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Hometown Organisations and Development Practices

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Paper 2 of 2 on 'The migrant organisations of development:
Unveiling the meta-structures of transnationalism'

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Abstract (Research Background)

This working paper is part of a comparative research project looking at three immigrant groups (two North African Berber groups: the Moroccan Chleuhs and the Algerian Kabyles, and the Sikh Punjabis from India) residing in two receiving countries (France and the UK). This work seeks to explain the emergence of hometown associations committed to the development of their place of origin since the early 1990s. This research draws on a previous doctoral study on Moroccan Berber immigrants in France. Since then, I have extended this research to the other two groups. This choice has been underpinned by the prospect of comparing this first group with one which displays strong similarities (the Berber Kabyles from Algeria) and another which presents distinct features (the Sikh Punjabis). The three migrations have been spurred by British and French colonisation. They are three ethnic minority groups in their origin country which have become the forerunner of the Indian and North African migration systems. However, the conditions of their settlement in the arrival countries are obviously different. The Berber groups have predominantly remained working-class groups while the Punjabis have enjoyed a better economic integration into multicultural Britain. However, despite their common cultural, religious and historical features, Algerian Kabyles turn out to be far less committed to transnational practices than their Moroccan counterpart. Conversely, Moroccans and Indians both display a high level of engagement in cross-border development projects. Relying on Mill's laws of comparison, my intent is to uncover the common factors which have led these two distinct groups to engage in similar practices. Conversely, the Kabyle/Chleuh comparison is likely to give us the possibility of highlighting the obstacles which explain why some groups form developmental hometown groups while others do not.

The analysis initially rests on the structure agency approach. However, the research has been heavily influenced by the theory of communicative action of Jürgen Habermas, which offers a better framework to address the coordination of collective actions. This has led me to unravel the symbolic framework which underpins the implementation of a development project, a symbolic framework which allows migrants to use remittances as a means of expression of who they are and how they position themselves within and toward the spaces of departure and arrival.

This paper is the second of three working papers addressing the different layers of structural constraints which were conducive to the implementation of collective remittances of development: the moral-practical infrastructures, the agential structures and the institutional superstructures.

Keywords

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Contents

Introduction

Development projects run by hometown organisations for the benefit of their place of origin, also called collective remittances, are common features of transnational linkages forged and sustained by migrants. In fact, hometown organisations have been a focus of interest since the very first publications on transnationalism in the early 1990s (Glick Schiller 1992, pp.2-4; Portes 1996). Contrary to individual remittances, collective remittances are far from being a universal phenomenon. This pattern of commitment can be observed among very different groups, such as the Mexicans in the US, the Moroccans in France, the Senegalese in Italy, or the Chinese in the nineteenth-century Far East; i.e. groups which have, *a priori*, nothing in common. It gained momentum during the 1990s among very different groups scattered around the globe. In addition, the existing literature on collective remittances stresses that the groups concerned are not national groups but regional ones. My previous study of the Moroccan case showed that the pattern of collective commitment has evolved greatly during the last twenty years, gradually shifting from religious or traditional projects to development ones (Lacroix 2005). The same trend is observed among other groups such as West Africans in Europe and Africa (Adepujo, 1974; Barkan et al. 1991; Daum 1998; 2000; de Haas, 2006; Gonin 1997; Mercer et al. 2008; Mohan 2006; Quiminal 1991), Latin Americans in the US (Babcock 2006; Fitzgerald 2004; Fox 2005; 2006; Goldring 2002; Ionescu, 2006; Levitt 2001; Orozco 2000; 2003; Portes et al. 2005; Smith 2006; Zabin & Radaban 1998).

In IMI Working Paper 27 (Lacroix 2010), I analysed the fundamental reasons which explain why Sikh Punjabis in the UK, and Moroccan Chleuhs and Algerian Kabyles in France, recreate hometown networks in the place of arrival. I argued that the primary function of hometown networks is to combine the individual and collective interests of the various actors involved in the migration process (namely the emigrants themselves, the households they are part of and the village community they belong to). The hometown groups transpose in the arrival country a moral framework which enables participants to achieve their migration project while remaining tied to their duties towards their household and origin community. Nowadays, North African and North Indian hometown networks in Europe seem to have lost their original *raison d'être*. The migration flows of Berbers and Sikhs are steadily waning while children of immigrants do not show any interest in renewing the associations of their elders. However, against all the odds, hometown groups are not only still active, but they turn out to have extended their field of activities by engaging in translocal development practices. The literature asserts that this trend started in the early 1990s.

This second working paper arising from IMI's 'Transnational Migrant Organisations' project explores the long-term evolution of North African and Punjabi hometown groups at the general level of agents and agency. My intention is to show how hometown organisations adapted to the transformation of their context to continue producing a shared communality of belonging. Besides the traditional functions of hometown organisations highlighted by

the existing literature, this paper brings to the fore their capacity to incorporate social change.

The first section presents the different forms taken by hometown organisations among the three groups of reference for this study (Moroccan Chleuhs, Algerian Kabyles and Sikh Punjabis). The second section comes back to the different challenges faced by hometown groups since the end of the Second World War, such as decolonisation and post-colonisation wars, changing migration policies, assimilation, and their effect on hometown communities. Finally, I examine the adaptation of hometown organisations to the transformation of their environment. I argue that the engagement in development practices is the last avatar of their fundamental role, namely a matrix of incorporation of social change.

1 The forms and emergence of hometown groups among North Indians and North Africans in Europe

1.1 The origin and constitution of hometown groups after the Second World War

Community of suffering

There is a sweet and sour flavour to the migration experience in Europe between the post-war years and the 1960s. On the one hand, emigrants constituted the bulk of the lumpen-proletariat which supported the reconstruction effort of European states (Rex & Moore 1969; Sayad 1999). Newcomers were segregated into shabby hotels and housing in deprived city centres while working endless hours in factories, janitor work or the building industry. Five or six people sharing a room was not uncommon. Food expenses were also shared in order to reduce the cost of living. But, on the other hand, this austere life, authors note, was not purely imposed on emigrants, but also the result of a choice in accordance with their desire to remit the largest sums possible and shorten their stay. Immigrant groupings constituted what Pnina Werbner calls 'a community of suffering' (Werbner 1990) characterised by a relative absence of hierarchic relationships. For example, high-caste immigrants from Punjab did not begrudge taking 'impure' jobs such as janitor work or participating in housework alongside those of lower status (Helweg 1979: 43). Solidarity was also apparent when young men had to conceal from relatives back home immoral behaviour such as drinking, smoking or love affairs with local women. Among Sikh Punjabis, the vast majority of men shaved their beards and cut their hair.

