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Oberlin College

Amazight Identity
in The Post Colonial Moroccan State:
A Case Study in Ethnicity

An Honors Thesis
submitted to the
Department of Anthropology

by

Morag E. Boyd

Oberlin, Ohio

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Chapter One: Introduction

I: Introduction

Morocco is a state of many nations. The throngs of people on the streets of Tangier, Rabat, Essouaria, and Zagora represent an immense variety of different backgrounds. Cultural diversity and political correctness are concepts that have not entered the intellectual discourse of Morocco let alone become a concern of the rural farmer. Yet Moroccans hold senses of identity connected to their historical and ethnic backgrounds. Historically, many of the Moroccan peoples were organized tribally and drew much of their regional identity from these groupings. Now, the significance of tribes has reduced to such an extent that larger groupings have become more important; however, the heritage of this background remains strong. Amazight ethnicity depends on the continuity of tribal forms.

While other ethnic identities, such as Jewish, Bedouin, and sub-Saharan African, represent significant portions of the Moroccan population, this study focuses on the Amazights in the Morocco of today; that Morocco is a developing country struggling to catch up to the Western World that has so strongly influenced it. The Amazight is a group of people of unclear geographic, historical, and ethnic origin; "a composite people; ... the affinity among the various people seems to be solely linguistic " (Nelson 1985:4). Although their tradition traces their origins to two unrelated families;

Amazighs have now grown to account for an unknown, but large, percentage of the population, anywhere from 20 to 80 percent (e.g. Hoffman 1967: 19, Wolfert 1973: 13). The discrepancies in the figures stem from the Moroccan census that does not include Amazight/Berber as a choice for either ethnicity or primary language. This segment of the Moroccan population is redefining itself in the context of a state dominated by French and Arab influences; the Amazigh are taking new pride in their language and heritage and seeking to break into government in a more active way in an effort to define themselves as a cultural driving force.

This study will demonstrate that the Amazigh are a distinct ethnic group in Morocco, despite the common interpretation in scholarly and everyday discourse that they are merely groups of people speaking one of the Amazigh language and not representing a distinct cultural entity. The study will go on to examine the ramifications of this ethnic identity and the heritage of the historical and tribal roots of the Amazigh in light of nationalism, state building, ethnicity, and cultural marginalization.

II: Fieldwork and Methodology

The core research for this study was done over a three week period from April 20 to May 11, 1996 as part of the School for International Training College Semester Abroad in Morocco, Spring 1996. Dr. Susan Schaefer Davis and Dr. Abdelhay Moudden served as my advisers. I interviewed approximately thirty people representing both Arab and Amazight identities, a wide variety of adult ages, and both men and women. Of course, some were much more valuable as sources of information and/or insight than others. While I had a set of questions in mind, a formal interview with a list of questions, paper, pen, and a cassette recorder proved to be an ineffective strategy. Most of my information comes from casual conversations that I framed around my questions. These were two way conversations with people just as eager to understand me and my background as I was to understand them and theirs.

Furthermore (and most frustrating), the data are limited by time and access issues growing out of language limitations and aspects of being a woman interacting with Moroccan cultures. The majority of my informants are young males. This is because I had to access people through the public sphere, a male dominated environment in Morocco. This category of the population is the most willing and accessible even within the public sphere as (given the unemployment problem in Morocco) they had the time to talk to me. In most cases, to meet women I had to be invited into the homes of the men

whom I had met in cafes, etc. This required a degree of trust in these men that I did not always have (not to mention the implication about my character that such an action would have meant to other Moroccans).

Additionally, particularly in Setti Fadma, the language barrier was an issue. This was an issue ~~was~~ most problematic with children and women. The vast majority of the conversations upon which this study is based took place in French with some in English. Arabic was used mostly as a rapport builder. As my topic focused on Amazight peoples, many of my informants spoke an Amazight language in daily life. Many females, who are educated in significantly smaller numbers than males, spoke only one of the three Amazight languages. Others spoke Amazight and *Derija*, the Moroccan dialect of Arabic that differs from *Fousha*, the Modern Standard Arabic (so much that they are not really mutually intelligible). Morocco: A Country Study tells us that only one percent of Riffian Amazight women speak another language in addition to Riffian Amazight; the statistic is significantly higher in other areas (fifty-eight percent in the Middle Atlas) (Nelson 1985: 114).

I spent research time in five different communities. A total of eight days were spent in the urban areas of Casablanca, Rabat, and Marrakech, a historically Amazight city. I was in Khemisset, a provincial capital perhaps 75 km outside Rabat, for six days. This town is noted for its weekly carpet *souk* (market). It is close to the Middle Atlas mountains, therefore it is populated by both Arabs and Amazight, who are probably the majority of the population.

The rest of my time was spent in Setti Fadma, a small almost entirely Amazight village approximately 65 km south of Marrakech in the High Atlas Mountains. This town is the site of a saint's tomb dedicated to the daughter of Mohammed the Prophet, Fatima. The tomb is the site of a *mousseem* (religious festival in honor of a saint) held each August cited as one of the three most important in Morocco (Rough Guide 1995: 298). The economic activities of the town include goat, sheep, and cow pastoralism. In addition, there is limited cherry, apple, and other terrace horticulture. A few families engage in the potentially lucrative, but risky, walnut harvesting. The town is becoming increasingly dependent on tourism to the nearby cascades both by Moroccans and foreigners. This made it significantly easier for me to interview in this town than other small villages that I had visited.

People and their opinions that I cite in this paper are often only representative examples. Wherever possible, I have let an interviewee speak (through my translation) rather than choosing their words for them. Names of cited informants appear with some biographical information as an appendix.

An important word choice I have made is to refer to this segment of Moroccan society as "Amazight", a word coming from their languages meaning "free man", rather than Berber. The second term is the one most commonly found in the literature, however, it is related to "barbarian". For obvious reasons, the Amazight people, particularly those living in southern Morocco,

have strong objections to its connotations and demand the use of "Amazight" instead.

Chapter Two: Theoretical Foundations

I: Ethnicity

In order to fully grasp the placement of the Amazight within Moroccan society and to connect this study to a more general cultural processes, it is necessary to look at the theories of ethnicity circulating today. Fredrick Barth's Ethnic Groups and Boundaries is one of the most influential works in this area. However, there are many other theories of varying utility. In the case of the Amazight, it is interesting to consider their ethnicity in light of immigration theory. These theories allow one to define the Amazight as a distinct ethnic group rather than a linguistic unit in all other respects like the remainder of the Moroccan population.

Relevant to discussion of ethnicity are the distinctions between ethnic categories, ethnic identities, and ethnic groups. These terms may be seen as levels of a hierarchy in that order. Only when a community of individuals reach the level of "group" do they become a culturally and socially significant category.¹ An ethnic category exists when characteristics may define an individual as a member (or not as a member) of the category. As a category is not a culturally and socially salient method of categorization, this is a low level distinction. Ethnic identity comes with self-subscription to a category.

¹ Cultural significant is taken to mean that cultural forms are effected by this trait. Socially significant indicates that the organization and institutions of a society are in some way dependent on the described trait.

This level is culturally and socially significant. However, an ethnic group is the only level in which there is a social component. To define ethnic group, persons share an ethnic identity and use that identity as a primary basis for social organization (Casson 1994).

In order to define ethnicity, there are four major areas of concern. The term "ethnic group" as defined above may be applied to peoples meeting the following criteria.

- An ethnic group must be a biologically self-perpetuating population.
- They must share cultural values and beliefs and express this in overt cultural forms.
- A field of communication and interaction between the members must be defined. This factor is often defined by a common language not shared with other groups.
- A group must identify with a cultural category that defines and distinguishes them from all others (Barth 1969: 10-11).

Although much of the anthropological literature has discounted the usefulness of making ethnic distinctions between Arabs and Amazight, ethnicity is a salient feature in the social, cultural, and political construction of Morocco. This is demonstrated by the ethnically definable ethnicity of the Amazight. Other sections of this study will look at these traits in greater detail. However, to briefly fit the Amazight into this model, they meet the four criteria. As they have retained systems of kinship and tribal ties, they have maintained an at least partially biologically self-perpetuating population. It is

important to regard ethnic groups not as completely closed systems, but rather as a component of larger society with permeable boundaries; nevertheless, the internal cohesion of the group is maintained. The Amazight certainly share cultural beliefs and values, as demonstrated by their own statements and outside observation. Moreover, the Amazight have their distinct languages. Finally, the Amazight do identify themselves and are identified by others as belonging to a distinctive category.

At this point, it also important to stress that there is no implication of equality in “ethnic group” status. Indeed, ethnicity has often been the basis for the maintenance of an intrinsically unequal system, as in the case of slavery or policies regarding Native Americans in the United States.

Paul Starr has provided an etic “checklist” of ethnicity that is applicable to the case of the Amazight and many others. It depends on what he calls “features” (physically definable aspects) and “dimensions”. However, Starr is not implying that appearance plays a large role in ethnicity. The items to look for include: language; vocabulary; dress (including colors and styles of dress shared with other ethnicities); tattoos, body scarring, and other methods of self marking; residence patterns, particularly those that associate groups with difference communities, and individual’s names (Casson 1994). All these items are present to varying degrees among the Amazight peoples.

Barth has provided a key element to the study of ethnicity by expanding concerns in his refocusing onto the cultural. He moves away from the four criteria listed above. This does not mean that he invalidates them; rather he

sees them as results and not markers of ethnicity. His ethnic groups are defined simply as cultural bearing units (Barth 1969: 11). His most significant contribution is the notion that people in the same cultural category can engage in very different activities in very different environments; for example, the Amazight rural pastoral nomad and the Amazight urban shopkeeper are both Amazight. This is due to the shared "basic value orientation" that, along with the other elements of their culture, defines a group of people as an ethnic group (Barth 1969: 11-12). To Barth self-identification becomes paramount. In this case study, the self-identification criteria is certainly met.

This leads into the next major concern of his work; boundaries and their maintenance. While some ethnic groups have little or no contact with others, most have to establish a system to maintain their ethnicity while engaging in a society with other ethnic groups. The ethnic groups modifies some modes of interaction, cultural behavior, etc. therefore "insulating parts of the culture from confrontation and modification" (Barth 1969: 16). Flow across the boundaries, as in the extensive intermarriage of the Amazight with Arabs, may increase the stability of the system by keeping the population at a level that can be maintained by the cultural norms (Barth 1969: 23).

Barth also makes the important point that ethnicity may be situational. People define their ethnicity more or less specifically in different circumstances. An interesting example of this is terminology used to describe Americans of Asian and Pacific Island descent. Many will adopt the generalized term "Asian-American" in situations of mixed ethnicity,

particularly in the presence of non-Asian-Americans. However, many also maintain a more specific ethnicity, such as Korean-American or Japanese-American, used under circumstances where the country of origin is more important (Espiritu 1992: 15). Additionally, an ethnic identity may become more or less important as circumstances change.

