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The Social Mobility of the Haratine and the Re-Working of Bourdieu's *Habitus* on the Saharan Frontier, Morocco

In this article, I examine the practical relevance of Bourdieu's notion of *Habitus* in understanding the relationship between the acquisition of land and the transformation of political and social relations of subordination in the stratified communities of southern Morocco. First, I claim that the acquisition of land by the Haratine, a subordinate and low-status ethnic group, means more than just a simple economic transaction, and land serves as the very basis for changing the political relations of subordination. Second, I argue that the Haratine strategy of land acquisition was made possible by the intervention of the central state in the local power structure during and after the French colonial period. When these transformations were coupled with labor possibilities made available by national and transnational migration, the market game was opened to the Haratine, who could draw on the accumulation to improve their political and social standing. This also meant that the autonomy of the local community was lost forever, and the traditional nobility of Berbers and Arabs was no longer able to exclude the subalterns by extra-economic or legal means. [*Arabs, Berbers, Bourdieu, Habitus, Haratine, Morocco*]

In this article, I explore the utility of Bourdieu's notion of *Habitus* in understanding the relationship between the acquisition of land and the transformation of political relations of subordination in the Ziz Valley of southern Morocco. First, I claim that the acquisition of land by the Haratine, a subordinate and low-status ethnic group, means more than just a simple economic index of accumulation or access to the means of production. For the Haratine, land serves as the very basis for changing the political relations of subordination, as well as a vehicle to their emancipation. This is so because the ownership of land was and still remains as the necessary condition for the inalienable right to citizenship in the local community, and the Haratine were until the 1950s excluded from this privilege by political fiat.

Second, while the Haratine appear to be employing an economic strategy as a means to a political end, the economic strategy itself was made possible by external political forces, especially the intervention of the central state in the local power structure during the French colonial period. The postindependence government continued the same policies, and the autonomy of the local community was lost forever. This meant that the traditional nobility was no longer able to exclude the subalterns by extra-economic or legal means. When these changes were coupled with income-generating opportunities made available by national and transnational migration, the market game was opened to the Haratine, who could use the accumulation to improve their political situation. The Haratine strategies of in-

vesting in land have also led to daily struggles involving unique nonviolent modes of resistance by the Berber and Arab nobility to arrest its eroding social standing and to contain the upward mobility of the Haratine—silent resistance from above at its best indigenous form.

Bourdieu's work over the last four decades provides a theoretical framework for the nonreductionist properties of cultural production as forms of power by extending the logic of economism to the nonmaterialist spheres where he identifies honor, prestige, status, and knowledge as forms of capital. He argues that the struggle for social recognition is a critical aspect of social life and states that in that struggle, institutions, processes, and cultural resources structure groups into self-perpetuating hierarchies of domination. He claims that all cultural symbols and practices embody interests and function to enhance social distinction. Individuals and groups constantly struggle and negotiate strategies to achieve a gamut of interests within fields of conflict, and in so doing these agents reproduce the social stratification order (Anheir et al. 1995; Bourdieu 1977, 1989; Jenkins 1992; Sabour 1991).

For instance, in his ethnographic essays on the Kabyle of Algeria, Bourdieu (1972) does not deal with the practice of economism in which social actors calculate how to maximize their yields in an open forum of decision making, but with agents used to certain dispositions, with certain schemes of thinking and acting that are regarded as the only right way to do things because they are the natural way to act. As an entire system of schemes of perception,

appreciation, and action, these dispositions constitute what Bourdieu calls "Habitus." It is Habitus that lends order to customary social behavior by operating as "the generative basis of structured, objectively unified practices" (Bourdieu 1977).

In short, Habitus, the product of history, produces and perpetuates individual and collective practices, and hence history, in accordance with the schemes engendered by history. Such dispositions give birth to strategies that do not only manipulate the established order but also preserve it by constituting the field of what is possible within the limits of their manipulative exercises, daily exercises guaranteeing the misrecognition of possibilities (Bourdieu 1977:82). Bourdieu insists on the need to analyze the social construction of those contexts. Such contexts are conditioned by "the system of social relations of production, circulation, and consumption in which these relations are set up and in which the social functions that they objectively fulfill at any given moment are defined" (Bourdieu 1977: 231).

Power is enacted not only by the mobilization of material violence but also by symbolic violence leading to the imposition of the very principles of the construction of reality or common sense. Such a sense of reality, given expression in the production of mythico-ritual homologues, produces a somewhat closed ideological world limiting the possibilities of change and contestation. The dominated social groups have limited options for questioning the ongoing definition of reality. Domination, in this context, is a matter of "good faith." Misrecognition or false consciousness is not simply imposed on the subordinate groups but is a condition of the actions of the dominant groups. Strategies of cultivating cultural capital and coercion are recognized assets embodied in the idiom of honor that ensures that one has labor when needed and allows transactions in the market without resort to money. In such contexts, the moral obligations crafted and maintained by such behavior are a mode of symbolic violence—unrecognized violence—which conditions the allegiance of subordinates to dominant social groups (Bourdieu 1989).

Pointing out the centrality of "conflict of interests" to any given social field, he stresses that Habitus constitutes an ongoing set of outcomes or probabilities. These outcomes are the product of the actors' strategies or practices. In turn, practices are products of the Habitus, and these same practices serve to reproduce it or establish it as the right way of doing things. Hence we have a process of adjustments and a dialectical relationship between collective history inscribed in objective conditions and the Habitus inscribed in individuals. What individuals learn in their socialization processes are not rule-governed or encultured patterns of behavior but realms of possibilities they can expect from the ongoing result of the dialectic between the dispositions of the Habitus and the constraints and possi-

bilities that are the basis of any given social field (Jenkins 1992; Swartz 1997).

