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Collective Remittances and Integration: North African and North Indian Comparative Perspectives

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This paper makes the case for a joint redefinition of the concepts of transnationalism and integration in a way that would allow a better combination. Transnationalism is here defined as a coping strategy for migrants who strive to manage their integration into two (or more) settings. Integration is commonly depicted as a multi-level process which combines a social embedding into a web of interpersonal or associational relations and a systemic embedding into wider economic or political systems. Next to these levels, this work highlights a third one, namely the identity integration of migrants who seek to maintain a balance between the poles of their identity. This conceptual framework is applied in order to analyse the emergence of collective practices of development among two North African groups in France (the Moroccan Chleuhs and the Algerian Kabyles) and one UK-based North Indian group (the Sikh Punjabis). It is shown that transnational development practices, in the form of collective remittances, constitute a matrix of identity integration for migrants who want to reinvent their identity of villager despite the transformations induced by their stay abroad. However, the success of their actual engagement into cross-border practices largely depends on the effectiveness of their systemic and social integration.

Keywords: Transnationalism; Hometown Organisations; Integration; Collective Remittances; France; UK

Introduction

Transnationalism is commonly perceived as a new pattern of migrants' adaptation to their host context, which would be neither assimilation nor return but a form of incorporation which would not imply the cutting of long-distance linkages with the

place of origin (Faist 2000; Kivisto 2001). More recent works have highlighted a positive correlation between the level of sophistication of cross-border commitments and upward social mobility: immigrants in a less favourable situation tend to practice a low-intensity transnationalism (remittances, contacts with the homeland, irregular visits etc.), while more complex and time-consuming activities are to be found among better-off migrants who can combine skills and financial and social resources such as collective remittances, business activities etc. (Mazzucato 2008; Portes et al. 2002; Snel et al. 2006).

These findings suggest that transnationalism is not merely a variant of immigrant incorporation but that the two phenomena are distinct and related distinct because groups and individuals engaged in upward integration processes may or may not translate their social mobility into new transnational commitments. In some cases, assimilation is conducive to the un-making of cross-border social fields (Lee 2007; Marger 2006); in other cases, it does not seem to be true. For example, personal investigations have shown that the children and grandchildren of Polish exiles who found refuge in Western countries after the Second World War still maintain a dense diasporic associational field built upon a strong anti-communist ethos (Lacroix 2011). At the same time, the two phenomena appear to be related insofar as the forms taken by cross-border engagements hinge upon access to an array of financial, social, cultural and legal resources usually acquired through integration in the host society.

These findings call for a reformulation of the relationship between integration and transnationalism. However, this endeavour faces a theoretical obstacle. The two concepts are rooted in two different (not to say opposite) epistemic terrains. 'Integration' is one of the key concepts of migration studies. It refers to a Durkheimian conception of society delimited by national borders. Conversely, 'transnationalism' is an approach dwelling upon methodological individualism, which derives from a Weberian approach focused on the experience of migrants and their behaviours. The distance between the two theoretical universes to which these two notions belong renders any attempt to study their relationship an awkward exercise. In consequence, this paper makes the case for a joint redefinition of the two terms. It is contended that this is an issue as important as mobility or the maintaining of long-distance ties for the definition of transnationalism. Secondly, a lot has been said about the necessity to revise the concept of integration (Wieviorka 2011). Indeed, the concept fails to acknowledge the multiplicity of social spheres in which migrants are embedded. In other words, our analysis of the building of transnational ties and social fields should factor in settlement and integration processes. Conversely, the concept of integration should be revised in order to move beyond the conception of social actors embedded in a single social and territorial framework.

The intent of this paper is to propose a redefinition of the two concepts and to apply this approach to the analysis of collective remittances through the study of two Berber groups in France the Algerian Kabyles and the Moroccan Chleuhs and Indian Punjabis in the UK. These groups do not display even patterns of engagement in development practices. While Moroccan and Indian organisations have become

active development actors for the benefit of their origin area, Algerian organisations though sharing a long-standing history of collective mobilisation display a lower level of commitment to cross-border projects. The central argument of this paper is that these discrepancies can be accounted for by distinct patterns of integration into the society of arrival. It will be shown how hometown informal networks and formal organisations, originally meant to facilitate chain migration, found in development a new field of collective mobilisation in the 1990s. It is argued that development initiatives represent, for expatriates, a means to build towards equilibrium between their identity of villager and the person they have become after many years abroad. However, their different levels of commitment to development practices also derive from their uneven access to financial resources. The level of economic integration of Indian Punjabis and the inscription of Moroccans into civil society networks in the sending and receiving societies have secured different sources of funding. Conversely, Algerian Kabyles suffer from their low socio-professional incorporation which is not compensated for by their civic activism: in the wake of ten years of civil war in Algeria and recurrent conflicts with the Algerian government, the Kabyle organisational field is now fragmented and fraught with distrust.

