NAVIGATING BETWEEN STRUCTURE AND AGENCY: MOROCCAN INDEPENDENT YOUTH MIGRATION

by

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Acronyms

AU	African Union
CEAS	Common European Asylum System
CofP	Community of Practice
CRC	Convention of the Rights of the Child
EMN	European Migration Network
EU	European Union
FRONTEX	European Agency for the Management of Operational Cooperation at the External Borders of the Member States of the European Union (derivation from the French abbreviation Frontières Extérieures)
ILO	International Labour Organisation
SIVE	Sistema Integrado de Vigilancia Exterior, Spanish maritime border control
Tba	translated by author from
	(F) – French
	(S) – Spanish
	(G) - German
THB	Trafficking in Human Beings
UAM	Unaccompanied minor
UN	United Nations
WSA	World Systems Analysis

Glossary

Terms in Moroccan Arabic or Standard Arabic

Amazigh (pl. *Imazighen*) – Berber

Andalus, al – former Moorish areas in Spain (Andalusia) and northern Morocco

'aql – sense of responsibility as in being an adult

Babouches – Moroccan slippers usually made of leather

Bayti – our house

Bled – from Arabic *bilad*, meaning village (in Moroccan Arabic) or country (in Standard Arabic), see French derivative *blédard*

Bled as-siba – land of dissident, where the central government was powerless

Bled al-makhzen – land of the government, where taxes were collected, and laws respected

Dabbar – 'make do', see *débrouillage*

DAESH – used by Muslims for ISIS, ISIL (Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant)

Darija – Moroccan Arabic

Darna – our house

Djellaba – long-fitting unisex robe with long sleeves, everyday wear in Morocco.

Douar – village, settlement

Fellahin (sing. *fellah*) – farmers

Fitna – chaos (due to sexual misbehaviour or seduction by women)

Fus'ha – Standard Arabic

el-Ghorba – exile, Europe

al-Halal – allowed by Islamic law

Hammam – public bath

al-Haram, l-hram – forbidden by Islamic law

Harraga (sing. *harig*) – irregular migrant

Hirak – movement (as in revolt)

Hogra – disdain (against the government)

Hrig, hrq – irregular migration

Hshuma – shame

'ird – honour

Kafala – in Morocco this refers to adoption within the family

Karkoubi – a mix of cheap psychotropic pills with alcohol, solvent or cannabis oil

Maghreb – Northwest Africa, i.e. Morocco, Algeria, Tunesia, can also include Mauretania and Libya. In *Darija*, it refers to Morocco only

Makhzen – Moroccan government, including the monarchy and the military, as well as the upper class connected to the government

Mashi mooshkil – no big deal, no problem

Medina – old city centre in North African towns, surrounded by walls

Msharmlin – person adapt in *Tsharmil*

Nif – honour

Rajul – man

Rujula – virility, manhood

Shabab (sing. *shabb*) – male youth

Shamal – north, refers to someone from northern Morocco

Shemkara – glue sniffer

Sharaf – honour

Tamazight – Berber language

Tsharmil – Moroccan underground youth culture

'urubi – yokel, see also *blédard*

Wld-l-zanqa – street boy

Wld-l-hram – child of sin, shame

Zamel – pejorative for homosexual man

al-Zanka, l-zanqa – street, neighbourhood

Terms in French

Bidonville – shanty town, slum

Blédard – (from Moroccan Arabic *bled*) pejorative term for someone from the countryside or who is not up to modern standards, 'yokel'

Débrouillage – referring to informal or illegal activity to make money as a survival strategy

Petite bonne – female child domestic worker

Terms in Spanish

Buscarse la vida – getting a life, in search for a better life

El riski, (also *risquer* in French)- irregular migration

Niño hombre – male working child

Pateras – wooden (later also motorized) boats

Terms used within World Systems Analysis

Core, Semi-Periphery, Periphery (upper case) – refers to global areas

core, semi-periphery, periphery (lower case) – refers to local areas or social class

Global South – developing countries

Global North – developed countries

Western world – developed countries influenced by capitalism

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دخول الحمام ماشي بحال خروجو

(dkhoul l'hammam machi bhal khroujou)

Entering the hammam is not like leaving it

(Moroccan proverb)

This Moroccan proverb signifies that one should reflect well before engaging in an undertaking because when it is accomplished, one will not be the same. This PhD project reflects my intellectual journey of the past 5 years, and indeed, it has shaped and influenced me to a point that things can never be the same again. An incredibly enriching experience, but also an often long and winding road, where I have met the most extraordinary people and where I have also painfully lost a few dear to my heart along the way. I am very grateful for the opportunity I was given to work on this project, and it would not have been possible without the help of the many people I was surrounded by and of whom I can unfortunately only name a few.

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dear ones. I was filled with sadness when I have seen you agonizing in the streets, struggling to survive, missing your families, and I was filled with joy because we have also laughed so much together as you somehow always keep your wonderful humour alive. It is thanks to you and your determination that I have been able to get through the highs and the lows of the past five years, wanting to share your stories. And it is to you that I dedicate this thesis.

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Abstract

Recent International Migration Scholarship is slowly moving away from the tendency to predominantly focus on adult migration. Awareness has widened that young migrants engage in migration for similar reasons as adult migrants, and one of these reasons can be economic. Over the past 2 decades, an increasing number of unaccompanied minors have migrated on dangerous routes to the Western world for reasons that can often not be clearly categorised under current legal and policy definitions. Whereas International Development Scholarship is well aware of children and adolescents migrating South-South for reasons other than war, persecution, and child trafficking, economic youth migration was rarely acknowledged with South-North migration. Moroccan children and adolescents, usually males between 14 and 16 years of age, but sometimes much younger, were among the first to have engaged in independent migration to Europe since the early 2000s. They first arrived in Spain (and some in Italy), and became quickly known for moving onward north, until they were sighted about a decade and a half later for the first time in Sweden. Regardless of which European country they migrated to, authorities were in general stupefied by the independent and mature manner in which they absconded from or avoided reception structures altogether and not seldom became associated with delinquencies.

Through the lens of a Theory of Practice combined with World Systems Analysis, supported by ethnographic fieldwork, the present research investigates the reasons why young Moroccans engage in independent youth migration, how they put their migration into practice and their reasons for onward migration within Europe. It looks at the structural constraints and opportunities the young migrants face in Morocco, in terms of a particular emigration culture that has been shaped historically, and present-day conditions in Morocco which influence the decision why some of their youth leave the country under the most dangerous conditions of contemporary migration. Moroccan children and adolescents migrate with a utopic migration goal imagining that they will better their lives and that of their families by migrating to Europe and become providers,

regardless their age. Yet, the young migrants are confronted with enabling and constraining structures also once they arrive in Europe, which are predominantly of legal and policy origin. Unaccompanied minors are defined as children and victims due to a particular social construction of childhood, and within the context of the Refugee Convention. Young Moroccans are in general unable and unwilling to fit this particular profile, but due to the fact that they are children, they are tolerated to stay in Europe until the age of 18. These structures are incorporated into their migration project while they organize themselves in groups, or Communities of Practice, that are crucial for their survival and information sharing. These groups are however not always beneficial. Psychological instability, disappointment and inability to understand the controversies of Western society, can lead to a desocialising spiral where they are increasingly marginalised. Moroccan independent youth migrants are navigating between structure and agency, shaping their migration from Morocco to Europe and within Europe, making them vulnerable in ways beyond legal and policy definitions they fall under as unaccompanied minors.

1 Introduction

In 2009, for the first time, a child-sized rubber boat carrying exclusively children arrived in Tarifa, the southern tip of Spain. All of them boys, they declared to be from a small northern Moroccan town and had paddled all night to cross the 12-kilometre stretch across the Mediterranean. The youngest were estimated to be only eight or nine years old, the oldest sixteen, simply carrying some dates, *Kinder Bueno* chocolate bars, water and a few spare clothes with them (De Cozár 2009). Spanish authorities were stupefied, as it was the first boat exclusively carrying children. They seemingly had organised the crossing themselves, had procured with a toy dinghy without any involvement of smugglers or traffickers. In the same year, Spanish statistics reported that about half of all unaccompanied minors, or UAM, arriving in either the Canary Islands or on Andalusian shores were from Morocco or, to a smaller extent, Algeria (FRONTEX 2010). What further surprised the Spanish authorities was their great mobility. Young Moroccan migrants showed themselves to be anything but immobile and in July 2005, *La Vanguardia*, a Catalan newspaper, reported that the *Generalitat* (national government of Catalonia, northern Spain) was 'flooded' by Moroccan UAM, 'who are attracted to Barcelona for *el Barça*'[1] (*La Vanguardia* 2005; also quoted in Empez Vidal 2007:1) They had thus travelled the distance of over 1,000 kilometres from southern to north-eastern Spain to a city the name of which was apparently only familiar through their favourite football team. Yet each one of them seemed to know exactly where to go and how to get there. A few years later, other countries (e.g., Belgium) started reporting on 'atypical UAM', especially Moroccans, roaming the streets of Brussels (Danckaers 2012; Loore 2010a; Loore 2010b). Increasingly, they were also sighted in other bigger European cities – in e.g. Germany, France, and Sweden – where they also always had a port of call and knew where to find peers.

Child migrants are not a new phenomenon in the history of human migration. In the past 150 years of European history alone, children have been known not only to try to escape war, conflict and persecution, but also to flee from abuse, neglect, poverty and

forced labour (Ayotte 2000: 13–14), and other circumstances which accounted for their migrating alone. The young Moroccans, nevertheless, appear to have been one of the first youth migrants to leave their countries with no apparent 'reason', from a country at peace. They left authorities perplexed on how to deal with them, as they did not correspond to the image of UAM, who are seen as victims and children in need of help. The young Moroccans, on the contrary, demonstrated resilience, absconded from reception centres or avoided authorities and adults altogether. Frequently, they gave indications of being orphans, became involved in petty crime, smoking and selling hashish, and roaming the streets. Authorities categorised them as street children with no families in their home country and their incredible rapidity moving from one country to the next was linked to vagabonding. With an increasing number of young Moroccans coming to Europe over the years, continuously indicating that they were without families, authorities came to question their background, and their reasons for coming to Europe.

Moroccan UAM have become visible as of the end of the 1990s in Spain and soon came to be known as extremely mobile, rapidly moving from one EU country to the next. They gradually continued to migrate further north, and Sweden estimated that as of 2012, up to 800 Moroccan UAM resided in the country, either as registered UAM or unregistered in the streets (fieldwork Sweden 2016).

1.1 The Research and its Context

This study reflects several years of research into a rather new phenomenon in international migration studies, i.e. that of UAM from Morocco, migrating to Europe for economic reasons. While most are male adolescents between 14 and 16 years of age, some are as young as 11 years old or even younger. They attempt to cross the Strait of Gibraltar in order to reach Europe and 'build a future (fieldwork Morocco 2016; see also Juntunen 2015), as most consider themselves 'already dead' (fieldwork Morocco 2016; see also e.g. Jiménez Álvarez 2012: 68) if they were to remain in Morocco, one of the newly thriving economies in the Maghreb, proudly hosting *Tanger Med*, the biggest commercial port of Africa in the northern city of Tangier. There exists a high degree of class segregation, with most of the population unable to partake in newly emerging lifestyles, where literacy rates are among the lowest in the region and with an urban youth unemployment close to 45% in 2018.

Research over the past decade on rural change in the non-Western world has demonstrated that an increasing number of children and adolescents decide to migrate alone in order to better their own and their families' lives (e.g. Orgocka 2010; Bastia 2005;

Hashim and Thorsen 2011; Heissler 2008; O'Connell Davidson 2011). In some societies of the Global South, youth migration is considered an indispensable part of a *rite of passage* in order to move from childhood into adulthood (e.g. Castle and Diarra 2003; Heissler 2008; de Lange 2007; Hashim and Thorsen 2011). Yet, while autonomous youth migration is rather common in South-South migration, it is rarely being acknowledged as *independent* migration when the young person arrives in the Global North, where young people who have not reached the age of majority and who migrate across international borders without a legally responsible adult are legally defined as *unaccompanied minors*, *unaccompanied children*, or *separated children*[2] (in this thesis unified under the abbreviation of UAM), according to Article 1 of the UN Convention of the Rights of the Child (CRC). The CRC is the most widely globally ratified human rights treaty, which emphasizes the importance of providing child protection in every part of the world (Hashim and Thorsen 2011: 5). UAM are seen to be in need of help due to war, persecution or conflict in their home countries, the reasons why they were forced to leave home.

Other youngsters migrating alone may be defined as victims of child trafficking (trafficking in human beings or THB), seen as having been abducted from their homes and forced into child labour, prostitution or other precarious situations. Without understating the gravity of the devastating situations such children and adolescents find themselves in, where the main emphasis is laid on their being victims of trafficking, and hence forced into migration or work, one must realise that this is contrary to the reality of many children's lives in the Global South, where their roles as producers are considered a 'necessity or normality of their contribution to family activities' (Hashim and Thorsen 2011: 5).

Moroccan children and adolescents were among the first independent youth migrants who became visible in the Global North, in particular Spain, as of the late 1990s/early 2000s. They arrived without a legally responsible adult and seemingly lacked legal or politically substantial reasons for being driven towards migration. In addition, many appeared to be children of the street, informing Spanish authorities that they were orphans. They became known for undertaking their journey to Spain in irregular, dangerous and autonomous ways, i.e. without the help of a smuggler, in *pateras* (fishing boats and later motorized boats), or hiding under trucks and buses, or on cargo ships crossing the Mediterranean. Soon they also became known for the incredible swiftness with which they moved, travelling further north within Europe beyond Spain, making increasing 'appearances' in all Western European countries.

Each time the young Moroccans arrived in a new country, the respective authorities were puzzled on how to deal with them, as they did not correspond to the image of the adult-dependent victim associated with the legal and political definition of UAM or THB. On the contrary, the young Moroccans showed much resilience, in addition to being wary of adults and reception structures provided to migrants. Capitalist consumerism, together with sending remittances to their families back home (that were gradually 'discovered' by the European social services), appeared to be their main interests. These interests were in general pursued through petty crime, through being involved in using and selling narcotics, absconding from reception centres, and roaming the streets. The young Moroccan migrants soon became seen as 'problems' rather than 'victims', not seldomly resulting in confining them to youth correction centres or locked institutions for as long as possible. Overstrained with these 'atypical' UAM, many EU countries tried to reach an agreement with Morocco to return them, mostly unsuccessfully, or, *in lieu* thereof, to wait for them to turn 18 in order to be able to deport them as adults.

1.2 Research Objectives

This research is concerned with the reasons for the ongoing autonomous, irregular migration of Moroccan male youth from marginalised Moroccan neighbourhoods to southern Europe, especially Spain, and the onward migration to northern Europe, in particular to Belgium and Sweden. It focuses on how the young migrants exercise agency to counter the legal and political structures that impact on their migration and mobility, despite the vulnerabilities they are being exposed to. It takes into account how their migration is historically shaped through colonial and post-colonial links with Europe and how the introduction of capitalism in Moroccan society has brought about a particular 'global youth culture' that is in fact inaccessible to many, who live their lives waiting for 'life to begin', hindered by an appalling youth unemployment rate, low wages and exploitative employment conditions.

The young migrants studied in this thesis are mostly male children and adolescents from shantytowns of urban or peri-urban settings that were created during the 20th century due to internal migration. The focus of this thesis is on them for several reasons. First, due to my personal language skills, my focus was on migration via Spain (and not Italy, which was also one of the first countries of arrival, yet mostly immigrants from rural areas of Morocco) and from there further to Belgium, where I was situated at the time of writing, and then Sweden where Swedish media reported extensively of them as 'being a problem'. While in Belgium there was still a mix of rural and urban Moroccan youth

migrants, who had arrived via Italy as well as Spain, most of the young Moroccans I met elsewhere were of deprived urban and peri-urban background. The aim of the thesis is therefore to give an understanding of this particular group of independent youth migrants, who acted autonomously without support from their families, in contrast with those who were sent by their families within a household decision – which is the case with some rural boys from southern parts of Morocco – and who immigrate to Italy. The young migrants the thesis is concerned with are situated within a changing capitalist world system that first favoured internal migration, to be followed by international migration which many deemed necessary due to the structural changes Morocco was and still is undergoing.

The perspectives presented in this work have been shaped by participant observation during fieldwork from 2014 to 2016 in Belgium, Sweden and Morocco, and by conversations with Moroccan youth migrants, social and street workers, and other adults who are in contact with this group. In addition, previous research – mostly of Spanish, Italian, and French origin, and of different disciplinary approaches – has been taken into account, as well as empirical studies by governmental and non-governmental organisations who have published on this particular type of migration.

The research questions this thesis is investigating are the following:

1. What are the reasons for Moroccan youth engaging in autonomous migration since the late 1990s/early 2000s?
2. How do they implement their migration, i.e. how do they organize themselves how is it distinct from adult migration?
3. What are the reasons for avoiding, or absconding from, the European social systems that are focussed on the protection of unaccompanied minors?
4. Why do they change countries and drift into marginalisation once they are in Europe?

1.3 Independent Youth Migration in the Setting of a Capitalist World System

While a large number of young Moroccans today wishes to leave the country for the lack of opportunities for its youth (see chapter 5), this thesis is concerned with a particular group of young independent migrants, male and under 18, from socioeconomically deprived neighbourhoods of expanding cities. The thesis argues that Moroccan male urban youth of the socioeconomically deprived strata of society see irregular migration as their only possibility to escape marginalisation that evolved as a result of inequalities in

the capitalist world system. These inequalities have become increasingly visible to Moroccan youth over the past decades due to mass media, social media and previous Moroccan emigrations. The goal of the young migrants is to ultimately move into social adulthood through migration to Europe, symbolic for their rite of passage of becoming 'men'. However, once in Europe, the legal and policy framework of UAM categorises them as children, where they are, once again, confined to *waithood*, a term coined by Honwana (2014) to define the time youth involuntarily spend in waiting between childhood and adulthood with no possibility to reach social adulthood for a lack of formal employment. Contrary to their goal of becoming 'men' and providers through international migration, for themselves as well as for their families back home, they 'roam' within Europe in search of a place where they will be able to meet this objective, which, in turn, pushes them into social marginality in Europe.

Relevant historical and social structures that are seen as the driving factors for Moroccan youth migration from Morocco will be analysed through the theoretical framework of World Systems Analysis (WSA). This framework will also be used to analyse the legal and policy settings they are confronted with once they are in Europe. To understand how the young migrants go through the process of migration, I will look at how tactics and agency are exercised within a Community of Practice (CofP), showing that this interaction between structure and agency adds to their vulnerability and keeps them in a marginalised position.

While the independent migration of Moroccan youth has to a limited extent been examined over the past two decades by predominantly Spanish scholars, with a focus on Morocco and Spain, little Anglophone academic literature has analysed the topic of independent youth migration in a North Africa/Maghreb-EU context, particularly absent beyond southern Europe. In north-western/northern Europe, the focus in regard to child/adolescent migration is in general concerned with the vulnerability of UAM that fall under the definition of refugee/asylum-seeking children or under the legal framework of trafficked children. The thesis is thus contributing to raising awareness on the independent migration of children and adolescents who are not seen as being 'forced' into migration, but who are considered 'voluntary migrants', demonstrating agency in their own right. Also, the thesis is innovative in that it is using the theoretical frameworks of WSA and CofP in order to link structure and agency, a link that is often missing in Migration Studies (cf. Bakewell 2010: 1690).

1.4 Terminology and Concepts

This thesis looks at the independent migration of Moroccan children and adolescents, known as *harraga* in Morocco, within an interdependent capitalist world system, through the lens of the World Systems Analysis (WSA) developed by Wallerstein (e.g. 2006). The terms to describe the world system will be dealt with in detail in the next chapter, but I will briefly introduce them here. The 'Core' refers to the affluent, industrialised world, which I also refer to as 'the Western world' or the 'Global North', whereas the 'Periphery' refers to the developing world, also named the 'non-Western world' or 'Global South' in this thesis. I will also use 'North-South' or 'South-South' for migration movements between these parts of the world. Particular for WSA is the term 'Semi-Periphery' which refers to the areas in-between Core and Periphery, e.g. countries that have economically developed to be no longer in the global Periphery but are not yet in the global Core. In addition to this, WSA sees Core, Periphery and Semi-Periphery as not being only country-specific, but rather as areas, regions or social systems. As such, there may be, for example, core areas in Periphery countries, meaning the affluent upper-class in a developing country. To distinguish between both, I will use an upper-case first letter for the areas referred to globally (Core), and a lower-case first letter for the areas referred to locally, within a country (core).

In order to understand the structural constraints and opportunities the young migrants experience, we need to further look at their *habitus*, which Pierre Bourdieu (1977) defines as ways of doing, thinking, seeing, acquired through the course of life, either individually or in groups (O'Reilly 2012a: 16). To counter restraining structures, the young migrants need to exercise *agency*, i.e., by being agentic, which they are able to implement within their habitus, according to how they have been socialised to see the world. They put agency into practice by organizing themselves in a *Community of Practice* (CofP), defined by a common goal, i.e., migration, and information-sharing regarding best practices to reach this goal. Their migration to Europe is seen as a rite of passage into social adulthood, where they spend time in liminality, a phase of 'neither here nor there' (Turner 1991: 95), passing from one social status (childhood) to the next (adulthood).

Upon arrival in Europe, young people under eighteen who are travelling alone without a legally responsible adult are considered *unaccompanied minors* (UAM). In this study, the term *independent, irregular, or autonomous youth migrant* and will be used interchangeably with the legal term UAM. I will also use the words *adolescent, teenager, youth, minor, young migrant* and to a more limited extent *child or boy,* in addition to the Maghrebi terms *shabab* (sing. *shabb*[3]*,* Arabic for male youth) and *harraga* (sing. *harig*[4]*,* Moroccan Arabic

for irregular migrant) with no specific legal or pejorative connotations ascribed to any of these terms.

The Maghrebi term *harraga* defines the migrant who emigrates under irregular circumstances, generally used for North African boys or young men, but may also be used for females and older people (Lydie 2010: 38). The term is used for both children and adults alike, distinguishing it from the term UAM which specifically refers to any migrant under 18 in the EU. The act of emigrating irregularly is referred to as *hrig*; some youth migrants refer to it as the *'riski'*, or in French as *'risquer'*, meaning that they are risking their lives with the hope of finding a better one. *Harraga* and *hrig* refer to the *practice* of irregular migration. It is a particular phase in the migrant's life (Arab and Sempere Souvannavong 2009: 192), the step from the country of origin to the destination country, e.g. from Morocco to Spain. Once the migrant has reached the destination country, he is no longer a *harraga,* but has reached another phase (ibid.), in the case of this thesis, he is usually considered a UAM.

Both *harraga* and *hrig* derive from the classical Arabic *hrq,* which means 'to burn'. The *hrig* designates transgression, as in *'harqt l-feu rouge'*, a French-Arabic mix meaning that one has 'burned', i.e. run, a red light (Pandolfo 2007: 333), but *hrig* also refers to incineration or rupture. In terms of clandestine migration it alludes to the metaphorical meaning of 'burning down' borders, or burning passports in order to 'burn' one's identity and taking on a new one (Muñoz Riera and Empez Vidal 2007; Vacchiano 2007b; Cabrera Medina 2005: 74). It also refers to 'burning steps'[5], meaning that the *harraga* 'wants it all and at once' (Arab and Sempere Souvannavong 2009: 192). Both terms, *harraga* and *hrig,* are increasingly associated with socioeconomic poverty and looked down upon, seen as the desperate recourse of people who have no other means besides putting their lives at risk in order to strive for a better one, which needs to be seen in context of the widening gap between the more and less affluent in Moroccan society.

The young Moroccans, many of whom have dropped out of school at an early age and have difficulty finding formal work, find themselves in *waithood*, where irregular migration is seen as the only means to escape and 'get a life'. *Waithood* (Honwana 2014: 30), an amalgamation of waiting' and 'adulthood', refers to a prolonged period of waiting between childhood and adulthood when young people are unable to move into social adulthood, as they are unable to access basic resources – e.g., find formal employment – to become independent adults.

Young *harraga* usually stay in the streets, waiting and trying for the right opportunity to emigrate in order to find a better life and move into social adulthood. The street, *al-*

zanka or *l-zanqa,* are a socialising space not only for young *harraga*, but in general for the *shabab* in urban Morocco. *L-zanqa* and the *hrig* are important stepping stones in a *shabab*'s life to virility, *rujula*. Some have adopted a rebellious look of a particular youth culture, *tsharmil,* to voice their rebellion and discontent with the waithood life they are being confined to. This discontent with the government is known under the name of *hogra* and is omnipresent among young Moroccans from all backgrounds, due to a lack of adequate jobs. It is however mostly the *shabab* from the peripheral neighbourhoods that will become *harraga*, taking the greatest risks and most dangerous routes, usually autonomously, i.e. without the help of a smuggler, and without parental involvement. When young Moroccans *harraga* arrive in Europe, they are usually categorised as unaccompanied minors. As they do not correspond to the legal definition of UAM, which focuses on the vulnerability of children in (forced) migration, they are seen as a homogenous group of street children that are 'difficult to help' (European Migration Network 2009: 14).

1.5 The Structure of the Thesis

While this research is predominantly concerned with the independent migration of Moroccan youth, i.e., a micro level of migration, it is important to also understand the macro and meso levels that shape this specific migration. As Castles and Miller (2009: 30) argued: 'Macro-, meso- and micro-structures are intertwined in the migratory process, and there are no clear dividing lines between them. No single cause is ever sufficient to explain why people leave their country and settle in another.' In order to link the different levels of this particular migration of Moroccan youth, the recurring structure and agency debate of the social sciences, including migration studies (Bakewell 2010: 1689; Van Hear 2010: 1532), need to be considered. The theoretical framework of structuration/practice theory as suggested by Karen O'Reilly (2012a) is helpful in doing that. O'Reilly's framework builds on structuration theory by Anthony Giddens, including its elaboration by Rob Stones, some practice theory by Pierre Bourdieu, supplemented with insights from Etienne Wenger and his Communities of Practice as well as the concept of agency as defined by Emirbayer and Mische, seconded by Ortner's 'agency of personal projects' and de Certeau's 'tactics'. This framework enables to link structure through the lens of the World Systems Analysis method (macro) with tactics of agency as described by Ornter and de Certeau (micro), and communities of practice and the respective migratory networks (meso) Moroccan youth migrants draw on.

There are four main concepts that this framework identifies and which I will draw on in this thesis:

- external structures (WSA, EU legal and policy frameworks)
- internal structures (habitus)
- practice (CofP and agency)
- outcomes (the results of this particular migration once the EU has been reached).

Chapter 2 looks in detail at the theoretical framework used, notably WSA, EU legal and policy frameworks, habitus, agency, and CofP.

Chapter 3 discusses the methodology, which attempts to establish a nexus between theory, ethics and practice of research. It draws on ethnographic fieldwork, in addition to desk research for the historical part of the thesis. I stay clear of a single literature chapter and instead combine my own findings, taking into account previously available qualitative and quantitative research on this particular type of youth migration.

Chapter 4 looks at the external structures within a capitalist world economy through the lens of WSA, examining historical aspects that, I argue, have ultimately led to independent Moroccan youth migration. I refer to historical relationships between Morocco and the EU (colonial and postcolonial relationships, and in particular the so-called guest worker programs), but also how the introduction of capitalism has engendered internal migration and feminisation of the local labour market, seen as ultimately creating an 'emigration culture' (Vacchiano 2007b: 6) facilitating their dream of migrating to an Eldorado.

Chapter 5 examines what O'Reilly refers to as the internal structures, which, in addition to the external structures of chapter 4, shape Moroccan independent youth migration. Internal structures are defined as the habitus of the young migrants, belonging to the Moroccan periphery, i.e., socioeconomically deprived urban and peri-urban neighbourhoods. Waithood, in combination with different types of violence, lead to anger and disdain towards the government (*hogra*), which, in addition to the social construction of shame (*hshuma*) within their social setting, plays a relevant role in the implementation of their migration project.

Chapter 6 analyses how they put their migration into practice through a CofP and particular networks, and as such, relates to the tactical agency exercised by the young migrants in the attempt to partake in a 'global youth culture' as shaped by capitalist consumerism, which they equate with achieving social adulthood. I will argue that they need to undergo a rite of passage with a phase of liminality, where they are, on the one

hand constrained by their habitus, yet on the other experiencing a change of it, as is usually the case in any type of migration (Koikkalainen 2013: 47).

Chapter 7 returns to the external structures their migration is shaped by, from the moment they arrive in the EU. Here, I will discuss the social constructions of childhood in Western and non-Western societies, child protection as well as migration policies and legal structures in both Morocco and the EU in regard to independent youth migrants and how these structures enable or constrain their migration.

Chapter 8 sets the stage for the outcome of this particular migration. It again looks at how they use tactical agency to counter the external structures that restrain them from reaching their migration goal, which, in combination with their internal structures, i.e. habitus, keeps them in a marginalised periphery, which ultimately leads to further vulnerability

Notes

[1] FC Barcelona, very renowned soccer team among Moroccan youth.

[2] *Separated children* are defined as having become separated from their legally responsible adult *during* the journey or *after arrival* in the destination country, whereas *unaccompanied minors* or *children* are alone from the beginning of the journey.

[3] I will only use the term *shabab*.

[4] I will only use the term *harraga* for both singular and plural to simplify for the reader.

[5] In English this is referred to as 'skipping steps'.

2 Theoretical Framework: Structure and Agency Put into Practice

The aim of this thesis is to explain the migration processes of independent Moroccan youth migrants by combining structural understandings that have shaped this migration as seen through the framework of World Systems Analysis (WSA), in addition to ethnographic research conducted in Morocco, Spain, Belgium and Sweden from 2014 to 2016. The field research looks at the ways the young migrants exercise agency in order to navigate through 'structural constraints and opportunities, limits and resources' (Benson and O'Reilly 2018: 261). It is thus informed by desk research using WSA and by on-the-ground empirical research using ethnographic methods. In order to weave both together, I use the meta-framework of practice theory for international migration, as suggested by O'Reilly (2012a), linking structure and agency through practice.

'Practice is the acting out of social life', writes O'Reilly, and reminding us that it is not to be confused with the verb 'to practise', i.e., to exercise or repeat something. Neither does it refer to the adjective 'practical' (2012a: 24), but rather it 'perceives social life as the outcome of the interaction of structures [of constraints and opportunity] and actions of individuals and groups who embody, shape and form these structures in the practice of everyday life' (O'Reilly 2012a: 8). It builds on existing migration theories taking into account the macro, meso and micro levels of the migratory process.

My research is concerned with the personal experience of autonomous Moroccan child and adolescent migrants of predominantly socioeconomically deprived background who have migrated in an irregular manner to Europe, mostly arriving in Spain, and who have then continued to migrate further north, in particular to Belgium and Sweden. Therefore, the main focus is on what is considered the *micro level* of international migration. However, in order to be able to understand what drives their migration, and why Moroccan youth began to migrate alone as of the end of the 1990s, developments outside of their control – e.g., historical processes, economic developments, immigration policies – are taken into account. These are the *macro levels* of international migration. The independent migration of Moroccan youth is very much shaped by their organisation in

groups, drawing on existing networks, enabling them to migrate and survive despite their young age. This is considered the *meso level* of international migration. The three levels were thus important to consider in order to be able to understand this recent phenomenon of independent migration of children and adolescents. However, most theories of migration focus on either the macro, i.e., how global and structural factors explain different patterns of population movement, or they focus on the micro, i.e., the individual reasons of migration (Faist 2010: 60). The level between these two levels, i.e., the meso level, has long been under-researched. In regard to the latter, Charles Tilly (cited in Faist 2010: 66) argued that it is 'not people who migrate but networks', meaning that the meso level, defining the role of social relations and ties, is crucial in the understanding of how macro and micro levels of international migration are linked (Faist 2010: 60). Drawing on O'Reilly's theory of practice for international migration, it is the meso level[1] that enables us to draw the link between structure and agency. Practice takes place within groups of people, involving both the explicit, such as rules and procedures, and the implicit, e.g. shared world views and underlying assumptions (Wenger 2008: 47). It is the focus on practice that enables us to analyse the interaction between agency – i.e., independent migration of Moroccan youth – and structures – i.e., world systems and specific immigration laws. This level is often missing in empirical research (O'Reilly 2012a: 24) and communities of practice, as defined by Etienne Wenger (2008; 2011), combined with active agency, are useful in providing this link.

Given the importance of these three distinct levels, this complex field of migration studies has been looked at from different angles and disciplines.[2]

In migration theory, children and adolescents are often seen as dependents of adults, and, in general, are not taken very much into account. A migration theory that looks somewhat closer at the role of children in migration is the New Economics of Labour (NELM) approach, which argues that migration decisions are made by families, where one member of the family is chosen to migrate and send remittances to the family back home, or to enable family reunification in the host country (i.e. '*anchor* children'). Different migration theories look at different aspects of migration, often from the perspective of the receiving country with a strong focus on immigration, integration (in the host country), legal protection, border control and curbing irregular migration. Theories of migration that look at connections between the sending and the host country are notably

- the aforementioned NELM;

- World Systems Analysis, which looks at structural consequences of the expansion of markets within a global political hierarchy and is not a migration theory per se; and
- Social Capital Theory, which looks at networks and relationships in origin and destination areas that are useful for migrants as it enables them to lower the costs and risks of movement and increase the expected net returns to migration.

While all theories are certainly useful in looking at specific levels and angles of migration, they are able to tell only part of a story. Not much has changed since Massey et al. (1999b: 17) argued:

> At present, there is no single theory widely accepted by social scientists to account for the emergence and perpetuation of international migration throughout the world, only a fragmented set of theories that have developed largely in isolation from one another, sometimes but not always segmented by disciplinary boundaries.

While there is a considerable number of substantive migration theories, they either shed light on (individual) micro perspectives of migration, assuming migrants to be free agents, or they focus on structural macro levels that lead to economic differences and out-migration (O'Reilly 2012: 6). Castles and Miller (2009: 30) added:

> Macro-, meso- and micro-structures are intertwined in the migratory process, and there are no clear dividing lines between them. No single cause is ever sufficient to explain why people leave their country and settle in another.

This crystallised already early on during fieldwork conducted from 2014 to 2016 in Morocco, Spain, Belgium and Sweden. I saw the young migrants I spoke with being very much constrained by the structures they were surrounded by on both sides of the Mediterranean. In Morocco they faced the inability of building a 'liveable life' due to a set of factors that will be explained later, but they were also confronted with an 'involuntary immobility' (Carling 2002: 7) due to the lack of having the necessary requisites to go abroad within restrictive immigration policies. If they would make it to the European side, they imagined structural opportunities as unaccompanied minors (UAM), where they would be allowed to stay due to their age while being able to achieve their goal of living a 'liveable life', shaped by neoliberal ideas of 'social and economic transformation' (Benson and O'Reilly 2018: 8). Yet, in reality they also faced structural constraints on the European side, as they needed to fit a specific legal profile of UAM, which, as will be explained, did not match their expectations when they migrated. Taking into account structural constraints as well as opportunities, they demonstrated an impressive amount of resilience, exercising agency precocious for their age, engaging in the most dangerous

forms of irregular migration to achieve their dream of coming to Europe. They survived by staying in groups in the streets of Morocco, waiting for the right moment to escape waithood, and, once in Europe, by relying on their peers in order to implement their migration goal of moving into social adulthood.

The three different levels, i.e. macro, meso and micro, thus needed to be linked in order to analyse this particular migration comprehensively. However, as writes Koikkalainen (2013: 80), while it is good to take into account the existence of three distinct levels, it does not 'sufficiently recognize the processual nature of migration phenomena'. In addition, as Bakewell (2010: 1692) points out, the different ontological and epistemological foundations of diverse migration theories illustrate a further problematic when combining them. Further, he argues, there is a tendency to emphasize on either objectivism (structure) or subjectivism (agency). Linking structure and agency has been a challenge in the social sciences for decades, and migration studies are no exception (Bakewell 2010: 1689; Van Hear 2010: 1532), which O'Reilly (2012a) aims to overcome with her practice theory for international migration. O'Reilly (2012a: 15) explains,

> Practice theories attempt to understand the interaction and interconnection of structure and agency, first by opposing the notion of a strict ontological dualism. […] It is an attempt to understand the historical processes of society without resorting to either objectivism or subjectivism […].

This will be explained in further detail under the section 'Practice theory for international migration'. O'Reilly suggests combining existing theories using practice theory as a meta-framework. A meta-framework does not replace, but rather builds on other migration theories and approaches, enabling to explain macro and micro processes of the particular type of migration this thesis is concerned with, while linking them through the meso level. By using this framework, the interactions of the three levels can be analysed in a sociologically informed manner while avoiding 'one-dimensional, static, or narrow explanations' (O'Reilly 2012: 8). In the present thesis, this means that WSA will be used as theoretical framework in order to explain how they shape 'habitus of individuals and groups, combined with other dispositions and cultural schemas' (O'Reilly 2012a: 26) through a practice story. This requires looking at the interaction of external and internal structures, practices and outcomes, and how this is done with O'Reilly's meta-framework will be explained further below. The different frameworks used in order to link the interactions are WSA as the first external structure, and the legal framework of UAM for the 'more malleable' external structure. As I build on these external structures, I will explain them first before looking at O'Reilly's meta-framework. While discussing

the meta-framework, I will also explain the internal structure I have focused on, i.e., habitus; and the practice, i.e. how Moroccan youth practised agency within their Community of Practice (CofP).

2.1 External Structures

2.1.1 Theoretical framework: World Systems Analysis[3]

WSA, developed by Immanuel Wallerstein, looks at transnational power relations governing the world as a single global capitalist system (Babones 2015: 5; O'Reilly 2012a: 33). Arguing from a neo-Marxist historical-structural perspective, it sees the spread of global capitalism as the cause of global inequalities, where those in power create conditions of conformity for those who are not in power (Wallerstein 1996: 18). In terms of migration, people are seen as being forced into migration 'because traditional economic structures have been undermined as a result of their incorporation into the global political-economic system' (Castles et al. 2014: 32).[4] Under these conditions, historical-structuralists see traditional livelihoods being uprooted and rural populations joining the urban proletariat to become part of a capitalist system. Distinct from Marxian approaches, however, it backdates its origins to the 1500s (e.g. Wallerstein 1974b: 391; cf. Babones 2015: 3) when Europe amassed wealth in its colonies in Latin America, Africa, and Asia, which led to the ultimate rise of capitalism in Europe (Bernstein 2000: 244). It accounted for material wealth polarisation (Wallerstein 1996: 123), creating uneven development between colonizing powers and colonized areas (Bernstein 2000: 244), which are often defined as *Western states* or the *West, Global North*, *developed/industrialised world* for former colonizing powers, and *Global South*, *developing world* for formerly colonized areas. Wallerstein uses the terms *Core* and *Periphery* respectively, which are dependent on one another in order to make capitalism function.

WSA also built on Latin American Dependency Theory, the first to divide nations into Core and Periphery (Rammelt and Boes 2013: 273) and to argue that developing nations are forced into dependency by capitalist countries which in turn 'develops underdevelopment' (Massey 1999a: 40) in the developing countries. In other words, '[i]n the global economy, Core countries are in a monopoly position and influence the terms of trade in their favour, while Periphery countries typically provide raw materials, commodities and cheap labour' (Rammelt and Boes 2013: 273). Wallerstein agrees that the world's central dynamic in a world system is the unequally distributed political power across a capitalist world maintaining poorer 'Periphery' countries dependent on rich 'Core' nations (Wallerstein 1974b; Hobden and Jones 2001: 206). He nevertheless

countered Dependency Theorists in that 'Third World countries are not "underdeveloped" nations but "peripheral capitalist" nations' (Wallerstein 1974a: 2), important for a capitalist system to function and therefore dependent on each other. While the Periphery is situated in the margins of global capitalism, both Core and Periphery are required for a global market: 'without Peripheries, no Cores: without both, no capitalist development' (Hopkins 1982: 13).

At approximately the same time (1971), Johan Galtung elaborated his 'Theory of Imperialism', where he observed that it is not merely a poor Periphery and a rich Core, arguing that 'two of the most glaring facts about this world: the tremendous inequality, **within and between nations**, in almost all aspects of human living conditions, including the power to decide over those living conditions; and the resistance of this inequality to change' (Galtung cited in Rammelt and Boes 2013: 269, my emphasis). Galtung further explains: 'The world consists of Cent[re][5] and Periphery nations; and each nation, in turn has its cent[re]s and periphery. Hence our concern is with the mechanism underlying this discrepancy, particularly between the cent[re] in the Cent[re], and the periphery in the Periphery...' (Galtung cited in Gunaratne 2001: 126). Galtung referred to the inequality of Core–Periphery as 'a major form of structural violence' (Gunaratne 2001: 126), and asserts that the periphery in the Periphery and the periphery in the Centre have a disharmony of interests, i.e., gaps in living conditions between the parties *increase*; while there is harmony between the core of the Core and the core in the Periphery, i.e., gaps in living conditions *decrease* (Rammelt and Boes 2013: 273, my emphasis).

Galtung thus came to the conclusion that despite poor regions in Core nations, '[…] the basic idea, absolutely fundamental for the whole theory... is that there is more disharmony in the Periphery nation than in the Cent[re] nation' (Galtung cited in Gunaratne 2001: 126), meaning that the gaps between rich and poor in the Periphery are tremendous, whereas in Core nations with welfare systems and charity, the national disharmony is reduced to some extent (Rammelt and Boes 2013: 273). Rammelt and Boes, in reference to Galtung's theory of imperialism, argue that economic growth has thus not eradicated poverty over the past decades, but rather has increased the widening gap between rich and poor.

Wallerstein, however, points out that the world system has an important third layer, the Semi-Periphery, an intermediate category that finds itself between Core and Periphery[6] (Wallerstein 2006: 28). Besides the highly developed Core that exploits the little developed Periphery for cheap labour, agricultural production and raw materials, the Semi-Periphery

functions as buffer zone, and helps maintain the political stability in the capitalist world system (Elwell 2006: 80; Wallerstein 1974a: 4). In Wallerstein's words:

> A system based on unequal reward must constantly worry about political rebellion of oppressed elements. […] The major political means by which such crises are averted is the creation of "middle" sectors, which tend to think of themselves as primarily better off than the lower sector rather than as worse off than the upper sector. This obvious mechanism, operative in all kinds of social structures, serves the same function in world systems. (Wallerstein 1974a: 4)

The situation of the Semi-Periphery is a difficult one, as it is concerned with advancing towards the Core while trying to avoid slipping back into the Periphery. The Semi-Periphery is known to put forward aggressive protectionist policies and is an 'eager recipient of relocation of erstwhile leading products' in order to achieve economic development. Competition, therefore, is greatest between Semi-Periphery nations (Wallerstein 2006: 29).

Wallerstein further argues that in a world system, it is not necessarily *countries* or *states*, but rather systems and economies within a spatial/temporal zone, cutting across 'many political and cultural units, one that represents an integrated zone of activity and institutions which obey certain systemic rules' (Wallerstein 2006: 17). Unequal economic relationships thus occur *within* as well as *between* nation-states. This means that growing inequalities within specific regions around the world gave rise to wealthy pockets in poorer countries,[7] whereas the wealthier countries increasingly created poor pockets.[8] While the focus is on a world system and not on particular countries or states, Wallerstein however argues that the sovereignty of the modern nation-state continues to be of great importance[9] (Strickwerda 2000: 341). In WSA, nation-states are seen as part of a broad economic, political and legal framework within the world system of capitalism. They are political units built on the principles of sovereignty, meaning that the nation-state' governments have the absolute and final authority in a society, which no outside power is entitled to overrule (Castles and Miller 2009: 3). In WSA, nation-states are seen as essential for capital accumulation and for the creation of the geographical unequal distribution of economic power. It was the expansion of capitalism that nurtured nationalism, the sovereignty of nations and the growth of the interstate (or international) system (Elwell 2006: 79). The nation-state's ultimate strength is the competitive ability within the world system (Wallerstein 2006: 55), defined by power – and lack of power – *between* individual nation-states (Elwell 2006: 80). It is established through a global division of labour based on occupation, race, sex, class and ethnicity, which are distinguished by their 'differential access to resources *within* nations' (ibid.).

The sovereignty of the nation-state has an important role to play in terms of immigration and border control. Zolberg (1989: 406) claims that it restricts the free movement of people, and 'serves to maintain global inequality'. For WSA, migration is one of the factors where the Core dominate the Periphery and Semi-Periphery (O'Reilly 2012a: 34) where the introduction of capitalist economic relations into peripheral, non-capitalist societies is seen as stimulus for internal as well as international migration (Massey et al. 1993: 444–5), based on Karl Marx' argument that societies undergo social change when going from one form of production to another,[10] i.e., when traditional livelihoods are uprooted and rural populations join the urban proletariat to become part of a capitalist system. This change is nevertheless not just merely economic, but extends into the social and political spheres, e.g., family units and states, which undergo consistent changes in order to maintain their dynamic (Hobden and Jones 2001: 207). These changes have the most radical impact in the Periphery and Semi-Periphery, i.e., what Galtung described as 'more disharmony'. WSA scholars thus became first interested in internal migration in regard to the introduction of capitalism into non-capitalist societies, and the movements that originated due to it. Then, in the 1960s and 1970s, they examined the insertion of rural-to-urban migrants in the informal urban economy. After the economic recessions of the mid-1970s, the interest shifted to a possible link between *international* migration and 'the structural consequence of the expansion of markets within a global political hierarchy' (Massey 1999a: 41), realising that ideological and material links to the core regions where the capital originates had an important impact in aspirations to international migration (ibid : 42).

For WSA, migration – alongside military and economic control – is just another element in the world domination of the Core (O'Reilly 2012a: 33). As O'Reilly writes, using the conceptual framework of WSA in research on international migration is useful in pointing out the 'historical relationship between colonialism and many contemporary flows, the role of the state in migration processes, and the unequal political and economic relationship between states' (ibid.: 34). She nevertheless points out that it overlooks the role of the individual in making decisions to migrate, as well as reducing capitalism mainly to economics (ibid.), overlooking 'social relations, property patterns, ideologies, political institutions' (Gonzalez and Fernandez cited in ibid.: 34). But by using WSA within a practice theory, it enables to incorporate structures and to show how an agent's power is 'enacted and embodied, perpetuated, strengthened, or challenged and transformed' by them (O'Reilly 2012a: 34).

2.1.2 Conventions and protocols for the protection of the child migrant

The more malleable external structures that are important in shaping migration are, according to O'Reilly, e.g., laws or policies. They are more malleable than the first category of external structures, as they can, to a certain extent, be 'detoured' or 'shaped' to one's needs. In Benson and O'Reilly's research on Lifestyle Migration, they explain, e.g. how 'elite migrants' use 'creative ways of bypassing and sidestepping requirements' (Benson and O'Reilly's 2018: 120) in terms of visa or immigration policies. Similar can be observed with independent Moroccan youth migrants, as will be explained in chapters 7 and 8. Here I will briefly lay out the legal framework relevant for independent youth migrants upon arrival in the EU.

As already mentioned in chapter 1, young people who have not reached majority age and who migrate across international borders without a legally responsible adult are defined as UAM according to Article 1 of the UN Convention of the Rights of the Child (CRC). A *child*, according to the CRC is 'every human being below the age of 18 years unless under the law applicable to the child, majority is attained earlier.'

Despite that children are known to have been migrating alone for centuries, the term UAM, however, became institutionalised only after World War II through its inclusion in the 1951 UN Convention relating to the Status of Refugees (Refugee Convention).[11] During and after World War II, people moved in masses, and many children had become orphans or were separated from their parents, were forcefully moved or crossed borders alone (Ayotte 2000: 13–14). For their protection, they were included separately in the Refugee Convention (UNHCR 1951) with the particular recommendation that governments

> take the necessary measures for…[t]he protection of refugees who are minors, in particular unaccompanied children and girls, with special reference to guardianship and adoption.'

Mostly an inner-European concern when the treaty was signed, this changed significantly during and after the Cold War. Numerous conflicts outside of Europe resulted in the displacement of children from developing countries to Western countries, and the migration of minors further intensified with the end of the Cold War in the early 1990s. While the Western world was rejoicing over the fall of Communism, it led to important political and economic instabilities in a vast number of developing countries. Armed conflicts with drastic growth in civilian casualties were on the rise, while the conditions for refugees fleeing to neighbouring countries in the developing world proved to be precarious. At the same time, capitalism emerged as the world economic model,

with significant decrease in travel costs facilitating the mobility of certain populations on one hand, but also excluding many developing countries from participation in the benefits on the other. It increased the perception of difference and the unviability of existing livelihoods for many poor people around the globe (Sen in Seabrook 2004: 102). And it furthered the independent migration of children and adolescents towards Western countries, where they were seeking refuge, education, and/or economic betterment (Ayotte 2000: 14–15). In addition, child trafficking (THB, see below) for purposes of the sex industry, illegal drugs trade, labour exploitation, begging, and pickpocketing became increasingly visible in Western countries (cf. Ayotte 2000: 14–15).

The Refugee Convention, under which UAMs fall, was thus ratified in the mind-set of post-WWII in order to protect persecuted people within Europe. It initially did not give thought to people arriving from developing countries. People may thus be protected once they have reached Europe and when they can demonstrate that they are in need of protection, thereby giving them the legal right to it. The lack of perspectives in the country of origin, economic and social deprivation, on the other hand, do not fall under legal and policy definitions that need to be met as a refugee, and, hence, are not acknowledged as valid reasons for seeking asylum.

Irrespective of legal and policy definitions, people are seeking possibilities of fleeing situations of extreme violence, poverty or human rights violations (Gallagher 2002: 28). Doing so legally is very limited, as is the possibility of entering the EU legally, which is a reason why migrants may resort to the help of a smuggler, and hence become irregular migrants. Smuggling happens with the migrant's consent, i.e., the smuggler is paid money to help cross international borders illegally,[12] which is considered *a crime against national and international border-related laws* (Europol 2016: 7). The 'contract' ends once the migrant has arrived at the agreed destination.

Considered a great danger with children and other vulnerable migrants is the risk of trafficking in human beings (THB),[13] which is, in contrast to smuggling, linked to the trafficker's use of 'threats, coercion, deception or fraud in order to exploit the victim' (Europol 2016: 7). THB may or may not be initiated with the migrant's consent; and smuggling may turn into THB at a later point, e.g., once the migrant is at the mercy of the facilitator. Trafficked people are defined as vulnerable in that they have no other alternative than to submit to the abuse inflicted upon them (Europol 2016: 5). Contrary to smuggling, THB is considered *a serious crime against the person*, i.e., 'an abuse of an individual's fundamental rights and dignity' (ibid.). Children are considered particularly

vulnerable and – contrary to adults who are trafficked – seen as unable to consent to trafficking under Art. 3(c) of the Palermo Protocol:

> any exploitation of a child [defined as under 18] shall be considered trafficking even if it does not involve 'the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception'.

In response to the increasingly visible number of child migrants, THB, and especially trafficking of children, has received growing attention over recent years. The EU sees law enforcement in this regard – in addition to the smuggling of migrants – as a priority for the EU member states (Europol 2016: 5).

The aforementioned Conventions and Protocols were ratified to entitle UAM and trafficked children to international protection and to bind countries to specific obligations in the treatment of migrating children, defining them 'as a category apart from adults' (Hashim and Thorsen 2011: 5). They are treated as a separate category because children are seen as innocent beings in need of adult guidance and protection, unable to act in their own best interest. It is believed that acting in their own interest is an ability that is not yet developed in a child (Gozdziak 2008: 911). Legally confined as entirely dependent on adults, passive and vulnerable, neither work nor migration can thus be intentionally chosen by the child. It is understood as being forced upon a defenceless and innocent young being and considered an abuse of adult authority (Oude Breuil 2008: 224).

What is especially striking in recent years is the unprecedented number of children and adolescents travelling alone, meaning that they are 'alone' in the sense of being without a parent or other legally responsible adult. They may, however travel with peers, and the importance of peers will be explained in chapter 6, where I will discuss how young Moroccans put their migration into practice. While minors are found on every continent travelling within countries, crossing country borders, and as of the last two decades, increasingly crossing continents also, their numbers have reached an all-time high in the EU in 2015 with the registration of approximately 95,000 UAM (Eurostat Press Office 2016). This number is a dramatic increase from the 12,000 asylum-seeking UAM in 1998, the year when UAM in the EU received public attention for the first time. That year, the Netherlands received the highest number of UAM with 3,500 applications (Ayotte 2000: 16), a number that has increased tenfold nearly two decades later in 2015, with Sweden receiving the highest number of UAM at 35,000 applications (field interview with Swedish immigration office 2016).

However, while the rise in UAM is certainly linked to an overall increase in migration as of 2014 due to 'the largest global displacement crisis since World War II' (HRW 2017),

it is nevertheless noteworthy that until 2014, UAM asylum applications remained steady at a little over 3% (European Asylum Support Office 2016: 109) in relation to the total asylum claims in the EU (Eurostat Press Office 2016), however increasing to 7% of the total asylum applications in the EU in 2015 (European Asylum Support Office 2016: 109). The increase of children travelling alone to the EU is thus not only important in numbers on its own, but also in comparison to the total percentage of asylum seekers. It indicates that not only more people are migrating but that they are increasingly younger and travelling without their parents or a legally responsible adult. Most of these UAM are boys (94% in the first quarter of 2017) and between 15 and 17 years of age (UNHCR, UNICEF, IOM 2017a), and more than half of all asylum-claiming UAM in 2015 were from Afghanistan (European Asylum Support Office 2016: 110), making every fourth Afghan asylum applicant a minor travelling alone (ibid.). Other UAM asylum applicants in very high numbers were from Syria, Eritrea, and Iraq (ibid.), but also from the Gambia, Somalia, and Morocco (Eurostat Press Office 2016).

In 2016, the Italian shores counted the largest share of child migrants: nine out of every ten minors were travelling without a parent (UNHCR, UNICEF, IOM 2017b). Italy is usually reached via the central Mediterranean route, and most UAM who are using this route originate from North, West, and East Africa. The central Mediterranean route is 'among the world's deadliest and most dangerous migrant routes' (UNICEF 2017), known to be controlled by smugglers and traffickers, where migrant children and women '…are routinely suffering sexual violence, exploitation, abuse and detention …' (ibid.). Yet, this is the route mostly used by children who are migrating alone. The use of the most dangerous route, as well as the increasing number of UAM on a worldwide scale points to a rising desperation for young people of developing countries, who seem to be escaping age-specific hardships. Young Moroccans are no exception in this matter.

The rest of the chapter will now look at the meta-framework elaborated by O'Reilly for international migration to explain Moroccan independent youth migration on the macro, meso and micro levels.

2.2 Practice Theory for International Migration

This study employs O'Reilly's practice theory for international migration, which builds on structuration theory by Anthony Giddens (e.g., 1984), which was further elaborated into 'strong structuration' by Rob Stones (2005), while also taking into consideration practice theory by Pierre Bourdieu (e.g. 1977). These are supplemented with

insights from Etienne Wenger's (2008) communities of practice, as well as the concept of agency as defined by Emirbayer and Mische (1998).

Structuration theory, as Giddens defines it, aims to overcome the structure/agency debate by focusing on its *duality* instead of *dualism* (Giddens 1984: 25). Giddens argues that structure and agency thus do not exist ontologically as two distinct entities as in dualism, but are interrelated and interdependent (O'Reilly 2012a: 15): 'structures are constituted through action and […] action is constituted structurally' (Giddens cited in O'Reilly 2012a: 15). O'Reilly explains that

> [t]his interdependency is linked via phenomenology (the way people understand and perceive their world), hermeneutics (shared understandings), and practice (daily, lived experiences and actions). Social structures are the outcomes of agency, and are perceived, understood and practised by agents, while agents embody or include social structures in the form of perceptions, roles, norms and other phenomenological and hermeneutic phenomena. […] Social processes take place through an ongoing cycle, or constant interaction, between external structures (what is out there [i.e. institutions, constraints, limitations, rules, norms]), internalised structures in agents (what is in here [i.e. in minds, bodies, perceptions and understandings]), practices (actions), and outcomes (with intended and unintended consequences). But this cycle of structuration should not be perceived as a sequence of discrete moments: both structures and agency are at all times involved in social process. (O'Reilly 2012a: 15)

Giddens tends to focus on the agent's power to change things, i.e., emphasizing that agents always have the choice to act otherwise, even in the most oppressive circumstances (Stones 2005: 29; O'Reilly 2012a: 17) for which he has been criticised (O'Reilly 2012a: 17), in addition to the abstractness of his concepts and the difficulty of applying them coherently (ibid.: 18; Stones 2005: 6–7). Giddens' work shares certain similarities with Bourdieu's practice theory, both opposing objectivism and subjectivism (O'Reilly 2012a: 16), 'draw[ing] attention to the ways in which the social world emerges out of an ongoing interrelationship between structures and the way they are interpreted and enacted' (ibid.: 17). O'Reilly (ibid.: 18; see also Stones 2005: 71). Bourdieu's practice theory incorporates his key concepts habitus, field, and capital, which will be explained further below. O'Reilly argues that Bourdieu's concepts may be easier to apply systematically than Giddens', but Bourdieu's work lacks a coherent theory of social change, which is problematic in migration research (O'Reilly 2012a: 17). She therefore also draws on Stones' (2005) structuration theory which integrates the work of both Giddens and Bourdieu.[14] Stones refers to 'the crucial part played by […] Giddens in the creation and development of structuration theory as a distinct analytical and conceptual resource' (Stones 2005: 1), but

proposes a 'stronger' version of Giddens' core elements (ibid.: 1–2) and complements it with Bourdieu's theory of practice, in particular his concept of habitus.

O'Reilly's framework, building on Stones' cycle of structuration, identifies 4 main concepts i.e., external structures, internal structures, practices, and outcomes (O'Reilly 2012a: 19).

2.2.1 External structures

External structures, explained above, are 'external' to the agent, the agent in this thesis being independent youth migrants of predominantly socioeconomically deprived urban neighbourhoods of large Moroccan cities. External structures can have a causal influence, constraining or enabling the actions of the agent and are explained by macro theoretical frameworks. They are further divided into 'upper structural layers' and 'proximate structural layers'. Global inequalities, colonial histories and post-colonial legacies fall under 'upper structural layers', whereas 'laws, rules, organisational arrangements, and local policies', as well as man-made physical or material objects (e.g. housing) and the natural environment are 'proximate structural layers' (O'Reilly 2012a: 20).

In this thesis, the external structures beyond the control of Moroccan youth migrants are the historical relationships between Morocco and the EU (especially guest worker programs, but also colonial and postcolonial relationships), and the effect of capitalism in Morocco. This will be analysed through the framework of World Systems Analysis (WSA) in chapter 4.

More proximate structures are the social constructions of childhood in Western and non-Western societies, child protection as well as migration policies and laws in both Morocco and the EU, with a specific focus on unaccompanied minors (UAM), and how these structures enable or constrain the migration of Moroccan children and adolescents. These external proximate structures will be addressed in chapter 7.

2.2.2 Internal structures

In addition to external structures that constrain or enable actors, structures are also internalised in form of habitus and conjuncturally-specific internal structures (O'Reilly 2012a: 21). While I will explain both in this section, given the number of frameworks already used in this thesis, I will limit the internal structures to habitus. Habitus is used here in Bourdieu's terms, a concept he has developed in many of his publications, which he describes as 'structured structures predisposed to function as structuring structures'

(Bourdieu 1977: 72). In other words, habitus translates into 'people's habits, conceptual frameworks, repeated practices, internalised social structures and norms; the result of experience, habit and socialisation' (O'Reilly 2012a: 21). Habitus thus refers to ways of doing, thinking, seeing, acquired through the course of life, either individually or in groups (ibid.: 16), and is shaped by skills, knowledge and personal resources. It is formed from childhood onward, and gives the actor 'implicit rules on how to behave in a specific situation in relation to their social position' without questioning it (Bueger and Gadinger 2014: 23). Habitus is closely linked to Bourdieu's other key concepts of field (the given set of circumstances in which the actor finds himself) and capital (resources). O'Reilly's practice theory focuses predominantly on habitus within the internal structures, but I will explain field and capital briefly, since, as Bourdieu emphasises, habitus cannot be understood correctly if it is not placed at least within these two concepts (Maton 2008: 61). In an interview with his colleague Wacquant (1989: 43), Bourdieu explains: 'And when habitus encounters a social world of which it is the product, it finds itself "as fish in water", it does not feel the weight of the water and takes the world about itself for granted.' The 'water' he refers to is the field, or social space, the actor finds himself in. When an actor finds himself in an unfamiliar field, as in the case of migration, his habitus might change significantly from his customary ways of interaction with his social world (O'Reilly 2012a: 22). Capital, according to Bourdieu, is divided into four categories: economic, social, cultural and symbolic. Economic capital refers to economic and monetary funds, social capital specifies influence or support that is obtained by being part of certain groups or networks, and cultural capital is obtained through education and the socialisation process, demonstrated through skills, education and knowledge (Bourdieu 1986: 242–3). These three forms of capital represent the fourth, which is symbolic capital, important in societal reproduction (Bourdieu 1989: 17). The 'right' types of symbolic capital define 'prestige and honour' in society (Jenkins cited in Koikkalainen 2013: 48) and define the 'symbolic power' (Bourdieu 1989: 21) of the individual or the group concerned. International migration entails a change of field, and with it the types of capital may be valued differently, having an effect on the symbolic power of the migrant (Koikkalainen 2013: 48). In Koikkalainen's words, 'Depending on how the value of one's economic, social and cultural capital changes during and after migration, the move abroad can thus signify either "loss" or "gain" for the individual (ibid.: 48). Returning to the main concept of habitus which is embedded in the concepts of capital and field, it thus embodies 'what is taken for granted and seen as possible' (ibid.: 82). In terms of migration, this means that habitus can incorporate an emigration culture, facilitating the idea of moving abroad, as

in the case of the young Moroccan *harraga*. It further relates to their deprived socioeconomic urban and peri-urban backgrounds, and the social construction of shame (*hshuma*).

Whereas habitus relates to *general* habits, conjuncturally-specific internal structures are defined as '*specific* reactions to and knowledge of specific features, conditions, external structures and constraints' (ibid., my emphasis; cf. Nyhagen 2014). Conjuncturally-specific knowledge is learned and incorporated over time (Stones 2005: 91) and enables an agent (e.g., a migrant) to know how to react in specific circumstances – e.g., a change in policy or other circumstances that need to be dealt with, within the agent's understanding of 'networks, roles, norms and power relations' (O'Reilly 2012a: 22). By adjusting habits and goals, new structures are created or recreated, in order to adapt to or change patterns and norms of the group the migrant is part of, his community of practice (CofP) (Benson and O'Reilly 2018: 4). CofP are 'sets of people they share their time with and who shape their understandings, hopes and dreams, and who offer constraints and opportunities, through norms, rules, and expectations' (ibid.: 262), explained in more detail below. The malleable habitus (ibid.) in conjuncturally specific internal structures is of particular importance in migration, when changing fields (i.e., crossing national borders) and 'in understanding the meso-level of interaction between structure and agency in the practice of daily life' (O'Reilly 2012a: 22).

