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Transnational practices of the Moroccan community in Rome

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Abstract

The recognition of transnational practices of Moroccan immigrants shows that among the Moroccan community present in Rome such practices are quite widespread. We have pointed out that there is a continuous exchange between the latter and the home community. This exchange takes the form of economic exchange in the majority of cases. A more collective-oriented dimension is noticeable among the women interviewed that are interested in cultural and political aspects of transnational practices. They prefer to approach transnational practices with more institutional tools and they also tend to build up institutional networks. So the political objective of transnational practices expands the scope of the latter that surpasses the limits of family networks.

Keywords: Immigration; Transnationalism; Development

Riassunto

La ricognizione delle pratiche transnazionali degli immigrati marocchini mostra che tra la comunità marocchina nella città di Roma tali pratiche sono abbastanza diffuse. Abbiamo rilevato l'esistenza di un continuo scambio tra questi ultimi e le comunità di origine. Tale scambio si presenta prevalentemente nella forma di scambio economico. Una dimensione maggiormente orientata alla collettività è più evidente tra le donne intervistate che sono maggiormente interessate agli aspetti culturali e politici delle pratiche transnazionali. Esse preferiscono seguire un approccio più istituzionale e tendono a costruire reti istituzionali. Di conseguenza, l'obiettivo politico amplia il raggio di attività di tali pratiche che superano i limiti delle reti familiari.

Parole chiave: Immigrazione; Transnazionalismo; Sviluppo

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by
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Part I

The demographic structure of the Moroccan and Romanian presence in Italy

1. The demographic structure of Moroccan and Romanian immigration in Italy: the numerical dimension, territorial placement and demographic aspects

The numerical consistency, the demographic profile and the territorial diffusion of the Moroccan and Romanian presence within the foreigner population within Italy is examined in this section with reference to two significant years and with the purpose of highlighting the evolution of the phenomenon. The comparison will be carried out both within the two nationalities considered -Moroccan and Romanian- and the main immigrant nationalities present in Italy, in order to delineate the elements peculiar to the Moroccan and Romanian migratory model and elements in common with other nationalities. The main statistic font utilized consists of the “Permits to stay” issued by the Police and revised by Istat. The “Permit to stay” is the document that legalises the presence of the foreign citizen and bears his/her identification data and the reason for staying. This implies that the illegal immigrant component is not considered in these statistics. Table 1 reports the more present nationalities in Italian data, according to sex from 1992 to 2004.

Table 1 – ‘Permit to stay’ according to sex and main nationalities present. 1st January 1992 and 2004.

Paesi	1992			Paesi	2004			Numeri indici (1992 = 1)	
	MF	F	% F		MF	F	% F	MF	F
Morocco	83.292	8.180	9,8	Romania	244.377	120.829	49,4	2,9	14,8
Tunisia	41.547	3.733	9,0	Albania	240.421	92.674	38,5	5,8	24,8
Philippines	36.316	24.407	67,2	Marocco	231.044	71.970	31,1	6,4	2,9
Ex Jugoslavia	26.727	9.911	37,1	Ucraina	117.161	99.077	84,6	-	-
Albania	24.886	3.504	14,1	Cina	104.952	46.848	44,6	4,2	13,4
Senegal	24.194	694	2,9	Philippines	76.099	48.190	63,3	3,1	69,4
Egypt	18.473	2.624	14,2	Polonia	64.912	48.837	75,2	3,5	18,6
China	15.776	6.283	39,8	Tunisia	62.651	15.285	24,4	4,0	2,4
Poland	12.139	6.757	55,7	Senegal	49.720	5.379	10,8	4,1	0,8
Sri Lanka	12.114	3.758	31,0	India	49.157	15.707	32,0	4,1	4,2
Ghana	11.303	3.506	31,0	Perù	48.827	32.040	65,6	9,8	10,0
Brasil	10.953	7.513	68,6	Ecuador	48.302	31.624	65,5	46,6	44,5
India	9.918	4.265	43,0	Egitto	47.094	8.076	17,1	4,7	1,9
Argentina	9.603	5.036	52,4	Serbia e M.	46.766	18.511	39,6	1,7	1,9
Somalia	9.265	5.685	61,4	Sri Lanka	43.047	17.757	41,3	4,6	3,1
Romania	8.250	4.786	58,0	Moldavia	38.269	27.180	71,0	2551,3*	2470,9
Ethiopia	7.615	5.024	66,0	Macedonia	34.291	11.399	33,2	50,4**	80,3
Pakistan	6.983	248	3,6	Bangladesh	34.255	6.049	17,7	6,2	37,8
Iran	6.821	2.359	34,6	Pakistan	31.607	5.197	16,4	4,6	2,2
Nigeria	5.627	2.426	43,1	Brasil	26.975	19.120	70,9	4,8	7,9
Total	648.935	259.050	39,9	Totale	2.227.567	1.076.080	48,3	3,4	4,2

Source: elaboration of ISTAT data; * 1998; ** 1993

The analysis of the flows starts in 1992 because that is when a progressive improvement in the recording of statistics had begun which insured a better reliability of the available

information on the subject, especially for what concerns the numerical dimension, registered components and immigrant nationalities.

The data in table 1 clearly shows that, firstly, in the period taken into consideration the picture of present immigration structure has become more articulated. The first result shows a clear increase in the number of immigrants coming from eastern Europe who represent the main immigrant presence in Italy up until the present day. However, at the same time, the north African component is still holding a strong position, in which the Moroccan is the main contributor. It is therefore evident that within the migratory flows that interested Italy then, the Mediterranean and the Balkans area had increased their numerical hegemony. It is also evident that, within the same period, the migratory flows coming from Asian and east European countries had a relevant and constant increase. Within such areas the Romanian flows stand out and were the first foreign presence in Italy according to the number of foreign citizens in Italy in 2004. Such a presence exploded due to regularisation permitted by Italian law 189 in 2002 and law 222 in 2002, when 134.909 Romanian citizens were regularised.

