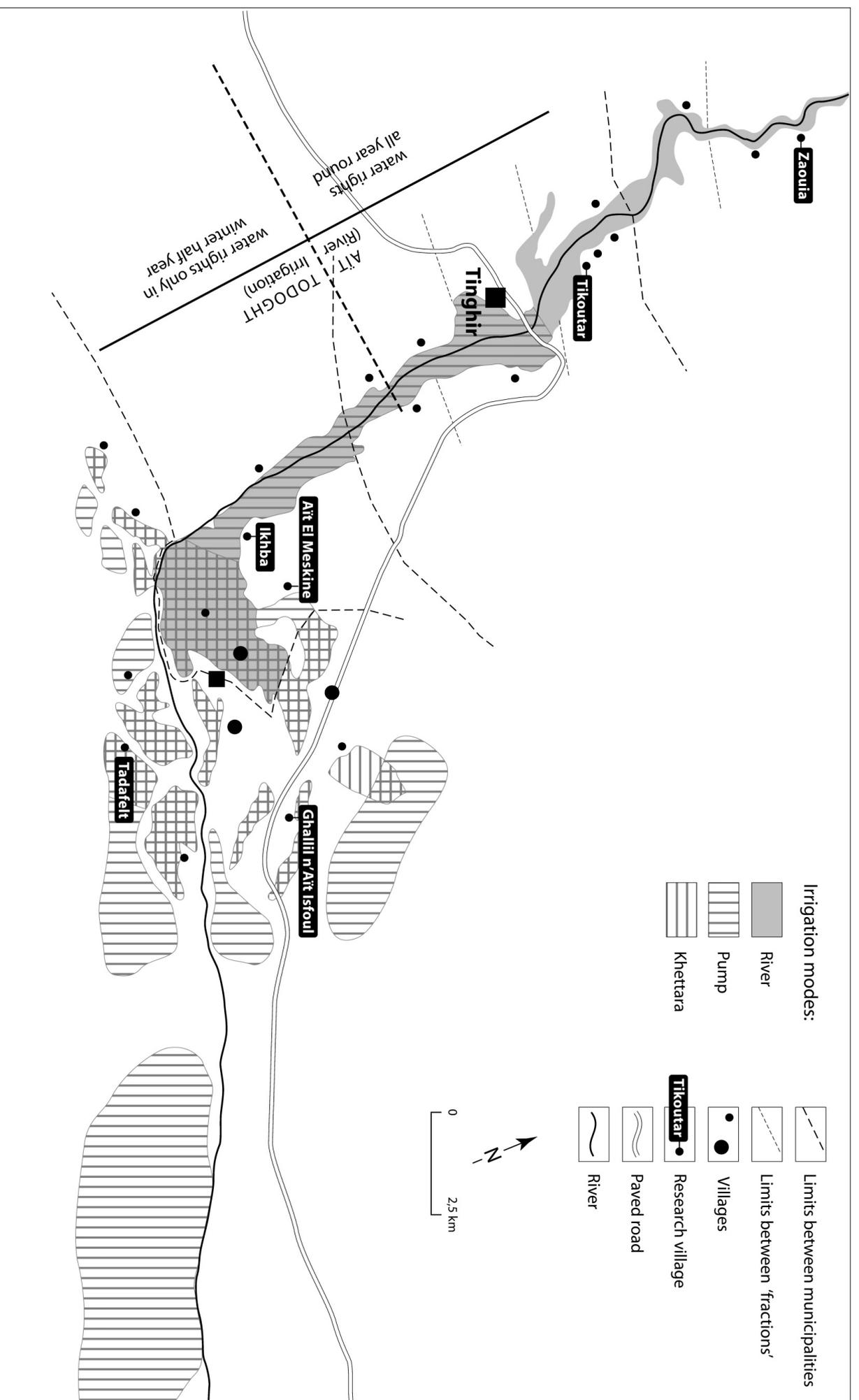
Cultivation of a large variety of crops in several layers should therefore not primarily be understood from the perspective of production maximization. This should primarily be seen in the light of the historical need for self-sufficiency (cf. De Haas 1995:39). Although long-distance trade and barter played a certain role, oases were, however, obliged to produce most of their dietary needs themselves until the twentieth century. Cultivating only one or a small number of (best-adapted) crops was therefore not possible. Crop diversification should also be seen in the light of risk-spreading. For example, a monoculture of dates would theoretically be more productive in terms of weight and market value than the mixed cultures of the traditional oases. However, date harvests show large annual variations depending on climatic conditions or the occurrence of plagues.

By cultivating several crops at once and in various periods, the risks of crop failure are spread, and the risk of one-sided nutrient depletion decreased. In the absence of fertilizers, it was also necessary to cultivate fodder crops and hold livestock in order to produce manure (De Haas 1998). Alfalfa, the main fodder crop of oases, has the extra advantage of its nitrogen-binding, soil-enriching capacities. Such crop associations were vital in order to maintain the fertility and viability of the traditional oasis system.

In the Todgha, the simultaneous cultivation of three vegetation layers is not the prevailing type of crop association. Most plots are semi-open, with two layers of vegetation, mostly combining date palms or almond trees with alfalfa or cereals. On such plots, the tree cover is generally not very dense, with the trees mainly located at the fringe of the plots, so that we can often hardly speak of a “layer”. If many trees are planted on the plots themselves, the second layer of annual crops visibly suffers from the lack of light and nutrients. Especially in the upper Todgha, several zones are densely planted with one layer of mainly olive trees, which lack any undergrowth.

The most intensive and yielding agriculture is taking place in open treeless plots, which can be found in the whole valley, but especially in the lower Todgha and the recent extensions. Open plots contain a large variety of crops, with a domination of alfalfa and cereals, but there is also a large variety of vegetables. If enough water is available, open fields carry two crops per year, typically wheat in the winter half year and maize or vegetables in summer. Geographical differences in water availability explain why the lush fields of the upper Todgha are cultivated all year round and that in the lower Todgha many fields lie fallow during the dry and hot summer half year.

Map 5. irrigation zones of the Todgha valley



Source: Adapted from Büchner (1986)

## 8.2. Recent dynamics in water management and irrigation patterns<sup>1</sup>

### 8.2.1. Traditional river and *khattara* irrigation

The Todgha river is literally the life source of the valley. Being an agricultural region in an arid environment, access to its water has been crucial for survival. In most conflicts between ethnic groups, villages and individuals, it is the control over these very water resources, which has generally been at stake. Much of the history of the Todgha should be understood in light of this continual struggle for water. The valley is characterized by a high spatial differentiation in the availability of surface water resources, in which the upstream parts of the valley are better endowed than the downstream parts. Two dominant forms of traditional water extraction techniques can be found in the valley: (1) River irrigation with the surface waters of the Todgha, which is strictly limited to Aït Todoght territory; and (2) *khattara* irrigation in the lower Todgha, on which the Aït ‘Atta used to rely completely, and the El Hart villages partially (see map 5).

In the upper and middle parts of the valley, the perennial surface waters of the Todgha feed a complex irrigation system, which is composed of dams and irrigation channels (*targa* in Tamazight, pl. *teregin*<sup>2</sup>) transporting water over distances of up to twenty kilometers further downstream. As we have seen in chapter 5, only the Aït Todoght—including the research villages Zaouïa, Tikoutar, Ikhba, and, until recently, Aït El Meskine—are entitled to use and benefit from these surface waters.

Several dams, which are located at regular distances in the river bed, divert the perennial river water into a complex and stratified system of primary, secondary, and tertiary channels irrigating the agricultural plots<sup>3</sup>. The principal irrigation channels originate from one of the dams located at several places in the Todgha river bed. In the upper Todgha, most dams have been constructed by using natural materials, such as wooden branches, soil, and stones. This weak construction makes them vulnerable to damage by floods, but also easy to repair. Most irrigation channels are dug into the soil. In the case that concrete is used, it mainly concerns some primary irrigation channels and a number of larger dams in the lower Todgha.

River irrigation is occasionally supplemented by flood irrigation. During each flood, all the irrigation channels of the Todgha are opened to capture the flood water which is immediately used to irrigate as many fields as possible<sup>4</sup>. The importance of flood irrigation in maintaining soil fertility should not be underestimated, since the flood water contains high quantities of sediments. The other side of the coin is that extreme floods can ravage fields and villages, and frequently cause the loss of human life.

The only irrigation technique used in the Todgha, including the *khattara* zone, is the submersion of so-called flood basins (*iguemunn*). Each plot is divided into small flood basins to enable irrigation. The size of these flood basins varies considerably, but does normally not exceed 100 square meters. Irrigation generally takes place by submerging—in succession—all the plots located along a tertiary irrigation channel. Subsequently, all plots located along the channel are irrigated, and so on, until all plots located along all tertiary channels depending on a secondary irrigation channel have been irrigated. Subsequently, the “water turn” moves on to the following secondary channel. In this way, all sectors of the fields

<sup>1</sup> Sections 8.2.1-8.2.4 heavily draw on De Haas and El Ghanjou (2000a).

<sup>2</sup> In Arabic: *séguia* (pl. *swagui*).

<sup>3</sup> Primary and secondary irrigation channels primarily function to transport water over larger distances. From these main channels, the water is diverted into smaller tertiary channels, which actually serve to irrigate the plots.

<sup>4</sup> In contrast to regular river irrigation, no rotation (*nuba*) system is used in case of floods.

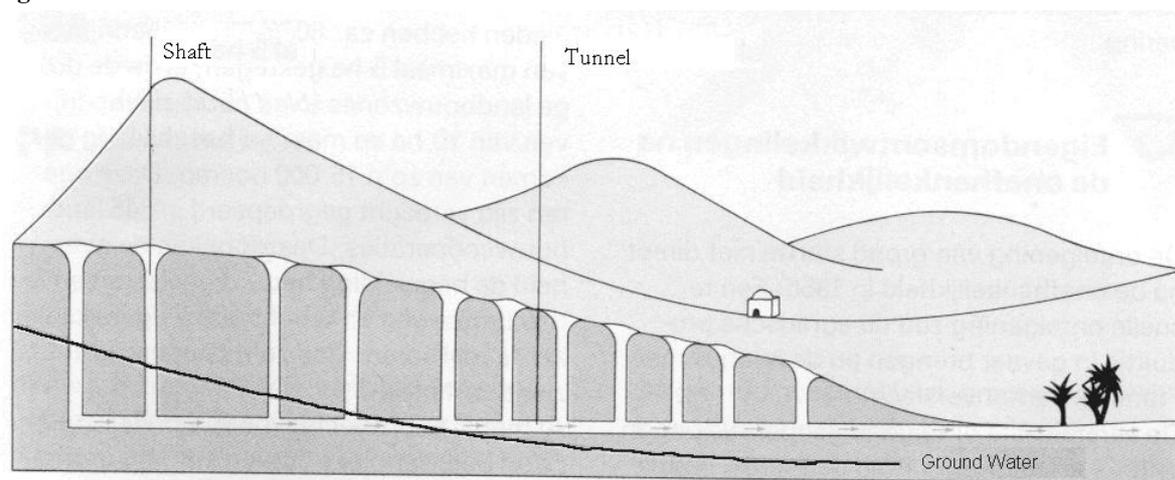
belonging to one particular village are irrigated. Thus, the irrigation at the tertiary level primarily follows a spatial pattern. This means that water rights (*tagurt n waman*) are generally not individualized to the extent that the water owner has the right to irrigate a plot which is located at another spot<sup>5</sup>.

Moving downstream, river water becomes gradually less abundant, until the stream becomes subsurface in the lower Todgha, where the Aït Todoght are entitled to tap only limited amounts of river water from dams located upstream. Whereas villages located in the upper Todgha receive river water all year round, villages located in the downstream administrative *fractions* of Amzaourou and El Hart only have the right to tap river water during the winter half year. Although the flow of the Todgha is perennial, water needs are far higher in the summer season due to the very high temperatures and evapotranspiration during summer. Therefore, many fields lie fallow during the summer.

The Aït ‘Atta villages—including the research villages Tadafelt and Ghallil n’Aït Isfoul—have been historically deprived by the Aït Todoght from any rights to river water at all (see section 5.3.3). Traditionally, so-called *khettara*-techniques have compensated for this water deficit. The *khettara* (also known as *foggara*) is an ancient, sophisticated technique, which enables the draining of underground water resources for irrigation. Originating from ancient Persia, the technique has spread over the Middle East and North Africa and is found throughout semi-arid and arid Morocco. The *khettara* system taps the groundwater table through digging a nearly horizontal tunnel from the well to the surface over a long distance. At regular distances, vertical shafts are dug that enable access to and maintenance of the tunnel (see figure 8.1).

As the *khettara*’s tunnel is constructed in such a way that it has a flatter gradient than the terrain under which it is constructed, the tunnel transporting the water becomes gradually shallower until it emerges above-ground after a distance of several kilometers downstream from the first shaft, which mostly lies at a depth of 10 to 20 meters (De Haas and El Ghanjou 2000a). From the *khettara*’s outlet, the water is directly conducted into a system of irrigation channels to irrigate the fields, largely analogous to river irrigation.

**Figure 8.1. Structure of a *khettara***



**Source: Adapted from Lentjes and De Mas (1991)**

<sup>5</sup> It should be noted the organization of the *nuba* is complex and inherently flexible. Therefore, important local exceptions to this rule exist. Moreover, rules are generally more strictly applied in case of high water scarcity. For example, “looser” systems often exist in the upstream villages of Aït Tizgui due to the abundance of water. Flexibility in water distribution also tends to increase in winter as opposed to summer.

The *khettaras* of the Todgha have been dug in the alluvial plain of the Todgha, exploiting the important underflow of the river. *Khettaras* are mainly found in the lower Todgha where most villages have no historical rights to surface waters, although some traces of old *khettaras* have been found in the upper Todgha (e.g., near Tikoutar). Among the Aït ‘Atta, agriculture used to be entirely dependent on *khettaras* until recently. The El Hart villages are located in a transition zone, as they use both river (in winter) and *khettara* water.

### 8.2.2. The *nuba* water allocation system and collective water management

The necessity of sharing the water of one collective source, the Todgha river, among all Aït Todoght villages, lineages and individuals, has led to the development of a water distribution system based on the so-called *nuba*, which means water “round”, “rotation” or “cycle”. Among the Aït Todoght, this water division system is organized on three levels. At the highest (valley) level, the water is divided among the seven administrative *fractions* of the Aït Todoght. Each *fraction* has a predetermined right to a certain number of days within the total duration of the valley’s *nuba*, which currently lasts 21 days in summer and 42 days in winter. These *fraction*-level water turns are further subdivided between the different villages within each administrative *fraction*. This is the second level *nuba*. Within each village, the second level *nuba* is further subdivided between the main ethnic lineages (*ighsan*) and the plots of individual peasants. This intra-village distribution system is the third-level *nuba*.

During the total length of a third level *nuba* within a village, the right to use the water of the river circulates among all peasants entitled to irrigate. Water rights (*tagurt n waman*) are measured in time units, and the length of each individual turn is exactly known and, nowadays, often documented. In the Todgha, land and water rights are “married”, which means that water rights are generally related to the amount of land possessed by a peasant. The *nuba* rotates among all the peasants following a strict order. After its completion, the cycle repeats itself. This water distribution system crucially depends on a certain level of agreement and close cooperation between villages and peasants. This also makes the *nuba* system vulnerable to conflicts between individual peasants and (groups of) villages.

Since the river irrigation system depends on the good state of the dams, the latter have to be maintained frequently. At least once per year, and after each flood, collective maintenance is obligatory. The maintenance of the main irrigation channels is equally the subject of collective labor. The maintenance of smaller channels and individual plots is the responsibility of individual peasants, although labor is frequently pooled. Collective labor is organized following the general rule that each adult man is obliged to participate, regardless of the agricultural property and general wealth of the participants. As labor contributions are not proportional to agricultural wealth, this rule tends to favor wealthy, large landowners.

Collective labor is organized by the village’s *taqbilt*. The collective works are organized under the authority of the *amghar*, who is elected each year by the lineages’ representatives within the *taqbilt* to manage all water and land affairs. This “land and water chief” supervises the work and divides the tasks between the participants, allocating the heavy tasks to the young men and the light tasks to the older men. For specific tasks, specialists sometimes participate in return for payment. People not able or not willing to participate in collective labor have to pay the laborer replacing him or he has to prepare a meal for all workers. The neglect of collective maintenance duties is considered a threat to the unity and the collective interests of the entire community, and “free riders” are fined by the *amghar*.

As is the case with river irrigation, the management and maintenance of the *khettara* is the responsibility of the *taqbilt* and the *amghar*. The main difference is that a *khettara* generally belongs to only one village, so that the *nuba* only comprises one level. A higher-

level *nuba* between different villages does not exist, which makes the distribution of water less complicated. However, the first part of most *khettaras*—which have a length of several kilometers—often crosses the territory of neighboring villages. This necessitates a certain level of mutual agreement with such villages, which generally claim so-called “passage rights”, giving them the right to use part of the *khettara* water in exchange for the guaranteed passage of the water. Similar to river irrigation, the intra-village distribution of the water is organized according to a *nuba*, which is different in each village, according to distribution methods, the water flow, and the number of ethnic lineages and people entitled to irrigate<sup>6</sup>.

Similar to river irrigation, all people owning water rights are obliged to participate in the collective maintenance of the *khettara*, regardless of the amount of land and water owned. *Khettaras* are more labor-intensive compared to river irrigation systems, which tap readily available and relatively abundant surface waters. Digging and maintaining *khettaras* requires a heavy input of labor in exchange for a relatively limited water flow. Intensive maintenance is necessary as the accumulation of sediment in the *khettara*'s tunnel quickly lead to a decrease and the eventual ceasing of water flows. The maintenance generally consists of removing sedimented soil from the *khettara* and main irrigation channels. In other cases, it is necessary to extend the *khettara* in an upstream direction or construct a second tunnel—as has been done in Tadafelt—in order to maintain or increase the water flow.

The Aït ‘Atta neither dig nor maintain their own *khettaras*, which is dangerous work requiring a high level of expertise. Apart from the fact that the Aït ‘Atta generally have not mastered this technique, they also believe it an inferior type of work which should be done by subordinate and low-status ethnic groups such as the *haratin*. Their *haratin* neighbors living in the El Hart villages maintain their own *khettaras*, but often refuse to work for their Aït ‘Atta neighbors due to the historical hostility between the two groups (see chapter 5). Therefore, the Aït ‘Atta often employ non-Aït ‘Atta specialists to dig and maintain *khettaras* from oases outside the Todgha, such as the Drâa valley. If outsiders are hired for maintenance, all water owners are expected to contribute to their payment.

Both river and *khettara* irrigation systems are subject to collective regulations concerning maintenance and water distribution. Whereas water allocation is more complex in the case of river irrigation, since many villages make use of the river water, maintenance of *khettaras* seems more intensive compared to river irrigation. As we will see in the following sections, the functioning of both river and *khettara* irrigation systems has undergone fundamental change over the second half of the twentieth century. With regards to the main causes of these changes, we have to distinguish between (1) the political integration of the Todgha into the modern (colonial and Moroccan) state that actively intervened in the *nuba* at the valley level; (2) changes in socio-political relations at the village level emanating from the changing livelihoods of oasis households; and (3) the introduction of motor pumps. Before describing how the latter developments transformed agriculture in particular in the lower Todgha, we will first examine how radical changes in the macro-political context of the Todgha affected local water politics and the spatial distribution of entitlements to water among the Aït Todoght villages.

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<sup>6</sup> The allocation of water rights was previously based on measurement by the so-called *tanast* (pl. *tinassen*), which refers to a small dish with a tiny hole, which was put in a bucket with water. The time it needed to fill with water and to sink, was equal to one *tanast* (cf. Otte 2000). The length of a *tanast* could differ slightly from village to village, but normally lasted between seven and ten minutes. The *tanast* was particularly useful at night and during cloudy days, when use of sundials was not possible. Modern clocks have now completely replaced the *tanast*.

### 8.2.3. State intervention: the *nuba* as a political instrument

When, in the turmoil of colonial conquest, a warlord named *qaid* Ba Âli arrived with his military forces in the Todgha valley in 1919, he punished villages that refused to surrender to him by depriving them of access to the Todgha water (De Haas and El Ghanjou 2000a). This event demonstrates that the *nuba* has not been just a “neutral” means to regulate the distribution of river water among the different parts of the valley, but that it has been a vital political instrument too.

The existence of several dams along the course of the Todgha and the necessity of sharing one single source of water has created constant tensions and occasional violent conflicts between the populations living upstream and downstream in the river basin. Differences in power between villages and ethnic groups seem to have been reflected in unequal water allocation among the Aït Todoght villages and the total exclusion of the Aït ‘Atta.

There are several indications that water has been an important instrument for the upper Todgha villages to exert political pressure on the downstream villages, and villages did not hesitate to use military force to defend their claims on water and arable (i.e., irrigable) land (cf. De Foucauld 1885; Büchner 1986). Local oral traditions abound with accounts of violent conflicts and coalitions between villages and groups of villages. In the absence of a central (state) authority, access to water has probably been the main focus of inter-village struggles. The group controlling the water sources also controlled the valley. Such “water politics” over the ever-contested *nuba* constituted a permanent danger for fragile oasis livelihoods, which crucially depended on access to this vital resource.

Colonization heralded an era in which the state superimposed its structures upon traditional political institutions. This had a clear impact on the organization of the valley’s *nuba*. The French colonial authority actively intervened in the division of water. In 1942, all *shiukh* (representatives of the administrative *fractions*) of the Aït Todoght were convened to decide, under supervision of the colonial authorities, on a new division of water (De Haas and El Ghanjou 2000a).

The new *nuba* heralded the beginning of a new era, in which the central political power henceforth dominated and “pacified” water politics in the valley. In the pre-colonial times of *siba*, the *nuba* at the valley level depended on the power balance between villages in the upper and the lower parts of the valley. As this power balance was constantly shifting, the *nuba* has probably undergone parallel and permanent shifts too. However, there has never been a central state authority intervening in this distribution. With the direct intervention by the French colonial authority, the *nuba* was formalized and imposed, at the cost of the power and autonomy of the villages.

As we have not retrieved any documents concerning the division of water before the colonial era, it is not possible to determine the exact nature of the change in the distribution imposed by the French. According to several informants, however, the new division favored the central *igherman* around Tinghir that had collaborated with the establishment of the colonial authority in the Todgha. For example, as of the late 1910s, central *igherman* such as Asfalou, Tinghir, and Afanour were already allied to Thami Glaoui, the pasha of Marrakech, who conquered large parts of the South with French military aid. The new colonial water politics would therefore have favored the *igherman* that had already established good contacts with the new rulers.

The total length of this new *nuba* was 42 days (see table 8.1). The central villages located around Tinghir (i.e., the administrative units of Igourtane, Tinghir, Afanour, Aït Ouamast, and Aït Mhamed) seem to have profited disproportionately from this new *nuba*,

especially if we take into account the relatively limited size of their agricultural holdings compared to the lower Todgha villages.

After independence in 1956, the (Moroccan) state intervened a second time to establish another *nuba*, which still applies today. The most important change was the creation of two seasonal *nubas*: a summer and a winter *nuba*. The winter *nuba* is in force over a period of six months between mid-September and mid-March. During this season, all the villages of the Aït Todoght receive water. The total duration of the winter *nuba* is 41 days, that is, almost the same length as the colonial *nuba*. The intra-valley allocation of the winter *nuba* is largely similar to the previous one, thereby clearly disadvantaging the villages of Amzaourou (including the research villages Ikhba and Aït El Meskine) and El Hart, while the upstream villages of Aït Tizgui (including Zaouïa) were even granted the right to *permanent* irrigation.

**Table 8.1. Valley-level *nuba* before and after independence**

Administrative <i>fraction</i>	The colonial <i>nuba</i> (since 1942)	Post-independence <i>nuba</i>	
	Number of days	Winter <i>nuba</i> (days)	Summer <i>nuba</i> (days)
Tizgui	2	permanent	permanent
Aït Snane	3	3	5
Igourtane	7	7	5
Tinghir & Afanour	6	6	5
Aït Ouamast & Aït Mhamed	6	7	7
Amzaourou	7	7	0
El Hart n'Igurramen	5	5	0
El Hart Niâamine	6	6	0
Total	42	41	22

Source: De Haas and El Ghanjou (2000a)

However, the most drastic change was the establishment of a summer *nuba*, which clearly favored upstream villages such as Zaouïa and Tikoutar. The summer *nuba* is in force from mid-March until mid-September, and is almost half as long as the winter *nuba*, that is, 22 days. During summer, only the villages in the upper Todgha until Tinghir and the villages of the Tagoumast *fraction* (Aït Ouamast) receive water. This new *nuba* meant a doubling of the irrigation frequency in summer in the upper Todgha. This allowed for the cultivation of almost all agricultural fields in the dry and hot summer, which was probably not possible under the previous *nuba* of 42 days due to high evapotranspiration.

This new division constituted was without any doubt a deterioration for the downstream Amzaourou and El Hart villages, which were now plainly excluded from access to river water during six months of the year. For them, it meant that they were forced to keep most of their land fallow during summer. Again, the *nuba* seemed to reflect the power relations within the valley, with the villages of the upper Todgha, and especially those around Tinghir, increasingly politically dominant, more affluent, and apparently better able to influence local authorities.

Although the new *nuba* meant a deterioration for the downstream villages, the imposition of central state power and “pacification” also marked the end of the great violent conflicts between the villages for the control of water. It is the central state, locally represented by the *qaid*, which interferes in case of serious conflict. Notwithstanding this relative peace, the post-colonial *nuba* has remained a contested institution and this escalates during periods of drought<sup>7</sup>.

<sup>7</sup> Each village closely watches over the correct execution of the *nuba*, in order to ensure that other villages do not receive more than they are entitled to. For example, the villages of El Hart send people to camp close to each dam in the Todgha during their turn within the *nuba*, in order to guard the passage of their water from the dams

#### 8.2.4. The collective crisis and the decline of *khattara* irrigation

In all research villages, the *taqbilt* and *amghar* are responsible for the maintenance of the irrigation system, the distribution of water and the settlement of conflicts over water or land. The imposition of central state power heralded a new era, in which the functioning of these traditional institutions was gradually undermined. Although the *taqbilt* is still responsible for the organization of oasis agriculture, the position of this traditional institution has been severely weakened. This process cannot only be explained by the imposition of state power, but that it has been reinforced by the legal and social-economic emancipation of formerly subordinate groups, a process in which migration plays an important role as an avenue of upward socio-economic mobility.

The *taqbilt* is gradually losing its influence, and its legitimacy is being increasingly contested. The *amghar*, the traditional chief elected annually by the village's *taqbilt*, has lost most of his former power and legitimacy, and his directives are less and less respected. Lacking formal power, *amghars* complain that they lack the status and respect to be able to fine people or to settle conflicts between land and water users. Sometimes, such cases are brought before the official state's court, thereby totally ignoring traditional institutions (see section 10.5). However, as it is generally considered as shameful to revert to the "hostile" state institutions to solve problems within the community, many cases are not solved at all.

Under these circumstances, it has become increasingly difficult to enforce customary law (e.g., fining in the case of crop theft, which has become increasingly common) and to prevent "free-rider behavior" (e.g., tapping water but not maintaining the irrigation infrastructure such as ditches, dams, and *khattaras*). Conflicts between groups of water users frequently reach deadlock situations in which it becomes harder to organize collective labor or to collect financial contributions in order to pay laborers for the maintenance of the irrigation infrastructure. A decrease in the dependency of oasis dwellers on agriculture through migration and general livelihood diversification, as well as a diminishing dependence on collective irrigation systems brought on by the recent rise of motor pumping, is further reinforcing this tendency towards "de-collectivization".

This has had fundamental implications for traditional oasis agriculture. The *taqbilt* and *amghar* are less and less effective in settling disputes between peasants. Through these processes, the village community is less and less capable of guaranteeing the maintenance of irrigation channels, dams, and other water works. This is leading to the decline of the agro-hydrological infrastructure, in particular of the laborious *khattara* irrigation in the lower Todgha. As a result of bad maintenance, many *khattaras* have now run dry, a development that further obliges peasants to install water pumps to be able to irrigate.

Out of a total of 39 *khattaras* in the valley, 21 have stopped functioning or only contain a negligible flow in relatively wet years. Most of the *khattaras* that are still functional have a decreased flow. Nowadays, only some *khattaras* have important water flows, such as Tadafelt's *khattara* and those of El Hart n'Igurramen, Aggoudime, and Boutaghat. In the course of the twentieth century, the *khattaras* of most other villages suffered from a lack of proper maintenance, which has in some case led to the abandonment of agricultural fields—which happened in Ghallil n'Aït Isfoul.

The erosion of the effective power of the *taqbilt* and the growing autonomy of households vis-à-vis these institutions—enabled by livelihood diversification and the increased importance of non-agricultural income—have contributed to a worsening collective

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to their fields. It is an endless struggle against deceit. According to several informants, there have been several violent confrontations over this between villages of the lower and upper Todgha over the past decades.

maintenance of the *khettaras*. A second factor that might have contributed to the decline of the *khettaras* appears to be the installation of numerous motor pumps as from the 1970s, which has caused a lowering of groundwater tables.

Both factors seem to have played a simultaneous and mutually reinforcing role. With the gradual desiccation of the *khettaras*, the motivation to maintain them will further decrease, and motor pumping will be further encouraged. Apart from the question as to what extent motor pumping has contributed to the lowering of groundwater tables, the rapid rise of motor pumping in the past decades (see following section) and the creation of new agricultural extensions have, in any case, decreased the relative importance of *khettara* irrigation, and owners of motor pumps tend to be less motivated to contribute to the maintenance of *khettaras*.

Conflicts between different ethnic lineages over their contribution to the maintenance of the *khettara* are frequent, and more and more peasants refuse to participate in collective works. Migration seems to have played an important role in accelerating the breakdown of collective maintenance agreements. Migration in particular has coincided with the increased importance of non-agricultural revenues and the concomitant socio-economic emancipation of landless and smallholding peasants and sharecroppers, who constituted the labor basis vital to oasis agriculture. In this way, many families belonging to traditionally inferior groups have been able to free themselves from absolute social and economic dependence on agriculture and, consequently, the obligations traditionally imposed on them by the *taqbilt* and the *amghar*<sup>8</sup>. The diversification of livelihoods, combined with the imposition of formal state law, have all gradually undermined the functioning of traditional institutions and contributed to the concomitant decline of *khettaras*.

The labor-intensive *khettara* irrigation system is more susceptible to bad maintenance than river irrigation. In contrast to the *khettaras*, many river irrigation systems are still functioning. *Khettaras* require intensive labor input in exchange for a meager water flow. In comparison, river irrigation is less labor-intensive and rather straightforward, by collecting water in relatively large quantities through the construction of dams, which are relatively easy to maintain and to restore in case of breakdown. This might partly explain why *khettara* irrigation in the lower Todgha has suffered more from the general "collective maintenance crisis" than the river irrigation in the upper Todgha. Furthermore, river irrigation has not suffered from motor pumping, which only takes place in the lower Todgha.

However, this does not mean that the "collective crisis" has not affected agriculture in the upstream part of the valley. Migration-related processes of socio-economic change have affected oasis agriculture in general. This particularly applies to the process in which oasis livelihoods have been transformed in such a way that the "individualistic" socio-economic orientation of households increasingly conflicts with the inherently collective nature of traditional oasis agriculture, whose spatial structure is still based on former social structures.

The complex nature of land tenure patterns, characterized by the small size and scattered location of plots, adds to the inherently collective nature of traditional oasis agriculture. For example, fruit trees and palms planted on small plots can often survive without irrigation, as their root systems grow under other, irrigated plots or tap the water leaking under the earthen irrigation channels. When the land, and the fruit trees on it, are possessed by different people, the agricultural enterprise becomes even more complicated, as the owner of the trees benefits from the water used by the land owner to irrigate the annual crops on the same plot. Moreover, the presence of high trees on one particular plot might

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<sup>8</sup> It should, however, be noted that it has generally not been the poorest within these subordinate and low-status ethnic groups who migrated.

hinder the cultivation of annual crops on adjacent plots. This “involution” severely limits the scope for individual entrepreneurship within the traditional oasis

Besides the establishment of a new *nuba* at the valley level, the active role of the Moroccan state in traditional oasis agriculture has been limited. In the 1970s and 1980s, the Moroccan state attempted to stem the decline of the *khettaras*. With support of the ORMVA (Office Régional de Mise en Valeur Agricole), the agricultural extension office in Ouarzazate, some of the remaining *khettaras* were renovated by covering the walls of their tunnels with concrete. This has proven to be an effective way of reducing the leakage of water and the accumulation of soil in the tunnel. Moreover, this has drastically reduced the requirements for maintenance and rendered the vertical shafts—which served to maintain the *khettara*—superfluous.

In the 1990s, however, the state seemed to largely retreat from such attempts to preserve traditional *khettaras*. Moreover, officials working for local *Centers de Mise en Valeur Agricole* (agricultural extension services) in Tinghir and Taghzout seem to lack the financial means and motivation to support peasants. They mainly remain in their offices, and peasants actually complain that they almost never see them. The officers seem mainly interested in large-scale, “modern” agriculture and tend to disqualify traditional agriculture as “no agriculture”. Nevertheless, recently, there have been initiatives by newly created village associations, which contest the legitimacy of the *taqbilt*, to restore *khettaras* by applying for aid to the Moroccan government or foreign NGOs (see further section 10.5).

### 8.2.5. The rise of motor pumping and the role of migration

The conditions and technical basis of agricultural production in the traditionally water-scarce lower Todgha has radically changed with the rapid introduction of diesel water pumps since the mid-1970s. The motor pump was the latest water extraction technique to appear in the Todgha. The traditional method of collecting water from wells by the use of human labor or animal traction (the so-called *aghrur*) was laborious and mainly served domestic need and the irrigation of relatively small plots. Until the 1970s, virtually no peasants used motor pumps for irrigation. They continued to rely on *khettara* and limited river irrigation.

This changed as from the mid-1970s, when peasants started to install motor pumps, a development that gained further momentum in subsequent decades. Initially, pumps used to be mainly installed in the ancient oasis of the lower Todgha to supplement the (increasingly) scarce *khettara* and river water resources. However, besides increasing production in the ancient oasis, the introduction of the motor pump technique has also enabled the creation of large new agricultural extensions in previously uncultivated land around the Ait ‘Atta villages and in the alluvial plain of Ghallil (see section 8.3.3).

As table 8.2 shows, there is a clear upstream-downstream gradient in the use of motor pumps. In the upper Todgha, agricultural motor pumps are absent, since river water is abundant and new agricultural extensions not possible since all arable land is already cultivated<sup>9</sup>. The motor pumping area begins near to the villages of Taourirt and Tikoutar. Most of these upstream pumps were installed in the 1980s, when the valley suffered from a long-term drought, which reduced the flow of the Todgha. At the end of the 1990s, most of

<sup>9</sup> It should be noted that many households in the upper Todgha do own small (electric) motorpumps, which serve to pump water for domestic use, but also frequently to irrigate the *urtan*, gardens located within the family compounds, which are rather small but often produce an important quantity of vegetables and fruits for own consumption. As houses are generally located at a rather elevated position, river or *khettara* water cannot reach most houses, which necessitates this small-scale pumping.

the pumps located upstream of Tinghir were abandoned, as recent years have been relatively wet.

Going downstream from Tinghir, the density of motor pumps increases (see map 5). The *communes rurales* of Todgha Es-Soufla and Taghzout comprise 94 percent of all motor pumps and 89 percent of the total surface irrigated by motor pumps. The irrigation in the recent extensions and the Ghallil plain (which are all located in Taghzout) is almost uniquely based on motor pumping, where about 21 percent of all motor pumps in the Todgha are located. Nowadays, approximately 79 percent of all agricultural land in the Todgha is principally irrigated by motor pumps. According to official estimates of the CMV Tinghir, in 1999, the total number of agricultural motor pumps in the Todgha was 1100 (as compared to 980 in 1996), with a clear concentration in the lower Todgha and the Ghallil plain.

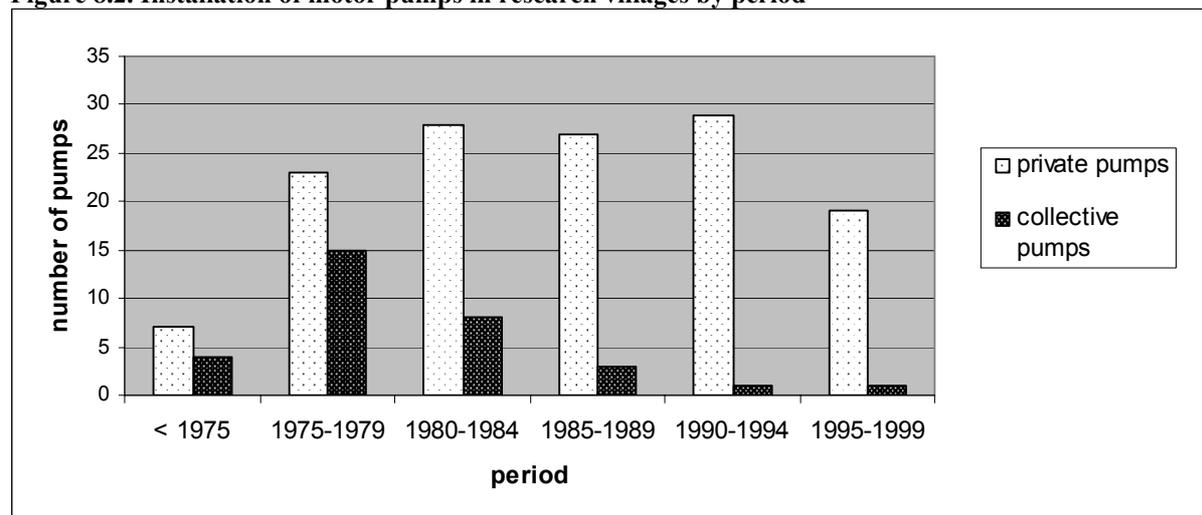
**Table 8.2. Repartition of the irrigated surface by irrigation modes (1996)**

Irrigation mode	Number of motor pumps	Area irrigated by pumps (ha)	%	Area irrigated by river or <i>khattara</i>	%	Total area (ha)	%
Todgha El Oulya	0	0	0	150	100.0	150	100.0
Tinghir	60	280	56.0	220	44.0	500	100.0
Todgha Es-Soufla	315	450	69.2	200	30.8	650	100.0
Taghzout & Ghallil	605	1,850	93.9	120	6.1	1,970	100.0
Total	980	2,580	78.9	690	21.1	3,270	100.0

Source: CMV Tinghir and CMV Taghzout 1996

Figure 8.2 shows that the number of motor pumps rapidly increased after 1975. Furthermore, the data show that most “collective pumps”, which are installed and managed by groups of peasants, were installed in the 1975-1984 decade. The vast majority of pumps that were installed after 1985 were individually owned. Finally, the pace of installation slowed down in the 1995-1999 period, which might indicate a certain “saturation” of motor pumps in the traditional oasis.

**Figure 8.2. Installation of motor pumps in research villages by period**



Source: Household survey<sup>10</sup>

There are two principal causes for the rapid rise of motor pumping in the lower Todgha. The first cause seems to be the general water scarcity in this part of the valley. This situation has

<sup>10</sup> As only data until 1998 were recorded, the number of pumps installed in 1995-1998 has been multiplied by 1.25 to get an estimate of the total 5-year period.

been further aggravated by the establishment of the new post-colonial *nuba* and the increasing malfunctioning of the *khetaras*. In normal years, traditional water resources were already insufficient to irrigate the whole agricultural surface all year round. Especially during droughts, widespread crop failure was common. The fact that the 1970s and 1980s were characterized by recurring droughts might also have constituted an additional stimulus for peasants to look for alternative sources of irrigation water.

A second, important *enabling* factor explaining the boom in motor pumping seems to be the international migration from the Todgha to European countries, which started to gain ground in the late 1960s and 1970s. It seems mainly through the effect of remittances that many households could now afford to pay laborers to dig a well<sup>11</sup> and to buy a diesel pump. International migrant households in particular have dug new wells and installed pumps in order to increase agricultural production. Table 8.3 shows that 17 and 18 percent of nonmigrant and internal migrant households possess a private water pump, compared to 43-47 percent among all three types of international migrant households. Apparently, it is mainly households with access to international migration resources that are able and willing to bear the costs and risks of installing agricultural water pumps.

On average, the cost of installing a water pump (including well-digging) was around 30,000 dirham (i.e., about 3,000 US\$) in the 1990s. Almost all pumps are driven by small diesel motors. Based on a diesel price of 5 dirham and a combustion rate of 2.5 liters per hour, the hourly operating costs are around 12.5 dirham. Many pump-owning peasants sell water to others. Water is sold in time units. In 1999, the price was about 30 dirham per hour. This price varies according to the location, season, and precipitation.

**Table 8.3. Possession of pumps by household migration status**

Migration status	Possession of pumps (%)			<i>n</i>
	Private pump	Collective pumps	Collective or private <sup>12</sup>	
Nonmigrant	12.6	5.1	16.6	175
Internal	16.5	2.4	18.1	127
Indirect international	44.7	10.5	47.4	38
Current International	39.2	10.8	43.1	102
Returned international	44.6	7.7	44.6	65
Total	25.4	6.3	28.2	507

Source: Household survey

Looking at total investments in motor pumps (table 8.4), we see a similar pattern. On average, international migrant households have invested far higher amounts in motor pumping than nonmigrants and internal migrant households. It is striking that *indirect* international migration households clearly make as equally high investments as other international migrant households. One explanation for this may be that “indirect international migrants” are present in the Todgha (in contrast to current international migrants) and that they are relatively young compared to international return migrants. Indirect migrants often receive remittances from migrated family members with the objective of making them financially independent in the long run. As they do not participate in international migration themselves, they might be even more motivated to develop local economic activities, as the source of remittances might fall away.

It is also striking that return migrants do not invest more than current or indirect international migrant households. This runs counter to expectations that it would be

<sup>11</sup> In the Todgha, almost all wells, which may reach depths up to 20 meters, are dug manually.

<sup>12</sup> The percentage of households possessing a private or a collective pump is slightly lower than the sum of the two columns to the left due to the fact that some households possess both types of pumps simultaneously.

particularly the more “committed” return migrants that would tend to invest. Furthermore, internal migrant households invest only slightly and not significantly more than nonmigrant households<sup>13</sup>. This probably reflects their relatively low and unstable income (see chapter 7.4), which is more comparable to nonmigrant than to international migrant households.

**Table 8.4. Investments in pumping by household migration status**

Migration status	Investments in pumping in dirham 1975-1998 (%)									
	No	within investors group				Total	Mean	Mean	5% trimmed <sup>14</sup>	<i>n</i>
		<10,000	10-39,999	≥40,000						
Nonmigrant	84.6	40.7	44.4	14.8	100.0	19,176	2,959	1,129	175	
Internal	81.9	52.2	30.4	17.4	100.0	19,289	3,493	1,148	127	
Indirect international	57.9	25.0	18.8	56.3	100.0	33,219	13,987	12,127	38	
Current international	57.8	25.6	32.6	41.9	100.0	32,933	13,884	9,568	102	
Returned international	56.9	10.7	39.3	50.0	100.0	31,196	13,438	11,241	65	
Total	73.0	29.9	34.3	35.8	100.0	27,592	7,456	4,646	507	

Source: Household survey (C=0.333\*\*;  $\eta$ =0.275\*\*)

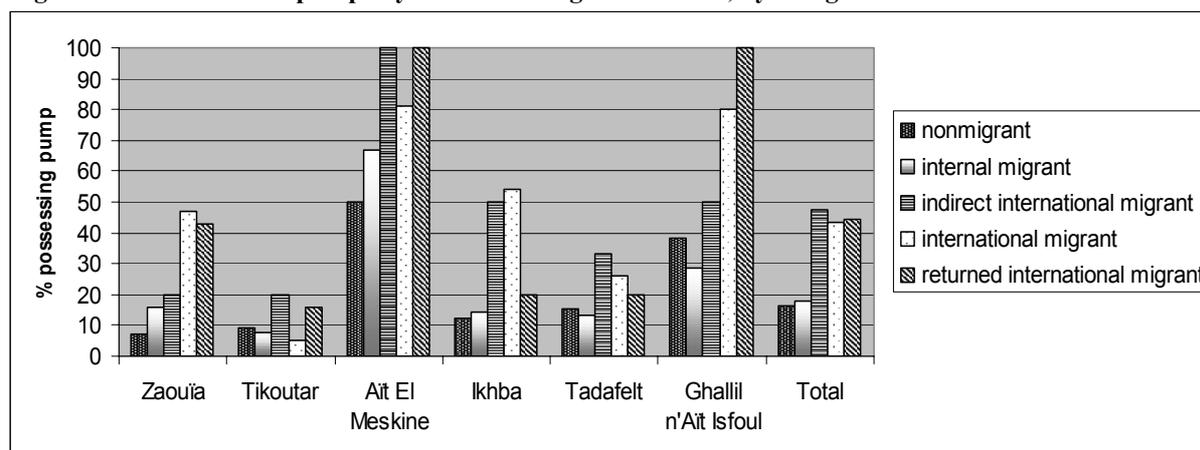
Figure 8.3 shows the distribution of motor pumps across the research villages. The figure confirms that international migration households exhibit a higher tendency to possess pumps than nonmigrant and internal migrant households. However, it also shows that there are important inter-village differences, which are primarily related to the extent to which villages have access to river and *khattara* water resources. Both Zaouïa and Tikoutar have access to sufficient river water all year round, and peasants here generally do not need pumps to make up for irrigation deficits. The relatively high number of migrants possessing motor pumps in Zaouïa should be explained by the fact that many households have pumps within their family compounds for the irrigation of *urtan* (small vegetable gardens) and that relatively numerous households possess—irrigated—land outside the traditional oasis in other areas. Ikhba only has access to river water during the winter *nuba*. This relative water scarcity explains why about half of the indirect and returned international migrant households in Ikhba have installed agricultural motor pumps.

Aït El Mesquine appears to be the village with the highest possession rate of motor pumps. Even half of nonmigrant households and virtually all international migrant households possess motor pumps! In Aït El Mesquine, it indeed seems that a certain point of “saturation” has been reached, which means that almost all households capable of installing a motor pump, have done so. The relative wealth of its inhabitants, the limited access of Aït El Mesquine to river water, and the shallow water tables can explain this phenomenon. The inhabitants of Aït El Mesquine have gone so far as to entirely give up their rights to river water. Agriculture in this village now entirely depends on pumped water. Nevertheless, particularly in the light of increasing diesel prices, villagers now consider reclaiming their historical entitlements to river water.

<sup>13</sup> The results of Bonferroni multiple comparison of group means revealed significant differences between (1) nonmigrant and internal migrant households on the one hand, and (2) current, indirect, and returned international households on the one hand. Within these two main groups, differences between means are insignificant.

<sup>14</sup> The 5% trimmed mean (which excludes the 5% largest and 5% smallest values) was calculated because some extreme values occurred on this variable. Although the trimmed means are clearly lower than the actual means (indicating a skewed distribution), the general pattern, with indirect and current international migrant households scoring highest, and nonmigrants lowest, has remained. The remarkably lower 5% trimmed mean among current international migrant households reveals the existence of a particularly large extreme value, which is however not an outlier.

Figure 8.3. Possession of pumps by household migration status, by village



Source: Household survey ( $C \text{ village} * \text{pump} = 0.430^{**}$ )

As far as the two *khattara* villages in our sample are concerned, it is striking that Ghallil n'Ait Isfoul has the highest pump possession rate after Ait El Meskine. The primary explanation for this seems to be that the traditional *khattara* water source of this village has become entirely desiccated. This means—as is the case for Ait El Meskine—that people without motor pumps are forced to either buy water from other peasants or to withdraw from agriculture. Tadafelt is one of the few villages in the valley where the ancient *khattara* is still well functioning and can meet most agricultural needs. In many respects, Tadafelt is the village where traditional *khattara*-based oasis agriculture has been best preserved. Also in more general terms, Tadafelt is the most “traditional” village in the sample, with a relatively high reliance on agricultural sources and a relatively recent migration history. However, the recent establishment of agricultural extensions has increased the need for water, especially in summer, and has urged some peasants to buy and install pumps.

In sum, agriculture in the lower Todgha tends to increasingly rely on water pumps, a development which has been provoked by the decline of *khattaras* on the one hand, and the creation of recent agricultural extensions on the other, and has been facilitated by the influx of international remittances to an important extent. However, the extent to which motor pumps are installed not only depends on access to financial resources, but also on the geographical location of the villages which largely determine the scope for agricultural extension or intensification. Since natural water is scarce in most lower Todgha villages, installing a water pump is the only viable option for intensifying agriculture in the same location or extending the agricultural surface. In the upstream parts of the valley north of Tinghir, river water is generally so abundant that agriculture is possible all year round. Here, land rather than water that is the limiting factor. The available agricultural land is already cultivated so intensively that there is hardly any possibility for further intensification.

About 90 percent of all motor pumps have been installed in the ancient oasis, on the fields traditionally belonging to the village. It is, in particular, international and returned international migration households that tend to install motor pumps in other parts of the Todgha (i.e., recent extensions and Ghallil plain, accounting for 5 percent of all pumps) or in other regions (mainly in other oases such as Tinejdad, equally accounting for 5 percent of all pumps).

In chapter 2, we discussed the relevance of the temporal dimension in assessing migration impacts: the full developmental impacts of migration may take decades to fully materialize. Table 8.5 indeed suggests that the effect of migration on motor pumping is of a “lagged” nature. Among those households which began participating in international

migration less than 15 years ago, only 21 percent have invested in motor pumps, a percentage which is only slightly higher than among nonmigrant (15 percent) and internal (18 percent) migrant households. This percentage rises to 35 percent for those between 15 and 28 years abroad, and further to 70 percent among those more than 28 years abroad.

Although we should be very prudent with such “temporal reconstruction<sup>15</sup>”, the migration stage seems to influence the incidence and amount of investments in pumping. Most international migrants only start investing in pumping after more than two decades of absence. In addition, the total amount of money invested clearly rises with migration duration. This may give additional explanation as to why Aït El Meskine, a village with an ancient history of international migration, has far higher pump possession rates than other villages. This may also explain why the great boom in water pumping occurred in the 1975-1994 period, well after the international migration boom of the late 1960s.

**Table 8.5. International migrant households’ investments in pumping by length of stay abroad**

Length of stay abroad	Investments in pumping in dirham 1975-1998 (%)								
	within investors group				Total	Mean	Mean	5%trimmed	n
No	<10,000	10-39,999	≥40,000						
1-14	78.9	58.3	33.3	8.3	100.0	11,479	2,417	1,170	57
15-28	64.9	10.0	45.0	45.0	100.0	36,338	12,750	7,976	57
≥29	30.2	13.5	29.7	56.8	100.0	35,284	24,632	22,956	53
Total	58.7	20.3	34.8	44.9	100.0	31,453	12,995	10,407	167

Source: Household survey ( $\eta=0.355^{**}$ ;  $r=0.380^{**}$ )

In order to examine whether the higher propensity of international migrant households to invest in pumping is more than the mere effect of their higher incomes, it seems useful to analyze whether international migrant invest more than nonmigrant households within the same income categories. Table 8.6 shows that there is no significant association between migration and pumping investments in the two lowest income categories. However, in the highest income category (above 3,750 dirham per month), we still witness a strong and significant association.

This means that the higher propensity of international migrants to invest in pumping cannot only be attributed to the income effect of remittances. Two factors might explain this “above-income effect”. First, as international migrants have access to European social security systems, their incomes tend to be more stable and secure than laborers in Morocco. Especially those migrants who have built up pension rights, and therefore have “insured” their future income, might make them more prone and less hesitant to take the risk of such investments.

Second, it might be that migrants, partly as a result of their long stay abroad and their possible experience with modern management, have more entrepreneurial and risk-taking attitudes. However, the latter variable is possibly endogenous due to the selective nature of migration. After all, assuming that (international) migrants already tend to have more entrepreneurial and risktaking attitudes—apart from factors such as age and education—before migration, these attitudes are not or only partly the *result* of migration. However, this cannot explain why *indirect* international migrant households exhibit similar propensities to invest as direct (current and returned) migrant households. Therefore, the first hypothesis that the more stable and secure character of international remittance income accounts for the higher tendency to invest, seems the more valid.

<sup>15</sup> By comparing the investment behavior of international migrant households based on the length of the stay abroad, we neither can, nor do not claim, to be able to predict how recent migrants will behave and invest in the future.

**Table 8.6. Investments in pumping by international migration participation, by household income<sup>16</sup>**

Total household income	Migration status	Investments in pumping in dirham 1975-1998 (%)						Mean	n
		No	within group of investors			Total			
			<10,000	10-39,999	≥ 40,000				
0-1,699	Nonmigrant	90.5	50.0	50.0	0.0	100.0	1,090	169	
	Intl migrant	88.0	33.3	66.7	0.0	100.0	2,000	25	
	Total	90.2	47.4	52.6	0.0	100.0	1,207	194	
1,700-3,749	Nonmigrant	76.3	38.9	22.2	38.9	100.0	6,700	76	
	Intl migrant	71.3	21.7	34.8	43.5	100.0	8,169	80	
	Total	73.7	29.3	29.3	41.5	100.0	7,458	156	
≥ 3,750	Nonmigrant	76.7	70.0	20.0	10.0	100.0	3,143	43	
	Intl migrant	37.4	21.1	28.1	50.9	100.0	21,264	91	
	Total	50.0	28.4	26.9	44.8	100.0	15,405	134	

Source: Household survey ( $\gamma$ : 0-1699=0.138<sup>x</sup>; 1700-3749=0.138<sup>x</sup>; ≥ 3750=0.704<sup>\*\*</sup>)

We can conclude that international migration has enabled households in the relatively water-scarce lower Todgha to install motor pumps, and, thereby, (1) compensate for the declining availability of traditional *khattara* water (e.g., Ghallil n'Ait Isfoul); (2) intensify agriculture by cultivation all-year round on plots which only used to be cultivated during winter due to limited river or *khattara* water availability (e.g., Ait El Mesquine, Ikhba); and (3) extend agriculture through land reclamation in formerly barren land outside the traditional oases (e.g., Tadafelt, Ghallil plain). Migration has clearly enabled households to overcome local (environmental and institutional) constraints on agricultural development. Nevertheless, as we will see, this uncontrolled boom in pumping also poses a major threat to the sustainability of oasis agriculture.

### 8.3. Land tenure and investments in land

#### 8.3.1. Legal status of landed property

According to official figures, more than 97 percent of the agricultural land in the Todgha valley is privately owned (*melk*) (see table 8.7). Besides land, water is equally the subject of private property. In contrast to some other oases, the possession of land is generally coupled with the right to irrigate that land<sup>17</sup>. Land with the *habus* status is traditionally given, leased, or conceded by devout individuals to religious foundations (a mosque, a *zawia*, a *marabut*). Nowadays, this “religious land” is administered by the Ministry of Islamic Affairs. *Habus* land is generally leased to peasants for a fixed amount during five years. *Habus* plots are generally characterized by their extremely small size, and represent merely 2.9 percent of the total agricultural surface in the Todgha.

The traditional system of “land mortgage” (*rhan*) implies the transfer of land use rights to another person during a determined period, in exchange for a pledge in the form of a

<sup>16</sup> In order to maintain sufficiently high case-loads, nonmigrant and internal migrant households have been grouped as “nonmigrant”, and indirect, current and returned international migration households as “international migrant”.

<sup>17</sup> However, this does not automatically mean that these water rights are sufficient to irrigate the land. In the lower Todgha, the traditional river and *khattara* water resources are far from adequate and tend to be in decline. Furthermore, possession of fruit trees (e.g., date palms, olive or almond trees) is not automatically linked to the possession of the land on which they grow. Consequently, it is possible to buy or sell fruit trees apart from the land on which they grow.

fixed amount of money on which both parties have to agree. For the duration of the *rhan*, the land owner is free to use this money as he likes, but he should return the entire sum after the end of the mortgage period. The household survey indicated that only a very small proportion of all privately owned land is mortgaged, and that *rhan* is mainly limited to the upper Todgha. What might have distorted this figure, is that peasants tend to hide the fact that they mortgaged their land, fearing social criticism. Mortgaging land to another person is usually interpreted as an indication of poverty. Most owners who mortgage their land have financial problems, and many have actually lost their land, as they were unable to refund the pledge.

As is the case with mortgaged land, rental of land is rather rare in the Todgha, and is mostly limited to the traditional oasis. Rental of land including motor pumps in the modern extensions is equally a rare phenomenon. This can be explained by the fact that collective water resources are generally not available here, and that each peasant has to dig his own well and purchase his own motor pump. Regarding the generally short term of land rental in the Todgha, which rarely exceeds one or two years, this is not an attractive option.

**Table 8.7. Legal status of agricultural land (1996)**

Municipality	Private		<i>Habus</i>		Total	
	Surface (ha)	%	Surface (ha)	%	Surface (ha)	%
Todgha El Oulya	145	96.7	5	3.3	150	100.0
Tinghir	485	97.2	15	2.8	500	100.0
Todgha Es-Soufla	625	96.2	25	3.8	650	100.0
Taghzout n'Aït 'Atta	1,560	97.5	40	2.5	1,600	100.0
Total	2,815	97.1	85	2.9	2,900	100

Source: CMV 1996

### 8.3.2. Landed property and distribution of the plots

Before colonization, ownership of arable (i.e., irrigable<sup>18</sup>) land was the main source of wealth, and largely determined the social and economic status of oasis households. Besides its vital economic role in maintaining oasis livelihoods, land ownership also has a strong social and emotional connotation. It symbolizes membership of the ethnic group, belonging to the Todgha, and being an “honorable” person. This might partly explain why many migrants have been eager to buy land in the traditional oasis, especially if they were landless. Apart from its potential economic value, land purchase symbolizes upward social mobility. On the contrary, selling one's land is generally considered as a shameful act and even a betrayal of one's ancestors.

Although neither landlessness nor large-scale landownership are very frequent, land is unequally distributed, as table 8.8 indicates. In the *commune rurale* of Taghzout n'Aït 'Atta for example, enterprises smaller than 0.5 hectare represent together only 27 percent of the total cultivated surface, but represent 67 percent of all agricultural enterprises. In the same *commune*, enterprises bigger than one hectare represent 59 percent of the total surface, but only 16 percent of all enterprises

There are clear intra-valley geographical differences in the size of the agricultural holding. The smallest holdings are generally found in the extreme upstream part of the valley, near the gorges. In the *commune rurale* of Todgha El Oulya, no holding is bigger than 0.5 hectare. Going downstream, there is a clear gradient in which, with the gradual widening of the valley, the mean size of agricultural holdings becomes remarkably bigger.

<sup>18</sup> Needless to say, in oases, land only has agricultural value if it can be irrigated.

**Table 8.8. Size of agricultural holding by municipality (1996)**

Municipality	Size of agricultural holdings in hectares					Total	Total surface	Mean surf.	n
	< 0.5	0.5-1	1-2	2-5	>5				
Todgha El Oulya	100.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	150	0.30	500
Tinghir	67.2	32.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	500	0.42	1190
Todgha Es-Soufla	56.0	33.6	10.3	0.0	0.0	100.0	650	0.56	1160
Taghzout n'Ait Atta	66.7	17.8	5.9	6.7	3.0	100.0	1500	0.84	1800
Total	67.7	23.7	4.9	2.6	1.2	100.0	2800	0.60	4650

Source: CMV 1996

Currently, the majority of households in the research villages own land. Only 14 percent of the surveyed households do not possess land (see table 8.9). Nevertheless, the percentage of landless households varies across villages: from 3 percent in Tikoutar to 25 percent in Tadafelt. Although the number of landless households is relatively small, most households possess only a very small amount of land, which can be explained by high population densities, population growth, and the repeated subdivision of landed property through inheritance. The average size of the agricultural holding in the research villages is 0.4 hectare, and more than two thirds of all landowning surveyed households own less than this average<sup>19</sup>.

In line with the valley-wide data, a comparison of the research villages reveals that land is relatively more abundant upstream than downstream. The positive up to downstream gradient of land availability is inversely proportional to the predominantly negative gradient of river water availability. Therefore, in villages such as Zaouïa and Tikoutar, lack of land is the main constraint on agricultural livelihoods. Moving downstream, water becomes the dominant constraint. We will see that this spatial differentiation in water and land availability are also important in explaining spatial differences in recent patterns of agricultural change in a rather unexpected manner.

Agricultural holdings—except for those in recent extensions and the Ghallil—are comprised of several small and dispersed plots. In the upper Todgha, we find veritable micro-plots, generally varying between 100 and 1000 square meters. Again, there exists a clear intra-valley gradient, with increasing plot sizes as one goes further downstream. However, the plots remain small throughout the valley, and rarely exceed 0.5 hectare. Only in the Ghallil and other recent extensions may they measure one hectare or more.

**Table 8.9. Size of agricultural holding in traditional oasis by village**

Village	Size of holding in traditional oasis (hectare)				Total	Mean	n
	Without land	0.001-0.049	0.05- 0.39	≥ 0.4			
Zaouïa	17.1	80.5	2.4	0.0	100.0	0.015	123
Tikoutar	2.9	12.5	82.7	1.9	100.0	0.133	104
Aït El Mesquine	11.3	1.4	29.6	57.7	100.0	0.712	71
Ikhba	9.7	21.0	50.0	19.4	100.0	0.323	62
Tadafelt	25.0	0.0	13.8	61.2	100.0	0.745	116
Ghallil n'Ait Isfoul	7.1	0.0	28.6	64.3	100.0	1.011	28
Total	13.7	25.0	32.7	28.6	100.0	0.399	504

Source: Household survey

Tables 8.10 and 8.11 show that, for the historical reasons described in section 5.4, half of the Zaouïa households possess land outside the Todgha. These are generally small, traditional holdings in other oases or the Middle Atlas mountains. One quarter of all Aït El Mesquine

<sup>19</sup> According to official statistics from the CMV (1996), the average holding size for the entire Todgha valley is 0.6 hectare. This difference can be partly explained by the fact that the last figure comprises the relatively large farms of the Ghallil plain.

households possess land outside the Todgha. In contrast with Zaouïa, however, these holdings are generally larger than 1 hectare. Most holdings are located in the Middle Atlas. However, some households possess land in the Ghallil plain or the Bour Tinejdad, a recent agricultural extension east of the Ghallil. One third of all households in Ghallil n'Aït Isfoul possess plots outside the traditional oasis, which are mainly located in the Middle Atlas. Land possession outside the village territory is limited in the other villages.

If we examine all the research villages together, land possession outside the traditional oasis is rather significant. Two thirds of this land is located in the northern Middle Atlas (Aghbala, Azaghar, Boumia, Khenifra), one tenth in the nearby Ghallil or Bour Tinejdad, one tenth in other southern regions, and one tenth in eastern Morocco (mainly Moulouya). Since the size of these holdings is generally far higher, the total size of land possessed outside the ancient oasis by all surveyed households is no less than 181 hectares, which is almost equal to the 200 hectares of land possessed in the ancient oasis. In the following sections, we will analyze to what extent this is the result of recent land purchases and to what extent migration has played an enabling role in this process.

**Table 8.10. Size of agricultural holding outside village territory by village**

Village	Surface of land outside village territory (%)				Mean	n
	0	< 1 ha	≥ 1 ha	Total		
Zaouïa	49.2	33.6	17.2	100.0	0.474	122
Tikoutar	94.3	0.0	5.7	100.0	0.252	105
Aït El Meskine	74.6	5.6	19.7	100.0	0.731	71
Ikhba	93.5	3.2	3.2	100.0	0.061	62
Tadafelt	100.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	0.000	112
Ghallil n'Aït Isfoul	64.3	0.0	35.7	100.0	1.429	28
Total	80.0	9.4	10.6	100.0	0.360	500

Source: Household survey

**Table 8.11. Total land possession outside village territory by location**

Location land	Land outside village territory (ha)						Total
	Zaouïa	Tikoutar	Aït El Meskine	Ikhba	Tadafelt	Ghallil n'Aït Isfoul	
Todgha	0.1	0.0	0.0	2.8	0.0	0.0	2.9
Ghallil (Todgha)	0.0	0.0	11.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	11.3
Bour Tinejdad	0.0	0.0	3.7	0.0	0.0	4.0	7.7
Saghro	1.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	4.0	5.1
Other South	11.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	6.0	17.2
Middle Atlas	27.1	26.5	35.8	1.0	0.0	26.0	116.4
High Atlas	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
East Morocco	19.0	0.0	1.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	20.1
Total	58.6	26.5	51.9	3.8	0.0	40.0	180.8

Source: Household survey

### 8.3.3. New green frontiers in the desert

The most significant agricultural development of the final three decades of the twentieth century was the extension of oasis agriculture through the reclamation of new agricultural land in the desert, which almost exclusively relied on motor pumping. It is striking that many peasants prefer to invest in new, until recently barren, areas located *outside* the traditional oasis. In the traditional oasis, plots are generally small and scattered, and the collective, community-level organization pertaining to water distribution is increasingly considered as an

obstacle to individual agricultural entrepreneurship. This explains why peasants often seem to prefer to localize investments in areas outside the traditional oases where constraints such as the inflexible collective regulations concerning water allocation, fragmented land property, and collective maintenance of the irrigation infrastructure do not play a role. This seems to reflect a general pattern throughout the oases of the Maghreb (Bencherifa 1991; 1993; De Haas 2001).