The conjucturally specific internal structures independent Moroccan youth migrants are using within their CofP are explained by the tactics they use in order to get by. In de Certeau's analysis of trajectories, he distinguishes between 'tactics' and 'strategies' in agentic actions. Strategies, according to de Certeau, can be used as 'little acts of resistance' (O'Reilly 2012a: 23), used by those who are 'able to act within the dominant system' (de Certeau cited in Williams 2006: 4), where one has a clear perspective of an ultimate goal and expects long-term benefits from it (Honwana 2005: 32–3). Tactics, on the other hand, are 'an art of the weak' (de Certeau cited in Williams 2006: 4), used by the 'relative powerless' (Williams 2006: 4) who 'manipulate events in order to turn them into "opportunities" ' (Honwana 2005: 49). Honwana calls this 'tactical agency', where the person uses agency within his possibilities of coping under specific circumstances (ibid: 32–3). As laid out at the beginning of the section, in this thesis, I will not refer to them as conjuncturally-specific internal structures, but rather deal with CofP and agency under Practice. Independent Moroccan youth migrants use tactics within a CofP to navigate within the structures, as will be explained in chapter 6.

2.2.3 Practices

It is the focus on practice that makes possible the analysis of the interaction between agency (i.e., independent migration of Moroccan youth) and structures (i.e., world systems and specific immigration laws). This level is often missing in empirical research (O'Reilly 2012a: 24) and communities of practice, as defined by Etienne Wenger (2008), combined with active agency, and conjuncturally-specific external structures are useful in providing this link.

2.2.3.1 Active agency

Active agency is 'everyday engagement' or the 'daily actions of agents' out of either routine or reflexive activity (O'Reilly 2012a: 23). In the words of Emirbayer and Mische (1998: 963), active agency consists of

> a temporally embedded process of social engagement, informed by the past (in its habitual aspect), but also oriented towards the future (as a capacity to imagine alternative possibilities) and toward the present (as a capacity to contextualise past habits and future projects within the contingencies of the moment).

Active agency is thus shaped by habitus, understanding of the situation and making changes (within the possibilities of habitus), and implementation. While an agent's desires and dreams are culturally embedded and constrained by habitus and conjuncturally-specific internal structures, it does however not make an agent's actions predictable. Social life includes uncertainties and constraints to which an actor must respond, and imagined alternatives to prevailing circumstances, visualizing other possibilities, testing out an idea or modifying an undesirable situation are part of active agency (O'Reilly 2012a: 24). Bourdieu points out that agency happens within a particular field; therefore, it remains within ones' limits of what is estimated to be imaginable (ibid.). What these 'limits' are is particularly interesting in international migration where there is a change of field and where future projections are likely to be of importance.

In a theory of practice, active agency is seen as being shaped by the individual, but also within the group(s) the individual finds himself in, where he is 'subject to a diverse range of norms and expectations', framed by the specific identity he holds within a certain group (ibid.: .23). As in the case of the young Moroccan *harraga*, one may thus be seen as an irregular migrant, an unaccompanied minor, a migrating youth, but also a friend, a foe, a brother, a mother's child and so on. While they are all important in terms of the construction of active agency, in this thesis I will particularly focus on their active agency within a community of practice, crucial for putting their migration into practice.

2.2.3.2 Communities of Practice (CofP)

In a theory of practice, practice is about knowing how to deal with specific circumstances within networks of people or groups – involving both the explicit, such as rules and procedures – and finding solutions for problems arising therefrom, and the implicit, e.g., shared world views and underlying assumptions (Wenger 2008: 47). These groups or networks are coined by Wenger as a CofP (Wenger 2008), where each one is interested in the same topic, yet every single person brings in his own 'norms, habits, desires and conjuncturally-specific internal structures, power and constraints' (O'Reilly 2012a: 25) with him. CofPs are not simply groups or networks, but rather people with different roles, backgrounds, goals, identities, 'who share a concern or a passion for something they do and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly' (Wenger 2011). This does not necessarily mean that they have met personally (cf. Koikkalainen 2013: 182), it is rather that they contribute to a pool of knowledge beneficial to all in regard to the topic of interest. In the migration of Moroccan *harraga*, this means for example that each member contributes to facilitating the practice of migration through information-sharing about the times the police is patrolling in the port of *Tanger Med*, how to escape the guard dogs, how to avoid being detected by the scanner,[15] or where to find food and shelter. Communities of practice provide the context of how to exercise 'active agency' within constraining or enabling 'conjuncturally-specific external structures' (O'Reilly 2012a: 106).

Conjuncturally-specific external structures, relate to the agent's *specific* knowledge of particular contexts (Stones 2005: 10). It refers to the embodiment of the role and position he has within a community of practice, i.e., his obligations, routine practices, and privileges. It is what an agent does because of what is expected of him within a group (2012a: 25), shaped by habitus and conjuncturally-specific internal structures. As with these internal structures, I will also not analyse conjuncturally-specific external structures, as they are of minimal relevance to the research. I will focus instead on the impact of the CofP in combination with different networks, in particular peer networks. The latter are of particular importance in Moroccan independent youth migration and are explained in chapter 6.

'Practice' in this thesis relates to the active agency exercised by Moroccan youth in the attempt to achieve social adulthood through out-migration and onward-migration within Europe. This is manifested through agency, the CofP, and as just mentioned, specific migratory networks.

2.2.4 Outcomes

What agents do and the way they do it has an effect on all of the previously mentioned concepts: expectations, perceptions and habitus, which in turn affect how wider structures are reproduced or transformed (O'Reilly 2012a: 25). Changes may be deliberate or accidental and can lead to consolidation or innovation of future proceedings (ibid.). Outcomes thus create 'newly (re)shaped external and internal structures, dreams and desires' (ibid.: 106). This may include broad social changes, 'an identified set of surface appearances', change or continuity between intentions and outcomes, or specific events. In this thesis, outcomes will focus on how agency of Moroccan independent youth migrants is linked to further marginalisation and increased vulnerability and maintains the young migrants in a marginalised position in Europe. This will be addressed in chapter 8.

The framework of O'Reilly's practice theory thus enables us to link structure (through the lens of WSA) with tactics of agency (as described by de Certeau) and the CofP, including respective migratory networks Moroccan youth migrants draw on.

O'Reilly argues that the broad-brush studies (such as, e.g., WSA) are especially useful for analysing the external structures and wide historical or macro developments, and combined with '[a] theory of practice, it provides a coherent framework […] to combine existing work, identify gaps, and begin to tell practice stories about given explanada […].' In order to understand the various structuration processes, she argues that ethnographic research will enable us to fill the missing gaps, as will be explained in the following chapter.

Notes

[1] In line with O'Reilly, I distance myself from Castles et al.'s definition of meso structures in migration theory and networks, where the term 'meso' refers exclusively to intermediaries that can be both 'helpers and exploiters of migrants', e.g. lawyers, agents or smugglers, who 'mediate between migrants and political or economic institutions' (Castles and Miller 2009: 29–30).

[2] See, e.g. *Migration Theory: Talking across disciplines* (Brettell and Hollifield 2008), see also O'Reilly's *International migration and Social Theory* (2012a) where she gives an overview of different migration theories.

[3] Also known under World Systems Theory; Wallerstein however argues that it is not a 'theory' but rather a 'framework or perspective' (Babones 2015: 4), or in Wallerstein's words a 'knowledge movement' (Wallerstein cited in ibid.).

[4] This shows how WSA refers solely to structures and ignores the agency of migrants, e.g., leaving 'the frequent breakdown of migration polices' unexplained, such as unforeseen shifts from labour migration to permanent settlement (Castles and Miller 2009: 27).

[5] Or 'Core' in WSA terms.

[6] Galtung also pointed to a layer between Core and Periphery, which he named 'go-between nations' (Galtung cited in Wallerstein 1974a: 3). Wallerstein disapproves of this term as he believes that it does not underline enough their disadvantage in the world system nor does it do justice to the complexity of the role of what he calls semi-peripheral states without whom the world system would be unable to function (Wallerstein 1974a: 3).

[7] E.g., immense gaps between new elites and slum dwellers in developing countries.

[8] E.g., unemployment and cutbacks in welfare provisions in industrialised countries.

[9] Which distinguishes WSA from Globalisation Theories, of which WSA is sometimes seen as their precursor (Castles and Miller 2009: 51). Wallerstein further disapproves of Globalisation Theories because, as he argues, 'what is described as globalisation has been happening for 500 years' (Wallerstein 2000: 249).

[10] From feudalism to capitalism, from capitalism to socialism, and, ultimately, to communism (cf. Skeldon 2012: 154).

[11] Under Art. 1 A(2) of the Refugee Convention, a refugee is a person who, 'owing to well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country; or who, not having a nationality and being outside the country of his former habitual residence as a result of such events, is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to it.'

[12] E.g., this may be the actual transport or the issue of false documents or both.

[13] THB is defined under the Palermo Protocol under Art 3 (a) as 'the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation.'

[14] Stones also takes into account and builds on some critics of structuration theory, i.e. Margaret Archer, Nicos Mouzelis, John B. Thompson, William Sewell Jr., Ira J. Cohen, and Chris Shilling.

[15] Before being allowed on a cargo ship in *Tanger Med*, trucks need to move through a scanner in order to detect any potential human bodies hiding inside the truck.

3 Methodology

Aware that data collection would be a rather long process with a difficult-to-reach-group, and not knowing how much data I would be able to collect and where it would lead me, I started fieldwork immediately with a Grounded Theory approach, where data collection and analysis are done simultaneously, leading to new questions and ideas (Thornberg and Charmaz 2012: 44). Grounded Theory provides the tools that enable the researcher to manage qualitative data and to come to terms with theoretical analysis (ibid.: 64). However, as my research advanced, it became clearer that I was not so much looking for emerging concepts through a constant comparative method that Grounded Theory depicts, but rather that I needed to understand the causes why Moroccan youth emigrate to Europe and what encourages them to engage in secondary migration once they had arrived. I therefore continued with analytic induction of ethnographic research which is concerned with 'producing and confirming the causes of a problem' (Riemer 2012: 179). This then enabled me to decipher the interaction of structure and agency in this particular type of youth migration, which further led me to critical ethnography, as will be explained.

3.1 Research Setting

'Research is never neutral; when we start an investigation, we always have a preconceived idea of the field we want to explore', writes Núria Empez (2009: 156) about her research with Moroccan UAM in Morocco and Spain. My interest in the research on Moroccan UAM started in 2012 while I did my MA in Migration Studies at the Brussels School of International Studies, when the media reported about 'large numbers' of Moroccan minors having arrived in Brussels, Belgium, 'involved in criminality and running away from reception centres, staying in the streets' (Loore 2010a). At the time, relatively little attention had been given to child migration in comparison to (adult) female and especially (adult) male migration, but every academic, legal and policy literature on UAM I could find portrayed the latter exclusively as innocent and vulnerable beings in need of adult guidance, often associated with child trafficking. I was thus intrigued by this

group of 'atypical' young migrants, who seemed to counter this image and demonstrate agency and resilience, dissociated from the mentioned writings concerning them. What further struck me was that despite a universalised law concerning the Rights of the Child, and a unified EU definition of what an UAM is, it became clear quite quickly that UAMs face a multitude of systems, laws and treaties differing from state to state within the EU (cf. Empez 2009: 156–7). Seeing a gap in the literature, I wrote my MA dissertation about their migration to Belgium, while taking into account push- and pull-factors for their emigration from Morocco. I did, nevertheless, soon realise that the very limited time for fieldwork during the MA dissertation was insufficient to obtain primary interview data with Moroccan UAMs, who proved to be a group of youngsters extremely wary of adults. I had set up several interviews in a reception centre, but the boys had disappeared each time before I was able to meet them. I thus needed to base my findings on interviews with Belgian social workers and secondary literature, as there was a limited amount of research in Spanish on this particular topic, given that the young migrants had come through Spain several years earlier. Spanish media reflected the country's astonishment of autonomous young migrants arriving alone, which was mirrored in the Belgian media a few years later when they arrived in Belgium. When I started my PhD research in 2014, I wanted to amplify the research I had started during my MA, focusing on their secondary migration to Belgium, imagining this to be a fairly easy task, as I had more time to build trustful relationships with the minors and had already established contacts with reception centres, social workers, and government employees in this country. I had imagined enrichening my research with fieldwork in Morocco and in Spain to be able to give an in-depth analysis of their migration to Belgium. I was aware that this would not be an easy group to reach given their mistrust towards adults, also taking into account their incredibly rapid mobility, meaning that they could disappear from one moment to the next. This was the reason why I started fieldwork immediately, doing participant observation once a week during the evening in a reception centre in Brussels, accompanied by a social worker who I knew from my MA research. What I had not taken into account as a possible additional challenge by the time I started my research, however, was that suddenly most of them had not only disappeared from reception centres into the streets, but that they had in fact already left Belgium, and no one could tell me where to. Yet, with the few young Moroccans that were still in the centre, I was able to build trustful relationships, which was, without doubt, easier to achieve than meeting a larger group of teenagers. I soon found out that many of them had moved on to Sweden, where headlines appeared similar to those in the Spanish and Belgian media a few years earlier. I thus added Sweden

to my list of countries for fieldwork. Given my experience with this research group during my MA studies, and the difficulties of finding and reaching them, I was not certain where, how, and how many young Moroccan migrants I would be able to interview, if they would be willing to talk to me, how much of what they said would be useful for the research, and in how far ethical limitations of interviewing minors would allow me to investigate. In addition to the nonetheless very restricted time frame available for empirical research with a 'thick' (see below) ethnographic approach – i.e. a scholarship of three years – I was thus prepared to include interviews on a broad scope of informants who interact with them on a professional or personal level on a daily basis. As discussed in chapter 2, it was important to understand how macro- and micro-levels influenced this particular type of migration by examining the interplay of structure and agency. I wanted to explore how the boys used agency to avoid structures, where they encountered limits to this, and what this ultimately did to them.

Using ethnography as my methodological approach, the research is thus inductive and necessarily broad in scope, led by its subjects and relevant to a limited number of Moroccan children and adolescents, who were precisely those of a very specific structurally deprived population, mostly of urban origin, engaging in irregular migration. It is important to emphasise that findings in this research are not to be confounded with separated/unaccompanied minors in general and are not generalised to apply to independent youth migrants who migrate for economic reasons. This research is thus concerned with a very specific, particular group of Moroccan youth migrants, who are limited in numbers and are being mostly ignored by migration literature and who are vulnerable due to the tactics they use to counter the structural constraints or to use the opportunities that come their way.

The research is based on qualitative fieldwork conducted from 2014 to 2017 in Morocco, Spain, Belgium, and Sweden, using ethnographic methods, i.e., participant observation, open-ended and semi-structured interviews, conversations, and immersion into the culture. This will be explained in further detail on the following pages.

3.2 Ethnography as Methodological Approach

> Ethnography, from the Greek *ethnos* ('foreign people') and *graphein* ('to write'), is the systematic study of a particular cultural group or phenomenon. Ethnography is the primary research methodology for anthropologists; it seeks to answer anthropological questions concerning the ways of life of living human beings. Ethnographic research is also conducted by social scientists in other fields […]. Historically, ethnography has been defined in ways that focus on both the *what* and the *how*,

explains Riemer (2012: 165, emphasis in original).

Ethnography has its roots in social anthropology (Geertz 1973: 5) and draws on a range of methods – e.g., participant observation, in-depth interviews and conversations – providing insights into the social worlds of the human subjects studied, usually obtained through long-term immersion based on trust and evolving relationships (O'Reilly 2012a: 112). Ethnography considers the wider structures but also the thoughts and feelings of the subjects in terms of agency and is therefore an ideal method to research practice (O'Reilly 2012b). Both ethnography and grounded theory are inductive and use 'comparable processes of generating understanding with iterative comparisons of data and theory' (Agar cited in Stewart 1998: 8–9). However, while grounded theory centres on theoretical sampling and is thus more time-efficient, its focus is on concepts, whereas ethnography focuses on context (Stewart 1998: 9). Unlike surveys, ethnography uses, in addition, informants who will enable the researcher to understand '*what they think you need to know* about their culture' (Bernard cited in Riemer 2012: 165, emphasis in original). Ethnography, outside of anthropology, is sometimes perceived as something 'anyone can do', as the publicly visible methods named above seem to be something we do in everyday life, which undeservedly downplays much of the hard work involved in ethnography (Harrison 2018: 87). To be a successful ethnographer, it is crucial to gain access to the research group and to build up trust, which is especially difficult with 'hidden' or 'hard-to-reach' populations, calling for specific approaches usually unnecessary for more easily observable research participants (Van Liempt and Bilger 2009: 8). If the researched population engages in 'stigmatised or illegal behaviour' and is concerned to protect their own privacy, it may be an additional challenge to obtain reliable answers or cooperation from them (Van Liempt and Bilger 2009: 8). Furthermore, when dealing with vulnerable people (e.g. UAM) specific ethical concerns have to be taken into account, and the aim is to eventually disrupt the asymmetric power relations between the researcher and those researched (Van Liempt and Bilger 2009:4). Two further aspects are important. One is to avoid exploitative interests a researcher may be inclined to focus on in order to obtain answers (Van Liempt and Bilger 2009: 4). The other is to consider 'native readers' – i.e., those about whom is written – as, in today's postcolonial world, a post-Malinowskian (see below) participant observer remark of 'I know because I was there' is no longer acceptable, as Brettell points out in 'When They Read What We Write' (1996: 2). Questions about objectivity, accountability, relativism, representation, ethnocentrism, science and truth are crucial in today's ethnographies (Brettell 1996: 2; see also Riemer 2012: 181).

While ethnography is a powerful empirical tool in qualitative research – that allows linking macro and micro structures by delving into specificities quantitative research would be unable to grasp (cf. Bourgois 2002: 12) – it is nevertheless a time-consuming undertaking, and for it not to be superficial, the researcher needs to use 'thick description' (Geertz 1973: 10), i.e., illustrate the fieldwork in the cultural and social settings the research is embedded in. While classic ethnography focused on one site and one society, more recently ethnographers have been looking at a range of sites, known as multi-sited ethnography (Riemer 2012: 166). This approach was first discussed by George Marcus (1995) who portrayed single field conventional ethnographic approach as insufficient due to an increasingly interconnected world (Muir 2011: 1014). Marcus argues that from a World System perspective, contemporary local changes in culture and society can no longer be represented by single-site research. Ethnography is concerned with 'agency, symbols, and everyday practices' where multi-sited research can help 'to discover new paths of connection and association' (Marcus 1995: 98). It is very relevant in Migration Studies in terms of 'following the people' (Marcus 1995: 106), with Bronislaw Malinowski cited as pioneer in his intensive early twentieth-century ethnographic fieldwork, following traders and goods in the Trobriand Island archipelago (Muir 2011: 1014).

As Riemer (2012: 170) points out, ethnographers want to see a 'full cycle of activities', i.e., the beginning, the middle, and the end of a set of events. For my research, it was indeed important to understand the context in Morocco in order to be able to understand the young migrants' migration to Spain and their onward migration further north. However, due to the challenges in studying this specific youth migration, and despite my best intentions, I did not have the possibility to accompany the same individual or group of migrants from the beginning to the end of his/their journey. Their migration is undertaken under most precarious conditions, i.e., sleeping rough and being exposed to dangerous settings. Despite their offer to 'protect me' if I stayed with them and being certain that they would have done so, given that protection within the group is very strong, this was neither the goal of my research nor a personal choice for me. Also, the young migrants sometimes wait for months on end in the port of Tangier seeking an opportunity to cross, and it usually takes them years before arriving in Sweden, which had become the ultimate destination of my fieldwork. I therefore studied different groups of boys in different countries and was able to follow a very limited number of boys who had already travelled from one country to the next within Europe.

During the course of fieldwork, I was increasingly often faced with the structures that the young Moroccans had to comply with, as well as the resilience they were

demonstrating in order to counter these structures. This led me to employ critical ethnography which has similarities with traditional ethnography, with the difference that it focuses on the 'complex relationship between structural constraints on human action and autonomous, active agency by individuals and groups' (Castagno 2012: 374). Structure relates to 'economic, political, social, historical, and cultural institutions and norms that operate in all contexts', whereas agency is 'the ability of individuals to make choices and shape their experiences so that they are not completely determined by structures' (Castagno 2012: 374). In short, it looks at power differences and explicitly assumes that certain groups of people are 'positioned unequally within society', something that the value-neutral approach of traditional ethnography is more detached from (Castagno 2012: 375). Critical ethnography is concerned with opposition to marginalisation and experienced oppression by an individual or a group. In other words, it emphasises on resistance and resilience (Castagno 2012: 377). Of specific importance in critical ethnography is the nonliteral meaning of language or other forms of communication which point to unbalanced power relations (e.g., 'children at risk'), or to how non-communication/silence discloses certain messages (e.g., youth migrants being silent on questions about family) (cf. Castagno 2012: 385).

3.3 'Doing' Fieldwork

The fieldwork for this research was conducted between November 2014 and April 2017. While my fieldwork started in a centre for UAM in Belgium (the country where I resided at the time of writing), the first pilot study was conducted for a week in April 2015 in Tangier, Morocco. In September 2015 I spent a week in Granada, Spain, and Rabat and Casablanca, Morocco to conduct institutional interviews and to observe the situation of independent youth migrants in these locations. I wanted to see whether most were in fact leaving from Tangier or if Casablanca could also provide a lead in my research. In February 2016 I went to Stockholm for a week of institutional interviews, and in March 2016 I returned to Morocco for 2 months of fieldwork mostly in Tangier, as well as in Casablanca and Rabat. I also spent a few days in Ceuta, as well as Algeciras, Spain for fieldwork and institutional interviews. I then returned to Malmö and Stockholm, Sweden for the last two months of fieldwork in October 2016. Fieldwork in Belgium continued throughout the periods I was home until April 2017. Rabinow's reflections are somewhat similar to how I felt during my first days of fieldwork in Tangier:

> How ethnographic. In Morocco only several days and already I was set up in a hotel, an obvious remnant of colonialism, was having coffee in a garden and had little to do but start 'my' fieldwork. Actually, it was not exactly clear to me what that meant, except

> that I supposed I would wander around Sefrou a bit. After all, now that I was in the field, everything was fieldwork. (Excerpt from Rabinow 1977: 11)

Although I did not stay in a colonial hotel, but rather occupied a small room in a traditional house with a Swiss-Moroccan family deep in the medina, the old city centre, the first days consisted of much 'walking around', trying to get a feel for the city. Once in the streets, I almost immediately met the first street children who spend their days at the *souk dbarra*, a market square at the entrance to the medina. I also had a list of addresses of NGOs that I wanted to talk to, which led to meeting with a Spanish researcher who lives in Tangier and who put me in touch with helpful contacts, not only in Tangier but also with one important contact in Malmö who helped me with my first encounters there. Snowball sampling, a technique where one acquaintance leads to the next, were thus my first steps in building up a network where I found informants, gatekeepers[1], translators, the boys I was researching, as well as adults I interviewed. Similar strategies were used during fieldwork in Sweden, and to a limited extent in Spain (including Ceuta). On the Spanish mainland, I was unable to encounter the young migrants themselves, and interviews in a Spanish centre for UAM were forbidden without the previously acquired authorisation of the municipality, which required several weeks for authorities to process and I was told I was unlikely to obtain. I was able to conduct two interviews in Granada in 2015 with employees of the municipalities who dealt with Moroccan UAM. Knowing of the difficulties of being granted entry to the reception centres, I wrote to the Junta de Andalucía[2] in 2016 to ask permission to enter the UAM reception centre El Cobre in Algeciras. This was a strategically very important institution in my research being the very first reception centre where most Moroccan UAM who migrated from Tangier to southern Spain, are received. After the difficulties that I had encountered to do research in Spain in 2015, to my surprise and joy, I was now granted access as the first non-Spanish researcher. My interlocutor, a cultural mediator at El Cobre for the past decade had meticulously registered every single Moroccan youth migrant who had travelled through this centre, and was very knowledgeable on their origins, migration routes and destinations, and well aware of probabilities of trafficking. Some minors that I had met in Belgium, as well as some that I would meet later during fieldwork in Sweden, had come through El Cobre.

In Sweden, I had similar luck, in that my contact from Tangier had put me in touch with a former UAM who lived in Malmö. Unfortunately, he was not there at the time of my fieldwork in Sweden, but he gave me the name of a café where young Moroccans were known to meet. At the café, where I received curious looks as I was the only woman

drinking coffee in an environment of Maghrebi men, I informed the owner of my research who then put me in contact with a young Moroccan, former UAM, who was now undocumented. He became an informant, gatekeeper and friend, and introduced me to perhaps all Moroccan UAM in the city of Malmö. He further put me in contact with one of his close friends in Stockholm, also a former UAM and now undocumented, who became an informant, gatekeeper and friend for me in Stockholm. In Stockholm, I also contacted the organisation *Habibi* that I had found on Facebook which stated that they were collecting food and clothes for Moroccan UAM who stayed in the streets in Stockholm. The three very engaged people of *Habibi* seemingly knew every single Moroccan youth migrant who had chosen to avoid the reception facilities for UAM in this city. All three became my gatekeepers, informants and friends during long and cold nights in the streets of Stockholm, alternated by hours of warming up and chatting with my research subjects in a dubious McDonald's, full of captivating creatures of the night.

3.4 Reflexivity and Ethics

It is not an easy task to render an unbiased account of the findings as any ethnographic method will be used through the lens of the researcher (cf. Rodríguez García de Cortázar 2016: 248) and calls for reflexivity on the impact of the researcher's own identity (Sime 2008: 75). Reflexivity is defined by Roni Berger (2005, cited in Harrison 2018: 88–9) as 'the process of continual internal dialogue and critical self-evaluation of the researcher's positionality as well as active acknowledgement and explicit recognition that this position may affect the research process and outcome'. This self-conscious reflexivity was certainly central in my case. Given that I am a white, European, non-Muslim female, I was aware that my research would be biased due to this particular factor. Despite taking Moroccan Arabic lessons, which helped me very much in not only being able to communicate minimally, but also in gaining a better understanding of Moroccan culture, communication was very restricted with people who could only communicate in Arabic. Translators were thus indispensable for me to speak with young *harraga* in Morocco as well as with most families of deprived neighbourhoods. Finding a translator was a challenge, as I will explain later. Also, I avoided resorting to translators as the contact is less direct and the positionality of the translator is a further aspect to be taken into account, in addition to the translation perhaps not being as accurate as understanding the language oneself. As my research was not based on discourse analysis, when I resorted to a translator, I primarily only needed rough translations to understand the bigger picture I was interested in. On the other hand, my male translators were sometimes indispensable

having a double role as not only translators but also as male escorts in more reclusive situations.

Two additional factors of myself as an individual facilitated access to the young migrants. I started my research as a mature student, after having spent a number of years working with vulnerable, marginalised people of the global South as a professional, speaking several languages, having travelled extensively and having lived with deprived communities in developing countries. I was thus very much aware on a practical level of the challenges socioeconomic deprivation causes in general in developing countries, and what impact it has on the conditions of the child and teenager. I am also a legal guardian for UAM in Belgium, which familiarised me in depth with the Belgian legal system and gave me access to a number of institutions and their employees. My age combined with previous experience, and dressing modestly in traditional settings, made it easier (although not easy) to be respected as a woman in mostly exclusively male environments during fieldwork. Being a woman facilitated access to women in Morocco, especially mothers of young *harraga*. I was aware that shared white identity with representatives of authorities in Europe (i.e., lawyers, ministers and police) opened certain doors for me, and interviewees revealed opinions assuming that we shared similar ideas. The dreadlocks I wore may have confused some of the latter, whereas in more informal settings (i.e., with social and street workers, teachers, and especially youth migrants), my hairstyle was likely to be associated with a migrant-friendly mindset and/or being part of a sub-culture. It particularly appealed to the young migrants and was often an ice breaker, making them curious and wanting to talk to me.

Ethnography, and doing research with people in general, requires following specific codes of ethics, in particular when working with minors. Individuals who participate in a study need to give informed consent, which usually involves a signed form or, if this is not possible, at least oral consent. Also, the importance of ethics in the research with children and adolescents in vulnerable situations demands a thoroughly elaborated research project taking into account necessary flexibilities or change of schedule in order to accommodate the young person in the most ethically possible way (Hopkins 2008: 39), as well as ensuring that they may not be harmed by inappropriate questions or approaches. It was at times challenging to make the aim of my research clear, as a number of young migrants (and some adults) had little or no school education and were unable to understand what a PhD is, and given my age, were sceptical when I said that I am a university student. Some thought I was a journalist and that I could pay them, others were worried because they imagined I could be 'a spy' for a European government. Written

consent was not possible to obtain, as many were illiterate and signing a form made them increasingly suspicious. I therefore took much time explaining exactly what I was doing, and if I still failed to make myself understandable, I resorted to saying that I was writing a book for a university, describing it as a school for adults. I told all interviewees (minors and adults) that they did not have to answer any questions if they felt uncomfortable and that they could stop talking to me at any time. With minors especially, I did not ask too many questions, and I rather let them talk freely about whatever they wanted to talk about in an informal way. With time, I learned how to 'guide' these conversations, always weighing each word, and rather speaking about myself to see if the young migrants would engage in speaking about themselves. I also learned to take specific caution not to ask direct questions about family, and sometimes asking which city they were from was already as far as I could venture. I needed to adapt my approach significantly between interviews conducted with young *harraga* in Morocco and interviews with Moroccan UAM in Europe. While youth migrants in Morocco were much more open to talk about themselves, those who had made it to Europe were much more reluctant to do so. This needs to be seen in the context of their migration journey, i.e., I avoided asking questions that they are repeatedly asked by immigration officers whose intention is to find if there is a possibility to send them back to their country of origin. I wanted to avoid at all cost of being associated with the authorities, as it would have not only falsified my findings, but the risk of losing a very difficult-to-build trustful relationship would have been too great. In addition, as will be explained in chapter 7, my Swedish gatekeepers warned me that boys who have been through much hardship will not want to talk about their past as it is too painful for them to be reminded of their families. Some haven't seen their families in years and miss them dearly, whereas others have 'fled' dysfunctional family environments and do not want to be reminded of what they have endured. I contented myself with secondary literature of research conducted by NGOs and did not consider knowing the background of each individual as necessary for my own work. In several cases it was even impossible to talk about their city of origin, and I thus often started speaking about the cities I had been to in Morocco, and waited for them to join in; or, if they didn't, I accepted that I was not going to obtain any information on their background at all. Able to understand a few words in Moroccan Arabic, I would often catch a word here or there, which would give away their origins.[3]

In addition, a third precaution needs to be taken when researching settings of deprivation, where violence may be a structural cause of exclusion (Bourgois 2001: 11). Most young people in this research have been exposed to much abuse and violence,

which, with age, they also often engage in themselves, as will be explained in later chapters. Also, conducting research in frameworks of poverty has been argued to 'contribute to the disempowerment' of deprived populations as labels such as 'poor' and 'poverty' may be considered as stigmatizing and are usually avoided by the subjects the labels are meant to describe (Sime 2008: 65). As Laura Nader (1972, in Bourgois 2001:11) argues, participant observation among the powerless entails a risk of 'publicly humiliating them'. I have therefore taken great precaution not only in engaging with my research group in the most ethical way possible, but also in avoiding any terms and questions (especially in terms of sexual abuse or prostitution) that could possibly be perceived as stigmatizing or shameful. However, in order to create a true picture of independent youth migrants in a structural context that either sees them as victims (UAM) or as criminals (irregular migrants), it was important to portray their agency and resilience, which is often linked to abuse and violence. In addition, it was crucial to acknowledge the social, economic and cultural exclusion they experience in Morocco as well as in Europe, in order to be able to demonstrate how their everyday reality is shaped by a world system that categorises them as peripheral subjects and ensures that they stay in their place. As anthropologist Nancy Scheper-Hughes' (cited in Bourgois 2002:12, footnote 19) argues in her research in Brazilian favelas:

> For anthropologists to deny, because it implies a privileged position (i.e., the power of the outsider to name an ill or a wrong) and because it is not pretty, the extent to which dominated people come to play the role… of their own executioners is to collaborate with the relations of power and silence that allow destruction to continue.

3.5 Access and Data Collection

As my fieldwork started in a centre for UAM in Belgium, my initial aim was to trace back the routes of the boys I had met, by visiting their families in Morocco, and 'following' the boys, physically or virtually, as they journeyed onward. While the latter was feasible with a very limited number of boys, it was restricted to those that I had been able to befriend and stay in touch with over a longer period of time. Given the limited amount of time for this ethnographic approach, it was not only difficult to build up trustful relationships. Furthermore, most boys disappeared and were out of touch, sometimes for months on end, to again reappear, contacting me from a new country, where they had also changed their identity. In addition, most boys I have met in Morocco, as well as in Sweden during later stages of fieldwork, were in precarious conditions in the streets and had problems with the law, where building trust was a challenge a fortiori. Most boys I have met during fieldwork in Europe have 'befriended' me on Facebook and contacted

me via Messenger. However, due to their frequent change of names and ages while changing cities or countries, some Facebook profiles were not used anymore, and I lost track of them. Some have been imprisoned or sent to youth correction centres and were unable to contact me. Still others, albeit very few, have 'defriended' me on Facebook and I have no further information of their whereabouts. Further, contrary to the boys in the centres in Belgium, where individual conversations were possible, most boys I have met in Morocco and in Sweden were staying in the streets, usually in groups, meaning that conversations were rarely one-on-one and mostly with a group of boys, which also gave insight into other scopes of the research, such as how they interact in their Community of Practice (CofP). Meeting the families of the boys I had met in the streets, on the other hand, turned out to be an impossible undertaking with the exception of one in Morocco who had not managed to emigrate yet and who returned home most nights (field interview Morocco 2016). In Morocco, field interviews (2016) made me understand that young *harraga* were either too ashamed of the socioeconomic settings under which their families suffered, in addition to safety issues in their neighbourhoods. Others were ashamed of the liminal situation they found themselves in and did not want their parents to know their whereabouts. It is important to remember that most had left their homes without their parents' consent, having interrupted all connections with their families and determined to take them up again only once they had 'succeeded' in their migration goal, typical for the liminal phase, as will be explained in chapter 6. They therefore remained opposed to connecting me with their families. In Europe, the former mentioned objections also applied, but the main reason for not revealing their roots was for fear that the information could leak to the authorities and result in their deportation (field interviews Belgium 2015, 2016, Sweden 2016).

I was able to meet five families in Morocco. Of these five, only one family was introduced to me through the abovementioned son who wanted to emigrate. I had met with a group of his friends in Tangier, while they were unsuccessful in trying to jump onto a Spanish bus. The youngster invited me into his home, and was not a *harraga* per se, even though he desperately tried to leave the country. He still attended high school on a regular basis and lived at home. I was therefore able to visit their modest home. Though the father was unaware of his son's emigration attempts, the son confided his intentions to his mother, and she tried to dissuade him from irregular migration and was very worried about the possibility of him dying in the crossing (field interview 2016). The other three families I met in Casablanca through a gatekeeper who was the manager of a youth centre in a shanty town. All three families invited me into their homes and had sons who had

emigrated irregularly or who had tried to do so. While all families were hospitable, the hospitality and the kindness of the two most deprived families that had invited me into their homes was outstanding and touching. The neighbourhoods the families lived in were only accessible for me in company of a gatekeeper or a member of the family who also saw to it that I left the neighbourhood before dark (fieldwork 2016). And finally, the fifth was a mother of a returned *harraga*. I met her in Ceuta, to which I travelled in order to grasp the situation of the enclave, she was a cleaning lady in the accommodation I was staying in and travelled forth and back every day[4] (fieldwork 2016).

For fieldwork with the research group, especially in the streets, my (mostly male) gatekeepers and/or translators were essential. In general, I limited my research to public spaces. Most fieldwork in the street was done from late in the afternoon into late at night, given that the research group is active at night and sleeps during the day for safety reasons. I took great precaution to leave the sites in time when intoxication (drugs or alcohol) and/or fights between the boys became too much of a concern for my own safety. That said, in general, either the gatekeeper or at least one of the boys would have defended me, as loyalty to friends, which many considered me to be after having taken the time talking to them, is of utmost importance. Despite the violence the boys encounter during their young lives, most showed much respect toward me and many have thanked me for being able to talk to an adult who listens to them (field interviews Morocco 2015, 2016, Sweden 2016).

In order to better understand the cultural setting and context, and to be able to communicate with or understand the few minors and adults who did not speak any of the languages I speak, I took *Fus'ha* (Modern Standard Arabic) lessons in Belgium for one year and *Darija* (Moroccan Dialect of Arabic) in Morocco in the mornings (when my research group was sleeping). Interviews were conducted in languages I understand very well (i.e., English, French, and Spanish), and informal translators helped with *Darija*, translated into French or Spanish, which were translated on my behalf into English for the thesis.

As pointed out, while my age and ethnicity were sometimes an advantage, at other times it could also be a hindrance, especially when searching for a translator in Tangier (fieldwork 2016). Potential translators often did not believe that I was a student but rather a journalist and thought I was lying in order to avoid paying them a salary. I was able to contribute a small amount of my travel stipend that I had received, in order to recompense them, but some were asking for a remuneration of €2,000, which was more than the entire stipend I had received. In addition, they were not official translators, they were simply

able to translate from *Darija* into a language I understood (usually into Spanish). As mentioned, male translators who accompanied me at night-time in the streets were also of help. The only exception where a male translator was a hindrance was during an interview with one boy's family in Tangier. As only the mother was at home, the male translator was not allowed to go inside. For myself it was learning by doing as I became aware that a male stranger could not enter the house without the head of household being present. The latter needed to close his shop for an hour and come home to allow the translator into the house in order to maintain the honour of the family. However, with the father being present, who did not know that his son wanted to emigrate, it was difficult to conduct the interview. Also, the son hardly spoke because of respect toward his father and the mother did not sit with us out of respect and tradition but stayed in the kitchen and prepared tea and treats for us. When the father needed to return to his shop, I politely asked if he would agree on me asking his wife a few questions with the help of the translator. This was fine with him, as he now knew the translator and me. The actual interview thus only started after an hour of drinking tea and small talking with the father, when he finally left after his son had kissed his hand to pay respect. Here, my positionality as a female was a clear advantage, as I would not have been able to stay with his wife if I were a man. With other families, also, it was a clear advantage to be a female researcher, as it would have been much more restrictive to enter the homes as a foreign man, as the home is considered female space in Maghreb culture (Mekideche 1996: 55).

Apart from situations were translators were needed, gatekeepers played a crucial role in most situations to gain access to the boys. In social science research, gatekeepers typically are individuals of an organisation and 'who have the power to grant or withhold access to people or situations for the purpose of the research' (Pettlway 1993: 264). In my fieldwork in Brussels, my gatekeeper was a social worker of the centre for UAM were I started with participant observation and interviewing individual boys. With the agreement of the director of the centre, the social worker granted me access and informed me of any new arrivals or disappearances of young Moroccans. He also explained their individual backgrounds to me as he had interviewed them upon arrival and was updated on their situation, as he saw them every day, whereas I saw them only a few hours per week. Yet, for research outside of institutional settings, the profile of the gatekeeper needs to meet further requirements. Pettlway (1993: 264) describes the role of the gatekeeper in drug research, which is similar to the requirements gatekeepers needed to meet in my own research with young Moroccans in the street. Although substance abuse was not the object of my research, it is often part of the research subjects' everyday lives.

In this context, the gatekeeper must have the ability to reject individuals who do not meet the project's research requirements and defuse situations that have the potential of becoming volatile when rejected respondents protest. The gatekeeper must also be streetwise, have the ability to look beyond what is being said to determine what is true, and have the ability to develop probes to reveal whether an individual is an acceptable respondent. The gatekeeper must be aware of certain cues, both verbal and physical, that might suggest any serious behavioural abnormalities that could place other staff members in jeopardy. Therefore, the gatekeeper's role involves not only safeguarding the integrity of the sample but also reducing the likelihood that injury might occur in the field site.

With the exception of my Swedish gatekeepers mentioned earlier, my other gatekeepers were former UAM, streetwise and clean (of drugs). Their hierarchical position in regard to the young Moroccans was impressive. As they were adults and considered 'pioneers', i.e., having migrated before them and seen as having left liminality (see chapter 6), they were met with great respect.

Most of these gatekeepers also acted as informants in my research. Informants hold a further important role in ethnographic fieldwork, as they explain aspects of the culture that are hidden or not obvious for the researcher. Yet, not all informants were necessarily gatekeepers. And not all gatekeepers were necessarily informants. Also, not all of my informants were Moroccan, but those who were not had spent either enough time in Morocco or with the young migrants to be able to help me understand certain characteristics, especially if they were related to shame (*hshuma,* explained in chapter 5) or about the government/the monarchy, topics a Moroccan will not necessarily discuss with an outsider.

3.6 Participant Observation

As explained earlier, I started my fieldwork 'observing' in a centre for UAM in Brussels. Participant observation was first acknowledged as a data collection method by the Chicago School in the 1920s and 1930s (Moeran 2007: 4), and 'requires close, long-term contact with the people under study' (Fetterman cited in Riemer 2012: 172). But Goffman (1956) points out that there is a 'front stage' and a 'back stage' to this type of research, where the former relates to how people present themselves, whereas the latter enables the researcher to 'go beyond the social front that informants present to strangers in their everyday lives' (Moeran 2007: 14). Moeran (ibid.) argues that this can be achieved by switching from participant observation to observant participation. For example, in my research this could have meant assisting a social worker in a centre for UAM or doing

group activities with the research group in an institutional setting. While I had given thought to assisting a social worker in the centre in Brussels, it was complicated to volunteer, as I do not have a background in social work and the work with minors would have required further ethical considerations imposed by the Belgian government, which are time-consuming. I finally deliberately chose not to proceed as an observant participant, as I realised that the actual fact of being in an institutional setting only allowed me to see the 'front'. Here, the boys were in a structural setting which would not have enabled me to investigate their agency and the tactics they use to counter these structures. Further, I was not looking to understand how the institutions dealt with them, but rather how they survived beyond them. This would not have been possible as observant participant, as I would have been seen as part of the institutional setting and I would have only been able to hear the same stories they tell social workers. Also, it was already difficult enough to make my position as a researcher understandable and I did not want them to think that I was a social worker from the centre (which some nevertheless did despite my efforts of explaining). The centre permitted that I spend time with the UAM in the common room in the centre, that I speak with them individually, and observe them as a group, enabling me to see how they networked among each other and via social media. Some boys would show me their photos on Facebook, explaining which countries in Europe they had been to so far, who their friends were and how many material goods (e.g. brand clothes) that had been able to 'collect'. Others were more secretive about everything, constantly pondering how much they could trust me and whether I had a 'hidden agenda'. I would therefore categorise my research in the institutional setting as the 'front stage' of my empirical research, whereas the 'back stage' was achieved once I had become friends with a few boys, and, very importantly, once we had moved out of the institutional setting (e.g. meeting in town). This happened with a very limited number of boys, as 'outside' were the locations where they would meet their peers and engage in different sorts of illegal activities. On one occasion in the evening at the centre, the Moroccan boys were going out, and I suggested to come with them. While a few thought this was 'cool', the boy who was considered their leader and known as a troublemaker, got very upset, telling me that my place was in the centre (as he saw me as one of the social workers) and not outside. I did certainly not impose myself and let them go but realised that this was the 'backstage' he didn't allow me into.

While going 'back stage' is where the actual ethnographic research starts, it however also bears the risk of 'going native' (Powdermaker 1967, cited in Moeran 2007: 20), when crossing the fine line between objectivity (that is expected of the researcher) and

subjectivity (when becoming too close to the researched group). As Alison Liebling (2001: 474) points out, social research is an 'act of human engagement', where empathy is a key aspect, meaning that the researcher needs to have the capacity of being able 'to feel, relate and become "involved"'. This certainly bears the risk of becoming too 'native', partial, sympathetic. 'The old theological question of how to be in but not of the world' (Liebling 2001: 475, emphasis in original) reflects this central problem of 'the tension between objectivity and participation' (ibid.). Becker (1967: 245) writes that it is most likely that the researcher will take sides with one specific group, e.g., if s/he is interviewing prisoners for his/her research, prison guards will usually not be interviewed. However, he warns of bias in taking only one perspective, arguing that '[o]ur problem is to make sure that, whatever point of view we take, our research meets the standards of good scientific work, that our unavoidable sympathies do not render our results invalid' (ibid.: 246). He further notes that this may be avoided by taking into account opposite perspectives, giving the research more neutrality by focusing on a third perspective (ibid.: 245). Goldner suggests that this third perspective is the precise task of sociology (Liebling 2001: 478),

> Isn't it good for a sociologist to take the standpoint of someone outside of those most immediately engaged in a specific conflict, or outside the group being investigated? Isn't it precisely this outside standpoint, or our ability to adopt it, which is one source and one possible meaning of sociological objectivity? […] Isn't it the sociologists' job to look at human situations in ways enabling them to see things that are not ordinarily seen by the participants in them? … It is only when we have a standpoint somewhat different from the participants' that it becomes possible to do justice to their standpoints. (Gouldner 1975, cited in Liebling 2001: 478)

In my own research, interviews with representatives of authorities enabled me to achieve a better insight into the problematics and also to avoid that I would 'go native', and especially interviewing the police in Stockholm was a very useful experience. There were however ethical limits to obtaining a 'neutral' position, and I did explicitly not choose police in other countries where research was conducted as I had repeatedly been told that abuse against young Moroccans occurred, whereas the Swedish police was always portrayed as 'sympathetic' by my research subjects. Confidentiality of all interviewees was a given, and I made certain to never reveal the identity of my young interlocutors, but I also made sure that they did not know that I was speaking to the police as I feared that they would no longer trust me. The experience of interviewing 'both sides' enabled me to maintain a 'neutral' (yet not impartial) 'third perspective'.

I reached the 'backstage' when doing research in the streets in Morocco and in Sweden, and I became aware that situations that shocked to me at first – e.g. children and

adolescents sleeping in the streets, taking drugs – became part of my everyday research, numbing me to a certain extent. It was therefore important for me to balance my perceptions with interviews in the institutional world, as well as to clearly keep my research separate from my personal life.[5]

Being able to see a glimpse of the 'backstage' needed much time, especially to build up trust, and the role of the gatekeeper who gave me access to the group was of crucial importance. In Stockholm, being with *Habibi*, one of my Swedish gatekeepers, the UAM would see me as being part of *Habibi*'s team, but for some UAM (i.e., newcomers or those I didn't get a chance to speak with), there was always a doubt that I could be someone from the authorities they had brought along and who would send them to a youth correction centre or deport them. Whereas with my other gatekeeper in Stockholm, an undocumented Moroccan, trust was much easier established, as they saw me as a friend of a friend, and the possibility of me being someone from the authorities was ruled out despite that I looked Swedish to them.

Building trust in the streets was nevertheless also difficult, given that they were usually in groups and the circumstances (substance abuse and physical/psychological deterioration of the minors) was a further challenge and I learned that it was better to avoid interviews or conversations related to the research when they were not in a state of lucidity, and to rather let them speak or resort to small talk. For obvious reasons, interviews under substance abuse were to be avoided, however speaking with them in groups was also challenging, as everyone was eager to get my attention at the same time, and fits of jealousy, screaming at one another, e.g. 'I am talking to her!' or 'This is between me and her, you shut up!', on the brink of fist fights would be the result if I would not position myself as an adult, immediately intervene and 'designate' one by one who was to speak. This was not always easy, as they appeared very mature, i.e., not in need of an educator or adult. Also, I did not want to risk losing trustful relationships which had been difficult to establish, and I tried as much as possible to avoid positioning myself in an asymmetric power relation (Van Liempt and Bilger 2009: 4) as an authoritative adult, who they were already wary of. Also, if they found out that I was speaking to other Moroccan minors outside of their peer group (perhaps even in a different country), it was sometimes felt as a betrayal towards them, e.g. 'Why are you speaking with them? They are bad guys.' (fieldwork Belgium 2016, Sweden 2016). While I naturally never shared any information from one interviewee to another, I also needed to be careful about giving information on who I was talking to without compromising clarity about the scope of the research. I therefore resorted to simply socializing with them, and letting them talk, adding a few

open questions when it was possible. This was undertaken to build up trust, so that they would see me on a regular basis and not mistake me for someone from the authorities. Further, participant observation was important to understand how the group functions, and what their situation was like in the streets or in the centre. I would try to speak with them on an individual level whenever possible.

3.7 Interviews with the Research Groups (UAM and Former UAM)

I have mostly conducted open-ended and rarely semi-structured individual and group interviews with Moroccan youth migrants or former youth migrants. Open-ended or unstructured interviews are 'open to any and all relevant responses' and whenever possible, I opted for in-depth interviews, meaning that I explored a topic in detail in order to understand it better (Riemer 2012: 173). 'The best ethnographic interview is more like a conversation than a traditional interview', argues Riemer (cited in Riemer 2012: 173), which is what I tried to achieve whenever I spoke with Moroccan minors. Individual and group interviews were done in person, but with individuals that I had become to know better, additional chats via Messenger and phone calls were also conducted. In total, I have interviewed a number of 45 individual interviewees who were minors and who wanted to emigrate or have emigrated, as well as former UAM, who were now irregular migrants (with the exception of one who had received papers in Sweden). Some I have interviewed only once, others more often. With 10 of them, I have kept regular on-and-off contact, mostly via Facebook. In addition, I have interviewed five UAM in the centre in Belgium, who were not Moroccans, but who would inform me about living with them and about life as UAM in Belgium in general. Without including the individual interviews, I have also conducted group interviews/conversations and/or participant observation with approximately 90 minors in Morocco, Sweden and Spain. Most (23) interviews were conducted in Spanish, 19 interviews in French, 3 in English, and 5 in Arabic translated into either Spanish or French with the help of an informal translator. Group interviews were conducted in Spanish, French or Arabic with the help of translator. While I would usually record or take notes when interviewing adults, this was not possible when interviewing minors or former UAM, as this would have harmed the trust that took a long time to build up. I rather resorted to notes once the interview was over.

Table 1
Individual Interviews

Number	Country	Setting	Remarks
8 (including 1 girl) + 5 non-Moroccan UAM	Belgium (Brussels and remote locations in Wallonia and Flanders)	Centre	UAM
15	Sweden (Stockholm and Malmö)	Street	UAM and former UAM (now irregular migrants)
14	Morocco (Tangier)	Street (and one home)	*Harraga* and former *harraga* (of which one now a regular migrant in Sweden, others returned to Morocco and living in the street)
8 (including one girl, the sister of 2 boys who had intended to emigrate, but who was not interested in emigrating herself	Morocco (Casablanca)	Home	To be *harraga* or returned *harraga*

Table 2
Group Interviews/Conversations, Participant Observation

Number (approx.)	Country	Setting	Remarks
40	Morocco (Tangier)	School	School class, some interested in emigration, others not (especially girls were not interested)
10	Morocco (Tangier)	Street	Children of the street (some interested in emigration, others not)
5	Morocco (Tangier)	Old port (in 2015)	*harraga*
20	Morocco (Tangier)	New port (Tanger Med, in 2016)	*harraga*
5	Spain (Ceuta)	Street	*harraga*
5	Sweden (Malmö)	Street	UAM (mostly living in centres or with host families)
10	Sweden (Stockholm)	Street	UAM (few living with host families, most stayed in the street)

3.8 Interviews with Adults

I have also conducted interviews with adults who were in contact with young Moroccan migrants on a personal or professional level. These interviews were above all

informative, to enable me to better understand the context of emigration from Morocco, and Moroccan society in general, immigration to Europe, reception conditions in Belgium, Spain, and Sweden, as well as specifics about Sweden as this was a country, I was not familiar with.

Open and semi-structured interviews were conducted with five families or parent(s) of Moroccan youth migrants in Casablanca and Tangier (Morocco) as well as Ceuta (Spain). Open and semi-structured interviews were conducted with social/street workers in Morocco, Belgium, and Sweden, two cultural mediators in southern Spain, a number of project managers coordinating (a) youth culture programs for deprived youth (youth centre Les Etoiles in Sidi Moumen, Casablanca), (b) youth migrant projects (IOM in Tangier and Casablanca, Ahlem and in Tangier), street and deprived children projects, as well as return projects (Darna in Tangier and Bayti in Casablanca). Additionally, I interviewed one high school teacher and a class of high school students (semi-structured group interview) in a deprived neighbourhood in Tangier (Berchifa) also conducted open and semi-structured interviews with adults in Sweden who were in contact with UAM on a private level (providing housing, clothes or food), and with one police officer specialised in Moroccan UAM in Sweden.

In Tangier, I have also conducted open and semi-structured interviews with two undocumented sub-Saharan (adult) migrants who were trying to reach Europe, but failing to do so, had been working in the construction sector for over one year. Both of them being Muslim, they were able to elucidate particularities of Moroccan society (especially in regard to hshuma), that I would have been unlikely to grasp as a non-Muslim foreigner and which was unlikely to have been told to me by a Moroccan. I would meet them on a regular basis in a small restaurant where I would sometimes eat at night and I would spend my dinner with them, discussing Moroccan society (and their lives as immigrants).

3.9 Data Analysis

Being in the field on and off for a number of years enabled me to collect a vast amount of data. Interviews were either recorded or notes were made during, as well as after the interview, where I either sat down and took notes or I recorded myself rendering an account of what was talked about or what I had observed. The data elucidated certain patterns that were to be found in the iterative aspects of the fieldwork, and meanwhile, research questions were formulated, field notes recorded, analytical memos written, existing questions were revised and reformulated (cf. Riemer 2012: 176). In order to be able to sort out my findings, all recordings were transcribed and entered into *NVivo*

software for analysis, using nodes or key words/concepts that would allow categorisation of specific aspects and see certain patterns. The research of this qualitative research project was inductive, collecting data in the field and developing theory from it. Intended and unintended audiences trigger in depth-reflection on the consequences of this type of work and it is certainly of utter importance that the anonymity of the youth and undocumented migrants I worked with stays intact. I have therefore used pseudonyms in the data collection and do not name any of them in the thesis. In research with youth migrants, especially very young ones, there is a high risk of romanticizing the researched group (Suárez Navaz 2006: 17), or, as explained earlier, to fuel the discourse of criminalizing those who do not comply with the Western social construct of childhood, and special precaution needs to be taken in this regard. Throughout the writing process, I constantly reflected on a possible use of the research results for 'progressive, conservative, and repressive social policies' (Weis and Fine cited in Castagno 2012: 388).

To a limited extent, I have also used visual ethnography for my own use, i.e., collecting and analysing photos on Facebook in order to understand certain configurations in self-representation of Moroccan youth and to compare them with what I had found in the field.

[1] Gatekeepers are individuals who enable access to someone or something, explained in more detail later in the chapter

[2] Regional government of Andalusia.

[3] Northern Morocco, e.g. Tangier, has specific words and pronunciations that differ from cities further south, e.g. Fes, or those from the Algerian border, e.g. Oujda, would use terms of the Algerian dialect.

[4] At the time, Moroccan residents of Tetouan were allowed to visit and work in Ceuta without the need of a visa or work permit, under the condition of leaving the enclave by the evening

[5] To give an example, on several occasions I was asked by young Moroccans if they could stay with me (as they were in the streets). This is a delicate situation for an ethnographer. Wanting people to open up also requires the researcher to open up about him- or herself and becoming friends can be both more pleasant and useful. Yet, there is a fine line in order to keep the researcher's private space intact and to avoid going too native where the lives of the research subjects can become part of the researcher's life. I always aimed to keep my private space intact, but it was not an easy decision to take as I often felt sorry for leaving them in the streets.

4 Moroccan Migration in the World System

I had scheduled an interview with the manager of *Les Etoiles*, a youth centre in Sidi Moumen, a shanty town of Casablanca. There, I meet H., charwoman of *Les Etoiles* and mother of two young *harraga*. I tell her about my research and ask her if I could meet her sons, who are now back in Casablanca, and she invites me to come with her to her home. We take a taxi and get off at the entrance to a deprived looking neighbourhood, a shanty town within a shanty town, so to say. 'This is where we live', she makes herself understood, as her French is about as minimal as my *Darija*. Their home is a concrete shack, where I am heartily welcomed. Her husband joins and so do some other family members or neighbours. Tea and food are being served and I feel a bit ashamed that I come with bare hands as this was an entirely unexpected encounter. A thought crosses my mind, that this is perhaps the first time a white foreigner comes to their house, perhaps even to the entire neighbourhood. They make me understand that I cannot walk around here on my own and that they will escort me out to a taxi when I would want to leave. Both of her sons (14 and 16), who have just returned from an unsuccessful *hrig* are there, and so is her daughter (18), the only one who speaks French and who translates for me. She says she is about to finish high school and that her brothers have both dropped out a while ago, 'they get bored with school and would rather work', she says. H.'s daughter translates what her mother wants to tell me,

'My older son didn't come home one day, days passed, and we didn't know what had happened to him. Then the police caught him in Tangier [340 km north] because he had gotten into a fight with other boys from Tangier who were also trying to emigrate. The police sent him back to Casablanca […]. A few months later, our younger son didn't return from school one night. The next day, one of his friends came and said my boy had left for Tangier to emigrate to Europe. My husband and brother left immediately for Tangier to find him. [They found him and] he was very happy to see his father and uncle, because he had been treated very badly by the other boys in Tangier[1]. We were so lucky that we found him! […] So many boys die when they emigrate clandestinely. And even if they make it, parents sometimes don't hear from them for years. I'm also very worried, because I know my boys will try again and we can't do anything about it. We are poor, we have nothing to offer them here, nothing to hold them back. And I'm almost certain that they will never be able to find a regular job here. My boys tell me they want to do the *hrig* to go to Europe, because there they will receive everything they want. They say, "If I am in Europe, I will send you money. You

won't need to work anymore, I will buy you a car, a house, and you will have a good life!" But I don't care about money, I don't want my boys to die doing the *hrig*. My older boy is very upset at me because I don't want him to leave illegally. My husband and I struggle very much with the little money we have and can't buy him the brand clothes and shoes he wants. He sees his friends who have these things, he sees people from the neighbourhood who now live in Europe and come back during the summer. And then he gets very angry and tells me "Why did you put me into this world when you can't even provide for me properly?" That's so painful to hear, it hurts me very much. It's very difficult. My daughter understands that we don't have this money, but the boys don't understand and are just angry all the time.' (field diary Casablanca April 2016)

4.1 Introduction

This chapter looks at the external structures on the Moroccan side that have shaped Moroccan independent youth migration. I argue that it is a combination of Morocco's move into the Semi-Periphery in addition to colonial and post-colonial influences that have affected Moroccan migrations, ultimately increasingly involving children and adolescents migrating alone. From the angle of World Systems Analysis, the chapter begins by examining Morocco's introduction to capitalism and the resulting internal and international migrations. Pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial influences have created ideological and material links to Western culture, further reinforced by an increase of global mass communications, e.g., advertising, television, and – over the past decade –- social media, which increased the myth of the European Eldorado where a better life is possible and where aspirations towards migration gained increasing importance. Earlier Moroccan generations were primarily influenced by colonial powers, especially France, but certainly also Spain in parts of the former Spanish protectorate. I will analyse how Morocco is situated within the global world system as well as how Morocco's internal periphery and core are constructed, which are at the root of social change and transformation in Moroccan society, leading to previous and current migrations.

World Systems Analysis sees a country's development linked to becoming part of a capitalist world system, and the resulting structural changes that accompany 'a nation's insertion into the marketplace' (Massey 1999a: 41) as a trigger for migration (Massey et al. 1993: 445), at first internally and then internationally (de Haas 2005c: 3–4; de Haas 2008:17–18; de Haas 2007a: 53–4). As de Haas (2007c: 833–4, 836) lays out, this step towards international migration may take several generations, and for those who have neither access to regular migration options nor prospects in their home country, it will often lead to international *irregular* migration (ibid.: 837).

Many Moroccan youth *harraga* who emigrate autonomously to Europe are from socioeconomically deprived neighbourhoods of expanding Moroccan cities that gradually developed when Morocco was drawn into the capitalist world system, which had already started before, yet accelerated, during the French protectorate. A generation or two ago, families of the young *harraga* of today often emigrated from impoverished rural areas to the expanding Atlantic coast cities under the French, where the economy was thriving. During the French protectorate (1912 to 1956), internal migration within 'French Morocco' and international migration to France increased, with Moroccans being actively 'recruited' by the French. Yet, in terms of international migration, this migration flow can be considered 'relatively moderate' (de Haas 2007a: 45), in comparison to the influence of later recruitment programs, i.e. the guest worker programmes. As of then, Moroccan labour recruitment became significantly diversified into several Western European countries, making Morocco one of the leading emigration countries in the 20th century (de Haas 2005c: 3). Further, the socioeconomic development of the northern Mediterranean countries, especially Spain and Italy, in the 1980s/90s, created demand for a specific 'immigrant' labour market, spurring further migration from Morocco.

While a large number of young Moroccans today wishes to leave the country because of the lack of opportunities for its youth (see chapter 5), the young *harraga* from the Moroccan urban and semi-urban periphery are of particular interest here, because, I argue, they are the 'product' of Morocco's position in the Semi-Periphery of the world system. Directly affected by the sharp contrasts between internal core and periphery, and by the social transformation of Moroccan society, their possibilities to betterment are very restricted. As I will discuss, it is in this context that the structural violence Galtung refers to becomes greatest. It is in this context of Morocco's move into the Semi-Periphery and the resulting structural violence for this particular population in combination with the aforementioned emigration culture that an 'escape' is imagined to be possible through irregular migration. It is this specific group of boys and adolescents that is the most important one in numbers of young Moroccan UAM in Europe. In order to substantiate this argument, I look at the following five components. In order to facilitate the understanding of internal core and periphery, I will first give a brief overview of the country and its state apparatus. From there, I will examine the influence of the capitalist world system on Moroccan migration patterns in pre-colonial and colonial times, followed by influences on migration patterns in post-colonial times. I will then investigate the social transformation of Moroccan society during post-Fordism, ultimately impacting, I argue, the shaping of independent Moroccan youth migration.

I will argue that the internal core and periphery played a role in the construction of the Moroccan state, explain how I see that the country was drawn into and became part of the Capitalist World System, creating an internal and international emigration culture, and how this ultimately led to Moroccan independent youth migration.

4.2 Internal core and periphery in Morocco

Al Mamlakah al Maghribiyah, the Western Kingdom, or short *Al Maghrib*[2] are the official Arabic names for the Kingdom of Morocco. Its total population was estimated at approximately 35,5 million in early 2019 (Haut-Commissariat du Plan[3] du Royaume du Maroc 2019). Demographically a young country with nearly half (45%) its population being under 25, most Moroccans are Sunni Muslims and of Arab-Berber descent. In 2010, over half (58%) of the population lived in cities, urbanisation increasing annually at around 2% (World Population Review 2019; World Bank 2019a). Morocco's present government is a constitutional monarchy under the reign of Mohammed VI, succeeding his late father, King Hassan II who ruled from 1961 to 1999, known as a theocratic monarch and infamous to some for his poor human rights record (Tucker and Roberts 2008: 432; Layachi 2016: 359; Cohen and Jaidi 2006: xv). As of his accession, Mohammed VI committed to a transition into constitutional monarchy, political pluralism, and economic liberalism. He also promised to tackle poverty, unemployment, corruption, and enhance human rights, which endeared him to the country's reformers and young people (Njoku 2006: 10). I will discuss this further in chapter 5, while I will elaborate in this section how the internal core and periphery in Morocco interact.