To further explore changes in expression of ethnicity, a theory from immigration and ethnicity may be invoked. In this model, the first generation retains its ethnic identity, the second generation rejects it, and the third generation reclaims the ethnic identity of the first generation (Hurh 1980: 46). This model may be applied in the case study at hand for specific political reasons. As Morocco was a colonized nation until 1956, it is essentially a new nation. The Amazight are in many respects in a situation similar to immigrant groups as they have lived under the domination of another group for this entire. The first generation may be seen as the Amazight under the late French Protectorate and early independence, who maintained their ethnicity through government policy and an their struggle for independence. The second generation discarded their ethnic identity in an attempt to belong to a new category -- Moroccan. Unfortunately, for a variety of reasons to be discussed, the Amazight ended up in a subordinated position. This, as in the case of immigrants, resulted from the retention of an ethnic category by the dominant ethnic group. The generation that is now in their late teens to late twenties belongs to the third generation of post colonial Amazight. Following the pattern observed in Asian and other immigrants to the United States, this

generation is reclaiming the ethnicity of the first generation. Also reflecting the immigrants on whom the theory is based, this generation exists in different social and political circumstances that prevent a complete reversion. Instead, the third generation negotiates a new ethnicity based on the current situation and on their heritage. In the immigrant case, this results in composite identities, like Korean-American (Hurh 1980: 60). For the Amazight, and other groups for whom this model may work, the new identity may not have a new label but a reformulation of the original ethnicity.

Important models can also be gleaned from several other theories of ethnicity. Abdo I. Baaklini proposes several characteristics of ethnic conflict that are useful for this study. His theory is based on Lebanese ethnic conflict and is concerned with political forces. It views ethnic groups as political actors who change strategies to gain the greatest possible share of power (Baaklini 1982: 50). This approach also broadens the scope of consideration of ethnicity. Rather than limiting conflict to those between ethnic groups, it recognizes that conflict within an ethnicity is key in its development and maintenance (or lack thereof) (Baaklini 1982: 51). Moreover, it rejects inevitability based on the usual divisions of ethnicity, race, class, etc. Instead, ethnic conflict in pluralistic societies is based in three dynamics. First, inter-ethnic and intra-ethnic conflict are instrumental in the society at large. Second, secular and nationalistic forces appealing across ethnic boundaries in turn exacerbate and accentuate ethnic conflict. This is because they do not adhere to the usual societal mechanisms. Eventually trans-ethnic groups are seen as usurping

power. Finally, integrative institutions, such as the military, a single strong leader, or political systems that do not recognize ethnic difference, will not succeed in controlling conflict as well as representative institutions may.

Although Morocco is not experiencing ethnic conflict to the same magnitude as Lebanon and many other contemporary states, these models of conflict are applicable.

A symposium at the 1979 American Psychological Association Convention proposed a graduate curriculum for "Ethnic Psychology". This sequence of classes would address six areas of concern for those practicing psychology in a world diversified by race, culture, and ethnicity. The six areas are cognitive process, perceptual processes, mental health, attitudes and personality, value, and group process (Ramirez and Ossorio 1982: 285). For these purposes, three of the areas are important. "Values" deals with "assimilation, acculturation, family, and cultural values." "Perceptual processes" are "self-perception, self-esteem, self-concept, and ethnic identity." "Group processes" refers to "intergroup conflict, cooperation, and separatism, group identity, ethnic group relations, [and] intra-group conflict" (Ramirez and Ossorio 1982: 285). These categories point to the issues that should be kept in mind when attempting to grapple with ethnicity. In addition, the areas of concern also point to the two dimensions of "groupness". A group has both conceptual and organizational dimensions. The two may be difficult to separate and may also be at odds (Espiritu 1992: 15). However, it is important

to keep in mind that these two dimension must remain for a group to maintain cohesion. Additionally, any group depends on individuals to maintain it.

Ethnicity is a broad and difficult concept to systematize into a concise set of points. However, the above theories do well at sign posting things to look for as one embarks on a study of ethnicity (in this case the Amazight). The Amazight do in fact have the sufficient cultural distinctiveness to be considered a group separate from the Arabs. Additionally, they see themselves as forming a distinct group. Attention must be paid to the process of self-identification and outside identification. At this time, the Amazight are engaged in a low level ethnic conflict. This stresses the importance of group cohesion and group processes. One must also look to the political system to find the source and solution to the need for the Amazight to state their ethnic identity in concrete terms in the Post Colonial Moroccan state.

II: Political Symbolism

Just as tools were needed to understand the ethnic issues involved, one must also look briefly at political symbolism. By looking to the theory of political symbols, it becomes clear how and why certain events and behaviors take on significance.

To pick a prominent theorist in the area once more, Abner Cohen provides powerful tools for dealing with this topic. Fundamentally, his theory states that human beings and the societies that they create have two dimensions. In the case of people, these dimensions are political and symbolist. "Normative culture" will also express two dimensions, political and psychological (Cohen 1979: 99). Symbolism unites the dimensions of each layer as well as the humans and their societies. As might be expected, Cohen suggests that symbolism has two dimensions, existential and political. Both these dimensions may be manipulated (Cohen 1979: 98).

In order to discuss political symbols, "political" must be defined. Throughout this study, Cohen's definition will be adopted. Politics is the "distribution, maintenance, exercise of, and struggle for power within a social units;" all relationships and power dynamics contribute to this system (Cohen 1979: 88). To paraphrase Cohen, individuals, collectively or not, will continually exert pressure on the state just as the state will continually exert pressure on them (Cohen 1979: 88). Power is also the common denominator of political and economic concerns; this power is articulated in kinship, ritual,

and other components of culture (Cohen 1979: 88, 110). Therefore, power is always at the core of the discussion of this study, whether or not this is articulated overtly.

Symbols organize all culture, to a certain degree. Political relationships are no exception. The most politically significant symbols are overtly non-political; the less obviously political a symbol is the more efficacious it is politically. As symbols are by definition ambiguous, they depend upon the interpretation of the members of a society (Cohen 1979: 87). For example, the religious festival *Iid Kahbir* (literally, the big feast) calls for the slaughter of a sheep by every Muslim family. The king of Morocco is the religious leader; his religious edit^c is almost as good as the word of the Qur'an. Unique to Morocco, King Hassan II has more than once (including 1996) declared that he will slaughter the only sheep in the place of all members of his state. This decision is ostensibly because of the high price of sheep, partially due to a small supply of Moroccan sheep. This would create undue economic hardship for the entire country as sheep would have to be imported, raising the price. The king slaughtered his sheep publicly, broadcasting the event on television. While this was a religiously symbolic act, motivated by economic pressures, it quickly became a political symbol. While many families were happy to be relieved of the burden of time, expense, and having to eat all that sheep meat (which takes a very long time), others resisted. As with my host family, they chose to obey the word of the king, but not his intention. Rather than slaughtering a

sheep, they bought pieces of sheep representative of all parts. They did watch the sacrifice on television, and then prepared their feast. While this was somewhat resistant to the power of the king, defiance was expressed strongly in rural areas. As most families do not have a television, so could not participate in the collective sacrifice, and many are sheep farmers facing potential ruin by the edit, they came to regard the king's action as directed against them. Many families chose to have a larger than normal *Iid Kahbir*. Additionally, Morocco has a festival to celebrate the king's birthday. Although celebrations are typically smaller in rural areas, the event went by virtually unnoticed in these areas in 1996. However, these events were not overtly conceptualized as political resistance. Rather, they saw resistance as a function of the supply of sheep. The lack of celebration due to the flooding of the previous months and the economic situation caused by the crash of the sheep market. As the rural population had abundant sheep, they saw no reason to cancel *Iid Kahbir*. While these factors may have played a role, all the events took on political symbolism centering on the power of the king. It will become more significant later in this study that responses fall on urban and rural divides.

Political symbols, as covert mechanisms, are omnipresent on social organization. It is important to recognize that these symbols order experience and structure, but do not define it. Symbols may either uphold or change the existing systems. Power and symbolism pervade all levels of social and

cultural life (Cohen 1979: 110). However, they are the instruments of change.

Although he uses a difference⁺-vocabulary, Bruce Lincoln writes the following:

To hold that thought is socially determined does not mean that all thought reflects, encodes, re-presents, or helped replicate the *established structures* of society, for society is far broader and more complex than its official structures and institutions alone. Rather, such a formulation rightly implies that all the tensions, contradictions, superficial stability, and potential fluidity of any given society *as a whole* are present within the full range of thought and discourse that circulates at any given moment. Change comes not when groups or individuals use “knowledge” to challenge ideological mystification, but rather when they employ thought and discourse, including even such modes as myth and ritual, as effective instruments of struggle. (Lincoln 1989: 7)

Thus, power and politics mediated by symbols become a primary concern, because they can both change and sustain a system. Power and the struggle to attain it, most often achieved at times of flux, will remain a key issue.

Chapter Three: History, Organization, and Politics

I: Historical Background

It is important to place the Amazight in their historical perspective for it is here that the antecedents for characteristics of the contemporary Amazight may be found. To briefly summarize the major cycles of Moroccan history, tribes with limited spheres of influence had carved up between. As they divided these areas among heirs, Morocco became increasingly fragmented. In the late seventh and early eighth century, Arabs successfully brought Islam to Morocco through military conquest and settled as a ruling urban elite. The Amazight quickly adopted Islam in large numbers, unifying Morocco at least on one subject. Moulay Idriss, an Arab who had settled with an Amazight tribe established the first Islamic dynasty. This dynasty saw the rise of Fez, with its inhabitants declaring themselves to be Arabs by virtue of their physical location and political allegiance. It is probable that most of these Fassis were predominately Amazight (particularly on the maternal side). The glory of this dynasty was short-lived as a fast turnover of Amazight tribes supplanted the Idrissis and then each other. The Almovids, the next significant dynasty, brought “nominal political unity to all present day Morocco” and actively participated in the Abbasid Caliphate. In time, they too fell, this time to the Almohads, another Amazight dynasty, who by 1140 occupied most of Morocco. The third significant Amazight dynasty was the

Merinid, who took the Almohadi capital of Marrakech in 1271. They were the last of the Amazight dynasties, simply fading away into a period of power struggles from 1415 until the early 17th century rise to power of the Alouite dynasty that holds the throne to this day. The Alouite used a plea of direct descent from the prophet, Mohammed, and therefore a claim of Arab identity to gain popular support (Nelson 1985). While this brief summary serves only to fit the right names and time periods together, it demonstrates that the Amazight were a powerful political force through much of Morocco history.

International influence has always been strong in Morocco. This influence is by virtue of the geographical position of Morocco. Situated at the Atlantic entrance to the Mediterranean Sea, with coast on both bodies of water, Morocco has long been an influence on and influenced by the heavy, multinational commerce of the Mediterranean. Moreover, their position at the top of trade routes across the Sahara from Sub-Saharan African nations has brought a strong cultural and economic tradition. The proximity of Spain, merely 15 kilometers across the Strait of Gibraltar, also encouraged close connections to Europe. However, the most influential international influence was the 20th century period of French Protectorate, more overt than other demonstrations of influence, forcing Sultan Mohammed V into exile. This French occupation brought a powerful Western style presence and all its ramifications into Morocco. Although it took many years, the French eventually gained control of all the tribes of Morocco for the first time in

history and established a government and urban society that reflected the European heritage of the *colons*.

If “the course of Moroccan history before the protectorate was seen as the efforts of the Arab government forces to impose themselves on Berber dissidents,” French colonialism left behind the mechanism to put the Arabs firmly in control, and the Arabs and the Amazight found themselves in a new positions to fight for dominance of the Moroccan cultural and political life (Burke qtd. in Seddon 1982: 29).

II: Ramifications of Segmentary Lineage and Tribal Heritage

The early historical record of the Morocco is devoted to the waxing and waning of the relative powers of competitive tribes. These tribes were what actually organized the people on the ground; they were responsible for cultural structure that shaped social, political, and even economic life.