International migration, in those times, was somewhat emancipating for those who had moved to Europe. Because of the sheer social transformation occurring in the origin locality, migration was resting on the crumbling of the traditional order. The mandated pre-war migration subordinated to a peasant order was superseded by a more adventurous migration driven by personal interest. Migration changed in nature. Abdelmalek Sayad put forward that Algerian emigrants were young unmarried men (Sayad 1999: 70), and therefore free from the obligations of a father. Migration was a transgression of the moral spaces delimited by the traditional social structures. Mohand Khelil notes that most of his

Kabyle interviewees had had an affair and sometimes children, with a local woman (Khelil 1979: 207). In this context, untold truths and conscious lies became a way of coping with the paradoxes of migration. For those who came back home after a couple of years in a foreign country, hiding some aspects of their stay and lying about the reality of their life was a rule. In their narrative, the emphasis was put on the bright side of emigration, in order to comfort their audience and pander to their fascination for foreign lands and, by and large, their perception of what migration should be. Returned migrants had to manoeuvre along a fuzzy line between what could be told and what could not be heard, between what could be shown and what must not be seen. This divide was conducive to a fundamental fracture between the different spheres of life and, ultimately, it led migrants to endorse a divided identity between what they were in the host country (immigrants) and what they were in the origin area (emigrants). The relationships between expatriates and those left behind were therefore submitted to what Jørgen Carling calls a 'moral economy of belonging', which filtered out the transfer of values and behaviours (Carling 2008).

Emancipation was therefore not freedom. If someone's behaviour was going beyond the limits of the tolerable, a wide array of retaliation measures was available, from hunger strikes of determined mothers to the journey of fathers to fetch and bring back the ungrateful son. The tight relations within the 'community of suffering' provided a strong support for insertion in the host country but also kept the members connected to the origin community. Social pressure, though leaving some leeway for young men, was permanent. In that sense, the 'community of suffering' prefigures the establishment of migrant social institutions, mediating the relationships between emigrants and their social environment.

Likewise, the community of suffering was not a purely flat, anarchic community. The internal arrangements of immigrant groups were conducive to the emergence of new forms of leadership. The gate-keeping role of intermediaries between migrants and the host society endowed them with a *de facto* authority within the immigrant community: intermediaries such as the hostel/house managers or people acting as a go-between for employers and job seekers. Being literate, they helped newcomers with paperwork. They could also store the meagre savings of their clients and arrange transfers for them to the family back home. In exchange, their followers were expected to support them in case of factional conflicts.

Mutation of immigrant groupings

From the early 1960s onwards, the number of immigrants in Britain and France soared. The net inflows of Indians to the UK amounted to 20,000 people a year during the decade. The Indian immigrant community reached half a million in the mid 1970s (Tinker 1977: 184). The number of Algerians in France increased from 211,000 in 1954 to 800,000 in 1972 (Khelil 1979: 91). In each country of departure, the phenomenon started encroaching on new regions, including urban areas. In addition, the movement of people became more complex. An increasing number of emigrants of rural origin spent a few years in a city in their own country before leaving the country of origin. The entry restrictions imposed by host countries led immigrants to opt for family reunification (i.e. the whole family emigrating) for fear of not being able to circulate as freely as they did before. However, the reasons underlying the mobility of women are far from clear-cut. Legal restrictions only account for the acceleration of the process, not for its initiation observed as early as the late 1950s. The

proportion of women is the largest among Punjabis, where they constitute 50 per cent of inflows to the UK after 1962 (Tinker 1977: 184).

This mutation of immigrant groupings put an end to the former 'community of suffering'. First, immigrant village communities lost their homogeneity as they swelled with the arrival of newcomers. The re-composition of family units in settlement areas was conducive to a verticalisation of relationships between households and the concretion of social hierarchies. Pnina Werbner has extensively described the process of stratification of migrant communities taking place in the inter-household sphere (Werbner 1990). Households compete with each other for their social status to be acknowledged, establish networks between equals and position themselves within a social hierarchy. Immigrant communities therefore stratified as they developed. In parallel, migrants imported with them the rights and duties of villagers. The mechanics of social spatial representations wove together a moral framework which led expatriates to maintain a village ethos in a foreign land (see IMI Working Paper 27 [Lacroix 2010]). Villageness remained a prevailing pole of identification which 'ordered' the relationships between expatriates and the arrival society, and between expatriates and the origin community.

It is in this context that hometown organisations emerged to manage the contradictions between the increasing differentiation and the maintaining of a common village identity. Their appearance among Algerian Kabyles is noted as early as the 1950s (Direche-Slimani 1997; Khelil 1979). Based on personal investigations, I found that the first collective remittances to Punjab dated from the same period (see below, the Patiala example). Likewise, the building of a road in the early 1960s by expatriate Chleuh hometowners was reported by one interviewee. The severe droughts affecting Southern Morocco in the 1970s were in great part overcome thanks to the digging of new wells funded by emigrants (Pascon 1985). These initiatives hint at the formation of village networks in the country of arrival at the beginning of mass migration waves to France and the UK.

1.2 Forms of hometown organisations

Kabyles

'When someone comes from Algeria, he goes directly to a town where there are fellows from his village. Personally, I arrived in the 15th arrondissement of Paris. Why there? Because I had fellows from my village there. From Orly, I took a taxi to the 15th arrondissement. I arrived at midnight. There was no problem. I had a room to sleep in. I was more or less taken charge of during the first days, until I went to my brother's in St Ouen.

As you saw last time [the interviewee refers to a board meeting of the hometown organisation I attended], it was the same but under the statute of association. It has always existed since the beginning of Kabyle migration. Because, among Arabs, it does not exist this kind of thing. Because people arrive at the same place, it is easy to list them. A listing is done. As soon as there is a newcomer, he is registered at once. And once a week, there is a village gathering. It is a tradition. But it is not a formally registered association. It is a natural thing. Every village has it. There are fees. Every village has its own method. Fees vary according to the number of persons living in France. The first purpose is the one of body repatriation. The idea of village is that. And also to gather and talk about the news from

there.' (Interview in Clichy in 2007 with Smail, a member of the board of trustees of Ouled Ali)

The Kabyles display the most structured form of hometown grouping of the three case studies (Kabyles, Chleuhs and Punjabis). The above interview illustrates the various functions of these organisations and their articulation with chain migration. They ease and orient the arrival of newcomers, and provide information about job and housing opportunities. This support constitutes the original gift which establishes a regime of mutual obligations between hometowners. It ushers the newcomer into the community of expatriate villagers. Simultaneously, this support settles the hometown group as a mediating institution between the newcomer and the arrival society. Hometown organisations also circulate information about the homeland and support a shared sense of identity and belonging to the place of origin. The interview illustrates the verticality and horizontality of migrant institutions.