With the boom in pumping there has been a concomitant boom in the creation of agricultural extensions in the water-scarce, but land-abundant, lower Todgha. This process started in the 1970s but gained further momentum in the 1980s and 1990s. For geomorphological reasons, land reclamation has remained limited to the lower Todgha. In the upper Todgha, the river terrace of the river is narrow, and hemmed in by steep mountains or, in the middle sections of the valley, by high escarpments. All arable land has already been cultivated, and reclamation of barren desert land is virtually impossible due to the strong geographical relief and the virtual absence of soils. Despite the abundance of water, land scarcity poses an almost absolute obstacle to agricultural extension. Within the ancient oasis, the fragmentation and complexity of land tenure systems form an obstacle to any kind of increase in the scale of agricultural production. To a great extent, this “agricultural involution” (cf. Geertz 1963) is an obstacle for people wishing to invest in agriculture. Although this lush part of the valley gives the impression of prosperity at first sight, this impression is deceiving, as opportunities for agricultural development are very limited in the upper Todgha.

Agriculture is literally “trapped” here, since all the land in the narrow valley has already been exploited. Plots are so small that conflicts over the shade given by fruit trees in neighboring plots are frequent, often leading to increasing “shade competition”. This deadlock has pushed ambitious peasants of the upper Todgha to buy land in the Ghallil plain or in other regions, especially near to Beni Mellal, the Middle Atlas, Rich, and Tinejdad. In these regions, access to relative large surfaces is easier and cheaper, and a certain degree of mechanization is possible due to larger plot sizes. In these places, the peasants are not bound to collective regulations characterizing traditional oasis agriculture, which are increasingly perceived as constraints by individual agricultural entrepreneurs.

New agricultural extensions can be found in the lower and wider part of the valley, where sufficient uncultivated arable land outside the traditional oases is available on the river banks. Geographically, this coincides almost exactly with the part of the valley inhabited by the Aït ‘Atta. Until recently, the scarce natural water resources put a severe constraint on agriculture, and limited the size of the cultivated surface. Yet the advent of motor pumping has enabled peasants of the lower Todgha not only to intensify production in the ancient oasis, but also to significantly extend the irrigated agricultural surface since the 1970s.

Two types of extension can be distinguished. The first type is the relatively small extension zone immediately around the villages of the lower Todgha. Almost all the Aït ‘Atta villages and El Hart Niâamine have reclaimed barren land immediately adjacent to the ancient oases. Although the majority of these extensions are directly located on the terraces of the Todgha, some villages have located their agricultural extensions on the banks of tributaries of the Todgha (Asif n’Taghia, Asif n’Tadafelt). These extensions vary in size between approximately 100 and 400 hectares. Several such extensions exist in the research village Tadafelt. The second extension type is the more large-scale land reclamation taking place in the Ghallil. This plain, which is located east of the ancient oasis on the right bank of the Todgha, stretches out over a length of more than 10 kilometers and has a mean width of 4 kilometers.

The reclamation of formerly collective land generally follows the following pattern. First, a village or a group of villages claims a piece of land. As the status of such land is

generally not documented, such claims are often contested by surrounding villages. Conflicting claims on collective land often lead to mounting hostility between villages. In order not to become involved in feuds, local authorities (i.e., the *qaid* or *pasha*) are generally hesitant to recognize claims on land, unless agreement has been reached between villages. However, negotiations often fail and many conflicts remain unsettled for many years. On several occasions, this has resulted in violent confrontations between villages, to which local authorities generally respond by putting a (temporary) ban on reclamation. They can thereby appeal to the law that all collective land is state property. It is often after many years of hostility and difficult negotiations that agreements are reached with other villages, after which recognition of these claims can be sought with the local authorities.

Once a claim of a village has been recognized, the land is divided between the different households of the village. United as a village generally is in the phase of the delineation of new extensions, the subsequent division among households is often a source of conflict, opposing *ighsan* (lineages) and households, and, increasingly, the ancient elite against formerly inferior groups, such as *haratin*, smallholders, and the landless, who often feel disadvantaged. They sometimes accuse village leaders (e.g., the *shikh*, *moqaddem*, representatives in the municipal council, rich businessmen) of corruption and procuring the best located and largest plots for themselves.

Among the Aït ‘Atta, land divisions follow the so-called *tagurt* system, which they have historically used when they reclaimed new agricultural land after digging a new *khattara*. The *tagurt* system involves the division of newly reclaimed land into rectangular bands, which are allocated to individual households. Until recently, the width of such bands was determined by the land each household already owned in the old oasis. This system tends to replicate existing inequalities in land property by allocating most new land to large landowners.

This ancient *tagurt* system is increasingly contested by formerly “inferior” groups consisting of small landowners and landless people, who used to work as *ikhmmesen* for large landowners. We have seen that landed property has decreased in importance as a prime determinant of socio-economic status over the past decades, which is a consequence of the livelihood diversification of oasis households in general and (international) migration in particular. Traditional elite groups cannot maintain their former position of power vis-à-vis smallholders and landless *ikhmmesen*.

It is basically the same process of livelihood diversification, migration and emancipation that partly explains the “collective crisis” in the maintenance of traditional irrigation systems, which is intimately related to fundamental shifts in the local balance of power, which also explains why villagers increasingly contest this “inegalitarian” system of division based on landed property in the ancient oasis.

In Tadafelt, for instance, frequent conflicts have arisen concerning the division of land, opposing the ancient landed elite and an “opposition” (see section 10.5). The younger generations in particular, it seems, support a more egalitarian system of land division, by which the width of the bands is determined by the number of (adult) men in the household. This system has already been used in the Ghallil plain, and is gaining ground in new extension zones around the Aït ‘Atta villages. Some people argue for an even more egalitarian system that also takes into account the total size of the household, that is, including women.

Most of the current villages extensions were divided up in the 1970s, although new land is still being divided, such as north of the Aït Aïssa Ou Brahim villages and in the Tangerfa plain<sup>20</sup>. Agriculture on newly reclaimed land strongly relies on motorpumping.

<sup>20</sup> The Tangerfa plain is a new extension zone in the High Atlas *piedmont*, north of Tinghir. This former pastureland is being claimed and divided between several Aït ‘Atta *igherman*.

However, there are some exceptions to this rule. In Tadafelt, for example, the traditional *khattara* network has been extended, and irrigates part of the new extensions<sup>21</sup>. Only part of the land is actually tilled. Whereas some plots are intensively tilled, others lie fallow or have never been touched at all by their owners, who are either not willing or do not have the resources to invest in pumping. However, each year more land is put under cultivation.

### 8.3.4. Land purchase and the role of migration

Land in the extension zones is acquired for free. Consequently, most land-owning households among the Aït ‘Atta and the villages of El Hart have been able to extend their holdings without payment. However, households in the more upstream Aït Todoght villages can only increase the size of their holdings by purchasing land elsewhere, either from land owners in the extension zones, or outside the Todgha. In section 8.2.5, we saw that there was a strong association between access to international migration resources and investments in motor pumping among the surveyed households. This section will investigate whether there is a similar relationship between international migration and land purchase.

Figure 8.4 shows that land purchase was a limited phenomenon before 1975. Although the data are probably biased towards more recent purchases since only current households were surveyed, this, however, seems to corroborate the notion that widespread land purchase and land reclamation in the Todgha are relatively recent. It was in the late 1970s that the local effects of the international migration boom first started to materialize, and that remittances enabled increasing numbers of smallholding and sharecropping households to buy land. Similar to investments in motor pumping, land purchase gained momentum in the late 1970s and 1980s. The incidence of land purchase rose until 1990, but has decreased since then. Looking at the total area purchased we can see a more irregular pattern. However, similar to investments in motor pumping, we can see a decline in the 1995-1998 period. The reasons for this recent decline are not entirely clear. A possible explanation for this is that households that participated in the international migration boom in the 1965-1975 period have now reached the end of their household life cycle and may therefore be less inclined to invest in land. This might also reflect a general tendency among “younger” households to invest in non-agricultural economic activities.

Similar to motor pumping, (mainly current and return) international migration households tend to invest more frequently in land purchase than other households (see table 8.12). More than one quarter of all households involved in international migration have purchased agricultural land, compared to less than 10 percent of nonmigrant households. Again, there is hardly any difference between nonmigrant and internal migrant households<sup>22</sup>. On the whole, there are clearly less households investing in land purchase (16 percent) than in motor pumping (28 percent), but the strength of association is only slightly lower (see table 8.12). Although the incidence of land purchase is limited, the amounts invested are generally larger than is the case for motor pumps, which explains why the average amount invested in land purchase (9,800 dirham) for all households is even somewhat larger than for motor pumps (8,200 dirham).

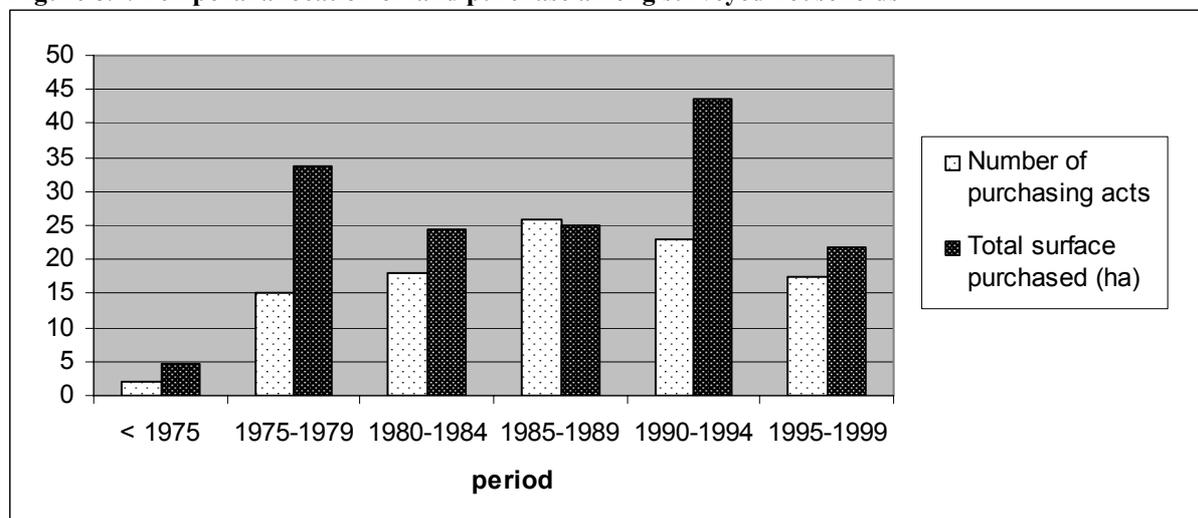
Among the international migration households, return-migrant households exhibit the highest propensity to invest, although current international migrants invest the same amounts

<sup>21</sup> This is also the case in the village of Boutaghat (cf. Bencherifa & El Ghanjou 2001).

<sup>22</sup> The Bonferroni multiple comparison of group means revealed significant differences between (1) nonmigrant and internal migrant households on the one hand, and (2) current and returned (but not indirect) international households on the other hand. All other differences between group means are insignificant.

on average and tend to purchase larger areas. This might be an indication that the latter tend to invest more outside the traditional oasis. In contrast to motor pumps, indirect international migrant households tend to invest less in land purchase than other international migrant households.

Figure 8.4. Temporal allocation of land purchase among surveyed households



Source: Household survey

Table 8.12. Investments in land purchase by household migration status

Migration status	Investments in land purchase in dirham 1975-1998 (%)										
	No	within group of investors (*1000)				Total	Mean	5%trim	area (hectare)		n
		<50	50-100	>100	Mean				Sum		
Nonmigrant	91.4	60.0	33.3	6.7	100.0	3,132	316	0.165	28.8	174	
Internal	88.2	80.0	20.0	0.0	100.0	2,697	704	0.101	12.7	127	
Indirect international	78.4	87.5	0.0	12.5	100.0	12,176	3,498	0.468	17.3	37	
Current international	74.5	46.2	19.2	34.6	100.0	21,912	11,983	0.637	63.7	102	
Returned international	70.8	36.8	26.3	36.8	100.0	20,962	14,778	0.406	26.4	65	
Total	83.6	56.6	21.7	21.7	100.0	9,773	3,153	0.297	148.9	505	

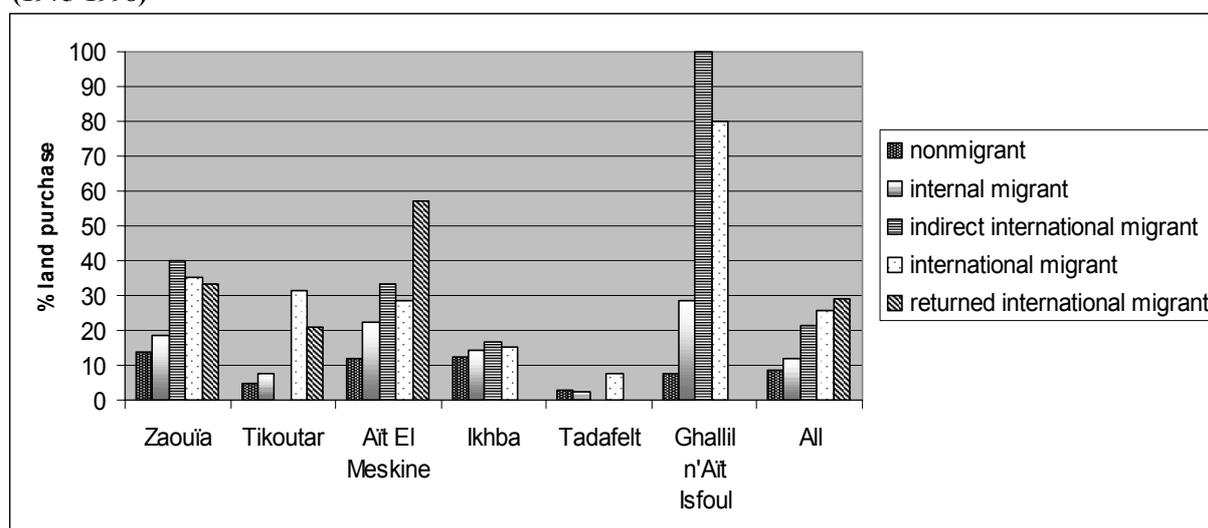
Source: Household survey (C=0.282\*\*;  $\eta$ =0.242\*\*)

Figure 8.5 shows that there is considerable inter-village variability in the extent to which households tend to purchase land. This tendency is clearly the highest in Ghallil n'Ait Isfoul. This might be related to the fact that traditional agriculture in this village has suffered heavily from water scarcity following the demise of *khattara* systems. Many villagers have therefore purchased land in the Middle Atlas, and around Aghbala in particular. As agriculture in Ait El Mesquine used to be rather extensive due to their limited claim on river water, and plot sizes relatively large and groundwater abundantly available, many peasants chose to intensify and modernize production within the ancient oasis by purchasing motorpumps. Others purchased land in nearby extension zones, notably in the Middle Atlas (around Azaghar in particular) and the Ghallil Plain.

In Zaouia and Tikoutar, intensification of land use and mechanization are virtually impossible due to fragmented land tenure and the fact that all arable land has already been cultivated. In the upper Todgha, peasants wishing to invest in agriculture are automatically forced to purchase land elsewhere. In the upper Todgha, there is a general preference to buy land in the Middle Atlas (notably in Aghbala, Azaghar, Boumia, and Khenifra), where land is relatively cheap and the climate more humid, allowing for cultivation of cereals without irrigation. Such distant land is generally exploited by *ikhmmesen*. In Ikhba and Tadafelt, only

a few households have invested in land. In Tadafelt, this seems to be the combined result of poverty and the presence of new agricultural extensions next to the ancient oasis—where land does not have to be bought but is allocated “for free” to households—that can partly be irrigated with *khattara* water.

**Figure 8.5. Percentage of households that purchased land by household migration category and village (1975-1998)**



Source: Household survey ( $C \text{ village} * \text{land purchase} = 0.251^{**}$ )

Table 8.13 reveals that the majority of international return migrant households tend to buy the relatively small plots in the traditional oasis. This is possibly related to the fact that return migrants are relatively aged, and, hence, more oriented towards “traditional” oasis agriculture than younger migrants. Moreover, there is a category of “hobby farmers” among the retired migrants, who take great pleasure and satisfaction in cultivating their oasis gardens. To a certain extent, we might indeed call this “sentimental” (Bencherifa 1991) or “ritual” (De Mas 1990) agriculture, which can primarily be explained by the strong emotional attachment many elderly oasis dwellers feel to oasis agriculture. For many return migrants, it symbolizes a return to their “roots”. However, for most other investors, economic motives play a more crucial role.

**Table 8.13. Location of purchased land by household migration status**

Migration status	location of purchased land 1975-1998 (% of purchasing acts)					n
	Traditional oasis	Recent extensions	Ghallil	Outside Todgha	Total	
Nonmigrant	27.8	5.6	11.1	55.6	100.0	18
Internal	37.5	18.8	6.3	37.5	100.0	16
Indirect international	27.3	0.0	0.0	72.7	100.0	11
Current international	45.5	9.1	9.1	36.4	100.0	33
Returned international	63.0	0.0	3.7	33.3	100.0	27
Total	41.2	7.1	8.2	43.5	100.0	85
Total surface (ha)	27.3	6.5	18.0	97.1	148.9	

Source: Household survey

Nonmigrants and indirect international migrant households in particular tend to buy large plots outside the traditional oasis. On the whole, most land is bought outside the traditional oasis. While 41 percent of the purchases are made in the traditional oasis, these represent only 18 percent (27 hectares) of the total area that has been purchased. In total, 149 hectares have

been bought by the surveyed households since 1975, including 122 hectares outside the traditional oasis. Of these 122 hectares, 97 hectares are located outside the Todgha, with an emphasis on the Middle Atlas. This implies that two thirds of the total of 181 hectares of farmland possessed by the surveyed households outside the traditional oasis, has been bought since 1975, predominantly by households involved in international migration.

Table 8.14 reveals a clear association between migration stage and the incidence and amount of money invested in land purchase. As is the case with investments in pumping, the impact of migration on land investments is clearly of a “lagged” nature, further corroborating the hypothesis that the full impact of migration takes decades to materialize.

**Table 8.14. International migrant households’ investments in land by length of stay abroad**

Length of stay abroad	Investments in land purchase in dirham 1975-1998 (%)							<i>n</i>
	No	within group of investors			Total	Mean	5%trim.	
		<10,000	10,000-39,999	≥ 40,000				
1-14	91.2	80.0	20.0	0.0	100.0	2,254	307	57
15-28	73.7	53.3	20.0	26.7	100.0	19,018	8,982	57
≥29	52.8	28.0	24.0	48.0	100.0	45,377	39,025	53
Total	73.1	42.2	22.2	35.6	100.0	21,662	15,556	167

Source: Household survey ( $\eta=0.333^{**}$ ;  $r=0.318^{**}$ )

Table 8.15 examines whether the fact that indirect, current, and international migrant households invest more in land purchase is merely an income (i.e., remittance) effect. Although within the lowest income category the correlation between international migration participation in investments indeed vanishes, international migrant households still tend to invest significantly more than nonmigrants in the middle and higher income categories. Whereas the percentage of nonmigrant or internal migrant households investing in land purchase increases only slightly when incomes rises, this increase is larger among international migrant households. This means that the “migration effect” cannot be attributed to income effects only. This is possibly related to the same factors of income stability, income security and the relatively entrepreneurial attitudes of international migrants, which were already mentioned for motor pumping.

**Table 8.15. Investments in land by international migration participation, by household income**

Total household income	Migration status	Investments in land purchase in dirham 1975-1998 (%)							<i>n</i>
		No	within group of investors			Total	Mean	Mean surface	
		< 50,000	50,000-100,000	>100,000					
0-1699	Nonmigrant	92.9	91.7	8.3	0.0	100.0	1,411	0.075	169
	Intl migrant	96.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	300	0.080	25
	Total	93.3	92.3	7.7	0.0	100.0	1,268	0.076	194
1700-3749	Nonmigrant	84.2	75.0	16.7	8.3	100.0	4,263	0.249	76
	Intl migrant	71.3	60.9	21.7	17.4	100.0	15,706	0.515	80
	Total	77.6	65.7	20.0	14.3	100.0	10,131	0.385	156
≥ 3750	Nonmigrant	88.1	20.0	80.0	0.0	100.0	6,429	0.237	42
	Intl migrant	72.2	40.0	16.0	44.0	100.0	27,178	0.550	90
	Total	77.3	36.7	26.7	36.7	100.0	20,576	0.448	132

Source: Household survey ( $\gamma: 0-1699=-0.296^*$ ;  $1700-3749=0.362^*$ ;  $\geq 3750=0.459^*$ )

### 8.3.5. The pioneering role of migrants: The case of the Ghallil settlers<sup>23</sup>

Although international migrant households exhibit a higher propensity to invest in agriculture, there is also a sizable category consisting of nonmigrant and internal migrant households that purchase land and install motor pumps. The colonization of the Ghallil plain allows us to further investigate the specific role of migrants and nonmigrants in recent agricultural transformation. The land of this alluvial desert plain has been divided among the inhabitants of El Hart n'Igurramen (officially known as El Hart Mourabitine) and the three Aït 'Atta villages of the Aït Aïssa Ou Brahim *fraction* (Tlout, Boutaghat, Ighrem Aqdim)<sup>24</sup> in the 1970s (De Haas and El Ghanjou 2000b).

Since 1975, people have started colonizing this agricultural plain. As the distances to the villages of origin are rather big, this has normally implied the transfer of the entire household to the Ghallil plain. Instead of the concentrated, fortress-like *ighrem* habitat that is characteristic of traditional oases, houses are constructed directly on the farmland, and are therefore located in a dispersed manner over the entire plain. Figure 8.6 shows that colonization only gained real momentum in the early 1980s, stagnated in the late 1980s—according to the peasants due to a drought which lowered water tables—and then gained new momentum in the 1990s. In 2000, an estimated number of 270 households comprising 2020 people lived in the Ghallil. This new and heterogeneous community of settlers has started to develop their own infrastructure of mosques, schools, and so on.

The mean farm size is 7.8 hectares. Although not all land is always irrigated and cultivated, this indicates that the scale of farming is radically different from that in the ancient oasis. Most peasants use tractors to plough their land, although traditional irrigation techniques (i.e., flood basin irrigation) have remained, with the exception of a single peasant using trickle irrigation. The most important crops are wheat, almonds, and various vegetables.

Although the inhabitants of Aït Aïssa Ou Brahim and El Hart n'Igurramen acquired the land for free, only a minority of households have actually cultivated their landed property in the Ghallil plain. First, many households lack the resources to dig a well, install a motorpump, and build a new house. Second, the risks of failure are rather high. When choosing the location of new wells, people rely on dowers, and are not assisted by the local agricultural extension service. In several places, insufficient or no groundwater at all has been found. Third, living conditions in the Ghallil are rather harsh. The isolation, the long distances to Tinghir, the lack of public infrastructure, and the hot sandstorms make it a rather inhospitable environment to live in. Fourth, settling in the Ghallil implies the clear choice of a farmer's life, which is difficult to combine with other local economic activities.

Especially the Aït Aïssa Ou Brahim—who seem the most wealthy group of Aït 'Atta in the Todgha due to their early and intensive participation in international migration—generally despise the idea of having to move from their villages and become full-time farmers. The inability or reluctance to invest explains why many landowners have sold their land to settlers from other areas. The majority of these immigrant settlers are Aït 'Atta from isolated villages in the Saghro Mountains north of the Ghallil plain. By settling in the Ghallil, they are, in fact, perpetuating the age-old descent of the Aït 'Atta from their native Saghro to

<sup>23</sup> The data presented in section 8.3.5 are based on De Haas and El Ghanjou (2000b).

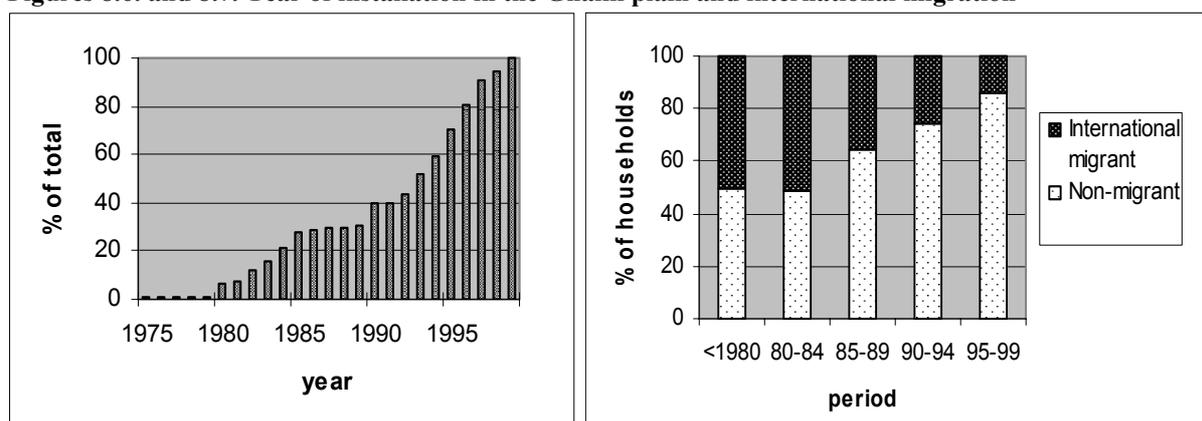
<sup>24</sup> This unusual, ethnically mixed land partition pattern can be explained by the former protection agreements (*ra'aya*) between El Hart and different *fractions* of the Aït 'Atta. The last protectors of El Hart n'Igurramen were the Aït Aïssa Ou Brahim. In exchange for protection against attacks by other Aït 'Atta *fractions*, the Aït Aïssa Ou Brahim could settle in an area immediately north of El Hart n'Igurramen. During the French protectorate, both groups claimed the eastern Ghallil plain. This eventually led to a partition pattern in which both villages acquired half of the territory (De Haas and El Ghanjou 2000b).

the surrounding plains. In their eyes, settling in the Ghallil and becoming a “true” farmer is a big advance, whereas the Aït Aïssa Ou Brahim, just like most Aït Todoght, have set themselves higher targets in life than, as they tend to put it, to “plough through the sand”.

In contrast to the Aït Aïssa Ou Brahim of the Todgha, the inhabitants of El Hart n’Igurrmen tend to have fewer objections to becoming a farmer than the Aït Aïssa Ou Brahim, and several *haratin* families have actually settled in the Ghallil. Other settlers are Aït Todoght from the upper Todgha. This explains the ethnically diverse nature of the Ghallil population.

Sources of investment capital are diverse too. Several Aït ‘Atta from the Saghro have sold their land in their native villages in order to buy land in the Ghallil. Others rely on remittances or other sources of income. Only 28 percent of all the surveyed households in the Ghallil have been directly or indirectly involved in international migration. This points to the important fact that international migrants are not the only ones investing in agriculture. If we look at the years in which households settled (see figure 8.7), however, it is striking to see that among the households who settled before 1985, about half were involved in international migration. In subsequent years, the number of international migrants as a percentage of all settlers’ households gradually declined.

Figures 8.6. and 8.7. Year of installation in the Ghallil plain and international migration



Source: Ghallil survey by De Haas and El Ghanjou (2000b)

Apparently, in the early settlement years, international migrant households played a certain pioneering role. There are two possible explanations for this phenomenon. First, back in the 1970s and 1980s, it was particularly international migrants who had enough financial resources to make the considerable investments and take the risks involved in starting a new agricultural enterprise. Second, it might be related to more entrepreneurial attitudes among international migrants, although the latter hypothesis is notoriously difficult to prove.

### 8.3.6. Conclusion

Households with access to international migration resources have a higher propensity to invest in land purchase than nonmigrant and internal migrant households. This is more than only an income effect, as the association is partly maintained even when controlling for income. There is a strong spatial differentiation in the allocation of landed investments. In the main, international returned migrant households tend to buy small plots in the oasis. Most other households, however, prefer to invest and buy land outside the traditional oasis, where the obstacles associated with collective water management and fragmented land tenure do not

play a role. Even more land is bought outside the Todgha, notably in the Middle Atlas region, where Todghawis have invested in extensive cereal cropping.

Thanks to the advent of motor pumping, the former desert plains of the lower Todgha and Ghallil are now being increasingly put into cultivation, whereas agriculture in the water abundant and lush upper Todgha is—paradoxically—stagnant due to high land scarcity. Installing a motor pump, digging a well, and purchasing land obviously all involve the financial risks many nonmigrant households cannot afford. An important explanatory factor seems to be that the incomes of international migrants are not only much higher, but also far more stable and secure. After all, international migrant households have direct access to European labor markets and social security systems.

Despite the management crisis suffered by the traditional *khattara* system, there has been no large-scale withdrawal from the land due to water shortages. Migrant remittances have enabled many peasants of the lower Todgha to make the transformation to motor pumping and even to significantly extend the irrigated agricultural surface of the Todgha.

Although it is certainly not uniquely migrants who are investing in pumps and land purchase, international migrant households clearly exhibit a higher propensity to invest and have played an initiating and accelerating role in such developments. This refutes pessimistic-structuralist theories on migration and development and in particular cumulative causation theory, which hypothesize that the negative “backwash” effects of migration tend to undermine local economies and lead to the retreat of migrant households from local economic activities. The results of the data analysis rather confirm the premises of the new economics of labor migration theory that migration is, instead, a strategy to overcome local capital constraints on production. Nevertheless, the analysis also showed that the developmental impact of migration takes decades to fully materialize.

## 8.4. Cropping patterns, agricultural labor, and cultivation methods<sup>25</sup>

### 8.4.1. Alfalfa and annual crops

Many of today’s agricultural practices still follow traditional patterns: they are highly labor-intensive, have low levels of mechanization, use traditional irrigation methods (i.e., flood basin irrigation), and, except for the Ghallil plain, involve a generally reduced scale of agricultural production. Extremely small plot sizes, fragmented land tenure, and the inherently collective nature of resource management in the traditional oasis partially explain the low tendency towards agricultural change in the traditional oasis, especially in the upper Todgha. However, the apparently stagnant character of agriculture here does conceal some important changes in cropping patterns. Increasing market integration, migration, the increased importance of non-agricultural income, and the increasing relevance of comparative advantages have led to a decreasing diversification in cropping patterns and the specialization in certain crops.

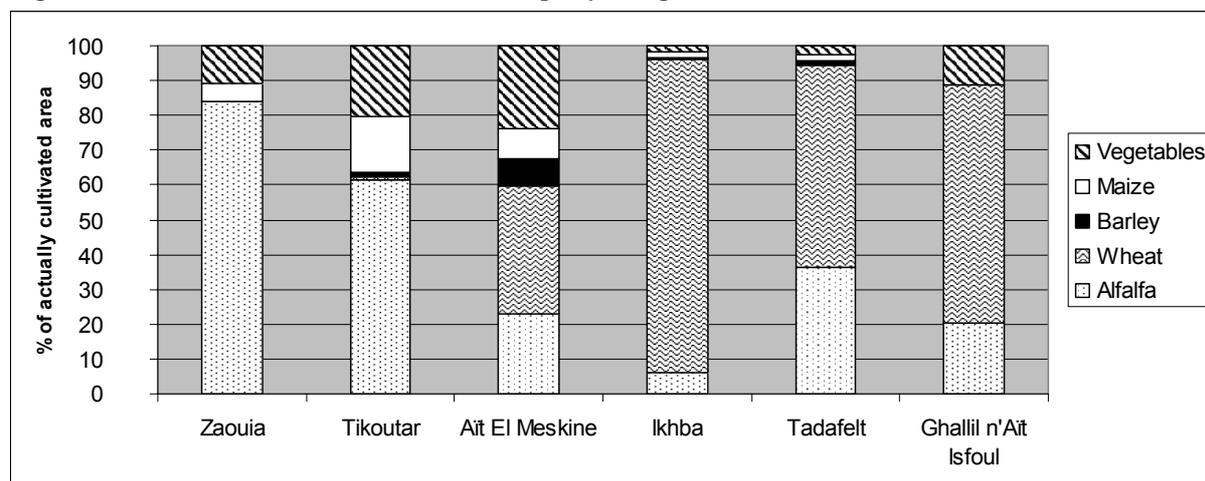
Figure 8.8 shows the geographical distribution of the most important annual crops in the Todgha, which together occupy the “third layer” of traditional oasis agriculture. Alfalfa and cereals are clearly the dominant crops. Alfalfa is the main fodder crop grown in the Todgha, and it is particularly prevalent in the upper Todgha, where it has largely replaced

<sup>25</sup> General observations on valley-wide cropping patterns are based on De Haas and El Ghanjou (1998; 2000a).

wheat in past decades (De Haas and El Ghanjou 2000a)<sup>26</sup>. Alfalfa is a semi-perennial crop, which is cultivated 3 to 4 years before alternating it with an annual crop. In order to obtain a good harvest, alfalfa needs relatively large amounts of water almost all year round. Therefore, the water-abundant upstream parts of the valley are particularly suitable for alfalfa cultivation. In the lower Todgha, the surfaces occupied by alfalfa are relatively smaller, as irrigation water is generally scarcer here, especially in the summer, which makes it more costly to irrigate all year round.

In general, the prevalence of alfalfa seems strongly related to the availability of “natural” surface water during summer. Whereas alfalfa covers 80 and 60 percent of all cultivated agricultural land in Zaouïa and Tikoutar, respectively, it is one third or less in the lower Todgha villages. Interestingly, Tadafelt scores relatively high, which reflects the availability of perennial and relatively abundant *khattara* water sources in this village. The water-scarce villages of Ikhba and Ghallil n’Ait Isfoul only have very limited surfaces covered by alfalfa. The relatively high prevalence of alfalfa in Aït El Meskine—especially among international migrant households—compared to nearby Ikhba can be probably explained by the high prevalence of pumps in this migration village *par excellence*.

Figure 8.8. Incidence of alfalfa and annual crops by village



Source: Household survey

Whereas there is a negative upstream-downstream gradient for alfalfa, there is an opposite, positive gradient for wheat and barley cultivation. This can principally be explained by the fact that water is much scarcer in this part of the valley. Although pumping has enabled irrigation all-year-round, the high evapotranspiration in the hot and dry summers causes extremely high water losses. In the lower Todgha, consequently, leaving land fallow is common practice in the hot and dry summer season, and irrigation is then mostly limited to tree crops. Since wheat and barley are grown as winter crops, they are better adapted to the conditions prevailing in the downstream part of the valley. Whereas these crops are virtually absent in Zaouïa and Tikoutar<sup>27</sup>, they dominate agriculture in Aït El Meskine, Tadafelt, and,

<sup>26</sup> Alfalfa is one of the most nutritious crops grown for fodder. Alfalfa has the extra advantage of its nitrogen-binding soil-enriching capacities. The effect of alfalfa on irrigated land is to increase the value per hectare of subsequent crops. Crop associations with alfalfa were therefore vital in order to maintain the fertility and viability of the traditional oasis system. It is also an excellent honey crop for bees (several oasis peasants possess beehives) and is used to prepare the local dish *ifnuzen*, a kind of *couscous*.

<sup>27</sup> It should be noted, however, that several upper Todgha households cultivate wheat on land bought in the Middle Atlas and elsewhere.

in particular, Ikhba. In Ghallil n'Aït Isfoul, again, the areas covered by wheat and barley are very limited, reflecting the general water crisis in this village.

Based on written sources (cf. Beurpère 1931) and according to all informants, wheat and barley also used to be prevalent in the upper Todgha, and has gradually disappeared from this part of the valley in the past few decades. This development is possibly related to the increased importance of animal husbandry, in particular of cattle (see section 8.5), which has increased the need for high-quality fodder. Combined with the advent of imported grain on local markets and the subsequent drop in grain prices, this has probably increased the comparative advantages of cultivating alfalfa as compared to cereals in this water-abundant part of the valley.

In most of the lower Todgha and recent extensions, however, the costs of cultivating alfalfa are higher. Moreover, moving downstream, plots become larger. This sometimes even allows mechanized ploughing, as is the case in Aït El Meskine and the Ghallil. Therefore, compared to the upper Todgha, more economies of scale are possible in this part of the valley. Finally, plots tend to be more open and less shaded in the lower Todgha. The combination of land tenure structure and seasonal patterns of water availability explain why the comparative advantages of cultivating wheat and barley are higher in comparison to alfalfa.

Maize is the second most important fodder crop in the Todgha. It is a water demanding crop that is cultivated during summer. Maize is particularly prevalent in Tikoutar, where it covers 16 percent of the total cultivated area. Maize covers smaller areas in Aït El Meskine (9 percent) and Zaouïa (5 percent), and is virtually absent in other villages. As was the case with alfalfa, maize mainly occurs in locations where (river or pumped) water is relatively abundant.

Besides alfalfa, wheat, barley, and maize, a large variety of vegetables are grown. The prevailing vegetables are (in decreasing order of importance): Breadbeans, carrots, onions, cabbage<sup>28</sup>, rapeseed (*left*), tomatoes, potatoes, green peas and green beans. In the lower Todgha villages and the Ghallil, some peasants have recently introduced (cash) crops such as watermelons and courgettes. Mint, which is used to prepare Moroccan green tea, is grown on small plots.

There is also a clear geographical differentiation in cropping patterns for vegetables (see figure 8.8). Vegetables are particularly prevalent in Tikoutar and Aït El Meskine, where they cover 21 and 24 percent of all cultivated land. In other villages, this proportion is one tenth or less. Vegetables are generally cultivated on small plots or within *urtan*, often within family compounds. Although vegetables cover rather limited areas, they constitute crucial elements in subsistence production. Some vegetables, such as breadbeans, are intercropped with alfalfa. Cabbage is generally grown in association with other crops such as alfalfa and is planted on the edges separating the *iguemunn* (flood basins).

Cropping patterns differ little between the household migration categories. Figures 8.9 and 8.10 reveal no clear relationship between migration and the relative areas covered by alfalfa and cereals. The same applies to most vegetables. Furthermore, the figures clearly show that there is a clear upstream-downstream gradient in cropping patterns, with alfalfa dominating in the upper valley and grains in the lower valley.

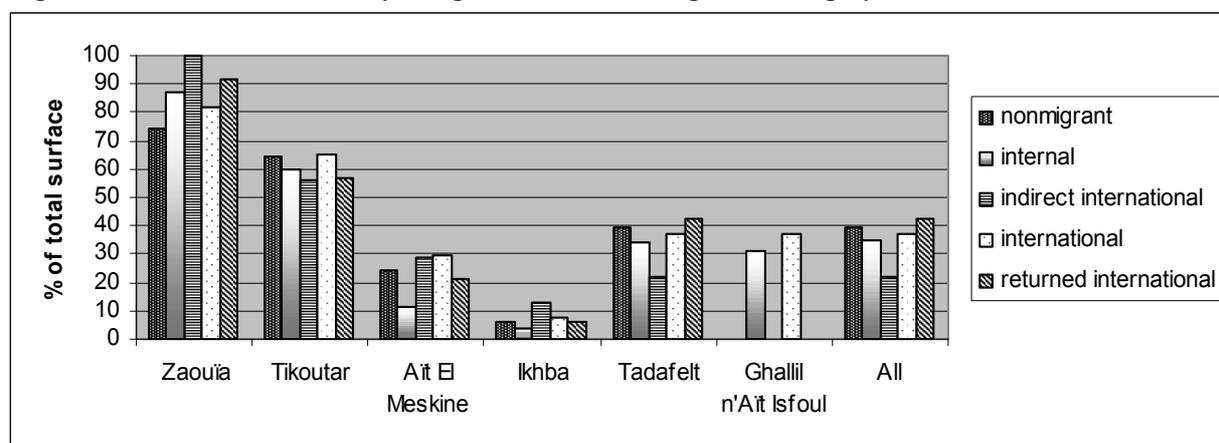
#### 8.4.2. Date palms and fruit trees

Figure 8.11 reveals a clear geographical differentiation in the prevalence of date palms and fruit trees (i.e., the first and second vegetation layers) between the more upstream and

<sup>28</sup> The only cabbage grown is the local *zegzaw* variety used in *couscous*.

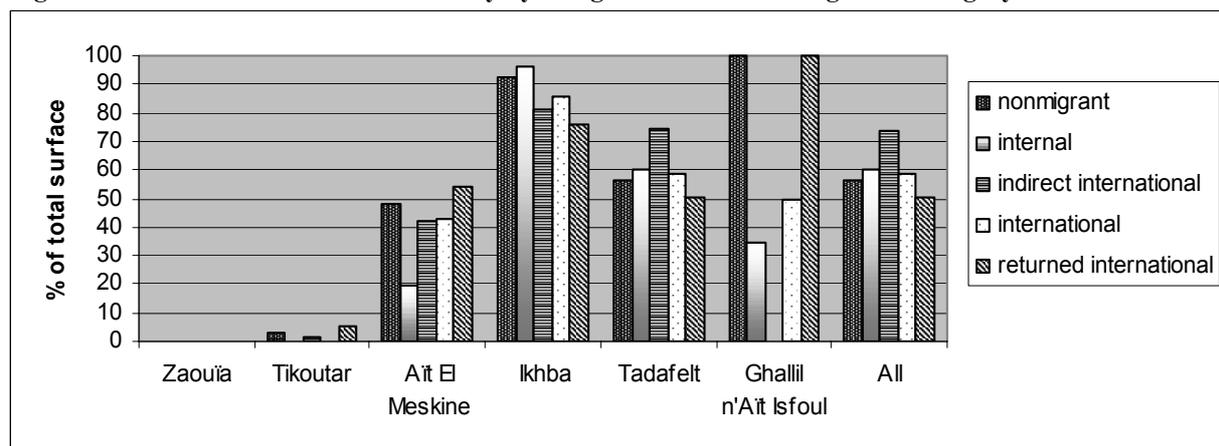
downstream parts of the valley. The variety of fruit trees is relatively high in the upper Todgha villages of Zaouïa and Tikoutar, with olives and almonds dominating. The variety is particularly high in Zaouïa. Only in this uppermost part of the valley do we find relatively large numbers of fig and pomegranate trees.

Figure 8.9. Incidence of alfalfa by village and household migration category



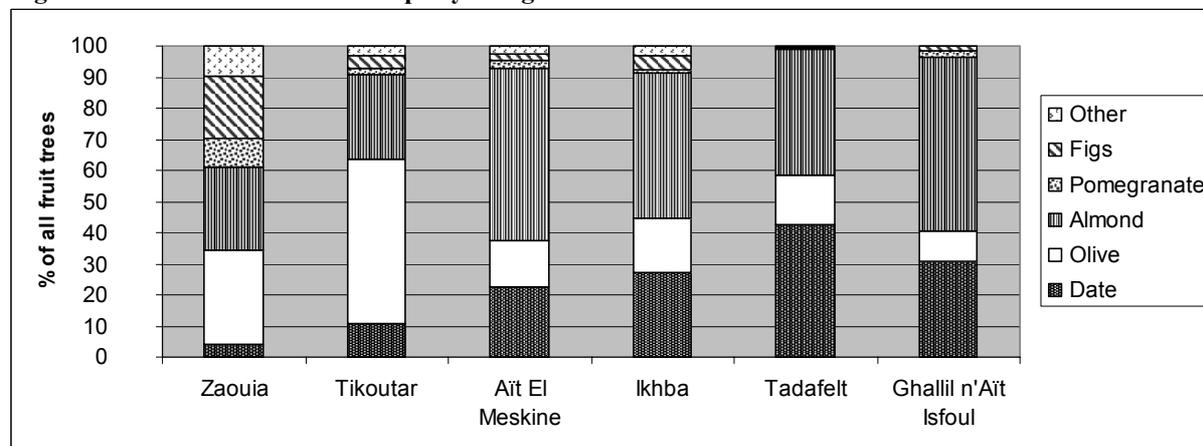
Source: Household survey

Figure 8.10. Incidence of wheat and barley by village and household migration category



Source: Household survey

Figure 8.11. Prevalence of tree crops by village



Source: Household survey

It is furthermore striking that date palms are not numerous here, which is almost certainly related to the relatively cool climate in this elevated part of the valley. Dates need excessive heat to ripen, explaining their absence in most mountain oases (De Haas 2001). Indeed, cropping patterns in Zaouïa resemble those of mountain oases such as the Dadès (west of the Todgha) rather than the lower Todgha. Moving downstream, the variety in fruit trees gradually decreases, and trees like figs largely disappear. Moreover, there is a clear shift from olives—which reach their “optimum” level towards the middle parts of the valley such as in Tikoutar—to date palms in the lower Todgha. Again, this seems primarily related to climatic factors. Almonds prevail in the lower Todgha villages, except for Tadafelt, where date palms are equally prevalent.

The olive tree is the dominant tree crop of the Todgha. According to official estimations, the total number of olive trees increased from 72,000 in 1979/80 to 99,000 in 1996, representing 41.8 percent of all fruit trees under cultivation (De Haas and El Ghanjou 2000a). In the 1980s, the local agricultural extension office (CMV) held a campaign to encourage peasants to plant olive trees. Olives are almost exclusively cultivated for oil production. The oil is obtained by using traditional olive presses which are found in almost every village, and which work with the use of animals (donkeys or mules). With this method, about 2.5 to 3 liters of olive-oil is extracted from one ‘*abra*<sup>29</sup> (13 kg) of olives. With the electrification of the majority of the villages, several electric presses have been established, but most people prefer the olive-oil produced by the traditional presses, as they are believed to produce a better quality of oil. The olive trees are hardly maintained and not pruned at all, and the trees are generally planted very densely. Especially in the “olive forests” of the upper Todgha, yields are low as a result of the light competition between the trees.

The date palm has a prominent position in traditional oasis agriculture in the lower Todgha. Notwithstanding its general presence in the entire valley and its visual dominance (due to the height of their tops), the date palm is not the dominant fruit tree, and with a total estimated number of 67,000, it only occupies third place after olive and almond trees. Traditionally, dates play an important role as staple food and bad quality dates serve as animal fodder. Moreover, palm-leaves are used for basket-work and the trunks are used for construction of the traditional *igherman* habitat. In the Todgha, the main date variety is the Saïr<sup>30</sup>, and the principal improved varieties are Boufeggous, Oultouakdim, Hafssa, and Bouskri.

Nevertheless, in the lower Todgha, almonds seem to be increasingly “outperforming” the date palm. The decline of the date palm in comparison with other crops (especially almonds), but also compared to other oasis regions, can partly be explained by the mediocre yields and the bad quality of dates. The quality of Todgha dates is relatively low, and cannot compete with the superior dates grown in the Tafilalt and Drâa<sup>31</sup>. Only the best dates are sometimes traded, and low quality dates are sold as fodder on the markets of Tinghir and Taghzout. Local consumers who can afford it prefer to buy dates from these regions or imported dates from Algeria or Tunisia. In contrast, both olive oil and almonds from the

<sup>29</sup> The ‘*abra* is a local volume measure. One ‘*abra* of olives is the equivalent of approximately 13 kg.

<sup>30</sup> Saïr comprises all date palms grown from seeds, hence heterogeneous, and is therefore no genuine variety. All improved date palm varieties are multiplied by cloning.

<sup>31</sup> The reasons for the low quality are not entirely clear. The bad quality and low yields of the Todgha dates are partly related to bad maintenance, but a number of bio-physical factors might play a role too, in particular the specific climatic conditions in the Todgha. Compared to genuine lowland date palm oases such as the Drâa and Tafilalt, the climate of the Todgha, which is located at an altitude of between 1100 and 1420 meters, is relatively cold and humid. The frequent night-frost in winter and the early autumn rains tend to be factors that also negatively influence date yields. In fact, the upper Todgha is located on the very climatic boundary of the date production zone.

Todgha are known for their high quality and are sold at relatively high prices. Therefore, dates seem to be clearly “outperformed” by olives and, increasingly, almonds in terms of market value.

Moreover, date cultivation is labor-intensive compared to olives and almonds. In order to obtain good yields, date palms require a relatively specialized and laborious maintenance, which necessitates physically climbing into the palm at least two to three times per year (pollinating, yielding, cutting away dead palm leaves). Specialists traditionally do this maintenance work, mostly *haratin*, whose remuneration amounts to ten dirham per ascent, plus a part of the annual production of the palm. Many of the former *ikhmmesen* and laborers who did such work have migrated or are now unwilling to do such work. Moreover, the younger generations generally lack the expertise of the older generation in this domain, and are increasingly difficult to find. Consequently, this labor has become increasingly expensive. It might be that this has more affected oases with high participation in international migration (such as the Todgha) than poorer and less migration-bound oases such as the Drâa and Tafilalt.

As in other Moroccan oases, a part of the date palms suffers from the *bayoud*<sup>32</sup> disease. In the oasis literature, the *bayoud* is often presented as the main cause of an alleged general decline of oasis agriculture, unrightfully so (cf. De Haas 2001). *Bayoud* is a general problem affecting all Moroccan oases including the Drâa and Tafilalt. However, *bayoud*, which seems not extremely frequent in the Todgha, cannot explain the decline of the date palm in comparison with other Moroccan oases, where *bayoud* occurs as well.

In the Todgha, the date palm is in decline, and suffers from a relative lack of maintenance. However, even if neglected, most date palms survive on ground water due to their extensive root system. Most families use the dates for their own consumption and to feed their livestock. Although some peasants plant improved date palms varieties in the agricultural extension zones, more preference is given to the cultivation of olives and, in particular, almonds. According to official data, between 1980 and 1994, the share of date palms as a proportion of the total number of fruit trees in the Todgha decreased from 34 percent to 28.3 percent (cf. De Haas and El Ghanjou 2000a).

In the lower Todgha, the almond tree has rapidly gained ground over the past few decades, mainly at the cost of the date palm. The total proportion of almond trees amounts to 29 percent of all fruit trees, and has shown a steep increase since the 1980s. Almonds tend to occupy first place in the lower Todgha. An important advantage of almond trees is that they do not require a highly specialized or laborious maintenance as is the case with dates. Moreover, they have low water needs compared to olives or dates. This makes it an ideal tree to combine with extensive motor pumping. According to the peasants, three or four irrigations per year are already sufficient to guarantee a reasonable harvest. What seems equally important is that the almonds produced in the Todgha are of a good quality and are traded at attractive prices.

Figures 8.12, 8.13, and 8.14 display the incidence of date palms, olive trees, and almond trees—Todgha’s main tree crops—across household migration categories for each village. The figures do not point to a clear association between migration and the fruit tree cropping patterns: inter-household variations in cropping patterns cannot be explained by participation in either form of migration.

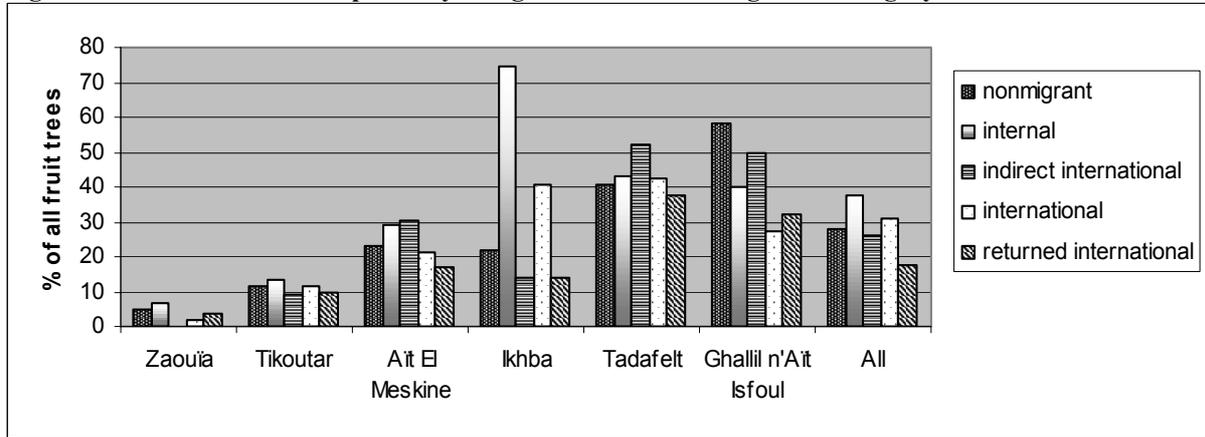
In summary, there is a clear spatial differentiation in cropping patterns, with alfalfa, olive, and other fruit trees dominating the upper Todgha villages of Zaouïa and Tikoutar. In

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<sup>32</sup> *Bayoud* is a date palm disease caused by the fungus *Fusarium Oxysporium Albedinis*, leading to the gradual desiccation and death of the palm.

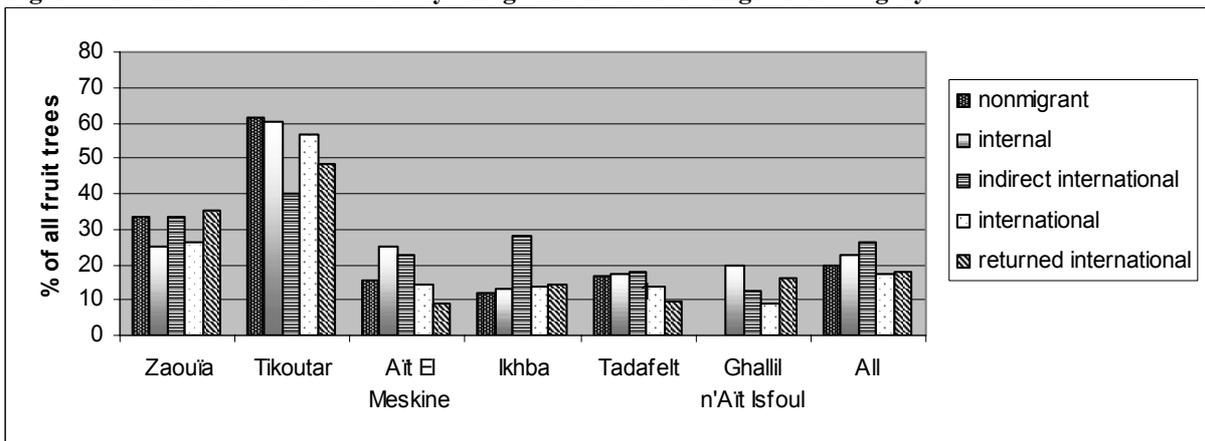
the lower Todgha villages of Aït El Meskine and Tadafelt, cereals are the dominant annual crops, and almonds and date palms are the dominant first and second layer crops. This spatial differentiation in cropping patterns should primarily be explained by the diverging local water and land availability and—to explain the relatively low numbers of date palms in the upper Todgha—climatic factors.

Figure 8.12. Incidence of date palms by village and household migration category



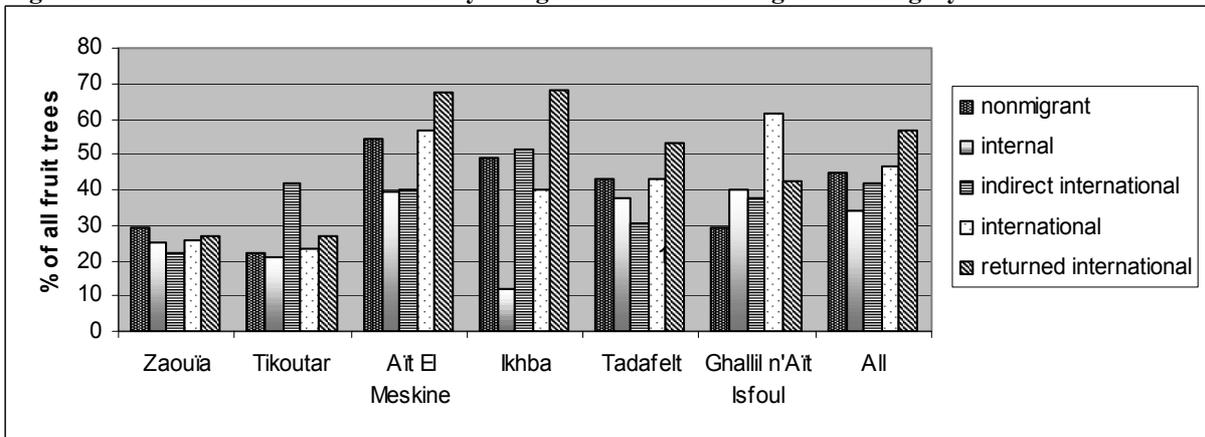
Source: Household survey

Figure 8.13. Incidence of olive trees by village and household migration category



Source: Household survey

Figure 8.14. Incidence of almond trees by village and household migration category



Source: Household survey

In the upper part of the Todgha valley, water is abundant all-year-round but land is scarce. Moreover, extremely fragmented land tenure patterns hinder any form of mechanization. Alfalfa is the dominant crop in this part of the valley, since water is cheaply<sup>33</sup> and relatively abundantly available. The low costs of production give distinct advantages to the cultivation of alfalfa as compared to other crops. Moreover, as we will see, this coincides with the growing importance of livestock in the valley.

Going downstream, water becomes increasingly scarce whereas land becomes relatively abundant. Here, water scarcity is partially tackled by motor pumping, allowing “vertical” intensification in the ancient oasis or “horizontal” intensification through the creation of new extensions. Nevertheless, water losses due to evapotranspiration are high in summer, rendering all-year-round cultivation of alfalfa rather costly if water has to be pumped. This explains the focus on winter crops such as wheat and barley. Moreover, in the lower Todgha, plots are often large enough to allow a certain degree of mechanization. Moreover, in this zone almonds are tending to become the dominant tree crop at the expense of dates.

Differences in water availability explain why the fields of the upper Todgha are cultivated all year round, and that in the lower Todgha many fields lie fallow in the summer half year. In general, fodder crops—mostly alfalfa, but also maize—have increased in importance at the cost of cereals, which reflect the increased importance of animal husbandry. In the lower Todgha oases, however, subsistence production of cereals is still important.

In conclusion, the differentiation in cropping patterns is primarily explained by spatial variation in climate, land tenure patterns, plot size, and relative water scarcity, and not by migration participation. The changes in cropping patterns that have occurred over the past decades rather seem to be the result of more general changes, in particular the integration of the Todgha into internal and international markets for agricultural products, the introduction of motor pumps, and increasing labor costs. Although there are little inter-household differences in cropping patterns, table 8.16 shows, however, that international migrant households tend to grow a somewhat larger variety of annual crops. Returned migrants, in particular, tend to grow a larger variety of vegetables. This seems to corroborate the hypothesis that the more aged return migrants cling more to traditional forms of oasis agriculture (see section 8.3.4).

### 8.4.3. Migration and fallow land

In the migration and development literature, it has often been hypothesized that migration leads to a retreat from agriculture due to the “lost labor effect”, which manifests itself in the large amount of agricultural land that is left fallow by migrant households. In particular, cumulative causation theory presents this “lost labor effect” as one of the main reasons for its negative evaluation of the impact of migration on development in migrant sending areas (see chapter 2). Table 8.16 indicates that there is no clear association between migration and fallow land among the surveyed households. The incidence of fallow land<sup>34</sup> is *highest* among nonmigrants: 15 percent of the landowning nonmigrant households have *not* cultivated annual crops during the last year. With 8 percent of the households not cultivating any annual crops, the incidence of fallow land among current (internal and international) migrant households is

<sup>33</sup> The only “costs” of obtaining water are the villagers’ contributions to the maintenance of the irrigation system.

<sup>34</sup> Such fallow land is seldom totally so, since date palms and fruit trees remain on the land. In an oasis context, therefore, fallow land is then best defined as that land where there is an absence of annual crops.

only marginally higher than among indirect international migrant households. It is the lowest among international returnees. This seems to contradict the “lost labor” hypothesis.

Although migration-related abandonment of land sometimes occurs among international migrant households, it is generally a limited phenomenon, typically occurring in the first years after migration. In general, “stay-behinds” (women in particular) continue agriculture. In case of family reunification at the migration destination, most households entrust their land to family members (who often form *indirect* migrant households) or, in some cases, *ikhmmesen*, who continue cultivating the land.

The incidence of fallow land is highest in Ghallil n’Aït Isfoul—where agriculture suffers from acute water shortages—and, to a lesser extent, Aït El Meskine. Since agriculture in these two villages entirely depends on pumps, agriculture is relatively capital-intensive compared to other villages, where water from natural sources or *khetaras* is available. This also means that water resources are more difficult to access for households lacking sufficient means to install pumps. Consequently, the poorest sections of the local population, mostly nonmigrant or internal migrant households, are forced to retreat partly or entirely from agriculture. A first sign of such de-intensification is the abandonment of annual crops. In Aït El Meskine, 18 percent of nonmigrants and 22 percent of internal migrant households do not grow annual crops. In Ghallil n’Aït Isfoul, these percentages are 91 and 71 percent, respectively.

Therefore, poverty rather than migration seems to be the prime factor forcing (internal migrant and nonmigrant) households out of agriculture in villages where water is nowadays only accessible through pumping.

**Table 8.16. Number of annual crops by household migration status**

Household migration status	Number of annual crops grown last year (landowning households)				Total	Mean	<i>n</i>
	0	1-3	4-7	≥8			
Nonmigrant	14.7	41.9	32.6	10.9	100.0	3.47	129
Internal	8.0	41.0	43.0	8.0	100.0	3.78	100
Indirect international	6.3	37.5	40.6	15.6	100.0	4.53	32
Current international	7.9	37.1	43.8	11.2	100.0	4.24	89
Returned international	3.2	25.4	47.6	23.8	100.0	5.22	63
Total	9.2	37.8	40.4	12.6	100.0	4.06	413

Source: Household survey ( $\eta=0.265^{**}$ ;  $C=0.228^*$ )

#### 8.4.4. Agricultural equipment and other capital inputs

Among all the surveyed households, only six (1.2 percent) have purchased a tractor and a similar number of households have purchased other heavy agricultural equipment, notably threshers. Out of these twelve investors, nine belonged to households involved in international migration. Most owners of agricultural equipment gain an additional income from renting this equipment to other households, who also use it for threshing cereals—traditional threshing methods using animal traction are now rarely used—and for ploughing their land<sup>35</sup>.

In the upper Todgha villages such as Zaouïa and Tikoutar, agriculture is hardly mechanized. This is due to the extremely small plot sizes and their inaccessibility to machines. Moreover, it is impossible to intensify or extend agriculture outside the traditional oasis, as all suitable farmland in the narrow upper Todgha has already been intensively used.

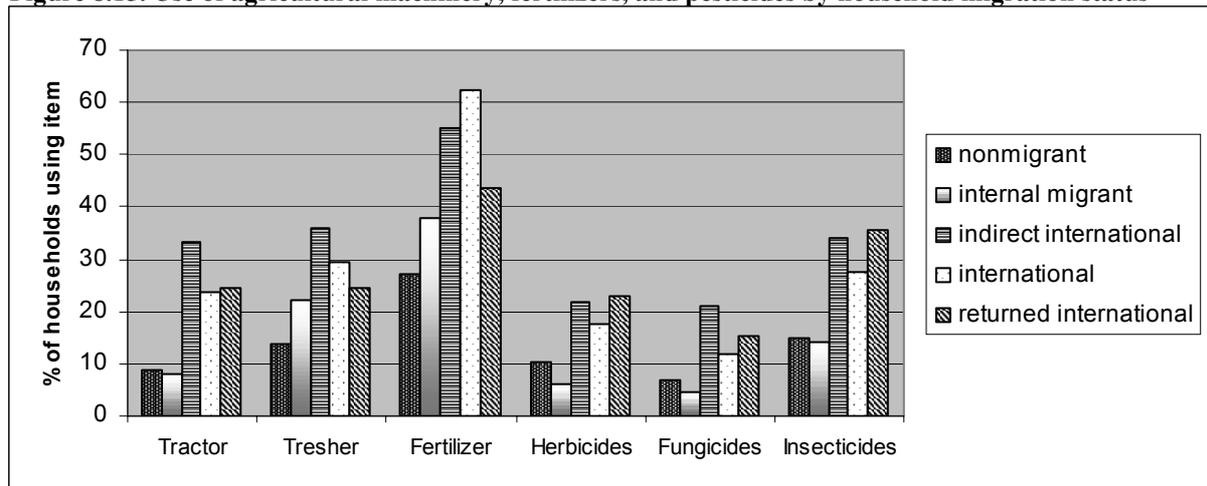
<sup>35</sup> The same applies to owners of pumps, who often sell water to other peasants.

People wishing to invest heavily in agriculture do so at more distant locations. The only peasants using tractors there do so on land they possess outside the Todgha.

In the lower Todgha, agriculture is generally more mechanized than in the upper valley due to the prevalence of motor pumps and the larger plot sizes, which allow for mechanical ploughing. Agriculture in Aït El Meskine is more mechanized than in all the other research villages. Besides the fact that most households possess a motor pump, the use (either through possession or rental) of tractors and other “modern” agricultural equipment is common practice in Aït El Meskine. Here, 80 percent of peasants use tractors to plough at least part of their fields. Nevertheless, it should be stressed that this mechanization is only partial: sowing and harvesting is done manually only with a few exceptions.

Figure 8.15 clearly reveals an association between participation in international migration and the use of agricultural machinery. Furthermore, it is striking that *indirect* international migrant households score highest on the use of both tractors and threshing-machines. Concerning the use of agricultural inputs like fertilizers—in addition to manure—and pesticides (differentiating between herbicides, fungicides, and insecticides), we can equally observe their higher use among international migrants. Internal migrant households generally score slightly lower than nonmigrant households on most of the mentioned items, with the exception of the use of tractors and fertilizers.