Figure 1
Map of Morocco showing each region's capital[4]

Source: Factbook (2021)

Since many decades, Morocco's core consists of the *makhzen*[5], the central state apparatus directed from the capital Rabat, consisting of the government including the monarchy and the military, civil servants and functionaries, as well as the family dynasties of the upper class connected to the government. The *makhzen* plays a crucial role in the social and economic stratification of Morocco's society, and as writes Daadaoui (2011: 41), a clear concept of the *makhzen* is often difficult to grasp. For most Moroccans, the *makhzen*

> 'is an apparatus of state violence and domination, and at the same time a system of representation of traditional royal power. Makhzen is also a system of conflict resolution controlled by the king, who dominates all fields of the social universe. It evokes fear, awe, and respect in the Moroccan political culture and refers to a

patrimonial institution that has managed to adapt to the realities of modern Moroccan politics' (ibid.).

While the *makhzen* constitutes Morocco's core, the Moroccan periphery is made up of rural Berber and Arab populations, yet not to forget that there has always been a Berber nobility, and during the reign of Hassan II, rich Berber businessmen, in particular from the Souss region, joined the Moroccan core (Lagarde et. al. 2011). Arabs and Berbers are the main ethnic populations of Morocco, next to further ethnic minority groups[6]. Berbers, who are the indigenous pre-Arab population of North Africa, and who call themselves *Amazigh* or *Imazighen* (pl.), signifying 'free people', have their own languages and a distinct alphabet[7]. Since more recent times, the Moroccan periphery also includes those who have migrated internally from rural areas to urban shantytowns. Both rural and urban periphery live in precarious settings with substantial differences on all levels of life between Moroccan core and periphery. Morocco's division of internal core and periphery dates back to well before the protectorate era (1912 to 1956).

Pre-colonial political development was influenced by Morocco's topography and remained an important characteristic well into the twentieth century (Burke 1976: 2). In rural areas, different types of tribalism[8], based on descent from a common ancestor, including a rural notability (ibid.: 7, 9), stood in contrast to the city-dwellers who were often a proud and cultivated elite of scholars and merchants, with an important number as descendants of expelled families from Spain in the fifteenth and sixteenth century, known as 'Andalusians' (ibid: 3-4). The *makhzen* was progressively established over the decades, dating back to the eighth century until the present and maintained its privileges even during the protectorate (ibid.: 45). For centuries, the *makhzen*, constituted of sultanate dynasties and the state-related and largely urban-based class associated with the sultan's power (de Haas, 2003: 118), attempted to gain control over the autonomous Berber and Arab tribes, without however being successful for longer periods of time. The areas under the control of the *makhzen* were referred to as *bled el-makhzen* (land of the government, where taxes were collected and laws respected), whereas the rebellious areas were known as *bled es-siba* (land of dissident, where the central government was powerless and feudalism and banditry ruled) (Burke 1976: 12). Depending on the power and authority of the particular sultan, the area of *bled el-makhzen* increased or decreased in size, thus making it impossible to pinpoint on a map (ibid.), meaning that the *siba* was not necessarily synonymous with areas of particular ethnic groups. To this day, the highlands belong to Berber and Arab tribes, and the *makhzen* considered and considers them as rebellious towards urban, i.e., colonial or governmental impositions.[9]

The head of the *makhzen*, the sultan (later king), is seen as a direct descendant of the Prophet Mohammed with one of the main goals to unify the country along religious lines (Daadaoui 2011: 42). While the *makhzen* was often unsuccessful in collecting taxes in the *siba*, the sultan's role was nevertheless always a prestigious one in religious terms. Due to this fact, his influence in the countryside was and is important even if the population rebels on political terms. Also, despite the main religious institutions and scholars (the *'ulama*) being urban based, in particular in Fez, but also in Marrakech, Meknes and Rabat, they exerted much religious influence in these regions. The cities were thus never isolated from the hinterlands, but instead closely tied by religious and political matters as well as trade, despite of the constant threat of tribal revolt (Burke 1976: 5).

Significant changes happened prior and during the protectorate era when Morocco's incorporation into the world capitalist system increasingly undermined the old traditional society. By the end of the nineteenth century, the European presence in the cities increased with European merchants taking on Moroccan assistants, or protégés, in order to help them doing business. The protégés, in urban and in rural areas, soon emerged into a new bourgeoisie, distinct from the indigenous one, and immune to Moroccan taxes and laws (Burke 1976: 25-26). These new groups of privileged individuals became part of a new *makhzen* elite with strong interests in the centralisation of the government and its reform along European lines, gradually widening the gap between rich and poor (ibid.: 212). Under French Resident-General Lyautey during the French protectorate, the traditional *makhzen* administration was replaced by 'modern bureaucratic and technocratic structures' (Daadaoui 2011: 46), but the sultan maintained his spiritual power 'as the final arbiter in matters of Islamic justice and *habous* (pious endowment)' (ibid.). Lyautey was enthralled by Morocco's royal system and its conservative societal construct (Miller 2013: 90). He believed that Morocco should not be annexed to France or become a colony, but rather be 'protected', i.e. a protectorate, until, in his own words, it would be 'developed, civilized, living its own autonomous life, detached from the metropole' (Laroui in ibid.). His ambition was to reform the *makhzen* to 'its former glory', restoring the sultan's power as 'respected symbol of the state', while at the same time 'strictly limiting its authority' (Miller 2013: 91).

The changes inflicted by the French indeed strengthened the *makhzen's* political power in the areas of *siba* (ibid.), as the hinterlands were also reformed, which however ironically opened a new form of resistance, this time against foreign rule (ibid.: 118). In addition, the restored position of respect of the sultanate in its monopolistic claim on religious authority, put it in absolute power beyond the period of the protectorate and

'perfumed Morocco with an oligarchic scent that lingers to this day' (ibid.). *The bled as-siba* was indeed a continuously thorn in the side not only to the *makhzen*, but also to the colonial powers.

4.3 Pre-colonial and colonial influences on Moroccan migration

Yet, the gradual transformation of Moroccan society started well before it became a protectorate. As discussed in chapter 2, WSA argues that the introduction of the global market in non-industrialised countries is a trigger to internal migration, as new labour market openings in the cities encourage rural dwellers to relocate and abandon their traditional forms of living. Societies undergo social change when traditional livelihoods are uprooted, and rural populations join the urban proletariat to become part of a capitalist system. This touches not only upon the economic, but also the social and political spheres (Hobden and Jones 2001: 207) with such fundamental changes evoking more than just social change, but rather social transformation (Castles and Miller 2009: 54). Traditional forms of social and economic organisation give way to a capitalist order of society – i.e., with fixed role relations – and norms of reciprocity in the traditional forms are being replaced by individualism and private gain (Massey 1999a: 41). Social and economic uprooting is an important element in creating desire for internal migration, leading to rapid urbanisation in developing countries (ibid.: 42).

This was also the case in Morocco. Trade and work had been crucial elements in seasonal and circular migration between the coasts of the entire Mediterranean region for centuries (King 2001: 2–3; de Haas 2007a: 44), but the gradual transformation of Moroccan society didn't start until the introduction of capitalism in the entire Maghreb region with the French colonisation of Algeria in 1830. The French settlers' demand for labour attracted a number of Moroccan seasonal and circular workers, which continued steadily until Algeria's independence war from France in 1956 (de Haas 2007a: 44). In fact, until about the mid-nineteenth century, Moroccan economic relations with European countries were relatively unimportant, as the market was mainly geared towards the needs of a 'quasi-traditional agricultural population and a small but industrious urban bourgeoisie and artisanry' (Burke 1976: 19). Yet, with the French invasion of Algeria, neighbouring Morocco was also gradually drawn into the capitalist world system and the entire Maghreb region became progressively restructured, economically, politically, and socially (de Haas 2007a: 44), undermining the traditional system and setting the stage for a pre-colonial Morocco (Burke 1976: 20).

After the Battle of Isly on the Moroccan-Algerian border in 1844, with France defeating Morocco allied with Algeria in the intention to prevent the latter's colonisation, European commercial penetration in Morocco began to increase (ibid.). With the loss of the Hispano-Moroccan war from 1859-1860, Morocco was faced with its increasing 'backwardness' and the need for economic and political reforms, which by the end of the nineteenth century had brought Morocco's traditional system to collapse (ibid.). Economic treaties with England, France, Spain and other European powers as of the mid-nineteenth century resulted in the lowering of custom duties for European goods, flooding the Moroccan market with cheap imports and the end of Moroccan artisanry by the end of the century (ibid: 23). In addition, the opening of the Suez Canal and increasing international economic competition, disastrous crop failures leading to prolonged famine and rural exodus towards the cities along the Atlantic coast in search for work, destroyed 'whatever resilience might have remained in the traditional system' (Burke 1976: 22). Cheaper European products brought about 'newly acquired tastes' in the Moroccan population (ibid: 23). This concerned in particular the consumption of tea and sugar, which nowadays is one of the prominent features of Moroccan culture, at the time leading many Moroccan families into debt (ibid). It is an example of how the introduction of capitalism transforms societies. European merchants increasingly established themselves in the coastal cities. While the *makhzen* had restricted the European settlements to Tangier and Mogador (now Essaouira), this changed during the latter half of the nineteenth century, with the Europeans becoming more assertive and powerful, and age-old Moroccan economic and social practices being disregarded (ibid: 24-25). The 1907 photo below (figure 2) gives an idea of Morocco's incorporation into the world capitalist system and the growing European presence even before becoming a protectorate in 1912. Especially notable are the advertisements for European manufactured goods and the heterogeneous crowd of French soldiers, European housewives, Jews in traditional garb and small children (Miller 2013: 73), among others, mingling at the entrance to the main market in Casablanca.

Figure 2
Bab el Souk, the entrance gate to the main market in Casablanca, circa 1907

Source: Postcard collection, Gérard Lévy, Paris (in Miller 2013: 73)

Miller's (2013: 80) writes,

'Morocco of 1912 was not the Morocco of 1870. The public sphere was in the midst of a process of transformation. Evidence of European styles and tastes were everywhere: cigarettes and steam-powered flour mills, telephones and the telegraph, cameras, bicycles, sewing machines and pianos, and even the occasional motorcar. Methods of mass communication were becoming part of the fabric of daily life.'

From 1912 until 1956, and after years of dispute over the territory among French, British, Spanish and Germans, the country became divided into 'French Morocco' and 'Spanish Morocco'. While the Rif – along with Ceuta and Melilla in northern Morocco and the 'Spanish Sahara' in the south – stood under Spanish rule, the rest of the country was a French protectorate. The exception was the city of Tangier, which, already decades before the protectorate, held a particular, international, position as a port city close to Europe and with significant European population (Miller 2013:83). Tangier in its 'westernizing tendencies' was influential for the rest of Morocco (ibid: 86), and during the protectorate was granted a specific 'international status', the 'Tangier Zone', becoming part of Morocco only in 1956 upon independence (Lehtinen 2008: 127). Tangier, once

known as the mythic, international city of artists, writers and diplomats, is today one of the main cities of outmigration of the young *harraga*, independent youth migrants (ibid.).

Figure 3
Morocco during French and Spanish protectorate

Source: Cradel 2008

In the French protectorate, Lyautey had designated certain areas as *le Maroc inutile* (the useless Morocco), notably the areas of little economic interest to the coloniser (Puschmann 2011: 107) in contrast to the 'useful Morocco', i.e., cities generating economic growth as well as rural regions contributing to Morocco's overall economic richness in terms of mining, agriculture and fishing. France focused particularly on the development of industrial hubs along the Atlantic coast, free of the rebellious tribes. Casablanca, for example, today Morocco's largest city and main industrial and commercial centre, is a nearly exclusive creation of French colonialism (see e.g., Rabinow 1992, Pushmann 2011: 54-55). Alongside the development of the coastal cities and the

increasing introduction of capitalism, the internal rural-to-urban migration expanded. Mechanisation had left traditional peasants unable to compete with a small portion of rich farmers who were able to afford the modern production machinery (Puschmann 2011: 97). Traditional peasants gradually became unable to sustain themselves, sold their land to the few rich, modernised farmers, and made their way to the cities in order to find work. As of 1912, land grabbing of thousands of acres of the best arable land by the colonisers France and Spain ultimately led to very unequal land distribution, remaining mostly unchanged even after independence (ibid.). During both world wars, a combined number of about 200,000 Moroccan men, many of them rural dwellers, were recruited as soldiers to fight on the side of France. With the support of the sultan, the coloniser had the particular goal of recruiting in *bled as-siba* in order to eliminate opponents of the *makhzen* and the colonial regime and to mute possible rebellions (ibid.: 58, de Haas 2007a: 45). Others, mostly jobless *fellahin* (farmers), were recruited by force to the metropole as 'colonial workers' to compensate the lack of local French workers during this war (Bokbot and Faleh 2010: 59), where about 7 million workers needed to be replaced (Hahamovitch 2003: 78). The French government not only recruited in North Africa, but also in Indochina, Madagascar, China, along with southern European workers, i.e. Italians, Spaniards and Portuguese (ibid.: 78-79). These recruitments, where non-European workers endured discriminatory treatment and were expected to leave once they had completed their contracts (ibid.: 79), can be seen as a precursor to the post WWII guest-worker programmes of Western Europe. Yet, some still came to France during the economic recession of the 1930s in search of work (Bokbot and Faleh 2010: 60).

Moroccans were also recruited to work in the rapidly growing cities along the Atlantic coast, where the French desperately needed 'low cost indigenous workers' (Bokbot and Faleh 2010: 59-60). The latter increasingly abandoned their traditional forms of living and relocated to join the urban 'lumpenproletariat' (Bokbot and Faleh 2010: 60) to work as manual labourers in road construction and other infrastructural work (de Haas 2007a: 44). French colonial policies thus introduced a new capitalist mode of production which led to the development of an urban working class (Daadaoui 2011: 57) and the beginnings of shanty towns on the outskirts of the cities for that this cheap, low-skilled labour force was unable to afford proper housing. While eight per cent of the population had lived in urban settings in 1900, by the end of the protectorate it had increased to twenty-nine per cent (Puschmann 2011: 65).

Yet, this rural-urban migration only applied to 'French Morocco', and especially to the river oases around the Atlas Mountains. Later, in the 1960s, people from this area

continued into international migration, mostly to France (de Haas 2007a: 46) due to their 'colonial links'. Also, France had 'imported' Algerian labour from 'French Algeria' to the French mainland during Algeria's colonialization, which was replaced with Moroccan labour during the Algerian war (1956 to 1962) (ibid: 45). During this war, approx. one million *pieds-noirs*[10] fled to France (King 2001: 4), some of them taking their Moroccan workers with them (De Haas 2007a: 45). This active recruitment of Moroccan labour on behalf of France resulted in the first Moroccan emigration wave to Europe that continuously increased over the decades. In addition, some of the survivors who had been recruited for the French army during the two world wars, stayed in France after the wars and encouraging others to follow (de Haas 2007a: 45).

By 1949, the population of Moroccan origin in France was at 20,000, (de Haas 2007a: 45). With independence in 1956, these migration patterns were reinforced, and new ones were created and Moroccan migration to France further increased to 53,000 by 1962 (ibid.), ultimately making France the European country with the highest number of legally residing Moroccan diaspora (de Haas 2005c: 11). These movements can be seen as the precursors of Moroccan migration to France, to date the European country with the highest number, i.e., 1.5 million in 2015 (Guigou 2015), of legally residing Moroccans or French of Moroccan descent.

The Rif under Spanish protectorate, however, remained isolated during the infrastructural remaking of the Atlantic coast due to the absence of colonial connections with France, so that the Rif population did not become familiarised with the French language (de Haas 2007a: 53), but with Spanish language and customs. To this date, these influences dating from the protectorate era are well recognisable throughout Morocco (fieldwork March-April 2016). Spain, during the time of 'Spanish Morocco', was less involved in economic undertakings but was rather concerned with geopolitical interests (de Haas 2007a: 53). 'Traumatised' by the recent loss of her New World Empire at a time where other European powers were accruing colonies, Spain put her hopes in its Moroccan stakehold 'to revive her imperial fortunes and restore her claims to greatness' (Miller 2013: 104). Only recently industrialised, Spain was interested in Morocco as a source of cheap labour, unobstructed markets and raw materials, yet confronted by a fierce Rifian resistance (ibid.: 105), ultimately leading to the Rif War of 1921-1925.

The Rif mountains constitute a natural boundary to the coastal cities of the Mediterranean and the rest of the country, with a population whose identity is shaped by resistance and armed rebellion (*bled es-siba*) towards the colonial powers and the *makhzen,* lead to an ongoing marginalisation of the region (Lehtinen 2008: 124). During the Spanish

Civil War in Spanish Morocco (1936–39), some 40,000 Riffians were recruited into Franco's army under similar strategies as the French army recruitments during the two world wars, i.e., with the goal of eliminating rebellious subjects from the *siba* opposing the *makhzen* and the colonial power Spain. Labour migration to Spain was very limited at the time, as Spain itself was facing not only political but also economic hardship until the 1960s, with Spanish labourers migrating to northern Europe and Algeria for work (de Haas 2005b).

As of the 1990s, Spain (together with Italy) became important to Moroccan immigration. Between 1980 and 2004, the Moroccan population residing legally in Spain and Italy has risen from 20,000 to 550,000; hence taking over from France as the primary destination of *new* Moroccan labour migration (de Haas 2007a: 48).[11] This is also of relevance in Moroccan independent youth migration, where Spain is given preference over France.

Ancient historical links with Spain are to date still vivid in northern Moroccan society. Some young Moroccan *harraga* from northern Morocco refer to themselves as descendants of the 'Andalusians' (field interviews Morocco 2016). Mentioned earlier, this historical term refers to Spanish Muslim nobility of Andalusia, expulsed during the *Reconquista* in the 15th century, and who settled in northern Moroccan cities, whereas most young *harraga* are descendants of rural internal migrants. It is not rare to hear young northern Moroccans proclaim, 'Spain is ours' (ibid.), impacting youth migration patterns to southern Spain in the early 2000s, and 'because in Morocco and Spain everything is similar' (field interview with a UAM in Sweden 2016). The influence of Spanish tourism, Spanish radio and television, but also Spanish commodities that are being smuggled or brought into the region across the borders in Ceuta and Melilla, e.g. via *mujeres porteadoras*[12], have significantly added to this feeling of 'being similar' to Spain or, in fact, genuinely 'Andalusian'.

The colonial period thus not only divided the country into Spanish- and French-speaking protectorates, playing its part in shaping Moroccan society's habitus with regional differences, but it also lay elemental foundations for Morocco's future migration patterns (de Haas 2007a: 45).

4.4 Independence and guest-worker programmes

With independence in 1956, Morocco became a close and important political ally to the Western states, and, in fact, the only one in the region during the Cold War[13] (Zunes 2007: 110). As an ally of the West, the North African country was pushed further into the

liberal economy, especially by the US (Zunes 1998), increasing Moroccan core pockets, and enabling it to move into the global Semi-Periphery. However, core pockets of wealth in the global Periphery or Semi-Periphery do not alleviate poverty for the broader section of the population as they are available to a small group of the upper-middle/upper social class only. It is in the Semi-Periphery where differences between rich and poor are the most striking on a global scale: while a certain number of inhabitants enjoys a core-affiliated lifestyle, the rest of the population lags behind in a socioeconomically deprived periphery. As argued Galtung, discussed in chapter 2, this inequality within nations is greatest beyond the global Core (Rammelt and Boes 2013: 269, 273).

After independence, the focus of capitalist expansion on the Atlantic coastal cities, which had started during the protectorate, continued. The rural periphery of the impoverished hinterlands (which the French had categorized as *'le Maroc inutile'*) continued to be voluntarily neglected under the reign of Hassan II. While some rural dwellers had already moved to urban settings during the protectorate era, people now moved out of desperation to escape rural poverty (Ribas-Mateos 2001: 30), provoking a vast rural exodus. Hoping to find new means of livelihood, significant numbers of rural families migrated to continuously expanding Moroccan cities on the coast (Cabrera Medina 2013: 132). The urban employment growth provided urban employers with 'a welcome over-supply of cheap labour' (Allsebrook and Swift 1989: 47). As unskilled workers and low-paid workers, unable to pay for proper housing, it led to a further increase in squatter settlements or shantytowns in the outskirts of basically every Moroccan city (Jiménez Álvarez 2005a: 120). Insalubrious housing conditions and occasional low-paid work was and still is seen as more viable than the absolute poverty many rural dwellers had and continue to face today. While at independence in 1956, 29 per cent of Morocco's population lived in the cities, by 2017 this number had jumped to 61 per cent (World Bank 2018). Morocco is one of the many developing countries that underwent this demographic transformation, slums being omnipresent in every developing country that has come in contact with capitalist economic relations.[14] Slums are synonymous to a life in destitution, where not only housing, health and education are low, but violence, crime and human right violations are issues inhabitants are faced with on a daily basis (Castles and Miller 2009: 55).

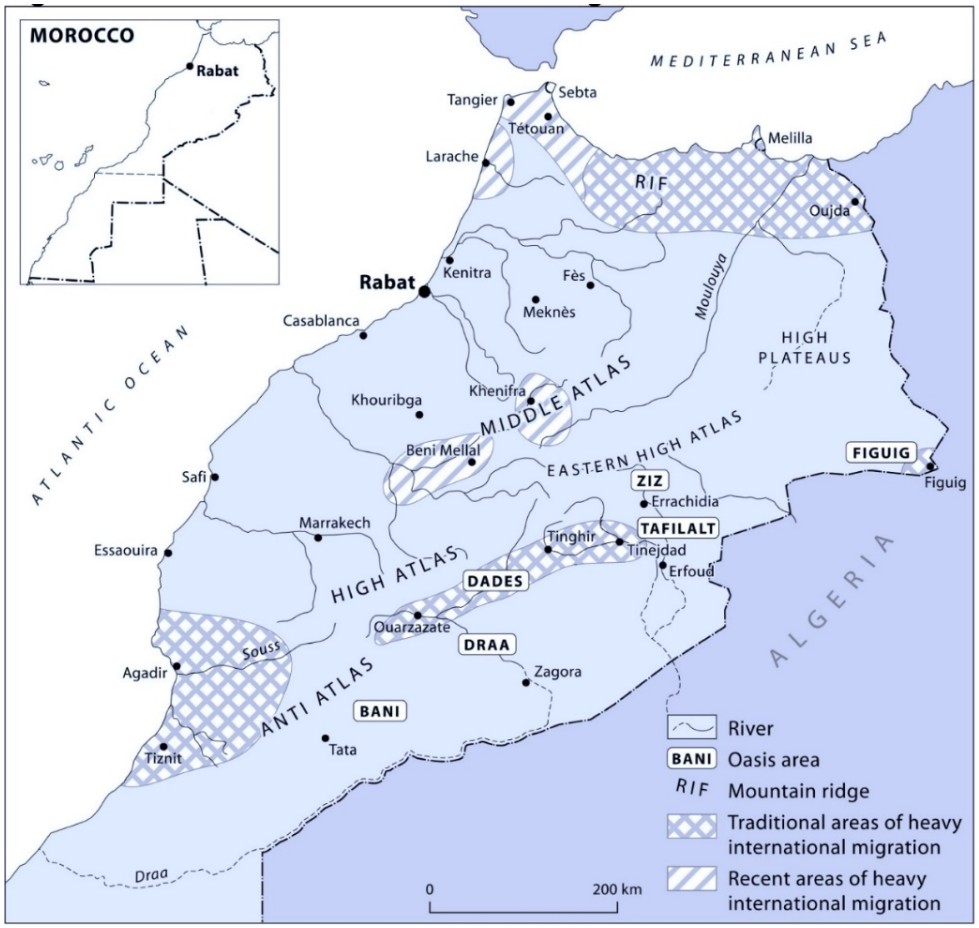
As of 1968, at the peak of the Moroccan rural exodus, most north-western European Core countries started recruitment from Morocco and other the non-European periphery countries into the so-called 'guest-worker programmes'[15]. These two important migration movements, i.e., rural to urban, as well as international through the guest-worker

programmes, created by capitalist economic growth and interests, have led to a social transformation of Moroccan society.

For north-western Europe, i.e. the global Core, the recruitment of guest-workers helped ring in the 'Golden Years' (Hewitt 2000: 292). As of the mid 1950s until the early 1970s, north-western Europe saw its economy boosting under 'Fordism'[16] (Harriss 2000: 330–2) and experienced dire need of manual labour for its post-war reconstruction (Castles and Miller 2009: 99–100). Initially seen as temporary labour recruitment for north-western Europe, (mostly) male labour was recruited as guest workers from the Mediterranean Periphery[17], but also from the impoverished northern European periphery[18], and people headed to north-western Europe in the millions (King 2001: 2).

The guest-worker programme recruitments had a significant impact on the diversification of Moroccan migration to Europe and changed 'the face of Moroccan migration' (de Haas 2007a: 45). Until then, the majority of Moroccans had emigrated to France, but now Moroccan labour migrants were recruited not only into France, but also into Belgium, West Germany, and the Netherlands (King 2001: 2; de Haas 2007a: 45). Political and ethnic factors played an important role in shaping Moroccan international migration. Through selective passport issuance policies and by directing non-francophone recruiters to the tribal regions, in particular the Rif Mountains, the *makhzen* once again took the opportunity to eliminate subjects that were considered rebellious towards urban state authorities (de Haas 2007a: 54). It resulted in distinct settlements of specific regional groups from Morocco in certain countries, regions or cities in Europe, shaped by colonialism and post-colonialism on the one hand, and by the guest-worker programmes on the other. Riffians, for example, who had little connection to France, settled predominantly in Belgium (Flanders), the Netherlands, and West Germany (de Haas 2007a: 53).

Figure 4
Main zones of international out-migration in Morocco



Source: Adapted from De Haas (2007a: 52), also showing recent international migration areas, mostly towards Spain and Italy. Other scholars add expanding urban cities as further recent areas of out-migration, e.g., Casablanca, Oujda, Meknes, etc. (Arab 2013, sec. 912: para. 38).

The guest-worker programmes stand at the beginning of Morocco's evolution into as one of the leading emigration countries in the 20th century (de Haas 2005c: 3). The number of 30,000 Moroccans living in Europe in 1965 increased to 400,000 by 1975 (de Haas 2007a: 46). By 2014, the number of Moroccans residing in Europe was at 2.4 million for Moroccan-born immigrants, and an estimated 4 million for a combined first, second and third generation, making them the largest number of immigrants or EU citizens with immigration background from any southern Mediterranean country in Europe (De Bel-Air 2016).

When guest-workers were actively recruited, governments of sending countries encouraged their nationals to emigrate (and in certain cases still encourage them today) for obvious reasons: migrant remittances had, and to date still have, a tremendous impact on the economic development of their countries of origin (de Haas 2007a: 56; de Haas 2005a). It is well known today that remittances are a greater source of foreign exchange than official development assistance and foreign direct investment (de Haas 2007a: 56). De Haas explains that due to the Moroccan diaspora's remittance-driven investment in housing and enterprises, many centrally located villages have more recently developed into small or medium-sized urban centres within rural regions (de Haas 2007a: 55, 58). As I will explain later in this chapter, the remittance-related development has an impact in furthering (youth) migration from areas who were migration was rather uncommon. Migration thus not only has a powerful influence in furthering social transformation (Ribas Mateos 2005: 33) but is itself a 'form of social transformation' (Castles and Miller 2009: 56).

In addition to the colonial influences, the guest-worker programmes were thus an important element in the introduction of capitalism in Morocco, creating multiple links from the Moroccan periphery to the Moroccan core (through internal migration), from the Moroccan Periphery to the European Core (through international migration), and also from the European Core to the Moroccan Periphery (through the diaspora and remittances).

Yet while migration may enable physical movement from the periphery to core areas, whether internal or international, this rarely affects the social move – i.e., a migrant from the Moroccan Periphery is most likely to stay in the periphery of the Core and a possible change usually takes at least a generation[19] to achieve (de Haas 2007c: 837).

Moroccan guest-workers in Europe did hence not move from their own peripheral subsistence in Morocco to a core existence in Europe. In the guest-worker countries they were seen as necessary workers, yet unwanted citizens (see Hahamovitch 2003), to be returned to their countries of origin once their labour was no longer needed. But also the guest workers themselves, in the tradition of centuries-old circular migration patterns, had the intention to return to their countries of origin once they had saved enough money to establish themselves with land, a house or their own business (de Haas 2007a: 46).

4.5 Post-Fordism and the outsourcing of labour

The guest-worker labour recruitment halted in 1973 due to the oil crisis which generated economic recession, unemployment and lesser demand for lower skilled work in Europe (de Haas 2007a: 46). It rang in a challenging period of 'economic restructuring and of social and political adjustment' in north-western Europe (Harriss 2000: 332). Fordism gave way to 'flexible accumulation', or 'Post-Fordism', which sought to maximise profits by demand-driven rather than resource-driven production (Harriss 2000: 330). This meant more flexibility in the production process, flatter hierarchies and a move from mass to individualized consumption with customary satisfaction as the means to measure performance (ibid.: 333, 334). At the same time, it led to higher levels of structural unemployment, as well as cutbacks in welfare provisions (ibid.: 334–5). Subcontracting gained importance, where smaller firms with lower wages and poorer conditions of employment were chosen and many former industries reduced their labour force, in particular 'good jobs' that were held mainly by white men during Fordism. In addition, a decrease in manufacturing and an increase in the service industries meant that jobs became more unstable. Part-time and temporary jobs increased while more women came to be hired, however not enhancing their power, but rather making the working conditions more 'flexible' (ibid.: 335). While poverty had always existed within rich nations, inequality now grew and increased poor peripheral pockets in the wealthy Core nations, which in turn pushed towards more restrictive immigration policies in the 1980s and 1990s (Carling 2002: 6), to reduce foreign labour and settlement resulting in an 'emigration crisis' for a number of sending countries (ibid.).

At the same time, Morocco not only struggled under the economic recession of the 1970s, but also went into a period of political instability and repression, following two failed coups d'état against King Hassan II (de Haas 2007a: 46). The rural exodus gained further importance as devastating climate conditions in the 1970s increasingly pushed rural dwellers into poverty (Cabrera Medina 2013: 132). Many guest-workers decided not to return to their countries of origin, resulting in an 'involuntary immobility' for people who had relied on circular migration in order to improve their living standards in the their home countries (Carling 2002: 7).[20] With legalisation campaigns in the guest-worker countries, many migrants obtained permanent residence papers (de Haas 2007a: 46) and decided to bring their families together through family reunification.[21] The introduction of family reunification saved many Moroccan women and children left behind from

severe poverty (Pham 2014: 41). They were dependent on their husbands' and fathers' remittances as guest-workers, which they were increasingly unable to send due to their jobs becoming unstable during the economic recession in Europe.

As it became increasingly difficult to enter Europe, circular migration then changed into permanent migration, with family reunification, followed by family formation[22] as one of the only legal entry possibilities into north-western Europe,[23] and enhancing irregular migration, as argues de Haas, mentioned earlier. Carling (2002: 7–8) points out that the abolishment of circular migration affects both migrants and those who remain in the country of origin, with remittances being of significant importance. Remittances and investments in the country of origin were and to date are key in Morocco's emigration culture, one of the factors creating an 'idealisation' of Europe as Eldorado. Restrictive immigration to Europe can also reinforce the contrast of being immobile and become 'an important dimension of social differentiation' (ibid.). The effect this has on the young generation that feels involuntarily 'immobilised' while being exposed to an increasingly 'globalised' world, will be discussed in chapter 5.

In a capitalist world system based on profit for the Core, the global Periphery and Semi-Periphery, as well as in the internal periphery (lower class) and semi-periphery (middle class), are crucial elements because the system could otherwise not function (Wallerstein 1974a: 3). Restrictive immigration policies are part of this scheme, where immigrants are allowed if they are of use for the Core's profit, i.e., if they are highly skilled labourers who will help in advancing the Core's economy. The Semi-Periphery is of particular importance in 'balancing out' an otherwise polarised world-system of Core and Periphery (Wallerstein 1974b: 405). Its task is mostly to give political stability, meaning that 'the upper stratum is not faced with the unified opposition of all the others because the middle stratum is both exploited and exploiter' (Wallerstein 1974b: 405). As such, the Semi-Periphery exploits the periphery for its primary production but also for its labour force to fill areas the Semi-Periphery 'no longer wants to do'. On the other hand, the Semi-Periphery is being exploited by the Core for, e.g., its lower wages.

As explained in chapter 2, the structure that holds the capitalist world economy together is the division of labour (Wallerstein 2006: 24); where people acquire specific jobs on the basis of their human capital, (education and skills), shaping their symbolic capital (Bourdieu 1989: 17), meaning their prestige and honour (or the lack of). During Post-Fordism, the outsourcing of production to low-wage economies, with lower taxes and lower labour costs, created a 'new international division of labour' (Harriss 2000: 335). In Morocco, the most profitable industries were gradually privatised and gave rise to new

elites who profited from their transnational roles in capital accumulation (Castles and Miller 2009: 55), joining the political and economic power that had always belonged to the *makhzen* (The New Arab 2015). Market penetrations that were once assisted by colonial regimes, became enabled 'by neo-colonial governments and multinational firms that perpetuate the power of national elites who either participate in the world economy as capitalists themselves or offer their nation's resources to global firms on acceptable terms' (Massey 1999a: 41). Lower wages and special export-processing zones, where taxation is low or inexistent are implemented to attract foreign companies (Massey 1999a: 41), as is the case in, e.g. the Tangier Free Zone of Morocco. Foreign companies outsource their labour for the production of all sorts, from shrimp peeling to textile manufacturing to building parts for the automobile industry. In export-oriented activity and free trade zones, the demanded low-cost labour is often female, as women and girls are more likely to accept exploitative working conditions (Beall 2000: 433, 435).

Figure 5
Shrimp peeling factory in Tangier [24]

Source: Yabaldi (2019)

While newly created jobs in the special export-processing zones strengthen local labour markets on a macro level, its impact on traditional gender roles on the micro level was a crucial part in the social transformation of Morocco. As female labour force became

increasingly preferred, the consequences on the social structure of traditional households was significant, where men are normally seen as breadwinners, a social construct still predominant in socioeconomically deprived, peripheral, neighbourhoods (Jiménez Álvarez 2003: 55). As it became increasingly difficult for men to find formal work, many became unemployed or took up informal work, which is known for irregular and insecure working conditions with little pay, insufficient to support a family. In the social structure of traditional households, the loss of men's roles as breadwinners is equal to the loss of status as father and husband (Jiménez Álvarez 2003: 55). Loss of paternal authority is often replaced by physical violence (M'Jid 2005: 41), some men become depressed or alcoholic (ibid.; Jiménez Álvarez 2003: 55), and it is not seldom that they abandon the family (Allsebrook and Swift 1989: 52). The latter has dire consequences for the socioeconomic status of women and children, with female-headed households in Morocco known to be the most vulnerable family units in the country (Skalli 2001: 81). The restructuring of the economy also has implications in the social services sector, affecting the Moroccan health and education system. With the Moroccan state disengaging in public expenditure, the cancellation of subsidies has increased the vulnerability of the already vulnerable, in particular divorced, single or widowed women and their children (ibid.: 83).

Those who are not or no longer employed in factories, frequently need to resort to precarious work conditions of the informal market in order to escape poverty. Home-based activities include sewing and knitting, but women also engage in domestic work, small-scale trade, sale of home-cooked food or of smuggled goods (ibid.: 84). Others sometimes engage in or are forced into 's/exploitation of an expanding, though invisible, market of prostitution' (ibid.: 84), where they are exposed to abuse and rape, 'in a society that is not ready to accept the consequences of either prostitution or rape' (ibid.: 84). Single mothers are among the most scorned of Moroccan society.

Moroccan women and girls not seldomly need to do double and triple chores as they continue to be responsible for the household and upbringing of the children (Jiménez Álvarez 2003: 55), which in families of lower socioeconomic status is rarely shared with the male members of the family. Changes in the social structures of family units where mothers work have a direct effect on the upbringing of children, who are either being taken care of by extended family or left to themselves (ibid.). Many children who receive no or little care will linger in the streets (M'Jid 2005: 34–5). UNICEF estimates that there are about 25,000 street children in Moroccan cities, a quarter of them located in the streets of Casablanca (Ciliberti and Badillo 2015: 114).

Male unemployment also led to a rising participation in family income-earning by children and the elderly (Beall 2000: 435), and sometimes children represent the only source of income for the entire family (M'Jid 2005: 41). Large numbers of underprivileged boys under the age of 10 can be seen begging, shoe-shining, or selling paper tissues in Moroccan cities, whereas girls are likely to be sent away as *petites bonnes,* domestic workers for affluent families or to work in factories, mentioned above. Skalli (2001: 84) points out that the vicious circle of female poverty and illiteracy continues as young girls of socioeconomic deprived background enter the labour market, at an age where they should attend school. Boys as of 10 years of age often work as apprentices in workshops as manual labourers, and have the responsibilities of adult men, contributing to the household income or providing for parents and siblings, as will be explained in more detail in chapter 5.

At the same time, the feminisation of the work force has a further important consequence in that women and youngsters are socialised 'for industrial work and modern consumption, albeit without providing a lifetime income capable of meeting these needs' (Massey 1999a: 41). Massey argues that '[t]he result is the creation of a population that is socially and economically uprooted and prone to migration' (ibid.), as the ideological and materialistic links with capitalist Core countries is reinforced. Skalli (2001: 84) writes that rural to urban migration is increasingly female as women migrate to the cities in order to escape rural poverty and unemployment, and continues observing that there is also an increase in skilled and unskilled female Moroccan emigration to Europe since the 1990s, in particular of single or divorced women (ibid.). Ribas Mateos (2005: 35) sees the increase of female Moroccan emigration as a precursor to Moroccan youth migration, especially visible in the city of Tangier. Here, a contemporary urban environment of consumerism is combined with an old tradition of mobility (ibid.: 46), where the shores of southern Spain are in visible distance, facilitating the 'imagination of departure' (Vacchiano 2007b: 6).

In line with Practice Theory, the consequences of the external structures that are being explained with WSA have thus a direct impact on the internal structures, and in particular, habitus. The social transformation society undergoes, especially in this case of socioeconomically deprived families, influences their habitus, i.e., shaping their ways of doing, acting, thinking, as explained in chapter 2. I will explain further below what impact this has in terms of independent youth migration.

4.6 Morocco in the Semi-Periphery

Today 'Morocco is at a critical juncture in its development', according to the World Bank (2019b). A new Country Partnership Framework with the World Bank for the period 2019–24 was launched for under the leadership of King Mohammed VI, in order 'to set the country on track to meet the challenges of global competition, national social cohesion, job creation and human capital development' (World Bank 2019b). Due to 'sound fiscal and monetary policies, more consistent sector strategies, and an improved investment environment', the World Bank expects Morocco's economic performance to increase over the medium term, 'mainly be driven by more dynamic secondary and tertiary activities, bolstered by substantial foreign investments in the automotive and aeronautic industries as well as expanding services to businesses and households' (World Bank 2019c). The OECD is similarly positive in their 2017 report, noting that with Morocco's new constitution adopted in 2011, complemented from 2012 to 2016 by a legal and institutional framework that enables 'sound economic governance', it has 'not only implemented economic policies designed to prevent crises and to preserve macroeconomic and social stability, but has also consolidated the process for achieving public strategies and policies, both sectoral and cross-cutting, and has initiated others of no less importance, thereby laying the bases for a more appropriate and inclusive model of development' (OECD 2017 19).

However, the World Bank also writes that Morocco's economy remains 'volatile', and warns that it is of particular risk for the population 'just above the poverty line', where 'a small negative shock can push this group back into poverty' (World Bank 2019c). The World Bank also points out that 'the numbers of poor and those not poor but vulnerable to falling into poverty are strikingly high: more than 25% of the population, or nearly 10 million Moroccans, can be considered poor or at risk of poverty' (World Bank 2019c). This number is certainly not insignificant, it corresponds approximately with the number of inhabitants of Belgium or Sweden. Three out of the four million Moroccans living under the poverty line are to be found in rural areas (Borgen Project 2014), formerly designated as *'le Maroc inutile'*, deliberately ignored for decades with no access to running water, toilets, and electricity (Arab 2013, sec.986: para 48). To this day, the rural population of these regions continues to be strikingly poor, not only in economic but also in social terms, where absolute misery, individually and socially, reigns (Arab 2013, sec.960: para 45). The most socioeconomically deprived are landless people, rural wage earners, unemployed young people and women (Borgen Project 2014), with the highest

poverty rates and exclusion of the latter, in particular if they are widowed, divorced or single mothers, illiterate and unskilled (Skalli 2001: 73, 81).

As discussed earlier, in rural areas, Morocco has witnessed several rural exoduses over the past two centuries, with rural dwellers desperate to move out of their dire conditions in hope of finding jobs in the cities, contributing to the growth of shanty towns. Their inhabitants continue to be among the most socioeconomically deprived of the Moroccan population, and, as already mentioned, the young *harraga* this thesis is concerned with are from this urban periphery of a country in the Semi-Periphery.

As argued earlier, the Semi-Periphery holds an important role in economic and geopolitical terms, but also in regard to international migration. As de Haas (2007c: 834) points out, 'countries with lower-income, or bottom of middle-income range (such as Mexico, North African countries, and the Philippines)', i.e. countries in the Semi-Periphery, are the 'world's main labour exporters', contrary to common belief that it would be countries with the lowest GNP and the highest population growth, i.e., countries in the Periphery. These 'labour exporter countries' of the Semi-Periphery defines de Haas (2007a: 58)

> by upper lower- and lower middle-income levels, sharply falling birth rates, rather high, but decreasing, population growth, and a steep increase in the number of young adults entering the labour market. Their modest social, economic, and infrastructural development is thought to motivate and enable people to emigrate in large numbers.

Morocco's transition into the Semi-Periphery is reminiscent of the changes in Spain and other northern Mediterranean countries when they gradually shifted into the Semi-Periphery as of the 1980s until finally joining the EU and thus the European Core in the 1990s[25]. King (2001: 2) describes the Mediterranean countries as being 'united in their poverty and relative overpopulation' until well into the 1960s, having economically and demographically more in common with their southern Mediterranean neighbours than with the northern European countries (ibid:8). At a statistical level, King (ibid.) argues, the 'steepness of the economic and demographic gradient across the Mediterranean increased considerably between the 1960s and 1980s', northern Mediterranean countries shifted from emigration to immigration countries, gradually joining the European Core, leaving their southern Mediterranean neighbours 'behind' in the global Periphery. The resulting socioeconomic differences between the northern and southern shores became so important that the Mediterranean Sea was named the European 'Rio Grande' (Rufin cited in King 2001: 8), a metaphor for one of the most important 'borders' of global inequality (Ribas-Mateos 2001: 29), a liquid frontier separating the rich north (Europe)

from the poor south (North Africa […]) and temptingly open to migrant crossings' (King 2001: 8).

However, today still, Northern Mediterranean countries are not seldomly challenged with falling back into the Semi-Periphery, especially perceivable during the economic crisis of the early 2000s. One important shared struggle of southern and northern Mediterranean countries is contemporary youth unemployment, further discussed in chapter 5.

As explained in chapter 2, the increasing exposure to a global (capitalist) market leads to a social transformation that often starts in agriculture (Castles and Miller 2009: 54; Massey 1999a: 41). It undermines traditional forms of social and economic organisation giving way to a capitalist order of society (Massey 1999a: 41). Ribas Mateos (2001: 28-9) explains the transformation of Spain while shifting into the Semi-Periphery. They key features lay in the

> processes of modernisation, urbanisation and tertiarisation; the dynamism of the informal sector; the importance of small-scale enterprises; an enhanced level of education for most young people leading to the rejection of manual work; and a sharply defined conception of social and family prestige reflected in attitudes towards acceptable and unacceptable types of work.

The 'unacceptable types of work' were being mostly performed by immigrants. The arising demand of low-skilled labour in Spain which was filled by immigrants is a specific characteristic of the labour market in southern Europe. Here, the labour market is not only highly segmented and partly dualistic, but also informal and dynamic, where migrants insert themselves into specific employment niches (Ribas-Mateos 2001: 29). Autonomous jobs (e.g., street vendors, petty tradesmen) and irregular jobs (e.g., agricultural or construction sector, local manufacturing industries) further characterise the southern European labour markets – in southern Italy, Spain, Greece, and southern France (ibid.; see also Reyneri 2003). This had an impact on irregular migration from Morocco as of the 1990s. Low-skilled Moroccans moved predominantly to Spain and Italy, to seek employment in agriculture, construction, and the service sector (de Haas 2007a: 48). The employment in these countries was low-paid, so that nationals did not want to work in these sectors, but in comparison, they were much more lucrative than similar or identical jobs in Morocco. In the 1990s and 2000s, Italy and Spain granted legal status to 'hundreds of thousands of undocumented Moroccan migrants through successive legalisation campaigns' (ibid.) which encouraged people further to seek employment in these countries.

With Morocco's move into the Semi-Periphery, agricultural work is increasingly becoming 'unacceptable', with young people rather 'not working at all than on their family's land' (Arab 2013: 933, para. 43). Agricultural workers earn around 30 to 40 dirhams a day,[26] very little for Moroccan standards, encouraging young people to seek work elsewhere (Arab 2013: 960, para. 46). Ironically, it is however often in agriculture that Moroccan rural youth will find work if they make it to the south of Spain (Arab 2013: 933: para. 43), where they will be exploited once again only with a slightly higher salary. What is considered 'unacceptable' work back home, becomes acceptable with a higher salary on the northern side of the Mediterranean. Despite conditions in Spain (or elsewhere in Europe) being exploitative, it is in any case considered 'better to be suffering in Europe than to be suffering in Morocco' (field interview Morocco 2016).

When young people distinguish between 'acceptable' and 'unacceptable' work, with 'unacceptable' work being part of the work the periphery lives off, e.g., agriculture, it is an indication that these young people see themselves as 'more advanced', having moved beyond the peripheral life of their parents or grandparents. Internal migration, i.e., the rural exodus, has 'elevated' the former peasants to a new urban population, seen as an 'upgrade' towards the core, despite the fact that they also often live in dire socioeconomic deprivation in urban or peri-urban settings. But despite these shortcomings, they have become part of the urban proletariat, and are no longer peasants. This new urban population is thus on the brink of, or already part of, a more 'prestigious' Moroccan internal semi-periphery. It is an important part in the functioning of the world system, which is based on inequality with the political rebellion of oppressed elements being a constant worry (Wallerstein 1974a: 4). Those in the internal semi-periphery, the 'middle sector', are therefore stimulated 'to think of themselves primarily as better off than the lower sector rather than as worse off than the upper sector' (ibid.). It again shows how external structures are being incorporated into internal structures, i.e., habitus. The consequences of increase in symbolic capital on the micro level will be discussed in chapter 5.

The closeness to Spain and Europe with supposedly 'better opportunities', is something that has been shaped by the topics discussed in this chapter. Colonial and post-colonial factors, including former migrations, in particular the guest-worker programs, and how the Moroccan diaspora has shaped ideals of aspired capitalism and their impact in Morocco's development through remittances have structured independent youth migration that became apparent about 2 decades ago. As a result of Morocco's move into the Semi-Periphery the widening gap between internal periphery and core has become an

everyday reality for Morocco's youth from the periphery. With the feminisation of outsourced labour during post-Fordism and with it the increasing inclusion into a capitalist market, women and children have become socialised for modern consumption. Children grow up with a focus on Western consumer goods and lifestyle, resulting in critical intergenerational changes in moral, social and family values (Bennani-Chraïbi 1995, p.14) and in promoting an occidental mindset of 'climbing the social ladder' (Suárez Navaz 2006: 30–1). Today's connections of 'production and consumerism, internet and TV, tourism and advertising' (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 2007: 260) are tools for an increasing disclosure of profound dividing lines and contrasts (ibid.: 238) and key in understanding today's 'global generation' (2007: 260).

4.7 Global consumerism in the Semi-Peripheral context

In today's world, consumerism is equated with happiness (Gómez Bahillo 2014, p.11) as the increasing 'production of attractions and temptations', feigns a future improvement and an escape from deprivation (Bauman 1998: 78). Wealth is adored (ibid.: 94), and some critiques of capitalism argue that people are 'lured into complicity with capitalism' because of their craving for goods that seemingly satisfy their desires, giving their lives meaning (Moore 2011: 24-25). Economic indicators are seen as measures of a nation's and their citizens' progress, satisfaction and feelings of security, regardless of what the reality for individuals of that very country looks like[27] (Gómez Bahillo 2014, p.11). The Western world has exported this myth of being a paradise of consumerism and abundance into the non-Western world for many years (ibid.), influencing ideologies and criteria of 'a better life' (Seabrook (2004: 7–8). The desire to migrate has always been closely linked to colonialism, industrialisation, or military presence, and Seabrook thinks that the spread of a single global culture can have a greater impact on other societies than war, especially if there is 'a promise to end poverty', as '[d]elivery from poverty and insecurity is the most ancient of human dreams' (ibid.: 7). Yet, as Castles (2016, sec. 43: 00) argues, while poverty can be stifling, people do not seek to migrate 'just because of poverty'. In fact, it has been argued that it is not the most impoverished that migrate as they lack the means to do so (de Haas 2005a: 1271). Poverty has been a motivating factor in many countries for a very long time but people tend to migrate because of a perception that there is a difference between earning a living elsewhere and their existing livelihoods which are becoming unviable (ibid.). De Haas (2005a: 1271) explains that the exposure to global markets stimulates economic growth, which ultimately leads to higher incomes, but at the same time increases income inequality. As I have explained earlier, the feminization of labour

force in the Moroccan periphery has socialised women and youth for modern consumption without providing the necessary economic capital for partaking in it. Improved education, with certain jobs becoming 'unacceptable', increased media exposure and the awareness of the greater wealth of others, lead to feelings of relative deprivation (ibid.; Portes 2009: 13–14). It makes people feel increasingly impoverished, according to Bauman (2013: 88), creating an '[…] overwhelming […] desire to taste, if only for a fleeting moment, the bliss of choosing. The more choices the rich seem to have, the less bearable to all is a life without choosing' (ibid.). Global consumerism plays a crucial role in perception of difference, as I observed during fieldwork in Tangier when its first shopping mall opened in April 2016.

> I went to see Tangier's first shopping mall, which is a world apart from the traditional shopping areas in Tangier. It could well be a shopping mall somewhere in Europe, if it wasn't for the crowd. The number of people was impressive, and many stood in stark contrast to the European shops, as they were dressed in their usual manner with Moroccan *djelabas* and *babouches*. They came to look at the modern, expensive stores and, especially, to ride the escalators, because I can't think of any other publicly accessible building in Tangier with an escalator […]. Guards were helping them to get on and off, and people were screaming and laughing. The atmosphere was a little like being at the fair, balloons were given out to the children and they could ride around on toy cars […]. A. [my translator] jokingly said, *Who do they think is going to be able to buy something here? It will just make people feel even poorer.* (Fieldnotes Morocco 2016, tba(G))

The growing global inequality is the inevitable dynamic of a capitalist world according to Wallerstein (1996: 18), which can stimulate the desire to look for better opportunities elsewhere (de Haas 2005a: 1271) and a reason for leaving home (Arab 2013, sec. 933: para. 42). As de Haas (2007c: 833) writes,

> As long as aspirations increase faster than the livelihood opportunities in sending regions and countries, social and economic development will tend to coincide with sustained or increased out-migration.

James Ferguson (2006: 186–7) writes that many 'ordinary Africans' see that due to their 'shameful inadequate socioeconomic conditions and their low global rank in relation to other places', they are denied the 'global status' and the 'political economic condition' of being part of the 'first class', i.e., the Core. Vacchiano (2014: 9–10) points out that '[y]oung Moroccans, as with their peers in many other places around the globe, grow up with the legitimate ambition to embrace this status', i.e., to be part of the 'first class' Core. This is not just a 'caprice' of today's young people influenced by capitalism. As I have explained earlier in this chapter, in pre-colonial Morocco families put themselves into debt with the rise of capitalist consumerism, when tea and sugar became commodities, bringing

about 'newly acquired tastes' (Burke 1976: 23). Today, the interconnections created by capitalism are increasingly globalised and painfully demonstrate relative deprivation. It has a significant impact among the young generation (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim (2007: 260), because while youth relate to local social structures and cultural patterns, they are also connected to global culture (Honwana 2014: 30). They grow up with similar advertising, music and movies (Montgomery 2009: 208), predominantly capitalist, where even children are addressed as consumers, contrary to earlier 'versions' or other social constructions of childhood where children and adolescents were/are seen as producers in society (Montgomery 2009: 67). Comaroff and Comaroff (2005: 25) argue that it has led to the rise of a global 'youth culture', with the term 'teenager' being invented by the marketing industry as the pre-adult evolved as 'the new model consumer-citizen'. Youth becoming consumers created a market addressing them with their own commodities, e.g. 'clothes, music, magazines, dances', that gave them an identity distinct from the 'soiled and compromised parent culture' (Hebdige cited in ibid.), as I will discuss in chapter 7.

Figure 6 shows examples of a globalised capitalist consumer culture, addressing a (predominantly young) Moroccan consumer.

Figure 6
Examples of capitalist consumerism in Morocco

Coca Cola in Morocco

McDonalds in Tangier

Pizza Hut at Tangier Mall

Fake 'Nike' shoes

Source: Author's photos, with exception of Pizza Hut photo (Challenge 2016)

The symbolic capital associated with success and supposedly being part of a 'youth culture' core shaped by capitalist consumerism, translates for young men from the Moroccan periphery into wearing branded clothes, e.g., Nike shoes, and being in possession of other goods associated with wealth, e.g., big cars, money in Western currency, gold chains, expensive watches. In Morocco, the boys and young men that are part of a 'youth culture' are being referred to as *shabab,* having a rather homogenous view of socioeconomic reality (Juntunen 2015). Brand products are associated with a symbolic power, giving 'a feeling of belonging to the 'first class' core with access to symbolic capital, 'elevating' the *shabab* into being 'men' (discussed in chapter 6). For the *shabab* signs of poverty and misery are seen as humiliating and inflict shame, *hshuma* (chapter 5), clothing demonstrating capitalist consumerism is thus a crucial 'exterior sign' of 'being someone' (cf. ibid.).

In a conversation with a Moroccan UAM in Sweden (field interview 2016 (S) tba), he proudly told me that he had many Nike shoes of different colours but that they were too

expensive in Sweden for him to buy. Having made fun of me because I was still using the same smartphone from when I had first met him a year earlier in Belgium, he apparently assumed that my financial situation was so dire that it wasn't worth asking me to buy him Nikes in Sweden. He flashed his brand-new iPhone (which he assured me was a present from his host mother and not stolen) and paid for my pizza. However, he asked if I could bring him a pair of Nike imitations from Morocco next time I would go there. 'They are much cheaper', he said. 'Yes, but they are fake', I replied, to which he answered, 'That doesn't matter. No one knows they are fake unless you have a really close look. I just want to have as many Nikes as possible!' Indeed, his Facebook page was full of photos with the newest Nikes, brand clothes, haircuts, sunglasses, posing as 'the cool guy'. I asked him what colour he preferred, to which he replied, 'Doesn't matter. Just NOT (emphasis) anything pink or girlish! [laughs] Well, you know… And make sure you get me the latest model, not one from last year or so! [laughs]'.

Being socialised for modern consumption in the context of a global youth culture, combined with lack of social and economic capital to participate in it, increases the feeling of relative deprivation for the *shabab*. In combination with an involuntary immobility, irregular out-migration becomes a 'vital imperative, by which the subject finds a possibility of self-determination and differentiation' (Vacchiano 2014: 9–10). The inability to self-fulfil and remain in the periphery can become so unbearable that leaving the country becomes an 'obsession' that needs to be realised under all circumstances (fieldwork Morocco 2016, see also Arab 2003: 74).

A UAM in Belgium explained (fieldwork 2016),

> 'It's typical ... in Morocco [to emigrate]. In every city, you find half of the city in Europe. After a while they [emigrants] come [to visit] with the car and it's like seducing. And you already finished university, your master, and you can't find a job. You work as haircut [hairdresser] or something. And you find your friends, they want to go to Europe because they have [like] a burning from inside. What am I [still] doing here [in Morocco]? They don't know, the guy who comes with car and family, they don't know what he [has been] through in Europe. Even if he explains that to them, they say no, he is lying. Maybe he doesn't want us to be [rich] like him. That happens a lot in Morocco. They think, I want to go to Europe and finish!'

Irregular migration, *hrig* in Moroccan dialect, for young Moroccan males of the Moroccan periphery, is often seen as the only possibility of 'building a future' and making it possible to become 'a man' (Juntunen 2015) in the sense of increasing one's symbolic capital and being 'a provider'. The 'good life' related to capitalist consumerism is also

synonymous with freedom and autonomy (Suárez Navaz 2006: 30). Wallerstein (1996: 131) argued that the Core countries of the world have not only accumulated wealth, but also established a 'universalizing model of freedom', i.e., democracy, with a legal and moral priority of human rights to its citizens. Moroccans are yearning to have their basic rights respected, want social justice, liberty, and equality (field interview in a high school of a deprived neighbourhood in Tangier 2016). Some even dream of a better education in Europe despite that it is often the least of their worries in their home settings and where it is predominantly social and economic betterment they are interested in (fieldwork ibid.). Well aware that they need to reach Europe before turning eighteen in order to be granted stay as UAM, young *harraga* I interviewed in Tangier (2016), repeatedly spoke of *el centro* [reception centre for UAM] as a key aspect in their migration project. They imagined arriving in a land of plenty that respects their rights, and where they would be welcomed with expensive consumer articles such iPhones and Nike shoes, in addition to receiving 'money for nothing' and free accommodation in a luxurious setting, because 'there [Europe] everything is possible and they respect children' (field interview ibid.). In chapter 8 I will discuss the consequences of this utopian dream being shattered.

4.8 Independent youth migrants: new actors in migration

However, youth are not merely consumers of the globalised world they live in, but they are also 'both a force and a product of globalization' (Maira and Soep 2005: xx). The ability to access information and imagery from across the globe was unknown to former generations and enables newer generations to 'cross boundaries of class, culture and ethnicities', which can 'encourage them to question traditional forms of authority' and see 'possibilities of living differently' (Seidler 2006: 21). As writes Shepler (2005: 130), in many parts of the world 'youth power is realized through youth reinventing themselves through consumption', but also, beyond materialistic consumerism. Youth can show power by other means; knowing that it is possible for minors who migrate alone to be granted stay in the EU is an example of their agency through the 'ironic power of powerlessness' (ibid.), 'legitimated through international structures' (ibid.: 131).

Young *harraga* are autonomous in their migration, i.e. they are not 'being sent' by the parents, which is another demonstration of their agency and clearly formulated in this field interview with a former Moroccan UAM (Sweden October 2016, (S), tba):

> In 1994 [my parents] got a satellite dish, and then we were watching this German TV channel called VIVA. We saw all these blondes, beautiful and all, dancing. And you know that in your own future, you're not going to have this, no blondes, no shit, no nothing. You're not even going to school; you're not going to do anything [with your

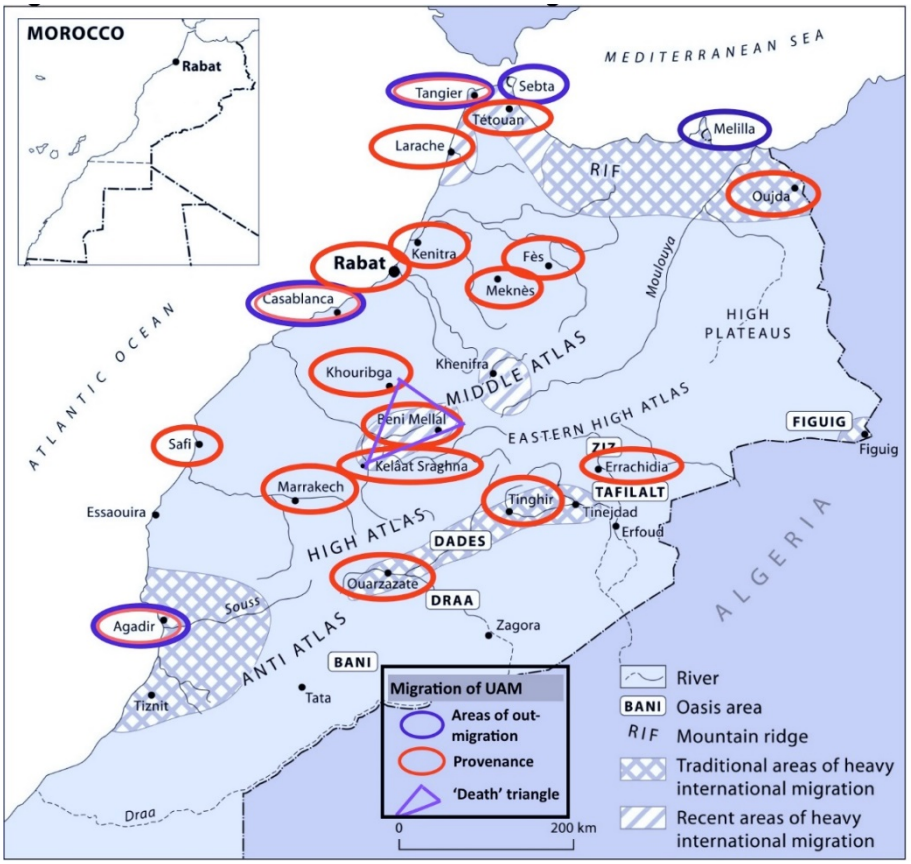
> life]. See what I mean? […] So, if you were smart you left Morocco. I was one of the smarter ones and I left [at the end of the 1990s]. We were one of the first ones [UAM] to arrive in Europe.

As point out Bakewell et. al. (2011: 11-12), 'agency is exercised within the conditions created by structures', and structures like e.g. colonialism, immigration policies or economic development, can create the settings for pioneer migration and migration systems formation. Pioneer migrants are the first ones to 'pave the way' (ibid.: 12) forming a particular migration system, i.e. creating the necessary social and economic structures, in particular networks, to make a new migration self-perpetuating (ibid.: 6). In this chapter I have discussed how the structures mentioned by Bakewell et. al. have shaped Moroccan youth migration, and in chapter 7, I will elaborate my argument that EU immigration policies have further influenced this new migration of Moroccan youth. As said, being a UAM is nowadays one of the only possibilities of being granted stay in the EU (until the minor comes of age and can be deported), and an indication why young Moroccan migrants are increasingly younger. The migration projects and routes of young Moroccan migrants are different from those of their adult peers, which means that the first ones to undertake the *hrig* in the 1990s/2000s were pioneer migrants and have created a new migration system. This indicates that they are new actors in migration (see also, e.g., Suárez Navaz 2006; Gimeno Monterde 2014; Jiménez Álvarez 2005b).

While traditional out-migration derived from specific zones, as shown in figure 4, the particularity of irregular youth migration from Morocco is that while they originate from nearly everywhere, they nevertheless show three distinct profiles:

- Urban and rural areas that have a history of international migration
- Urban areas that have been populated during the rural exodus
- Rural towns that have transformed into smaller urban towns.

Figure 7
Out-migration of Moroccan Youth Harraga



Source: Author's field study, combined with findings by Cabrera Medina (2013) for Larache and Tinghir, and by Arab (2013) for the death triangle[28]

Author's elaboration from de Haas' map (2007a: 52).