At the core of the hometown organisation lies the *caisse*, i.e. the burial fund (they use this French term which means fund or kitty). In order to manage the fund, hometowners reproduce the *Tajmaat*, the customary assembly which rules the Berber village in Kabylia. Emigrants choose a leader from among themselves (the *Amin*), and household representatives (the *Tamen*), on the basis of respectability, skills and reputation. The members meet weekly in the leader's house or in a café owned by a village fellow. Their primary function is to maintain the *caisse* to cover the expenses of the repatriation of the corpse in case of the death of a fellow migrant. Their secondary role is to ensure that the members keep on fulfilling their duties towards their family and the village community in Algeria. In particular, they keep on taking part in the *tiwizi* – that is, the communal duties. The *tiwizi* refers to the customary agricultural system, but also includes other matters such as the maintaining of public and religious infrastructures (the mosque, the *Tajmaat* building, roads, etc.). The fees, as well as the participation in collective activities, are not voluntary, but compulsory. The sums paid to the fund are not periodical fees, but a community tax. If a member fails to pay, his participation is demanded by the *Amin*. The social pressure is guaranteed through a system of honour and reputation, which must be respected by every group member. Ultimately, serious faults and refusal to participate are sanctioned by banishment. This rare measure results in the impossibility for the banished to participate in any collective gatherings: weddings, religious ceremonies, etc. Interviewees reported that the contribution of people refusing to participate is sometimes covered by relatives unwilling to face the shame of the banishment of their kin. Lahcen, a Kabyle hometowner, is a case in point. He kept on paying the fees of his brother who objected to doing so, since the former had his own insurance provided by a private company.

Chleuhs

The Moroccan case displays an intermediary level of structuring. Even if the Berber Chleuhs do not co-opt *Amin* and *Tamen* among them, they keep on fulfilling what the *tiwizi* implies. Like Kabyles, they are expected to carry on performing their duties as villagers. Their networked life is organised around regular lunches at the leader's home, and life course rituals such as marriages or circumcisions.

Punjabis

The Punjabis in the UK do not display a homogeneous pattern of structuring. Jats, a caste of landowner, formed the bulk of cohorts of immigrants who arrived in the 1960s in the UK. Sikh Jats have adopted a rather informal organisational pattern. Unlike their Ramgharia counterparts, who arrived in the late 1960s in the wake of the mass deportation of East African countries (Bhachu 1985), and unlike Hindu and Muslim groups originating from other parts of India, they have not reproduced caste committees. Nor have they formed burial committees as in the case of eastern Punjab Pakistanis (Joly 1987). The high level of informality probably explains the lack of interest in this pattern of organising in the literature on Indian community building. In addition, Indian hometown groupings are overshadowed by other identification patterns such as caste, religious and political affiliations.

However, even in the absence of a formal normative framework, the maintaining of a village organisation is apparent through the tight networks that Punjabis constitute in the host society. These networks perform the same functions as structured social institutions: easing the migration process while preserving social linkages and allegiance towards the village of origin. Newcomers usually have in their pocket the address of a relative when arriving for the first time in the UK. The spatial proximity allows regular meetings for parties, religious activities, social gatherings in homes or pubs, and weddings, but also for collective remittances. Collections are made to support a member or a household during significant life events: birth, marriage, death. Even in the absence of an institutionalised burial fund, the repatriation of the body of one member was a collective issue. Weddings are moments of particularly intense gift exchanges between families. Besides weddings, 'kitty clubs' are another institution where social interactions are cemented by gift exchanges. Kitty clubs are rotating credit institutions of women of the same social status who regularly gather in one of the members' homes. During each gathering, members are to give a lump sum of money to a kitty. The receiver of the whole sum is drawn among the attendees. Finally, return to the homeland is also a time to express success, attachment and allegiance in the form of gifts to relatives and the wider community. In addition to gifts and remittances, migrants also invest in land. Wealthy individuals or collectives mobilise in order to construct a Gurudwara (Sikh temple) or a school, or to spend money on conspicuous religious rituals.

The diversity of forms taken by hometown groups among the three groups of reference is striking, ranging from highly structured organisations to loose networks. Beyond their formal differences, these groups have in common the functions they assume. These functions go far beyond the support of migratory chains and arrivals of newcomers. Hometown groups used to have an overall role of surveillance of who and what used to circulate between the host and home lands: the circulation of people, of bodies (through burial funds), of gifts (for example during weddings) and of remittances (if someone failed to send his share of saving to his family back home, he could be pressured into doing it by other hometowners). As shown below, the hometown organisations can have a life span of several decades. In fact, these groups have shown an astonishing resilience to change. They have proved to be capable of evolving and adapting to the transformation of their environment and of the immigrant community. This observation invalidates the perception of hometown organisations as a purely conservative organisation meant to protect a village

ethnicity. In order to improve our understanding of hometown groupings, the next section scrutinises this resilience to the passage of time.

2 Resilience of hometown groupings

Hometown groups have faced three major changes during the last sixty years: the social, political and economic transformation of the origin countries; the modification of migration routes and migration regime; and the mutation of immigrant communities under the joint effects of integration and new migration waves. This section presents each these three processes of social transformation which, because they were conducive to a radical transformation of the initial conditions of migration, undermined the original *raison d'être* of hometown organisations. In this context, one observes an individualisation of transnational relationships with the homeland.

2.1 Social change in the origin countries

In the early 1950s, Punjab, Kabylia, and southern Morocco were at three different stages of social transformation. India was a newly independent country. The transformation of agrarian structures started in the late nineteenth century with the abandonment of collective land management, the introduction of the *Jajmanji,*[1] and the private property regime (Mayer 1993). This movement gained momentum in the 1960s when the government responded to the shortage of food by implementing the Green Revolution in 1966. The plan aimed to improve land productivity by the introduction of mechanisation, pesticides and improved seeds and crops. Punjab became the main granary of India. The social and legal transformation of the state favoured entrepreneurial behaviours but widened the gap between landowners and landless workers (and between castes). In addition, Punjab's agricultural specialisation constrained its industrial development for the benefit of other Indian states. The growing internal and external imbalances set the backdrop for the civil war which flared up in 1984, when the Indian Army attacked the Golden Temple (the holiest Sikh shrine) to flush out a group of Sikh extremists. The country fell into a civil war which primarily targeted civil-society forces and saw a widespread use of terror. After the war, in the early 1990s, the Indian government put an end to its traditional self-centred development policy and protectionism. The authorities implemented an IMF-inspired structural adjustment policy which deregulated further the legal framework, was conducive to the withdrawal of the central state (and its financial commitments) from the local scale and, conversely, to an increased capacity of local authorities and civil-society actors.

In Algeria, the Kabyle area was heavily affected by both colonisation and decolonisation processes. In the late nineteenth century, the French authorities proceeded to mass expropriation in the wake of the revolt that flared up in 1870. These expropriations and the subsequent impoverishment of the area triggered the first migration waves to other Algerian areas and to France. During the decolonisation war, the Kabyle countryside was further affected not only by the fierce fights but also by the regrouping of the rural population into camps. But the turmoil did not stop with the end of the war. In the

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[1] The *Jajmanji* was a customary rule regulating the patron–client relationships between castes.

immediate wake of independence in 1962, the first uprising of Berberist activists flared up in the Kabyle Mountains; they were reacting against the national project of state authorities, which denied any right to cultural minorities and nationalised the Arabic language and culture. Regular outbreaks of violence against the state *hoghra*[2] have occurred during the last three decades. The largest ones took place in 1980 (the so called Berber Spring) and in 2001 (the Black Spring).

Social changes in the Moroccan countryside have been slower than in India and Algeria. Economic and social evolution was deliberately frozen by the colonial polity and then by the monarchy after independence in order to maintain the political and civil order of the area (Leveau 1985). It was only in the 1980s, with the first structural adjustment plan, that major transformations occurred. The traditional authorities were rapidly ousted by a bureaucratic management of land and agriculture. These changes were further reinforced by the second adjustment plan in the 1990s, which, as in India, led to state withdrawal and the rise of local powers.