**Figure 8.15. Use of agricultural machinery, fertilizers, and pesticides by household migration status**

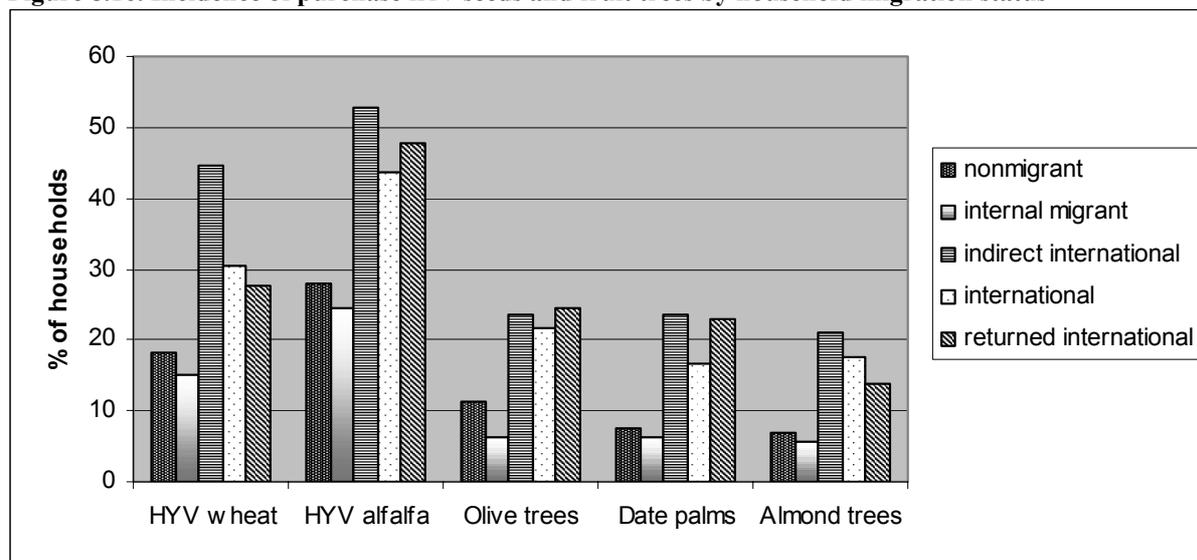


Source: Household survey

If we look at the tendency to purchase HYV seeds and young date palm offshoots and other fruit trees (see figure 8.16), we also see that international migration households tend to score far higher than nonmigrant and internal migrant households. Thus, the use of agricultural capital inputs seems positively related to international migration participation. In general, *indirect* migrant households tend to score highest.

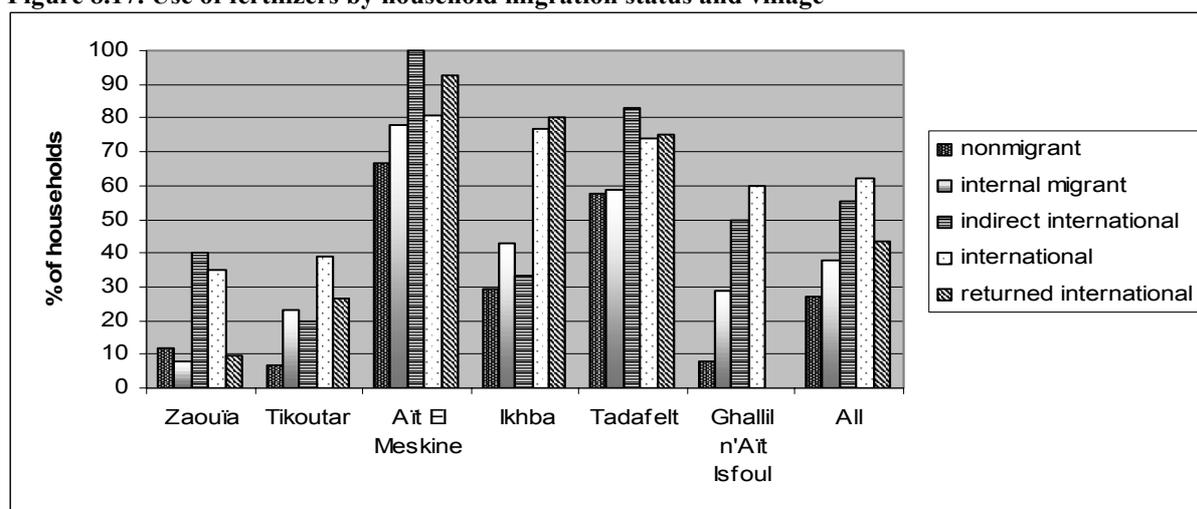
In order to shed more light on the geographical differentiation in the use of agricultural inputs, figure 8.17 analyses the association between migration participation and the use of fertilizers within the research villages. The data illustrate how both general geographical and household-specific migratory factors influence agricultural practices. The use of fertilizers is limited in the upper Todgha villages of Zaouïa and Tikoutar, even among international migrants, reflecting the largely traditional, small-scale, labor-intensive, and capital-extensive character of agriculture in that part of the valley. In the lower Todgha villages, the use of fertilizer is clearly more common. It is clearly the highest in Aït El Meskine, where—even among nonmigrant and internal migrant households—the majority use fertilizers.

Figure 8.16. Incidence of purchase HYV seeds and fruit trees by household migration status



Source: Household survey

Figure 8.17. Use of fertilizers by household migration status and village



Source: Household survey

Thus, although cropping patterns only show little differentiation in relation to household migration category, the agricultural practices of households involved in international migration tend to be more capital-intensive. If we consider the incidence of diverse agricultural capital inputs, households involved in international migration score significantly higher (often double or more) on almost all categories compared to nonmigrant households.

Table 8.17 shows that only 19 and 18 percent of indirect and current international migration households, respectively, have not purchased one of these inputs over the last year, compared to 53 and 45 percent among nonmigrant and internal migrant households, respectively. Among international return migrants, this percentage is 36 percent, corroborating the hypothesis that this group is more inclined towards traditional oasis agriculture.

When we control for income levels (see table 8.18), however, we see that there is no significant “above-income effect”, except for the highest income category. If we look at the

mean invested sums among investors, we see that, when controlling for income, differences largely vanish and that nonmigrant households even score slightly higher. This is largely due to the inclusion of international returnees, which have a lower tendency to invest in capital inputs within the group of international migrant households. Current and indirect migrant households play relatively important roles in “innovative” agricultural development. This indicated that it would be erroneous to study only households of international returnees, as migration impact studies tend to do.

**Table 8.17. Agricultural capital inputs by household migration status**

Household migration status	Yearly capital input (fertilizer, pesticides, seeds, tree seedlings) in dirham				Total	Mean	5%trimmed	n
	0	<200	200-3999	≥4000				
Nonmigrant	52.3	20.1	15.5	12.1	100.0	1,618	781	174
Internal	45.2	17.5	21.4	15.9	100.0	1,846	1,264	126
Indirect international	18.9	21.6	27.0	32.4	100.0	2,520	2,183	37
Current international	18.0	22.0	30.0	30.0	100.0	3,103	2,703	100
Returned international	35.9	18.8	25.0	20.3	100.0	2,217	1,270	64
Total	39.1	19.8	22.0	19.2	100.0	2,115	1,437	501

Source: Household survey ( $\eta=0.122^*$ ;  $C=0.292^{**}$ )

**Table 8.18. Agricultural capital inputs by international migration participation, by household income**

Household income	Migration status	Yearly capital input (fertilizer, pesticides, seeds, tree seedlings) in dirham				Total	Mean	Mn investors	n
		0	<200	200-3999	≥4000				
0-1699	Nonmigrant	50.9	48.2	37.3	14.5	100	942	1,919	169
	Intl migrant	40.0	40.0	46.7	13.3	100	885	1,475	25
	Total	49.5	46.9	38.8	14.3	100	935	1,851	194
1700-3749	Nonmigrant	46.7	20.0	40.0	40.0	100	2,169	4,067	75
	Intl migrant	26.3	39.0	40.7	20.3	100	1,704	2,310	80
	Total	36.1	31.3	40.4	28.3	100	1,929	3,020	155
≥ 3750	Nonmigrant	42.9	25.0	25.0	50.0	100	3,891	6,809	42
	Intl migrant	15.9	16.2	31.1	52.7	100	4,103	4,879	88
	Total	24.6	18.4	29.6	52.0	100	4,034	5,351	130

Source: Household survey ( $\gamma: 0-1699=0.187^*$ ;  $1700-3749=0.130^*$ ;  $\geq 3750=0.401^{**}$ )

Therefore, the conclusion is that, except for the highest income category, the effect of migration here is largely an income effect: it is the higher income of international migrant households that enables them to invest. International migrant households do not typically retreat from agriculture but rather shift to a more intensive type of agriculture in which increasing use is made of capital inputs, which they are able to do due to their relatively high incomes. With the exception of a small, relatively wealthy group, households without access to international migration resources are generally not able to make such investments.

#### 8.4.5. The demise of sharecropping and the rise of paid labor

In the upper Todgha, the extremely small plot sizes make any form of mechanization impossible. From Tinghir downstream, in the lower Todgha, plots become gradually larger. This explains the increasing utilization of tractors, which are mainly used for ploughing. The use of tractors is most intensive in the new extensions and the Ghallil plain. Nevertheless, even in the extension zones, much of the land is still tilled manually. The only agricultural activity that has been almost completely mechanized is the threshing of cereals, which used to be done by animals on the villages' threshing places. Each spring, the few threshing machines

in the valley, which their owners hire to peasants on an hourly basis, process almost the entire grain harvest.

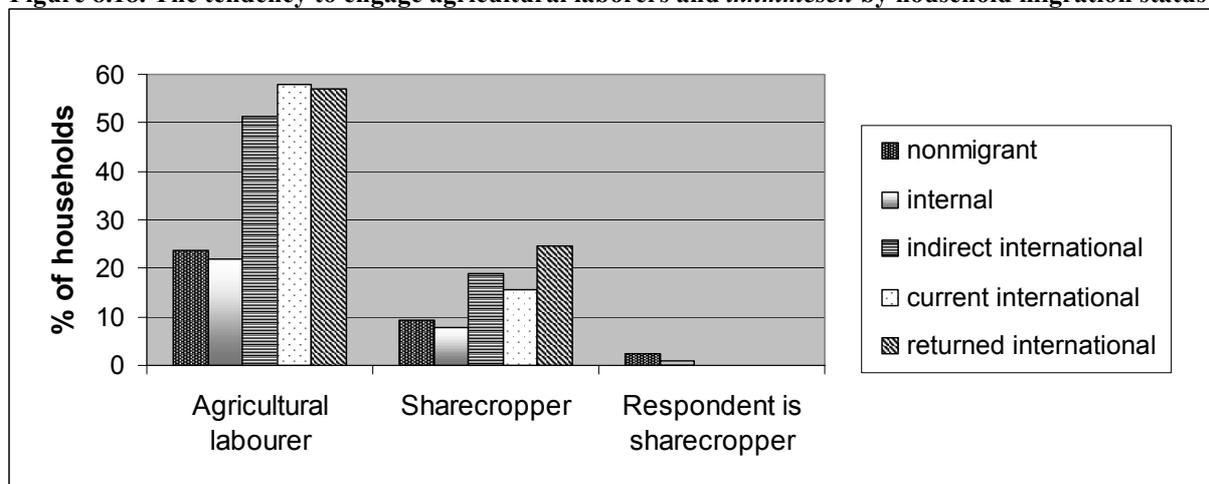
Thus, besides the introduction of pumps and some machinery, agriculture has remained rather labor-intensive. In the literature, the absence of generally young, male, and able-bodied migrants is often mentioned as a cause of agricultural decline. However, evidence on cropping patterns and the incidence of fallow land seems to contradict that hypothesis for our case study. International migrant households seem to have a more intensive agricultural practice than nonmigrant and internal migrant households.

The fundamental weakness of the “lost labor hypothesis” is its static nature, since it ignores that (1) other household members may take over agricultural tasks; (2) land can be entrusted to *ikhmmesen*; (3) the counterflow of remittances potentially enables households to hire paid laborers; and, last but not least, (4) agriculture can become more capital intensive (e.g., through the use of tractors, threshing machines, and pumps) through which similar or higher production levels can be achieved by using less labor.

Figure 8.18 shows that such a substitution of lost family labor indeed occurs. There is a strong and significant association between participation in international migration and the employment of agricultural laborers ( $\gamma=0.436$ ; significance = 0.000). Over half of international migrant households have hired agricultural laborers during the last year, compared to only one fifth among other households. Figure 8.18 also reveals a less strong but still significant association between participation in international migration and the incidence of sharecropping ( $\gamma=0.216$ ; significance=0.027). About one fifth of all international migrant households engage *ikhmmesen*, compared to less than 10 percent among other households.

Thus, at first sight, “lost family labor” is partly or entirely replaced by non-family labor, either through engaging *ikhmmesen* or through hiring paid laborers. This conforms to evidence that wives of international migrants tend to hire laborers for certain, typically “male”, agricultural tasks (see section 10.4). Wives of internal migrant households, who are equally affected by this “lost labor effect”, are not able to do so because they lack the financial means. Figure 8.18 further confirms that internal migrant households, which hire laborers or engage *ikhmmesen* even less frequently than nonmigrant households, are not able to compensate for the lost labor effect. Therefore, the “substitution effect” only applies to international migrant households. As we will see in chapter 10, the most direct effect of this seems to be a considerable increase in the (agricultural) workload of the wives of internal migrants or even that certain agricultural tasks cannot be done anymore.

Figure 8.18. The tendency to engage agricultural laborers and *ikhmmesen* by household migration status



Source: Household survey

However, it is remarkable that indirect and returned international migrant households, where there is no “lost labor”, contract out work to the same degree as current migrant households. It then becomes doubtful whether “lost labor” is a major cause of this phenomenon. It rather seems that access to international remittances enabled households to give up the agricultural duties that are generally considered as heavy, such as ploughing and maintenance of the irrigation infrastructure.

Younger, more educated, ambitious household members are generally not *willing* to work in agriculture anymore, an activity which they consider as inferior. This growing disaffection vis-à-vis agricultural activities among young oasis dwellers seems to explain why they prefer to do other work or sometimes even remain unemployed rather than do agricultural work. This is also a factor obliging households to engage hired laborers or *ikhmmesen* if they want to continue their agricultural activities<sup>36</sup>.

At first sight, this seems to corroborate the migration pessimists’ hypothesis that migrants tend to retreat from traditional economic sectors. However, disaffection vis-à-vis traditional agriculture seems a general development in the Todgha, which is certainly not limited to migrant households. Moreover, the question is, however, whether this should be interpreted as a negative development *per se*. Increasing media exposure, better education, and the exposure to the relative wealth of international migrants have all made people set higher personal development goals than ever before.

Their perception that their higher aspirations can never be fulfilled through local agriculture seems correct. As we saw in section 8.3, even if agricultural production in the Todgha was sufficient to feed the entire population—which is not the case (cf. Büchner 1986)—people would simply no longer be content with such a basic livelihood. From this perspective, it is a rational strategy, if people prefer to concentrate on migratory or non-agricultural local activities, to contract out the most arduous agricultural activities. This actually allows them even to intensify agriculture, whereas nonmigrant and internal migrant households are less able to do so. Moreover, the tendency to contract out is to the profit of the laborers or *ikhmmesen* they hire. This is one of the examples of how a part of the benefits of migrant remittances may accrue to households that are not involved in migration themselves.

The *khammessat* was the traditional form of sharecropping in which the owner supplies the land, the seeds, and the equipment to the *akhemmes*. The *akhemmes* supplied his labor, for which he received one fifth of the yield. The *khammessat*, which used to be the predominant mode by which landowners cultivated their fields, has clearly declined over the past decades. The number of people willing to work as *akhemmes* has diminished because of increased job opportunities outside the agricultural sector and of the perceived low social status of *ikhmmesen*. Livelihood diversification in general and migration in particular has offered alternative and more remunerative sources of income for the former *ikhmmesen*. Whereas in traditional oasis society, landless and smallholding peasants had no other choice to make ends meet than through entering into sharecropping engagements, their upward socio-economic mobility has now enabled them to withdraw from this activity.

The profession of *akhemmes* is generally considered as “dishonorable” and tends to be associated with poverty and patron-client relationships. Youngsters universally despise the idea of being an *akhemmes* and the remaining *ikhmmesen* tend to be old. This relative scarcity of agricultural labor implies that the remaining *ikhmmesen* have now been able to claim one third or even half of the harvest, up from one fifth in the past. On average, *ikhmmesen* now receive 41 percent of the harvest (see table 8.19)<sup>37</sup>.

<sup>36</sup> For return migrants, an additional argument to hire external labor is that they tend to be relatively aged.

<sup>37</sup> However, it should be noted that contracts which included a higher (or smaller) share for the *akhemmes* also existed before.

Absentee landowners generally prefer to entrust their land to close family members or to hire laborers rather than to enter into sharecropping arrangements. This may be because, in the absence of clear land title deeds and formal sharecropping contracts, conflicts between landowners and *ikhmmesen* are frequent. This can lead landowners to fear the property claims of long-term *ikhmmesen* working on their land. In the Todgha, paid labor is therefore increasingly replacing traditional sharecropping arrangements.

Traditional forms of *khammessat* seem to be disappearing, and are increasingly being replaced by remunerated agricultural day labor. Laborers are hired on a day-to-day basis for specific agricultural tasks, such as ploughing and irrigating, and for “specialist” work, such as the digging of new wells, pollinating date palms, and the maintenance of irrigation channels. Agricultural laborers are mainly employed during peak seasons, such as for the olive, date (fall), and cereal (spring) harvests.

Besides male workers, international migrants’ wives often engage nonmigrant or internal migrant woman to cut alfalfa, to pick fruits and to fulfill diverse household tasks (see section 10.4). In the traditional oasis, permanently employed agricultural laborers hardly exist. Only in the extension zones and the Ghallil do several peasants employ laborers more or less permanently, although seldom on a contract basis. Women are generally paid less than men, with daily wages varying between 30 and 40 dirham for women<sup>38</sup>, and between 40 and 60 dirham for men. Laborers are often nourished and accommodated if transport to home is impossible.

International migrant households generally prefer to employ nonmigrant community members. Besides the fact that they can trust them better, as they say, there is also social pressure on migrants to employ community members as an act of “solidarity”. Not employing community members is criticized as selfish behavior, adding to the religious-moral criticism to which migrants are already exposed (see section 10.2). Most laborers come from poorer nonmigrant or internal migrant households from within the village. However, increasingly, such laborers come from poorer villages or even from outside the Todgha. Coming from regions such as Ifre, Taghbalt, Alnif, and the Drâa valley, they mainly settle in the lower Todgha, where investments in agricultural extensions have created extra demand for workers.

**Table 8.19. Employment of paid agricultural laborers and *ikhmmesen* by international migration participation, by household income**

Total household income	Migration status	% of households employing agricultural laborer of <i>akhemes</i>							
		Paid laborer	Mean daily salary	Days/year	Mean yearly expenses	Share-cropper	Share to sharecropper (%)	Respond. is sharecropper	<i>n</i>
0-1,699	Nonmigrant	16.7	42.9	1.6	74	5.9	40	0.6	168
	Intl migrant	20.0	49.0	1.8	88	16.0	43	0.0	25
	Total	17.1	43.8	1.6	76	7.2	41	0.5	193
1,700-3,749	Nonmigrant	26.3	38.0	12.6	325	10.5	41	3.9	76
	Intl migrant	56.3	45.6	13.0	569	16.3	45	0.0	80
	Total	41.7	43.2	12.8	450	13.5	43	1.9	156
≥ 3,750	Nonmigrant	39.5	42.6	8.6	361	16.3	40	2.3	43
	Intl migrant	67.8	44.8	32.0	1,358	20.0	39	0.0	90
	Total	58.6	44.4	24.5	1,038	18.8	39	0.8	133

Source: Household survey ( $\gamma$  migration\*laborer=0.436\*\*; migration\*sharecropper=0.216\*.  $\eta$ : migration\*salary=0.221<sup>x</sup>; migration\*expenses=0.228<sup>x</sup>; migration\*share to sharecropper=0.036<sup>x</sup>)

<sup>38</sup> Nonmigrant women often work “voluntarily” for international migrants’ wives, and are paid in kind by their patrons, generally in the form of free meals and agricultural produce (see chapter 10).

Table 8.19 examines whether the fact that international migrant households tend to contract out certain agricultural tasks is only explained by their relative wealth. It clearly shows that the association between access to international migration resources (i.e., remittances) on the one hand and the employment of laborers is high within income categories, with the exception of the lowest income category. In the highest income category, for instance, 68 percent of international migrant households hire laborers, compared to 40 percent among nonmigrants, while the mean yearly expenses are four times higher among international migrants. This means that the higher income of international migrant households cannot explain their higher tendency to employ laborers. On the one hand, this might indeed be a compensation for the “lost labor effect” and the fact that most youngsters prefer to study or to work in non-agricultural sectors. On the other hand, this might be related to the higher propensity of migrant households to invest in agriculture. Such investments create an extra demand for labor to dig wells, maintain the irrigation infrastructure, irrigate, and till the land.

The data presented in this section suggest that international migration generally does not coincide with a retreat from agriculture, as is assumed by cumulative causation theory. The family members left behind continue to assume daily agricultural tasks. Moreover, their relatively high incomes enable international migrant households to hire agricultural laborers to carry out heavy or typically “male” tasks, or specialist work such as the digging of wells. However, most nonmigrant and internal migrant households are not able to do so, due to a lack of income required to hire such laborers. This creates an extra workload for “stay-behinds”, and women in particular, and might in certain cases indeed lead to de-intensification of, or retreat from, agriculture. Again, the impact of different types of migration seem to be rather different, with the major border line running between households with and without access to *international* migration resources.

Although international migration households tend to hire paid agricultural laborers more frequently, there are no signs of a major retreat of family labor from agriculture by international migrant households. As table 8.19 shows, households only tend to hire laborers for a limited number of days per year. Many nonmigrant men combine agricultural work with non-agricultural activities, typically construction work. Finally, it should be stressed that women form the main labor force of oasis agriculture. Women carry out the vast majority of the agricultural tasks (see chapter 10), and it is the widely undervalued female labor which has guaranteed the continued existence of oasis systems.

## **8.5. Animal husbandry and the role of migration**

One of the main characteristics of animal husbandry in the Todgha is the small size of the herds. Table 8.20 shows that the average number of animals per surveyed household is 8. Animals are kept in stables located within the family compounds. Sheep represent about 60 percent of the total livestock, goats 24 percent, and cattle 15 percent. Camels are extremely rare among the sedentary oasis population, and are mainly kept by (semi-) nomads. The composition of the herds seems to be changing. Between 1994 and 1999, the number of goats had decreased by 22 percent, whereas the number of cattle had increased by 17 percent. The number of sheep increased slightly, by only 5 percent. In the absence of horses, the donkey is the most common draft animal (owned by 18 percent of households), followed by the mule (8 percent). Donkeys and mules play an important role as transport between the house and the sometimes remote plots, and from the village to the market, although their numbers seem to be declining due to the increased importance of motorized transport.

**Table 8.20. Livestock numbers in all research villages (1994 and 1999)**

Animal	1994		1999		Trend 1994-1999	Per household
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%		
Goats	1,261	30.6	976	24.1	- 22.6	1.9
Sheep	2,325	56.4	2,445	60.3	+ 5.2	4.8
All cattle	539	13.1	631	15.6	+ 17.1	1.2
<i>local race</i>	471	11.4	543	13.4	+ 15.3	1.1
<i>crossbreeds</i>	16	0.4	30	0.7	+ 87.5	0.1
<i>graded cattle</i>	52	1.3	58	1.4	+ 11.5	0.1
Total	4,125	100	4,052	100	- 1.8	7.9

**Source:** Household survey

In the literature on Moroccan oasis agriculture, it has been hypothesized that there is an association between migration and the prevalence of alfalfa and animal husbandry (Aït Hamza 1995; Bencherifa 1991). Livestock numbers, especially cattle, have significantly increased in oases and nowadays peasants are buying more and more exotic, imported cow breeds. Two underlying factors seem to have caused this development. First, the presumed “feminization” (Bencherifa 1991; Steinmann 1993) of the agricultural work force—itsself the consequence of migration and the general reorientation of men towards other activities—has encouraged animal husbandry. Within the prevailing gendered labor division, domestic livestock-breeding is an activity that can be carried out entirely by women and children. Women are also allowed to harvest the alfalfa, which serves as fodder. Moreover, alfalfa can be left on the same plot for several years, which reduces the need for ploughing—which is a typically male task. Secondly, livestock-breeding can be carried out individually, independently from the agro-hydrological structures on which traditional agriculture strongly depends. Moreover, the reduced size of holdings does not play a constraining role. After all, additional fodder can be bought on the market, which is indeed increasingly the case.

Although the number of cattle indeed seems to be increasing, the question is to what extent this is related to migration. We have already seen that international migrant households do not tend to cultivate more alfalfa than other households, which casts doubt on the validity of the aforementioned hypothesis. Van Rooij (2000:67) equally concluded that there does not seem to be a shift towards animal husbandry at the cost of other agricultural activities. In order to further test this hypothesis, it is necessary to examine whether there is an association between migration and the possession of livestock. Tables 8.21, 8.22 and 8.23 indicate that such a relationship hardly seems to exist for the possession of goats and sheep, but that there is, indeed, a significant association between migration and the possession of cattle. As with most other investment categories, internal migrant households are hardly distinguishable from nonmigrant households.

Traditionally, goats and sheep were predominant in oasis livestock and cattle were relatively rare. The predominant sheep and goat breeds in the oases are more resistant to the vagaries of the desert climate than cattle and have relatively low dietary requirements. Goats in particular feed on the branches and leaves of the date palm, shrubbery, and domestic refuse (cf. De Haas 1998). Keeping sheep and goats entails fewer risks and costs than cattle, which are not only expensive to buy, but also more vulnerable to heat and disease and more demanding on fodder. This explains why the possession of cattle is traditionally considered as a sign of household wealth and an important status symbol.

**Table 8.21. Number of goats by household migration status**

Migration status	Number of goats (%)					
	0	1-3	≥4	Total	Mean	<i>n</i>
Nonmigrant	74.9	16.0	9.1	100.0	2.0	175
Internal	62.2	24.4	13.4	100.0	1.6	127
Indirect international	71.1	13.2	15.8	100.0	2.3	38
Current international	63.7	13.7	22.5	100.0	3.0	102
Returned international	84.6	10.8	4.6	100.0	0.5	65
Total	70.4	16.8	12.8	100.0	1.9	507

Source: Household survey ( $\eta=0.062^*$ ;  $C=0.572^{**}$ )

**Table 8.22. Number of sheep by household migration status**

Migration status	Number of sheep (%)						
	0	1-3	4-5	≥6	Total	Mean	<i>n</i>
Nonmigrant	13.1	29.1	30.3	27.4	100.0	4.4	175
Internal	7.9	33.1	33.1	26.0	100.0	4.2	127
Indirect international	15.8	18.4	34.2	31.6	100.0	4.9	38
Current international	4.9	30.4	17.6	47.1	100.0	6.1	102
Returned international	10.8	24.6	30.8	33.8	100.0	5.3	65
Total	10.1	29.0	28.8	32.1	100.0	4.8	507

Source: Household survey ( $\eta=0.139^*$ ;  $C=0.432^{**}$ )

**Table 8.23. Number of cattle by household migration status**

Migration status	Number of cattle (%)							
	0	1-2	≥3	Total	Mean	Member co-operative (%)	crossbreeds or graded cattle(%)	<i>n</i>
Nonmigrant	62.9	24.6	12.6	100.0	0.9	1.1	3.4	175
Internal	58.3	30.7	11.0	100.0	0.9	2.4	3.1	127
Indirect international	26.3	44.7	28.9	100.0	2.0	13.2	15.8	38
Current international	26.5	52.0	21.6	100.0	1.7	2.0	8.8	102
Returned international	21.5	56.9	21.5	100.0	1.8	4.6	16.9	65
Total	46.4	37.3	16.4	100.0	1.2	3.0	7.1	507

Source: Household survey ( $\eta=0.320^{**}$ ;  $C=0.288^{**}$ )

Table 8.24 examines the association between access to international migration resources and the possession of cattle within income categories. It shows that the initial association found in table 8.23 largely vanishes when controlling for income, and only remains significant within the highest income category<sup>39</sup>. The fact that international migration households tend to possess more cattle seems mainly to be an effect of their higher income. There is no convincing evidence to support the hypothesis of the feminization of oasis agriculture as a cause of increasing numbers of cattle. The variance in cattle numbers seems a function of income in the first place, and is not correlated with “lost (male) labor”.

Expectedly, there is a strong and significant correlation<sup>40</sup> between household income and the number of cattle. However, it is doubtful whether the “lost” male labor effect plays a role, since indirect and returned migrants—for whom the “lost labor effect” does not count—tend to possess about the same number of cattle as current international migrant households. Moreover, internal migrant households only tend to possess a few cattle. This casts further doubt on the hypothesis that there is any specific migration effect (i.e., the migration induced “feminization” of the agricultural workforce) beyond the income effect on livestock numbers.

<sup>39</sup> As with other investment categories, this association might be explained by the higher stability and security of remittance income.

<sup>40</sup>  $r = 0.407$  (significant at the 0.01 level).

**Table 8.24. Possession of cattle by international migration participation, by household income**

Household income	Migration status	Number of cattle in possession (%)				Total	Mean	n
		0	1-2	≥3				
0-1699	Nonmigrant	73.4	22.5	4.1	100.0	0.5	169	
	Intl migrant	64.0	28.0	8.0	100.0	0.8	25	
	Total	72.2	23.2	4.6	100.0	0.6	194	
1700-3749	Nonmigrant	48.7	32.9	18.4	100.0	1.2	76	
	Intl migrant	28.8	62.5	8.8	100.0	1.4	80	
	Total	38.5	48.1	13.5	100.0	1.3	156	
≥ 3750	Nonmigrant	32.6	34.9	32.6	100.0	1.8	43	
	Intl migrant	9.9	53.8	36.3	100.0	2.4	91	
	Total	17.2	47.8	35.1	100.0	2.2	134	

Source: Household survey ( $\gamma$ : 0-1699=0.229<sup>x</sup>; 1700-3749=0.151<sup>x</sup>; ≥ 3750=0.283<sup>\*</sup>)

Meat and dairy products are primarily destined for self-consumption. Milk is often churned to produce butter and buttermilk. There is no cheese making tradition. An increasing number of peasants trade their livestock and sell dairy products on the growing local (urban) market of Tinghir. Most households produce uniquely for self-consumption, with the exception of some households who introduced graded cattle (Holstein-Friesian or Tarantaise) with the objective of trading dairy products. Most sell the milk directly to the milk co-operation “Halib Imlil” in Tinghir, which was created in 1983. Others trade their dairy products directly with the hotels and *crémeries* in the center of Tinghir.

Only three percent of all the surveyed households are member of the cooperative Halib Imlil. Membership is particularly prevalent in Aït El Mesquine, where 11 percent of all households are member. In Ikhba, Tadafelt, and Ghallil n’Aït Isfoul, no households are members of Halib Imlil. It is striking that members are concentrated within the group of indirect migration households, where 13 percent are members, compared to less than 5 percent in all the other categories. Vans of Halib Imlil collect milk throughout the valley on a daily basis. Many households aspire to membership of Halib Imlil, as it assures them a stable cash income. Nevertheless, access to membership is restricted, and seems to be a prerogative of relatively wealthy (international migrant) households.

The purchase of graded cattle is linked to international migration, as the relatively high, stable and secure income from remittances provides the necessary means to invest in livestock. However, there is a remarkable and significant difference between current international migrant households (the true absentees) on the one hand and indirect and returned international migrant households on the other hand. Table 8.23 indicated that 9 percent of current international migrant households possess graded cattle or crossbreeds. Although this is higher than for nonmigrant and internal migrants (4 percent), the highest percentages are found among indirect (16 percent) and returned (17 percent) international households. This further refutes the hypothesis that “lost labor” accounts for investments in cattle.

Animal husbandry is practiced in small stables inside houses, except for some large freestanding stables in the Ghallil. The cattle, goats, and sheep mainly feed on the fodder produced on the household’s agricultural plots, that is, alfalfa and, to a lesser extent, maize. However, own production is mostly not sufficient and additional fodder is obtained by buying straw, hay, and beets, which are mainly imported from western Morocco<sup>41</sup>. Purchased fodder is generally destined for sheep and, in particular, cattle. Also with regards to animal

<sup>41</sup> Trucks overloaded with bales of hay commute between Morocco’s grain growing areas west and north of the Atlas and oases such as the Todgha. The hay is generally sold on the markets of Tinghir and Taghzout, although some trucks travel between the villages to deliver the hay directly to their customers.

husbandry, the importance of the market is increasing. As table 8.25 shows, the majority of households buy fodder such as beets, hay, and straw on the market. It also indicates that there is a positive, though mostly insignificant<sup>42</sup>, association between international migration and the purchase of fodder. The association is particularly high for international returnees.

**Table 8.25. Expenses on fodder by household migration status**

Household migration status	Yearly expenses on fodder (beets, straw, hey)				Total	Mean	5%trimmed	<i>n</i>
	0	<1,400	1,400-4,299	≥4,300				
Nonmigrant	24.7	34.3	24.7	16.3	100.0	3,559	1,881	166
Internal	19.8	28.9	35.5	15.7	100.0	2,949	2,048	121
Indirect international	11.8	23.5	29.4	35.3	100.0	5,786	5,164	34
Current international	11.1	23.3	25.6	40.0	100.0	7,802	5,205	90
Returned international	11.7	16.7	15.0	56.7	100.0	14,859	6,888	60
Total	18.3	27.8	26.8	27.2	100.0	5,813	3,319	471

Source: Household survey ( $\eta=0.165^*$ ;  $C=0.337^{**}$ )

## 8.6. The economic role of agriculture in oasis livelihoods

Notwithstanding the increasing importance of non-agricultural income—both locally earned and through remittances—agriculture still plays an important role in sustaining household livelihoods. The major change over the past decades has been the radical diversification of the portfolio of livelihood activities, in which agriculture still plays an important, but no longer dominant role. Agricultural produce in the Todgha is still mainly destined for self-consumption. In particular in the lower Todgha, where holdings are relatively large, many households themselves produce an important share of their daily needs of cereals, vegetables, and dairy products.

Figure 8.19 shows that less than 10 percent of households market vegetables and grains. However, the marketing of dates and, increasingly, almonds is far more common. They are the only two “semi-cash crops” in the Todgha. Especially in many lower Todgha villages, such as Ait El Meskine and Tadafelt as well as in the agricultural extension zones and Ghallil, agricultural investments often concern new almond plantations, specifically oriented towards market production. The figure equally shows that households involved in international migration are more inclined to market almonds and dates. However, international return migrant households form a notable exception to this rule. This confirms the hypothesis that this “older” group is rather oriented towards subsistence agriculture, and that current and indirect international migrant households in particular also tend to produce for the market.

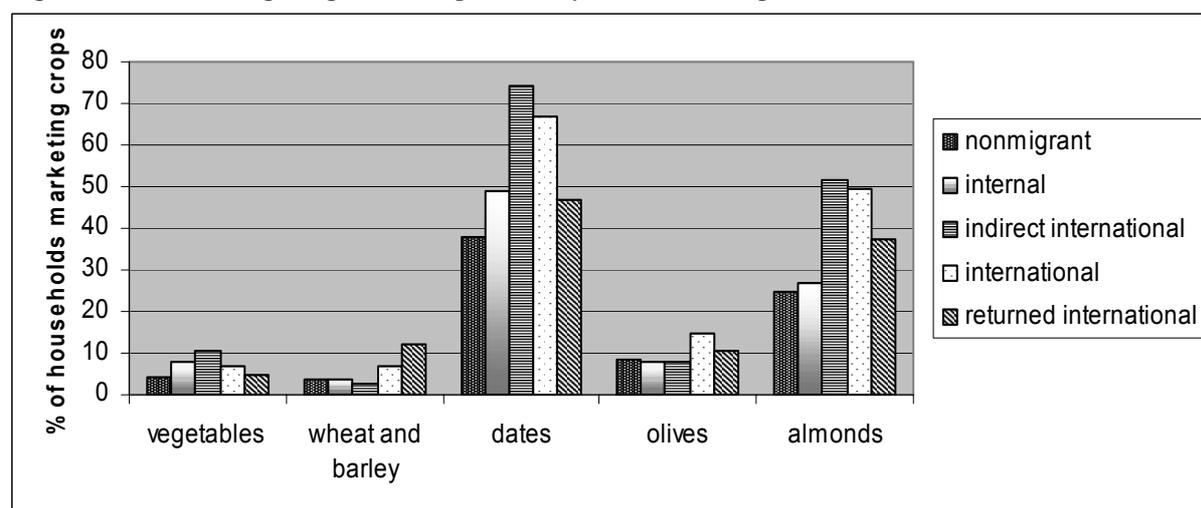
Younger Todghawis do not share their fathers’ ideal of restoring oasis agriculture like in the “good old days”. On the contrary, they generally despise the idea of becoming full-time peasants. Nevertheless, they do see a clear material interest in continuing or intensifying agriculture. Most households invest in agriculture with the clear idea to gain benefits from it, either in cash or in kind.

In order to assess the relative importance of agriculture to household livelihoods, table 8.26 shows the estimated market value of the yearly agricultural produce per household migration category. It shows that tree crops (dates, almonds, olives) are more important than annual crops, although it should be noted that alfalfa has not been included in the

<sup>42</sup> The Bonferroni multiple comparison procedure revealed that returned international migrant household spend significantly more on fodder than both nonmigrant and internal migrant households. All other mean group differences are insignificant.

calculations<sup>43</sup>. Furthermore, there is apparently an association between migration and the value of agricultural produce, which is highest among indirect international households. The value of their agricultural production is about three times higher than for nonmigrant and internal migrant households, which score on almost equally low levels. This is another indication that indirect international migrant households in particular aim at increasing agricultural production. Again, international returnees score relatively low.

Figure 8.19. Marketing of agricultural produce by households migration status



Source: Household survey

Table 8.26. Market value of agricultural produce by household migration category<sup>44</sup>

Household migration status	Market value agricultural production (% of total income)							
	Annual crops	%	Tree crops	%	Dairy	%	Total	%
Nonmigrant	2,402	6.6	9,410	25.8	1,564	4.3	13,376	36.6
Internal	837	2.0	10,748	25.5	1,728	4.1	13,313	31.6
Indirect international	8,469	10.0	27,193	32.1	4,583	5.4	40,244	47.5
Current international	3,449	4.2	19,458	23.7	3,103	3.8	26,010	31.7
Returned international	4,726	5.8	11,275	13.9	4,324	5.3	20,325	25.0
Total	2,800	5.0	12,714	22.8	2,497	4.5	18,011	32.4
$\eta$	0.209*		0.187*		0.223**			

Source: Household survey

If we calculate the market value of all agricultural produce as a percentage of the total cash income, we can see that the average market value of the agricultural produce for all surveyed

<sup>43</sup> The main reason for doing so was that peasants did not know the volume of yearly production, as alfalfa is harvested in small quantities on an almost daily basis. To a limited extent, the value of this production is reflected in the milk production. The production of meat and wool was also not included in the calculations. Therefore, the total market value of harvested annual crops is likely to be higher than indicated here. On the other hand, the capital (fertilizers, pesticides, seeds, petrol) and labor costs have not been included in this variable, which should therefore not be interpreted as indicating "agricultural profit".

<sup>44</sup> It should be noted that this is a rough, and probably inaccurate, estimate, all the more because it does not include the *costs* of agricultural inputs in terms of capital and labor. Furthermore, the value of alfalfa production is unknown, even though it is the main crop grown in the Todgha. Because of a lack of data on some essential agricultural inputs and outputs, it was impossible to calculate *reliable* net profit rates with the data from the household survey. However, the fact that the high and significant differences in agricultural production levels across household categories are repeated in all villages, and the fact that there is no association between migration participation and the prevalence of alfalfa, indicates that we can safely assume that agricultural incomes of households with access to international migration resources tend to be higher.

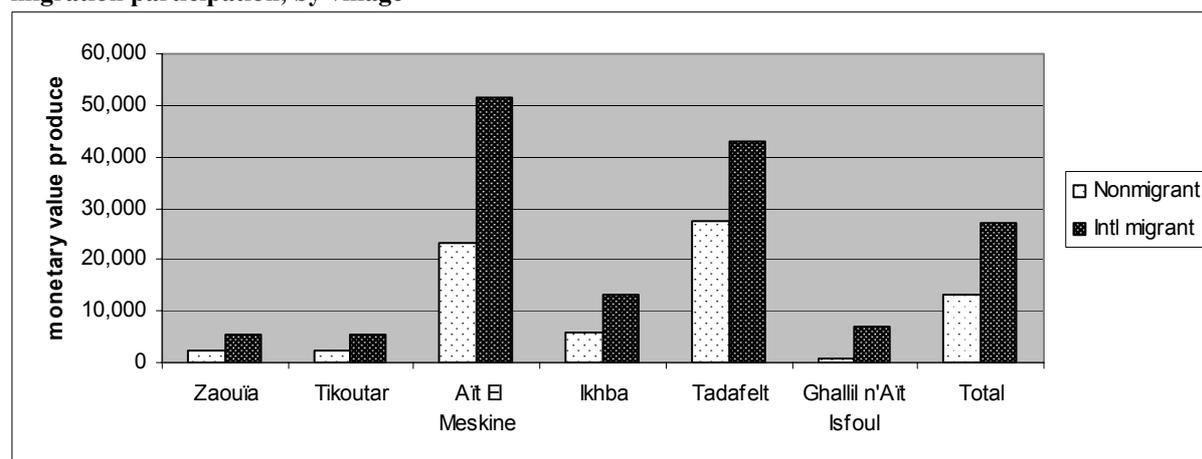
households represents about one third of the total (cash and in kind) household income<sup>45</sup>. The proportion of agricultural income as a percentage of total income is lowest among international returnees (25 percent), and the highest among indirect international migrants (48 percent). Among other households, about one third of all income stems from households' own agricultural production.

Thus, the higher cash incomes of international migrant households do *not* coincide with a lower relative importance of agriculture. The relative importance of agriculture remains largely stable, and the absolute production levels are clearly higher than for households without access to international migration resources. It is important to note that this higher productivity cannot only be explained by the fact that agriculture is selective for land possession (see section 6.8). The main explanatory factor seems to be that households with access to international migration resources exhibit a higher propensity to invest in agriculture. Indeed, international migrant households do not so much tend to retreat from agriculture, but to invest in land purchase, motor pumps, fertilizers, seeds, fruit trees, in order to increase agricultural productivity.

Although international migrant households tend to have higher agricultural production levels, figure 8.20 reveals a high geographical differentiation in agricultural production. Zaouïa and Tikoutar have low production levels per household, reflecting the small size of agricultural holdings in these villages. Nevertheless, the actual figures are probably higher, as alfalfa production is not included in the data. Agricultural holdings in Ikhba are somewhat larger, which is reflected in higher production levels.

Aït El Meskine clearly has the highest production levels, reflecting the larger holding sizes and the high investments in agriculture and pumping. Tadafelt's production levels are the second highest, which is the combined result of relatively large holdings and the availability of relatively abundant *khettara* water. Ghallil n'Aït Isfoul has very low production levels, reflecting the water crisis that struck this village (see also sections 5.4, 8.2.4, and 8.2.5). Many fields have been abandoned here, although it is mainly international migrant households that seem able to till some of their fields in the village or elsewhere.

**Figure 8.20. Monetary value of yearly agricultural production at the household level by international migration participation, by village**



Source: Household survey

<sup>45</sup> Calculated as the sum of the total cash income and the market value of agricultural produce.

## 8.7. Disparate migration impacts, constraints, and the water crisis

### 8.7.1. Migration and the propensity to invest in agriculture

The data presented in this chapter seem to contradict the “migration pessimists” hypothesis that migration contributes to the demise of agriculture in migrant sending areas. Instead, international migration not only contributes to the continuation of traditional oasis agriculture, but also to agricultural *intensification* within the confines of the ancient oasis through the introduction of motor pumps, as well as through the spatial *extension* of the oasis through land reclamation. Migrant households play an important and innovative role in these developments. International migrant households exhibit a higher propensity to invest in oasis agriculture than nonmigrant and internal migrant households. More than others, households with access to remittance income tend to channel financial resources into agriculture not only to preserve it, but also, in many cases, to increase its productivity through installing motorpumps and buying agricultural land. In the same vein, their agricultural practices are relatively capital intensive. More than other households, international migrants tend to possess or hire agricultural machinery, buy fertilizers, pesticides, HYV seeds, fruit trees, and animal fodder. This clearly contradicts the pessimistic and structuralist hypothesis on the relationship between migration and agricultural development.

In the same vein, there has been no indication that the “lost labor effect” that has negatively influenced agricultural production in the longer term. The counterflow of remittances enables current international migrant households to compensate for the so-called “lost labor effect” by hiring paid agricultural laborers for typically “male” agricultural tasks (e.g., tillage, irrigation), maintenance work and well-digging, as well as during agricultural peak seasons. This reveals a major weakness in cumulative causation theory, which implicitly supposes a fixed labor supply within households, and neither takes into account the possibility of hiring “external” labor, nor the possibility of any re-allocation of the intra-household division of labor.

Interestingly, indirect and returned migrant households—to whom the lost labor effect obviously does not apply—exhibit an equal propensity to hire laborers as current migrant households. Besides the fact that young household members generally prefer non-agricultural activities, this is possibly related to the fact that both groups have invested considerable sums in agriculture. This has coincided with an increase in the workload involved. Moreover, their comparative wealth allows them to contract out the most arduous and unpleasant agricultural tasks. It is, however, important to note that these compensatory mechanisms do not apply to internal migrant households, who generally cannot afford to hire laborers. In particular for the wives of internal migrants, the absence of their husbands implies a clear increase in their workload.

Cropping patterns do not differ significantly among the different household categories, although international migrant households tend to cultivate a larger array of crops, including various vegetables, than nonmigrant and internal migrant households. This particularly applies to international return migrants, who sometimes tend to cling to traditional forms of “sentimental” agriculture.

Whereas the number of goats seems to be decreasing, households tend to possess an increasing number of sheep and, in particular, cattle. There is a clear association between migration and the possession of milk cows: those households involved in international migration tend to have more cattle than nonmigrants and internal migrants. In the literature, this phenomenon has been connected to the “feminization” of the agricultural work force due to the out-migration of men (Bencherifa 1991; Steinmann 1993). However, this hypothesis

does not seem to be valid, as indirect and returned international migrant households have an equal or even higher tendency to possess cattle than current international migrant households. The increasing importance of livestock keeping seems to be a general phenomenon. The fact that international migrant households in particular are able to keep cattle seems primarily related to their relatively high financial wealth.

The empirical evidence from this study contradicts cumulative causation theory and, more in general, the pessimistic structuralist views on migration and development: Instead of draining the Todgha of its productive forces, migration has played an important developmental role by enabling agricultural investments.

The data analysis also revealed the importance of the “temporal” dimension in assessing the role of migration in development. International migrant households are certainly not the only investors in agriculture. However, they not only exhibit a higher propensity to invest, but also seem to play an important pioneering role in introducing new agricultural practices. International migrant households were among the first to introduce motor pumps in the Todgha valley in the 1970s. The recent colonization of the Ghallil plain, which transformed Todgha’s eastern desert frontier into a new agricultural frontier over the last 25 years of the twentieth century, sheds more light on the pioneering role international migrant households have played. International migrant households seem to be important as the early adopters of new agricultural techniques and practices. Installing a motor pump, digging a well, purchasing land and cattle obviously involve costs and the sort of financial risks most nonmigrant and internal migrant households cannot initially afford.

Another indication of the relevance of the temporal dimension is that the response of agricultural investments to migration appears to be “lagged”. Household analysis has indicated that most agricultural investments occur after 15 years of migration. Indeed, the initial effect of international migration might be a partial withdrawal from agriculture, and the full impact of migration on agriculture may take two to three decades to fully materialize. A focus on the short-term effects of international migration might therefore lead to rather pessimistic conclusions whereas the relationship between (international) migration and agricultural development in the Todgha is clearly positive in the long run.

### **8.7.2. Factors determining propensities to invest**

It is striking that agricultural investments and capital inputs among internal migrant households are comparable to those of nonmigrant households. This seems to suggest the act of migrating as such does not have a distinct influence on agriculture practices. It is not migration as such, but rather the access to financial resources that enables households to further increase agricultural production. In all domains of agriculture, the main dividing line runs between households with and without access to remittance income. Therefore, the primary factor determining the level of agricultural investments and capital inputs is (1) *access to substantial financial resources, often in the form of remittances*. Since international migrants generally have far higher incomes than internal and nonmigrants, their households are better able to make various agricultural investments and hire external labor. This corroborates the assumption of the new economics of labor migration that international migration is a strategy employed to overcome local market constraints, which enables households to invest in productive activities and, hence, to improve their livelihoods.

Reasoning within a capabilities perspective on development (see section 2.6), we can say that access to international migration resources has expanded the freedoms and capabilities of household members by enhancing the substantive choices they have. In terms of well-being and quality of life, international migration has positively contributed through its

effects on decreasing the agricultural and household workload of men and women as well as through expanding the freedom of individuals to lead lives they have reason to value. International migration potentially frees household members from the obligation to slave from early morning until late at night in agriculture and household activities. This decrease in workload and increase in free time are valuable in themselves. Moreover, it gives people the freedom to concentrate on what they see as more valuable or productive work.

Moreover, international migration has increased the capabilities of households to improve their agricultural livelihoods. Remittances play a crucial role in providing households with sufficient investment capital to do so. However, it should be noted that this positive remittance effect remains largely limited to *international* migration. Internal migrant households tend to be as poor as most nonmigrants, and are therefore less in a position to afford the costs and risks involved in agricultural investments.

Inter-household differences in agricultural investment levels cannot only be explained by income. It is a crucial observation that *international migrant households have a higher propensity to invest in agriculture even when controlling for income*. This implies that there are other factors than higher income alone that explain their higher propensity to invest. Two factors can possibly explain this “above-income effect”. In the literature on migration and development, it has often been argued that international migrants have acquired certain (2) *knowledge, skills, and more business-like attitudes* during their stay abroad, and are therefore more inclined to invest than nonmigrants. Although such human capital factors might possibly be applicable in the case of some individual investors, most international migrants are active in lowly skilled jobs, and have little or no experience in running their own businesses. In chapter 6, we already saw that international migrants are not better educated than nonmigrants.

However, reasoning from the NELM perspective, it is indeed highly likely that international migrants are more prone to invest even when controlling for income, since we have hypothesized that one of the very reasons to migrate is “partir pour rester”, that is, to improve one’s livelihood at “home”. If investing back home is one of the motives to migrate, it is not surprising that the eventual outcomes reflect this. Moreover, the very fact that a person migrates is likely to be a manifestation of his or her relatively risk-taking attitude.

Unfortunately, apart from educational levels, it is difficult to operationalize and retrospectively measure variables such as “risk taking attitude at the onset of migration”. However, such human capital factors cannot explain why *indirect* international migrants have an equal or even slightly higher propensity to invest than current and returned migrants, as well as their high agricultural production. This seems to be an argument to reject the hypothesis that specific knowledge, skills, and attitudes play a significant role in explaining the higher investment levels of the surveyed international migrant households when controlling for income.

An even more crucial factor seems to be that international migrants tend not only to have higher but also far more (3) *stable and secure incomes* than laborers in Morocco, with the exception of civil servants. As they have access to European social security systems and have generally further “insured” their future income through pension rights, they might also be more prone to take the risks involved with such investments. These factors, which are rarely mentioned in the theoretical literature on migration and development, probably play an important role, all the more so because factors such as risk-aversion and income security are known to influence people’s economic behavior. We can therefore hypothesize that income stability and security explain why international migrants tend to invest more in agriculture even when controlling for income.

The prime determining factor in explaining differences in investment levels is access to international migration resources. Within the group of international migration households,

general investment levels are roughly comparable. However, there are some interesting differences between current, indirect, and returned migrants in regard to preferences for certain *types* of agricultural activities and investments. Returned international migrant households are most oriented towards subsistence agriculture of the traditional type, regarding their tendency to buy land in the ancient oasis, their tendency to cultivate a high variety of crops, and their relatively low tendency to market crops. The relatively advanced age of return migrants and their emotional attachment to oasis agriculture might explain this pattern.

Indirect international migrant households, instead, are generally oriented towards relatively modern forms of agriculture outside the traditional oasis, and have a higher propensity to market crops such as almonds and dates. The value of their agricultural production is clearly higher than is the case for current and returned migrants. The generally (4) *younger age* and, possibly, the concomitant better education and more “modern” attitudes of the heads of these households, as compared to return migrants, might partly explain this tendency towards relatively “modern” agriculture.

However, this argument seems equally applicable to *current* international migrants. Two other arguments might explain why *indirect* migrant households are also oriented towards relatively “modern” agriculture. As they have (5) *no direct access to international migration* themselves, indirect migrant households are possibly more focused on becoming financially independent and securing their livelihoods in the Todgha through local investments. Most “indirect” migrant households receive remittances from close kin and, in particular, from the brothers of the household head. However, such money flows might easily be disturbed, for instance in case of marriage, family reunification, and conflict. This means that their income is less secure compared to current or returned migrants. Investing money in one’s own productive enterprises is therefore a way to secure one’s future and create an additional source of income to fall back on.

However, this argument seems to be in conflict with our earlier argument that income security increases the propensity to invest. What might play a more important role is that (6) *indirect migrants have the advantage of being present in situ*. Current migrants can be more hesitant to make big investments, particularly if they do not know whether they will return. For indirect migrants, it is more likely that they will stay. Some migrants support non-household family members with the explicit objective of helping them to set up their own enterprise.

### **8.7.3. Contextual factors underlying spatially differentiated investment patterns**

Until now, we have mentioned factors at the household-level which explain differences in agricultural (investment) behavior. Although the aforementioned factors are likely to influence the propensity to invest, certain geographical-contextual factors influence the extent to which, and *where* such investments are made. Households do not behave within an isotropic surface, and conditions for agricultural investments differ significantly across space. Intra-valley spatial variability in natural endowments shapes different local contexts for agricultural development. Spatial variability in the relative scarcity of land and water in upstream and downstream parts of the valley play a crucial role in explaining geographically variable investment patterns. Besides the unequal spatial distribution of natural resources, differences in the institutional environment between the ancient oasis and the agricultural extension zones equally play an important role in households’ decision-making regarding agricultural investments. The combination of these factors explains why the water-scarce—

but land-abundant—lower Todgha has become a less-constrained and more attractive place for agricultural investments.

In the Todgha, land and water resources are unequally distributed between the upstream and downstream parts of the valley. Whereas water is abundant in the upper Todgha, land is very scarce. The narrow upper valley is hemmed in between steep mountains, all arable land has already been cultivated intensively, and land tenure is extremely fragmented. Moreover, constraints set by the “collectivity” of land and water management limit the “room to maneuver” for peasants wishing to invest in agriculture. Thus, although this lush part of the valley looks an attractive prospect at first sight, the opportunities for agricultural development are actually very limited in the upper Todgha.

In the lower Todgha, the situation is the opposite, with relatively abundant land resources but scarce and less accessible water resources. This had led to diverging patterns in agricultural development, whereby the introduction of motor pumping has boosted agricultural development in the lower Todgha since the mid-1970s. This situation reveals an interesting paradox, as the new agricultural developments take place mainly in the lower Todgha, which has historically been considered as the most marginal zone in agricultural terms. In the lower Todgha, and in particular around the villages of Aït ‘Atta, arable land is relatively abundant, and water used to constitute the principal limiting factor to agriculture. With the introduction of the water pumping technique, however, this limiting factor can now be overcome, provided that enough investment capital and groundwater is available. This has enabled the intensification (in the traditional oasis) and spatial extension (in recent extensions) of agriculture. With the advent of motor pumping techniques, landed resources seem to have become the main limiting factor to agriculture in the Todgha.

Whereas the intensive traditional oasis agriculture of the water-rich upper Todgha is stagnant, in the sense that it offers little opportunities for individuals willing to increase agricultural production, agricultural development is actually taking place in the lower Todgha and especially in the extensions around the villages and in the Ghallil plain. Technological innovation in terms of the introduction of motor pumps—in which the Todghawis’ increasing access to “international migration capital” (i.e., remittances) has played an initiating and enabling role—has not only increased the opportunities for increasing agricultural production on an individual basis, but has also affected the spatial allocation of agricultural investments.

These findings reveal that scarcity of water is not an obstacle to agriculture *per se*, provided that water can be pumped and that sufficient land and investment capital is available<sup>46</sup>. However, water scarcity becomes an important limiting factor if water tables are too deep to access by digging ordinary wells, or if the underground flows are too limited. This increases the costs of pumping, and can subsequently force people to stop cultivating their land, as seems to be the case in Ghallil n’Aït Isfoul and some other peripheral villages, such as Taghia. Tadafelt is a particular case, as natural *khettara* water resources are still available in relatively abundant quantities.

Concerning the spatial allocation of landed investments, most land is bought outside the traditional oasis. This can not only be explained by fragmented land tenure, but also by the social and institutional constraints associated with the “involved” traditional oasis agriculture. Peasants often prefer to localize new investments in new, until recently, barren areas outside the traditional oases<sup>47</sup>, where land is abundantly available in contrast to the sometimes extremely fragmented land tenure systems in the old oases, and where constraints related to the complex and inflexible collective regulations concerning water allocation and

<sup>46</sup> Whether water scarcity might even be a kind of incentive to innovative agricultural practices (cf. Boserup 1965) in oases remains to be confirmed, but this study does not obviate this hypothesis.

<sup>47</sup> This phenomenon seems typical of Moroccan oases (cf. Bencherifa 1991).

maintenance of the agricultural infrastructure do not play a constraining role. Motor pumping allows for a relatively individualized type of agriculture, with no risk of “free-rider behavior”, and in which individual efforts and investments only accrue to the investor and are not to the “benefit of all”. In a way, this has freed the peasants from the collective constraints associated with river and *khattara* irrigation, and has enabled peasants even to produce two harvests per year.

Particularly in the upper Todgha, the limited scope for individual entrepreneurship in the traditional oasis combined with the general scarcity of arable land has pushed peasants to invest in other regions. However, about 90 percent of all land is bought outside the Todgha, in particular in the Middle Atlas region, where more favorable climatic conditions allow for the rain-fed cultivation of grains. Moreover, institutional obstacles linked to the traditional, communal management of highly fragmented land and water resources in traditional oases are absent in the Middle Atlas, where land is also far cheaper.

This extra-regional “leakage” of landed investments seems to confirm the structuralist, center-periphery and cumulative causation theories that migration tends to increase inter-regional inequalities. However, besides the fact that the Middle Atlas cannot be considered as a central region, agriculture in the Middle Atlas is generally rather extensive and most other agricultural investments are done in the Todgha. Landed investments outside the region generally do not coincide with a retreat from intensive local agriculture. Only very few peasants actually resettle in the Middle Atlas. Most investors are absentee landowners, who contract the agricultural work out to *ikhmmesen* or laborers. Thus, most of the profits flow back to the Todgha.

#### **8.7.4. Migration, pumping competition, and threatened sustainability**

The rise of individualized mechanized pumping seems to undermine people’s willingness to participate in the maintenance of the traditional agro-hydrological infrastructure and to obey customary law. Migration has not only affected migrant households, but also the entire agricultural constellation through its effect on social and institutional life. In chapter 10 we will further see how migration, through its emancipatory effects on formerly “subordinate” groups, has played an accelerating role in undermining traditional village institutions of the *taqbilt*, which used to function as “land and water boards”. The increasing inability to guarantee maintenance of collective irrigation systems often led to decreasing water flows in the *khattaras*.

Moreover, pumping can lead to the desiccation of the *khattaras* and natural springs on which the traditional systems rely, thereby further eroding the willingness to maintain these systems, and further reinforcing the shift towards motor pumping. The increasing reliance on pumping has made agriculture more capital intensive in most lower Todgha villages. The shadow-side of this is that some poor—generally nonmigrant and internal migrant—households have become partly or entirely excluded from access to water.

Particularly in those villages where traditional, collectively managed river or *khattara* water resources are no longer available—which is the case in Aït El Mesquine and Ghallil n’Aït Isfoul—households lacking the financial resources to either install a pump and dig a well, or to buy water from pump owners, are forced to withdraw entirely or partially from agriculture. While “wealthy” international migrant households have been able to intensify agriculture, several poor households have thus abandoned agriculture. This probably explains why the difference in production levels between households with and without access to international remittances is relatively high in Aït El Mesquine and Ghallil n’Aït Isfoul. In many lower Todgha villages, access to water resources is becoming increasingly concentrated

in the hands of the relatively wealthy. The poorest households are thus emerging as losers from this water game.

Therefore, it is poverty rather than migration that forces (internal migrant and nonmigrant) households to withdraw from agriculture in villages where water is nowadays only accessible through pumping. Their inability to access water and other agricultural means of production—not migration—seems to be the prime explanation for the long-term abandonment of agricultural land in the lower Todgha. Small-scale abandon does sometimes occur through the effects of migration, but it is a limited and mostly temporary phenomenon. Large-scale land abandonment through “lost labor” has not been detected. Migrants who are not interested in agriculture generally entrust their land to (poorer) family members who often form the indirect international migrant households.

In conclusion, international migration has contributed to increasingly unequal access to water resources in the lower Todgha, both through the demise of village institutions responsible for the management of the collective irrigation infrastructure and through the environmental effects of motorized pumping. In addition, international migrant households have been able to acquire new land both within and outside the Todgha. Thanks to their access to the European labor market and social security systems, international migrant households have been able to extend their access to both water and land resources. Whereas international migration has contributed to increasing local agricultural productivity and improving households’ livelihoods, it has, in particular in the lower Todgha, coincided with an increasing agricultural disparity between those households with and without access to international migration resources.

Although relatively wealthy international migrant households are generally able to pump up water, falling water tables might endanger the future profitability and sustainability of agriculture in the lower Todgha. In villages such as Ghallil n’Ait Isfoul, but also in parts of the Ghallil plain, many wells have become desiccated, presumably due to excessive pumping. The rise of motor pumping has been an “anarchic” development that has not been subject to any control or planning by the local authority or the local agricultural officers of the Centre de Mise en Valeur Agricole (CMV). From these authorities, the peasants receive neither assistance in choosing suitable sites to dig the wells or the right type of motor, nor financial aid. Formally, peasants need a permit to install a motor pump, but in practice there has been uncontrolled development. In all the research villages, the role of the state in agriculture has been minimal. Agricultural extension services are generally office-bound, suffer from a lack of funds, seem demoralized, and rarely play an active role in promoting agriculture in the valley.

At the valley level, there has been increasing competition between peasants, who continue to install new pumps and dig increasingly deeper wells, without taking into consideration the availability and quality of water. Especially in zones that are not directly located on the terraces and aquifers of the Todgha, peasants often dig up to twenty meters deep, without finding any water or water of bad quality. The pumping has had a negative effect on the level of water tables (cf. El Harradji 2001), which has further contributed to the desiccation of *khetaras* and of the wells used for motor pumping.

Increasing pumping competition and falling water tables might, in the absence of government intervention, endanger the ecological and economic sustainability of oasis agriculture. The anarchic, largely uncontrolled growth of agricultural motor pumping is putting increasing stress on these resources, and threatens to lead to the depletion of this vital resource. Villages located downstream accuse those villages located upstream of causing the desiccation of their *khetaras* and wells through excessive pumping.

The legislative powers seem unable to effectively control the expansion of motor pumps and to settle conflicts between water users. Tadafelt and some other nearby villages,

for instance, have accused farmers who have created new agricultural extensions near the upstream village of Tiliouine of excessive pumping. The result of the ensuing lawsuit was that the farmers did not have the right to settle on the land. Moreover, it is officially not allowed to pump without permission. However, the verdict has never been enforced, and the farmers continue to cultivate the land and pump water (cf. Otte 2000:93).

In the lower Todgha and Ghallil plain, most respondents have witnessed a significant lowering of water tables over the past decade (see also El Harradji 2001; Otte 2000). Several wells have become desiccated, which is currently leading to the abandonment of newly established farms and the waste of investments. This development has exacerbated the growing agricultural inequality between rich and poor households, as only the relatively wealthy can afford to dig deeper wells and install heavier pumps if water tables fall. This may lead to the increasing concentration of “water power” in a decreasing number of hands.

Although these hypotheses still need to be tested by hydrological research, concerns over the uncontrolled increase in the number of motor pumps seem to be legitimate. Nowadays, motor pumping is by far the most important source of water in the lower Todgha. The advent of motor pumping has contributed to the intensification of agriculture and enabled a significant increase in the irrigated area in the lower Todgha and the Ghallil plain. However, serious doubts on the sustainability of this type of agriculture remain (De Haas 2001; De Haas and El Ghanjou 2000a; 2000b). Moreover, excessive pumping in the Todgha is probably a major factor in explaining the near-total decline of traditional agriculture in the Ferkla oasis around Tinejdad, located 50 kilometers downstream from Tinghir in the same catchment basin as the Todgha.

## 8.8. Conclusion

In the second half of the twentieth century, there has been a general diversification in oasis livelihoods, which has coincided with the decreasing relative importance of agriculture. This diversification has not only been realized through migration. The regional economy of the Todgha itself is “de-agrarizing”, and more and more people are locally active in retail trade, commerce, cafes and hotels, crafts, and so on. Households that base their livelihoods uniquely on agriculture have become exceptional. Nevertheless, in spite of these developments, subsistence agriculture plays an important role in sustaining oasis livelihoods, in particular in the lower Todgha where holdings are larger and households generally poorer.

It is surprising that the level of agricultural production as a proportion of total income is not lower among international migrant households—with the exception of international returnees—than among nonmigrant and internal migrant households. International migrant households exhibit a higher propensity to invest in oasis agriculture than nonmigrant and internal migrant households, even when controlling for income. This contradicts the idea that international migration leads to a retreat from agriculture.

Investments in motor pumping, land purchase in and outside the Todgha, as well as the purchase of HYV seeds, seedlings, fertilizers, and pesticides should be primarily interpreted as a household strategy to increase agricultural production and, hence, further diversify and increase income. Although most produce is destined for households’ own consumption, an increasing number of international migrant households also produce for the market. Others gain additional cash income by renting out their motor pumps or agricultural machines. Despite the “leakage” of agricultural investments to the Middle Atlas and other regions, most of the benefits of this agriculture flow back to the Todgha, and there can be no doubt that international migration has contributed to agricultural development in the Todgha.

