

CeMIS

MIGRATION AND INTERCULTURAL STUDIES

MOROCCAN
MIGRATION IN
BELGIUM

More than 50 Years of Settlement



CHRISTIANE TIMMERMAN, NADIA FADIL, IDESBALD GODDEERIS,
NOEL CLYCQ AND KARIM ETTOURKI (EDS)

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Moroccan migration in Belgium

CeMIS Migration and Intercultural Studies 1

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Edited by

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Introduction

Christiane Timmerman, Nadia Fadil,
Idesbald Goddeeris, Noel Clycq & Karim Ettourki

In 2014 Belgium celebrated 50 years of Moroccan and Turkish migration. The year commemorated the signature of bilateral agreements with Morocco and Turkey in 1964, which resulted into the migration of tens of thousands of workers to Belgium. The celebrations of 2014 were also, at once, the occasion to acknowledge the presence and the history of these migrants which have become an incumbent part of society. Yet, despite more than fifty years having passed now, Belgium's growing cultural and religious diversity is occasionally at the grips of social anxieties or moral panics. These various societal tensions are part and parcel of the increasing awareness of the changing demographic composition of the native population, and the fact that its multicultural composition is an irreversible fact. Scholars and scientists have played a key role in disseminating this idea, and in acknowledging the ways in which migration flows deeply impact upon the receiving countries.

This book is an attempt to offer an overview of the various studies that have appeared in this regard, and which have played a central role in offering insights, vocabularies and imaginaries in order to account for, and acknowledge, this multicultural society. It focusses on Moroccan migration in Belgium, with an explicit attention to the scientific knowledge its history produced. It deals with Belgium as a whole, although it once in a while will draw comparison with other countries (e.g. the Netherlands) and even with other migration groups (e.g. people of Turkish descent). Most of its authors are based at Flemish universities,

which epitomizes the greater deal of attention that these universities pay to migration.

We deliberately opt for a focus on Moroccan migration, because of the important role this group played in triggering various societal debates on multiculturalism and migration. The Moroccan immigration was, together with the Turkish one, the first large wave of non-European immigration in the 20th century in Belgium. By now, the number of Belgians with Moroccan roots is estimated at 300,000, thus making this group one of the largest non-EU minorities. Furthermore, various members of this minority group have played a central role in the recent years in modeling and shaping the debate on multiculturalism. Many of the major societal debates on immigration and multiculturalism from the eighties onwards have often taken the Belgian-Moroccan community as main target in these discussions, to the extent that some right wing analysts even speak of the existence of a 'Moroccan problem'.¹

Furthermore, in the recent attacks in Paris and Brussels in 2015 and 2016, several perpetrators were of Moroccan origin and came from Belgium, thus feeding into the already existing stigmatization of the community.

The large societal attention (positive and negative) accorded to this group has coincided with the creation of public policies geared towards a better inclusion of immigrants (and more specifically of Moroccan background). A major boost came with the establishment of the Royal Commission for Migrant Policy (*Koninklijk Commissariaat voor het Migrantenbeleid*) in 1989 that strengthened the policies in place aiming for the integration of the immigrant communities (*categoriaal beleid*). In Flanders, a specific policy for newcomers was developed (*inburgeringsbeleid*) focusing mainly on Dutch language acquisition and introduction into the labor market. By the beginning of the 21st century in the context of major terrorist attacks associated with Islam in the West, public opinion became more skeptical, if not hostile, towards Muslim immigrants, including the Moroccan community. From then on, the specific integration policies were abandoned and instead a policy of general social inclusion was installed, aiming to improve the situation and participation of all vulnerable groups in society, including Moroccan immigrants. Transnational contacts on an institutional as well as individual level remained important over the years. In general, Moroccans living in Belgium stayed well connected to their regions of origin and started, during the last decades, to develop a diaspora policy from below. From the side of Morocco a lot of energy was invested in an institutional diaspora policy to make their citizens abroad staying well connected to their

country of origin. During the last years a turn in the Moroccan diaspora policy can be witnessed, focusing much more on the relevance for the Moroccans living abroad to become integrated in the countries of destination, including Belgium.

The growing visibility of this minority group has, consequently, generated a large amount of scientific studies. The Belgian Moroccans – as the group will regularly be called in this book for practical reasons (it reads more fluently than the correct name ‘people of Moroccan descent’) – represent one of the most studied groups in the Belgian context, and several aspects of their presence have been subjected to a scholarly scrutiny. Yet this book is not only a comprehensive overview of the scholarly *status quaestionis* on Moroccan migration. By taking this minority group as a reference point, it also seeks to offer an overview of the most representative trends in the rapidly developing scholarly field of migration studies in Flanders.

Despite the presence of some pioneering researches already in the seventies, migration studies remain a rather young and minor sub-disciplinary field in Belgium, restricted to sociology and anthropology. In the recent years, however, one can witness a growing interest from various disciplines (history, religious and cultural studies, economy, political sciences, demography, media and urban studies), thus turning it into one of the fastest growing research domains. By attending to the particularity of the scientific production on Moroccan minorities in Belgium, this volume is simultaneously an attempt to identify some current trends in this newly emerging field and to bring more established and new scholars in conversation. The book is divided into five parts.

