

# REMITTANCES AND TRANSNATIONAL SOCIAL SPACE

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This presentation examines how transnational social space between migrants and their families back home changes from the beginning of migration, when solitary migrants send remittances to their home country, to the stage at which migrants start to bring their family members to the host country. I hope to shed some light on the multiplicity of the social and cultural meanings of remittances by examining Moroccan immigrants and their relatives in Morocco. I will also discuss the meaning of 'home village' to Moroccan immigrants.

When the villagers of a central Moroccan village first started to go to France in the 1950s, their sole aim was to earn money and send home remittances. Indeed, their families in Morocco regarded them as 'remittance makers.' Once they had brought their families to France, the migrants were no longer obliged to send money back home. However, they continued to send remittances because they felt that since they were living in a developed country they should help their relatives in their underdeveloped homeland; their relatives in Morocco felt the same way.

As migrants brought their families to settle in France, they did not lose ties with their homeland, but their positions in the transnational social space changed and diversified. On the one hand, migrants who regarded their ties to relatives in Morocco as very important, and had the money to do so, built houses in Morocco to show 'honor' in the transnational social space. On the other hand, some migrants invested their economic resources more heavily in France, to upgrade their quality of life there. Nevertheless, they too did not wish to fully cut their ties with their homeland.

**Keywords:** Remittance, Settlement, Transnational social field, France, Morocco