Colonisation, decolonisation, confrontational integration into a postcolonial state and structural adjustment plans have been the main factors of change in the three considered areas. Social transformation, in the three examples, is characterised by the collapse of traditional social structures, the end of collective land management and, conversely, the rise of capitalism and individualism (Bourdieu 1977). These processes affected the *raison d'être* of hometown organisations, which are primarily based on traditional solidarities. The rise of individualism opened an avenue for cross-border individual practices escaping the control of the community. In Punjab, where the Green Revolution transformed the socio-economic context, it became possible for expatriates to invest their savings in small businesses. The same phenomenon was observed in North Africa but to a far lesser extent. Investments in individual plots (and therefore outside *tiwizi* regulation) were for a long time limited to water pumps and agricultural equipment in some areas of southern Morocco and Kabylia (de Haas, 2003: 253–61; Mter 1995). These new forms of remittances testify to new forms of relationships with the sending area, more driven by individual concerns than by community obligations.

2.2 Change in migration and migration regime

After the two oil shocks of 1973 and 1979, Britain and France adopted a zero immigration policy. In the UK, the policies adopted in 1962 and 1968 that were meant to curtail immigration flows were further complemented in 1979 by a law withdrawing any specific right of entry to Commonwealth citizens. In France, the government suspended labour immigration in 1974. Visas were imposed in the wake of the 1986 bombings in the Parisian underground, thus allowing for stricter controls at the border. These measures were conducive to a complete reconfiguration of immigration flows. Stocks of undocumented migrants, whether arrived illegally or over-stayers lingering after their permits expired, started increasing in the late 1980s.

Family migration (along with highly skilled immigrants and refugees) offset the decline of unskilled labour immigration which had so far prevailed. But, more importantly, the closure

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[2] *Hoghra* is the Arabic term for despise. It is a term used by Kabyles to describe the perceived discrimination on the part of official authorities (and Arabs in general) towards the Berber population.

of borders put an end to the possibility for migrants to circulate freely and to maintain chain migration. The migration of women occurred at a moment when the decline of chain migration was weakening the capacity of origin communities to keep a grasp on expatriate behaviours. The re-composition of households in the country of arrival had deep impacts on hometown networks. Beforehand, short-term stays and the presence of wives and children in villages acted as primary safeguards against the temptation to cut off ties with the village. Their arrival removed this safeguard.

In addition, in the wake of family reunification, emigrants left shabby hotels in city centres and slums for social and private housing. This often dismantled the spatial aggregation of hometown networks, especially in France where available cheap housing was to be found in distant suburbs. In other words, family reunification ended the 'community of suffering'. This was less the case in the UK where the housing market left the possibility for the emergence of 'little Indias' in city centres. Finally, the reconstitution of the family in the host country transformed the migration project. The migrants were led to imagine themselves being in the place of arrival in the longer term. As a consequence, it disturbed the relationships with the homeland. With the arrival of women and the transposition of the household, the place of arrival became the setting of new responsibilities for migrants. Put differently, family reunification implied a dualisation of the moral geography of migration. To the moral obligations to remit, and to remain tied to the village community, were added the moral duties of the family household.

2.3 Assimilation and the mutation of the immigrant community

Finally, hometown networks survived the insertion of immigrants and immigrant communities into the host society and the subsequent rise of alternate identities. From the 1960s onwards, one observes the emergence of the black and minority ethnic working class movement. Algerians and Moroccans were active in industrial movements fuelled by the crisis of industrial employment in the 1970s and 1980s (Wihtol de Wenden 1988). In the UK, the Indian Workers Association was one of the leading organisations of the black working class movement (Husband 1982; Ramdin 1987). Immigrant activism spread among workers a proletarian identity imbued with Marxist references. A class of leaders emerged. Among North Africans, this phenomenon disrupted further the relationships between emigrants and those left behind: leftist movements and working-class values were condemned both by national and traditional authorities in the sending areas. Stories of immigrants exchanging their European working-class clothes for the Arabic gandoura on the boat on their way back to the origin country are classic snapshots of the émigré–immigré life. The situation was far less confrontational in Punjab where communist parties were powerful and well embedded at the local level.

After the second half of the 1980s, the general collapse of working-class structures led to a rapid disaffection of working-class organisations. They were superseded by the rise of ethno-religious identities during the late 1980s. The shift was gradual in the North African case (Muslim organisations are now the largest associations among North Africans [Dumont 2008]), but dramatic among Indians. The civil war in Punjab marked the rise of the Khalistani movement, a radical Sikh movement claiming the independence of Punjab. The ''movement accelerated in the span of few years the collapse of the main Indian organisations (among them, the Indian Workers Association) and the merging of the political and the religious

among UK-based Indian organisations. Proletarian and religious identities both transcend local belongings. In that respect, these overarching identities are potentially at odds with village belongings.

Besides the rise of new identities, the overall diversification of socio-professional statuses undermined communal identifications. For example, in the 1980s, the contraction of industrial employment threw numerous workers on the dole. Some of them chose to create their own employment through entrepreneurship. The 1980s thus became a period of thriving ethnic entrepreneurship. Large Indian and North African marketplaces developed, in Belsunce (Marseilles), Place Voltaire (Gennevilliers), Barbès (Paris), Southall (London) and Handsworth (Birmingham) (Ait Ouaziz 1989; Lacroix 2009; Tarrius 1995). The 1980s thus accelerated a trend of diversification of immigrant groups, with, at the bottom of the social scale, the appearance of undocumented workers surviving in the black job market and, at the opposite end, elite traders and businessmen. The development of a business class added to the general growth of an upper class of students, engineers and professionals. Hometown groups became less useful as their members followed different paths and different integration trajectories.

Against all the odds, hometown groupings remain a common pattern of organising among North African and North Indian migrants. The density of collective remittances observed in Punjab and southern Morocco testifies to their dynamism. Despite their lesser engagement in development activities, Kabyle hometown organisations are reported by informants to be numerous at least in the Paris region and in Marseilles. This resilience is all the more surprising since hometown organisations have practically lost their original *raison d'être*. New inflows from the three regions are tenuous, community control over marriages tends to be a thing of the past, and insurance companies have replaced the repatriation fund. Hometown organisations have survived decolonisation and the postcolonial reconstruction of the South, and the transformation of migration regimes and immigrant communities in the North. They have survived racism and assimilation, wars and civil conflicts, the collapse of Marx and the rise of God. In fact, hometown networks and organisations have withstood half a century of world history.