Segmentary Lineage and Tribes

Affiliation to a tribe is generally made genealogically, often based on segmentary lineage systems of kinship (Coon 1931: 72). The tradition of origin and descent is usually rooted in legend; however, the legend is flexible enough to meet the current needs of political situation of the tribe. (Seddon 1981: 86). Segmentary lineage is usually summed up in cliched expression "I against my brother; my bother and I against my cousin; my cousin, my brother, and I against the world." The system is based on patrilineal descent and occasionally tweaked so that it balances exactly. Each level of descent has an equal and opposite counterpart from the individual household to the entire tribe. Generally, each level had some form of leadership and corresponding scope of power. For example, the Saharan nomads called Tuareg are structured family, faction, clan, tribe, confederacy, nation of Tuareg, with each level building on the previous (Briggs 1960: 126). The higher the level the more nebulous the affiliation is from an emic perspective. The Tuareg, to continue the example, will classify each other by tracing the family line

starting with the parents until a mutually known or connected relative of ancestor is discovered. They also know who is not “Tuareg”, although they do not always know what their tribe is called, nor be able to name their nation by its common etic appellation of “Tuareg”. Rank and responsibility belong to some segment of the lineage, and not to an individual. Entire clans can change their distribution with over arching levels or organization to ease conflict. This leads to a kind of collective responsibility that is key to understanding the “law and order” heritage of Morocco.

Many tribes had other organization strategies, usually in addition to segmentary lineage. For example, the Riffian tribes had a “highly complex” governmental system attached to their segmentary lineage system. This system was essentially composed of three councils arranged hierarchically. Often membership was elected. First was the village council responsible for minor social transgression. Above that was the “council of the great”; usually this council covered the same area as a *souk* and regularly met there. They were responsible for inter-village conflict and greater social transgressions. Finally, there was a tribal council that handled major issues with their own tribe and inter-tribal conflict and wars that were a staple of early Morocco (Coon 1931: 83, 142).

Thus, tribes were set up to organize all of their members; some grew in power sufficiently to control other tribes. When there were dynasties ruling greater Morocco, in a model constructed by Ernest Gellner, tribes fell into one

of three categories. Those who ruled, those who paid allegiance and taxes, and those who refused to recognize the ruling tribe (Seddon 1981: 31). While this may be an oversimplification, it demonstrates how Morocco was a patchwork of tribes and not a cohesive unit.

Tribes, Power, and Politics

Tribes remain an intriguing issue in the political, “law and order” lives of Amazights as well as maintaining their position as a defining factor in the identity of the Amazight. Tribes essentially formed the political organization of Morocco until the mid twentieth century; they were “the most intricate level of social and territorial organization in Morocco” (Miller 1984: 195). They have not disappeared completely today despite a constitutional monarchical government that runs the state of Morocco. The sense of justice that accompanied tribal law remains strong in the value system today. The mechanisms continue to be invoked in informal cases and those outside the realm of Moroccan law. More importantly, tribes are fundamental to the identity of their members. James Miller lists three factors that define the *Ait Mizane*, a neighboring tribe to the residents of Setti Fadma. The environment and Islam provide two of the threads, but the third is the tribe, “the social organizer of local land and life, powerful symbolic repository of past experience, and a vehicle through which people meet the challenges of everyday life” (Miller 1984: 6).

One of the more significant ramifications of the traditional structure of Morocco is the informal organization and justice mechanisms that are still invoked frequently today. Mohammed told me about a case in his tribe. There was a man in Khemisset who was often late for appointments or missed them altogether. Finally, a business associate became annoyed enough that he went

to the oldest man in the tribe for advise. As there is no longer a formal power structure within the tribe, the oldest man fills the role that could be termed "chief". This echoes the cultural beliefs in the superiority of the wisdom of males and elders. The elder proposed a solution; the next day about 40 people turned up at the offender's home shortly before lunch. Of course, he was obligated to feed all of them or lose his honor and reputation. This is because a gracious and generous host is one of the first ideals of Amazight personality theory. Despite this informal power, the tribes lack real leverage.

Most of my informants knew of and took pride in their tribe as a source of identity. Several of my informants, including Akhmed, had ridden for their tribes in a Fantasia. "Fantasia" is the word used in Amazight and Arabic (although clearly of French origin) to describe a traditional Amazight event that celebrates tribal pride. Fantasias are commonly convened in the spring and fall. They may be in honor of an important wedding or other significant individual event; however, they are more often a large party for everyone. Often they are timed to coincide with a religious celebration. For these celebrations, a tribe sends its best horses and horsemen dressed in their finest clothes and riding tack. The participants gallop down a field surrounded on all sides by spectators. As they approach the end of the field, all the riders stop their horses dead in their tracks then twirl and fire rifles in unison.

Elaine Combs-Schilling provides an analysis of the Fantasia as an event that "without much subtlety ... mimics the sexual act" (Combs-Schilling 1989: 203). However, she also points to another significant element of symbolism--

control. Just as the rider must remain in control of his mount and his emotions if he and his team perform well or poorly (Combs-Schilling 1989: 204), the event also celebrates the control of the tribe. The Fantasia is a condensed expression of tribal pride and cohesion. The actual contests of the Fantasia recall the military past of independent tribes and evoke pride in the heritage of the tribe. As collective contests, they rely upon the unity of the related men. Surrounding events of the Fantasia also stress the unity of tribes as well as reinforce their relationships with between tribes. Many families erect tents on the site, and the most powerful entertain large groups of people. The event provides a forum for the contracting of marriages, business contracts, and all other inter-family matters. Formerly, Fantasias were the locus of inter-tribal and tribal decision making. Now, they are almost symbolic calls on the tribal identity while concretely stating the social relationships between members.

Akhmed is extremely sad that the power of his tribe has diminished within his lifetime. He said that the tribe is just not well enough organized to wield any real power. He felt that there was greater justice under tribal law, but Arab law and domination of the educational system has prevented the young Amazight from studying their own heritage in order to even know that they are being oppressed. Instead, young tribe members look to the government for leadership. This is despite their elders efforts to teach them to take pride in their tribe. However, this trend is subject a reversal at this time. I found in the young an increasingly strong interest in the tribe and the

associations they make to independence, strength, and their identity as Amazight.

Political Heritage of Tribes and Amazight Ethnicity

There are political ramifications of tribal heritage and Amazight identity. David Sedan writes, “tribal divisions, which frequently coincide with electoral boundaries, although they have not been of general political importance ... are of some importance in that their persistence as cultural and ideological entities cast local politics in a distinctive and somewhat restricted mold” (275). It is this level of politics that the Amazight I met seemed most interested in; however many are interested in using their interrelated Amazight ethnicity and tribal identity to bring issues to national attention.

Another slant on this is to make tribal/Amazight identity a national issue unto itself. After independence, there have been various political parties viewed as “Berber” by the Moroccan populace. This is partially because they represent the economic concerns of the mostly rural farming and pastoral Amazight and partially because they appeal to Amazight identity to garner support (Seddon 1988: 167-183). However, the distinction between the two concerns is not as great as it may seem due to the strong correlation between rural living and Amazight ethnicity. Although these parties have yet to gain significant political power, that they exist at all indicates an interest in the making Amazight identity one of political significance. As the younger generations age into politics, particularly the newly urban Amazight youth, it is likely that this movement will become stronger.

At a more subtle level, Amazight identity already plays a greater role in Moroccan politics. Amazights have been regarded almost universally in

Moroccan history as “dissidents”, not succumbing to Roman or Arab rule, not even to Amazight dynasties. They continued this tradition in resisting French colonialism and participating in the struggle for independence. In recent years there have been more Amazight movements in Morocco (Lakhsassi 1996). A government publication refers to the organization of local politics as “heir to a long past” in clear reference to tribal organization (The Organization... 54). Thus, tribal and Amazight identities continue to play a key role in the structure and tone of Moroccan politics.

However, the extent of the Amazight influence has been limited in the post colonial period. Other parts of this study have pointed to the relationship between Amazight ethnicity and several factors affecting their placement in the power structure. Given the tradition of the Amazight to remain focused on their immediate environment, it is logical that they have not succeeded in nor have been interested in claiming power at the nation state level. Also, their continued participation in rural economies of farming and pastoralism have left them out of the greater, international economic market in which urban Morocco participates. Although the Amazight used to control the trade routes that crossed the Sahara, these trade routes have largely been supplanted by other modes and lines of trade. In addition, the colonial period also reduced the Amazight’s control of these sectors of their traditional economies. The educational system and these economic concerns have marginalized the Amazight out of the city based wealthy that control the national government.

The corrupt national government, in a top down model, has reduced the influence of the Amazight in the areas that they demographically dominate.

The limitation of the scope of influence of the Moroccan tribe also rests in the traditional relationship between tribe and sultan. The sultan may be seen as analogous to the modern national government, at least in terms of attitude. Tribes traditionally felt threatened by the power of the sultan. However, they could choose to recognize the sultan only as a religious leader, or to not recognize even this religious authority (Miller 1984: 197-98). Moreover, the position of sultan was always open to threat from a would-be replacement. This fluidity made the central government less threatening (Miller 1984: 197). It was trade that united tribes together, not a political figurehead. As Miller says "market day has always been truce day in Morocco" (Miller 1984: 198). This system allowed a tribe to select a level of involvement in the central government, while also defining that government's role more narrowly than the modern government. As such, the tribe after their united struggle with the Arabs for independence found themselves in unfamiliar political territory. Unable to negotiate terms at that time, they remained without a strong voice.

The younger generations of the Amazight are currently attempting to renegotiate this position. As more Amazight move to the cities and circles of higher education and power while maintaining their Amazight identity, they are using their knowledge of the Morocco of today and their heritage to find a role for themselves in a contemporary state that also celebrates their ethnic

identity. To separate ethnic identity from tribal identity would be virtually impossible in the case of the Amazight. However, this does not mean that the tribe as a discrete unit is the source of identity. Rather, the common heritage of a tribal structure with all its ideological, organizational, and philosophical ideas is shared by all Amazights. This is one of the ways in which a pan-Amazight identity, despite the linguistic, environmental, geographical, and cultural differences between the three major groups is possible.

Tribalism, in this context, refers to the continuation of the influence of the tribe in framing the identity of the individuals that belong to it. In the case of post colonial Morocco, the tribe continues to contribute a social and political framework to some extent, particularly in the rural areas. As the tribe is no longer invested with formal powers, it lends it ⁵weight to more general Amazight identity. The population of Morocco is increasingly urbanizing (in the last census Morocco was for the first time slightly over fifty percent urban; many Amazight are taking their identities with them. They look to their tribal heritage for pride and ethnicity as well as for ideology that they are using in their efforts to renegotiate their position in the government, power structure, and cultural heritage of modern Morocco. ✓

III: Arabization and Colonization

French colonialism was frequently offered to me as a model for understanding the coming of the Arabs to Morocco. However, discussion of the French Protectorate rarely had the explicit expressions of feelings of oppression that accompanied discussion of Arabization/Islamization of Morocco. Three factors seemed to be at work. First, people presented that model as they felt I would understand it. Analogy was possible without the emotion content. Indicative of a distinction between ethnic and political domination, the Amazight did not express feelings of oppression under the French regime or stated that the oppression was generalized to the entire Moroccan population (rather than specific components of it). Finally, because the French have essentially left Morocco, leaving it to redefine itself in their wake, they are no longer a significant presence. All of these perceptions shape attitudes towards both the arrival of Arabs in Amazight Morocco and the French Protectorate. Other informants gave a much more peaceful, integrationist view of the situations. Both these models and historical events have led to a theme of Arab/urban, Amazight/rural identification.