One of the most important changes showed by foreign immigration in Italy concerns the relevant growth of the female presence. During the last years, a growth of the above mentioned component was recorded, going from less than 40 per cent of the total in 1992 to more than 48 per cent in 2004. Such an increase led to a slight attenuation of the various present nationalities strong distinctive characteristics. This is especially true for those nationalities, like the north African, which have always been characterised by a clear prevalence of the male component. The female Moroccan presence should be taken into consideration. It has moved from 9 per cent in 1992 to more than 31 per cent in 2004, with a growth of its absolute value of 9 times compared to the initial number, while the total presence has increased by 2,8 per cent. This indicates that the female presence has increased at a higher rate compared to that of the male one in the latter years.

Such data is different in the Romanian case where the balancing of the component happened in an inverse way, which means that the male part has shown a bigger growth and now is very much balanced with a female presence of 49 per cent of the total.

As far as Moroccan immigration is concerned, the main female presence is most probably due to family re-uniting and therefore it must be considered as a consequence of the beginning of the stabilisation processes. On such matters we must point out that the female presence, being an important element that characterises the various nationalities migratory models, and with its different distribution within the national communities, has contributed to outline in a different way the processes of stabilisation surveyed between the same nationalities. In other words, the fact is that the female component for some nationalities represents, such as for the Philippine or Polish ones, the primary agent of the migratory process. It is they that make decisions on very important aspects of life, such as, the time and way for families to reunite. This ensures to such nationalities migratory movements, their peculiar and more stable characteristics, compared to those characterised by a prevalent male presence.

As far as the immigrant's territorial distribution is concerned, table 2 shows the 'permit to stay' data divided by territory between 2003 and 2004, thus allowing a study of the effects of the latest immigrant regularisation.

Tabel 2 – Permit to stay per geographical regions. 1° January 2003 - 2004

	2003		2004		Increase 2003 - 2004		Amnestied
	V. a.	%	V. a.	%	V. a.	%	V. a.
Norh-West	492.948	32,8	746.146	33,5	253.198	51,4	214.272
North-East	388.427	25,8	550.095	24,7	161.668	41,6	126.608
Centre	426.737	28,4	618.645	27,8	191.908	45,0	186.438
South	133.763	8,9	232.205	10,4	98.442	73,6	100.579
Islands	61.411	4,1	80.476	3,6	19.065	31,0	18.932
Italy	1.503.286	100,0	2.227.567	100,0	724.281	48,2	646.829

Source: INSTAT elaboration of Ministry of the Interior's data

The noticeable increase in 'Permits to stay' in 2004, compared to the previous year, is mainly due to the latest regularisations which have legalised 646.829 foreign citizen's status.

Furthermore, the study of the territorial distribution, both from an increase in the 'Permits to stay' and in terms of an absolute number, indicates a progressive concentration of immigrants in the centre north regions related to a strongly expanding demand for work in such regions not compensated by a corresponding demand by local residents for work. The most noticeable increase shown by the southern regions, is due to a very strong demand for regularisation by immigrants in such regions that does not always represent the reason for settling there. It shows that in such regions the highest quota of irregulars is concentrated and, once a regular permit is obtained, they move north, as shown by the residency transfer data.

This indicates the immigrants mobility phenomenon, following the re-enforcement of their presence and progressive stabilisation, towards those areas in Italy where the phenomenon meets more favourable conditions.

The reason for such particular territorial distribution of the immigrants on Italian territory, could be related to the different demands for work in different regions and the dualist economic and social factors that characterise Italy. (F. Crescenzi, A. Ferruzza, M. Ricci, 1993, p.11). Therefore the high concentration of immigrants in the north is a sign of the immigrant stabilisation process: they are found where work is present with such conditions to guarantee a higher level of stability.

1.1 *The Moroccan and Romanian presence in the Italian regions*

Let us now make a more detailed comparative analysis in relation to the diverse presence of the studied immigration phenomenon in our regions. In Table 3 the distribution of the 'Permit to stay' issued to Moroccan and Romanian immigrants in each of the Italian regions, is presented.

Tabel 3 - Permit to stay issued to Moroccan and Romanian citizens divided by issuing regions.
1st January 2004

Regioni	Marocco		Romania		Total	
	v. a.	%	v. a.	%	v. a.	%
Piemonte	33.203	14,4	39.773	16,3	171.497	7,7
Valle d'Aosta	1.074	0,5	340	0,1	3.681	0,2
Lombardia	55.418	24,0	35.620	14,6	512.632	23
Trentino	4.079	1,8	2.496	1,0	44.006	2
Veneto	29.519	12,8	28.981	11,9	225.994	10,1
Friuli	1.635	0,7	4.893	2,0	61.522	2,8
Liguria	6.526	2,8	2.272	0,9	58.336	2,6
Emilia	34.950	15,1	14.985	6,1	218.573	9,8
Toscana	13.362	5,8	19.122	7,8	174.997	7,9
Umbria	4.936	2,1	5.088	2,1	244.696	2
Marche	7.436	3,2	5.572	2,3	65.419	2,9
Lazio	6.875	3,0	71.499	29,3	333.533	15
Abruzzo	2.466	1,1	4.136	1,7	33.037	1,5
Molise	469	0,2	409	0,2	3.500	0,2
Campania	8.513	3,7	2.615	1,1	114.360	5,1
Puglia	3.889	1,7	1.624	0,7	42.608	1,9
Basilicata	814	0,4	479	0,2	5.649	0,3
Calabria	6.766	2,9	1.578	0,6	33.051	1,5
Sicilia	6.822	3,0	2.312	0,9	65.331	2,9
Sardegna	2.292	1,0	583	0,2	15.145	0,7
Italia	231.044	100,0	244.377	100,0	2.227.567	100,0

Source: elaboration of Istat data

As for the regional peculiarities, Lombardia, with more than 24 per cent of the total presence, Emilia Romagna, with its more than 15 per cent and lastly, Piemonte and Veneto, respectively with 14 and a bit less than 13 per cent, make up two-thirds of the total number of Moroccans present in Italy. The Moroccan territorial diffusion, therefore, is mainly present in just four regions. It is not by chance that such regions have the highest demand for work compared to the other Italian regions.