3 Hometown organisations as a matrix of incorporation of social change

As seen above, the passage of time has diversified hometown groups to an extent that their members often have little more in common than a common origin. It remains to be seen why hometown groups have sustained themselves and what role development plays in this process. As will be shown, in the three examples considered, the evolution of hometown organisations has been very strong. Hometown organisations have adopted new patterns of functioning (such as the opening of a bank account, registration, etc.) and have engaged in a new field of activities (development). It can therefore be argued that hometown organisations survived because they evolved with time and not because of conservative tendencies and social reproduction. It remains to be seen *how* hometown groups evolved and adapted to renew their legitimacy among migrants. A closer scrutiny of the incentives of the different categories of actor shows that, beyond their differences, hometown

organisations provide them with a framework of conciliation of the paradoxes and contradictions of migration. Hometown organisations provide migrants with the possibility of managing the tensions inherent to their fragmented identities between emigrant and immigrant. Development, an object of widely shared consensus, provides a framework which unifies the group and gives members meaning to their migration. The role and incentives of the main categories of actors intervening in hometown organisations are examined below.

3.1 Wealthy people and philanthropy

Wealthy people engaged in development practices are an important group among Indian Punjabis. Affluent people, such as successful entrepreneurs, tend to be involved in personal philanthropic initiatives, often outside village networks. Their personal financial contributions to hometown projects are usually outstandingly above the average. Hometown networks endowed with a large amount of financial resources do not organise festivities in order to collect money as observed in the North African case. But these people pay the price of their leadership: they often have to mobilise their personal fortune to cover extra and unexpected expenses which are not covered by network collection.

The role of wealthy actors is illustrated by the example of Bhikhi HTO. Bhikhi is one of the 'large' villages of Daoba (over 12,000 permanent inhabitants), in the heart of the Jat country in Punjab. The existence of a small emigration is reported prior to the First World War. During this period, the son of the head of the Daoba village left for the USA. But administrative obstacles constrained him to change his route and he landed in Argentina, where his fate was bound to change definitively. There, he met Indian activists of the Gadr movement, the first pro-independence party. By means of diverse routes (he spent several years in Moscow to receive training) he returned to Punjab with the duty to organise a local insurrection. After independence, he became a communist leader and divided his life between Punjab and the Midlands (UK), where his two sons are established. On the basis of his charisma, past and family reputation, he sparked a collective energy among the Bhikhi hometown network, whose achievements are manifold. The leader died in 2009 at the age of 102.

While he grew older and withdrew from public activities, a young doctor came to the fore and engaged in a large educational project to found a university called Achich College. This doctor is a cousin of the son of the old leader. His engagement in the project was spurred by the death of one of his nephews. The College was named after the late nephew. After the completion of this first project, a new one was launched to build a village hospital. A collection was made among expatriates from the UK, Canada, US, and emigrants in large Indian cities. In order to encourage large donations, a title of 'life member', with the name carved in marble in the hospital hall, was granted to those offering over £10,000. Hometowners were also given the opportunity to sponsor a room by providing the equipment and its maintenance. The room would be named after the sponsor, with a copper board screwed next to the door. The land where the building is set up was donated by a friend of the old leader. An association was founded to co-ordinate the collection and the implementation of the project: the Bhikhi Hospital Charitable Trust. The committee of the association, headed by the doctor, is established in Birmingham where the largest

overseas Bhikhi community is settled. He contributed financially to the project on many occasions in order to cater for unexpected expenses.

This example illustrates two styles of leadership. While the old leader relied on his charisma and family status to mobilise 'human' resources, the young doctor relies on his personal fortune and energy to mobilise financial resources. But his discourse highlights the use of another form of power, namely positional power (i.e. the power proceeding from the positioning between two distinct social fields and the capacity to mobilise assets between them). The doctor justifies his engagement by his knowledge of the needs of the local population, i.e. of the discrepancies between here and there: 'the health service in Punjab villages is very poor' (Jugjit, 2009, Birmingham, head of Bhikhi Hospital Charitable Trust). The needs of the population are defined in terms of lacks. He thus conceives the condition of the village community through what they do not have. In contrast, he positions himself through his capacity to fulfil these lacks: 'being in the medical profession, I thought I could do something medical in my village'. In short, the doctor is a philanthropist who emphasises the poverty of the local population in order to build his upper-class status. Philanthropy, as Georg Simmel suggests, implies the identification of a category of have-nots which enables the wealthy to constitute themselves as a class (Simmel 2005). This strategy is deployed at a global level as it ties together the members of the same class spread across a different country. In the above example, the status of life-member and room sponsorship are two ways through which wealthy hometowners enter the closed circle of a transnational Bhikhi elite. Development initiatives are, for rich people, a class distinction strategy.

3.2 Fatherhood and youngsters: bridging space, bonding generations

The children of immigrants are seldom interested in community activities. They have not internalised the village ethos and are reluctant to share the burden of its duties. They have different yearnings and do not nurture the same attachment to their parents' place of origin. Besides, traditional village organisations as a patriarchal system, are, for youngsters, closed by birthright. They have to deal with a social organisation which grants primary power to elderly people. For these reasons, their role is more indirect. Immigrants' children, by their very presence, radically transformed both the self-perception and the perception of their place in the world of immigrant communities. As offspring grew up and started themselves to have children, the host country became for immigrants the home country of their descendants. They found themselves split between two homelands, the one of their ancestors and the one of their descendants, between their past and future. This brought to the place of arrival a value which redefined the moral geography in which migration is inscribed. While, previously, the place of departure was thought of as the unique legitimate place where the migration project was conceived, the birth of children redefined this project. Migrants found themselves obliged to spend more time and resources in the place of arrival to cater for the needs of the household. Their role of father/mother took precedence over the one of son/daughter. The dualisation of the moral space of migration dovetailed into a dualisation of status and of identity. For many, the lack of interest displayed by their children in their roots was endured with difficulty. Their children's disinterest echoed the split between their identity of emigrant and of immigrant. In this context, development projects are conceived by hometowners as an attempt to bridge generations. Most interviewees said that they informed their offspring of the nature and progress of the projects, even if the former were not actively involved. Others presented

their engagement as a way of preserving traditional solidarity (often perceived as unbearable and old-fashioned community control, especially by children) in a positive way, and as an invitation to go and see the transformation of the village (once again, the lack of modern equipment in the village fosters children's reluctance). It is by no means clear that this endeavour met all the expectations of the actors (interviewees still wished that their children were more committed). The intention of hometowners is more interesting to us than the actual result. We therefore see these endeavours as a symptom of the need to overcome the fracture that divides the self into immigrant and emigrant identity. Against the injunction of choosing between here and there, migrants negotiate a dual identity of transmigrant: they are from here and there. These initiatives are an attempt to articulate their spaces of belonging and spheres of identity. Development projects are a bridge thrown across space and time.

As mentioned above, youngsters rarely take an active role in hometown organisations. However, when present, they often prove to play an influential role. They are often educated, sometimes unemployed graduates willing to give their time for a charitable cause, or they are more established and the head of young family. North Indian and North African youngsters born in the country of origin (the so-called 1.5 generation) are much more present than those born in the place of arrival. Their engagement often implies a profound change for hometown organisations: they need to challenge the power of the elders if they want to be in a position to participate fully in the projects. This can take a very long time and many of these 'youngsters' are now in their forties. To be a youngster pertains more to social status than belonging to a particular age group. Their main role has been to urge the organisation to formalise. Better educated, on average, than their parents, they bring their skills and ideas. Personal investigations show that they have introduced the use of computers, book keeping, and mobile phones. Beyond these functional improvements, youngsters bring a new conception of the role of the village organisation, a structure focused on development and less on the respect of traditions. The formalisation of the village organisation causes a revolution in the social structures. Replacing a system of appointing with elections challenges the power of the elders and opens the possibility for the youngsters to access to the board of trustees.