The first part of this volume needs to be read as three general thematic introductions into the rich and diverse body of scholarship that was generated by 50 years of Moroccan migration in Belgium. Rather than providing a general and comprehensive introduction, which covers the various topics within one text, we have chosen to develop these themes into separate chapters: a first one which goes more deeply into migration as a phenomenon and sketches its diachronic resonance in different academic disciplines; a second one that turns to the attention that has been given to Islam in the study of Moroccan migration in Belgian scholarship; and a last contribution that looks at how history has related to the phenomenon of (Moroccan) migration. These three texts must be read as interdependent and are illustrative of the richness and vastness of the academic knowledge produced so far.

Christiane Timmerman’s contribution outlines migration history in Belgium and describes this dynamic process by using a theoretic model of Hein de Haas.

She shows how the different stages in this migration process have influenced the scientific research over time. While at first these studies were descriptive in nature, research nowadays is no longer simply descriptive but is built upon analysis and theory.

Nadia Fadil's contribution offers an account of how Islam was considered by Belgian scholars interested in (Moroccan) migration. She notes that while the focus on Islam will emerge quite late compared to the other themes raised in this volume, recent years have witnessed an exponential increase in researches focused on this theme – often as a result of the growing public anxieties around the visibility of Islam in the public sphere. Whereas the early studies were marked by an interest in the institutional aspects of the presence of Islam in Belgium, recent works have paid more attention to the individual and collective dimensions of their religious experiences. An important element, Fadil notes in her review, is the relative neglect of the component of ethnicity as well as the role that the “home countries” and other, non-European, transnational agents continue to play in the organization of the religious lives of Belgian Moroccans.

Karim Ettourki, Sam De Schutter and Idesbald Goddeeris, finally, offer an overview of historical research into Moroccan immigration in Belgium. They argue that the research is still in its infancy. There are some valuable studies, both written in academia and by some people within the Moroccan community, on a variety of topics, from local cases to Berber activism. Yet, an abundance of primary sources remain untouched so far. The three scholars discuss some of them, such as institution archives (e.g. the alien policy), media (both Belgian and migrant periodicals), private papers (e.g. the ones of Johan Leman), and interviews.

The second part offers an account of some historical facets and contemporary developments of this migration that was initiated as a program of temporary labor migrants (*gastarbeiders*). Albert Martens – the emeritus Leuven social scientist who has been pioneering Belgian migration studies since the seventies – discusses Moroccan migration to Belgium from a labor perspective and by means of statistical data, most importantly labor cards (i.e. work permits). He paints a different picture than the classical one that highlights the watersheds of the bilateral agreement of 1964 and the migration halt of 1974. Martens elaborates, for instance, on the so-called touristic migration between 1963 and 1967, which he calls ‘a fitting euphemism for the pure and simple acceptance of immigrants non-conforming to the law and accordingly illegal’. A foreign worker could come to Belgium with a tourist passport and could easily regularize his situation if he was able to find employment. In the second part of his chapter,

Martens denounces the continuing ethno-stratification of the labor market. In spite of the fact that it is difficult to conduct quantitative research on the occurrence of discrimination in the social field because many second generation immigrants have become Belgians, the work situation (selection, remuneration, unemployment, etc.) of 'Belgians of allochthonous origin' is clearly less favorable than that of 'autochthonous' Belgians.

The Ghent scholars Emilien Dupont, Bart Van de Putte, John Lievens and Frank Caestecker examine the evolutions in intra-ethnic partner choices in Belgium among residents of Moroccan origin. This topic has recently been considered particularly relevant for migration policies and dominates public debates because marrying a spouse from the country of origin could potentially hinder or even fully inhibit the integration process (although there are different views, suggesting that choosing a partner from the country of origin could also be seen as a way of emancipating oneself). The team compared the choice of partner migration to the choice of a Moroccan partner in Belgium by means of 24,723 first partner choices among residents of Moroccan origin between 2001 and 2008. In general, they compute that partner migration still prevails (54,5% for women and 51,3% for men), but they simultaneously observe a shift towards a more local partner choice. They also find differentiation between age, generation, and gender. While Moroccan women from the second generation increasingly opt for a local partner, Moroccan men who were born in Belgium, are keen on marrying a wife migrated from Morocco. Men from the first generation, in contrast, are more likely to choose a local partner compared to the second generation.

Drawing on the 2001 Belgian census data as well as on birth registrations from 2002 to 2005, the Antwerp social scientists Jonas Wood, Layla Van den Berg and Karel Neels study the household organization among 176,048 co-residential couples of Belgian, Moroccan, or mixed Belgian-Moroccan origin. Since the seventies, women are increasingly active on the labor market, inter alia due to higher female educational attainment, rising earning potential, and the expansion of subsidized childcare. However, this evolution is not entirely visible among Moroccan migrants in Belgium. First, couples in which one or both partners are of Moroccan origin exhibit much lower shares of dual earner households, and much higher shares of male breadwinner models, female breadwinner models, or households without an earner. This may be related to less favorable labor market prospects for Moroccan men. Second, there is a difference in entering into parenthood. Whereas among Belgian couples the dual earner model yields

the highest first birth odds, the male breadwinner model plays this part for Moroccan couples. The outsourcing of childrearing and household tasks may be too costly for these groups due to lower wage potentials, although this may also be caused by less favorable attitudes toward female labor force participation.