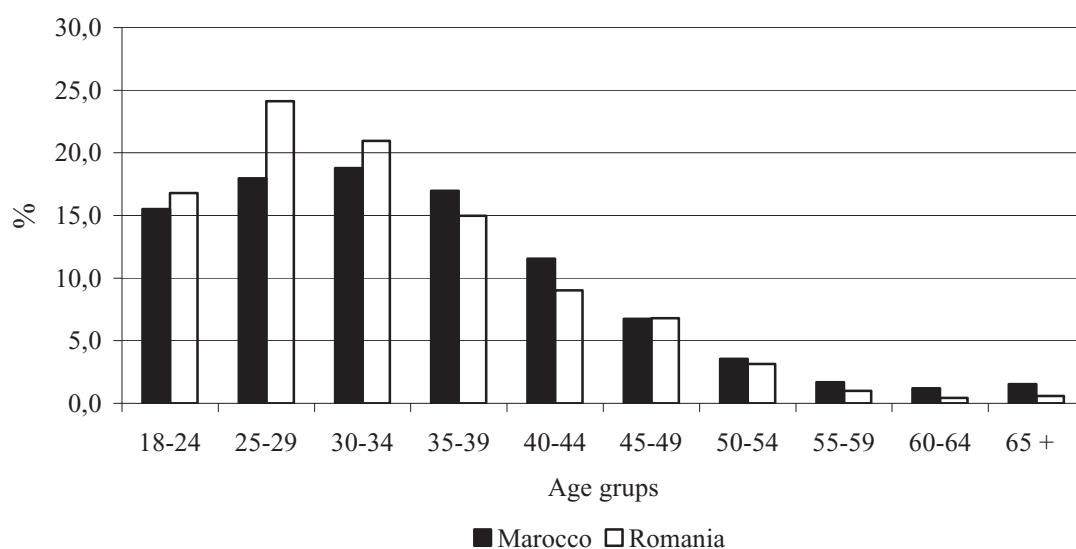
The Romanians show a territorial presence very similar to the Moroccans, with a slight preference for Piemonte, where over 16 per cent of Romanians in Italy are concentrated. In any case the first Italian region for Romanians is Lazio which accounts for more than 29 per cent of the total of Romanians present in 2004.

Settling into a region depends on numerous factors and the explanation for the high concentration of Romanian immigrants in Lazio regards the interaction of these factors. The most important one in the decision on where to settle is undoubtedly represented by the above mentioned work dimension. The preponderant presence of the nationalities considered in the regions where it is easier to find stable work confirms the guiding role of this factor in the choice of territorial settlement. However the role played by the ethnic and parental networks must be taken into consideration too, as they ensure a first reception of the new arrivals as well as a higher possibility of finding employment. Furthermore, the magnitude of the foreign presence and its past history in the various Italian regions, and since there is existence of an already established and consolidated community, guarantees a higher possibility of success to the new arrivals migratory choices. The parallel action of these two factors explains the high quota of Romanian immigrants in Lazio.

1.2 Demographic features and reasons for Moroccan and Romanian immigration

Another important demographic characteristic that must be taken into consideration for the immigrants integration process is represented by such populations divided by age. Table 1 shows the distribution of the 'Permit to stay' issued to Moroccan and Romanian citizens.

Graph 1 - Permit to stay per age group. 2004



Source: elaboration of Istat data

Before we start the data analysis a note must be made concerning the numbers of immigrants younger than eighteen. The source used (Permit to stay permit) presents important limitations concerning age, as a good percentage of minors are excluded, being most of the time dependants of their parents. And they are exonerated from holding an individual authorisation. Their status is noted on their parents 'Permit to stay.' Hence the data from the 'Permit to stay' for immigrants up to eighteen is underestimated due to the lack of statistics on this age group who are legally dependants of their parents. As a result we have chosen not to consider minors in this table.

The first relevant point from the table regards the distribution per age group of Moroccan immigrants that are slightly more homogenous than Romanians, which are slightly more concentrated in the younger age groups. Over three quarters of the Romanian population is located in the eighteen to forty year age group whilst a little more than 69 per cent of the Moroccan population is concentrated in the same age group. The interpretation of such a difference seems to indicate that for the Moroccan population the stabilisation process, which involves a more unified age group distribution, is more advanced, even if we must consider that such data implies that the general migratory phenomenon in Italy, and in particular the Romanian and Moroccan populations, is still too recent to have a balanced age group structure.

Table 4 shows the reasons for which the 'Permits to stay' are issued for Moroccan and Romanian citizens present in Italy in 2004.

Table 4 - Permit to stay by reason for stay. 1st January 2004

	MF	Work	%	Family	%	Others	%
Morocco	231.044	164.759	71,3	63.523	27,5	2.762	1,2
Romania	244.377	194.408	79,6	38.458	15,7	11.511	4,7
Total	2.227.567	1.479.381	66,4	545.300	24,5	202.886	9,1

Source: elaboration of Istat data

The reasons related to work for the two populations is the prevailing characteristic, although we must point out that, in the case of the Moroccans the percentage of permits issued for family reasons is higher than for Romanians.

Given the prevalence of permits issued for working reasons, Moroccan and Romanian immigration, in accordance with the literature written on the subject, is mainly a working migration.

The first step to make for the identification of the characteristics of the Moroccan's and Romanians' incorporation in the labor market consists of the analysis of the diverse motives for which the working permits are issued. Table 5 gives some basic information on the ways through which regular immigrants present in Italy might have entered the Italian labour market in recent years.