The following example, the Parisian-based Kabyle hometown organisation of Ouled Ali, is a case in point. Ouled Ali is a rural municipality composed of nine villages of the Great Kabylia. The municipality was part of the province of Fort National under French Rule. The province itself is known as one of the main source areas of labour migration (Direche-Slimani 1997: 38). The first immigrants worked in the car industry and were established in the 14th and 15th arrondissements of Paris. Each recomposed 'village' used to maintain a fund for body repatriation, all managed by an *Amin* and *Tamen*. The cafés were the focal point of social life. In case of a wedding, a death, or a birth, posters were pinned there to inform other fellows. This system lasted until the 1980s. Because of returns and deaths of migrants and because of households moving to more distant suburbs, the networks gradually dissolved. The youngsters did not participate in a system that they had no concern for and even wished to escape from.

In 2001, two villages planned to reinvigorate community solidarity by merging their burial funds. During the discussion about how to implement the project, other villages showed their interest. Finally, the Ouled Ali hometown organisation was founded in 2002, an

association gathering representatives from the nine villages. This federation was led by a scholar who initiated the process. The registration was the starting point of a silent revolution. Some youngsters got onto the board, attracted by the ambitions of the new structure, and solicited by the co-ordinator who was willing to modernise its functioning. These youngsters favoured two objectives: tackling the development needs of the village of origin and the social needs of the community in France. The system of appointing and decision-making shifted gradually from a show of hands to a secret ballot. This led to the withdrawal of elders who did not want to face the public dishonour of a failure. The membership and attendance became voluntary and not compulsory: the fines which used to be given to people absent from a meeting were suppressed. A bank account, book keeping, registration of balance and receipts clarified the finance. Text messages and emails replaced the usual posters pinned in cafés. These small changes have reactivated the community linkages. The association is funded by annual festivities gathering the families from different parts of Paris and its suburbs. These community gatherings attract around 500 people from five generations. Intergenerational transmission is one of the priorities of the organisation. The board has maintained the repatriation insurance but has enlarged its range of activities. In 2005, solicited by the local hospital in Ouled Ali, the association funded an air-conditioning system in the village. Different projects are discussed: a public library for the municipality, literacy courses, and so on. Yet, the association suffers from the lack of means and time of the co-ordinators, and from the often confrontational points of view of the members.

The need to comply with the expectations linked to the status of household head on the one hand, and the status of son (or daughter) on the other – that is to say the need to be part of the course of generations – appears as a fundamental factor explaining migrant engagement in development activities. Youngsters committed to development projects often put forward the will to pursue and modernise the legacy of their parents. But this stance is often taken on with the prospect of transmitting this legacy to their own children. Youngsters are often themselves fathers (more rarely mothers) of young children. Their commitment is therefore underpinned by a similar concern as the one of the previous generation. However, beyond this common point, their involvement is, indeed, underpinned by specific considerations. In a way, they want to incorporate the legacy of their parents into their own life trajectory, while development projects are for elders a way to articulate the balance of their space trajectory. The youngsters' focus is the place where they were born, not the place of origin. Their engagement is more based upon a family ethos rather than a village ethos. But, beyond these differences, primo-migrants and their children inscribe themselves into the same migration process, a process initiated by the departure of the parents, and closed by its incorporation into a family history by the children when they themselves become parents.

3.3 The bridging function of retired people

At the other end of the generational spectrum, retired people appear to have played a critical role in the transformation of hometown organisations. The generation of immigrants who arrived between the 1950s and the 1960s reached the age of retirement in the 1990s. Some have stayed in Europe, some have returned, but most of them keep on circulating regularly between the countries of origin and the country of their children. Circulation is, in this regard, a decisive resource they bring in to improve the implementation of projects.

Since they have more time to devote to associative activities, they play a key role in the transmission of information. Those who spend most of their time in the village are present on co-ordination committees managing the implementation of projects in the villages. They often act as points of contact who mediate the relationships between villagers and expatriates.

The example of the Patiala hometown organisation, a village of Punjab, illustrates the importance of retired people in modern collective remittances. Johinder, an interviewee, arrived in the UK in 1956. He joined his uncle in the Midlands where most of the emigrants from Patiala were settled. He worked in different local factories for forty years. Simultaneously, he joined the Indian Workers Association in his town of settlement, and the Communist Party. He became the general secretary of the IWA branch from 1970 to 1997. The 15 families of Patiala in the West Midlands (there are about 50 in England) sustained a thriving social life, gathering in pubs or at home every week. After 1962, family reunification enriched this social life with the arrival of women and children. This process also affected the myth of return and thus, the relationships with the country of origin: 'we realised we can't come back' he said.

The group has implemented several development projects since the 1950s. In 1958, the headmaster of the school in Patiala, a friend of Johinder, spent three months in England. Together, they decided to build a high school for the village. Johinder collected the money by visiting every Patiala family in England; in Coventry, Birmingham, Wolverhampton, Leicester, Leeds and London. He solicited not only the village fellows but also friends from neighbouring villages. Each household gave between £10 and £60. He sent £800 to the village *Panchayat* (the municipality authorities), which co-ordinated the project. The donations were registered in a book in order to clarify the operations. Three other projects were achieved: the extension of the school in 1967, the renovation of the *Panchayat* building in 1977, and the building of a crematorium in 2003. For each project, the techniques of collection and implementation were improved. In 1967, subcommittees were created in the main cities of settlement. They were constituted by one or two persons entrusted with the duty to centralise the donations in their town. In 2003, the crematorium project was decided during a village meeting in Patiala. The villagers expressed their needs to the migrants. In the UK, the active members opened a bank account dedicated to the collection of the money. The money was directly transferred to the bank account of the *Panchayat*. This decision was also taken in order to improve the transparency of the operation. A second meeting was organised in Patiala, once the crematorium was established, in order to account for the expenses to the villagers.

The Patiala case illustrates the long-term adaptation of hometown organisations to the evolution of the hometown network. As in the Ouled Ali case, the techniques of collection and the formal aspects of the organisation were gradually improved. From its inception, the hometown organisation had a steady pace of one project per decade, before it fell into a long period of inactivity between the late 1970s and the early 2000s. It is worth noting that family reunification and the ensuing dualisation of the moral space of migration did not alter, at least in the short run, the rhythm of the projects. But integration and the gradual subsequent dismantling of the group of hometowners account for the ceasing of activities over three decades. The renewal of engagement in 2003 was spurred by the old leader reaching retirement age. Circulation is therefore a crucial factor favouring engagement in

transnational practices (and the joint building of transnational identities). It is generally admitted that transnationalism would not have been possible without the space/time compression induced by new technologies and low-cost transport (Vertovec 1999). Transmigrants are often depicted as restless circulating people. This example highlights that only a minority of hometowners are engaged in dense circulation practices. Hometown networks are not mobile networks. In fact, some circulate so that the majority do not have to. But this example also shows that collective remittances did not need to wait for the arrival of email and low-cost air companies. Contemporary mobility is therefore not a necessary condition for hometown transnational practices.