This work draws upon research conducted between 1999 and 2009. Over 100 interviews and informal discussions were carried out with immigrant actors and stakeholders in London, Birmingham, Coventry, Paris, Marseille, Amsterdam, Brussels, New Delhi, the Indian Punjab, Rabat and Southern Morocco.¹

Jointly Rethinking Transnationalism and Integration

The findings of recent works directly addressing the relationship between transnationalism and integration call for rethinking both concepts in a way that would allow a better combination. Transnational studies have shown that migrants can be involved in several processes of integration at the same time, in the host country, in the origin country and in cross-border social fields. As seen above, the joint analysis of transnationalism and integration encourages us to take greater account of settlement processes. With that in mind, I propose a reconsideration of transnationalism as the result of a multi-sited process of integration. The surge, evolution and shrinking of cross-border social spaces are an outcome of the social dynamics at play at both ends of the transnational spectrum.

Transnationalism as a Coping Strategy in Multiple Integration Processes

Migrant/non-migrant relationships are usually described as sustained by emotional linkages and determined by a contract or by the expected repayment of a debt. This type of argument, commonly found in the literature on transnationalism or remittances, acknowledges migrants' willingness to maintain linkages with their origin community beyond mere economic rationales, but ultimately implies that these relationships are written in stone. It fails to acknowledge that migrants are

transformed by their stay abroad. Their class position and ideological or cultural references evolve over time. Likewise, social change in the place of departure affects the perceptions of migration and the relations toward those abroad. Migrants and non-migrants are engaged in a constant effort to renegotiate their positioning towards each other. To acknowledge the effects of integration and social change is to introduce a temporal dynamic to cross-border linkages.

In accordance with the constant evolution of migrant/non-migrant relationships, the making and un-making of transnational practices bear the marks of integration and social change. Migrants benefiting from improved socio-economic status can rely on wider resources to set up ever-more-sophisticated practices. But integration can also widen the gap between migrants and the left-behinds beyond the possibility of mutual understanding and recognition. Engaging in cross-border practices therefore depends on what migrants can do, who they think they are and what non-migrants expect from them. In other words, transnationalism can be perceived as an adaptation strategy to a migration dilemma: how to maintain long-distance linkages when everything changes, when available means, social norms, individual yearnings and collective structures evolve?

Multi-Sited Integration and its Consequences for Identity

Placing integration at the core of the definition of transnationalism may appear counter-intuitive. Such an endeavour must be supported by a related effort to tailor a relevant definition of integration. The point of departure adopted here is a Habermasian definition of society as the aggregation of a system of systemic units (an economy, a polity) and a system of social relations resting on a shared lifeworld (Habermas 1987).² Bridging social and systemic levels (but not forming a level of its own) stands the civil society, which enables the formation of corporate interests. From there, two different levels of integration can be defined: systemic integration into a political and/or economic system (measured through occupational status, political or organisational engagements, etc.), and social integration into the web of interpersonal relations measured through the composition of social acquaintances, the handling of language and the host-country culture, etc. (Habermas 1987: 165_6). This dichotomy is quite common in studies on integration. American and European academics commonly distinguish between formal participation in economic and political structures on the one hand and acculturation and relational interactions on the other (Gordon 1964; King and Mai 2009; Snel et al. 2006). The reference to Habermas in this work flags up the influence of the German philosopher on my analysis of transnational processes and the choice made to regard cross-border practices as a form of communicative action. But this reference is also justified by the greater account made by Habermas' theory of civil society as a bridge between social and systemic levels of society. As shown in this paper, the insertion of migrants into wider associational networks is a central aspect of their integration.