Table 5 - Permit to stay by working reason. 1st January 2004

	Lavoro	Employee work	%	Job seekers	%	Self-employed	%
Morocco	164.759	131.426	79,8	8.898	5,4	24.435	14,8
Romania	194.408	175.152	90,1	11.514	5,9	7.742	4,0
Total	1.479.381	1.270.046	85,8	83.788	5,7	125.547	8,5

Source: elaboration of Istat data

Concerning such inclusion in the labour market of the immigrants taken into consideration, we should underline that final deductions cannot be made from this data. First of all because the data considers regular work permits and therefore skips a rather significant quota. And finally because the information concerning self-employed workers and those searching for work, for instance, is surely over estimated. Many immigrants, in fact, request such permits, even though already employed – in the majority of cases working for someone but without a regular contract – because it is easier to obtain a permit as a freelance worker or if you are searching for work and thus not able to demonstrate your working status. This was especially true during the 90's when such a possibility was codified by the then law. Hence the work permit for those looking for work does not necessarily mean the immigrant holding such authorisation to stay is, in fact, unemployed. Having said this we can begin to make some hypotheses about the way and the quality of the Moroccan's and Romanians' incorporation in the labor market.

Firstly, we understand that the permits issued to Moroccan immigrants in 2004 as employees makes up more than three quarters of the total number of permits issued for work. When considering that in 1992 such quotas corresponded to almost 54 per cent of the total, we can see a relevant increase in the tendency to ask for and to issue permits for employees. This is contrary to what happens to those permits issued for those looking for work. For these permits the tendency is a clear decrease in number going from around 40 per cent of the total in 1992, to less than 5,4 per cent in 2004. Such a tendency confirms what was just said about the real nature of the permits issued for those looking for work and their real numbers. As a matter of fact the highest number of such permits requested was registered the day after the regularisation, following the

Martelli Law and, in any case, the various peaks shown by the decreasing tendency happened the day after the following regularisations.

Alongside the reinforcement of such a trait of Moroccan immigrant workers as employees, we must underline the remarkable growth of the permits issued for freelance workers which increases from 6 per cent in 1992 to almost 15 per cent in 2004. Such a way of entering the workforce in specific social, economic and institutional contexts and within very rich ethnic networks, has led to entrepreneurial experiences which undoubtedly represent a phenomenon of real interest, especially in the Moroccan case. On the other hand such permits may correspond to a form of self-employment, as an expression of strategies to escape from unemployment and that, in any case, represent secondary and precarious occupations more than real entrepreneurial work.

As far as the Romanian presence is concerned, we must say that it presents the same characteristics as the Moroccan one, although almost exclusively concentrated on permits issued for subordinate work. It is possible that such a concentration is due to the effects of the previously mentioned regularisation which was issued only for employee work.

1.3 Insertion in the labor market. Main features

It is therefore evident that Moroccan and Romanian immigration is characterised by an immigration for work reasons and the entrance into the workforce represents one of the main stabilisation factors.

Table 6 shows some signs of such entrance for both populations, using data on extra communitarian workers affiliated or members of the *Istituto Nazionale della Previdenza Sociale* for 2002. Such data obviously does not refer to the immigrant population as a whole since it only concerns the part of the population that has obtained a regular contract with the relative contractual guarantees and right to health care.

Table 6 – Romanian and Moroccan workers and the total of extra communitarian work members of INPS divided by working sector and sex. 2002

Sector	Romania			Marocco			Total		
	MF	% MF	% F	MF	% MF	% F	MF	% MF	% F
Agrarian - industry	2.349	1,7	37,7	3.427	2,5	17,3	24.010	2,0	28,8
Building	37.218	26,8	1,0	23.385	16,8	0,6	174.532	14,3	1,2
Textiles	2.268	1,6	73,5	4.975	3,6	38,7	139.205	11,4	11,4
Metallurgy	14.073	10,1	13,0	24.104	17,4	6,3	53.746	4,4	45,1
Rest of industries	8.966	6,5	24,0	16.050	11,6	10,9	98.397	8,0	18,1
Domestic	15.019	10,8	89,7	4.767	3,4	82,5	211.248	17,2	43,2
Commerce	17.716	12,7	46,9	23.509	16,9	26,0	110.981	9,1	47,1
Hotel	11.986	8,6	69,0	8.062	5,8	42,8	147.328	12,0	84,0
Rest of services	7.996	5,8	23,2	10.604	7,6	12,4	71.544	57,0	21,7
Self employed	7.515	5,4	25,9	10.193	7,3	12,7	85.123	7,0	23,2
Not traceable	12.893	9,3	59,2	8.628	6,2	19,4	8.566	0,7	22,4
Various	985	0,7	23,0	1.128	0,8	17,5	100.071	8,2	49,0
Total	138.984	100,0	35,0	138.832	100,0	17,2	1.224.751	100,0	34,3

Source: elaboration of Istat data

The first element that differentiates the two models for entering the workforce is the relevance of the female component over the total number of INPS members. In the Romanian case female workers represent 35 per cent, decisively higher than the Moroccan one which is a little more than 17 per cent, and fully in line with the national average. Such a feature is not solely due to a greater female presence in the Romanian

population but also the fact that within this female presence there is a significant participation of immigrant women who has entered in Italy by themselves for job search. In the case of the Moroccans the largest component of the female presence is represented by those who arrived in Italy through family reunification. They do not present themselves to the labour force at the moment of their arrival. Their eventual entry into the labour force goes through the actions of the head of the family. Such considerations seem to be confirmed by the differences in the relevance of the domestic workers which seems to be the second attribute which characterises the entrance into the work force of the two populations.

The number of Romanian citizens that are part of the domestic work sector is much higher than in the Moroccan case. In the first reality almost 11 per cent compared to a little more than 3 per cent in the Moroccan case. Furthermore, Moroccans show a much higher preference for the commercial and industrial sectors. 17 per cent of the total number is found in the commercial sector whilst almost a third are in the industrial sector. Romanians, on the other hand, show an almost upside down picture in which the domestic and the building sector are predominant. Only a few years ago a great part of the building work was also done by Moroccan immigrants, whereas today such a quota is reduced both as a regular occupation and in absolute terms, which means that the underground occupation must also be included. This could mean that a section of the immigrants involved in the building sector in the past has got a more productive occupation. In general, it seems that there has been a certain turnover of nationalities presenting themselves in the building sector.

