

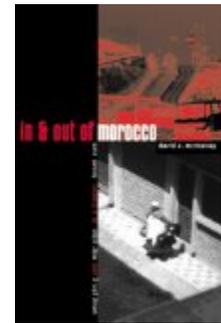
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David A. McMurray. *In and Out of Morocco: Smuggling and Migration in a Frontier Boomtown*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2001. xx + 203 pp. \$49.95 (cloth), ISBN 978-0-8166-2507-9.

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Globalization, National Subjectivity, and Local Identity

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Morocco occupies a central place in the anthropological imagination. From the functionalist and structural-functionalist treatises of Robert Montagne, Jacques Berque, and Ernest Gellner through the interpretive frameworks of Clifford Geertz, Lawrence Rosen, Vincent Crapanzano, and Kevin Dwyer to the Foucauldian and post-Foucauldian approaches of Paul Rabinow, Dale Eickelman, and Abdellah Hammoudi the anthropology of Morocco has been one of the privileged loci for theoretical innovation in the discipline. David McMurray's long-anticipated ethnography, *In and Out of Morocco*, very much deserves a place in this illustrious lineage. Although its fine-grained analysis of daily life in the northern Rif border town of Nador appears to privilege the "native's point of view" over infra-disciplinary conversations or analytical discussions, in the end the book offers a surprisingly innovative perspective on one of the central themes in contemporary anthropology: namely, the impact of globalization—as mediated in this case by patterns of migration and smuggling—on the construction of local identity and national subjectivity.

Based on field research conducted in mid-1980s, the study questions how Nadori lives are mediated by the constant flow of goods and people across the border with Melilla, Spain, Europe, and beyond. It demonstrates how these flows have effected a transformation of systems of wealth and status, as labor migration and smuggling have

become alternative strategies for social mobility, and as European products and styles have inserted themselves into local games of distinction. Indeed, McMurray points to a veritable fetish of the foreign within Nadori consumption practices, a fetish that extends not only to recognized imports—such as Belgian carpets, Mercedes cars, and Marlboro cigarettes—but also to local products endowed with an aura of the foreign, such as taos ("peacock") China plates pirated in Fez, or the Casablanca-made "Skep Skol" line of swimwear, the logo of which mimics European brands. One of the most striking consequences of this simulacral economy is, as McMurray narrates, the erosion of the depth of the local. Evident not solely in the devaluation of locally-identified products, this erosion involves an historical amnesia of Nador's own heritage of resistance, a patent erasure from local memory, for instance, of Abd al-Krim's 1921 battle against the Spanish at nearby Anoual.

McMurray is particularly attuned to such effects of migration, smuggling, and hyper-importation on the re-figuring of gender identities in Nador. In the first place, the absence of husbands and fathers, due to protracted work in Europe, entails a re-negotiation of dynamics of honor and shame as social diacritics of masculinity and femininity. While male migrants seek to maintain domestic authority through house construction, remittances, and unexpected telephone calls—and indeed often employ such technologies to enforce a greater degree of gender seclusion than in previous periods—their absence does provide greater space for the women and

children of the household to construct wider patterns of sociality and life aspirations. Furthermore, the book shows how the increased connectivity to Europe itself created new avenues for women in public life, whether as foot smugglers of everyday goods from Melilla, or as singers (*cheikhas*) of Rifi ay-aralla-bouya ballads, often about the impact of migration on male-female dynamics, which are bootlegged and re-sold to the Berber diaspora in Europe. Finally, McMurray indicates how the increased consumerism of foreignness in Nador has commodified and commercialized a particular form of masculinity that, with Marlboro in hand, takes a condescending disinterest to local Moroccan life.

While these transformations in and of themselves may not be surprising to students of contemporary Morocco, what makes the book powerful and innovative is its particular melding of detailed life history accounts and interpretive ethnography with more theoretical reflections. Like the work of Crapanzano and Dwyer, the conversation between informant and anthropologist takes center place throughout the book, with the latter repeatedly underlining the subjectivity of his interpretations and refusing to make any analytic closure. The life history of Haddou, a Nadori migrant to Dusseldorf, constitutes the entirety of second chapter, and the chapter that immediately follows balances that story against six others, each representing different perspectives on the migrant experience. The “lie of the land” and the impact of migration on Nador are largely related through the narrative of the author and his family’s integration into Nador, particularly the various negotiations around the *issm* (naming ceremony) of McMurray’s son, Char-

lie Anwal. While these rhetorical techniques might appear to narrow the robustness of McMurray’s account to simply his own experiences, they actually have quite the opposite effect. The detailed narratives of everyday Nadori life flesh out our understandings of globalization and its local ramifications in ways far more satisfying than the more sweeping theoretical reflections or macro-sociological analyses that have become de rigueur in scholarly bibliographies. For instance, in but one of many fascinating interpretive moves, McMurray employs actual and apocryphal tales of smuggling to demonstrate, via Achille Mbembe’s discussion of postcolonial aesthetics, how the “border theater” of trafficking and policing, while appearing to constitute a form of subaltern resistance, symbolically legitimates the state’s monopoly of ceremony and violence.

Given these thematic concerns and methodological contributions, *In and Out of Morocco* will be of great interest to scholars of the Middle East, gender, and globalization more generally. While theoretically sophisticated, it is more than accessible to an undergraduate audience, and indeed works extremely well in stimulating classroom discussions on issues of transnationalism and contemporary North African cultural and sexual politics.

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