All of my informants, including the Arabs, stressed the Amazight origins of Morocco, directly contradicting the scholarly belief that the Arab conquest is culturally seen as the beginning of Morocco, indicative of the change in attitudes towards the Amazight (Entelis 1989: 25). The peaceful camp, including Salat and Mohammed, presented an arrival of Arabs that was

essentially a non-military religious conversion. Amazight women married the Arab men, and, due to patrilineal descent, the children were considered to be Arab and may have learned to speak only Arabic. Their descendants were also considered to be Arab; however, many of these individuals have maintained closer ties to their Amazight heritage. These families lived in the blossoming cities. Saied and Salat brought the argument full circle by declaring that the origins of the Amazight peoples lay in ancient migration from the Arabian peninsula. Therefore, all Amazight are really Arab in origin, making Morocco a purely Arab country. This argument, coupled with the previous statement that all "Arabs" in Morocco are Amazight, is a function of (or leads into) a more positive attitude towards Arabization. Until recently, people would declare themselves to be Arabs as soon as they could due to urban living and language usage. Although the peaceful conversion model does not explicitly label the Amazight in any negative way, it does stress the method for an Amazight to become Arab rather than placing value on Amazight origins.

Bouchara, Mohammed's younger sister by ten years, is a good spokesperson for the alternate viewpoint, as well as the active Amazight pride of her generation. She saw a version of Arabization that included a violent, drawn out war and ended with a few Arabs ruling tyrannical over a people that had previously lived on their own land, speaking their own language, and following their own law. All of Morocco was in a similar situation under the French Protectorate, by which time the Amazight were well versed in integration. Madame Chaoui, an Arab that grew up during the French

protectorate and hates to speak French despite fluency, also sees Arabization somewhat in this way, with the Arabs forcing the Amazight to move to the mountains.

Contemporary Ramifications

The French Protectorate was seen by most as a time that has passed, but has left a legacy significant to the Arabs more than the Amazight. It is the Arabs that are seen as having adopted cultural traits from the French. More significantly, it is the Arabs that are seen as taking over the Western style political structure and cultural traits that the French left behind. It is at this point in Moroccan history that political domination of the Arabs began (at least in the perception of the people I spoke to). Mohammed related that until the 1940's many Amazight still lived under tribal law. A historical theme became important at this point, with ramifications that reach into the present situation. There were always tribes that did not pay allegiance to the ruling power; it was not until after exhaustive French efforts that the entire population was under one government for the very first time.

In the early years of the protectorate, the French met resistance from the Arab ruling elite and the Amazight, but these resistances were separate. Edmund Burke, in his case study of the resistance by the *Ait Ndhir* (an Amazight tribe), points to the bitterness towards the Arabs and to the threat of control by the French. Sultan Mohammed IV had attempted to impose taxation and administration of the *Ait Ndhir* in an effort to fortify against the

French; this was perceived as a threat to tradition existence, and resisted (Burke 1991: 132). Additionally, the French began an armed campaign to seize lands that was never entirely successful (Burke 1991: 144). The reason that the Amazight resistance was so successful lies in the ethnic characteristic of the Amazight. The religious practices of the Amazight connected them through a network of similar mystical brotherhoods, but did not establish strong ties to the Arabic “high Islam” they theoretically practiced. Secondly, the history of the relationship between the Ait Ndhir and the Moroccan state (in all its forms as dynasties rose and fell) had never been strong. This is similar to the pattern of “dissident Berber tribes” who prefer their structured independence to state domination. Lastly, their geographical position had directly effected the economic position of the *Ait Ndhir*. They were excluded from the vast wealth that could be found in cities, but gained a lucrative position as middlemen between Marrakech and Meknes, only enhanced by their transhumant nomadism (Burke 1991: 142-144). These elements enabled the segmentary tribe to unite under adversity and unite around some of the markers of Amazight ethnicity.

By employing a simple political theory of domination, the French took advantage of this strife and divided the population to gain tighter control. During the early part of the Protectorate, the ethnic groups in Morocco were gradually manipulated to the advantage of the colonial power. The French “converted markets into effective points of tribal control” by exerting their

military and governmental presence at the *souk* (Hart 1972: 35). This is why in the 1930 French law referred to as the “Berber *Dahir*” (law) met with much protest from both Arabs and Amazight. As the law officially recognized the authority and continuation of customary law and tribunals of Amazight tribes only, it would seem logical that the fiercely non-Arab population would welcome this validation, but they did not as it inhibited the struggle for independence, which had become a common cause of Arab and Amazight in direct proportion to the squeezing of the French on the power of Morocco. This independence movement correlates strongly to the trend throughout Amazight history of resisting the domination of a state or other tribal unit seeking to seize more power.

The historical factors and the events of the French Protectorate had the net effect of bringing the Amazight under complete control of the Arabs for the first time. The Arabs gained control of the existing structures for several reasons. They had been subject to French law for decades longer than many Amazight, so were more familiar with it. More importantly, they were the inhabitants of the urban areas, where the French had concentrated their infrastructure and political development. Many have the opinion that the French structure and its remnants denied and continue to deny Amazight access to self-determination and effective political and economic power since the end of tribal law.

Those who saw Arabization as peaceful seem less resentful of the molding of Morocco into a Western style but still Islamic state after independence. Proponents of the unwilling conquest of Amazight Morocco by Arabs, who mostly belong to the younger generation, see Arabs as unfairly dominating Moroccan politics after a long history of futile attempts that the traditional structures successfully repelled for centuries.

The difference in perception and reaction may also lie in the nature of the domination. The French Protectorate did not include heavy settling of Morocco by the French. Instead, domination was almost purely political and military. However, the relationship between Arabs and Amazight bears the hallmarks of an ethnic conflict. Using Baaklini's model, the ethnic groups involved have acted in many respects like a political actor, and not merely as culture bearing units. Moreover, the French Protectorate did enact Baaklini's processes. The united independence movement was an example of "secular and nationalist forces appealing across ethnic boundaries (Baaklini 1983: 54). The new Morocco turned to a political system dependent on a power and charismatic leader, the now "King" Mohammed V, and then his son Hassan II. Baaklini would term their rules "integrative institutions". Following the pattern suggested in this model, the conflict had worsened in the wake of these movements. An exploration of the contemporary relationship between the Amazight and the government elaborates this worsening of ethnic relationships.

IV: Amazight Identity and Government Today

The Relationship between Amazight identity and the Moroccan government is seen differently by almost all of my informants. The differences seem to stem from the fact that, perhaps counter intuitively, the government is more overtly present in rural areas. For example, during my time in Morocco, I spent three months in the city of Rabat without any formalized government contact, yet in Oulmes, a rural village in which I stayed in for five days, I was summoned by the authorities six times for no apparent reason. These summons seemed to have been made purely to demonstrate the power of the *qaid*. He just wanted to try out his few words of English or ask if I was enjoying myself (of course not until I had waited an appropriately long time).² Perceptions of the interconnection of government and Amazight identity correlate to the Arab/urban Amazight/rural and class connections.

Morocco today is governed by constitutional monarchy; however, it is one much further towards the absolute monarch end of the spectrum than to the figurehead end. Internationally, Morocco lies somewhat in the middle of the road, trying to maintain closet ties to the West while also identifying “with the aspirations of the Arab world, including the call for Arab unity, opposition to Zionism, pride in a common cultural, religious, historical, and linguistic heritage, and a desire to assert an authentic Arab identity” (Entelis 1989: 101). Note that this agenda leaves little room for an international statement

² However, this did afford the opportunity to observe the *qaid* in action. I saw who was seen first, who got a shared audience, who saw the *qaid* alone, etc.

of the Amazight-ness of Morocco. The king is the clear driving force behind the country's political and governmental decision. The power of King Hassan II is bolstered by the magnificent flying buttress of god given right. The king is a Sharif, a descendant of the prophet (and therefore Arab), and his job comes with the title "Commander of the Faithful"; the faithful being the Muslims that make up 99 percent of the Moroccan population. It is illegal to denounce the king, and Morocco does hold political prisoners.³ All this makes it unlikely that anyone will publicly criticize the king. Abdul prefaced a scathing critique of the government with the statement "the King is very intelligent and a wonderful person, but those around him - the ministers and all those people - are corrupt." The last part of this statement is a sentiment overwhelmingly shared. The government is seen as badly run, disorganized, and corrupt.

The circles of the government extending from the king, the object of the scorn of the people, are also likely to be Arab. Education, wealth, and urban living all aid in developing the social and political rank necessary to become powerful. Interestingly, the one sector of the King Hassan II's government that was dominated by the Amazight for many years was the military. Entelis explains this, "their ethnolinguistic origin is less important than their extremely conservative and nationalistic political views, which stress the need for discipline, honesty, and sacrifice at the expense of democracy, liberty, and justice" (Entelis 1989: 89). These comments applied to the Amazight at the

³ In recent years, Morocco has come under considerable international pressure to clean up its human right record.

beginning of the modern era of Morocco as it emerged from a long battle for independence from the French. However, the current state of the Amazight's concept of their ethnicity and position in the power structure leads to demands for greater say in the governance of a country they see as their own. This, coupled with Baaklini's model, explains why the relationship between the king and the Amazight dominated army quickly became unstable. In 1963, 1971, 1972, and 1983 either plots were uncovered or military coups were actually attempted. All these movements were lead by Amazight military officers (Entelis 1989: 89-90). Now the military seems loyal, but is also more Arab. In this case, the exclusion of Amazight from positions of power is overt, but also suggestive of the more subtle trend for Arab domination of the government.

Government of rural areas also responds to the ethnicity based power structure of Morocco. In the rural areas I have visited, such as Setti Fadma and Oulmes, the Qaid is an extremely important figure. Interestingly, the title is the same as that of a political figure who governed approximately the same jurisdiction under traditional tribal governments. The permission of the qaid, and appointed official usually drawn from outside the district--ostensibly as the position requires education, is required for any number of things. If one wants to build a house, start a business, etc. the must seek the permission of the qaid. The qaid can request anyone's presence, as he did in my case, and usually gets it, even with much grumbling on the way. The people have a great deal of respect for this office, perhaps related to it position in their heritage and the power of the national government. Bila said "the people here

[in Setti Fadma] think that the government is a bit like god- you have to do what is says.”

Government is certainly a heavy handed presence, but the people do not feel it is connected to them. When this meets with the independent spirit that the Amazight feel characterizes them and a lack of education and the empowerment that comes with it, resentment is created. While this is mostly a function of rural living (as the rural population is so far from major cities where the real political power rests), most rural families are Amazight.

Setti Fadma has recently been the victim of worse than usual annual floods. Many people died, and much property was destroyed. Abdul told me that he knew European countries had sent money to Morocco for the town, but nobody had received any. He feels this is because of the corrupt government's assumption that the town would be too naive to figure it out. While Abdul has figured it out, he does not know what to do about it.