The entrance into this field of work requires few skills and it represents an open market for a great part of the immigrants looking for a first occupation in Italy. It is a field of work in which immigrants can enter without permission to stay and, when they obtain it, generally they leave this kind of occupation. Or, just like other sectors, they carry on as regular, and or, specialised workers. The foreign worker, in short, changes work or improves his qualifications whilst working for someone as a dependant. Furthermore he or she becomes a team leader with other immigrants who are living that which he has been through.

Table 6 gives some indication of such improved working paths amongst Moroccan workers. It is a sign of work becoming more stable in some Moroccan immigrant work sectors. At the same time it points out that from a work entry point of view, Romanian immigrants are still at a basic level in this stabilisation process. This is also understood by the fact that Romanian immigration is still a recent phenomenon compared to the Moroccan which is far older.

Part II

The transnational migratory movements of the Moroccan community in Rome

2.1 *The characteristics of Moroccan immigration in Rome*

The transnational practices of immigrants cannot be fully understood if they are not considered within a global context of the immigrant population and its fundamental features. In this paragraph we consider in particular the main demographic features of the Moroccan population and, furthermore, the varying degrees of working incorporation of such a population present in the city of Rome.

In order to identify the numbers and the distribution per nationality of the immigrants in Rome, we used the data concerning foreign citizens registered at the central registrar. This source shows a number of foreign citizens who are resident under a specific town hall, divided by sex and nationality. We prefer this source to the ‘Permit to stay’ because the latter doesn’t distinguish according to which town hall one is registered under and does not include minors. However, we must underline that town halls have their limitations in that while they show the part of the more stable migratory population with the inconvenient of an over representation of this component, as they don’t remove from registrar that immigrant leave a town hall without communicating this information. Therefore the town hall data may include immigrants no longer resident. Table 7 shows the numbers in the 2005 registrar.

Table 7 – Foreign citizens present in the Lazio Region, Province and city of Rome divided by sex and nationality – 1st January 2006

Lazio Region	Province of Rome		City of Rome					
	MF	% F	MF	% F				
Romania	65.507	50,1	Romania	53.297	50,2	Romania	26.268	52,8
The Philippines	18.540	61,3	The Philippines	17.965	61,2	The Philippines	16.819	61,3
Albania	16.929	44,7	Albania	13.779	64,8	Albania	8.609	67,6
Poland	16.035	64,9	Poland	10.073	44,9	Poland	6.897	63,4
Ucraina	9.752	81,5	Ucraina	8.513	62,5	Ucraina	6.134	28,6
Peru	8.957	62,7	Perù	6.934	81,9	Perù	5.250	65,2
Morocco	7.483	40,6	Morocco	6.505	28,9	Morocco	5.094	48,7
Bangladesh	6.937	29,2	Bangladesh	6.103	64,3	Bangladesh	4.864	83,4
Ecuador	6.409	64,2	Ecuador	5.772	48,7	Ecuador	4.369	37,7
China	6.390	48,9	China	5.499	36,8	China	3.833	46,5
India	6.254	41,4	India	4.562	63,2	India	3.562	65,7
Egypt	5.835	36,8	Egypt	4.540	46,5	Egypt	3.174	50,7
Moldova	5.512	63,6	Moldova	4.424	42,5	Moldova	3.029	47,9
France	4.976	65,2	France	4.351	65,5	France	2.990	66,2
Sri Lanka	4.182	47,8	Sri Lanka	3.723	47,7	Sri Lanka	2.867	64,5
Macedonia	4.079	39,8	Macedonia	3.473	51,7	Macedonia	2.862	54,2
Tunisia	3.968	41,2	Tunisia	3.381	66,3	Tunisia	2.446	66,1
Germany	3.824	65,7	Germany	3.228	61,0	Germany	2.342	56,9
United Kingdom	3.796	60,4	United Kingdom	3.192	66,2	United Kingdom	2.302	61,6
Serbia e Montenegro	3.759	50,8	Serbia e Montenegro	3.007	73,6	Serbia e Montenegro	2.227	46,7
Other	65.941	58,6	Other	55.884	55,5	Other	40.895	55,4
Total Area	275.065	54,6	Total Area	228.205	55,1	Total Area	156.833	56,7

Source: elaboration of Istat data

The most remarkable data is that within the Moroccan immigrant presence in Rome, the female component is higher than the national Moroccan women quota. Those resident in Rome represent 46 per cent of the Moroccan population. This indicates that at this territorial level the Moroccan presence holds a very advanced stage of stabilisation which, when compared to the national data where the female component corresponds to a third of the population, is due to an advanced stabilisation of this immigration. The stabilisation of Moroccan immigration is also evident from a work point of view, as stated in Table 8 which gives the data of the Moroccan workers affiliated to INAIL.

Table 8 – Moroccan dependent workers insured^a in the Province of Rome divided by sector and business dimension. 2001 - 2005

	Settore				Total	% F
	Agriculture	Industry	Services	Not known		
2001	1,5	24,9	73,0	0,6	2.178	19,9
2002	1,2	25,0	73,1	0,8	2.765	20,5
2003	1,0	22,8	75,2	1,0	3.081	22,3
2004	1,3	22,1	74,8	1,8	3.454	22,8
2005	1,1	22,6	73,9	2,4	3.221	23,8
	business dimension				Total	% F
	Micro firms (1-9)	Small (10-49)	Medium (50-249)	Big (+ 249)		
2001	42,7	20,2	12,1	25,0	2.178	19,9
2002	48,2	19,9	8,5	23,4	2.765	20,5
2003	45,6	18,8	7,6	27,9	3.081	22,3
2004	42,4	18,0	7,8	31,8	3.454	22,8
2005	47,8	15,4	8,1	28,7	3.221	23,8

Source: elaboration of Istat data. ^a Workers who have worked at least one day a year

Moroccan work stabilisation can be observed, firstly, through the increase in the number of Moroccan workers that have insurance and, secondly, from the fact that such an increase also includes the female component, both in absolute and relative terms. The latter aspect points out that even if the Moroccan female immigrants come to Italy mainly through family reunions, a significant number of them enter the workforce and, with time, find an occupation. Therefore, following the establishment of the family in Rome and the beginning of integrating into the new society, Moroccan women are expected to look for work. Such an impulse may be produced both by the need to participate in the formation of family income and, therefore to go beyond the stabilisation process, and also by the women's need to be emancipated. In any case this leads to a higher push in the integration processes.

