



LUND
UNIVERSITY

**Bachelor of Science Programme in
Development Studies (BIDS)**

Sub-Saharan migration in Morocco

Mobility and perceptions of migration management

Kira Twistmann Askholm

Department of Human Geography
SGED10

Spring 2019
Supervisor: Yahia Mahmoud

Abstract

Sub-Saharan migration towards Europe is an increasing concern amongst politicians and citizens in Europe. While migration to Europe across the Mediterranean generally has decreased since 2015, the number of people transiting through Morocco to Europe has increased significantly during these same years. This paper explores the experiences of sub-Saharan migrants in Morocco and how their mobility is affected by their perceptions of Moroccan migration management and Morocco as a transit zone. This is done through a qualitative case study based on participant observation and semi-structured interviews with sub-Saharan migrants in Morocco. Taking a starting point in the concepts of *transit zones* and migrants' *agency* and *resistance*, it has been found that sub-Saharan migrants perceive the Moroccan migration management as a business for Morocco where the government is taking advantage of its position as a transit zone towards the European Union. It is found that migrants acknowledge that they are part of this geopolitical interest game but resist the control and disruptions of their journeys by the authorities by gaining and sharing local knowledge and by organising in social communities.

Keywords: *Migration management, Morocco, Sub-Saharan African migration, Transit migration, Transit zone.*

Table of Contents

1. INTRODUCTION.....	4
1.1 AIM AND RESEARCH QUESTION.....	5
1.2 LIMITATIONS AND SCOPE	5
1.3 STRUCTURE OF THESIS	6
2. BACKGROUND	7
2.1 MIGRATION MANAGEMENT IN MOROCCO	7
2.2 MOROCCO’S REGIONAL COOPERATION ON MIGRATION.....	9
2.3 REASONS FOR TRANSIT MIGRATION TO MOROCCO	9
3. LITERATURE REVIEW.....	11
3.1 SUB-SAHARAN MIGRATION IN MOROCCO	11
3.2 TRANSIT MIGRATION.....	14
4. THEORY	17
4.1 TRANSIT ZONES.....	17
4.2 AGENCY AND RESISTANCE.....	19
5. METHODS	20
5.1 RESEARCH DESIGN	20
5.2 DATA COLLECTION	20
5.3 DATA ANALYSIS.....	26
6. ANALYSIS	26
6.1 POLICE AND CONTROL	27
6.2 ORGANISATIONS AS PART OF MIGRATION MANAGEMENT	30
6.3 MIGRATION MANAGEMENT AS A BUSINESS?	32
6.4 MOBILITY IN MOROCCO.....	34
6.5 STRATEGIES FOR MOBILITY	37
7. CONCLUSION.....	40
REFERENCES.....	43
APPENDICES	48
APPENDIX A.....	48
APPENDIX B	49

FIGURES

FIG. 2.1 MAP OF THE NORTH OF MOROCCO AND THE SOUTH OF SPAIN	10
FIG. 2.2 MAP OF TOWNS IN MOROCCO AND WESTERN SAHARA MENTIONED IN THE STUDY .	10

1. Introduction

Morocco has traditionally been a country of emigration, but since the 1990s this has changed, and the country is now increasingly also a country of immigration and transit for people wishing to move further to Europe (Janati et al. 2013). The migrants coming to, or transiting through, Morocco are primarily French, Yemeni, Syrian, South Asian and sub-Saharan African. The group of sub-Saharan migrants has gotten a lot of attention both in media, amongst politicians and the population in Europe, mainly because many of these migrants are attempting to move further from Morocco to Europe (de Haas 2008a; Janati et al. 2013). While Moroccans also attempt crossing the border to Spain without authorisation, it has been suggested that the border management is racialised and the crossing especially for sub-Saharan migrants happens under violent conditions which forces people to move by more dangerous means or routes (Johnson 2013).

The European Union has for long restricted immigration into its territory. This was especially seen with the creation of the Schengen system in 1990, and even more significant in 1999 when fences were built between Morocco and the Spanish enclaves Ceuta and Melilla (Collyer 2006). Morocco's incentive to help the EU keeping migrants from entering the Schengen area is partly due to the country's dependence on exports to the EU (Kreienbrink 2005). However, Morocco is at the same time working to keep a good relation to its African neighbours, mainly to keep the African countries' objections to Morocco's occupation of the Western Sahara silent (Kreienbrink 2005). Further, Morocco has been campaigning for long in order to get back into the African Union which they succeeded with in 2017 (African Union 2018).

Regarding the quantity of this migration flow, it is estimated that less than 10.000 people a year arrived unauthorised from Morocco to Spain in the years between 2008 and 2016 (Frontex 2018). This is a relatively small number compared to the annual inflow of more than 330.000 foreigners to Spain on average during those same years (IOM 2019a). This indicates that the flow on the Western Mediterranean route from Morocco to Spain has been relatively small. However, the quantity of this flow is now increasing. The number of unauthorised arrivals to Spain by sea went from about 5.300 arrivals in 2015 to more than ten times as many arrivals in 2018 where about 58.500 people arrived unauthorised (IOM 2019b). This is in contrast to the total number of unauthorised arrivals to Europe across the Mediterranean which is currently decreasing (IOM 2019c).

The EU has responded to the migration flow across the Mediterranean by calling it a "challenge" while they are working towards "protecting" their borders (European

Commission 2019a). An example of this was seen latest on the 1st of April 2019 when the EU decided to deploy an additional 10.000 border guards at its external borders (European Commission 2019a). Furthermore, immigration was the most important issue for European citizens when asked about their main concerns at a European level in 2018 (European Commission 2018a). With these tendencies in mind, this study explores how sub-Saharan migrants themselves experience being in Morocco on their way further.

1.1 Aim and Research Question

The aim of this paper is to analyse sub-Saharan migrants' perceptions of migration management in Morocco and to examine how these perceptions affect migrants' mobility in Morocco. This is done to better understand the experiences of migrants and how their mobility is determined by their perceptions of Morocco as a *transit zone* (Hess 2012 p.428). In order to reach this aim, it is examined which actors of the Moroccan migration management play a role for migrants' mobility in Morocco and how these actors play a role. Furthermore, sub-Saharan migrants' patterns and strategies for mobility in Morocco is explored.

The study is carried out as a qualitative case study in order to obtain a holistic understanding of the experiences of sub-Saharan migrants in Morocco (Bryman 2012 p.66). The empirical data is related to the theory of *transit zones*, primarily in order to guide the analysis. It is not specifically attempted to test or develop the theory further. However, by applying this theoretical concept, which has been developed for similar migration patterns in other Mediterranean countries, the possibilities and applicability of this approach is explored (Hess 2012). Therefore, in order to obtain a more comprehensive understanding of the experiences and mobility of sub-Saharan migrants in Morocco, it has been asked:

How is Moroccan migration management perceived by sub-Saharan migrants in Morocco? And how does this affect migrants' strategies for mobility in Morocco?

1.2 Limitations and scope

The group of sub-Saharan migrants included in this study is limited to people who have arrived and/or stayed in an unauthorised manner in Morocco. This being people who have either entered Morocco without the necessary authorisation required by immigration laws or people who have entered legally and later overstayed their visa resulting in an unauthorised status (IOM 2011). This scope was chosen since the experiences of this

group of people in many ways are similar. This includes, at some points, an insecure legal status, which makes people vulnerable to assaults, abuse and displacements. Further, people often have limited opportunities for employment and have no other option than low paid jobs with poor work conditions (Collyer 2010). Other groups of sub-Saharan migrants in Morocco which are not included in the study are students and pilgrims. These groups often have a more stable legal situation during the whole duration of their stay, and thereby have a less risky stay in Morocco (Janati et al. 2013).

The data collection for the study has been limited to the geographical areas of Rabat, Casablanca and Tanger in Morocco, and Ceuta in Spain. This scope was chosen since Rabat and Casablanca are the two cities where migrants usually settle for longer time in Morocco (Alioua 2005; Thorsen 2017). Furthermore, Tanger was visited in order to explore different experiences of mobility, and further because the migration management is carried out quite differently and stricter in Tanger (Thorsen 2017). However, because of stricter control in Tanger, it was rather limited what data could be obtained from there. Ceuta in Spain was visited in order to understand migrants' mobility from the perspective of those who did reach Spain. Ceuta is a Spanish town on the African continent and thereby one of two places where it is possible to enter Europe by land from the African continent. The other place being Melilla, also bordering Morocco (see Fig. 2.1).

1.3 Structure of thesis

This paper will first present the background of Moroccan migration management. Second, an overview of previous research on sub-Saharan migration in Morocco and transit migration in general will be presented. The third section will present the theoretical framework applied. This will include a discussion of the concept of *transit zones*. Fourth, the method of data collection and analysis will be outlined. In here, specific constraints and limitations in the field will be discussed. Fifth, an analysis and discussion of the data and results will be presented, and the findings will be related to the existing literature and the concept of *transit zones*. Finally, a conclusion will sum up the answers to the research question.

2. Background

The following chapter will describe the background for Moroccan migration management and Morocco's international cooperation on migration. Furthermore, it will shortly outline some contextual factors of sub-Saharan transit migration in Morocco.

2.1 Migration management in Morocco

Migration management in Morocco has traditionally been concerned with issues of emigration and less with immigration. This is due to Morocco's significant experience with emigration, especially with "guest workers" emigrating to Europe from the end of the 1960s (de Haas 2014 p.4). Moroccans are still one of the largest migrant communities in Europe and remittances from Moroccans abroad have been increasing significantly from 1.3 billion in 1989 to 6.8 billion in 2017 (de Haas 2014; World Bank 2019). Emigration has therefore been an important subject of policy for the Moroccan government, and since 1968 the country has had a policy encouraging emigration of its citizens. This is mainly with the objectives of countering the negative effects of high youth unemployment, while also taking advantage of the possibility for remittances (Baldwin-Edwards 2006).

During the 1990s the focus of Moroccan migration management changed - not away from emigration - but to include the immigration and transit migration taking place in Morocco (Berriane, de Haas & Natter 2015). Two interacting developments were especially important for this shift. The first being the introduction of visa requirements in Italy and Spain which had become major destinations of Moroccan migrants. With a continued demand for cheap labour in these countries and with stricter control, unauthorised boat crossings from Tanger and Nador in Morocco to the south of Spain increased (de Haas 2007). In combination with this, an increasing number of sub-Saharan migrants arrived to Morocco. First it was mainly refugees from Sierra Leone, Liberia, Ivory Coast, the Republic of the Congo and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (de Haas 2007). From the 2000s sub-Saharan migrants started joining the Moroccans in unauthorised crossings of the Mediterranean to Spain. These developments urged Morocco to develop a policy on immigration and transit migration. This resulted in the first law on immigration, which was passed in June 2003, and which primarily targeted human trafficking and irregular migration. Amongst other things it introduced fees or imprisonment for leaving the country unauthorised (Lahlou 2015).

In 2013, triggered by reports from several Moroccan NGOs documenting precarious living conditions and human rights violations against sub-Saharan migrants in Morocco, the king of Morocco initiated a reform of the country's migration policy (MCMRE 2016). This led to the first of two major regularisation campaigns mainly targeting sub-Saharans living undocumented in the country. Further, it resulted in the re-opening of the national office for refugees and stateless persons, whereas previous to this, asylum applications were only possible through the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in Morocco - UNHCR. Finally, it led to the opening of the department of migration under the Ministry in charge of Moroccans living abroad (MCMRE 2016). This new policy is said to be more human rights-based with a further focus on the integration of migrants (Berriane, de Haas & Natter 2015). Morocco argues that this policy is more humane and only initiated of humanitarian reasons as the country has no need for immigration in terms of demographics (MCMRE 18.03.2019).