The majority of boys met during fieldwork were from Tangier, followed by those from Casablanca; in Sweden a fair number of boys were from Fes. Other big cities were mentioned to a much lesser extent.[29] When asked which neighbourhoods of the specific cities they were from, they would exclusively name a peripheral neighbourhood, i.e., a shantytown or former shantytown, meaning they are descendants of internal migrants.

Table 3
Fieldwork data

Place of fieldwork	Provenance of roaming youth	Approximate no. of youth met
Tangier, Morocco	Tangier, Tétouan, Larache, Ksar el-Kbir, Kenitra, Rabat, Casablanca, Safi, Agadir, Laayoune	50
Casablanca, Morocco	Casablanca, Marrakech	10
Ceuta, Spain	Tangier, Casablanca	10
Brussels, Belgium	Tangier, Nador, Oujda, Casablanca, Agadir, Ouarzazate, Errachidia	20
Malmö, Sweden	Tangier, Nador, Beni Mellal, Agadir	20
Stockholm, Sweden	Tangier, Tétouan, Nador, Oujda, Fès, Casablanca, Beni Mellal, Marrakech, Laayoune	50

It is also notable that the young migrants' urban peers from the cities of Casablanca and Safi (Antonelli 2012: 86) are more likely to migrate to Turin, Genoa (Ricucci 2012: 21) or Bologna (Antonelli 2012: 86), whereas most adult immigrants of Moroccan urban background are situated in Milan and the Lombardy region (Arab 2013, sec. 3673). This again is an interesting indication that youth migrants focus on different migration routes and destinations, depending on their origins and reasons for migration, differing from Moroccan adult migration and even from their established communities in Europe.

What is of particular interest here is that young Moroccan migrants build on traditional migration routes of former generations, i.e., their emigration culture is based on specific European countries they have a historical relationship with and as such, have been incorporated as part of their habitus. In other words, a young Riffian will most likely not attempt to migrate to France, but rather to Spain, or a European country where his elders were sent as guest workers. However, different from former generations is that Moroccan youth are not only emigrating from traditional or more recent areas of out-migration that are indicated on de Haas' map, but that most are of economically deprived urban or peri-urban background that needs to be seen in the post-Fordist and post-colonial perspective I have discussed in this chapter. This is especially the case with newer developed urban areas of Morocco's north, referred to as *Bilad Harraga*, the 'country of the *harraga*' (Juntunen 2015) and confirms that an important number of young people who emigrate internationally are the progeny of internal rural to urban migrants who have settled in the shantytowns of (northern) Moroccan cities. Further, young people from rural areas from former expanding towns that have evolved into new urban centres

through remittances are also engaging in international irregular migration. Whereas it was once adults from the mountainous Berber areas migrating internally and to France, it is now predominantly youth from the Arab-speaking plains that seek to leave clandestinely to Europe (Arab 2013, secs 932: para. 41–2). Importantly, as argued earlier, despite that they are from the Moroccan periphery, they are not from the poorest strata of the population but rather from a background that has been significantly exposed to and socialised for capitalism. Moroccan independent youth migration demonstrates how external structures, i.e., capitalist development and migration policy, have influenced newer migration patterns. The more recent hubs of Moroccan youth migration coincide with Berriane et al.'s (2012: 51) study on irregular (adult) migration from Morocco to predominantly Spain (ibid.: 52) with its attraction of the 'immigrant labour niche', discussed earlier, and the possibility of obtaining residence permits. This supports the argument that Moroccan youth migration is not only shaped by the earlier discussed colonial and postcolonial influences in international but also internal migration, the guest-worker programs and the Moroccan diaspora's remittances impacting the development of their hometowns. More recent EU migration policy developments have influenced their irregular migration routes towards the labour niches and to the fact that they, as minors, engage in this migration, making the argument of them being new actors in migration a plausible one.[30]

It is important to point out that not only young Moroccans are part of this new 'phenomenon' and new actors in migration, but rather that youth across the globe is affected and increasingly engages in independent youth migration, as pointed out in chapter 2. While children and adolescents have always migrated independently, today's youth migrations are distinct in that they have a much wider global span with important socioeconomic consequences, influencing social transformations of their countries of origin (Ribas Mateos 2005: 33) and are social actors who 'position themselves as a solution to the various challenges related to improving their own life opportunities' (Orgocka 2012: 4) and/or that of their families. It therefore seems that the young *harraga*, together with other youth migrants around the globe, are part of a new pattern in international migration. In the following chapter, I will take a closer look at the socioeconomic circumstances young Moroccans in particular face today, which may or may not encourage them to look for better opportunities elsewhere.

4.9 Conclusion

In this chapter, I have outlined through the theoretical framework of WSA, how the independent migration of Moroccan youth emerged over time from previous Moroccan adult migrations. For this, I have argued, it is important to look at historical aspects of the introduction of global capitalism into non-capitalist Morocco, and how it has shaped internal, and later international migration. The conceptual framework of WSA illustrating the 'historical relationship between colonialism and many contemporary flows, the role of the state in migration processes, and the unequal political and economic relationship between states' (O'Reilly 2012a: 34), enables us to explain resultant political and economic occurrences in Morocco, which in turn created the independent migration of Moroccan youth. Migration is thus one of the elements characteristic of the domination by the Core of the Periphery and Semi-Periphery (O'Reilly 2012a, p.34).

In line with WSA, I have discussed that the spread of global capitalism has not only enhanced global inequality, but that it transforms societies with 'major shifts in dominant power relationships' (Castles and Miller 2009: 54). With traditional economic structures being compromised into the global political-economic system (Castles et al. 2014: 32), internal and international migration are being spurred, and both internal and especially international migration bring further social transformation with it.

De Haas (2007a: 46) sees the colonial and post-colonial migration patterns, followed by the guest-worker migrations, as 'a modified continuation and spatial extension of ancient patterns of circular migration'. It was with the end of the guest-worker programmes that circular migration became permanent migration due to increasingly restrictive immigration policies on the EU side, so that people decided to stay and bring their families instead of returning to Morocco which was hit by severe political and economic hardship at the time. With this, former circular migration patterns have turned into permanent migration, enhancing irregular migration, as the possibilities to immigrate regularly are very limited for lower-skilled labour from the global Periphery and Semi-Periphery. Carling (2002) writes that the abolishment of circular migration affects both migrants and those who remain in the country of origin, with remittances being of particular influence in the decision to stay permanently in a foreign country. Being immobile can 'become an important dimension of social differentiation' (Carling 2002: 7–8).

Young Moroccans are especially affected by the possibilities a global capitalist world has to offer in combination with the emigration culture their habitus is shaped by while at the same time they are confronted with inequality and 'involuntary immobility' (ibid.:

7). Previous migrations – especially the *guest-worker programs* and the diaspora which has established significant ideological and material links – in combination with the social transformation Morocco underwent over the past decades have had an important impact on the 'creation' of youth migrants. The move into the Semi-Periphery and with it the social transformation of Moroccan society, has affected even rural areas, as argued earlier, where the remittances of diasporas have helped to develop rural villages into urban centres in the rural regions. 'Unacceptable' types of work, e.g., agriculture, are increasingly frowned upon and modern city life has become desirable in global youth culture. In addition, the rise of female labour in the urban periphery is an important factor effecting a change in moral, social and family values.

The feeling of relative deprivation can affect the young 'global' generation, exposed to ideological and and material links with an imagined 'Eldorado' of consumerism, emphasised through global mass communications. Increasingly, young Moroccans also desire freedom to exercise their rights to travel, and to learn about other cultures, known to them from friends and families abroad (fieldwork 2014–16; see also Jiménez-Alvarez 2017: 414) who have emigrated in earlier years. Due to lack of job opportunities for the young generation but also a general loss of trust towards a government (*hogra*) that seems to provide for the Moroccan core only, young Moroccans experience an increasing disclosure of profound dividing lines between the periphery they find themselves in and the core of their home country. The possibility of being granted status as a UAM in Europe seems to be a way out of this dilemma, but only to be reached by engaging in irregular migration in the most dangerous ways while being under eighteen years of age.

How and under what circumstances Moroccan children and adolescents undertake the actual step of irregular migration since the 1990s will be explored in the following chapters. I will discuss how the internal structures, i.e. habitus and social capital, influence their decisions to take this step and how they put their migration into practice.

Notes

[1] there is much rivalry between boys who want to emigrate clandestinely, especially between those from Tangier and elsewhere from the country (see chapter 5)

[2] Meaning 'the West', as it is the geographically most western of the Arab countries.

[3] 'Higher Planning Commission' in French, Moroccan ministerial department producing official statistics.

[4] not including the disputed territory of Western Sahara.

[5] The word *al-makhzen*, in Spanish *'almacén'*, signifies 'warehouse'. In pre-colonial times, *al-makhzen* was the place where the goods collected as taxes were stored. By extension, it referred to the Moroccan government or administration collecting taxes (Burke, 1976: 12, 268).

[6] This is a simplified portrayal given that Morocco is an ethnically heterogenous country but considered sufficient in the scope of this thesis, and most relevant to Moroccan independent youth migration. In reality, most Moroccans who call themselves Arabs are descendants of both Arabs and Berbers, with the exception of some family dynasties mainly from Fes. There are also different Berber/Imazighen groups, with their own nobility, divided into further tribal groups and dialects, and even further into clans. Imazighen live in rural as well as urban settings (Marrakech being the most important Moroccan Berber city). There are also Arab tribes (e.g., Bedouins), and Arabs also live in rural as well as urban settings. Other ethnic groups are Sahrawi (from 'Western Sahara'), Haratin (former slaves from sub-Saharan Africa), Moroccan Jews (mainly in Casablanca). Each group can be situated in their own peripheral-core contexts (see also next footnote).

[7] One of the main *Amazigh* languages, *Tamazight* (or *Tamazirt*), was accredited second official language in Morocco in 2011. However, *Imazighen* are not a unified people, either. Within the Moroccan *Amazigh* groups, there are three major subgroups with different dialects and traditions, holding certain prejudices against one another. Crivello, whose anthropological research focuses on Berbers in the Rif Mountains in the north, explains that Berbers from the Rif refer to themselves as morally superior *shleuh al-'az* (Berbers of honour); Riffians refer to Berbers from the Middle Atlas as *shleuh al-haz* (Berbers of shame, referring to sexual promiscuity and general immorality); and finally, Soussi Berbers of the Anti-Atlas region are characterised by Riffians as *shleuh al-kinz* (Berbers of treasure, signifying greediness) (Crivello 2008, p.42).

[8] As points out Burke (1976: 7), the term 'tribe' in Morocco has caused controversy among scholars as it refers to 'a great variety of groups living quite different ways of life and having widely different political, social and economic structures'. Burke explains these differences in further detail, which I do not include here, as they are of little relevance to Morocco's inclusion in the capitalist world system and of the migration of Moroccan youth.

[9] This also explains why big Moroccan cities are located in the lowlands, especially along the Atlantic coast, where foreign administration was easier to manage, and why these cities have no representation of tribal life (Mikesell 1958: 505–6).

[10] In this case, French colonial settlers and their descendants, who were born in Algeria during the colonial period. The term *pieds noirs* further includes Algerian Jews who had obtained French nationality, as well as other European descendants born in 'French North Africa', i.e. Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia, during the colonial period.

[11] The total number of legally residing Moroccans is nevertheless much higher in France; see above.

[12] Spanish for women porters, *porteadoras* transport bundles of Spanish merchandise across the borders of Ceuta and Melilla into Morocco. Morocco does not impose custom taxes on anything carried as hand luggage without limitation of weight. Thousands of *porteadoras* of all ages cross the borders daily, carrying bundles of 70 to 90 kilos on their backs to deliver them to Moroccan retailers. As inhabitants of the border region, they do not have to show passports to cross the border, however, they are not allowed to stay in Spain overnight. Some cross the border several times a day to bring back as many bundles of merchandise as possible, earning them a commission or a profit of the sale between €10 and up to €60 a day. The women are considered as one of the

most socio-economically deprived Moroccan citizens and exposed to numerous human rights violations while doing their cross-border work. (European Association fort the Defence of Human Rights, 2017).

[13] Morocco was strategically important as neighbour Algeria, upon independence from France, was supported and armed by the USSR, and seen as a permanent threat to the Western world. Rivalry between the two North African countries intensified over the Western Sahara, which Morocco claimed to be part of 'Greater Morocco' (which at times included territorial claims for Mauritania, western Algeria, western Mali and the extreme north of Senegal, see Zunes 2007 :113) and resulted in an ongoing conflict when the Spanish left the territory of Western Sahara (then 'Spanish Sahara') in 1975.

[14] The absolute numbers of slum dwellers in developing countries has increased by 28% over the past 25 years, from 689 million in 1990 to 881 million in 2015, and numbers continue to be on the rise (UN Habitat 2015: 8).

[15] Great Britain, Belgium and France were the first Core countries to recruit immediately after WWII from the European periphery, especially from Italy and Spain. West Germany's 'economic miracle' enabled the country to join the European Core a few years later and it started recruiting labour as of 1955 from Italy, Spain and, as of 1960, from Greece. Switzerland, Luxemburg, the Netherlands and Sweden started recruitment in Europe's periphery in the 1960s (Hahamovitch 2003: 83-84, see also Castles and Miller 2009: 99–100). As of 1968, bilateral agreements were signed with Morocco, Tunisia, Turkey, Yugoslavia, and Portugal. Switzerland, West Germany and France held the highest percentage of guest-workers post WWII (Hahamovitch 2003: 83-84).

[16] The organisation of industrial mass production named after automobile producer Henry Ford, 'Fordism', was successful in most industrialised countries in the later twentieth century as a response to the near collapse of capitalism in the 1930s. Fordism was defined by Keynesian economics, that empower the state in terms of demanding and securing the conditions of mass consumption. It had a critical role to play in the development of capitalism, securing the conditions for mass production of homogenized, standardized goods, automated assembly lines and hierarchical discipline in firms. Mass consumption was achieved through advertising (Harriss 2000: 331). Higher ranking jobs were usually held by white men and guest workers were recruited for lower skilled work. Simultaneously, during Fordism, the labour movement fought for shorter working hours, safety at work, education for children and access to health care, making welfare 'fiscally viable' (ibid.: 332).

[17] This included southern and northern Mediterranean countries, especially Portugal, Spain, Italy, Greece, former Yugoslavia, Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, and Turkey (King, R. 2001: 2).

[18] i.e. Ireland and Finland (Castles and Miller 2009: 97)

[19] E.g. Mistiaen et al. (1995: 282) explain how the second and third generations in the immigrant neighbourhoods of Brussels continue to be marginalised, making clear that the move from the periphery into the core is a very difficult one.

[20] This, in fact, affected migrants not only on a European, but also on a world-wide scale. Carling (2002: 7) gives examples of 'increasing political barriers' in South Africa, Australia, and New Zealand.

[21] In the Moroccan case, the introduction of family reunification saved many women and children left behind from severe poverty, as they were dependent on their emigrated husbands' and fathers' remittances (Pham 2014: 41), which they were increasingly unable to send during the economic recession.

[22] Marrying a partner from the country of origin, e.g. Morocco, and bringing him/her legally to, in this case, Europe.

[23] The angle here is from a lower-skilled labour migration perspective and does not include high-skilled labour migration.

[24] Suárez Navaz (2006: 31) and Vacchiano and Jiménez (2012: 465) report of women and girls working for MNCs in the port of Tangier as cheap labour, peeling shrimps at freezing temperatures, which are then shipped to Europe. This needs to be done under the fastest and coldest conditions possible, to prevent deterioration of the product.

[25] with the exception of Italy, which was one of the first member states in 1951, Greece joined in 1981, Portugal and Spain in 1986. As the latter three were being ruled by dictatorships into the 1970s, it not only delayed their entry into the EU, but also their socioeconomic development.

[26] Approx. €3-4/day, i.e., less than €100/month; in comparison, the minimum wage in the private sector is approximately €1.20/hour, in the public sector €230/month (EIU 2014).

[27] Moore (2011: 25) points out that in recent years some western governments have started to follow Bhutan, where indicators of satisfaction based on GDP (gross domestic product) are replaced by GPI (genuine progress indicator), economic performances giving way to indicators of happiness of their population with an increased focus on the reduction of social inequality, unemployment and ill-health.

[28] The Death Triangle refers to an area that is known for the irregular migration of boys and men, (in)famous due to the high number of drowned victims from this area (Arab 2013, sec. 920: para. 40)

[29] It needs to be taken into account that some minors I have met in Belgium and Sweden may not have told me the truth of their provenance due to fear of being returned. Others may have mentioned a region/city they thought I would be familiar with instead of a smaller town, e.g., many minors in Tangier are from Ksar el-Kbir, a smaller town 100km from Tangier. Abroad they may have told me that they are from Tangier instead, because they emigrated via Tangier. When I became aware of this, I would try to ask which neighbourhood in Tangier they were from and sometimes they would tell me the name of a smaller town.

[30] I am not the first to argue this. Other Moroccan youth migration scholars (e.g. Suárez Navaz 2006; Gimeno Monterde 2014; Jiménez Álvarez 2005b) have brought the argument forward that Moroccan independent youth migrants are new actors in migration, yet have explored it from other angles.

5 Waithood, the *Shabab*, and the Youth *Harraga*

> Leaving the country. It was an obsession, a kind of madness that ate at him day and night: how could he get out, how could he escape this humiliation? Leaving, abandoning this land that wants nothing more to do with its children, turning your back on such a beautiful country to return one day, proudly, perhaps as a rich man: leaving to save your life, even as you risk losing it… He thought it all over and couldn't understand how he'd reached such a point. The obsession quickly became a curse: he felt persecuted, damned, possessed by the will to survive, emerging from a tunnel only to run into a wall. Day by day, his energy, physical strength, and healthy body were deteriorating. […]
>
> Azel says not a word about either his plan or his dream. […] He keeps it to himself, doesn't mention it to his sister, Kenza, still less to his mother […]. Even Azel has come to believe in the story of she who will appear and help them to cross, one by one, that distance separating them from life, the good life, or death.'
>
> (Tahar Ben Jelloun 2009, *Leaving Tangier*)

5.1 Introduction

The previous chapter explained the external structures of how Morocco's emigration culture has been shaped by moving into the global Semi-Periphery. In this chapter, I will move from the discussed macro-level and external structures in chapter 4 to the micro-level and internal structures of what it precisely means for young Moroccans to be in the global Semi-Periphery. In Practice Theory, it is especially habitus we are interested in, in order to explain internal structures. Habitus, according to Bourdieu (1986: 242–3) needs to be understood within the social field and symbolic capital, i.e., a combination of economic, social and cultural capital. Young males, *shabab*, strive for recognition through symbolic power that it is achieved through capitalist consumerism and, for some, through irregular migration. While most young Moroccans often face similar hardships in finding jobs that enable them to move into social adulthood, the internal structures, i.e. how their habitus, social field and symbolic capital are shaped, ultimately define who engages in the *hrig*, and who does not.

As discussed, those of poorer socioeconomic standing, the Moroccan periphery, often see themselves as being deprived of taking part in a global youth culture and see the possibility of reaching their goal in partaking in the global world through international migration to Europe. Lacking the habitus that would enable possibilities of regularised migration, they are being restricted by an involuntary immobility and see independent, irregular migration as their only option for betterment.

In exercising tactical agency, they navigate through constraining as well as enabling external and internal structures, empowering them and making them vulnerable at the same time.

5.2 Habitus, social field and symbolic capital

A person's possibilities in creating their life in either the core or the periphery relates to their social field, which shapes their habitus and symbolic capital. As Koikkalainen (2013: 47) writes, habitus is a useful concept in migration where there is a change of the social field and it illustrates dispositions that are usually 'taken for granted in everyday life'. In the last chapter, I have discussed how the social field changed when people became socialised for the consumer goods and their relationship with the Western world. This in turn, has changed their habitus and 'opened' them for internal and international migration on a macro level, the habitus of Moroccan society and their emigration culture. Habitus can also relate to an individual, micro level.

As discussed in chapter 2, Bourdieu's habitus is a set of dispositions, reflexes and forms of behaviour that people acquire as social actors. It reflects the different positions people have in society, for example, whether they are brought up in a middle-class environment or in a working-class suburb. The concept of habitus explains how society reproduces itself when people internalise the material, cultural and intellectual structures that constitute a particular type of environment. Habitus happens, for the most part, unnoticed, undiscussed, and undisputed, i.e., in what Bourdieu calls the *doxa*, and thus agents draw on habitus naturally (ibid.).

The social field defining habitus and symbolic capital in Morocco is shaped in a multitude of ways, e.g., through language, schooling and possibilities of mobility. Youth of the Moroccan core are much less restricted in travelling in terms of visa and immigration policies, for example. A further difference between core and peripheral youth is language. While the Moroccan dialect of Arabic (*Darija*) is spoken throughout the country with variations in northern Morocco, the educated upper-middle and upper-class

youth of urban Morocco tend to speak '*l-ârancia*',[1] a hybrid between French and Moroccan Arabic (Hargraves 2009: 221). The Moroccan core youth also attend private schools, based on the French school system, and are taught in French (fieldwork Morocco 2016; see also Kadiri 2016), whereas those in public school are taught in Modern Standard Arabic (fieldwork Morocco 2016). The language of education at Moroccan universities is however French,[2] which is also the preferred language for business matters. This further shows how lower or lower-middle class youth will have difficulties in improving social capital, due to the language barrier of not being able to speak French well enough once they have finished school in order to study at a university or to find a better-paid job. The gap between core and periphery is therefore unmistakably visible from the earliest age and is further enhanced by internal politics. The social field and social capital of young Moroccans of the core are therefore somewhat closer to that of French youth of the French core than to their Moroccan peers of socioeconomically deprived urban background, and even more so than with those of rural background. As one of my French interviewees, a young expat in Casablanca, explained:

> When I speak with my [upper-class] Moroccan colleagues, I forget that they are Moroccan. Their education is French, their accent is French, the way they dress is French. And then, suddenly, some cultural thing comes up, and it startles me because I am reminded that they are not French but Moroccan whom I took for being French. It's surprised me so many times already. (Field interview Morocco 2016, (F) tba)

Another significant difference between youth of the Moroccan core versus youth of the Moroccan periphery is the access to consumer goods and a 'global youth culture', as I have explained in chapter 4. Yassni (2018: 33) points out that

> [b]ig cities like Rabat, Casablanca, and Marrakech are becoming vibrant hubs where the culture of consumerism is articulated through the growing appeal of tokens of extravagant lifestyle, luxury cars, posh fitness cent[re]s, shopping malls, spas and the billboards that have recently sprouted along roads and highways in Morocco are a strong reminder of the power exercised by consumer culture on Moroccan's imaginaries […].

This 'globalised' lifestyle is available to the upper class and *nouveaux riches*, i.e., the Moroccan core, who 'spend huge sums of money to meet their desire for personal satisfaction and social distinction' (ibid.), while lower classes, i.e., the periphery, are unable to partake in these 'new consumer needs, desires, and habits' (ibid.: 34). But it not only concerns consumerism. In 2005, Jiménez Alvarez wrote that in Tangier, a thriving north Moroccan city which takes pride to host *Tanger Med,* the biggest port of the African continent, entire neighbourhoods did not have electricity and running water (Jiménez Álvarez 2005b: 130). Class segregation with the more affluent living in the inner city of

Tangier, is profound (ibid.: 126), still today (fieldwork Tangier 2016). By 2012, the education levels in socioeconomically deprived neighbourhoods were still well below national average (Vacchiano and Jiménez 2012: 462). Some murmur that it is one of the *makhzen*'s tactics to keep its periphery's education at a low level so people will have less means to revolt (fieldnotes Morocco 2016).

At *Tanger Med*, one of my translators, a young educated Moroccan, explains the situation for young people this way:

> The Moroccan government is interested in boosting its economy, that's the priority. Look at this huge port, *Tanger Med*! They want to be on top, they need to be better than Algeria, they want to be the best on the African continent. Morocco's image is increasingly more of a developed country, but it's really the rich getting richer and the poor staying poor. But to the outside world, it's all glitter because all these investments are made […] But the government is not interested in the condition of its youth, to invest in better education or school equipment […] because that's not lucrative to their economy, at least not immediately. So, we live in awful conditions with a highly uneducated population […]. I have a diploma, I speak several languages, and the best job I can expect is working for a call centre, for a ridiculously low salary. And even that is difficult to find. Right now, I am unemployed, I live with my parents and I'm almost thirty years old! […] Have I thought of emigration? Yes, if I have the possibility to do it legally, yes. But not what the kids here are doing, not the *hrig*, no way. I'm not risking my life and then be undocumented in Europe. I still have hope that I will find a job here, even if it's short-term […] (Field interview Tangier 2016 (S) tba)

The immense gaps between core and periphery, typical for a Semi-Periphery country according to Wallerstein, are greatest in the periphery of the Semi-Periphery and where structural violence is blatant. As write Vacchiano and Jiménez (2012: 465), young Moroccan *harraga* from the urban periphery are among the confronting images of 'the different worlds that meet in any Moroccan city today – the donkey alongside the luxury car, the shanty close to the resort'.

Yet, as the above interview shows, not all are interested in the *hrig* and the social field, habitus and symbolic capital are crucial in explaining the reasons why a young person would risk his or her life to emigrate. The following interview with another young man is from fieldwork in Tangier (2016 (S) tba). His habitus is shaped by a different social field and a different symbolic capital than my translator's. Approximately the same age as the latter, also unable to find formal work, L. tried the *hrig* innumerable times since the age of 15. The outcome of his decision is a very different one, despite that his account depicts the situation many boys and young men find themselves in; unable to find formal employment without the 'necessary connections', or at very low wages.

5.3 L.'s story

L. is a 29-year old young Moroccan I had met a year earlier in the city port of Tangier, where he was 'hanging out' with a group of other young *harraga*, their accommodation being an old ship that didn't leave the port anymore. It is around 6 pm and we sit on the terrace of a men's café at the busy *Souk d Barra,* the big market square in Tangier, across the city walls of the *medina*, the old part of town. We had kept in touch via Facebook and had agreed to meet up once I would come back to Tangier. He had travelled from a rural village in the Rif near Tetouan to come and meet me in Tangier (approximately 45 kms).

Figure 8
Towns and region where L.'s story is situated

Source: World Atlas 2016

He insists to pay for my *na'na* tea[3], as it would be too shameful to let a woman in his company pay her own tea. I ask him if he still goes to the city port to try the *hrig* and how the other boys I had met are doing. To my surprise, he says he lost touch with all of them. When I first met them, they seemed like very best friends. He explains that it is no longer

possible to stay in the city port, that they were chased away and that it has become too complicated.

> It's all fenced in now and police surveillance makes it impossible. The only option is now the new port [*Tangier Med,* approx. 45 kms from Tangier, next to the small town of Ksar es Srhir], but it's difficult because out there, there is nothing, and it's quite dangerous.

We speak in Spanish and I ask if he learned Spanish in school to which he replies that he taught himself, over the internet. We had also exchanged messages in Spanish over Facebook and his writing was quite good, too. When he sees my amazement, he smiles and comments, 'well, you know, I really, really want to go to Spain. It's been my dream forever. It's so much better there and I have family there.' I ask him why he wants to leave, he explains,

> Look at me, I'm 29 now and still live with my parents. I can't get a job. I do on and off jobs here in Tangier or Tetouan, but I can't even sustain myself. How will I ever be able to find a wife and have children? No one would want to marry me! I need to get to Spain and find a job. It's the only solution or I will stay like this forever.

I ask him about his school education, and he tells me that he has elementary education in the *msid* (Quranic school) where he learned to read and write in Arabic. He can also read and write block letters of the Latin alphabet, but not cursive. He says he is lucky that everything on the internet is in block letters, that's how he was able to teach himself Spanish. When he left school, he helped his parents in agricultural work. I ask him if he doesn't want to continue working in agriculture which he negates by telling me 'you can't live off that' and 'I don't want to be a farmer'. I understand that he comes from a socioeconomically precarious background and that *relative deprivation* in regard to life in the city (Tangier or Tetouan) and family in Spain play important roles in shaping the desire to emigrate (topics discussed in chapter 4). Upon my question if continuing school would be an option to perhaps get better paid formal employment in the city, he replies that it would be impossible as he would not be able to sustain himself and the Moroccan government does not support adult men who want to return to school. I tell him about NGO projects for female education I had heard of and he replies,

> Yes, for women there are projects like this, but not for men. If you mess up at school, you're out and that's it. Men need to work, not study. We're the breadwinners. If you want to get married, you need a job. But that's also a problem now, because in the factories they hire mostly women because they are paid less than men. So, the women work, and the men are unemployed. Imagine, what a disgrace for us men! *Hshuma!*[4]

I then ask him if he has already tried to emigrate to Spain and he tells me that he has tried innumerable times since the age of 15, but always unsuccessfully.

> I managed to make it to Spain twice, but they always caught me once I was there and sent me back. Actually, the last time I tried was last month […]. I had a diving suit and dived to one of the ships, got on, hid, and made it to the other side, to Algeciras. I got off the ship without anyone noticing me. I walked out of the port to a roundabout, but I didn't have any other clothes with me and couldn't just walk into the city with a diving suit on [laughs]. I grabbed a guy, a Moroccan, who was walking by and asked him to bring me some clothes so I could change out of the diving suit. He left and I waited but then the police arrived and found me. They sent me back to Tangier and I spent a few days in prison […].

He tells me that he now applied for a job in one of the new car factories in Tangier and was waiting for an answer. I ask him if he would stop trying the *hrig* if he would get the job and he replies, 'we'll see'. A few days later he calls me to let me know that he is hired. Enthusiastic at first, he tells me a few weeks later that he is thinking of the *hrig* to Spain again. From time to time, I receive messages or photos from him at work, where he is doing a low-skilled, monotonous job of wrapping merchandise in plastic. The monotony and long hours do not seem to bother him too much, but he explains that he is unhappy because of the low salary, telling me that he could earn three times as much for the same job in Spain. He wants to get married and found a family but claims that it is impossible in his current situation. Then one day in 2017, I get a message from him that he is in Spain but that nothing is as he expected. He can't find work because he doesn't have papers and is devastated. He says that he can't go back to his old job in the factory in Tangier either, because now that he has not shown up for work for a few days, he is laid off. Then he disappears, I do not hear from him until he reappears a year later (2018) with a post on his Facebook page where people comment 'Thank God you are alive!' I send him a message and he answers that he is still in Spain. He apologises for not contacting me anymore because he had in prison but does not want to tell me too much about the circumstances. We have a few exchanges via messenger, where he tells me that he continues to stay in Spain but can't find work. He writes that it is still better than Morocco because at least in Spain you can always find some 'small business' to do, even collecting glass or metal allows one to survive. In Morocco, if you are able to make even a little money, you always need to share it with family or others, and you end up with nothing. After this, he disappears again, and I do not hear from him anymore.

L.'s story shows interaction of structures and agency, as well as intersections of masculinity, where on the one hand he wants to be a 'provider' and a man, whereas on the other he is confronted with the struggle of mere survival and being a victim. The 'undesirable' rural life and agricultural work, the 'long-term' desire to make it to Europe, usually Spain, spurred by the relative deprivation felt via relatives abroad in combination with the possibilities of a supposedly better life via the internet, are also well expressed in my conversations with L. His frustration of being unable to find formal work with decent pay in order to be able to get married is one of his greatest preoccupations, which I will discuss further in the next section. This frustration goes as far as in that he finds it much better in Spain than in Morocco despite the fact that he had a factory job in Tangier and is now collecting glass and metal as an undocumented migrant in Spain. His last statement where he speaks about 'not having to share' shows how his habitus has changed, or in WSA terms, how exposure to capitalism through life in a Core country has socially transformed him. L.'s story is representative for many issues boys and young men are facing in Morocco and which I have heard during fieldwork. Stagnating in 'waithood', being unable to move into social adulthood and taking part in Moroccan society, as unemployment or low wages also translate into being unable to marry and found a family, one of the pillars in traditional Moroccan society.

5.4 Waithood in Morocco

There is a constant frustration of how difficult it is to find better living conditions in their own country, where 'sitting around', waiting, is one of the main past-times for many young men. My fieldnotes give a portrait of the situation,

> Many boys and young men can be seen loitering the streets or sitting in cafés, smoking hashish or *kif*[5] and drinking a single glass of tea all day long, for lack of being able to afford themselves more than a glass, sometimes playing a board game, waiting for 'something to happen'. When speaking with them, they tell me *No hay nada aquí,* there is nothing here. Every opportunity to make some money in an informal 'business' is gratefully accepted. The very lucky ones with diplomas have monotonous, low-paid jobs in call centres where they answer complaints or questions from customers calling from Europe. (fieldnotes Tangier 2016)

> […] 'I hate it', said [one], 'people from France call me and yell at me and I'm not even in Europe! But what can I do? I smile and stay polite; I need the money and consider myself lucky to have this job. Most of my friends are unemployed.' I ask him how much he earns, and he answers 4000 DH [€ 400], about a third of what someone earns in a call centre in France. But in Morocco it is considered good money, where it is nearly double the SMIG [minimum wage].[6] (fieldnotes Casablanca 2015)

The prolonged period of 'waiting' for something to happen before being able to move into social adulthood is what Honwana (2014: 30) coins as 'waithood', a portmanteau combining 'waiting' and 'adulthood'. She argues that waithood 'represents the contradictions of modernity, in which young people's opportunities and expectations are simultaneously broadened and constrained' (ibid.). As discussed in chapter 4, on the one hand, new technologies of information and communication integrate young people on a global level, i.e. have created a global youth culture. On the other hand, they are 'constrained by lack of access to basic resources owing to unsound socioeconomic policies, epidemics, political instability and repression' (ibid.). Honwana emphasises that this stagnation is not due to the young people's fault of being unwilling or unable to manage this transition, but due to a breakdown in the socioeconomic system with high youth unemployment rates affecting youth not only in the global South, but rather, worldwide. There is not only a global youth culture, but also, as writes Honwana (ibid.), a 'global youth crisis', where young people are increasingly unable to become independent adults and remain in waithood for a prolonged period of time.

Honwana's explanation on the breakdown of the socioeconomic systems conforms with Wallerstein's argument, who sees these happenings as a consequence of the neoliberal strategies of the 1980s during the Reagan and Thatcher administrations (Wallerstein 2000: 254–5). With the outsourcing of labour, discussed in chapter 4, the increasing polarisation of 'real income' has expanded on a world-wide level (wherever more countries of the global Periphery are drawn into the Semi-Periphery and ultimately into the Core). The result is that even the poorest of the world are continuously drawn into the capitalist world system and increasingly demanding reasonable wage levels in order to enter the formal wage economy (ibid.: 260), laid out in chapter 4. In my discussion with L., he states that he does not want to be a farmer like his parents because it is 'unacceptable work' in his view and that also the job in the factory in Tangier is unsatisfactory due to the low pay, because there is a possibility of making 'three times as much for the same job in Spain' (field interview Tangier 2016).

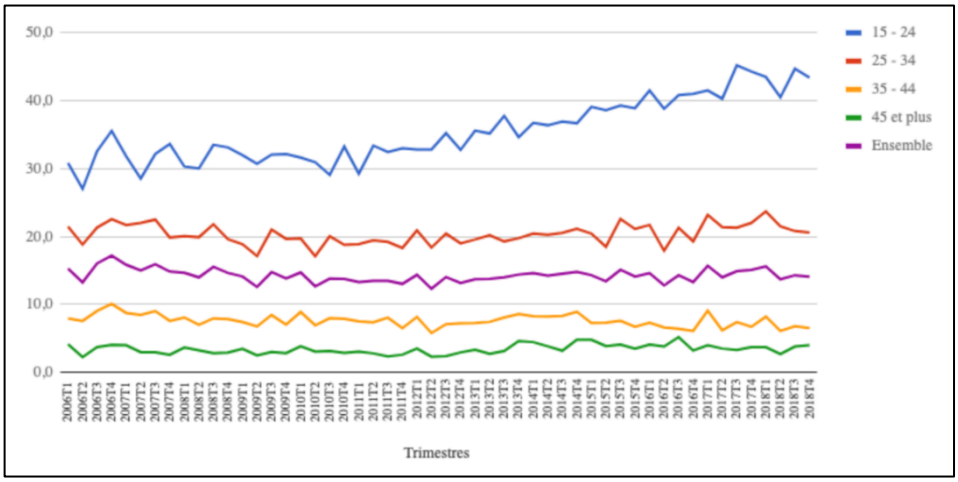
The increasing demand for reasonable wage levels is problematic for the capitalist world economy, as it is founded on inequality, and needs to maintain the profit level through the accumulation of capital in the Core in order for this system to function (Wallerstein 2000: 260). As laid out in chapter 4, it is a reason why corporations change countries for outsourcing once the wage levels have increased and a country with lower wage levels will be chosen in order to maintain the profit for the corporation. However, once a country has moved into the Semi-Periphery, people have been socialised for

modern consumerism. This change in habitus can explain why people engage in migration towards the Core where they expect better wage levels that are capable to meet their new needs. The transformation from Periphery to Semi Periphery to Core can explain global youth unemployment in that qualification levels rise and lower skilled (and lower paid) jobs become 'unacceptable' due to an enhanced level of education.

Morocco's job offer is insufficient or does not correspond with the number of young people entering the job market (fieldwork Morocco 2016). While youth unemployment for 15- to 24-year olds has been curbed over the past 2 decades, it is in particular the more educated from urban areas that are affected (see also e.g. Bennani-Chraïbi 1995; M'Jid 2005), because of a lack of adequate jobs and being underemployed. The lower skilled may be able to find jobs more easily, in either formal, however exploitative conditions, or in informal work. It particularly affects Morocco's urban areas which show an unemployment rate of over 40 per cent for the 15- to 24-year olds in relation to other age groups. Most of the youngsters (70 per cent) are out of work for more than a year (Maaroufi 2019a), with nearly 60 per cent never having held a declared employment in their life (Maaroufi 2019d).

Figure 9

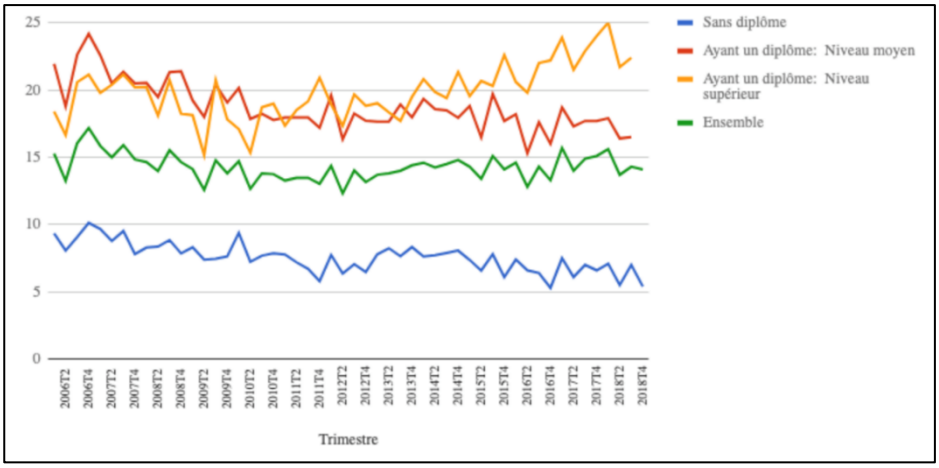
Trimestral urban youth unemployment percentage from 2006 to 2018



Note: blue: no diploma, red: middle-level education (e.g. high school, technical diploma), orange: upper-level education (e.g. university level), green: mean of all groups combined.

Source: Maaroufi 2019b

Figure 10
Trimestral unemployment percentages of different age groups from 2006 to 2018

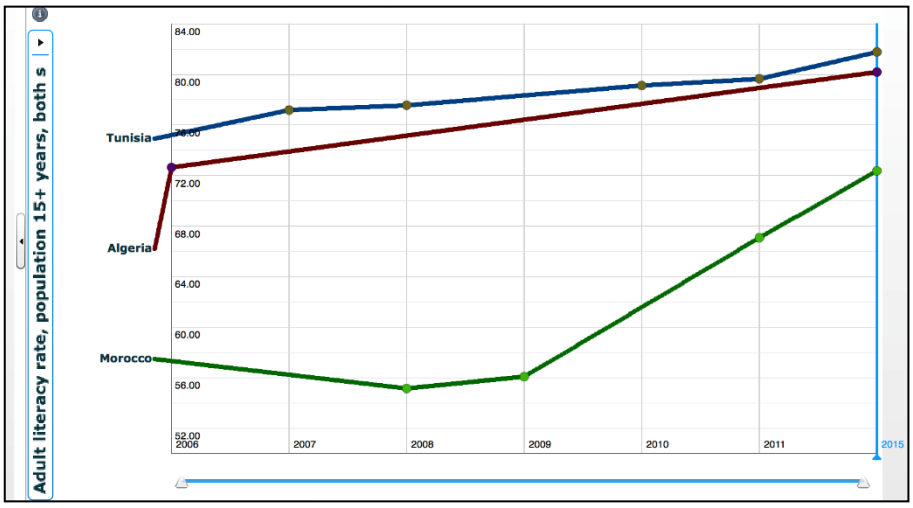


Note: purple: mean of all groups combined
Source: Maaroufi 2019c

Despite increased educational levels, in regional comparison, Morocco still has one of the lowest education levels of the region (Unesco 2019), however the literacy rate for 15-24 year olds has increased from around 75 per cent in 2008 to around 95 per cent in 2015[7]. In comparison, the literacy rate including the entire population for the ages 15+, is only at 72 per cent. In fact, more than half (61 per cent) of the population over 50 years of age is illiterate, the highest percentage ascribed to rural women (Hemidach 2015), which is especially dramatic for widowed, divorced or single women, making them one of the most vulnerable members of Moroccan society (Skalli 2001: 81). These age- and sex-dependent differences of literacy are especially telling for Morocco's move into the Semi-Periphery and its social transformation.

Figure 11

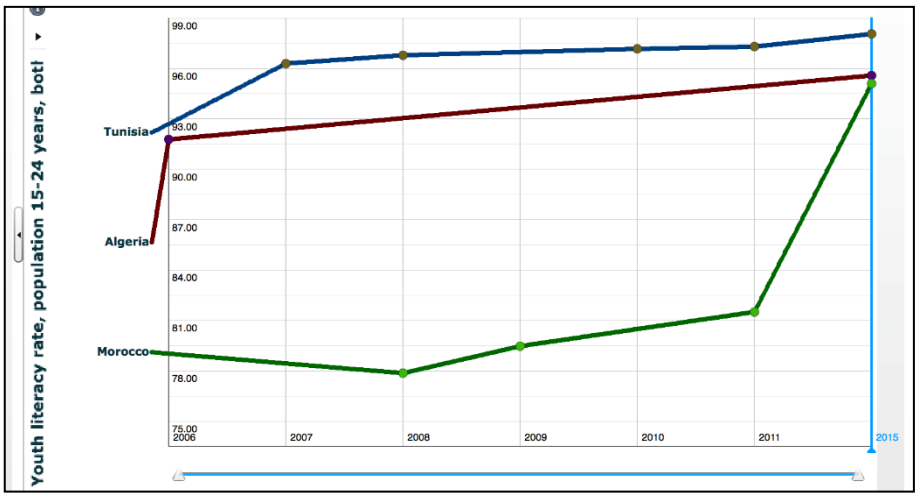
Adult literacy rate 15+ in Maghreb countries from 2006 to 2015, both sexes (%), at 72% for Morocco in 2015



Source: Unesco 2019

Figure 12

Youth literacy rate 15-24 in Maghreb countries from 2006 to 2015, both sexes (%), at 95% for Morocco in 2015



Source: Unesco 2019

School dropouts and literacy continue to be problematic in Morocco.

While in 2018, nearly 95 per cent of children were enrolled in primary school, i.e., appear in the statistics as being literate, less than 15 per cent are likely to graduate from high school (USAID 2019). Also, the statistics do not differentiate on the social backgrounds of the pupils. Therefore, despite the increase of literacy rate for under 24-year olds, a lower education level and investment in education is very much felt in socioeconomically deprived urban neighbourhoods as well as in rural areas.

Many young people do not see a credible reason to stay in school due to the lack of jobs holding a diploma and because they are unhappy with public schooling altogether (field interviews Tangier, Casablanca 2016). Students of marginalised neighbourhoods attending the Moroccan public school system complain about the teaching methodology, where the emphasis is on memorizing lessons and where silencing, ignoring and discouraging those who make mistakes is a general practice (field interviews Tangier 2016; also IOM 2013: 13–18). A lack of learning equipment and extra-curricular activities, inadequate school facilities, extremely crowded classrooms, but also parents' lack of interest in their children's education are other reasons students mention as reasons for dropping out of school (IOM 2013: 13–18). As many parents have little or no schooling themselves, they have difficulties understanding their children's preoccupations (field interviews Tangier 2016). Another issue in marginalised neighbourhoods is the frequent occurrence of various types of violence within the school environment,[8] including abuse by teachers of a physical, psychological, and especially verbal nature (IOM 2013: 13). Boys in particular see school as a waste of time and money and believe that it makes no difference whether they attend school or not. Socioeconomic precarity of the family, e.g. unemployed fathers or sick parents, are a strong reason for youth to drop out of school in search for work in order to 'save the parents' (Vacchiano 2010) or to 'save the mothers' if they are vulnerable women, rural or urban, divorced or single (Jiménez Álvarez 2012: 62). Young people believe it more useful to find work in order to help their families make ends meet, sometimes by means of the *hrig* (field interviews Tangier 2016, see also, e.g. Vacchiano 2010: 116, IOM 2013: 21–2). Knowing that better salaries are available in Spain, with the shortest distance of 14 kilometres from Morocco's shores, makes international migration an attractive option to 'building a future' also for oneself. Spanish-speaking Moroccan boys and young men during fieldwork referred to it as *buscarse la vida*[9], directly connected with the possibility of moving into social adulthood and becoming a man. Certainly not everyone emigrates, but a great number of young Moroccans would want to leave the country for better opportunities 'if it were legal' (fieldwork Tangier 2016).

Students in Morocco can repeat a grade once in the public-school system, then they are expelled from school. School dropouts have the possibility to

1. either engage in vocational training
2. find an informal activity, or
3. become unemployed (IOM 2013: 22–3).

Most dropouts seem to fall under number 3, according to a 2013 FORSATY[10] report. Sobhia, a high-school teacher in Berchifa, an underprivileged suburb of Tangier, explains her worries of keeping her students, especially her male students, in school,

> We, the teachers of this school, we fight that these kids stay in school, that they finish high school. We fight for this every single day, every single day (emphasis)! If they drop out, there will be nothing left for them at all. They will try to emigrate, and they will be roaming the streets here. They will take drugs and become involved in the drug business. Or they will be recruited by DAESH[11] and leave for Syria. That's it. There is nothing else for them, and certainly not in this neighbourhood. (field interview Tangier 2016 (S) tba)

The lack of infrastructure for the youth is painfully striking in neighbourhoods like Berchifa, and young Moroccans interviewed during fieldwork said that there was 'nothing to do' (Tangier 2016). Lack of security, violence, drugs and irregular migration are issues children and adolescents in these neighbourhoods are not only confronted with on a daily basis, but they can also become part of it. Impoverished urban neighbourhoods, but also neglected rural areas, can also be places of social unrest (Boukhars 2018: 4). Young Tangerians in the FORSATY study described their neighbourhoods as an overall violent environment, including violent crimes such as murder and rape, and drug circulation (IOM 2013: 33). But also, violence within their own families with verbal, physical and psychological abuse were frequently mentioned. During my fieldwork (2016) in deprived neighbourhoods, e.g. Berchifa in Tangier or Sidi Moumen in Casablanca, gatekeepers were indispensable for me, not only to enter but particularly, to exit.

Sobhia is worried about her students dropping out because the peripheral areas are not only a breeding ground for drug, merchandise, and human smuggling, but are also prone to terrorist recruitment. 'Where you have extreme poverty, anarchic habitat and crime, you will inevitably find a fertile ground for radicalisation' argues Abdellah Rami, researcher at the University Hassan II, Casablanca, in an interview by Jeune Afrique (Ben Larbi 2014). Recruitment through DAESH was a predominant security issue in Morocco's urban periphery during fieldwork in 2016 (see also Ben Larbi 2014). During field

interviews, I was told that parents were often in favour of their children (usually boys) being recruited, as DAESH paid a considerable amount of money to the family with the promise to take care of the family for a lifetime should their child die as a DAESH soldier (field interviews Tangier, Casablanca 2016; see also Ben Larbi 2014). Terrorist recruitment has been an important issue on the Moroccan security agenda for a number of years. The 2003 terrorist attacks in the city of Casablanca were related to recruitment activity in one of its shantytowns, Sidi Moumen. After the 2003 terrorist attacks in Casablanca, the project 'Villes sans Bidonvilles'[12] was brought to life in 2004 in cooperation with UN-Habitat. By January 2016, 55 out of the targeted 85 Moroccan cities, were declared to be free of slums (ONU Femmes 2016). While better housing conditions are certainly a major achievement, it nevertheless did not eliminate the depriving socioeconomic factors characterising shantytowns (ONU Habitat 2011: 34), and the inhabitants often continue to stay on the margins of society.

Over the past decade numerous projects have seen the light of day in Morocco to prevent the outmigration of their youth, offering extracurricular activities to boys and girls in these neighbourhoods. Moroccan organisations and authorities also use these funds for projects to curb the risk of youth recruitment by terrorist organisations (fieldwork Tangier, Casablanca 2016). These projects usually run for a few years or months and are often funded by the EU, IOM, the Spanish or the Italian Development Cooperation. They have been implemented to keep youth off the streets and 'out of trouble', with the primary goal of preventing outmigration to the EU, explaining the dangers of irregular migration, as well as the reality of what awaits the young migrant in the EU. The projects are in general well received by Moroccan youth, and local organisations that are implementing them report of their success in preventing independent youth migration. Yet, the funds usually last only for a few months or years and then are abandoned, as alternative funding is often difficult to find (fieldwork Tangier 2016). Further, the Western-funded projects primarily focus on the prevention of outmigration, but due to lack or end of funding, little is undertaken once the outmigration is already in progress, as very limited number of official entities intervene in the streets (Ciliberti and Badillo 2015: 115), where young independent migrants usually stay sometimes for months on end, waiting for the right moment to emigrate. During this time, they are exposed to the dangers of the street, being mainly unprotected, and at the mercy of delinquents who may abuse or take advantage of them in many ways (fieldwork Tangier, Casablanca 2016; see also Cruz 2014: 30).

5.5 Agency

However successful or unsuccessful the prevention of outmigration projects may be, they do not eliminate waithood. But, as argues Honwana (2014: 30), despite waithood, youth exercise agency to 'invent new forms of being' in interaction with society. Agency refers to being agentic in contrast to passively enduring waithood.

Ottosson et al. (2017: 428) define agency as the 'universal human capacity to act… shaped in dynamic interaction with structures of meaning and power'. As Giddens (1984: 9) argues, agency implies power as it is more than just the *intention* to do something, but rather the *capability* to do it. Agency enables transformative capacity where

> … an 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. (ibid.: 9)

The agent's intervention influences the structures he is surrounded by, and therefore empowers the agent. And while agency can be constrained under specific circumstances, Giddens believes that there is always a choice, however minimal it may be (ibid.: 16; Honwana 2005: 48).

Emirbayer and Mische (1998) embed active agency within its conjuncturally specific structures, i.e., in how it is shaped by individual, reflexive reactions to specific contexts, stimulated by projections, yet restricted by habitus (O'Reilly 2012a: 106). Active agency therefore is a

> a temporally embedded process of social engagement, informed by the past (in its habitual aspect), but also oriented towards the future (as a capacity to imagine alternative possibilities) and toward the present (as a capacity to contextualise past habits and future projects within the contingencies of the moment). (Emirbayer and Mische 1998: 963)

With regard to Moroccan independent youth migrants, agency is shaped by the revolt against waithood and immobility, informed by reflexive reactions to past, future and present contexts. Their agency is thus situated within Moroccan emigration culture, which is influenced by colonial and post-colonial ties with Europe, and Morocco's present focus on economic development, while neglecting the social progress of the population in the periphery. Furthermore, the young migrants' agency is shaped by a personal project (Ortner 2006) and put into practice by using 'tactics' (de Certeau 2011). Ortner's agency of personal projects

> is about people having desires that grow out of their own structures of life, including very centrally their own structures of inequality; it is in short about people playing, or

> trying to play, their own serious games even as more powerful parties seek to devalue and even destroy them. (Ortner 2006: 147)

Ortner's work on agency distinguishes between *agency of personal projects* on the one hand and *agency of power* on the other. While the latter refers to situations of domination and resistance, mostly exercised by the dominant party, agency of personal projects defines the resistance of the dominated. Both definitions of agency are often linked to some extent (ibid.), but it is the resistance against situations of domination that young *harraga* are concerned with. As explained, these situations refer to being constrained to waithood in their country of origin, but also being constrained territorially due to the restriction of movement to the other side of the Strait, mostly enforced by EU immigration policy.

Young *harraga* exercise agency of personal projects which require agentic actions which de Certeau defines as 'tactics'. In de Certeau's definition of agency, he distinguishes between 'tactics' and 'strategies' (de Certeau 1988: xix). Strategies, according to de Certeau, can be used as 'little acts of resistance' (O'Reilly 2012a: 23) by those who are 'able to act within the dominant system' (Williams 2006: 4), where one has a clear perspective of an ultimate goal and expects long-term benefits from it (Honwana 2005: 32–3). This is in line with Ortner's agency of power, i.e., resistance towards domination, exercised by those who have at least a certain extent of power.[13] Tactics, on the other hand, are 'an art of the weak' (de Certeau 1988: 37), used by the 'relative powerless' (Williams 2006: 4) who 'manipulate events in order to turn them into "opportunities"' (Honwana 2005: 49). Honwana uses the term 'tactical agency' to describe how child soldiers exercise agency within their possibilities of coping under specific circumstances,

> They are not in a position of power, they may not be fully conscious of the ultimate goals of their actions and may not expect any long-term gains or benefits from it - which would, in de Certeau's terms, make their actions "strategic". Nonetheless, they are fully conscious of the immediate returns, and act within certain constraints to seize opportunities that are available to them. Their actions, however, are likely to have both beneficial and deleterious long-term consequences. (ibid.: 32–3)

As I will discuss in the following chapter, the desire for migration of young *harraga* clearly grows out of 'a position of weakness' (Honwana 2014.: 49), fleeing a situation of waithood and the inability of leaving the periphery and partaking in capitalist consumerism that is seen as part of a global youth culture. Young *harraga* exercise tactical agency when migrating from Morocco to Europe, and also in the onward migration within Europe. They are not fully aware of the ultimate goals of their actions, except that they want to implement individual self-fulfilment through capitalist consumerism, empowering

themselves and (in some cases) contributing to their families' social advancement. They are aware that being under 18 and migrating alone is one of the only options for them to be granted stay in the EU as UAM. However, they do not reflect further what this means when they come of age and are no longer UAM, i.e. they live for the moment and make use of it. This is a typical example of the tactical agency Honwana refers to. The outcome of this particular tactic of migrating to become an UAM will be discussed in chapter 8.

But agency, or tactical agency, is not only exercised by young Moroccans who migrate. Youth in general is agentic and inventive (Honwana 2014: 30), and I will now explain how young Moroccans use agency to navigate around constraining structures, and finally who engages in the *hrig*.

5.5.1 *Débrouillage*

'Waithood accounts for a multiplicity of young people's experiences, ranging from daily survival strategies such as street vending and cross-border trade to involvement in gangs and criminal activities', writes Honwana (2014:30). The above-mentioned recruitment for DAESH can be a further possibility of reinventing oneself and can be added to Honwana's examples. And certainly, the *hrig* is a further example of exercising agency in order to escape waithood. In Morocco, these 'making do' activities are typical for the *shabab*, in fact, they are very much part of what it means to be a Moroccan youth (Juntunen 2015) beyond the local core. They are referred to as *dabbar* (ibid.) in Moroccan dialect or *débrouillage*[14] in French (Honwana 2014: 34). As Honwana points out, other countries also refer to these escape activities in their own languages[15], demonstrating how genuinely widespread the phenomenon of waithood is. *Dabbar* or *débrouillage* is an example of how youth in precarious conditions exercises these '[…] practices as tactical actions […] to survive on the margins of society' (ibid.). It is through *débrouillage* that they 'create new spaces and mechanisms for survival and operate in subcultures outside hegemonic structures' (ibid.). Yet, *débrouillage* is not just a phenomenon of the global south. It is a well-known term throughout the French-speaking world and also in France, where people – especially young people – struggle to make a living or to find formal employment. As said earlier, Honwana points out that it is a global youth crisis, not only one affecting the global South. In Europe, youth from the northern basin of the Mediterranean are particularly affected by waithood, although there is a significant difference with their peers from the southern Mediterranean, such as Morocco. All European Mediterranean countries have suffered greatly under the economic crisis of the early 2000s, with their cultural and socioeconomic similarities mentioned earlier, in this specific case with regard

to their struggles in providing employment for their young people. Spain's youth unemployment (15–24 year olds) saw its peak of over 55% in 2013 (Trading Economics 2019). Southern Spain was hit especially hard, and to date youth unemployment remains at over 40% in Andalusia, topped by Ceuta at nearly 50% and Melilla at 55% (Country Economy 2019), the Spanish enclaves on Moroccan territory. *El País* writes that Spain is the EU country with the highest number of young unemployed persons willing to leave the country (64% of the 20- to 34-year-old population are unemployed) in order to find work abroad (Alonso 2018). Cuzzocrea's (2018) research on Sardinian youth shows similar findings, where many of her young interviewees see emigrating further north (where the economic conditions are somewhat better) or to leave Italy altogether 'for a better future' (Cuzzocrea 2018: 2). Cuzzocrea also refers to southern European youth as 'one of the most disadvantaged and vulnerable groups of society' due to their economic marginality (ibid.: 5) as a result of labour market constraints (ibid.: 6), in line with Honwana's argument of a 'global youth crisis'.

However, Cuzzocrea's study on Sardinia shows an important difference between young Sardinians and young Moroccans, which demonstrates one aspect of Core and Semi-Periphery countries well. While waithood for Sardinians as well as for Moroccans 'is characterised by emptiness rather than accumulation of skills or experience of any kind' (Cuzzocrea 2018: 13), the postponement of moving into social adulthood and avoiding 'any role that involves responsibility' (Côté and Allahar cited in ibid.: 5), whether voluntary or involuntary, is entirely permitted by Sardinian society (ibid.: 4). Institutionalised forms, e.g., gap years or youth mobility programmes, and the linked mobility are 'a possibility in the transitions to adulthood' (Cuzzocrea and Mandich 2016: 3), seen as a solution 'to overcome regionally specific socioeconomic disadvantage' (Cairns cited in ibid.: 559). It can be seen as an 'entry ticket' to a better life and an important psychological phase of 'finding oneself' during youth (Cuzzocrea 2018: 1).

Finding oneself, e.g., 'doing a gap year', is however rather a privilege of middle-class Sardinian youth, acknowledges Cuzzocrea (2018: 13), whereas for the 'lower class' who do not have the economic and perhaps social capital to do so, it means 'waiting' in the sense that Honwana (2014) refers to. In other words, youth of the core settings are thus *allowed* to take their time, enhanced by the possibility of being mobile, whereas youth of peripheral settings are those who *lose* time (Cuzzocrea 2018: 14), amplified by immobility, especially if it is involuntary immobility (Carling 2002). The freedom to 'take time out', especially in combination with mobility, is limited to the privileged youth of the world. The imposed immobility is certainly a constraint for most young people of the global

Semi-Periphery and Periphery. Young Moroccans who live with an imposed immobility may see irregular migration not only as a possibility to increase economic capital, but as their only option to experience this sort of self-realisation, freedom and adventure they are deprived of. As one of my interviewees, a 17-year old UAM in Belgium answered my question to why he had left Morocco: 'Because I'm not a tree. I'm like you. I want to travel and see things' (field interview Brussels 2015 (S) tba).

As will be further discussed in chapter 7, a prolonged childhood, where one has few responsibilities and focuses on 'self-fulfilment' until the age of adulthood, is an 'economic luxury' denied to the less affluent (Denzin 2010: 20), and 'a privilege of the rich' (Goldstein in Montgomery 2009: 94). A 'gap year' for young *harraga*, even if they are looking for self-fulfilment and adventure, will never only be such. Youth from the periphery are bearers of responsibility, a particularity of the social construct of childhood beyond the global Core, discussed in chapter 7.

5.5.2 *Hogra*

While *débrouillage* certainly is a survival strategy that requires agency, others take it further in voicing their discontent. The loss of trust in the country's political system, known under the name of *hogra*[16] in the Maghreb, and the overall discontent of the population is slowly increasing. As Haim Malka at the Centre for Strategic and International Studies, a US think tank, argues: 'Morocco faces many of the same socioeconomic challenges and drivers of radical ideology that many other countries in the region face. What's different about Morocco is that it has a strong executive authority, namely the king, who controls the security forces and sets security policy' (Winsor 2016). In fact, as argue Vacchiano and Jiménez (2012: 464), the king ensures that any genuine dissent is silenced.

Despite the fact that Morocco's 'Arab Spring' was a rather timid protest in comparison to some other North African countries, it did have its *Movement du 20 Février* (20 February Movement, date when it started in 2011), where people took to the streets to protest peacefully for political reform, voicing their anger against corruption, police brutality and high unemployment, among other issues that affect the population. Slogans to be seen were '*Makhzen* get lost! Power to the people', however, and this contrary to other 'Arab Spring' countries, without putting the king's power in question but rather voicing the anger against his government (Bennafla and Seniguer 2011: 153). Seen as the most shocking offenses against the king, who has religious authority, explained in chapter 4, were replacing the national shibboleth *Allah, al watan, al Malik* (God, the Nation, the King) with slogans such as *Allah, al watan, wal hurriya wal karama*

(God, the Nation, Freedom, Dignity). This sort of protest was still unimaginable in 2008 were a young high school student was imprisoned for 18 months for having smeared *Allah, al watan, al Barça* (God, the Nation, the *Barça* [Spanish football team]) on a school wall, seen as a profanity against his majesty (ibid.: 148).

To avoid similar violent protest as in the neighbouring countries, King Mohammed VI took immediate action to calm the population, announcing on March 9, 2011 that the political reforms and changes that had been promised already in 1999 would be implemented promptly (Vermeren 2016: 148). The constitution was rewritten by June 2011 and the king's resolutions, aligned with the political rhetoric of the Western Core, e.g. good governance, human rights and female participation, to name a few, were highly praised abroad, classifying Morocco as one of the 'open' Arab countries (Bennafla and Seniguer 2011: 153). Tamazight became the second official language in Morocco, after decades of struggle of the *Imazighen* (Al Arabiya 2019), being seen as part of *bled as-siba*, the rebellious areas of Morocco and thorn in the *makhzen's* side, explained in chapter 4. However, protests continued, claiming that the reforms were 'superficial' (BBC News 2011). Protests were scheduled once a month, but the biggest threat was stifled by dissolving the political forces of the *Movement du 20 Février*, pursuing main supporters and imprisoning the ones considered most dangerous and hostile towards the government (Vermeren 2016: 148).