In order to move beyond methodological nationalism and to incorporate the implications of multiple belongings in our analysis, a third level of integration is here proposed namely identity integration. Contrary to previous levels, identity integration is a subjective process which highlights the influence of social structures on the personality of actors. Identity can be conceived as a psychic tool which prevents the *dasein* that is, the ever-changing disposition of the self from collapsing on itself. Hour after hour, day after day, the self is transformed owing to the collection of experiences, the choices and encounters that are made, the looks of others and even the physical evolution of the body. As Sartre once put it, individuals are woven in time. Identity is what allows us to channel and give meaning to this flow and what prevents us from being overwhelmed by our own temporality. Besides, identity enables people to endorse a variety of social roles and interact with a range of actors. The channelling of temporal experiences and their effects on the self is done through the constitution of identity poles which are structured through our interactions with others. We are, according to the circumstances, child of our parents, parent of our children, man or woman, customer in a shop, citizen of our country, member of our community, etc. Identity is therefore a co-ordination of various roles and a sedimentation of our former selves (Merton 1957). In this regard, identity integration is an outcome of the harmony (or dissonance) which may exist between different poles of our identity. Dissonance always exists (we all might find it hard to be the child of our mother and the spouse of our partner), but some are harder (if not impossible) to cope with when they confine individuals into a status of social subordination. Several coping strategies are henceforth available: some can strive to suppress or legitimise dissonant polarities, others can build a wall between the various compartments of their life or, conversely, merge them. For example, Albanians in Italy tend to opt for definitive settlement in Italy. They tend to conceal or even deny their 'Albanian-ness'. The networks of co-ethnics are very weak and their engagement in transnational practices tends to be confined to the family sphere (King and Mai 2009). In contrast, the literature on transnationalism has amply explored the emergence of transnational social fields as a mode of articulation of a multiplicity of belonging. In this sense, transnationalism is the choice which results from a non-choice, i.e. from the wish not to choose between assimilation and return. Transnationalism, in that regard, bears the mark of the various strategies through which migrants strive to align the different poles of their identity.

To sum up, the emergence of transnational practices hinges on three factors: the material and social resources which result from social and systemic integration and the pattern of identity integration opted by a given group. The intent of the present paper is to show that the commitment of North African Berbers and Indian Punjabis to collective development practices is the result of the will to legitimate the two poles of their identity: that of villager and that of immigrant. Coming back to the definition of transnationalism drafted in this section, collective remittances are, for hometown groups, a way of reinventing and re-asserting their identity as villagers despite their migration, their own evolution and the transformation of their place of

origin. However, the three groups display distinct patterns of engagement in development practices. While Moroccan Chleuhs and Indian Punjabis have managed to spur a strong local development dynamic in their place of origin, the achievements of the Algerian Kabyle community are much more limited. This is due to their differentiated patterns of systemic and social integration. While Moroccans and Indians rely on their social and financial capital to muster the resources required for the undertaking of these projects, Kabyles lack both types of capital.

Three Case Studies: Kabyles and Chleuhs in France and Punjabis in the UK

Hometown Transnationalism among North Indian and North African Migrants

North Indian and North African migration history represents two archetypical examples of postcolonial migrations. They are the two main areas that two colonial powers (France and the UK) tapped into after the Second World War in order to fulfil their unskilled labour needs. North African Berbers and Indian Sikh Punjabis were two pioneer immigrant groups that preceded the mass-migration wave of the 1960s. These migrations were locally highly concentrated, affecting very specific districts in the departure areas and forming clusters in industrial areas of France and the UK. The pre-war and immediate postwar periods were the heydays of informal chain migration. The process itself is well-known. Migrants chose their destinations according to job availabilities and the presence of kin who could facilitate their installation. This process entails the clustering of immigrants in the arrival countries according to their regional origin. The harsh conditions in which migrants lived used to spur a strong sense of solidarity. Werbner (1990), for example, talks about 'a community of suffering' when she describes the relative egalitarianism which reigns among early migrant communities. In this context emerged the first hometown networks in the places of settlement. This phenomenon is not specific to North African Berbers or Indian Punjabis but is reported among a wide array of immigrant groups in Europe and the US (Moya 2005).