In Bourdieu's view, Habitus is a structured and durable set of dispositions because it becomes impossible to imagine any other ways or horizons of success. Society keeps its status quo going and its social structure functioning because people in it expect it to work as it is, in spite of the fact that some members may express ambivalent feelings of resistance and collaboration toward any given component of the social field. This gap between real (or observed) reality and expected outcomes is often expressed in such constructs as dreams or imagined stories or utopias. Bourdieu has been criticized for assuming an internal process of production and reproduction in the practices of everyday life; however, his notion of strategizing appears to be different from the "encultured" patterns of action (Bohman 1999; Bouvresse 1999; Hammoudi 2000; Margolis 1999; see also Ortner 1995).

The relevance of Bourdieu's view is that when people modify their expectations, others will behave as they have always done in past experiences, room is opened for possibilities, and actors improvise and intervene in their history in meaningful and successful ways. This is exactly what the Haratine seem to be engaged in. They still subscribe to the ongoing social game and values because these are also conditions of their actions and have bearing on whatever outcomes or odds of success they may expect. In this sense, the Haratine draw on the Habitus of the Arabs and Berbers—while consciously breaking away from their own Habitus, which held them from citizenship and political emancipation—and reintroduce acquired practices onto Habitus by investing in land, which forms the foundation of autonomy and honor in the stratified communities of the Ziz Valley.

First, I discuss the geographical setting and social history of the Ziz Valley, with particular attention to the ethnographic present and past of the Haratine. Second, I examine the recent ethnic changes and their implications for shaping local senses of community and reality. Third, I use the villages of Amazdar and Afla, where migration remittance strategies have been utilized by the low-status Haratine group to contest the hegemony and readjust the Habitus maintained by the land-owning nobility of Berbers and Arabs.

The village of Amazdar is one of the sites where I conducted my dissertation fieldwork in 1994 and 1995 on the relationship between ethnicity and agricultural intensification. The Amazdar community is composed of three ethnic groups: Berbers, Arabs, and Haratine. The population of the village is 1,296, making up 193 households: 10% Berber, 8% Shurfa and Murabitin Arabs, and 82% Haratine. The local economy is based on irrigated subsistence agriculture, the tending of dates and olive trees, and livestock raising. Its farming population mainly cultivates barley, wheat, corn, alfalfa, turnips, carrots, fava beans, and various

fruit trees. Rainfed agriculture, or *lbur*, is also practiced in rainy year for growing cereals, particularly wheat and barley in the surrounding hills. The Amazdar village is characterized by land differentials among its ethnic groups. The entire village farming land is 163.5 hectares, 33% Berber, 20% Shurfa and Murabitin Arabs, 22% Haratine, 15% *barani* or outsiders, and 10% mosque or *waqf* (Ilahiane 1996, 1998).

The Geographical Setting and the Past and Present of the Haratine

The Ziz Valley is situated in southeast Morocco, on the edge of the Sahara Desert. Two converging rivers rising out of the Atlas Mountains, the Ziz and the Ghri, sustain the valley's livelihood. Despite the harshness of the climate (aridity and low-pressure sand storms), a microclimate prevails in the oasis, and managed irrigated subsistence farming and shade provided by olive and date palm trees render the environment at the ground level less arid (Ilahiane 1996).

The peoples of the Ziz Valley comprise an ethnically stratified society. The Murabitin and Shurfa Arabs are alleged descendants of the Prophet Mohamed or of revered saints. These families are entitled to certain privileges and immunities. Berber high status derives from their historical military dominance and persistent political power, factors prompting Berber self-perception as a dominant social class. The Haratine are allocated inferior status and are typically responsible for farming labor. Since they did not own land in the past, they worked as sharecroppers for Arabs and Berbers and provided much of the labor for repairing the irrigation infrastructure.

For the sake of simplicity, once the Ait Atta established their control of the Middle Ziz Valley villages or *ksars* in the nineteenth century, these same villages were subjected to the *ahkams* or rules of governance of the Ait Atta confederation. These rules were either transmitted orally, as in the body of customary laws of *azarf*, or often written on camel skin *shrut n-khams khmas*, rules of the five-fifths composing the segmentary lineage organization of the Ait Atta confederation. The political life and administration of the internal affairs of these ksars were and are documented in local legal treatises called *azarf* and *ta'qqit* in Berber and *shurut*, or conditions, in Arabic. While *shurut* implies the conditions set on the conquering groups by the sedentary population, the *ta'qqit* is the result of the conqueror's determination to subject the conquered. The agnatic lineage-based council called *taqbilt* administered Ksar life. The *taqbilt* was composed of *id-bab n-imuran*, or lineage representatives, headed by the Berber *amghar n-tmazirt*, the country or land chief. The *amghar* was elected every year from a different lineage. The *id-bab n-imuren*, meaning the people who own land and shares of protection of the non-Ait Atta groups, were nominated to the council by

the *amghar* but not appointed by the members of their own lineages.

Furthermore, these legal customary treatises suggest that for the Ait Atta, Berbers land tenure was the founding pillar of law and tradition, *azarf*. Land and tree tenure was virtually the decisive vehicle through which the Ait Atta's social organization expressed itself. Exclusion of outsiders was the chief operational element of the Ait Atta's construction of property, and the keepers of *azarf* guarded the perpetuation of *tamazirt* or patrimony. Someone other than a member of the Ait Atta and the holy Arab lineages could never acquire land in the Ait Atta land, particularly the Haratine. The concept of *shafa'a*, or preemption, for instance, was and is still mobilized to block land transfers from Berber lineages to non-Ait Atta groups. For the Ait Atta, land tenure refers to *al-asl*, or origin and ancestry; in other words, origin, social structure, and identity were and are writ large in property (De Monts de Savasse 1951; Dunn 1977; Gellner 1969; Hammoudi 1974; Hart 1981, 1984; Ilahiane 1996, 1998; Mezzine 1987). In *ksar al-Gara*, in the nineteenth century, for example, it was prohibited to sell or transfer land to the Haratine, and such acts, if they happened, would result in severe financial fines to the buyer, the seller and his lineage, and the land chief under whom the land transaction took place (see also Mezzine 1987).