Hogra and the overall discontent of the population however remained latent and sparked again during the *Hirak Rif*[7] of 2016 and 2017. How much socio-political discontent affects also very young people is reflected in the age of the detainees, with the youngest detainee of the *Hirak Rif* being 14 years old, treated as a criminal and remaining imprisoned during *Aïd Al-Adha,* an important Islamic festival celebrated among family (Harmach 2017). As Crawley (2011: 1175) argues, children are often not directly politically active in the 'conventionally understood meaning of the word', e.g. as members of political parties, but many are engaged in issues that affect themselves or their communities and are very interested in being part of change.

As a streetworker in Casablanca explained,

> The kids who are in the streets and who want to emigrate are aware of everything, even the very young ones. They will come up to you and speak about their rights, speak about freedom. That was something that never happened before the Arab Spring, it's quite impressive. But you know, they are very intelligent, and when people demonstrate for their rights in the streets, they listen closely. (field interview Casablanca, April 2016 (F), tba)

It is an interesting aspect contrary to EU immigration law and policy in regard to UAM, discussed in chapter 7, where children and adolescents are seen as unagentic and, thus, as 'apolitical'. The outmigration of Moroccan youth since the early 2000s is a further aspect of the *hogra* and youth agency, with young people deploring that their country does not offer them a future due to a segregated education system and a lack of adequate jobs. Others, less able to use their voices and restrained by their symbolic capital, are showing *hogra* by surviving in 'subcultures' (Yassni 2018: 30). It has given birth to a new category of youth, using their own specific language, with distinct expectations and aspirations, shaped by social mobility and access to consumer goods (Vacchiano 2007a: 4).

5.5.3 *Tsharmil*, symbolic power and 'everyday violence'

Unable to satisfy their expectations and aspirations results in some young Moroccans from the deprived periphery seeking 'social revenge' for their perceived lack of social justice (Gimeno Monterde 2015: 23–4). This social revenge has become well visible in the *tsharmil* movement, an urban youth movement from peripheral neighbourhoods, which can be seen as an agentic way to counter waithood (Honwana 2014: 30). Tsharmil, originally a word of Moroccan Darija for a spicy meat or fish marinade, is used to signify that its followers are 'adding spice' to a society they feel excluded from (Stiles 2015). The 'trademarks' of the *msharmlin* (those adept in *tsharmil*) are the intensive use of social media (especially Facebook) to demonstrate how they engage in 'urban youth crime' (Yassni 2018: 31) with the goal of shocking a traditional Moroccan society based on values such as family, religion and community (Yassni 2018: 36). Many wear the 'faux-hawk' haircut made popular by Portuguese football star Cristiano Ronaldo, post videos and photos of themselves with sabres and knives, as well as with highly desired stolen consumer goods, e.g., Nike or Adidas sportswear, expensive watches, smartphones, bottles of alcohol, in addition to bundles of money, and sometimes arms. Some young *harraga* encountered during fieldwork in Europe are part of this 'urban gangsta' youth subculture. However not all *tsharmil* are able or willing to emigrate, and those who stay and hunt down people with knives and sabres on beaches and in the cities to rob them of their possessions, have become a 'real source of security concerns for many Moroccans' (Yassni 2018: 31).

Media reports and news stories have further amplified the fear of *tsharmil* amongst Moroccan citizens (ibid.: 31). But while some do engage in crime, others 'have simply adopted the group's look to express frustration with a lack of jobs, opportunities and respect for youth' and 'reflect the discouragement felt by many Moroccan youth' (Stiles

2015). Their agency is linked to a significant amount of frustration. As argued in chapter 4, the symbolic power associated with branded goods gives 'a feeling of belonging to a consumerist order' (Yassni 2018: 31) and belonging to the 'first class' core through the 'appropriation of middle-class credos of capital accumulation, conspicuous consumption and ostentatious display of gold accessories and flashy, branded attire' (ibid.: 38).

The symbolic power these consumer goods are associated with is closely linked to the structural and symbolic violence peripheral Moroccan youth are subject to. Structural violence has no 'perpetrator' that is identifiable, but rather shows in 'deeply unequal life chances' (Dominguez and Menjivar 2014: 186). The social suffering that is inflicted by a 'political economy of inequality', compels to reflect on how economic oppression is used as a tool of structural violence against the periphery, impacting social relations and shaping social capital (Dominguez and Menjivar 2014: 186–7). The 'social privilege as natural superiority' (Schubert 2008: 190) of the dominant social class is what Bourdieu (1977) coins 'symbolic violence'. It inflicts a subtler violence upon the dominated than other forms of violence as the latter do not have the predispositions, i.e., social capital, to comply with the standards of the dominant (ibid.: 184), but, in fact, it intensifies social suffering of the dominated (ibid.: 190). 'The violence is symbolic, but the suffering and reproduction of class hierarchies that result are very real' (ibid.: 193). The aforementioned distinctions between Moroccan youth from the core and periphery relating to their social field, e.g. language and privilege in schooling, travel and access to capitalist consumerism, are demonstrations of symbolic violence. They are natural to the privileged yet experienced as painful deprivation of the unprivileged.

Bourgois (2001) argues that interaction of structural violence and symbolic violence ultimately leads to 'everyday violence'[18] with 'violence at the micro-level such as domestic, delinquent and sexual conflict, and even substance abuse' becoming the norm (Bourgois 2001: 8–9). Frustrations are expressed through an oppositional inner-city street culture, while imitating 'the most savage elements of [Western] neoliberal ideology through its celebration of ostentatious individual material gain, masculine domination, commodity fetishism and a racialised understanding of hierarchy' (Bourgois 2001: 29)[19], reminiscent of US-American or Hispanic gang culture. Everyday violence reflects the 'social revenge' towards society Gimeno Monterde (2015: 23–4) refers to. But there is also an everyday violence inflicted on themselves through the use of drugs and alcohol or by scaring themselves, as will be discussed in a later chapter. Some girls are also adept in *tsharmil*, however rather as 'followers' of the boys. Girls portray sexualised images of themselves, which can on the one hand indicate that they want to 'please' the boys within the cultural

'superiority' of Moroccan masculinity; on the other, it can be interpreted as agentic and rebellious in a conservative Moroccan society where female chastity and purity is closely linked to family honour. The racialised understanding of hierarchy becomes very visible in a street culture, where young *harraga* of northern urban background (especially Tangier) call themselves *shamal* ('north' in Arabic) and see themselves as superior to urban and rural youth from further south, who are mocked for sometimes being unfamiliar with the most basic standards of modern life[20] and whom they pejoratively call *'urubi*, yokel or peasant (Cabrera Medina 2013: 134).

Following, I will explain in more detail the symbolic violence young Moroccans from the peripheral parts of the country are exposed to, shaping their social and cultural capital. The symbolic violence is especially notable in the form of shaming, known as *hshuma* within the social context of Moroccan honour and shame. It is a further example of how the Moroccan periphery is structurally dominated by the core. And, as Bourdieu points out, 'the dominated apply categories constructed from the point of view of the dominant to relations of domination, thus making it appear as natural' (Bourdieu cited in Dominguez and Menjivar 2014: 187) where '[i]nternalised humiliations and legitimation of inequality and hierarchy' are exercised with the 'unwitting consent of the dominated' (Dominguez and Menjivar 2014: 187). The 'active violence of people' is therefore 'often [directed against] one's own companions in misfortune' (Bourdieu cited in Bourgois 2001: 28).

5.6 *Al-halal wa al-haram* (the permitted and the forbidden)

Morocco's social transformation in the context of its move into the Semi-Periphery is happening at a very slow pace, writes Carmona Benito (2008: 18), with people adopting an attitude of *ad dounia hania*[21]*,* meaning that 'life is tranquil', 'anything can happen but we adapt'. Stuck in waithood, many young people are getting tired of this slow pace where nothing is happening, desperate to 'break out and survive by emigration' (ibid.).

Moroccan society follows conservative Islamic views, while at the same time, traditional cultural values are giving way (ibid.:17) to a capitalist way of life, creating a world where 'everything is possible, where the forbidden coexists with the permitted'. *Al-halal wal-haram fi al-Islam*, meaning the permitted (*al-halal*) and the forbidden (*al-haram*) in Islam, are two important concepts for every Muslim to respect according to the *shari'a*, the 'law based on God's sovereign commandments and prohibitions as conveyed by the Qur'ān' (Campo 2009: 284, 620). *Halal* and *haram* refer to ritual acts of worship, dietary laws and family law, believed to have been created by God[22] (ibid.: 284). These concepts

are relevant in a Muslim's daily life in regard to 'clothing, hair, home furnishings, pets, employment, business, bathing, male and female relations, child rearing, toys, recreational activities, social relations and relations with non-Muslims' (ibid.: 285). *Haram* also relates to the sacred, i.e. sacred places, homes, female family members and spouses, meaning that they are 'taboo' to outsiders in order to protect them from the profane (ibid.: 290).

Moroccan society is shaped by these understandings, affecting everyday life and the well-being of people. They can be unfavourable to those who fall outside 'expected' settings, e.g. single mothers and their children, sex workers or children in the street, pushing them to the margins of society. In an ideal world, they do not exist, and should stay out of sight, and it can even be difficult to aboard the topic (fieldwork Tangier, Casablanca 2016). When the king comes to visit a city, street children are caught and locked away until his majesty leaves again (field interview Tangier 2016). Sex work is a flourishing business in the kingdom, but highly stigmatised and concealed (see e.g. Carmona Benito 2008).

Yet, typical for a country in the Semi-Periphery, while traditional views are still important, neoliberalism and universal human rights are increasingly also strived for (ibid.: 18). In the kingdom, the outcome is a façade of allegedly respecting the core values Moroccan society is founded on while 'adapting' to the specific situations that may not be conform with a conservative Islamic doctrine, secretly satisfying personal, in particular sexual, desires that would fall under *haram* (ibid., also fieldwork Tangier 2016). Having pre- or extra-marital sex is one example that is encouraged for men yet highly stigmatising for women. Women needing to be virgins for marriage, and men encouraged to show proof of virility through sexual partners, it creates a moral problematic which can, however, be 'adapted'. Female sex workers are thus 'beneficial' for a man's virility, while sex work itself is *haram*, especially for the woman (Carmona Benito 2008: 40). Resorting to male-male sex is not necessarily considered homosexuality which would be *haram*, but to increase virility, as will be explained later. For women who engage in pre- or extra-marital sexual intercourse, it is somewhat more problematic. To those who are able to afford it, hymenoplasty is available to restore a young woman's or girl's physical virginity in order to be 'intact' for marriage (Carmona Benito 2008: 20). In case of pregnancy out of an 'illicit' relationship, evidence can be obscured through, e.g. illegal abortion, illegal adoption, or abandonment of the baby (ibid.). Being a single mother or being the child of a single mother is one of the greatest shames in Morocco.

5.7 Honour and Shame

In a culture where the dominant system of meaning in terms social, political, and family life is based on religion, moral matters are crucial. Morals shape the meanings of responsibility, solidarity and justice, but also sin, remorse, repentance, and penitence (Hermans 1999: 314). In Moroccan society, moral behaviour is controlled through honour and shame (Carmona Benito 2008: 21; Crivello 2008: 43). Muslim culture being collectivistic, honour and shame are significant for both individual and family; a shameful act of an individual may not only dishonour himself but also his family (Davis and Schaefer Davis 1989: 66). The individual self is constructed within the family and in relation to 'social expectations and constraints afforded by Moroccan society and the neighbourhood setting' (ibid.: 155).

> [T]he Moroccan concept of the person is one in which the individual is always a situated actor – an individual who manoeuvres within the realm of relationships, circumstance, and human qualities to cumulate a set of publicly seen and worldly consequent traits and ties. It is a world – and hence a self – in which people are known by their situated obligations and by the impact their actions have on the entire chain of obligations by which they and their society are known. (Rosen 1984: 178–9)

Without further investigating the depths of honour and shame in Maghreb society that have fascinated anthropologists for a long time (Pham 2014: 6), there are a few aspects that are relevant in understanding the habitus of the underage *harraga*. Most relevant is *hshuma* (shame) in relation to shame and guilt, and *sharaf*, *'ird/nif*.

5.7.1 Shame and Guilt

First of all, it is necessary to point out that there is a distinction between shame and guilt and their particular connotations within Moroccan and Western societies.

> It is important […] to understand a fundamental difference between Moroccan *hshuma* and Western guilt. Guilt arises when one's conscience notes that one has done wrong. Guilt plays very little or no part in the conduct of Moroccan life; shame, on the other hand, is paramount. It is the censure of others that a Moroccan shrinks from, since his or her self-image is derived from others and is not cultivated internally… (Hargraves 2009: 53)

Whereas shame implies personal defeat, and is based on external morality performed by the community, hence of highest importance in Muslim societies, guilt is internalised self-punishment and a moral basis in Western societies (Hermans 1999). This is also reflected in the language, as *Darija* has no direct word for 'guilt' but rather words or expressions that could describe it (ibid.: 313).[23] In Morocco, stealing and lying may not

trigger guilt; it will however be of great shame (*hshuma*) if one gets caught (ibid.: 305, fieldnotes Morocco 2016).

5.7.2 Shame (*Hshuma*)

Shame under the word of *hshuma* is omnipresent in Moroccan society and refers to the loss of honour, either family or personal (Pham 2014: 6). It can be used in ambivalent ways, e.g., jokingly, educatively (*hshuma 'alik*, loosely translates into 'shame on you'), or when speaking of someone or a certain situation (Carmona Benito 2008: 21). *Hshuma* is the respect of moral and at the same time a 'symbol of repression and stigma' (Serhane in Carmona Benito 2008: 21). Pointing out *hshuma* is usually accompanied by a gesture of the index finger (or index and middle finger) sliding down the cheek from cheekbone to upper jaw (fieldwork Morocco 2016, see also Cabrera Medina 2005: 80).

> Pervasive in the Moroccan psyche, and closely related to identification with the family, is the concept of hshuma, or shame. One's personal honour and dignity, and by extension, the honour and dignity of one's family, are a Moroccan's most cherished possessions… Nothing can be worse than for hshuma to descend, raptor-like, and darken one's name… The shamed individual faces ostracism from society or even from family, and in the Moroccan context, no punishment could be worse. Misbehaviour by one member of the family impugns the reputation of all, so there is great pressure within the family to protect all its members. (Hargraves 2009: 53)

5.7.3 Honour under the words of *sharaf* and *'ird/nif*

Hshuma is closely intertwined with honour. Two versions of honour exist in Muslim society: sharaf and 'ird (or nif in Darija) (Pham 2014: 6). Sharaf translates into dignity and respect and refers directly to the honour of the family and can be increased through moral behaviour, e.g., hospitality or generosity (ibid.). 'Ird, on the other hand, relates to chastity and purity of women and can only decrease. 'Ird has a higher value than sharaf, meaning that the woman's chastity is of highest importance and she can gravely damage the family's honour in case of socially defined inappropriate moral behaviour (ibid.). Female modesty in terms of speech, movement, dress, but also strict control of their sexuality is directly linked to family honour. Moroccan girls are expected to be virgins when they marry and faithful to their husbands once they are married (Carmona Benito 2008: 32). Physical beauty is attributed to women, but they are required to conceal it, and control themselves, as they would otherwise provoke fitna[24](ibid.: 26). The highest violation of 'ird occurs when a woman – married or unmarried – gives birth to an extramarital child (Pham 2014: 7). As such, extramarital sex for women is haram and especially single mothers are stigmatised with hshuma (fieldwork Morocco 2016, see also Carmona Benito 2008: 20).

Here it is important to note that the family is highly important in identification purposes (Davis and Schaefer Davis 1989: 65-66) and is linked to the man/husband/father. Children born out of wedlock are the epitome of hshuma, if there is no identification through the father, and in particular if the mother is from the Moroccan periphery (where her own family does not have a 'compensatory' status). These women (sometimes girls) are usually repudiated by their families, and often resort to prostitution or begging, or work in other precarious settings (Verduzier 2019). Abortion, on the other hand, was entirely forbidden until 2016 and to date minor exceptions will be made only for severe cases[25] (Lefébure 2016). According to a study by INSAF[26] and the UN in 2011, 30,000 children born out of wedlock are registered yearly (here it is important to note that many children are never registered), and, according to INSAF in 2010, about 24 children are abandoned in the streets of Morocco on a daily basis (Verduzier 2019). Moroccan orphanages work on taking them in[27], in addition to children that have been abandoned because of a physical or mental disability (fieldwork Morocco 2016). By the wider public, these children are pejoratively called wld lhram, literally child of sin, are mocked and often live in the most precarious conditions either with their mothers or in the streets (fieldwork Morocco 2015, see also Jalab 2015).

Stigmatised with *hshuma*, children in the street are the personification of the periphery in the World System and as such, dehumanised to the point where abuse, including sexual abuse, is not considered tragic by the wider public, which needs a further short explication in the Moroccan context of sexuality.

5.7.4 *Hshuma* and sexuality

Whereas women are often accused of 'sexual vice', men, already as boys are socialised to develop their sexuality freely and encouraged to have many sexual partners, seen as proof of their virility (Carmona Benito 2008: 24ibid.: 25). Seemingly an oxymoron in the opposing upbringing of the sexes, it creates a moral problematic in terms of sexual desire, claims Carmona Benito (ibid.: 23). While homosexuality is strictly forbidden by the Qur'an and is in general not tolerated by Moroccan society, male-male sex is not automatically considered homosexuality. Under specific circumstances, especially for male adolescents, it may be seen as a 'necessity', as they need to prove their virility (ibid.: 29–30), if it is not possible to have sex with a female partner. It must exclude romantic love (Eppink 1992: 36), and the active part is 'preferable' (Dialmy 2009: 36–7; Eppink 1992: 36). In recurring sexual interactions with males, the active partner is considered to be bisexual which is tolerated as a sexual variation, whereas the passive partner is considered to be homosexual

(*zamel*[28]), feminised, and treated with scorn (Dialmy 2009: 36–7). This 'problematic' is avoided when an adolescent/adult chooses a younger boy aged 7 to 13, claims Eppink (1992: 36), 'they are younger therefore they can be submitted.' It is in this context, that young boys in the streets are highly exposed to sex. While some see it as a means of making money through sexual services, many boys in the streets are sexually abused (field interviews with street and social workers, Morocco 2015, 2016). To date, paedophiles are punished mildly, if at all, and the rape of boys and men is considered inexistent, judged simply as a 'violent attack against modesty' (Chaudier 2014).

Not only sex work is highly stigmatised with *hshuma* and *haram* but also sexual abuse, which makes it extremely difficult for young *harraga* to speak about abuse they may have possibly endured. The social and psychological implications are significant as will be discussed further in chapter 8; however, this topic is often overlooked when young Moroccans arrive as UAM in Europe.

5.7.5 *Hshuma* and the young *harraga*

Many young *harraga* from the urban and peri-urban periphery are children/adolescents from aforementioned backgrounds and stigmatised with *hshuma*. Young *harraga* usually stay in the streets when they leave their homes to emigrate. They normally do not mix with street children and stay in separate groups (fieldwork Tangier 2015, 2016), but sometimes get drawn into street life and abandon their migration project. Independently of whether they are children of the street or trying to emigrate, they are treated in similar degrading ways by the wider public as well as by Moroccan police and encounter much verbal and physical abuse. Street children as well as young *harraga* in the streets are 'the main victims of torture and other cruel, inhumane or degrading treatment in Morocco (Ciliberti and Badillo 2016: 115).

Besides the increasingly pejorative connotation for the term *harraga*, *wld-l-hram* (child/boy of sin) is also used for the young migrants, together with other humiliating denominations, e.g., *shemkara* (glue sniffer), or *wld-l-zanqa* (street child/boy), used for either group alike (fieldwork Tangier 2015, 2016, Casablanca 2016, see also Vacchiano and Jiménez 2012: 464). The degrading treatment and names given to the youngsters by the wider Moroccan public, associating them with *haram* and enhance their feeling of *hshuma*, is an example of structural violence going hand in hand with symbolic violence.

The time spent in the streets is often considered as one the most difficult ones of a young *harraga*'s life. They need to stay in the streets waiting and trying for the right opportunity to emigrate and to build connections with others, crucial for putting their

migration into practice, as will be discussed in chapter 6. The verbal and physical abuse, hygienic conditions, injuries, illnesses, exposure to drugs and fights between the boys, and other dangers of the street are reasons why some want to abandon their migration project. Abandoning the project and returning to the family is however closely linked to *hshuma*.

The young *harraga* this thesis is concerned with are boys from peripheral neighbourhoods of expanding cities, often adept in the *tsharmil* look, to voice *hogra* and as a rebellion against the social injustice they feel they are being subjected to while looking for a betterment of their circumstances. As a reminder, this betterment is closely linked to capitalist consumerism. These *harraga* take the greatest risks and most dangerous routes, usually autonomously, i.e. without the help of a smuggler, and without parental involvement. There are, to a lesser extent, also others who may engage in the *hrig*. Their routes may be different and their possibilities in migration, as well. They often have a different profile in Europe due to their different habitus, which may nevertheless may have been influenced by other '*tsharmil harraga*' or they may have needed to adapt, as I will discuss in chapter 6 under communities of practice. When young Moroccans arrive in Europe, they are usually categorised as a homogenous group of street children, which overlooks their heterogeneity and oversimplifies them as 'the' Moroccan unaccompanied minor. Yet, their habitus plays a significant role in their behaviour and well-being once they are in Europe, discussed in chapter 8. Following is a brief explanation of the social backgrounds of young *harraga* in order to give a better understanding.

5.8 Social backgrounds of young Moroccan *harraga*

Young Moroccan *harraga* have in common that they are predominantly male and between 14 and 17 years, although some engage in migration at an even younger, pre-adolescent, age(Jiménez Álvarez 2003: 47–51, 2017: 415–17; Baba 2006: 6). They are usually from unstable, economically deprived family background, including single or divorced parents (IOM 2013: 40) of the post-Fordist context discussed earlier. Yet, there is also a minority of young *harraga* from a stable family environment and who have attended school (Jiménez-Alvarez 2017: 415–17) but who see betterment only through migration. There is also a small number of girls that migrate in this manner, but only limited research is available on *harraga* girls (e.g., Jiménez Álvarez 2012; Morante del Peral and Trujillo Vega 2007) due to the fact that they are much less visible than their male peers.[29] Most young *harraga* of urban or peri-urban background do not migrate within a family project[30] and, in general, without the parents' consent. Those with difficult/non-

existent family relations are the ones who are most and longest exposed to significant amounts of verbal, physical, and sexual violence as they spend much time in the streets.

Boys from poor rural areas, on the other hand, usually have a different profile in that they are sent within a family migration project (Jiménez Álvarez 2003: 47–51, 2017: 415–17; Baba 2006: 6). However, due to most families' lack of funds to pay a smuggler or because the youth may get caught during their migration journey, e.g., returned from Spain to Morocco, some rural boys may also linger in the towns of out-migration, i.e., Tangier, Casablanca, or Nador, and engage in autonomous irregular migration in the same manner as their urban peers (Jiménez-Alvarez 2017: 416). The distinct rural or urban backgrounds are of importance when different *harraga* groups meet, may it be in Morocco or in Europe, and symbolic and everyday violence may become an issue when they meet in the streets or reception centres.

Almost all young migrants will have spent time in the streets waiting for the right moment to emigrate. This has to be understood in the sense that a young *harraga* (or any irregular migrant for that matter) often spend months or even years 'roaming' before reaching their final destination (see e.g. Crawley et al. 2016: 27). Moroccan UAM I have met in Europe had usually left their homes at least 5 years before I met them in Sweden or Belgium. Young Moroccan *harraga* often travel hundreds of kilometres within their own country to reach Tangier, sleeping rough, wearing the same clothes, sometimes not eating even once a day and exposed to the dangers of living in the streets. Yet, while they may become children *in* the streets, they are not children *of* the street *per se* even though some of the street children also engage in the *hrig*. Here it is important to understand that those who meet in the streets influence each other, before, during and after the process of migration, a survival strategy to be seen within a community of practice, explained in chapter 6. Therefore, a 'categorisation' of different social backgrounds is not 'obvious' when encountering young Moroccan *harraga*. It is, however, relevant in understanding issues related to their psychological wellbeing and social integration when they are in Europe. Most young *harraga* encountered in Belgium and Sweden during fieldwork are from the first two 'categories', often having adopted the *tsharmil* look, with a focus on consumerist culture and substance abuse being part of their everyday life. My findings during fieldwork are supplemented with the in-depth long-term ethnographic research undertaken by Jiménez Álvarez (2003; 2012) in the city of Tangier, as well as research by Baba (2006), in addition to Morante del Peral and Trujillo Vega (2007) and Ciliberti and Badillo (2015).

5.8.1 Precarious socioeconomic urban/peri-urban family situations

The young people of this 'category' are usually offspring of internal migrants from rural areas, i.e., parents or grandparents who have moved to a city in search for work and live in socioeconomically deprived urban or peri-urban neighbourhoods, in the post-Fordist context. Minors of this category often abandon school and start working at a very young age to help their families financially. Their families assume basic functions in terms of socialisation of the child. They are prone to stay in the streets sporadically, or temporarily live with their employers. The family may not agree with the emigration at first but will usually not oppose, given their precarious financial situation. If the minor makes it to Europe, he is expected to send remittances. Jiménez Álvarez (2003: 47–51) points out that these minors are at high risk of a self-destructive personality disorder once they have reached their destination country. This is due to the dynamics of their former life in the streets and their pursuit of immediate success, particularly driven by identification through consumer goods and adopting the *tsharmil* look. During my fieldwork in Belgium and Sweden, it appeared that most young migrants were from this category. Some stayed in reception centres, but often disappeared, and stayed with their networks if possible. They rapidly moved from one country to the next, changing identities when they crossed a border. They are not always easy to distinguish from the following 'category', as both groups have spent much time in the streets, influencing each other, affecting their socialisation.

5.8.2 Economically deprived and socially destructive urban/peri-urban families

Just like the former category, the homes of these minors are situated in the socioeconomically deprived urban or peri-urban neighbourhoods in the post-Fordist context. The difference is that the family context is socially destructive, meaning that domestic violence, alcohol, drug and/or sexual abuse, prostitution, divorce, widowhood, or remarriage are possible elements that have created an instability within family. The young migrants of this category may be children of extramarital birth, stigmatised with *hshuma*. Psychologically unstable, they may spend time in the streets in order to escape the destructive family environment and are at risk of becoming children of the street (Jiménez Álvarez 2003: 47–51). Some see migration to Europe as their only resort, but they usually do not have a specific migration project. Often, there is no contact with the family once they have left the home. They are at high risk of substance and physical/sexual abuse, as well as of engaging in criminal activity. This appears to be the second- largest category I have encountered during fieldwork. My findings showed that during the migration

journey, the street had become a way of life for them and whenever possible, they tried to avoid the EU child protection system altogether. They also rapidly moved from one country to the next, changing identities when they crossed a border (fieldwork Sweden 2016).

5.8.3 Children of the street (street children with rural or urban background)

This category refers to children who have made living in the streets their way of life before leaving Morocco. They, also, are often from the urban/peri-urban post-Fordist context, or from rural regions where they were suffering poverty, as Ciliberti and Badillo (2016: 115) report,

> children living and working on the street [in the cities] come from different regions and primarily from families living in poor neighbourhoods or shantytowns. Some of these children left the rural regions where their families live hoping to find work or better living conditions in the city. Obviously, these children left school at a very young age and the vast majority are illiterate. […] The street children come from various backgrounds, but everyone's story is tragic […].

Children who make the street their way of life are in general from dysfunctional and abusive (step-)families, often with alcoholic, drug-addicted and/or depressed parents. Others are children of unmarried mothers and highly stigmatised with *hshuma*. Children of the street live in the most abhorrent conditions at constant exposure to violence, abuse (including sexual abuse) and degrading treatment from the wider Moroccan society but also from within their group (fieldwork Morocco 2015 and 2016).

As mentioned earlier, while a child *of* the street has chosen the street as a way of life, a child *in* the street has chosen the street as part of his migration project. Yet, before a child makes the street his way of life there are periods where he comes back home and then leaves again (Lucchini 1996: 134–8, fieldwork Tangier 2016), and the idea of emigration may be a possibility when the family environment is not stable. During fieldwork in Tangier I have met many children of the street, but most did not have a concrete migration project. In reality, most are in such physically and psychologically fragile state that they are unable to engage in the *hrig*. Being addicted to glue sniffing has profound consequences on their mental state.[31] Children of and children in the street may meet at one point or the other and influence one another, in terms of glue sniffing as well as in terms of migration. Young *harraga* who are psychologically unstable may become children of the street and with increasing addiction to glue sniffing (and sometimes other drugs) abandon their migration project.

Most young Moroccans I have met during fieldwork are from precarious socioeconomic urban environments, e.g., shantytowns, but from a more or less stable family environment, while some of them are from socially destructive families or children of single mothers; still others appear to belong to the first group (children of the street), who have been in the streets for a while and became interested in migration due to peer influence.

There are 3 further categories of minors that I have encountered to a very limited extent during fieldwork but will touch upon them briefly to emphasise on the heterogeneity of Moroccan youth migrants.

5.8.4 Minors from middle-class urban families

This category refers to minors from middle-class urban families, with a stable family, educational, medical and nutritive background. Baba (2006: 4) writes that this category is a minority amongst Moroccan UAM in Europe. Nevertheless, during fieldwork in Morocco, I have increasingly encountered in context to the 'refugee crisis' in 2015. Families organised passport and visa, and/or a smuggler. This type of migration has to be seen in context with the high youth unemployment rate and the difficulty of finding a job, increasingly so for young people with a diploma. As successful emigration could mean adequate employment for the young person, and/or an increase in the family's revenue, some families take out loans Baba in order to pay for their son's trip. Some reported that the adolescent will be accompanied by his father to fly to Turkey, and the latter will return alone to Morocco and leave his son in Turkey to enter the EU with the 'refugee flow' coming from Syria and Afghanistan (field interview with IOM in Rabat, Morocco 2016). It is important to note that this type of migration usually happens because the minor insists on leaving with the goal of self-fulfilment, e.g., to take up his studies or find better life chances. It is not undertaken in the context of a family migration project as in the case of rural emigration (see below), yet the family is well aware of the advantages it could bring to their son and to the family if their child would be in Europe.

During fieldwork I met very few young Moroccans of this category, as the focus was on irregular and independent migration without the involvement of the boys' families, the research aiming to highlight agency in independent child/teenage migration. However, they meet other young Moroccans from other social backgrounds during the *hrig* and in the reception centres for UAM in Europe. Here again, they may influence each other and be exposed to peer pressure for illicit activities (fieldwork Brussels 2015). But due to their more stable family background, the desocialising process other young *harraga* are exposed

to usually stays however at a lower risk for this 'category'. Chances are high that they integrate well into host families and societies, attend school and have the intention to stay in a particular EU country (fieldwork Sweden 2016). As a social worker in a Swedish centre for UAM explained (fieldwork Stockholm 2016),

> We have one Moroccan now, but he doesn't act as if he has lived in the streets. He stays in his room and he doesn't interact so much with the others. And he's not so much out in the streets. He goes out but not all night and not for too long. […] He has been in Sweden for about 2 months, he only speaks Arabic and French. […] You can tell if somebody has lived in the streets if they speak a lot of languages and if they want to be in the streets all the time. Most Moroccan boys have been in the streets.

Not speaking 'a lot of languages' is indeed an indication that the young person has not been exposed to life in the streets and has not moved through different countries. In order to move quickly and directly from one place (Morocco) to the next (Sweden), usually requires a smuggler, as Cabrera Medina, a cultural mediator in a centre for UAM in Spain explained (fieldwork Algeciras 2016). It is unlikely that the first three groups mentioned are able to afford to pay smugglers, in particular as they engage in the *hrig* without the parents' consent. There is a risk, however, of them 'engaging' in a contract with smugglers and consenting into paying them back once they have arrived in the desired country, and even becoming victims of trafficking. I will discuss this further in chapter 8.

5.8.5 Girls (mostly urban)

Little research is available on the migration of girls as *harraga*. Given the cultural circumstances, it is rare for girls to emigrate alone as independent irregular migrants, although there is nevertheless an increasing number of girls engaging in this type of migration (Jiménez Álvarez 2012: 61; Morante del Peral and Trujillo Vega 2007). A girl might emigrate as *harraga* to help her divorced, widowed or single mother, because there is no available brother,[32] while still others may migrate within a family project (Jiménez Álvarez 2012: 62).

Moroccan female youth migration is a well obscured topic and more research is necessary, as migrating girls are especially vulnerable to sexual exploitation (Jiménez Álvarez 2012: 61) as well as child trafficking. Girls usually emigrate with a family member, e.g., hidden in a car, often in order to join relatives in Europe. Other girls will engage in the *hrig*, staying in the streets and becoming part of a male peer group, disguised as boys and emigrating in the same manner as boys from urban areas (Jiménez Álvarez 2012: 62). During fieldwork in Tangier and Casablanca, I was told of girls who run away to migrate

with their *harraga* boyfriends. Should the migration project fail, the girls will be stigmatised with *hshuma* and unable to return to their families. According to my interviewees, these girls then choose to stay in Tangier and work as prostitutes (fieldwork Morocco 2016). Further research on this particular group is necessary.

Within Morocco, it is not uncommon that very young girls from impoverished families are sent to richer families, sometimes relatives, to work as *petites bonnes*[33] to take care of the household. They are often severely abused, living under slavery-like conditions and being denied school attendance (Terre des Hommes 2013). Some girls who are sent abroad under the *kafala*,[34] will work as *petites bonnes* for a Moroccan family in Europe.[35] Here as well, there is a significant lack of research on this topic, in Morocco and even more so in Europe, due to the fact that they remain highly invisible, being confined inside the homes.

5.8.6 Minors of rural background

These minors are from impoverished rural areas, either from small villages/settlements (*douars*) or from the outskirts of newly emerging towns/small cities, as described in chapter 4. These areas often lack basic social services for e.g., health, education, transport, and many homes do not have running/drinking water (Serifi Villar et al. 2005:42). Families work in agriculture, parents are usually illiterate and children have a very basic primary schooling (ibid.). Families are in general stable, with numerous children, and it is often either the oldest or the youngest son at an approximate age of 15 who emigrates within a clearly defined family migration project[36] (Jiménez Álvarez 2003: 47–51, 2017: 415–17; Baba 2006: 6; Serifi Villar et al. 2005: 43), with the goal of sending remittances once he is in Europe to help alleviate poverty of his family. Boys from rural areas, especially of the wider Beni Mellal-Khénifra region, are often trying to reach family in Italy, especially in Turin and the wider Piedmont region due to migratory ties that were established in the 1980s through Moroccan adult migrants, now well established in this specific region of Italy[37] (Ricucci 2012: 18). Boys from the Beni-Mellal region will either be sent with a relative who pretends to be the father (Ricucci 2012: 20), or families will resort to a smuggler, sometimes needing to sell their basic essentials, which could mean, e.g., the only cow they have (Serifi Villar et al. 2005: 43). Others may receive help with the 'fare' from internally emigrated family who live in a Moroccan city or from family members who live abroad (ibid.).

However, due to many families' lack of funds to pay a smuggler, some rural boys may engage in the *hrig* on their own and also linger in the towns of out-migration, especially

Tangier, in order to cross over to Spain. This also applies to rural youth caught during the migration journey and returned from Spain. They engage in autonomous irregular migration in the same manner as their urban peers (Jiménez-Alvarez 2017: 416) because it would be too shameful to return home with empty hands, even more so if the family has paid for a smuggler. In this case, the pressure for sending remittances is immense as the young migrant is expected to repay the family's indebtedness for his migration and more.

Furthermore, some rural boys who are not part of a family project may have run away due to difficult family situations similar to the ones of their urban peers. They stay in the streets and either become children of the streets in a Moroccan city, e.g., Casablanca, or they try the *hrig* to Spain via Tangier. In Tangier, they are highly discriminated against through symbolic and everyday violence by their urban peers (fieldwork Morocco 2016, see also Cabrera Medina 2005: 19–22), in some cases acted out in life-threatening fights.

As said, all 'categories' can meet at one point or the other and influence one another. As I will explain in chapter 6, the different groups are rather distinct while still in Morocco. However, once they are in Europe, and especially once they have engaged in onward migration, they are often difficult to distinguish from one another, due to the fact that they have become one 'community of practice'. When speaking with social services in Europe, it is in particular the first three 'categories' mentioned that are referred to, as they are the highest in numbers to emigrate autonomously to Europe.

5.9 Conclusion

This chapter has looked at the internal structures that shape Moroccan independent youth migration. It is concerned with how habitus of young *harraga* in the Moroccan periphery influences the decision to emigrate. I argued that many young Moroccans are disillusioned in their home country due to limited future perspectives of moving into social adulthood and remaining in a state of 'waithood' for too long. A general disdain (*hogra*) with Morocco's government is sprawling amongst Morocco's peripheral youth who feel that their rights are not respected and that their country's leaders are indifferent to their sufferings. Those from the deprived, peripheral areas of the country often see irregular migration, the *hrig*, as the only possibility of bettering their life chances. While they hope for socioeconomic betterment, they also hope for more respect of their rights and for more access to consumer goods that they see as being part of a global youth

culture. Being confined to involuntary immobility in the context of a 'global youth culture' can emphasise relative deprivation.

As argued in chapter 4, most young Moroccan *harraga* are second- or third-generation internal migrants who live in socioeconomically deprived neighbourhoods or shantytowns. I have pointed to how Moroccan society is subjected to shame (*hshuma*) and how young people from the Moroccan periphery are stigmatised by it. Their social field is marked by structural, symbolic and everyday violence that shape their habitus and as such their symbolic capital, which they imagine ameliorating through the *hrig* and the possession of consumer goods.

In the last part of the chapter, I have discussed the heterogeneity of Moroccan independent youth migrants. Most boys I have met during fieldwork have engaged in the most dangerous ways of coming to Europe, and it is important to acknowledge that Moroccan youth migrate for a number of different reasons. Many come from economically deprived families, and they usually engage in their migration journey without their parent's consent. However, over the years, many boys leave because their friends have left (Leidel 2007) as future perspectives are increasingly bleak with youth unemployment on the constant rise (Medias24 2018). Immigration becoming increasingly militarised and dangerous, some young migrants now engage in less dangerous routes with the financial help of their parents.[38] Regardless of how they engage in the *hrig*, the young migrants have their own reasons for migration and make use of the resources and networks at their disposal (Jiménez-Alvarez 2017: 414), which will be discussed in the next chapter.

Notes

[1] From Arabic *'ârabia'* and *'francia'*.

[2] This is a further problem in the Moroccan education system, which splits society into affluent and less affluent, as those who graduate from public school and move on to university where instruction is in French, which to them is a foreign language, making it difficult for them to follow the courses (fieldwork Morocco 2016).

[3] Maghrebi mint tea with lots of sugar

[4] Maroccan Arabic for shame, explained later in the chapter

[5] Moroccan cannabis, grown in the Rif mountains. In northern Morocco, it is usually smoked by elder men in a traditional pipe, the *sebsi*. Cultivation and consumption are illegal in Morocco since

independence yet embedded in the Rif culture long before the internationalisation of cannabis. Smoking the *sebsi* in northern Morocco is tolerated, but young people across the country tend to prefer hashish, which is illegal (fieldwork Tangier April 2016).

[6] According to research on the internet, a call centre employee in France earns a minimum of €1200 (Chartier 2008). The minimum wage in Morocco [SMIC] was approx. €250 in 2015 (Machrafi 2015).

[7] thanks to the implementation of literacy programmes by NGOs (Borgen Project 2016) and the focus on improvement of education quality as well as teacher training by international donors[7] (Glavin 2017).

[8] E.g. sexual harassment between students, abuse of younger by older peers, drug dealing, or the carrying of knives by some students (IOM 2013: 32)

[9] This term is also used by Spanish scholars, literally translates into 'in search for a good life', as in 'no longer wasting one's life', or perhaps best put in English as 'building a future'.

[10] FORSATY 'Favorable Opportunities to Reinforce Self-Advancement for Today's Youth', financed by USAID and IOM, implemented in cooperation with local organisations, is a programme seeking to 'prevent school drop-out and increase youth employment opportunities in Tangier and Tétouan, focusing on at-risk youths between the ages of 15 and 25 living in marginalised neighbourhoods' (IOM 2013: 4)

[11] Also known under ISIS or ISIL.

[12] French for 'Cities without Slums'

[13] E.g. demonstrators opposing political decisions in democratic countries.

[14] From *se débrouiller* in French, to manage, to sort things out.

[15] In South Africa it is referred to as 'just getting by', in Mozamique as *desenrascar a vida*, and in Guinea Bissau as *dubriagem* (Honwana 2014: 34)

[16] Loosely translates into 'disdain'.

[17] 'Rif movement' in Arabic, referring to many months of protest in 2016 and 2017 in the Rif region after the death of a Riffian fishmonger, crushed to death by a garbage truck while trying to save his merchandise that police had thrown into the trash; which in turn led to general revolts against oppression by the Moroccan government.

[18] This term was originally developed by Nancy Scheper-Hughes, focusing on everyday violence in combination with structural and institutional violence. Bourgois (2001: 8–9) adapted this concept to emphasize on the micro-level experiences that normalise petty brutalities and create an ethos of violence.

[19] Bourgois' research (2001; 2002) focuses on crack-dealers in New York City and how structural and symbolic violence lead to further 'incorporated', everyday violence

[20] This refers mostly to boys from the 'useless Morocco' explained in chapter 4

[21] lit. 'the time is right' or 'people are patient and work slowly' (Carmona Benito, S., 2008:18)

[22] It is also believed that God permits more than he prohibits, and the binary *halal/haram* was thus subdivided into three categories for *halal* and two for *haram* issues and relevant in debating sacred law and issuing judgements and advisory rulings (Campo 2009: 284). As such, there are obligatory (*wajib/fard*), recommended (*manduh*), merely prohibited (*mubah*), disapproved (*makruh*) and forbidden (*halal*) acts. The latter two fall under *haram* and are reprehended *(makruh),* or punishable *(haram*). But also, the omission of the obligatory *halal* category *wajib/fard* is punishable by *shari'a* law, the omission of the other two *halal* acts are considered neutral (ibid.). Acts that fall under *haram* are 'adultery, theft, highway robbery, apostasy, idolatry, consumption of alcohol and murder' (ibid.: 291), but also 'usury,

gambling and making money related to illicit activities and substances' (ibid.) can fall under punishable acts. To some Muslims, listening to music and dancing are also either *haram*, *makruh* or *mubah,* depending on context (ibid.), whereas still others see them as permissible.

[23] E.g., *denb* (sin), or ndem (to regret), *bqa fiya el hal* (lit. 'the situation stayed in me', meaning 'I did something wrong that weighs on my conscience').

[24] *Fitna* is chaos due to seduction, also defined as a 'rebellion against God'.

[25] e.g., rape or incest confirmed after judicial investigation, or malformation of the foetus

[26] *Institution Nationale en Solidarité avec les Femmes en Détresse*, a Moroccan NGO working for the empowerment of women and their children in distress.

[27] Toddlers found in the streets are usually taken to orphanages, and can then be adopted, but only by Muslims. Nevertheless, many children are never adopted and are only allowed to stay while they are still very young. During fieldwork, I was told of a significant amount of abuse in orphanages, which children try to escape, and they thus end up in the streets again (fieldwork Morocco 2016).

[28] Pejorative and offensive connotation, similar to 'faggot' in US English.

[29] Jiménez Álvarez (2012: 62) writes that they may dress as boys, also confirmed during fieldwork by social workers in Stockholm (Sweden 2016).

[30] A family project refers to children and adolescents being sent abroad by the family, with or without the agreement of the young person, in order to ameliorate the family's economic status back home or in order to enable the family to follow to the host country through family reunification; in the latter case, the young migrants are described as 'anchor children'.

[31] Sniffing glue is the most common drug in the street. It makes delirious, 'as if everything is in cotton' (field interview with a former glue sniffing UAM, Belgium 2015, tba (S)), but can cause brain damage and kidney failure if used over extended periods (Green 1998: 60).

[32] This needs to be seen as agentic project of the youth in the cultural context of responsibility towards the family/mother, not as being sent by the family within a family migration project.

[33] French for 'little maids', the French term is used in Morocco for these girls.

[34] Islam recognizes descent under ties of blood. Under Islamic law exists an agreement of 'handing over' (informally adopting) a child within the family, e.g., a mother delegates her parental authority over her daughter to her sister, the child's aunt.

[35] Cf. Ulmer's (2003) film on Moroccan *petites bonnes* in Marseille, France, in French.

[36] Ricucci (2012: 18) writes that they are increasingly younger (12-14), also observed with their urban peers in recent years.

[37] Which further distinguishes them from their urban peers who use other migration routes than the ones preestablished by adults (see chapter 4).

[38] For fear that their sons will run away in order to emigrate and die during the journey, some extremely worried parents indebt themselves by taking out loans or selling their belongings in order to be able to pay a smuggler. This increases the pressure for the boy to succeed in Europe and send remittances to the indebted parents immense (field interviews Casablanca, 2016; Algeciras, 2016).

6 Moroccan Youth Migration in Practice

> To emigrate, you must train yourself to run, swim, climb. You must learn to resist fatigue, stress and strain; stifle primary physical needs, fight sleep, control fear, combat claustrophobia when staying for a very long time in dark, narrow and confined spaces without the possibility to move; dare to swim in the open sea next to ship engines with the risk of getting sucked in. You must be able to withstand the [mental] strain of awaiting the anticipated "right moment" to sneak under or onto a vehicle, hang on to it for a long time and then get off without being seen. (Antonelli 2012: 87, tba (F))

6.1 Introduction

Antonelli's vivid description of the *hrig* or the *riski* – as the young migrants also call it to refer to risking their lives while migrating – is what de Haan and Yaqub (2009: 6) describe as an 'extreme survival strategy' those with no other means to migrate engage in. It often includes younger, more vulnerable migrants who have no guarantee that the migration will be beneficial, making it rather highly likely that exploitative structures are reinforced (ibid.). In the case of the young Moroccan *harraga*, this 'extreme survival strategy' is seen as a means to escape waithood and move into social adulthood, regardless of their biological age.

In the previous chapters I have explained the external and the internal structures that shape Moroccan independent youth migration. In this chapter, I will discuss how the migration of young Moroccan *harraga* is put into practice. Drawing on O'Reilly's approach of a theory of practice for international migration, it is at the meso level, i.e., where social relations and ties play a role, where we are enabled to draw the link between structure and agency, explained in chapter 2. Practice is 'the acting out of social life' (O'Reilly 2012a: 24), taking place within groups of people, involving both the explicit (such as rules and procedures) and the implicit (e.g., shared world views and underlying assumptions) (Wenger 2008: 47). The very concept of the *harraga* is, in fact, the *practice* of irregular migration. It refers to a defined phase in the migrant's life, the phase of liminality he undergoes while moving from the country of origin to the destination country, e.g. from

Morocco to Spain (cf. Arab and Sempere Souvannavong 2009: 192). Once the migrant has reached the destination country, he is no longer a *harraga,* but has reached another phase. He is now a UAM, an 'errant' or a 'nomad' (ibid.: 192), as will be discussed in chapter 7.

It is the focus on practice that enables us to analyse the interaction between agency (i.e., independent migration of Moroccan youth) and structures (i.e., world systems and specific immigration laws). This level is often missing in empirical research (O'Reilly 2012a: 24) and a Community of Practice (CofP), as defined by Etienne Wenger (2008; 2011), combined with active agency are useful in providing this link. In the case of Moroccan youth migration, the CofP is crucial for their survival but also the networks they rely on are important. It is in particular peer networks that are indispensable, which also makes this migration significantly different from (Moroccan) adult migration, and new actors in migration, as laid out in chapter 4. The combination of the CofP with the peer network allows the young migrants to traverse a phase of liminality, a phase of transition where they are 'in limbo', enabling them to use their independent migration as a rite of passage into social adulthood. This transition requires a remarkable amount of agency on behalf of the migrant, but first, the actual act of migration needs to be explained.

6.2 The *Hrig* or *'El Riski'*

> One time I almost died. I was with a friend […]. It [was night] and took us 4 or 5 hours [to get inside the port and near the ship] because we had to be careful with the security guards. We arrived at the water and started swimming [with diving suits] through the ships and the gasoline […], the water was really dark […]. My friend can't swim that well, so I was carrying all our stuff, rucksacks, ladder to climb the ship, and it was difficult to move forward. I was still [halfway] when a small boat arrived [from the other side]. The cargo ship had already start[ed] the engine and with the pressure of the small boat, it push[ed] me toward the cargo ship. At first, I start[ed] laughing, thinking this is making it easy for me. But then I couldn't control it anymore and the ship's propeller start[ed] sucking me in. I lost all our belongings, they were sucked in, I was next […]. I started panicking and thought I was going to die. The first image was my mother, she is going to go crazy, she will die [of sorrow]. I never told her when I went to the port to emigrate, she didn't know anything. I tried to paddle against it, but it was useless, I couldn't even breathe anymore, I [swallowed] a lot of water and I thought [the engine] will chop me up, I will be good meat for the fish! Then, I was only a few metres away from the propeller, it suddenly stopped […]. After this I said, I will never do it again. But a few weeks later I did it again [laughs]. […] The next time, [my friend and I] got on a ship and we were so happy we had made it. The next day we thought we would be in Europe, but we had arrived in Safi [Moroccan city 300 km north of

> Agadir]. We were so angry! All of this for nothing! We stayed hiding in the port for 5 days, because if they catch you, you go to jail for 2 days and you have to pay a fine. Then they leave you in the streets and you have to find a solution to get back home. I was actually scared that we [may be] in Tangier. Because if you don't know anyone there, it is difficult to get back home [because it is very far and transport expensive]. In Safi, the police caught me in the port after 5 days and sent me to jail. […] I stayed in a cell with many adults, they were there because of fighting, drinking, hashish […]. Then they let me go and I took the bus to go back to Agadir. My mother was very worried, because she hadn't heard from me. Everyone thought I was in Europe. All my friends were laughing at me, saying, *So, how is Europe?* [laughs].

In this interview from my fieldwork with I., a Moroccan UAM in Belgium (June 2016), he explains his attempts to emigrate from the port of his hometown Agadir. It portrays the dangers of the *hrig,* the dangers young *harraga* are being exposed to, often not knowing where they are going or what may await them, but also how agentic they are in order to put their migration into practice. Young *harraga* are a veritable nuisance in Morocco's geopolitical interests, acting as an important partner to the EU in curbing irregular migration. As such, irregular migration is strictly penalized under Moroccan law 02-03, Art. 50[1], ratified in November 2003, and does not distinguish between minors or adults. A fine of up to 10,000 DH[2] and imprisonment of up to 6 months can be inflicted on the subject. When they are caught and imprisoned, they may share the cell with adult detainees.[3] Most minors do not stay imprisoned for longer than 72 hours and are then released, which means that they may be left somewhere along the road, sometimes over 1,000 kilometres from their hometown (Afailal et al., 2009, Vacchiano and Jiménez, 2012). Moroccan police are feared by young *harraga*, as they are known to reserve no special treatment for minors.[4]

Being unsuccessful and returning home is *hshuma* and being afraid of losing face is one of the reasons why young *harraga* may expose themselves to dangers and even death. When I. speaks repeatedly about his mother and how this will affect her, it shows once again, the intertwinement of different aspects of masculinity. On the one hand, he is agentic, sees himself as 'a man' and leaves without telling her, on the other he shows vulnerability by being afraid that she will 'die of sorrow' and his narrative shows the immatureness of an adolescent, by not planning correctly, being unaware of the danger of the ship propeller and later by getting on the wrong ship. The *hrig* is one of the most dangerous forms of migration. Due to its closeness to the Spanish mainland, Tangier (in addition to Nador, Ceuta and Melilla), has been and is one of the most important points of exit for young *harraga.*

Figure 13
Northern Morocco with Ceuta and Melilla

Source: Anarkangel 2007

Spain, which at some points along the Moroccan coast is only 14 kilometres distant, can be seen looking across the Strait of Gibraltar. Young *harraga* became initially known for setting off at night with a rubber boat or small motorboat to cross the Strait from other places near Tangier. Yet, this crossing has become increasingly difficult as of the early 2000s due to the implementation of SIVE,[5] surveilling the Spanish Andalusian littoral, reinforced as of 2006 with the creation of FRONTEX.[6] Youth migrants thus increasingly resorted to hiding under, above or inside lorries, in areas where they risked being squashed, burned or suffocated.

Others would hang on to ships (field interview Stockholm October 2016) or cross with drug smugglers in small boats, as one young *harraga* at Tanger Med explained, 'because those boats are sure to arrive on the other side, but for this you need to pay' (field interview Tangier April 2016). Being involved with (drug) smugglers bears the risk of becoming a victim of trafficking, as the fare needs to be repaid. As will be discussed later, this danger is significant with independent youth migrants, however research is scarce in how they become involved in being trafficked or in smuggling drugs themselves. Recent reports inform of some aiming to cross via pedal boat (Andalucía Información 2017), or being smuggled on jet bikes, the latter taking only nine minutes and involving a cost of around €4000 (Cabrera Medina 2017a, 2017b).

Young *harraga* come to Tangier from different parts of Morocco, and there is an increasing number of sub-Saharan migrants (including children migrating alone) to be

seen, all of them staying in the streets, usually nearby the ports. Before the inauguration of *Tanger Med* in 2010, Africa's biggest port 40 kilometres outside of Tangier, youth had emigrated irregularly from the small port of the city of Tangier. The *Tanger Med* port complex extends over 1000ha, surrounded by hills where Moroccan and sub-Saharan *harraga* live and hide, waiting for the right opportunity to cross the Strait to Spain (fieldwork Morocco 2016). There is much rivalry as they compete between each other for, e.g., get the space under the truck, as well as for food and shelter (Muñoz Riera and Empez Vidal 2007) and abuse from older towards younger boys within and between groups is common (fieldwork Tangier April 2016). Encounters can be especially brutal if groups from different cities confront each other or when urban meet rural youth.[7] Territory is an important aspect, and in general, different groups do not mix or enter the territory of others (cf. Suárez Navaz 2006). Moroccan youth *harraga* stay in groups and make use of their own resources and networks (Jiménez-Alvarez 2017: 414), discussed further later in this chapter. The following ethnographic vignette is from fieldwork at Tanger Med in April 2016 (conversations translated from Arabic into Spanish by translator).

> A. [my translator] and I arrive at Tanger Med and soon meet 2 young boys in shabby clothes. One looks around 15 years old, the smaller one 12 at the most. He tells my translator that he is also 15, that they are both from a suburb of Casablanca, and that they have been staying in the port for the last 8 months, trying to emigrate. The smaller one is the one who does all the talking, the bigger one tags along. They show us from afar where some young *harraga* stay, hiding and sleeping in an underground tunnel next to the tracks of the train station at *Tanger Med*, which is reached by crawling under the fence that surrounds it or by finding a hole in the fence. I ask him if we can go there and he says 'Definitely not! They are crazy. Most of them are from Fes and carry knives or razor blades under their tongues. We don't sleep there either, we sleep in a big garbage container up on the hill. We're safe there because we can block it from inside.' I understand that the tunnel is comparable to gang territory, where boys, who have no one from their neighbourhood or city, will not enter. Our two interlocutors stay in the surrounding hills where adult *harraga* also stay. I was informed by a social worker in Tangier that abuse, including sexual abuse, from adult *harraga* is a constant threat for younger ones, they therefore need a safe hiding place. The smaller one tells us that sometimes they beg money from tourists that leave from or arrive at *Tanger Med*. He laughs, 'You know, you just whine around a bit with the tourists and they become soft. I'm really successful because I'm so small. And then I share the money with my friends, and we buy food.' We laugh with him about his mischievousness, but the money is indeed desperately needed for them to buy food in one of the surrounding caffs outside of the port, where the boys often meet during the day, drink tea, play cards, or just sit around 'waiting' to get on a ship. A little later, while we are walking around the port where he shows us different areas, we come across a group of boys who are fighting. He runs up to them and yells 'Hey guys, let's stop this! Stop fighting!' He is the smallest

> of them all, but they immediately stop. They exchange a few words and he gets a few coins out of his pocket and hands them over to them, 'so they can get some food', he says. We continue to walk, and he tells us how he and his friends are constantly beaten or insulted by workers in the port, by police, or other adult *harraga*. Yet, returning home is out of the question, 'There is nothing in my neighbourhood, you [meaning anyone outside of the neighbourhood] can't even enter there, they will cut your throat. It's full of *tsharmil*. […] I don't want to talk about my father. But my mother is sweet, I miss her. But she has never left the neighbourhood, that's all she knows. She stays at home and only goes out to go to the neighbourhood market. I would rather die than go back there, there is no way back for me. I need to emigrate no matter what, it's my only chance to get a life. One of my brothers made it to Sweden, he says it's good there. I want to join him. I only hope I will be able to reach Europe before I have lost all my dignity (*karamaˢ*) here in this port.' We continue our walk around the port and come across another group of friends. One of them has a BMX bike. He suddenly forgets about us and runs over asking to ride the bike. They are frolicking around the bike and he overexcitedly starts riding it over a few bumps and humps within our vicinity, laughing and screaming with the others. My translator and I watch a few children at play for a little while. Then he returns the bike and comes running over to us, takes my hand and says, 'If you want to know more, you can stay here with us tonight. You don't need to worry about the others. I'll protect you, you're my friend!'

This account from my fieldwork shows again how agency and vulnerability are intertwined, how much the young *harraga* define themselves as 'men' and at the same time, are still 'children'. Not all are aware that the *hrig* is a matter of life or death. What is certain, if they survive, it will mark them for life (Jiménez Álvarez 2003: 74). Survival is dependent on the help of peers and requires the young migrants to exercise a great amount of tactical agency, where they imagine escaping Moroccan waithood and easily moving on to social adulthood. Their migration can be seen as an informal rite of passage, where boys who are successful in crossing and remaining in Europe are considered men regardless of their age (Suárez Navaz 2006: 38), which nevertheless needs to be 'proven' by showing the ability to partake in capitalist consumerism, and, if they are in touch with their families, by sending remittances. Social adulthood is referred to as *'aql,* meaning that a sense of responsibility, intelligence and thoughtfulness has been reached (Davis and Schaefer Davis 1989: 6-8). In Moroccan context, this not only means individual autonomy but is also defined within the social context (ibid.), hence the responsibility of sending remittances. The proper behaviour of an adult, *'aql*, differs for males and females (ibid.). Mekideche (1996: 54) explains that the street (*al-zanka*, or *l-zanqa*, in Maghrebi Arabic) plays a crucial role in child development amongst siblings and other children, where adults usually do not interfere. With age, the boundaries of *al-zanka* expand for boys and decrease for girls (ibid.: 55). Girls as of around age 11 will increasingly learn to take care

of the household (Davis and Schaefer Davis 1989: 17-24), whereas boys will usually assist in household duties only if no one else is available and spend more times walking about in the streets or meeting friends in a café (ibid.) This is certainly a further reason why boys are more likely to engage in the *hrig*, because the outdoors become increasingly part of their social space, whereas 'good' girls, as they become older, are increasingly confined to staying indoors (Mekideche 1996: 55). As points out Juntunen (2015), the meeting of *shabab* in the street, especially in the evenings, is a gender-specific part of socialising and those who do not go outside are considered 'asocial'. *L-ẓanqa* and the relevance of peers is an important factor in the migration of young *harraga* where they build a community of practice among peers, absolutely crucial to their survival. For boys the *hrig* can thus be seen as a rite of passage into masculinity, synonymous with virility (*rujula*, from *rajul* (man) and distinct from the *shabab*) (ibid.). *Rujula* is not simply attained through a change in social status or with physical changes of the body, it needs to be acquired by showing that one is 'tough', resilient and courageous through performative acts (ibid.), such as the *hrig*.

6.3 Rite of Passage and the phase of liminality

The passage into adulthood and into obtaining *rujula* is negotiated socially by going through a phase of liminality (Mai 2010: 73), an ambiguous in-between phase of transition from one social status to the next, where not only creativity is possible, but also vulnerability and loss (Ottossonet al. 2017: 428). Typical characteristics of liminality can be described as being 'in an underworld between past and future lives' (Williams 2006: 876), 'neither here nor there… possessing nothing' (Turner 1991: 95) navigating in a 'limbo of statuslessness' (ibid.: 97).

Turner (1991: 94) explains a rite of passage[9] as being marked by three phases: separation, liminality, and aggregation. For Moroccan youth migrants these three phases mean detachment from their social structure of origin, the migration process, and the reinsertion into a new social structure. In context this refers to the young migrants escaping waithood while staying in the streets and aiming to be granted stay in Europe through irregular, independent migration. Rites of passage are often associated with risk-taking behaviours in order 'to prove' that the actor has passed from adolescence to adulthood (Adès and Lejoyeux 2004; Michel et al. 2001), or in the Moroccan context, from the *shabab* to the *rajul*. It is no secret that many young *harraga* have drowned, died, or have gone missing in the process of their migration. The *hrig* or *riski* are part of this risk-taking behaviour within the rite of passage. Risk-taking behaviour in the rite of passage can be a psychological tool to fight moroseness and exasperation (Adès and

Lejoyeux 2004: 202–3), which can be seen in relation to waithood, as explained earlier when young Moroccans feel that 'nothing is happening' (fieldwork Morocco 2016). In risk-taking behaviour it is often typical, according to Adès and Lejoyeux (ibid.: 211), that the young person undergoes a modern 'trial by ordeal' in order to (self-) determine if he is still considered worth living (e.g. by God). Jiménez Álvarez (2003: 74) writes that some young *harraga* reported that they pray and say that they put their lives in the hands of Allah when engaging in the *hrig*. Ordeal risk-taking is often used as a means to protest against a society where the young person feels oppressed (Adès and Lejoyeux 2004: 211) and where the young person feels that he has 'nothing to lose' (fieldwork Morocco 2016). As explained earlier, the Maghrebi term *hogra* describes this feeling well, where young Moroccans see their migration as a means to protest against a system that does not offer them a viable future. If the young migrant survives the *riski,* it means that he will not only undergo a metamorphosis, a 'ripening' or a rebirth (Adès and Lejoyeux 2004: 211), but he will also emerge as a hero in the mythological sense (ibid.: 213), as in the original definition of the *hrig*[10], before becoming associated with socioeconomic deprivation and being looked down upon. The change of social field will thus signify a change in habitus and increase the young migrant's symbolic capital. However, as will be discussed, this rebirth is dependent on being able to leave the liminal phase and by demonstrating that aggregation has been reached, which in the case of the young *harraga* is to show his virility, *rujula*, by partaking in capitalist consumerism and in enabling their families to gain symbolic capital through remittances. Another aspect of having reached aggregation and *rujula* is associated with building their own families in Europe. During fieldwork, young Moroccans near or over the age of 18 often spoke to me about wanting a (European) wife and children, and a few that I was able to remain in contact with, became successful in this undertaking. Becoming fathers is also a further demonstration of tactical agency, as they are able to stay beyond their status as UAM.

Simon Turner, in his research on refugee camps, argues that all refugees go through a liminal phase, and that it is 'the young men that have unique opportunities to trespass into new roles' (Turner 1999: 1). He calls them 'liminal experts', claiming that some 'make use of this suspension of social structures to try to change things to their advantage' (ibid.: 8), in line with the discussion on tactical agency above. Even though young Moroccan *harraga* are not refugees as per the legal definition, they also have the possibility of transitioning into new roles through their independent migration. As males, they may change things to their advantage (escaping waithood and achieving social adulthood),

whereas their female peers are much more restricted within traditional roles, even if they do migrate as *harraga*.