In the case of Algerian Kabyle hometown organisations, membership goes with a set of rights and duties imported from the country of origin. The groupings reproduce the *Tajmaat*, i.e. the customary village assembly which rules Berber villages in Kabylie. Emigrants chose a leader (the 'Amin') on the basis of his respectability, skills and reputation. Around him stand the 'Tamen', representatives of their extended family or household. Caf  s owned by a Kabyle friend or relative often constitute a place for meeting. The primary function of Kabyle hometown organisations is to maintain a 'caisse commune' (they use this French term which means 'collective fund') to cover the expenses of the repatriation of the corpse in the case of the death of a fellow member. This participation is not voluntary but compulsory. The money given by the members is not a periodical fee, but a kind of community tax. If a member fails to pay, their participation is demanded by the Amin. The social pressure is backed up by honour and reputation. Ultimately, heavy faults and a refusal to abide

by the decisions taken are sanctioned by banishment. This measure, rarely enforced, consists in the impossibility for the banished to participate in any social gathering weddings, religious ceremonies, etc. Broadly speaking, the Tajmaat ensures that emigrants respect the Tiwizi i.e. the set of customary norms ruling village life. This occasionally entails participation in the maintenance of collective equipment such as the village irrigation system or the mosque. The contribution to these traditional projects constitutes a preliminary form of 'collective remittances'. Hometown organisations abroad are therefore functioning as a transmission belt for village communities to exert control on expatriated village fellows. To sum up, they are a social institution which eases the systemic insertion of newcomers into the housing and job markets of the host society and maintains their identity and role of villager beyond the limits of the village.

The other Berber group, the Moroccan Chleuhs, have never displayed a like degree of formalisation. They have never maintained collective funds for repatriation nor replicated to the same extent the customary structures of the Tajmaat. Village groupings appear to coalesce as networks rather than as formal organisations. They nevertheless display a strong level of stratification with leaders grounding their legitimacy in family affiliations. Community life is no less intense. Meetings at homes are frequent and occasional events such as marriages attract large numbers of fellow villagers, sometimes from other European countries. Despite their weaker level of formalisation, Chleuh village networks have fulfilled the common set of functions of this type of grouping i.e. the 'cushioning effect' for newcomers, assistance in settling in, and a channel mediating the relationship between migrants and villagers. For example, Chleuh migrants carry on fulfilling their 'Tiwizi' duties by participating in the maintenance of village infrastructures, noticeably in the wake of environmental hazards. The severe droughts affecting Southern Morocco in the 1970s were in greater part overcome thanks to the digging of new wells funded by emigrants.

Likewise, Punjabi hometown collectives are more akin to loose networks of people rather than to formal 'organisations'. For example, they have not reproduced the caste Panchayat. This institution had gradually declined since the early-twentieth century in Northern India. They have, however, reproduced the social and caste stratifications which prevail in the Punjab. The community is divided into various caste groups and factions coalesced around a charismatic leader. The bulk of Punjabi immigrants in the UK are Sikh Jats (a caste of landowners) coming from the central districts of the Punjab (Singh and Tatla 2006). Other caste groups include the Ramgharias (craftsmen) and the Dalits (untouchables). Punjabi immigrants can also be Hindus or Muslims. Hometown networks tend to coalesce around a specific faction but can also include members from different castes and religions. Collective mobilisations around development projects can also involve people coming from neighbouring villages. The architecture of hometown networks is therefore not fixed and can vary from one event to the other. As in other cases, Punjabi hometown groups ensure the circulation of information between the place of arrival and that of origin. Village or household heads can rely on this network to exert control over individuals.

Despite their comparatively loose nature, Indian Punjabi and Moroccan Chleuh hometown networks share the same characteristics as the Kabyle Tajmaat. They play a decisive role in the continuity of village identity over time and, simultaneously, facilitate the arrival and settlement of immigrants in their host society. Hometown organisations and networks therefore foster specific patterns of social, systemic and identity integration.

The Distinct Levels of Engagement in Long-Distance Development

Indians, Moroccans and Algerians in France do not display the same forms and degree of engagement in development issues. Indian Punjabis display much long-distance engagement in development initiatives. One can observe, since the mid-1990s, an increasing number of organisations dedicated to homeland development in the UK (Lacroix 2011). The most visible of these organisations are NGOs or branches of Indian NGOs which are not tied to a specific place of origin. However, hometown groups have proved to be the key actors of this trend. Their engagement in development initiatives remains a decentralised, grassroots phenomenon. Despite this informal character, diaspora investments into development projects have been massive. A survey in 477 villages of the Punjab shows NRI (non-resident Indian) transfers into religious and social development projects amounted to \$4.5 million. Places of worship, schools and hospitals absorb the largest shares of these monies (Dusenbery and Tatla 2010: 111, 131).