When considering the size of the firms in which the Moroccan immigrants find work in Rome, what appears, even if the work is mainly concentrated in the tertiary sector and in small firms during the period taken into account, is that the more important of these firms have continuously increased the number of Moroccan workers they have hired. However the Moroccan's entrance into the labour force, due to the particular configuration of roman work markets that are dominated by the tertiary sector, is precarious. In effect about three quarters of the Moroccan workforce find employment in the service sector, even though we must underline their significant presence in the industrial sector, particularly in specific areas of the urban territory.

A more detailed vision of the kinds of work is given in Table 9 which presents the data of the Moroccan workers divided by the economical sector and sex.

Table 9 – Dependent Moroccan workers in the Province of Rome divided by sector and sex. 2005

	MF	% MF	% F
Agrarian – industry	93	2,9	24,7
Building	456	14,2	5,5
Textiles	215	6,7	5,1
Metallurgy	350	10,9	19,1
Rest of industries	444	13,8	27,9
Agrarian - industry	1.584	49,2	31,5
Not traceable	79	2,5	24,1
Total	3.221	100,0	23,8

Source: elaboration of Istat data

The hotel sector and in general the business sector, in which they appear both as freelance workers and dependants, represents the main working environments of the Moroccans employed in the service sector.

The group called ‘rest of the services,’ considers both domestic work, which represents a bit more than 4% of the total, and all work connected to low skilled labour working activities such as cleaning carried out by co-operatives and industry services. It represents more than 30% of the total of the Moroccan workforce up until 2005 in the city of Rome. It is in such a group that Moroccan female workers show the highest values, with rather similar characteristics to the majority of the female immigrant population.

In conclusion, within the area of Rome a Moroccan immigrant presence is consolidated, whose stabilisation process is rather advanced and it influences significantly the transnational networks as will be shown here following.

2.1 Profiles of immigrants interviewed

During the 1990s the immigrant population in Italy stabilised considerably. The integration process into Italian society is not easy and is still marked by economic and political difficulties, but it has undoubtedly started. In recent years such a process of stabilisation has become apparent in Rome as elsewhere, although to a much larger extent in the large cities of northern and central Italy.

As the previously shown data demonstrates, and from the privileged data received from the interviewees, in Rome almost the majority of Moroccan immigrants have been involved in these integration processes.

The Moroccan community in Italy can be considered as the forerunner of migratory flows into Italy, and Rome has been one of the principal destinations of immigrants from Morocco. Nevertheless, nowadays this community is one of the less numerous of immigrant populations living in Rome. This is because, with the progression of the integration processes, quite a lot of Moroccan immigrants have moved to northern regions of Italy (in particular Piemonte and Lombardia) where there is a greater demand for immigrant labour and it is possible to find more stable and well-paid jobs. As a consequence, the Moroccan presence in Rome has diminished over the last decade. Thus nowadays we have a small but long-standing community of Moroccan immigrants in Rome. All expert witnesses highlight that this community is well-established and that we can observe a rising second generation of Moroccan immigrants. As regards their entrance into the labour market, they principally work in the trade and restaurant sectors where we can see an interesting number of entrepreneurs.

Our sample was chosen from among Moroccans immigrants that have been in Rome for many years (at the very least six). Thus those that are the older and better settled. This means that the choice of subjects to interview was directed towards immigrants holding a long stay residence permit (*carta di soggiorno*) or Italian citizenship.

Subjects were contacted through traditional channels: the department of Immigration and CGIL – Italy’s largest trade union – in Rome, community leaders, associations working on immigration issues in the city and Moroccan immigrant associations.

For most of the subjects we interviewed, Rome was their first destination in Italy, and also where they settled. Some of our subjects, before leaving, saw Rome as an intermediate stage on their migratory path to another destination. Initially, they intended to go to France. However after a sort of “cultural acclimatisation” they realised it was better to stay in Rome. Moreover, all the individuals in our sample also hold a high school or university degree, a feature common to many early immigrants in Italy. They also tend to come mainly from cities such as Casablanca or semi-urban areas, and none hail from a background of social exclusion or cultural or economic disadvantage. They can all be described as coming from the “middle class” in their home country.

As for family composition, they can be divided into two groups: individuals living with their families, thanks to family reunion laws; and singles. Our intention in differentiating the sample based on family composition was to determine the effect of the presence of a family on trans national practices.

Finally, we have selected our sample from a gender dimension in order to pay particular attention to the role of woman in designing the trans national ties.

2.2 Prior to departure. Projects and migratory chains

The immigrants in our sample based their migratory projects prevalently on economic goals. These appear to be much stronger than other goals that may be part of their intended projects. A vast majority invested greatly – both economically and psychologically – in their decision to emigrate, which they took after long deliberation.

The initial goal is always to find work. But, there is a quite interesting difference between the migratory projects of male and female immigrants. For males, it is most important from an emancipation point of view. For the women interviewed, work is a means to obtain freedom from an oppressive situation. They emigrate to free themselves through work, not for work.

A large part of the female component of Moroccan immigrants in Italy arrive through the reunification of family but, there has always been quite a small number that have not arrived as dependents or followers of ‘primary’ male migrants but as the independent migration of females in response to the needs of the European and global service economies.

Finally, all interviewees do not have previous experiences of territorial mobility, neither abroad nor in others parts of their home country. But they have relatives, in the great majority of cases parents and brothers, that have moved abroad for work. These experiences do not only concern migrants’ families but all sending communities.