At both of the regularisation campaigns in 2014 and 2017, it was estimated that there were about 30.000 undocumented sub-Saharan migrants in Morocco. In the first regularisation campaign around 27.000 people applied, while 28.000 applied during the second campaign. According to the Moroccan Ministry in charge of migration affairs, this is the best indication of the number of sub-Saharan migrants currently in Morocco (MCMRE 2018a; MCMRE 18.03.2019). It is however, necessary to be aware that these numbers are highly uncertain, since there is no way to keep track of the exact number of unauthorised migrants (Simon 2006).

Parts of the Moroccan migration management currently works in practice through international organisations and the civil society which is mainly in charge of the work with integration of migrants in Morocco. The UNHCR is in charge of receiving the initial asylum requests from refugees. If being granted asylum, refugees can get their status approved by a national office for refugees (UNHCR 12.03.2019). This means that most of the work with the protection of refugees in practice lies with the UNHCR. Another important partner of the Moroccan government is the International Organization for Migration - IOM. They play a major role in the return of migrants from Morocco, since they are in charge of a return and reintegration programme (MCMRE 2016). These organisations are usually perceived as the "softer" part of the Moroccan migration management (Bartels 2017 p.319).

2.2 Morocco's regional cooperation on migration

In terms of Morocco's regional cooperation on migration issues, one of the main partners is the EU. Morocco is part of several agreements and partnerships with the EU. Most important is the Mobility Partnership Agreement which is part of the larger European Neighbourhood Policy and which was signed in June 2013, a few months before the reform of Morocco's national migration policy (MCMRE 2016). This agreement was intended to facilitate cooperation on several programmes funded by the EU, in order for Morocco to develop its migration policies and manage the migration flows through Morocco (European Commission 2013). Furthermore, Morocco benefits from European funding from the EU Emergency Trust Fund for African Development and Migration. This is also with the objective of managing migration flows towards Europe (European Commission 2018b). Finally, Moroccan and Spanish border guards work closely together both at the land border and at sea to stop the migration flow across the border. Currently there is a readmission agreement in place which ensures that Moroccans who enter Spain without the necessary permissions can be readmitted to Morocco, if their claim for asylum is rejected. However, sub-Saharan migrants are in practice not included in this agreement (Carling 2007a).

Morocco has also recently initiated more regional cooperation with other African countries. This was seen with the Moroccan king being designated the leader on migration in the African Union. This has resulted in the initiation of an observatory on migration in Rabat (MCMRE 2018b). Generally, Morocco is rather active in taking a lead in international cooperation on migration. One example was when Morocco hosted the first meeting of the Rabat process in 2006 which initiated a European-African dialogue on migration, and most recently when Morocco hosted the international conference on the Global Compact for Migration in December 2018 (ICMPD 2019; MCMRE 2018b).

2.3 Reasons for transit migration to Morocco

One factor making Morocco an attractive country for sub-Saharan transit migrants, is first a stable political situation. Compared to other North African countries where sub-Saharan migrants also migrate to, Morocco has the recent years been significantly more stable (Pickerill 2011). Further, Morocco's economy is stronger, with a higher GDP per capita than most sub-Saharan countries. In combination with a large informal labour market with demand for cheap labour, this makes it possible for migrants to earn money even without a regularised situation (IMF 2019; Pickerill 2011). Furthermore, Morocco have had relatively liberal visa regulations for several West African countries, making it easier

for some migrants to enter Morocco (Carling 2007a). Contributing then to make people want to move further from Morocco is racism and ill treatment combined with the relatively short gap of 14 km on the narrowest point between the African and the European continent (Carling 2007a). Further, as mentioned, Morocco is the only place on the African continent with land borders to European territory. Morocco's proximity to Spain can be seen on the maps below. The maps can also be referred to especially in chapter 6.4 where the mobility of sub-Saharan migrants within Morocco is explained.

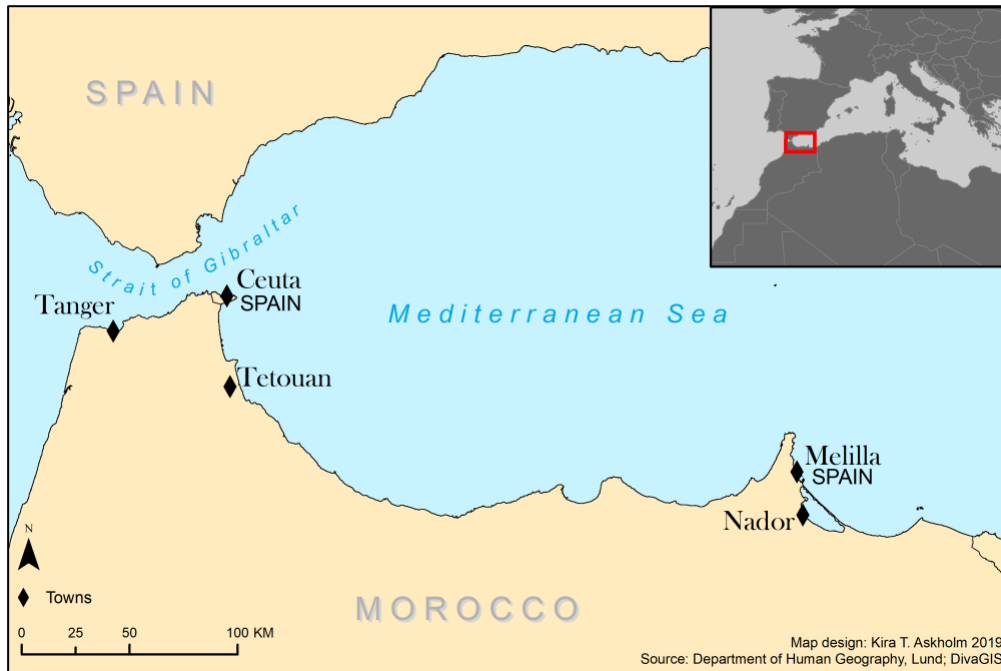


Fig. 2.1 Map of the north of Morocco and the south of Spain



Fig. 2.2 Map of towns in Morocco and Western Sahara mentioned in the study

3. Literature review

This chapter will first outline the existing literature on sub-Saharan migration in Morocco. Second, the literature on transit migration will be presented, as this concept has characterised much of the research and policies on sub-Saharan migration in Morocco and to North Africa in general.

3.1 Sub-Saharan migration in Morocco

The literature on sub-Saharan migration in Morocco is generally increasing in scope and quantity. Since sub-Saharan migration in Morocco has only been significant and gained attention from media from the 1990s, most of the literature has also been written from the beginning of the 2000s and onward (Collyer 2010; de Haas 2008a; Janati et al. 2013). Different aspects of sub-Saharan migration in Morocco have been covered up until now. However, related to the focus of this study, four major themes seem to have been the focus of research yet; social relations, trajectories of mobility, migrants' agency, and finally, migration flows and policies.

Social relations

The importance of social relations and migrant communities in facilitating and easing mobility is one of the most covered and reaffirmed findings regarding sub-Saharan migration in Morocco (Alioua 2005; Cassarino & Fargues 2006; Collyer 2007; Pickerill 2011; Thorsen 2017). It is argued that the social connections migrants form during their migration journey play a great role in facilitating and shaping the further mobility of migrants in Morocco (Alioua 2005). The near social relations amongst migrants in Morocco are claimed to provide the means and practical opportunities for livelihood and further mobility. This is when migrants share food, housing and information about jobs, conditions and opportunities in Morocco. In addition, it is argued that sub-Saharan migrants' transnational social relations with relatives and friends in their country of origin provide the motivation for further mobility. At least these more distant social relations prevent migrants from returning back because of perceived expectations from their families of sending remittances or paying back debt (Collyer 2007; Pickerill 2011; Thorsen 2017). Pickerill (2011) further shows that social connections, and especially transnational connections, can facilitate income generating activities through small-scale trade with traditional goods between migrants' country of origin and Morocco. This is in turn a way of facilitating mobility (Pickerill 2011).

Collyer (2007) argues that while social relations facilitate mobility, migration control eventually stop migrants from moving further from Morocco. This results in sub-Saharan migrants staying longer and longer time in Morocco (Collyer 2007). Collyer (2007) further claims, that not only social connections, but also improved technology and well-developed money transferring networks have made the movement itself significantly easier. This creates a situation where migrants at one hand can move more easily, but on the other hand is prevented from moving by stricter control (Collyer 2007).

Trajectories of mobility

In regard to migrants' trajectories of mobility in Morocco, it has been shown by Simon (2006), that the most common way of entering Morocco is through the north-eastern border with Algeria, where migrants arrive to Oujda as the first Moroccan town. Simon (2006) explains, how the major routes for sub-Saharans transiting through Morocco is by one of three channels; the northeast channel and the northwest channel towards the Strait of Gibraltar, and the south channel towards the Canary Islands (Simon 2006). In his account, it is assumed that the majority of migrants are moving with the help of "smuggling-networks" (Simon 2006 p.43). However, this is in contrast to the findings by Collyer and de Haas (2012) amongst others, who argue that the trajectories of sub-Saharan migrants in Morocco are highly multi-directional and non-linear (Düvell 2012; Schapendonk 2012; Thorsen 2017). Migration projects change along the way and so does the mobility, both in terms of intentions, directions, legal status and the means migrants use for moving (Collyer & de Haas 2012). Furthermore, it has been argued that migrants usually only get assistance for parts of their journey, and that this is far from the large-scale smuggling networks as one could be led to believe, if listening to policy makers or the media (Collyer 2006; de Haas 2008a).

Agency and resistance

A third theme that has been covered, however less extensively, is sub-Saharan migrants' agency and role in shaping their own migration journeys. It is found by Johnson (2013) that sub-Saharan migrants who wish to move to Spain from Morocco show a high level of agency and are able to- and active in shaping their own mobility and livelihood when being in Morocco. However, as soon as they enter the Spanish enclave of Melilla, they are in the hands of Spanish authorities at the migrant reception centre with more limited space of navigation, but in spite of this, still manages to gain voice through "flashes of resistance" (Johnson 2013 p.88). This is for example when migrants decide not to sleep in the reception centre to avoid deportation or when they chose to speak with journalists

in spite of risking to lose their identity cards and not getting food from the reception centre (Johnson 2013). Similarly, Üstübici (2016) highlights sub-Saharan migrants' agency and resistance in Morocco. She argues that migrants have been able to improve their livelihood by claiming rights and by creating alliances with Moroccan and international organisations, in spite of a restrictive and sometimes violent environment. Üstübici (2016) insists on seeing migrants not as victims, but as active subjects in their journey (Üstübici 2016).

Migration flows and policies

As opposed to the previous outlined literature which is all based on empirical work directly with sub-Saharan migrants in Morocco, other studies have a larger focus on the historical- and macro-level perspective (Carling 2007b; Cherti & Collyer 2015; de Haas 2006). First, it is argued that the migration flow from sub-Saharan Africa to North Africa has taken place for long following traditional trading routes. However, now by terming it transit migration, the flow has become politicised and led to increased control which makes the journeys more dangerous for migrants (Bredeloup 2012; de Haas 2006). Contrary to this, it has been argued that the current migration flow from sub-Saharan Africa to Morocco is not mirroring traditional trading routes, since migrants coming to Morocco now are coming from places where there was no trade with Morocco traditionally (Janati et al. 2013).

Finally, it has been shown that the migration issue in Morocco intercepts with other regional issues in relation to the EU and the African countries neighbouring Morocco (Carling 2007b). It is argued that the Moroccan government can negotiate support from the EU in other issues, as for example the occupied Western Sahara, export agreements and the Spanish enclaves of Ceuta and Melilla, in return for doing an effort on migration (Carling 2007b; de Haas 2006). At the same time, it is argued that Morocco's most recent immigration law from 2013 is clearly a move away from Europe's demands and instead reflects a general geopolitical orientation towards keeping good relations to the rest of Africa (Berriane, de Haas & Natter 2015; Cherti & Collyer 2015).