As in the Indian case, Moroccan expatriates have been extremely active in the field of development. Their actual engagement is difficult to quantify in the absence of a systematic survey. The informality of these collectives renders this exercise all the more difficult. However, contrary to what happened in the Indian case, Moroccan hometown groups have widely benefited from the support of overarching migrant NGOs. 'Migrations et Développement'³ (MD), the largest and oldest of these organisations, has been working in approximately 200 villages since its inception in the mid-1980s. MD has supported village groups undertaking projects in the field of public infrastructure (roads, electrification, water access, sanitation, etc.), social infrastructure (the building of schools, colleges and health and community centres) and a few income-generating activities such as the creation of Argan oil co-operatives and tourist hostels. Most of the projects have been achieved in the origin area of its founder, himself a Chleuh Berber, in the Anti-Atlas (Lacroix 2005). Another important player is 'Immigration, Développement, Démocratie'⁴ (IDD), created by leftist activists in 2000. It is a platform gathering together 16 smaller organisations from various backgrounds. Their main achievement is the building of public libraries in rural areas. Once again, Southern Morocco is one of their main regions of activity but IDD displays a wider field of interventions than MD and has achieved projects in Central (Beni Mellal, Fe's, Khouribga), Eastern (Figuig) and Northern (Nador) Morocco.

In contrast to the two previous cases, Algerian Kabyles do not display such a high commitment to development initiatives. Kabyle hometown organisations are still active in Paris and Southern France, functioning as networks of solidarity and, occasionally, supporting political mobilisations. But their engagement in long-distance development projects is, in comparison, limited. There are only a handful of more-formal organisations operating in Algeria. The Forum des Organisations de Solidarité Internationale Issues des Migrations (FORIM), a platform of migrant organisations based in Paris, lists only four Algerian organisations (compared to 28 Moroccan). The first is Solimed, an association created by a long-standing development activist of Algerian origin. In parallel, he works for ENDA Maghreb, one of the leading French NGOs in Africa. Solimed is active in the health sector and organises yearly 'caravans' of doctors in Southern Algeria. The next two organisations, Touiza Solidarité and ID Méditerranée, work on the model of MD and support village initiatives, but on a smaller scale than their Moroccan counterpart. Finally, the

Association Migration Solidarité et Echanges pour le Développement (AMSED) is a Maghrebin organisation for which Algeria and Morocco, amongst others, are a focus. Personal investigations in the informal sector in Paris yielded little evidence that development activities are widespread among village networks. In December 2008, a meeting convened by ID Méditerranée gathered together nearly 50 organisations already committed or willing to commit to development projects in Algeria. Most were village organisations, but only a handful had successfully achieved a project.

Punjabis in the UK and Kabyles and Chleuhs in France represent three relatively similar groups, displaying roughly analogous migration histories. However, this overview highlights their different levels of commitment to transnational development issues. The following section attempts to explain these discrepancies by examining more closely the evolution of the three hometown transnationalisms and by using the theoretical framework outlined in the first part of this paper.

Hometown Collectives as a Matrix of Incorporation of Social Change

As seen above, hometown networks facilitated the arrival and settlement of newcomers. These networks have also provided a place of socialisation circulating information between hometowners and the place of origin. In this regard, hometown networks have acted as key social institutions enabling the reproduction of a village identity and ethos in the place of arrival. However, this maintaining of a village identity has been challenged by the process of integration. With family reunification and upward social mobility, immigrants gradually moved to new neighbourhoods and cities in search of better living conditions. The process dismantled the spatial concentration of village groupings. In parallel, the transformation of power relations between migrants and villages, the process of individualisation and the loss of social homogeneity among migrants put an end to the original *raison d'être* of hometown organisations. Their members have followed divergent life trajectories. Some have become successful entrepreneurs while others have worked their whole life in the

same factory. Diverging political alignments have created new fault lines, often widening existing factional rivalries. The identity of hometowners became more complex, more attuned with the evolution of their life trajectory in the country of settlement. In this process of spatial, social and political diversification, a large number of village organisations have either disappeared or been reinvented in order to survive. Engagement in development practices is the central part of this process of reinvention. In other words, development initiatives render meaningful a shared village identity.