The suspension of social structures during the liminal phase frees the young males from obligations they may have towards their families and even entirely disrupt contact with their families until they are able to send the remittances their families expect of them (fieldwork Belgium 2015, Morocco 2016). However, as will be elaborated in the following chapter, being categorised as UAM postpones obtaining their migration goal of moving into social adulthood. They are often confined to a prolonged liminal phase, unable to reach aggregation, which in turn, traps them in a marginalised periphery that they try to escape, despite now being in Europe. It puts the young migrant in a difficult situation between family expectations back home and the reality of being a UAM in the EU with no income. In order to fulfil the rite of passage, the liminal phase is seen as a necessary kind of social experience, 'in which the subject passes through a period of ambiguity between the roles assigned by law and custom before being reintegrated into society with an enhanced and established position' (Mai 2010: 73). Once the rite of passage, i.e., the migration, is completed it is considered the point when one leaves the liminal phase. Being unable to send remittances once having supposedly reached aggregation, i.e., upon arrival in Europe, is therefore seen as a grave form of *hshuma*, or 'an unbearable shame' (Williams 2006: 874), as I will explain in chapter 8.

A further unbearable form of *hshuma* is the inability to take part in capitalist consumerism that is associated with their symbolic capital and imagined to be easily attainable in Europe. Being called a *blédard*, or a 'yokel', is one of the worst insults and a form of symbolic violence which can spark dramatic fights (fieldwork Sweden 2016) as it brutally confronts the young migrant with his inability of reaching his migration goal, and increasing his symbolic capital by openly demonstrating that one is part of a global youth culture.

Risk-taking behaviour (reason for calling it *el riski*) in the rite of passage can be encouraged by members of a peer group and by the use of drugs (Adès and Lejoyeux 2004: 211, 213). For young *harraga,* there is peer pressure to sniff glue or use drugs (Antonelli 2012), and they are commonly used in order to 'forget sorrows' (field interviews Morocco and Sweden 2016, see also Vacchiano and Jiménez 2012: 465), be more 'courageous' (fieldwork Morocco 2016, see also ProgettoMondo Mlal 2013: 170), and 'to calm anxiety', e.g., at night in the street (fieldwork Morocco 2016, see also ProgettoMondo Mlal 2013: 174). In a study conducted by an Italian NGO (ProgettoMondo Mlal 2013: 175), over half (54%) of the children interviewed indicated that they sniffed glue or

inhaled solvent with a psychotropic effect to calm themselves down. *Karkoubi*, which consists of mixing cheap psychotropic pills (e.g., benzodiazepines) with alcohol, solvent or cannabis oil, is widely used by those engaging in the *hrig* (ibid., fieldwork Sweden 2016). *Karkoubi* takes effect quickly, rapidly rendering one severely dependent, and it is said to give a feeling of invincibility, making users psychotic, extremely impulsive and violent (Wuyard 2018). It is very dangerous in the context of street fights, and the most atrocious mutilations, attacks, and homicides have been done under its influence (ProgettoMondo Mlal 2013: 33–4). In an interview in Antonelli (2012: 87), a young *harraga* describes how he uses *karkoubi* to give himself courage,

> […] To face all this, you cannot stay sane. […] To give yourself courage, you drink [alcohol] and you take karkoubi. You have to be in an altered state of consciousness to give yourself the strength to [do the h'rig]. When you set off, you're no longer in normal life [...].

Victor Turner also asserts that neophytes of the liminal phase tend to 'develop an intense comradeship and egalitarianism' (Turner 1991: 95), beyond 'secular social structure' (ibid.: 96). This absence of traditional authority encourages the formation of new communities (Williams 2006: 876). Turner (1991: 96) adds that these communities are made '[…] of equal individuals who submit together to the general authority of the ritual elders.' As will be explained further below, in the case of Moroccan youth migration, the anthropological term of 'ritual elders' translates into older boys, or sometimes young adults, 'leading' the group of neophytes and younger boys, and in many cases, exercising significant power over them (fieldwork Morocco 2016). Belonging to a specific community during the phase of liminality is highly relevant in Moroccan independent youth migration. The young migrants do not only rely on their networks, but they engage in their migration process within specific peer groups, or more precisely, they do so within a community of practice (CofP).

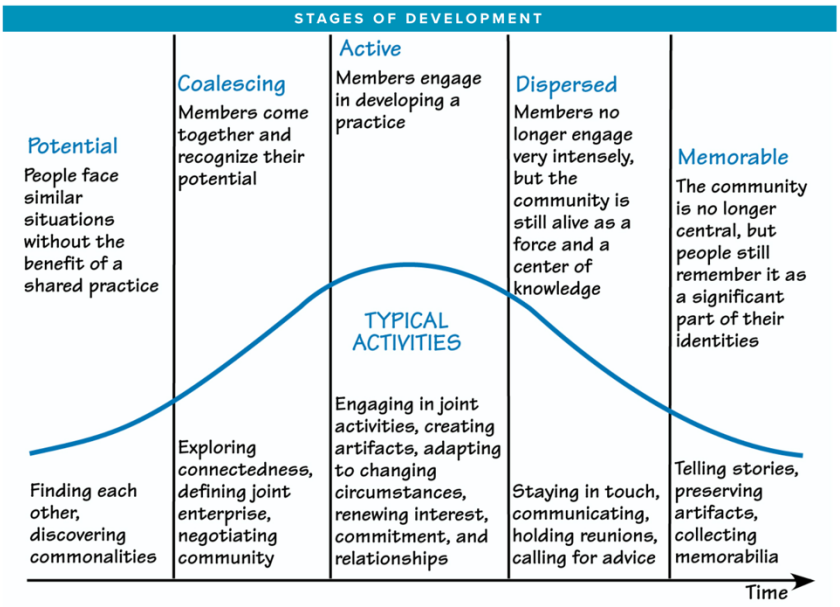
6.4 Communities of Practice (CofP)

Moroccan boys from the same neighbourhoods or towns will stay in groups, and their migration is neither spontaneous nor accidental (Jiménez Álvarez 2003: 18), it is well organised and contemplated. They always refer to the crucial importance of 'their friends' (Suárez Navaz 2004: 45) when engaging in the *hrig*. During the liminal phase, the contact with networks can be difficult or interrupted, and the Community of Practice (CofP) is therefore crucial for the survival of the young migrant. The *unaccompanied* Moroccan minor

is thus never truly *unaccompanied*, which however does not mean that he is exempt from being vulnerable and in danger.

A CofP goes beyond the 'feeling good, cosy and comfortable' definition of a *community* that Zygmunt Bauman (2011: 1) evokes and is more than an aggregate of people, e.g., a group of friends, a neighbourhood, or a network of connections (Wenger 2011: 1). CofPs, rather, are 'groups of people who share a concern or a passion for something they do and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly' (Wenger 2008: 73). In a CofP, members influence each other's understandings, while exchanging opinions and information (ibid.: 75), which however does not necessarily mean that they are a homogenous group, nor does it mean that their diversity, e.g., complementary knowledge, or competence, can, in fact, contribute to their success (ibid. 76). CofPs share similarities with networks, and in fact, many CofPs form out of a social network of relationships (Wenger and Trayner 2011). Yet, social networks concentrate 'on the network of relations and the flow of information' (footnote 2.1 in Wenger 2008: 287) based on self-interest, whereas the focus of a CofP is on shared identity around a specific topic, to transmit and enhance knowledge about it to one another (Wenger and Trayner 2011). In short, it is about a community of people putting a specific expertise into *practice*. Also, as Wenger (2016) explains, a CofP may be relevant for a particular phase in order to reach a specific goal and may then disperse again.

Figure 14
CofP time frame



Source: Wenger 2016

For young Moroccan *harraga*, the CofP enables them to make a change in their habitus and symbolic capital (Moore 2008), which, as discussed above, will enable them to show that they have 'succeeded'. As such, through their CofP they can put their migration into practice, and it is crucial for the young *harraga*'s survival during the liminal phase.

A CofP is typically characterised by 3 crucial points (Wenger 2008):

1. mutual engagement in a shared domain of interest
2. joint enterprise and information sharing
3. shared repertoire of resources

Communities of Practice (CofP) make practice happen through active agency, which, as Stones (2005: 86) argues, can only be exercised within the person's habitus. The habitus of young Moroccan migrants is shaped by the lack of crucial future perspectives for a young generation which created a 'collective dream' of departure (Bennani-Chraïbi 1995: 159). But also, their position within the world system, where they are confined to the periphery – with a lack of schooling, possibilities of social ascension, and self-fulfilment – is an important part of shaping their habitus. Adhering to the rebellious *tsharmil* subculture is part of the agency that defines their CofP, shaped by their habitus. They share the passion for becoming part of a capitalist global youth culture which translates for them into social adulthood and having become 'men' by engaging in the *hrig*, seen as their rite of passage. To be successful in this undertaking, they learn 'the tricks of the trade' (de Certeau 2011: 62) from one another as being part of a CofP. Drawing on agency of personal projects (Ortner 2006) using tactics (de Certeau 2011), enables them to put their migration into practice.

The mutual interest of young Moroccan *harraga* is to escape waithood and achieve social adulthood through the *hrig*. The second characteristic of a CofP – joint enterprise and information sharing – refers to learning 'the rules of the game' (O'Reilly 2012b) from one another as part of a CofP. Older boys, or those with more experience, will take care of the younger or less experienced ones by teaching them how to deal with certain situations. Within the rite of passage during the liminal phase they can be referred to as 'ritual elders', initiating the younger ones into the 'art of migration' through tactical agency.

Lave and Wenger (1991: 29) define this as 'situated learning', i.e., a newcomer becoming a full participant of a CofP through engaged learning of the CofP's specific knowledge, guided by the adepts. In Morocco, the CofP provides information on where to sleep, where to find food, boat schedules, truck and bus routes, where to find a diving suit in order to swim to/with a ship, how to avoid the police and their guard dogs, amongst other useful knowledge. In Europe, the CofP shares knowledge in how to get from one country to the next, which centre for UAM to go to, or whether to stay outside of the system, what stories to tell immigration officers, etc. (fieldnotes Belgium 2015, Spain 2015, 2016, Morocco 2016, Sweden 2016). Their joint enterprise of successful

migration is thus constantly developing due to the input of each individual's expertise and information sharing. Their expertise in surviving in the streets, their learning from each other and valuing their collective identity are essential for the knowledge sharing of the CofP, despite that this particular expertise may not be perceived as 'expertise' by outsiders (Wenger 2011: 1–2).

And while boys develop intense comradeship and egalitarianism, typical for the liminal phase they find themselves in, CofPs are diverse and not necessarily harmonious. Members of the same CofP can be seen fighting and screaming at each other one moment and the next moment hugging again, laughing, and calling one another brothers (fieldnotes Belgium 2015, Morocco 2016, Sweden 2016). Typical for the liminal phase during the rite of passage mentioned earlier, peer pressure for substance abuse is common (Antonelli 2012). While doing drugs and having sex amongst peers is common for life in the streets (Green 1998: 75), here it is often permeated by everyday violence (field interviews with street workers and informants, Morocco 2016, Sweden 2016). Stealing from one another, sexual abuse and even rape happens within the group, usually inflicted by older boys upon younger ones (field interviews with street workers and informants, Morocco 2016), the former abusing their specific roles as 'ritual elders'.

Mai (2010: 82) points out that these relationships often end in violent rebellion when the submitted youth has nearly reached adulthood and needs to justify to his peers that he is now a man and no longer subordinated. A street worker in Casablanca narrated (field interview Morocco 2016, tba(F)).

> These children stay in small groups to protect themselves. But there is always a leader [who is older] who will exploit them. The child thinks he is protected by the leader, but the leader wants money [makes the child steal]. Or he exploits him sexually […] Many children do not want to talk about being sexually exploited or abused. Because they have been violated in their dignity, in their humanity […]. But being a social worker, they will sometimes talk to me about it. I tell them to inform the police, but most don't want to. […] But once these children have become adults, this can become a very serious problem, because they will settle old scores. For revenge. [They] may go find the old leader, who is now maybe 30 years old, and burn down his place. Or assault him with a knife […]. Children [who have lived in the street] often carry revenge or hatred inside them […].

The third characteristic of a CofP, the shared repertoire of resources, relates to how things are done and which have become part of the practice, may it be through words, tools,[11] gestures, actions, symbols or concepts (Wenger 2008: 83). Young *harraga* use specific street language[12] and hand gestures, some similar to hand signs of youth gangs.

The display of a shared repertoire goes in line with symbolic capital and habitus.[13] The adoption of *tsharmil* subculture can be an example of shared repertoire. While it is visibly displayed in Morocco if possible, it becomes 'obligatory' to youngsters of northern urban origin[14] once they have reached Europe. It is a vivid demonstration of the capitalist consumerism *msharmlin* ascribe to, the latest Nike shoes, brand clothes, gold necklaces or bracelets, and the fauxhawk hairstyle of footballer Cristiano Ronaldo are part of this repertoire. Other status symbols that require money – e.g., tattoos, iPhones, or a girlfriend (which supposedly signifies that they are sexually active) – are a further obligatory shared repertoire once they are in Europe. Posting photos on social media of oneself with said materialistic goods or girls demonstrates identification with a youth sub-culture that represents an escape from a society where they are confined to the periphery and often condemned under *hshuma*. It symbolises that the young migrants have (supposedly) left the liminal phase of the rite of passage into social adulthood through migration.

6.5 Networks

I have argued that the local group and the CofP are important for the survival of the young Moroccan *harraga*, yet their actual rite of passage, i.e., the act of migration, is not a group undertaking, but rather an individual fight for survival, adding to a competitive climate among the boys. Boys are on their own when dealing with fractures and illness (Muñoz Riera and Empez Vidal 2007), when they miss their families, especially their mothers, and when they need to deal with psychological trauma (fieldnotes Morocco 2016, Sweden 2016). It is also surprising to see how easily 'best friends' forget about each other once they have moved beyond the liminal phase of their rite of passage (fieldwork Belgium 2016, Sweden 2016). This was something striking in my interview with L. in chapter 5, where 'best friends' had lost touch as soon as they had left the port. Due to the nature of their migration, it is therefore crucial for them to be able to draw on personal networks when they find themselves alone putting migration into practice.

While a CofP and personal networks – especially peer networks – may share overlapping ideas, they are nevertheless distinct from one another (Wenger and Trayner 2011). Young Moroccans will rely on strong and weak networks, including family and transnational networks. However, as is the case with irregular migration in general, most independent youth migrants are very reluctant to talk about their networks and subtle indications are not always easy to grasp for the researcher (cf. Williams 2006: 871 in her study on refugees in the UK and beyond). Therefore, different networks laid out in the next sections are not meant to analyse network theory, but rather to underline the

argument that Moroccan independent youth migrants rely on them in addition to their CofP in order to exercise agency in their migration process.

Migratory social networks, argues Faist (2010: 66), 'are sets of interpersonal ties that connect movers, former movers and non-movers in countries of origin and destination through social ties, be they in relations of kinship, friendship or weak social ties.' In this social-relational context, both movers and stayers are active decision-makers in migration (Faist 2010: 66, 72). Social networks (also called personal networks) play an important role in migration decisions and may produce a migration chain; they may help to finance travel, cross borders, find employment and housing (Haug 2008: 588), provide contacts, information about social services, recreation and emotional support (Ryan 2008: 455). Personal networks can thus reduce monetary and psychological costs of adjustment in the new country (Faist 2010: 65) and facilitate transnational connections (Haug 2008: 588). These networks are therefore highly diverse, they may either have 'high levels of "intensity" ' (Williams 2006: 873) where difficult-to-meet expectations can burden the migrant, or they may be very loose, with little more than a contact enabling them to cross a border (Williams 2006: 869).

Young *harraga* are known to use established networks to some extent, however, of much more relevance are their own, much more recent networks. This is one of the reasons why some scholars have argued that Moroccan independent youth migrants are new actors in migration, discussed in chapter 4. The new networks also have new 'role models', which are the pioneer migrants of this particular youth migration and different from previous generations. Pioneer migrants are often seen as role models that encourage further out-migration through social networks (Faist 2010: 65; Fawcett 1989: 677). Young Moroccans who feel excluded from being able to attain social adulthood in their country of origin are especially impressed by those who left the neighbourhood for Europe as *harraga* a few years earlier and who return to visit their families, apparently having succeeded abroad. In Casablanca, the mother of two boys who had intended the *hrig*, explained (fieldwork Morocco 2016, interview in *Darija*, translated into French by translator (tba)):

> Those who left 10 or 15 years ago and now have legal status in Europe are seen as an example, they are being idealised. They come visit with a nice new car, or they buy a house here; they have money to invest in a small business or the like. They now have a wife and children. They have made it. Whereas in Morocco the situation is worse and worse, there are no jobs; there is no future for the young generation. So, the boys want to go to Europe, make money and get a future. That's their goal.

The former youth migrants are seen as their direct pioneers, having migrated as adolescents, and subsequently succeeded in Europe. The young migrants-to be can directly identify with the tactical agency their pioneers have used to achieve their personal projects, i.e., searching for autonomy and adventure, economic betterment for themselves and their families, finding work and sometimes better education (cf. Heissler 2008: 3). The pioneer migrants of young *harraga* differ importantly from former generations of extended family members who have migrated during the guest worker programmes in the 1960s or family reunification as of the 1980s. As discussed earlier, their profile also differs in that they are in generally descendants of internal migrants and now engage in international irregular migration.

The following vignette from fieldwork in Tanger Med in March 2016 shows the impact of pioneers on young *harraga* and how much they hold the role of 'heroes', but also accounts of the agency they implement, defying structures and vulnerability, having undergone their rite of passage successfully beyond liminality, and have become 'men'.

> I travel to Tanger Med with R., who was introduced to me the day before, in his car with a [European] license plate. He is a rough guy and former UAM from Tangier, now an adult living in [a country in Europe], visiting Tangier. Yesterday, he told me that he was one of the first teenagers to leave for Europe, sometime in the 1990s. In a roundabout, not far from the hill dominating the port with the national slogan in huge letters *Allah, al watan, al Malik* [God, the Nation, the King], we see two adolescents in rather shabby clothes, walking around in the midday heat. R. […] stops the car next to them. I see fright in their eyes and R. explains in Arabic that we are not police or security. It is obvious that they are trying to make it to Europe, the port is far from any town and everyone who is not police, security or a port employee, is here to get on a ship, either as *harraga* or as tourists […]. They agree to talk to us, and he asks them how long they have been trying here in the port. He then translates to me, 'One is from Rabat, the other from Agadir. The one from Rabat has been trying on and off for four years, the other one has been in the port for a year. […] A torrent of Arabic words is exchanged between the boys and R. and he translates that they are extremely frustrated because all of the lorries they hide in or under, go through a scanner before going on the ships that take them across. […] Scanners detect heartbeats and they don't know what to do and how they are ever going to make it. R. then tells them that they should wrap their chests in aluminium foil because then the scanner cannot detect the heartbeat. The boys are about as impressed as I am, and I realise how street wise R is. My *Darija* is minimal but good enough to understand that he is using a very colloquial tone, perhaps a 'street language', I wonder. I also understand that he tells them that he has also emigrated like them and now lives in [a country in Europe] and has his papers. By the tone of his voice, I become aware of a sort of growing hierarchy between him and the boys and it appears to me that they increasingly see him as one of 'them'. They shower him with thank yous and that Allah may protect him, nearly ready to fall on

> their knees before him. I look at him in astonishment, given this sudden change in 'status' from being the insignificant driver of an insignificant 'tourist' (myself) to a 'pioneer' of the *hrig* who has 'made it'. He seems pleased with himself and we drive on. On our way back to Tangier, he tells me that he had left Morocco as a *harraga* at a young age and that he was also returned a number of times, but still, that it was easier 15 years ago than it is now. He says that he had spent much time in the streets and the city port of Tangier, selling knick-knacks. His voice becomes quieter as he tells me that his life had not been easy with constant beatings by his father, many siblings and not enough money for food. But then he boasts again that one time he had trained himself to swim across the 14 km that separate the Moroccan from the Spanish coast, but I am not sure if he actually did manage to swim across, or if he only tried or if he is just making this up. One thing is certain, he is experienced in the *hrig* and in everything that comes with it. [...] (fieldnotes Tangier March 2016 (G + S), tba)

The fact that young *harraga* are migrating irregularly also has an important impact in the use of social networks. In his study on undocumented Algerian asylum-seekers in the UK, Collyer (2005: 699) found that 'undocumented migrants use social networks differently, focusing on weaker ties rather than strong family networks'. If the kin networks can no longer be relied on for support, the social capital – i.e., networks that lower migration cost – is rendered ineffective and migrants will look for help elsewhere (Collyer 2005: 706). This means that they may continue their migration journey to another country where conditions are more favourable to them and/or they will rely on other networks. As will be looked at in more detail in chapter 8, young Moroccans, once in Europe, are extremely mobile, rapidly moving from one country to the next. Not being able to rely much on kin networks in the country of destination increases the importance of being part of a CofP. For the young Moroccan migrant, the CofP is crucial and closely linked to the peer networks they draw on.

6.5.1 Kin networks in the destination country

Today, most families in Morocco have at least one relative in Europe. They play an important role in terms of remittances and gifts that are sent on a regular basis to family members in Morocco. These remittances and gifts are expected from the relative that lives in Europe, regardless of their financial situation. As discussed, kin are also influential in the country of origin not only in economic terms, but also in shaping the habitus of their family members back home, with an emigration culture having become part of everyday life. Kin networks are influential in migration decisions and go beyond ' "family migration" in terms of conjugal unit or household' (Ryan 2008: 454), but rather also include the extended family, tribe or group members (Williams 2006: 869) beyond geographical limitations. They are also referred to as transnational networks and often

play an important role in supplying information, resources, and organisational infrastructure for migrants (ibid.). With transnational kin networks come a large number of social obligations, where requests are difficult to refuse, even when these are not easy to fulfil (ibid.: 873).

Kin networks may be called upon to help, e.g., financially, in order to pay a smuggler. Kin is also known for helping personally in making the journey less dangerous, e.g., by hiding the migrant in their car on their way back to Europe from the summer holidays (field interview Stockholm 2016). However, as many boys migrate independently and irregularly, and without their parents' consent, it is seldom that kin is informed about the adolescent's migration project. For the young migrants, nevertheless, kin in the EU is often considered as their first port of call. Heading to a specific EU country is not seldom linked with being familiar with the country's name due to a relative living there (fieldwork Brussels 2015, Tangier 2016), demonstrating the classical geographical attraction of migrant networks. The young migrants thus engage in a perilous journey to a European country without knowing much about its geographic location, its climate, customs or the language that is spoken. The young migrants are also rarely aware (or concerned) by the fact that they are entering a foreign country illegally without the necessary passport and visa. Upon arrival, they may call someone from their kin network, if they have a phone number, or, if they have an address, they may arrive without prior notice. Relatives rarely appreciate this, and the youth may be taken in for only a short amount of time or not at all (field interview Brussels 2015). Relatives may be upset, as the young migrants have transgressed not only country borders illegally risking their lives, but also cultural and social boundaries where the parents have not agreed to migration and the relatives were not informed beforehand.[15] And while hospitality plays an important role in Moroccan society, regardless of income or social class, the financial and personal burden the young migrants impose on their kin may lead to a disruption of the network.

In his study on undocumented Algerian asylum-seekers in the UK, Collyer argues that increased border control policies have changed traditional approaches to migrant networks, which no longer operate in terms of 'simple geographical attraction', but rather 'as a means of transferring information and remittances' (Collyer 2005: 705). Migrants who stay undocumented for the sake of being with their relatives who reside in a country that may not grant status may put a high burden on their kin. This can result in the rejection of the migrant from his kin network (ibid.: 706), which seems to be the case with the majority of Moroccan independent youth migrants. As they are minors, relatives may

suggest that they 'regularise' registering as UAM and stay in a centre instead of disclosing that they have relatives in the country of arrival.[16]

The following interview from fieldwork (Casablanca 2016, tba (F)) with a French woman of Moroccan origin visiting her family in Casablanca demonstrates some of the reasons why kin networks can fail, and is, in addition, an example of the symbolic violence that may occur when kin consider themselves as part of the Core in the context of living abroad.

My gatekeeper takes me to another family's home in Sidi Moumen [one of Casablanca's shantytowns]. I meet the mother of the boy who had emigrated to Germany recently, a humble quiet woman who immediately goes to the kitchen to make tea for us, and the aunt from France who is visiting. The interior of the home suggests that they are better off, which, according to the French relative is 'thanks to her', continuously pointing out to me how 'stupid' her illiterate sister-in-law is (who does not understand our conversation in French). The aunt is a loud woman, constantly using abusive language, especially when speaking of her sister-in-law, and barely listening to anything I say. She says she has paid for her nephew's passport and airfare from Morocco to Turkey. From Turkey he had migrated clandestinely over the land route via Greece into Germany, where he was now in a centre for UAM. 'We didn't hear from him for weeks; we were all so worried! His mother was bawling her eyes out! But what does she know, she's stupid, she's illiterate, doesn't know anything, that one! I told her if something happens to him, it's her fault! [she snorts deprecatingly]. But also, the boy had been on our nerves forever [lit. 'broke our balls', a vulgar French expression] and besides, what kind of future does he have here? So, we had given in and I bought the passport and plane ticket [...]. What horrifying weeks we had!! We thought he was dead [...]. And then, one day, finally, he called and said he was in Germany! *Al Hamdulillah*!![17]

I then ask her, as a French citizen, why did she not organise for him to come to France and live with her, which she answers furiously in a shouting voice,

> 'What?! Am I crazy? What is he going to do in France?! There is nothing for him! He can't even work! And then I have him sitting around in my house! Then he's better off staying unemployed at home [in Morocco] with his mother who cooks for him and washes his clothes! I have accommodated someone once [in France], what a mistake it was! All he did was loiter around and do stupid things! In the end I had to pay 6000 Euros for all the crimes he had committed! Never again! If they [young migrants] absolutely want to come, they'll have to manage themselves! And besides, I'm against all of them coming to France! What the hell do they want there? They think it's easy, that they have got it made!'

Several aspects in regard to kin networks come to light in this vignette. The superior position the aunt sees herself in as a literate French citizen in comparison to her illiterate Moroccan sister-in-law, but also how she sees herself obliged to provide a certain living standard for her relatives and to 'help' with youngsters wanting to emigrate to enable them a better future. At the same time, she appears very frustrated about her obligations.

A further clash between Moroccan communities in Europe and Moroccan independent youth migrants can be explained by fundamental differences in habitus. Transnational communities and networks have a tendency to be conservative, as they often aim to rebuild culture and identity of their origin while living outside of their or their ancestor's homeland (Williams 2006: 873). Islam having a crucial role in Moroccan culture and identity, Moroccan communities in Europe are thus often inclined to maintain their identity by abiding to Islamic precepts and idealizing their country of origin, the political system and the king. As argued, Moroccan teenage migrants, on the other hand, are in *hogra* towards a country and a political system that seemingly cannot offer them a future and keeps them in waithood. They are eager to 'get a life', wishing to embrace a capitalist consumerism society, which they imagine finding in Core countries.

As most boys have lived in the streets for longer periods of time, in Morocco, but also in Europe, they have incorporated street life, especially substance abuse, but also street vernacular and a *haram* way of life, clashing with more conservative communities. A street worker in Casablanca working with street children explained the difficulty of re-socializing a child that has lived in the streets (fieldwork Casablanca 2016, tba (F)):

> 'It depends on what the child has experienced during his time in the streets. If he lived for more than 5 years in the streets, it's very difficult to re-socialise him, and to get him off the streets. This is so difficult because the child has lived in another world, a world that society does not understand. You must be able to understand the culture of the street if you want to get a child off the streets.'

A young *harraga* in the city port of Tangier (fieldwork Tangier 2015), showed me his sleeping place in a remote corner, a Styrofoam fish cooler box.

> 'It's small, but it's my own space, no one can pester me sleeping here. It's the first time ever I am doing the *hrig*. I grew up with my grandparents in Casa[blanca]. If they would see me here, they would probably get a heart attack. But this life in the streets is really growing on me, you know. I love it! It's so much freedom!' [laughs]

Yet, while it implies freedom and agency, staying in the streets can be one of the most vulnerable times in a young *harraga*'s life. Moroccan youth I have met in the streets of Sweden explained to me how they avoided structures. They preferred staying in the streets

because they were unable to cope with the rules of family life or because living with a family was too difficult to endure psychologically as it reminded them of back home.

> 'I prefer staying in the streets, even though it is difficult, especially when it's cold […] I mean, the family I stay with is nice, but there are so many rules! Do this, don't do that… You know these Swedes, they don't live, man! They get up at 6, go to work, then go home, eat at 5 and go to bed at 9. What a life, so boring! I can't live like that! I've lived in the streets, man! It's freedom! A boring life like that just suffocates me!' (field interview Stockholm 2016 (S) tba).

Another young migrant said,

> 'We're sleeping in a car at the moment [in the winter in Stockholm]. It's hell, it gets so fucking cold! So, I take pills to be able to bear it. Drink vodka. Go crazy. […] There was a lady that took us in, she was really nice. She was Turkish, Muslim and all. Treated us like her kids. But I couldn't stay there. Reminded me of home and my mum. It was just too much! So difficult to be reminded of home all the time, I couldn't handle it. Made me so damn sad. So, I left and went back to the streets.' (field interview Stockholm 2016 (S) tba)

Moroccan teenage migrants who have stayed in the streets may therefore become incompatible living an orderly family life, which is especially problematic when there are other children in the host family's or relative's home. A social worker in Brussels explained why a Moroccan teenage girl[18] who had relatives in Brussels ended up staying in the centre for UAM (field interview Brussels 2015, tba(F)),

> She stayed with her uncle when she first arrived but caused a lot of trouble. She didn't come home at night and slept around. She has two teenage girl cousins and her uncle became furious about her bad influence on his daughters. So, he started beating her, which made things worse. After a few weeks he kicked her out and she arrived here at the centre. And let me tell you, she really is one hell of a troublemaker! She is flirting with all the boys here at the centre, maybe she is sleeping with them, I don't know. Sometimes she stays out all night. Soon she will be 18, she will have no papers and won't be able to stay in the centre anymore. I don't know what is going to become of her [...].

The interviews collected during fieldwork demonstrate why kin networks may not be reliable for the independent youth migrant. Therefore, the CofP is crucial, in addition to peer networks, which usually play a much more important role than kin.

6.5.2 Peer networks

One distinctive element in Moroccan independent youth migration are peer networks. Peer networks may vary in the strength of ties (Williams 2006: 875). They may be weaker in terms of emotional support but stronger in terms of confidentiality than kin

relationships. Peer networks are more 'flexible, practical, tactical and adaptive', although they may not be long-lasting (ibid.: 875–6) and they may not be as reliable as kin networks. The peer networks are not geographically limited; they may be local within the same city, national within the same country, or they may be transnational across country borders (cf. ibid.: 871–3). Peer networks influence the migration of Moroccan independent youth migrants significantly. They inform future youth migrants about the possibility to stay in the EU legally as UAM, considering that those over 18 have few possibilities to obtain papers (Jiménez Álvarez 2003: 43). In lieu of a CofP, peer networks also provide information about local access to food and shelter, about border control, where and how to cross (Montesino Parra and Jiménez-Álvarez 2015: 334), in addition to where to go – i.e., which reception centres in which cities, how to get there, possibilities of obtaining papers and where to find work (Antúnez Álvarez et al. 2016: 75). Moroccan peer networks usually stay connected through social media, i.e., Facebook, Twitter, Tuenti[19] (cf. ibid.), Messenger, WhatsApp, and the like. Social media, especially Facebook, and formerly Tuenti, have a significant influence and impact on the migration project of the young person. Young Moroccans explain that the photos posted by their friends who had migrated to Europe, encourage them to do the same (fieldwork Morocco 2015 and 2016, Belgium 2015, Sweden 2016, Antúnez Álvarez et al. 2016: 70, 75).

Nevertheless, the information provided by peers is not always reliable, frequently incomplete or distorted 'half truths' (Jiménez Álvarez 2003: 18). Photos on Facebook are often invented scenarios, where those who have reached Europe will pose with consumer goods, in order to make believe that they have left the liminal phase and accomplished their rite of passage. The impact it has on young people in waithood back in Morocco is reflected in this group interview in a high school of a Tangerian shantytown (fieldwork Tanger 2016, tba (S)):

> We all want to go to Sweden! […] We have many friends who migrated there. They tell us it is beautiful, and their photos [on Facebook and Instagram] are beautiful. The beaches are beautiful. The women are beautiful. And you become rich when you make it to Sweden. They give you papers, and you get lots of money!

There is another misleading general perception young migrants-to-be received through their networks (fieldwork Morocco 2015, 2016), which was that they would be taken care of in a 'centro' (centre for UAM) upon arrival in Europe, which many imagined to be a luxurious pension for children and adolescents, where they would receive everything from smartphones to money for buying themselves brand clothes and using the surplus for remittances, helping their families back home. Others imagine to be able

to find a well-paid job while staying with someone of their network (fieldwork Morocco 2015, 2016, Belgium 2015, Sweden 2016), while their networks (especially kin) are often not even aware that they are on their way to them.

The initial euphoria when they have reached the European shores gradually turns into deception, anger (Quiroga et al. 2005: 83) or even depression when they become confronted with reality. However, the idea of staying in Europe persists (ibid.), as it is 'better to live badly in Europe than to live badly in Morocco' (field interview Stockholm 2016). Furthermore, returning to Morocco would mean losing face to family and friends, and would signify that their emigration was unsuccessful, i.e. that they failed their rite of passage. In reality, as will be discussed further in chapter 8, they continue to remain in the liminal phase and the oxymoron of pretending to have moved into social adulthood while not having left the liminal phase, pushes them into further marginalisation.

6.6 Conclusion

In this chapter I have discussed how young Moroccan *harraga* put their migration into practice. In O'Reilly's theory of practice for international migration, practice is referred to as the meso level and enables to link macro and micro levels of a particular migration. As explained earlier, the macro level are the external structures that constraint or enable the migration. In this thesis, the external structures are discussed in chapter 4, structures that have shaped an emigration culture in Morocco and the imagination of departure of the young migrant. Other external structures are discussed in chapter 7, referring to the legal concepts of UAM. In chapter 5, I have discussed the internal structures shaping the migration, mostly related to habitus of the young migrant in a state of waithood, unable to reach social adulthood and capitalist consumerism in the framework of a global youth culture, which they see as 'getting a life'.

In this chapter, I have explained how they put their migration into practice, i.e., how they use agency to counter the aforementioned external and internal structures. Being in a weak position, possessing little power to counter these structures, the young migrants use tactics (de Certeau 1988: xix) to navigate around the obstacles that are perceived as hindrances to their undertaking. Being trapped in the Moroccan periphery, where they are unable to escape waithood, remaining *blédards* (yokels), i.e., where social ascension is nearly impossible; they are in rebellion against their own government (*hogra*) but also against EU immigration laws and policies that confine them to territorial immobility. They see their migration as a rite of passage making them men, despite their age, which requires them to enter a phase of liminality. Here, they are in an in-between position from one status

(*blédards* of the Moroccan periphery) to the next (social adulthood as men in the European Core).

During the phase of liminality, young *harraga* establish themselves in a CofP while also relying on a number of personal networks. The CofP shapes their identity and enables them to learn the 'rules of the game', not only of the *hrig* itself, but also how to use tactical agency. Due to the nature of their migration, where the actual act of migration is done individually, and where they may find themselves alone for longer periods of time, the importance of personal networks is not to be underestimated. Their networks, however, will differ significantly from those of adult migrants, and peer networks – though weaker – often have a more important role than kin networks in the destination country. Both CofP and peer networks are crucial in the survival of the young migrant. While CofP and peer networks share similiarities and overlap in many circumstances (Wenger and Trayner 2011), the CofP is important in identity formation, with members who share mutual interest, information and a survival repertoire. The *tsharmil* movement can thus be seen as a CofP, as a group of specific youngsters with the same dress codes, ideologies and language. The CofP is 'about something', not just a set of relationships. Also, it can be confined to a certain time frame and considered no longer necessary when a specific goal is reached. It is influential in the change of their habitus which is due to a change of the social field they undergo in their liminal phase when putting migration into practice. While peer networks concentrate more on self-interest and share information relevant to the young migrant's project – e.g., by posting photos on social media, influencing the decision to leave, or providing shelter upon arrival in a new country, in addition to sharing specific tactics – the peer network is not about a group identity.

In the following chapters, I will explain the external structures the young Moroccans are confronted with upon their arrival in Europe, and how these structures have been shaped. I will discuss how, despite the rite of passage they undergo with the *hrig*, they are once again navigating structures using tactical agency, this time on the other side of the Mediterranean.

Notes

[1] Loi 02-03, available from http://www.gadem-asso.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/Loi_02-03.pdf (accessed 16 December 2017)

[2] approx. €1,000; keeping in mind that the average minimum wage is theoretically at 2,500DH = €250/month, yet many families of Moroccan irregular UAM are low-skilled workers who do not fall under the minimum wage and earn much less or are unemployed

[3] In the EU, depending on the member state, children and young adults up to 25 years of age may be detained together in juvenile correctional institutions, taking into account the best interest of the child (see chapter 7 for the best interest of the child) (FRA 2018). In the case of UAM in the EU, in line with the best interest of the child, detention is discouraged, and it is highly recommended to separate them from adult detainees (European Parliament and European Council 2013).

[4] During fieldwork at Tanger Med in April 2015, I witnessed physical abuse (a slap on the head) of a potential young migrant by a policeman because the former did not have his ID card on him. Afailal et al. (2009) report of police denying imprisoned young *harraga* food and forcing them to drink out of buckets that are used to flush the toilet. Suárez-Navaz and Jiménez Álvarez (2011) interviewed young *harraga* that tell them that police set their dogs on them, steal their money and clothes and whip them with ropes on their bare foot soles.

[5] Sistema Integrado de Vigilancia Exterior, Spanish maritime border control.

[6] European Border and Coast Guard Agency, from French 'FRONTières EXtérieures'.

[7] This is also an issue when they meet in Europe, as will be explained in chapter 8.

[8] *Karama* is a word that was used during the April Spring revolts (see chapter 5) and I do wonder if he picked up this word in the streets during the manifestations or if he heard it from friends

[9] With reference to Van Gennep's ethnographic definition of 'Rites of Passage' from 1909.

[10] The historical use of the term *hrig* was associated with an act of rebellion and bravery when the Moors set sails to conquer Spain. After having crossed the strait of Gibraltar in 711 AD, Tariq Ibn Ziyad ordered his ships to be burned to resist the temptation of returning home to the Maghreb (Vacchiano 2007b: 8). Initially, youth *harraga* were also considered heroes to their peer groups and families (Ribas-Mateos 2005: 237; Jiménez Álvarez 2012: 67).

[11] E.g. social media communication tools, such as Facebook.

[12] Their language may be coded and not understandable to outsiders as was confirmed to me by my Arabic teacher when asked for a translation of specific phrases I had picked up during fieldwork in Morocco (2016).

[13] In Morocco, this shared repertoire is often visible in urban teenage youth, especially those adept in *tsharmil*, it is however rarely seen in rural and pre-teenage urban youth before migration.

[14] During fieldwork, youth from southern Moroccan cities and rural areas were much less influenced by the *tsharmil* look, which, as explained in chapter 5, is part of a revolt against an oppressive system in socioeconomically deprived neighbourhoods of northern Moroccan cities, the young migrants this thesis is concerned with.

[15] This has to be seen in a Moroccan context where a young person is expected to be obedient and respectful towards an older person.

[16] One of the prevailing reasons for this is that they will be returned to Morocco if the parents are traced in the country of origin.

[17] Loosely translates into 'Thank God!'

[18] She was the only girl I have personally met during fieldwork, however social workers in Sweden have confirmed similar behaviour in other Moroccan girl migrants.

[19] A former social network service in Spain, predominantly used by young people in the late 2000s, referred to as the 'Spanish Facebook' (Ferreño 2017)

7 From Youth *Harraga* to Unaccompanied Minors

I met M. at a temporary centre for UAM in Brussels. He had arrived from Spain two days earlier. He speaks Spanish, Arabic and Riffian, but not French, and none of the social workers at the centre were able to communicate with him. He was relieved to be able to speak with me [in Spanish], and very nervous about what was going to happen. The social worker told me that he will have to register at the Immigration Office the next day and I asked him if he wanted me to come with him to translate, which he happily accepted. Very early morning I went to the centre and waited with him for a car to pick us up and drive us to the Immigration Office. The car came and dropped us off in front of the Immigration Office. I asked the driver for instructions on where to go, he said he didn't know and left us standing in the street. M. was wearing a thin jacket and summer gym shoes, he was very cold, it was around 0°C. He laughed and said he didn't know that Belgium was so cold, and that he only knew Morocco and Spain. But his friends had told him that Belgium was good, so he had come here. We both went inside where I needed to ask several people where to go and what to do. I couldn't help wondering if he would have absconded if I wouldn't have come with him, but he seemed happy to tag along, sit next to me and talk and laugh in Spanish.[1] We waited for about an hour in a specific waiting area for UAM, in freezing conditions as the entrance door was wide open for others who were coming in. Finally, we were admitted inside, where a female immigration worker who spoke some Spanish attended him. To my surprise, no one asked who I was, and they pointed out a chair to me where I could sit. M.'s fingerprints were taken, and he was asked questions about his name, age, and family. When he said that he was 15, the lady shouted in Dutch to her colleague across the room 'Do you really think he's 15?' Her colleague answered, 'This little man? [shrugging her shoulders] I don't know, maybe.' The immigration worker turned towards me and asked me the same question 'Do you really think he's 15?' I was dumbfounded and shrugged my shoulders. She registered him as 15 and he did not have to do an age assessment test. When she had finished the interview, she told us that he would need to take the train to the centre for UAM in Sugny[2], but no one was able to hand him the train ticket now, so he would have to wait until 1 pm [this was at 9 am]. He would receive a sandwich and a soft drink at noon. I stayed with M. in the waiting room with the open doors until 1 pm when another immigration worker came with the train ticket. She explained to me in French how to get to the centre, which required a train ride of several hours, then he would need to get off at a small town I had never heard of, and wait for the bus, and from the bus

> stop where he needed to get off, he would need to walk a little to arrive at the centre. I translated for M. into Spanish and voiced my concern to the immigration worker about him getting lost, because he didn't know French and because the journey seemed quite complicated, to which she replied, 'He made it all the way to Belgium, don't worry he will find his way.' [...] Later that evening, M. called me to tell me that he had arrived. 'It has taken me five hours to get here. I didn't get lost, but it was a long trip! And now I'm in the middle of nowhere, man! I'm in the fucking woods! I can talk to the animals here! I'm the only Moroccan, all the others are Afghans. I can't even speak with them! What am I going to do here? I'm not staying here! I want to get back to the city and be with my friends!' (field diary January 2015)

7.1 Introduction

When young Moroccan *harraga* arrive in Europe, they become categorised under the legal definition of unaccompanied minor (UAM). In fact, on the Moroccan side, age makes no difference when using the term *harraga*, it is used for adults and minors alike. However, most people who are *harraga* are young, under the age of 30 and nowadays they are increasingly under the age of 18. UAM refer to young people under the age of 18 migrating without a legally responsible adult, and their definitions differ significantly. A youth *harraga,* whose habitus is often shaped by different types of violence, is agentic in order to escape waithood and partake in a capitalist consumer youth culture of the global Core. The young *harrag*a is migrating without a legally responsible adult by his side, but he is not 'alone'. Laid out in chapter 6, the CofP and the networks he relies on are crucial in his undertaking. A UAM, whose habitus is also considered to be shaped by violence through persecution, war or abuse, is considered a vulnerable child that has migrated without a legally responsible adult and in need of protection. In other words, agency in UAM appears to be absent, whereas in youth *harraga* vulnerability is usually overlooked. The latter is feared because of the violence he supposedly emanates, the UAM is pitied for the violence he supposedly suffered. While the definition of UAM is shaped by the conventional Western image of a child dependent on an adult, the independent youth migrant is, as writes Huijsmans (2006: 7), the very confrontation of the conventional Western image of the child. Whereas one is portrayed as 'innocent victim', the other is seen as a 'pathological threat' (White, cited in Huijsmans 2006: 8). Nevertheless, whether independent youth migrant or UAM, rescue, rehabilitation or control are deemed necessary for both, as they are considered to be 'children out of place' (Huijsmans 2006: 8).

This chapter will look at how they are seen to be 'out of place' and I will give the reasons with regard to a specific social construction of childhood. I will explain how different societies define childhood and demonstrate from a historical perspective that the image of the 'emotionally priceless' child (Montgomery 2009: 114) shaped by the global Core is a rather recent one.

However, while the legal definition of UAM is considered protecting the 'vulnerable child' and act in its best interest, the resilience and agency of migrating youth coming from a different construction of childhood show, can push them into further vulnerabilities. The concept of the biological age is decisive for an increasing number of children and adolescents to engage in international migration and can be tragic when they come of age in the EU and lose their status as UAM and with it many of their rights.

7.2 Young *Harraga* becoming Unaccompanied Minors

When young *harraga* arrive in Europe, they are no longer *harraga*, a term that refers to the actual act of irregular migration (chapter 6), used for migrating youth and adults alike. The young people under the age of 18 who migrate across international borders without a legally responsible adult become legally defined as UAM according to Article 1 of the UN Convention of the Rights of the Child (CRC). The CRC is the most widely ratified human rights treaty on a global scale, demonstrating the importance given to child protection in the world (Hashim and Thorsen 2011: 5). UAM fall under the CRC as well as under the 1951 UN Refugee Convention. As points out Jiménez-Alvarez (2015: 411), it is however interesting to note that youth migrants travelling alone become legally categorised as UAM only once they have reached the border of a global Core country. Despite international conventions and protocols, migrating children and adolescents sometimes cross entire continents in the global Semi-Periphery and Periphery without a legally responsible adult by their side, 'as if they were invisible to the migration control and protection systems' (ibid.). It is only once they arrive in global Core countries that they catch the attention of child protection systems and that they become politicised and categorised as UAM (ibid.).

Yet, their categorisation as UAM is not as straight forward as it may seem. Discussed in chapter 2, the Refugee Convention under which migrating children also fall, was ratified with hindsight to WWII aiming to protect vulnerable people within a European context. While adaptions have certainly been made to suit an increasingly globalising modern world, extracurricular Western Core issues can represent particular challenges in adequately addressing them. In chapter 6 I have explained how the hrig is seen as a rite

of passage into rujula (manhood) for the shabab. In this context, the young Moroccan harraga becoming UAM challenge the scope of the legal concept and with it its implementation. As one of the social workers I interviewed (field interview Stockholm 2016) exclaimed,

> […] something absolutely fantastic about the Moroccan kids is that they have turned the whole Swedish system upside down. I love that! We have a traditional way to work and they do not fit. We have to explore how to work with them.

However, not all are as enthusiastic about 'exploring how to work with them', and often Moroccan UAM are simplified as 'street children' that are 'difficult to help' as this excerpt from a study in Belgium by the European Migration Network (2009: 14) shows,

> [UAM] coming from Maghreb countries (Morocco, Algeria) […] are often street children, who have few or no expectations in their country of origin and have come to Europe to find a better future. They sometimes wander around Europe for several years until they decide to settle in Belgium where they usually have a network of friends and relatives. This group is difficult to help as they are not used to a well-structured life, and they are thus prone to disappear from the reception structures.

Yet, as laid out previously, they are not a homogenous group of street children who have come to Europe, wandering about with no particular goal or reason, but rather that the street, *l-zanqa*, is a gendered socialising space in the Moroccan periphery, playing a crucial role for the CofP in the *hrig*. By characterising the young Moroccan migrants as a homogenous group of 'street children', it nevertheless frees the European Core countries from all responsibility: if they are street children, then Morocco must be held as solely responsible in that they are not taking proper care of their youth or, for that matter, their socio-economically deprived citizens. While the latter may indeed be the case, the emigration culture these young people are being born into, is also to be placed in the historical perspective of colonialism and post-colonialism discussed in chapter 4, indicating an important role of the Core in the shaping of independent youth migration.

The young migrants have very specific reasons that have shaped their migration, discussed in chapter 4 and 5, and they have goals that are difficult to align within the concepts of vulnerability that UAM fall under, clashing with the agency young Moroccan *harraga* demonstrate. Their migration being a symbolic rite of passage into manhood entirely clashes with the concept of vulnerable, migrating children that the legal definition of UAM portrays. The *shabab* risked his life during the *hrig* not because he is fleeing a macro-level war in the conventional sense. But rather, he is fleeing a micro-level war of structural and symbolic violence inflicted on the global Periphery by a capitalist world

system. Categorising them as 'difficult to help' demonstrates the very denial of agency in UAM and the acknowledgment of the capitalist impact beyond the global Core. It leads to overlooking vulnerabilities that are beyond the categorisation of the 'classic victim' and to the neglect of protective measures that are to be taken under Conventions and Protocols concerning underage migrants. In chapter 8 I will discuss what this means concretely to the young migrants and to what outcomes this can lead. In this chapter, I will explain how the legal frameworks applying to UAM are constructed and how this can lead to difficulties in understanding their vulnerabilities and needs. Childhood is a social construct and legal frameworks are based on a Western Core concept of defining what it means to be a child.

7.3 Social and legal constructions of Childhood

Modern global Core approaches having shaped universal legal standards, they have influenced the image of what a proper childhood should be. This gives 'the illusion of constancy and permanence' (Hashim and Thorsen 2011: 5) and at the same time condemns whatever does not fall under this universalised idea of childhood (James and James 2004: 29). While the CRC is certainly one of the most important international legal conventions in advancing children's rights on a global scale, in societies outside of the global Core it is, however, predominantly implemented for children of the Semi-Periphery's or Periphery's local core, i.e., of the upper middle-class. Implementing the modern Western Core model of children's rights in a non-Western society can hold a number of difficulties because childhood is a social construct and 'the specificity of the cultural context to that construction' (James and James 2004: 12) is relevant. An example is Art. 31 and 31(a) in the African Union's (AU)[3] Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child. Despite that it is nearly identical with the CRC, it refers in one point to a specific African construction of childhood which shows a fundamental different social construction from the Western model,

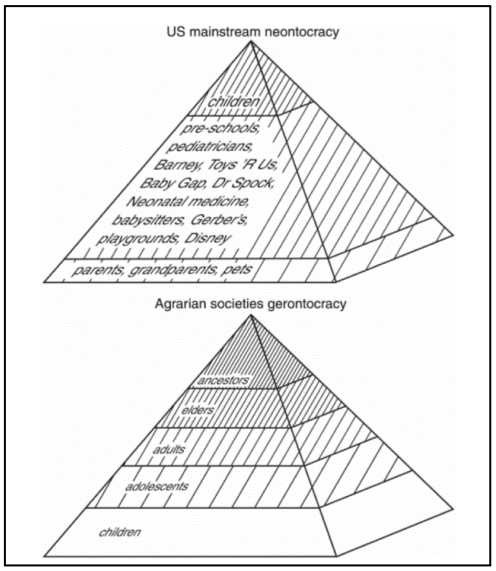
> Every child shall have responsibilities towards his family and society […]. The child, subject to his age and ability […], shall have the duty to work for the cohesion of the family, to respect his parents, superiors and elders at all times and to assist them in case of need. (Quoted in Hashim and Thorsen 2011: 6)

In African societies, it is thus legally regulated that children not only have *rights* but also have *responsibilities*, especially towards their families (ibid.: 5–6). With responsibility comes agency, which in the Western model is nearly entirely absent from the social construction of childhood. An important aspect in understanding the distinct social

constructions of childhood is explained by Lancy (2014: 2) in terms neontocracy (children ruling) and gerontocracy (elders ruling).

Figure 15

Neontocracy vs. gerontocracy where 'US mainstream' can be applied to core areas, and 'Agrarian societies' to peripheral areas of the world



Source: Lancy 2015: 2

In gerontocracy, predominant in the global Periphery and local peripheral parts of the Semi-Periphery, children are largely seen as a liability until they have reached an age when they become 'useful'. In neontocracy, by contrast, and upon which universal legal frameworks around children and childhood are based, children are accorded a great deal of social capital, in some cases as of conception, and are under little or no obligation to pay back the investment made in them (ibid.: 12). Childhood should ideally be a 'time of carefree, disorganised bliss' (Denzin 2010: 182), free from work, with much play and little responsibilities, all under the surveillance of an adult, with parents or other legal guardians as the main caretakers liable for the upbringing of the child (ibid.; Hashim and Thorsen 2011: 7; Montgomery 2009). A child's responsibilities may increase and his or her surveillance may decrease with age, however the chronological age of being under 18 is significant in differentiating between childhood and adulthood.

As I argued earlier, neontocracy can be applied to core areas of the world, i.e., upper and upper-middle class throughout the world, whereas gerontocracy demonstrates understandings of childhood in peripheral areas of the world. The upper and upper-

middle class of the global Periphery and Semi-Periphery follow a locally adapted global Core neontocracy child rearing model. In the Moroccan core, children, especially little boys, are treated like royalties (fieldwork Morocco 2016). Working class in Morocco of the local periphery, will however follow the traditional gerontocracy model, where the child is expected to contribute to the household and has specific responsibilities (fieldwork Morocco 2016), which is also applicable to a certain extent in the local periphery of global Core countries, e.g., rural Western societies and the economically deprived. This is reminiscent of an earlier discussion in chapter 4, where I pointed out that core regions in the world have more in common across borders than they have with their fellow citizens of the local periphery. Also as pointed out, in Morocco, it is mostly *shabab* of the local periphery that engages in the *hrig*, as the upper and upper-middle class have no need to engage in irregular migration, usually being able to afford or have the connections to enable their offspring to study or work abroad.

Independent child migration, as well as varying views of child work, demonstrate, that childhood is socially constructed, and Crawley (2011) makes a crucial point when she writes that this understanding has important consequences in how the identity and experiences of migrant children are defined and addressed. Despite universal laws protecting children, reality may refute universality, and demonstrate very different social constructions, which are rooted in the cultural identity of society, ethnic groups or clans.

The social construction of childhood means, then, as the AU Charter on the Right and Welfare of the Child cited above demonstrates, that the interpretation of what it means to be a child may shift from one social context to another. The signification of childhood has shifted considerably over time in Europe and the Western world, where the transition to the present-day 'sacralisation of child life' (Zelizer 1994: 22) only happened about a century ago.

7.4 Historical Construction of Childhood in Modern Western Core Society

Neontocracy is a rather recent phenomenon where children are seen as 'cherubs', precious, innocent and sweet, whereas they were, during entire periods in history, often perceived as 'changelings', unwanted and inconvenient, or seen as 'chattel', a commodity (Lancy 2014: xii). The US historian Lloyd DeMause (2005: 21) writes that the history of childhood in Western society resembles a nightmare: 'The further back in history one goes, the lower the level of childcare, and the more likely children are to be killed, abandoned, beaten, terrorised, and sexually abused.'

When examining the history of childhood, the work of French historian Philippe Ariès (1962) cannot be overlooked. Despite having been criticised from almost all disciplines in the social sciences (Montgomery 2009: 91), his claim that childhood is a social and historical construct profoundly influenced ideas on childhood in the social sciences (Montgomery 2009: 90; James and James 2004: 13). It was thanks to Ariès that researchers became aware of the fact that childhood is not universal in that it needs to be relativized culturally and across time (ibid.). According to him the notion of 'childhood as a distinct human condition' (Montgomery 2009: 51) only started to emerge between the 16th and 17th century in Western European upper class society, and even later among the working classes (Hashim and Thorsen 2011: 3). Before the 'beginning of a concept of childhood' (Ariès 1962: 132), children were often depicted as having 'neither mental activities nor recognizable bodily shape' (Montaigne 1533–92, quoted in ibid.: 130). A child up to the age of 'five or seven' was seen for the amusement of adults and then became immediately part of the adult world (ibid.: 128, 329). Until the Age of Enlightenment, terrorisation and torture of children was widespread amongst all social classes[4] and not condemned as cruelty. Also, it was believed that children were indifferent to sex and sexual matters, and sexual practices on children, e.g., playing with their private parts, were common (Ariès 1962: 106; DeMause 2005: 24; Lancy 2014: 198–9). It is in fact to date still a common finding in some non-Western societies that children under five are believed to be too immature to understand sexuality (ibid.) and somewhat reminiscent of immigration policies discussed above where children are expected to be 'asexual' (and 'apolitical'). Discussed in chapter 5, during fieldwork in Morocco (2016), I was informed by social workers and other informants, that sexual abuse of street children and younger migrating boys by older male adolescents or men is not an exception, which, by looking at it from this Western historical perspective, can point to vulnerabilities in a context where modern child protection is not a given and where children of the local periphery continue to be seen as inconvenient or a commodity.

7.4.1 Age

The question of age is an important aspect of difference between gerontocracy and neontocracy. As said, in gerontocracy, a child can take on greater responsibilities as of the age of 7, whereas in neontocracy, children turn adults when they reach the chronological age of 18.

Legal frameworks thus do not distinguish between a new-born and a 17-year old, yet they are considered adults from one day to the next the day they turn 18. In practice, the

age groups during childhood already inevitably beg for difference with distinct needs and responsibilities (Hashim and Thorsen 2011: 7). Also, social expectations and responsibilities (Honwana 2014: 29) may differ significantly from one society to the next, as will be explained below. Childhood, and the border between childhood and maturity, is a flexible and fluid one, increasingly apparent and possibly challenging in a continuously globalising world (James and James 2004: 29). In cases of waithood and the inability to reach social adulthood, Honwana (2014: 31) points out that in societies of the global Semi-Periphery or Periphery, a 40-year-old unemployed and unmarried man is still considered a youth, whereas child soldiers who may only be 10 years of age are seen as adults despite their young age, such as the *niño hombres* mentioned earlier. But also, as Honwana (2014: 32) lays out, 'many children who assume adult roles at a tender age are later pushed back into waithood as they grow up and try to attain their independence', i.e., social adulthood. The *shabab* who is unable to prove *rujula* stays a *shabab* no matter his age, as the interview with L. in chapter 5 clearly demonstrates. This shows how childhood is socially constructed and how legal definitions can be subjective, especially in a peripheral context.

In neontocratic Core context, however, 'all persons under the age of 18 constitute a homogenous category – children, devoid equally of sexual identity and sexual activity, bereft equally of the ability to exercise agency and hence in need of identical protective measures' (Sanghera quoted in Gozdziak 2008: 911).

7.4.2 Child work

Gerontocracy and neontocracy are divided furthest on the issue of work (Lancy 2014: 254). This discrepancy can become apparent and problematic with the arrival of UAM in Core regions of the world, especially when they do not clearly fall under the category of forced migration, i.e. as a refugee or as a trafficked child, and when they show agency in their desire to work.

Contemporary global Core countries based on neontocracy, associate child work with 'loss of innocence and studiousness' (Lancy 2014: 254) and, therefore, 'the dissociation of childhood from the performance of valued work is considered a yardstick in modernity' (Nieuwenhuys quoted in ibid.). In gerontocracy, world child work is usually seen as a pathway to adulthood. Moroccan independent youth migrants, for the most part, already have work experience when they arrive in the EU, as an intercultural mediator of the Social Services of Andalusia in Granada (fieldwork Spain September 2015) confirmed: 'All [Moroccan] minors [arriving] here have work experience. They have a migration project, they want to work here, and they have also worked in their home country.'

Despite the fact that employing children under 15 is punishable by Moroccan law (Art. 151, Government of Morocco 2004), and despite the compulsory school attendance until completion of age 13 (Art. 1, Government of Morocco 1963), some employers hire children, as they are cheaper and easier to exploit (Antonelli 2012: 100). During fieldwork (Morocco 2016), one of my informants referred to the young boys working in manual labour workshops or restaurants in Tangier as *niño hombres* (Spanish for 'child men'); they are young boys yet working like adult men and carrying the same responsibilities in that they need to provide for their families to make ends meet. Notwithstanding, as Suárez Navaz (2006: 32) writes, many boys who work as of a young age are proud to contribute to their families' income. Lancy (2014: 20–1) also confirms that in gerontocratic societies '[w]ork is central both to the nature of childhood […] and to the child's progress towards adult standing and competence' where '[m]ost children are, in fact, quite eager for these [work] opportunities to assume more adult responsibilities'. Suárez Navaz (2006: 32) notes that the young Moroccans complain not so much about the fact that they are working but rather about the working conditions they are exposed to, creating a sensation of 'frustration and powerlessness' (ibid.). When they engage in the *hrig*, they are also not fleeing the fact that they have to work, but rather they arrive in the EU with the goal to earn more money and be less exploited than in their home country, have their rights respected, experience 'freedom' and partake in a consumer culture (fieldwork Morocco 2016) as discussed earlier.

In the modern global Core, it is indeed easy to forget that the abolishment of child labour in Western society is of comparatively recent date (Cunningham 1996: 41). Yet, historical perspectives of today's global Core countries show many similarities with societies of the local peripheries in today's global Semi-Periphery and Periphery. In the Western Core, the first legal regulations for children were ratified only about a century ago: the first Child Labour Convention dates from 1919 (International Labour Organisation 1999) and the first Declaration of the Rights of the Child was adopted by the League of Nations in 1924 (Committee on Education 2015). The segregation of children in the educational treatment in the local core versus the local periphery made an important difference in the social construction of childhood at the time, intensified during the industrialisation and the demand of child labour, where children of the periphery were much more prone to be sent to work. As discussed in chapter 5, these similarities exist in modern-day Morocco, with an important segregation of children of the internal core attending private or foreign schools, whereas children of the internal periphery attending

public schools that often lack the most basic infrastructures and differ greatly in the school system (fieldwork Morocco 2016).

7.4.2.1 Child Work in the Historical Perspective in Europe and the US

Before legal regulations for children in the Western Core, the approximate age of 5 to 7 seemed to be a turning point, where a child was considered capable of taking up responsibilities and joining the adult world. With the exception of the upper class, well into 19th century Europe, children became 'acknowledged as fully human or a full member of society' (Lancy 2014 : 5) through the work they did, as writes Heywood (quoted in ibid.: 56): '[S]even was an informal turning point when the offspring of peasants and craftsmen were expected to start helping their parents with the little tasks around the home, the farm or the workshop.'

In traditional Maghreb society today, it is common to send a child as of five to buy food at the store and delegate more important tasks, as he or she grows older (Mekideche 1996: 52). Denzin observed a similar phenomenon in the US of the 1970s. He claims that a girl 'in the black lower class' (Denzin 2010: 20), ceased to be a child around the age of seven and, if she was the oldest, she would be responsible in the upbringing of her siblings. The upbringing of siblings plays an important part in increasing responsibility in children's lives in many societies. Mekidèche (1996: 54) explains that in Maghreb society a child's education is not only the parents' responsibility but also older siblings and other children play an important role in the upbringing of the child. This was also the case before and during industrialisation in Europe, especially for working class children who were left to fend for themselves while 'their parents worked 14-hour days in the factories and docks' (Venning and Mouland 2011). Work – remunerated or not – and chores were thus important responsibilities directly linked to becoming an adult. As said earlier about niño hombres and them being proud of contributing to family income, historians report the same about children in the Western world when child labour was not yet prohibited. They were not only making a significant difference in their family's standard of living (Cunningham 1996: 52), but work also increased their social standing and contributed to their gender identity (Lancy 2014: 256), as Ehrenreich and English (quoted in Montgomery 2009: 97) explain,

> [T]oday, a four-year-old who can tie his or her shoes is impressive. In [US-American] Colonial times, [however], four-year-old girls knitted stockings and mittens and could produce intricate embroidery; at age six they spun wool. A good industrious girl was called 'Mrs.' instead of 'Miss' in appreciation of her contribution to the family economy: she was not, strictly speaking, a child.