Generally, it is seen that different issues have been covered in regard to sub-Saharan migration in Morocco, however most issues are not covered extensively. Most of the existing literature has been written with a focus on migrants themselves and their experiences in terms of social networks, trajectories of mobility and their agency in shaping mobility. Less has been written on the macro-level structures of regional migration flows and Morocco's migration policy. However, very little has been written

about the interplay between migrants' trajectories and the Moroccan migration management. Only Collyer (2007) writes about how migrants' trajectories of mobility are shaped by social networks and stricter migration policies. However, Collyer (2007) does this with a major focus on Europe's approach to migration management and less on how the migration management works in practice in Morocco (Collyer 2007). Based on this, it is seen that there is room for further and alternative perspectives on sub-Saharan migrants' experiences and perceptions of migration management in relation to their trajectories of mobility in Morocco.

3.2 Transit migration

The existing literature on *transit migration* is rather limited and dispersed. The concept itself is contested and thereby problematic to apply if not being cautious. The concept has been developed as a way of avoiding the traditional dichotomies of migration studies e.g., forced/voluntary, origin/destination, legal/illegal, internal/international. It is argued that these cannot capture the state when a migrant is between the country of origin and country of destination (Collyer & de Haas 2012). However, transit migration is also currently the most comprehensive and accurate concept developed for describing the part of a migration trajectory between emigration and immigration. One significant issue with this concept is that there is no commonly agreed definition, and a great amount of what is written about transit migration is concerned with defining the concept (Düvell 2012).

One issue of contestation is the temporal definition of transit migration or being in a state of transit. Some definitions emphasise that transit migrants are only in a place *temporarily* (Cassarino & Fargues 2006; OHCHR 2016). This is seen in the definition by the UN Human Rights - OHCHR (2016) which defines transit migration as "temporary stay of migrants in one or more countries, with the objective of reaching a further and final destination" (OHCHR 2016 p.5). The same notion of temporariness is seen in a definition by the IOM from a report on migration in Azerbaijan; "Transit migrants are defined as aliens who stay in the country for some period of time while seeking to migrate permanently to another country" (IOM Azerbaijan 2003 p.7). This definition has been referred to as the closest to an official definition of the concept of transit migration (Bredeloup 2012; Zentella & Schiesser 2005). The aspect of temporariness is argued to be problematic, since there is no common understanding of the extend of *temporary* (Collyer & de Haas 2012). Furthermore, in contrast to these definitions, it has been shown that it is far from all migrants, who are termed transit migrants, that eventually move further to another country, and that some migrants might stay for many years before

moving further. Therefore, this notion of temporariness might be misleading in understanding this type of migration (Bredeloup 2012; Thorsen 2017).

A further critique of the concept is that oftentimes it is assumed that migrants have a fixed intention of moving further from where they are (de Haas 2008b). This aspect is present in most of the definitions found, as it was seen in the previous two, and as it is seen in the definition by Icduygu (2005) who writes about transit migration in Turkey; “Migrants come to a country of destination with the intention of going and staying in another country” (Icduygu 2005 p.1). However, as previously mentioned in regard to sub-Saharan migrants in Morocco, migrants’ journeys are often multi-directional, and intentions and objectives might change along the way (Collyer & de Haas 2012). This applies both to sub-Saharans traveling to Morocco and to other cases termed transit migration (Hess 2012). Because of the non-linear character of most of these migration journeys, Collyer and de Haas (2012) have suggested the term “fragmented journey” in order to capture the complexity of trajectories and the shifting intentions of migrants (Collyer & de Haas 2012 p.478).

A final critique in regard to the definition of transit migration, is that the concept often is applied to migrants as individuals. As it was seen in the definitions by the OHCHR (2016), IOM Azerbaijan (2003), and Icduygu (2005) the concept is applied to transit *migrants*. This is found problematic, as de Haas (2008b) points out in a report for the IOM, since the term is often unfoundedly connected with illegality and irregularity. It is found both unethical and inaccurate to label individuals *illegal* (Carling 2007b; Collyer & de Haas 2012). Instead, it has been attempted to develop the concept, so it can be applied to the movement itself or the space where people move through (Collyer, Düvell & de Haas 2012; Hess 2012). One example, where the term is applied to the movement itself is from the European Commission (2019b). They define transit migration as “passage through a country of transit of a third-country-national travelling from their country of origin to an EU Member State” (European Commission 2019b). In this definition, it is avoided to label individuals and to make assumptions about their intentions of mobility. However, at the same time, it is with this definition, only possible to define mobility as transit migration after it has taken place, since the mobility is only termed *transit migration* after a person has passed through a country and entered an EU member state. Thereby, no mobility could be categorised as transit migration at the time when migrants are actually in transit (Düvell 2012; European Commission 2019b).

The politics of transit migration

Except from the lack of a commonly agreed definition, the concept of transit migration has been criticised for being politicised. This is both linked to a Eurocentric understanding of the concept and a tendency to link the concept with illegality and crime (Baldwin-Edwards 2006; Collyer, Düvell & de Haas 2012; Düvell 2012; Hess 2012). It is argued that the term *transit migration* is usually only applied to non-European countries where there is an assumed migration flow towards Europe (Collyer, Düvell & de Haas 2012; Düvell 2012). Thereby, the term is used to justify the EU's migration management which is increasingly extended to take place outside of Europe, even though migrants are not always intending to reach Europe (de Haas 2008a). Likewise, it is argued that the concept is used to put pressure on countries bordering the EU. This is done by claiming that there are flows of migrants coming towards Europe which need to be controlled by transit countries before reaching the territory of the EU (Baldwin-Edwards 2006; Düvell 2012; Icduygu 2005).

In connection to this, it is further argued that the term *transit migration* is linked with notions of illegality, irregular migration, smuggling, trafficking and organised crime (Düvell 2012). Düvell (2012) shows how transit migration has been linked with crime and illegality in several publications both by scholars and international organisations as the UN and the European Council (Düvell 2012). This leads to a discourse where migrants are criminalised, and the response becomes a question of security. It is claimed that these connotations are upheld in order to justify extreme – in some cases violent - actions in migration management (Baldwin-Edwards 2006; OHCHR 2016).

It is further claimed that host countries use the concept by emphasising the temporariness of migrants' stay and thereby attempt to avoid responsibilities of integration and well-being for migrants in their country, as migrants are seen as simply passing through (Bredeloup 2012; Collyer 2010). This can be linked to a finding by the OHCHR (2016), which claims that specific issues connected to the transitory character of this migration makes migrants especially vulnerable. They claim that there is a protection gap, since there is no authority ensuring migrants' rights when being in a state of transit. In practice, this leads to injuries, deaths and human rights violations (OHCHR 2016). Finally, it is suggested, however sparsely documented that so-called transit countries use the term for negotiating regional issues with the EU. It is argued that various kinds of support can be gained in return for an effort or a promise of stopping migrants on their way to Europe, as it was suggested in the case of Morocco (Bredeloup 2012; Hess 2012, Pastore 2017).

It is generally seen that there is a relatively large amount of literature critically assessing the definition of transit migration. However, at the same time, much literature simply uses the concept with no further comments or considerations to the applicability. Since there is still no commonly agreed definition of transit migration, but many considerations, it is in this study explored how the concept applies to the case of migration management and sub-Saharan migrants in Morocco. This is done by taking a starting point in the concept of *transit zones* as explained by Hess (2012), which will be outlined in the following chapter.

4. Theory

The theoretical framework directing the analysis of the collected data takes its starting point in the concept of transit migration as discussed in the previous chapter. This section will present the concept of *transit zones* derived from the concept of *precarious transit zones* as explained by Hess (2012 p.428). It will be outlined how this concept is used to shed light on the collected data and guide the analysis in order to understand the experiences and mobility of sub-Saharan migrants in Morocco.

4.1 Transit zones

The concept of *transit zones* is a development of the previously discussed *transit migration* (Hess 2012). As explained, the concept of transit migration does not fully cover the complexities of migration journeys, since it holds the assumption that people have a fixed intention of moving to a third country – usually in Europe (Collyer, Düvell & de Haas 2012). Furthermore, the concept has inaccurately been linked with connotations of criminality and irregularity (Bredeloup 2012; Düvell 2012; Icduygu 2005). However, Hess (2012) attempts to overcome some of these problematic issues by applying the concept of transit migration to a zone and not to people individually. Thereby, it is avoided to label individuals as illegal or irregular, and assumptions about fixed intentions and directions by migrants are avoided (Hess 2012). Further, by applying the concept of a zone and not the territory of a nation state, it is attempted to avoid the politicised implications which have been a main critique of the concept (see Ch.3.2). In this study, the *zone* will cover the territory of Morocco and the Western Sahara, as the Moroccan migration management in practice extends to the border with Mauritania. Further, it will include the sea off the coast of Morocco towards Spain.

Migrants' strategies and migration management

It is argued that these transit zones emerge “as an effect of migrants practices and of the European border regimes” (Hess 2012 p.429). In this way, the concept allows for capturing the interaction between migrants and the migration management as determining for how these zones are shaped. While the European border regimes are mentioned here as the unit of analysis, this study is instead concerned more specifically with how the national system of migration management works in Morocco. This is because it is assumed that the Moroccan migration management is working in its own right and not simply as a reflection of the European migration management, as it is sometimes assumed (Cherti & Collyer 2015).

The concept of transit migration has been criticised for being Eurocentric, since it is often assumed that migrants have the intention to move to Europe. Further, the concept is more often applied to countries bordering Europe than other countries with similar flows of people transiting through (Collyer, Düvell & de Haas 2012). By not looking to the European border regimes, but more specifically to the Moroccan migration management, it is attempted to overcome the Eurocentric assumption that migration management and the migration itself only works in relation and connection to European objectives (Collyer, Düvell & de Haas 2012).

In this case, it is therefore assumed that a transit zone is shaped by the Moroccan migration management on one hand and migrants' strategies on the other, regardless if migrants are intending to move to Europe or not. While migration management is seen as impacted by national needs and objectives, it is here also understood as impacted by - and having implications for – a country's international political interests as argued by Cassarino and Fargues (2006). In this study, the migration management includes not only the management connected specifically to the border, but more generally migration management as it takes place in the whole of Morocco. Further, it includes the Moroccan authorities and other actors identified as important for the migration management by migrants themselves. The other component forming Morocco as a transit zone is migrants' movement to-, in- and from Morocco, as this mobility is not only shaped by, but also contributes in shaping a transit zone with implications for Moroccan migration management (Hess 2012).

Migrants' perception of migration management

In regard to how migrants' strategies relate to migration management and thereby shape a transit zone, the migration management will not be taken to mean migration management as an objective or fixed phenomenon working independently. First, it would be inaccurate to regard migration management as it is explained in national and regional policies, since those policies framed at the centre of a political system in many cases are not exactly what is implemented at the local level (Rigg 2007 p.144). Furthermore, from a constructivist standpoint, it is assumed that what plays a role for migrants' strategies for mobility is neither how migration management is supposed to work according to policies, nor is it how migration management works in practice as the actions carried out by relevant actors. However, what is determining for migrants' strategies must be the subjective experiences and perceptions by migrants themselves on how migration management works and what possibilities and space for navigation is identified within this system of migration management. A central component of what shapes these transit zones is therefore migrants' experiences and perceptions of migration management (Bryman 2012 p.34).

4.2 Agency and resistance

A further component of Hess' (2012) explanation of these *transit zones* is when she claims that border control does not stop mobility, but rather keeps people in mobility and transforms border areas into zones of increased mobility (Hess 2012). In this way, it is argued that the border regime in transit zones "irrationalises people's movement", since the mobility is disrupted and prolonged, and migrants' directions are changed, but mobility is not stopped (Hess 2012 p.436). As a way of explaining migrants' response to this *irrationalised* movement, the dimensions of *agency* and *resistance* have been considered, as these were identified in the literature as central to the experience of sub-Saharan migrants in Morocco. This includes the actions and activities carried out by sub-Saharan migrants in an attempt to counter the control and restrictions they experience. It is seen how migrants find room for navigation and exploit these marginal opportunities for mobility (Mainwaring 2016). The concept of resistance is seen as covering activities and protests with low visibility and high level of organisation with the aim of countering the structures of control experienced as a migrant in Morocco (Rigg 2007 p.167). Based on these dimensions, it is from the perspective of migrants seen what experiences and perceptions they have of the actors they consider significant for Moroccan migration management. It is further examined how these perceptions shape and affect migrants' strategies for mobility.