For village groupings which have been able to reinvent their legitimacy, the diversification of immigrant populations in France and the UK has strongly affected their functioning. Two categories of actor have more specifically impacted on these organisations. Firstly, modern associational activists (whether skilled workers, youngsters, unionists or political activists) have been instrumental in modernising the formal structures of these organisations. They brought in new management techniques such as secret ballots, the opening of bank accounts and book-keeping. The recent trend towards modernisation has opened up to new leaders the possibility of engaging with these groupings. This evolution was conducive to the emergence of skill-based legitimacy and leadership challenging the clan-based legitimacy of elders. The vast majority of the youngsters I encountered who were active in contemporary village organisations were born in Algeria and therefore retained a certain degree of attachment to the origin country. 'Second-generation' youngsters born in France are predominantly absent from village organisations. They do not share the same sense of obligation and identification toward the origin community as elders and young people born in Algeria. A second category of actors participating in the transformation of village organisations is people who have reached the age of retirement. Their situation gives them the possibility to dedicate more time to community life. Retirees often divide their life between the origin and the settlement countries. Their cross-border life has revitalised communication flows between expatriate and village communities and they have become crucial conveyors of information between the origin and settlement areas.

The consensual aspect of development ensures the mobilisation of people who now share little more in common than a place of origin. But development projects are also a means for migrants to redefine their positioning vis-à-vis the village community. Through such initiatives, they assert themselves as vectors of modernity within the village, thus bridging the two sides of their identity that of emigrant and that of immigrant. The projects trigger, in the place of origin, a public debate (often supported by the local partners of migrant organisations) around the question of development and the change in the living conditions brought about by the innovations. Migrants seize on this opportunity to give exposure to their life in Europe and explain the potential benefits of modernisation. They legitimate their position as villagers outside the village and challenge common assumptions of moral corruption that may be associated with the status of expatriate (Carling 2008;

Lacroix 2010). In that sense, the primary motive of their engagement in development projects is to foster the integration of their multipolar identity.

By and large, hometown organisations are social institutions whose function evolves over time. In the early days of migration, they ease the migration process. As time goes by, they form a sphere in which hometowners seek to build up a continuity of their identity as villagers and their connections with the village of origin despite the growing complexity of their individual identities. Development projects, in this regard, can be considered as a collective effort of identity integration. These projects are a means to legitimise the correspondence between their identity of villager and that of emigrant. However, the will to engage in development projects, even if widely observed among the various groups investigated, is not always followed by practical achievements. The access to financial and technical resources conditioned by their systemic and social integration into the settlement country is here a key factor explaining the differences between groups.

Indian Punjabi Hometown Networks and Philanthropy

As shown above, hometown transnationalism among Punjabis in the UK is characterised by both its intensity and its informality. Development initiatives such as the refurbishment of schools have been recorded since the 1950s. The first projects were either initiated by successful emigrants or by school teachers, village officials or development-minded individuals who contacted expatriates to meet the village needs. One of the specificities of Punjabi hometown transnationalism is the importance of prominent philanthropists in the achievement of development initiatives (Dusenbery and Tatla 2010: 111). Philanthropy is a widespread form of assertion of a social status. It has the double quality of enabling wealthy individuals to give exposure of their own wealth and to build up a social category of needy people out of which (and upon which) they stand. In this regard, transnational philanthropy is part of a process of social stratification, as were European and American philanthropies in the nineteenth century (Simmel 2005). However, it would be erroneous to reduce the transnational hometown development activities of Punjabis to an individual behaviour. In the first place, leaders of hometown groups are not necessarily wealthy (or at least, not the most wealthy) individuals. In practice, most affluent businessmen have no time to dedicate to collective initiatives. In the second place, the vast majority of projects are not supported by one isolated individual, but by the hometown network as a whole. Collections are undertaken in the various countries of settlement. Hometown network leaders sometimes carry out door-to-door collections, not only in the UK but also in other countries of settlement such as Canada or the USA. Some groups create branches in the main settlement cities. The money is then sent to one leader who centralises the funds collected before transferring them to the place of origin. Extra collections can be undertaken in the village, when emigrants pay visits to their families.

