



Laboratoire de recherche
 Le Maroc dans l'Afrique: Histoire, Mémoire et Contexte International
 «MOROCCO IN AFRICA: HISTORY, MEMORY AND INTERNATIONAL CONTEXT»
 مختبر البحوث: المغرب في أفريقيا: التاريخ والذاكرة والمحيط الدولي



كلية الآداب والعلوم الإنسانية
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 FACULTÉ DES LETTRES ET DES SCIENCES HUMAINES

INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION TO AND THROUGH NORTH AFRICA

The Faculty of Letters and Human Sciences (FLSH) of Agadir- Ibn Zohr University, in collaboration with the research laboratory: "Morocco in Africa: History, Memory and International Context", the History Department (FLSH, Agadir), Ca' Foscari University of Venice, the Population and Development Center (CEPED)- Paris Cité University, Modern Philology Department, Translation and Interpretation- Las Palmas University of Gran Canaria, the International Organisation of Migrations (IOM, Rabat), the Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees (HCR, Rabat), are organizing an international symposium entitled: **"International Migration to and through North Africa"**. This international symposium will be held in Agadir, Morocco, on April 10, 11 and 12, 2025.



Rationale:

According to the United Nations, the number of international migrants in the world has increased remarkably over the last twenty years, reaching "281 million in 2020, compared to 173 million in 2000. Over the last two decades, international migrants have increased by an average of 2.4% per year". However, despite this absolute quantitative increase, the proportional share of international migrants worldwide showed a very timid evolution between 1990 and 2020, rising from 2.8% to 3.6%. All the more so as the international health crisis caused by Covid 19 and the restrictions adopted in the majority of countries are bound to lead to a marked reduction in all normative forms of international migration worldwide.

Between 2011 and 2017, years coinciding with what is referred to by so-called Northern countries as the "migration crisis", the number of refugees and asylum seekers increased "by around 13 million, or almost a quarter of the increase in the number of international migrants. North Africa and West Asia received around 46% of the global number of refugees and asylum seekers, followed by sub-Saharan Africa (21)". While international migration during and prior to the "thirty glorious years" (1945-1974) was mainly in the "South-North" configuration, today, according to a recently published official report, a majority of international migration now takes place in the "South-South" direction: this is perfectly the case for China, Ivory Coast, Turkey, Tunisia, Libya, Algeria and Morocco.

Most Arab countries, including North Africa, have been shaken and conditioned by the impact of the "Arab Spring", as in Syria and Iraq, ravaged by the emergence of the extremist group "Islamic State/Daesh" and its sister groups which are located everywhere, exerting unprecedented violence.

The immediate result of this situation is the acceleration of migratory flows towards relatively secure areas. For example, "since the start of the militarized Syrian conflict, over 12 million Syrians have been forcibly displaced, either within the country or to neighboring countries", according to J. Hassine, who has forgotten that thousands of Syrians fleeing the civil war have moved as far as the Maghreb, particularly Morocco and Algeria.

And let's not forget that, Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia and Libya form a regional political and economic organization, the Union du Maghreb Arabe (UMA), founded on February 17, 1989 and headquartered in Rabat. Nevertheless, this organization was born "dead" and is distinguished only by its inactivity, dictated by deplorable geopolitical reasons.

What's more, the "irregular" or "clandestine" international migration that has developed in the "North African region"¹ since the 1990s has unquestionably and profoundly changed previous migration patterns, not just in the Maghreb region, but throughout the Mediterranean in relation to the countries of sub-Saharan Africa and Europe. As a result, "the Maghreb now plays a key role as a 'migration security zone' between Africa and Europe".

In the current state of draconian restrictions and controls on international migration, the whole of North Africa is experiencing and going through "a migratory transition which is reflected in and reveals a series of profound changes in the countries and societies of departure". Starting with the increasingly feminized profiles of would-be migrants, who are becoming much more diversified

¹ North Africa is used here in the commonly known and geographically accepted sense, marked by the migration issue: Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Egypt, Libya and even Mauritania.

and are no longer just single men, but also women on their own or with children, not to mention unaccompanied minors. Added to this is the fact that the level of education is still higher than that of previous generations, which are becoming increasingly older. What's more, migratory paths are leading to the discovery of new, highly complex geographical trajectories and itineraries, reflecting new, reinvented migratory territories and configurations.