While circulation is the specific resource brought by retired people, the respect of a certain idea of tradition is what best characterises their incentive. In contrast with youngsters, elderly people tend to engage in collective practices with a view to reproducing a past social order. This stance also contrasts with the one of wealthy people. The issue here is not to assert a class position but to conform to a social hierarchy grounded in interdependence. In Emirbayer and Miche terms (Emirbayer and Miche 1998), the agentic orientation of elders' engagement is different. Their role is less oriented towards a social becoming than towards past and entrenched habitus. Their participation is not voluntary but inherent to inherited social status; their contribution cannot be associated with a subscription but to a community tax they are to pay.

3.4 The organisational role of political activists

The last category of actors which has spurred the metamorphosis of transnational village organisations is that of political activists, and unionists. They use their know-how in collective mobilisation and associative management to lead development activities. Johinder, the former general secretary of an Indian Workers Association branch, mentioned above, is a typical example. The old leader of the Bhikhi hometown network is another. One could expect these activists to seek a political return on their investment. This is actually true only for a small number of them. Most of them have not formally bridged the political and developmental aspects of their activities. Development belongs to the private kinship sphere of their lives, whereas their political activism is focused on the UK public sphere. In fact, the context of village networks is not suitable for political strategies. The projects need internal consensus among people from very different backgrounds. Moreover, politicisation is likely to discredit the projects in the eyes of the villagers, especially in regions where authoritarianism or political instability reigns. The motivation lies elsewhere. The political trajectory is often rooted in a family tradition of engagement in public affairs, as shown in the case of Bhikhi. If hometowners do not possess large financial capital, they may rely on family networks and reputation.

A case in point is Attacharouk, a hometown organisation of Berber Chleuhs from Kasbat Ouled Herbil in the Province of Tata. The first collective initiatives began in the late 1970s. Wells were dug thanks to a contribution launched by Netherlands-based immigrants. In the wake of this operation, a collective fund was created. In the 1980s, the fund served to renovate religious buildings. Contributions were made on a voluntary basis and money was transferred to Morocco by a trusted Hadj. In 1994, the villagers received support from UNICEF and Catholic Relief Services to build a water tower. The two funding bodies required from the villagers the creation of a registered village association to represent the village

community. Once the project was achieved, villagers and expatriates decided to build on this first experience to carry out their own development projects. The association received public authority support through a government co-funding scheme to electrify the village. It was then decided to found a sister organisation in France to collect and manage the contribution of expatriates. Attacharouk-France was therefore created in 1998. In addition to the support from immigrants given to their families to cover the expenses of electrification (amounting to 40 dirham per month over seven years), Attacharouk-France collected 100,000 dirham to fund the electrification of distant houses not covered by the Office National d'Electricité. The organisation thus replaced the collective fund created in the 1970s. Additional projects were carried out in the following years (a classroom, the planting of 300 ornamental trees in 1998, and various social and cultural events). In 2003, a new organisation, Tamount, was registered in the Netherlands to manage the contribution of Netherlands- and Belgium-based immigrants.

Attacharouk-France is headed by the brother-in-law of the Morocco-based association leader. Having arrived in France in 1965, he worked for thirty years for various enterprises. He became a leftist activist while he partook in industrial actions in the 1970s and 1980s. He was an active member of the Association des Marocains de France (AMF) and the Association des Travailleurs Marocains de France (ATMF). In parallel, he joined a major French trade union, the Confédération Générale du Travail. When, in 2001, some militants of the ATMF created a platform of NGOs, Immigration Démocratie Développement (IDD), Attacharouk-France was among the founding members. Thanks to IDD, they achieved the building of a rural library in 2004. The leader of Attacharouk-France relied on a dual set of legitimacies, a family legitimacy to manage its relationships with Morocco, and an activist legitimacy which turned out to be instrumental in mustering external resources. On the one hand, the leader is himself the cousin of the village head and belongs to an established family of the village. It confers on him a certain credibility and fame among hometowners. On the other hand, his connections with ATMF and IDD gave access to subsidies of the French Foreign Ministry. Interestingly, these two spheres of belonging have, for a long time, been completely disconnected. This disconnection is rooted in a history of repression of leftist movements in Morocco. Political activists and union leaders based in France were under threat from police authorities during their stay in Morocco. The collaboration between Moroccan and French intelligence services led to the arrest many activists. Several famous trials condemned *in absentia* political refugees who had fled to Europe. By and large, the working-class identity and its political underpinnings were seen as suspicious and unwelcomed by local authorities. This disconnection is to be understood in this context. For forty years, the leader of Attacharouk-France has been giving money to the village Madrassa in Morocco, while shouting Marxist slogans in France. He has been fulfilling *tiwizi* duties and organising industrial actions.

Development projects have been, for these activists, the means to bridge both aspects of their life. They mobilise their know-how in terms of collective mobilisation and negotiation for the village cause. Hometown organisations and their development practices have therefore been instrumental in integrating the various spheres of life of their members. This is particularly true for political activists. Beyond its impact on identity, development is also a field where customary and modern normativities combine. This combination is examined further below.

3.5 Leadership without membership: the reinvention of social normativities

From the 1980s onwards, the end of chain migration (which was conducive to the clustering of expatriate villagers in the same arrival areas) and integration processes have put an end to the original *raison d'être* of hometown organisations. Why, then, have they have survived up until now?

A first answer lies in the adaptation of hometown organisations' role and functioning. The renewal of hometown organisations in the 1990s was largely due to a surge of development initiatives. In that sense, development has become the new grammar of hometown translocalism, superseding the former function of supporting the circulation of people (dead or alive) and overseeing the maintaining of relationships between hometowners and also with the village community. Even if some Kabyle organisations still maintain a repatriation fund, this type of function is no more than a mere symbolic remnant of the role they played in the past. In addition, one observes the introduction of bureaucratic practices in the functioning of hometown organisations. The opening of bank accounts is now widespread. The registration of the association remains unusual due to the work it entails for organisation managers (book keeping, etc.). The choice to formalise an existing hometown organisation has two reasons: either it is spurred by a group of people willing to renew the management of the institution (as in the case of Ouled Ali) or it is induced by the need to apply for funding to public authorities. By and large, the modernisation of organisational structures has rendered hometown organisations more trustworthy in the eyes of community members.

The renewal of hometown organisations has been possible owing to a transformation of the objectives of hometown organisations. From institutions of community support and long-distance control, hometown organisations have become development actors. This is particularly true among North African organisations. Until the 1990s, collective remittances were mostly in the form of traditional *tiwizi* projects: restoration of religious buildings, or collective wells and irrigation systems, i.e. infrastructure already existing in the village. Things changed in the 1990s when development projects led to the creation of new infrastructure, such as electrification, the building of health centres, etc. The situation in Punjab is different insofar as development initiatives (primarily the building of schools) are reported as early as the 1950s. One observes however an acceleration of the number of projects and an increase in size in the 1990s.