Many of the people that I talked to felt that the end of the French Protectorate had left not only the Arabs, but the mostly urban, upper class elite in control of Morocco. They feel excluded from politics, but the young aim to fight their way in. Bouchara represents the opinion that pressure should be put on the king through student activism, academic and intellectual circles, etc. Although the king had already recognized the cultural heritage of Morocco in declaring his own Amazight roots, even stating that Amazight languages should enter schools, nothing has changed. That King Hassan II said this at all is a remarkable statement on the increasing political and cultural saliency

of Amazight identity. His dynasty came to power by appealing to their status of Sharif. As direct descendants of the prophet, they are by definition Arab. Yet, the king is now willing to attach an Amazight component to his self-identity. Bouchara believes that if Amazight issues became a priority for King Hassan II or his successor, Amazights would "rise to the top." I also met a group of students who believe that revolution is the only to fix the grave flaws in it sees in Moroccan politics and the hierarchical society that uphold it. This society is one made of a rigid class structure based on ethnicity. 2 ✓

The present construction of the government affects and is affected by Amazight ethnicity in several ways. The present king belongs to a lineage that rose to power through and appeal to the purity of its Arab-ness. As direct descendants of the Prophet, they are in a sense entitled to power, by virtue of being Arab. In addition, the king is supported by a network of ministers, etc. that is drawn from the upper class, educated, urban level of Moroccan society. This level is predominantly Arab. This same association of the Arabs to urban and Amazight to rural also accounts for another factor on the relationship between the Amazight and the government. As a rural, undereducated group, they are subject to more controlling government and the effects of governmental corruption. ✓

Chapter Four: Finding Amazight Ethnicity

I: Perceptions of Amazight Identity

In the course of this research, the hardest question to find an answer to was “what is an Amazight?” Everyone I spoke to and most scholarly materials agree that there is a “profound ethnic split in Moroccan Society between Arabs and Berbers” (Burke qtd. in Seddon, 1981: 29). However, the difference is hard to define, either subjectively or objectively. Perhaps the prevailing definition is “Not Arab”, but this is not very enlightening. “Amazight” has emerged in the Post-Colonial period as an important concept in the politics and culture of Morocco. Additionally, the heritage of segmentary lineage and tribal organization had strong effects today. While the social relevance of Amazight ethnicity has been shown, it is not a simplistic exercise to demonstrate the cultural significance. Both cultural and social dimensions are required to achieve “ethnic group” standing. Starr’s “checklist”, the four criteria for an ethnic group, and problems of ethnic boundaries provide the theoretical background for this exploration. Amazight ethnic identity is a broad and significant cultural concept. Although it rests on self-identification, the psycho-cultural, linguistic, and religious components of Amazight life are unique to them. ✓

Many have reduced Amazight cultural identity to the languages. For example, Lakhsassi, a respected Morocco professor of religion who is of

Amazight origin, denied that there could possibly be any other measure of ethnic identity other than daily use of the language. I engaged him in debate on this point, citing examples of people who claimed an Amazight identity but did not speak that language. He declared this “impossible.” My point that if I spoke an Amazight language as my daily language, I still would not be Amazight was agreed to by him, demonstrating that he had an underlying concept of cultural identity that he failed to recognize consciously (Lakhsassi 1996). I relate this exchange as it demonstrates the extent to which language is used to denote identity.

This language restricted definition of identity is completely inadequate as it disregards other aspects of Amazight culture. Anna, a Peace Corps volunteer working in the Amazight village of Setti Fadma and its environs, who stated emphatically “a Berber is some one who speaks the language of course” would be very surprised to hear Halid say “although I do not speak Berber, I am Berber, My mother and father are Berber and raised me in their tradition.” Further, there are Amazight groups, such as “most of the Jebala-Chornara-Riffian Tribes” who now use Arabic as their primary (or even only) language, but “still retain the rest of their culture” (Hoffman 1967: 22). It is this “rest of their culture” that must be define being Amazight.

Markers of Ethnicity

Significantly, Moroccans put themselves and others into ethnic categories; yet the question “how can you tell if someone is Arab or Amazight (Berber)?” was almost universally answered “you cannot”, or at least one can

not know by looking. In Setti Fadma, Jamal told me that it is easier to tell in the mountains. The men wear *jellabahs* (a hooded over garment usually described by Westerners as being like a bathrobe), *gondoras* (a simple shift like garment), tradition shoes, and carry a small leather bag slung over the shoulder like a saddle bag (usually described by shopkeepers, Jamal, and others as “an Amazight bag”). Only Arab women wear the jellabah, added Chebib. In the village, I saw many women wearing that traditional head scarf, jewelry, and other clothing. In addition, the older women in Amazight tribes are still tattooed with the facial markings designating their tribe. That the younger women do not should not be seen as a sign of reduction of ethnic or tribal significance; rather, it signifies the spread of a Western beauty ideal and the success of a public health campaign against the practice. Ultimately, most people said that they had to talk to a person; if their language did not make it obvious “the way that they think” will make it instantly obvious (Saied).

Ethnic Boundaries and Maintenance of Ethnic Identity

There is frequent intermarriage further blurring the lines between Amazight and Arab. (Although most Amazight said that they would prefer to marry another Amazight, preferably from the same area/tribe.) Salat said that due to intermarriage there are hardly any pure Arabs “perhaps one in a thousand.” Mohammed M. said “I am an Arab-Amazight-Moroccan. I am half Amazight because my mother is Amazight, and half Arab because my father is Arab. The left side of me is Amazight and the right side is Arab. I say this

because the right side is stronger as it came from my father.” This statement is revealing on many different levels. It comes from the context of a strongly patrilineal society, which partially explains the dominance of the Arab aspect of his heritage. Yet, there are other issues at work.

Basic Value Orientation

Amazighs selected a set of characteristics as descriptive of their ethnic group. These characteristics were often stated in opposition to those found in Arabs. To list a few, Amazighs see themselves as generous, honest, and patient. To be an excellent host is a top priority for Moroccans in general, but these characteristics better equip Amazighs (in their opinion anyway) to reach this ideal. In addition, they see themselves as living in the present without looking forward and thus causing themselves to worry. They do not miss what they never had, leading simple lives. This means that Amazighs are happier than Arabs.⁴ Chebib summed it up as Amazighs are always on the “straight and narrow”⁵ while Arabs zigzag. Omar stated that Amazighs are just nicer than Arabs for three reasons. First, they are fundamentally nice people. Second, Arabs are pretentious in manner and self-conscious. This means that to accept the hospitality of an Arab is an uncomfortable experience. “There are certain things you have to do in their homes, and you always have to be careful how you hold yourself” he said. In addition, one is never invited into the home without an ulterior motive. On the other hand, in

⁴ All the characteristics listed here were cited by at least two people.

⁵ A loose translation of a French idiom into an English one

an Amazight home one is free to do as they please. His characterization echoes the theme of the happy, generous Amazight leading a simpler and therefore better life. Finally, Amazight are more flexible, quick learners, and easily integrate into any situation. James Miller cites this characteristic being key to a Moroccan tribe. Growth, movement, and social flexibility enable the continuity of the tribe (Miller 1984: 56). ✓

The last point is interesting when considered in light of another widely cited Amazight characteristic, freedom and independence. Many of my informants were adamant that Amazight do not live under the control of others, contradicting history and also their own laments about Arab domination of the political and economic spheres. There is way to reconcile this paradox. In the Amazight tradition, “ultimately each household or tent was its own republic” (Nelson 1985: 5). The Amazight currently feel in control of their own families, homes, and flocks, even towns, but also feel disassociated from more regional or national issues. Chebib said “Amazight do not think much about politics-it is not important here in the mountains.” Tempering this is the integrationist survival tactic of the Amazight peoples; for it is they who have learned Arabic, not the Arabs who have learned Amazight languages. To retain their own household size “republics”, they have quickly adapted to keep others away from the core of their lives and beliefs. In turn, this process has maintained their ethnicity. However, as with other Amazight issues, the younger generation are taking a more active interest in the higher level political concerns. ✓

Culturally, Amazight perceive themselves to be different from Arabs, yet this is not always valid. For example, the famous Amazight hospitality always includes the (in)famous mint tea. Often the subject of “Moroccan wine” or “Berber whisky” quips, the Amazight claim the tea as their own tradition. When I pointed out to Omar that I had frequently drunk tea with Arabs and in Arab homes, he agreed “yes, but it’s different. They serve it in cups not glasses. “ Many other claim that the difference lies in the preparation (with the Amazight tea being superior, of course). The word commonly used to describe this difference of preparation was usually *doucement* no matter what language the interview was being conducted in. *Doucement* literally translate to “gently”, but in Moroccan usage has the connotation of “with care and attention, calmly.” This harkens back to the self-description of the Amazight people are simpler, slower, and living in the present. Interestingly, the Arabs do not (in my experience anyway) prepare or serve their tea any differently. Furthermore, tea was actually introduced into Morocco via Portuguese and Dutch traders on a Europe-China route in the seventeenth century (Loument 1994: 43). This is one example of several that suggest that both the Arabs and Amazight deny their mutual influences upon each other or from the outside.

Barth identifies a ‘basic value orientation’ as a marker of ethnicity. In this case, a code of values was not easily discernible. However, comments of both Amazight and Arabs made it obvious that there was a cultural concept of the philosophical nature of being Amazight. Although the psycho-cultural

differences between the ethnic groups was at times overstated, this is onto itself interesting. In addition, positive and negative value judgments were made of perceived cultural traits. This trend demonstrates that the cultural and “value” differences themselves are less important than the emic perception of these differences.

Significance of Amazight Ethnicity

The significance of Amazight identity seems to be changing. People were quick to tell me that they are Amazight (even before I brought up my interest in the topic) while no one told me unprompted that he or she is Arab. Anna, upon hearing what I was doing in Setti Fadma, exclaimed “people will actually tell you that they are Berber ?! Most people try to hide it.” She went on to describe how most people will jump to claim Arab ethnicity as soon as they put a little distance between the mountains and themselves. No Amazight or Arab personally expressed this sentiment to me, but did make reference to this feeling in the not too distant past or as one that is a function of Arabs sense of superiority. “They,” said Allal, who does not like his name as it is Arabic, “have erased our identity. To say that you are Amazight is to put yourself in the lowest position. But I refuse to stay there.” This expressed vividly expresses the pride in Amazight identity that I discerned in most people.

Common History as a Source of Group Cohesion

Much of this pride stems from the Amazight position in history. My informants were proud to tell me that the Amazight were the first inhabitants

of Morocco. This is in direct contradiction with the prevailing scholarly opinion that states “the fact that the Berbers are the original inhabitants of North Africa ... is not mirrored in the folk mind” (Entelis 1989: 25). Moreover, the Amazight resented the Arabs for taking a dominant role. Great pride was expressed in the Amazight ruling dynasties. Aziz said “we ruled this country well and spread Islam; we did not really need the Arabs.” Allal sang a song in Amazight that he translated as “we don't want your Islam, we don't want you language, go away and leave us alone.” Clearly Amazight identity is a source of pride for many people.

Urban and Rural Divide

Halid, who now lives in Rabat, told me that although he is Amazight, it did not matter as he lives in the city. This stresses the association of Arabs with urban areas, and Amazight with rural areas. Even in Setti Fadma, people told me that the “true” Amazight were those living in the mountains, living a simple life, and descending to the weekly *souk*, also described as a fundamentally Amazight event (Jamal and Bila). Yet, Halid is not representative. Most people stress the retention of Amazight identity even after urbanization.