Historically, in the valley's chain of ethnic stratification, the Arabs and the Berbers classify the racial and social status of the Haratine along at least five attributes: (1) a skin color attribute, *ahardan*, implying black and not worthy of respect; (2) a landless attribute, people of no *al-asl*, denoting lack of ancestry and shamelessness; (3) an obtuseness attribute, *ighyal*, meaning short of intelligence "like donkeys" and infantile; (4) a patronage attribute, *ait-tmurt*, or "our people" indicating the Haratine client status; and (5) a labor attribute, *akhmmas*, sharecropper, naming any Hartani (pl. Haratine) working on the lands of the people of *al-asl* in exchange for one-fifth of the harvest. In *siba* or dissidence times, they were also deemed to be "like women" and not permitted to wear white turbans, the symbol of Ait Atta and holy Arab manhood. They were prohibited from participation in village councils of the Ait Atta, denied arms, and sometimes used as shooting targets for any Ait Atta member who wished to test his new gun (Hart 1981; Jacques-Meunié 1958).¹

In 1912, the colonial administration was officially exercised through a partition of Morocco into a Spanish and French zone of control. The southern zone came under French military control, although Berber and Arab resistance followed there until 1936. By the turn of the century, the Tafilalt area, located at the tail end of the Ziz Valley, was not only the agricultural and trade center of the region but also represented a formidable capital of Morocco rivaling Fez and Marrakech. It was an armament bazaar for the surrounding nomads and sedentary communities as well as

a refuge for the rebellious elements attacking the French along the Moroccan-Algerian border and pillaging much of the declining Saharan caravan trade. With Tafilalt plunged in political and tribal strife during the first three decades of the twentieth century and the Caliphate of the Sultan, Moulay Mehdi, tired of being abused and tired of anarchy, desperately pleaded with “*al-kalb* or the dog,” meaning the French colonial power (*al-isti'mar*), to step in and restore order and dignity to Tafilalt. Many informants believe that Moulay Mehdi was “tired of paying heavy fines imposed on him by foreign powers whose traders and caravans were jumped all the time by Berber and Arab nomads and the sedentary road extortionists or cutters” (Ilahiane 1998).

For the French, however, the occupation of Tafilalt would deliver the last of the three major Moroccan capitals that would, of course, send vibrations across Morocco and thus boost their prestige. To establish order and the rule of law, they had to eliminate the sedentary dissident villages as well as the nomadic Berber and Arab tribes gravitating toward Tafilalt. The occupation of Tafilalt was seen as the first act in a theatrical drama that would open the door to the intractable areas of Jbel Saghro and the High Atlas. In reducing the Tafilalt and the Ait Atta Berbers of Jbel Saghro, the French would rejoin the Atlas mountain communities to the already pacified territories and tribes of Daddes and Dra'a ruled by the French collaborator T'hami El Glaoui, Pasha of Marrakech. In 1917, the French would give in to the Caliphate's request for military help to maintain his authority and suppress the rise of “fanatic” religious groups and the never-stopping intertribal nomadic pillaging of the sedentary villages. *Harkas*, or armed movements, however, were organized to chase *irumiyn*, or Christians, from the region (Ilahiane 1998).

By 1932, after several fierce battles, the French established the new military district of the Tafilalet region and imposed a series of administrative and tribal rural communes, (*caidats*) throughout the Ziz Valley. Furthermore, the French elaborated a political strategy of rewarding and favoring the indigenous power holders in the new administrative system, therefore privileging the power position of Arab and Berber notables. These gestures toward the notables compromised the precarious social status of the subordinate group of the Haratine (Ilahiane 1998). At any rate, this state of affairs led to the integration of the Tafilalet region into the Moroccan state and into the international flows of labor, first across the Moroccan-Algerian border and later to the Metropole. Ever since the French control of the Moroccan territory, people from the Ziz Valley have been migrating to Moroccan urban towns, French Algeria, and from the 1940s to 1970s, to France, Germany, and Holland. Many Haratine found seasonal farm work in Moroccan and Algerian boomtowns and were also “recruited” as *corvée* and wage labor, including work on roads and other development schemes, throughout the region. While

the French might have opened the door for labor opportunities outside of the Ziz Valley region, their colonial policies privileged the Berbers and the Arabs over the Haratine in southern Morocco. After independence, these discriminatory policies lapsed, but the colonial structure was largely perpetuated. Not until 1962, when the first post-colonial constitution of the Kingdom of Morocco went into practice, could the Haratine be eligible for the same civil rights that other social groups have enjoyed for so long (Ilahiane 1998).

Despite their low social status and marginality in the Ziz Valley, the Haratine slowly rejected the old ties of traditional society and welcomed the opportunity to migrate. Because the Haratine were landless and were not allowed to have the means to acquire private land, a large number of them migrated in search of seasonal and annual work, first in French Algeria and the interior of Morocco, and later in Europe. The integration of the Haratine into the colonial system has had radical implications on the transformation of traditional relations between sharecroppers and landowners. The transition of the Haratine from the precolonial society is not the result of the internal mechanism of the local social system but the result of the unplanned consequences of the colonial and postcolonial policies that facilitated the means of communication and free movement. This transition from prehistory or no history at all to history making was also made easier by the slow replacement of old tribal systems of governance by the French colonial and postcolonial administration (Ilahiane 1998).