The third part of this book looks into the policy dimensions of this history. It investigates the various facets of the policies of integration, and also attends to the ways in which this minority group is not simply a recipient or passive actor in this process but in many cases actively negotiated, contested or engaged with the various demands from stakeholders and society at large. A particular attention is thus paid to the role of minority networks, and the ways in which these fulfill a central role in the integration and participation process of this minority group.

In the early years of immigration policy makers were not focused on designing and implementing a comprehensive reception and integration policy aimed at the settlement of migrant workers. These laborers were seen as temporary guests who sooner or later would return to their country of origin. It is only when reality refuted this assumption that in the eighties the first seeds of a more elaborate integration policy became implemented. Noel Clycq and François Levrau tackle the transformations that occurred in the development of integration policies from the eighties until present day. They focus on the shift from a Belgian migration and asylum policy to a Flemish (civic) integration policy, and simultaneously from a shift from a more group oriented to an individual oriented definition of integration. In many of these policies Moroccans were often – together with Turks – the ‘ultimate other’ or individuals that needed to be integrated, even though policies seldom explicitly targeted ‘Moroccan’ migrants as such. In a final section they discuss these processes in light of a more general discussion of the rationale underlying integration policies.

It has been common practice to conceive of people from Moroccan descent as an ethnic community that finds its origins in a common national heritage. Concomitantly, immigrant associations have in general been considered as the most fundamental expressions of this collective national identity. Nicolas Van Puymbroeck asks whether Belgian Moroccans indeed organize unlike other immigrant groups, thus giving a different form to their cultural heritage and shared origins. He draws on a historical study of immigrant organizations of two most similar groups (Moroccan and Turkish) in two most similar cities (Ghent and Antwerp) and points to the importance of the city context, as assumed by political opportunity structure explanations, but also highlights idiosyncratic national traditions, as highlighted in resource models.

A few decades ago, integration of the expatriate Moroccans in the receiving countries was totally rejected by the Moroccan state as it was deemed to undermine their homeland affiliation. Remarkably, in the current Moroccan diaspora policies, we find that policy discourses are increasingly focusing on the improvement of their expatriate citizens' integration in the receiving societies. This shift is remarkable, as it implies a total rupture with previous Moroccan diaspora policy discourses. Rilke Mahieu, Nadia Fadil and Christiane Timmerman put focus on diaspora policies of the Moroccan state regarding the *Marocains Résident à l'étranger* (Moroccans Living Abroad), the increasingly diverse group of Moroccan emigrants and their descendants currently estimated at 5 million. They analyze how integration and its relationship with transnationalism are conceptualized in these current diaspora policy narratives.

The sociological reality of the Moroccan community in Belgium is, however, not only one of history, or policy, but elements of culture and identity have also been central in this. Whereas early research has tended to pay attention to the impact of the socio-economic dimensions on settlement and incorporation processes, it is mostly from the nineties onwards that researchers increasingly pay attention to the role of cultural markers such as language or food in ethnic identity construction processes. Building upon this academic legacy the papers selected in this **fourth part** focus on the ways in which Moroccan ethnicity emerges as an important (or sometimes rather the opposite is the case) variable in and across various social domains.

Norah Karrouche starts with a broader scope on a topic that is almost absent in the research on the Moroccan identity in Belgium. Up until the late nineties, Berber culture and languages in the Maghreb countries were neglected and at times even severely and violently oppressed. Since the late eighties, Berber cultural associations in France, Germany and the Netherlands have been advocating the rights of Berbers in the Maghreb and its diaspora. These associations continue to strive for the recognition and dissemination of knowledge on Berber languages, history and culture both in the Maghreb and among Moroccan and Algerian migrants and their descendants in the diaspora. Karrouche describes and analyzes the history of Berber associations and their members in Belgium, and in Antwerp and Brussels in particular. She explains why and how these associations in Flanders/Belgium developed late in comparison to other Western European countries and addresses their public lives and roles as secular actors in Flemish society. In so doing, she takes into account both local Belgian politics and transnational ties.

In the second chapter Anna Berbers, Leen d'Haenens and Joyce Koeman study how identity processes are intertwined with individual's social networks, in particular Belgian and Dutch Moroccans. It examines how personal networks and interactions of minorities with society at large shape their daily identity negotiations and constructions. The authors analyze the 'lived' experience of social networks, with an emphasis on related identification processes, as well as the structure and composition of networks. The findings show how minority individuals with a more dense and homogeneous network (in terms of ethnicity) and a smaller number of subgroups are more likely to self-identify ethnic-exclusively (e.g. Moroccan), whereas other types of networks may lead to ethnic-inclusive (e.g. Moroccan-Belgian) and generic identifications (e.g. as a woman).