Migrant remittances have enabled many peasants of the lower Todgha to make the transition to motor pumping, to intensify agriculture, and even to extend the irrigated agricultural surface of the Todgha.

The case of the Todgha has shown that international migration has provided households with the necessary revenues to invest in agriculture. These results seem in line with the premises of the new economics of labor migration, which sees migration as a household livelihood strategy to overcome local (credit, insurance) constraints to production. However, this only seems to be valid for international migration. Moreover, the impact of migration is spatially differentiated. The extent to which agricultural investments occur not only depends on the prevalence and duration of migration, but also on specific geographical factors such as the relative land and water scarcity.

As a major “capital provider”, international migration plays a crucial role in current agricultural transformations. Although migration (remittances) seems to have had a primordial *enabling* role in recent changes, it is important to observe that migration does not determine the nature and direction of changes as such. This is a key observation. After all, *migration enables the withdrawal from, as well the intensification of agriculture*. Access to relatively high and stable international migration resources increases the economic freedom and the “room to maneuver” of households. It increases the substantive choices they have to concentrate on particular livelihood activities, to withdraw from others, and it increases their liberty to choose the location of their social and economic activities.

The level of investments as well as the spatial and sectoral allocation of such investments depends on the specific local, environmental, and institutional context, which can form an obstacle to or, instead, give an incentive to investments in agricultural development. For instance, we have seen that the upper Todgha is not an attractive environment for agricultural investment due to geomorphological and institutional constraints. This has led peasants to invest in other places or in other economic sectors. Although international migration potentially enables households to invest in agriculture, there are a number of constraints that explain why the potential of migration and remittances has certainly not been fully realized. Major obstacles to agricultural investments are “red tape” and corruption, which makes it, for example, difficult to obtain title deeds on land for pioneer farmers in the Ghallil. Besides the uncertain legal status of landed property, the near-total absence of advice and guidance by the agricultural extension services with regards to new agricultural practices also constitutes a major obstacle to agricultural development.

The theoretical inference from this is that the NELM-premise that migration is a strategy to overcome local constraints to production should not lead to the conclusion that migration thus automatically leads to more investments or more material development. This would be a determinist and erroneous reversal of the negative vicious cycle of cumulative causation theorists and structuralist migration pessimists. The extent to which such investments indeed occur, and where they are allocated, not only depends on the type and duration of migration, but also on the specific environmental and institutional context in which these livelihood activities take place. Migration is one factor among many others determining the processes of agricultural development and a wide range of agricultural development responses to migration is, therefore, possible.

It seems important not to become too fixated on migration at the risk of singling out migration as the only or prime factor of change. We should not lose sight of processes of change at the macro-level. In fact, migration is part of the more general process of the political and economic integration of the Todgha into wider systems and the general diversification of oasis livelihoods. Livelihood diversification and market integration have led to the increasing relevance of comparative advantages in determining cropping patterns, and has enabled the increasing specialization in certain crops. Increasing wealth and the growing

importance of non-agricultural cash income has created a new situation in which the previous necessity of producing a large variety of products to satisfy the demands of one's own consumption no longer exists. In other words, *subsistence agriculture has lost its former imperative of self-sufficiency*. This process has enabled households to cultivate those products which they find either the most convenient in terms of labor input or the most productive.

As most households have liberated themselves from the obligation to be agriculturally self-sufficient, they now have a freer choice to specialize in certain products. Moreover, technical innovations, in particular mechanized pumping have changed, that is, eased, the conditions under which oasis agriculture is possible. The increased role of non-agricultural cash income and technical innovations have considerably enlarged the room to maneuver or "degrees of freedom" peasants have in opting for a particular form of agriculture, in terms of cropping patterns, labor inputs, as well as capital intensity. In this sense, migration has played an important developmental role.

Although increased access to international migration resources has increased the substantive livelihood choices households have, this does not rule out the high relevance of structural constraints, which explain why the potential of international migration in stimulating agricultural development has not been fully realized. Migration and development do not occur in a political and institutional void. In various specific settings, various structural obstacles may exist to varying degrees, explaining why migration does not *automatically* bring about agricultural development in migrant sending areas, and sometimes even leads to the opposite.

Moreover, the analysis has shown that, even though the general impact of international migration on agricultural development seems to have been positive, there are also clear losers in the process of migration and agricultural transformation. The increasing reliance on capital-intensive pumping in the lower Todgha has contributed to a partial or entire exclusion of poor households from water resources and, thus, to increasing agricultural inequality. In contrast to international migrants, internal migrant and nonmigrant households generally do not have the financial resources to invest in agriculture. Finally, excessive pumping and falling water tables might endanger the future sustainability of agriculture in general.

The impacts of migration are clearly disparate in nature. Whereas migration has indeed enabled agricultural development in general, the benefits derived from migration are not equally distributed, neither across communities, households and individuals, nor across space.

# Migration, non-agricultural investments, and education

## 9.1. Introduction

The previous chapter has shown that migration is not only a means to spread income risks and improve living conditions and general well-being, but also that (international) migration can be a strategy to overcome local capital constraints on agricultural production. Remittances are a potential source of investments. Through their access to this “international migration capital” households have been able to invest in local agriculture. The relatively stable and secure nature of remittance income, moreover explains why international migration households exhibit a higher propensity to invest than other households, even when controlling for income.

Now that we have investigated the role migration has played in agricultural development, the investments made by migrants in non-agricultural sectors will be at the center of this chapter. We have argued that migration should be seen as an integral part of a more general process of regional integration into wider economic and political structures and the concomitant diversification of livelihood strategies. Nevertheless, migration is not the only way through which this diversification is achieved. Almost no household relies exclusively on agriculture, and most households also have local, non-agricultural, and non-migratory sources of income. This points to a process of economic diversification and partial de-agrarization within the Todgha itself (see chapter 5).

To a certain extent, diversification and the improvement of oasis livelihoods has been enabled by structural changes in the macro-context (integration of this tribal area in the modern state’s structures and the national and international capitalist economy, development of public infrastructure, and so on) that have affected oases. On the other hand, actors such as individuals and households are not only passive pawns reacting to the opportunities shaped by shifting macro-forces. Within a certain latitude set by structural constraints, households have the capacity to take their fate into their own hands, and attempt to reshape, diversify, and durably improve their livelihoods through various investments. Through this agency, they can also alter structures (e.g., markets and other institutions), thereby reshaping the very development context in which both migration and development take place.

Based on the analysis in the previous chapter, we have concluded that remittances increase the propensity of international migrant households to invest in agriculture. In this chapter, we will analyze to what extent and in what way migration has enabled households to invest in the further improvement and future security of their livelihoods through investments in non-agricultural sectors. Furthermore, we will investigate how spatial and temporal differentiation in this investment behavior can be explained (research question 3). The non-

agricultural impact of migration is primarily realized through investments in (a) housing, (b) private enterprises, and (c) education (human capital).

Besides analyzing the relationship between migration and non-agricultural investments, we will assess the recursive impact of such investments on regional development in general (so, including effects on nonmigrant households) and the migration and immigration patterns ensuing from these developmental impacts. This chapter, therefore, will assess the role of migration in the more general transformation of the Todgha towards a more open, integrated, diversified, urbanized, and partly de-agrarized regional economy (research question 4). In this analysis, we will weigh the specific impact of migration compared to more general, contextual factors of geographical, economic, and institutional change, of which migration itself is a constituent part.

## 9.2. Migration and investments in housing

### 9.2.1. The exodus from the *igherman* and the housing boom

Simultaneously with processes of out-migration and high population growth, the Todgha valley has witnessed the massive movement of people out of the traditional adobe *igherman* habitat to new, more spacious, and often more luxurious houses (see section 5.1). It is important to note that the exodus from the *igherman* started well before 1975. This movement started in the 1940s and 1950s, when the first people left the *igherman* of Tinghir and some other villages to construct large houses in the vicinity of the old village (cf. Büchner 1986). The exodus from the *igherman* further spread to all villages in the 1960s and 1970s, and was virtually completed in the 1990s. This led to the relocation of entire villages and the general demise of the traditional *igherman*, which have quickly fallen prey to the elements.

The new houses have been constructed on what used to be pasture land collectively owned by the tribe or village<sup>1</sup>. As such collective land officially belongs to the Moroccan state, villages have to claim a specific lot with the state authorities before construction is allowed. After the local authority (i.e., the *qaid* or *pasha*) has recognized a claim, the land is further subdivided among all the households of the village. The past decades have been marked by a veritable “land reclamation fever”, in which villages try to claim and privatize as much land as possible. Most villages have gone through two or sometimes even three successive cycles of land reclamation, in which they have extended their territories as much as possible, and whereby the last empty spots of the upper Todgha are currently being claimed. Conflicting claims on land regularly lead to conflicts between villages or groups of villages.

The explanation for this land reclamation fever goes beyond the mere need for space to build new houses. It is also a quest to obtain an increasingly scarce asset, from which substantial profits can be drawn at a later stage. In the upper Todgha, along paved roads, and in the urbanizing villages around Tinghir, Taghzout, and Aït Aïssa Ou Brahim, building land is becoming increasingly scarce and costly. Collective land reclamation is an effective means by which households can acquire costly building land “for free”, which subsequently becomes an object of speculation.

The social and economic life of the valley gets increasingly oriented towards Tinghir and the outside world. Good road connections to the booming town of Tinghir and, from

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<sup>1</sup> Although this is a semi-desert area, goats and camels feed on the variety of shrubs that grow in the surroundings of the Todgha. Moreover, plants sprout during the occasional wet winters.

there, to more distant places, have become increasingly important. Therefore, locating houses along (paved) roads gives advantages in the form of easy access to semi-public transport (*transits* and taxis) and, hence, quicker, and cheaper access to administrative services, schools, banks, and markets. Therefore, people prefer to construct new houses along roads, instead of more difficult-to-access places where several *igherman* are located. The increasing importance of accessibility equally explains why households from more isolated and distant villages often decide to move to Tinghir.

Between the 1960s and 1990s, virtually all building land (i.e., land located on relatively flat terrain between the actual oasis and the mountains) in the upper Todgha along the paved road between Zaouïa and Tinghir was privatized (i.e., de-collectivized) to construct new houses outside the *igherman*. In this way, entire villages have been relocated, generally to a place adjacent to the ancient *ighrem*<sup>2</sup>. However, several villages that were located on the infrastructurally isolated left bank of the Todgha have been completely or partially relocated to the right bank, next to the paved road<sup>3</sup>. The building density is the highest along the paved road between Tinghir and Zaouïa, which is now fenced off by a nearly continuous stretch of houses. This process is increasingly blurring the distinction between villages in spatial, though certainly not in socio-ethnic, terms.

Land prices are highest around Tinghir, where several villages have virtually become part of Tinghir's sprawling urban structure and the remaining building space is increasingly being filled. In the future, new quarters will be constructed south of Tinghir. North of Tinghir, past the bridge over the Todgha along the main road to Errachidia, most of the building space has been filled up to the village of Tamasint. Here, the higher banks<sup>4</sup> of the river are being occupied by houses, increasingly forming one semi-urban area, with the Todgha running like a broad lush artery through the different quarters on both sides of the river<sup>5</sup>.

The section between Tamasint and Aït Aïssa Ou Brahim is the only part of the paved road to Errachidia where there has not yet been any construction activity. The main reason for this is that both Aït Todoght and Aït 'Atta villages claim ownership of the land on this ethnic frontier. Since this long and bitter conflict has not been settled<sup>6</sup>, the local authorities have proclaimed a building freeze.

Further east, new semi-urban structures are arising around the cluster of Aït Aïssa Ou Brahim and Taghzout. The inhabitants of the El Hart villages have settled down in five new villages around the new administrative center of Taghzout. The original inhabitants of the three *igherman* (Tlout, Boutaghat, Ighrem Aqdim) of the Aït Aïssa Ou Brahim (an Aït 'Atta sublineage)<sup>7</sup> have settled on both sides of the road to Errachidia, which runs through their former tribal territory. Houses increasingly fence off the dirt road linking the two centers. All

<sup>2</sup> Interestingly, spatial segregation between different *ighsan* is often maintained in the spatial set-up of the new villages, in which each *ighs* lives in an ethnically homogeneous section of the village (e.g. Büchner 1990).

<sup>3</sup> This is the case of many villages on the left bank of the Aït Smane *fraction* of the upper Todgha, which are very difficult to reach by car.

<sup>4</sup> Houses are never built on the agricultural fields located directly along the course of the Todgha because of the danger of flooding. They are always located on more elevated places adjacent to the actual oasis.

<sup>5</sup> The inclusion of the surrounding villages in the municipality of Tinghir in 1992 has been a *de facto* recognition of their integration into the urban structures of this town.

<sup>6</sup> The focus of the conflict is that the Aït Aïssa Ou Brahim claim that the official administrative border between the municipalities of Taghzout and Tinghir does not coincide with the pre-colonial tribal sphere of influence. They claim that all land up to Tamasint used to belong to their pastureland, and that the *borj* (arch) indicating the municipal border has therefore been misplaced. The Aït Todoght villages at the western side of the ethnic frontier, however, claim that all the land west of that border is their rightful property. Attempts of local authorities to settle this conflict have failed so far.

<sup>7</sup> This new semi-urban center has adopted the name of this ethnic group, that is, Aït Aïssa Ou Brahim.

the other Aït ‘Atta villages of the lower Todgha have equally developed new habitation extensions, although empty space is less scarce in the most downstream part of the valley.

Through this process of housing construction and urban spread, the river oasis has become increasingly hemmed in by a continuous band of housing structures, which has almost completely replaced the old nodal settlement patterns of dispersed, fortified *igherman*. Most of the 64 *igherman*—including the research villages except for Zaouïa—in the Todgha have been completely abandoned. In the absence of regular maintenance, the *igherman* rapidly fall into ruin. The adobe structures are extremely sensitive to erosion during occasional rain showers. The degradation is further accelerated by the fact that many people have removed palmwood beams from the *igherman* for reuse in their new houses.

Nowadays, only some *igherman* in the Todgha have sizable populations, notably Tinghir, Afanour, Taourirt (all three in the Tinghir municipality), and Zaouïa (in the upper Todgha). Not coincidentally, these are also the locations where land is scarce and land prices high. The people inhabiting these *igherman* generally do not belong to their “original” population. Most new *ighrem* dwellers are poor *immigrants* from the Atlas and Saghro mountains or sedentarizing nomads, who work as agricultural day laborers, well-diggers, bricklayers, and in various other irregular jobs. They often settled in the relatively cheap *ighrem* habitat, which had been abandoned by the relatively “wealthy” autochthonous population. However, this process of the reoccupation of the *ighrem* only occurs in land-scarce environments, such as Zaouïa and Tinghir. Without intervention, all other *igherman* will completely disappear within one or two decades<sup>8</sup>.

### 9.2.2. General causes for the exodus from the *igherman*

Maintenance of the erosion-sensitive adobe habitat is labor-intensive, and, after each rain shower, repair is necessary. Adobe disintegrates when wet, and without continuous maintenance, adobe structures tend to quickly fall into ruin. Moreover, the traditional adobe *ighrem* houses tend to be small, dusty, and laborious to clean. With some exceptions, *igherman* lack hygiene facilities such as lavatories and drinking water. As *ighrem* houses are packed together, it is difficult or impossible to enlarge houses and add facilities. A major advantage of concrete houses is that they are easy to maintain.

In the light of rising living standards, however, people find it increasingly difficult to live in the traditional *ighrem* houses. Resettlement in larger houses also yields a degree of privacy, which would have been unthinkable in the packed *igherman*. The spectacular population growth of the last century has also increased people’s propensity to leave the *igherman*. Besides rising standards of living and population growth, the increasing nuclearization (i.e., the disintegration of extended families, see also sections 7.3.2 and 9.2.5) of households has also played an important role in this process.

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<sup>8</sup> The fine architectural heritage of south-Moroccan adobe fortresses and castles testifies to the age-old intensive trade and migratory links between the Maghreb and sub-Saharan Africa. Through the rapid demise of *igherman*, the Presaharan region also risks completely losing this age-old tradition of major historical, cultural, and touristic significance. So far, except for UNESCO’s effort to restore Taourirt, the great *qasbah* in Ouarzazate, little has been done to stop this process. The demise of the *igherman* has social causes that are comparable to the “collective” crisis affecting the communal management of traditional oasis agriculture. *Igherman* are collective structures with a common defense wall and watchtowers. Individual houses lean against each other, and will collapse if surrounding houses are not maintained. Thus, if a substantial part of the population leaves the *ighrem* and does not contribute to its maintenance anymore, this will increase their labor inputs necessary to upkeep their houses. This will decrease the incentives for remaining inhabitants to maintain the collective *ighrem*, and this will stimulate them to leave as well.

However, the most fundamental general factor enabling the exodus from the *igherman* has been the incorporation of the Todgha into the modern state. This marked the end of the *siba*, the pre-colonial period of tribal wars and general unsafety, in which the sedentary population lived under the permanent threat of attacks and raids by other villages and invading nomads. This situation of violence and lack of safety explains the fortified character of the *igherman*. Before the (colonial, later Moroccan) state got a final and complete grip on the Todgha in the early 1930s, settlement in fortified *igherman* was necessary to protect the villagers from attacks by outsiders. Since then, the political and military *raison d'être* of the *igherman* has fallen away. Since the state has now an effective monopoly on the use of violence, and tribal warfare has consequently been banned, people do not have to fear attacks anymore, and feel safe to settle outside the *igherman*.

### 9.2.3. Migration and the propensity to invest in housing

In order to explain the exodus from the *igherman*, it seems useful to distinguish between the general factors which have increased the *propensity* of people to leave the traditional habitat and the economic factors at the household level that have enabled people to actually make this move. The exodus from the *igherman* and the concomitant housing construction boom seems to be a general development that can be observed throughout the entire valley. The construction of new houses is thus not only reserved for migrant families. However, if we look at the type and size of houses, as well as the amount of money invested and the spatial allocation of such investments, important inter-household differences come to light.

The migration literature gives overwhelming evidence that international labor migrants across the world give a high priority to housing investments in their region of origin (Papademetriou and Martin 1991; Massey *et al.* 1998). In the same vein, apparently *all* studies on migration and development in Morocco agree that housing construction is the first investment priority (cf. Fellat 1996). The Todgha valley is no exception to this rule. Although the construction of new and relatively modern large houses outside the *igherman* has been a general development in the valley, international migrants have been at the forefront of this development, as they tend to build quicker and nicer constructions, and often construct more than one house.

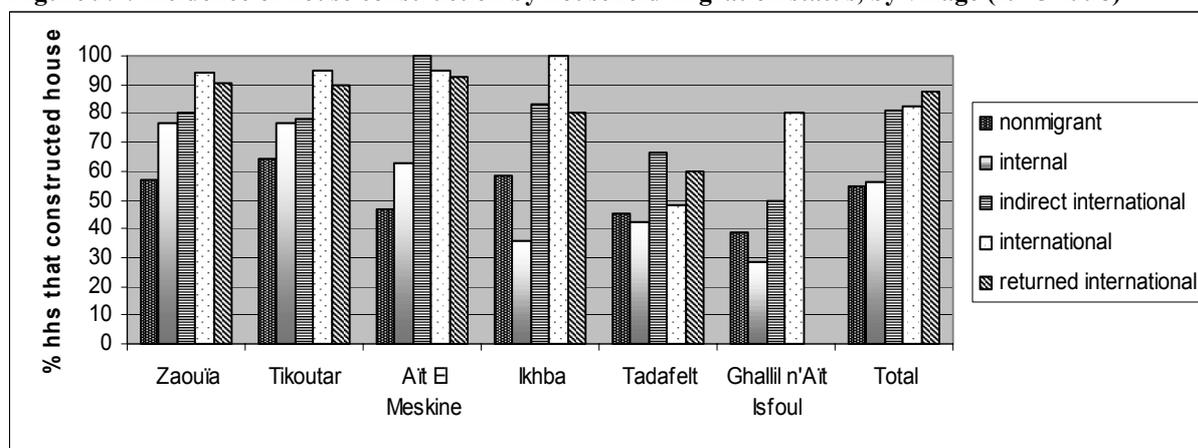
Figure 9.1 indicates that 80 to 90 percent of the surveyed international migrant households have invested in construction since 1975, compared to about 55 percent among both nonmigrant and internal migrant households. The figure equally demonstrates that the tendency to construct houses is higher in Aït Todoght compared to the Aït 'Atta villages, which is probably related to the poorer character of the latter villages.

International migrant households not only have a higher tendency to construct, they equally tend to construct more luxurious and bigger houses. In chapter 7, we saw that most international migrants' houses are built with concrete, and generally enjoy facilities such as lavatories, showers, kitchens, pumps for drinking water, and even small water towers. There is a clear association between participation in international migration and the tendency to have such basic facilities. Most households lacking access to international migration resources build relatively simple houses, generally using adobe as (cheap) construction material.

As could be expected, table 9.1 clearly shows that not only is the incidence of housing construction higher among international migrants, but also that they tend to invest larger sums in housing. There is a high and significant association between participation in international migration and investments in housing. These patterns resemble those for agricultural investments in the previous chapter, with small and insignificant differences between

nonmigrant and internal migrant households as well as between the three types of international migrant households<sup>9</sup>. As was the case for household wealth, living conditions and agricultural investments too, the principal (socio-) economic borderline is between households *with* and *without* access to international migration resources.

**Figure 9.1. Incidence of house construction by household migration status, by village (1975-1998)**



Source: Household survey

**Table 9.1. Investments in housing by household migration status**

Migration status	Investments in housing in dirham 1975-1998 (%)							
	No	within group of investors			Total	Mean	5%trimmed	n
		< 50,000	50-200,000	>200,000				
Nonmigrant	45.6	51.6	36.6	11.8	100.0	47,858	32,442	171
Internal	44.0	47.1	40.0	12.9	100.0	46,592	34,213	125
Indirect international	18.9	20.0	40.0	40.0	100.0	178,095	153,498	37
Current International	17.8	18.1	42.2	39.8	100.0	187,931	162,965	101
Returned international	12.3	21.1	47.4	31.6	100.0	220,231	156,709	65
Total	33.3	34.2	40.8	24.9	100.0	108,003	76,126	499

Source: Household survey ( $\eta=0.358^{**}$ ;  $C=0.395^{**}$ )

The higher incomes of international migrant households seem to primarily explain their higher propensity to invest. However, table 9.2 highlights that, even when controlling for income, a significant association remains between international migration and housing investments within the middle and the high income categories. In line with our analysis of agricultural investments, it is likely that income stability and security are important factors explaining international migrants' higher propensity to invest in housing within income categories.

Table 9.3 shows that, logically, investments in housing increase with the length of stay abroad. The data also reveal that the biggest differential is found between the first two categories, and that there is a much smaller differential between the 15-28 years and  $\geq 29$  years abroad groups concerning the incidence as well as the level of investments. Constructing a (concrete) house is generally the first investment a migrant makes after having saved a certain amount of money. About half of all international migrants have constructed a house within 14 years of migrating. Thus, the investment response to migration for construction is less "lagged" than was the case for agricultural investments.

<sup>9</sup> The results of Bonferroni multiple comparison procedure of group means revealed significant differences between (1) nonmigrant and internal migrant household categories on the one hand, and (2) current, indirect, and returned international household categories on the other. Between categories within these groups, differences of means are insignificant.

**Table 9.2. Investments in housing by international migration participation, by household income**

Total household income	Investments in housing including land purchase in dirham 1975-1998 (%)							
	Migration status	within group of investors				Total	Mean	n
		No	< 50,000	50-200,000	>200,000			
0-1699	Nonmigrant	50.9	61.0	31.7	7.3	100.0	28,519	167
	Intl migrant	32.0	52.9	35.3	11.8	100.0	73,760	25
	Total	48.4	59.6	32.3	8.1	100.0	34,410	192
1700-3749	Nonmigrant	37.3	53.2	40.4	6.4	100.0	48,013	75
	Intl migrant	12.7	23.2	50.7	26.1	100.0	135,057	79
	Total	24.7	35.3	46.6	18.1	100.0	92,666	154
≥ 3750	Nonmigrant	35.7	18.5	40.7	40.7	100.0	120,571	42
	Intl migrant	13.2	10.1	38.0	51.9	100.0	249,692	91
	Total	20.3	12.3	38.7	49.1	100.0	208,917	133

Source: Household survey (C: 0-1699=0.139<sup>9</sup>; 1700-3749=0.379<sup>\*\*</sup>; ≥ 3750=0.271<sup>\*</sup>)

**Table 9.3. Length of stay abroad and investments in housing**

Length of stay abroad	Investments in housing including land purchase in dirham 1975-1998 (%)								
		within group of investors				Total	Mean	5%trimmed	n
		No	< 50,000	50-200,000	>200,000				
1-14	33.3	34.2	55.3	10.5	100.0	106,421	62,008	57	
15-28	12.3	20.0	28.0	52.0	100.0	236,421	200,989	57	
≥29	1.9	5.9	52.9	41.2	100.0	260,606	233,750	52	
Total	16.3	15.7	37.3	30.7	100.0	199,358	76,126	166	

Source: Household survey ( $\eta=0.229^*$ ;  $r = 0.200^{**}$ )

More convenient and luxurious housing is a top priority for migrants and nonmigrants alike. In general, much more money is invested in housing (108,000 dirham on average, see table 9.1) than in land purchase (9,800 dirham on average) and pumping (7,500 dirham on average). Moreover, housing investments tend to occur early in the household migration cycle.

It is certain that (international) migration has accelerated the exodus from and the demise of the *igherman*<sup>10</sup>. The privatization of communal land and housing construction has taken place in successive stages, and many households constructed an adobe house outside the *ighrem* before 1975. This partly explains why most households that have not invested in housing live outside the *ighrem*. If it is not their private property (through own construction or inheritance), they rent the houses or live in houses owned by close kin. International migrant households that have left the village altogether due to family reunification—which have not been included in the survey—often entrust their unused houses to close family members or sometimes servants or guards, who are then allowed to occupy (part of) the building.

In the Todgha valley, housing construction tends to be a long-term process, in particular for poorer households. Generally, as soon as the ground floor has been completed, the family moves into the house. Second or third stories are only constructed when the household has saved enough money or are not built at all<sup>11</sup>. Construction speed crucially depends on the amount of money available to pay for building materials and laborers, and this brick-by-brick mode of construction may take many years. In contrast to most nonmigrants and internal migrant households, international migration households are able to construct their houses in one go.

<sup>10</sup> The high level of international migration may explain why the exodus from the *igherman* is almost complete in the Todgha valley. In oases with a lower prevalence or shorter history of international migration—such as the Tafilalt, the Drâa, and the Bani—many *igherman* are still partly inhabited.

<sup>11</sup> The construction of multi-storey houses is mostly limited to the upper Todgha—where there is a lack of building space—and to the urban clusters around Tinghir and Taghzout. In the lower Todgha villages, most houses only consist of a ground floor, except for some houses that are mostly owned by international migrants.

### 9.2.4. Spatial allocation of housing investments and the role of migration

Households generally build their first house outside the *ighrem* in the village. Table 9.4 reveals that many migrant households have constructed several houses. Over half of the international migrant households possess more than one house, compared to one quarter among nonmigrant and one third among internal migrant households. Second, third, and fourth houses are generally constructed outside the native village. Table 9.5 analyzes the spatial allocation of housing investments. It shows that one quarter of all houses constructed by the surveyed households are located outside the village. Since urban houses are far more expensive—more than double on average—to construct, however, extra-village investments account for 44 percent of the total amount invested in housing. Tinghir is clearly the focus of external real estate investments, accounting for three quarters of all houses constructed outside the village.

Only about 20 percent of the houses are constructed outside the Todgha, notably in Rabat/Salé. There are clear differences in investment preferences among the villages. In Zaouïa, Tikoutar, and Ikhba, about 90 percent of the extra-village houses are located in Tinghir, whereas more than half of the houses outside Aït El Mesquine are constructed in the Rabat/Salé region—particularly in the Temara district. Real estate investments in Rabat/Salé are a real specialty of international migrant households from this relative wealthy village. Some households from the Aït ‘Atta village of Tadafelt and Ghallil n’Aït Isfoul have constructed houses in nearby Taghzout.

**Table 9.4. Number of houses outside the *ighrem* by household migration status**

Village	Number of houses in possession (%)				Total	<i>n</i>
	1	2	3	≥4		
nonmigrant	76.0	21.7	2.3	0.0	100.0	175
internal	68.5	29.1	0.8	1.6	100.0	127
indirect international	42.1	39.5	15.8	2.6	100.0	38
current international	40.2	47.1	8.8	3.9	100.0	102
returned international	46.2	38.5	12.3	3.1	100.0	65
Total	60.6	32.1	5.5	1.8	100.0	507

Source: Household survey ( $\eta=0.234^{**}$ ;  $C=0.394^{**}$ )

**Table 9.5. Spatial allocation of housing investments**

Location	Investments in housing in dirham 1975-1998					
	Incidence	%	Total investment	%	Per house	% of total sum by intl migrant
Within village	352	75.2	29,273,250	56.2	83,163	69.0
Outside village	116	24.8	22,792,500	43.8	196,487	79.9
<i>Tinghir</i>	89	76.7	14,736,500	64.7	165,579	73.9
<i>Other Todgha</i>	3	2.6	135,000	0.6	45,000	-
<i>Middle Atlas</i>	3	2.6	487,000	2.1	162,333	-
<i>Rabat/Salé</i>	14	12.1	6,100,000	26.8	435,714	100.0
<i>Other</i>	7	6.0	1,334,000	5.9	190,571	57.4
<i>Subtotal</i>	116	100.0	22,792,500	100.0	196,487	79.9
Total	468	100.0	52,065,750	100.0	111,252	74.0

Source: Household survey

In line with migration systems theory, these cases highlight that not only migration, but also the concomitant investment streams tend to follow distinct, spatially clustered patterns. Moreover, we can conclude that there is only limited “leakage” of real estate investments outside the valley: most houses are constructed within the Todgha. Whereas first houses are

generally built in the village, subsequent houses are overwhelmingly built in Tinghir, the valley's capital. International migrant households are playing a leading role in the current construction boom. Representing 40 percent of all households, they account for 69 and 80 percent of investments in and outside the village, respectively.

Table 9.6 demonstrates that international migrant households exhibit a higher propensity to construct houses both within and outside the village, and tend to invest larger sums in housing construction than nonmigrant and internal migrant households. Almost one third have built houses elsewhere, compared to 11 and 13 percent among nonmigrants and internal migrants. The costs of constructing houses outside the oasis are generally higher, as land has to be purchased—whereas in the villages, land is generally acquired through division. Moreover, urban dwellings are generally made of cement bricks and concrete instead of adobe, which is still used to construct houses in the lower Todgha villages.

For relatively wealthy households, it is common to construct one new house in the village and a second one in Tinghir (of Taghzout) as an investment project. Other households construct such urban houses as a second house. This is especially common among inhabitants of Zaouia and other relatively remote villages, who often stay overnight in Tinghir if they are working, running their own enterprise, or going to school there.

In most instances, however, such extra houses are not primarily destined to live in but as a means of acquiring extra income via short- or long-term leases<sup>12</sup>. It is also very common to keep one storey free for use by the family while renting out the others. There is a significant correlation ( $r=0.338$ ) between investment in housing outside the oasis and income from renting houses. Ongoing immigration to the Todgha valley, population growth, and increasing economic activity have all increased the demand for housing and driven up rents and land prices over the past decades. Given these circumstances, real estate investments are a logical choice for migrant households. Moreover, most investors indicated in interviews that one important motive for investing in housing was that they consider it as a kind of “life insurance” for the household. In case of the death of the breadwinner, for example, family members are at least guaranteed shelter and will often gain rental income. Constructing houses, therefore, is also an investment in future income stability.

**Table 9.6. Investments in housing in and outside village by household migration status**

Migration status	Investments in housing including land purchase in dirham 1975-1998 (%)							
	Within village				Outside village			
	% inv	Mean	Within inv	<i>n</i>	% inv	Mean	Within inv	<i>n</i>
nonmigrant	50.9	31,107	61,141	171	10.9	16,654	153,395	175
internal	52.8	29,980	56,780	125	12.6	16,350	129,781	127
indirect international	70.3	78,973	112,385	37	31.6	96,513	305,625	38
current international	80.2	103,188	128,667	101	32.4	84,966	262,621	102
returned international	84.6	105,577	124,773	65	30.8	114,654	372,625	65
Total	63.1	58,664	92,931	499	19.7	48,871	247,775	507

Source: Household survey ( $\eta$ : Within village 0.415\*\*; Outside village 0.247\*\*)

### 9.2.5. “Stone-age” mentality or rational choice?

While virtually all studies on migration and development in Morocco agree that housing construction is the first investment priority of migrants, the overwhelming majority of researchers lament this. Researchers and policy makers have frequently “accused” international migrants of building large, richly ornamented houses in an urban style. In line

<sup>12</sup> Sometimes, building lots in Tinghir and Taghzout are purchased for speculation.

with the general tendency in the international migration literature (see section 2.4.3), studies on migration and development in Morocco have tended to strongly disapprove of this so-called “mentalité de pierre” (Kaioua 1999:124), which they consider as “exaggerated” (Ben Ali 1996:354) and which for them reflects a largely unnecessary, and “irrational” (Aït Hamza 1988) use of money which only fuels price inflation. The size and self-indulgent style of migrants’ houses is generally frowned upon.

Researchers have blamed the lack of entrepreneurial mentality among migrants, in particular among the first generation, in explaining this orientation towards what Kaioua (1999:124) called a “refuge sector par excellence”. Such studies typically call on policies to “divert remittances to productive sectors of the economy” (Agoumy 1988:159) by informing and “guiding” migrants towards better, more “rational” investment behavior (Kaioua 1999:124).

However, there is reason to criticize the patronizing attitude towards migrants’ investment behavior that is displayed by many researchers, which mostly consists of blaming their “irrational” mentality<sup>13</sup> *a priori* rather than really trying to comprehend the motives behind their behavior. Taking into account the specific social, cultural, economic, and institutional context, the high priority among migrants (and nonmigrants) to invest in housing seems a “rational” and relatively secure choice. It is a relatively low risk investment (cf. Ben Ali 1996) with potentially high benefits.

Although researchers might not always appreciate “pompous” houses, their constructors and inhabitants see the advantages of living in large, hygienic, and easy to maintain houses. It would be too simple to reduce the desire to construct houses as simply a quest to erect status symbols, although such arguments might indeed play a role too (see section 10.2). Several other arguments can be put forward to explain the priority for housing construction.

Hajjarabi (1988) has pointed to the legitimacy of the desire for decent housing and basic hygienic facilities. The first logical goal for almost all migrants is to fulfill the households’ immediate needs. Proper nutrition, health care, clothing, and housing all serve to give the family a decent living. The relatively large, new houses can offer more convenient living and privacy than was ever conceivable in the packed, dark, and dusty *ighrem* dwellings<sup>14</sup>.

Moreover, the luxury of migrants’ houses is often exaggerated in the migration literature on Morocco. In fact, only a minority of the houses are built in what could be called a pompous style, which are, however, often taken as a representative example. Apart from the incidental truly pompous buildings, most migrants’ houses are large and contain many rooms, but are relatively basic beyond the necessities mentioned above. The image that most migrants construct “castles” is probably due to the fact that such houses, which are often located along the paved road, catch the eye. Unfortunately, there is a tendency to jump to the conclusion that such dwellings are representative of migrants’ houses on the basis of such superficial observations. It is exactly this tendency towards “rural tourism” or “impressionism” (cf. Taylor 1999) that has hampered migration and development research for the past decades.

For migrants who left behind their families, the desire to offer them more convenient living conditions is the first argument to construct houses outside the new *ighrem*. This is all

<sup>13</sup> In this context, Taylor *et al.* (1996a:411) speak of “diatribes by academics and policy makers against migrants for their profligate and unproductive ways”.

<sup>14</sup> If badly maintained, *igherman* can also be dangerous to live in due to the risk of collapse. However, the major disadvantage of concrete brick houses is their poor insulating qualities compared to adobe. Concrete houses tend to become excessively hot in summer and bitterly cold during winter nights. Thick adobe walls protect houses better from the extremities of the Presaharan climate.

the more logical regarding the fact that the costs of constructing a new house are only a fraction of what one would pay in Europe. Even migrant households that have left the village altogether due to family reunification, have an interest in maintaining a foothold. After all, as Ben Ali (1996:360) has also argued, most migrants expect or hope to return some day<sup>15</sup>.

Indeed, houses are *also* important status symbols, expressing upward social mobility achieved through, for instance, migration (cf. Mezdour 1993:182). However, the fact that people (not just in Morocco) tend to be proud of their houses as a symbol of a life achievement does not dismiss the positive well-being and health effects of living in relatively large, easy to maintain and clean houses<sup>16</sup>. And for what good reason could we classify facilities such as lavatories, washbasins, showers, tiled kitchens, and drinking water as (excessive) luxury?

Decent housing is generally recognized as a basic necessity of life. The quest for space, hygiene, and some degree of privacy seems to be almost universal. By implicitly suggesting that rural dwellers should stay in their “mud brick houses”, wealthy and urban-based social scientists apply different standards to them than they would probably do to themselves. Reasoning from a capabilities-based concept of development (Sen 1999), increased well-being and standards of living are to be considered as constituent parts of development. Dismissing such well-being aspects as “non-developmental” reflects a narrow view of development.

There are also more specific social and cultural reasons explaining why housing construction takes such priority. In extended migrant households, there are usually conflicts between migrants’ wives and their in-laws, in particular their mothers-in-law. Such conflicts are usually centered on control over remittances. Traditionally, the male “in-laws” receive and decide on the use of remittances. However, such patronizing traditions are increasingly contested by migrants’ wives. This creates a strong push for migrants to establish their own, nuclear households by constructing a new house either in the village or elsewhere. The decision to establish independent, nuclear households is often initiated by the spouse of the migrant. Besides increasing the personal liberty of migrant wives, this can also be an effective strategy for migrants to escape from the heavy financial burden of supporting large extended families. The same centrifugal processes towards household nuclearization can eventually push towards family reunification at the destination.

This all points again to the limitations of migration network theory. Migrants have to strike a balance between social expectations of them to be generous on the one hand, and finding gentle ways to protect their own (material and social) interest from what they sometimes might see as the predatory behavior of others on the other. Networks do not extend *ad infinitum*, as lineages (*ighsan*) tend to monopolize access to international migration systems (see section 6.8.3). In the same vein, there are clear tendencies to preserve the migration capital within the households through literally fencing off the nuclear household behind four walls.

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<sup>15</sup> As most migrants do not return eventually, it is unclear what will happen to these houses in the future. Whereas migrants might maintain such houses as “holiday homes”, it is also conceivable that many of their children will possibly lose interest in those houses, and will eventually sell them. Researchers have predicted over the past three decades that this would cause a collapse of the housing market. Whether and to what extent this really will happen in the future crucially depends on other demand-related factors such as demographic and economic growth. However, in the light of sustained population growth and the further nuclearization of households, it is not so likely that the housing market will durably collapse. Moreover, this danger seems to apply to village rather than to urban housing.

<sup>16</sup> Lack of space is also a problem for schoolgoing children, as living in crowded houses hampers their ability to do their homework, thus leading to a potentially negative effect on their performance.

This is another dimension of the “downside of social capital” put forward by Portes and Landolt (1996; see also section 6.8.3). The social capital of the petitioners consists precisely in their right to demand and receive assistance from fellow group members. Tight social networks and obligations to financially support family and community members may therefore eventually lead to the accelerated breakdown of extended families and a certain loosening of tight family ties. Avoidance of social pressure towards “shared poverty” (see also section 10.2) explains why some households even decide to relocate the entire household to Tinghir or elsewhere in Morocco. Such short-distance migration has the additional advantage of facilitating access to public infrastructure, banks (not unimportant for remittance receiving households), work, and schooling.

Similar disaggregating processes, in which intra-household tensions lead to the break-up of extended families and the physical “lifting out” of nuclear families and atomization of family life, have been described for other migrant sending areas in Morocco and Tunisia (Aït Hamza 1988; 1995; Berriane 1996; De Mas 1990; Michalak 1997). Hajjarabi (1988:182-3) argued that the wish to have one’s own house is *the* top priority among women even more than among men, because women have most to gain in terms of autonomy and privacy by establishing an independent household. She also argued that, in their very architectural design, traditional houses reflect traditional, patriarchal norms and the domination of the mother-in-law, and, hence, obstruct private family life.

### 9.2.6. Indirect effects of real estate investments

Through the influx of relatively high, stable, and secure remittance income, international migrant households are better able to bear the costs and risks of real estate investments. It is through these investments that international migrant households simultaneously capitalize on, and actively contribute to, the accelerated urban growth and concentration of economic activities in Tinghir and, to a lesser extent, around places like Taghzout and Aït Aïssa Ou Brahim.

Although we have not been able to quantify these effects<sup>17</sup>, the indirect positive effects of real estate investments should probably not be underestimated. Nonmigrants and local entrepreneurs tend to admit that they would probably not have work if migrants did not invest in construction and consumption to such an extent (cf. Otte 2000:124). Many nonmigrants and immigrants supplement their agricultural income by working in the local housing sector. Thus, the migration-propelled housing boom also has positive effects on the wider valley economy. 33 percent of the surveyed nonmigrant households gain income from *local* construction work (see section 7.4.1), and almost 22 percent of all nonmigrant working men above the age of 17 reported construction work as their principal activity. Therefore, the general housing boom—which has been partly enabled and triggered by international migration—has probably also created employment for nonmigrant populations.

The construction boom has also created considerable local employment in sectors that are closely related to the construction business, such as Tinghir’s thriving crafts industry (e.g., carpenters, welders), hardware stores, and retail trade in household utensils and building material. Furthermore, it has offered employment to various electricians and plumbers. Via such multiplier effects, it is likely that nonmigrants have indirectly benefited from migrants’ investments, both in the villages and in Tinghir. Moreover, construction activities in Tinghir,

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<sup>17</sup> It was not the aim of this study to make a quantitative assessment of local income multiplier effects of migrants’ investments. Through the survey’s setup, essential data are lacking in order to calculate such effects. Therefore, more research is required in order to further test the *tentative* hypotheses presented in this section.

Taghzout, and other places attract workers from other areas to the Todgha (see section 6.6.1). In the same way as the migration-triggered urban boom in the Rif (which is however much larger in scale) attracted migrants from the Todgha. Investments by international migrant households in Tinghir have, in turn, triggered reversed processes of internal migration to this region of international out-migration. In other words, the recursive developmental effects of international migration seem to have created a counterflow of internal migrants.

It has often been argued in the migration and development literature that the housing boom would only be a temporary activity, and that the economic activities associated with real estate investments would constitute “spurious development”, as opposed to the “real development” commonly associated with productive, industrial investments. However, it seems difficult to maintain this argument for two reasons. First of all, this reveals a limited understanding of economic processes and what actually constitutes development, as it ignores the ways in which consumption and so-called non-productive investments may stimulate the local and regional economy through income multipliers. Secondly, the argument that the housing boom would be only a temporary phenomenon is somewhat difficult to sustain after three decades of sustained urban growth in Morocco in general, and migrant sending areas in particular.

Apparently, this viewpoint was based on the implicit expectation that construction activities would cease and the house market would collapse once all migrants had constructed their new, fancy houses. Obviously, this ignored the fact that migrants do not only construct houses for themselves, but also that they have capitalized on broader processes of economic development, rising standards of living, population growth, and urbanization.

This all explains why demand for convenient urban housing has skyrocketed over the past decades. Thus, unexpectedly, migrants often continued to build houses. Furthermore, it was assumed that international migration would come to an end in the mid-1970s, while, in fact, out-migration has continued since then (see section 6.3.2). Finally, it should not be ignored that, though to a lesser extent and at a lower pace, many nonmigrants and internal migrants equally construct houses. Indeed, the quest for more convenient, rural or urban, housing seems a universal one, and it is unlikely that the (urban) housing boom has come to end.

There is no indication that migrants’ investments have led to excessive, general price inflation, except for the general increase in land prices, especially in Tinghir and along paved roads. This increase in land prices seems indeed to decrease the ability of the poor to construct houses at such locations. Constructing adobe houses at less central places is relatively cheap. Moreover, almost all people native to the region have acquired land for free in their village. Almost all nonmigrant and internal migrant households now live in new houses, although their houses tend to be less well equipped (see section 7.5). This, however, cannot be the result of migration-driven price inflation, as prices for equipment and (imported) household utensils have actually decreased in recent years. Nevertheless, the living conditions of the poor immigrants, who live in the decaying *ighrem* habitat, are generally more arduous.

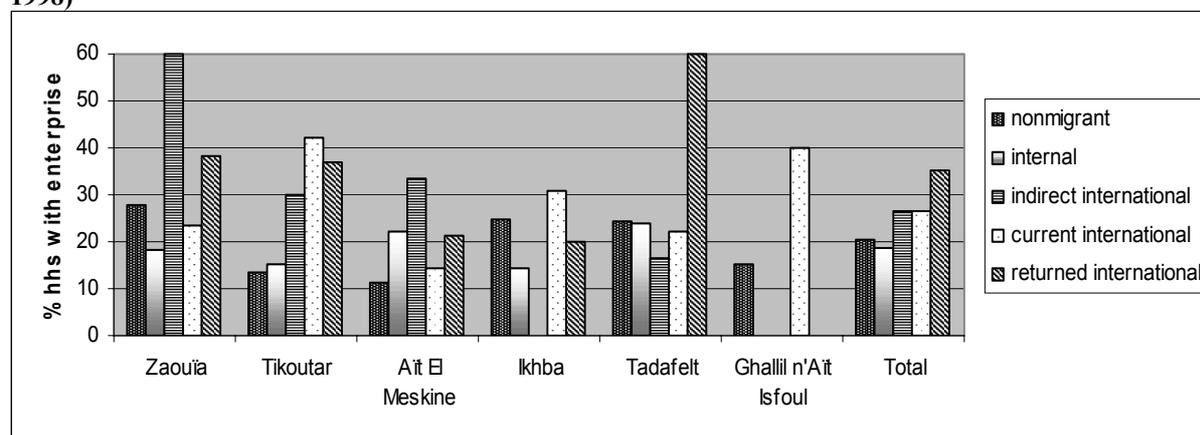
### 9.3. Migrant entrepreneurs: Survivors and *batroons*

#### 9.3.1. Migration and the propensity to invest in private businesses

As figure 9.2 demonstrates, the association between migration and investments in commercial enterprises (coffeehouses, restaurants, grocery stores, transport and so on) is weaker than for

agriculture and housing. Moreover, the relationship is irregular across villages. The strongest relationship between participation in international migration and such investments is found in Tikoutar. On the whole, returned international migrant households exhibit the highest propensity to invest. More than other types of investments, investments in private business enterprises seem a specialty of returned migrants.

**Figure 9.2. Investments in non-agricultural enterprises by household migration status, by village (1975-1998)**



Source: Household survey

Table 9.7 shows the amounts invested in business enterprises per household category, and reveals that the association between migration and investment in enterprises is weak, though still significant. Less than one fifth of all the surveyed nonmigrant and internal migrant households have invested, compared to one quarter among indirect and current international migrants. Among the international returnees, one third has invested. Although measures of association are relatively weak, differences in investment levels between households with and without access to international migrant remittances are significant.

**Table 9.7. Investments in private enterprises by household migration status**

Migration status	Investments in enterprises in dirham 1975-1998 (%)							
	No	within group of investors			Total	Mean	5%trimmed	n
		< 50,000	50-100,000	>100,000				
Nonmigrant	82.7	62.1	17.2	20.7	100.0	9,799	3,189	168
Internal	81.7	65.2	17.4	17.4	100.0	11,011	2,728	126
Indirect international	75.7	55.6	33.3	11.1	100.0	12,824	6,419	37
Current International	74.3	53.8	15.4	30.8	100.0	19,878	9,810	101
Returned international	64.1	30.4	47.8	21.7	100.0	118,386 <sup>18</sup>	21,540	64
Total	77.8	53.6	24.5	21.8	100.0	26,581	6,014	496

Source: Household survey ( $\eta=0.186^{**}$ ;  $C=0.232^{**}$ )

The Bonferroni multiple comparison procedure revealed the same pattern as for pumps, land purchase and real estate investments (see tables 8.4, 8.12, and 9.1): there are significant differences between (1) nonmigrant and internal migrant household categories on the one hand, and (2) current, indirect, and returned international household categories on the other. Between household categories within these groups, differences of means are insignificant. It

<sup>18</sup> This mean has been inflated due to the existence of one extreme value, representing a rich investor in the tourist industry. Without this extreme value, the mean would be 63,985. Looking at the 5% trimmed mean values, it remains clear that returned international migrant households tend to invest far larger sums than others. In the following tables, this extreme value has been excluded from the analysis.

is important to note that although the group of investors is relatively small compared to agricultural and real estate sectors, the invested amounts per investor are relatively large (see table 9.9).

Table 9.8 shows that there is only a weak and insignificant association between migration and investments in business enterprises when controlling for income. In contrast to agricultural and real estate investments, there is apparently no above-income effect of migration on total business investments. However, because return migrants—who tend to concentrate on such business investments—are grouped with indirect and current migrant households, the important role of return migrants is concealed. The question is, however, to what extent these patterns are repeated across the different types of business investments that we have distinguished.

**Table 9.8. Investments in private enterprises by international migration participation, by household income**

Total household income	Migration status	Investments in private enterprises 1975-1998 (%)						Mean	n
		No	within group of investors			Total			
			< 50,000	50-200,000	>200,000				
0-1699	Nonmigrant	88.0	75.0	20.0	5.0	100.0	4,667	166	
	Intl migrant	100.0	--	--	--	100.0	0	25	
	Total	89.5	75.0	20.0	5.0	100.0	4,056	191	
1700-3749	Nonmigrant	78.7	68.8	12.5	18.8	100.0	9,367	75	
	Intl migrant	70.5	52.2	26.1	21.7	100.0	18,548	78	
	Total	74.5	59.0	20.5	20.5	100.0	14,077	153	
≥ 3750	Nonmigrant	70.0	50.0	16.7	33.3	100.0	30,384	40	
	Intl migrant	64.8	40.6	37.5	21.9	100.0	33,429	91	
	Total	66.4	43.2	31.8	25.0	100.0	32,499	131	

Source: Household survey (C: 0-1699=0.132<sup>x</sup>; 1700-3749: 0.130<sup>x</sup>; ≥ 3750=0.124<sup>x</sup>)

Table 9.9 gives an overview of the relative importance of different types of investments and their spatial allocation. Table 9.10 reveals to what extent these investment patterns differ across household categories. It shows that, in general, the association between international migration and investments is relatively weak, but differs according to investment category. Representing 42 percent of all new enterprises established by the surveyed households, investments in small grocery shops and other retail activities are most common. Although one fifth of the stores are located in the villages, over half of the stores are located in Tinghir. With an average invested amount of 43,000 dirham, these are relatively cheap investments. It is also a business with a fair representation of nonmigrants: A relatively low percentage of 53 percent of the total invested amount is made by international migrant households, who represent 40 percent of all households. Equally, except for international returnees, there is no significant association between household migration status and the incidence of investments in the retail trade.

Representing 23 percent of all established enterprises, investments in transport enterprises, such as taxis, delivery vans, and trucks are the second most important investment category. The most common investment is in the *transits*, delivery vans that are used as small minibuses for the transport of people and goods between the villages and Tinghir. *Transits* hold a crucial position in linking the village to the outside world, and are typically owned by relatively wealthy households. Others have invested in Tinghir-based *grand taxis*, which have an important function as inter-urban transport. Migrants often bring transits and taxis to Morocco in order to create employment for close family members, that is, “indirect” international migrants. Some have invested in the purchase of trucks, with which they transport diverse agricultural and industrial products from western Morocco to the Todgha.

International migrant households account for 75 percent of the total invested amount in transportation.

**Table 9.9. Location of investments by type of private enterprises**

Location	Investments in private enterprises 1975-1998					Total	n
	Café/restauran t	Shop	Transport	Other			
Village	10.5	17.3	58.6	20.0	26.4	33	
Tinghir	31.6	51.9	34.5	40.0	42.4	53	
Taghzout	10.5	11.5	0.0	16.0	9.6	12	
Other Todgha	21.1	3.8	3.4	0.0	5.6	7	
Other	26.3	15.4	3.4	24.0	16.0	20	
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	125	
n	19	52	29	25	125		
%	15.2	41.6	23.2	20.0	100.0		
% total of investments	24.3	25.9	39.2	10.5	100.0		
% total inv by intl migrant	87.6	52.2	74.8	39.2	68.4		
investments per enterprise	116,816	43,388	114,376	32,598	74,859		

Source: Household survey

**Table 9.10. Incidence of investments and average invested amounts by household migration category (1975-1998)**

Household category	Café/restaurant		Shop/retail		Transport		Other	
	%	Amount	%	Amount	%	Amount	%	Amount
Nonmigrant	1.1	57	10.3	4,660	4.0	1,882	7.4	2,932
Internal	3.9	2,201	11.0	3,072	3.9	4,882	3.1	821
Indirect intl	5.3	5,263	10.5	2,892	10.5	3,243	10.5	1,250
Current intl	7.8	9,875	10.8	5,426	5.9	1,814	6.9	2,328
Returned intl	6.2	13,047	18.5	10,048	18.5	39,172	6.2	1,719
Total	4.1	4,617	11.6	4,973	6.7	7,459	6.3	1,997
Cont. Coeff. / $\eta$	0.127 / 0.149*		0.082 / 0.145*		0.190** / 0.214**		0.085 / 0.095	

Source: Household survey

Transportation is the only business where there is a relatively strong and significant association with participation in international migration. However, whereas indirect and returned migrant households are relatively active in the transport business, current migrants participate almost as little as nonmigrants and internal migrants. Apparently, “on site” presence is important for this type of business.

Another typical migrants’ activity is the establishment of coffeehouses, restaurants, and small hotels. Although the association between migration and the incidence of this type of investments is not as high and significant as for the transport business, international migrant households account for 88 percent of the total invested amount. International migrant households tend to invest far larger amounts in this kind of enterprise. In most cases, these investments are made outside the native village, notably in Tinghir and the touristy Gorges du Todgha<sup>19</sup>. Some local migrants have invested in commercial activities outside the Todgha valley. Like the transportation business, it is rather expensive to establish a coffeehouse, restaurant, or hotel. The average invested sum per enterprise is 115,000 dirham. The relatively high investment costs might explain why international migrant households are overrepresented in these sectors.

<sup>19</sup> The excluded “extreme value” (see note 18) concerns an international return migrant who has heavily invested in the tourist-oriented hotel and catering industry.

Finally, there is a remaining category consisting of various small-scale investments—with a mean amount of 33,000 dirham—ranging from telephone shops (*téléboutiques*), all kinds of workshops (e.g., car and motor repair shops, smiths, carpenters) to tailors and laundries. There is no clear or significant association between international migration and investments in this category, with indirect international migrant households exhibiting the highest propensity to invest. Accounting for only 40 percent of all investments in this sector, international migration households are underrepresented in this sector on the basis of what one would expect from their higher incomes.

### 9.3.2. Typology of migrant entrepreneurs

It is striking that international returnees in particular tend to invest large sums in private enterprises. Upon departure, most migrants intend to leave only for a limited period, with the ambition to return in order to set up their own enterprise at home. This seems to be characteristic for labor migration from the southern Mediterranean. Running their own enterprise, that is, being an independent *batroon* (“boss”) back home is the typical ideal of most migrants. Besides the social prestige associated with being a *batroon* and employing people, it enables people to be materially self-sufficient. The establishment of their own enterprise may allow households to diversify, stabilize, and increase their income independent of remittance resources.

Drawing on a typology developed by Michalak (1997), two basic types of (migrant) entrepreneurs can be distinguished. The first type is the *'ayach* (“survivor”), the small businessmen, and the typical owner of a grocery shop, coffeehouse, taxi, or delivery van. The generally small investments made provide a modest income. This is a heterogeneous group, including many retired return migrants (often the same ones practicing “sentimental” agriculture, see chapter 8), but also nonmigrants and internal migrants. Another representative of this group is the indirect international migrant who has received financial support from migrated family members in order to set up a small business, such as a *transit* service between the village and Tinghir<sup>20</sup>.

Certainly, it is true that many migrants do not realize the dream of returning and establishing themselves as successful businessmen, and keep on extending their stay abroad, often resulting in family reunification. Many who do return, do only so after retirement, and these *'ayaches* content themselves with limited investments in real estate and small-scale agriculture.

Nevertheless, it should not be ignored that some international migrants *do* actually return well before retirement in order to set up their enterprises once enough money has been saved. This is the second type of entrepreneurs, the veritable *batroon* (“boss”). They represent about one fifth of all the surveyed return migrants and 3 percent of the total population. This small but influential group of successful “super migrants” invests large sums in commercial enterprises—often in combination with real estate investments in Tinghir. With this, they are also capitalizing on urban growth and the increasing importance of tourism in the Todgha. These successful “super migrants” tend to possess several stores, coffeehouses, hotels, and restaurants in Tinghir, or are active in the transportation business through the ownership of

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<sup>20</sup> On the one hand, one can see such support as altruistic behavior by migrants (cf. Lucas and Stark 1985). On the other hand, making nonmigrant family members financially independent can also be seen as a strategy to avoid the financial burden of supporting (passive) recipients of remittances. Moreover, some migrants share in the profits made from such business.

trucks. Some have invested in building hotels along the touristy Route des Gorges du Todgha running between Tinghir and the Todgha gorge near to Zaouïa.

The fact that these “heavy” investors tend to be international return migrants seems to be explained by two main factors. First, the presence of the owner *in situ* seems more important for such relatively large-scale investments. Second, their decision to return permanently explains their high motivation to invest in the local economy, as they want to secure a future income for their family. Third, the business experience and know-how acquired abroad possibly plays an additional role.

Every village contains a number of such entrepreneurs who have often used their financial and social resources to gain political influence, for example by becoming a *shikh*. Due to their wealth and good contacts with local authorities, they are able to literally buy such influence, and tend to have less difficulties in obtaining licenses for establishing businesses—in sharp contrast to the difficulties small entrepreneurs face in their contacts with rent-seeking civil servants.

### 9.3.3. Spatial allocation of investments and temporal dimensions

“Super migrants” play a leading role as entrepreneurs in their home villages and have become key players in the economic development of Tinghir, where most investments are allocated. Even more than investments in real estate, investments in commercial enterprises tend to be allocated outside the village (see table 9.11). Only one quarter of all enterprises, representing 18 percent of all investments, have been established in the village. Accounting for 42 percent of all new enterprises, Tinghir is clearly the main focus for investments among the surveyed village population. In terms of invested amounts, the “other locations” in the Todgha score surprisingly high, which is explained by the heavy investments of some entrepreneurs in the hotel and catering sector in the Gorges du Todgha. Only about 16 percent of all enterprises have been established outside the Todgha.

**Table 9.11. Spatial allocation of investments in private enterprises**

Location	Investments in private enterprises in dirham 1975-1998					
	Incidence	%	Total investment	%	Per enterprise	% intl migrant
Within village	33	26.4	1,650,000	17.6	50,000	85.7
Outside village						
<i>Tinghir</i>	53	42.4	3,879,300	41.5	73,194	91.5
<i>Taghzout</i>	12	9.6	174,300	1.9	14,525	99.6
<i>Other Todgha</i>	7	5.6	2,465,000	26.3	352,143	100.0
<i>Prov. Ouarzaz</i>	7	5.6	572,800	6.1	81,829	33.3
<i>Middle Atlas</i>	7	5.6	235,500	2.5	33,643	0.0
<i>Rabat/Salé</i>	1	0.8	210,000	2.2	210,000	100.0
<i>Other</i>	5	4.0	170,500	1.8	34,100	100.0
Total	125	100.0	9,357,400	100.0	74,859	88.7

Source: Household survey

Table 9.12 shows that there are important differences in the degree to which the households of the different research villages have been involved in business investments. In Zaouïa, Tikoutar, and Tadafelt, about one quarter of all households have invested in enterprises, compared to about one fifth in Aït El Mesquine, Ikhba, and Ghallil n’Aït Isfoul. Whereas these differences are not large, there are important differences concerning the amounts invested. Zaouïa is clearly the village with the highest investment rates, accounting for 58 percent of the total invested amount by all households. The limited possibilities for agricultural

development and its proximity to the Gorges might play a role in this preference for investments in non-agricultural commercial enterprises.

Tadafelt exhibits the lowest mean investment per enterprise, which is not surprising considering the general poverty of its inhabitants and the relatively recent character of international migration from this village. Looking at the involvement of international migrant households, we can see that Zaouïa, Tikoutar, and Aït El Meskine score highest. It is not a coincidence that these are also the villages with the highest proportion of returned international migrants, representing 17, 18, and 20 percent of all households in the above-mentioned villages, respectively.

**Table 9.12. Investments in commercial enterprises by village**

Village	Investments in commercial enterprises in dirham 1975-1998						
	% household investing	Mean inv	Mean/investor	Total inv	%	% by intl migrant	<i>n</i>
Zaouïa	26.8	45,557	169,805	5,558,000	57.8	64.8	122
Tikoutar	24.8	14,705	59,386	1,455,800	15.1	94.0	99
Aït El Meskine	18.3	17,746	96,923	1,260,000	13.1	82.5	71
Ikhba	21.0	5,927	28,269	367,500	3.8	41.5	62
Tadafelt	24.8	4,382	17,681	499,600	5.2	38.8	114
Ghallil n'Aït Isfoul	17.9	16,786	94,000	470,000	4.9	46.8	28
Total	23.5	19,377	82,392	9,610,900	100.0	68.4	496

Source: Household survey

This all adds to the idea that it is mainly in communities with a relatively long-standing, rather “mature” tradition of international migration, that migration pays off in terms of investments. This “lagged investment response” to migration seems to apply even more to business enterprises, as these are mainly concentrated in the hands of return migrants. Consequently, the indirect positive (employment and income multiplier) effects of international migration on households without direct access to international migration (i.e., indirect international migrant, nonmigrant and internal migrant households) only fully materialize after several decades.

It therefore seems surprising that there is apparently no significant correlation between migration duration and investments (see table 9.13). This might be related to the fact that the relationship between length of stay and investments is not linear. Most truly entrepreneurial return migrants return well before retirement in order to set up their businesses. This might explain why it is among migrants who stayed 15-28 years abroad that we find the highest mean investments. However, the measures for non-linear association ( $\eta$ ) also indicate that there is no significant link between length of stay and investment level. Apparently, “return migration” is the determining factor.

Even stronger than was already the case for real estate investments, investments in private commercial enterprises tend to be allocated in Tinghir. This adds to the idea that some migrants capitalize on processes of urban growth, which offer increasing opportunities for investments. Interestingly, these investments, by themselves, contribute to this same process of urban economic development. Through such investments, more and more employment is created outside the traditional agricultural sectors. As we have seen, many nonmigrants work in housing construction, small-scale industry (car repair shops, all kinds of handicrafts), and service jobs in Tinghir. In this way, international migrants’ investments create opportunities for the livelihood diversification of nonmigrants too.

**Table 9.13. Investments in enterprises by length of stay abroad of international migrants**

Length of stay abroad	Amount invested in dh within group of investors							<i>n</i>
	No < 50,000	50-100,000	>100,000	Total	Mean	5%trimmed		
1-14	75.0	12.5	7.1	5.4	100.0	51,061	7,710	56
15-28	67.9	17.9	5.4	8.9	100.0	83,836	14,024	56
≥29	62.3	9.4	17.0	11.3	100.0	48,717	26,562	53
Total	68.5	13.3	9.7	8.5	100.0	61,369	6,014	165

Source: Household survey ( $\eta=0.049^x$  ( $0.081^x$  without outlier);  $r$  length stay\*investments= $0.022^x$  ( $-0.034^x$  without outlier);  $C=0.211^x$ )

This stimulating effect of international migration on the development of Tinghir—and, to a lesser extent, Ait Aissa Ou Brahim and Taghzout—is not only achieved through the employment directly created by their investments in all kinds of enterprises. The higher standards of living and investments by international migrants have also created a higher demand for diverse products and services. This increased consumption has created increased income earning possibilities for “stay-behinds”.

For example, the construction boom has coincided with a surge in demand for building materials, wood- and ironwork. Numerous workshops have sprouted in recent decades in response to this (cf. Büchner 1986). Tinghir furthermore boasts one of the highest concentrations of car repair shops in the Presaharan region, which is undoubtedly related to the large number of international migrants possessing and trading cars from Europe. Migrants also bring loads of second-hand goods, such as car spare parts, clothes, televisions, mobile phones, refrigerators, water heaters, and even washing machines. Several Tinghiri try to gain a living by trading these second hand products on Tinghir’s thriving weekly market, and some have opened second hand shops. The additional advantage for nonmigrants of these informal imports has been a considerable drop in prices of products that are far more expensive on the formal market due to heavy import levies.

Tinghir has developed into one of the most thriving commercial centers in the Presaharan region. This is certainly, though not exclusively, related to the increased consumption and investments of international migrant households. The importance of international migration in Tinghir’s development is also exemplified by the fact that all the major banks of Morocco had already established branches in Tinghir back in the 1970s and 1980s (cf. Büchner 1986). This has undoubtedly stimulated further the establishment of other businesses in Tinghir.

## 9.4. Obstacles to investments

Notwithstanding this positive evaluation of the impact of international migration in enabling investments in real estate and private enterprises, investors are confronted with a number of obstacles to investments. This makes us conclude that the developmental potential of migration is not being optimally realized. First, lengthy bureaucratic procedures and corruption form clear obstacles to obtaining building and business permits and title deeds on land and real estate. In particular, small investors without direct access to political power (such as the “super migrants”, who often occupy political functions themselves) face high bureaucratic obstacles, or even opposition, from local authorities.