These reforms allowed most of the Haratine to escape the old patron-client ties of sharecropping and ignited their desire to migrate outside the walled corporate communities of the oasis in search of seasonal and annual wage labor opportunities. These reforms led to two major events in the valley: the first is that the entire region was integrated into national and international labor markets, and the second is that the pull of wage labor made emigration a highly attractive option for the Haratine when compared with the exploitative labor inputs of sharecropping in the valley. For instance, an earlier study on the impact of the Hassan Ad-dakhil Dam on the valley's ecology by Toutain (1982:80) indicates that seasonal migration increased by 330%, long-term migration by 115%, and the number of able-bodied men joining the army reached 330% between 1970 and 1977. Additionally, the analysis of my surveyed sample indicates that 58.80% of the able-bodied male members of households practiced seasonal migration between village and city while 41.20% practices an annual pattern of migration, in particular to France (Ilahiane 1998).

Though a few Berbers and Arabs have also migrated, they have adopted Western consumption patterns, thereby taxing their participation in land investments. What is interesting, however, is the fact that the Haratine are using their new wealth to short circuit the traditional barriers of

access to resources and appropriate what is inherently a Berber cultural concept, *al-asl*, to construct an empowered identity and produce a Hartani idiom of kinship and sense of community. These factors, I argue, motivate their investment drive and strategies. In fact, it seems that the Haratine's strategy to amass land and the latent determination "to oust the old masters"—the focus of this paper—could only be understood in connection with remittances from Europe.

It also appears that the Haratine's cultural appropriation of the Berber concept of *al-asl* provides them with a multiplicity of cultural and power bases to challenge the traditional cultural hegemony of the Berbers and the Arabs. Migration outside the oppressive conditions of the walled corporate communities of the oasis has been critical for the Haratine's transition from the precolonial period of "the people without history" to the people with history. When questioned as to why they invest their remittances in land, the Haratine respond that "*tubat al-walidin* or the ancestral adobe brick keeps them coming back" (Ilahiane 1998). Access to land "breeds" empowerment, identity, roots, and origin, *al-asl*. Without land one has no rights to speak of, and one is "like a walking donkey," and "your value or *qimtak* is not even zero in the eyes of the community" (see Figure 1).

Figure 1 shows the evolution of land tenure figures among the ethnic groups of the Amazdar village over the period of 11 years. It reveals the fact that the Haratine have been accumulating land while the other groups have been slowly selling it. When compared with the other groups, the Haratine had 41.60 ha in 1995 against 35.00 ha in 1984, whereas the Arabs had 35.00 ha in 1984 and 27.70 ha in 1995 and the Berbers had 52.20 ha and 51.80 ha, respectively. The incidence of land sales appears to have a higher frequency among the Arabs, and it is relatively low among the Berbers. Outsiders have also increased their land purchases, from 12.25 ha in 1984 to 16.50 ha in 1995. The

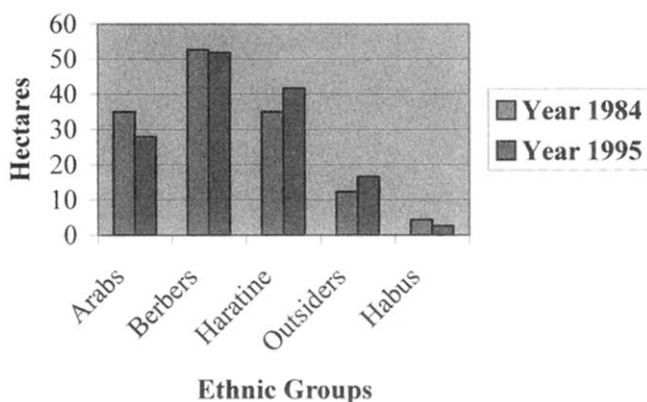


Figure 1. Land Tenure in the Amazdar Village, 1984–1995. Source: Ilahiane (1998:317).

analysis of the village record of land tenure or *kunnash taqvim al-mulk* indicates that around 65% of the outsiders are Haratine from neighboring villages along the valley. While the Berbers, and more particularly the Arabs, seem to be willing to sell land, the Haratine figures underscore the fact they are the buyers of land. The *habous* land, however, shows a slight increase in its accumulation, and this is perhaps due to the prevailing feeling that such donations might benefit the village, if given to the poor (Ilahiane 1998; see also Ilahiane and Park 2001).

Another cultural factor or motivation is the satisfaction the Haratine obtain from notoriety and gaining status. Having access to land is associated with having and establishing origin, or *al-asl*. In precolonial Morocco, particularly in most of the Saharan valleys, political representation in the ethnic council, or *taqbilt*, rested on the landed lineages. Since the Haratine were landless and sharecroppers, their political participation in the ethnic council could only be possible through land ownership. The Haratine are not born with rights in the Ziz Valley; equal rights and full citizenship in the community are acquired by having access to land and representation.

As a result of these investment strategies, the Haratine have moved from the stage of absolute sharecropping to a stage where they negotiate the terms of sharecropping. These terms have evolved from the one-fifth share to the one-half system to a full-fledged choice of land rental and purchase, or migration. Toutain (1982), for instance, noted that the number of sharecroppers has decreased by 36% between 1970 and 1977, while another study by ORMVAT (Office Régional de Mise en Valeur Agricole 1987) reported the increase of nonagricultural work by 20% between 1965 and 1980. Within the surveyed sample of the 61 households I conducted in 1994 and 1995, the analysis revealed the absence of the one-fifth system and the rise of the system of land rental among the Haratine with a percentage of 15.66%, while only 4.60% of the total parcels are under the one-half system of production, of which 4.28% is under Haratine control (Ilahiane 1998).