The Moroccan immigrants of our sample come from regions of Morocco that are the principal and older sending areas of the country: Beni Melal, Kouribgha – regions of southern part of the country - and Casablanca. We can assess that the first emigrants from these areas were already in their thirty’s in the twentieth century when they moved to France. After World War II, they also left for Belgium and the Netherlands. At the beginning of the 1980’s they started emigrating to Italy and Spain. Therefore, during all these years in these regions of Morocco a certain “culture of migration” developed that predisposed young people to leave the country. With the expression “culture of

migration", as stated Jeffrey Cohen, we principally intend a complex mix of knowledge, practices and "know how" on the possibility of migration, on the receiving countries and on the possibility of entry into these countries (J. H. Cohen 2004).

Thus in these regions migration is an all encompassing experience. It occurs throughout the regions and has a historical presence that dates back to the first half of the twentieth century. With this background, the decision to migrate is one that people make as part of their everyday experience and migrating is accepted by most Moroccans as one path toward economic well-being. In other words, migration is "deeply ingrained into the repertoire of people's behaviour, and values associated with migration become part of the community's values" (Massey et al. 1998, 47).

Finally, for the subjects interviewed, the choice to leave comes from the interplay of individuals, their households, and their communities, as well as national and international socio economic forces.

The role of networks (of family and do community) is crucial not only for the decision to leave but also to choose where to go and what to do.

2.3 Entering and settlement into the city of Rome

Regarding entry and settlement in Italy, shifting the focus on social relationships means that the areas to consider are the width of the network of relations that the immigrants have built up or inherited, the role of relatives as opposed to friends in terms of support, and who the figures are that immigrants turn to for support.

The analysis of migratory paths reveals that our subjects have been the earliest to arrive in Italy. They have functioned as the first ring in the migratory chain. They have received some information about Italy and the working situation in Italy through friendship networks or family. But, in almost all cases, their networks were located elsewhere, particularly in France. The subjects in our sample had been in Italy for a long amount of time and so they had built up a strong network through contacts with fellow-countrymen and associations dealing with immigration affairs, and thus were part of a network that could put them in contact with associations and other organizations.

So, we can point out that the support of social networks has functioned as an active instrument of working integration. Having a network composed of individuals that have already worked and settled means having a better knowledge of the labour market and of one's occupational chances. The analysis of the working situation and of the work history of subjects interviewed reveals that the market has been the only place where immigrants have found their means of integration into Italian society.

Those interviewed who had received some form of training or had done a course in Italy show almost the same stages. They are marked by a growing stability. Generally speaking, we can see that after their arrival in Italy, they start working as peddlers. When their knowledge of the labor market becomes more in depth, they look for more stable and lucrative work. After that, as soon as they gain the necessary capital to begin their own activities, they become sellers or entrepreneurs. In the Moroccan community of Rome, self-employment is very widespread.

The networks described in our interviews are especially broad in terms of the number of contacts that can be activated. The picture is more complex regarding networks of friends, and it appears that there is a widespread ability to activate relationships within different social contexts. They have Italian friends just like fellow nationals or non-nationals residing in Rome or in its province.

Single immigrants tended to have wider networks of friends, while married ones, tended to keep to their network of relatives. Job stability, knowledge of the city and a longer permanence in Rome are the conditions that make possible the widening of friendship

based networks, from purely ethnic to mixed (comprising of Italian and non-Italian friends). The ability to entertain relationships outside close family and the ethnic group is an important factor in the stabilisation of the migratory experience.

2.4 The practices and development of transnational networks

The capacity of building wider networks also involves a trans national dimension. All the subjects have a network, at least family, that crosses the Italian dimension and involves both Morocco and other European countries, such as France. We do not think that all trans national ties of the immigrants interviewed shape a trans national community because they lack stability and they are centred around immigrants in Italy so they are not self – sustainable. But these trans national ties can work as a bridge between home country and Italy and they work as a vehicle for many kinds of material and immaterial resources.

From a study of the interviews we see that remittances assume a primary role in these trans national actions. All subjects have a regular relationship with their community of origin. This liaison consists of regular return trips and sending money to the family back home. This money is generally used by the family in Morocco for satisfying their needs (i.e. to pay for schooling of brothers and sisters). The subjects use indifferently both the banking channel and the more traditional channel of sending money. It is a wide spread practice to use an immigrant that returns home for sending money or bringing money with them on return trips after the summer holidays.

As regards collective remittances, we can point out that only for emergencies is there a collective mobilisation in order to collect money. The interviewed Moustafa Mansouri remembers that they organised some collections on the occasion of an earthquake for the repatriation of the remains. Furthermore, there were some occasions of collective remittances for particular needs of the village. He remembers the restoration of the local Mosque made by French emigrants. Another occasion was the purchase of an ambulance and some other big events at the Mosque. Generally speaking, in these cases, the local community in the country of origin choose a delegate who is in charge of the administration of these monies.

Aziz Darif states that a collective mobilisation in order to collect money is more frequent among the Moroccan community in Rome when someone needs help, for example, on the occasion of a funeral, repatriation or unemployment. However, it is the opinion of the interviewed that the economic sphere of trans national networks of Moroccan immigrants in Rome is more individually oriented than collective.

No one thinks of undertaking business initiatives in Morocco, because they consider doing business in the home country too complicated and too expensive from the point of view of bureaucracy. Thus, they prefer to invest money from their country of origin in Italy as that is the country where they intend on settling.

In the case of Lacsan, the economic sphere of trans national practices reaches a wide transnational dimension. It includes Morocco and Italy, as usual, but also Spain and France. Lacsan left for Italy in 1989 at the age of 14 in order to join his father in Rome. After his arrival he started working with his father, at the beginning as a peddler, selling clothes. He worked as such until 1992. After that he gained the necessary capital to begin his own activity, he bought a van and began to sell various merchandise imported from Morocco, Algeria and Tunisia through Spanish and French trading firms made up of Moroccan immigrants and natives.