Even given the urban/rural associations, my informants generally saw Amazights as retaining their culture and traditions more strongly than the Arabs. Not only do they associate Arabs with urban living, but the next step is that Arabs look to Europe and America for models. An Amazight I met in

Marrakech was adamant that even urban Amazight are retaining their heritage. Jamal said that people might assume that he is Arab as he habitually wears Western clothing demonstrating this pervasive Western/Arab association. Despite this and their classification of mountain dwellers as “real” Amazight, both small town and city inhabitants thought of themselves as Amazight. Many of the Amazight families I spoke to had a home in the town or city as well as a home in the mountains. I met a family in Oulmes in which the Amazight man has two wives. The Amazight wife lives in the mountains while the Arab wife live in town with all the modern conveniences. Another family I know in Rabat considers themselves to be Amazight, although the children do not speak Amazight. They remain connected to the countryside, *bled*, and thus their Amazight identity, by family members outside Khemisset whom they visit often. These ties to the *bled* allow Amazight to feel that they are retaining their culture and also strengthens Arab/urban Amazight/rural correlations.

Historically, patterns of Arabs and Amazights vying for power have placed them in competitive situations based more on tribal than ethnic divisions. The French played upon this competitive history for their benefit, but defined ethnicity as the criteria. Now that this competitive spirit is restricted within the political boundaries of modern Morocco, ethnic division is emphasized. Younger Amazight are taking increasing pride in their identity as Amazight. Although the generation before them united with the Arabs to

seek freedom from the French, the young generations want equal say in the new state but as a separate category from their former allies. While Amazight identity may currently be seen through language, self identification is to an ever increasing degree the defining characteristic and grounds for pride.

II: Language

Amazight languages are fundamental to Amazight identity. Many scholars consider language to be the only marker of ethnicity in Morocco. For example, Lakhsassi, Entelis, and others would agree with the conclusion that the Amazight are “a composite people; ... the affinity among the various people seems to be solely linguistic” (Nelson 1985: 4). Additionally, many people I spoke to immediately jumped on the linguistic component as soon as I began to describe my interest in the Amazight in Morocco today. They told me stories of Americans that spoke Amazight and took great delight in making me use my few words of *Shluha* (central Moroccan Amazight) and teaching me more. Many were particularly interested in teaching me the Amazight alphabet. Virtually all the Amazight I spoke to denied that language alone made a Amazight, but language clearly holds a great deal of significance and is a source of pride. As an objective marker, many have seized upon language as a symbol for more general Amazight identity. ✓

Scholars of Morocco (and Moroccans) generally consider there to be three distinct regions of Amazight peoples that constitute equally distinct cultural groups. Equally, they speak three different languages. The three zones are usually labeled Riffian, located in the Rif Mountains of northern Morocco, *Imazighen* or Berber living on the east side of the High Atlas and in the Middle Atlas mountains, and finally the *Shluh* of the western High Atlas, Ante Atlas, and Southern Morocco (Hoffman 1967: 22-28). Whether the

spoken languages constitute languages or dialects of the same language is the subject of much debate outside the scope of this discussion, but they do differ significantly. Even within the three major groups, wide variation exists. Each tribe has a slightly different vocabulary set and pronunciation according to Mohammed who wrote an unpublished dissertation on this topic. However, most of my informants claimed that all Amazight languages are mutually intelligible, although Riffian forms are the most different. "I might not be able to really discuss with him, but I understand what he means. After a month or two I would be fluent," said Omar of a conversation he was having with a Sous.⁶

The Amazight languages are considered by their speakers (and increasingly others) to be rich and beautiful languages utilizing much poetic imagery and rhythmic inflection patterns. This is why Amazight music and poetry are so valued by all Moroccans, Salat (an Arab) pointed out. Bouchara told me that in the past Amazight languages were thought of only as dialects and not "real" languages, lacking grammar, rich vocabulary, alphabet, and other characteristics thought to be required for advanced language status. In fact all these characteristics are true of these languages, including an alphabet specifically designed for Amazight languages. Additionally, Arabic, Latin, and international phonetic alphabets are used for transcription. This has been done for a variety of Amazight publication, including a now defunct Amazight

⁶ The Sous are an Amazight group living in Southern Morocco, stereotypically good business people who have established *epicerie* (small grocery stores) throughout the urban areas.

newspaper printed in Arabic script. Interestingly, under the same criteria applied above, *Derija* is “only a dialect, not a real language” as it is not a written language under any circumstances.

Amina, an Arab, told me that her father used to work in a book shop in Rabat that carried Amazight publications. When they began teaching Amazight languages, the owner was arrested and the shop closed. This occurred about seven years ago; however, the status of the languages has changed considerably in the intervening time. The year of this research, 1996, was the debut of a daily ten minute newscast in an Amazight language on Moroccan national television. Bouchara explained that this came about following a strong movement among Algerian Amazight university students to reclaim their language and identity as part of a national political movement for Amazight power. The Moroccan government began the newscast because “when they saw this, they knew that it was a good thing.” A more cynical interpretation would be that the Moroccan government wished to prevent similar uprisings within its potentially unstable borders. She saw in this immense hope for the acceptance of Amazight language and heritage in Moroccan. Her enthusiasm was infectious when she spoke of rumors that Amazight languages will become an official course of study at some Moroccan universities (all but one of which are state institutions) in the 1997-1998 academic year. Even if the rumors are unfounded, that they exist

demonstrates clearly the increased value of Amazight language and heritage in Moroccan national opinion.

Language and Education

Language and education create many controversial issue in the extremely polyglot Moroccan society. Often, when an Amazight begins school he or she can speak only one of the Amazight languages. However, few teachers speak any Amazight language, nor is it permitted in the classroom (even as a teaching tool). Moroccan Arabic is used to teach Modern Standard Arabic (MSA, *Fousha*), the language of education and the upper classes. Before this is fully mastered, students begin to learn French. Karima, a French teacher in a rural *college* (the rough equivalent of a middle school in the Moroccan interpretation of the French school system), cited this as her major problem in the classroom, the source of behavioral problems and inability to learn. Ali told me of his first few years in school. He felt frustrated and stupid as he struggled to understand what was happening in the classroom. He was physically punished by his teachers for speaking Amazight in the classroom. He resorted to getting older friends to recap the day's events in his native language as they made the three kilometer hike back to their homes. He persevered and is now a graduate student. However, his sister went to school for only one year but could not learn anything. As mandatory education is rarely enforced in Morocco (especially for rural females), her formal education ended there. This is one of the ways in which

the Amazight, intentionally or not, may be marginalized by the structure of the Moroccan state.

Several movements have begun that would make education in Amazight languages available, at least to teach children enough Arabic to enter the existing schools. Jamal told me with great pride of a school conducted in Amazight in Agadir, and expressed a desire that more would be created. He saw Arabic as the unifying language of Morocco (given that the three major Amazight languages vary considerably) and therefore it was logical for higher education to be in Arabic. This view was shared by most of the people with whom I spoke.

Daily Language

This raises this issue of daily language. Abdulillah, studying for his Masters in English, said "When I was younger, I used four languages everyday: Amazight at home, *Derija* walking to school, *Fousha* and French at school." The majority of people gave less inclusive descriptions of their language use. Most claimed that they used their native language most of the time. However, my observations showed that many, such as Aziz and Fetiha, actually used *Derija* in equal or greater frequency with each other, friends, family, etc. Another common attitude was to make the explicit decision not to speak Arabic. Arabic is Omar's last choice language. He would rather use French or English with a fellow Moroccan even if Arabic would be a less demanding choice. Jamal also cited rejection of Arabic. In Agadir, when a

different Amazight form than his native is spoken, he asks for prices in his Amazight rather than Arabic else he will be overcharged. He and others described Agadir as a center of Amazight activism where European languages are more widely spoken than Arabic. The most interesting case of politically motivated language choice I encountered was that of an eight year old girl. We were sitting next to each other on a long bus trip. When I tried to speak to her in Arabic,⁷ she told me in French that she did not speak Arabic. Upon questioning, I learned that she was Amazight, and that her father was a politician who did not want her to speak Arabic. She attended a French speaking private school. From these examples, it seems that *Derija* is by necessity the common language, almost a lingua franca, of virtually all Moroccans. However, many Amazight would rather not use it -- or at least prefer to think that they do not speak *Derija* -- except when necessary.

Amazight languages provide a more objective method of measuring Amazight identity than any other method and are a source of great pride for speakers. However, there is much more to Amazight ethnicity than merely language. Although forced by school and circumstance to speak forms of Arabic, the Amazight continue to see their languages as the most important means of communication in daily life.

⁷ This was for two reasons. First, I found practicing Arabic with children to be simpler than with adults. Also, I assumed that Arabic could be her only language as we were on a bus between two urban areas and that French instruction does not begin until about that age.

III: Religion

Islam as a faith and as a way of life is the common thread among ninety-nine percent of Moroccans. Miller describes Islam as “a socially organizing force of spiritual and universalizing intensity, the integrator” (Miller 1984: 198). As inhabitants of an Islamic state, all children are educated in the public schools to be Muslims. Individuals are legally considered to be Muslim by default, and as such are required to fast during Ramadan. They also view the king as both their political and spiritual ruler. “We are all Muslims, so there is no difference [between ethnic groups]” said Anas in the course of a conversation in which he also labeled himself a militant Amazight. On one level, Islam does unify all Moroccans as well as legitimizing the power of their king through his role of “Commander of the Faithful”; however, there are significant differences in local practice of Islam that separates the Amazight even in the religious sphere.

Tombs to saints and the religious brotherhoods attached to them constitute the greatest difference at the “Little Tradition” level from the Qur’anicly prescribed Islam. These tombs, referred to as marabouts (as are the saints themselves), dot the *bled* (countryside) and occasionally pop up in the cities. The tombs are objects of hope, sacrifice, pilgrimage, and even worship. This practice is not prescribed by the Qur’an, and some schools of Islamic thinking feel that it is condemned. Yet these tombs and the *moussems*, festivals held in honor of the marabouts, form the core of the

religious practice of (rural in particular) Amazight. Setti Fadma is overlooked by a marabout on a mountainside. This tomb is the focus of one of the most important *moussem* in Morocco. ✓

Although Arabs now practice some of the saint worship and are members of brotherhoods, the tradition is believed to have grown out of pre-Islamic Amazight beliefs. With the expense and difficulty associated with a pilgrimage to Mecca, it is possible to make pilgrimages to five specific holy sites in Morocco instead. Four of these sites are marabouts. These sites also offer a direct sense of participation to its followers, particularly women who are generally illiterate and not competent users of Arabic, let alone classical Qur'anic Arabic. Amazight are also associated with less than mainstream Islamic beliefs. Sufism⁸ has "found particularly fertile ground in the traditions and superstitions of the Berbers. There is little doubt that the cults that prosper in Morocco do so in mostly Berber areas" (Simonis and Crowther 1995: 38).

Moreover, these religious practices have been used by Amazight in their political agenda. "At various times in Moroccan history the Berber's separatist aspirations and their reactions against Arab authority ... have expressed themselves through the heretical and schismatic doctrines of particularly vivid Berber holy men" who probably went on to become saints and the center of religious brotherhood practices (Nelson 1985: 137).

⁸ Sufism is the mystical "brand" of Islam. It may pre-date Islam but has integrated just as the marabout practice has.

As Jamal pointed out, it is theologically mandated that the Qur'an be in Arabic and for Islam to be practiced in Arabic. However, at the mosque in Setti Fadma, the verse of the Qur'an at prayers is explained in Amazight, otherwise a significant number of people would not understand. This is yet another example of slight tweaking of traditional Islamic doctrine that harbors traditional Amazight beliefs. Therefore, at the philosophical level, Morocco is united by Islam, but daily practice differs by ethnic affiliation.