These changes have transformed the ethno-political structure of the villages. Although the Haratine have challenged the traditional order and have become wealthy, they have never left the village. In fact, they keep coming back to buy land and to assert their presence among the traditional declining Arab and Berber elites. Consequently, the local ethnic or lineage-based council has had to accommodate the rise of Haratine economic power. The continuous flows of remittances in combination with an increased portfolio of land have gained them political representation in the ethnic council, a council that was closed to the Haratine until the 1950s. Over the last two decades, they have been influential in local political decision-making. These changes, however, have not gone unnoticed by the traditional power holders, the Arabs and the Berbers. They are dreading the social mobility of the Haratine and regret not

having migrated to Europe while the door of migration was open to all people in the late 1940s and early 1960s.

The remittances have certainly facilitated the Haratine drive to rework the underlying practices of *Habitus* and hence attain equality and social mobility within the stratified communities of the southern oases of Morocco. In essence, these economic and political changes have prompted the mobilization of latent ethnic consciousness and the creation of new traditions among the Haratine. The appeal to a Haratine ethnic consciousness and status change creates a space for mutual aid. Because most of the Haratine are still poor, and because most of them have not equally benefited from the same remittances revenue streams, the most fortunate ones have, for instance, established a burial fund in the Amazdar village.

The fund is a recent institution and came to existence in 1983. Because some members of the Haratine ethnic group cannot offset the expenses associated with the religious ceremony and guests, the fund underwrites most of these fees. The fees usually cover the purchase of food, the expenses of the religious ceremony, and the material for the digging of the grave. Most Haratine, in particular those who are really poor, do not have enough room in their houses for the ceremony. Even furniture and cooking utensils are borrowed from the fund at no charge to accommodate the guests. Every Haratine household is required to contribute to the fund in cash or in kind, and the fund has a manager who sees to it that every Haratine has given his or her share. The collection of contributions, in cash or in kind, takes place at date, olive, and cereal harvests because “at this time no one can hide from his obligations to the fund.”

When asked about the fund institution, its manager said, “despite the fact that some of us [Haratine] have done well, most of us are still struggling and remain as the poor of God. And we can only get out of debt from others [Arabs and Berbers] through the fund.” The unvoiced and central issue is the fact that the Haratine now do not die in debt, and they do not leave unpaid debts for their children who, in turn, will be held to old expectations and social obligations by Arabs and Berbers. “What we are all doing here is hunting for ways of establishing our independence of the old ties of the past,” a young Haratine adult said with pride.

Because of these changes, status and ethnic identity as a Haratine has developed as an idiom for cementing kinship relationships and leadership, responsible for the regulation of conflict and tensions in the community. The Haratine status, then, is rooted in the processes of social and political mobilization involving a collective act to enhance access to resources and thereby to ameliorate the standing of their community within the system of social stratification. This mobilization is performed through the ethnic solidarity of marriage alliances among the well-to-do and poor families, shared expenses for communal ceremonies such as circumcisions, weddings and funerals, and certain fictive

lineage conventions as in referring to any Haratine as “*ben 'ami*,” or my cousin, versus the others; “us” and “them” discourse is becoming an everyday convention.

What becomes clear is that the process of creating identities is historically and regionally specific. This historical construction of identity and status among the Haratine is only possible when worked within larger cultural frames. In addition to the creation of their own sense of tradition that the process involves, the Haratinization process of the means of production has succeeded in the sense that it “moves” particular aspects in their shared historical experiences—a shared history of subordination that touched them all. The Haratine, in this sense, are creating and rearranging older elements to “elucidate the empowered production of identities” (Comaroff and Comaroff 1992). For instance, the *takhmast*, or sharecropping institution, is no longer a matter of good faith between the owners and the landless, but it is subject to intensive negotiations and terms of work. Tree sharecropping also has evolved from the one-tenth share to the one-sixth. “In the old days before *Francis* [the French] and this thing they call democracy, they [Haratine] followed the way things were; they listened and did not question the nature of things. But these days, they even have the face to look you in the eye and dictate what they can or cannot do. This is the end of the world as we know it when the Haratine get to have the word and make rules. *Allah in'al had zman* [May God damn these times],” said an old Arab of holy lineage in a nostalgic way.

Although the Haratine have been successful in acquiring land and creating their own version of collectivism, they still run into difficulty at a number of levels. These socio-economic and political changes sweeping the valley are, however, silently resisted by the declining traditional nobility, a nobility forced to “eat its fields” and *al-asl*, one by one, to meet its subsistence and “ceremonial” fund and to face up to the new demands of the changing community. The struggle of the declining elites with the improvement of the Haratine’s social, political, and economic status involves various hidden and voiced forms of social struggle over the ever-changing senses of the community. Recent modifications, for example, brought upon methods of assessing agricultural production as well as evaluating household labor obligations for the maintenance of the irrigation system by the village council demonstrate the village’s lukewarm reaction to Haratine upward mobility and access to land. In this new system, it appears that the Berbers and the Arabs would still want to mobilize Haratine labor for most of the upkeep of the irrigation infrastructure at traditional levels. Their claims on Haratine labor are increasingly resisted, and if their increased output were to be interpreted as a legal right to demand correspondingly increased levels of labor, it might cause insuperable social problems (see Ilahiane and Park 2001).

The Ziz Valley's Changing Senses of Community²

In fact, with the infusion of remittances leading to the rise of the Haratine's socioeconomic status and the slow decline of the old nobility of the Arabs and the Berbers, the old spatially bound and coherent villages are cut by competing discourses and ideologies on how the community was and is: each ethnic group sees itself as a collection of people that has to defend its interests in the face of the perceived threat from the others, and each ethnic group is well versed in how its sense of community was and is, and how all these changes are either a menace to the common good or a healthy step for the betterment of the lot of the other people.