5. Methods

The study is carried out as a qualitative case study where data collection was done by semi-structured interviews and participant observation. This chapter will outline the research design and the procedures of data collection. Furthermore, limitations of the collected data will be discussed, and finally, it will be outlined how the following analysis has been carried out.

5.1 Research design

A qualitative case study was chosen in order to gain a holistic understanding of the issue by including both the macro-level structures and individual experiences of migrants (Bryman 2012 p.66). The study primarily takes a deductive approach, since a starting point is taken in already developed concepts and theories identified in the existing literature. The study does not have a specific aim of testing a theory, but the findings are evaluated against the existing theory which might provide a base for further developments of the concept of transit migration (Bryman 2012 p.25).

The study takes a constructivist standpoint, where it is assumed that social phenomena and categories are continually negotiated and constructed by social actors. Furthermore, it is assumed that the social world and its meanings are in constant change (Bryman 2012 p.33). In this study it implies that the characteristics of the interplay between migrants and Moroccan migration management is in constant change depending on the actors' perceptions. An interpretivist standpoint will enable one to understand social actions from the actors' point of view (Bryman 2012 p.30). In this study, it implies that the research participants' meanings and perceptions of migration management and their situation in Morocco are considered determining for how their mobility can be understood. While the truth can only be understood from migrants' perspective, it is acknowledged that the researcher inevitably influences the data collection and interpretations, since the production of knowledge can be no more than a construction (Bryman 2012 p.34).

5.2 Data collection

Data collection was carried out primarily in Rabat with smaller visits to Casablanca and Tanger in Morocco, and Ceuta in Spain, as explained earlier (see Ch.1.2). The sampling of research participants was intended to be done by purpose sampling with the ideal of including a wider variety of people of different ages, genders, nationalities, socio-economic backgrounds and different legal status with the aim of ensuring maximum

variation and thereby explore how experiences vary for different people (Bryman 2012 p.419). However, because of difficulties of getting in contact with people and building enough trust for carrying out interviews where research participants would feel comfortable being honest and sharing their experiences, it has only been possible to rely on snowball sampling. This is mainly because migrants often are in an insecure legal status, and therefore might be worried about the consequences of sharing information about their situation in Morocco (Collyer & de Haas 2012). Contact to migrants was established initially through a local organisation working with the support and integration of migrants in Morocco (FOO 2019). From here, the research came to include migrants coming to the organisation, and their friends and relatives. However, also people met randomly who had no connection to the organisation were interviewed. This has been useful to counter the potential bias of only including people which are connected to an organisation and therefore have the necessary time and resources for this (Chambers 1981). In spite of the inability to ensure a group of participants with a wide variety of backgrounds, relying on snowball sampling has proven to give some insights into the strong connections between people and networks within the migrants' community (Bryman 2012 p.424).

A total of twenty-one semi-structured interviews have been carried out. This includes thirteen interviews with sub-Saharan migrants, six interviews with various organisations in Tanger, Rabat and Ceuta, one interview with the migrant reception centre in Ceuta, and finally, one interview was made with the director of the Ministry in charge of Moroccans living abroad and migration affairs. The interviews with organisations will work primarily as background information whereas the focus of the analysis will be the data obtained from interviews made with sub-Saharan migrants (Bryman 2012 p.440).

The interviews with organisations were carried out with l'Association Marocaine des Droits Humains - AMDH and le Groupe antiraciste d'Accompagnement et de Défense des Étrangers et Migrants – GADEM. These are two NGOs working with advocacy and human rights for migrants in Morocco (Appendix A). Furthermore, Caritas in Tanger and San Antonio immigrant centre in Ceuta were interviewed (Appendix A). These NGOs both provide basic services and trainings for migrants. Finally, two interviews were carried out with the UNHCR in Rabat (Appendix A). These organisations have all been working with migration for several years and thereby have a deeper and broader understanding of the issue and its development through time, than otherwise would have been possible to obtain from interviews with migrants (Hammet, Twyman & Graham 2015 p.141).

The interviews with migrants included participants from Guinea, Ivory Coast, Cameroon, Sierra Leone, Togo and Senegal (Appendix A). Five out of thirteen participants were from Guinea why there might be a bias towards the specific experiences of Guinean migrants. This is mainly a result of the snowball sampling method. However, the group of participants does to some extent mirror the migrant community as one of the largest groups of sub-Saharan migrants in Morocco currently is Guinean, and it is by far the biggest group of sub-Saharans crossing to Spain from Morocco (IOM 2019d). The participants were between 25 and 60 years old with the large majority younger than 40 years old. Only two women are included whereas the rest are men. It would have been useful to include more women, since their experiences differ significantly (IOM 2019d). However, again this pattern does to some extent mirror the sub-Saharan migrant community in Morocco, as there are more men than women migrating from sub-Saharan Africa through Morocco to Spain (IOM 2019d).

Interviews with migrants

The interviews were semi-structured but with a high degree of flexibility. Since the aim of the study is to understand the experiences of migrants, it has been important to listen to the topics and subjects of their concern (Scheyvens, Scheyvens & Murray 2014 p.201). This flexibility also led to more informal conversation-like interviews, which resulted in more relaxed situations that encouraged people to talk freely about their experiences and thoughts.

All interviews were introduced by explaining the topic of the research and the role of the participant within the project. Participants were informed about anonymity and confidentiality. They were further informed, that participation was completely voluntary, and that the participant should feel free to not answer any particular questions or stop the interview at any time (Banks & Scheyvens 2014 p.166). The interview would then follow with simple introducing questions as, how migrants had entered Morocco and how long they had stayed. From there, the direction of the participant's storytelling would be followed by asking follow-up questions and specifying questions (Bryman 2012 p.478). No set structure would be followed strictly, however, it was ensured that the interviews would cover issues of mobility in Morocco, encounters with Moroccan authorities, encounters with various organisations, and parts of livelihood and social relations in Morocco (Appendix B). Interviews were always ended by asking if the participant had anything to add or anything they found important for telling the story of migrants' experience in Morocco (Appendix B).

Interviews with migrants were carried out in different settings. It has always been up to the participant to decide where they felt comfortable carrying out the interview, in order to provide the best conditions for people to speak freely (Bryman 2012 p.473). The interviews were between 40 minutes and two hours long. Nineteen out of twenty-one interviews have been recorded and transcribed afterwards. In the two interviews where the participants did not feel comfortable with the recording, notes were taken during the interview followed by more detailed notes directly after the interviews. Notes would usually not be taken during the interviews that were recorded, since it was found disturbing to the interview situation. It would limit the possibility for making eye contact and showing interest in what people were telling. Furthermore, for the interviews carried out in public, it would catch unnecessary attention from strangers passing by.

The interviews were conducted in English, French, Darija (Moroccan Arabic), Spanish and Pular. Interviews not carried out in English were done with the help of a translator. The translator helping with most interviews spoke both English, French, Darija and Spanish which made it possible to use the same translator during most parts of the research. This ensured that she obtained a good understanding of the focus and development of the study, which have been an advantage in many interview situations (McLennan, Storey & Leslie 2014 p.157). Furthermore, by working with a translator who was employed at the organisation where about half of the interviews were carried out, it was ensured that she was familiar with the topic of research and had a clear understanding of the sensitivity of the topic, and finally, that she was already trusted by some of the research participants (McLennan, Storey & Leslie 2014 p.153).

A challenge when conducting interviews with a translator, is that some things might get lost in translation. The discourse of the participants is very difficult to understand, since some words and phrases cannot be translated directly with the exact same meaning (McLennan, Storey & Leslie 2014 p.157). Furthermore, a risk is that new perspectives are omitted or not translated fully, since they might not be regarded as important by the translator (McLennan, Storey & Leslie 2014 p.157). However, in spite of these challenges, the study would have been biased, if only including English-speakers. It could have led to only people from anglophone countries or only more educated people being included, since many might not have had the opportunity or interest in learning English (McLennan, Storey & Leslie 2014 p.156).

Participant observation

Participant observation was carried out primarily by spending time and participating in activities carried out by a local organisation in Rabat working for the support and integration of migrants in Morocco (FOO 2019). This way contacts were established which facilitated smaller visits to places – both neighbourhoods and homes - where migrant communities are settled both in Rabat, Casablanca and Tanger. This way, understanding of some aspects of migrants' livelihood was obtained, which was a great advantage, since this information was difficult to get through interviews. Furthermore, time was spent at a street market at a central taxi station with connections both to other places within Rabat, but also to other regions in Morocco. By following daily activities, it was possible to obtain information from a different community than those coming to the organisation where participant observation was otherwise carried out.

No strictly defined observation schedule was used, but observation was rather used as a way of understanding the contexts of daily life and exploring unexpected aspects of the experience of sub-Saharan migrants (Bryman 2012 p.442). Furthermore, after having relevant and informative conversations with people, permission to use the information has been requested. Detailed notes would be taken by the end of the day, or as soon as possible after observation (Bryman 2012 p.440). While the interviews have been useful in obtaining more in-depth and detailed information about migrants' past experiences, thoughts, values and relations; the participant observation has been useful in understanding daily life for some migrants, and in revealing unexpected aspects that could be explored further during interviews (Bryman 2012 pp.494-5).

Limitations of the generated data and the study

A significant limitation during the fieldwork was the general political situation and sensitivity of the issue of migration in Morocco. This made it challenging to obtain data from the actors directly engaged with migration management in Morocco, which was initially planned (Thorsen 2017). As explained by the UNHCR, Moroccans working for the authorities might be afraid of losing their job while migrants are afraid of being deported, if sharing information about migration issues in Morocco (UNHCR 12.03.2019). This made it challenging to get good quality data, since it would be avoided to put anyone in such a risk (Banks & Scheyvens 2014 pp.161-2). This means that it is not possible to say anything about how migration management works from the perspective of the actors carrying it out in practice. The migration management is only examined from the perspective of migrants.

A general limitation to the study is that, since it is carried out as a qualitative case study, focusing specifically on the case of Morocco, it is impossible to generalise the findings. Since the findings are based on a relatively small number of research participants, that have not been sampled randomly, it is not possible to say anything exact about the whole population of sub-Saharan migrants in Morocco (Bryman 2012 p.406). Instead it is attempted to understand some of the perceptions and some determinants of mobility, even though all findings might not be true for all sub-Saharan migrants in Morocco. Likewise, the context of Morocco is quite particular, both in terms of its geographical position between Europe and the rest of Africa, and its regional political relations, why it will not be possible to generalise findings to other countries (Bryman 2012 p.406).

Positionality

In regard to the researcher's positionality it is clear that the significantly different background of the researcher in relation to the participants has influenced the study; both in regard to who it was possible to speak with, and perhaps also in regard to the stories being told. The privilege of having a better economic situation than most of the participants, and of having a European passport giving access to move freely - which was the main struggle and objective for many of the participants – was experienced as creating distance between the researcher and the participants (Scheyvens, Scheyvens & Murray 2014 p.189).