IV: Conclusions

This chapter addressed the cultural components of Amazight ethnicity. In conjunction with the earlier chapters, it has been demonstrated that the Amazight are indeed a distinct ethnic group. This has been accomplished in the following manner. To look first to the definition of "ethnic group" predominant in the literature, the Amazight do meet the four criteria. They live in largely self-perpetuating biological populations. A strong expression of shared cultural beliefs and values was discerned. These were expressed in both overt cultural forms and unique cultural forms such as the Fantasia. A field of communication and interaction has been defined, largely a result of their unique languages. Finally, the Amazight have designated and identify themselves with a distinct category. Further, these factors are used for social organization.

In the case of Starr's checklist, the case of the Amazight expresses these items. The Amazight do speak a distinct language, and express varying vocabulary sets. Dress and tattoos may be distinctive features. Moreover, the Amazight show distinct residence patterns, living predominately together and in rural areas, thus associating the group with a community. Finally, names may be Arab or Amazight. As a result of Islam, many Amazight have Arab names, but the owners of these names may resist the connotation.

Barth, in his discussion of ethnic groups and boundaries stresses the shared cultural beliefs that were demonstrated in this case. Most important,

Barth stresses self-identification, which is most certainly present in this case study. His concepts of situational ethnicity and flow across boundaries aimed at protecting the core ethnicity are also demonstrated in this case. ✓

However, to reduce this analysis to proving a statement of ethnicity would show it to be a futile exercise. The significance of this and other ethnicities is not the definition, but the causes and effects of that ethnicity. This area will be addressed in the next section.

Chapter Five: Conclusions

I am an Arab-Berber-Moroccan. I am half Arab because my father is Arab and half Berber because my mother is Berber. The left side of me is Berber and the right side if Arab. I say this because the right side is stronger as it came from my Father

--Mohammed M.

These words convey the essence of Amazight identity in Morocco as I found it. No ethnic group can define and place itself without the historical and political context. History reveals a long tradition of independence; but one that is little known in Morocco today. Akhmed, almost angrily, asked me what I knew of Amazight history that justified my ability to conduct this project. When I gave him a brief summary, he shook his head and looked to the ground with tears in his eyes. "You," he said, "know more about the history of my people than my children. This is a sad time for me."

His children do not know this history for several reasons. Ethnographic and political analysis of Amazight peoples are nor readily available in Morocco (Moudden: 1996). However, if they were many Amazight would not be able to read them. Education conducted in a non-native language marginalizes many directly out off the schools, while devaluing an important aspect of self-identity.

The Amazight also generally inhabit rural areas, once again a function history, where resources are simply unavailable. After a period of

marginalization following independence, the young Amazight are seeking to find power. They are using their identity of a differentiated ethnic group as a vehicle to achieve their goal of equal involvement at all levels of Moroccan society. As contemporary life and world view have expanded Amazight horizons beyond their traditional lands, rather than seek and return, they are applying tradition models to the current situation.

Given that the Amazight are the earliest known inhabitants of Morocco, one might wonder why now is the time for this movement. The French Protectorate was a pivotal point in the history of the Amazight in the system that is modern Morocco. Under the French, ethnic differences were highlighted by the “Berber *Dahir*”. Moreover, the French were the first power to effectively control the entire population, and left this control to the Arab urban elite. Thus, the Amazight are struggling for the first time to assert their identity and, following a common pattern of many societies, the younger generations have taken up this fight. Like Mohammed M., Morocco is increasingly recognizing that the Amazight side is integral to its state level identity and functioning. The Arab side may stronger, although not greater, but the left side is seeking equal prominence.

The true significance of ethnicity is in these roots. The historical, political, and economic issues form a cyclic and reciprocal relationship. Events support an ethnic distinction, and the ethnic distinction creates other events.

In this case, a long thread of historical conditions has supported an ethnic identity. In the Post Colonial period, an intricate expression of ethnicity has developed. The struggle for independence from the French created a unity between Arabs and Amazight. Yet, as Baaklini predicted, this system actually served to accentuate the ethnic differences. In a political, economic, and cultural system that has left the Amazight feeling marginalized, renewed interest in their ethnic identity as a means for self empowerment has arisen in what may be called the third immigrant generation. In this situation, we have a youth with a strong interest in perpetrating their ethnicity. Although there is a strong correlation between urban-Arab and rural-Amazight associations, economic conditions are forcing urbanization. The urbanized Amazight typically live in bidonvilles on the outskirts of the cities and remain connected to their traditional roots (Entelis 1989: 107). As they become more socialized into this urban, "modern" world, many are redefining their ethnicity within this context.

According to Cohen, when "two ethnic groups join together and interact politically and economically and establish a new political system, they will soon become involved on cleavages on economic and political lines running throughout the extent of the new society" (Cohen 1974: 95). When these cleavages transcend the ethnic group lines, they will form the new basis for identity. Ethnic and tribal affiliations will gradually weaken and disappear (Cohen 1974: 95). However, as in the case of the Amazight, if the difference coincide with the existing ethnic affiliations, the cultural differences will

become “entrenched, consolidated and strengthened in order to articulate the struggle between the two social groups across the new class lines” (Cohen 1974: 96). The ultimate expression of this is the militant Amazightism in southern Morocco.

Ethnicity and politics are therefore inseparable. Without the political conditions and interactions present in Morocco, Amazight would cease to be a salient category. Modern ethnicity results not from isolation but from interaction (Cohen 1974: 96). The dynamic relations of the group and their culture with new positions of power places new emphasis on parts of the traditional culture and structure. Essentially, ethnicity has become a political organization, at least symbolically (Cohen 1974: 96-97).

Additionally, it is impossible to segregate these issues of ethnicity from those of nationalism and state building. The increased militants in the south may result from their proximity to the “Western Sahara Question.” The government has called upon a discourse of nationalism to elicit support for their occupation of the Western Sahara, culminating in the Green March, a peaceful civilian “invasion” of more than 100,000 people. This has linked the Amazight into concepts of self-determination and nationalism. This does not imply that they want separation from Morocco.

Indeed, they want just the opposite, closer integration into Moroccan society. The Amazight see Morocco as “their” country. They are more than willing to share it with their partners in religious activity and fundamental beliefs and in the creation of the independent Moroccan state, the Arabs.

However, the Amazight wish to maintain a separate ethnicity and integrate the concepts of their segmentary lineage based tribal heritage into the guiding political concepts of the modern Morocco.

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Appendix II: List and Brief Biography of Cited Informants

Abdul a middle aged Amazight living in Setti Fadma

Abdulillah a student of English at the university in Kenitra, an Amazight from Oulmes

Ali an Amazight with the same biography as above

Akhmed an Amazight living outside Oulmes, approximately 35 years old. Studied Arabic literature at Al Karouain

Allal an Amazight living in Khemisset, a student at University of Mohammed V in Rabat. He is a Marxist revolutionary and activist for the Amazight cause.

Amina a 21 year old Arab from Rabat

Anas an Amazight from Khemisset in his early 20's; a member of the upper class

Anna an American Peace Corps volunteer posted in Setti Fadma

Aziz an Amazight from Khemisset, 35 years old

Bila a 30is Amazight working as a mountain guide in Setti Fadma who has traveled throughout the world.

Bouchara a 24 year old Amazight; she wrote her BA dissertation on Amazight poetry

Madame Chaoui an Arab in her late 40's educated at Al Karouain

Chebib a hotel owner in Setti Fadma from a mountain Amazight family, late 50's

Fetiha an Amazight woman in her twenties who lives in the *bled* outside Khemisset.

Jamal an Amazight who runs a souvenir shop in Setti Fadma

Halid an Amazight from Khemisset, a student in Rabat, 23

Karima an Arab teacher of French in an Amazight area

Omar an Amazight rug dealer in Khemisset

Mohammed an Amazight French teacher, 35 years old

Mohammed M. a 22 year old student in Rabat. His comment grew out of discussion of political correctness in the United States

Saied an Amazight in his mid twenties living in Setti Fadma.

Salat an Arab in his mid twenties vacationing in Setti Fadma. His was educated in Italy.

Appendix III: Interview Questions

The following is a list of example questions that framed discussions with informants. The list was compiled with the assistance of my adviser in Morocco, Dr. Susan Schaefer Davis.

I know that there is a distinction between Arab and Amazight, which are you?

How important is this distinction to you?

What is uniquely Arab of Amazight, and not more generally Moroccan?

What is the most important thing about being Arab or Amazight?

What are the Characteristics of Amazight? Arabs?

How do you classify others?

How is it important to do that?

What is the significance of Amazight Culture and being member of that culture?

How have Arabs and Amazight influence each other

Are people retaining their Amazight culture? How can you tell?

It seems that many Arab and Amazight traditions are the same. Can you Explain this?

How do you see the future of the Amazight in Morocco?

What would you like the future of the Amazight in Morocco to be?

Language

How important is Amazight language to Amazight culture?

Should schools be conducted in Amazight languages?

Should Amazight languages be taught in schools?

Tell me about written Amazight languages.

Whom did you last speak with, and in what language?

Marriage

Would you rather marry an Arab or an Amazight?

How are spouses chosen?

What are the differences between Arab and Amazight marriages?

What happens in a marriage ceremony?

Women

Are or should women be veiled?

Who gets tattooed and why?

Are less people getting tattooed now, and why?

Religion

Are Amazight of Arabs more religious?

Does the practice of Islam vary?

How do folk traditions effect Islam?

What do you think about translating the Qur'an into Amazight for comprehension purposes?

Political Issues

Do you feel that Arabs and Amazights are treated differently by the government?

Have tribes remained important in Moroccan politics?

How large is your tribe?

Describe people's feelings about tribes and pride in their tribe.

What Activities do members of your tribe participate in together?

Does the tribe play a role in conflict in the community?

Are political choices effected by tribal affiliation?

Do you follow the tribes lead?

Are Amazight political parties important?

Do you make political choices based in being Arab or Amazight?

Appendix IV: Annotated Bibliography

Barth, Fredrik ed.

1969 Ethnic Groups and Boundaries. Boston: Little, Brown, and Company.

A significant work in the field of ethnicity theory. As it stresses self-identification as a mode of formulating ethnic identity, it was useful in this study where ethnic identity was a key concept. The creation and maintenance of ethnic boundaries is also key in this work.

“Berbers.” Encyclopedia of Islam. 2nd edition, vol. 1. pp. 1173-1187

An entry that illustrates the common views of the Amazight and their languages.

Briggs, Lloyd Cabot

1960 Tribes of the Sahara. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

An exhaustive ethno-historical/ethnographic description of the tribal peoples living in the Sahara. It is relevant to this study for its discussion of segmentary lineage and other formalized structures of the peoples it describes. It is very much in the tradition of presenting itself as the ultimate source of truth, but contains little analysis.

Combs-Schilling, M. E.

1989 Sacred Performances: Islam, Sexuality, and Sacrifice. New York: Columbia University Press, 1989.

In this work Combs-Schilling argues that rituals of Islam as they are practiced in Morocco were used in the 1500's to "reformulate the foundations of their central political institution" (xii). These rituals now reinforce and lend authority to the monarchy. For my purposes, this argument is significant in that its breadth leads Combs-Schilling to conclude that these rituals unite all Moroccans under the power of the king. Her discussion of the "Berber *Dahir*" interprets its significance under these terms. While I agree that the French instituted this program to prevent national cohesion, she does not see the Amazight as having a separate cultural identity to preserve. Thus, the *dahir* served to unify the Moroccans as a unit, and then Morocco with the Arab world. I contend that the Amazight do see themselves as a distinct cultural group marginalized by the Arabs. I also agree that the rituals do have a political component, which is why they are rejected by some of the militant Amazights. Additionally, when I was in Morocco, the king ordered that only he would perform the "Great Sacrifice", yet many chose to ignore this directive or find ways to follow the letter, if not the spirit. Combs-Schilling does not relate similar observations. To discuss her ritual analysis is out of the realm of this study, but it is interesting and insightful nevertheless.