These competing voices, although framed and conjugated in the third person for the sake of not wanting to alienate and isolate the others, are highly sensitive in their accounts of the past and the present events of the valley villages. Because no group wishes to be overtly isolated and because members of the community meet five times a day in the village mosque, and also because the agricultural bases of the village still require communal labor for the upkeep of the irrigation system, tensions are kept under a more or less manageable level, at least in the public discourse arena. However, the private or "hidden transcripts" about the negative and positive changes that members of the community have witnessed are different (Scott 1990). They exude with mixed opinions and feelings about the old glorious days of the Arabs and the Berbers and the better and much improved present and future times of the Haratine.

Within the incessant intrusion of government services into the area lies its central objective of eliminating, if not liquidating, the tribal system of social organization. The administrative reforms begun with the French and intensified after independence left several marks on the locals. Of all these reforms the locals are quick to pinpoint the flawed nature of the elections that came with the new establishment of rural communes or counties bringing a large share of village-based governance under the eye of the government and its agencies (particularly since 1962). Put simply, this was done by electing local representatives from villages, and these elected officials formed the governing body of the Rural Commune under the leadership of the District's Parliament Representative. The old tribal council that governed the village found itself representing the government, and its local authority was limited to the communal arrangements of irrigation and the olive oil press. The intrusion of governmental policies is striking to the point that decisions of when to harvest dates and olives, for instance, once the internal business of the council, are now superseded by gubernatorial memos fixing the dates of harvest in the entire province.

Although the mosque was under the umbrella of local governance, the government agency of religious affairs has

now taken that responsibility. The old mechanisms of conflict resolution have found their way into the provincial courts. The postcolonial administrative policy of integrating every inch of Moroccan soil into the national territorial unity has succeeded in eroding major aspects of local forms of governance. As a result, it appears that political parties, in particular the color of their voting cards since most of the population is illiterate, matter more than the local politics of ethnic management of religious life and the means of production. Since the late 1970s, the rural election campaigns have actually divided the population of the valley along political parties and ideologies, and even exacerbated ethnic tensions at the village level by creating "vote banks" where electoral voting proceeds along the logic of "ambivalent" ethnic boundaries: "we are the people of this or that and we vote for so and so because he is one of us." In fact, given the Haratine's remittances, involvement in politics, and higher household size, Arabs and Berbers see the election process based on the one-man-one-vote principle as flawed. They insist that the old system of the people or land of origin ought to be the basis for electing the leaders, and elections should not be driven by the "rabbitlike" breeding behavior of the Haratine.

Since independence, the transformations in the social status of the Haratine have gone unabated. The Moroccan reforms of the postcolonial political culture, in particular the new constitution of 1962 and the refurbishment of the administrative universe of rural Morocco, have voiced the cultural ideal of equality of all Moroccans before the law. Similarly, internal and external wage labor opportunities have provided the sharecropping Haratine many ways in which they could evade the old patron-client relationships of the landed nobility. Hart (1984) rightly noted the upward social mobility of some Haratine households after independence in 1956. Provided that racism and exclusion of the Haratine were the building blocks of the sociopolitical culture of southern Morocco, Hart predicted the changing socioeconomic position of the Haratine would lead to all sorts of conflict with the declining nobility. Some of these predictions have materialized as migration remittances and have fueled the Haratine's drive to expropriate from the old landed nobility its claims to origin, or *al-asl*, *awal*, or the word, and bases of political power—land (for comparative views on the Haratine see Dwyer 1982; Ensel 1999; Pandolfo 1997).

Let's consider Yidir's Berber narrative. Yidir is 72 years old, a Vietnam veteran, and a retired irrigation guard, and still receives a pension from the Ministry of Agriculture and Agrarian Reform. He joined the French Army in 1951 and "got shipped" to Saigon in May 1952; he went from Sefrou across the Algerian-Moroccan border to Oran, then on board the SS *Athos* to Saigon, Indo-China. He served in Vietnam for two years, witnessing the early Vietnamese revolt against the French, and returned to Morocco in 1954. "All the Vietnamese need is wheat and dates; they

have everything and it is always summer over there” he said with the pride of a legionnaire. He is credited with being the first person to bring coffee and to introduce the bicycle to the Amazdar village.

When asked about all the social transformations he has lived through, he is quick to lament the erosion of the old tribal system of governance when the Berber and the Arab word carried weight, and the way this word was backed by force if not implemented. For him, the village has fallen into an unruly state in which the Haratine have come “to say their words on its management, and this fact has even speeded the total erosion of *qanun*, or law, and gave way to *huriya*, or freedom. Most of the people who think they are democratic or free have no idea of what it is” (see also Ashford 1961; Gellner 1957; Lewis 1960).

Yidir illustrates the demise of old good justice and law, as well as the old community where law and order prevailed, with examples of the Haratine’s defiance of the village’s mechanisms of keeping order. “In the old days, and even under the French, when a thief is caught he paid his dues in the village and paid his fine either in kind or in jail. These days, offenders have no respect of law and have found ways of getting out of their penalties,” he says with a nostalgic manner and longing for the old French days and Berber mode of governance. He decries the fact that most of the Haratine, because of the intervention of the local representative at the Rural Commune level and because they voted for him, always get out of their duties to the village, and he argues that this is a corrupt way of holding people responsible for their actions. “You cannot trust the Haratine, they have large families and few fields or none at all, and yet they manage to have some livestock. People wonder how they feed their livestock and the answer is that theft is rampant everywhere, and even your sharecropper would steal from you. There is no respect, and no shame anymore, and all I do is expose the ugly changes of time,” he says with a strong and disciplined attitude.