The confrontation with rent-seeking officials not only increases investment costs, it more importantly also perpetuates people’s low *trust* in the state’s administrative and legal institutions. The issue of trust is crucial to investment decisions. Most inhabitants of the

Todgha have a profound distrust of the central state and its local representatives. The perceived unreliability of the state manifests itself also in a general feeling of legal insecurity (with regards to property) and a fear of tax collectors. Besides the general distrust vis-à-vis the *makhzen* (the state apparatus and its representatives), this seems more specifically related to the fact that the Todgha and its Berber inhabitants were independent of central state power until colonization. Todghawis who ally themselves with the *makhzen*, for instance by becoming *shikh* or *moqaddem*, are equally distrusted.

Such circumstances seem to make potential investors hesitant. Although housing is generally perceived as a relatively secure investment compared to agricultural and other business investments, interviews revealed that house owners face specific problems with non-paying tenants. It is very unusual to make up rental agreements in order to hide income from tax officials. Tenants, in their turn, have no interest in signing leases, so as to avoid any liability. The absence of rental agreements makes it all the more difficult for both renters and tenants to appeal to the public authorities or legal institutions to protect their rights. It often requires many years of lengthy legal procedures to recuperate rent arrears or to expel tenants, if they succeed at all. Moreover, many tenants claim not to have sufficient financial resources to make up rent arrears, or simply abscond. The informal way of renting and the distrust felt towards authorities and the judiciary explains why most home-owners do not even attempt to sue non-paying tenants<sup>21</sup>.

Here, the informal character of the house renting market and the malfunctioning of the judiciary and the bureaucracy seem to constitute major impediments to the success of investments. From this, it can be hypothesized that home-owners are deterred by their own or others' bad experiences, rent-seeking behavior by officials, and defaulting tenants unwilling to leave their houses. The institutions supposed to protect their rights are generally seen as their natural adversaries. In these circumstances, homeowners in Tinghir sometimes prefer to leave houses empty or leave them to family members for free until a "trustworthy" tenant (i.e., somebody from the same village, ethnic group or family) has been found. From this, it can be hypothesized that the developmental potential of remittances as an investment resource in housing has not been fully realized.

## 9.5. Migration, education, and development

### 9.5.1. The neglected role of education in migration research

In the preceding sections, we have seen that, instead of being "opposed" to each other, the rural and urban sectors are heavily integrated and, one level up, the same goes for the integration of the Todgha into national and international economic networks. Migration plays an important accelerating role in these processes. There is one other process, which we have not yet discussed, but that seems to play a crucial role in these processes of regional integration and generalization of migration, that is, the diffusion and increasing importance of education. When regarded as an investment in human capital, education is a fundamental part of general livelihood strategies through which households try to diversify and increase their income portfolio.

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<sup>21</sup> According to a recent study conducted by the INSEA (Institut National de Statistique et d'Economie Appliquée) the problem of non-paying tenants has led to a reorientation of migrants' investments in Morocco. The study further indicated that two thirds of all migrants (compared to four fifths in the Todgha) have already invested in housing and that whereas 83.7 percent of all previously realized investment projects was in real estate, this is only 35.6 percent for the intended investment projects (L'Economiste n°1328 07/08/02).

In the following chapter, we will discuss how education—along with the impact of migration and increasing media exposure—is fundamentally changing the social and cultural face of oasis society and tends to raise the aspirations as well as capabilities of youngsters to migrate. However, besides a (1) cause of socio-cultural change (its function as “independent variable”), education can also be a (2) household investment strategy in human capital which potentially contributes to development and personal well-being. Education not only potentially enables women and men to access more stable and better paid employment but also to increase their general capabilities to stand up for their rights and shape their own lives (cf. Sen 1999). Furthermore, since (higher) education requires movement to another place, investments in education can also be a factor in (3) causing (internal) migration.

The role of education in migration processes has been largely neglected in the migration and development literature. This is unfortunate, since education is now generally recognized as one of the constituent components of social, political, and economic development. Moreover, Morocco’s literacy and educational participation rates remain among the lowest of all African countries, and a large gender gap for adult literacy persists (Spratt 1992). In this light, it seems vital to analyze to what extent migration has had an enabling effect on the schooling of migrants’ children in general as well in gender-specific terms. This analysis will be the aim of this section.

### **9.5.2. The generalization of education in the Todgha valley**

In the past few decades the number of primary and secondary schools has been steadily increasing in the Todgha valley. In 2000, there were schools within a reasonable (i.e., walking) distance of virtually all villages (see chapter 5). This has coincided with a general increase in education levels. However, there are important intra-valley spatial differences in illiteracy rates and school enrollment, and there is a considerable gender gap in education.

As can be inferred from 1994 census data (table 9.14), illiteracy rates are the lowest in Tinghir (40 percent) and the highest in the lower Todgha, with rates of 56 and 57 percent in Taghzout and Todgha Es-Soufla<sup>22</sup>. In the whole Todgha, differences between male and female illiteracy are high. Over one quarter (26 percent) of the men are illiterate, whereas the same goes for two thirds (67 percent) of all women. The younger generations, however, enjoy a much better education. Thanks to the presence of primary schools nearby virtually all villages in the valley, the official 1993-94 school enrollment rate among 7-12 year old was 85 percent.

Whereas the school enrollment rate of boys fluctuated around 90 percent in all parts of the valley, the enrollment rates of girls show more differences. Here again, Tinghir girls participate relatively more intensively in education than girls in the lower Todgha. However, with an average participation rate of 78 percent for the whole valley, the present situation seems much more favorable than one or two generations ago, when virtually no girls went to school (cf. Van Rooij 2000). Even in the more conservative villages of Taghzout n’Aït Atta, 69 percent of the girls attend primary school. Socio-cultural obstacles hindering primary

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<sup>22</sup> In Morocco, the 1999 literacy rate among women above 15 years old was 35.1 percent, which represents 57 percent of the male literacy rate (61.1 percent). The gender gap in education seems to be decreasing. Among the 15-24 year old age group, the female literacy rate was 57 percent, which was 75 percent of the male literacy rate among the same age group. Nevertheless, Morocco remains educationally underdeveloped compared to other middle income countries in the southern and eastern Mediterranean. In Algeria, for example, 83.3 percent of 14-24 year-old women are literate, 91 percent of the male literacy rate. In Tunisia the same percentages are 88.2 and 91.0 percent; and in Turkey 93.6 and 95.0 percent (source: UNDP 2001)

school attendance by girls—in particular the idea that a girl’s education was unnecessary and could potentially endanger their own and their family’s reputation—seem to be slowly fading away.

**Table 9.14. Gender-specific illiteracy and school enrollment rates (Todgha, 1994)**

Municipality	Todgha El Oulya	Tinghir	Todgha Es-Soufla	Taghzout	Total
<i>Illiteracy rate (≥ 10 years)</i>					
Men	27.1	20.2	31.7	33.0	25.8
Women	67.9	58.5	77.9	76.4	67.1
Total	48.1	39.7	56.7	55.5	47.3
<i>School enrollment rate (7-12 years)</i>					
Men	92.9	91.6	90.0	89.9	91.0
Women	77.8	84.5	68.8	72.0	78.0
Total	85.6	88.1	80.2	81.0	84.8

Source: Own calculations based on the 1994 national census

The 1999 survey data presented in table 9.15 show a striking degree of similarity with the 1994 census data concerning the spatial differentiation in educational participation. Illiteracy rates tend to be relatively high in the lower Todgha villages, with the notable exception of Ghallil n’Aït Isfoul. As with other indicators—such as wealth and migration participation—Tadafelt stands out as the most underdeveloped village with an illiteracy rate of 54 percent.

**Table 9.15. Gender-specific illiteracy and school enrollment rates in the research villages**

Village	Zaouïa	Tikoutar	Aït El Meskine	Ikhba	Tadafelt	Ghallil n’Aït Isfoul	Total	<i>n</i>
<i>Illiteracy rate (≥ 10 years)</i>								
Men	14.8	20.3	22.2	20.9	40.1	12.0	23.2	1,592
Women	49.3	59.8	46.0	64.4	71.5	60.0	58.5	1,328
Total	30.3	38.1	33.3	41.1	54.2	33.5	39.2	2,920
<i>School enrollment rate (7-12 years)</i>								
Men	93.8	96.6	100.0	96.2	96.3	100.0	96.3	328
Women	92.8	95.7	92.1	82.5	76.4	81.8	87.7	260
Total	93.3	96.2	95.9	90.3	88.3	93.1	92.5	588
<i>School enrollment rate (13-18 years)</i>								
Men	72.9	62.5	85.4	76.0	73.4	77.8	73.3	322
Women	47.6	47.1	34.2	21.6	4.5	58.3	31.0	277
Total	63.4	55.0	62.8	48.5	38.5	70.0	53.8	599

Source: Household survey

Although we should be prudent because the research populations are different, it at least appears that illiteracy rates seem to have further dropped, and primary school enrollment further increased. Since 1994, school enrollment rates seem to have increased too. In 1999, they were over 90 percent in all research villages except for Tadafelt. Since 1994, the gender gap in (primary) education seems to have further closed. In Zaouïa, Tikoutar and Aït El Meskine, well over 90 percent of all girls attend school, compared to 83, 76, and 82 percent in Ikhba, Tadafelt, and Ghallil n’Aït Isfoul, respectively. Apparently, girls’ school enrolment is the lowest in the relatively “marginal” and poorer villages. This corroborates the hypothesis that education, wealth, and migration are strongly interrelated elements of the same general process of development.

Among the 13-18 year old age group, school enrollment is significantly lower, with an average rate of 54 percent for all research villages. School enrollment is highest in Ghallil n'Aït Isfoul, Zaouïa, and Aït El Mesquine, and lowest in Tadafelt. Compared to primary education, the gender gap for secondary education is very large, with 73 percent of all boys going to school compared to 31 percent of all girls. With the exception of Ghallil n'Aït Isfoul, the gender gap in secondary education increases clearly from upstream (Zaouïa) to downstream (Tadafelt), with the notable exception of Ghallil n'Aït Isfoul.

Whereas primary school attendance by both boys and girls has almost been totally accepted and generalized now, it was very rare for girls to attend secondary school, at least until the early 1990s. Going to secondary school used to be mainly a prerogative of girls from middle class families that had migrated from other areas to Tinghir to work as civil servants, engineers in the mine of Imiter, or as private entrepreneurs. Being higher educated and generally coming from urban areas, these immigrants generally had less reservations vis-à-vis female education than the autochthonous population of the Todgha. The Tinghir municipality was the only exception, where girls represent 28 percent of the pupils at the *collège* (lower secondary school), and 32 percent at the *lycée* (higher secondary school) (De Haas and El Ghanjou 2000a). In more distant villages, virtually no girls attended secondary school until recently.

Low school attendance by girls can be explained by conservative attitudes towards women's role in society as well as the fact that the secondary school was considered relatively far away. With the establishment of four new secondary schools throughout the valley between 1984 and 2000, the situation has radically changed. Most villages are now within a short distance of a secondary school. This has had positive implications for girls' school enrollment, as parents often oppose the idea of their daughters walking long distances through the oasis<sup>23</sup>, which is seen as a potential threat to the "respectability" of the girls and the family's reputation. The same fear tends to deter people from sending their daughters to the *internat* (boarding school). In the upper valley, girls are gradually making up the difference in participation rates in secondary education, but that there is still a long way to go in more marginal and conservative villages of the lower Todgha valley.

In her study on gender relations and migration in the Todgha, Van Rooij (2000:36) concluded that whereas older women (i.e., above 40) tend to keep their daughters at home to help in the household, younger women attach increasing value to the education of their daughters. There indeed seems to be an intergenerational upward shift in girls' education.

### 9.5.3. The impact of migration on education of household members

In section 6.8.5, we saw that migration is not selective with regard to education: migrants are not significantly better or worse educated than nonmigrants. In order to assess the impact of migration on the educational levels of migrants' children, it is interesting to analyze whether the children in migrant households are relatively better educated than children in nonmigrant households—as could be expected on the basis of their higher wealth—and whether there are differences between the different household categories.

As the younger generation tends to be *generally* better educated, it is necessary to analyze the effect of migration on education levels within age groups. Table 9.16 shows the

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<sup>23</sup> This is particularly a problem in Tadafelt, where girls are not allowed to attend secondary school in Taghzout, as this obliges them to walk through the "hostile" *haratin* villages of El Hart. Aït 'Atta parents say that they fear that their daughters will be harassed by the *haratin* if they have to return home after sunset.

relationship between household migration status and education when controlling for age. It reveals that within the two oldest age groups ( $\geq 60$  and 45-59) there are no clear patterns, and that there is only a very weak and insignificant association between household migration status and education. The vast majority (i.e., 96 and 77 percent respectively) have never had formal education.

**Table 9.16. Educational level by household migration category, within age groups**

Age	Migration status	Educational level (%)					Total	Mean level <sup>24</sup>	n
		None or Coranic	Primary	Lower secondary	Higher sec.	Higher			
7-14	Nonmigrant	5.3	85.2	9.5	-	-	100.0	1.04	264
	Internal	9.2	80.5	10.3	-	-	100.0	1.02	185
	Indirect intl	0.0	88.3	11.7	-	-	100.0	1.12	60
	Current intl	3.7	74.6	21.7	-	-	100.0	1.19	189
	Returned intl	2.1	81.4	16.5	-	-	100.0	1.14	97
	Total	5.0	81.4	13.6	-	-	100.0	1.09	795
15-29	Nonmigrant	26.6	40.6	23.4	8.4	1.0	100.0	1.17	286
	Internal	26.1	32.2	20.3	8.7	12.8	100.0	1.50	345
	Indirect intl	11.4	39.8	17.0	17.0	14.8	100.0	1.84	88
	Current intl	12.9	35.7	29.5	13.8	8.0	100.0	1.68	325
	Returned intl	9.9	41.4	28.4	9.9	10.5	100.0	1.70	162
	Total	19.4	36.9	24.4	10.8	8.5	100.0	1.52	1206
30-44	Nonmigrant	55.7	30.2	7.3	3.6	3.1	100.0	0.68	192
	Internal	53.1	30.0	6.3	0.6	10.0	100.0	0.84	160
	Indirect intl	50.0	36.4	2.3	-	11.4	100.0	0.86	44
	Current intl	59.3	27.9	3.6	5.0	4.3	100.0	0.67	140
	Returned intl	35.4	41.5	12.2	4.9	6.1	100.0	1.05	82
	Total	52.8	31.6	6.5	3.1	6.1	100.0	0.78	618
45-59	Nonmigrant	73.4	25.3	-	-	1.3	100.0	0.30	79
	Internal	77.9	22.1	-	-	-	100.0	0.22	86
	Indirect intl	87.5	12.5	-	-	-	100.0	0.13	32
	Current intl	71.0	29.0	-	-	-	100.0	0.29	107
	Returned intl	83.3	16.7	-	-	-	100.0	0.17	54
	Total	76.5	23.2	-	-	0.3	100.0	0.24	358
<60	Nonmigrant	96.6	3.4	-	-	-	100.0	0.03	89
	Internal	95.9	4.1	-	-	-	100.0	0.04	73
	Indirect intl	100.0	0.0	-	-	-	100.0	0.00	23
	Current intl	94.7	5.3	-	-	-	100.0	0.05	57
	Returned intl	94.2	5.8	-	-	-	100.0	0.06	69
	Total	95.8	4.2	-	-	-	100.0	0.04	311
Total	35.6	42.1	13.4	4.6	4.3	100.0	1.00	3,288	

Source: Household survey<sup>25</sup>

However, these age groups comprise migrants themselves. Therefore, for our analysis it is more relevant to study younger age groups, as these comprise migrants' children. Among the 30-44 years age group, there is a stronger and significant association between migration participation and the educational levels of younger household members. Whereas 53 percent of the entire age group has never attended school, this rate is clearly lower (35 percent)

<sup>24</sup> The mean level of education is calculated by attributing values to different levels of education, ranging from 0 for "no or Coranic" to 4 for higher education.

<sup>25</sup>

Age category	<15	15-29	30-44	45-59	$\geq 60$
Cont. Coeff.	0.204**	0.258*	0.228**	0.158 <sup>x</sup>	0.075 <sup>x</sup>

among members of international return migrant households. This seems logical, as these households generally are in an advanced stage of their life cycle, and have been involved in migration for several decades. As some of the children of these “mature” migrants may already be in their thirties, the effect of migration on education can indeed be first expected among returnees’ households. Other international migrants have simply migrated too recently to see any migration effects in this cohort.

Among the 15-29 year old age group, differences in educational levels between household categories become more clear-cut. While the educational situation of this group is significantly better, the rate is again lowest (10 percent) among members of returned international migrant households, with only 19 percent of the population never having attended school. It is striking that the rates among international (13 percent) and indirect migrant households (11 percent) are now also significantly lower than among internal (26 percent) and nonmigrant (27 percent) households. On the basis of the relatively recent migration participation of indirect and current migrant households, this could indeed be expected.

Within the youngest age group of the 7-14 year old children, only 5 percent have never attended school. Among this generation, primary education has become generalized and inter-household differences have therefore largely vanished. Consequently, differences in the category “no or Coranic school” become small, although international migrant and, in particular, indirect migrant households (0 percent!), score better than households without access to international migration resources.

Concerning secondary education participation in the 30-44 age category, members of international return migrant households again score far higher (17 percent) than other household categories. Among the 15-29 year old age group, however, inter-household differences become less clear-cut, although current international migrant households score somewhat higher (43 percent) than others. The differences are particularly high for participation in upper secondary school (*lycée*) where indirect and current international migrant households clearly score better. Among the youngest age group, current and return migrant households score highest.

The conclusion is that children in international migrant households have a higher tendency to attend school, and exhibit higher educational levels with regards to primary and secondary schooling. However, participation in higher education (university or higher vocational education) is less neatly associated with access to international migration resources. Among the 30-44 old age group, members of international migrant households and internal migrant households score clearly higher than other categories, with 11 and 10 percent participation in higher education. Among the 15-29 year old age group, again these categories exhibit the highest rates with 15 and 13 percent participation. The lowest rate is found among nonmigrant households.

At first sight, it is surprising to find a relatively high percentage of people having followed higher education among internal migrant households. The educational profile of these households is polarized, with relatively high scores on either end of the educational scale. In order to understand this apparently contradictory pattern, it is important to acknowledge that student migration is intertwined with internal labor migration, which means that participation in internal *labor* migration increases the likelihood of participating in internal *student* migration, and *vice versa*.

However, it is also important to observe that participation in higher education is an endogenous variable to a certain extent, as it can be an independent cause of internal migration. Therefore, the 15-29 age group is somewhat “polluted”. In these cases, we are not correctly measuring the effect of migration on education, as the independent variable (i.e.,

household migration status) is partly defined in terms of the independent variable (i.e., participation in higher education).

When excluding the group of student migrants, we see that educational levels among the members of internal migrant households who have not migrated are relatively low. Within the 7-14 age group, for instance, where student migration does not yet play a role, we can see that internal migrants score lowest on educational levels. Furthermore, when grouping members of households with and without access to international migration, it becomes clear that the first group is generally better educated, in particular in the 15-29 and, to a lesser extent, the 7-14 age groups, which comprise most international migrants' children. The mean levels of education are clearly higher for those within international migration households.

It is particularly striking that *indirect* international migrant households score high, and even highest in the 15-29 age category. It is thus not migration participation as such, but rather access to remittances-based financial resources that explain educational levels. Moreover, the fact that indirect international migrant households have no direct access to international migration systems, and have to secure their future livelihood in Morocco, might be an additional argument to explain why they appear to prioritize the (higher secondary and higher) education of their children.

The empirical evidence presented here seems to corroborate the hypothesis that the relatively high income of international migrant households allows them to keep their children longer at school. In poor households, children are often forced to leave school at a certain age in order to work. Whereas international migrants were not better educated than nonmigrants and even less educated than internal migrants, their children clearly are better educated than others. Migrant remittances seem to play a crucial enabling role in allowing migrants' children to attend school.

In order to test whether material wealth is indeed the main explanatory variable for higher educational levels among international migration households, table 9.17 displays the association between participation in international migration and educational levels within income groups, controlled for age. In order to maintain sufficient case-loads, nonmigrant and internal migrant households have been grouped as "nonmigrant". Among the population above 25 years, there is no association between international migration and educational levels. Although the association tends to be slightly positive in the lowest income category and slightly negative in the highest income category, this association is insignificant.

In the 7-25 age category—which comprises most migrants' children and is therefore most relevant—the differences become more clear-cut. Among households without access to international migration resources, the percentage of children that has never gone to school is about twice as high as among international migrant households. Looking at general educational levels, however, the association between international migration and education in the lowest and highest income categories is small and insignificant. However, in the middle income category we find a relatively strong and significant association. Interestingly, in the same income category we can generally find the strongest association between international migration and investments in housing. Stated differently, the "above income effect" of migration manifests itself clearest in the middle income category.

It is doubtful whether the non-material effects of the stay abroad play a stimulating role in the education of children, especially because *indirect* international migrants, who never went abroad, also exhibit a high propensity to educate their children. It is more likely that, as seemed to be the case for agricultural, housing and business investments, the relatively stable and secure nature of remittance income can explain why their children tend to be better educated than could be expected on the basis of income only. Especially in the middle income category, income stability and security appears to be decisive in the decision

on whether or not to continue education. In conclusion, differing income levels seem to explain most of the variation in educational levels, although there is some extra-income migration effect, especially among middle income groups.

**Table 9.17. Education by international migration participation by household income, by age**

Age	Educational level (%)							Total	Mean level	n
	Househ income	Migration category	No or Coranic	Primary	Lower sec.	Higher sec.	Higher			
7-25	0-1699	Nonmigrant	17.9	59.2	16.9	3.9	2.1	100.0	1.13	485
		Intl migrant	10.9	60.9	23.4	4.7	-	100.0	1.22	64
		Total	17.1	59.4	17.7	4.0	1.8	100.0	1.14	549
	1700-3749	Nonmigrant	13.2	60.7	17.5	5.1	3.4	100.0	1.25	234
		Intl migrant	6.7	49.2	29.8	9.2	5.1	100.0	1.57	315
		Total	9.5	54.1	24.6	7.5	4.4	100.0	1.43	549
≥ 3750	Nonmigrant	12.0	54.8	18.7	9.6	4.8	100.0	1.40	166	
	Intl migrant	5.3	59.6	22.2	9.2	3.7	100.0	1.46	379	
	Total	7.3	58.2	21.1	9.4	4.0	100.0	1.45	545	
≥25	0-1699	Nonmigrant	67.2	24.8	4.3	0.5	3.1	100.0	0.47	415
		Intl migrant	58.3	29.2	-	1.4	11.1	100.0	0.78	72
		Total	65.9	25.5	3.7	0.6	4.3	100.0	0.52	487
	1700-3749	Nonmigrant	60.7	27.2	4.9	1.8	5.4	100.0	0.64	224
		Intl migrant	62.1	26.7	6.1	1.8	3.2	100.0	0.57	277
		Total	61.5	26.9	5.6	1.8	4.2	100.0	0.60	501
	≥ 3750	Nonmigrant	59.2	21.7	5.1	2.5	11.5	100.0	0.85	157
		Intl migrant	62.2	24.6	4.6	2.3	6.3	100.0	0.66	349
		Total	61.3	23.7	4.7	2.4	7.9	100.0	0.72	506

Source: Household survey<sup>26</sup>

#### 9.5.4. Migration and the gender gap in education

Migration has potentially positive effects on the education of women. On the basis of a survey conducted in the Moroccan regions of Nador and the Tadla, Bencherifa (1996:417-9) concluded that international migration had had a positive effect in partially closing the gender gap in education. In order to similarly test whether migration has also had a positive effect on the educational levels of girls and young women (compared to men) in the research villages, table 9.18 displays the association between international migration and gender-specific education levels within age categories. The table shows that the vast majority (i.e., 85 to 100 percent) of women above 30 have never been to school and that almost none have attended secondary school. It also shows, however, that this situation is radically better for younger generations, although secondary education remains the exception rather than the rule.

Besides confirming the fact that children living in international migrant households (more or less coinciding with the 7-30 age group<sup>27</sup>) tend to be clearly better educated, table

<sup>26</sup>  $\gamma$  measures:

Household income	7-25	≥25
0-1699	0.155 <sup>x</sup>	0.192 <sup>x</sup>
1700-3749	0.322 <sup>**</sup>	-0.033 <sup>x</sup>
≥3750	0.087 <sup>x</sup>	-0.090 <sup>x</sup>

<sup>27</sup> Among the population above 30, only weak and generally insignificant (positive and negative) associations exist between the level of household migration status and the educational level. This is in line with the observation that migration itself is not or even slightly negatively selective for the variable education, but that migration does have a positive effect on the education of younger household members.

9.18 shows that the association between international migration and education is stronger among women than among men, in particular in the 15-29 age group<sup>28</sup>. For instance, whereas 50 percent of the 15 to 29 year old women living in nonmigrant or internal migrant households have never attended school, the same applies to only 26 percent of women within international migrant households. Whereas only 7 percent of the first group have attended secondary school, this is the case for 17 percent of the second group. Among men, the association between access to international migration resources and educational levels of household members are positive too, but less strong.

**Table 9.18. Educational levels by international migration participation, by sex and age**

Age	Sex	Migration	Educational level (%)					Total	Mean level	n
			No or Coranic	Primary	Lower sec.	Higher sec.	Higher			
7-14	Male	Nonmigrant	4.4	81.9	14.1	-	-	100.0	1.10	248
		Intl. migrant	1.6	74.3	24.0	-	-	100.0	1.22	183
		Total	3.2	78.7	18.3	-	-	100.0	1.15	431
	Female	Nonmigrant	10.0	85.0	5.0	-	-	100.0	0.95	200
		Intl. migrant	3.7	84.0	12.3	-	-	100.0	1.09	163
		Total	7.2	84.6	8.3	-	-	100.0	1.01	363
15-29	Male	Nonmigrant	7.2	30.0	35.2	14.4	13.3	100.0	1.97	347
		Intl. migrant	2.1	24.3	38.0	19.3	16.3	100.0	2.23	337
		Total	4.7	27.2	36.5	16.8	14.8	100.0	2.10	684
	Female	Nonmigrant	49.6	43.3	5.3	1.4	0.4	100.0	0.60	284
		Intl. migrant	25.6	57.1	12.2	4.6	0.4	100.0	0.97	238
		Total	38.7	49.6	8.4	2.9	0.4	100.0	0.77	522
30-44	Male	Nonmigrant	23.9	47.2	12.5	4.0	12.5	100.0	1.34	176
		Intl. migrant	17.0	52.5	11.3	7.8	11.3	100.0	1.44	141
		Total	20.8	49.5	12.0	5.7	12.0	100.0	1.38	317
	Female	Nonmigrant	85.2	13.1	1.1	0.6	-	100.0	0.17	176
		Intl. migrant	88.0	12.0	-	-	-	100.0	0.12	125
		Total	86.4	12.6	0.7	0.3	-	100.0	0.15	301
45-59	Male	Nonmigrant	53.5	45.3	-	-	1.2	100.0	0.50	86
		Intl. migrant	60.8	39.2	-	-	-	100.0	0.39	97
		Total	57.4	42.1	-	-	0.5	100.0	0.44	183
	Female	Nonmigrant	100.0	-	-	-	-	100.0	0.00	79
		Intl. migrant	93.8	6.3	-	-	-	100.0	0.06	96
		Total	96.6	3.4	-	-	-	100.0	0.03	175
≥60	Male	Nonmigrant	92.9	7.1	-	-	-	100.0	0.07	85
		Intl. migrant	92.3	7.7	-	-	-	100.0	0.08	91
		Total	92.6	7.4	-	-	-	100.0	0.07	176
	Female	Nonmigrant	100.0	-	-	-	-	100.0	0.00	77
		Intl. migrant	100.0	-	-	-	-	100.0	0.00	58
		Total	100.0	-	-	-	-	100.0	0.00	135
Total			35.7	42.0	13.4	4.6	4.4	100.0	1.00	3,287

Source: Household survey<sup>29</sup>

<sup>28</sup> For the 15-29 age group,  $\gamma$  is 0.185 for men, against 0.444 for women. In the 7-15 age group, this differential drops with values of 0.340 and 0.456, respectively (see table 9.18).

Age	7-15		15-29		30-44		45-59		≥60	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
$\gamma$	0.340**	0.456**	0.185**	0.445**	0.088 <sup>x</sup>	-0.127 <sup>x</sup>	-0.157 <sup>x</sup>	1.000*	0.046 <sup>x</sup>	NA <sup>1</sup>

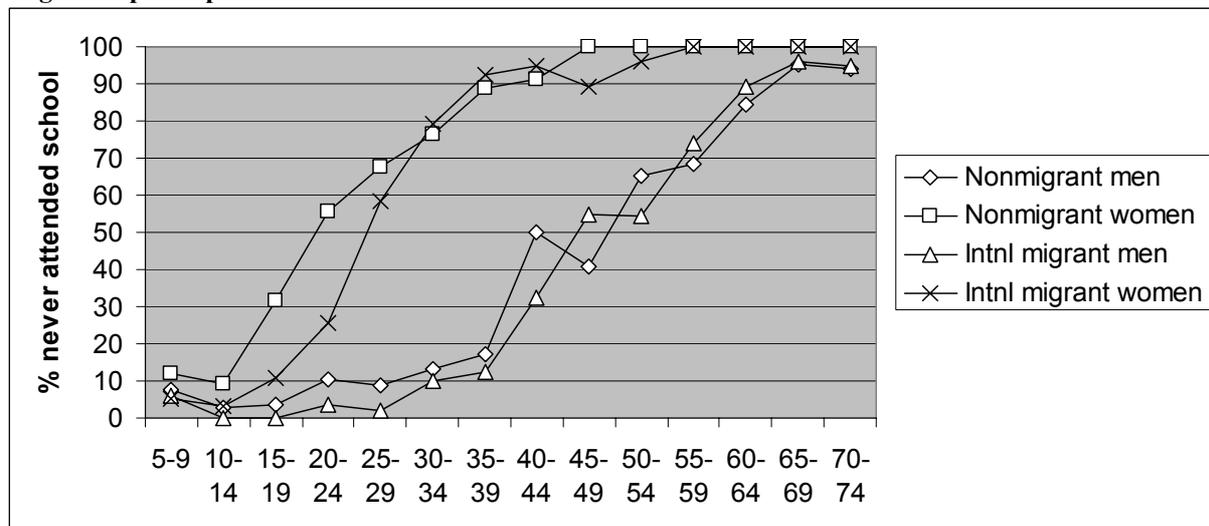
<sup>1</sup> No statistics are computed because level of education is a constant.

In order to deepen our understanding of the effect of migration on women's education, figure 9.3 displays the link between age and the proportion of men and women who have never attended school specified for households with and without involvement in international migration. First, it clearly demonstrates the very strong relationship between age and education. Within the last 50 years, primary school attendance has dramatically improved from less than 10 percent to well above 90 percent. This exemplifies that a true "educational revolution" has taken place in the Todgha.

Secondly, the figure suggests that at the times when the male "rate of ignorance"<sup>30</sup> dropped rapidly—from over 90 percent among those who did or did not go to primary school in the early 1940s (i.e., among the 65 year olds) to less than 20 percent in the early 1970s (i.e., among the 35 year old)—women remained excluded from schooling. The gender gap in education is the biggest among 35-39 year olds, with a "rate of ignorance" of around 90 percent among women, compared to 15 percent among men. From the early 1970s on (i.e., the 30-34 age group), women started to make up this difference in participation rates in primary education, a process that was largely completed in the 1990s.

Thirdly, the *general* process of improving access to primary education had a disparate effect on members of households with and without access to international migration. Looking at figure 9.3, it is striking that primary school attendance has increased much faster for girls in international migrant households than for others. The differences between those two groups are particularly high in the 15-24 age group. Among the youngest age groups (5-14 years), the gap has been largely bridged, reflecting the generalization of primary education.

**Figure 9.3. Proportion of men and women who never attended primary school, by age and international migration participation**



Source: Household survey

Based on this analysis, we can conclude that migration has played an accelerating role in closing the gender gap in primary education. Furthermore, the positive effect of migration on education seems stronger for women than for men. Now that the gendered educational

<sup>30</sup> Since the variable measured here is whether individuals ever attended at least one year of primary school, it should not be automatically equated with "illiteracy". Although primary school attendance can be used as a rough estimate of illiteracy, it does not measure the actual ability to read and to write. Actual illiteracy levels are higher than the figure might suggest due to the occurrence of early school "drop-out". Many young children learn basic writing and learning skills at Coranic school, though generally these are not sufficient to be used actively. Coranic school has, therefore, been excluded from this figure.

transition is almost complete for primary education, it is quite possible that this process will repeat itself in secondary education, where international migrants' daughters participate 2.5 times more than girls in nonmigrant and internal migrant households (see table 9.18).

These results comply with Bencherifa's (1996:417-9) earlier findings, and lead us to conclude that international migration has played a positive role in enabling girls to attend school. The relevant question here is whether this phenomenon can only be explained by the fact that international migrant households enjoy relatively high, stable, and secure incomes. After all, this cannot explain why the effect of international migration on education is not gender-neutral. What might offer a possible explanation for this is that, as will be further analyzed in section 10.4, many international migrant households are headed by women. As this leads to a (temporary) increase in migrants wives' influence in household decision making, this may also give them more power to fulfill their increasingly strong wish to keep their daughters at school.

### 9.5.5. Education as a household investment strategy

So far, the data have suggested that the relatively high, stable, and secure income of international migrant households enables them to invest in the "human capital" of their children. In order to further test this hypothesis, it seems useful to go beyond measuring general levels of education, as this variable does not relate to the exact number of years that people attended school. We will therefore analyze the extent to which household migration status is associated with the propensity among children and young adults to continue school or university over the course of their schooling career. Moreover, in order to assess the relative success of such investment strategies, it seems useful to compare unemployment levels among school-leavers and graduates.

With this we should bear in mind that the costs of education pertain not only to expenses related to tuition fees, textbooks, educational tools, and, for higher education, travel, and housing. The most important costs are related to the loss of work time, and, hence, income. It is fairly common for young children (from the age of 7-8) to work in household production, such as tending sheep and goats, and helping in the household, and so on. Until recently, men used to start working as laborers from the age of 13-14. Each year of education means the loss of this work time and potential income. These costs can be considerable and tend to increase with age. For (nearly) adult men, in any case, these costs can amount to 1,000 dirham per month or more<sup>31</sup>.

Although expenses on education might appear relatively limited, they have to be sustained over many years before any return on investment is seen. The high opportunity costs of educational investments are exactly the reason why many children from poorer households are forced to leave school at an early age to work in order to make ends meet. As the direct and indirect costs of education tend to increase with age, it can be hypothesized that the proportion of children following education will decrease faster with age among households with, rather than without, access to international migration resources.

The data presented in table 9.19 confirm this hypothesis to a certain extent. Among the 7-9 year old age group, differences in educational participation are very small, although

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<sup>31</sup> The daily payment for most unskilled day laborers is generally between 40 and 70 dirham (e.g., 50 dirham for agricultural laborers, 60-75 dirham for experienced construction workers, and 40 dirham for inexperienced construction workers). It should be noted that these estimates might be too optimistic due to widespread unemployment, although unemployment is far higher among highly skilled than among unskilled and lowly-skilled workers.

they are highest among indirect international migrant households. For the 10-14 year old age group, differences are small for men, while girls in international migrant households clearly exhibit a higher schooling rate. In the age group of 15-19, differences between households with and without access to international migration resources become more clear-cut, with higher schooling rates for the first group among men as well as women. Again, it is striking that indirect international migrant households score highest.

As higher education requires remarkably more expenses than primary and secondary education, one would expect the differences to increase among young adults. What we see is that 50, 27, and 31 percent of the 20-24 year old men among indirect, current, and returned international migrant households, respectively, are studying, compared to 13 and 19 percent among nonmigrant and internal migrant households. However, among those of 25 and older, the proportion of men following higher education degrees is relatively high among internal migrant households. This unexpected result can be largely explained by the partial endogenous character of the education and internal migration (see section 9.5.3).

Education can be interpreted as a household investment strategy to increase and stabilize future income, which is particularly prevalent among international migrant households. Until recently, a higher education degree was seen as a kind of job guarantee in the future through work as a civil servant. Working for the government has generally been considered ideal, as it implies not only relatively high and secure payment, but also social security and medical insurance.

**Table 9.19. The propensity of household members to study by age group by household migration categories, by sex**

Household migration status	Sex	% currently studying within age group					
		7-9	10-14	15-19	20-24	25-29	30-34
nonmigrant	Male	95.5	92.6	59.7	13.0	-	-
	Female	95.6	67.6	14.8	-	-	-
internal	Male	94.6	91.4	53.4	19.0	12.2	2.4
	Female	85.0	62.1	5.6	3.6	2.9	-
indirect international	Male	100.0	91.7	77.8	50.0	10.5	-
	Female	100.0	94.1	30.8	-	-	-
current international	Male	100.0	97.5	71.8	26.7	6.4	-
	Female	88.9	72.7	22.2	-	-	-
returned international	Male	86.7	100.0	68.0	31.6	12.5	4.5
	Female	100.0	87.8	24.0	2.7	-	-

Source: Household survey<sup>32</sup>

This promise of a better future has stimulated many households to sacrifice everything in order to give their children a good education. More than agriculture or other enterprises, education is the first investment priority. Although relatively wealthy international migrant households are generally better able to educate their children, many nonmigrant and internal migrants aim to send at least one son to university. In relatively poor households, the oldest brothers and sisters often leave school early in order to work, enabling one or more younger brother(s) to study. These students will then often stay with migrated family members in the cities.

<sup>32</sup> Measures of association (yes/no study dependent – not differentiated for sex):

Age	7-9	10-14	15-19	20-24	25-29	30-34
Cont. coefficient	0.105 <sup>x</sup>	0.139*	0.157*	0.145*	0.154 <sup>x</sup>	0.113 <sup>x</sup>

Many international migrants who left their children in Morocco, argued they did this from the fear that their offspring would become “spoiled”, “westernized” or “drunkards” in Europe. Moreover, having experienced the often problematic position of many migrants in Europe<sup>33</sup>, they reasoned it would be better not to expose their children to potentially humiliating positions. Back in the 1970s and 1980s, many migrants therefore reasoned that it would be better to send them to university in Morocco, which would enable them to live secure and comfortable lives as civil servants in Morocco.

However, this strategy has been only partly successful, since, in the meantime, it has become increasingly difficult for university graduates (*licenciés*) to find a job due to government budget cuts and the surge in the number of young people holding higher education degrees. Other migrants’ sons have left university before obtaining any degree at all. Table 9.20 shows that unemployment rates<sup>34</sup> among higher educated people in international migrant households vary between 18 and 25 percent. This reflects the general Moroccan pattern of high unemployment among the young and higher educated (see section 4.6). The two basic reasons for their inactivity are the lack of proper employment opportunities as well as the financially secure position of their households, a situation which allows them to refuse semi- or unskilled work. More generally, the mediocre quality of higher education, the gap between the type and level of education and labor market needs, government budget cuts, and relatively low economic growth have all negatively affected the access of young, higher educated Moroccans to the labor market.

**Table 9.20. Unemployment rates by educational level, by household migration status**

Migration status	Unemployment rate by educational level (>15 yrs) (%)					Total
	No	Primary	Lower sec.	Higher sec.	Higher	
Nonmigrant	2.2	3.7	1.4	3.2	0.0	2.6
Internal	1.0	1.7	6.9	0.0	15.0	3.1
Indirect international	1.2	1.9	0.0	6.7	27.8	4.4
Current international	2.8	3.3	7.3	3.9	25.0	4.8
Returned international	3.9	2.8	10.4	5.3	18.2	5.4
Total	2.1	2.8	6.0	3.4	18.3	3.8

Source: Household survey<sup>35</sup>

Most jobless graduates are forced to return to the Todgha to stay with their families. This is generally perceived as an extremely frustrating if not humiliating experience. They find it dishonorable to remain dependent on their parents and to be unable to marry. Boredom and bitterness characterize their existence. These unemployed young men now form Todgha’s share of Morocco’s “detached middle” (cf. Cohen 2001; see also section 10.3)<sup>36</sup>. The

<sup>33</sup> Possibly, international migrants who have not reunified their households also tend to have more negative experiences living and working in Europe.

<sup>34</sup> Note that in the Moroccan context, “unemployment” is a concept with a limited significance. In fact, many people are “underemployed” in the sense that they only work from time to time, depending on the availability of—mostly temporary—employment.

Household migration	nonmigrant	internal	indirect international	international	returned international
Cont. coeff.	0.074 <sup>x</sup>	0.647**	0.754*	0.439**	0.359 <sup>x</sup>

<sup>36</sup> Mass unemployment and frustration among a new generation of relatively well-educated youngsters is a general problem in Middle Eastern and North African countries, and it is often suggested that this is one of the major explanations for the growing (religious and ethnic) radicalism in the region. In this context, Richards (2003:6-7) argued that “Government policies have not only reduced the rate of growth of demand for labor, but have also fostered inflexible labor markets. Decades of government job guarantees for graduates have induced

unemployed sons (and daughters) of international migrants tend to be full of resentment vis-à-vis their fathers who did not allow them to join them in Europe. The international migrants themselves, confronted with the broken ambitions of their children, tend to regret their choice not to reunify their families in Europe. For them, their investment strategy has apparently failed. Notwithstanding the fact that higher education is no longer the guarantee of a government job, people have apparently not (yet) abandoned the idea that education is of paramount importance to secure a better future for their children and, hence, for themselves. The generalization of primary and secondary education and increasing participation in higher education seems to be an indication of this. After all, better education remains the only way to access relatively well-paid and stable jobs, either with the government or in the private sector. This is particularly true for households lacking the funds to start large business enterprises.

Materially, education is the most accessible livelihood strategy for improving future livelihoods. Besides housing, such investments in children's "human capital" are considered as a "household life insurance". Furthermore, education should not only be valued because of its utility in gaining access to better employment. It is also functional in improving the capabilities of people to be informed, to stand up for their rights, to participate in local politics and, more in general, contribute to the public debate. In chapter 10, for instance, we will analyze to what extent improved education has contributed to changes in culture, local power relations, and gender relations.

Indeed, this important developmental dimension of migration deserves more than the scant attention it has received up to now. Besides the generally acknowledged importance of education for social and economic development (cf. Sen 1999), female education in particular tends to contribute to decreasing fertility and child mortality, and to the use of more modern health care practices (Spratt 1992). Thus, if access to international migration resources enables households to improve their children's education—as this analysis has demonstrated—this aspect should be valued as highly "developmental".

Nevertheless, it is clear that massive unemployment and the difficult access to government jobs for non-elite groups that is linked to the alleged corruption during *concours* (entrance examinations for government jobs) constitute clear obstacles for households who have invested in the education of their children in order to secure their future livelihoods. This has led to bitter frustration among the group of higher educated youngsters who have returned to the Todgha empty-handed. Most perceive migration, legal or "illegal", as the only remaining option to improve the quality of their personal life.

## 9.6. Synthesis of temporal and sectoral allocation of investments

Table 9.21 summarizes the sectoral allocation of investments by different types of households in terms of total amounts invested. Education has not been included due to the difficulty of reliably quantifying such an investment. The table reveals that households with access to international remittances tend to invest three to six time more on average than nonmigrant and internal migrant households. The table clearly shows that housing is the most common type of investment, followed by pumps, land purchase, and the establishment of private businesses. Housing represents 71 percent of all money invested. Although the incidence of agricultural investment in pumping and land purchase is far higher than is the case for non-agricultural

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students to seek any degree, regardless of its utility in the production, since a degree, by itself, has long been a guarantee of a government job. Governments cannot now provide the necessary jobs, but statist policies impede private sector job creation."

enterprises, the amounts invested per enterprise are far higher in the last category. This highlights that those investing in private businesses outside agriculture generally invest large amounts. The propensity to invest in this sector is particularly high among returned international households.

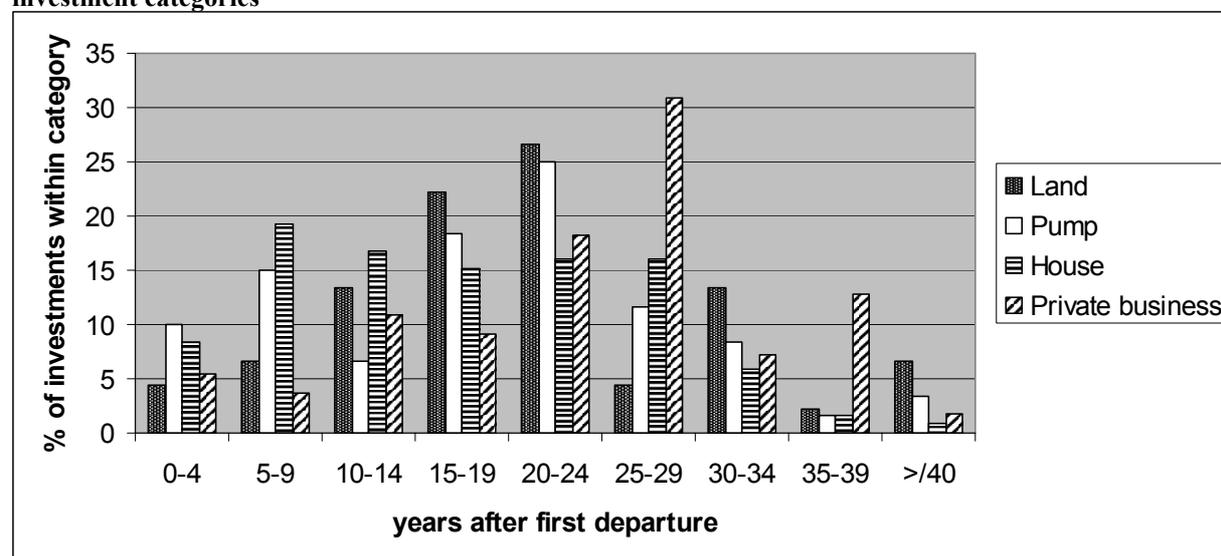
**Table 9.21. Sectoral preference of investments by household migration category**

Migration status	Investments per sector as percentage of total investments 1975-1998 (%)					Mean total investment
	Pumping	Land purchase	Housing	Private enterprises	Total	
Nonmigrant	4.6	4.9	75.1	15.4	100.0	63,748
Internal	5.5	4.2	73.0	17.3	100.0	63,793
Indirect international	6.4	5.6	82.0	5.9	100.0	217,082
Current international	5.7	9.0	77.1	8.2	100.0	243,605
Returned international	3.6	5.6	59.0	31.7	100.0	373,017
Total	4.9	6.4	71.1	17.5	100.0	151,813
$\eta$	0.275**	0.242**	0.358**	0.186**		

Source: Household survey

In chapter 2 we hypothesized that sectoral investment preferences tend to change over time, and that the full developmental effects of migration take decades to fully materialize. The analysis of survey data presented in the previous and current chapter has confirmed this hypothesis. Figure 9.4 summarizes the temporal allocation or timing of four main types of investments among international migrant households. The figure indicates how many years after migration the first investment in each of the investment categories were made.

**Figure 9.4. Temporal allocation of first investment by international migration households, within investment categories**



Source: Household survey

The figure confirms that housing investments tend to occur relatively quickly after migration, and that other investment types mostly occur at a later stage. Housing investments occur relatively early in the “migration cycle” and reach their peak 5-15 years after migration, although they also tend to occur relatively frequently in later stages. Besides housing, most migrant households concentrate on basic needs and education in the first decade or so after migration. Major agricultural investments, such as pump and, in particular, land purchase,

mostly occur 15-25 years after migration. Investments in private businesses follow a more irregular pattern, but reach a peak 25-30 years after migration.

## 9.7. Conclusion

Migration is not only a constituent part of the general processes of integration of the Todgha into the wider economic and political context and the concomitant diversification of oasis livelihoods. It is also an independent factor contributing to the further diversification and partial de-agrarization of the regional economy through its enabling effect on households to invest in local housing, business enterprises, and education. Therefore, through its recursive developmental effects on the Todgha, migration has the tendency to strengthen and to intensify the more general process of integration of the region into the wider political-economic context and the concomitant livelihood diversification.

The first aim of this chapter was to examine the extent to which migration has affected the investment behavior of households in non-agricultural sectors and to explain the spatial and temporal differentiation in this behavior. The preceding analysis has shown that, similar to the effects of international migration on agricultural development, access to international remittances has positively influenced investments in non-agricultural sectors. International migrant households exhibit a higher propensity to invest in these sectors than internal and nonmigrant households. This largely confirms our NELM-inspired hypothesis that *international* migration is a livelihood strategy not only to stabilize and increase income, but also to overcome local constraints on the economic and social “freedoms” of households and their individual members. Access to remittances enables households to invest in housing, business enterprises, and to better educate the youngest generations.

It is a key observation that there is an association between access to international migration and investments even when controlling for income. This cannot only be attributed to the relatively (1) high level, but also to the relative (2) stability and (3) future security of their incomes. Possibly, the experience of staying abroad for a sustained period has enabled migrants to acquire (4) entrepreneurial knowledge and attitudes. However, this only seems to play a role among a small group of wealthy “super migrant” entrepreneurs.

The fact that most international migrant households have access to stable jobs and European social security systems seems crucial, enabling them to bear the costs and risks of such investments. Especially in the middle income category—where we find the highest “above-income migration effect”, income stability and security appears to be decisive in the decision whether to invest or not. However, as with agricultural investments, our hypothesis seems only valid for international migration. The investment behavior of internal migrants hardly differs from nonmigrant households. Access to international migration resources (i.e., remittances) is the prime discriminatory factor in determining investment levels. Differentiating between indirect, current, and returned migrants does not remove much variation. This further supports the idea that it is primarily access to international migrant remittances—a high, stable, and secure source of income—that matters.

Concerning the temporal differentiation in investment behavior, the analysis revealed a priority for housing and education at relatively early stages of the household life cycle. Investments in various productive enterprises gain momentum only at a later stage of migration. Both in terms of amounts invested and timing, housing is the priority investment. The most visible effect of international migration is the construction of new houses outside traditional villages and the related decline of traditional *ighrem* habitat. Instead of adobe and stone, migrants often now prefer to construct such houses in concrete and in “modern”, urban

styles. In the case of Tinghir, Aït Aïssa Ou Brahim, and Taghzout, this general building fever has enabled the transformation of villages into towns, where migrants also seem to prefer to locate other investments. Second and third houses are generally constructed in one of these (semi-) urban centers.

Housing occupies the highest priority on the list of capital investments. However, it would be erroneous to explain the construction fever only in terms of people's quest for more status within their own community, as has often been done in the literature. Decent housing is universally recognized as a basic necessity of life, and the importance attached to housing can partly be explained by a logical quest for more luxury and privacy, less conflict, and better physical and mental health. Besides such obvious well-being and health aspects, women often gain significantly in personal liberty through the establishment of new houses. Moreover, it is a strategy to protect the interests of the household from material and social claims by kin and community members.

Housing should also be considered as an investment strategy that serves the households' material interests by generating sources of income independent of external migrant remittances. Households constructing more than one house tend to do so with the specific aim of making profits through later sale or letting. Considering the population growth and high urban growth in Tinghir, this can turn out to be a rewarding investment strategy, which has enabled many migrant households to stabilize and further increase their income.

Moreover, the interviews revealed that the respondents consider housing investments as a form of "life insurance" for the family. In case of the death of the breadwinner, for example, family members are at least guaranteed shelter and will often gain rental income. This is particularly important in a society where no social services are available for most people. Housing should therefore be perceived as a logical and relatively secure investment in a rather insecure investment environment, which generates additional household income and provides "life insurance" for migrant households.

The second aim of this chapter was to assess the role of migration in the more general economic-geographical transformations of the Todgha (research question 4). The analysis highlighted that, through investments in non-agricultural sectors, international migration also contributes to the diversification of the regional economy and, in particular, the urban economy of Tinghir. The many international migrant households that have built more than one house have mostly done so in Tinghir. This applies even more to the investments in private business enterprises, which are overwhelmingly located in the valley's capital. Migration has played an active role in enabling the economic-geographical transformation of the Todgha valley, which has led an increasing demand for non-agricultural labor.

Migrants' investments not only serve to diversify, increase, and secure their own future income, but also create a certain level of employment for nonmigrants. Moreover, there has been only limited "leakage" of non-agricultural investments by resident households to other regions. Although one might argue that intra-valley rural-urban inequality has been reinforced by the allocation of investments to Tinghir, migration has contributed to mitigating the development gap between the Todgha as a whole and the more central regions of Morocco. In comparison with surrounding areas (e.g., High Atlas, Saghro, Tafilalt, Drâa) the Todgha valley has even become relatively prosperous. This is not only visible in the construction boom and Tinghir's commercial development, but is also manifested in the occurrence of internal labor migration from other areas of Morocco to the Todgha valley (see section 6.7.1). The construction boom and increasing business activities have created a surge in the demand for laborers, particularly in housing construction, which cannot be fulfilled locally or even regionally. This has triggered "reversal" migration from the above-mentioned, poorer regions to the Todgha valley.

The way in which international migration has played an accelerating role in the rapid urban development within the Todgha valley seems to reflect patterns found in other migrant sending areas in Morocco, such as the Rif (Berriane 1997), where boomtowns in migrant sending areas have also become important destinations for internal migrants. Notwithstanding the dominance of housing, there is a certain diversification, in which the importance of other types of investments, especially in the service sector, seems to be growing. Many migrants create small-scale projects in trade or services, either for themselves or for close kin they have left behind. This also reflects patterns found by (Berriane 1997) in northern Morocco.

Thus, the recursive developmental effects of international migration on a certain region (e.g., through investments by international migrant households) can create the economic-geographical conditions for subsequent internal migration towards the same region of international out-migration.

Nevertheless, the analysis has also demonstrated that the institutional constraints such as alleged corruption, red tape, as well as the general lack of trust vis-à-vis the *makhzen* form clear constraints to investments in private enterprises, especially for relatively poor households lacking good connections and political “shortcuts”. This leads us to hypothesize that the developmental potential of migration is certainly not being fully realized. It can equally be hypothesized that the far-from-ideal investment environment and the concomitant lack of trust in institutions reinforces the tendency among many migrants to reunify their households at the destination—a process through which these households “disappear” from the oasis—or to allocate investments in the relatively secure housing sector.

Another way in which the recursive developmental effects of migration tend to influence people’s propensity to migrate and directly create other forms of migration is manifested in the effects of migration on the education of younger household members. Whereas international migration itself was not selective for education, younger members of households with access to international migration resources (i.e., migrants’ children) are significantly better educated. Children of international migrants exhibit significantly higher education rates at all levels, including higher education, than children within nonmigrant and internal migrant households. Furthermore, international migration has clearly played an accelerating role in closing the gender gap in primary education. However, whereas internal migration is not positively associated with agricultural and business investments, internal migrant households clearly are in a better position than nonmigrant households concerning education. The presence of labor migrants in town decreases the costs and risks associated with the education of a younger brother.

However, mass unemployment among higher educated youngsters may also partially remove people’s incentive to put too much money and effort into higher education. There is widespread frustration among a whole new generation of well-educated youngsters in the Todgha, who feel that they will never be able to realize even a part of their aspirations in the Todgha or even in Morocco. The perceived exclusion and the general lack of prospects make them bitter. This only reinforces their tendency to revert to international migration as the one and only way to fulfill their ambitions.

It is this role of migration in changing attitudes, values, aspirations, and social relations that will be at the center of the following chapter.

## From oasis to paradise

### 10.1. The role of migration in socio-cultural change

Within the whole complex framework of socio-economic transformations the Todgha has witnessed over the past decades, migration has perhaps been the most prominent development, not only because of its magnitude, but also because of its profound impact on the daily life of most oasis families and on social relations within oasis society. It is particularly through the experience of migration that general processes such as “integration into the modern state and market economy” or “globalization” are concretely manifested for oasis dwellers.

It would be erroneous to depict migration only as an economic phenomenon (cf. Reniers 1999). To a large extent, migration is also a social event in its causes and consequences. The social and economic dimensions of migration can hardly be separated. The fact alone that migrants send remittances is an expression of the intensive social bonds they tend to maintain with kin back home. Social and ethnic bonds also affect the selectivity of future migration—the likelihood of migrating is clearly higher for people with access to “social migration capital” in the form of already-migrated relatives.

The impact of migration has important social and cultural dimensions, which—within a human capabilities perspective—have an intrinsic value as constitutive components of development. Moreover, in their turn, social, cultural, and institutional changes are likely to have their recursive impacts in the economic realm. The socio-cultural effects of migration may have recursive effects on people’s future propensity to migrate and are also likely to (negatively or positively) affect perceptions of local economic opportunities and, consequently, the propensity of migrants to invest in and/or return to the Todgha. Through its effects on socio-ethnic stratification, migration may also challenge traditionally established power relations and the functioning of village institutions, which might, in their turn, affect economic production and oasis agriculture in particular.

The social and cultural effects of migration are also likely to influence the distribution of social and economic “freedoms” emanating from labor migration across communities, households, and individuals. From a capabilities perspective on development, the distributional dimension of development (“equity”) is equally as important as the accumulative dimension of development (“efficiency”). Changing value systems and social stratification affect the extent to which the social and economic benefits (and costs) of migration are distributed among ethnic groups, households, and sexes. Previous chapters have indicated that, in recent decades, migration has increased income and wealth in general, but has also created intra-community inequality between international migration “haves” and “have-nots”—although it should not be ignored that traditional oasis society used to be

inherently unequal, and denied basic human freedoms to large sections of the oasis population.

However, besides inequality at the inter-household level, it is important not to ignore inequality at the intra-household level. To conclude that international migrant households tend to be wealthier and enjoy better living conditions does not mean to say that the benefits (or drawbacks) of migration equally accrue to all household members. While some individuals within households might increase their “freedoms” through migration, some might potentially see their “freedoms” decrease. Individuals within oasis households are typically not equal, in particular not along gender lines.

In order not to ignore these important and development-relevant dimensions of migration, this chapter explores the impact of migration on social and cultural life in the Todgha valley, and in particular the extent to which migration has affected social stratification, gender roles, culture, and institutions (research question 5)? First, it will analyze to what extent migration has affected traditional patterns of socio-ethnic stratification and inter-household inequality (research question 5.a). Second, it will study the role of migration in changing local tastes, preferences, ambitions, perceptions, and to what extent such changes have contributed to the emergence of a “culture of migration” (research question 5.b). Subsequently, the analysis will focus on the way internal and international migration has affected intra-household gender roles and gender inequality (research question 5.c). The chapter will conclude with an analysis of the role of migration in local processes of institutional change (research question 5.d).

## **10.2. Migration and new patterns of socio-cultural stratification**

Migration has created a new socio-economic divide—in terms of income, general standards of living, and social status—between households *with* and *without* access to the European migration market. In past decades—to be more precise, since the definite incorporation of the Todgha into the European-Mediterranean migration system in the late 1960s—the Todgha has witnessed the emergence of an “international migration elite” or a “class” consisting of households with direct access to high wages, social security and residence permits in Europe. Access to international migration and remittances is the main determinant of socio-economic status in contemporary oasis society. Although there is a small group of relatively wealthy nonmigrants and immigrants—mainly local businessmen, schoolteachers and other civil servants—international migration is now the prime avenue of upward social and economic mobility.

Considering the fact that no less than 41 percent of all surveyed households have direct (33 percent) or indirect (7 percent) access to international migration resources, we can hardly speak of a migration “elite” but rather of a new socio-economic divide in the Todgha. Traditional determinants of social status and wealth (e.g., religious status, ethnic background and land possession) have decreased, and access to monetary income has increased in relative importance as a determinant of social status. To a significant extent, this has eroded traditional socio-ethnic hierarchies. Inequality based on access to international migration resources has been largely superimposed upon traditional, largely hereditary forms of

inequality based on religious nobility (e.g., *shurfa*, *igurramen*), ethnic affiliation and complexion (e.g., *imazighen*, *haratin*, *ismakhen*), and land and water possession<sup>1</sup>.

In particular, the significance of complexion in determining socio-economic status has decreased. Although still considered inferior by other groups, the fact of being *hartani*, for instance, is now less a determinant of socio-economic status than it used to be. For traditionally subordinate ethnic groups such as the *haratin*, migration has created new opportunities for upward social mobility. We have seen that migration has not been very selective according to complexion: both *imazighen* and *haratin* have migrated abroad, although the former group somewhat more and at an earlier stage than the latter group. In fact, tribal affiliation (Aït Todoght participated more, Aït ‘Atta less until recently), membership of an “international migration lineage” (either *imazighen* or *hartani*), and the location and relative isolation of the village are more important than complexion in determining migration participation.

Investments in large, concrete houses and the purchase of land and various consumer goods not only improve living conditions and the general well-being of the migrant households, but also symbolize their newly acquired material and social success. The numerous gifts international migrants tend to bring, the marriage and circumcision feasts they organize, and the cars in which they tend to come back during the summer holiday season are other status symbols expressing their upward social mobility.

International migrants also invest in symbolic-religious capital, as is manifested through pilgrimage, mosque building, and alms giving. Throughout the Todgha valley, migrants play an important role in the construction of spacious new mosques in their native villages. Furthermore, international migration has enabled more and more Todghawis to fulfill the religious duty of the pilgrimage to Mecca. Indeed, the vast majority of *hajji* (pilgrims to Mecca) in the Todgha valley are international migrants. As it is relatively expensive to make the pilgrimage to Mecca, the *hajj* not only fulfills a personal, religious function, but also adds to the prestige of the pilgrim. The ability to make the *hajj* is proof of one’s success in life. *Hajji* are generally esteemed and treated with respect. It is also more or less expected from international migrants that they invest part of their financial wealth in mosque building and pilgrimage<sup>2</sup>. Those who do not risk being criticized by others as selfish or, worse, having lost their faith while in Europe. As pilgrimage has become rather common among migrants, fulfilling the *hajj* more than once has become a means of accentuating one’s devoutness.

However, it would be erroneous to assume that international migrants and their relatives are universally regarded as highly respected members of society. The attitude of nonmigrants vis-à-vis international migrants is rather ambivalent. In line with observations by Strijp (1997) in the Rif, migrants and their household members are both praised and vilified. People’s jealousy of migrants tends to be expressed through by strong moral-religious criticism. According to Tadafelt’s nonmigrant population, for instance, two types of migrants exist (Otte 2000)<sup>3</sup>. The “good” migrant shares his earned money with poorer villagers. Migrants are considered as “bad” and “selfish” if they do not share their wealth with other

<sup>1</sup> This process has been enabled by legal changes following the incorporation of the valley into the modern state, which implied the abolishment of slavery and the introduction of national law proclaiming the legal equality of people, regardless of ethnic or other hereditary background.

<sup>2</sup> Following Bourdieu (1979), one can say that international migrants opt for investments in rather secure, traditional status symbols. As with most *nouveaux riches*, they tend to be culturally uncertain, and tend to follow rather conservative patterns of symbolic investment, such as the above-mentioned investments in religious capital.

<sup>3</sup> The following paragraphs on nonmigrants’ attitudes towards migrants heavily draw on fieldwork by Otte (2000).

villagers besides their own household and family. Nonmigrants tend to consider such migrants as “arrogant”, who do not help the villagers and look down on their way of life. In this context, a “good person” means a “good Muslim”, who has the obligation to take care of the people of the village. This means that a “good” migrant is expected to share his money with relatively poor “stay-behinds”. After all, donating to the poor and needy is one of the essential religious duties of Islam. Such *zakat* is obligatory for Muslims and constitutes one of the five “pillars” of Islam. Only when enough *zakat* has been paid is the rest of a Muslim’s property considered purified and legitimate. According to the villagers, “good” people are mainly found among returned migrants. Most young and still-abroad migrants, who only return during summer holiday, showing off their material wealth, are considered “bad”. In a way, not engaging in “shared poverty” (cf. Geertz 1963) behavior entails the risk of being criticized as a bad Muslim. This way of putting social pressure on migrants to share their wealth with family and community members is another example of the so-called “downside of social capital” (Portes and Landolt 1996; see also 6.8.3 and 9.2.5).

Especially young, recent migrants tend to be accused of selfish and haughty behavior. As one respondent stated:

They return each year with their nice cars because they know other people in the village are jealous. They all look down upon us. They think they are European now, and have become as selfish as Europeans. Take Saïd. At school, he used to be a good friend of mine. But since he moved to Spain, he has changed completely. He is so arrogant now. He now tries to ignore me. And when I ask him to take me to Europe, he says he cannot help me because the borders are closed now. But I know that he is lying. Two years ago his brother also moved to Spain. He just does not want to help me.

They seem less inclined than most of the elderly people to share their wealth by distributing gifts, employing others, and helping community members to migrate. There indeed seems a tendency for (younger) people to attempt to escape from the pressing obligations of the social environment through forming nuclear households (see chapter 7), constructing new houses (see chapter 9), or reunifying their household in towns or at the destination. In the interest of preserving a certain level of wealth and privacy, stricter boundaries are drawn between the household and the outside world. This largely reflects a general cultural change towards a preference for nuclear households.

There is widespread gossiping on the bad behavior of migrants in Europe (e.g., the tight clothes and “loose hair” of migrants’ daughters, pre-marital sexual contacts, drinking, smoking, and so on), which adds to the image that many migrants, and in particular their children, have lost their faith and traditions.

Basou stared at the ravishing migrants’ daughters who were walking arm in arm in Tinghir’s center. The four high-heeled girls wore stylish, tight pants and were carefully made-up; three of them wore tight, smart headscarves. He sighed. “If I could ever marry one of these girls, then I would be saved” He paused and stared at them. “The problem is that when I try to talk to them, they only laugh at me. They are very beautiful, but you cannot trust such girls. Most are in fact whores<sup>4</sup>. In Europe, they smoke, drink, and visit bars. They might wear headscarves, but look at their pants! It must be difficult to live with such a girl.”