During fieldwork the researcher has been perceived in some cases as a journalist and in some cases as a development worker representing an international organisation. This made it particularly important to clearly state before engaging with anyone, that nothing in terms of possibilities or financial support could be expected by participating in the study. This has been both to be clear and honest with people and to not take advantage of migrants' sometimes vulnerable situation in order to obtain research data (Khotari 2006 p.16). When being perceived as a journalist, migrants were reluctant to speak, since most migrants are well-aware of the oftentimes negative discourse on sub-Saharan migration both in Moroccan and European media (de Haas 2008b). It was experienced that many migrants in the organisation where participant observation was carried out had been interviewed by students previously. Some people were fed up with western students coming to know their stories without giving anything back. This made it challenging to conduct interviews in an appropriate way (Scheyvens, Scheyvens & Nowak 2014 p.131).

However, it has throughout been attempted to be open and transparent about the position of the researcher and the objective of the study to all participants. The data and potential

findings have been discussed with participants, which – except from great insights and perspectives on the study - also have contributed to creating more balanced relations and situations (Bryman 2012 pp.491-2).

5.3 Data analysis

The analysis of the collected data has been carried out as a thematic analysis by coding the transcripts of interviews and notes from participant observation. This was chosen in order to identify significant and re-occurring themes and categories relating to the research question and focus of the study. The coding was done first by open coding where codes were applied to all of the collected data. In a second step, re-occurring themes that were related to the research question and the theory of the study were identified (Bryman 2012 p.580). These were; 1) Migrants' perceptions of- and experiences with police and direct control by Moroccan authorities, 2) migrants' perceptions of- and experiences with local and international organisations in Morocco, 3) migrants' perceptions of Morocco's approach to migration in relation to its neighbouring countries, 4) mobility and reasons behind it, and finally, 5) migrants' strategies for mobility.

Within these broader themes, the most significant codes were kept, and categories were made. For example, in relation to migrants' perception and experience with police and control, the categories identified were: 1.1) "All sub-Saharanans are treated the same", 1.2) "Police is unpredictable", and finally, 1.3) "Corruption is normalised". This was similarly done within all of the five themes. When identifying themes and categories in the data, the concepts of *transit zones*, as well as *resistance* and *agency* were kept in mind. However, an open mind was kept in order to see other categories or themes occurring from the data (Bryman 2012 p.569). Finally, all the data was examined again, now with this set of themes and categories in mind, while still keeping an open mind to perspectives missed in the first place.

6. Analysis

The following chapter will present the analysis and main findings of the collected data. This will be discussed in relation to the existing literature as well as the presented theory of *transit zones*. The chapter is divided into five sections whereas the first three will deal with the first part of the research question, namely migrants' perceptions of migration

management. This will first be in regard to the police and the direct control that migrants encounter in Morocco. Second, migrants' experiences with the organisations which are seen as the "soft" part of the Moroccan migration management will be covered. Third, migrants' perceptions of the broader structures shaping Moroccan migration management will be discussed. The two final sections will approach the second part of the research question; Migrants' strategies for mobility in Morocco. This is done by first presenting and discussing migrants' mobility and reasons for mobility in relation to the migration management. Second, the strategies and tools used by migrants in order to facilitate mobility will be discussed, likewise in relation to migrants' perception of migration management.

It is shown that migrants perceive the Moroccan migration management as working in response to European policies on migration. However, in contrast to most of the existing literature on transit migration, it is not the case that Europe is pushing Morocco as a transit zone to keep migrants out of Europe (Düvell 2012), but rather that Morocco is using its position as a transit zone to its advantage, while still keeping good relations to other African countries. Furthermore, it is found that Morocco's position as a transit zone leads to a high level of mobility of sub-Saharan migrants within Morocco as described in the theory of *transit zones* (Hess 2012). Finally, it is seen that sub-Saharan migrants primarily organise and use social connections and local knowledge both in order to avoid control and to facilitate mobility.

6.1 Police and control

It has been found that migrants identify the national police as one of the main actors in the Moroccan migration management. Twelve out of thirteen participants reported to have had one or several encounters with the police during their time in Morocco. Generally, the police play a major role for the experience of migrants in the border areas where migrants need to consider the police both in everyday life and especially in mobility. It is found that migrants experience a higher level of control in the border areas and the places which are central transit nodes on the routes of migrants coming to Morocco and/or wishing to cross to Spain compared to the rest of Morocco. These places are Oujda on the border to Algeria (see Fig. 2.2); Tanger and Nador in the north where migrants leave with boats towards mainland Spain, and the border areas around Ceuta and Melilla where some migrants try to cross the fence to the Spanish enclaves (see Fig. 2.1). Finally, it is the Moroccan occupied town of Laayoune (see Fig. 2.2) which increasingly has become a point of departure for migrants wishing to reach the Canary Islands by boat (Carling 2007b). In these areas, it is commonly experienced that migrants

are displaced to other towns in Morocco by the police, both after a failed attempt to cross the border to Spain, but also when only carrying out everyday activities.

It is found that the displacements and the character of migrants' encounters with the police do not depend on migrants' legal status, their intentions or the situation they are in. Nine of the participants had experienced to be displaced to another Moroccan town by the police. This included both migrants without legal residence, migrants with residence card from the Moroccan authorities and migrants with a refugee card from the UNHCR in Morocco. One migrant who had been granted asylum by the UNHCR explained:

There are some policemen, when you show them your [refugee] card, they don't recognise it. They just take the card and throw it away. They just say that the residence card is the only one actually valid (Participant 2).

In this way, sub-Saharan migrants are oftentimes treated as a complete homogenous group with no distinction to their individual situations. Instead, the situation of some migrants is generalised, and the same practices are applied to all. This is in line with Thorsen's (2017) analysis when she argues that migrant categories tend to be conflated or mistaken in immigration practices throughout North Africa (Thorsen 2017).

The same practice of not distinguishing between those in need of protection, those with legal residence and unauthorised migrants, is also indicated in Johnson's (2013) analysis when he suggests that the Moroccan border control is racialised. Johnson (2013) mentions that sub-Saharans are more often suspected for being unauthorised migrants in the border areas towards Spain compared to Moroccan migrants moving unauthorised the same way (Johnson 2013). While Moroccans often use false identity documents in order to cross borders unauthorised, sub-Saharan migrants are forced to move by more dangerous routes in order to hide from authorities (Carling 2007b; Johnson 2013).

It was seen that events indicating this racialised migration management also take place far from the border areas. This was explained by a Zambian student who mentioned that during times of increased control he has not been able to travel northwards in Morocco, since the authorities have attempted to stop migrants from going to the border areas in the north. Simply because of his skin colour and thereby association with sub-Saharan unauthorised migrants, he has not been allowed to buy a bus or train ticket going north, in spite of the fact that he is residing legally in Morocco (Rabat 17.03.2019)¹. This

¹ This information was obtained through an informal conversation in Rabat, Morocco, with a Zambian student met by coincidence. Permission to use the information was gained.

finding, that sub-Saharan migrants often are treated the same in spite of different legal situations supports the fact that sub-Saharan migrants also often have similar experiences in Morocco regardless of their intentions or means of coming to Morocco (Thorsen 2017).

Police control is prolonging migrants' journeys

A further finding is that the migrants perceived the Moroccan police to act inconsistent with official laws and regulations. Instead, the actions of police and border guards are determined by other and not clearly defined factors. One thing perceived by the participants as determining the arbitrary actions by the police was direct orders from the Moroccan king. Furthermore, corruption was considered an important factor in negotiating the relation between migrants and the police. As noted by the OHCHR (2016), corruption is a major factor determining possibilities for mobility in transit migration (OHCHR 2016). In Morocco it was seen especially in the border areas with higher level of control, where migrants can bribe police and border guards in order to avoid control when leaving Morocco. This is systematic, and all participants mentioned that this is how police and border guards are dealt with if migrants wish to cross the border to Spain unauthorised. However, corruption is also prevalent in the form of more developed contacts between the police and migrants. Three of the participants reported to have the personal phone numbers of police officers and that some police officers would call and warn before a raid in return for money. This is explained by one participant who stayed in Tanger in order to cross by boat to Spain:

You can have some policemen as a friend. So, if there is a problem in your area, they can call you; "Ok, listen, today my colleague will come there, so pay attention." And you stay maybe inside, or you get out and you get to another area (Participant 5).

It is further found by the OHCHR (2016) that corruption is exacerbating risks and can prolong journeys for migrants in transit (OHCHR 2016). In the case of Morocco, it was found that the price of bribing the border guards, is a major part of the 150 EUR to 3.000 EUR, that migrants pay in order to cross to Spain by boat. The high cost of crossing the border increases the duration and the risks of the journey since for most migrants it is necessary to stay in Morocco for a longer time in order to save the money necessary for crossing.

6.2 Organisations as part of migration management

Local and international organisations in Morocco were also identified as playing a major role in terms of livelihood and mobility for the participants. While the police and border guards were seen as restricting mobility, organisations were in some cases seen as facilitating it - or at least not preventing it. The organisations mentioned most often by the participants were the UNHCR, IOM, Caritas and various churches. These organisations were perceived as part of the Moroccan migration management, because migrants approach these, if they are in need of protection, support or if wishing to return to their country of origin.

The UNHCR was perceived as a major actor since migrants would approach this organisation if intending to apply for asylum in Morocco. If unauthorised migrants are acknowledged as refugees by the UNHCR, they then have better chances of avoiding displacements within Morocco and they are eligible for support from various local organisations (UNHCR 12.03.2019). The Moroccan state does not have their own law on asylum yet. Since the newest immigration law was passed in 2013, the Ministry in charge of migration affairs has been working on a legal framework for a national asylum system. However, the law has for unknown reasons not been passed yet (MCMRE 18.03.2019; UNHCR 12.03.2019). The fact that Morocco does not have a system for asylum can be seen as part of ascertaining their status as a transit zone. It is claimed that states, by emphasising a position as a transit zone, can avoid responsibilities of care and integration for migrants, since it is assumed that migrants are intending to pass the country and therefore not to settle (Bredeloup 2012). In this way, it could be suggested that Morocco is attempting to avoid some of the responsibilities which they in theory should take for refugees as they have ratified the UN 1951 Refugee Convention shortly after Morocco's independence in 1956 (United Nations 2019).

The other major organisation identified as part of the Moroccan migration management was the IOM whose main activity is a return and reintegration programme for migrants in Morocco (MCMRE 2016). The usefulness and character of this programme have been contested. It is claimed by two of the interviewed organisations, that the voluntary aspect of this programme is very doubtful (AMDH 31.01.2019; GADEM 04.02.2019). It is on the other hand suggested by Bartels (2017) that the programme in periods has been out of funds and thereby not able to fulfil promises of return for migrants wishing to go back to their country of origin (Bartels 2017). However, it is mentioned by three of the participants that it is completely accepted by the IOM to take part in the trainings of the programme without even considering returning to one's country of origin. This is in line

with the argument by Bartels (2017) who explains that the IOM cannot be seen as anything else than a softer part of migration management which does not have the mandate to enforce their strategies and likewise are not obliged to provide any services or rights to migrants. Their work can only be seen as an “act of mercy” (Bartels 2017 p.320).

Disappointment with organisations

Bartels (2017) further argues that there at times has been a tendency for migrants in Morocco to see the possibility of participating in the voluntary return programme as a right instead of simply an act of mercy (Bartels 2017). Similarly, it was found in this study, that despite the participants identifying several organisations as important for their support and protection, there was a great disappointment with these organisations’ services. This applies both for the process of applying for asylum at the UNHCR, the services by the UNHCR’s partners, if granted asylum, and the services - or lack of the same – at various other organisations and churches. One migrant explained:

I do not trust those organisations anymore. Because every time, it is the same thing. When you go, they will ask you to come back. They will ask you to do this, they will ask you to do that. And the only thing they can do, to take some bread, take some milk and give it. It cannot do the job. So surely, I am hopeless (Participant 10).