This scientific event of international scope concerns Maghrebi and North African migration in the national and international context. The aim of this international colloquium is to assess, develop, analyze, take stock of and retrace the sociological, historical, geographical, anthropological, geopolitical, diplomatic, socio-demographic and legal evolution of international migration in, from and through North Africa to Europe. In other words, the aim is to study and take stock of migratory relations between North Africa and Europe.

The countries of the Maghreb, notably Algeria, Tunisia, Libya and Morocco, are characterized by a triple dynamic function that is still relevant today: a regional and international migratory departure zone, a transit zone and an immigration zone.

In fact, "foreigners in Algeria numbered around 10,000 in 1975, rising to over 150,000 in 2010". According to "the International Association of the Algerian Diaspora Abroad, there are currently 6 million Algerians or people of Algerian origin living abroad". Historically, Tunisia is a country characterized by the export of Tunisian labor abroad: "more than 900,000 Tunisians are settled mainly in Europe in 2020". Currently, it is estimated that over five and a half million Moroccans residing abroad - more than 80% of the "Moroccans of the world" - live and concentrate in Europe. However, at least since 1980-1990, Morocco has also become a country of transit and immigration. This social and migratory mutation has prompted Morocco to adopt a new policy: the National Immigration and Asylum Strategy (SNIA). It is fully in line with the structural measures initiated by Morocco since September 2013, including "two operations to regularize some 50,000 foreigners between 2014 and 2018".

Moreover, the foreign population of the Maghreb was "close to a million in the 1960s. In 2010, it is estimated at 324,000 migrants", a remarkable decrease explained by the fact that European settlers gradually returned home after independence, and the nationalization of the economies of Maghreb countries. These figures do not take into account so-called "illegal or clandestine" migration, which by definition is difficult to establish and evaluate. As things stand, the number of Moroccans, Tunisians and Algerians could easily reach 12 million, the vast majority of whom have settled in Europe.

Today, with the outsourcing and near-closure of European borders to northern Morocco (Tangiers, Ceuta and Melilla), "illegal" migration mafias have shifted their approach from southern Morocco to penetrate Spain from the Atlantic to reach the Canary Islands. This "clandestine" migration route is more than dangerous, given the long and risky sea journey, symbolically referred to as the "road of death" by the migrants themselves.

On the other hand, **racism, xenophobia and discrimination** do not only affect immigration and immigrants in the migratory countries of the North, but this phenomenon also profoundly affects the countries of the South, such as North Africa, where we are witnessing major societal and migratory transformations. What's more, **media coverage** of migration issues in North Africa is largely characterized by **negative images and stereotyped language, which provoke and illustrate preconceived ideas and value judgments** that only serve to accentuate a whole range of discriminations, and thus fuel hate speech and negative, unhealthy collective representations.

There are many forms of international migration, starting with classic ("economic") migration, student migration and migration of skilled or highly-skilled people, and forced or imposed migration. There are many reasons for international migration: socio-economic, scientific, political and even military (civil wars, illegitimate coups d'état to gain power, etc.), climate change reinforcing extreme drought and/or flooding, which are no longer periodic but structural throughout the world. How does this affect migratory trajectories, the implementation of public policies, and the management of criminal networks involved in human trafficking and smuggling? In what way are these migrations also sources of highly qualified or unskilled skills, in a context of globalization and talent capture?

Thus, the aim of this international symposium, which explores an innovative and scarcely studied topic, is **to sketch a picture that aspires to offer a comprehensive retrospective of the social and human sciences, restoring** and situating the Maghreb and North African migration issue in its general context in relation to the European dimension, which remains inescapable.

It is important to update the data on our subject in the light of recent geopolitical changes in the contemporary world, and in the Maghreb region in particular, so as to be able to put forward coherent recommendations and lines of thought that can facilitate decision-making in terms of public policy. Hence the following pertinent questions: what impact has the so-called "international migration crisis"² had on migration in North Africa? At what point can we mention that this "migration crisis" is a purely Euro-European crisis, referring to a crisis of human rights values? To what extent has the Covid 19 health and epidemiological crisis had a negative impact on migratory mobility and the labor market in Africa and the Maghreb in particular, and in Europe generally?