The employment profile of Sikhs⁵ in the UK still reflects the postcolonial pattern of the 1960s, with a large proportion of men and women occupying low-skilled positions in manufacturing, construction, catering, transport, hotel and distribution sectors : 72 per cent of men, 55 per cent of women in 2003 (Singh and Tatla 2006). But, over the years, a sizeable group of highly skilled professionals (doctors, engineers) and entrepreneurs has formed. The relative affluence of Punjabis in Europe and America explains why the networks remain informal. They do not need recourse to external sources of funding, even if the State of Punjab has implemented co-funding schemes to support collective remittances (Vezzoli and Lacroix 2010). Unlike Latin-American organisations in the US, they do not organise social events and parties to make community collections (Orozco 2000). Likewise, hometown groups remain disconnected from mainstream UK-based Indian civil society. Unlike in the Moroccan case, there is no overarching organisation federating hometown groups. The investigated associations do not maintain formal partnerships with other UK-based Punjabi organisations. The absence of any impetus for liaising with local authorities or with other volunteer organisations does not dovetail with weaker integration. In fact, due to their favourable systemic integration into the UK economy, hometown groups appear to be relatively self-sufficient and do not have to rely on other forms of external resource.

Moroccan Hometown Transnationalism and Development

Development practices undertaken by Berber Chleuhs in France have been supportive of the maintenance of a sense of community belonging in spite of diversification and scattering trends, and were also instrumental in helping actors to forge a composite but articulate identity between 'home and away'. In the absence of a systematic survey of collective remittances to Morocco, it is difficult to give an assessment of their volume. However, previous research has highlighted an important regional impact in Southern Morocco on rural public infrastructure (Lacroix 2005). Due to their informality, the actual number of hometown organisations abroad is unknown. At least 250 hometown groups have established partnerships with umbrella organisations.

Unlike the Punjabi case, development became a point of convergence between hometown networks and the wider immigrant civil society. The integration trajectory of North Africans in France has not been as successful as in the Indian case. Seventy per cent of first-generation Algerians and Moroccans in France are unskilled workers (Beauchemin et al. 2010: 65). The unemployment rate is as high as 14 per cent among men and 21 per cent among women between 18 and 50 (2010: 56). The North African middle and upper classes are growing among second generations but remain far smaller than in the Punjabi case. As a consequence, the sources of funding of hometown networks differ strongly. In order to compensate for the lack of internal resources, Berber Chleuhs rely on their insertion into French civil society to channel external subsidies. A large proportion of hometown groups benefit from the support of immigrant NGOs whose work is to bridge funding bodies and informal collectives.

These NGOs (MD and IDD, to cite the largest ones), have been created by activists who have a long-standing history of activism, either in unions or in refugee organisations. The generation of Moroccan political activists who sought refuge in France during the 1960s and 1970s played a leading role in this process. The field of development activities provided a number of refugees with a way of re-creating in Morocco a space of mobilisation. These associational elites have forged long-standing contacts with Moroccan and French policy-makers, associations and private enterprises. They found, in development, a way of using their relational and political integration. Moroccan organisations, for example, include non-migrant members in order to widen their outreach and their relations with funding bodies.

In parallel, from the mid-1990s onwards, the inception of the co-development policy opened to migrant organisations a source of financial and political support. The activities of MD, from 1993 onwards, benefited from the support of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Likewise, IDD launched its first activities in the domain of rural libraries thanks to funding from another Foreign Office programme 'Programme Concerté Maroc. Indeed, the unprecedented surge of collective remittances observed among Moroccan immigrants in general, and Berber Chleuhs in particular, is directly related to the recognition of emigrants as development actors through the co-development policy.

The Kabyle Case

There has been a revival and modernisation of Kabyle Tajmaat in France. The repatriation fund is still operative in some of them, but their normative capacity has lost its edge. The 'café' as a meeting place has been replaced by premises in community centres, and posters on café walls and word of mouth have been replaced by email and mobile phones as means to disseminate information. This modernisation trend goes along with an increasing attention paid to the development needs of origin villages. The organisation of a meeting in Bobigny (north-east of Paris) by Idmediterrane'e, an Algerian Kabyle migrant NGO, attracted a number of village organisations willing to carry out their own development projects in 2006. However, in the Kabyle case, development remains at the stage of wishful thinking only a handful of them managed to reach the stage of implementation.

As shown, North Africans in France have failed to form sizeable middle and upper classes. Two-thirds are still unskilled workers (Beauchemin et al. 2010). At the other end of the social scale, 3.6 per cent of Algerians living in France were business owners and 4.8 per cent medium- and highly skilled workers. In addition, contrary to the Moroccan case, Kabyles have not compensated for their lack of financial resources by a strong associational integration.