This disappointment was caused by several factors. It was commonly mentioned that the waiting time for getting in contact with organisations or benefitting from their services was extremely long and sometimes not worth the effort. Further, in order to benefit from some services, migrants would need a refugee card from the UNHCR in Morocco. Finally, in two cases it was mentioned that it had not been possible to benefit from services because of language barriers between migrants and the organisations approached. However, in contrast to Bartels’ (2017) findings, the participants did not perceive these services as a legal right, but rather as an issue of fairness. The participants felt entitled to receive support in the form of services as housing, food, clothing etc. since it was generally assumed by the participants that organisations in Morocco receive funding from European donors in order to support sub-Saharan migrants.

There are plenty associations in Morocco, but it didn’t help the black people. He [the associations] will lie to the European people. The European people will send to the Moroccan people like hundred million euro. The black people he will never

get. He [associations] will lie to you. "We give this to the black people, we give this to the black people." It is not true. Nothing (Participant 6).

The majority of the interviewed migrants felt they were being denied support and services which were rightfully theirs. However, in spite of this great disappointment with the services provided by organisations in Morocco, it was also expressed that there was no other choice than trying one's luck of benefitting from the organisations. This disappointment is also part of an overall perception by the participants, that the Moroccan migration management is a business or an interest game where the actors involved are acting in a way to acquire as much funding as possible from the EU, while the sub-Saharan migrants are simply being used in this *game*, as migrants call it.

6.3 Migration management as a business?

In line with the previously explained perception that organisations are not providing services at a level corresponding to the funding they receive from European donors, it was further assumed by the participants that the Moroccan government uses the migration management and Morocco's position as a transit zone in order to acquire funding from the EU. One of the participants presented his analysis of Moroccan migration management:

Moroccan government is earning a lot of money on migration. The objective is to secure the border, but the Moroccan government know that, if all the migrant return back in their country, their business is spoiled. This is why they keep the migrant here. Sometimes, it is very hard to cross the border, and sometimes it is easy. It is some play of the Moroccan government, because sometimes they have to let it be easy to make pressure to the European Union. If the European Union give some money, you can see, in about one month, two months, the border is very, very difficult (Participant 5).

Eight out of the thirteen migrants interviewed expressed views similar to the one above. The same idea of migration management as a business was similarly referred to by two of the organisations interviewed (AMDH 31.01.2019; San Antonio Ceuta 26.02.2019). It has been suggested that states in transit zones can use their geographical position for their advantage by taking part in the EU's externalisation of migration management by offering their services at very high prices (Pastore 2017). Since the EU is increasingly cooperating with countries outside of Europe in order to manage the migration flow towards Europe, a position as Morocco's, right at the border of Europe, is very important for the EU's

strategy (Lucht 2013). For this reason, it is assumed that Morocco can use its position to acquire financial support for their work in managing the migration flow towards Europe. However, also to gain influence on global migration management and to negotiate support in other regional concerns and issues (Bredeloup 2012; Pastore 2017). In this migrant's analysis above, it is also mentioned that Morocco's position as a transit zone is dependent on the presence of sub-Saharan migrants in the country. This supports the claim by Hess (2012), that transit zones emerge as an effect of both migrants strategies and migration management.

The view that Morocco is using its position as a transit zone for other purposes than benefitting directly from agreements on migration, was mentioned by two organisations interviewed. These organisations claim that Morocco, due to their important position in controlling migration flows, negotiates political support from the EU (AMDH 31.01.2019; GADEM 04.02.2019). One example is when Morocco continuously claims its position as an important exporter of especially agricultural products to the EU. Furthermore, it is argued that the EU is purposely ignoring the issue of the Moroccan occupied Western Sahara, because of its dependence on Morocco in the migration management (AMDH 31.01.2019). This view is also commonly found in the existing literature (Bredeloup 2012; Kreienbrink 2005). It is mentioned that non-EU countries bordering the EU generally can use their transit position as a "bargaining chip towards the European Union" (Hess 2012 p.436).

While the participants mentioned economic benefits from the EU as a central consideration in migration management, it was rather political support which was perceived important to ensure in Morocco's relation to other African countries. The participants perceived Morocco's relation to Europe as crucial, while the relation to the rest of Africa was considered less, however, not unimportant for the migration management. One example was when one migrant told about an experience where he was about to be deported from Morocco:

They took people from all the major cities around Morocco and put us on busses and said they would bring us back to Mauritania, but then halfway through the journey, someone had called or something like this and everyone, all the busses, went back to their own cities (Participant 7).

When asked about his perception of this situation, he answered:

At the time, the king of Morocco was touring all the sub-Saharan African countries. So, there is a theory that the king didn't want that to happen at that exact point, because it would not be received well (Participant 7).

In the same way, it is mentioned in the literature how the Moroccan government needs to keep good relations with its sub-Saharan neighbours and therefore need to consider how sub-Saharan migrants are treated in Morocco (Cherti & Collyer 2015; Kreienbrink 2005). This is claimed also to be with the purpose of softening the regional responses to the issue of the Western Sahara, and to ensure support for the Moroccan government's increasingly integration in the African Union (Cherti & Collyer 2015). It is thereby found that the Moroccan migration management is perceived to be highly influenced by Morocco's position between Europe and the rest of Africa and the government's need to keep good relations to African countries while taking advantage of its position as a transit zone towards Europe. This was summed up by one of the migrants interviewed:

You see the king, he is very smart, because he is trying to play this game between the sub-Saharan and Europe (Participant 5).

6.4 Mobility in Morocco

When looking to sub-Saharan migrants' mobility in Morocco, it has been found that this group is highly mobile as suggested by Hess (2012) when she writes that transit zones are spaces in border areas where an increased circulation of people is taking place (Hess 2012). It was seen that all except from one participant had stayed for a longer period of time in at least two different places in Morocco. In some cases, migrants had been to many different places, as seen when one participant was asked which places in Morocco he had been to, and he rather unaffected answered:

Casa, Agadir, Rabat, Fez, Errachidia, Zagora, Oujda, Kenitra. Plenty. Marrakech, Béni Mellal, the forest, Tétouan, Tanger. Sometimes, it is just to look for job. Sometimes when you go to the border, the police take you back to the cities (Participant 8).

This represents well the mobility of sub-Saharan migrants in Morocco. Generally, some important places in Morocco mentioned by the participants for their migration journeys were first Oujda (see Fig. 2.2). Here it is common that migrants from sub-Saharan Africa enter Morocco from Algeria after having travelled north through the Sahara in Niger and Algeria (Collyer 2007). While staying in Morocco, Casablanca and Rabat were identified

as important places (see Fig. 2.2). Rabat was perceived a place where migrants have the possibility of benefitting from the help and support of organisations or are able to study or get a job. Casablanca was primarily seen as a place with economic opportunities. Most migrants would need to save money while in Morocco in order to leave the country. It was therefore necessary for migrants to avoid control by the police, since that could distort and prolong their journeys either by being send to a remote place of Morocco or by needing to bribe police or border officers. Rabat, and to a lesser extent, Casablanca were perceived as places where the level of control by authorities is lower, and places where migrants are generally left undisturbed by the police.

For example, in Rabat, it is more ok with police. When you go to Casa, it is another thing. When you go to Marrakech it is another thing. And when you go to Tanger, it is another thing. When you go to Tanger, you can never see black in the road. Never! Because if they catch you, they will send you back (Participant 1).

This aspect is also noted in the literature where it is claimed that “Rabat is a place where people forget that they are on the way to the EU” since they are not directly confronted with control (Schapendonk 2012 p.37). However, it has been found in this study that migrants do not “forget”. The migrants were still on their way and highly engaged with their migration projects. The objective of coming to Rabat and Casablanca was to earn money and gain the resources needed for further mobility.

Furthermore, Tanger, Nador, Laayoune and the forests outside of Ceuta and Melilla (see Fig. 2.1 & 2.2) were seen as important when migrants attempt to leave Morocco. While it has been suggested that far from all sub-Saharan migrants in Morocco have the intention to leave for Europe (Bredeloup 2012), it was seen in the sample of this study that only two of the migrants interviewed did not intend to leave Morocco. Of these two, one had previously attempted to cross the border to Spain, but now decided to settle in Morocco. In regard to which way sub-Saharan migrants eventually attempt to leave Morocco, it was found that this depended on the means migrants had available. An NGO in Ceuta reported, that some migrants chose to cross the fence to Spain, since this is almost free compared to the costs of crossing the sea (San Antonio Ceuta 26.04.2019). However, the far majority attempts to cross the Mediterranean, where the chances of crossing are higher. However, the risk of dying during the crossing is similarly higher (Government of Spain 2018). Finally, the towns of Agadir, Tiznit, Dakhla, Fez, Beni Mellal, Errachidia and Zagora (see Fig. 2.2) were mentioned as places where the interviewed migrants had been

brought to by force by the Moroccan authorities. In this way it is found that the Moroccan migration management directly affects sub-Saharan migrants' mobility.

These findings; that sub-Saharan migrants in Morocco are not simply passing through, but move around within Morocco, go significantly against the findings of Simon (2006) who describes the routes travelled by sub-Saharan migrants towards Europe as rather static and linear (Simon 2006). However, it has been found that migrants rather move between different towns in Morocco, in order to make money or if being displaced, but still with the objective of eventually leaving the country. This supports Collyer and de Haas' (2012) suggestion of using the concept of a *fragmented journey* instead of simply transit, since the journeys are fragmented and multi-directional (Collyer & de Haas 2012).

Migrants' mobility is irrationalised

It has further been found that the displacements experienced by the participants reflect well the claim by Hess (2012), that movement of migrants in transit zones is increased and irrationalised. When asked about these displacements the majority of the migrants interviewed expressed frustration and anger with the Moroccan authorities. However, most also expressed confusion or saw these actions as nonsense as it would not make them stop their migration projects. When asking one migrant where he was sent by the Moroccan police, he answered:

I don't know. I didn't even look, I didn't even look. I think, it was 1:00 am, we reached the place at 1:00 am, in a city, near to the train station, and we took the train around 4:00. We came to Tanger around 6:00, and we went to sleep (Participant 4).

This was followed by a quiet laugh indicating that this type of mobility did not affect him much. Furthermore, by simply going home to sleep, it was seen that this person rejected letting the authorities' practices interrupt his daily life and activities. This follows the findings by Johnson (2013), that sub-Saharan migrants are active in shaping their own trajectories of mobility, and reject being treated as victims. This was further seen when one migrant was sent to Agadir by the police:

Moroccan soldiers, they think that migrants have no money. Because inside the bus, when they are sending us at Agadir, they give us something to eat, like bread, like sardines, like milk. So, when you arrive to Agadir, you have to take another bus to come back (Participant 5).

Similarly, this person rejected the authorities' treatment of him as a victim. He claimed his agency by going back the same way as he came and by stating that the money is not a problem for him. Even though it is not the case for all migrants, that they simply can go back to where they came from, this perspective still highlights the irrational movement and the fragmented journeys. The movement becomes irrational, because migrants are simply moved around in the country, but are not letting this measure of the authorities stop them in their migration projects. Instead of stopping the migration flow, the authorities' practices keep migrants in mobility for an extended period of time.

6.5 Strategies for mobility

It has been found that Sub-Saharan migrants' strategies for mobility are to a high degree shaped by migrants' perceptions of migration management in Morocco. It is found that migrants' strategies are characterised by a need to avoid control by Moroccan authorities as it can prolong migrants' journeys. This is done primarily by gaining local knowledge about migration management and by organising in migrant communities.

Local knowledge for avoiding control

Generally, the interviewed migrants had very detailed knowledge or perceptions of practices of the police and border guards. Knowledge that was used in everyday living in Morocco, but also when attempting to cross borders. It was mentioned by three of the participants that learning the language and the system of Moroccan migration management can be a way of avoiding control and troubles with the police. Further, two migrants stated that they had experienced problems exactly because they were not able to communicate with the Moroccan authorities in their language. It was further found that local knowledge can be a way of making profit for one's own further journey. This was seen when one migrant told about the benefits of getting to know Tanger well:

If one day, things become easy and people come many, you are the one that will receive them, and you will slowly benefit from the people. That's why some of them try to hide and to suffer there, to experience many people. The more you experience police aggression, the more you get informed about the police. You will know more the city, where to hide, and how. Times where police came and can catch you. Times when the police come and make rounds. You can know all those things. And the newcomers don't know anything. You can receive someone. You can make him pay money (Participant 4).