Nonmigrants also tend to criticize migrants’ children for their alleged poor knowledge of Tamazight Berber, Arabic, and the Muslim religion. Migrants, in their turn, tend to do their

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<sup>4</sup> “Whore” is commonly used to indicate a woman who is not a virgin, or, in a larger sense, has “loose” habits and freely talks to men. Such women are considered “unsuitable” for monogamous marriage.

best to prove the contrary. Many in the villages also say that migrants who present themselves as pious during their holidays in the Todgha, in fact are all too happy to paint the town red back in Europe. International migrants in particular, who have not reunified their families, and have stayed alone in Europe for decades, are especially suspected of such “hypocrisy”. Ironically, these migrants typically say that one of the main reasons why they left their wife and children in the village is the fear that they would become too westernized in Europe.

On a hot summer’s evening, I sat with Hamid on one of the terraces of Tinghir’s center on the sidewalk of Boulevard Mohammed V. The center was crowded with migrants’ cars riding to and fro. A Peugeot 405 with a French license plate parked in front of us—five women on the rear seat and two men on the front seat. The driver was dressed in an immaculately white *jellaba*. His passengers apparently were not family or friends, because they quickly disappeared after having stepped out of the car. He possibly played the usual role of taxi-driver that is so typical of migrants. The driver proudly walked to the coffeehouse next to us, where the other men enthusiastically greeted him. He sat down and started to talk, the eyes of the other men were all directed towards him. He was obviously the center of attention.

We looked at the “successful migrant” scene for a while. Then Hamid said: “That old man over there is from my village. He left the Todgha some thirty years ago. He now lives in Paris, and returns only once every three or four years. He never took his wife and children to France. He just sends enough money to allow them to survive. His children barely know him, and hate him because he did not allow them to come to France. People say that he does not want them to come, because he drinks, visits nightclubs, and has a French girlfriend. He does not want to have them around, because they will disturb his life. When he is on holiday, he tries to act as a good Muslim, to do all his prayers and visit the mosque. But he is a hypocrite. When you talk to him, you can smell the stench of wine”

Strijp (1997:160-1) interpreted such moral-religious criticism by nonmigrants as an attempt at “symbolic domination” by them. Feeling (materially) deprived vis-à-vis international migrants, nonmigrants try to stigmatize them as morally inferior. Migrants themselves often have the feeling of being caught between several fires, as they have to maneuver between the many requests for financial and practical assistance, their personal interest in keeping enough money for themselves, and presenting themselves as “successful” migrants. This also applies to the household members they leave behind, who are equally considered rich. Migrants often do not feel understood by nonmigrants. As a migrant, who spent his summer holiday in the Todgha, said:

People here don’t understand us. They only think of us as a bag full of money, while they do not understand that we have to work hard. When I try to explain that our salaries might be high, but that life in Europe is very expensive, they simply don’t believe me. They think that I am incredibly rich. They all hold out their hand, and they all expect me to bring gifts. But the worst are the continuous requests for visas. Everybody wants to talk to me, and they all seem friendly, but what they really want are visas. And if you meet a nice girl, the first thing she asks is whether you want to marry her. I like to come back each year, because this is my *bled*, and after a year in France, I cannot wait to go to Morocco. But after a few weeks here, I long to go back to France, where my home is.

However, in their direct contacts with migrants, nonmigrants are generally friendly and eager to maintain relationships with them. Criticism is mostly expressed in a subtle, indirect way. After all, migrants can be of great help in obtaining goods, money, and work. Nonmigrants are partly dependent on the employment created by international migrants’ investments and their need to have their fields and houses maintained. Contacts with migrants can also serve to

obtain visas or to establish migrant-nonmigrant marriages<sup>5</sup>. The potential opportunity of gaining access to international migration is reason enough not to spoil relations even with “bad” migrants.

The general image of the international migrants as rich and successful puts high expectations and pressure on new migrants. This explains why less successful migrants generally prefer not to return instead of having to admit their failure. The increasing number of undocumented migrants generally do not even have the possibility to return. They typically stay away for years, until they have managed to acquire residence permits and stable employment. Only a small minority never return. Migrants tend to save money during the entire year in order to give the impression of the wealthy migrant in the Todgha during the summer holidays. Through this pressure to show off one’s success and the social obligation to distribute money and presents generously, an average summer holiday spent in Morocco tends to be expensive. Several respondents stated that this was one of the main reasons they did not return each year. As one respondent said:

It is very expensive to go to Morocco. You have to prepare your car, buy new clothes for your family, buy many presents, and pay for the petrol and toll on the road. Once in Morocco you keep on spending money to pay the border officials, police, and to help family members and friends who ask for my assistance. Each time we go, it really drives me crazy. It takes months of preparation and lots of money. Six weeks of holiday in Morocco will cost me at least 30,000 dirham. It can therefore be more relaxing to spend the summer in the Netherlands or to visit family in Belgium and France.

Although it is certainly not the only cause of social change, migration has certainly accelerated the breakdown of the former socio-ethnic stratification in the Todgha. It is in particular through migration that many individuals belonging to a traditionally inferior group (i.e., landless sharecroppers, *haratin*, and *sismakhen*) have acquired a higher social status. Such processes of partial emancipation-through-migration have been described in several Moroccan oases (De Haas 1998; Ilahiane 2001; Mter 1995). For these groups, migration has offered new opportunities to earn an external income independent of the severe social and economic constraints of traditional oasis agriculture, and has therefore clearly been a liberating experience. Migration has contributed to the emergence of new patterns of social stratification, which is primarily based on monetary income, and in which international migrant households form a new kind of *nouveau riche*.

Nevertheless, descent and ethnic affiliation still play an important role in social interaction. For example, intermarriage between different ethnic groups has remained rather unusual. In particular, marriage between *hartani* men—regardless of their material wealth—and *imazighen* women is still largely taboo.

“Do you know what I have heard? It is unbelievable. A man in our village was visited by a rich man who works in France. He asked for the hand of his daughter. But he was a Negro! How dared he! Who do they think they are?” Abdallah, my Aït ‘Atta informant who told this anecdote, was visibly amused by the very thought. All the other ‘Attawi men roared with laughter. “What did the father do”, I asked. “Of course he chased him away. This was an insult for him. An ‘Attawi could never entertain the thought that his daughter would marry a black man”.

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<sup>5</sup> In order to obtain tourist visas or residency permits for almost all European countries, it is necessary to have family or friends residing in the country of destination who are willing to stand surety.

For many Aït ‘Atta, it is painful that many of their *haratin* neighbors have accumulated considerable wealth. Nevertheless, as they often state, “all of this cannot remove the color of their skin”, which remains, for Aït ‘Atta and Aït Todoght *imazighen*, proof of their humble descent. For this reason, most Aït ‘Atta—no matter how much they are in need of money—refuse to sell land to *haratin*.

### 10.3. From oasis to paradise ... A culture of migration

Please try to understand me. I have nothing to lose. This is no life here. I have no job, no money, nothing. I cannot even marry. Here I am dead anyway. So, either I remain dead or I go to Europe. I do not fear the risks of taking a *patera*<sup>6</sup>. When I go, I at least have a small chance to survive. If you cannot find me today or tomorrow, you know that I am in Europe (Mohammed, 26, university graduate)

Migration has not only affected the social and ethnic fabric of traditional oasis society; it has also played a significant role in processes of cultural change. For instance, migration seems to be influencing local tastes and styles, which is becoming particularly visible in the construction of urban-style houses, which strongly deviate from the traditional Presaharan architecture of the adobe *igherman*. Furthermore, as many (internal) migrants work or study in Arabic-speaking areas, migration has played an independent role—besides the strong influence of education and the media—in stimulating the use and knowledge of Arabic in this Berber-speaking area<sup>7</sup>. Even among migrants living in Europe, there is an increasing tendency to speak *darija* (Moroccan colloquial Arabic)<sup>8</sup>.

However, it seems erroneous to perceive the influence of migration as a one-way intrusion of urban, modern, or Western influences into traditional, rural areas. On the contrary, the increasing confrontation with the outside world has also provoked local (counter-) reactions. Concerning the use of language, there is an increasing consciousness, pride, and affection for the mother tongue, Tamazight Berber, which seems to be very much due to this increasing confrontation with, use of and perceived threat of Arabic. Several well-educated, often unemployed young Todghawis are active in Berber associations, which have sprouted in recent years following a political change towards more permissive cultural policies by the Moroccan state.

Berber-awareness seems particularly high among the Diaspora of second generation Moroccans in Europe. Increasingly, such activists have transnational links, in particular through the internet<sup>9</sup>. Berber consciousness—in its modernist, largely de-tribalized, and internationalized form—is increasingly important in identity formation among the Todghawi youth. It gives a sense of identity and self-esteem to these young people who feel socially, economically, and politically excluded, and who tend to blame the “suppressing Arab elite” for their perceived backwardness and general lack of perspectives. As one respondent said:

<sup>6</sup> *Pateras* are flat-bottom launches that were built for sprat fishing off the Moroccan coast, some of which are now used to ferry groups of 20 to 30 migrants across the Strait of Gibraltar.

<sup>7</sup> Such impacts have also been described for other parts of rural Morocco (cf. Crawford 2001).

<sup>8</sup> Migrants themselves explain this tendency by the fact that, in Europe, they meet Moroccans from other regions who speak either Arabic or different Berber languages, such as Tarifit or Tassusit. In this context, Moroccan Arabic functions as a *lingua franca*.

<sup>9</sup> There are many Berber websites, on which migrant and nonmigrant youth discuss various issues and exchange information. There are even some special websites dedicated to the Todgha (<http://gtf.asso.free.fr/gtfl.php3>; <http://gtf.asso.free.fr/forum/index.php>; <http://www.tinghir.net>; <http://iquebec.ifrance.com/todra/>; <http://www.siteavie.com/tinghir/>; <http://www.amazigh.info/>).

It is the fault of the Arabs that we do not have work. For us it is very difficult to find a job in town. Without corruption or the right connections, it is impossible to get a good job. Even at university, Berbers are discriminated against and get lower grades. Also in the Todgha, the Arabs and the *makhzen* are stealing our riches. We have a mine. Nevertheless, all the profits go to the Moroccan state. If the Arabs were not here, we would not have all these problems.

We have no empirical evidence to assess to what extent such perceptions reflect reality. What is relevant though, is that such feelings of structural exclusion are the dominant perception of reality among many young and relatively well-educated Todghawis.

There is some empirical evidence from other countries that migration might also affect local (rural) religious life in Muslim society, as both internal and international migration tend to confront people with new, more puritan or fundamentalist religious norms. Bernal (1999) argued that, in a Sudanese rural community, return migrants from Saudi Arabia had stimulated the rise of fundamentalist Islam and the parallel decline of popular Islam. Due to the high social status of migrants, fundamentalist Islam was identified with progress and prosperity.

In the Todgha, migrants have not played a similarly prominent role in the rise of fundamentalist Islam. Certainly, besides the “Berberists”, a minority of unemployed ex-students who returned to the Todgha have converted to “fundamentalist” Islam and have sometimes become active in fundamentalist associations such as Al Adl wa-l Ihsane (“Justice and Benevolence”) of the popular Cheikh Yassine. They take new pride in their “newborn” religious identity, and they find recognition within the local circle of fundamentalists.

However, migrants do seem to play a more important role in the rise of orthodox, relatively puritan Islam, which is not fundamentalist but clearly deviates from popular Islam<sup>10</sup>. The rise of orthodox and fundamentalist Islam in the Todgha coincides with the parallel decline of popular Islam. On their return from cities and abroad, labor and student migrants tend to criticize (allegedly pre-Islamic) practices such as the veneration of *marabouts* (local saints) and mountains, sorcery, the tradition of *ahidus* (mixed dancing and music making during village feasts), and the traditional practice of tattooing women’s faces and bodies. Indeed, most such practices are rapidly declining under the combined influence of migration, formal education, the state-controlled mosques, and the media, which are all channels through which “correct” Islam is propagated. It is nonetheless difficult to disentangle the influence of migration from other influences, which are equally or even more important.

The most significant cultural impact of migration, however, seems to be its role in “mobilizing” the mindsets of people. In the early twentieth century, the rhythm of local life in the Todgha was still determined by agriculture. The high seasons used to be fall and spring, when most crops are harvested and fields are ploughed. Today, the yearly economic and cultural high season is the July-August summer holiday period, when international migrants return temporarily from Europe in their cars and *transit* minibuses, generally loaded with gifts and merchandise. Most marriages take place during this season, and the markets are at their busiest. The local youth in particular look forward to the exciting summer holiday season. In this way, migration has led to a reversal of traditional patterns of seasonality, reflecting the decreased relative importance of agriculture.

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<sup>10</sup> Orthodox Islam refers to the official version of Malekite Islam recognized by the Moroccan sovereign. Orthodox Islam is mostly associated with urban, elitist Morocco, and contrasts with the popular Islam of rural Morocco. Orthodox Islam should not be confused with fundamentalist Islam, which is a modernist religious movement rejecting both orthodox and popular Islam.

The regular return of migrant role models and exposure to their relative wealth seem to have increased the feelings of relative deprivation and the material and social aspirations of the “stay-behinds”—even though their standard of living has actually increased over the past decades<sup>11</sup>. The encounter with migrant wealth takes place not only in the summer but all-year-round, as all the villages contain large numbers of households that receive remittances from one or more family members living abroad. Moreover, the Todgha is developing into a tourist destination, which implies that oasis dwellers are even more intensively confronted with “incredible” Western affluence.

This has given rise to the emergence of a “culture of migration”, in which international migration is strongly associated with personal, social, and material success, and in which migrating has become the norm rather than the exception. In addition to the exposure to the relatively high wealth of international migration households, improved education and increased media exposure seem to have further contributed to the rising aspirations of oasis dwellers and to a growing orientation towards the outside world. Most young women and men aspire to leave the valley, at least temporarily, to “make it” elsewhere before returning successfully. Especially for youngsters, the question is not so much whether to migrate, as *when* to leave the oasis.

The attraction of the great urban centers of Morocco and Europe is enormous. This attraction should not only be seen in an economic context. Stimulated by today’s omnipresent (satellite) television, young oasis dwellers feel attracted by a “modern” and more liberal lifestyle. In their opinion, the “harsh” and “boring” oasis life cannot compete with the perceived advantages of living elsewhere.

The hope of many nonmigrant youth and their parents is focused on marriage with a second-generation European migrant or, sometimes, a tourist. A marriage with a migrant is generally considered as the ultimate ideal, being the most secure way to material stability and success as well as upward social mobility. For them, this makes the summer holiday a thrilling event, when they can meet and talk to their “European” peers. The latter seem to enjoy their high appeal, riding around in flashy cars, strolling Tinghir’s streets in fancy clothes, and ostentatiously speaking in French or Dutch smoothly alternated with Tamazight and Arabic. By displaying their wealth and “otherness”, they command the covert jealousy and admiration of the local, nonmigrant youth. The Gorges du Todgha has become the main meeting place for migrant and nonmigrant youth, where they spend the hot summer days picnicking and courting. It is in this “hot spot” that migration networks are fostered and the foundations for future chain migration are laid.

For many, migration has become a veritable obsession. Education in particular seems to play an important role in making people more aware of the degree to which economic, social, and political constraints form obstacles to fulfilling their personal aspirations. However, at the same time, education is no longer a guarantee of well-paid government jobs as used to be the case (see section 4.6). In the Todgha, unemployed youth—especially those from relatively wealthy families—tend to be so focused on migration that they are not even seriously looking for work, and are generally unwilling to do low-skilled, irregular, and manual jobs. They tend to be well-educated (holding secondary education or university degrees), but unemployed, and spend their days in frustrating lethargy.

Most assistants who helped to carry out the household survey belonged to this group of jobless ex-students (see also section 3.4.2). These unemployed young men form Todgha’s

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<sup>11</sup> Similar processes by which international migrants have become role models in migrant sending communities have been described for other Moroccan migrant sending areas (Aït Hamza 1995; Hearing and Van der Erf 2001; Kerbout 1990).

share of Morocco's "detached middle"<sup>12</sup>, passing their empty days on Tinghir's terraces, doing occasional jobs (such as being a research assistant), and, first and foremost, dreaming of migrating to Europe. The lack of stable employment is an increasing obstacle to marriage, which is still the only real way of establishing a stable, socially accepted, and legally admitted place in Moroccan society. Although they are neither starving, nor responsible for maintaining an entire family, such youth are generally frustrated in their personal ambitions, which seem indeed impossible to realize in the Todgha or even within Morocco<sup>13</sup>. On the one hand, the frustration, confusion, and disorientation lead some to cling to religious and/or Berber movements. On the other hand, it makes them dream of fulfilling their ambitions elsewhere, that is, through migrating.

The desire to migrate should not exclusively be interpreted in material, but also in socio-cultural terms, especially when it concerns new generations of relatively well-educated women and men. Migration tends to be associated with the idea of gains in personal liberty. Confronted not only with economic stagnation, but also with a political and social lack of freedom, a new generation of relatively well-educated people aspires to live in open societies, which offers them better opportunities for personal development (achieved through education, work, social relationships, and cultural participation) in general.

In fact, it is difficult to disentangle these material and social aspects, as both play an important and mutually reinforcing role in personal well-being and social recognition. In this context, higher earnings are a means rather than an end in themselves. This brings us back to Sen's capabilities approach, which argues that development is not about economic development or an increase in wealth *per se*, but about the expansion in the capability of human beings to lead lives they have reason to value and to enhance the substantive choices they have. An increase in material wealth through migration can undoubtedly be an effective way of increasing such freedoms, but it is not an end in itself. In any case, international migration is generally—and rightfully—perceived as the ultimate way towards more social and economic freedom.

The relevance of rising aspirations in explaining the mounting desire to emigrate can hardly be overestimated. This observation leads us to some important theoretical inferences. It has been rather common to explain the occurrence of migration in terms of a limited agricultural "carrying capacity" of migrant sending areas, which has, under conditions of high population growth, "pushed" people out of these areas. Prior research has abounded in such neo-Malthusian reasoning. However, besides the fact that people typically migrate from sparsely to densely populated areas, the problem with such explanations is that they assume that the needs and aspirations of people are stable. In fact, people's aspirations are volatile and highly sensitive to the general level of wealth at the community level. As has been argued

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<sup>12</sup> As a consequence of stagnating economic growth and rising unemployment, a large share of the new generation of high school and university graduates are forming what Cohen (2001) called the "detached middle" of Morocco. High unemployment, the lethargy of the educational system and state bureaucracy, and the general inaccessibility to stable jobs for those lacking good connections condemn many young people to frustrating inactivity (Davis 1989).

<sup>13</sup> This situation seems typical for many parts of Morocco. Schoorl *et al.* (2000) argued that, apart from the limited opportunities for finding work, the pervasive culture of migration explains why "young people prefer to look for opportunities to migrate as so many of their friends and relatives have done, rather than to try to build their future in Morocco". There seems to be a tendency towards a diversification of migration motives. In particular "unemployment" is increasingly presented as the main motive for migration, whereas the prime motive used to be to "earn more money" (Fadlollah *et al.* 2000; Hearing and Van der Erf 2001; Refass 1995). Direct material needs seem to play a relatively less important role than was the case at the time of "classical" labor migration of mostly illiterate peasants in the 1960s and 1970s, who generally had a more direct and urgent responsibility for the maintenance of their families (Heinemeijer *et al.* 1977; Michalak 1997).

in section 8.4.5, even if the agricultural carrying capacity of the Todgha were sufficient to feed the entire population, it is highly likely that people would simply no longer be content with a basic subsistence livelihood. After all, they have become exposed to other ways of life and increasing wealth, both outside and inside the valley.

Besides unequal access to social, informational, and material resources that enable people to migrate, differences in relative aspirations might equally explain why people from more “underdeveloped” areas within the Presaharan region migrate to the Todgha, while Todghawis migrate away from the valley. On the one hand, the Todgha and Tinghir may be perceived as boring and “underdeveloped” through the eyes of Todghawi. On the other hand, the Todgha may be a “land of opportunities” and Tinghir a relatively wealthy town through the eyes of an Attawi from a poor and isolated village in the Saghro Mountains. They do not only tend to have less resources to migrate, but their aspirations are relatively low compared to most Todghawis, who are already used to better living conditions.

General living conditions in the valley undoubtedly improved over the second half of the twentieth century. The one-sided dependence on subsistence agriculture has been replaced by the increasing diversification of economic resources. Moreover, access to public health care, family planning, schooling, and other public facilities have dramatically improved. Regularly recurring famines and epidemics—which used to be common in oases—have been eradicated, and mortality and birth rates have significantly decreased (cf. Büchner 1986). Although large sections of the oasis population still live in poverty, all the (circumstantial) evidence indicates that the general standards of living have undoubtedly improved and that the most grinding forms of poverty have actually decreased.

Thus, in spite of population growth there has been a certain social and economic development, which has even attracted immigrants from other regions of Morocco to the Todgha. From a “push-pull” or neo-Malthusian perspective, it then becomes impossible to explain the simultaneously high migration from the Todgha to cities and abroad. This contradicts neo-Malthusian explanations of migration, and rather seems to support transitional migration theory, stating that a certain minimum level of development is necessary—in shaping the mental (knowledge, aspiration) and material (risks and opportunity costs) conditions—for large-scale (international) migration to occur.

Throughout the twentieth century, migration has been the main avenue of upward social and economic mobility. Exposure to the relative success of migrants seems to contribute to the perception among the valley’s inhabitants that real success is only achievable through migration, which enables migrants to accumulate sufficient wealth to successfully return to the Todgha. Higher aspirations, better education, access to international media—indeed the whole process of the “opening up” of the valley to the modern world has put migration at the center of people’s minds.

In the migration literature, it has been suggested that migrants tend to hide their problems and exaggerate their wealth, thereby creating an unrealistic perception that Europe’s streets are indeed paved with gold. As has been argued by Fadlollah *et al.* (2000:89), the perception that migration is the ultimate road towards social and material well-being is further encouraged by special broadcasts on national television, in which mainly successful Moroccan migrants are interviewed. Over the 1990s, satellite dishes have mushroomed throughout the valley and have further intensified the exposure of Todghawis with alternative cultural models and the economic affluence usually depicted on foreign (Arab or Western) channels.

It might indeed be true that these distortions have created a positive bias in nonmigrants’ perceptions on the opportunities abroad. Nevertheless, most “stay-behinds” are

also aware of the difficulties migrants might encounter and this is also what they tend to gossip about. As one respondent said:

Migrants live in great difficulties for 11 months per year, but here they present themselves as rich men. They live with large families in small apartments in the *banlieues*, and do not have enough to eat. Many do not even have a car. When they go to Morocco, they buy a car, but sell it again at the end of their holidays in Morocco or in France. They hide their misery, but we know of their problems.

Although he added

Nevertheless, if I could seize the chance, I'd leave tomorrow.

However, the simple fact that salaries in Europe easily exceed Moroccan salaries by five or ten times, as well as the potential access to public health care, schooling and social security, seem to justify the strong desire to migrate among those who do not have much to lose anyway. It is an erroneous impression that Todghawis tend to migrate "blindly". Many stories go around in the Todgha concerning the difficulties many migrants are experiencing. It is a favorite pastime to tell anecdotes about the failed and sometimes fatal attempts of Todghawis to leave the country illegally.

However, the prospect of becoming an undocumented migrant does not scare all people off. Prospective migrants tend to be optimistic about their chances of obtaining legal status in European countries. The large number of "illegals" who have eventually acquired residency status (principally through marriage or legalization programs) seemingly justifies this optimism. As one respondent stated:

Ten years ago, everybody said it was not worthwhile migrating to Europe anymore. But look at the people that went to Spain and Italy. They now come back in nice BMWs and Mercedes in summer, and all have papers now. I regret that I did not leave at the time. What can I do with my *baccalauréat* here? Nothing!

Apparently, even an "investment" in undocumented migration is perceived to be worth the risk. Even undocumented or unemployed migrants tend to have incomes that exceed by several times what they could have earned in Morocco<sup>14</sup>. Therefore, reasoning from the lack of perspective in Morocco, their desire to migrate seems logical, since the high aspirations can only be fulfilled through migration to the European "paradise".

The allegedly "materialistic" attitude of migrants has frequently been frowned upon in the literature and by policy makers. Migrants, it is often written, would be better to stay at home to help the development of their region "by itself". However, this reflects a naïve view of development, considering the high unemployment and the lack of local resources which oasis dwellers need in order to fulfill their aspirations. This very lack of capabilities-enhancing resources largely disqualifies them from self-development and it can often only be through (international) migration that these capabilities can be acquired.

Or, as Sen (1999) emphasized, many poor are essentially deprived of the capabilities or freedoms to assume the responsibilities to (re)shape their own destiny. International migration

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<sup>14</sup> A typical salary of a day laborer doing unskilled work in Morocco is around 5-6 US\$ a day. Illegal agricultural workers in the Spanish province of Andalusia earn about 26 US\$ dollars for an eight-hour day (Migration News, Vol. 7, No. 6, June 2000). Salaries in western and northern European countries tend to be significantly higher. Moreover, there is the potential prospect of access to the "unimaginable" European social security systems if one succeeds in obtaining residence papers.

can be considered as an investment, helping oasis households to overcome the above-mentioned local constraints. This seems in line with the premises of the new economics of labor migration theory that states that, besides diversifying livelihoods and increasing income, migration can be a way to overcome local constraints to economic production.

What seems essential in explaining how development and increased wealth over the twentieth century has coincided with the growing propensity of people to migrate is that *people's aspirations have increased faster than the social and economic opportunities within the Todgha and Morocco*. Migration is a deliberate, rational act in the sense that young, ambitious people are right in assessing that their personal aspirations can probably not be realized within Morocco in the near future. They cannot afford the luxury to just wait one, two, or three decades to see whether the situation in Morocco improves. Therefore, reasoning from their "blocked" position, it is a rational strategy to leave.

#### 10.4. Migration and gender relations

Traditionally, gender relations in rural Morocco are based on strong patriarchal principles. This implies that men were dominant in household decision making. This coincided with a tendency towards spatial separation of the sexes, in which women's lives have been largely restricted to the domestic domain, while the public domain is largely reserved for men. Nevertheless, it should be stressed that the reality of life in rural Morocco often deviated from this cultural-religious ideal. As in other Presaharan oases, women in the Todgha also had important agricultural tasks<sup>15</sup>. Moreover, social contacts between village men and women in the public space used to be rather common.

According to both Ait Todoght and Ait 'Atta customary law, and in contrast with *shari'a* (Islamic law)<sup>16</sup>, women are not entitled to inherit. Both customary law and *shari'a* allow men to marry up to four women (although this has largely remained a privilege of the rich) and render divorce much more difficult for women than for men. Until recently, most girls were given in marriage at ages of between 13 and 18 years. In general, women are placed under the guardianship of their father, their husbands and their family-in-law, and are expected to obey male household members. Only when a woman has given birth to several children (preferably sons) and reaches a "respectable" age, can she increase her say in household affairs.

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<sup>15</sup> Typical household tasks of women are: Cleaning the house of dust and sand; the daily preparation of bread and cooking lunch and dinner; washing clothes by hand; fetching and carrying water, which is a heavy task, especially when there is no private well in the family's courtyard, and, last but not least, taking care of the children. In a minority of households that do not yet use gas stoves, women have to walk kilometers to fetch wood. The only household task of men is purchasing food at the weekly market. Women also have agricultural tasks. They harvest fruits and crops such as wheat and barley, and regularly go to the fields to cut the alfalfa for the livestock, to weed, and to collect wood, leaves, and twigs. The latter products are used to feed the livestock, heat the bread ovens, and to braid baskets. Women also take care of the family's livestock of sheep, goats, and cows, and process products such as milk (butter) and wool. Typical male agricultural tasks are: Ploughing, seeding, irrigating, maintenance of irrigation infrastructure (i.e., dams, irrigation channels, *khettaras*), and climbing date palms to pollinate, cut old leaves, and harvest dates (cf. Van Rooij 2000:38-41)

<sup>16</sup> The Moroccan law of inheritance, which is based on *shari'a*, stipulates that women are entitled to half of the inheritance of men. Most women, however, do not claim their legal portion, since this is considered shameful, and a dishonoring indication that the household head is too poor to support his family. Only recently have young women tended to claim their inheritance rights.

**Box 4. A day in a woman's life**

Oasis women usually work from dawn till dusk. They get up extremely early and eat something (e.g., flour soup, dates) before they walk to the fields to harvest crops, collect dead palm leaves—which is used to heat the bread ovens—and to cut alfalfa and weeds for the livestock. Depending on the size of the livestock and the number of fields, women go between every day and once every other week. After carrying the agricultural produce home she feeds and milks the animals. She then starts to prepare breakfast (e.g., bread, *aghrum n'gensu*, olive oil, *couscous*, tea) for the other family members who are getting up by that time. In families with more than one adult woman, these tasks are done in rotation.

After breakfast the house is cleaned, bread is baked and the warm lunch (e.g., *tajin*) is prepared. After lunch the dishes are washed. In summer, when temperatures rise above 40°C, the whole family rests until three or four o'clock. After siesta, she might do the laundry by hand, either at home or near an irrigation channel or *khattara* with other women. If there are many crops in the fields, she will go to the fields again to cut alfalfa and other crops. Other tasks she might be doing in the late afternoon could be churning milk to produce butter and buttermilk. If there is time left, she might visit neighbors or family to drink tea. Preparing dinner is the next task. Dinner is usually eaten at around eight or nine. After dinner and tea, she goes to bed (adapted from Van Rooij 2000:41).

Then there is the heavy task of child rearing, which is predominantly a woman's responsibility. Also in important affairs for which the father's approval is mandatory (e.g., school, work, marriage) negotiations usually take place via the mother. Breast-fed babies are usually carried on the back in a large cloth if the woman goes to the fields or works in the house. Older sisters or other women in the household often take care of toddlers. From the age of 6-7, girls usually start helping their mother in the household. From the age of 11-12, this becomes mandatory. However, with the increasing school attendance of girls, their participation in household work is decreasing, although they are generally expected to help after school.

Gender inequality is further manifested by the fact that, until recently, only men were allowed to migrate on their own. If the migrant was married, the honor of the family and, in particular, the chastity of his wife and daughters who were left behind, used to be guarded by the migrant's extended family household. In a certain way, remittances, which are destined for the entire extended family household, can be considered as the price that the migrant pays for this (cf. De Mas 1990:83). Thanks to this system, men have traditionally been able to participate in circular migration without risking the family's honor.

The question now is to what extent migration has affected traditional gender roles in the Todgha valley. The position of migrant wives and the impact of migration on gender roles has received only scant attention in Moroccan migration research, focused as it is on the position of the—predominantly male—labor migrants and “household heads” (see for similar criticism Hajjarabi 1995). Moreover, most studies that do pay some attention to gender issues are almost exclusively focused on international migration, and largely ignore how internal migration might affect the position of women.

The existing evidence from Morocco seems to suggest that migration has encouraged the emancipation of rural women, as, in the absence of their husbands, their responsibilities, autonomy, and power have increased (Aït Hamza 1988; Fadloulah *et al.* 2000:xix,130). In the same vein, general studies on migration and development suggest that migration might have expanded women's power in household negotiations and in community affairs (Brydon

and Chant 1989; Chant 1997). The extent to which this hypothesis is sustained by empirical evidence from the Todgha will be the focus of this section<sup>17</sup>.

#### 10.4.1. General trends in gender inequality

It is important to disentangle as much as possible general processes of change and specific migration impacts. Therefore, before examining the specific impact of migration on gender inequality, we will first briefly review *general* changes in the position of oasis women. In section 7.3.1, we saw that women tend to marry at a much younger age than men (see figure 7.2). The average age at which the interviewed women, whose present age was 37 on average, had married, was 15 (Van Rooij 2000:32). However, nowadays women tend to marry at a later age than before. This is due to the influence of legal restrictions, education, and generally changing norms, which explain why most young people now reject arranged, early marriages. Only 2.4 percent of current 15-year old girls are married. In this context, it is important to note that the growing influence of modernist Islam might have reinforced this decline of traditional norms pertaining to early marriage. Although this remains to be confirmed, knowledge of official religion and scripture might be a powerful tool in the hands of increasingly literate young women to defend their claims.

Moreover, there is growing awareness among parents that forced or arranged (premature) marriages tend to lead to divorce, which has become an increasingly common phenomenon<sup>18</sup>. Van Rooij (2000) revealed that almost all older women (above 35–40 years) say that their marriages were strictly their parents' decisions and that they hardly knew their husbands before marriage. Most young women claim that they chose their marriage partner, either independently or in negotiation with their parents. They are now generally allowed to meet their future husband several times before marriage. For young women, the tendency towards later marriages seems a clear advance, not least because this allows them to continue their (secondary) education.

Moreover, for girls and their mothers, education is today a socially acceptable reason to postpone marriage. This was a priority for all respondents below 40. Women who keep—particularly their eldest—daughters at home are all above 40. In addition, the growing influence of modernist Islam to the detriment of popular Islam seems to have a positive rather than negative effect on girls' education. Education of both women and men is an important virtue in official Islam, whereas traditional norms strongly reject girls' education.

Thus, both prolonged education and changing norms concerning marriage seem to reinforce each other. This agrees with the evidence in chapter 9 that girls increasingly attend primary and secondary school. Moreover, we have seen that migration has played a positive, accelerating role in closing the gender gap in primary education, and will possibly play a similar role in secondary education. Besides the fact that international migrant households enjoy relatively high, stable, and secure incomes, the fact that many international migrant households are *de facto* female headed seems to play an explanatory role. Since this gives

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<sup>17</sup> Section 10.4 mainly draws on fieldwork by Van Rooij (2000) on the effects of migration on women's lives in the Todgha valley (see section 3.3.5). Her study consisted of semi-structured interviews (with generally open questions) with 20 wives of nonmigrants, 10 wives of current internal migrants, and 13 wives of current international migrants. Migration impacts were assessed through systematic comparison of these three categories.

<sup>18</sup> 8.0 percent of women in the 20–24 age group are divorced. The divorce rates are 14.9, 14.3, 11.8, and 7.3 percent for the 25–29, 30–34, 35–39, and 40–44 age groups, respectively. For men, these rates are 0.3, 0, 1.2, 6.6, 3.1, and 4.8 percent, respectively (Household Survey).

women a (temporary, but factual) greater say in household decision making, this may also give them more power to fulfill their generally strong wish to keep their daughters at school<sup>19</sup>.

The traditionally high age differential between male and female spouses can be interpreted as another dimension of gender inequality. Table 10.1 indicates that the age differential between spouses is clearly lower for younger generations. Among households headed by men or women above 59 years, the male spouse is 14 years older on average than the female spouse. For heads younger than 45 years, this differential is only 7 years. There is a significant correlation ( $r=0.391^{**}$ ) between the age of the household head and the age differential between the head and his/her spouse. The table also indicates that international migration participation does not seem to play any significant role in explaining this decrease. Comparing households with and without access to international migration, and when controlling for age, no significant differences were found. Therefore, declining age differentials between spouses indeed seem rather part of a more general trend.

**Table 10.1. Age differential between male and female spouses by international migration participation, by age household head**

Age household head	Migration status	Age differential (%)			Total	Mean	n	Cont.coeff
		< 7	7-11	≥ 12				
< 45	Nonmigrant	54.4	32.2	13.3	100.0	6.7	90	0.100 <sup>x</sup>
	Intl migrant	44.8	34.5	20.7	100.0	8.1	29	
	Total	52.1	32.8	15.1	100.0	7.0	119	
45-59	Nonmigrant	31.2	35.1	33.8	100.0	10.8	77	0.117 <sup>x</sup>
	Intl migrant	29.9	45.5	24.7	100.0	9.3	77	
	Total	30.5	40.3	29.2	100.0	10.0	154	
≥ 60	Nonmigrant	19.5	39.0	41.6	100.0	12.6	77	0.099 <sup>x</sup>
	Intl migrant	17.5	31.3	51.3	100.0	14.9	80	
	Total	18.5	35.0	46.5	100.0	13.7	157	

Source: Household survey

As we have seen in chapter 5, birth rates in the Todgha seem to be declining, reflecting the rapid demographic transition Morocco is currently experiencing. Considering the fact that fertility is an important indicator of women's social and economic position in society (Glewwe 1999; Sen 1999), this development should certainly be seen as positive<sup>20</sup>.

This agrees with our empirical findings, which suggest that there is a relationship between age of marriage, fertility levels, and girls' schooling. In Tadafelt, it is only recently that primary education for girls has become acceptable, while secondary education is still taboo (see table 10.2). Not coincidentally, it was the research village where 39 percent of the 15-19 year old girls are married. This agrees with valley-wide evidence that fertility rates tend to be higher in the lower Todgha than in the upper Todgha (see chapter 5).

<sup>19</sup> We can also hypothesize that the immigration of professional workers, civil servants, and schoolteachers from western Morocco to the Todgha might have an indirect positive impact on other women's conditions. Since these immigrants are relatively well-educated and tend to come from the more modernized and urban areas of Morocco, they also import new social and cultural values. Immigrants were often the first to allow their daughters to attend secondary school, to work, and to go out without wearing a scarf.

<sup>20</sup> In explaining the rapidly declining fertility in Morocco, Courbage (1994; 1996) suggested that—after other main factors such as higher age of marriage, greater female labor force participation, and better education—the migration of Moroccan families to European countries has also contributed to the adoption of small family norms, and has thus played a significant role in the demographic transition. Nevertheless, Courbage does not give empirical evidence to support this hypothesis.

**Table 10.2. School enrollment and age of marriage, by village**

Village	Girls' school enrollment 7-12	Girls' school enrollment 13-18	% 15-19 women married	% 20-24 women married
Zaouïa	92.8	47.6	0.0	39.7
Tikoutar	95.7	47.1	12.8	55.0
Aït El Mesquine	92.1	34.2	6.3	52.4
Ikhba	82.5	21.6	10.8	64.3
Tadafelt	76.4	4.5	39.0	49.0
Ghallil n'Aït Isfoul	81.8	58.3	12.5	50.0
Total	87.7	31.0	14.5	49.8

**Source:** Household survey

Unfortunately, we do not possess household-level data on birth rates in the research village. However, this general improvement in the position of women seems mainly to be the result of a general development rather than of migration as such. This general process seems to be stimulated by the following factors: (1) the spread of primary and secondary public schools throughout the valley; (2) pro-active family planning policies by the Moroccan government; (3) the general diffusion of small family norms; and (4) increased awareness of women's rights through education and media. There is no indication that the mentioned changes are a particular effect of migration. They rather seem part of a process of general social and cultural change.

#### 10.4.2. Women's workload and migration

The position of migrant wives left behind in extended families is often difficult. While they tend to bear major responsibilities in child bearing and rearing, housekeeping, as well as assuring agricultural production during the absence of their spouses, they are also expected to obey their in-laws, and their mother-in-law in particular. Moreover, in extended family households, remittances are rarely sent directly to the migrant's wife, but generally to one of the men in the households, such as her father-in-law or brother-in-law.

This situation tends to generate numerous conflicts between migrant wives and their family-in-law, especially on the expenditure of remittances. To avoid these conflicts, and to avoid supporting the whole extended family, these tensions seem to stimulate the eventual "lifting out" of nuclear families and atomization of family life. This happens either through family reunification at the migration destination, or through the construction of their own house in the village, or through the relocation of the entire nuclear family from the village to Tinghir or other towns (see also section 9.2.5)<sup>21</sup>.

Because of the increasing atomization of family life, more and more households are headed by women. 10.4 percent of all surveyed households are officially headed by a woman. This is 14.8 percent for nonmigrant households, 13.5 for internal migrant households, 23.1 percent for indirect international migrant households, and 1.0 and 0 percent for current and returned internal migrant households. These figures partly reflect the higher occurrence of divorce among younger women.

Among the relatively "old" international migration households, divorce is rare. However, the majority of current internal and international migrant households are *de facto*

<sup>21</sup> Similar processes have been described for other regions of out-migration in Morocco (cf. Hajjarabi 1988). It is important to note that the atomization of family life is a general development in Morocco.

female households. Although it is generally the oldest man (e.g., father-in-law, brother-in-law, son) in the household who is the official *remplaçant* of the migrated household head, the migrant's wife tends to bear the actual responsibility for the household. This is certainly the case if the household is nuclear and the children relatively young. Female headed households now account for over one third of all surveyed households<sup>22</sup>. Although some "public" and "male" tasks (e.g., going to the market, certain agricultural tasks) may be delegated to family members or laborers, the migrant wives carry the actual responsibility.

It is important to note that there is a major difference between internal and international migrant households. Wives of internal migrants—who generally have only temporary and badly paid jobs—tend to live materially insecure lives and often have to deal with low and irregular remittance transfers. Wives of international migrants tend to receive regular and relatively high remittance transfers. Moreover, they live in larger and more luxurious houses.

The preponderant role of women in sustaining households' livelihoods and child rearing is easily underestimated, since the gendered division of labor implies that women's labor is less visible and not financially remunerated. Research by Van Rooij (2000) indicated that the workload of women did not significantly increase as a consequence of migration. After all, they were already used to being responsible for all domestic and many agricultural tasks before migration. However, for typical "male" agricultural tasks—such as ploughing, seeding, and irrigation—migrant households are obliged to hire wage laborers if there are no men around who can or want to pursue these tasks.

Since international migration households tend to be in more advanced stages of their life cycle (see section 7.3.1), there are generally more adolescent or adult women around to share tasks within such households. Moreover, international migrant households tend to hire nonmigrant women for domestic tasks and they can afford to pay agricultural laborers. This has even led to a *decrease* in their workload. Wives of internal migrants, who have less financial resources to pay laborers, and who tend to live in small nuclear households with young children, generally have the most arduous workload<sup>23</sup>. Whereas remittance counterflows enable international migration households to (more than) compensate for the "lost labor effect" by hiring personnel—thereby easing the life of migrant women—internal migrant households are generally not, or only partially, able to do so.

All female respondents, migrant and nonmigrant, agreed that their life is easier than that of their mothers. This can be partly attributed to recent technological advances, such as the advent of gas stoves, private water wells, and water pumps. Modern concrete houses are easier to clean and often contain lavatories. However, as we saw in chapter 7, it is predominantly households involved in international migration that enjoy such facilities. Wives of nonmigrants or internal migrants generally live in more arduous circumstances. Other factors that have eased the burden of women in their own eyes are the decrease in fertility (less children) and the fact that most women now buy leather, fabrics, and clothes on the market, instead of manufacturing them themselves as their mothers used to do.

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<sup>22</sup> 72.2 and 58.8 percent of the internal and international migrant households are nuclear, and can therefore generally be considered as *de facto* female headed. Together, they represent 29.9 percent of the surveyed households. If we add to this the female-headed households of nonmigrant and indirect international migrant households, representing 6.9 percent of the total population, we can estimate that 36.8 percent of all surveyed households are *de jure* or *de facto* female headed.

<sup>23</sup> It should be noted that there are also international migrant households that predominantly contain young children. This is especially common among migrants who left to Spain and Italy in the 1990s, who are still in relatively early stages of their family life cycle (cf. Otte 2000:121-2). However, in most such cases, the married migrants have left their wife and children in extended households. Especially when these migrants live "illegally" in Europe, the lives of their wives are difficult and uncertain, and their husbands are also unable to return regularly.

All female respondents—both migrant and nonmigrant—see education as a huge improvement to their daughters' lives. All respondents regretted not having attended school themselves, and attached high priority that their daughters attend school. This was not only because of the contribution of education to possible job prospects, but also because they perceived that education made them less dependent on others (e.g. to read documents, to write and send letters) and, in their own words, to be “better prepared for marriage” both with regards to physical maturity, knowledge and assertiveness. In Sen's (1999) terms, one would say that schooling increases the capabilities of women to gain control over their own lives. Moreover, mothers and daughters perceive education as a good strategy and socially acceptable justification for preventing marriage at an early age. For the girls themselves, going to school is a socially acceptable justification for not being involved in housekeeping all day long.

Concerning their daughters' future, all the respondents (obviously) wish their daughters a better life than they themselves have had. In order to achieve this, most mothers wish for their daughter a life outside the Todgha, in cities or in Europe “so that they will not have to work in the fields”. Interestingly, more migrant wives than nonmigrant wives wish their daughters to leave the oasis. They think that this objective is most easily realized through marriage with a migrated and preferably rich man. A minority also see a professional future for their daughter, such as being a schoolteacher outside the oasis. In general, the younger and the better educated the mothers are, the higher their ambitions for their daughters. It therefore seems particularly to be the internal migrant wives, who are predominantly young and sometimes attended school for a number of years, who want their daughters to finish their studies and obtain a good job (Van Rooij 2000). However, this seems a function of their age rather than of their migratory background.

This corresponds with earlier observations that there is an intergenerational tendency towards better participation in education for girls (see section 9.5.4), which is positively influenced by migration. Besides this influence of gradually shifting norms vis-à-vis female education, the increasing participation in primary and secondary education is facilitated by the extension of schools throughout the valley (see section 5.6.3).

#### **10.4.3. Women's responsibilities and their role in decision-making**

Over the generations, there seems to be a *general* decrease in women's workloads and a clear increase in their material well-being. Nevertheless, internal migrant wives tend to have heavier workloads than nonmigrant wives, and the wives of international migrants tend to have the easiest lives in terms of physical labor. Another impact of migration seems to be the increase in responsibilities and power among migrant wives.

In her study on the position of migrant wives in the Todgha, Van Rooij (2000) observed that women in migrant households tend to have more control over the use of their husbands' earnings than nonmigrant wives, whereby migrant wives living in extended households have less decision making powers than those living in nuclear families. Almost all migrant wives decide independently on most day-to-day spending and smaller investments. Compared to nonmigrant wives, migrant wives decide relatively independently what crops to grow and what purchases to make. They also have more influence on the schooling of their children, including that of their daughters, which might indeed explain why girls in international migrant households tend to be relatively well-educated. Migrant wives are also responsible for hiring personnel and finding people to go to the market for them. In general,

migrant wives only consult their absent husbands on major issues such as the renovation of a house or the purchase or sale of animals.

In both internal and international migrant households, the absence of their husbands gives women more decision-making authority, especially when they live in nuclear households. However, a key observation is that this gain in authority is mainly *temporary*, as migrants take over their position as “patriarchs” as soon as they return. It is particularly striking that the vast majority of migrant women see this (temporary) increase in responsibilities and decision-making power as a burden. They say it is “not the right position” for a woman, often because they are afraid that they will be criticized by community members for their “manly” behavior. The respondents consider the prevailing role patterns as “natural”, and most say that they are not prepared to bear the responsibility for decision making and play the role of household head. Migrant wives tend to complain that they have to carry all the weight of the responsibilities, and therefore prefer their husbands to be at home.

A minority, however, would prefer their husbands stay away. Nonmigrant wives often want their men to leave. The perceived material advantages of migration typically coincide with a fear of being left alone. Van Rooij (2000:62) cited a migrant wife saying:

We want our husbands to be at home because we find it difficult without them and they [nonmigrant wives] want their husband to migrate because there are always relational problems in marriages and they need the money

Besides the perceived burden of carrying double (“male” and “female”) responsibilities, many wives just miss the company of their husbands (Van Rooij 2000). While obviously depending on the quality of the personal relationship, the emotional seclusion, the long periods of sexual abstinence, and the material dependence on their spouses do not make life easier for migrant women. The position of migrant wives is also vulnerable, dependent as they are on remittance transfers, and because they often live in the fear of being repudiated by their absent spouses<sup>24</sup>. Nevertheless, despite all the difficulties, most wives of international migrants claim that, on the whole, they live in better circumstances. As one respondent stated:

We have better houses and more money than other women. It is good for the men themselves to have a job somewhere but it is difficult for us, women, to live without our husbands. We have all the responsibilities. But, despite the difficulties, it is certainly better to be a migrant wife because of the money (Van Rooij 2000:63).

Of all women, internal migrant wives tend to have the most arduous lives in both material and physical terms. They tend to live in financial insecurity and often lack grown-up children to support them in household tasks and decision-making due to their generally young age. Wives of international migrants often have grown-up children, live in better conditions concerning housing and sanitation and can afford to hire personnel to carry out certain domestic or agricultural tasks.

Moreover, wives of international migrants often gain in power and status vis-à-vis nonmigrant and internal migrant women. Within a kind of patron-client relationship, the latter

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<sup>24</sup> According to Steinmann (1993:122), the increasing emphasis on a capital based economy adversely affects all women in the Todgha. Women in migrant households are more dependent on their husband’s remittances, while women in nonmigrant households are also increasingly dependent on their husband’s income, which is often barely sufficient to meet the household’s needs. Although this seems true as such, it is probably not right to claim that women’s tasks have increased in general. They seem to have decreased instead. Steinmann also seems to ignore undeniable improvements in education, fertility, age of marriage, as well as in the general living conditions of women.

two categories of women tend to perform domestic and agricultural tasks for international migrant wives in exchange for vegetables, meat, or some financial compensation. Such “payment” is generally not fixed beforehand, and depends on the benevolence of the patrons. Poor women have an interest in working for international migrant wives, as this gives them the moral right to make an appeal to their patrons in times of economic hardship, if, for instance they do not have enough money to buy food. Thus, working for their patrons is a kind of insurance against crises. Nevertheless, the relationship is not necessarily warm-hearted. International migrant wives tend to feel superior to other women, and other women tend to complain about their arrogant attitude<sup>25</sup>.

According to Van Rooij (2000), all the interviewed women say that they agree with their husbands’ migration, but some women indicate they actually “have no choice than to agree”. This is an interesting contradiction. In Sen’s terms, one could say that women are basically “unfree” and bereft of the power to decide on issues such as the migration of their husbands, let alone their own migration.

International migrant wives expect and wish to follow their husbands through family reunification. They clearly wish to do so not only to be reunited with their husbands, but also because they think that migrating abroad will increase their freedom both in legal and material terms. Internal migrant women generally do not see this as a realistic possibility because of the lack of stable and remunerative employment for their husbands.

#### 10.4.4. Migration as women’s emancipation?

We have seen that migration has not played a major and independent role in the emancipation of women, as has been suggested in the literature. Although the absence of men has implied a considerable increase in the responsibilities and decision-making power among both internal and international migrant women, this has mainly been just a temporary change, as most men assume their traditional, patriarchal roles as soon as they return. Thus, the migration of men does not lead to a permanent change in the position of women from the restrictions of their traditionally defined roles. Nevertheless, in more indirect ways and in the longer term, migration might contribute to women’s emancipation through its positive effects on girls’ education and the potential (but yet to be investigated) function of female (family) migrants and the generally well-educated and (partly) westernized “second generation” daughters as role models.

An interesting question is *why* most migrant wives actually consider their temporarily more responsible and powerful position as a burden, as this runs counter to expectations that they would enjoy this. What probably plays an important role is the general fear of social criticism and scandalmongering. Such criticism might endanger their respectability and, hence, their social security. Too overt rule breaking may well lead to social exclusion. In this, gossiping seems a powerful social instrument in order to force villagers not to break too overtly with the prevailing cultural norms. The widespread fear of gossiping prevails in all the research villages and maintaining the good name of the family preoccupies the minds of villagers in social interaction.

In this vein, Kandyoto (1991) argued that in order to avoid overt rule breaking while improving their own situation, women engage in various strategies to maximize security and optimize life options within the given set of concrete social, economic, and cultural constraints. Women may therefore actually cling to patriarchal principles, as they seem to do

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<sup>25</sup> See Steinmann (1993) for similar evidence in her study on the Todgha.

in the Todgha, since they have no alternatives in a patriarchal society for securing their situation (cf. Van Rooij 2000:9).

Migration has created a quite dramatic and not intended “shock” in the responsibilities and tasks of women, which they do not consider rightfully theirs within the normative context of “traditional” society, and to which they do not always aspire. Women have been pushed to assume the responsibility for entire families, and to intervene in domains and processes that used not to be their sphere of influence (cf. Hajjarabi 1995:106-7). Within one generation, these women have been confronted with a change in social, economic, educational, and symbolic functions for which they were not prepared. In a sociological context that is not favorably disposed and can be even hostile towards this change, the more or less forced adaptation of new roles is often painful. Women defy complex emancipation processes and fear a new status that they have not chosen.

This explains why, the women themselves generally do not tend to view this temporary “emancipation” as a positive experience. As this new role is generally not assumed out of free choice, but forced upon them by the situation, it should not automatically be equated with emancipation in the meaning of changing norms on gender roles. It seems that migration itself has only limited direct influence on such norms, and that gradual improvements in the position of women (e.g., better education, later age of marriage, more freedom in partner choice, lower fertility, and the beginning of participation in labor migration) reflect general processes of cultural change within Moroccan society rather than being particular effects of migration.

However, in spite of the social difficulties of deviating from their traditional role, women in the Todgha generally realize that they are in a disadvantaged position. Television and education confronts them with new ideas on the role of women. As Van Rooij (2000), demonstrated, they therefore hope that their daughters will enjoy more freedom than they themselves. They therefore encourage their daughters’ schooling—as they see this as an effective way to be better prepared for marriage and sometimes also to obtaining an independent income—and many hope that they will be able to build better futures through migrating elsewhere. Thus, the “culture of migration” has certainly also affected women. The typical dream of young women in the Todgha is to marry an international migrant, not only in order to achieve wealthier and more stable livelihoods, but also to break away from the constraints that traditional rural society imposes on women.

Thus, an increasing number of young women aspire to migrate independently in order to study or work elsewhere, and often preferably on the other side of the Strait of Gibraltar. Seeing and meeting better-educated, working, and more independent female migrants makes them not only more aware of other lifestyles, but also makes them realize that their aspirations can potentially be fulfilled, and that another, in their eyes better, life is in fact possible. Indeed, the culture of migration has clearly pervaded women’s lives too.

## **10.5. Migration, power, and institutional change**

The traditional village institution of the *taqbilt* (*jema’a* in Arabic) used to regulate village life, the distribution of water, the settlement of conflicts over water or land and organize the collective labor necessary for the maintenance of the irrigation system (see section 5.3.4). However, the political and legal integration of the Todgha into the structures of the state has

fundamentally eroded the power and effectiveness of this *taqbilt* (see section 8.2.4). Migration seems to have further accelerated this breakdown through its partially emancipating effect on formerly inferior social and ethnic groups, such as smallholders, *ikhmmesen*, *haratin*, and *ismakhen*. Although the very poorest within these groups generally did not manage to migrate, others seized the new opportunities migration offered to them to break away from the constraints of traditional oasis society. This has contributed to the erosion of ancient socio-ethnic hierarchies.

New patterns of social stratification and the partial emancipation of formerly subordinate and low-status ethnic groups have eroded the traditional community institutions that regulate village life and manage the agro-hydrological infrastructure. Moreover, the declining dependence of oasis dwellers on agriculture, the establishment of new farms *outside* the traditional oasis, and decreasing social and economic interdependence between community members through the increasing importance of external revenues have further contributed to the breakdown of traditional village institutions.

Under these circumstances of the decreasing legitimacy of the power of the *taqbilt* and *amghar* (chief), it has become increasingly difficult to enforce customary law and organize collective labor based on *timiwult* and *tuiza*. “Free-rider behavior” (e.g., tapping water but not maintaining the irrigation infrastructure) and theft have become serious problems. As we saw in chapter 8, this has had fundamental implications for traditional oasis agriculture, particularly for laborious *khettara* irrigation in the lower Todgha. Because of bad maintenance, many *khettaras* have now run dry, a development that further obliges peasants to install water pumps<sup>26</sup>.

Power relations within the village community used to be primarily based on land and water ownership. For instance, a villager who does not own land is not allowed to take a seat in the *taqbilt* (Otte 2000:118-120). Nevertheless, the landless are also expected to contribute to the construction of the new village mosque and to pay their financial contributions the village’s *fqih*. This experienced “injustice” increasingly incites traditionally subordinate and low-status ethnic groups to contest the legitimacy of the *taqbilt*. Contrary to most landowners, the landless people will not turn to the traditional village council if they have personal problems or problems with other villagers. Instead, they go to the official authorities like the police, the *moqaddem*, or the municipal council (the “modern” *jema’a*).

Less and less people respect the decisions of the *taqbilt* and in all the research villages it has even become difficult to find people willing to become *amghar*. Land possession, which used to largely determine one’s say in the *taqbilt*, has become less important, and many of the new migration elite now refuse to obey customary law or to work for their former patrons. In Tadafelt,

many people complained about the current *amghar*, who was not present in the village for a long time because he went on pilgrimage to Mecca. In the view of the villagers, the village and the fields had descended into “chaos”. The village needed a strong leader, but he was gone. Despite the dissatisfaction with this *amghar*, the villagers did not decide to dismiss him, because nobody else wanted to become the next *amghar*. They feared to become the next *amghar* themselves otherwise, and that was not their aim (adapted from Otte 2000:107).

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<sup>26</sup> The breakdown of traditional village institutions seems a general development in Morocco (see also Crawford 2001; De Haas 1998; Kerbout 1990). Both internal and international migration have played an important role in this “landslide of social, political and economic changes” (Crawford 2001) rural Morocco is currently experiencing, although it is certainly not the only factor explaining these changes.

Being the *amghar* is increasingly considered as a burden, which makes them difficult to recruit. Tadafelt's *amghar* actually did not aspire to this function, and only accepted after repeated appeals by the villagers:

The people wanted him for this function, so he accepted it. After fifteen days, he announced new sanctions and fines for breaking the rules the *taqbilt* had set. This announcement created bad blood among some young villagers, who did not intend to obey his authority. They went to the fields of the *amghar*, where they threw stones at his water pump, cut his alfalfa, snapped his trees, ran through his fields and destroyed his palm trees. The water pipe of his water pump and the crops were severely damaged. The *amghar* picked up some damaged palm leaves and walked to the village mosque, where he showed the damaged leaves and said to his fellow villagers: "The *amghar* and the *aiyans* cannot carry out this job alone. You all have to help us. Teach your children never to do something like this again". However, the *amghar* was not compensated and the youngsters were not punished (adapted from Otte 200:109).

Likewise, in Zaouïa it has become difficult to find an *amghar*. It is now only in return for cash payment that they are willing to bear this responsibility:

Normally, the *amghar n-tamazirt* of Zaouïa came from the neighboring village of Aït Izduig, since any activity which bears any relation to agricultural labor has been considered as inferior and not appropriate for the *igurramen* of Zaouïa. Usually, the *amghar* did his work without being paid. His only source of income was the fines levied on the theft of fruits and vegetables (50 dirham for adults and 20 dirham for children). In 1998, however, it was impossible to find a new *amghar* who wanted to do this work for free. The people from Zaouïa and Aït Izduig therefore signed a contract with the *qaid*, stipulating that the people from Zaouïa have to pay 3,000 dirham per year in cash to the *amghar n-tamazirt*.

Younger oasis dwellers and the *nouveau riche* (in particular international migrants) increasingly neglect the decisions and regulations of the *taqbilt*, and now can freely do so, since customary law is not recognized by the state<sup>27</sup>. For instance, they increasingly contest the traditional *tagurt* system—used to divide newly reclaimed land—which tends to favor groups within the village who traditionally possessed most land (see section 8.3.3). This has led to mounting conflicts within village societies and the erosion of the legitimacy of the *taqbilt*. Apparently, this process started several decades ago, as the following account from Tadafelt demonstrates:

In 1960, some villagers rebelled against the *amghar* and *aiyans*. This group contained about 35 landless and smallholding villagers. They claimed that newly reclaimed agricultural land outside the village should be equally divided among all male inhabitants instead of according

<sup>27</sup> One exception to this rule is the *Qadi El 'Orf* among the Aït 'Atta, who enjoys recognition by the Moroccan state. This "traditional" tribal judge is elected every six years by the Aït 'Atta villages within the municipality of Taghzout. The Qadi El Orf is responsible for the implementation of traditional Aït 'Atta customary law pertaining to land and water management (Otte 2000:114). After his election, the Qadi El Orf receives a brief legal training at the courthouse in Ouarzazate and he has to take an official oath in front of the governor and the president of the tribunal. He is mainly responsible for settling conflicts that the villages' *taqbilt* cannot resolve, and with which the formal judiciary system has difficulties to effectively deal with. In practice, people appeal to the Qadi El Orf if they do not agree with the *taqbilt*'s decision. People, however, increasingly tend to circumvent this semi-official "buffer" institution between the village's *taqbilt* and the State's legal system, and go directly to the courthouse. They tend to do so because they doubt the Qadi's neutrality (who mainly tends to follow the *amghar*'s decisions in order not to contest his authority) or do not agree with "unequal" customary law (Otte 2000:115).

to the traditional *tagurt* system. The *taqbilt*, consisting of relatively large landowners, tried to suppress this plan. Large landowners bribed or threatened the members of this “opposition party” that they would not employ them anymore as laborers. Only five dissidents remained, who decided to start a lawsuit to claim what they saw as their rights. To prevent this, the large landowners proposed a settlement. In the village’s mosque, they swore on the Koran that the land would be equally divided among all men. The remaining dissidents wrote a letter to the *qaid* stating that they abandoned the lawsuit because the problem had been solved internally. However, the large landowners did not hold their word: At the public announcement of the new land division, the *taqbilt* proclaimed that the land would be divided according to the *tagurt* system. This was allegedly legitimized by the argument that the *tagurt* was something developed over time, and that what was shaped by time, could not be changed. In other words, it was God’s own will that it happened this way (Otte 2000:125-6).

Similar conflicts have occurred in all the other research villages, and have created resentment between the traditional landowning elite and smallholding or landless subordinate and low-status ethnic groups. Over the past decades, the dominant position of large landowners has been progressively put under pressure. This has resulted in increasingly overt conflicts within village communities, which has further hampered the functioning and legitimacy of the *taqbilt*.

In this process, the former landless and smallholding have been emancipated to a significant extent. As we saw in chapter 8, most *tagurt* land division systems have now been made egalitarian. Due to the diversification of oasis livelihoods, land ownership has lost its dominant position in determining (largely hereditary) socio-economic status. Migration has played an important role in this process. Upon their return, migrants generally refuse to work as *ikhmmesen* or agricultural laborers for large landowners, as they used to do before migration. Land possession used to determine one’s say in local affairs. Through migration and the generally increased importance of non-agricultural income, these days are gone now. Formerly landless, hence powerless, people can now earn monetary wages outside agriculture that allow them to gain increasing influence in local affairs. Although such *nouveaux riches* tend to buy land both as an economic investment and a status symbol, land is no longer the only determining source of wealth and power.

New elite groups increasingly circumvent traditional village institutions by creating a personal power basis based on their financial wealth. In this context, the role of gifts, religious donations, almsgiving, and investments in local infrastructure can hardly be overestimated. For instance, a rich international migrant in Aït El Mesquine improved the access road to the village by covering it with a layer of sand. Allegedly, he did so because he did not want to damage his nice car during summer holidays. On the other hand, this also added to his prestige among community members.

In Tadafelt, the richest villagers—among whom there are many international migrants—paid for the construction of a huge, concrete mosque boasting a sky-high minaret, which dwarfs the ancient, adobe mosque. Within six months, most of the mosque was erected, whereas most houses can take years to complete. This was only possible because poorer villagers were morally obliged to contribute their labor to the collective construction of the mosque. Returned migrants coordinated the construction of the mosque and established a rotation system (*nuba*) to ensure continuous labor input. Whereas the wealthy initiators contributed their money, the other villagers contributed their physical labor. Although some respondents complained about this duty, almost nobody dared to refuse to contribute to the erection of this huge mosque out of fear of being socially excluded and stigmatized as a “bad Muslim”.

Gifts, donations, and the generation of local employment have given rise to new patron-client relationships between the migrant *nouveau riche* and poorer villagers. Migrants who construct houses in the village not only prefer (because of higher trust) but also are morally obliged (to avoid negative rumors) to employ kin and community members (Otte 2000). In all villages, migrants who have set up businesses in Tinghir, Taghzout or the Gorges du Todgha, equally preferred to employ community members. Nonmigrants often work as guards of empty migrants' houses and take care of their agricultural fields, and, as we have seen, nonmigrant women tend to help international migrant women in exchange for payment in kind. Not doing so is interpreted as an act of selfishness so typical of "arrogant" migrants, and potentially entails a loss of clientele for entrepreneurs. In this way, the direct and indirect benefits of migration tend to accrue to nonmigrant kin and community members.

Through the aforementioned social and cultural changes, young people, and in particular returned internal migrants, increasingly question the legitimacy of the power of the *taqbilt*. They also tend to criticize its decreasing capacity to organize community members and defend the village's interests. As a partial response to increased disputes over land and water and the general "collective crisis" of the traditional village institutions, modern village associations have emerged recently. In the 1990s, there was a rapid increase in the number of modern, officially recognized and registered village associations in the Todgha, a process that has been enabled by increasing civic liberties in Morocco. While attempts by people to organize themselves tended to be regarded as politically suspect, this climate has changed. Freedom of speech and organization drastically increased over the 1990s.

This development particularly gained momentum after 1995. In all the research villages, such associations already exist or there are concrete plans to establish one. Most associations are officially recognized by the local authorities. Young and well-educated returned *internal* migrants (in particular schoolteachers, but also unemployed university graduates) play an initiating role in this so-called *mouvement associatif*. At the valley level, the local intellectual elite, schoolteachers in particular, have created the *Association le Grand Todgha*.

The main goal of village associations is to stimulate local development through acquiring funds or practical support from the state, foreign embassies or non-governmental organizations. Typical projects aim at developing agriculture (e.g., "cementing" of irrigation channels, covering of the shafts of *khettaras* to prevent sand encroachment), improving local infrastructure (e.g., drinking water, electricity, roads), and educating villagers (e.g., literacy programs). In the lower Todgha villages of Aït El Mesquine and Tadafelt, these associations tend to be more agriculture-oriented than in the upper Todgha (Zaouïa, Tikoutar), where agriculture is relatively less important. In general, these associations seek to re-organize peasants and village communities based on other, more "egalitarian" conditions (through formal membership by fee-paying members) than was the case under the traditional *taqbilt* system.