Cohen, Abner

1974 Two-Dimensional Man: An Essay on the Anthropology of Power and Symbolism in Complex Society. Berkeley and Los Angeles, University of California Press, 1974.

Key to analyzing the symbolic and political lives of individuals and collectives, this work also uses a system of analysis that is broad and multi-layered. It provides means at looking at the many different components of a society , both as individual factors and as a system.

1979 "Political Symbolism" in Annual Review of Anthropology. Palo Alto: Annual Reviews, Inc.

This article builds in by giving specific theoretical and ethnographic accounts of political symbolism in a society.

1981 The Politics of Elite Culture. Berkeley: University of California Press.

This ethnographic study of the Creoles in Sierra Leon is a direct application of the theories expounded in Two-Dimensional Man etc. In this book, Cohen looks at a specific group, their religious, economic, social, and cultural lives in an effort to understand their elite position in the ethnic hierarchy of Sierra Leon.

Coon, Carleton Steven

1931 Tribes of the Rif. Harvard African Studies, vol. IX. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Similar in style and content to Briggs' work, but dealing with a different area.

Coon was one of the earliest anthropologists working in Morocco, and an influential ethnicity theorist of his time. His legacy looms large over Moroccan anthropology, but many of his arguments are limited in range of analysis.

However, his work is a gold mine of information.

Crapanzano, Vincent

1980 Tuhami: Portrait of a Moroccan. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Tuhami is a man that Moroccans would consider to be abnormal, even *majnoon* (crazy). Crapanzano tries to use him to illuminate the forces of social norms and culturally held metaphors that negotiate a Moroccan's interactions with each other, outsiders, and their reality. This work has helped me to understand the sources of identity for an individual Moroccan, or perhaps even Moroccans in that it illustrates the power of "little tradition" Islam. These religious structures are mostly associated with the Amazight. The work also deals with the ramifications of the colonial period in economic and personal terms. However, this book is more interesting as an exercise in ethnographic writing and then critical reading. It was ultimately frustrating as I did not feel that I understood Tuhami, Aisha Qandisha, Moroccan Islam, Morocco, or

even Crapanzano very well. However, this psycho-analytical approach of an individual non-representative Moroccan was an interesting concept. (I think Shostak's Nisa more successfully carried out a variation of this approach.)

Davis, Susan Schaefer

1983 Patience and Power: Women's Lives in a Moroccan Village. Rochester: Schenkman.

Looking at the lives of women in this semi-rural town, Davis quickly learns that women do not occupy the position of inferiority and powerlessness implied by their stated cultural norms. Instead, they have informal power, mostly by virtue of their position within a family. Females actually have access to more channels of informal communication and power than men.

Davis, Susan Schaefer and Douglas A. Davis

1989 Adolescence in a Moroccan Town: Making Social Sense. New Brunswick, Rutgers University Press.

In this work, Davis and her husband return to the same town that provided the data for Patience and Power. As part of the Harvard Adolescence Project, they examined this critical life stage. It is particularly concerned with effects of the media, Western culture, urbanization, and psychological development.

1995 "Possessed by Love: Gender and Romance in Morocco" in Romantic Passion: A Universal Experience? William Jankoviak, ed. New York: Columbia University Press.

In this article, using the same data as above, the Davis and Davis explore romantic relationships and marriage in closer detail. They are most concerned with a purported change in gender relations. They find a continuity of forms, but a change in priority as a result of new economic and social concerns.

Entelis, John P.

1989 Culture and Counterculture in Moroccan Politics. Boulder: Westview Press.

Entelis is a political scientist looking to culture for political explanations. He does not see the Amazight peoples as a significant cultural or political force, to which I (of course) have objections. He does provide me with important information on Morocco's international policy and status in the realm, as well as structure of Morocco's government. He does make a strong argument for the influence of tribal heritage, Islam, and the monarch as fundamental influence in Moroccan politics, but denies that Amazightism is a factor. This work as well as Combs-Schilling's and others indicate that this feeling of pride and importance of the Amazight identity is a relatively new element in Moroccan politics.

Gellner, Ernest

1969 Saints of the Atlas. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Most notable for its treatment of segmentary lineage, this is an intricate ethnography of the Central High Atlas mountains. It most concerned with social organization strategies.

Gellner, Ernest and Charles Micaud, eds.

1972 Arabs and Berbers: From Tribe to Nation in North Africa. Lexington:

Lexington Books.

This somewhat dated work contains numerous articles dealing with the formation of the Post Colonial Morocco foreshadows many of the trends elaborated in this study. For example, Octave Marais in his article "The Political Evolution of Berbers in Independent Morocco" predicts a discontent with the monarchy among the Amazight and a movement to greater contribution in their own government.

Hammoudi, Abdellah

1993 The Victim and Its Masks: An Essay on Sacrifice and Masquerade in the Maghreb. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

A fascinating account of the tradition of masquerade in the rituals of rural Amazight, Hammoudi manages to integrate a functionalist argument with folk psychology and an analysis of the power structure at work. The ritual of liminality he describes exists on many different levels, and he lets us into all of them.

Hoffman, Bernard G.

1967 The Structure of Traditional Moroccan Rural Society. Hauge-Paris:
Moutron & Co.

A fairly mediocre account of the political and informal power structures that focuses on economic issues and fluctuations individual powers.

Joffe, E.G.H. and C.R. Pennell eds.

1991 Tribe and State: Essays in Honour of David Montgomery Hunt.

Outwell, Cambridgeshire: Middle East and North African Studies Press.

This volume contains articles by almost every major figure in the contemporary study of Morocco. Many of these essays focus on the influence of *zawiya*, religious brotherhoods of the Sufi tradition. They cover anthropological, historical, and political topics. The articles I found to be the most relevant were

“Bargaining for Segmentarity” by John Waterbury

He argues that segmentarity now exists only as idiom in the political consciousness of Moroccans. This does mean that it is nor influential, but that is only a model.

“The Segmentary Lineage Mode; in the Jbalan Highlands of Morocco” by

Henry Munson, Jr.

He argues that segmentary lineage did not exist before colonialism but rather had a more formalized political institution.

“Tribalism and Moroccan Resistance 1890-1914, the Role of the Ait Ndhir” by Edmund Burke, III

He sees a dominant urban perspective that has skewed understanding of Moroccan history and goes on to argue that the Ait Ndhir were a highly influential power in Morocco. It is this “dominant urban perspective” that is of interest (120).

1996 Lakhsassi, Abderrahman. “Amazighism (The Berber Identity).” Center for Cross-Cultural Learning, Rabat, Morocco. 22 Mar. 1996.

Lakhsassi is an Amazight, but in the reductionist camp that sees Amazighism solely in linguistic terms. I had prolonged debate with him that gave me interest in this topic.

Lincoln, Bruce

1989 Discourse and the Construction of Society: Comparative Studies of Myth, Ritual, and Classification. New York: Oxford University Press.

This volume presents several specific analysis of ritual. It fits them into a generalized model of social forms. This theory states that myth, ritual, and ideology are a function of social organization, but are exertive entities capable of change. His analysis of the Swazi Ncwala is excellent, clearly showing the

relationship between a ritual of disorder and the maintenance of societal order.

McCready, William

1983 Culture, Ethnicity, and Identity: Current Issues in Research. New York: Academic Press.

A compendium of articles on ethnicity coming from a wide variety of backgrounds, this volume excels as highlighting the complex nature of this topic. Abdo I. Baaklini's "Ethnicity and Politics in Contemporary Lebanon" is particularly useful in this study. It provides models for understanding ethnic conflict, and what sustains or ends it.

1984 Miller, James A. Imlil: A Moroccan Mountain Community in Change. Boulder: Westview Replica.

The three part identity, environment, tribe, and Islam, described in this book makes a nice system. Miller is geographer, and stresses environmental determinism over all other factors. In addition, he accepts stated norms, especially in the case of Islamic doctrine, perhaps a little too easily. Overall, this is a nice account of one village, but not particularly of the mechanism behind it, especially those of change.

Munson, Henry Jr.

1984 The House of Si Abu Allah: The Oral History of a Moroccan Family. New Haven: Yale University Press.

A dense account of a single family, Munson does well to explain the relationships between the members of the family and between the family and society. He is concerned with relating the symbols and organization of Islam, the Moroccan state, the family, etc. with individual lives.

1994 Religion and Power in Morocco. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Munson is primarily motivated by deprecating Clifford Geertz's analysis of many of the same issues. However, Munson is looking almost entirely at "High Islam" at not at the "Little Tradition" concerns of Geertz. Munson also gives an interesting account of the rising fundamentalist movement in Morocco that suffers from lack of sufficient comparative data.

Nelson, Harold D.

1985 Morocco: A Country Study. 5th edition. Washington DC: American University.

A good source for the conventional analysis of Morocco as well as statistics and other information.

The Organization and Evolution of Modern Morocco. Casablanca: Dar El Kitab for the Ministry of Information.

A government issued publication that describes the structure of Moroccan government in very nationalist, propoganda-ish terms. This is of interest because it uses imagery of Amazight tradition to color it descriptions.

Oussaid, Brick

1981 Mountains Forgotten by God: The Story of a Moroccan Berber Family.

Trans. Ann Wollcombe. Washington, DC: Three Continents Press.

An insightful mostly biographical account of an Amazight family living in rural Morocco during the struggle for independence. Significantly, Oussaid often uses his tribe as a measure of his personal and political identity.

Seddon, David

1981 Moroccan Peasants: A Century of Change in the Eastern Rif 1879-1970.

Folkstone: William Dawson & Sons.

An analysis mostly concerned with the economic changes of the Eastern Rif, this volume provides relevant information about social organization, especially the formal structures of tribal government.

Thompson, Richard H.

1989 Theories of Ethnicity: A Critical Appraisal. Contributions on Sociology, no. 82. New York: Greenwood Press.

I read this book so that I could have a better understanding of ethnicity theory as that lies beneath everything that I am trying to accomplish in this study. Thompson systematically describes and criticizes many of the predominant theories of ethnicity (sociobiology, primordialist, primordialist in a Geertz-ian way, assimilationism and its detractors, world system, and neo-Marxist).

Thompson also declares that a scholar must make a “theoretical choice” as to which he or she will follow, with Thompson choosing a neo-Marxist theory with the economic component reduced. I found all his arguments to be logical and persuasive, and I see why he made his choice. However, I was not convinced that Thompson resolved his own problem with Marxist analysis-- that it is reductionist, essentialist, and focused on economic issues. While I would take some parts of this, the Geertz model of primordialism appeals to me. We have racial and ethnic categories because we as people see and attempt to describe variation in a way that coincides with our world views. Thompson’s argument neglects Barth who systematizes some ideas about fluctuations in ethnic groups and their importance.

Waterbury, John.

1970 Commander of the Faithful: The Moroccan Political Elite. New York: Columbia University Press.

A very useful volume for comprehending the royal and elite circles. Banned in Morocco, it is not exactly complimentary to this system. The analysis is broad and cohesive, within the stated mission of describing the political elite. Therefore, its scope and applications are limited.