He travels to Paris and Marseille in France, and Barcelona, Alicante and Taragona in Spain, in order to buy the products and then sell them in Italy. In Italy, his work-zone spreads from Salerno up to Perugia. He sells especially to Asiatic and African

customers. In his trips to Barcelona and Marseille, he takes with him some products from Italy (such as beds and other furniture) that he sells during his trip.

At the beginning of his activity, he was supported by some fellow countrymen in France, who gave him all the explanations he needed on how to manage foodstuffs wholesale. He now works with two Moroccan men. Furthermore, he is member of an informal association of traders from North Africa that operate in the principal immigration countries of Europe. This association shares members' money and goods. Each member can receive money that he can then invest in buying and selling various products. They rotate the loan as soon as they have converted all products into cash. Otherwise, the members can receive some goods from the association and then they should revolve the equivalent value in money. Another important task of this association is the organization and management of international trade fairs.

What bonds this association is a confidence in and belonging to Islam. Economic mechanisms of association are ruled by norms of the Muslim religion. However to access this association it is not sufficient to be Muslim. One must obtain the confidence of the other members.

The dimension of confidence in this case depends on the social capital of the potential member. As far as this is concerned, we must specify that as for social capital, following the definition given by Bourdieu and Wacquant, for such work it means : "the amount of resources, both virtual and real, due to an individual or a group of individuals that depends on the ability of owning a stable network, more or less institutionalised, of mutual recognition and gratitude (P. Bourdieu, L. Wacquant, 1992)". In sum, it is the informal association in which the interviewee is part of, the social capital, that has the ability of transforming trust into monetary capital (P. Bourdieu 2000), it is the most important requirement for belonging to a trade association. In fact it is not uncommon, as the interviewees confirm, that the group or association give its services also to non Muslim traders – for example Jews and Catholics - that were introduced by members of the Muslim association.

The case of Lacsan satisfactorily illustrates the set of the transnational activities carried out by the Moroccan community present in Rome. They come out as being concentrated on economical and commercial aspects of the ties between the host nations of the Moroccan communities. The behaviour of Moroccan women, instead, is quiet different. Female immigrants interviewed show a strong inclination towards the socio – cultural aspects of trans national practices. Their activities are not limited to sending money as they also tend to participate in political and cultural debates affecting the home country. They act by utilising international cooperation tools. In particular, they work with international NGO's. We can quote the case of Siam who does voluntary work for an NGO that recycles used PCs. They mend them, install Linux and give them to public libraries, etc. She started with the association of Moroccan women.

In addition, another interviewee, Souad Sbai, has participated with other Moroccans in the founding of the female section of the 'Confederation of Moroccan Associations' in Italy called (ACMI-Donna) where she participates in the planning of activities with Moroccan women that live in Morocco. Currently, she is the president of this association that works with women and their children that are kidnapped by husbands through the appropriation of travel documents. In all interviewees there is a great interest in the bill of reform of family law and in the political debate over the condition of women in Morocco.

These transnational practices are affected by the life course of those interviewed, particularly if they have a strong coherence with their migratory project. They consider

their migratory experience as a successful experience as they have gained their emancipation, and now they feel able to help their fellow countrywomen in Morocco.

2.5 Conclusions

The identification of trans national practices of Moroccan immigrants shows that among the Moroccan community present in Rome such practices are quite widespread. We can see the presence of a continuous exchange between the latter and the home community. This exchange takes the form of economic exchange in the majority of cases. Usually, the exchange goes from Rome to the community of origin in Morocco and as a whole it consists of the sending of remittances or goods. The practice of regular return trips is just as widespread. On these occasions, the immigrants are used to carrying cash or some goods. Some subjects interviewed showed to have trans national ties very similar to family members that live in other European countries, for the most part, in France. In these cases, we can see a transnational space where the interviewees build up economic and social relations between Italy, France and Morocco.

It is hard to confirm whether these kinds of ties and trans national practices represent a shift beyond the usual territorial state-level memberships, state-bound national identities and civil political claims. If we explain trans nationalism as a combination of civic-political memberships, economic involvement, social networks, and cultural identities that link people and institutions in two or more nation-states, we can state that in our case the economic involvement and social networks guarantee a strong relationship among people in two or more nation-states. But, the trans nationalism of Moroccan immigrants in Rome can not be understood as a kind of organization spanning borders through networks or as a state of mind permitting multiple identifications and loyalties. Another limit of transnational practices that has been reviewed is represented by the family dimension. It means that trans national practices can get exhausted among family members. Furthermore, they depend on the initiative of the interviewed.

The limits of the trans national practices analysed do not consent to the former to shape communities but they can be considered as an expression of an individualization of lifestyles. We see individuals and families who exploit their relational, economic and cultural resources in their strategies for personal and group achievement.

A more collective-oriented dimension is noticeable among the women interviewed that are interested in cultural and political aspects of trans national practices. They prefer to approach trans national practices with more institutional tools and they also tend to build up institutional networks. So the political objective of trans national practices expands the scope of the latter that surpasses the limits of family networks.

The group of participants is not large or active enough to keep activities going, but a growth in these activities becoming institutionalized could give them their necessary stability and continuity. In this case, the institutionalization is driven by migrants themselves. Transnational practices seem more likely to develop when activities include not only individuals but also collectives because of the latter's high level of institutionalization.

As regards the relationship between transnational activities and structural and social integration, we can point out that it is deeply limited by the institutional and economic context of the receiving country. Restrictive immigration policies limit the possibilities for regular returns. Thus they reduce the number, the scope and the development of transnational practices. In reality, at the beginning of the process of migration of our interviewees, the transnational ties were very weak. At this time, they consisted of sending money exclusively as they could not return to their country of origin due to having an undocumented presence in Italy. At the same time, an integration into the

secondary segment of the labor market and social networks that were poor in social networks, reduced the resources that could be exchanged through trans national ties. With the progression of working stabilization and of social integration, we can observe a growth in trans national activities.

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