The main themes addressed in this international symposium are:

1. International migration in the Maghreb and North Africa, in the context of an increasingly restrictive Europe that is closing and externalizing its borders;
2. Migration, racism, xenophobia and discrimination;

² It concerns the agreement signed between the European Union and Turkey on March 18, 2016. This agreement was signed in the wake of what has been called by the international press: "the migratory crisis", yet in our opinion: it is a crisis that refers back to the values of Human Rights that made Europe great in the past, and which are being completely flouted today: In fact, "*Ankara undertook to exercise stricter controls at its borders to curb illegal immigration, in cooperation with Frontex [the European agency for the management of operational cooperation at external borders], and to take in all illegal migrants from its territory arrested in Greece. In return, Brussels pledged 6 billion euros in funding to welcome and support refugees on Turkish soil*": See the article by Barthelemy Gaillard, "*Crise migratoire: qu'est devenu l'accord entre l'union européenne et la Turquie?*",

3. Illegal migration" from southern Morocco, forcing risky journeys across the Atlantic to reach the Canary Islands;
4. Migration and human rights;
5. Migration and Development;
6. Migration and climate change: what is the relationship?
7. Migration and the media: what images and social representations are conveyed?
8. Student migration and the "competent" or highly qualified ;
9. Female migration;
10. Aging and death management in immigration/emigration;
11. Migration and health ;
12. Migration of unaccompanied minors ;
13. Migration and public policy.

Participation requirements:

Participants must send us a mini Curriculum Vitae (CV of one page maximum) and an abstract (also of one page maximum), plus a translation of the abstract into English. You must also choose one of the 13 proposed themes and complete the following questionnaire:

First and last name :
Currently held position:
Professional and institution affiliation:
Department and specialization:
Personal Phone:
E-mail Address:
Exact title of the proposed paper at the Agadir International Colloquium :
Number and title of the axis concerned:
Personal address:
City and dates of travel to and from Agadir-Morocco (round trip: between April 9 and 13: 4 nights maximum). Example: Outward journey: Paris / Agadir on March 12 via flight ... Return Agadir / Paris on March 16 via flight ...
Any proposal outside these dates will not be taken in charge by the organizers, who are currently responsible for catering and accommodation (hotel). We are awaiting a definitive response from the organizers regarding the possibility of taking in charge some international trips, in particular for a few PhD students (if possible). NB: Our FLSH is committed to publishing the proceedings of the international colloquium, which will be available during the event.

Participation in the international symposium in Agadir is contingent upon the receipt of the final submission, adhering to the deadlines set forth by the organizing committee, bearing in mind that all contributions will go through the scientific committee for evaluation.

The conference languages are: English, French, Spanish and Arabic. Paper proposals in the form of a one-page abstract, together with a one-page (maximum) translation of the abstract into English and a brief CV (1 p.), must be sent electronically and imperatively to e.atouf@uiz.ac.ma and r.benbih79@gmail.com by September 20, 2024. Conference participants will be notified by September 30, 2024. Final versions of selected papers must reach the Scientific Committee by January 15, 2025.

On behalf of the organizing committee:

- Prof. Elkbir ATOUF, scientific and organizational coordinator of the international symposium, Tel. 00 212 6 62 07 36 32. E-mail: e.atouf@uiz.ac.ma

- Prof. Rachid BEN BIH: international symposium coordinator, Tel. 00 212 667 991 512. E-mail: r.benbih79@gmail.com

The symposium will take place on April 10, 11 and 12, 2025, at the Salle des Humanités of the Faculté des Lettres et des Sciences Humaines (FLSH) in Agadir.

Organizing committee

- Prof. Mohamed NAJI, Dean of the Faculty of Letters and Human Sciences (FLSH), Agadir ;

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- Prof. Zouhir ELBHIRI, Vice-Dean of the FLSH, Agadir;

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