A third chapter focuses on the use of language(s) and relates this to a continuing concern among policy makers and educators on the position of minority language usage at school and in the home environment. Over the recent years, this concern has become the object of growing scientific interest. Jürgen Jaspers' detailed ethnographic description of the language usage at school seeks to gain insight into the way in which students and teachers try to reconcile the effects of migration within an institution that is often not geared to them. On the basis of ethnographic research in two schools where youth with a Moroccan background play a significant role, Jaspers describes how teachers and pupils cope with the contradictions between top down language policy and on the ground linguistic diversity.

In a final chapter of this section Wim Peumans studies the issue of same-sex sexuality in Moroccan communities and doing so he provides a unique insight into contemporary ethnic, racial, sexual and gender dynamics in Belgian society. His research assesses the attitudes of Belgian Moroccans towards same-sex sexuality and situates these attitudes in broader moral frameworks. Through an ethnographic content analysis of online and print media, the author discusses a series of events that took place during his fieldwork. All events were heavily mediatized and caused public and political scrutiny as they revolved around same-sex sexuality, Islam and migration.

Finally, **the fifth and last part** of this book will focus on the religious dimension of this migration history. In difference to the previous sections, the attention is given to the centrality of Islam or other forms of divination. In his chapter Philip Hermans sketches the nature of divination practices by traditional Moroccan healers. Many Moroccans assume that misfortune as well as many illnesses can be caused by demons (*jinn*) and other supernatural powers. Because of this,

they often find themselves misunderstood by western therapists and seek help from traditional healers who use popular Islamic elements in their treatments. This article depicts healing practices and rituals as they are still performed in Morocco and tries to explain the healers' relative success as well as their patients' dependencies on them in terms of psychological and social processes as well as the power of symbols in the placebo effect.

In just a few decades Islam has become the second largest religion in most European countries, including Belgium. This impacts on how our contemporary multicultural and multi-religious society deals with birth, marriage, and with death and dying and the philosophical and religious outlook on the attitudes toward bio-ethical issues. This evolution constitutes an important challenge to European health care (including palliative care), as this is still deeply influenced by secular-Western and/or Christian approaches. Bert Broeckaert, Chaïma Ahaddour, Goedele Baeke and Stef Van den Branden analyze real world end of life views and attitudes of elderly Muslims in Flanders, Belgium. Drawing on semi-structured interviews with elderly Moroccan men and women, their paper shows that among the respondents euthanasia and assisted suicide are strongly rejected; non-treatment decisions and the refusal of treatment are only allowed in exceptional circumstances; pain control does not pose an ethical problem. God, for their respondents, controls illness and health, life and death and many consider it unacceptable to interfere in this divine plan. Patience is considered a central virtue. Another important observation were the striking similarities between the guidelines in the international normative sources and the actual attitudes of the respondents. The attitudes of the generation of Belgian Muslims studied here are deeply influenced by a shared religious framework. Nevertheless, even in these very homogeneous groups a few dissident voices were found. Indeed, in palliative care it remains essential to start from the ethical and religious views of the unique individual in front of you; not from the views that are typically associated with the community he/she belongs to.

In the multicultural context of Brussels, Mieke Groeninck notes that there is a growing demand from the Muslim community for initiatives for the Islamic education of women. The main *leitmotiv* through the lessons is the subjective reform toward a more pious version of the self. In this process, a growing attention is paid to the instruction and transference of correct Islamic knowledge, *'ilm al-Islam*. In her paper, she describes how the question of correct knowledge (transference) is similarly the object of continuous debate. Drawing on two years (2013-2015) of participant observation in women-only and gender

separated courses on Islam in three mosques and three Islamic institutes in the region of Brussel she looks into the curriculum offered courses in Qur'anic exegesis (*tafseer*), Qur'anic recitation (*tajweed*), Islamic jurisprudence (*fiqh*), the biography of the prophet (*al-sirah*), Islamic dogma (*aqidah*), and Islamic ethics. The most important theme of the courses, she notes, is the idea of personal and communal reform. Therefore attention is paid to the perfection of one's *ibadat* (five pillars of Islam), as well as to one's ethical behavior towards others (*al-mu'amalat*), and one's spiritual relation with the ultimate Other. In her paper, she describes how, in the process of reforming and 'becoming pious', these three elements relate to each other during, but ideally also outside of the courses. Knowledge acquaintance, then, is not only aimed at disciplining the *self*, but also of the *self's being* in the world next to and in a mutual relation with similar and dissimilar, visible and invisible o/Others. Her paper thus describes how *politics of 'ilm* relate to the private, public and universal sphere of existence.

Iman Lechkar's chapter finally concludes this section through her study of Moroccan Belgians who were born as Sunni but converted into Shiism during their life. Her work thus offers a unique insight into an underexplored theme, and also shows the complexity and diversity of Islam within the Belgian-Moroccan community. Lechkar's contribution furthermore proposes a novel understanding of conversion by highlighting the affective and visceral dimensions that are often entailed in such life course changes. Through a detailed ethnographic description of the life story of one of her informants, she shows how this turn from Sunnism into Shi'ism was as much a matter of intellectual and existential interrogations as it was a consequence of being moved and touched by carriers and proponents of Shi'ism.