This person described what is known as a *smuggler* in the literature and as a *guide* by migrants. It resembles well what is described by Collyer (2006) as the help migrants make use of for parts of their journey, which is however far from large-scale highly organised smuggling networks which is usually the image in politics and the media (Collyer 2006).

Migrant communities

Another strategy for facilitating mobility and avoiding control is social relations and migrant communities. As it has been found in previous studies on sub-Saharan migration in Morocco, it was also found here that social relations play a significant role in facilitating mobility (Alioua 2005; Cassarino & Fargues 2006; Collyer 2007; Pickerill 2011; Thorsen 2017). All the participants mentioned that they at some point during their migration journey in Morocco had received help from another sub-Saharan migrant who they had met during their journey. It was found that migrants move to places where they have a specific contact or friend, but also to places where they know of migrant communities. One Sierra Leonean participant explained his experience of arriving to Rabat:

No for Sierra Leone. Nigerian, Cameroonian, Guinean; They have their group. So, I present myself, I said, I came here, but I don't know anybody. They said, eh, but don't worry, we are all one (Participant 13).

Even though the importance of social relations has been emphasised in previous studies, there has been very little attention to the functions and structures of these communities. It has been found that these communities in some places are highly structured with an informal government and system of security. These systems of organisation are local and present in what is known as *ghettos*, which are informal settlements by sub-Saharan migrants. One migrant explained how this system worked in one of the *ghettos* where he lived for a while:

They have a president, they have militaries, and every soldier know his work. In the place, no light, no water. Eh, every day, two people have to go, they have to go to look for water in the city and bring. Two people every day, two people go to the city for water. And if you want, you put your money; ten dirhams² for a day for the meal. And they cook there. If you don't want, no one ask you. If you want, you get. You will join any group you want. They have so many groups cooking. Every day, all those people that are not in the government bring a packet of

² Moroccan currency. 10 dirham = 1 euro.

candle. Three dirham a nose. To light the rooms. And every day, every person who is not in the government pay two dirhams to the government (Participant 4).

It could be suggested that these highly organised communities serve as a way of resisting control, while also lowering living costs. It was mentioned by four of the participants that even though the police are well aware of these *ghettos*, migrants are usually not bothered by the police. A common explanation amongst the migrants is that the Moroccan king have ordered the police to not bother sub-Saharan migrants when not in the border areas, as Morocco needs to consider and care for its relation to its sub-Saharan neighbours. This supports the theory that migration management in a transit zone is influenced by the governments need to consider its international relations (Cassarino & Fargues 2006; Hess 2012).

Organising to resist control in mobility

Except from being a way of avoiding control while being in Morocco, organising in communities is also a strategy used in the actual crossing of borders. Four of the thirteen participants had spent time in one of the forests outside of Ceuta and Melilla. Here, the organisation amongst migrants was a given necessity in order to cross the fence into the Spanish territory. One of the participants explained:

In the forest, it is not just something extraordinary, it is just to choose some men who can be chiefs, because the objective is what; to cross the fence. To do it, you need to be quiet, you need to calm down, and you need to be organised. So, this is why, when we come there, we chose. Ok, this one is the chief and we are gonna chose some men, they are gonna say they represent the security. Ok, so they are going to tell you; don't talk too much, don't shout here, because, if not, the police are around, they can see us. So, it is something like that (Participant 8).

In this way the organisation amongst migrants being in the forest was certainly considered important in order to avoid control from the police. It was also mentioned, that it is necessary to coordinate the time of crossing, as migrants expect that some will be caught during the attempt. Therefore, a strategy is to outnumber the police, so at least some can pass while others will be caught. This indicates that sub-Saharan migrants' strategies of mobility are certainly affected by the authorities practices and a need to avoid control, since that would prolong migrants' journeys.

7. Conclusion

The paper has explored sub-Saharan migrants' perceptions of Moroccan migration management and how these perceptions affect migrants' strategies of mobility in Morocco. First it has been found that the actors identified by migrants as important for the migration management are the Moroccan police and border guards, and further, local and international organisations. Regarding the Moroccan authorities, it was seen that migrants experienced that they were treated as one homogenous group where their individual legal situation was not considered. This included migrants being displaced to distant locations in Morocco as an attempt by the Moroccan authorities to disrupt their journeys. In regard to local and international organisations' role, it was found that migrants were disappointed with the help - or lack of help - from these organisations. It was generally thought that organisations are not providing services corresponding to the amount of funds they were perceived to receive from the EU.

Generally, migrants perceived the Moroccan migration management as working in response to opportunities for funding from the EU, while still considering Morocco's relation to the rest of Africa. As a response to this perceived *business* or *interest game* of Morocco, it was found that migrants acknowledged that they were part of this *game* but rejected being treated as victims. Instead, migrants resisted control and claimed their agency by not letting authorities disrupt their journeys. This was done primarily by gaining and sharing local knowledge about the practices of Moroccan migration management. Furthermore, it was done by organising in social communities where it is possible to avoid control by Moroccan authorities and where resources are gained and created in order to facilitate further mobility.

With these findings it has been described how the phenomenon of transit migration plays out in the case of sub-Saharan migration in Morocco. The findings show that the phenomenon is more complex than simply individual migrants transiting through a country with fixed intentions and directions. Instead, transit migration is found to include extended projects of multi-directional mobility with implications for not only the people involved, but also for the places where migrants are transiting through as it was seen with the creation of small societies in the so-called *ghettos*. Further, the phenomenon is found to include the management of transit migration which seems to be particular for this type of migration. Thereby, the critique of the concept of transit migration can be supported when it is claimed that the concept does not fully cover the complexities of this type of migration.

In regard to the specific concept of transit zones, it can be argued that Morocco is a case of a transit zone which is shaped as an effect of the Moroccan migration management and the transiting migration flow. In this case, the migration management was perceived to be influenced by Morocco's need to consider and negotiate its interests with both Europe and sub-Saharan countries. As pointed out by one of the participants; Morocco can use its position as a transit zone in order to negotiate support from the EU, but only as long as transit migrants are in the country. If no sub-Saharan migrants were in Morocco, the country would not be considered a transit zone. This follows the explanation of the concept of transit zones; that these zones emerge as an effect of the migration management and migrants' strategies.

The condition that transiting migrants is a necessity for a country to be considered a transit zone, might further explain the practices by the Moroccan authorities when migrants' journeys are disrupted, and their directions are changed. Instead of stopping migrants from attempting to go to Europe, these practices increase and irrationalise the mobility of sub-Saharan migrants within Morocco, as it was explained in the theory of transit zones. This is when migrants are going north to cross the border, but are sent to the south by the authorities, only to go north for another attempt. This increased mobility can be seen as reflecting the dilemma for Morocco as a transit zone, where the Moroccan authorities do an effort in controlling the migration flow towards Europe, while Morocco might still have an interest in having transit migrants in the country. If the Moroccan government has an interest in having transit migrants in the country, this might also explain why sub-Saharan migrant communities are left undisturbed by the police when not in the border areas. By not disturbing migrants, Morocco continues being an attractive transit country for migrants moving towards Europe. Furthermore, Morocco's relations to other sub-Saharan countries are not disrupted. Thereby, it can be suggested that not only is the mobility of sub-Saharan migrants affected by Moroccan migration management, but the migration management might also be affected by an interest in ensuring Morocco's position as a transit zone.

These findings are an indication of how sub-Saharan migrants' mobility is determined in Morocco and of Morocco's position as a transit zone. However, it is a weaker indication of how the Moroccan migration management works in practice and the objectives behind the policies. As the information presented are based on the experiences of migrants and not directly from the actors behind the migration management, the findings might be affected by a general aversion against Morocco and a more positive perception of the EU. As Europe was still the preferred destination for most of the research participants, it is likely that most of the interviewed migrants have a relatively positive image of Europe.

Therefore, a suggestion for further research, could be to look into how the Moroccan migration management is carried out in practice from the perspective of Moroccan police and border officers. Since it seems relatively certain that the Moroccan migration management is not working in practice exactly as it is planned in official policies and strategies, it could be relevant to examine the determinants for how this migration management works in practice. This could provide insights into how these practices contributes to – or are affected by - Morocco's position as a transit zone from the perspective of the authorities.

References

- African Union 2018, *African Union - Member states*.
Available: https://au.int/en/member_states/countryprofiles2 [2019, 29th of April].
- Alioua, M. 2005, "La migration transnationale des Africains subsahariens au Maghreb: L'exemple de l'étape Marocaine", *Maghreb-Machrek*, pp.37-38.
- Baldwin-Edwards, M. 2006, "'Between a rock & a hard place': North Africa as a region of emigration, immigration & transit migration", *Review of African Political Economy*, 33(108), pp.311-324.
- Banks, G. & Scheyvens, R. 2014, "Ethical issues" in *Development fieldwork: A practical guide*, ed. R. Scheyvens, SAGE, London, pp.160-187.
- Bartels, I. 2017, "'We must do it gently': The contested implementation of the IOM's migration management in Morocco", *Migration Studies*, 5(3), pp.315-336.
- Berriane, M., de Haas, H. & Natter, K. 2015, "Introduction: Revisiting Moroccan migrations", *The Journal of North African Studies*, 20(4), pp.503-521.
- Bredeloup, S. 2012, "Sahara transit: Times, spaces, people", *Population, Space and Place*, 18(4), pp.457-467.
- Bryman, A. 2012, *Social Research Methods*, 4th edn, Oxford University Press, Oxford.
- Carling, J. 2007a, "Unauthorized migration from Africa to Spain", *International Migration*, 45(4), pp. 3-37.
- Carling, J. 2007b, "Migration control and migrant fatalities at the Spanish-African borders", *The International Migration Review*, 41(2), pp.316-343.
- Cassarino, J. & Fargues, P. 2006, "Policy responses in MENA countries of transit for migrants: An analytical framework for policy-making" in *Mediterranean Transit Migration*, ed. N.N. Sørensen, DIIS - Danish Institute for International Studies, Copenhagen, pp.101-108.
- Chambers, R. 1981, "Rural poverty unperceived: Problems and remedies", *World Development*, 9(1), pp.1-19.
- Cherti, M. & Collyer, M. 2015, "Immigration and Pensée d'Etat: Moroccan migration policy changes as transformation of 'geopolitical culture'", *The Journal of North African Studies*, 20(4), pp.590-604.
- Collyer, M. 2006, "Undocumented sub-Saharan African migrants in Morocco" in *Mediterranean Transit Migration*, ed. N.N. Sørensen, DIIS - Danish Institute for International Studies, Copenhagen, pp.129-146.