Up to the 19th century, young boys as of seven were sent to 'master-craftsmen or merchants as apprentices' and their female peers were sent away for domestic work (ibid.: 151), reminiscent of today's *niño hombres* and *petites bonnes* in Morocco. One may think of the abolition of child labour in the Western world as a matter of course, yet it was in fact entirely unpredictable (Cunningham 1996: 41). Children were seen as the parents' property, which also meant that they were in general without legal protection from parental abuse or oppression (Nandy 1984: 362). At the time, many parents in Europe and the US strongly resisted the end of child labour (Lancy 2014: 64), often lying about their child's age in order to bypass regulatory legislation (Zelizer 1994: 69). A 1909 investigation of cotton textile mills in the US reported that parents vigorously resisted the state's interference in the regulation of child labour, claiming that a child ought to 'pay back for its keep' (ibid.) and the state's intervention was perceived as a violation of the parents' economic interests in their children (Lancy 2014: 64). Prohibition of their work meant a critical loss of some family's meanings of survival (Lancy 2014: 64), as children's wages contributed up to 40% of the family income (Cunningham and Viazzo 1996: 15).

Child labour was also seen as an important educational measure at the time, and child welfare organisations were more concerned with the idle and vagrant children than with child labourers (Zelizer 1994: 61). Unemployed children represented in fact a genuine problem. They were said to be '[…] idle, living on and off the streets, or roaming around the countryside, a threat to the stability of society.' (Cunningham and Viazzo 1996: 16). In the 1851 Census of England, for example, 20% of all children counted were registered as street urchins (Colón and Colón 2001: 384). As Colón and Colón (ibid.: 392) explain,

> Urban orphans of war and revolution, 'street-wise' and precociously hardened children, often became street urchins and vagabonds, gamins who worked as messengers, street vendors, acrobats, and scavengers who collected wood, glass, rags – anything that could be sold.

It is striking how transferable this definition of street children in 19th and early 20th century Europe is in regard to peripheral societies in the global Semi- Periphery and Periphery of today. In Morocco, street children are considered criminals under Moroccan law (Conseil Economique Social et Environnemental Maroc 2016: 11). Many of them are known to beg and/or work in the informal labour market, including drug smuggling and/or prostitution, according to UNICEF (Ciliberti and Badillo 2015: 116). Children roaming the streets are a concern to working mothers in Morocco who cannot take care of the child (fieldwork Tangier 2016), as a social worker explained about 11-year-old M.,

> [M.] lives with his mother and sister in a suburb of Tangier. His mother works long hours in a café, the parents are divorced […]. [M.] failed the school year and was expelled[5] […]. He stayed at home for a while, but then started hanging out in the streets and sometimes didn't come home. His mother looked for him from time to time and brought him back home, but when he was alone [when the mother was working], he would leave for the streets again, where he learned to beg for food […]. [The mother says] that M. also learned about emigration in the streets […].

In 19th and early 20th century Europe, idleness was seen as the seed to disorder and to raising future adults who would be incapable of gaining their livelihoods (Cunningham 1996: 41). Child work in a factory was understood as a means to learn a trade, with a direct connection to virtue, work, and knowledge (De Herdt 1996: 35), similar to how Morocco's working children of the local periphery are often perceived. While sometimes being pitied, they are nevertheless esteemed as being 'on the right path'; whereas children roaming the streets and/or intending to emigrate are treated pejoratively (fieldwork Tangier 2015, 2016, Casablanca 2016). The educational measure of child work in past centuries in the global Core is still relevant in many contexts of the global Semi-Periphery and Periphery.

The gradual introduction to compulsory schooling in Western Europe was another measure to get children off the streets (Cunningham 1996: 45) for those who were unemployed, and, for those who were employed, to curb child labour. Until then school education was reserved for upper- and middle-class boys, girls in general and 'lower-class' children of the local periphery were practically excluded from it (Ariès 1962: 332). Compulsory schooling for all was in fact opposed for a long time in the working class, as parents were worried about loss of family income, but also manufacturers worried that their factories would have to shut down without the child labour force. The core of the Core also feared that too much education of the lower classes could evoke social unrest (De Herdt 1996: 35), which reminds somewhat of contemporary similarities in the Moroccan context noted in chapter 5, with people murmuring that the *makhzen* wants to maintain a low education level of the Moroccan periphery in order to restrict social unrest (fieldwork Morocco 2016). Similar to the difficulties to ban child work in Western Europe, compulsory schooling also had to veritably be enforced with inspectors coming to school. Cunnigham (1996: 46) writes that in England and Wales the offence of ignoring compulsory schooling involved thousands of people appearing in court in the late 19th century, being 'second only to drunkenness'.

The child labour conflict of the early twentieth century in the Western world and the increasingly compulsory schooling for all are key to understanding the piecemeal

transformation of the sentimental and economic value of children in Western society (Zelizer 1994: 57; Lancy 2014: 66). It was then that the 'useful wage-earning child' was gradually replaced by the 'moral value of an economically useless but emotionally priceless child' (Zelizer 1994: 57).

7.4.2.2 From 'producers' to 'consumers' to the 'emotionally priceless child'

Over the 20th century in the Western Core, not only the concept of child labour was radically revised, but also the child's relationship with money (Zelizer 1994: 100). When child labour became prohibited, many continued to work before and/or after school, especially as industrial homeworkers (Zelizer 1994: 83). Later, they would seek alternative ways to raise money, e.g., by running errands, babysitting, or shoe shining. The economy increasingly aimed at juvenile customers, children started spending their money in 'school shops, purchasing supplies, […] on candy, toys, ice cream, theat[re] tickets, and often tobacco and gambling' (ibid.: 103).

With rising wages for male adults, social welfare provisions in Europe, and the decrease in family size (Zelizer 1994: 62; Cunningham and Viazzo 1996: 20), children were no longer participating in family income. This was an important turning point in Western childhood, as children were now turned from being 'producers' to being 'consumers' (Montgomery 2009: 67). News articles on how to finance the child were published and the advice to parents to give them a regular allowance to avoid turning 'studious youngsters into thieves' (Zelizer 1994: 104). Independent of the social class, parents were expected to give pocket money to their children, considered as 'safe'. Money earned by children, on the other hand, was seen as 'dangerous', as it gave the child 'an anomalous economic independence from its parents' (ibid.). Allowance money in 20th century Western society was soon to be seen as a child's right (ibid.: 108).

But not only the economic aspect of children changed, the gain of sentimental value also increased and with it the need for the protection of the child. Parents were advised against sending children alone on errands and children started to become supervised constantly (ibid.: 50). The focus of a defined space for children in Western Core society increased in the 21st century where it was advised that they should have their own area for sleeping, playing and studying. The adult's spaces were ideally to be adapted with a child's space, e.g., a small chair in the living room, suitable books on a low shelf, a low towel rod and a hook for the washcloth in the bathroom (Zelizer 1994: 54). Similarities were observed during fieldwork (Morocco 2016), where children in the Moroccan core have their own rooms, toys and books, whereas children of peripheral neighbourhoods will often share the couch of the living room with their siblings for the night, while the adults

are also present, watching television on full volume until 1 or 2 am (cf. Schaefer Davis and Davis 1989: 17-24).

Over the past two centuries, children of core settings have become increasingly 'economically worthless' yet 'emotionally priceless' (Montgomery 2009: 114), or even 'sacred' (Zelizer 1994: 52). Lancy (2014: 26) argues that Western society has gone so far that the 'entire round of holidays, passed down over millennia, have nearly all become occasions to celebrate – and spend money on – children'. He gives examples of birthday and 'princess' parties, where parents willingly spend large amounts of money to show their children how important they are to them. Similar observations were made during fieldwork in the Moroccan core (fieldwork Fes 2016), and as argued earlier, the local core of the global Periphery has more in common with their peers in the global Core than with their peers in the local periphery. As point out James and James (2004: 22), a middle-class child in Rio may indeed have more in common with her London counterpart than with a child from a poor family in northeast Brazil. '[C]hildhood is a privilege of the rich' with long protected childhoods, concludes Goldstein (quoted in Montgomery 2009: 94) in her research on shantytowns in Brazil, whereas their poor peers are 'hastened into becoming adults' (ibid.). This is also observed by Denzin (2010: 20) in his study on North American society, arguing that a prolonged childhood is an 'economic luxury', denied to the economically deprived, even if they live in a Western Core society.

Having pointed out how childhood is socially constructed in gerontocracy and neontocracy, I will now turn to what this means in detail for Moroccan youth migrants who do not correspond to the neontocratic model of UAM when they arrive in the EU.

7.5 Best interest of the child?

Conventions and Protocols concerning the child, based on the Core neontocratic model, entitle under 18-year olds to international protection and binding countries to specific obligations in the treatment of migrating children. Children, whether they are migrating or not, are treated separately 'as a category apart from adults' (Hashim and Thorsen 2011: 5). They are seen as innocent beings needing particular adult protection and guidance, and it is believed that acting in their own best interest is an ability that is not yet developed (Gozdziak 2008: 911). Therefore, the 'best interest' of a child is legally defined by adults under Art. 3 of the CRC. Of particular relevance in the definition of UAM are thus age and the 'best interest' of the child. While it is difficult to find an explicit definition of what their 'best interests' are, it generally refers to the well-being of the child,

usually in combination with being taken care of by the child's parents or other adult caretaker in a safe home.

Since the late 1990s, international migration is increasingly unified under the Common European Asylum System (CEAS), seeking to 'harmonise reception, integration and return procedures' for migrating adults and UAM alike while strengthening economic and political collaboration between member states and synergising immigration policies (Allsopp and Chase 2019: 296). In regard to the increasing numbers of UAM arriving in the EU (see chapter 2), an EU *Action Plan on Unaccompanied Minors* was first implemented in 2010. With the Action Plan, the EU commits to treating UAM 'first and foremost as children' (European Commission 2010: 3) and to act in finding 'durable solutions' in the 'best interest of the child' (ibid.: 2), regardless of the child's migration or residence status (ibid.: 3). Durable solutions in the best interest of the child are to be based on individual assessment and one of the following should be applied (ibid.: 12):

1. return and reintegration in the country of origin;
2. granting of international protection status or other legal status allowing minors to successfully integrate in the Member State of residence;
3. resettlement.[6]

'In many cases' it is considered best to reunite the child with the parents in the home country, in its 'own social and cultural environment' (ibid.). The Action Plan encourages EU member states to find 'innovative partnership solutions' with third countries of origin or transit in order to implement the return of the child, which is advised to be 'voluntary' (ibid.). An 'innovative partnership solution' could be 'a range of educational or training activities' (ibid.). If return is not an option or if integration in the country of residence is considered in its best interest, point number 2 becomes relevant, and the child should be 'granted refugee or subsidiary protection status under the conditions set out in EU legislation' (ibid.: 13). If this is not possible, the child should nevertheless be granted a legal status comparable to the former and supported in the path 'toward successful integration in the host society' (ibid.). Number 3 concerns third country refugee children whose best interest is to be resettled in the EU and where no other durable solution has been found (ibid.: 15).

Seen as entirely dependent on adults, passive and vulnerable, neither work nor migration are therefore imagined to be intentionally chosen by the child. Both work and migration are understood as being forced upon a defenceless and innocent young being and considered an abuse of adult authority (Oude Breuil 2008: 224). Children migrating

alone – and even more so, trafficked children – evoke sentiments of 'emotions and outrage' as their image 'attacks socially constructed divisions' (Oude Breuil 2008: 223–4). Legally and socially, they are seen as the personification of vulnerability. As Crawley (2011: 1172) writes, 'not only are they without the protection of a state, but they are also lacking the protection of an adult to steer them through the vagaries of childhood'. The abolishment of child trafficking, and, together with migrant smuggling, are therefore of particular concern in terms of child migration and protection and considered a priority for the EU member states (Europol 2016: 5).

Yet, Crawley continues, at the same time, these young migrants 'are also perceived as a threat, not only to systems of immigration control but to our ideas – and ideals – of what it means to be a child and, in turn, the values and responsibilities that we hold as adults' (ibid.). As laid out in the former chapters, independent youth migrants from Morocco exercise much agency in order to put their migration into practice. Yet, agency is seen as mostly absent in children, and demonstrating it can lead authorities to question whether the young migrant is genuinely under 18 and thus a child. This in turn can severely challenge a young migrant's right to protection (Crawley 2011: 1172), as he may be categorised as an adult. Sigona and Hughes (2010: 10) argue that the victimisation of the migrating child, i.e. the need to demonstrate an absence of agency, could serve 'other political agendas' in that it is used to quench 'unwanted migration'. The goal is then to categorise migrants into 'deserving' and 'undeserving' status in terms of whether they can demonstrate legally viable reasons to claim asylum and/or obtain refugee status. Sigona and Hughes further claim that the predominant interest and 'moral panic around child trafficking and human smuggling' is another Eurocentric approach to victimise independent youth migrants, distorting 'the complexity of independent child migration and the agency of the child in migration decision making and processes' (ibid.). Also Orgocka (2010: 139) points out, that with the number of children migrating abroad for a better life in order to offset poverty for themselves as well as their families, it becomes crucial to examine UAM's migration for labour purposes beyond and distinct from child trafficking. As Jacqueline Bhabha (cited in Sigona and Hughes: 8) recapitulates,

> Independent child migrants, as a matter of law, have generally been regarded as suspect, either passive victims of exploitation (trafficked), or undeserving illegals (petty thieves, beggars, domestic workers pretending to need asylum) or adults masquerading as children.

This ambiguity is also reflected in the EU Action Plan on Unaccompanied Minors. It distinguishes between asylum-seeking minors and victims of trafficking, who will be

protected; and migrant minors who are not seeking asylum, and who can be returned to their country of origin, despite their being children (European Commission 2010: 6; see also Jiménez-Alvarez 2015: 412). As such, asylum-seeking UAM are (theoretically) always allowed entry into EU territory. However, the Action Plan also points out that member states have the possibility to exclude those who have crossed borders irregularly. As explained above (point 2 of the Action Plan), if they are not eligible to apply for asylum, they can be allowed to stay on humanitarian grounds or under subsidiary protection. If none of these apply, they can be rejected, which was the case for over half (63%) of underage Nigerians, and a third (34%) of underage Gambians who arrived in Italy in 2016 (UNHCR, UNICEF, IOM 2017b: 5). Non-asylum claiming UAM can directly be refused entry and ordered to return to their country of origin (Saastamoinen 2017). However, sometimes foreign minors ignore the possibility of claiming asylum, whereas others avoid doing so because they do not fall under the refugee definition (Jiménez-Alvarez 2015: 412). This can mean that UAM are being returned despite the legal right to claim protection. The Council of Europe therefore recommends that no UAM – whether asylum-seeking or not – should be denied entry nor be deported, and that access to adequate accommodation, education, vocational training and health care should be under the same conditions as for citizen children of the host country (Reps 2011: 2). Also discussed under the Action Plan, EU member states may encourage the voluntary return of UAM if the minor has already entered the reception country and has little or no chance of obtaining asylum. This offer being rarely embraced, some countries have resorted to the forced return to countries of origin (Saastamoinen 2017). Detention of UAM in the EU is normally prohibited or only allowed under 'exceptional circumstances'[7] (European Migration Network 2015: 40). In half of the EU member states, however, UAM awaiting return may be placed in detention or in 'alternatives to detention'[8] (ibid.) under specific conditions that take into account the 'best interest of the child' (ibid.: 39).

As pointed to in the previous section, policies under the CEAS have often been criticised, seen as normalising discriminatory and exclusionary practices, especially in regard to youth migrants (Allsopp and Chase 2019: 296). Griesbeck (2013: 2) points out that the actual reception standards and implementation of legal bindings under the CEAS still differ greatly from one member state to the next. The Action Plan is a recommendation for EU member states to follow. Policy in regard to UAM in EU member states is nevertheless sovereignty of the nation-state. Further, the coordination on behalf of UAM within EU member states is rather weak, sometimes even within the same country, and exchange of data and experiences is rather cumbersome and

problematic (fieldwork Spain 2016, Belgium 2015, 2016, Sweden 2016). A Swedish Police Officer (field interview Stockholm 2016) explained how the coordination between Stockholm, Malmö and Gothenburg differed and made exchange of data not always easy, in addition to the fact that young Moroccans often change identities when changing locations. On an EU level, these difficulties become more complicated, as a Swedish Immigration Officer explained:

> We tried to build a platform a few years ago, it's called ERPUM,[9] […] but it turned out that the system in many countries was so different that it is hard to [find] a common ground […]. Not just the technical issues but also the mindsets. Are we going to do this because we're going to regulate immigration or, are we doing it in the best interest of the child? And if you don't agree on that, it is very hard to move further. [Now] we have liaison officers in Germany [and] in Italy. But we don't have a continuous corporation with the authorities, unfortunately. We have different standpoints and we work in different ways. When it comes to young Moroccans, the question is always about return. Because they don't have the legal status. So, this becomes the overall question. And in Europe it differs a lot, some countries only do voluntary return, and others do forced returns. But when it comes to forced returns [for] unaccompanied minors, it is a sensitive issue. (Field interview Stockholm 2016).

7.5.1 Return to the 'safe home'

The Western Core approach to childhood usually sees it in the 'best interest of the child' to return him or her to the country of origin and to the family, as it is considered to be most beneficial for the child to grow up in 'the safe home' in order to be protected from 'the dangerous outside [world]' (Oude Breuil 2008: 226). Migrating and trafficked children are imagined to be forcefully torn from their sheltering hearth into a world where they find themselves helpless, alone and prone to exploitation. Without denying that migrating and trafficked children are indeed extremely vulnerable, the modern Western image of childhood and child rearing, institutionalised in policies, regulations and law, nevertheless neglect historically and culturally specific constructions of childhood (Oude Breuil 2008: 226). As such, the illusionary image of 'the safe home' overlooks that the home of migrant children who engage autonomously in migration may often not be a haven of peace due to structural economic deprivation, oppressive or dysfunctional families, or harmful power relations (Oude Breuil 2008: 224–5). As argued throughout the present research, Moroccan independent youth migrants are often from disadvantaged, sometimes broken families, or single-parents, unable to provide for their children. Some children and adolescents may indeed 'seek asylum from their parents'

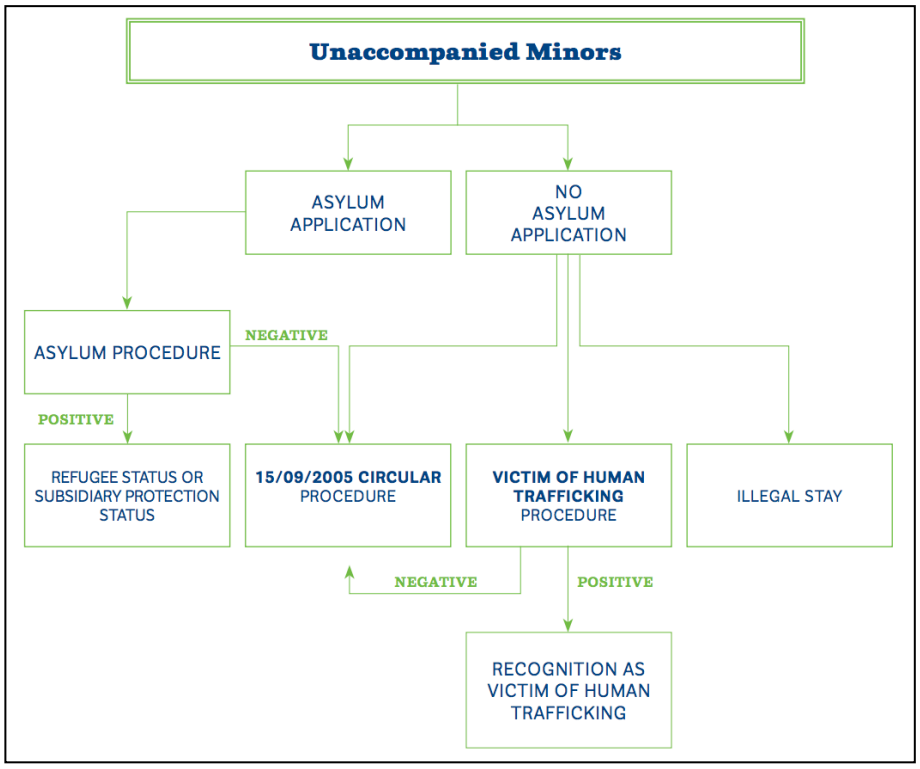
(Bossin and Demirdache 2012) when they flee abusive situations. During fieldwork, with the exception of rare cases, boys were usually reluctant to speak about abusive situations in their family homes. I was rather informed by social workers who were able to spend much more time with them. It was usually adults, former UAM, who would openly and directly speak to me about violence, see e.g. the interview with R. in chapter 6, on our way from Tanger Med.

7.5.2 International protection and the 'Refugee Experience'

As discussed in chapter 2, the numbers of UAM have increased greatly since 2014, and there is evidence that the actual numbers are much greater as an unknown number of unaccompanied migrant youth do not claim asylum, may not be detected and are absent from asylum policy (Allsopp and Chase 2019: 295). As discussed, UAM fall under the Refugee Convention. Most young migrants, however, do not fall under refugee status or humanitarian protection but receive welfare support and care provisions under leave to remain arrangements while they are still 'vulnerable children' in need of international protection (Allsopp and Chaise 2019: 296), i.e. until they turn 18, when they become deportable. While they are under leave to remain, however, the 'best interest of the child' is still seen to be with the parents and in the country of origin, unless the contrary is proven. As I have discussed in earlier chapters, young Moroccan *harraga* engage in the *hrig* because they want to escape waithood and partake in a capitalist lifestyle, linked to a life in Europe, which does not fit with the required legal concept of being able to claim a 'refugee experience' (Stein quoted in Turton 2003: 7). While their goal is to attain *rujula*, manhood, from a Moroccan point of view, they need to demonstrate that they are children in order to be categorised as UAM from a European point of view. This puts young Moroccan migrants in a particular dilemma which they try to navigate once again with tactical agency in that they adapt their stories (e.g. saying that they are orphans), change their name and age or avoid the welfare system altogether. If this is or becomes fruitless, a change in location, either the city or the country, as well as a new name and age, are further tactics to counter restraining structures.

Whereas some countries require the young migrants to be asylum claimers, others, e.g. Belgium, do not require them to apply for asylum if it is unlikely for them to receive asylum.

Figure 16
Asylum system for UAM in Belgium



Source: European Migration Network 2009: 39

In Belgium, not seeking asylum means that they either do not enter the system and stay 'illegally', or they are tolerated under the '15/09/2015 Circular Procedure' (European Migration Network 2009: 36) while authorities are searching for a 'durable solution' in the best interest of the child, which in the Moroccan case usually means the return to the country of origin, or if return is not possible, the residence until the age of 18 in Belgium is granted. Most want to avoid being returned under all circumstances, as their migration project is social adulthood with access to capitalist consumer goods, as well as living up to expectations of responsibility towards their families in providing for them, whereas others have fled abusive intra-family relations. Return, therefore, is in most cases not an option, as will be explained further in chapter 8, and is one of the reasons why many try to stay clear of the protection system altogether. As argues Mai (2010: 77), the 'victimhood narratives' of the global Core can in fact increase the vulnerability of the young migrant, as s/he is either not acknowledged as UAM or because s/he will avoid entering the initiatives of social intervention altogether by absconding from reception centres and

staying with their networks. This can mean that they are staying in the streets where they are exposed to further marginality.

For most Moroccan independent youth migrants, incompatibility with the legal definition of UAM pushes them in a state of legal limbo. They resemble irregular adult migrants but are nevertheless usually granted exceptional leave to remain due to the fact that they are protected as children. In their choice to not enter into the system intended for children, they then have limited access to any kind of support. The EU welfare system, in assuming that UAM do not have or have very limited agency, excludes those who do not fit the expected categories as 'victims' and overlooks that they may indeed be in need of support.

Exercising agency, young Moroccan migrants try to navigate through constraining as well as enabling structures, which means they are trying to 'make use' of the diverse opportunities in EU countries in order to survive, meet their migration goal and avoid being returned at all cost.

7.6 Navigating through EU reception structures

The focus on THB, asylum-seeking and refugee children is, in fact, as Mai (2010: 75) points out, a concern of predominantly northern European countries, e.g., Germany, UK, Sweden. While they certainly also exist in southern European countries, it is without doubt due to the particular focus of different asylum systems. Senovilla Hernández (2007: 29) shows in his research on UAM in Germany, Belgium, UK, France, Spain and Italy that UAM are registered according to their particular sociological profiles. Based on an earlier study conducted by Etiemble in France (ibid.), Senovilla Hernández differentiates between the following reasons for migration of UAM:

1. Exiled (forced migration due to conflict or other reason for flight, i.e., the 'typical' refugee profile)
2. Exploited (victims of sexual, criminal or labour exploitation, i.e. THB)
3. Mandatories (youth being sent within a family migration project in order to send remittances or as an 'anchor child' to obtain status for the family to follow)
4. Runaways (minors trying to escape their families, often due to violent environments and who then become errants)
5. Errants (minors that were already in 'survival mode', either alone or in a group, before migrating)

Senovilla Hernández points out that UAM may show profiles of more than one group (ibid.), e.g., a runaway may become a victim of exploitation, an exiled child may also be a 'mandatory'. Just like adults, children and adolescent can engage in mixed migration, with multiple reasons for migration. Mixed migration is a term used for combined reasons for migration, which are often difficult to divide into separate categories. While forced migration – i.e., which would fall under legal definitions of migration, such as profile numbers 1 and 2 – is usually accepted as an act of emergency, desperation or under constraint, other reasons for migration are often condemned as 'illegal' and bogus migration, sometimes associated with freeloading, greediness and criminality. Yet, over the past years, it has become more difficult to distinguish the 'voluntary' from the 'forced' migrant, not only because people on the move frequently use the same migration routes, but also because the reasons for voluntary and forced migration are often interwoven. Deteriorating economic situations are frequently at the root of armed conflicts (Findley 2001: 275), and reasons for migration may be a combination of fleeing social or economic upheaval while simultaneously hoping for economic betterment through migration (Van Hear 2011: sec. 2:30). Yet, policy regimes set up by governments are not taking into account the mixed nature of migrations (ibid.) and 'want to fit migrants into neat bureaucratic categories' (Castles 2016: sec. 56:00), whereas 'in reality many migrants need both protection and the possibility of building a new life' (ibid.). Migrants may therefore 'choose' particular countries where immigration regimes show a better understanding of the migrants' circumstances and different reasons for migration. UAM are no exception to this and can have as many reasons for migration as do adults and their own role in the migration process can be just as diverse (Bhabha 2010: 92).

Senovilla Hernández' typology shows how UAM 'choose' particular countries regarding their reasons for migration.

Table 4
Migration profiles of UAM in some EU countries

Country	Classical migration profile	Sociological profile (Etiemble typology)
Germany	Asylum seekers	Exiled, exploited
United Kingdom	Asylum seekers	Exiled, exploited
Belgium	Mixed	Exiled, exploited, mandatories, errants
France	Mixed	Exiled, exploited, mandatories, errants
Italy	Economic migrants	Mandatories, errants
Spain	Economic migrants	Mandatories, errants

Source: Senovilla Hernández 2007: 29

Germany and the United Kingdom, where the condition to stay is asylum, seem to be sought by minors who fulfil this condition, and who are seemingly of group 1 or 2. Belgium (as already mentioned earlier) and France have specific status regulations for UAM, which will allow also non-asylum seekers under the age of 18 to remain under similar conditions as asylum-seekers. A vast 'variety' of UAM will be found in these countries. Italy and Spain appear to attract young migrants with economic reasons. These countries, as explained in chapter 4, have a specific labour niche for immigrants (Ribas-Mateos 2001: 29; see also Reyneri 2003), which attracts not only adults but also minors with the main goal of finding work.

Of particular interest with Moroccan independent youth migrants is the framework of *errance*[10], that has emerged especially in France, Spain and Italy to designate independent youth migrants who desire to better their socioeconomic situation through migration (Mai 2010: 76). Mai (ibid.) argues that *errance* pathologizes independent youth migrants as 'lacking moral and social coordinates' while justifying social interventions for marginalised youth in an era where migrants are becoming increasingly criminalized, and, as write Sigona and Hughes (2010: 3), where irregular immigration has evolved as a top agenda security issue for the Western nation state. It is within the framework of *errance* that the best interest of the child is most likely to be to the detriment of immigration control. The two policy agendas, i.e. securitizing the nation state versus the protection of migrating children, creates tensions (Sigona and Hughes 2010: 3) that puts independent youth migrants in an ambiguous situation of protection. They are categorised as UAM on the one hand, yet as irregular migrants to be controlled on the other (Jiménez Alvarez 2016: 357). Being unable to 'deliver' a migration story that fits the legal UAM profile in harmony

with what it means to be a child, it may be seen as putting the nation state at risk between those who enter the territory 'uncontrolled' and the protection of the citizens of this territory (Sassen cited in Jiménez and Vacchiano 2011: 506). The expected or tolerated migration profile will therefore influence the UAM's choice of country (Senovilla Hernández 2007: 29), but it may also encourage the young migrant to adapt their story accordingly (Kohli 2006: 710). In chapter 8, I will further elaborate on what this means concretely for Moroccan independent youth migrants and how it in fact enhances their vulnerability.

Both categorisations, UAM and *errance,* are thus part of a strategy of the global Core, where victimhood and 'politics of compassion' are addressed by Eurocentric social interventions (Mai 2010: 76), ignoring cultural and social constructions of childhood and adolescence. Yet, the focus 'on specific groups of vulnerable children and young people' gives an incomplete vision of the mobility of minors (ibid.: 75), and in fact, of migration in general (Suárez Navaz 2006). Mai (2010: 77) argues that the Eurocentric social interventions for migrant youth, focusing solely on their vulnerability 'is exacerbated by the contrast between different cultural constructions of adolescence in relation to different socioeconomic and cultural backgrounds'. While European institutions and social services address them as vulnerable victims in need of protection, they see themselves as young adults with the mission to provide for themselves and their families left behind (ibid.). In EU policy, independent child migration is not being associated with the escape of peripheral settings within a capitalist world system and the escape from waithood. The Western Core's emphasis on children's victimisation as being trafficked/forced into migration or work contradicts the reality of many children's lives in the global south, where their roles as *producers* are a 'necessity or normality of their contribution to family activities' (Hashim and Thorsen 2011: 5). Research over the past decade on rural change in the non-Western world has demonstrated that an increasing number of children and adolescents migrate alone in order to better their own and their families' lives (e.g. Orgocka 2010; Bastia 2005; Hashim and Thorsen 2011; Heissler 2008; O'Connell Davidson 2011). Yet, while this type of migration is rather common in south-south migration, it is rarely being acknowledged as *independent* migration when the young person arrives in the global north, and, as argued earlier, s/he is likely to be associated with child trafficking, or seen as an 'anchor child' sent under a household decision, or the young person's age will be questioned as an irregular migrant.

7.6.1 Disappearances from reception centres for UAM

Europol estimated that 10,000 UAM went missing in 2015; Missing Children Europe claims that the number is likely to be much higher as exact data is unavailable[11] (European Migration Network 2015: 28), and up to 50% of UAM go missing within 48 hours of being placed in reception centres in Europe (Missing Children 2017). Many, yet not all minors that disappear are associated with THB. Some UAM are seen to be in transit in order to join family or diaspora in another country or are imagined going missing because they are hoping for better economic conditions or to find work, finds a study by EMN (European Migration Network 2015: 29). The report also shows that certain nationalities are more likely to go missing than others (ibid.), and UAM from Maghreb countries, in particular from Morocco and Algeria, are among the top nationalities to go missing. Also, most of the missing UAM are boys close to the age of majority, i.e., between 15 and 17 years of age. EU member states presume that there is a high likelihood that they abscond due to fear of asylum rejection and deportation (ibid.), as a very limited number of them are legally entitled to be able to stay *after* the age of 18.

In this regard, in 2011 the Council of Europe (Reps 2011: 1) points to a high discrepancy between official numbers of asylum-seeking UAM (at the time around 12,000), whereas they estimated *actual* number of UAM in Europe to be at approx. 100,000. Despite the precautions that need to be taken with estimates, it does point to an immense grey zone of uncounted, not legally regulated UAM. Belgian authorities, for example, confirm that only 30% of all UAM in Belgium claim asylum directly upon arrival. All others are intercepted by the police (Service Public Fédéral Justice 2019), meaning that they are on Belgian territory, yet, up to the moment of encounter with the police, they are neither in official reception centres for UAM nor in the statistics.

7.6.2 'Voluntary leavers'

A Belgium-specific study by EMN showed that it is mostly UAM who have decided not to claim asylum that disappear from the Belgian centres (European Migration Network 2014: 49), as they have the option to not claim asylum in the Belgian system and still receive food and shelter in a reception centre for UAM under the 15/09/2005 Circular Procedure (see figure 16). In this context, Benelux countries make an official distinction between 'worrying disappearances' and 'voluntary leavers'. Whereas the former are regarded as being under risk of becoming trafficked or smuggled, the latter are seen as having various reasons, described earlier, to move on autonomously (European

Migration Network 2015: 29) and to merely use the reception facilities as 'a temporary shelter' (European Migration Network 2014: 48).

There is an increasing concern that these 'voluntary leavers' may nevertheless be exposed to THB, as UAM are not necessarily abducted from their homes or from a reception centre, but rather during their migration journey (Orgocka 2010: 139) when they are in the streets or travelling. Moroccan independent youth migrants are of particular concern, as they often opt out of the protection systems due to their search for social adulthood, as already argued. As EMN points out in 2014 (European Migration Network 2014: 12),

> … it seems that one major difference with the group of asylum-seeking UAMs is that these [Moroccan] minors [do] not always want to be registered as an UAM or do not want to be cared for in reception centres. They are intercepted by the police, frequently do not respond to the invitation for registration at the Immigration Office or disappear from the reception structures. Much is rather unknown about this group, for example whether they are together with other young people (in particular to commit certain offences), or if they are actually in Belgium without the guidance of a person with parental authority, and often they take up different identities, rendering it difficult to identify or 'follow' them. Given these specific difficulties, it is a large group of concern regarding human trafficking and sexual or other forms of exploitation.

Bastia (2005: 60) points out that human movement patterns are often complex, and that boundaries with THB are not always clear-cut, but that there is a growing awareness that it is closely connected to economic migration, and that most THB victims were first and foremost economic migrants (Bastia 2005: 63). Economic migration and THB often have similar root causes but are unlikely to be acknowledged due to policy's focus on border protection and law enforcement (Bastia 2005: 63). Orgocka (2010: 139) emphasises that it is fundamental to recognise that in most cases 'there needs to be a motivation for wanting to migrate in order for trafficking to take place', and that young people risk to fall into the hands of traffickers once they have already engaged in their migration journey. The exclusive attention paid to child trafficking ignores the complexity of how irregular migration, smuggling, and trafficking are linked, and, in addition, encourages the evolution of criminal networks, as Gallagher (2002: 28) underlines:

> Many governments ignore the fact that irregular migration (including trafficking and migrant smuggling) happens because of the enormous difference between the number of people who wish (or are forced) to migrate and the legal opportunities for them to do so. There is a growing body of evidence that severely restrictive immigration policies are more likely to fuel organised, irregular migration than to stop it. Tighter law enforcement controls on smuggling and trafficking push individuals and smaller,

informal operators out of the market – helping to create a monopoly for the best and most sophisticated criminal networks.

THB was of concern to the mayor of Paris when a significant number of young Moroccans arrived in 2017, rapidly becoming infamous for delinquency in a particularly rough neighbourhood known for criminality and illegal drugs trade (Le Clève and Peyroux 2018). In their research, Le Clève and Peyroux' (2018: 50–2) argue that THB 'remains difficult to prove', due to the absence of a single criminal organisation that would force the minors into committing criminal acts. It appears that the boys engage temporarily with criminal networks, in order to seek their own advantages, i.e., to make a maximum amount of money, even with a high risk of exploitation or even being killed, as one of my informants in Sweden told me (fieldwork Stockholm 2016), if the operation is unsuccessful.[12] THB therefore is not a straightforward matter and not seldom difficult to unravel.

7.7 Conclusion

This chapter explored how conventions and protocols were ratified in order to protect children and child migrants. Yet, universalised legal definitions are usually based on Western-centric approaches, and in the case of children and child migrants, they may give the illusion of a universalised childhood, which in reality is the case only for certain strata of society around the world. In the case of UAM, EU member states also take into account the 'best interest of the child', which is usually considered to be with the parents, whereas some young migrants may have fled their family environment or they want to avoid being returned under all circumstances in order to not lose face or because they have to 'repay' what has been invested in their migration.

Further, the legal definition considers all young people from ages 0 to 18 as children, despite that members of this age group greatly differ from each other, with their distinct needs and responsibilities (Hashim and Thorsen 2011: 7). Yet, chronological age is the benchmark in modern Western society, where adulthood is achieved through law (James and James 2004: 33) and not through a result of maturity or a rite of passage, regardless of social expectations and responsibilities (Honwana 2014: 29). The modern Western chronological categorisation of childhood in Western society thus sets 'inflexible age limits, below which children have no capacity and above which they have total freedom to perform the activity in question' (James and James 2004: 34). The institutional process of defining a child is regulated through the concept of childhood, i.e., what is right and what is wrong for children (ibid.: 21), which is decisive when UAM turn 18, and become

adults from one day to the next, losing also the protective status they underlay as a minor and they may become undocumented. It explains why UAM may abscond from reception centres and how their protection may be jeopardised if they do not fit a specific legal profile. They may be seen as 'bogus' migrants or adapt their story, which may obscure their need for help.

This chapter has laid out how these Western-centric approaches of social intervention may collide with different socioeconomic and cultural constructions of childhood and adolescence. To provide a better understanding of how childhood is socially constructed, the chapter then turned to look at historical factors that have shaped the definition of childhood in the Western Core world. The modern Western childhood has in fact only existed for a short period of time, it is nevertheless most influential in regard to legal definitions of childhood and as such in the shaping policies for the protection of the child. While this has certainly advanced child protection in important ways, it overlooks the social construction of childhood in non-Western societies and the difficulties of implementing it. Putting Western childhood into its historical perspective, shows many striking similarities with the construction of childhood in peripheral, non-Western societies of today. The historical perspective also enables us to understand why children and adolescents migrate on their own and explains the underlying reasons for it.

Notes

[1] I kept in touch with M. throughout my fieldwork and also met him again when he had moved to another country. He said, 'I will never forget what you did for me that day in Brussels.' Asking him what I had done, he replied 'You helped me at the Immigration Office.' When I said, that I hadn't done anything in particular, that I had only accompanied him and translated a few things into Spanish, he said 'But you were there with me and waited with me.'

[2] a remote location in the French-speaking part of Belgium on the French border

[3] The AU is composed of all 55 countries on the African continent (African Union 2019).

[4] Nandy (1980: 33) writes that even 'honourable men' like Milton and Beethoven are known to have participated in the torture of children.

[5] The Moroccan public school system allows for pupils to repeat twice, then they are to leave school and find an apprenticeship.

[6] I will discuss the first two durable solutions in the best interest of the child, whereas the third, applicable to refugees, is not relevant for Moroccan independent youth migrants.

[7] E.g., justifying detention as 'last resort', or in 'risk of absconding').

[8] E.g., special youth centres that are adpated to the child's needs and where they are separate from adults.

[9] European Return Platform for Unaccompanied Minors, members were Sweden, Norway, the United Kingdom, and the Netherlands, Denmark and Belgium were observers (Lemberg-Pedersen 2015).

[10] French for roaming, or errant mobility.

[11] Only half of the member states collect data on missing UAM, and these are often not comparable or systematically collected

[12] Le Clève and Peyroux (2018: 52) report of Moroccan minors transporting the 'merchandise' being robbed by an unknown (who in reality is someone of the network), which indebts them toward the network. If they are unable to reimburse the money death threats are possible.

8 The Nothingness of *el-Ghorba*

[…]
We arrive in Tarifa, thinking that my dream will now come true
With difficulties I managed to get a Euro to call my mother
I left without telling her, in reality that was unfair
When she heard I am here, poor her, she had a lot of sorrow
Forgive me mother, pray for me, and say that I am blessed
I came to a foreign country, I'm tired of oppression, I can't help it
I am predestined to be exiled, and to live alone
Mother, I miss you; my country, I miss you
I left my country and sent myself into exile in foreign countries
My loved ones miss me, I became uprooted
I am in Barcelona, sometimes I work, sometimes I suffer
Oh Mother, I am no one in a foreign country
The dream that I had before leaving my country did not come true
I thought that my dream would come true as soon as I arrived
Thanks to Allah, I eat, I drink
But I struggle to survive
I miss my country, and I miss my parents and loved ones
I will never change, Mother, my origins and my blood are Moroccan
That's my life abroad, I get by
It's my fault, it's me who wanted to emigrate
I live in a foreign land, and I abandoned mine
Mother, I miss you a lot, and I don't have papers here
Five years that I'm here, it's been too long
How much I wish to be near my mother, kiss her head and her hand
I am in exile, only Allah knows what my heart feels
Soon I will return to my country, soon divine release
I left my country and sent myself into exile in foreign countries
My loved ones miss me, I became uprooted
[…]

(Excerpt of rap song *El-Ghorba* by Said Man, 2013,
Courtesy of *Ahlam* association, Tangier, original in Arabic, tba (F))

8.1 Introduction

This chapter will look at what O'Reilly calls the 'outcome' of a specific migration pattern. Outcomes in a theory of practice relate to what people do and how they do it, they may be intentional or unintentional, they may either consolidate or innovate specific aspects, i.e., create social change. O'Reilly (2012a: 25) explains that '[o]utcomes take the shape of all of the above: external and internal structures, practices and communities', and they need to be 'examined over time' in terms of 'movement and process' (ibid.: 5). Outcomes are not predictable, because they 'depend on the beliefs and dispositions of the human agents who are their parts to produce these mechanisms' (Elder-Vass cited in O'Reilly 2012c: 6).

I have argued that Moroccan independent youth migrants are new actors in migration, as they are making use of old and new migration patterns. I have explained that they are the 'product' of a capitalist world system and Morocco's shift into the Semi-Periphery, taking into account colonial and post-colonial influences, shaping Morocco's emigration culture. But they also use their own CofP and networks in order to succeed in their migration. While not all are successful, the use of tactical agency is an important factor in navigating the structures they are surrounded by. One of their tactics is making use of their age, knowing that being UAM is one of the only possibilities of being granted stay in the EU. However, as explained in chapter 7, the legal concept of UAM is a radically different one from the migration goal of a young Moroccan *harraga*. The best interest of the child is a legal concept that is socially constructed within the Western Core image of what a child requires. Not only is the home not a 'sheltering hearth' for many young *harraga* whose families struggle to survive, but the Moroccan concept of *rujula,* escaping waithood and becoming a 'man' in order to help oneself and one's family, is at opposite ends of the social construction of childhood. The Western Core concept of biological age and the lack to differentiate legally between a toddler and a 17-year old adolescent denies all agency to the young migrant who needs to demonstrate vulnerability and hide resilience. The tactical agency they use to become UAM is often a short-lived success of using an enabling structure turning into a constraining structure. This is when their agency enhances their vulnerability, yet it is a different vulnerability than the one that falls under the legal definition of UAM. In fact, it is the interplay of tactical agency with the constraining structure of UAM that makes the young *harraga* vulnerable, and even more so when he comes of age and is no longer granted stay in the EU. Being confronted with reality upon arrival in Europe, quite unlike the migration project they are determined to achieve, can drive them 'into an unknown world of utopian self-realisation, entitlement

and pleasure' (Mai 2010: 72), so that they are at risk, once again, of becoming 'a potentially vulnerable social group' (ibid.). Additionally, being unable to provide a coherent 'thick story', their needs, traumas and vulnerabilities may be minimised or entirely ignored.

This chapter is based on empirical findings during fieldwork with a focus on the arrival and onward migration in Europe. I will develop how the external structures – i.e., legal definitions of youth migration and the social construction of childhood – shape the experiences of Moroccan youth migrants, but also how these external structures are made somewhat malleable by using tactical agency. As they imagine having reached the Eldorado, the young migrants expect an escape from waithood and the liminal phase they underwent during their rite of passage, and the attainment of social adulthood, but structural constraints that collide with their migration project will lead to further marginalisation. This chapter will also look at how they are perceived in the host countries and why they continue migrating, rapidly moving from one country to the next within Europe, which they refer to as *el-Ghorba*.

8.2 Arrival in *el-Ghorba*

El-Ghorba, a term, frequently used by Moroccan migrants, refers predominantly to being abroad, with a feeling of being in exile, and a homesickness expressed through a nostalgic longing for the home country, the family and friends. *El-Ghorba* can also refer to isolation in one's own country, as in the case of being an outsider due to internal migration from rural to urban areas (fieldwork Morocco 2016). In the case of marginalised youth migrants, *el-Ghorba* signifies dissociation and forced liberation from the segregation they are exposed to in their country of origin (Antonelli 2012:122). It thus refers to marginalisation, and liberation from it, and the nostalgic longing for home and family.

El-Ghorba needs to be seen in context with the adolescent desire to 'be global', to escape waithood and social exclusion at home, while re-entering a similar scenario of marginalisation after the arrival in Europe (Mai 2010: 72). The marginalisation in Europe is due to being in a foreign country and having lost all points of reference, while at the same time idealistically thinking that the rite of passage they underwent will now free them from the liminality they have endured, immediately elevating them into the highly anticipated affiliation of a capitalist-consumerist Core.

In the Introduction chapter, I have written about the arrival of youth *harraga* on the southernmost tip of Spain in 2009. The small rubber boat they had used to cross the Strait carried exclusively children. Yet, youth *harraga* had been migrating to southern Spain along adult migrants for about a decade already. When I started fieldwork in 2014 for the present

research, young Moroccans had already migrated to more or less every Western-European country. During fieldwork in Ceuta (2016), one of the Spanish enclaves on Moroccan territory, I had a brief opportunity to meet a few Moroccan youth *harraga,* who were roaming about the McDonalds at a late hour at night (fieldnotes Ceuta 2016 (G) tba).

> Tonight, around midnight, I met a group of about ten young, some of them very young, boys (between 10 and 14 years old). They looked as if they hadn't changed clothes in a long time and asked me if I could buy them something to eat, which I did. The girl at the McDonalds counter told me that they were there every night, hoping to get food. She told me that there is a centre for UAM in Ceuta [which I was not granted access to during my stay], where they would get food, of course, but they prefer to run away and stay in the streets. I returned to the boys with the food and asked them about the centre. 'It's no good, we have to be back so early. And they lock the door and we can't get in when we come later. So, we prefer to have our liberty and stay in the streets' (field interview (S) tba). I asked them where they sleep, and they told me that they hide in a car park. One spoke to me in English, the others in French or Spanish, showing that they are from different parts of Morocco. One told me that he was from Mèknes, another from Tangier and that they have met here in Ceuta. One said that they made it here hiding under lorries. 'But we're not staying here. There is nothing here. Nothing. Sebta[1]'s dead. We want to get to Spain [mainland]' (field interview (S), tba). They were quite reluctant to speak with me, I guess just being very careful as they don't know who I am. When they had eaten up and before I could ask them another question, they had run off into the night.

My encounter with the boys who were 'reluctant to speak with me' was quite a different experience from meeting *harraga* boys on the Moroccan side, where I had spent the past month, and who would be willing to spend hours talking to me. This is certainly no coincidence, as they knew they had to be careful speaking to strangers who could be potential 'agents' to return them to Morocco. Throughout fieldwork, regardless in which country I met young Moroccan migrants, the reoccurring mentioning of 'nothingness' in *el-Ghorba* was omnipresent. They moved from one country to the next, looking for the capitalist-consumerism Eldorado, for the 'freedom' of the Western Core, only to find out that they had less liberties in Europe than they had in Morocco, where the *shabab* spent their time in *l-zanqa,* a world of their own. Having to be back in a centre for UAM at a certain hour, following strict regulations of a culture foreign to them, being treated as 'children' and learning that they are unable to work, comes as a shock and shatters the dream.

Sweden is often seen as their 'last resort', having travelled throughout Europe for years in order to meet their migration goal. Once they realise that they will not meet this goal in Sweden either, some become desperate finding a 'solution' (field interview with

gatekeeper, Sweden 2016), in particular when they are close to turning 18 with a high risk of deportation.

Others told me that 'there is nothing in Europe' and said that their goal was to migrate to Canada, because there, their networks tell them, 'there are many jobs and it's a great country where they are not racist' (field interviews Belgium 2015, 2016, Sweden 2016). One of my young interviewees in Belgium showed me on a computer in a centre for UAM how he was checking the times and dates of the cargo ships that were travelling from Belgium to Canada (fieldwork Belgium 2015). 'I know how to get on a ship. I've done it before when I left Morocco. I travelled from Agadir to Antwerp. Now I'm just waiting for the right moment to get to Canada' (field interview Belgium 2015).

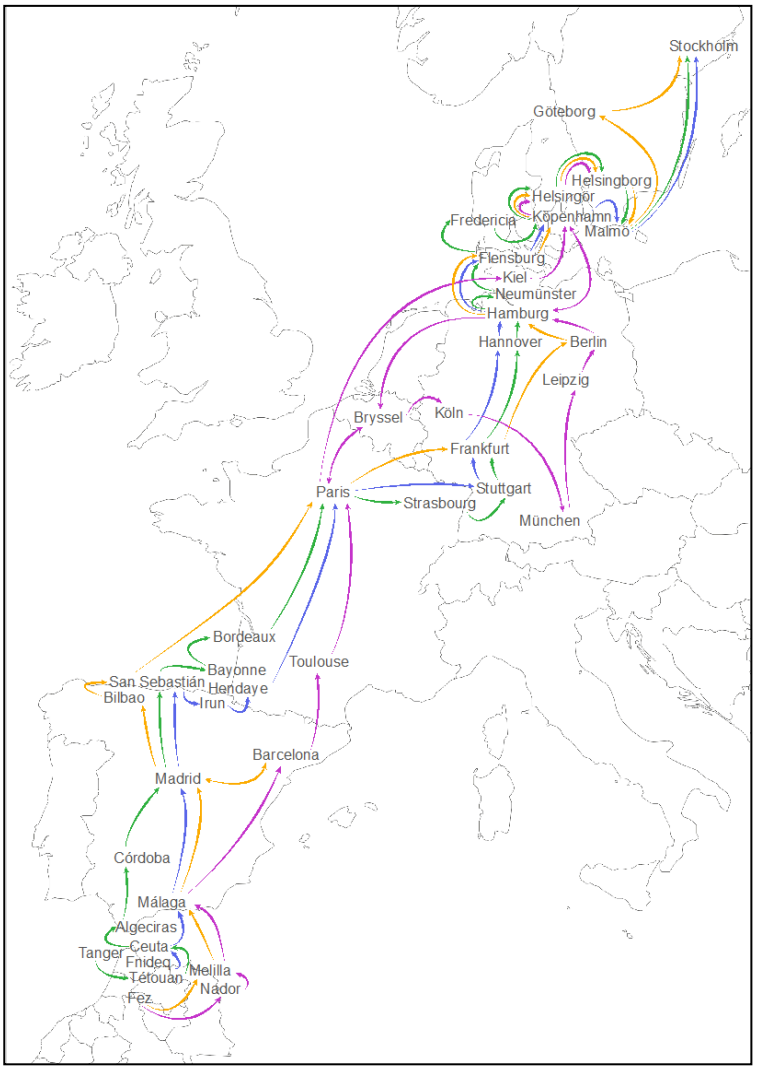
8.3 Onward Migration in *El Ghorba* and its reasons

Boys I have met during fieldwork in Europe (2014–16) have been to many different cities and countries, especially the cities that are shown in von Bredow's graphic (figure 17), but I have also spoken with youngsters who have been to Italy (notably Rome, Genoa, Turin, Milan, Bologna), and to a lesser extent the UK, Finland, and Norway. The young migrants usually move from city to city, where they can find someone of their network, often peer network, or they register in a centre for UAM that their peer network has told them about.

Von Bredow's research, concordant with my own fieldwork, explains that the boys hid under trucks to board ferries to cross the Mediterranean. Some parts of their route were done on foot 'especially at the border between Spain and France' (von Bredow 2018: 20). One of my interlocutors told me that he found it 'very easy' to move around, 'you just need to be smart' (fieldwork Belgium 2015). He explained that he was very young when he left Morocco and got on a ship to Spain, walking next to a woman. 'They thought she was my mother, and no one asked.' In Europe he said he moved about on busses and trains, 'You just need to wait for the right moment to get on. And if they check for your ticket on the train, you hide in the toilet. Sometimes they catch me and throw me off the train or the bus. But then I just get on the next one [laughs]' (ibid.). Often, they move in peer groups and stay where the train takes them or communicate intensively via social media informing one another where to stay, i.e., city and UAM centre or in which place it is easy to find informal work. If they do not find what they are looking for, they continue their journey (fieldwork Belgium 2015, von Bredow 2018: 20).

Figure 17

Migration routes of 4 independent youth migrants from Morocco to Sweden, demonstrating their extreme mobility



Source: von Bredow 2018: 20

Note: Green route: Moha, age 16; blue route: Fede, age 15; yellow route: Mahmoud, age 11; pink route: Zaki, age 16.

A Swedish Immigration Officer explained (field interview Sweden 2016),

> In 2011 I met a woman from CARITAS Belgium who said there was a huge influx of Moroccan unaccompanied minors in Belgium. At that time, we hardly had any in Sweden. And then we saw a huge increase in the beginning of 2012. 300 or 400 unaccompanied Minors in one year of one nationality is very much […]
>
> - Do they tell you how they arrived in Sweden?
>
> - They have different routes sometimes Spain, Belgium, France, Germany.
>
> - What about the Dublin regulation? Are they not being sent back to the first country of arrival?
>
> - Not unless we have the fingerprints. They need to have been registered in those countries […]. The Dublin regulation can only be applied with minors when there is a decision made. If it was just an illegal entrance or an asylum application that is not enough, you have to have a decision […]. And if you have no decision then you can't do anything.

As discussed in the previous chapter, despite the CEAS (Common European Asylum System), it is difficult to find common ground within EU Member States in terms of asylum policies. The sovereignty of the nation-state cannot be overridden, and asylum systems can thus be different from one country to the next (chapter 7). As discussed in chapter 7, those in southern France, Spain and Italy who do not fall under the legal definition of UAM and are rather seen as economic migrants with a goal to enter the informal labour market, are categorised under *errance*. They are also defined as 'voluntary leavers' and 'unworrying disappearances' from the reception centres, as in reality they are only tolerated to stay due to the fact that they are legally defined as children.

Being simply tolerated to stay without any future possibilities and becoming undocumented as of the age of 18, not only counters integration into the host society, but also tempts them into alternative 'options' proposed by their peers, and maintains the young migrants in the liminal phase, where everything is possible, and where societal rules do not apply. Deceived by false information through their peer networks and realizing that legal work is not possible, the inability to find work in the informal sector, or the exploitation they undergo in the latter, they are unable to reach aggregation (Turner 1991: 94), and remain in the 'limbo of statuslessness' (ibid.: 97). When structural framing does not allow them to achieve the utopic imagining of their migration, 'illegal activities and strategies of survival' (Mai 2010: 74) can be seen as best available option to save face. These 'opportunities' are survival strategies in terms of tactical agency, in already established places of marginality, which are essentially theft, drug selling and prostitution (ibid.: 78). The young migrants thus follow the advice of their CofP and peer networks in

order to survive, playing their 'own serious games' (Ortner 2006: 147), trying to navigate around 'malleable external structures' (O'Reilly 2012a: 19–20), i.e., different asylum systems, that hinder them from 'achiev[ing] psychological autonomy and upward social mobility in a context characterised by poverty and the need to survive' (Mai 2010: 74).

8.3.1 Remittances

In chapter 7, I have explained the responsibilities that a young migrant bears when making it to Europe. The responsibility to send remittances to the family in terms of an 'intergenerational loyalty' (Vacchiano 2010: 120), is a crucial factor for onward migration if the young migrant is unable to send money back home. The pressure young Moroccans are submitted to is reflected in this interview by Vacchiano (ibid.),

> Your mother doesn't need to say: 'Send the money.' You know from the beginning that they need it. When you call them, and they tell you about their troubles, the loans, the lack of this and that… you know perfectly well what you have to do…

Remittances are a 'proof' that the young migrants have succeeded in their rite of passage. During fieldwork my questions regarding remittances were always answered with pride of how they were helping back home, or sometimes even with surprise, 'of course I am sending money, how could I not?' (field interview Belgium 2016). Not being able to live up to the expectations of the family is *hshuma*, an 'unbearable shame' (Williams 2006: 874). The minor may prefer to break the contact again with the family back home, as a 17-year-old Moroccan UAM in Belgium explained in a centre for UAM (fieldwork Brussels, 2015, (S) tba),

> - I have not been in contact with my family for at least 6 months. They don't even know if I'm alive anymore [laughs].
> - Why did you not contact them?
> - Well, you know [hesitates], problems [hesitates]. I have not been able to find work and have no money to send home, so I'd rather not call until I can send money again.

Shortly after our conversation, he absconded from the centre. I thought that I had lost contact with him but after a few weeks, he sent a private message via messenger (2015, (S) tba),

> - Hi, I am no longer in the centre.
> - Hi, I noticed!
> - Haha, yeah sorry, I didn't tell you. But I'm still in Belgium. I found work!
> - What kind of work?
> - Construction. It pays well. I'm also in contact with my family again.
> - Were they happy to hear from you?
> - Yes, they were. I also sent a lot of money to them […].

Parents, especially mothers, play a key role in support and guidance or in enforcing exploitation and abuse (fieldwork Morocco, Sweden 2016, also cf. Mai 2010: 76). Expected to have 'succeeded' in becoming 'men and providers', publicly demonstrating that they are partaking in capitalist consumerism, the CofP and partial socialisation of young migrants in the streets counterposes the EU definition of UAM, where they are not allowed to work and are categorised as children, which in turn pushes many into a new form of marginalisation. While they do receive pocket money when they are registered as UAM and in a centre, this is certainly neither lucrative enough to buy brand clothes to demonstrate their supposed success nor to send remittances to their families.

The monetary pressure is important for the young migrants, as a social worker in a centre for UAM in Brussels explains (field interview 2015 (F) tba),

> A young Moroccan's major goal is to find work. They are underage economic migrants and will try to find work within the Moroccan community, for example at the […] market, in restaurants, snack-bars and so on. A youngster who stayed at [our centre], left at 7am every morning, even on the weekends. I asked him where he was off to, and he said to work. Their dream is to make €500 a month to buy themselves clothes. If they are on good terms with their families, they will also send money home. They want to give the image of having succeeded. Through photos on Facebook showing muscles, trendy clothes and shoes. They want to impress friends [back home], so that their families can be proud of them. They are constructing a [fake] image that corresponds to the image that [people back home] have of Europe. The photo on Facebook next to a car – no one back home knows that it's not his car, no one knows that he's having a hard time, that he lives in a centre, that he may be committing crimes to have his trendy clothes, that he may have been to jail – it's all in the appearance.

Police in Stockholm had similar findings in the importance of remittances (field interview 2016),

> We know that many of them send money back to Morocco, […] we have discovered receipts from money transfer when we search them, and they send quite a lot of money.

Families are usually unaware of their child's situation, but often also indifferent to how the money is obtained, as a social worker in Tangier explained (field interview 2016 (F) tba),

> Once they are in Europe, families don't want them to come back. They tell me, 'He promised to buy me a fridge. I don't care if he steals [to get the money for it].' The youngsters have to send back money […] These are poor families, who do not have a lot of education and who have many problems, even if they are not living in extreme poverty […].

How much saving families, especially mothers, from *hshuma* influences the behaviour of the young migrants is expressed in this field interview (Sweden 2016, tba (S)) by a former UAM in Sweden (now over 18 and irregular):

> I have done so much criminal shit when I was younger, like, you wouldn't believe. Just to send money home to my mother. Then one day she said to me on the phone, 'I don't want this *haram*[2] money anymore, get a real job, don't send me this *haram* money!' And that was it – everything changed for me. I didn't sell drugs anymore, I didn't steal anymore, I became a new person. I listened to my mother. It's thanks to her that I changed. But it's very difficult to make *halal*[3] money being illegal.

Criminal activities are often seen as the easiest and fastest way to achieve goals. Yet, as will be discussed in more detail later in the chapter, trauma and grief in combination with marginal activities can push some into severe psychological pain, which is not always realised by the youngster himself at the time, but often at a much later point. A social worker in Stockholm explained a case of a minor having received asylum, and consequently being reunited with his Moroccan family in Sweden,[4]

> […] he told me, they didn't send him of course, but he felt that he had the responsibility to support his family. And […] he said, 'I['ve] been hurting myself, and I['ve] been hurting a lot of people on the way to support my family. And now we are reunited, I haven't [seen] my family in 6 years, but I['ve] been supporting them and now we are supposed to be a family. And I look at my mother and I am so angry at her, [thinking] did you give birth to us just to provide for you?' He learned the value of being a kid, he had learned about the value [of] being in a family [in Sweden] without his family. And he was so hurt, and he was so mad at his family. […] And he said, 'now everyone [authorities in Sweden] is expecting me to be happy. But I haven't [seen] my brother, I haven't [seen] my siblings [for many years], we don't have a relationship, and now we're supposed to be a family'. (Field interview Stockholm 2016)

Frequently, the young migrants are under psychological pressure from the parents, not only to send remittances, but to receive asylum in order to be able to stay in the host country after the age of 18, as a Swedish immigration officer explains (field interview Sweden 2016),

> Often, they are pushed by their families who are saying that they have to get a permit [asylum]. When they don't get a permit, they don't dare tell their families that they didn't get one. They are in a very difficult situation.

These excerpts of interviews show how contrary the reality of young Moroccans is from the legal concept of the best interest of the child and the sheltering hearth with the family in the country of origin. The difficult situations many Moroccan UAM find themselves in increases drastically once they turn 18 when they lose rights to residency

and services. Drifting into undocumented status, where the pressure to send remittances and to get married, in order to be able to stay, increases further. Another former UAM I met during fieldwork in Sweden (2016), now undocumented, residing in an abandoned building and in desperate search for any kind of work, related,

> My mother keeps telling me to get married, so I get papers and become regularised. But I don't want to just get married to anyone […]. I don't know what to do, you have seen how I live. And when I find [informal] work they exploit me because I don't have papers. I worked in a restaurant, like a dog, I worked so much, and then they didn't pay me. They said if I complain, I can leave. So I left. But now, what can I do? I can't just marry anyone! I'm a practicing Muslim and I want to marry a Moroccan woman. But no Moroccan woman here in Sweden would marry me without papers. And I can't go back to Morocco. After all these years! I've been gone for more than 10 years. I left when I was 14. Now I'm 28. And come back with nothing? And what would I do in Morocco? It would be so shameful. *Hshuma! Hshuma!* (Field interview Malmö 2016, (S) tba).