The different sections proposed in this book offer a multifaceted introspection into the dynamic nature of migration studies in Flanders in general, and Moroccan studies in particular. Of course, they are not comprehensive, and certain other aspects, such as psychological research on acculturation or social research on the religiosity of Moroccan migrants, certainly deserve to be further analyzed in the future. Still, because of the large degree of comprehensiveness of the individual contributions, this book can not only appeal to scientific peers working on this domain, but also to teachers, social workers, policy advisors and other interested people who work from close or afar with this minority group.

Note

1. Expressions such as ‘het marokkanenprobleem’, ‘kutmarokkanen’ and others are routinely used by (mostly conservative) commentators in Flanders and the Netherlands to suggest a high rate of criminality and social fraud among Belgian-Moroccans and to link this with their cultural background. This formulation even figured as the official designation of a parliamentary debate in 2012 in the Netherlands

Part I
Research and context

1. Social sciences and Moroccan migration in Belgium

Christiane Timmerman

Belgian migration in a nutshell

In the past, certainly between 1850 and 1950, Belgium has been a country of emigration. Initiatives such as the recent creation of the Red Star Line Museum in Antwerp make sure that this important fact is not forgotten. Migration dynamics in Belgium began to change in the second half of the 20th century, and immigration began to prevail. Labor migration gained force in the Mediterranean region. First, guest workers from Spain and Italy were recruited; however, especially following the major mining disaster in Marcinelle (1956), it became difficult to convince Southern Europeans to work in Belgium under dangerous conditions for relatively low wages. Belgium was forced to look elsewhere for its heavy industry workers. In the early '60s, Belgium entered into agreements with Morocco and Turkey, upon which the guest worker migration began in earnest. Unlike other European countries, Belgium has remarkably few immigrants from its former colonies, and as a result of the Cold War, the number of refugees from the communist world remains limited. In the early '70s, the Western world was facing the Oil Crisis. The oil producing countries refused to continue to sell their oil at cheap prices, and as a result, the economic tide in Western Europe resulted in many workers losing their jobs. The rapid increase in the number of unemployed and the bleak economic outlook also had an impact on migration. In 1974 Belgium, like many other European countries, put a stop to migration. This did not, however, prevent migration from happening after 1974. Migrants

no longer entered the country to be guest workers, but mainly with the goal of ‘family reunification.’ The regions of origin of immigrants became more diverse at that point; from the ‘80s onward, Belgium welcomed immigrants from around the world, and no longer exclusively low-skilled workers but also highly skilled workers, refugees, asylum seekers, students, and undocumented migrants. The immigrant profile became unprecedentedly diverse. Migration also no longer implied a permanent establishment; mobility began to characterize migration – both in terms of successive visits to the homeland as well as between different countries.

The research follows...

It is evident that this important social phenomenon, namely migration, also attracted the attention of the scientific community in Belgium. In the beginning, in the sixties and seventies, the focus remained rather reluctant and migration was approached as an ‘exotic’ phenomenon, but by now, migration has become a factor that all areas of social science research take into account.

Migration is a dynamic process, not a static phenomenon; it evolves over time. At a certain moment, the migration of a particular group begins. Sometimes this migration is a great success and catalyzes a significant migration chain, developing into a real migration *system*; but after a certain period this migration system will also probably die out. A number of researchers have tried to understand these processes via theories. Hein de Haas offers an interesting exercise in this respect (see Figure 1).

De Haas distinguishes five phases – from beginning to end – in a migration system. This model is relevant first of all for its clarification that no migration system can continue to exist indefinitely. Several factors on macro, meso and micro levels ensure that migration will increase under certain conditions, and will thereafter decrease. It is interesting to apply this model to the Belgian situation and also to consider how the existing research has responded to these different phases. We note that there is a clear link between migration phenomena, in this case in Belgium, and the genre of research that it generates. To get a more thorough view on the historical research on Moroccan migration in Belgium we refer to the contribution of Karim Ettourki, Sam De Schutter and Idesbald Goddeeris to this volume.

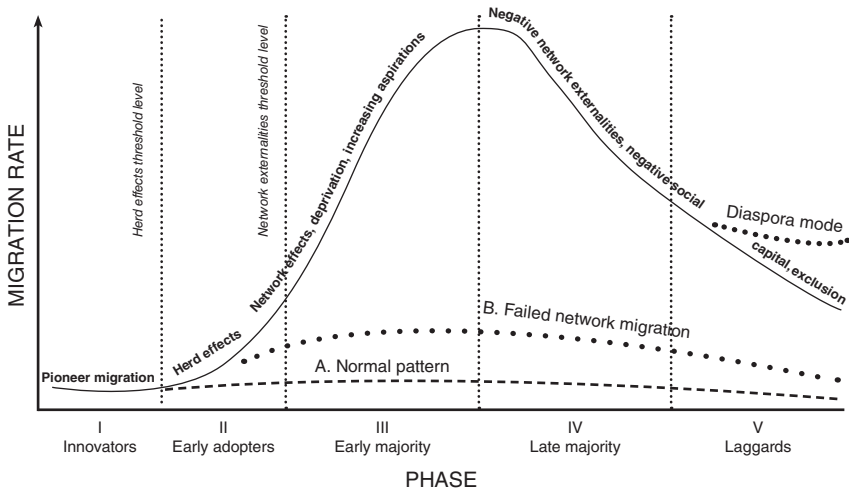


Figure 1: An ideal-typical trajectory of the rise and fall of a migration system (De Haas, 2010).