Such associations are typically created in response to crises or pressing needs that demand collective action, which traditional institutions are decreasingly able to deal with. Several associations have obtained financial support for various projects, such as the establishment of a drinking water system, the repair or extension of a *khettara*, the establishment of a concrete wall along the river to protect the fields from floods, literacy campaigns and self-employment projects for women. These associations nowadays seem more successful in mobilizing village populations than the old, increasingly discredited and criticized *taqbilt*. It remains to be seen to what extent these new associations will play a role in transforming agricultural institutions, and whether they will be capable of partly overtaking the role of *taqbilts*, which younger generations frequently criticize as being "ineffective" and

“non-democratic”. In any case, this spontaneous development demonstrates the willingness of oasis dwellers to improve their own conditions in and outside agriculture.

In Aït El Meskine, for instance, mounting problems associated with the anarchic boom in water pumping and the rising costs of pumping have created the perception among villagers that uncontrolled individual pumping might endanger the economic and ecological sustainability of agriculture. Water losses are considerable; in many cases, it takes 1 to 3 hours for the water to reach the fields from the families’ compounds, where most pumps are located. Several Meskini have now joined forces to construct a collective water pump. In 1998, they established the *Association d’Irrigation Aït El Meskine*, which has 46 members and an executive committee of 7 people. One of the aims of this water association is the construction of a collective water pump. This could reduce water losses and increase economies of scale. Furthermore, their aim is to “cement” the principal irrigation channels, which would further reduce water losses.

In Zaouïa and the neighboring village of Aït Oussaln, the *Association Villagoise Sidi Mohammed ben ‘Abdellah - Tizgui* was created in 1999. The association is chaired by a secondary school teacher native to this village, and has 140 members, among which 40 women. Its objective is to promote social, cultural, and economic development in other Aït Tizgui villages. It has established links and active cooperation with a French NGO and foreign embassies in Morocco. In a three year time scale, the association succeeded in creating a nursery school and obtaining external financial support for a drinking-water supply system as well as the creation of a workshop where village women can get sewing classes and produce clothes for the market. The French NGO has furthermore provided educational tools for village children, computers to set up secretarial training for village women, and medicines. The association has also organized cultural events and a collective campaign to clean the riverbed of refuse.

Interestingly, this process of institutional change is reinforced by donors’ preference to deal with officially registered organizations. For instance, the ORMVA (Office Régional de Mise en Valeur Agricole) in Ouarzazate has a budget for subsidizing small agricultural and irrigation projects, such as covering the wells of a *khattara* to prevent sand encroachment or “cementing”. In contrast to former “top-down” approaches of agricultural development, such projects have nowadays to be initiated and co-financed by the villagers themselves who can submit proposals to the ORMVA. However, non-registered organizations such as the *taqbilt* cannot apply for funding for such projects. According to Otte (2000), the ORMVA introduced this rule after it appeared that projects initiated by modern associations were a success in several villages, and that the same organizations tended to obtain additional funds from other, governmental and nongovernmental donors both within and outside Morocco. This spin-off has led to the creation of associations in villages that did not yet have one.

Finally, several “Todgha associations” exist among the European Diaspora of Todghawi. In Amsterdam, there is an association uniting over 100 Todghawi families. This association sometimes supports small “development” projects, for instance by providing the local hospital with medical equipment or beds. In France, the *Association Générations Tinghir-France* (GTF Tinghir) aims to stimulate cultural exchange between the Tinghir and the Diaspora in France. The developmental role of such “transnational” associations seems limited compared to local associations. Nevertheless, their role might well increase in the future due to increasing literacy among migrants and “stay-behinds”, the ongoing “media revolution”, and the increasing accessibility of the internet in the Todgha.

It is important to note that most local associations are mainly initiated and supported by well-educated internal return migrants. Education in particular—and not material wealth *per se*—provides people with the necessary capabilities to establish such associations, to

submit written project proposals, and to keep the books in order. This diffusion and relative success of the *mouvement associatif* in the Todgha might well further discredit the *taqbilt*, which one youngster depicted as an “an old men’s reserve”.

## 10.6. Conclusion

Migration has deeply affected social, cultural, and institutional life in the Todgha valley. It has had a major impact on the daily life of “stay-behinds”, women in particular. Migration has not only affected migration households, but has changed the face of the Todgha as a whole, not only in a material sense, but also in relation to the perceptions, preferences, and aspirations of its inhabitants. The rise of a new “class” of relatively wealthy international migrant households has contributed to the erosion of traditional patterns of socio-ethnic stratification. The influx of remittances and the transformation from an society that was predominantly based on subsistence agriculture and limited trade to a more open and diversified monetary economy, have decreased the relevance of land possession and ethnic background in determining socio-economic status. Subsequently, a new stratification based on access to international migration capital over the second half of the twentieth century has been largely superimposed upon traditional patterns of stratification based on tribal affiliation, land and water possession, and complexion. Nevertheless, these do also continue to play a significant role in determining social status and interaction.

Selective access to international migration has drawn new socio-economic dividing lines within the village communities and in the Todgha as a whole. However, most nonmigrant and internal migrant households have also been able to improve their wealth and living conditions over the past decades as a consequence of generally increasing opportunities to gain a local income outside agriculture and the establishment of public infrastructure (health care, education, electricity). However, the spectacular increase in relative wealth among international migration households has increased feelings of relative deprivation among nonmigrants and internal migrants alike. The exposure to international migrants’ wealth and status symbols, especially during the summer holiday return season, have contributed to the development of a culture of migration, in which international migration is perceived as the main avenue of upwards socio-economic mobility.

Thus, migration has changed the local socio-cultural context in such a way that it has further increased the urge of young men and women to leave the valley, at least temporarily, to “make it” (i.e., fulfill their aspirations) elsewhere before returning. Migration systems and migration network theories mainly explain the self-perpetuating forces and self-reinforcing tendencies by the emergence of migrant networks. Nevertheless, they tend to ignore the independent impact of international migration on changing perceptions, relative deprivation, and rising aspirations among nonmigrants. The fact that needs and aspirations influencing the propensity to migrate are not stable is also largely ignored by static push-pull models.

The individual propensity to migrate is influenced by capabilities (knowledge, social links and financial wealth) on the one hand, and by aspirations on the other hand. Exposure to migrants’ wealth and the culture of migration (i.e., the strong association of migration with success) has increased general aspirations to improve one’s livelihood through migration. For the new generations of better educated women and men, migration is not only perceived as a way to achieve one’s aspired material goals but also as a means to break away from the moral and cultural constraints imposed by local society. As long as people perceive that these mounting aspirations cannot be fulfilled locally, this will further increase (young) people’s urge to migrate. Although this mainly pertains to international migration, internal migration

often precedes subsequent international migration, and can be considered as a first step to breaking away from local constraints to personal development.

However, it would be erroneous to attribute the above-mentioned processes of social, cultural, and institutional change exclusively to migration. It is important to stress that contemporary migration itself is the outcome and constituent part of a complex set of general social, cultural, political, and economic transformation processes that have affected the Todgha and Morocco in the twentieth century, as well as a key factor in perpetuating and intensifying these processes at the local level. Migration is both a consequence and cause of processes of socio-cultural change.

The term “culture of migration” can be misleading in the sense that it might suggest that the rising aspirations and outward-looking mentality is the exclusive consequence of the exposure of nonmigrants to migrants’ wealth and their relative well-being. Other general processes, such as improved education and increased media exposure, also play an important role in opening people’s eyes to the wider world and other values and help raise aspirations.

Furthermore, many other factors besides migration also play a role in explaining processes of socio-cultural change at the local level. Since migration is a constituent part of a more general process of development, its role should be seen as an accelerator and magnifier of these processes rather than as a single or independent cause as such. The demise of traditional patterns of social stratification, for instance, is not only the consequence of migration, but, in a larger sense, the eventual consequence of processes such as the integration of the Todgha into the Moroccan state and the capitalist economy. This has entailed the legal equality between different “castes” within the socio-ethnic hierarchy, and has engendered a general process of economic diversification away from the dependence on subsistence agriculture. This process has, to a considerable extent, though not exclusively, been achieved through internal and international migration.

Although the position of women has certainly improved over the past two decades, this seems to be mainly a consequence of general processes such as the general improvement of public infrastructure and the spread of new family values (monogamy, less children) through education and media. Moreover, except for its positive effects on girls’ school attendance, out-migration does not seem to have directly affected women’s emancipation. Gradual changes in patriarchic values and gender roles seem rather to reflect general processes of cultural change within Moroccan society than the particular effect of migration.

Likewise, although processes of institutional change have been accelerated by the effects of migration on local socio-ethnic hierarchies, it seems the incorporation of the Todgha into the structures of the modern colonial and post-colonial states have swept away much of the legal and political basis of the *taqbilt*. This has enabled new (migrant) elite groups to circumvent such institutions and largely ignore customary law.

So, migration should be seen as a constituent part of more general processes of development, rather than as a single cause of change itself. Nevertheless, it is in particular through the experience and recursive impacts of migration that more general processes of societal change are concretely manifested. In a way, migration has become the metaphor for this whole complex of interrelated socio-cultural changes, and is the prime livelihood strategy through which individuals and households pursue improvements in their wealth and general well-being.

The relevant question now is how processes of social and cultural change have affected the economic behavior of households. After all, changes in social relations, ambitions, attitudes, and perceptions of local possibilities for development may influence decisions pertaining to (return) migration and investments. Cumulative causation theory and other pessimistic visions of migration and development assume that an increasing focus on migration contributes to a decrease in the belief in possibilities for economic development in

the regions of origin. The “culture of migration” would entail such a strong outward looking orientation that people cannot imagine any local improvements through their own initiative (Heinemeijer *et al.* 1976:88; Schoorl *et al.* 2000:xvi).

In the case of the Todgha, however, the empirical evidence presented in chapters 7-9 seems to refute the hypothesis that migration causes a general retreat from local economic activities. In contrast, international migration households show a relatively high propensity to invest in the Todgha, and do not exhibit the behavior of “passive remittance receivers”, especially in the longer term. Whether new generations will show the same determination to go back home and invest in a similar way to the first generation of Europe-bound migrants is, however, difficult to predict.

The main reason why Todghawis seem to value migration so highly is not so much because they dislike the Todgha but because they realize that it is *elsewhere* that they can better develop and capitalize on their capabilities through education, work, or both. They move away to secure the household’s livelihood and enable others to stay. Following ancient traditions of circular migration, the typical *intention* of Todghawi migrants is still *partir pour rester*.

Whether livelihood and migration strategies aimed at improving livelihoods and returning back home are eventually fulfilled—and to what extent they are successful—is quite a different matter. This eventually depends on the evolution of the development context in the Todgha as well as the destination. Indeed, several migrants do not succeed in their initial strategy and either fail in their migration project or end up by reunifying their households at the destination. However, it should be clear now that, in its intentions, the urge to migrate is not based upon an antipathy towards the Todgha as such, but rather upon the desire to improve one’s livelihood back home.

## Conclusions

### 11.1. Evolution and causes of migration from the Todgha

#### 11.1.1. Development breeds migration

Until French colonization of the Maghreb, the livelihoods of oasis dwellers in the Todgha valley used to be primarily based on subsistence agriculture. Barter with nomadic tribes, long-distance trade, and traditional forms of seasonal and circular migration formed sources of additional income. The Todgha valley belonged to the so-called *bled es-siba*, the hinterland of present-day Morocco that was largely controlled by autonomous tribes and where the state had only a marginal influence.

Colonization radically changed the development context of the Todgha valley. On the one hand, it entailed the end of tribal autonomy and the demise of traditional economic systems, trans-Saharan trade, and nomad-peasant trade relations. State formation and border demarcation further led to the disintegration of ancient trade networks and undermined nomadic lifestyles. On the other hand, these political-economic transformations created new livelihood opportunities within, but in particular outside, the valley through labor migration. Colonization and the concomitant incorporation of the politically largely autonomous Todgha valley into the context of the modern state and the capitalist economy as well as improved transport links and banking systems dramatically increased the scope for modern forms of remittance-based labor migration. This process radically reshaped the social, cultural, economic, and political context in which traditional migration took place, and triggered what we might—reminiscent of Zelinsky (1971)—call the “mobility transition” of the Todgha.

Besides a consequence of changes in the macro-context which have increasingly enabled people to earn an additional income elsewhere, migration has also played an independent role in intensifying links with the outside world and further embedding the valley in wider political, economic, and social structures. Whereas infrastructural development and increased opportunities of wage labor in other parts of the country and abroad increased the opportunities for labor migration, socio-cultural changes—triggered by the exposure to migrants’ wealth, increased schooling, and media exposure—“mobilized” the mindsets of Todghawi, increasing their aspirations and their actual propensity to migrate. This refutes the popular view that poverty and underdevelopment are the root causes of labor migration. This seems in line with the premises of transitional migration theory, which predict that development, in its initial stages, tends to lead to an increase of out-migration instead of the reverse.

The analysis also showed the need to extend views on migration and development beyond strictly material dimensions, which have been the usual focus of transitional models.

Increased access to education and information are constituent components of development, since they, besides increased wealth, also tend to increase the capabilities of people. Besides their capabilities-enhancing role, such types of development (better education, knowledge of other societies) also tend to increase the aspirations of people, leading them to migrate in order to fulfill these aspirations. This aspirations dimension should be analytically distinguished from the migration-enabling role of infrastructural improvements, better knowledge, and increased incomes. The fundamental point is that processes of social and economic development tend to be correlated, and both seem to reinforce processes of out-migration.

### **11.1.2. Evolution, clustering, and persistence of migration**

The “mobility transition” of the Todgha started at the end of the nineteenth century, when increasing number of Todghawis started to migrate to neighboring Algeria—a French colony since 1830—where they worked as wage laborers for French *colons*. To a certain extent, this early form of “modern” migration associated with capitalist development and colonization was an extension of earlier forms of seasonal and circular migration within Morocco. In the colonial era (1912-1956), internal migration was largely oriented towards the swelling cities on Morocco’s Atlantic coast (notably Rabat-Salé), whereas most international migrants continued to go to Algeria.

In the post-colonial era, opportunities for both internal and international migration further expanded. After Algerian independence in 1963, international migration flows shifted to France. It was in the late 1960s and early 1970s, however, that the great Moroccan migration boom took place. For the Todgha valley this was the “Golden Age” of migration. Rapid economic growth in France—but also in other northwestern European countries such as the Netherlands, Belgium, and Germany—attracted an increasing number of “guestworkers”, either through direct labor recruitment, or, increasingly, through spontaneous settlement. This sudden migration boom marked the definitive incorporation of the Todgha valley into the Mediterranean-European migration system, and the foundations were laid for the permanent establishment of Todghawi communities in Europe.

The 1980s and 1990s were characterized by a diversification of migration strategies as well as destinations. The recruitment freeze and increasingly restrictive immigration policies following the 1973 Oil Crisis and the economic downturn in Europe did not have the intended result of stopping migration. The recruitment freeze had the “perverse” effect of stimulating permanent settlement of migrants in Europe and subsequent family migration. Since 1973, family reunification and, in the 1990s, family formation have become the dominant forms of migration to northwestern Europe. Family migration often serves as a form of labor migration “in disguise”, through which households maintain their stakes in the international migration market over the generations.

This exemplifies the importance of migrant networks (a form of social capital) in explaining why once-started migration movements tend to gain their own momentum over time. The expatriate networks of Todghawis clearly played a facilitating role in perpetuating migration from the valley between 1975 and 2000. The increasing reliance on family migration—either through family reunification, family formation, or relay migration—has been one of the strategies through which migration to Europe has continued. This coincides with a growing awareness in the literature on “transnationalism” that links between migrants and “stay-behinds” may be far more persistent (over time and generations) than was assumed in the 1970s and 1980s.

Another consequence of restrictive European immigration policies has been a significant increase in undocumented migration. Another development was an increasing diversification of migration destinations in the period 1980-2000, in which Italy and particularly Spain emerged as new destination countries for both legal and undocumented migrants.

Rural-to-urban migration further increased in the post-colonial era to the detriment of the historically-rooted seasonal migration of harvest workers, for instance to the Middle Atlas. Since then, internal migration has continued and is becoming increasingly generalized. In the 1990s, this internal migration seems increasingly oriented towards the medium-sized towns instead of the large cities, whose growth seems to be slowing. An increasing number of rural-to-urban migrants end up settling permanently in the cities, thereby breaking with traditional patterns of predominantly circular migration.

The fact that half of the surveyed active male population has been, or is involved in either internal or international migration indicates the pervasive character of this phenomenon in the Todgha. Current international labor migrants accounted for 6 percent of the total population of the Todgha in 1998, a percentage that largely remained stable between 1970 and 2000. This exemplifies the unforeseen persistence of international migration.

There has been a remarkable degree of stability in the activity patterns of migrants over the past decades. Besides a minority of civil servants and professional private sector workers, a large majority of internal and international migrants are working in unskilled jobs in the construction and service sector. Over the 1980s and 1990s, student migration became an increasingly important form of migration, which is closely interwoven with and functionally related to internal as well as international labor migration.

In line with migration systems theory, migration flows tended to be spatially clustered. There are significant differences between the research villages in spatial orientation of migration. Migrants originating from the same village often predominantly live in one or two specific cities (or even quarters) in Morocco or in Europe. Within Morocco, large cities such as Rabat/Salé, but recently also Marrakech, Agadir, and the boomtowns in the Rif area (in particular Nador) have attracted many Todghawi. In Europe, the urban areas around Montpellier, Nice, Paris (France), and, to a lesser extent, Amsterdam (the Netherlands) have typically attracted many Todghawi.

### **11.1.3. Flows, counterflows, and the weaknesses of “push-pull”**

It is a key observation of this study that internal and international migration tend to be positively correlated “communicating vessels”. Especially in the longer term, they are complementary, mutually reinforcing rather than mutually exclusive or negatively correlated phenomena. Internal and international migration tend to occupy distinct places in the household life cycle. Internal migration, which involves less risks and opportunity costs, tends to function as a precursor to international migration. Internal migration tends to shape the mental, social, and material conditions for international migration. International migration may lead to internal migration through its effects on family relocation, student migration, and urban-based investments. Both internal and international migration are reciprocally related as constituent parts of the same general development process leading—in its social, cultural, and economic dimensions—to a general increase in mobility. This further corroborates the validity of transitional migration theory.

Regarding the high population growth over the second half of the twentieth century, permanent out-migration (e.g., through family reunification at the destination) from the valley

has been largely counterbalanced by natural population growth, return migration, and immigration. People are not only leaving the valley, but the Todgha, and its urban center of Tinghir in particular, has also become an increasingly important destination for migrants from other regions in southern Morocco. Furthermore, there are distinct patterns of intra-valley migration explained by spatially differentiated economic and infrastructural development across the valley. In net terms, migration has not creamed off the valley's population, due to the countervailing effects of migration to the valley. Thus, out-migration has not put an absolute "labor drain" on the Todgha.

In the Todgha, internal and international out-migration and immigration occur simultaneously, and seem to be part of the same process. Therefore, theoretical perspectives that divide regions and countries into (peripheral) sending and (central) destination areas do not necessarily reflect the complex, multi-layered spatial reality of migration systems. In fact, it is not possible to classify a region like the Todgha as either an "emigration" or an "immigration" region. It is both. Apparently, there are forces at work that simultaneously "push" some people to leave the valley as much as "pull" other people to move to the valley. The simultaneous occurrence of migration from and towards the Todgha can be explained by regional differences in relative access to social, human, and material resources or "capitals" enabling people to migrate, as well as spatial differences in aspiration levels.

It therefore seems to make little sense to explain migration between particular areas by a set of static "pushes" and "pulls". This is not only because push and pull factors are generally mirrored in each other, but also because such explanations tend to ignore that needs are not constant, but determined by people's perceptions and aspirations. Push-pull models typically fail to explain how a region can both send and receive migrants, and why migrants return.

#### **11.1.4. Migration selectivity and the "downside" of social capital**

Transitional migration theory is linked to the notion of the selectivity of migration: a certain threshold of "development" is necessary for people to have the aspirations and be able to assume the costs and risks of migrating. The fact that the more isolated and poorer Aït 'Atta villages of the lower Todgha started to massively participate in processes of internal and international migration far later than the Aït Todoght—who were incorporated into modern migration systems at an earlier stage—seems to confirm this hypothesis.

It has also been commonly hypothesized that migrants tend to be the relatively wealthy and better-educated members of a community. In line with these predictions, international Todgha migrants generally do not come from the poorest (i.e., landless) households. Nevertheless, the association between land possession and international migration participation is weak and only significant for the difference between international and internal migrants. Furthermore, the fact that international migrants from the Todgha are generally not better educated than nonmigrants of the same age refutes the second part of this hypothesis. Although the mean level of education among migrants has significantly increased in the past decades, this seems primarily the result of a general increase in education, not of a change in selectivity. Unexpectedly, the study revealed that internal labor migration from the Todgha is *positively* selective for education, due to its relationship with student migration and the fact that most job opportunities for higher educated people are found in the large towns and cities.

The non-selective character of international migration with regards to education is probably related to the fact that international labor migrants work in unskilled jobs, have been

recruited directly and that, in the past, a certain level of education was even ground for recruiters to reject prospective migrants. European employers generally preferred illiterate, docile, and hard workers. However, this cannot explain why recent and young international migrants are not significantly better educated than nonmigrants. What might play a role here is that the likelihood of international migration seems to be increasingly determined by the largely kinship-based access to migration networks and a certain level of material wealth, and that education only plays a secondary role in determining an individual's ability to migrate abroad.

Network theory predicts that the costs and risks of migration will fall over time due to the facilitating role established migrant communities play in the migration of other community members. In this way, migration becomes less selective over time and migration experience is diffused throughout communities. However, the hypothesis that migration tends to become less selective over time due to the growing importance of network effects is not sustained by the survey data. Over the past decades, selectivity has remained largely constant. This is related to the limited extent to which migration has spread through communities beyond the boundaries of families and lineages (*ighsan*) involved in international migration.

Due to the increasingly restrictive immigration policies of European countries, access to international migration resources is increasingly based on kinship. Positive network effects therefore remain largely limited to the boundaries of the individual's own family and lineage. This phenomenon is reinforced by the traditional preference for consanguineous marriage, through which "migration capital" is monopolized within the same kinship groups. Therefore, in the Todgha, migration networks can be to the advantage of people belonging to the same family or *ighs*, but seem to be exclusionary for people not belonging to such groups, clearly representing a dimension of the so-called "downside of social capital" (cf. Portes and Landolt 1996). Thus, kinship-based access to migrant networks also coincides with structural inequality in access to such networks.

Thus, although our general hypothesis that development initially tends to boost migration seems to hold in general, it is, however, important to bear in mind that the migration-enabling impact of "development" is disparate across communities because the latter are internally stratified.

The analysis also revealed the inherently dynamic nature of migration systems. Due to economic-geographical and political changes at the macro-level, there has been a partial shift in spatial orientation of migration from the Todgha. Nor does migration automatically tend to lead to increased geographical clustering, as is predicted by migration systems theory. For instance, the recent and unexpected migration of many Aït 'Atta to Spain illustrates the other, more volatile and unpredictable side of migration.

This all points to the limitations of the circular logic of migration systems and network theories, in which migration seems to go on *ad infinitum*. Such theories do not specify what external, structural factors as well as internal processes counteract the alleged self-reinforcing tendencies leading to falling costs and risks, decreasing selectivity, increasing migration, and increasing spatial clustering of migration flows.

## 11.2. Migration as a strategy to diversify and improve livelihoods

Chapter 7 demonstrated that internal and international migration should be seen as an integral part of the general process of the integration of the Todgha into the Moroccan state and the capitalist economy, which have enabled livelihood diversification among oasis households. Through the expanding opportunities to earn a monetary income elsewhere, and the new

possibility to remit part of the money back via banking systems, many oasis households have been increasingly able to pursue multi-local livelihoods and diversify their income portfolio. Nowadays, most Todghawi households have been in some way affected by international and internal migration. Many households count two or three generations of migrants. More than 40 percent of all the surveyed households are involved in international migration and 25 percent in internal migration, and several households are involved in both types simultaneously. Only one third of all households have not been directly affected by some kind of migration.

Increasing labor migration has coincided with the increasing multi-activity and multi-locality of contemporary oasis livelihoods, in which we can witness a general diversification and partial de-agrarization of activity patterns, especially among young men. Although agriculture remains important as a source of cash and in-kind income, its role has changed from being the pillar of the oasis economy to now being just one of the many sources of income. Nowadays, there are only very few oasis households that base their livelihoods on agricultural resources only. This corroborates the general point raised by Bebbington (1999:2021) that we should cease to “crunch rural livelihoods into the category of agricultural and natural resource-based strategies”.

The increasingly restrictive European immigration policies interrupted the traditionally circular character of migration from the Todgha. Family reunification heralded this shift from circular to more or less permanent migration, turning the intended *partir pour rester* (cf. Heinemeijer *et al.* 1977) into *partir pour quitter* (cf. De Mas 1990; Kagermeier 1997) for many migrants and their households.

However, maintaining strong social and financial links with “home”, these transnationally operating “permanent” migrants still play a crucial role in sustaining the Todgha economy and in general development in migrant sending areas. This manifests itself in remittance transfers to family members, the existence of “indirect” migrant households, and the high incidence of transnational marriages with second and third generation migrants’ children. Therefore, family reunification does not imply that linkages with the Todgha are cut, as classical models of “migrant integration” predicted. On the contrary, there is an unexpectedly high degree of “transnational” and intergenerational commitment.

This study has shown that international migration has greatly contributed to improving many people’s standard of living in the Todgha valley. Largely due to the effect of remittances, current, indirect, and returned international migrant households tend to earn far higher and more stable incomes than nonmigrant and internal migrant households. They also tend to live in significantly better conditions in regard to housing and basic luxuries. This corroborates the hypothesis of the new economics of labor migration that migration is a household livelihood strategy to not only diversify and spread income risks, but also to increase income, which enables households to improve living conditions and well-being. This is the first way in which (international) migration has contributed to development in the Todgha.

International migration has enabled many Todgha households to durably improve the “material” dimension of their livelihoods. This direct impact of migration on people’s living conditions should not be dismissed as “non-developmental”, as has been the case in much of the migration and development literature. From a capabilities perspective, consumption and so-called “non-productive investments” that enable people to be better housed, well fed, healthier, and decently clothed all endow people with a greater sense of well-being and increased freedom to take their fate into their own hands. They should therefore be considered as developmental. Although international migrant households are the prime beneficiaries of remittances, other households seem to have benefited in an indirect way through employment creation and income multiplier effects set in motion by migrants’ consumption and

investments. It is difficult to imagine what the Todgha would have been like without migration, but most households would probably be far worse off than they are today.

Cumulative causation theory and structuralist theoretical perspectives on migration and development tend to see dependency on the outside world as a negative phenomenon that undermines the local economy and leads migrant households to retreat from local economic activities. Nevertheless, such an “impressionist” image of the Todgha as a region more or less passively relying on migrant remittances is unmistakably erroneous. Firstly, although remittances constitute an important source of cash income, they represent “only” one third of total income of the surveyed households. Secondly, and more importantly, international migrant households tend not to rely solely on remittances and subsequently withdraw from other, local economic activities, but instead tend to continue or even extend the number of economic sectors in which they are active. They also tend to have higher non-migratory incomes than other households. Thus, labor migration from the Todgha should not be interpreted as an “under-developing” flight from misery, but rather as an investment in a potentially better future.

It would also be erroneous to depict migration as the one and only cause of livelihood changes as such. Rather than the independent cause of livelihood diversification, migration seems to be part of a broader strategy of oasis households to diversify and improve their livelihoods. Migration is an integral part of a broader process of political, infrastructural, economic, and social integration of the Todgha valley into a changing national and international context, and the concomitant increasing flows of products (e.g., trade), money (e.g., remittances), people (migration), and information (e.g. education, the media revolution) between the Todgha and the outside world. However, it is in particular through migration that these mutually reinforcing processes associated with “globalization” have materialized and become tangible for the average oasis dweller. In many respects, migration has literally brought the Todghawis into the modern world and the modern world to the Todgha.

### **11.3. Migration and investments**

#### **11.3.1. Migration, remittances, and the propensity to invest**

The most important conclusion of this thesis is that households with access to international migration resources (remittances) exhibit a significantly higher propensity to invest in the Todgha than other households. This corroborates the central hypothesis of NELM that migration is a livelihood strategy not only serving to diversify the household’s income portfolio and increase income and general well-being, but also to overcome local (economic, social, cultural, and institutional) constraints. This enables households to invest in local economic activities and the education of their children, and, hence, to further improve and secure their livelihoods. Although this is true for any investment category, international migrants tend to invest particularly in housing, education, and agriculture. The research revealed that international migrant households do not generally “waste” excessive amounts of disposable income on “conspicuous” consumption, but are, instead, very prudent in deciding how to invest their money.

There is only a small difference in the investment priorities of indirect, current, and return migrant households. Thus, the main dividing line is between households with and without access to international migration resources. The fact that current (i.e., absent) migrants exhibit a relatively high propensity to invest refutes common hypotheses that

returned migrants are the prime investors. This indicates that migration impact studies should not only focus on return migrants, as has generally been the case. The physical absence of the migrants does not have to prevent households from investing locally. This highlights the fact that household livelihoods have become increasingly multi-local and that migrants are increasingly operating (living, traveling, loving, communicating, thinking, consuming, and investing) on a “transnational” basis. Households do not have to concentrate their livelihood activities either at the origin or at the destination. It can well be both.

The explicit intention of most migrants is to eventually return in order to build a future for themselves and their families in the Todgha. Although international migrants in particular often end up settling at their destination, this more or less permanent character of migration does not necessarily imply that social and economic ties with the Todgha are cut. Among the first generation especially, the orientation towards the community of origin tends to remain strong. Even if they do not return, many current international migrants tend to invest, either directly or indirectly, by financially assisting kin living in “indirect” international migrant households.

Another key observation is that international migrant households exhibit a higher propensity to invest even when controlling for income. This means that the higher propensity of international migrant households to invest cannot exclusively be explained by their substantially higher incomes. Nor do the supposedly more entrepreneurial attitudes of international migrants form a major explanation, as indirect international migrants—who have never been abroad—exhibit an equal propensity to invest as current and returned migrants. We can therefore hypothesize that the main factor explaining this “above-income effect” of migration is that their incomes are not only higher, but also tend to be more stable and secure than is the case for laborers in Morocco. Many international migrants have access to European social security systems and have generally insured their future income through pension rights. This seems to make them more prone and less hesitant to take investment risks.

Within a capabilities perspective on development, we can say that access to international migration resources has expanded the freedoms and capabilities of household members by enhancing the substantive choices they have in life. Most oasis households have been able to free themselves from the imperative to be agriculturally self-sufficient. International migration has liberated numerous Todghawis from the obligation to “slave away” from dawn till dusk in agriculture and household activities. This decrease in workload and increase in free time are valuable in themselves, as long as this does not imply frustrating, unintentional inactivity. Moreover, this gives people the freedom to concentrate on more valuable or productive work and to better educate their children. Constituting a high and stable and secure source of income, international remittances have greatly increased the “degrees of freedom” households have in shaping their own (future) livelihood through opting for particular activities and investments according to their own preferences.

Nevertheless, it is important to note that these direct positive developmental effects have remained largely limited to households with access to international migration resources. As the incomes of internal migrants are generally low and insecure, migration generally does not allow them to make significant capital investments. Their investment behavior therefore does not significantly deviate from nonmigrant households, with the notable exception of investment in education. Internal migrants’ spouses, who generally become the *de facto* household heads, tend to live emotionally and physically arduous and materially insecure lives. Among internal migrant households, education of their children (e.g., the second oldest son becoming a school teacher while his older brother works in town) is the main (human capital) investment strategy through which they attempt to secure and stabilize future livelihoods.

Therefore, from a NELM perspective, the main rationale behind internal migration seems to be the diversification of the household's income portfolio. Moreover, settlement in cities increases the chance of finding better paid jobs and obtaining financial, social, and informational means to eventually "leapfrog" to Europe. Although some manage to find good jobs or migrate abroad, migration remains a "survival strategy" for most internal migrants. Trying to keep their head above water, many are not able to durably improve their livelihoods, as their (informal) jobs are too insecure and their salaries too low.

### 11.3.2. Sectoral allocation of investments and temporal dimensions

The analysis of the temporal allocation of investments confirmed the hypothesis that sectoral investment preferences tend to change over time, and that the full developmental effects of migration take decades to fully materialize. Investments in housing construction occur relatively early in the "migration cycle" (reaching their peak 5-15 years after departure) as do those in basic luxury and education. Major agricultural investments, such as land and pump purchase, mostly occur 15-25 years after migration. Investments in private businesses follow a more irregular pattern, but tend to reach a peak 25-30 years after migration.

This empirical evidence largely reflects the hypothesized sequence depicted in table 2.1 in chapter 2. In the first years after migration, migrant households tend to concentrate on fulfilling primary needs such as nutrition, health, debt repayment, and investments in education. We have also argued that these initial expenditure preferences are perfectly logical from a capabilities point of view. People's primary aim is to live in decent conditions, to be well fed, healthy, and to educate their children. In material terms, education is the most accessible investment strategy for households to improve future livelihoods. Besides housing, investments in children's "human capital" tend to be considered as a household "life insurance" by the respondents.

When the immediate needs are fulfilled, possible debts have been paid off, and a certain level of job and income security has been assured, most migrant households tend to invest in the construction of a new house and purchase items such as basic consumer durables and household appliances. Investments in more risky and costly commercial enterprises (agriculture, large-scale housing, commerce, and so on), generally occur only in the longer term, after the most basic necessities have been fulfilled. Only, that is, if migrants do not decide to depart once and for all, an event which is usually heralded by family reunification at the destination. The extent to which investments occur, and *where* and in which sector they are allocated, however, depends on household income and the specific local development context.

The short-term impact of migration might in some cases indeed be a temporary retreat from economic activities at the origin. However, in the longer term migrant households tend to be economically more active and invest more in local economic sectors than nonmigrants, even when controlling for income. This corroborates other empirical evidence that over time there tends to be a pattern first of negative and then of positive effects of migration on non-remittance income in migrant sending households (Taylor *et al.* 1996:405).

This all adds to the idea that it is mainly in communities with a relatively long-standing, rather "mature" tradition of international migration, that migration pays off in terms of investments. This "lagged investment response" to migration seems to apply even more to business enterprises, as these are mainly concentrated in the hands of return migrants. Consequently, also the indirect positive (employment and income multiplier) effects of international migration on households without direct access to international migration (i.e.,

indirect international migrant, nonmigrant and internal migrant households) only tends to fully materialize after at least three decades, when the “household migration cycle” reaches its end.

This implies that the developmental impact of migration can only be fully assessed when migration matures, that is, after several decades of sustained out-migration. This suggests that the rather pessimistic conclusion by prior research into migrant sending areas in Morocco can partly be explained by the fact that most of these studies were conducted relatively early after the onset of large-scale migration to Europe in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Since then, attention has largely shifted to “integration” issues at the destination, thereby largely losing sight of the positive long-term impact of international migration on development in many migrant sending areas.

## **11.4. Migration and economic-geographical transformations**

### **11.4.1. The pioneering role of migrants in agricultural transformations**

The analysis has demonstrated that the growing importance of remittances and local non-agricultural income as well as the “culture of migration” has not led to a retreat from oasis agriculture—as is generally assumed in the literature—but that international migration has instead contributed to the increasing productivity of agriculture. Instead of draining the Todgha of its productive forces, migration has played a developmental role by enabling agricultural investments, such as the purchase of motorpumps, land, cattle, as well as the increase and intensification of production through the use of fertilizers, pesticides, HYV seeds, and the partial mechanization of ploughing and threshing. This clearly contradicts the pessimistic cumulative causation theory and structuralist visions of migration and development.

International migration households not only tend to invest more, but have also played a pioneering role in the intensification of agriculture in the ancient oasis and the creation of new agricultural extensions in the lower Todgha. This process has been primarily enabled by the installation of motor pumps. The irony is that while the socio-cultural and emancipatory effects of migration have contributed to the breakdown of traditional village institutions regulating the maintenance of traditional, collective irrigation systems (e.g., *khattaras*), the same migration process and the concomitant remittance inflows have enabled peasants to switch to pump-based agriculture and to create a new green frontier in the desert.

Agriculture in the lower Todgha increasingly relies on water pumps. This development has been provoked by the decline of *khattaras* on the one hand, and the creation of recent agricultural extensions on the other, and has been facilitated by the influx of international remittances to a great extent. Nevertheless, the increasing reliance on capital-intensive pumping in the lower Todgha has contributed to the partial or entire exclusion of poor households from access to traditional *khattara* water resources and, thus, to increasing agricultural inequality. The transition towards more capital-intensive, pump-based agriculture coincides with increasingly selective access to water, and may in the future lead to a concentration of “water power” in a decreasing number of hands. Thus, the poorest households emerge as losers from this water game.

The major drawback of the boom in motor pumping is the threat it constitutes for the sustainability of oasis agriculture. Increasing pumping competition and falling water tables might—in the absence of government intervention, failing law enforcement, and the general

legal vacuum characterizing land and water management—endanger the ecological and economic sustainability of oasis agriculture. The anarchic, largely uncontrolled growth of motor pumping threatens to lead to the depletion of vital water resources.

The incidence of fallow land is highest among nonmigrant households, which seems to contradict the pessimistic “lost labor” hypothesis. It is poverty rather than migration *per se* that forces some internal migrant and nonmigrant households to withdraw partly or entirely from agriculture in villages where water is nowadays only accessible through pumping. The counterflow of remittances enables current international migrant households to compensate for the so-called “lost labor effect” by hiring paid agricultural laborers during agricultural peak seasons and for typically “male” agricultural tasks (e.g., tillage, irrigation), maintenance work, and well-digging. After family reunification and the factual disappearance of the household from the valley, land and other assets are normally entrusted to *ikhmmesen* (sharecroppers) or family members.

The fundamental weakness of the “lost labor” hypothesis, as formulated by cumulative causation and structuralist migration theory, seems to be its static nature, as it implicitly assumes a fixed labor supply, and does not take into account the possibility of hiring “external” labor. It ignores that (1) other household members may take over agricultural tasks; (2) land can be entrusted to *ikhmmesen* or family members; (3) the counterflow of remittances potentially enables households to hire paid laborers; and (4) agriculture can become more capital intensive through which similar or higher production levels can be achieved by using less labor.

The impact of migration on agricultural transformations exhibits a high degree of spatial differentiation. This is mainly due to the fact that land and water resources are unequally distributed between the upstream and downstream parts of the valley. Land is relatively abundant in the plains of the lower Todgha compared to the upper Todgha, where the narrow valley is hemmed in between steep mountains and all arable land has already been cultivated. Yet, however, surface water is extremely abundant and perennial in the upper valley while relatively scarce in the lower valley. These opposite gradients in relative water and land scarcity are crucial in explaining spatial differences in the patterns of agricultural change in a rather unexpected manner: most agricultural development is taking place in those parts of the valley where water is most scarce.

Although water is relatively scarce in the lower Todgha, this constraint can now be overcome through the advent of the water pumping technique, provided that enough investment capital and groundwater is available. This has enabled the intensification (in the traditional oasis) and spatial extension (in recent extensions) of agriculture in the lower Todgha, traditionally the most “marginal” part of the oasis. In the upper Todgha, moreover, plot sizes tend to be extremely small. To a great extent, this “agricultural involution” is an obstacle for people wishing to invest in agriculture on an individual basis. Although this lush part of the valley looks prosperous on first sight, this impression is deceiving, as opportunities for agricultural development are actually very limited. The absolute lack of new farmland in the upper Todgha has led to investment in other economic sectors or in agriculture in the lower Todgha or elsewhere in Morocco.

It is striking that many peasants prefer to invest in new, until recently barren, areas located *outside* the traditional oasis. In the traditional oasis, plots are generally small and scattered, and the collective, community-level organization pertaining to water distribution is increasingly considered as an obstacle to individual agricultural entrepreneurship. This explains why peasants often seem to prefer to localize investments in areas outside the traditional oases where constraints such as the inflexible collective regulations concerning water allocation, fragmented land property, and collective maintenance of the irrigation infrastructure do not play a role. Moreover, on such new land, the possibilities for

intensifying agriculture are better than in the ancient oasis, since plots are larger, which allows for some degree of mechanization and a relatively “modern” farming system. This reflects evidence from other rural regions and oases in Morocco (cf. Bencherifa 1991; 1993)

Although cropping patterns differ little across the household migration categories, international migrant households tend to grow a somewhat larger variety of annual crops. Returned migrants, in particular, tend to grow a larger variety of vegetables, and tend to cling to traditional forms of oasis agriculture, whereas *indirect* migrant households in particular tend to invest in relatively modern forms of agriculture. All the empirical evidence points to the fact that current and indirect migrant households in particular—and not returnees—play important roles in “innovative” agricultural development.

#### **11.4.2. Migration, non-agricultural investments, and de-agrarization**

Migration is not only a part of the general process of integration of the Todgha into wider economic and political networks and the concomitant diversification of oasis livelihoods. It is also a factor contributing to the further diversification and partial de-agrarization of the regional economy through its enabling effect on households to invest in local housing, business enterprises, and education. Households with access to international migration resources exhibit a higher propensity to invest in such non-agricultural sectors than other households, even when controlling for income. Through its recursive developmental effects on the Todgha, migration has the tendency to recursively strengthen and intensify the general process of livelihood diversification.

International migration has visibly contributed to the accelerated development of real estate in the valley. Although the construction of new houses is a general development, households involved in international migration tend to build faster and nicer houses and often own several. Housing is the highest priority on the list of capital investments for many, and the vast majority of international migrant households invest in real estate. However, it would be erroneous to explain the construction fever uniquely or mainly by the migrants’ quest for more status within their own community, as has often been done in the migration and development literature. Decent housing is a basic necessity of life. The importance attached to housing should primarily be explained by a logical quest for basic luxury, space, and privacy, less conflicts, and better health. Besides such obvious well-being and health aspects, women often gain significantly in personal liberty through the establishment of new independent houses for their nuclear family.

Much of the literature has tended to strongly disapprove of so-called “non-productive” and “unnecessary” investments in housing. However, by implicitly suggesting that oasis dwellers should stay in their “mud brick houses”, wealthy and urban-based social scientists apply different standards to others than they would probably do to themselves. The quest for space, hygiene, and some degree of privacy seems to be almost universal. Reasoning from a capabilities-based concept of development, improved well-being and standards of living are to be considered as constituent parts of development. Dismissing such well-being aspects as “non-developmental” typically reflects a narrow view of development.

Moreover, housing is *also* a logical and relatively secure investment in a rather insecure investment environment, through which households are able to generate additional income through various lease arrangements and provide “life insurance” for the migrants’ households. In case of the death of the breadwinner, family members are at least guaranteed shelter and will often gain rental income. This is particularly important in a society where most households do not have access to social security systems. Considering the population

increase and urban growth in Tinghir, real estate investments have turned out to be a highly rewarding investment strategy, which has enabled many migrant households to stabilize and increase their income.

It is through these investments that international migrant households have simultaneously capitalized on, and actively contributed to, the urban growth and concentration of non-agricultural economic activities in Tinghir and the semi-urbanization of the rural space around places like “New Taghzout” and Aït Aïssa Ou Brahim. The construction boom and investments in enterprises have also created considerable local employment in sectors that are closely related to the construction business, such as Tinghir’s thriving crafts industry (e.g., carpenters, welders), hardware stores, retail trade in household utensils and building material. Furthermore, it has offered employment to various electricians, plumbers, tilers, and people working in the service sector.

The many international migrant households that have built more than one house have mostly done so in Tinghir. This applies even more to the investments in private business enterprises that are overwhelmingly located in the valley’s capital. Migration has played an independent, accelerating role in the economic-geographical transformation of the Todgha valley, which have led to an increasing demand for non-agricultural labor.

The livelihoods of oasis households are increasingly oriented towards Tinghir and, to a lesser extent, towards the semi-urban centers of Aït Aïssa Ou Brahim and Taghzout. This also explains why the proximity to paved roads and access to (semi-public) transport have become so crucial in, for example, deciding where to locate a new house. Migrants’ investments in transport play an important role in the development of *transit* transport networks within the Todgha. The increasing orientation towards (semi-) urban centers is not only employment-related, but also related to changing consumption styles and the increasing importance of markets in general.

International migration has contributed to the economic development of the Todgha valley in the sense that migrants’ investments not only function to diversify, increase, and secure their own future income, but also to create a certain level of employment for nonmigrants. Moreover, there has been only limited “leakage” of non-agricultural investments to other regions. Although intra-valley spatial inequality has been reinforced by the concentration of investments in Tinghir, migration has contributed to mitigating the development gap between the Todgha as a whole and more wealthy regions in Morocco. In comparison with surrounding areas (e.g., High Atlas, Saghro, Tafilalt, Drâa), the Todgha valley has become relatively prosperous. This is not only visible in the construction boom and the expansion of Tinghir’s commercial function, but also in internal labor migration from other areas of Morocco to the Todgha valley. In other words, the recursive developmental effects of international migration have created a counterflow of internal migrants.

### 11.4.3. The reversed “cumulative causation” hypothesis

However, the recursive developmental effect of migration has not led to a lower inclination among Todghawis to migrate. On the contrary, migration seems to have stimulated subsequent out-migration. This effect is not only achieved through the important facilitating (i.e., risk and cost lowering) role of migrant networks. The exposure to media and the relatively high wealth of international migrant households, general improvements in wealth and education—which are partially the effect of migration itself—have all increased aspirations, feelings of relative deprivation, and the personal capabilities of young people to migrate. This corroborates the central assumption of transitional migration theory that

*development* initially tends to shape and enhance the material and mental conditions for migration. Thus, paradoxically, through its recursive effects on regional development, migration may subsequently trigger more migration.

Another way in which the recursive developmental effects of migration tend to increase people's propensity to migrate is manifested in the effect of migration on the education of younger household members. Whereas international migration itself was not selective for education, younger members of household with access to international migration resources are significantly better educated than children within nonmigrant and internal migrant households. With regards to education, internal migrant households are in a better position than nonmigrant households, since the presence of labor migrants in town decreases the costs and risks associated with the education of a younger sibling. Since higher education implies migrating to the cities, and the higher educated tend to stay working in cities, educational investments tend to further reinforce the propensity to migrate among younger generations.

As such, the whole idea that the recursive effects of migration shape the developmental conditions for subsequent and even intensified migration is not new. It was already postulated by Myrdal's cumulative causation theory (see chapter 2). However, in the core of its argument, our analysis—which corroborates transitional migration theory—is diametrically opposed to cumulative causation theory and structuralist perspectives in explaining how the recursive developmental feedbacks of out-migration stimulate subsequent out-migration. The fundamental difference is that cumulative causation and structuralist theories see migration as the consequence of social and economic decline (or “development of underdevelopment”—cf. Frank 1966) which are further stimulated by the negative “backwash effects” of migration, rather than, as we have hypothesized, the very result of development in the form of increased capabilities, freedoms, and aspirations of people to migrate. Whereas cumulative causation and dependency theories argue that migration stimulates further migration through its negative developmental effects, we can hypothesize that migration tends to stimulate further migration through its potentially positive developmental effects.

## **11.5. Migration and socio-cultural change**

### **11.5.1. Migration and new forms of inequality**

The study of the spatial allocation of migrants' investments corroborates the point made by Taylor *et al.* (1996) and Jones (1998) that differences in the scale of analysis may fundamentally affect the assessment of the impacts of migration on development. When exclusively focusing the analysis on the village level, one might conclude that many investments tend to “leak away” to urban areas. This seems to fit in with “pessimistic” center-periphery models and cumulative causation theory, which state that migration leads to increasing disparities in rural and urban development. However, when analyzing the impact at the regional level (e.g., the Todgha valley), the conclusion is that most investments remain within the valley, and that, moreover, the direct and indirect positive spin-off of these investments is considerable.

With regards to inequality at the inter-household level, it is difficult to give an unambiguous answer to the question of whether the impact of migration has been positive. International migration has certainly given rise to a new socio-economic divide between households with and without access to international migration resources.

Inequality and poverty are important features of the studied communities, and many nonmigrant and internal migrant households face meager and highly unstable livelihoods. From a capabilities perspective on development, such inequality is clearly *not* developmental. However, besides the fact that it is not possible to “scientifically” define an optimum between distributional (“equity”) and mean (“efficiency”) income objectives (Sen 1999; Stark 1988:309), there are two reasons not to jump to any conclusion that the impacts of migration have “thus” been negative, or that inequality has increased over the past half century.

Firstly, we should avoid romanticizing the past by acknowledging that traditional oasis society has been inherently unequal, with its caste-like socio-ethnic stratification, in which most oasis dwellers lived in grinding poverty and “inferior” ethnic groups were condemned to serfdom or slavery. Today, new forms of inequality based on access to monetary resources, which are to a considerable extent defined along lines of access to international migration resources, have been largely superimposed upon the traditional forms of structural, “hereditary” inequality based on ethnic affiliation, complexion, and land possession.

There are no objective, scientific standards to determine, like a *deus ex machina*, which form of inequality (“pre-modern” or “capitalist”) was worse. Nevertheless, traditional oasis society in its very essence was based on the “unfreedom” of large sections of the population. In the literature on migration and development in Morocco, we sometimes find a romantic discourse on traditional “community solidarity” or so-called “tribal democracy” in the form of the *taqbilt*. However, traditional oasis society used to deny basic human freedoms to large sections of the oasis population (women, slaves, serfs, landless *ikhmmesen*) and therefore seems—reasoning from the axioms of the capabilities perspective—inherently less developed than contemporary oasis society.

Secondly, to a certain extent, nonmigrant and internal migrant households have profited indirectly from consumption and investments by international migrants. International migration seems to have contributed to a general, community and valley-wide improvement of livelihoods and the reduction of absolute poverty through the employment and income multiplier effects of migrant households’ consumption and investments. Furthermore, 7.5 percent of all the surveyed households do not have migrated members, but receive international remittances on a regular basis from family members. Although inequality remains an important feature of oasis society, the vast majority of (migrant and nonmigrant) oasis households are better off than half a century ago, and this can, to a significant extent, be attributed to the direct and indirect effects of international migration.

The socio-ethnic emancipation of former subordinate smallholding and landless groups, such as the *haratin*, has contributed to the partial breakdown and malfunctioning of traditional village institutions for land and water management whose functioning was largely based on the inferior status of these people and their role as a cheap “oasis labor reserve”. Due to the decreasing legitimacy of the power of the *taqbilt* and *amghar* (chief), it has become increasingly difficult to enforce customary law. In this sense, migration has contributed to the above-mentioned process of exclusion of the poorest from access to “collective” water resources and, thus, to increasing agricultural inequality.

### 11.5.2. Visions of El Dorado: mirage or reality?

Within the complex process of transformations the Todgha has undergone over the past half century, migration stands out prominently not only because of its magnitude, but also because of its profound impact on the daily life of most oasis families, on social relations within oasis

society, and on the perceptions, tastes, and aspirations of its inhabitants. It is particularly through the experience of migration that general processes—which scholars tend to indicate as “integration in the modern state and market economy”, “modernization” or “globalization”—are concretely manifested for oasis dwellers.

It would be erroneous to depict migration only as an economic phenomenon. To a large extent, migration is also a social and cultural event both in its causes and consequences. The social and economic dimensions of migration can hardly be separated. The fact alone that migrants send remittances back is an expression of the intensive social bonds they tend to maintain with kin and friends back home. Social and ethnic bonds also affect the selectivity of future migration—we have seen that the chances of migrating are far higher for people with access to “social migration capital” in the form of already-migrated relatives. Moreover, migration is not “only” an attempt to secure better livelihoods, but has also been an avenue of upwards social mobility for traditionally inferior groups such as the landless or smallholding *ikhmmesen*, among which can be counted many *haratin*.

Migration has had an important influence on life rhythm and “seasonality”, as, instead of the harvest seasons, the July-August holiday season is now the yearly economic and cultural peak season, when international migrants return temporarily from Europe. During the hot summer season, markets are at their busiest. The summer holiday has also become the peak season for marriages between (second or third generation) Todghawis living in Europe and family or acquaintances in their region of origin. This continues to propel chain migration through family formation.

The hopes of many nonmigrant youth as well as their parents are focused on marriage with a second or third generation European migrant. A marriage with a migrant is generally considered as *the* ultimate ideal, being the most secure way to material stability and success as well as upward social mobility. For them, this makes the summer holiday a thrilling event, when they can meet and talk to their “European” peers.

Together with improved education and increasing access to modern media, sustained out-migration has given rise to an outward looking “culture of migration”, in which migration is associated with success and most young men and women aspire to migrate. This influence is not only manifested through the exposure of migrants to other tastes, preferences, economic opportunities, and lifestyles, but also through the exposure of nonmigrants to the relative wealth of international migrants and their relatives. This has clearly increased feelings of relative deprivation and, subsequently, raised the social and material aspirations of oasis dwellers. Confronted with the wealth of migrants, oasis dwellers tend to perceive Europe as “paradise”, an El Dorado of almost unlimited economic opportunities. In the eyes of most young men and women—who are confronted with high unemployment, poverty, corruption, and a general lack of opportunity in Morocco—their high aspirations can only be fulfilled through migration to Europe.

The importance of rising aspirations in explaining the mounting desire to emigrate is paramount. The fundamental weakness of common push-pull and neo-Malthusian explanations of migration—explaining migration in terms of high population growth and a limited agricultural “carrying capacity” which have “pushed” people out of their native areas—is that they assume that the needs and aspirations of people are stable. Even if the agricultural carrying capacity of the Todgha were sufficient to feed the entire population—which is not the case (cf. Büchner 1986)—most people would simply no longer be content with such a basic livelihood, as they have become exposed to other ways of life as well as increasing wealth and luxury, both outside (in cities or abroad) and inside the valley.

In the literature, it has often been stated that migrants tend to hide their problems and exaggerate their wealth, thereby creating an unrealistic perception that Europe’s streets are paved with gold. This might indeed be true to a certain extent. However, the simple fact that

salaries in Europe easily exceed Moroccan salaries by five to ten times and often more, and the access to public health care, schooling, and social security all seem to justify the strong desire to migrate among those who do not have much to lose in their own eyes. Todghawis do not tend to migrate “blindly”.

The allegedly materialistic attitudes and unrealistic expectations of migrants tend to raise worries among policy makers and some researchers. Migrants, they say, would do better to stay in their region of origin to “help” the development of their region or should be better informed about the great opportunities in their country of origin and the difficult situation of migrants in Europe. However, such views on migration and development seem somehow naïve if we bear in mind the high unemployment and the lack of resources available to most oasis dwellers. This very lack of certain capabilities largely disables them from “developing themselves”, and it is indeed particularly through (international) migration that these capabilities can be acquired.

There has been a tendency in the literature to view the “culture of migration” in an overly negative way. Even if impressions of Europe as some kind of paradise were too rosy, the image that there are more opportunities overseas does reflect reality. Confronted with the many developmental constraints in Morocco, it can be a highly rational choice to migrate, because it is elsewhere that ambitious, young women and men are more likely develop and capitalize on their capabilities through education, work, or both. Despite all the economic, social, and cultural problems migrants may face, the perception that international migration is the most secure way towards more social and economic freedom is more than a mirage.

However, those who leave generally have a strong desire to eventually return. The typical ideal of migrants is still to invest the money they have earned and saved abroad in a commercial enterprise in the Todgha, from which their families can live. The intention of most migrants remains “partir pour revenir”. The extent to which these intentions are eventually fulfilled is quite a different matter. What primarily matters for the migrants and their households is to improve their own livelihoods and well-being. To most of them, the preferable way of doing this would be to realize their aspirations in the Todgha. If circumstances do not allow this, they will realize them in another place, region, or country.

### **11.5.3. Migration and gender relations**

Although international migration has contributed to the well-being and freedoms that households enjoy, it is a different question of how the benefits of migration are distributed within the households, and in particular between men and women. Whereas international migration seems to decrease the workload and livelihood certainty of women living in migrant households, the reverse seems true for internal migration. Migration has clearly had a positive impact on the improvement in living conditions (e.g., better housing and sanitation), general well-being (e.g., through better access to health care), and decreasing workloads of international migrant women. Poor, nonmigrant “clients” often help them in domestic work, while they often hire laborers for certain typically “male” agricultural tasks.

However, women in internal migrant households, while facing the same poverty and relatively low standards of living as nonmigrants, are not or are less able to compensate for the “lost male labor effect” by hiring personnel. Although both internal and international migrant wives and their households tend to suffer from the absence of and dependency on their men, international migrant wives have far greater wealth, a certain degree of financial stability, and lighter workloads. Internal migrant wives tend to live more arduous and uncertain lives.

The present study has refuted the hypothesis that international migration contributes to the emancipation of women through the influence of modern values transferred by migrants. Women in migrant households tend to have more control over the use of their husbands' earnings than nonmigrant wives, whereby migrant wives living in extended households have less decision making power than those living in nuclear families. They also have more influence on the schooling of their children, including that of their daughters.

However, contrary to common hypotheses, migration has not led to fundamental, permanent changes in gender roles. Notwithstanding the contribution of international migration to general standards of living and material well-being, the lives of migrant wives remain largely confined to housekeeping, childrearing, and agricultural work. It is striking that the vast majority of migrants' women see the increase in responsibilities and decision making power as an unwelcome burden. Such a radical deviation from traditional gender roles is generally not appreciated by the women themselves, as it forces them into "male" roles which they are not used to playing and for which they are criticized by other villagers. Furthermore, their gain in authority is mainly *temporary*, as migrants once more take over their position as "patriarchs" as soon as they return. Gender inequality is sustained by national law, and migrant wives often fear repudiation or a marriage with a second wife by their husbands.

There has undoubtedly been an improvement in the position of oasis women over the past few decades. For instance, they tend to marry at a later age and have better access to health care and family planning. Young women also tend to have fewer children. Women's workloads have decreased due to the advent of gas stoves, electricity, water pumps, and various household appliances. However, such changes rather seem to be the effect of a general improvement in the position of women in Moroccan society than of a particular effect of international migration, which seems only limited.

The only clear exception seems education. The youngest generation of women is far better educated than the generation before, and the huge gender gap in (primary) education started to decrease rapidly over the 1990s. Although this is a general development, we have also seen that girls in international migrant households are generally better educated, and that migration has played an accelerating role in closing the gender gap in primary education. We have hypothesized that this can be explained by the greater say in household affairs that women tend to have during the long absence of their husbands living abroad.

An increasing number of young women aspire to migrate, either by marrying a migrant, or independently in order to study or work elsewhere, and often preferably on the other side of the Strait of Gibraltar. The exposure to better-educated, working, and more independent female migrants makes them not only more aware of other life styles, but also makes them realize that their aspirations can potentially be fulfilled, and that another, and in their eyes better, life is in fact possible. Indeed, the culture of migration has clearly pervaded women's lives too.

## **11.6. Structural constraints to migration and development**

Although the propensity to invest is higher among international migrant households and migration has undoubtedly contributed to development in the Todgha, this is not to say that the Todgha in particular, and Morocco in general, are ideal investment environments. Instead, this study identified several structural constraints, which lead us to conclude that the developmental potential of migration is certainly not being fully realized. These structural constraints explain why many migrants do not realize their intention of returning, invest less

than intended, or do not invest at all. This is not only related to general factors such as macro-economic and political circumstances<sup>1</sup>, but also to more specific problems related to failing governmental and non-governmental institutions, legal insecurity, the structure of “inherited” agricultural systems, gender inequality, structural unemployment, and the nature of migration policies. In many of these cases, the issue of trust is central.

Corruption, red tape, and the general lack of trust vis-à-vis the state apparatus (*makhzen*) tend to complicate and slow down administrative procedures like, for example, obtaining business permits or title deeds on land and other property. This often means such property cannot be used as collateral for loans, reducing land, real estate, and other property to so-called “dead capital” (cf. De Soto 2000). These factors form clear obstacles to investments, especially for relatively poor households lacking good connections and political “shortcuts”.

The confrontation with rent seeking officials not only increases investment costs, but also perpetuates people’s low trust in the state’s administrative and legal institutions. Needless to say, the issue of trust is crucial to investment decisions. The perceived unreliability of the state manifests itself in a general feeling of legal insecurity (with regards to property) and a fear of rent seeking civil servants. Inhabitants of the Todgha tend to have a profound distrust of “the *makhzen*”, the central state, its institutions, and its local representatives. This distrust is possibly reinforced by the fact that the Todgha and its Berber inhabitants were largely independent of central state power until colonization. Therefore, the *makhzen* and its local representatives are often seen as untrustworthy “outsiders”.

In sum, these circumstances seem to make potential investors hesitant, especially those whose financial resources are limited and who lack good connections and informal access to local rulers and the state bureaucracy. We can equally hypothesize that this unfavorable institutional environment and the concomitant lack of trust partly explain why so many migrants have decided not to return and to reunify their households and why the bulk of local investments are made in the relatively secure housing sector.

In the agricultural domain, the general lack of technical assistance by the government and agricultural extensions offices (ORMVA, CMV) leaves the potential for agricultural development partially unexploited. Oriented as they are towards “modern” agriculture, agricultural officials seem barely interested in small-scale oasis agriculture, and also seem to lack both the will and means to assist or advise peasants wishing to invest in agriculture. For example, peasants neither have access to information on water tables, nor receive advice on the optimal location of wells. This lack of assistance increases the risk of failure of pumping investments.

Due to excessive red tape, many peasants do not have the title deeds to their land. This is especially true for former collective pastureland in the lower Todgha (notably the Ghallil plain) that has been divided between individuals based on mutual but frequently informal agreements. This is an obstacle for obtaining agricultural credit, as banks require title deeds as collateral on loans. This legal insecurity of property rights is another dimension of the *general* lack of trust in government institutions.

Other types of obstacles are rooted in the inherited structure of “involuted”, oasis agriculture, the collective nature of irrigation, and structural inequalities in intra-valley water distribution. Extremely fragmented land tenure, the scattered location of plots, and the complex and collective character of regulations on water allocation hinder agricultural innovation, mechanization, and individual investments in the traditional oasis, particularly in

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<sup>1</sup> It goes without saying that economic and political conditions at the macro-level, such as political stability, international trade relations, and economic growth, play a crucial role too. However, an analysis of such factors was beyond the scope of this study.

the upper Todgha. Peasants willing to invest are therefore forced to buy land elsewhere, requiring considerable extra investment. Secondly, due to the historical outcome of a political struggle favoring the upstream and central *igherman*, the relatively abundant and perennial river water is disproportionately allocated to the upper parts of the Todgha valley—where water is spoiled (cf. El Harradji 2001)—depriving the lower parts of the valley of this cheap and renewable water resource.

The state does not play an active role in solving the crisis in the collective management of the declining *khettaras* and other agro-hydrological infrastructure. The anarchic, largely uncontrolled boom in motor pumping constitutes a clear danger for the future ecological and economic sustainability of oasis agriculture. Increasing pumping competition and falling water tables are one of the causes behind the desiccation of the *khettaras* and wells. This threatens to destroy investments in pumping done by over 1,100 peasants. Despite laws prohibiting unauthorized pumping, local authorities and the legislative powers do not seem willing or able to control the expansion of motor pumps through law enforcement or to settle conflicts between water users. This perpetuates feelings of legal insecurity. Furthermore, this development will exacerbate agricultural inequality between rich and poor households, as only the relatively wealthy can afford to dig deeper wells and install heavier pumps if water tables fall.

Patriarchal value systems are a clear constraint on women's freedom in schooling, work, family planning, partner choice, and, last but not least, mobility. Although the position of women has improved over the past few decades, women who stay behind remain structurally disadvantaged compared to men, and also benefit less from the new livelihood opportunities created by international migration. However, women can expect to gain more from their own migration to Europe in the context of family reunification and family formation. For women, migration to Europe not only implies an important improvement in their economic situation, but also in their legal and social position. To a certain extent, this may explain why migrant women seem less willing to return to Morocco than men. It can therefore be hypothesized that (legal and social) gender inequality decreases the propensity to return (and invest) among migrants and increases the tendency towards family reunification.

Many international migrants from the Todgha who decided not to reunify their families in the 1970s and 1980s did so because they assumed it would be a better strategy to invest in the education of their children (i.e., sons) in Morocco. However, this strategy has often failed since, in the meantime, it has become increasingly difficult for university graduates (*licenciés*) to find a job due to severe IMF-instigated budget cuts in the public domain, the general economic downturn, misguided educational policies, and the surge in the number of young people holding higher education degrees. Moreover, alleged nepotism when handing high-skilled jobs in the government sector might also partially remove the meritocratic incentives of people to put much money and effort into higher education. In combination with mass unemployment among higher educated youngsters, this reduces people's trust in Morocco as a country in which personal development goals can be realized. It only reinforces their tendency to revert to international migration as the prime vehicle of upwards socio-economic mobility.

Besides distrust towards the Moroccan *makhzen*, there is a general lack of trust among international migrants in the institutions of the destination countries. Confronted with a political discourse that has become progressively hostile towards immigration and with increasingly restrictive immigration policies and laws, potential migrant investors fear that by resettling in Morocco they will give up their acquired rights in Europe. This fear of not having the option to return to Europe in case of failure in social (adaptation) or economic terms seems to decrease their propensity to invest and return.

Paradoxically, the rather “volatile” (i.e., unreliable) European immigration policies have probably also played a role in decreasing the tendency among migrants to return and invest. Increasingly restrictive immigration policies have not only had the “perverse” effect of interrupting circular migration patterns and actually decreased people’s tendency to return (cf. Entzinger 1985). They have also added to the feeling that immigration policies will become even more restrictive in the future, and that today’s guarantees—for example the right to return in case of return migration—will only have limited and temporary value. This lack of trust might explain why many migrants cling to their acquired European residency rights.