When asked again about his military service, he quickly produces his *Liveret Militaire*, or Military Card, although it takes him some time to locate it since he is illiterate. Illiterate he is, but street and world smart, he says. He remembers his military service with fondness and appreciates its hard work and strict ethics. He is also fond of Général Charles de Gaulle. “He was a real man, a great man, and he embodied discipline and a great sense of achievement unlike the people I am surrounded by here who cheat and who are corrupt.” Yidir is decisive in his judgment about the recent changes in the village and the larger society, and some villagers attribute much of his vocal attitude toward the Haratine and the rest of society as an indication of an old man who likes to impose his worldview on his household as well as his neighbors. Some think he is bitter, or even crazy, because the times have not been kind to him and his sons left him because of his “military interventions” in their lives. Others believe that his point of view

must be seen as a generational gap: he lived under the French and the Moroccan systems, and he saw the rise of the Haratine as an antithesis to the tenets of the old Berber regime of *lahkam*, or law, and *lma’qul*, or reasonable behavior. The Haratine, in this sense, bring upon the community disorder and irrational attitudes of corruption and shame.

Yidir is not alone in his positions. Other Berbers and Arabs share much of his analysis of the causes behind the erosion of the village’s old communal traditions. Similar attitudes rise to the surface, particularly in times of elections. Eight years ago, the village of Amazdar had only three olive oil presses: the communal press of the tribal council and two private presses owned by a Berber and an Arab. During the elections, the Berber owner of one of the presses was running for public office to represent the village at the Rural Commune level; he lost mostly because his Haratine workers switched sides and voted for the Haratine candidate. Upon his defeat, the Berber fired his workers and told them “that for next year’s olive harvest they should look for work with the man that they elected [the Haratine].” When the Haratine representative heard these statements, he built an olive oil press to hire those to whom the Berber promised unemployment for next year.

The crucial issue that seems to fluster Berbers and Arabs about the way the elections are run is the fact that voting should not be universal, and “real” voting should be tied to the amount of land each lineage owns. For Berbers and Arabs alike, “the villages of the Ziz Valley have become more Haratinized—everywhere you look there are too many of them. The Ziz Valley is becoming another Somalia.” The Somalia images are tied to the images on television that villagers saw during Operation Restore Hope undertaken by the American military under the auspices of the United Nations in Somalia. The images they saw were images of poor black children and families, and those images were used by Berber and Arab youth to refer to the Haratine while inserting a joke here and there about when their visas of stay in Morocco are over, and inquiring if they had packed up their belongings and when they will be making the trek back home to black Africa.

From the Arab side, Mulay is 67 years old and considered a holy Arab as well as a very well-to-do household head. He owns an olive oil press and has almost 3.5 ha of land. While Yidir combines a transnational and a local view on the village and its social environment, Mulay is in many ways fortunate for having led a local and regional life since his birth. Mulay, given his holy status and the respect he gets for being a descendent of the Prophet’s line, wishes to distinguish himself and his oil press from the other three local ones: the communal, Haratine, and Berber presses. He concedes that there is competition among the three olive oil presses; true enough, for people who choose not to press their olives at the communal press put them in

one of the three private ones following more or less an ethnic or lineage-related means of selection.

Mulay states that his press workers are serious and very experienced, and do know how to press oil out of olives. He insists that I take note of how clean the process is and how the press workers use a plastic sheet when they transport crushed olives to the press. Unlike the other presses where they usually would pick the fallen bunches of olives mixed with dirt; his press is cleaner and yields more oil for every batch of olives.

As for his reflections on the changes that he has observed over his life span, he says that the villages of the valley are becoming black. The number of blacks surpasses that of the Arabs and Berbers combined. Their sheer number has been boosted by French remittances, hard work, and the determination to buy as much land as they can and to enter the realm of politics from a position of strength. "As you can see by your own eyes and hear by your own ears, the present president of the Rural Commune is a black man, and elections have become a black affair" he said in a low voice.

In the old days of the tribal council, the village agreed on representatives from the Arab and the Berber dominant lineages, and "if you got it, you got it." Now the number of blacks has increased and things have changed. Credible people lose because of their small number, not because of their standing, honor, and wealth in the community. The Haratine were never full members of the local council; they made their entrance to the council only as waiters during the social functions or gatherings of the council. The Berbers and the Arabs made the decisions, and the Haratine carried them out just like everybody else in the village. "They entered the council because of the Berber belief in democratic representation and because some of the Berbers did not want to deprive them of the right of membership in the council, and that is a big mistake according to some," Mulay said.

Things have changed, and the *blad* or village is not the same. Mulay relayed the following story to illustrate his analysis of social transformations in the village. He told me that a French colonial officer was on a duty tour in the village in the late forties, accompanied by the village *moqaddam*, or village head. Upon his tour, the French officer noticed a group of well-dressed and shaved people sitting on a bench in front of the village gate and inquired about what they did for a living. The village head answered that those people have black sharecroppers and do not work. "Well," said the French official, and they continued their inspection tour into the palm grove. While walking through the palm grove, they ran into a Haratine man with a load of alfalfa on one shoulder and a pick on the other, shabbily dressed, with pants hardly reaching his knees. The French turned to the Berber village head and said to him "These sharecroppers will take over this valley one of these days. Hard work pays off." This story is a popular tale among the Arabs and

the Berbers. Mulay adds that the French prediction is now coming true.

Furthermore, while the Haratine have been buying land year after year, the Arabs and the Berbers who could not work or do not have *dra'* (muscle power) either borrowed money and put up their land as collateral or started selling it piece by piece to satisfy their subsistence and market requirements. The option of going overseas was not honorable, and one went overseas only if he had nothing or did not own "a foot of land to his name." It was shameful to go overseas for work, and only the Haratine could do that since they had no honor to lose. However, only a few Arabs and Berbers went to Europe. Because of these internal and external migration opportunities, the Haratine have been successful in dismantling the old one-fifth sharecropping regime and replacing it by the one-half system. Given also the old-age and nuclear family properties of almost all Arab and Berber households as well as the loss of their able-bodied adult males to schooling, government services, and the army, Mulay says they do not have a choice but to accept the one-half system of land exploitation, and "you are lucky if you get that complete one-half," he says in an ironic voice.