- Collyer, M. 2007, "In-between places: Trans-Saharan transit migrants in Morocco and the fragmented journey to Europe", *Antipode*, 39(4), pp.668-690.
- Collyer, M. 2010, "Stranded migrants and the fragmented journey", *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 23(3), pp.273-293.
- Collyer, M. & de Haas, H. 2012, "Developing dynamic categorisations of transit migration", *Population, Space and Place*, 18(4), pp.468-481.
- Collyer, M., Düvell, F. & de Haas, H. 2012, "Critical approaches to transit migration", *Population, Space and Place*, 18(4), pp.407-414.
- de Haas, H. 2006, "Trans-Saharan migration to North Africa and the EU: Historical roots and current trends", *Migration Information Source*, pp.1-13.
- de Haas, H. 2007, "Morocco's migration experience: A transitional perspective", *International Migration*, 45(4), pp.39-70.
- de Haas, H. 2008a, "The myth of invasion: The inconvenient realities of African migration to Europe", *Third World Quarterly*, 29(7), pp.1305-1322.
- de Haas, H. 2008b, *Irregular migration from West Africa to the Maghreb and the European Union: An overview of recent trends*, IOM – International Organization for Migration, Geneva.
- de Haas, H. 2014, "Morocco: Setting the stage for becoming a migration transition country?", *Migration Information Source*, pp.1-17.
- Düvell, F. 2012, "Transit migration: A blurred and politicised concept", *Population, Space and Place*, 18(4), pp.415-427.
- European Commission 2013, *Migration and mobility partnership signed between the EU and Morocco*. Available: http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-13-513_en.htm [2019, 11th of May].
- European Commission 2018a, *December-last update, EU cooperation on migration with Morocco*. Available: <https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/sites/near/files/eu-morocco-factsheet.pdf> [2019, 15th of April].
- European Commission 2018b, Autumn 2018 standard Eurobarometer: Positive image of the EU prevails ahead of the European elections, *European Commission - Press Release*, Brussels.
- European Commission 2019a, *A reinforced European border and coast guard*. Available: https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/policies/european-agenda-migration/20190401_managing-migration-factsheet-european-border-and-coast-guard_en.pdf [2019, 29th of April].

- European Commission 2019b, *Transit - Definition*. Available: https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/content/transit_en [2019, 8th of May].
- FOO - Fondation Orient-Occident 2019, *Fondation Orient Occident: Who we are*. Available: <http://www.orient-occident.org/who-we-are/> [2019, 5th of May].
- Frontex - European Border and Coast Guard Agency 2018, *Migratory routes: Western Mediterranean route*. Available: <https://frontex.europa.eu/along-eu-borders/migratory-routes/western-mediterranean-route/> [2019, 29th of April].
- Government of Spain - Ministry of Interior 2018, *Inmigración irregular – Informe Quincenal: Del 1 Enero al 31 Diciembre 2018*. Available: http://www.interior.gob.es/documents/10180/9654434/24_informe_quincenal_acumulado_01-01_al_31-12-2018.pdf/d1621a2a-0684-4aae-a9c5-a086e969480f [2019, 10th of May].
- Hammet, D., Twyman, C. & Graham, M. 2015, *Research and fieldwork in development*, Routledge, Oxon.
- Hess, S. 2012, "De-naturalising transit migration: Theory and methods of an ethnographic regime analysis", *Population, Space and Place*, 18(4), pp.428-440.
- Icduygu, A. 2005, "Transit migration in Turkey: Trends, patterns, and issues", *CARIM – Euro-Mediterranean Consortium for Applied Research on International Migration*, 4, pp.1-31.
- ICMPD - International Centre for Migration Policy Development 2019, *The Rabat Process*. Available: <https://www.rabat-process.org/en/about/rabat-process/333-rabat-process> [2019, 26th of May].
- IMF - International Monetary Fund 2019, *GDP per capita, current prices – Africa*. Available: <https://www.imf.org/external/datamapper/PPPCC@WEO/AFQ> [2019, 28th of May].
- IOM Azerbaijan 2003, *The next stop is... - Study on transit migration through Azerbaijan*, IOM – International Organization for Migration.
- IOM - International Organization for Migration 2011, *Glossary on migration N° 25 – International migration law*, 2nd edn.
- IOM – International Organization for Migration 2019a, *Migration data portal*. Available: https://migrationdataportal.org/?i=inflow_total&t=2016&cm49=724 [2019, 23th of May].
- IOM - International Organization for Migration 2019b, *Mediterranean migrant arrivals reach 12,174 in 2019; Deaths reach 356*. Available: <https://www.iom.int/news/mediterranean-migrant-arrivals-reach-12174-2019-deaths-reach-356> [2019, 29th of April].

- IOM - International Organization for Migration 2019c, *Flow monitoring - Europe*. Available: <http://migration.iom.int/europe?type=arrivals> [2019, 29th of April].
- IOM - International Organization for Migration 2019d, *Flow monitoring surveys analysis: Profile and reported vulnerabilities of migrants along the eastern, central and western Mediterranean route*.
- Janati, M.I., Berriane, M., Aderghal, M. & Berriane, J. 2013, "Immigration to Fes: The meaning of the new dynamics of the Euro-African migratory system", *Journal of Intercultural Studies*, 34(5), pp.486-502.
- Johnson, H.L. 2013, "The other side of the fence: Reconceptualizing the “camp” and migration zones at the borders of Spain", *International Political Sociology*, 7(1), pp.75-91.
- Khotari, U. 2006, "An agenda for thinking about “race” in development”, *Progress in Development studies*, 6(1), pp.9-23.
- Kreienbrink, A. 2005, "Country of emigration and new country of immigration? Challenges for Moroccan migration policy between Africa and Europe", *Stichproben. Wiener Zeitschrift für kritische Afrikastudien*, 8(5), pp.193-219.
- Lahlou, M. 2015, Morocco's experience of migration as a sending, transit and receiving country, *IAI – Istituto Affari Internazionali*, Rome. pp.1-19
- Lucht, H. 2013, "Pusher stories: Ghanaian connection men and the expansion of the EU's border regimes into Africa" in *The Migration Industry and the Commercialization of International Migration*, eds. N.N. Sørensen & T. Gammeltoft-Hansen, Routledge, New York, pp.173-189.
- Mainwaring, C. 2016, "Migrant agency: Negotiating borders and migration controls", *Migration Studies*, 4(3), pp.289-308.
- McLennan, S., Storey, D. & Leslie, H. 2014, "Entering the field" in *Development fieldwork: A practical guide*, ed. R. Scheyvens, SAGE, London, pp.141-159.
- MCMRE - Ministry in Charge of Moroccans Living Abroad and Migration Affairs, K.o.M. 2016, *National policy on immigration and asylum: 2013-2016*, Rabat.
- MCMRE - Ministry in Charge of Moroccans Living Abroad and Migration Affairs, K.o.M. 2018a, *Politique nationale d'immigration et d'asile - Rapport 2018*, Rabat.
- MCMRE – Ministry in Charge of Moroccans Living Abroad and Migration Affairs, K.o.M. 2018b, *Morocco's migration policies and the Global Compact for safe, orderly and regular migration*, Rabat.

- OHCHR - Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights 2016, *Situation of Migrants in Transit – A/HRC/31/35*, Geneva.
- Pastore, F. 2017, "Migration and negative extraversion. Recent developments in Euro-African cooperation on migration: Theoretical implications and potential effects", *FIERI Working Papers*, pp.1-18.
- Pickerill, E. 2011, "Informal and entrepreneurial strategies among sub-Saharan migrants in Morocco", *The Journal of North African Studies*, 16(3), pp.395-413.
- Rigg, J. 2007, *An everyday geography of the global south*, Routledge, Oxon.
- Schapendonk, J. 2012, "Turbulent trajectories: African migrants on their way to the European Union", *Societies*, 2(2), pp.27-41.
- Scheyvens, R., Scheyvens, H. & Murray, W.E. 2014, "Working with marginalised, vulnerable or privileged groups" in *Development fieldwork: A practical guide*, ed. R. Scheyvens, SAGE, London, pp.188-214.
- Scheyvens, H., Scheyvens, R. & Nowak, B. 2014, "Personal issues" in *Development Fieldwork; A practical guide*, ed. R. Scheyvens, SAGE, London, pp.125-140.
- Simon, J. 2006, "Irregular transit migration in the Mediterranean: Facts, figures and insights" in *Mediterranean Transit Migration*, ed. N.N. Sørensen, DIIS - Danish Institute for International Studies, Copenhagen, pp.25-66.
- Thorsen, D. 2017, "Is Europe really the dream? Contingent paths among sub-Saharan migrants in Morocco", *Africa: The Journal of the International African Institute*, 87(2), pp.343-361.
- United Nations 2019, *Status as at: 12-05-2019. Chapter V, Refugees and Stateless Persons 2. Convention relating to the Status of Refugees, Geneva, 28 July 1951*. Available: https://treaties.un.org/Pages/ViewDetailsII.aspx?src=TREATY&mtds_g_no=V-2&chapter=5&Temp=mtdsg2&clang=_en [2019, 12th of May].
- Üstübcici, A. 2016, "Political activism between journey and settlement: Irregular migrant mobilisation in Morocco", *Geopolitics*, 21(2), pp.303-324.
- World Bank 2019, *Personal remittances, received (current US\$) Morocco*. Available: <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/BX.TRF.PWKR.CD.DT?locations=MA> [2019, 15th of April].
- Zentella, G.T. & Schiesser, F. 2005, *Migration and Development*, Inter-Parliamentary Union, Geneva.

Appendices

Appendix A

List of migrants interviewed

Participant	Country of origin	Sex	Date of interview	Place of interview	Language
Participant 1	Ivory Coast	M	16. Feb. 2019	Rabat	English
Participant 2	Senegal	M	7. Mar. 2019	Rabat	English/French
Participant 3	Ivory Coast	F	15. Mar. 2019	Rabat	English/French
Participant 4	Guinea	M	6. Mar. 2019	Rabat	English
Participant 5	Guinea	M	13. Feb. 2019	Rabat	English
Participant 6	Guinea	M	15. Feb. 2019	Casablanca	English
Participant 7	Cameroon	M	18. Feb. 2019	Rabat	French
Participant 8	Guinea	M	20. Feb. 2019	Rabat	Pular
Participant 9	Guinea	M	25. Feb. 2019	Tanger	French
Participant 10	Togo	F	20. Feb. 2019	Rabat	French
Participant 11	Ivory Coast	M	24. Feb. 2019	Tanger	French
Participant 12	Sierra Leone	M	15. Mar. 2019	Rabat	English
Participant 13	Sierra Leone	M	10. Mar 2019	Rabat	English

List of organisations interviewed

Organisation	Date of interview	Place of interview	Language
AMDH – L’Association Marocaine des Droits Humains	31. Jan. 2019	Rabat	French/Darija
GADEM - Le Groupe antiraciste d’Accompagnement et de Défense des Étrangers et Migrants	4. Feb. 2019	Rabat	English
Caritas - Tanger	25. Feb 2019	Tanger	Darija
San Antonio Ceuta	26. Feb. 2019	Ceuta	Spanish
CETI - Centros de Estancia Temporal de Inmigrantes	4. Mar. 2019	Ceuta	English
UNHCR – United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (External relations officer)	12. Mar. 2019	Rabat	English
UNHCR – United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (Liaison officer with Ministry in charge of Moroccans living abroad and migration affairs)	14. Mar. 2019	Rabat	English
MCMRE – Ministry in charge of Moroccans living abroad and migration affairs (Director of migration affairs)	18. Mar. 2019	Rabat	English

Appendix B

Topics covered in interviews with sub-Saharan migrants

1) *Experience in Morocco*

- a. *Time spent in Morocco*
- b. *Way of entering Morocco*

This topic provided background information necessary for understanding the following answers and stories by participants. Furthermore, it is relatively simple questions that would get the talking started.

2) *Mobility in Morocco*

- a. *Which places have you been staying*
- b. *What is the reason for mobility*
- c. *What are your future plans*

This topic was covered as one of the main focus points of the study, and the second part of the research question. Furthermore, it is also relatively simple questions, that could be elaborated by the participants, if they wished to.

3) *Encounters with Moroccan authorities (police, control etc.)*

- a. *Practices and perceptions of these*

This aspect was covered as part of the first part of the research question and was intended to gain more information about the practices of the Moroccan migration management and migrants' perceptions of this.

4) *Encounters with organisations in Morocco*

- a. *Functions, support and perceptions*

This aspect was covered to get information about the “softer” part of the Moroccan migration management and migrants' perception of international and local organisations.

5) *How to sustain a living in Morocco?*

This was asked, since livelihood initially was a major focus of the study. However, this was changed later in the process.

6) *Anything you would like to add, or you think is important to know about migrants' situation in Morocco?*

This was asked to make sure that no crucial aspects had been missed in relation to sub-Saharan migrants' experiences in Morocco.