The France-based Kabyle organisational field is even older and more established than the Moroccan one. It is rooted in Franco-Algerian colonial history. From the 1970s onwards, a Berberist movement took shape around the Front des Forces Socialistes (FFS). The 1981 riots in Kabylie were echoed in France with the creation of

a new generation of pro-Kabyle organisations around the Rassemblement Culturel Démocratique (RCD). In addition to these two major organisations, a wealth of cultural organisations sprung up to preserve the Kabyle identity, which was perceived as threatened in the host country by assimilation and in the origin country by the Arabo-Muslim Nation-State project (Direche-Slimani 1997). In 1988, a national uprising in Algeria led the government to put an end to the one-party system and to the subsequent recognition of the main Berberist and Islamist parties. But the ten-year civil war that followed between the state and radical Islamists deepened the fragmentation of the civil society. In particular, the participation of the RCD in the Algerian government eroded the credential of Berberist parties among the Kabyle population. This distrust became patent when, in 2001, during the last riots that flared up in Kabylie against the national authorities, these two parties were ruled out by demonstrators and replaced by a spontaneous and temporary re-creation of the Aarch movement a customary confederation of tribes (Collyer 2008).

The fragmentation of the associational field, the overall distrust in the leading Berberist parties and, conversely, the reluctance of political parties to see the emergence of autonomous associational hometown dynamics, have made the creation of an intermediate level between village networks and funding bodies impossible. The political sensibility of the Kabyle context has hindered any form of grassroots mobilisation, be it in France or in Algeria, and has complicated the dialogue with local authorities, even on seemingly consensual issues such as development. So far, the emergence of an apolitical hometown associational dynamic has not taken shape. The emergence of new immigrant NGOs such as Idméditerranée and Touiza, and their growing presence in official structures such as the FORIM, creates hope that the situation might improve in the years to come.

Conclusion

Since the early days of migration, village organisations have moved away from their traditional functions and been re-moulded by the process of integration. However, rather than a mere substitution of customary norms by modern ones, village organisations can create a constructive combination of community belonging and diversity. Their transformation gives members the possibility to invent a balance between the different spheres of their identity. Through their engagement, actors collectively forge a response to the social injunction to be either from 'here' or from 'there' (i.e. the spaces of origin or reception), and create a position from where they can legitimately put forward that they simultaneously belong to both spaces. Through this process, development initiatives convey this identity claim. They renew an allegiance toward the place of origin but they also transform emigrants into agents of modernisation. Put differently, hometown groups' increasing commitment to development is part of an identity integration process among immigrants.

However, as seen through a comparison between North Indians and North Africans in Europe, the forms and scope of their cross-border engagements hinge on

their integration in the receiving society. Benefiting from their relatively good systemic economic integration, Punjabis in the UK have been able to undertake the building of hospitals, schools and other public infrastructure projects in their region of origin in India, with little or no external support. Moroccan Berbers, whose economic integration trajectory was less favourable, have been able to compensate for a lack of internal resources by an efficient social integration into French civil society. An associational elite, trained in working-class and refugee organisations between the 1960s and 1980s, created an organisational level capable of bridging informal collectives of hometowners and external funding bodies. Such an associational seam did not emerge among the Kabyles. The organisational field, fragmented and affected by ten years of civil war in Algeria, has thus far been incapable of developing these types of connection.

This comparison has shed new light on the importance of considering the various levels of integration for the analysis of transnational engagements. But a lot remains to be done. The focus of this paper has been long-distance development initiatives and the role of various levels of integration. The limits of transnationalism have not been addressed through the case studies presented here. More research is needed to highlight the conditions under which integration can undermine transnationalism. Likewise, integration is likely to be a key factor in the transformation of transnational communities into diasporas (Faist and Bauböck 2010). In short, this area of research remains wide open for future research.

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Notes

- [1] Due to the uncertain political situation in Algeria at the time of my fieldwork, research in this country was not carried out.
- [2] In a nutshell, for Habermas, the lifeworld is a system of representation which structures a shared understanding of the world.
- [3] www.migdev.org.
- [4] www.idd-reseau.org.
- [5] Sikhs form the largest share of Punjabi immigration in the country.

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