8.3.2 Voluntary return

Another factor highly stigmatised with *hshuma* is being returned to Morocco without having 'succeeded'. In chapter 7 I explained that UAM are in principle not returned to the country of origin even if they cannot demonstrate legal reasons for seeking protection on the basis that they are children. EU member states may nevertheless explore possibilities to do so in the context of the best interest of the child, i.e. being with his family in the country of origin. In general, the return needs to be voluntary, i.e., the UAM has to agree to be returned, and specific programmes are meant to make their reintegration easier. Return procedures are nevertheless difficult to implement, e.g., obtaining travel documents for the minor, finding the parents, or ensuring that the minor wants to return, results in reality in very limited returns to Morocco. A Belgian social worker explained why return is highly stigmatised with *hshuma* (field interview Belgium 2016, (F) tba),

> There is this shame why they cannot return, [they tell me] 'For months, my mother thought I was dead, and now I return with nothing… if I come back like that, they won't believe me. They will think that it's my fault, that I am simply a loser.'

As discussed, return is not always voluntary, and some member states, e.g. Spain, may send them back when they are detected upon arrival. Even if the family is not against the return of the youngster, the stigma of *hshuma* and having lost face can be overwhelming, as a mother of a returned minor illustrated (field interview Ceuta 2016 (S) tba),

> Ever since they returned him, he has not been the same. He doesn't talk anymore, has no interest in life anymore. He just sits around, drinks coffee and smokes all day. He is deeply depressed.

Many families from the Moroccan periphery have put their hopes in their migrating sons and imagine them to be better off abroad in addition to hoping for remittances in order to make their own lives easier. A female social worker of an association in Tangier working with children in precarious situations, which had considered working with Spain on a return program for Moroccan UAM, narrated (field interview 2016 (F) tba),

> I was in Berchifa[5] to speak with the parents of emigrated children, I told them with [name of association] we could bring them back [from Spain], they could do an apprenticeship here in Tangier and be close to their families […]. They got very angry at me and said, 'Leave us alone, and leave our children alone. They are very well where they are, you are just telling lies,' and they almost beat me. Luckily, I was with the driver who is a big guy and who was able to protect me […].

In addition to Spain, other EU countries have implemented or have tried to implement return programmes for Moroccan youth migrants. Sweden implemented a programme with an association in Casablanca for children in precarious situations, in order to return Moroccan UAM to their families, within the framework of the best interest of the child. In Sweden, return can be implemented exclusively when it is voluntary, i.e., wanted by the UAM, and a 'reintegration package'[6] is offered to the young person by the Swedish authorities (field interview Stockholm 2016). Immigration officers explained that it is nevertheless a nearly impossible task,

> We never know if they [Moroccan UAM] tell the truth or not. We have had this agreement with [name of association in Casablanca] now since December 2014 and we have had 30 cases for family tracing. The main goal of the agreement is for them [association] to trace families [anywhere in Morocco], so we have something to work with. Because without finding the families we cannot return them. We need to organise their reception. Out of the 30 cases we have only received 5 answers where we have actually found the families. But they are quite poor, the children have lived on the streets on and off, some of them have had jobs, and two of them are actually not even unaccompanied minors, they were over 18. So, they have given us all the wrong information. [And] the rest of them tell us things like, I have lived in the mountains with a woman who isn't my mom. And we migrated all around the mountains and that's all I remember. And that's very difficult to work with because then we're not sure where they are from. We don't have a profile […]. [Of] the five families we have found we have not been able to return anyone yet.

During my fieldwork in Morocco, I visited the association in Casablanca, where the manager of this specific project explained,

> We look for the families according to the information we receive [from Sweden] […] and then we have to make sure that the minor wants to return voluntarily, […] that's the goal of this project. We talk to the minor on the phone, sometimes twice to make sure what he wants, to build up trust, and we talk to the families [if we find them]. […] We have been working on this for over a year now, but there haven't been any returns yet because most don't want to return, or we find out that they are over 18, and then we can't do anything because we only take care of minors. […] The problem is, they usually don't give their correct names or places of origin, and then we can't trace the family here. It's a lot of administrative work, we search and search, and in the end, we find out the information [we have] is incorrect. Or they give the correct name and address and then we find out that they are over 18 here in Morocco. In Sweden, they say they are 15 or 16. […] Sometimes the families think that their children are better off abroad, especially when their children don't tell the truth and tell them on the phone that they are doing very well where they are. So, the families ask us, 'Why do you want to send him back even though he is doing very well there? We don't have the means to receive him here!' These families are in very difficult financial situations. It's very difficult to get their cooperation. (Field interview Casablanca 2016)

In addition, obtaining the cooperation of the Moroccan Embassy can be a tedious task, as travel documents are often not issued (field interview Immigration Office Sweden 2016) due to the failure to provide proof of citizenship. It is not seldom that Moroccan independent youth migrants are not registered in their country of origin and/or have never been in possession of an ID card, despite it being obligatory in Morocco. Others have intentionally discarded their ID cards, thus have no identification and no proof of being Moroccan citizens. Moroccan authorities can thus refuse to take them back, even in the case that they do want to return.

The only one young Moroccan UAM I have met during my fieldwork (Belgium 2016) who decided to return voluntarily with a return programme that allowed him to do an apprenticeship in Morocco, also had a different profile from other Moroccan UAM I had met during fieldwork. He seemed to have a proper school education[7] with a good command of English, rarely the case with other Moroccan UAM encountered during fieldwork, with whom I usually spoke Spanish or French. His return was not linked to *hshuma* or expectations to be a provider for the family, 'It's my life, it's my problem. I don't care what [people] say' (field interview Belgium 2016). He further said, 'My mother is really happy. She didn't want me to go to Europe […]. I said I will go and try. And she said, well then go and try' (ibid.), signifying that there was no economic pressure from his family, on the contrary, he mentioned that his mother had been sending money to him in order for him to be able to make ends meet in Belgium (ibid.). There is overall frustration and incomprehension in regard to other nationalities who do receive asylum, especially

towards Afghan boys, who often have similar social profiles as their Moroccan peers,[8] yet, as many fit the legal definition of UAM, they often receive asylum.

> For people from Afghanistan, Syria, they have no papers [IDs or passports] and the procedure goes so fast. For me it took soooo long! They make it so long for you so that you become an adult [turn 18 and do not qualify as UAM anymore]. And then they will say you must leave [the country]. And I realised nothing is happening. So, I told them [Belgian authorities] I want to go back [to Morocco] voluntarily, and then it was fast as a lightning. It was really fast!

It explains why young Moroccans sometimes use the tactics of telling a story, explained further below, pretending to be Syrians, using the same migration routes, practicing a Syrian dialect and expecting to receive asylum in Europe (field interviews Morocco 2016).

The return of my young interlocutor was implemented within two weeks by the Belgian authorities once he had received the necessary papers from the Moroccan consulate. The latter, nevertheless, took much longer and was more tedious than expected despite that he was in possession of his Moroccan ID card. He explained that he had to return to the Moroccan Consulate several times to prove that he was authentically Moroccan and to have them agree to his return.[9]

> I have my original ID card, I showed them. [But] the procedure really is so slow. I went to Antwerp to the consulate five times and each time they tell me you need this and this. […] I could stay another two years [registered as 16 in Belgium], but I don't want to stay here, wasting time doing nothing. It's better to go home, you know. And Belgium will pay for my apprenticeship back home, that's cool.[10] (Field interview Belgium 2016)

He returned and happily started an apprenticeship as a male nurse. However, a few months later, he wrote to me that he was looking to do the *hrig* and come to Europe again, because it was 'unbearable to live in Morocco with no rights' and that it would be impossible for him to ever find work without any connections (Messenger 2017). Our contact ended shortly after. While return programmes may offer interesting perspectives for young returnees, they usually end abruptly once the apprenticeship has finished or the financial contribution has been paid, pushing the young person back into waithood as jobs are rare or they are not trained for the ones on offer and 'connections' are needed (fieldwork Morocco 2016), as discussed in chapter 5.

Also Spain sought to return Moroccan UAM as of 2003, however without a genuine legal basis (Senovilla Hernandez in Le Clève and Peyroux 2018: 30), and as of 2006, in order to improve the framework of these returns, the Spanish law of the protection of

the rights of the child was modified and obliged the autonomous regions in Spain to build reception centres in Morocco in order be able to return them (Le Clève and Peyroux 2018: 30, also field interviews Morocco 2016). As of 2009, another legal modification now allowed for age determination tests, and in addition, Spain reached an agreement with Morocco to return Moroccan UAM. Despite the number of very costly undertakings on behalf of Spain, very few minors were being returned, and the project of reception centres in Morocco was abandoned in 2010 (Le Clève and Peyroux 2018: 30).

8.4 Tactical Agency and Opportunities in *El-Ghorba*

Discussed in chapter 7, UAM will be found in the countries where the immigration policies correspond to their profiles (Senovilla Hernández 2007: 29) and where they are most likely to either receive asylum, find work, or be tolerated until the age of 18. Spain, due to a regularisation campaign for undocumented, economic migrants as of the 1990s (de Haas 2007a: 48), has become the most sought-after country for migrants from Morocco, including youth migrants. The economic crisis which hit Spain, in particular southern Spain (and other southern European countries) as of 2004, had an important impact for Spain's migrant workers, and sparked the onward migration of young Moroccan migrants who were registered as UAM in southern Spain. Better 'opportunities' were first explored within Spain. In Spain, reception conditions differ from one region to the next, and are entirely at the responsibility of its autonomous communities (Le Clève and Peyroux 2018: 26). In that regard, Basque country or Catalonia in the north are seen to be more favourable than Andalusia in the south, where Moroccan UAM first arrived. UAM who are considered as 'children in danger' will receive a residence permit, allegedly more easily received in, e.g., Barcelona than in Malaga. This information spread and young Moroccans started to engage in onward migration within Spain from south to north (fieldwork Spain 2015 and 2016).

During the economic crisis, a number of young Moroccans lost their residence permits and the informal jobs they held (Rodríguez García de Cortázar 2016: 407) which pushed many to migrate further north in order to find work (fieldwork Belgium 2015, 2016). EU countries north of Spain were already familiar by name to many Moroccan UAM due to colonial or post-colonial links, e.g. the previous guest-worker programmes. France, Belgium, Germany or the Netherlands became 'new old' destination goals. Some had family in these countries and started informing their peers of better 'opportunities' north of Spain, which resulted in a wave of northern onward migration. Here again, the CofP was crucial in informing them which country to go to, where to stay and how to

'adapt' their stories. Some started 'travelling Europe' while waiting for their permits in Spain to be issued (Le Clève and Peyroux 2018: 29). The permit is usually renewed annually[11], but administrative procedures sometimes take long and taken as an opportunity to 'explore' other European countries, finding jobs or other tactical opportunities to come closer to the dream of a capitalist-consumerism Eldorado, proving *rujula* and the move into social adulthood.

8.4.1 Navigating through different asylum systems

Informed by their peer networks, many went to Belgium as of 2008[12]. The capital Brussels is a location where work in the informal market within the Moroccan community is easily to be found, but where the young migrants are often highly exploited (fieldwork Belgium 2016). At peak in 2012, the number of Moroccan youth migrants drastically reduced by 2014. A social worker in Brussels explained that many left Belgium because the reception conditions were adapted due to a change of immigration policies with a change in the Belgian government in 2011.

> Before Maggie de Block,[13] they [UAMs that were not considered in danger] were accommodated in hotels because there weren't enough beds in the reception centres. That attracted more young Moroccans because they are looking for independence. [Now] Sweden attracts them more and more because they hear from one another that it is easier there. They [say that they] get a computer, a mobile phone and single rooms, everything. I don't know if that is true, but at least that's what they communicate to each other […]. Their communication is intense, and news spread very fast, via Facebook, phone, Skype. Their network is essential in their lives as migrants. (Field interview Brussels 2015, tba (F))

Fieldwork in Sweden revealed that, once again, information transmitted by networks is not always reliable. Computers and mobile phones do not seem to be part of the 'Swedish package', single rooms however are,[14] in addition to receiving approximately €80 of pocket money next to food and clothes (field interview with a Swedish immigration officer, Sweden 2016). Considering that the basic income in Morocco is between €100 and €200 a month, €80 may seem like a considerate amount of money for a young migrant, unaware of the high living cost in Sweden. Unlike Belgium, Sweden does not have the possibility of *not* claiming asylum, i.e., the minor either claims asylum or is in an irregular situation and stays in hiding. The asylum process for UAM takes about one year, with the possibility of appeal in case of a negative decision, prolonging the process by another 3 months (ibid.). Further, age assessment methods are used only at the end of the asylum process, so in case they have become older than the maximum age, they are able to stay

at least one year (ibid.), which however does not mean that they will necessarily stay in a centre, as a Swedish immigration officer explained (ibid.),

> The minors know that it's difficult for them to receive asylum, but they claim asylum to legalise their stay and to have a place to stay […]. Sometimes they claim asylum and stay in housing for a while and once they get a rejection they leave and when it gets cold or when they run out of money, they turn up again and they stay in the shelter again. […T]hey know they can get food in a shelter, a bed for a night, but then they take off again. […] Many minors who have absconded want to stay in the city areas, very often [in] Stockholm.

Others, who do not claim asylum, stay with their peers, as the immigration officer further illustrated (ibid.),

> For example, outside of Gothenburg they found 15 to 20 Moroccan unaccompanied minors in an abandoned house. Some of the boys were very young. Maybe 11 or 12 years old. […] An abandoned house in the woods.

8.4.2 Adapting Stories

When Moroccan youth migrants continue to migrate, they will sometimes change their name and age and adapt their stories. Giving a different name and indicating a lower age, usually 14 or 15, is, naturally, part of belonging to a CofP and following the advice of peers. It is a tactic used in order to 'gain' a few extra years as UAM and to remain untraceable, as a social worker in a centre for UAM in Brussels related (field interview 2015 (F) tba),

> I always ask them [when they register in the centre], 'so what's your age?' Then they give me a number, and I tell them, 'no, not your age here, your REAL age back home'. And then they burst out laughing, but of course they only tell me their Belgian age [laughs].

The change of age within the context of reaching legal adulthood is a crucial moment for UAM in general. While turning 18 is momentous for many young people in the world, for UAM it is a day that is often awaited with fear, as it means the end to their particular protective status as children. Those with international protection may experience a change in residence provisions and with it access to their rights. Those who were not able to claim asylum may encounter drastic change, e.g., they may become undocumented migrants, meaning that they are as of now detainable or deportable, in addition to losing the right to accommodation, health and community services, and access to employment[15] (European Migration Network 2014: 7; European Migration Network 2015: 33). The transition into adulthood is addressed by only a few member states (European Migration

Network 2015: 34), and according to EMN is one of the reasons why UAM disappear from reception facilities before turning 18 (European Migration Network 2015: 46–8).

Unable to comply with the legal definitions, they are without reason to be in the neoliberal economic system of the Core that has no legitimate use for subaltern, peripheral subjects (cf. Dominguez and Menjivar 2014: 188). For UAM, hence, time is an important factor, as age constitutes one of the main criteria of being able to stay in a host country until the age of 18 (Sigona and Hughes 2010: 12). As a social worker in Belgium explained:

> When a [young Moroccan] arrives at the age of 17, it's almost certain that it is too late for him to receive status [the procedure takes too long], he is likely to abscond and stay in the street. At 16, there is still a chance that he might receive status, but some also prefer the street [not entering the system]. If they have a coherent story, if they go to school, they can get status [allowed to stay until the age of 18] without seeking asylum.[16] [As] they are not asylum seekers; their only resort is their age [being able to stay until the age of 18]. This is what makes the difference with the asylum seekers. They, even if they are not minors, can stay in a centre [for UAM or asylum seekers, depending on their age] and wait for a decision. For them [asylum seekers] age is not important, but their story is. (Field interview Brussels 2015, tba (F))

Therefore, one of the tactics used by Moroccan youth migrants nearing the age of 18 is moving to another country, lowering their age and changing their name. Sweden being one of the 'last countries to reach in Europe' (field interview with a gate keeper in Stockholm, 2016), Moroccan UAM are sometimes, however not always, older, as it may take them years before arriving in Sweden.[17]

As a police officer in Stockholm explained (field interview 2016),

> I can see that the kids [Moroccan UAM] that come to Sweden are older. I would say maybe 17, […] but they say that they are 14 or 15 but they look older. […] I learnt from the beginning, the problem [of changing age and identity]. […] They will get busted for a crime, taken to the police station and say, 'My name is Ali and I'm 15 years old.' The prosecutor will not detain them because of their age. It takes special reasons to detain a person under 18 here, even if they have been involved in a crime. […] It is a huge problem with their different identities because the second time they will not say that they are Ali, [but that] their name is Mohamed and they are 16. […] So that is a huge problem. […] What to do with these kids, who are they, which one of their five different identities shall we pick […].

Another tactic the young migrants use, within the malleable external structures of legal definitions allowing them to stay, is the adoption of a story, as a social worker in Brussels explains (field interview 2014 (F) tba),

> The young [Moroccans] who come for economic reasons will most likely not admit this and will rather hide it with a [false] story that is expected of them to get status in

> Belgium. They may not answer questions honestly about their family because they run the risk of being returned if their motifs for migration do not correspond with a story [expected of an UAM] and if there are parents back home.

Being unable to provide a 'refugee experience' (Stein cited in Turton 2003: 7) can be one of the reasons why UAM may remain silent and circumspect about their circumstances and origins, when they are faced with authority figures, including social workers (Kohli 2006: 707). Departure is always associated with a complex set of reasons, and fleeing poverty, wanting a better education, or making money may be hidden by what Kohli (2006: 711) calls a 'thin' asylum story. Kohli contrasts 'thin stories' with what White (cited in Kohli 2006: 711) refers to as 'thick stories'. While UAM, and migrants in general, have complex, multi-layered 'thick stories', they prefer to present a 'thin story' which they have rehearsed, as they think that they are more likely to be accepted by the receiving authorities,

> The thin stories are […] purposefully constructed as an acceptable amalgam in compliance with international conventions related to the status of refugees. They act as the key to entry into the country of choice, based on its immigration policies. (ibid.)

During fieldwork in a reception centre in Brussels, Belgium (2014–15), Moroccan UAM would insist on saying that they are orphans, as they did not want to run the risk of being returned to their families in Morocco within the legal framework of the 'best interest of the child'. Others, as with the case of Sweden mentioned earlier, would give a false identity and/or city of origin to ensure that the family could not be found. The social worker in Brussels explained (2014 (F) tba),

> They will tell you that they have no family in Morocco, but the first phone call they make is to reassure their families, especially their mothers, that they are safe and sound in Belgium. We have an Arabic speaking colleague and he confirms it every time.

Swedish Immigration Officers in Stockholm (fieldwork 2016) were also well aware that some of the minors didn't want to reveal that they have connections to the home country for fear of being returned after having risked their lives during the *hrig* to reach their migration goal. These are examples of how the 'relative powerless' (Williams 2006: 4) 'manipulate events in order to turn them into 'opportunities' (Honwana 2005: 49), tactically coping with external structures that are somewhat malleable. But, as said, these tactics can also have adverse, dangerous and even destructive effects, what Honwana calls 'deleterious consequences' (ibid.). Typical for agency that is not strategic (Honwana 2005: 32–3), i.e., where long-term goals are expected and specific moves are planned

accordingly, tactical agency translates into an adaptation of circumstances where the consequences are not necessarily foreseeable or positive.

8.5 Deleterious consequences of Tactical Agency

While they are tactical agents navigating between structures, trying to shape their future out of waithood, young migrants often endure immense suffering. As explained, tactical agency can also have deleterious consequences and their paths are strewn with an omnipresence of different forms of violence, as the following interviews in Spain and Sweden reflect,

> They have been through the unimaginable, and then they turn dangerous, you know, because they have been through so much, they have lived so many violent situations. It is a different violence from [what we know]. […] It isn't violence with a lot of noise, on the contrary, it is violence done in silence, which is much more distressing. I am very distressed by that (field interview with a cultural mediator in a centre for UAM, Spain 2016, (S) tba)

> - If [we find out] that they are a danger either to themselves or to others then they can be put into locked institutions. The staff at the locked institutions said that they never encounter anyone [other UAM] near the Moroccan minors. They have a different mentality, a different mindset from the others that are being put into the locked institutions, and they also escape from there.
>
> - What do you mean, they have a different mentality?
>
> - Just from their background, […] what they have experienced before. They have such a great disturbance in relation to adults, they have been living on the streets for quite a long time, I think, since they were very young, which obviously shapes your personality in a certain way. I mean, I'm not a psychologist, but this is what we have learnt. (field interview with an immigration officer, Sweden 2016)

8.5.1 Trauma

The thin stories referred to earlier, a tactic to reveal as little as possible and therefore avoid being returned or rejected, can also be associated with *hshuma*. In such cases, the minor avoids relating physical and/or psychological dangers he may be faced with that would normally entitle him to asylum. In a field interview (Belgium 2016), a Belgian lawyer explained one of her only successful cases in obtaining asylum for a Moroccan UAM who had entrusted his 'thick' story with her. He told her of a violent family environment and it being the reason for having lived in the streets in Morocco, where he suffered physical and sexual abuse. As pointed out in previous chapters, fieldwork in Morocco and the EU revealed that nearly all boys encountered have somewhat similar or identical experiences

to the lawyer's case. Yet, most remain silent when they are facing authorities, being either too afraid or too ashamed to talk, and, at times even being unaware of aberrant situations they have endured. Traumatizing experiences are considered as irrelevant or 'normal', adding *'es normal'*, *'mashi mooshkil'*[18] to their sentence, as a social worker in Stockholm explained (field interview Sweden 2016),

> Moroccan kids probably never talk about psychological problems in Morocco; it is probably not accepted to talk about these problems. So, they are hurting inside, but everything is *normal*. Period. When you talk to [them] they will always say *it's normal, it's normal*. But it's not normal to me!

The social worker further explained how difficult it had been for one Moroccan boy to speak of his sexual orientation with Swedish authorities despite it being the reason for leaving his home country (ibid.). Although he knew that he had chances in obtaining asylum by telling his true story, he preferred to remain silent for a long time. In a culture where homosexuality is shunned, the stigma of not receiving asylum after having told the true story, and in the contrary case, the stigma of receiving asylum for a reason scorned in his culture, needing to answer peers' questions, explains his silence. Needing the 'right story' puts Moroccan UAM under pressure, and mistrust in the authorities and in adults in general is a hindrance in obtaining not only status, but also their rights.

This mistrust in authorities, and adults in general, is due to the maltreatment encountered along their migration journey. An important number of Moroccan independent youth migrants are from destructive family environments, have usually experienced street life, which involves abuses, including sexual, psychological and severe drug abuse in certain cases. This mistrust in adults discourages some of them from seeking asylum, giving preference to stay clear of or abscond from UAM reception facilities altogether (fieldwork Belgium 2015, Sweden 2016). Moroccan UAM feel safest in their CofP, sleeping rough in peer groups or by staying with someone of their network, who may provide temporary housing, food, or work, as explained in chapter 6. This is when they become most vulnerable to THB or other forms of exploitation, where they are exposed to engaging in forced or voluntary criminal activities, due to peer pressure or encouragement, but also because of the need for rapid economic gain. The deleterious long-term consequences of their tactical agency are reflected in the following interview with a Swedish social worker (field interview Sweden 2016),

> I had one kid that had four different identities in three different cities. He was very much into drugs and always ran away from the places where he was put. They would find him again and he would escape again […]

> I think [they run away] because they haven't been in one place for so long it is very hard for them to stay put. They are always on the move and […] do not trust anyone. They are also so used to being treated badly, for example by the police, or other grown-ups that they should be able to rely on, but they can't […]. I think many kids have been let down by so many grown-ups on the way, you can imagine that it's not always good people that take care of these kids. And in the end when they have a negative [asylum] decision, it will be another disappointment.

Missing Children Europe claims that EU member states are at the root of disappearances of minors from reception centres, as the latter often fail to protect UAM adequately (Toscano 2017). Reasons for absconding are seen in relation to poor reception conditions, 'in unsanitary and degrading conditions and abusive treatment, including detention with adults and ill-treatment by police' (ibid.). In previous chapters, I have already discussed the maltreatment of Moroccan independent youth migrants in more detail. The police, especially in Morocco and Belgium, but also in Spain (field interviews Morocco 2015, 2016, Sweden 2016, see also e.g. Vacchiano and Jiménez 2012: 460–1 for Spain, see e.g. Suárez-Navaz and Jiménez Álvarez 2011: 22 for Morocco), was often cited as brutal, i.e., kicking, hitting and even torturing them (field interview Sweden 2016). In Sweden, young Moroccans said that the police were gentler, and Swedish authorities see it at times as a reason why young Moroccans want to come to Sweden (fieldwork Sweden 2016). A Stockholm police officer illustrates (field interview Sweden 2016),

> We explain to them exactly what we have to do, because they have experienced so much violence and abuse by police [in other countries].
>
> [… In Sweden], they know that we are nice and [… they] will even take [a friend] to the police station or the social services. And they explain to each other 'calm down, [nothing] will happen'. […] We figure that some of them have experienced sexual abuse at some point in their lives. When we do a narcotic test some of them try to put some soap in the urine samples to falsify the test. So, we have to watch them, and we can see when they are panicking that something must have happened before. We explain to them why we're doing what and they cannot mistake our motives. When we strip them, and we always have to because we search them for drugs, they are panicking. They can smash their head against a concrete pillar just to get away. Just panicking.

The use of narcotics was often mentioned to be able to 'forget', i.e., their family problems, or that they had been abused, or beaten (field interview with a social worker Sweden 2016). It is not seldom that they become severely substance dependent. Young Moroccans in Sweden told me that they used drugs and alcohol to be able to stand the cold (fieldwork Sweden 2016). Staying in the streets in Sweden in the winter is difficult to endure, or as my interviewee from the Stockholm child rights organisation put it, 'they are equipped to survive a really hard life, which I wouldn't survive a night' (field interview

Sweden 2016). During fieldwork in Stockholm in November 2016, I accompanied a Swedish association, very engaged in helping young Moroccans in the streets. We would often meet them at a McDonalds in the city, where they bought them food and drinks, and where we would all be able to warm up from the freezing temperatures outside. Two of the young Moroccans were just over 18 and had become undocumented. As explained in chapter 7, being over 18 can become life threatening to some who were only tolerated as UAM within the scope of being a underage. The two young men broke into cars to spend their nights with temperatures dropping to minus 10°C, 'doing' *karkoubi* (chapter 6). One of my gatekeepers from the Swedish association pointed one of them out to me and said, 'He's a really nice guy but once he has popped the pills, it's better to leave him alone. He just goes nuts and is not himself anymore.' Speaking to the young Moroccan himself, he told me,

> I just want to forget everything. I'm so tired of being in the streets, sleeping in cars. It's freezing out there. I'm done. I just popped a few pills; I'll be high soon. I want to rob lots of people, so that they lock me up and I can finally get off the streets.

The desperation of belonging nowhere and having nowhere to go, even more so once the age of 18 has been reached, is an addition to the traumas many have encountered during their migration journey. A a social worker in Stockholm explains (field interview 2016),

> A lot of them have physical pain, like typical trauma. One of them told me that he has to go see a doctor because he has so much pain in his back. I asked him what happened, and he said that it is so cold in Sweden and it reminds him when he had to hang on to a boat in the cold water when he was migrating from Morocco. And the cold in Sweden reminds him of this incident where he was just so cold and hurting.

Traumatizing experiences and deep disturbances can also be a cause of silence (Ayotte and Williamson cited in Kohli 2006: 709). It may be needed as a protective shield to allow healing to take place and to reflect on lived experiences before being able to move on (Papadopoulous cited in Kohli 2006: 709–10). And Kohli (ibid.: 710) reminds us that while silence and secrets may be part of healing and managing hurt, they are also elements of regular teenage development, and of becoming autonomous. When dealing with UAM, vulnerability and resilience are therefore constantly intertwined (ibid.: 716), and only focusing on the earlier discussed 'thin story' can carry an important risk of overlooking physical and/or psychological dangers the minor may be faced with (ibid.).

Despite that Moroccan independent youth migrants are incredibly agentic, belong to a CofP, engage with their peer networks, and stay in the streets for undefined periods of

time, many suffer not only from homesickness but from being unable to see their families for years on end. They often leave their families at a very young age and are unable to return home for even a brief moment. Speaking with a number of boys in the streets of Stockholm (fieldwork 2016), they repeatedly spoke to me about missing their mothers, but I soon realized that it was a very sensitive topic and at best avoided . Being in *el-Ghorba*, a number of boys have told me that they miss their families, especially their mothers, and speaking about their loved ones is a very sensitive issue (fieldwork Sweden 2016). During fieldwork, this topic usually needed to be avoided, unless they would approach the subject on their own. A social worker in Stockholm confirmed similar findings,

> You can talk about anything with them, they will answer a lot of questions, and sometimes they do not show a lot of feelings. But when you ask them about their mother, most of them […] there is a reaction, like, they are blinking. You can see it is a sensitive issue talking about their mother or father. Or the siblings. (Field interview Sweden 2016)

An intercultural mediator of the Social Services in Granada, Spain, referred to their suffering as 'migratory grief',[19] involving seven factors, which are the loss of family and friends, language, culture, country, social class, ethnic belonging, which are exacerbated by being forced to take physical risks (Achotegui 2012). It is considered severe and nearly impossible to overcome when, e.g., the migrant does not have access to work or needs to live in hiding (ibid.). As discussed, many boys I have met during fieldwork in the EU lived in hiding for fear of being detected by police and returned and were extremely stressed about being unable to work and send remittances to their families.

8.5.2 Everyday Violence

The interaction of structural and symbolic violence leads to 'everyday violence', according to Bourgois (2001) (chapter 5). He argues that it is the result of a normalization of violence at the micro-level including 'routine practices and expressions of interpersonal aggression […] such as domestic, delinquent and sexual conflict, and even substance abuse' (ibid.: 8–9). Moroccan independent youth migrants experience structural and symbolic violence in both home and host countries. Authorities, especially police, and reception centres play an important role in structural and symbolic violence that shape the lives of young Moroccan migrants. Symbolic and everyday violence are often experienced in a dysfunctional home, followed by a life in the streets within a CofP, where abuse is common.

Shaped by structural violence of 'deeply unequal life chances' (Dominguez and Menjivar 2014: 186-7), symbolic violence is 'the inclination to violence […] engendered by early and constant exposure to violence' and 'one of the most tragic effects of the condition of the dominated', according to Bourdieu (1977). Everyday violence is expressed in everyday interactions on the micro-level (Dominguez and Menjivar 2014: 187) and as Bourgois (2001: 29) explains, it includes 'masculine domination […] and a racialised understanding of hierarchy'. Swedish police reported of assaults on girls (fieldwork Sweden 2016), but also elderly people, as one officer explains (field interview Stockholm 2016),

> Right now, we have 3 [Moroccan] kids that say that they are 14 and they commit quite severe crimes, crimes against elder people, and assaults, and I will [estimate] them as perhaps 16. So, they're quite young but quite raw in their criminality. […] It takes quite a lot to push an old lady to the ground.

Everyday violence also translates into willingness to commit violence between young men as a means to demonstrate virility and gain respect from peers (Rodríguez García de Cortázar and González Santamaría 2011: 1020). Interpersonal violence within the CofP of Moroccan youth migrants can be extremely harsh, especially under the influence of *karkoubi* (chapter 6), not seldomly resulting in visible scars in the face or on the neck (fieldnotes Sweden 2016). Frustrations deriving from structural and symbolic violence are expressed through a rebellious youth culture, e.g., being *Msharmlin*, who, following the *Tsharmil* movement, resist subordination with tactical agency. They see themselves as superior to those who are pejoratively called *'urubi* or *blédards*, and who are from less developed, or more rural areas of Morocco. *Tsharmil* are a CofP that maintain their image through the stories they tell, the photos they post on Facebook, self-portrayals of those who have succeeded.

During a field interview (Sweden 2016), a Stockholm police officer showed me photos on Facebook of some Moroccan youth the police had been interacting with due to crime or drug abuse,

> This would be a typical picture of how their life is in Sweden. Here's a pile of money, expensive watch, booze, new shoes, hashish, 100 grams, guns, knives, and all these gadgets showing that life is good here. [They get the guns] from criminals, but this is quite rare, we haven't taken any Moroccans with guns on them. To give you the background [of the person the Facebook profile is belonging to], this guy was not feeling well at all, he was very much into drugs when I met him a year ago and here, he is showing that life is good.'

As explained in chapter 5, not all are *Msharmlin* who associate with this youth movement, and not all engage in criminality and drugs. However, an important number of young Moroccan migrants from urban and peri-urban deprived neighbourhoods do, which is part of their shared repertoire within their CofP. The aforementioned police officer explained further (ibid.),

> In 2013 we met the Moroccan guys for the first time. […] They were street smart; they didn't want contact with the authorities. They made their living through crimes, theft mostly, pickpocketing. It took me awhile to see them because they were blending in with everybody else.[20] It was difficult to stop them. I worked in uniform back then and they saw me long before I saw them […] In 2015, 25 per cent of all unaccompanied minors that we locked up were Moroccans.[21] That's enormous. And you have to add that there were only 300 Moroccan unaccompanied minors applying for asylum in Sweden, in comparison with the Afghan boys, where we had 23,000 in 2015 that were applying for asylum. So, there are relatively few Moroccans, but an extremely high amount is involved in criminality. On the other hand, we also have Moroccan kids who do behave and who go to school and it's working out for them. And they have a good year or two in Sweden.

8.5.3 THB

Le Clève and Peyroux's (2018) report of the Parisian neighbourhood *La Goutte d'Or*, is another example of *Msharmlin* in Europe. Some of the boys are very young (as of age 10) from deprived urban neighbourhoods of, e.g., Fes, Tangier, Casablanca, Rabat (Le Clève and Peyroux 2018: 55), known for extremely violent behaviour, committing delinquencies, such as bag snatching, pickpocketing, burglary, drug dealing, and some of them engaging in prostitution (ibid.: 4). Mass and social media drew particular attention to the Moroccan youngsters living in and roaming the streets of *La Goutte d'Or* with the publication of a photo showing a few of them sleeping in the tumble dryers of a neighbourhood laundromat to escape the cold during the month of December 2017 (Baheux 2017). As I have explained in chapter 7, one of the tactics of young Moroccan migrants is to 'choose' a country and particular immigration policy towards UAM that corresponds to the need of the young person. Paris is known for 'making easy money', i.e. through delinquency while staying in the streets, and, according to Le Clève and Peyroux, particularly chosen for this reason, sometimes followed by a stay in a centre for UAM in a larger German city, especially Hamburg, Bremen or Düsseldorf, in order to recover and receive health care following challenging weeks sleeping rough in the streets (Le Clève and Peyroux 2018: 46). Italian cities were cited by Moroccan minors for 'lucrative employment' in drug trafficking (fieldwork Belgium 2015, Sweden 2016). A report by IOM Morocco states that some Moroccan minors are already recruited for drug

trafficking in their home towns or villages in Morocco, whereas others are recruited once they arrived in Spain or in Italy (Sarehane et al. 2009: 39). Stockholm police, who have created a special unit addressing only UAM, are becoming increasingly aware of the high risk of trafficking Moroccan boys are being exposed to, forcing them into prostitution and criminality (fieldwork Sweden 2016). Also in Spain, there is recent awareness of a possible smuggling and/or trafficking route from the center of Morocco via Algeciras, Andalusia in the south of Spain to Bilbao, Basque country in the north of Spain (Olabarri 2017).

Two of my interviewees, Moroccan UAM in Belgium (fieldwork 2015, 2016) openly told me of their 'work' as smugglers in southern Europe. 'No one expects you to smuggle cocaine because you're a kid', told me one of them. 'You just put the stuff in your backpack and travel around. Easy. And the money I got for it was great.' Travelling to a suburb in Stockholm (fieldwork 2016) with my gatekeeper (a former UAM in Sweden and now undocumented), we encountered one of his 'friends' when exiting the subway, a rough looking Moroccan adult in his 30s. Later, my gatekeeper told me 'He's one of the biggest drug dealers in Stockholm. He also engages the kids [Moroccan UAM] to sell drugs for him.' Being part of a rough street culture, it was clear that the youngsters are exposed to drugs and sale of drugs at all times, but it would need further research to investigate when tactical agency in this matter turns into a deleterious consequence, i.e. THB.

In Le Clève and Peyroux' (2018: 50–2) report on Moroccan youth migrants in delinquency in Paris, the authors argue that THB 'remains difficult to prove', due to the absence of a single criminal organisation that would force the minors into committing criminal acts. It appears that the boys engage temporarily with criminal networks, in order to seek their own advantages, i.e., to make a maximum amount of money, though it is accompanied with a high risk of exploitation or even being killed, as one of my informants in Sweden told me (fieldwork 2016), if the operation is unsuccessful.[22] The undertaking with criminal networks can be a reason for absconding from reception centres or even leave a particular country, as a former UAM explained (field interview Sweden 2016),

> I cannot stay put in one place, they will find me there and kill me. The authorities in Sweden have no clue what is going on out there and they can't protect me. I need to hide if I want to stay alive. I must leave the country.

One of my gatekeepers also told me that minors may commit petty theft in order to be placed in a locked institution to escape death threats of criminal networks they have worked for. At other times, they use this tactic to get off the streets and out of the cold

where they can 'have a bed, watch tv, get food, and become drug free' (field interview Sweden 2016). Regardless of the reason, it shows how tactical agency enables the young migrants to navigate within external structures. And while the goal is to 'detour' these structures to take advantage of opportunities in order to reach social adulthood, the consequences may be dramatic as they are increasingly exposed to violence which makes them vulnerable in ways that are overlooked under the legal definition of UAM.

8.5.4 Self-inflicted violence

But everyday violence can also be directed against oneself, and may be expressed in cuttings, burnings, drug abuse, and prostitution. Self-inflicted violence can be an expression of rage against perceived injustice, especially in form of structural, institutional violence (Rodríguez García de Cortázar and González Santamaría 2011: 1022). In a conversation with a 17-year-old in Sweden, he showed me the cuts in his arm,

> I cut myself. I do it all the time when I get angry and feel like hurting someone. I don't want to hurt anyone. Then I rather cut myself and when the blood comes, I feel better. (Field interview Stockholm October 2016, tba (S))

Self-inflicted violence can also be a search for relief from anxiety or sadness (ibid.: 1021), and in this context it was discussed earlier that the cognitive frame of the boys who have lived in the street is shaped by trauma, grief, and lived abuse, as a social worker in Stockholm explains (field interview Sweden 2016),

> To deal with anxiety, many hurt themselves. It is easier to handle physical pain than to handle emotional pain. If you cut yourself, you understand why it hurts… Sometimes the cuts are very deep, that's how they handle their pain. But they don't always know why they do it… Some cut themselves, others get into fights, still others do drugs, some burn themselves with cigarettes, or they hurt themselves by having sex. It's an emotional problem, but it's easier to handle when it's physical.

Stockholm police explains (field interview Sweden 2016) that the extent of self-inflicted violence in the context of psychological trauma,

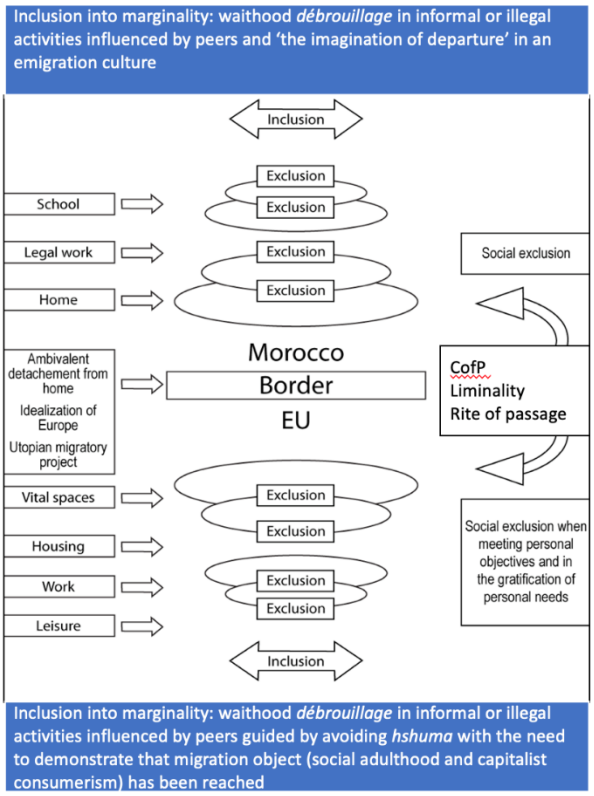
> We have heard rumors from Gothenburg [police] that they sell their bodies, but they never tell each other because it's a big shame. But sometimes they break down and tell a social worker. And we have seen 2 or 3 Moroccan guys that we think are selling sex near the central station. We think it is because of their mental illness [psychological trauma], they want to hurt themselves and they do this using their bodies. Many boys also cut themselves, they have diagonal scars in their arms or across the chest.

As discussed in chapters 5 and 6, same sex relations are highly stigmatised with *hshuma* for the 'non-active' partner, who is considered homosexual. While it is tolerated for young boys, it is not so for 'men', which Moroccan youth migrants think of themselves to be as they have undergone their rite of passage with their migration to Europe. It is therefore often overlooked in Europe and extremely difficult to obtain a 'thick story' that narrates that they have engaged in prostitution. As with other taboo issues, they prefer to intersperse their 'thin story' with 'coded language', as a cultural mediator in Spain (field interview 2016, (S) tba) explained, 'If a boy tells you that his mother is working as a cleaning lady, it is often an indication that she is prostituting herself. If he tells you that his father is ill, it will probably mean that he is alcoholic.' According to a social worker in a reception centre in Belgium (field interview 2016, (F) tba), 'If a boy tells you that one of his friends was raped or that a friend has prostituted himself, it is usually the boy himself and not his friend.' The word 'prostitution' is avoided at all times, explained the same social worker who learned of one of his protégés selling his body, 'He insisted that it was just for making money […]. He couldn't take it upon himself [to call it prostitution]. He described it as "doing men a favour".'

8.6 Social Exclusion and Peripheral Settings

The deleterious long-term consequences as a result of tactical agency that is meant to avoid restrictive structures detrimental to their migration goal of social adulthood and a partaking in capitalist consumerism, often leads to further marginalisation of the Moroccan youth migrant. In order to maintain a 'utopian migratory project' (Mai 2010: 72), avoid losing face and bringing *hshuma* over oneself and the family, rapid mobility between different asylum systems, 'thin stories' including change of age and identity, as well as the resort to illegal activities are thus common tactics. This combination, argues Mai (2010: 79) results in a 'desocialising spiral'.[23] While Mai's model looks at the exclusion of young (male) migrants engaging in irregular activity as of arrival in Europe, in the context of the young *harraga* from the Moroccan periphery, I have added the perspective of desocialising already originating in the home country, which includes dropping out of school, being exposed to illegal activities and engaging in irregular migration, the *hrig*. This is facilitated through the CofP, where the border is seen as the rite of passage into social adulthood by going through a phase of liminality.

Figure 18
Desocialising spiral on both sides of the border



Source: Author's adaption from Mai (2010: 79)

The desocialising spiral on both sides of the Mediterranean can thus be seen as a result of marginalisation on a multitude of structural levels. While the young migrants exert tactical agency as an 'escape' out of waithood in the periphery of the home country, additional structural constraints on the EU side keep them in a marginalised, peripheral position that degrades into further desocialisation. The infantilisation and victimisation of UAM on behalf of the EU that denies all agency to underage migrants, enhances the 'multiple dimensions of social exclusion' (Mai 2010: 80). As argued earlier, it 'maintains the periphery in the periphery' despite that the social field of the young migrants has changed and despite that this change has also influenced their habitus.

My interviewee from the Stockholm police summarises their profile (field interview Sweden 2016) and believes that while they are unable to attain their goal, they try to make the best of it and 'live for the moment',

> Some of them are quite nice guys, they really want to take advantage of the opportunities in Sweden, go to school, join a soccer team, live in a family. Most

> Moroccans cannot be placed in a family home because they can't behave at all and because they have these drug issues. But some of them behave really well. But mostly they live for the moment. They are teenagers and most teenagers live for the moment. And they know that only 5% of Moroccan kids get a residence permit. They know they will not be able to stay here and that they will be thrown out. So, they take advantage of the moment. And commit as many crimes as they can. They send money [back home] or they spend it on themselves. And they go up and down with how they are feeling and in their health. Their psychological health goes up and down. (Field interview Stockholm 2016)

A social worker in Stockholm (field interview 2016) found it rather piteous that the host country does not take their numerous skills into account,

> They are street smart; they are smart, they are talented boys. They are brave. I haven't met any children that speak so many languages. They are so fricking talented. They are survivors. And they are so thankful for grownups when we express our worries. They always say thank you. It makes them feel safe when someone cares. They have a goal. They are so good at solving problems. If you put all of this [on] a CV, these are really good qualities. Put this in a job [profile] and they could do anything. We need to work on their resources. When we work with them, we need to see their resources and put it into use. How can we work with [them] in terms of [them] being so good in finding solutions?

Yet, their 'resources' are not taken into account, but are rather seen as a hindrance in a migration system that sees them as 'migrants to be controlled'(Jiménez Alvarez 2015: 7). The head of a Swedish NGO (field interview Sweden 2016) found it incomprehensible that European member states invest 'so much money' into the reception of UAM, sometimes throughout their adolescence, increasingly shaping their habitus through socialisation in the host country, only to reject them at the age of 18.

This enormous deception as experienced by the young migrants arriving with a 'utopian migratory project' (Mai 2010: 72) – due to their 'lack of the cultural capital and life experiences necessary to understand the complex contradictions of Western capitalist societies' (ibid.), facing EU policy and authorities that neglect the 'complexity of the migratory project of young people and how it is an integral part of the development of their self-identities' (ibid.: 73) – is in fact partially responsible of turning 'children in danger' into 'dangerous children' (Antúnez Álvarez et al. 2016). As Stéphane Tessier argued a decade ago 'leaving children to the streets will turn them into ticking time bombs' (quoted in Jiménez Álvarez 2012: 80), and a passive approach on the part of EU member states – seeing them as 'a nuisance' (ibid.: 53), waiting for them to turn 18 in order to become undocumented and deportable – can have dire consequences. The continuous marginalisation in peripheral settings can become a serious security issue when they are

approached by radicalised groups (fieldwork Belgium 2015, Morocco 2016, Sweden 2016), which underlies the incarceration of a number of UAM. While unobtrusively observed to a very limited extent during fieldwork, it is a topic that requires in-depth research and should be attended to in the not-too-distant future. As a social worker in Belgium commented (field interview 2015),

> These kids come here with many illusions and they want to have all that capitalism can offer. They want to enjoy life to the max and are far from any mindset of radicalisation. But it may turn into that because they are in such desperate situations.

8.7 Conclusion

In this chapter I have explained how independent Moroccan youth migrants experience life in *El Ghorba*. Upon arrival, it usually does not take long for them to realise that Europe does not correspond to the Eldorado they have imagined, that their peers have transmitted false images of wealth and freedom and that they are being categorised as children by EU authorities after having risked their lives to escape waithood, enter social adulthood, and partake in capitalist consumerism of the global Core. They also understand if they want to be seen as men and behave as such, they may be seen as adult intruders and be deported, especially if they are close to majority age.

As their most important goal is to make money, in order to send remittances, but especially to maintain an image of having succeeded, they exercise tactical agency by avoiding reception structures or by changing countries that differ in asylum procedures. Absconding from reception centres, staying in the streets or with their networks in addition to changing their names and their age are part of this tactical agency used by the 'relatively powerless' (Williams 2006: 4). It enables them to navigate within the malleable external structures of the immigration restrictions based on socially constructed Eurocentric categorisation of childhood and UAM, while striving to turn the situation to their advantage, by defying the logic of EU protection systems and border control (Jiménez-Alvarez 2015: 411). Yet, while being agents and using tactics, their suffering can be immense, intensified by their young age and traumas related to the irregular migration they have undertaken. Being from the socioeconomically deprived periphery of Morocco, they have in general already been surrounded by structural, symbolic and everyday violence well before they have engaged in a migration project. Already disillusioned by the 'dynamics of social exclusion' (Mai 2010: 72) in their home country, their desire for 'social revenge' (Gimeno Monterde 2015: 23–4) may be expressed through membership in a particular violent youth movement of the periphery, i.e., the *Tcharmil* movement.

The constant violence they are surrounded by while being confined to the periphery, and unable to reach the core on either side of the Mediterranean, despite having risked their lives for betterment, can fuel further frustration and violence. The luring capitalist consumerism, seemingly the gate to being part of the core, appears to be achieved easily by engaging in delinquencies. With it they drift further into marginalisation and increasing violence, which is often difficult to escape, especially because often the resentment increases with age towards the host country. Becoming undocumented is a great fear and can lead to further violence, making them easy targets for criminal networks of all kinds, including radicalised networks. It is a link that is highly underestimated and calls for further research.

Notes

[1] Arabic name for Ceuta

[2] Proscribed by Islamic law, i.e., 'dirty money' through criminal activities.

[3] Permissible by Islamic law, i.e. 'clean money' through paid work.

[4] She pointed out that this was exceptional, as most young Moroccans do not get status, and Moroccan families usually do not follow their children to Europe (fieldwork Sweden 2016).

[5] A former shantytown and socioeconomically deprived neighbourhood in Tangier.

[6] Financial contribution to help with education or on the job training.

[7] He said he had dropped out of secondary school in his last year because he wanted to work and was bored with school. We spoke about socio-political issues in Morocco and around the world, which further confirms his habitus being different from other Moroccan youth migrants encountered during field work. He left Morocco because he 'wanted to see the world', and because he said he would never find a job in 'this corrupt country' (fieldwork Belgium 2016).

[8] Swedish police and Swedish social workers informed me that Afghan boys are also known for absconding, selling and doing drugs, and other criminal activities, sometimes armed (rarely the case with Moroccan boys), as well as some rape or intention of rape cases. Moroccan boys told me they saw this as an 'injustice' because Afghans 'are much worse but still get asylum and we don't'. (Fieldwork Sweden October 2016).

[9] He was accommodated in a remote centre for UAM in Flanders. In order to reach the consulate in Antwerp, he had to travel by public transport from his centre, taking him an entire day each way. He arranged to stay with friends in Antwerp and returned to his centre the next day or the day after.

[10] Similar to Sweden, Belgium helps voluntary returnees to pursue an apprenticeship in their home country.

[11] At the age of 18, the permit is usually renewed, provided that the minor has not left Spain for longer than 6 months (Le Clève and Peyroux 2018: 29) and that he has a clear criminal record.

Criminal records of minors are usually cleared after 5 years, and a number of young Moroccans I have met in Sweden were waiting for the 5 years to be over in order to return to Spain (field interviews Sweden 2016).

[12] Yet many avoided the Belgian authorities and stayed within their networks or in the streets, meaning that the actual number was even higher (field interview with a Belgian social worker in 2015).

[13] Belgian Asylum and Migration Minister from December 2011 until July 2014, and then again as of December 2018. Due to an influx in UAM applications, Belgium was short of beds in reception centres for UAM and accommodated them in lower cost hotels. When De Block took office, she ensured that UAM were accommodated in reception centres and no longer in hotels where supervision by the social services was minimal and the possibility of abuse or child trafficking was high.

[14] Single rooms, nevertheless, did not seem to be a pull factor, as Moroccan UAM do not like sleeping alone (field interviews Belgium 2015, Sweden 2016). They are used to staying and sleeping in groups and have told me of being afraid of the *djinn* (supernatural spirits that are very much part of Moroccan culture on all levels of society) when sleeping alone (fieldwork Belgium 2015, Morocco 2016).

[15] Restricted or specific employment is allowed as of 16 years of age in many EU countries.

[16] I.e. 15/9/2005 circular procedure, see chapter 7.

[17] Fieldwork demonstrated that many interviewed boys had arrived at a very young age, e.g., between 11 and 14, sometimes younger, in Spain, and had nearly reached majority age when they arrived in Sweden.

[18] Spanish and Moroccan *Darija* for 'it's normal', 'it's no big deal'.

[19] *'Le deuil migratoire',* grief caused by migration, a term used by the Spanish psychiatrist Joseba Achotegui in relation to the Ulysses Syndrome, also known as 'the Immigrant Syndrome of chronic and multiple stress', relating to psychosocial symptoms experienced by migrants in extreme situations (Achotegui 2012; Hadjab Boudiaf 2017: 33).

[20] He is referring to other UAM in the streets of Stockholm, especially young Afghans who were the highest number of UAM in Stockholm at the time. They were known to police for taking and selling hashish and heroin at the *Plattan* (officially known as *Sergels Torg*) in the centre of Stockholm. Most young Afghans suffered from PTSD and were eager to speak to and seek help from adults, including the police, whereas the young Moroccans tried to avoid all contact with police or adults in general (field interview Sweden October 2016).

[21] Sweden has closed centres for UAM who engage in criminality and are considered a threat to society or themselves (field interview Sweden October 2016).

[22] Le Clève and Peyroux (2018: 52) report of Moroccan minors transporting the 'merchandise' being robbed by an unknown (who in reality is someone of the network), which indebts them toward the network. If they are unable to reimburse the money death threats are possible.

[23] Mai (2010: 80) adapted his model from Spagnoletto in a Save the Children Italy report on Roma children (2008), which in turn is based on Spivak's desocialising spiral theory from 1974.

9 Conclusion

The perspectives offered in this thesis are inspired by interdisciplinary work, backed by a significant amount of empirical research in order to try to connect the macro, meso and micro levels of Moroccan independent youth migration, who are, as I argue, new actors in migration. By looking at the three levels, I have aimed to give a well-informed understanding of this particular migration – of the 'structuring structures', to borrow Bourdieu's term – and how tactical agency is put into practice in order to counter or make use of the structures. For international migration I have used O'Reilly's theory of practice, which links structure and agency through practice as a meta framework, that helps understand the social processes involved in shaping social life (O'Reilly 2012c: 5). The foundational theory I have built on is WSA, a macro theory of migration (but not only), which O'Reilly refers to as a useful base to construct her meta framework upon.

Through the lens of WSA, I have viewed Moroccan independent youth migration from the historical perspective, explaining how Moroccan emigration culture was shaped within its colonial and post-colonial frameworks and its move into the Semi-Periphery of the capitalist world system. From this macro perspective of the global Semi-Periphery, I have then explained how this affects the micro level, i.e. youth that is 'trapped' in waithood and involuntary immobility while being exposed to an increasingly capitalist consumer society. Having no possibility to move into social adulthood due to a lack of adequate jobs, they see international migration as their option to 'build a future'. In the Moroccan periphery, it is in particular male youth, the *shabab,* who are concerned with this, as masculinity in this part of society is connected to being able to take care of family. The inability to do so means that the youth remains a *shabab*, regardless of his age and does not move into manhood. Their migration is thus shaped by internal structures, micro structures, which I refer to mainly as habitus. The inability to move into social adulthood, or manhood, is situated within a social context of *hshuma* (shame) and surrounded by different forms violence, structural, symbolic and everyday violence. Some demonstrate

their anger and frustration, or *hogra*, through a particular underground youth movement, the *tsharmil* movement.

This is when some take their tactical agency further, by engaging in the *hrig*, or irregular migration, seen as a rite of passage into manhood and into building a future in Europe. The *hrig* means going through a phase of liminality, where they sleep rough, are exposed to further violence, but from which they imagine emerging as heroes, partaking in capitalist consumerism and sending remittances to their families. Being unable to do so is again soiled with *hshuma*.

There is an increasing number of under 18-year olds engaging in the *hrig*, as it is well known that restrictive EU immigration policy is concerned with the protection of children migrating alone, but deports adults who migrate in the same manner, i.e. irregularly in search for work. These are the more 'malleable' external structures, meaning that they are not as rigid as the first external structures and can somewhat be manipulated. Young Moroccans pass on this information in their networks, which is likely to encourage others to follow in search of better opportunities. This is one of the tactics they use, providing information within peer networks and learning from their CofP how to implement these tactics to navigate the structures. In some cases, they are able to make use of these legal and policy categories, as it enables them, e.g. to find shelter or limited status in the country of choice. If these structures are too constraining, the young migrants will continue moving, making use of their CofP or networks once again. However, networks are not always reliable in information sharing and the fact that young migrants in the EU are normally categorised as vulnerable victims, i.e., either as refugee/asylum-seeking UAM or as trafficked children, comes as a surprise to many. Further, the CRC under which the protection of migrant children falls, and which has without doubt advanced the rights of children to an important extent, is shaped by a social construction of childhood which is based on Western Core principles. Those who do not comply with the social construction of childhood and the categorisation of UAM or trafficked children, are considered 'atypical'. They may then be considered as problematic, 'pathological threats' (White cited in Huijsmans 2006: 6) or not as minors at all (Crawley 2011: 1172).

Navigating between these structures, exercising agency have resulted in unpredictable outcomes. It has led firstly, to a new migration phenomenon, that of new pioneers in Moroccan migration (i.e., youth as pioneer migrants and not adults) and new actors in migration; secondly, to restrictive emigration policy in Morocco; and thirdly, to EU law and policy aimed at implementing the return of young Moroccans that are not considered UAM. Yet, the young Moroccan migrants continue to navigate between these new

structures with further tactical agency. It leads to additional marginalisation in a continuous environment of violence while being in the EU, and being confined to stay in the periphery, results in a continuous desocialising spiral which, with age, is increasingly difficult to escape. They are new actors in migration, yet legal and policy definitions continue to see them as 'dependents' in the framework of adult migration. As I have pointed out, young Moroccans are certainly not the only ones, independent youth migration becoming an increasingly visible global phenomenon.

The aspects of originality of this thesis and its contribution to existing research is that its analysis combines the macro, meso and micro levels of a rather new migration phenomenon, i.e., that of independent youth migrants from Morocco. In this sense, my aim was to focus on the duality of structure and agency, arguing in line with O'Reilly (2012a: 15) that structure and agency are interconnected and co-dependent. The research analyses reasons for leaving the home country, findings on how the migration is implemented and organised, and reasons for marginalisation as well as onward migration in arrival countries. This is innovative, as, generally speaking, migration theories scrutinise and focus on only one aspect, which is either the reasons for leaving, or the context in the reception countries. The actual implementation of the migration, the meso level, which refers here to tactical agency, CofP, rite of passage and the phase of liminality is often absent or not further linked to how it came about, or, the effects it has once this phase is supposedly completed. This is one of the reasons why O'Reilly's Practice Theory was chosen as it enables linking these findings. Further, also rather uncommon in International Relations, is the extensive ethnographic approach which was applied from the beginning of the research and continued intermittently over several years, in addition to the diversity of the countries of research as well as the interviewees. As discussed in chapter 3, while ethnography usually takes one angle in focusing on one particular group, e.g., young *harraga,* I have taken into account interviewees of opposite perspectives, e.g., police and immigration officers, to obtain a profound understanding of the topic. Also, research was conducted in countries that differ greatly in their immigration policies, and I have aimed to combine these with my own findings and my own translations of existing literature in diverse languages in order to portray the topic in as much depth as possible.

There are nevertheless certain limitations to this research. As I have pointed out at the beginning of this work, this research has focused on a very specific group of young migrants. It is a sample of young Moroccans that engage in the *hrig,* of the urban or semi-urban Moroccan periphery, adept or impressed by the *tsharmil* lifestyle. It is by no means a general portrait of Moroccan youth migrants, because, as also argued, although they

have one goal in common, which is that of bettering their lives, they are a heterogenous group of young people, meaning that not all engage in the *tsharmil* movement, not all engage in the *hrig*, and will enter a desocialising spiral. In addition, it is certainly not a portrait of independent youth migration in a global aspect. The reason why this research focuses on them is, firstly, because they are the greatest in number of young Moroccan migrants encountered during fieldwork. Their difficulties 'living on the edge' despite their young ages and constantly navigating between structure and agency, demonstrates that they are the epitome of a globalising world with increasingly visible restrictions for those who cannot partake in the 'good life', i.e. capitalist consumerism and who are restricted in their mobility, physically, but also psychologically.

With this in mind, I would also like to draw attention to the importance of the broader context of the field of independent youth migration. Young Moroccans are by no means the only independent youth migrants that are engaging in a dangerous form of migration to better their lives and/or the lives of their families. As discussed in chapter 7, the number of independent youth migrants that do not fall under the legal definition of UAM or trafficked children appears to be on the rise, or, in any case, they are becoming increasingly visible. Regardless of their reasons for migration, they are often confined to using the most dangerous routes to reach the global Core, where they imagine themselves safe, and with better opportunities in terms of livelihood, education and work than in their home countries.

It was thus my aim to provide a more accurate picture of independent youth migration that goes beyond the legal and policy image of the child victim (UAM or trafficked child), explaining that it can encourage a nexus between youth migration and criminality. While doing so, I found it important to shed light on the vulnerabilities and the violence they are being exposed to and that tend to be overlooked.

Overlooking these vulnerabilities, in hope that 'atypical' UAM turn 18 in order to become undocumented migrants and deportable, is not only a loss of opportunity for the host countries, as I will argue below, but, as I have briefly pointed to in the last chapter, can lead to serious security concerns. While young Moroccan migrants are engaging in the *hrig* with utopic ideas of the Eldorado, the deceptions and rejections they are being confronted with once they have reached their destination, but also the violent environment they continuously find themselves in, may lead to further 'social revenge' (Gimeno Monterde 2015: 23–4) for the perceived lack of social justice. The desocialising spiral I have pointed to, can become problematic if the young person is psychologically unstable, uprooted, exposed to different forms of violence, and in a stalemate of ongoing

liminality. The nexus between these factors and the recruitment into radicalised groups is not to be underestimated and does not only call for further research but also for acknowledgement and action in terms of policies that do not stigmatise but rather opt for (re-)integration of the young persons in question.

The economic reasons for undertaking independent youth migration is another important aspect that should be taken into account in further research but is also a crucial aspect that migration policy should be concerned with. While the economic aspect of independent youth migration is well acknowledged in South-South migration, it is in general absent from research in South-North migration, which focuses solely on the structures and hence the victimisation of the young migrants, ignoring their agency and resilience. By doing so, it only shows a certain perspective of independent youth migration and neglects considering what they undergo, exposing them to dangers and vulnerabilities that are thus overlooked. Taking into account the declining working age population in the EU and given the investments member states are legally obliged to provide while UAM are still under the age of 18, young migrants should be seen as an opportunity instead of a threat, and, as argued above, *before* they may become a threat. As there is the opportunity for them to become socialised in the host countries, they are ambassadors for a future that can benefit both host countries and countries of origin. Host countries can gain with an increase of their working age population through educational and professional programmes that in turn can benefit countries of origin that are in desperate need of viable future possibilities for their offspring. Young people that are looking to better their own and their families' lives, should be embraced as the makers of the changing world system Wallerstein has advised us of.

> We have a powerful potential in our youth, and we must have the courage to change old ideas and practices so that we may direct their power toward good ends. (Mary Mcleod Bethune)

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