The second answer as to why hometown organisations have survived resides in the transformation of leadership. Traditional leadership is fixed by customary norms and family precedence. In this context, leaders were empowered with birthright legitimacy and charisma. Contemporary hometown organisation leaders rely on their capacity to handle various levels of legitimacies and to access a variety of resources. The leader is above all the one able to integrate the different skills and resources of the expatriate villagers. They cope with the existing organisational core of the community. Interviewees constantly refer to concepts such as *tiwizi*, *seva* and village solidarity to justify and explain their engagement. Hence, actors embed their legitimacy in traditional villageness and mobilise community members on the basis of entrenched moral duties. Conversely, the existing organisational structures affect and shape leadership. In the Indian case, organisations spring up around one or several leaders for specific projects and then return to the latent state of kinship

network. In the Kabyle case, organisations are more permanent and roles more fixed. Leaders must also display their capacity to mobilise the various forms of resources available, i.e. community, personal, and external resources. As for community resources, it is the combination of the different facets of the community resources that make them efficient. As shown by the different examples, none of the above-mentioned categories (youngsters, militants, affluent and retired people) plays a determinant role. What matters is the combination of the different potentialities they offer. Regarding personal resources, leaders rely on a repertoire of family, occupational and financial resources. In the cases of Patiala and Attacharouk-France, the leaders are retired and political activists, making the most of their capacity to move, and of personal associational networks. In the cases of Bhikhi and Ouled Ali, leaders are wealthy youngsters. They bring their financial means and their vision of modern volunteering. Finally, in terms of external resources, when community and personal financial capacities do not suffice to cover the costs of the projects, hometown organisations have to liaise with public authorities or NGOs to find additional funds, which, in turn, requires specific skills and connections.

Beyond the patterns of leadership, it is also the relationships between members and leaders which have changed. Traditional membership is defined by blood links. People were *de facto* members and there was no possibility of opting out. Leaving the organisation amounted to leaving the group. The contributions to the hometown organisation collections were not voluntary subscriptions but a community taxation induced by the status of expatriate villager. This pattern of functioning is still present among certain hometown networks but one generally observes a decline of this form of membership in favour of what we can call today loose, voluntary, membership. There is no permanent and defined membership, but, beyond a core of engaged actors, a fuzzy group of passive members who are solicited when collections are made. In the Indian case, donors are also recruited among neighbouring village networks. This does not mean that community pressure has disappeared. The ties induced by the village ethos still matter but do not suffice to spur an overall mobilisation of village expatriates. It is in the very nature of community development projects that members find the justification of their participation. Development projects rally support because they suit the contemporary identity of emigrants. In the first place, development initiatives are a means for hometowners to redefine their relationships with the village community. Development projects are a way for expatriates to assert themselves as conveyors of modernity in the origin village. Collective remittances bridge the identity fracture between emigrant and immigrant that characterised post-war migration. In the second place, engagement in development projects fosters a re-composition of the relations within hometown networks. The emergence of loose membership is a symptom of the processes at stake. The variety of profiles, class belonging and political affinities of the members undermine the communality of the networks. In this context, the renewing of hometown organisations has been possible thanks to the consensual and apolitical nature of development projects (Waldinger et al. 2008). Interviewees often highlight this apolitical aspect of their engagement, revealing without verbalising the sensitivity of the matter. De-politicisation is the condition which enables the variety of aspirations, visions and resources to 'precipitate' into development projects.

By and large, the transformation of leadership and membership heralds an overall evolution of the normative framework which underpin hometown organisations' functioning. One observes within the discourse of actors and within the patterns of mobilisation entangled

incentives and normativities. Development is imbued with philanthropic objectives, the will to bridge time and space, the respect of tradition and the need to enter modernity. These aspects are present among all actors, even if each category tends to put the emphasis on one of them. These aspects conflate within hometown organisations to constitute the contemporary meaning of collective remittances. Actors intertwine customary and religious norms with 'modern' ones (for want of a better term). Actors explicitly inscribe their endeavour within a tradition of collective mobilisation. They establish a link between their work and traditional *tiwizi*/*seva* duties. Leaders rely on the normative strength of traditional rules to force the participation of hometowners. Collective remittances are therefore imbued with old rules, but their content has changed to convey new meanings of migrant–non-migrant relationships. Collective remittances use the strength of tradition to redefine the contours of the 'moral economy of social belonging' that regulates the relationships with villagers and asserts a dual here/there identity. At the same time, the functioning of hometown organisations engaged in development practices has evolved to incorporate Western associational techniques (boards of trustees, bank accounts, book keeping) which have had effects beyond the daily management of the group. This evolution went along with the redefinition of internal hierarchies and the rise of new leaderships. The surge of development practices in the 1990s heralds a watershed in the history of hometown groupings.

Conclusion

This examination of the recent transformation of hometown organisations enables us to touch upon the deep function of this type of migrant institution. Hometown organisations have not been created to serve as development organisations. In fact, 'development' turns out to be a reality difficult to grasp in the implementation of the projects. Development is a veil which rapidly evaporates to reveal more personal motivations. Nor are they conservative institutions in charge of perpetuating a village habitus against the influence of the host society. The marks of integration are present everywhere. The choice to engage in development practices is, in itself, a deliberate expression of this integration. In fact, hometown organisations appear as social institutions which still maintain their bridging (vertical) and bonding (horizontal) functions. North African and North Indian hometown organisations are migrant institutions meant to create group communality despite objective differences between members. They incorporate social change and accommodate the coexistence of different levels of normativities and different modes of being *vis-à-vis* the group.

In this paper, I have depicted North Indian and North African hometown groupings and the causes and effects of their engagement in development practices. A long-term perspective highlights a surprising capacity of adaptation among hometown organisations to the changing needs of hometown networks. Of course, this capacity is not evenly displayed among hometown groups. The focus on successful collective remittances glosses over the failures of other hometown groups. Some hometowners stay at the margin of hometown networks and have a minimal involvement in collective activities. Some have no involvement at all, because they live far away from the rest of the group or because, for one reason or another, they have cut off links. There is a plethora of such cases. Development, the satisfaction of partaking in collective endeavour, is not a panacea for those who are

confronted with poverty and unemployment in their daily life in Europe. Associational transnational engagement is not a path to better living conditions. In terms of groups, many North Indian and North African hometown networks and organisations turned out to be unable to overcome their internal dissensions for lack of efficient leadership. Others have simply disappeared after their loss of *raison d'être* condemned them to inactivity. Failure is impossible to measure in a case study-based analysis, but it can be explained. Among Algerian Kabyles, where very few development projects have been carried out, the non-engagement in transnational practices is the rule, not the exception. At the organisational level, the reasons for this failure are not clear. A wider lens and the insertion of hometown organisations in their broader environment are necessary to address this issue. The inscription of hometown organisations within the host country civil society, and their relationships with state policies, is the object of a forthcoming paper in the IMI series.

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