From the Moroccan perspective, a European residence permit is a key asset, a “gold mine” giving access to the European labor market and social security systems. This asset is therefore fostered and preferably passed on to following generations. For female migrants, an additional reason not to return is that they enjoy better rights in Europe. For migrants’ children, it gives them access to European education systems.

In general, migrants are operating in institutional environments that they perceive as untrustworthy or even hostile on either side of the Mediterranean. This makes them extremely risk-averse and prudent about giving up their hard-won rights in Europe.

## 11.7. Synthesis and discussion

The main conclusion of this study is that international migration has substantially contributed to social and economic development in the Todgha valley over the second half of the twentieth century. The study seems to support the NELM-hypothesis that migration has not only been a livelihood strategy serving to diversify households’ income portfolio, substantially increasing and securing income, as well as improving living conditions, but has also been a means to overcome capital constraints on investments in the economy of the Todgha. The relatively high, stable, and secure nature of international remittance income enables households to make various investments in housing, agriculture, private enterprises, and education, allowing them to further improve and secure their livelihoods.

In addition, through indirect (multiplier) effects, investments and consumption by migrants seem to have had an indirect positive effect on the economy of the whole valley. The increased investments and consumption by international migrant households have significantly contributed to the growth, diversification, partial de-agrarization, and urbanization of the regional economy and the creation of employment, from which “stay-behinds” profit in indirect ways and which attract immigrant households settling in Tinghir and elsewhere in the Todgha.

Although this generally appears to be in line with the premises of the NELM, there seems to be room for comment. First, NELM has a one-sided focus on market constraints. The analysis has shown that migration has also been a livelihood strategy to overcome socio-cultural constraints on development. Migration has been a means to break away from inferior socio-ethnic positions for traditionally subordinate groups such as *haratin*, smallholding peasants, and *ikhmmesen*, for whom migration has been the main avenue for upwards socio-economic and cultural mobility. Nevertheless, patriarchal value systems have not been substantially altered by migration, and women remain in a disadvantaged position, although in the longer term migration has had a certain positive effect on the education of young women in migrant households.

Second, it should be noted that these positive developmental effects have remained largely limited to international migration. Internal migrants often lead a difficult life, struggling to survive and leaving their households (mostly women and children) financially

insecure. Unlike international migrants, the income of internal migrants is generally low and instable with the exception of a minority of civil servants and professional workers. Therefore, migration generally does not allow them to durably improve their households' livelihoods by investing money in the local economy. The main rationale behind internal migration therefore seems to be income diversification and the chance to gain access to international migration. For internal migrant households, education is the main investment strategy through which they attempt to secure and stabilize their future livelihoods, although this latter strategy has not been particularly successful in the light of present mass-unemployment.

Third, incorporation of the Todgha into international migration systems has given rise to a new socio-economic divide between households with and without access to international migration resources, which has largely been superimposed upon traditional forms of inequality based on ethnic affiliation, land possession, and complexion. Nevertheless, through its indirect positive effects on the regional economy, migration has almost certainly contributed to a decrease in absolute poverty. However, feelings of relative deprivation and generally rising aspirations caused by better education, the influence of the media, exposure to migrants' wealth, and the general "culture of migration" seem to have further increased many people's aspirations and propensity to migrate.

This study seems to suggest that it is possible to combine the insights derived from transitional migration theory, the new economics of labor migration (NELM), livelihood approaches, and the capabilities approach towards development. This allows us to integrate the social, cultural, and economic dimensions of migration and development interactions. This synergy can be established on the basis of the fundamental argument that they all see (1) labor migration as an outgrowth of development processes, which (2) potentially endows people and households with the (a) capabilities as well as the (b) aspirations to migrate, as (3) part of a more general livelihood strategy to (a) diversify (i.e., stabilize), (b) secure, and (c) increase income. In its potential income-increasing, stabilizing, and securing capacity, migration again can have a positive developmental impact on migrant sending areas by (4) potentially enabling households to increase consumption and investments and thereby (5) increase their capabilities to lead lives they have reason to value.

However, the extent to which this potential is realized crucially depends on the two following factors: (1) The level, stability and security of remittance income—In the Todgha, we have seen that there is a huge divide between internal and international migrant households in this respect; (2) The general development context at both the origin and the destination, which determines households' propensity to return as well as the level and spatial allocation of consumption and investments. Acknowledging its fundamental role in the process of development is not to say that migration thus automatically leads to more development, as its impact is far from uniform (i.e., disparate) across locales, social categories and over time. We have also seen that particular forms of migration (i.e., child labor in large towns) can increase "unfreedom", or have even their origins in coercion.

The many feedback mechanisms through which the impacts of migration have affected development in the Todgha valley have again influenced patterns of out- and in-migration. This leads us to conclude that migration is not only a factor explaining change, but is an integral part of changes itself in the same degree as it may enable further change. It therefore seems more accurate to refer to the *recursive* relationship between migration and development instead of the *impact* of migration on development.

The diversification and improvement of oasis livelihoods through migration has been enabled by structural changes in the macro-context that have impinged upon the Todgha. On the other hand, actors such as migrants and households are not only passive pawns or victims reacting to circumstances shaped by shifting macro-forces. Migration is not so much a flight

from misery, but rather a deliberate attempt to overcome local obstacles to social and economic development.

To a certain extent, households and individuals have the capacity to take their fate into their own hands, and attempt to reshape, diversify and durably improve their livelihoods, for instance through migration. Through this agency, they also alter structures, thereby reshaping the local context in which migration and development occurs. For instance, through remittance transfers, consumption and investments, migration has significantly expanded local markets for goods and labor, attracted banks to Tinghir and indirectly increased wealth among many nonmigrants. Such partly migration-triggered regional development has even given rise to new forms of “reversed” internal migration towards the Todgha. It is important to emphasize that this recursive impact of migration is not necessarily positive. For instance, migration has contributed to the demise of *khattara* irrigation systems and increasing agricultural inequality.

This illustrates that, in line with structuration theory and the “new regional geography”, agents or actors such as migrants and households have the ability to modify the structures of the local development context to a certain extent. However, it would be overly optimistic to suppose such actors are able to tackle more general constraints on development. Their scope for agency only exists within a certain latitude set by structural constraints.

Migration and development interactions do not operate in a cultural, social, political, and institutional void. Although “pessimistic” structuralists certainly overstated their point, NELM and livelihood approaches have perhaps been too fixated on agency, thereby losing sight of structural constraints and the crucial role of institutions. People might not be passive pawns, but their freedom is limited. Structural constraints do exist and hinder the free movement of capital, goods, and labor. Markets are far from perfect—especially in the developing world—and there are high intra-community inequalities in the degree to which people have access to various resources.

Bad or unequal access to public amenities—such as basic health care, education and credit facilities, corrupt or malfunctioning government and judiciary systems, authoritarianism, economic monopolism by influential politicians, lack of guaranteed property rights, and so on—all mean that large parts of the population have virtually no access to the social, human, economic, and political resources underlying development (De Soto 2000; Sen 1999).

From this perspective, the structural exclusion of large sections of the population from social facilities (education, health, housing) as well as credit, labor, insurance, and product markets are the core problems of development. Structural inequalities deprive people of the freedoms they need to improve their own lives. It restricts the space for individual agency. In short, inequality breeds underdevelopment. Migration has indeed the potential to alleviate at least some of these constraints, such as failing capital and insurance markets, and it can significantly contribute to the education, health, and well-being of family and community members, but it does not have the capacity to alter the more general development and investment conditions prevailing in a region and a country.

This explains why stimulating (international) migration alone, without having the accompanying measures to create a fertile ground for development in general, cannot be a credible development strategy for governments. This explains why policies to stimulate migrants’ investments and return migration have so often failed. Therefore, public policies aiming to improve the functioning of social, legal, and political institutions, restoring trust in government, and increasing the access of populations to basic amenities is crucial not only for creating a fertile ground for development in general, but also for stimulating migrants to return and/or invest in their countries of origin.

Although the basic NELM-hypothesis that international migration contributes to development in sending areas seems to be supported by this study, it is important to emphasize that what is involved is a potential, rather than a more or less predetermined impact. In line with what Keely and Tran (1989:524) concluded earlier, the lesson from this analysis is not that the optimistic (neo-classical and developmentalist) viewpoint is correct because the pessimistic (structuralist) framework predictions were incorrect—as NELM scholars sometimes have the tendency to do. In fact, neither the rigor of the “developmentalist” nor that of the structuralist perspectives seems justified.

In the Todgha we have seen that, notwithstanding its positive impacts, there is also reason to believe that the development potential of migration is not being fully realized due to the existence of various structural obstacles to investments. These obstacles have prevented many international migrants from investing and have stimulated them to settle permanently at the destination.

Thus, the degree to which the development potential of migration is realized depends on the specific development context. Depending on this specific development context, migration may enable people to retreat from, just as much as to invest in, local economic activities. This is a key observation. Remittances, just like any other source of additional, external income, may give households greater freedom and the capability to concentrate their activities and allocate investment to those economic sectors and locales that they perceive as the most stable and profitable. It is this capabilities-enhancing potential of (international) migration that also increases the freedom of households to settle elsewhere.

Structural factors at the micro and macro level play a key role in determining to what extent, and in what economic sector migrant and nonmigrant households are inclined to invest. These so-called contextual variables form the enabling conditions for investments. Jointly, they constitute the “field” on which the “seeds” of migration (e.g., remittances) are potentially sown. It is the general institutional and environmental context which largely determines this “fertility”. If the field is not fertile enough in the eyes of the potential investors, the seeds might not be sown at all, or in another sector, place, region, or country. In other words, migration impacts are highly context-sensitive. Therefore, migration cannot be classified as either positive or negative for development. Moreover, its impact differs across socio-economic domains, levels of aggregation, and over time.

Migration researchers should move beyond the negative-versus-positive debate. There is a clear need to shift from a determinist to a more pluralist view, recognizing that various development responses to migration are possible. I therefore agree with Taylor (1999) that the fundamental question for researchers in this discipline is not whether migration leads to certain types of development or not. Instead, we should examine which factors explain why migration has positive development outcomes in some migrant sending areas and negative outcomes in others.

Analogous to what Stiglitz (2002:20) argued on the issue of “globalization”, migration—a constituent part of that general process—is neither good nor bad for development. It has the *potential* to do enormous good and significantly contribute to development in migrant sending areas in the developing world. However, the extent to which this potential is realized crucially depends on the broader development context in such areas and the countries of which they are part, a context which cannot be fundamentally altered by individual migrants.

There is no automatic mechanism through which migration leads to development (cf. Papademetriou and Martin 1991), and, as Taylor (1999) aptly stated, migration is no panacea for development. Bad infrastructure, corruption, a lack of trust in government institutions, dysfunctioning judiciary, the absence of appropriate public policies (schooling, health care, land reform, and so on), market failures, and bad access to international markets due to trade

barriers—factors which are influenced by national politics and international institutions—may prevent migrant households from taking the risk to invest their money in their regions and countries of origin and lower their incentive to return.

Under such unfavorable conditions, migration may also give households the capability and freedom to effectively retreat from local and regional economies. This often coincides with family reunification and permanent settlement at the destination. In that case, they vote with their feet.

If favorable conditions for development and economic growth prevail, it is likely that migrants will send remittances home for local investment and that they themselves will return. If structural obstacles remain, however, migrants are unlikely to invest large amounts of money in risky private enterprises. Although (international) migration tends to generally have a clearly positive impact on wealth and living conditions, it alone cannot guarantee sustained economic development. Only if migration is accompanied by improvements in the general development context of the sending region or a country, can its high potential be fully realized.



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# Appendix 1. Key concepts and definitions

## Migration and migrants

Migration can generally be defined as a permanent or semi-permanent change of residence (Lee 1966:49), but from an operational standpoint it seems useful to refer to the multiple causes or backgrounds of migration (Golini 1996:332-3). We have seen that family and school migration are often closely intertwined with labor migration. Therefore, it seems important to use a sufficiently broad definition as to include long-term movements for education, family reunification, but which should exclude, for example, holiday trips, travel for medical treatment or commuting.

Such movements have been seen by (Golini 1996) as *non-migratory mobility*. Golini further proposed to exclude movements due to natural disasters, or political issues, which he classified as *semi- or pseudo-migratory mobility*. According to his classification, true *migratory movements*, both internal and international, are related to the “basic necessities of life”, that is, school, work, family and home. However, it is important to realize that migration typologies or strategies are fluid and may change over time (Sabagh 1997). Although it is not always possible to make a clear-cut distinction between such categories, and while recognizing that there may be multiple causes explaining particular forms of mobility, it seems a useful distinction for the purpose of our study.

*Migration* can then be defined as a move from the household of origin during at least six months per year to a place within the same country or abroad with the purpose of working, studying or family reunification, over a distance that forces the concerned person to settle at the destination to spend the nights. *Labor migration*, which is central to this study, is migration that is primarily motivated by the aim to work and gain a living elsewhere. Nevertheless, we should acknowledge that these are mainly legal distinctions based on the different rights of entry, and that many family and student migrants end up working at the destination. This makes it often difficult to distinguish labor, family, and labor migration in practice. Increasingly, student and family (network) migration are also a legal means to gain access to job markets, and therefore partially function as forms of labor migration “in disguise”

A *migrant* is then a person who actively participates in migration as defined above. It does not seem useful to make a distinction between permanent and temporary migration, as such categories reflect intentions rather than actual outcomes. However, we can distinguish *seasonal migration* as a separate category that can be defined as yearly recurring migration over periods of less than six months per year. Return migration is defined as the return of a once migrated household member over a sustained period of more than a year.

## Household and household membership of migrants

Defining a *household* is not as straightforward as it might seem, as there is no universal agreement as to its definition. In order to guarantee synchronized data collection, it was important to elaborate a clear and unequivocal definition of the household. For the purpose of migration research, it should be clear when a migrant is still considered as a member of a household, and when not. In practice, and especially in the case of migrants, there will be many borderline cases. Clear guidelines are therefore necessary concerning what migrants to include in the household definition.

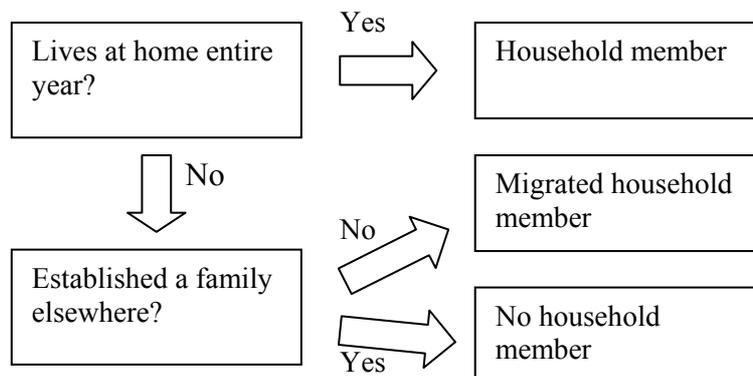
Generally, the household is a concept based on the idea of a ‘unity’ of habitat, consumption, and sometimes production. In this vein, a household can be defined as a ‘group of individuals, whether relatives or not, who usually sleep under the same roof and eat together, and share income and expenses’ (cf. Casley and Lury 1981:162). Nevertheless, such a definition would exclude all migrants, as they are normally too far away to eat and sleep together. In many cases, migrants maintain intensive social and economic relations with the household they left behind. For the purpose of migration

studies, we therefore have to extend the usual concept of the household to include people residing elsewhere “but whose principal commitments and obligations are to that household and who are expected to return to that household in the future” (Fawcett and Arnold 1987:1528; cf. Schoorl 1998:12). This notion of what we might call *shadow households* (Caces *et al.* 1985) was developed for research into migrant networks and allows the study of links between migrants and their region.

However, this does not resolve the issue of which migrants to include and which not. Concepts like “principal commitments and obligations” are vague and notoriously difficult to operationalize and measure, and such indicators give no clear indication where to draw a line between household members and non-household members. This study focuses on the actual social and economic ties maintained between migrants and their relatives (and, in some cases, friends) in sending areas. Financial ties typically consist of remittances sent by household members living elsewhere. However, opposite capital flows are also possible, as is the case of students living in distant cities who are financially supported by the households of origin. The same may hold for migrants who left recently and have not yet found any stable employment. What these cases have in common, is that there exist strong financial and usually also social relations between the migrant and the household in which he lived before departure.

To include both social and economic dimensions, and to come to empirically verifiable parameters, the main criteria we have developed is *whether a migrant has established his or own family household (usually through family reunification or family formation) at the destination*. If the migrant lives alone, he or she is still considered part of the household. If married on departure, most (predominantly male) labor migrants leave their spouses and children behind. If the family stays behind, this mostly entails frequent visits and relatively large remittance streams. In this context, establishing a household elsewhere is interpreted as cutting of the most intensive social and economic ties with the household of origin.

In this vein, a household can be defined as “a group of people who are generally but not necessarily relatives, who live under the same roof and normally eat together, including individuals who live for a part of the year or the entire year elsewhere, without having established their own family (with spouse and/or children) in that other place”. In the field, the following diagram has been used as a guideline aid to determine household membership of migrated individuals.



Unmarried migrants (mostly sons, sometimes also daughters, working or studying elsewhere), or those who leave behind their wife and children (mostly ‘household heads’ working abroad), are considered part of the household. We define them as *migrated (household) members*. The definition implies that family members who left the house with their spouse, or children, but who still maintain financial relations, are no longer considered as part of the household, as they have established their own independent, socio-economic unit.

However, if such non-household members nevertheless continue to maintain financial bonds with kin (or sometimes friends) in the village or town of origin, this group remains relevant to our research. For this category, a number of specific questions on the destination, type of work and remittance transfers by these associated members have been included in the household survey.

Associated members are usually migrants who send money to their brothers, sisters, fathers, or mothers, although they have established their own household. The households that receive such “indirect” remittances from abroad are defined as *indirect international migrant households* in chapter 6.

Households that have entirely left the oasis due to family reunification have not been included in the regular household survey. The study only considered households actually residing in the oasis and their contacts with migrants. Households that left the oasis altogether as a result of family reunification have not been considered. Although many of these households still possess residencies in the oases to which they may return from time to time, their ties tend to weaken over time and, subsequently, they cannot be considered as being member of the oasis community anymore.

In the collection of data on sex, age, education, activities, and migration history, only information on (migrated and present) household members has been collected. This implies that people who left the family habitation to live elsewhere together with their spouses, children or others, are no longer part of the household of origin. Nevertheless, such individuals (so-called ‘associated’ members) may well maintain close social and financial relations with their relatives at the origin. In order to overcome these difficulties, questions have been added on relations with *other* migrated relatives. It is important to note that in this definition, household is not equal to family, and may contain non-family members.

### **Household head and nucleus**

In many cultural settings, concepts such as household heads are inherently male-biased. Also in the Moroccan context, the household head is often assumed to be the oldest (healthy) male. We view the household head as *the person that is considered as such by the members of the household*. In general, this is the person who is considered the chief person responsible (“most powerful”, as others would prefer to say) for the management of the household by other household members. However, this is not automatically a man. Increasingly, households are female-headed (see chapter 10).

A family *nucleus* is either a married couple (with or without children) or a single (widowed, divorced) parent with at least one child. A nucleus may form one household, but a traditional Moroccan “extended family”-type household typically consists of several nuclei. Within such extended households, each brother with his wife and children normally forms a separate nucleus. Since we deal with a patri-local society, daughters move to the houses of their husbands’ families, and only return in case of divorce.

## Appendix 2. Statistical notes

Concerning the scales of measurement in the tables of this thesis, four main types can be distinguished.

1. In some tables, both the independent (i.e., migration status) and independent (e.g., migration destination) variable is measured on a nominal scale.
2. In other tables, both the independent and dependent variables are measured on an ordinal scale (e.g., yes/no migration and educational levels).
3. In most tables, the independent variable is measured on a nominal scale (i.e., migration status), and the independent variable on a ratio scale (e.g., household income, investment levels).
4. In some tables, both variables are measured on ratio level (e.g., migration duration by investment levels).

For all analytical tables using survey data, measures of association have been calculated. The following measures have been used. Strictly speaking, calculation of significance is not mandatory, because the entire population of the six research villages has been surveyed. Nevertheless, for reasons explained in section 3.4.3, it seemed desirable to display significance. For the four above-mentioned types of tables, the following measures of association have been calculated:

1. For nominal by nominal tables: contingency coefficient (“C”), both with approximate significance levels.
2. For ordinal by ordinal tables: Goodman and Kruskal’s Gamma (“ $\gamma$ ”) and approximate significance level.
3. For nominal by ratio tables: eta (“ $\eta$ ”). In the tables, the dependent variable has been classified. Displayed means and  $\eta$  values have been calculated using raw, original data. Significance levels have been calculated using analysis of variance (ANOVA). Strictly speaking, use of  $\eta$  is only appropriate if the groups within the independent variable are approximately of equal size and distributions are normal. As this is often not the case (in particular for data on investments), C has equally been calculated as an additional measure of association. If both  $\eta$  and the contingency coefficient indicate a significant association, it is estimated that there is a significant association.
4. For ratio by ratio tables, Pearson’s correlation coefficient (“r”) has been calculated using raw, unclassified data. For reasons of comparability with other tables,  $\eta$  values have equally been calculated.

For all measures of associations, 2-tailed significance levels have been flagged with \* (significance at the 0.05 level) and \*\* (significance at the 0.01 level). Non-significant associations have been flagged with <sup>x</sup>.

In chapters 9 and 10, when controlling the association between migration, investments, and education for income, nonmigrant and internal migrant households have been grouped as “nonmigrant”, and indirect, current and returned international migration households as “international migrant”. This has been done in order to maintain sufficient case-loads.

## Appendix 3. Glossary

(t) = *Tamazight*; (a) = (*Moroccan colloquial*) *Arabic*; (f) = *French*

'abd (pl. 'abid) (a)	see <i>ismakh</i>
'abra (a)	measure of volume
'adul (at)	traditional religious notary
'ayache (a)	lit. "living one"; survivor
'orf (a)	custom
agdud (t)	pilgrimage in the honor of a saint (see <i>saliḥ</i> ). The center of a <i>agdud</i> is usually the tomb of the saint
aghrum n'gensu (t)	lit. "Bread from the inside", bread stuffed with vegetables, fat, chilli pepper, and spices.
aghrur(t)	traditional technique of collecting water from wells with bags by the use of human labor or animal traction
ahidus (t)	collective village dance party
aït (t)	people, children
akhemmes (pl. ikhmmesen) (t)	lit. "one fifther"; sharecropper, receiving one fifth of the harvest in exchange for his labor. Arabic: <i>khammes</i> .
amghar (pl. imgharn) (t)	chief, elected by the <i>taqbilt</i> of the <i>ighrem</i> village
amghar n-tamazirt (t)	lit. "land chief"; village chief responsible for all agricultural affairs
asif (pl. isaffen) (t)	river, stream
ayian (t)	representative from each <i>ighs</i> in the <i>taqbilt</i> who, together, elect the <i>amghar</i>
baraka (a)	divine blessing, miracle-working ability which gives special powers to <i>igguramen</i> ( <i>mrabtin</i> ) and <i>shurfa</i>
batroon (a,t)	"patron", boss
bled es-siba (a)	"land of dissidence"; the part of Morocco's <i>hinterland</i> that was largely controlled by tribes and where the sultanic state had only marginal political influence
borj (a)	watchtower (in <i>ighrem</i> ) or arch, for instance indicating a municipal border
collège (f)	lower secondary school
colon (f)	French colonial settler
commune rurale (f)	municipality in a rural area, governed by a <i>qaid</i>
darija (a)	Moroccan colloquial Arabic
dirham (a)	Moroccan currency. In 1999, 10 dirham was roughly equal to 1 US\$.
fqih (a)	coranic teacher, leader of prayers
fraction (f)	administrative subdivision (subdistrict) of a <i>commune rurale</i> or a <i>municipalité</i> , governed by a <i>cheikh</i> . A <i>fraction</i> generally comprises a group of villages or <i>igherman</i>
fum (a)	lit. "mouth"; gorges in mountain chains, often the location of wells

<i>guemun</i>	flood basin (subsection of <i>iger</i> )
<i>(pl. iguemunn) (t)</i>	
<i>gulfa (a)</i>	feudal system of forced labor for rulers such as <i>qiad</i> and <i>pashas</i>
<i>ħshuma (a)</i>	shame, shameful, imperative: “shame on you!”
<i>ħabus (a)</i>	religious endowment. Property (i.e., land) that is traditionally given, leased, or conceded by devout individuals to religious foundations (a mosque, a <i>zaouiā</i> ). Nowadays, this “religious land” is administered by the Ministry of Islamic Affairs
<i>ħajj (a)</i>	pilgrimage to Mecca, title of returned pilgrim
<i>ħaratin (sing. ħartani) (a)</i>	black, sedentary oasis agriculturalists. They can be either Tamazight or Arabic-speaking. The term <i>haratin</i> is pejorative. Other appellations: <i>iqablin</i> (t), <i>issuqin</i> (a)
<i>ħarka (a)</i>	military campaign, punitive expedition, tribal war party
<i>ifnuzen (t)</i>	dish of couscous with alfalfa.
<i>iger (pl. igran) (t)</i>	agricultural field
<i>ighrem (pl. igherman) (t)</i>	traditional fortified oasis village of southern Morocco ( <i>qsar</i> in Arabic)
<i>ighs (pl. ighsan) (t)</i>	lit. “bone”; ethnic lineage consisting of a group of extended families all sharing one common ancestor. Each <i>ighrem</i> comprises several <i>ighsan</i> .
<i>igurramen</i>	ascribed descendants from a <i>salih</i> , or from families of
<i>(sing. agurram) (t)</i>	followers close to this saint ( <i>mrabtin</i> in Arabic)
<i>ikhmmesen (t)</i>	see <i>akhemmes</i>
<i>Imazighen</i>	the “free ones”. General appellation for the indigenous, non-
<i>(sing. Amazigh) (t)</i>	Arab population of the Maghreb, who prefer this term over the rather pejorative “Berber”. In the Todgha also interpreted as “White Berbers” as opposed to <i>haratin</i> .
<i>ismakh (pl. ismkhan) (t)</i>	slaves and their descendants (to be distinguished from <i>haratin</i> )
<i>jellaba (a)</i>	loose cloak with hood
<i>jema'a (a)</i>	(1) village council (see <i>taqbilt</i> ); (2) official name of the “modern” elected municipal council
<i>khammes (a)</i>	see <i>akhemmes</i>
<i>khettara (a)</i>	ancient technique consisting of tunnels and shafts enabling the drainage of underground water resources for irrigation. Tamazight: <i>lkhtart</i> (pl. <i>tikhtarin</i> )
<i>khums (a,t)</i>	lit. “fifth”; largest socio-political unit of the Aīt ‘Atta tribe, which consists of five <i>khmas</i> .
<i>lycée (f)</i>	higher secondary school
<i>makhzen (a)</i>	lit. “warehouse”; the Moroccan state apparatus and its representatives (civil servants, politicians, policemen, soldiers, schoolteachers, etc.)
<i>marabut (f)</i>	French corruption of <i>mrabtin</i> . “Holy man”, local saint blessed with <i>baraka</i> . See <i>salih</i> , <i>igourramen</i>
<i>medersa (a)</i>	(religious) school
<i>melk (a)</i>	private property
<i>moqaddem (pl. mqaddemin)</i>	head of one or a few villages; falls under the authority of the
<i>(a)</i>	<i>shikh</i>
<i>mrabtin (a)</i>	see <i>igurramen</i>

<i>mulud (a)</i>	celebration of the birthday of the prophet Muhammad
<i>municipalité (f)</i>	municipality in an urban area, governed by a <i>pasha</i>
<i>mussem (a)</i>	see <i>agdud</i>
<i>nuba (a)</i>	cycle, round, or rotation. Commonly used to indicate the system used to distribute the water of a collective water source ( <i>khettara, asif</i> ) to individual owners of water rights
<i>pasha (a, from Turkish)</i>	state appointed chief (mayor) of a <i>municipalité</i>
<i>plishtim (a)</i>	“indigenous” Moroccan Jews who immigrated from Palestine from the sixth century BC onwards
<i>qadi (a)</i>	(Religious) judge
<i>qaid (pl. qiad) (a)</i>	formerly tribal chief, since 1956 state appointed rural administrator (“mayor”) of a <i>commune rurale</i>
<i>qaidat (a)</i>	local government offices headed by the <i>qaid</i>
<i>qasba (pl. qasbat) (a)</i>	fortified residence or castle of a dignitary or ruler
<i>qsar (pl. qsur) (a)</i>	see <i>ighrem</i>
<i>ra’aya (a)</i>	protection, usually between (semi) nomadic tribes such as the Aït ‘Atta and sedentary oasis dwellers
<i>rais (a)</i>	president of the “modern” <i>jema’a</i>
<i>rhan (a)</i>	loan, pawn; traditional system of “land mortgage”
<i>salih (a)</i>	saint, blessed with <i>baraka</i> ; see <i>igurramen</i>
<i>séguia (pl. swagui) (a)</i>	see <i>targa</i>
<i>shari’a (a)</i>	Islamic law
<i>shikh (pl. shiukh) (a)</i>	head of a <i>fraction</i> supervised by the <i>qaid</i> or <i>pasha</i>
<i>shurfa (sing. sharif) (a)</i>	ascribed descendants of the prophet Muhammad.
<i>suq (a)</i>	market, market place
<i>tagurt (t)</i>	system of division of newly reclaimed land among the Aït ‘Atta in rectangular bands; unit of irrigated land or water
<i>tagurt n waman (t)</i>	water right
<i>tajin (t,a)</i>	Moroccan stew
<i>Tamazight (t)</i>	native “Berber” language of <i>imazighen</i> of the Middle Atlas and the oases south of the Middle Atlas
<i>tanast (pl. tinassen) (t)</i>	traditional system to measure the <i>tagurt-n-waman</i> . <i>Tanast</i> specifically refers to a small dish with a tiny hole, which was put in a bucket with water. The time it needed to fill with water and to sink, was equal to one <i>tanast</i> . <i>Tanast</i> is also the name of the dish itself.
<i>taqbilt (t)</i>	lit. “tribe” (from Arabic <i>qabila</i> ); clan, subclan, community. Also used to indicate the “council” ( <i>jema’a</i> in Arabic) of an <i>ighrem</i> .
<i>targa (pl. teregin) (t)</i>	irrigation channel
<i>timiwult (t)</i>	customary law concerning collective works ( <i>tuiza</i> ), according to which people who do not participate in collective works are fined by the <i>amghar</i>
<i>Todghawi</i>	inhabitant of the Todgha valley
<i>transit</i>	From “Ford Transit”; privately operated delivery vans used as collective taxis that commute between Tinghir and the numerous villages in the Todgha valley

<i>tuiza (a,t)</i>	“neighborliness”, collective work, labor service: cooperative and rotative labor system for the maintenance of the irrigation infrastructure, harvesting and construction of houses.
<i>urti (pl. urtan) (t)</i>	small, walled vegetable gardens in the oasis or family compound
<i>wed (a)</i>	river, stream
<i>zakat (a)</i>	donations for the benefit of the poor and needy prescribed in Islamic law
<i>zawiya (a)</i>	religious lodge, tomb for saint ( <i>saliḥ</i> ), in French written as <i>zaouïa</i>
<i>zegzaw (t)</i>	Variety of cabbage grown in oases



## Samenvatting

Het wetenschappelijke en maatschappelijke debat over arbeidsmigratie vanuit de zuidrand van de Méditerranée heeft zich na een tijdelijke hausse aan migratie-impact studies in de jaren zeventig vooral gericht op het zogeheten ‘integratievraagstuk’ van migranten en hun nakomelingen in de ‘ontvangende’ landen. Aan de gevolgen van migratie voor ontwikkeling aan de ‘zendende’ kant is sindsdien verrassend weinig aandacht besteed. Derhalve is er weinig recente, empirisch gefundeerde en theoretisch ingebedde kennis over dit thema in een van de belangrijkste emigratieregio’s ter wereld. Ook zijn Noord-Afrikaanse en Europese onderzoekers hierdoor de aansluiting kwijtgeraakt met het theoretische debat over migratie en ontwikkeling, dat zich in met name Amerikaanse wetenschappelijke kringen heeft voortgezet.

Deze dissertatie poogt die leemte gedeeltelijk op te vullen door middel van een empirisch onderzoek in een typische emigratieregio in zuid-Marokko: de oase van de Todgha-vallei. Centraal staat hierbij de vraag welke gevolgen decennia van intensieve binnenlandse en internationale migratie hebben gehad voor de sociale en economische ontwikkeling van dit gebied. De dissertatie laat zien hoe de massale geldovermakingen en de sociaal-culturele effecten van migratie deze oasesamenleving volledig op haar kop hebben gezet.

In hoofdstuk 2 wordt deze empirische studie binnen het kader geplaatst van het algemene, theoretische debat over migratie en ontwikkeling. Hierin staan functionalistische en neo-klassieke ‘migratie-optimisten’ tegenover meer structuralistisch georiënteerde ‘migratie-pessimisten’. De laatste groep, die het wegtrekken van ‘jonge, talentvolle en ondernemende’ migranten als oorzaak ziet van lethargie en economische neergang in herkomstgebieden, heeft het debat sinds de jaren zeventig gedomineerd.

Recenter, genuanceerder en minder deterministisch is de *new economics of labor migration* (NELM)-benadering, die na 1980 voornamelijk binnen de Amerikaanse onderzoekscontext is ontwikkeld. Deze benadering bekritiseert eerder onderzoek op methodologische en theoretische gronden en kent een cruciale ontwikkelingsrol toe aan overmakingen van migranten. NELM stelt verder dat Noord-Zuid arbeidsmigratie niet op individueel, maar op huishoudniveau verklaard en geanalyseerd moet worden.

Bij nader inzien blijkt NELM veel parallellen te vertonen met de in niet-economische kring opgekomen ‘livelihood approach’ en de ‘nieuwe regionale geografie’. Op hun beurt zijn deze drie benaderingen onder de noemer van Giddens’ (1984) structuratietheorie te scharen. Zij hebben gemeen dat zij structuur- en actorperspectieven met elkaar proberen te verzoenen. Zij hebben derhalve zowel oog voor de capaciteit en handelingsvrijheid (*agency*) van actoren (bijvoorbeeld de migrant en zijn gezinsleden) als de structuren die dit handelen beperken. Beide beïnvloeden elkaar en er bestaat daarom een voortdurende ‘recursieve’ wisselwerking tussen *agency* en structuur. Binnen een structuratieperspectief lijkt het daarom ook beter te spreken van een wisselwerking tussen de migratie van individuen en ontwikkelingprocessen (die veranderingen in de structuur impliceren) dan van een impact alleen.

Migratie is zowel een gevolg van structurele veranderingen, als een factor die invloed heeft op structurele factoren. Op theoretische gronden blijkt het daarom niet goed mogelijk de ontwikkelingsimpact van migratie te doorgronden zonder fundamenteel begrip van de structurele oorzaken van migratie. In dit verband blijken dynamische migratiemodellen (Zelinsky 1971; Martin en Taylor 1996), in de dissertatie aangeduid als ‘transitionele migratietheorie’, die het proces van ontwikkeling koppelen aan het achtereenvolgens optreden en de opkomst en neergang van specifieke typen migratie, veel meer verklarende kracht te hebben dan de gangbare maar nogal statische ‘push-pull’ modellen.

Tenslotte wordt het cruciale, maar bepaald niet eenduidige begrip ‘ontwikkeling’ geproblematiseerd en gedefinieerd, waarbij de *capabilities*-benadering van Sen (1999) als uitgangspunt heeft gediend. Deze benadering stelt dat niet inkomensgroei op zich, maar de mate waarin mensen de capaciteit hebben en over de vrijheid beschikken om hun bestaan naar eigen wens vorm te geven, de maatstaf voor ‘ontwikkeling’ zou moeten zijn.

Uit deze synthese volgt als algemene hypothese dat arbeidsmigratie vanuit arme naar rijke landen als een multi-lokale ‘bestaansstrategie’ van huishoudens moet worden opgevat. Deze strategie heeft als doel om (1) risico’s te spreiden door diversificatie van inkomstenbronnen, (2) inkomen te verhogen en derhalve (3) structurele sociale, institutionele en economische ontwikkelingsobstakels, zoals slecht functionerende kapitaalmarkten en ontoegankelijke publieke voorzieningen, in het herkomstgebied te overwinnen.

Het laten migreren van een of meerdere leden van het huishouden stelt de migrant en de achterblijvers daarom in staat hun levensomstandigheden te verbeteren. Dit vergroot hun handelingsvrijheid en stelt hen potentieel in staat te investeren in het herkomstgebied. Binnen het geschetste theoretische kader ligt de uiteindelijke ontwikkelingsimpact echter niet vast zoals in eerdere, meer deterministische visies op migratie en ontwikkeling. Deze impact hangt af van de specifieke ontwikkelingscontext in zowel het herkomst- als vestigingsgebied.

Hoofdstuk 3 beschrijft de onderzoeksvragen en de gehanteerde onderzoeksmethodologie. Deze empirische studie is gebaseerd op interviews, observatie en een survey onder ruim 500 oasehuishoudens in 6 verschillende dorpen van de Todgha-vallei. Het onderzoek, waarvoor de auteur tussen 1998 en 2000 twee jaar in de Todgha verbleef, vond plaats in het kader van het internationale IMAROM-project. In de analyse van het empirische materiaal stond de vergelijking tussen de volgende categorieën huishoudens centraal: (1) niet-migrantenhuishoudens, (2) binnenlandse migrantenhuishoudens, alsmede (3) ‘indirecte’, (4) huidige en (5) teruggekeerde internationale migrantenhuishoudens.

Hoofdstuk 4 schetst een algemeen beeld van Marokko als emigratieland bij uitstek. Marokko ligt op wat Skeldon (1997) heeft aangeduid als de mondiale ‘arbeidsfrontier’: die categorie landen die een zekere mate van sociale, economische, infrastructurele en demografische ontwikkeling kennen die mensen massaal in staat stelt om te migreren. Marokko heeft zich gedurende de tweede helft van de twintigste eeuw een centrale plaats verworven in het ‘Euro-Mediterrane’ migratiesysteem. Op een bevolking van dertig miljoen leven twee miljoen aan gene zijde van de Méditerranée. Met meer dan 3,5 miljard dollar aan jaarlijkse geldovermakingen door migranten behoort Marokko in absolute zin na India, Mexico en de Filipijnen tot de vierde ontvanger van dit soort gelden ter wereld. Dit is vier keer meer dan de ontwikkelingshulp aan Marokko, en overtreft ook de inkomsten uit de export van landbouwproducten, fosfaten en toerisme.

Deze instroom van harde valuta is niet alleen cruciaal voor de Marokkaanse betalingsbalans maar vooral ook voor talloze families die hierdoor een redelijk bestaan kunnen leiden. Voorts wordt betoogd dat de migratie-faciliterende rol van migratienetwerken, in combinatie met demografische en economische ontwikkelingen in Marokko en Europa, het uitermate waarschijnlijk maken dat de sterke emigratie uit Marokko de decennia zal blijven aanhouden.

Hoofdstuk 5 geeft een beschrijving van de Todgha-vallei. Vóór de kolonisatie waren de bewoners van deze rivieroase aan de zuidelijke voet van het Atlasgebergte goeddeels afhankelijk van zelfvoorzienende irrigatielandbouw. Dit werd mogelijk gemaakt door de permanente stroom water in de Todgha. De vallei wordt uitsluitend door Berber (*Tamazight*)-taligen bevolkt. Binnen het volk van de Aït Todoght (‘kinderen van de Todgha’), de sedentaire bewoners van het waterrijke hart van de oase, bestond een sterke etnische diversiteit en hiërarchie. Hierbij waren de ‘kasten’ van veelal zwarte deelpachters en keuterboeren (*haratin*), slaven (*ismakhen*) en joden traditioneel ondergeschikt aan de meest

blanke bevolkingsgroepen die van oudsher het leeuwendeel van het land en de waterbronnen in handen hadden. Aan de top van de hiërarchie stonden de afstammelingen van lokale heiligen (*igurramen*) en de profeet Mohammed (*shurfa*).

De Aït Todoght hebben nog steeds het alleenrecht op het gebruik van de bronnen van de Todgha. Er bestond en bestaat nog steeds een sterke antagonie tussen de sedentaire Aït Todoght en de semi-nomadische Aït 'Atta-stam, die zich in de loop van de eeuwen in de waterarme benedenloop van de vallei hebben gevestigd.

Sinds de Todgha-vallei in 1931 onder Franse controle kwam heeft deze oasevallei een stormachtige ontwikkeling doorgemaakt. De kolonisatie betekende enerzijds incorporatie van deze statenloze samenleving van vrije *Imazighen* (Berbers) in 'Arabisch' staatsverband, het verlies van tribale autonomie en de teloorgang van aloude regionale en trans-Saharaanse handelsnetwerken. Anderzijds schiep de incorporatie van deze oasevallei in modern staatsverband en de kapitalistische economie en de hiermee gepaard gaande revolutionaire ontwikkeling van infrastructuur en transportmiddelen, totaal nieuwe bestaansmogelijkheden door middel van loonarbeid buiten de zelfvoorzienende oaselandbouw.

Hoofdstuk 6 schetst hoe dit proces van incorporatie en 'mondialisering' zich in het bijzonder gemanifesteerd heeft door middel van een sterk toegenomen migratie naar zowel binnenlandse als buitenlandse bestemmingen. Hierbij blijkt juist het proces van ontwikkeling migratie te hebben aangewakkerd. De relatief ontsloten en relatief welvarende gedeelten van de vallei blijken veel eerder en veel massaler aan binnenlandse en internationale loonarbeid-migratie te hebben deelgenomen dan de geïsoleerdere en armere (met name Ait 'Atta-) dorpen. Dit sluit aan op de zogeheten 'transitionele' migratietheorie, die er van uit gaat dat ontwikkeling zeker in haar initiële stadia een sterk stimulerend effect heeft op migratie. Niet armoede en marginalisering maar juist het ontwikkelingsproces dat tot uitdrukking komt in de demografische transitie, technische ontwikkeling, onderwijs, inkomensgroei en mentale horizonverbreding heeft een proces in werking gezet van wat Zelinsky (1971) ook wel heeft aangeduid als de "mobiliteitstransitie".

De mobiliteitstransitie van de Todgha ving reeds ver voor de Franse bezetting van de vallei aan met de Franse kolonisatie van het naburige Algerije. Reeds in de tweede helft van de negentiende eeuw trokken arbeidsmigranten vanuit de Todgha naar Algerije om te werken in de steden en boerderijen van Franse *colons*. Na de instelling van het Franse protectoraat over Marokko ontstonden er ook steeds meer mogelijkheden voor binnenlandse migratie, die zich vooral richtte op kuststeden als Rabat en Casablanca. Na de Algerijnse onafhankelijkheid in 1962 verlegde de internationale migratiestroom zich naar Frankrijk; in veel mindere mate naar Nederland en België. Een minderheid ging werken in olielanden als Libië, Saoedi-Arabië en Irak.

Eind jaren zestig en begin jaren zeventig waren 'gouden tijden', waarin een groot aantal Todghawi naar het buitenland migreerde. Na de oliecrisis in 1973 leek het migratietijdperk voorbij. Veel 'gastarbeiders' bleken echter niet terug te keren en het tijdperk van de familiehereniging brak aan, die in de jaren tachtig grotendeels was voltooid. In de jaren negentig lijkt er sprake van een herleving van zowel gereguleerde als ongereguleerde arbeidsmigratie en een toenemende oriëntatie op de nieuwe bestemmingslanden Italië en vooral Spanje. Daarnaast verklaren gezinsvormende migratie, 'estafette-migratie' en andere vormen van 'netwerkmigratie' waarom, in plaats van de verwachte daling, het aandeel migranten op de totale bevolking van de vallei in de afgelopen drie decennia vrijwel constant is gebleven op een niveau van rond de zes procent. In de tweede helft van de twintigste eeuw is ook binnenlandse migratie naar steden onveranderd sterk gebleven.

Toegang tot internationale migratie via de zeer frequente huwelijksmigratie en allerhande vormen van 'migratie-hulp' wordt in sterke mate bepaald door het al dan niet

hebben van reeds in Europa gevestigde bloedverwanten. Het restrictieve migratiebeleid in Europa heeft geleid tot een groeiende afhankelijkheid van dit 'sociale kapitaal'. Uit de analyse blijkt dat netwerken faciliterend werken voor de migratie van leden van de eigen 'lineage' (*ighs*), maar juist uitsluitend werken voor mensen die daar geen deel van uitmaken. Dit verklaart ook waarom er geen sprake is van een in de literatuur veronderstelde afnemende selectiviteit of 'diffusie' van migratie door netwerkeffecten. Onderwijsniveau heeft daarom nauwelijks een selecterende werking voor internationale migratie. Binnenlandse en internationale migratie zijn wel enigszins selectief voor landbezit vóór migratie (dat als indicator voor traditionele welvaart is gebruikt), maar het verband is zwak. Alleen de allerarmste c.q. landloze huishoudens nemen relatief weinig deel aan migratie.

Migratie heeft niet geleid tot de in de literatuur vaak veronderstelde ontvolking van de vallei. Integendeel, de bevolkingsgroei heeft gelijke tred gehouden met de nationale trend. Tinghir, de hoofdplaats van de vallei, heeft in de afgelopen twee decennia een snelle groei doorgemaakt als gevolg van immigratie vanuit de haar omringende bergen en oases in het pre-Saharaanse ommeland. Het is daarom niet mogelijk om een regio als de Todgha aan te duiden als hetzij een emigratie- hetzij een immigratiegebied. Het gelijktijdig optreden van emigratie én immigratie toont ook de sterke beperkingen van de veel gehanteerde maar statische 'push-pull'-theorie. De transitionele migratietheorie blijkt dit fenomeen wel goed te kunnen verklaren.

De helft van de totale mannelijke bevolking tussen de 15 en 65 jaar is migrant of (een) retourmigrant. Binnenlandse en internationale migratie blijken een andere plaats in de levenscyclus van het huishouden in te nemen. Hierbij fungeert binnenlandse migratie naar de stad vaak als voorwaarde creërende 'springplank' voor internationale migratie. Ook internationale migratie is vaak een oorzaak van binnenlandse migratie. Uit de analyse blijkt dat beide vormen van migratie functioneel gerelateerd zijn, en deel uitmaken van hetzelfde ontwikkelingsproces dat leidt tot toenemende mobiliteit in meer algemene zin

Hoofdstuk 7 analyseert de sterke mate waarin migratie een integraal onderdeel is geworden van de multi-lokale en multi-sectorale bestaansstrategie van oasehuishoudens. Meer dan 40 procent van de geënquêteerde huishoudens is direct betrokken bij internationale migratie en 25 procent bij binnenlandse migratie. Ook niet-migrantenuishoudens hebben vrijwel allemaal aanvullende, niet-agrarische inkomsten. Er is sprake van een sterke diversificatie en gedeeltelijke 'de-agrarisatie' van de regionale economie, waarbij er sprake is van een toenemende concentratie van economische activiteiten in Tinghir. Slechts een kleine minderheid (4 procent) van de huishoudens leeft nog uitsluitend van de landbouw.

Voor de 'internationale migrantenuishoudens' heeft migratie een drastische verbetering van hun inkomenspositie betekend. Ook leven zij in aanzienlijk betere omstandigheden wat betreft behuizing, sanitaire voorzieningen en algehele levensstandaard. Binnenlandse migrantenuishoudens hebben het, afgezien van een groep relatief welvarende ambtenaren en zakenlieden, gemiddeld gesproken niet beter dan niet-migrantenuishoudens, hoewel de grootste armoede sterk geconcentreerd is binnen de laatste groep. In tegenstelling tot internationale migratie, kan binnenlandse migratie vanuit het perspectief van de *new economics of labor migration* daarom niet zozeer vanuit inkomensvergroting, maar voornamelijk vanuit het motief van risicospreiding worden verklaard. Daarnaast vergroot binnenlandse migratie de kansen op internationale migratie.

Dat internationale migratie geleid heeft tot een drastische verbetering van levensomstandigheden op het Marokkaanse platteland is geen nieuws. Verrassender is dat achterblijvers in internationale migrantenuishoudens niet bepaald het lethargische gedrag vertonen van de passieve, louter consumerende ontvangers van overmakingen uit Europa, hetgeen in de literatuur over migratie en ontwikkeling in de Méditerranée wel het dominante beeld is. Migrantenuishoudens hebben juist de neiging ook in andere economische sectoren

in de Todgha actief te zijn. Dit is een belangrijke aanwijzing dat internationale migratie niet gepaard is gegaan met een terugtrekking uit lokale economische activiteiten en ondermijning van het productief potentieel, maar eerder het tegendeel. Het hardnekkige beeld van emigratieregio's die passief aan het migratie-infuus liggen moet daarom voor wat betreft de Todgha-vallei worden bijgesteld. Migratie-inkomsten, die overigens 'slechts' eenderde van het totale geldinkomen van de vallei vormen, gaan gepaard met eveneens hogere inkomsten uit lokale niet-migratoire activiteiten.

Hoofdstukken 8 en 9 analyseren de mate waarin de diverse categorieën migrantenhuishoudens geneigd zijn te investeren in agrarische respectievelijk niet-agrarische sectoren. De belangrijkste conclusie van deze dissertatie is dat huishoudens met internationale migratie-inkomsten in alle sectoren een grotere geneigdheid vertonen om te investeren dan andere huishoudens. Dit is in tegenspraak met veel vroegere studies, die suggereerden dat migranten zich grotendeels zouden terugtrekken uit de regionale economie.

Bovendien zien we nog steeds een positieve samenhang tussen deelname aan internationale migratie en investeringen wanneer we deze analyse uitvoeren binnen gelijke inkomenscategorieën. Het migratie-effect behelst dus meer dan alleen een inkomenseffect. De verklaring hiervoor wordt met name gezocht in het feit dat buitenlandse migratie-inkomsten niet alleen veel hoger zijn, maar ook stabiel en zekerder van aard dan inkomsten uit lokale activiteiten en binnenlandse migratie. De vermeende ondernemende en risiconemende attitude van migranten lijkt een minder grote rol te spelen. Uit de data-analyse blijkt verder dat migrantenhuishoudens niet bepaald geneigd zijn het zuurverdiende geld over de balk te gooien. Een dergelijk beeld komt vaak in de literatuur voor, maar moet verworpen worden als een karikatuur. Spaarzaamheid en bedachtzaamheid typeren de migrant eerder dan ostentatief consumptief gedrag.

Hoofdstuk 8 analyseert de rol van migratie in agrarische transformatieprocessen. Internationale migranten hebben sinds midden jaren zeventig een voortrekkersrol gespeeld bij de massale introductie van gemotoriseerde waterpompen, die een welkome aanvulling vormen op de traditionele waterbronnen. Deze hebben een intensivering van de landbouw in de oude oase mogelijk gemaakt en in de benedenloop van de vallei boeren in staat gesteld stukken woestijn in cultuur te brengen. Hoewel de landbouw nog steeds een grotendeels zelfvoorzienend en traditioneel karakter heeft, houden internationale migrantenhuishoudens er dankzij hun financiële draagkracht gemiddeld een kapitaalsintensievere, productievere en meer marktgerichte landbouw op na dan andere huishoudens. Dit uit zich niet alleen in het slaan van waterputten, maar ook in de aankoop van grond binnen en buiten de Todgha en het frequentere gebruik van landbouwmachines, kunstmest en pesticiden. Ook bezitten zij vaker vee, in het bijzonder melkkoeien.

Internationale migratie lijkt in de regel niet tot de eveneens in de literatuur veronderstelde grootschalige braakligging ('sociaalbraak') als gevolg van de afwezigheid van jonge mannen te leiden. Met hun relatief hoge inkomens zijn migratiehuishoudens immers in staat arbeiders in te huren en zo de geëmigreerde arbeidskracht te compenseren. In andere gevallen wordt de grond in beheer gegeven aan een deelpachter of minder draagkrachtige familieleden.

Hoewel internationale migratie dus bijgedragen heeft aan de verhoging van de agrarische productie, hebben de investeringen ook negatieve neveneffecten. Het massale pompen in de benedenloop van de vallei heeft geleid tot een daling van de grondwaterspiegel en een verminderde watertoevoer vanuit traditionele, collectief beheerde waterbronnen. Deze staan toch al onder druk door het verslechterde onderhoud van dammen, irrigatiekanalen, en ondergrondse 'irrigatietunnels' (*khetaras*). Relatief arme huishoudens, die zich het niet kunnen veroorloven zelf een pomp aan te schaffen, zijn hierdoor soms gedwongen om zich geheel of gedeeltelijk uit de landbouw terug te trekken. Er is dus sprake van een toenemende

agrarische ongelijkheid. Het massale en nauwelijks gereguleerde pompen kan in de toekomst leiden tot toenemende concentratie van ‘watermacht’ in de handen van enkele rijke boeren. Deze ontwikkeling dreigt bovendien de duurzaamheid van het gehele landbouwsysteem in de benedenloop te ondermijnen, en kan derhalve tot grootschalige kapitaalvernietiging leiden.

Hoofdstuk 9 behandelt de rol van migratie in niet-agrarische investeringen. Huizenbouw is in het algemeen de eerste grote investering die migranten plegen. Het bouwen van betonnen huizen heeft geleid tot een versnelde leegloop van de *igherman*, de traditionele lemen woonburchten, het ontstaan van lintbebouwing langs wegen in de vallei en de sterke groei van Tinghir en enkele andere semi-urbane centra.

In de literatuur zijn migranten in dit verband dikwijls ‘beschuldigd’ van irrationeel investeringsgedrag in overbodige statussymbolen. Zij zouden hun geld immers beter in productieve investeringen kunnen steken. Het blijkt echter dat investeringen in huizenbouw in meerdere opzichten voor de hand liggen. Goede behuizing komt tegemoet aan een vanzelfsprekende, primaire behoefte aan privacy, ruimte, hygiëne en een zeker comfort. Verder is gebleken dat met name de vrouwen groot belang hebben bij het bouwen van een eigen huis voor het nucleaire gezin; door het apart gaan wonen van de schoonfamilie wint zij immers sterk aan autonomie en heeft zij meer zeggenschap over het inkomen van haar man.

Bovendien blijken huishoudens een investering in een eigen huis als een levensverzekering te zien mocht de kostwinner overlijden of er een andere crisis ontstaan. In dat geval heeft de familie in ieder geval een dak boven het hoofd, waaruit zij ook nog een inkomen kan verwerven door verhuur van een of meer etages. Zeker in een maatschappelijke context waar publieke sociale zekerheid grotendeels ontbreekt, is dit een belangrijke drijfveer. Veel migrantenhuishoudens bezitten meer dan één nieuw huis, meestal in Tinghir of andere steden. Voor hen is huizenbouw ook een manier om extra inkomen te verwerven, en ze springen hierbij handig in op de sterke urbane groei.

Hoewel onderwijs buitengewoon ontwikkelingsrelevant lijkt, wordt onderwijs nauwelijks genoemd als investering in eerder onderzoek naar migratie en ontwikkeling. Naast huizenbouw blijkt onderwijs de voornaamste investering van internationale maar ook binnenlandse migrantenhuishoudens te zijn. Hoewel internationale migranten niet beter opgeleid zijn dan niet-migranten, blijkt uit de analyse dat hun kinderen significant beter zijn opgeleid, en veel vaker hoger onderwijs volgen. Onderwijs is ook een steeds belangrijkere oorzaak van binnenlandse migratie. Ook blijkt internationale migratie een positief effect te hebben op de relatieve onderwijsparticipatie van meisjes.

Er is ook een kleinere categorie internationale migrantenhuishoudens die investeren in allerlei andere ondernemingen, zoals ambachtelijke werkplaatsen, naaiateliers, garages, koffiehuisen, hotels, taxi's en vrachtwagenvervoer. Het zijn met name relatief jonge retourmigranten die dergelijke investeringen plegen; in veruit de meeste gevallen doen zij dat in Tinghir. Naast de investeringen in de landbouw en huizenbouw, genereren dit soort investeringen in ondernemingen een niet onaanzienlijke werkgelegenheid en verklaren zo in belangrijke mate de sterke groei en immigratie naar Tinghir.

Hoofdstuk 10 behandelt de gevolgen van migratie op sociaal-cultureel terrein. Migratie heeft voor mensen—maar dus niet de allerarmsten—uit lagere ‘kasten’ van de oasesamenleving een gedeeltelijke of volledige emancipatie betekend. Het bouwen van een betonnen huis in de geboorteregio, het op vakantie terugkeren in een auto en het volbrengen van de pelgrimage naar Mekka (de *hajj*) kunnen naast hun intrinsieke waarde ook gezien worden als een symbool van hun nieuwverworven status. Traditionele, grotendeels erfelijke determinanten van maatschappelijke status (landbezit, huidskleur, afstamming) spelen een kleiner wordende rol ten opzichte van het geldinkomen uit veelal niet-agrarische, dikwijls migratoire bron. Toch speelt afstamming en met name huidskleur nog steeds een belangrijke

rol in statusbepaling en sociale interactie. Blanken kijken neer op zwarten en huwelijken tussen zwart en blank blijven grotendeels taboe.

In veel opzichten loopt de nieuwe sociaal-economische scheidslijn van de oasegemeenschap nu tussen de nouveau riche van huishoudens met internationale migratie-inkomsten en huishoudens die deze revenuen moeten ontberen. Migratie lijkt dus een nieuwe vorm van ongelijkheid met zich mee te hebben gebracht, en dit lijkt een duidelijke schaduwzijde. Een kanttekening hierbij is echter dat de investeringen en uitgaven van migranten en de regionale economische ontwikkeling die hiervan mede het gevolg is geweest, ook werk en inkomen hebben geschapen voor veel niet-migrant en immigranten in de lokale landbouw, huizenbouw en dienstensector.

Verder moet in acht worden genomen dat de traditionele oasemaatschappij gebaseerd was op geïnstitutionaliseerde ongelijkheid, waarbij de meest elementaire vrijheden aan grote groepen werd ontzegd. Oases waren allesbehalve harmonieuze en egalitaire samenlevingen. Voor de meeste oasebewoners heeft migratie daarom een relatieve bevrijding, vooruitgang, ontwikkeling, en geen achteruitgang betekend.

De achterblijvende vrouwen blijken minder dan mannen te profiteren van migratie. Met name vrouwen van binnenlandse migranten leiden een onzeker bestaan. In tegenstelling tot gangbare hypothesen, lijkt migratie niet of nauwelijks een positief effect te hebben op hun maatschappelijke positie. Recente verbeteringen in de sociale en economische positie van vrouwen lijken het gevolg van algemene maatschappelijke veranderingen, met uitzondering van de relatief grote onderwijsparticipatie van migrantendochters.

In de Todgha is sprake van een ware 'migratiecultuur', waarbij Europa als het paradijs wordt gezien. Veel jongeren kunnen zich vrijwel geen toekomst meer voorstellen zonder te migreren. De migratiedrang wordt mede aangewakkerd door de confrontatie met de relatieve welvaart van migranten. Aan de ene kant zou men dit als een negatief effect van migratie kunnen zien, aan de andere kant zit er, gezien de beperkte sociaal-economische ontplooiingsmogelijkheden in Marokko, een belangrijke kern van waarheid in de perceptie dat migratie de grootste kans op persoonlijke ontwikkeling betekent.

Deze perceptie dat niet-migreren een groot risico op stilstand inhoudt wordt gevoeld door het lot van de zonen van internationale migranten die in de jaren zeventig en tachtig besloten hun familie niet naar Europa te halen. Geconfronteerd met massawerkloosheid en opkomend racisme, dachten zij er goed aan te doen hun zonen in Marokko een universitaire opleiding te laten volgen, wat destijds nog bijna een garantie voor een redelijk comfortabel en zeker ambtenarenbestaan leek. Inmiddels is deze situatie drastisch veranderd, en heerst er massawerkloosheid onder hoger opgeleide Marokkanen. Veel emigrantenzonen zitten daarom werkloos en zwaar gefrustreerd thuis.

In concluderende zin kan gezegd worden dat migratie een positief effect gehad heeft op de sociale en economische ontwikkeling van de Todgha-vallei, hetgeen in grote lijnen de hypothesen van de *new economics of labor migration* lijkt te bevestigen. Hierbij moet wel aangetekend worden dat deze positieve effecten voornamelijk, maar niet uitsluitend zijn voorbehouden aan internationale migrantenhuishoudens. Voor de meerderheid van de binnenlandse migranten is migratie eerder een 'overlevingsstrategie' dan een manier om het eigen bestaan duurzaam te verbeteren. Toch profiteren huishoudens van binnenlandse migranten en niet-migrant indirect mee van de economische effecten van de uitgaven en investeringen van migranten. Ondanks hun relatieve deprivatie, waren zij zonder internationale migratie in absolute zin zeker veel slechter af geweest.

Een andere, wellicht paradoxale conclusie is dat de culturele, sociale en economische effecten van migratie op korte en middellange termijn juist tot meer migratie zowel uit en naar de vallei lijken te hebben geleid. Migratie en ontwikkeling blijken intrinsiek en in initiële

stadia van ontwikkeling zeer positief met elkaar samen te hangen. Het is een cruciale constatering dat deze economische ontwikkeling en migratie naar de vallei nu juist in niet onbelangrijke mate het gevolg is van de ontwikkelingsimpact van decennia van migratie vanuit de vallei naar het buitenland.

Evenzeer van belang is de constatering dat onder invloed van onderwijs, media en de blootstelling aan de welvaart van migranten en anderen, de persoonlijke ambities van mensen sneller zijn toegenomen dan de bestaansmogelijkheden in Marokko hun kunnen bieden. Dit verklaart waarom mensen onverminderd willen migreren ondanks het feit dat de levensomstandigheden in de Todgha in de afgelopen decennia ontegenzeggelijk zijn verbeterd. Naast de voornamelijk rol van toenemende ambities in het verklaren van migratiedrang, heeft juist een zekere mate van ontwikkeling de mensen beter in staat gesteld om ook daadwerkelijk te migreren.

Dit is een omkering van structuralistische visies die juist de verklaring van migratie zochten in toenemende misère. Dit bevestigt de transitionele migratietheorie en de stelling dat 'ontwikkeling' onontkoombaar gepaard gaat met toenemende mobiliteit. In overeenstemming met ander onderzoek toont dit eens te meer aan dat gangbare (meestal anti-migratoire) visies in beleidskringen dat ontwikkeling in de herkomstgebieden het beste 'medicijn' is tegen migratie, zeker voor de korte en middellange termijn op verkeerde veronderstellingen berust.

Tenslotte zijn er sterke aanwijzingen dat het ontwikkelingspotentieel van migratie in deze Marokkaanse vertrekregio bij lange na niet volledig benut wordt. Fundamenteel wantrouwen tegen de 'Arabisch'-Marokkaanse maar ook Europese overheden, rechtsonzekerheid, corruptie, nepotisme, en de moeilijkheid om eigendomsdocumenten over bezit te verkrijgen zijn factoren die verklaren waarom zoveel migranten uiteindelijk niet terugkeren of twijfelen hun geld in het land of regio van herkomst te investeren. Vrouwen en kinderen van migranten hebben belang bij gezinshereniging en hebben vaak veel te verliezen bij een eventuele terugkeer. Daarbij komt de meer algemene onzekerheid over toekomstige economische en politieke ontwikkelingen in Marokko. Dit gebrek aan vertrouwen maakt migranten en hun families uiterst risicomijdend en voorzichtig om hun zwaarbevochten rechten in Europa op te geven. Het zal voorlopig de neiging bestendigen om het heil over de grenzen te zoeken.

Migratie is geen panacee voor ontwikkeling. Hoewel de migratie zeker een bijdrage heeft geleverd aan het stimuleren van regionale ontwikkeling en aan het gedeeltelijk transformeren van de regionale ontwikkelingscontext, hebben individuele migranten niet de capaciteit om de meer algemene, voornamelijk institutionele ontwikkelingsobstakels op regionaal, nationaal en internationaal niveau uit de weg te ruimen.

Essentieel is dat migratie mensen nu juist de vrijheid heeft gegeven om zowel te investeren als zich volledig terug te trekken uit het land en regio van herkomst. Juist deze toegenomen vrijheid wordt door migranten beschouwd als een cruciale verworvenheid, en behelst vanuit hun perspectief 'ontwikkeling'. Of migranten en hun families geneigd zullen zijn sociaal en materieel te investeren in het geboorteland, hangt dus sterk af van de mate waarin er in mogelijkheden voor en vertrouwen in de sociale en economische ontwikkeling van Marokko zullen worden geboden.

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In 1995 and 1996, he worked as junior researcher at Regioplan research & consultancy, Amsterdam. In 1997, he worked at the European Centre for Work and Society (ECWS), Maastricht. In 1998, he started working as researcher at the AGIDS (Amsterdam Research Institute for Global Issues and Development Studies) institute of the University of Amsterdam, where he coordinated the international, EC-funded IMAROM (Interaction between Migration, Land and Water Management and Resource Exploitation in the Oases of the Maghreb) research project. Between 1998 and 2000, he stayed two years in the Todgha valley, Morocco, where he collected data for IMAROM and his PhD thesis.

After completion of the IMAROM project in 2001, he started working at the University of Nijmegen, where he is an affiliated researcher and lecturer at the CIDIN (Centre for International Development Issues Nijmegen). After completion of his dissertation, he started a postdoc research project in June 2003. This three-year project, which is funded by the Netherlands Foundation for the Advancement of Tropical Research (WOTRO) of the Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research (NWO), entails a comparative study on migration and development in migrant sending areas of the southern and eastern Mediterranean (Morocco, Tunisia, Egypt, Turkey).