The first phase, namely that of the ‘**pioneer migration**’, ended in Belgium in the early ‘60s with the signing of bilateral agreements that included Morocco and Turkey. Until then, migration was mainly a matter of individual adventurers and/or entrepreneurial individuals who dared to take risks. For example, in 1960 only 461 Moroccan nationals were registered in Belgium (DG Statistic Belgium).

The period 1964-1974 can be described as the second stage, that of the ‘**novice chain migration**’, in which the migration was effectively set in motion. At the end of this period, in 1974, already 40 000 persons with Moroccan nationality were living in Belgium (DG Statistic Belgium).

However, only a minority of immigrants used official immigration procedures; spontaneous migration was still the most common. The phenomenon called “herd effect” was apparent during this phase. Many migrants follow in full trust those who have preceded them, anchoring their confidence on migrants who have already made the crossing – despite lacking information about the migrant situation in the destination country. It is also at this stage that we find the first Belgian studies dealing specifically with migration, more specifically with the so-called ‘guest workers’. The studies are primarily descriptive in nature since it is a completely new phenomenon: One first had to get an overview migration in Belgium. Another remarkable finding is that these studies were often carried out in close consultation with key figures from the immigrant community. The subjects of these initial studies are closely linked to the status of these migrants: namely, “labor” (Martens, 1969; Hanotiau, 1973). The first doctorate on this

subject was realized by Albert Martens in 1973: “25 years of disposable workers”. We also see some studies on health and welfare (Van Mol, 1974; 1976a) and even already on integration (Van Mol, 1976).

The third phase, namely that of **‘the flourishing chain migration’** (1974-1989), is the heyday of Moroccan immigration: The number of Moroccans in Belgium in 1974 was, as mentioned before, 40,000, which increased to 140,000 by 1989. The labor migration indeed stopped due to the oil crisis, but the immigration continued largely on the basis of family reunification. This allowed a feminization of the migrant population and the emergence of the so-called ‘second generation’ migrants, children born in Belgium of immigrant parents. Along with this chain migration, intense transnational networks developed, particularly between regions of origin and destination. Such networks involve a substantial exchange of information which can facilitate the migration process of prospective migrants. These transnational networks thus increase the potential for migration and reduce the costs thereof. The migration process itself thus creates an internal dynamic that perpetuates migration. We note that the migration aspirations in emigration regions of Morocco are increasing.

It was also in 1974 that Islam was officially recognized as one of Belgium’s religions. In response to the new migration phenomenon, the extreme right gained more wind in the sails, and alarming election results showing that a significant proportion of the population was struggling with the new reality of a more culturally diverse society resulted in the establishment of the Royal Commission for Migrant Policy, led by Paula D’Hondt. We note that in this period the policy regarding the reception of migrants became more professionalized. More specific, they began building policy specifically aimed at migrants as a group.

This new situation was also reflected in academic research. As the number of immigrants increased, so did the amount of research on this theme. Migrants are increasingly becoming part of society and are no longer perceived as the exotic outsiders that they once were. In the meantime, a substantial amount of knowledge about the migrant groups has been gathered, research that is no longer simply descriptive but is built upon analysis and theory. In this phase, research was often done in close consultation with the categorical integration policy (Martens & Moulaer, 1985; Royal Commission for Migrant Policy, 1989). The period where a handful of key individuals were able to oversee the entire migrant situation is over.

The research themes were closely linked to the new migration landscape. Research was conducted on the changing profile of migrants (Bastenier & Dassetto, 1981;



*Paula D'Hondt, the Royal Commissioner for Migrant Policy, visiting a school in Gent
(source: KADOC)*

Dassetto & Bastenier, 1984; Dumon, 1982; Pauwels & Deschamps, 1989; Poulain & Eggerickh, 1990); as well as on the 'second generation migrants', wherein education occupies an important place (Gailly & Leman, 1982; Van Looock, 1988). Scholars also kept an eye on what was changing in the health domain (Schillemans, 1989). In anthropological research, the regions of origin became an interesting research topic (Leman, Gailly, Hermans, 1980; Cammaert, 1985; Hermans, 1985). Inspired by research in countries with a longer tradition of immigration, namely the United States and the United Kingdom, Belgian scholarship also began to focus on processes of ethnic identification (Roosen, 1989).

1989 was a significant year worldwide because of the fall of the Iron Curtain. In the following years, there were a number of events which thoroughly reshaped the international context and which also had a strong impact on Belgian migration dynamics. Therefore, we propose that we entered the fourth phase in 1989, namely that of the '**late chain migration**'. First there was the fall of the Iron Curtain and the collapse of the Soviet Union, whereby the East-West relation had to be redefined. In Belgium the so-called 'Fast Belgian Law' came into force, through which foreigners could acquire Belgian nationality in a very short time.

Many foreigners also became Belgian through regularization, as was the case among the Moroccans living in Belgium¹. On September 11, 2001, there were the terrorist attacks of Al Qaeda on the Twin Towers in New York. This helped to reinforce the image of the Muslim as the ultimate 'Other' in the Western world, thus further increasing polarization.

In the Belgian context, we see that the profile of immigrants is becoming more diverse. The majority of immigrants in Belgium are still coming in on the basis of family reunification, usually through marriage migration, but the proportion of students, migrant workers and so-called "illegals" is increasing. Compared with the previous phases, more highly skilled individuals, more women, and citizens of a wider variety of countries belong to this group of newcomers. The second and subsequent generations of immigrants are also increasing, and most of them acquire Belgian nationality. The feminization of the migrant population is continuing, and the ageing of the migrant population must also be considered now. Migrants and their descendants are increasingly part of mainstream society; we find them also among entrepreneurs, artists, scientists, and politicians.

We also see that the transnational networks between regions of origin and destination are changing in part due to the social mobility of the migrant population. Together with a bottom-up diaspora policy aimed at the regions of origin that has been developing out of the migrant populations, we see a concomitant new migration dynamic forming since the economic crisis in the EU. A number of people with a migration background, particularly second and subsequent generations, aspire to return to their country of origin, of which a significant number do effectively return. These developments also have an impact on migration aspirations in the regions of origin. People are now better informed and are more selective in planning a migration project. Moreover, prospective migrants are often discouraged from immigrating by people in their community who have already established themselves in the region of destination.

Despite the increasing integration of people with a migration background, it appears there are still obstacles to smooth participation in society. The policy with respect to immigrants is being further professionalized at this stage but the categorical approach is being abandoned in favor of socially inclusive policies. The "Integration Policy" is being launched specifically for newcomers, and aims to allow the so-called third-country nationals to take part as quickly as possible in society.

In this phase, the phase of the late chain migration, we see that the research field of migration is undergoing a metamorphosis. It integrates itself more and

more in all areas of social science research and increasingly follows the laws that apply in these areas. The research is also better supported theoretically, more analytical in nature and more strongly anchored in the international research context. The collaboration with policy will be continued and even institutionalized, as for example through the establishment of the Policy Research Centres. Research continues to focus on major current issues (employment, education, policy) but new research niches are also emerging (Islam, media, transnationalism, mobility). Studies are emerging that examine the changing migration and integration contexts (Vranken, Timmerman, van der Heyden, 2001; Bousetta & Martiniello, 2003; Khader, Martiniello, Rea, Timmerman, 2006; Foblets, Maes, Vanheule, 2011; Timmerman, Lodewyckx, Vanderwaeren, Vanheule, 2011; Zemni, 2010; Verhaeghe, Van der Bracht, Van de Putte, 2012; Levrau, Piquera, Goddeeris, Timmerman, 2014; Timmerman, Martiniello, Rea, Wets, 2015).

Migration and integration policy meanwhile have themselves also become the subject of scientific research and observations (Blommaert, Verscheuren, 1992; Adam, 2010; Levrau, Loobuyck, 2013; Van Puymbroeck, 2014). Considerable research is also still produced on classical themes such as work (Cuyppers, 1992; Scheepers, Speller, Willems, 1991; Geets, 2010; Glorieux, Laurijssen, 2009; Okkerse, Termote, 2004; Vandezande, Fleischmann, Baysu, Swyngedouw, Phalet, 2008; Vertommen, Martens, Ouali, 2006; Corluy, Marx, Verbist, 2011). In the field of health, on the other hand, significantly less has been published (De Munck, Peeters, 1994; Ferrant, Hermans, 1991; Verrept, Timmerman, 2001).

Education, especially with respect to the second and subsequent generations, has received a lot of attention since the '90s. Many of these studies are comparative and integrated into the international research context. We also see a lot of attention to this topic from anthropology (Leman, 1991; Roosens, 1995; Timmerman, 1999; 2000; Timmerman, Vanderwaeren, Crul, 2003; Duquet, Glorieux, Laurijssen, Van Doorselaer, 2006; Groenez, Van den Brande, Nicaise, 2003; Hermans, 2006; Hirtt, Nicaise, De Zutter, 2007; Lacante, Almaci, Van Esbroeck, Lens, De Metsenaere, 2007; Braeye, Hermans, 2011; Timmerman, Clycq, Segaert, 2012). In recent years several studies have focused on the educational situation of ethnic minority students in Flemish education, and again most of this research focused on Moroccan and Turkish origin students. The findings show that the experiences and performance of these youngsters can differ dramatically from those of Flemish native students (Clycq, et al., 2014). Studies have shown that a sense of futility in the school but also among teaching

staff can have negative impact on this situation (Agirdag, et al, 2012) and that the root cause of the perceived difficulties are often situated by educators outside of the school environment, and in particular in the home environment (Clycq, et al., 2014). In more recent work, the issue of identity becomes paramount (Baysu, et al., 2011) and the lack of valuing diversity and in particular multilingualism is discussed (Timmerman, et al, 2016; Pulinx, et al., 2016). The context of the school often becomes a high cost context that is not 'identity safe' for these students and wherein stereotype threat effects can have an important negative effect on feelings of belonging and educational performance (Nouwen & Clycq, 2016).

Scholars have also looked at the political attitudes of migrants (Phalet, Swyngedouw, De Rycke, 2005; Jacobs, Swyngedouw, 2006; Fleischmann, Phalet, Swyngedouw, 2013) as well as their legal status (Foblets, 2000; Hebberecht, 2011; Vandenhole, De Clerck, Verhoeven, Timmerman, Mahieu, Ryngaert, Carton de Wiart, 2011; Foblets, Vanheule, 2012).

A theme that has gained particular popularity since the 90's is Islam in relation to migration (Dassetto, 1990; Platti, 1990; Leman, 1992; Leman, Renaerts, Van Den Bulck, 1992; Janssens, 1993; Clycq, 2011; Agirdag, Loobuyck, Van Houtte, 2012; Debeer, Loobuyck, Meier, 2010; Kanmaz, 2007; Timmerman & Vanderwaeren, 2008; Rondelez, Bracke, Fadil, 2013; H'madoun, 2013; Benyaich, 2013). The relevance of Islam in the Belgian research agenda will be discussed more in detail in the next chapter 'The study of Islam and Moroccan migration in Belgium' by Nadia Fadil. The anthropologically inspired research tradition of culture and ethnicity has also been advanced (Hermans, 1994; Roosens, 1994; Roosens, 1995; Timmerman, 1999; 2000; Phalet, De Rycke, Swyngedouw, 1999; Timmerman, Vranken, 2001; Fadil, 2002; Saaf, Sidi Hida, Aghbal, 2009; Clycq, 2009; Smets, 2013; Hesters, 2013).

What is new in this phase is that research pays attention to various forms of migration and different aspects of it, such as marriage migration, student mobility, feedback mechanisms (Wets, 1999; Deschamps, 2005; Timmerman, 2006; Descheemaeker, Heyse, Wets, 2009; Timmerman, Lodewyckx, Wets, 2009; Desmet, Leys, Ronsijn, 2011; Casier, Heyse, Clycq, Zemni, Timmerman, 2013; Van Mol, Timmerman, 2013; Timmerman, De Clerck, Hemmerechts, 2014; Van Mol et al, 2014); but also to transnationalism and diaspora (Wets, 2002; Perrin, Martiniello, 2011; Michielsen, Notteboom, Lodewyckx, 2012; De Bruyn, Develtere, 2008; Mahieu, 2014; 2015).

The question is when Belgium will land in the fifth and final phase, the stage of '**stagnation and decline**'. We note that there are fundamental changes in different

explanatory levels of the migration process. Firstly, we see that on the macro level, some rather dramatic changes are taking place which affect the dynamics of migration in Belgium, among other places. Since 2008, an economic crisis has raged throughout Europe, resulting in an increase of job scarcity, insecurity, inequality and polarization. Migration has been gaining force during these years. At the same time, we note that a number of other regions are doing relatively well: the BRIC countries, but also Turkey, one of the major 'source countries' for Belgian immigration. However, the recent political tensions and embeddedness within the turmoil of the Middle East may negatively affect Turkey's socio-economic position in the future. This turmoil feeds also significant flows of asylum seekers towards Europe, which has become one of the major challenges the EU is facing now. The changing face of Europe compared to the rest of the world thus has repercussions on the migration aspirations of potential migrants. They may opt for destinations other than Europe, or just choose to stay at home. As was already discussed, migration aspirations are shaped by many factors that have to do with the regions of origin and destination and the networks developing between them. It is not only the economic situation of these regions, but also the overall situation in the fields of democracy and human rights which is taken into consideration when people make migration plans. There are also a number of internal migration dynamics that can have an inhibiting effect: the socio-economic mobility, integration and geographical distribution of the established migrant populations in Belgium could weaken transnational ties with the regions of origin. These factors along with the growing negative attitude and stricter policies on migrants, as well as the unfavorable economic climate could lead to established migrants dissuading prospective migrants from immigrating to Europe.

Research for the future

For future research on migration, there are thus countless interesting challenges. More than ever, scholars will have to examine these themes from an international perspective. Research on changing migration dynamics, including the so called refugee crisis, the increasing importance of transnational networks and spaces, new forms of social cohesion in increasingly diverse cities, new ideological and religious movements that see the light in the wake of migration, are just some

of the many research topics that deserve examination. The field will certainly continue to develop...

Note

- 1 For more information on the demographic dynamics of the Belgian Moroccans, see Quentin Schoonvaere (2014). *België-Marokko: 50 jaar migratie. Demografische studie over de populatie van Marokkaanse herkomst in België*, Federaal Migratiecentrum.

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