The lack of supervision of the work of the Haratine, and the ineffectiveness of local mechanisms of guarding the palm grove has led to an explosion of theft in private fields as well as on the communal banks of the river and the major irrigation canals. The inclusion of the Haratine in the local council and their success in influencing the elections has led to the deterioration of the management of the irrigation infrastructure. Their representative on the council, Mulay insists, has made a career of letting Haratine offenders "get off the hook." The execution of justice has been suspended, and justice has gone blind in the village since the Haratine have entered the council body. Letting people function outside the rule of law has led some Haratine members to defy the normal rule of sanctioning offenders who steal produce or irrigation turns from their fellow villagers.

"It is a way for them to rebel against the past, and they do it by showing no respect even to the elders and by obstructing and walking over the community's traditional rules of maintaining law and order in the palm grove," Mulay adds. As a result, people who used to grow vegetables refrain from doing so because the Haratine would not leave them alone; it is a lawless place. In the old days, anyone getting a notice from the Mayor or a scolding from the village head would sweat from head to toe, an indicator of how the power of the execution of justice was robust and effective. "These days, there is too much freedom for people who do not deserve it. Freedom is an understanding and an education, and in no way does it compel some members of the village to turn the laws of the community upside down. Today, the sheep and the wolf are hanging out and grazing together. Rules engraved in a long tradition are

meaningless to the Haratine, and they want to do what they like regardless of the interest of the others. Although not all the Haratine have access to migration remittances, they have been educated to view the Arabs and the Berbers as their old masters that should be questioned and resisted," Mulay says.

While the Berber and Arab accounts of the past and the present are mired in deep nostalgia for the old order when they ruled the village with an iron fist, the Haratine narrative, though anchored in the events of the past, tends to paint a bright present and future featuring the process they are now undergoing in building their own sense of community, including a sense of belonging on an equal basis with the other ethnic groups.

The Haratine narratives of the past are full of references to the hard life and suffering they underwent under the old masters of the valley and French colonial policies. Lhaj is a 75-year-old Haratine and a former sharecropper. He made the *haj*, or pilgrimage, to Mecca, and that event affected him, particularly in terms of how people should deal with each other. In Mecca, he said with a sense of religious steadfastness, "we were all in the same light dress, and we were all equal in front of God." Lhaj is one of those who made the transition from landlessness and basket making to the higher status associated with land acquisition and pilgrimage. He was a sharecropper, and now he has a sharecropper, as he likes to say. This transformation has been made easier with the flow of French Francs and all sorts of hard work and crafts. As a young adult in the company of his brother, there was hardly anything they did not do or try, from work in the mines or harvesting flood recession wheat in the Rissani area in spring to harvesting wheat in summer in the Middle Atlas Mountains. They also were the masters of adobe construction (*al-lluh*) through the valley as well as in the Middle Atlas area.

In terms of social relations with the other ethnic groups, he spoke of *daght*, or oppression. The Haratine did all the irrigation and agricultural work, and they were paid one kilogram of wheat or corn to take to their children. When they worked as sharecroppers, they were exploited. For the one-fifth of production they got for their labor, the sharecropper had to work the fields in exchange with other sharecroppers. Before tilling the fields, the sharecropper's wife obtained five or six kilograms of wheat from the owner to clean, grind, and bake a loaf for each worker in the labor party, or *twiza*. The owner provided only a dish of meat and stew. The Haratine were pressured to work and were exploited, and the elders of the masters in concert with the Berber mayor and other French collaborators made them work almost naked on an annual basis. "I remember with vividness, just as if it happened yesterday or earlier this morning, during one of the major floods of early fall and late winter [1965–1966], the guard of the irrigation system made us work almost naked, and the only thing we ate was a piece of bread tucked under or around

our waists: your hands worked, your back was bent, and your forehead sweated as you labored in five-meter deep irrigation canals from the rising star to the evening star," he said, shaking his head and repeating over and over that those were days of pressure and oppression.

Lhaj adds that in the aftermath of the devastating floods of 1965, he and other Haratine had to clear and rebuild the damaged irrigation infrastructure. While fixing the canals, they slept in the palm grove. He said that the village council notified the Haratine that they had to show up for work. If one failed to show up, the fines were very stiff and beyond the means of the Haratine. In those days, "Justice was absent, and it was all pressure, pressure, and pressure."

While the French days are somewhat cherished by Arabs and Berbers alike, the Haratine see the French as conspiring with the old nobility to keep them oppressed. Lhaj said that the Haratine were caught between the French, on one side, and the Arabs and the Berbers, on the other. Even during the *jihad*, or holy war, against the earlier inroads of the French Protectorate, the Haratine were not allowed to bear arms, and their role in the *jihad* was limited to transporting ammunition and food on donkeys and mules for the Berber and Arab holy warriors. This situation was even worse during the days of dissidence when the Haratine were tied to their masters through clientele relations. At that time, also, they could not move freely from the village for the fear that labor hunters might raid them. As the saying goes, "not every white camel is full of fat," meaning that white men were not kind to the Haratine in the past. With this saying Lhaj summed up his recollection of the Haratine and Arab and Berber relations.

In the colonial days, other Haratine reported, there was plenty of scarcity and no justice. Nowadays, there is almost too much of everything to eat and wear, and there is also justice, particularly since independence. Under the French, the Haratine were compelled to enroll in *corvée* labor for the construction of public works such as roads. They were also obliged to catch birds and destroy their eggs so that the yield of wheat would be saved from their beaks. Should they disobey these orders, they were subject to jail sentences ranging from one to three months. When sentence was pronounced, the French District Officer in charge of indigenous affairs would usually shorten the prison time, but the Berber mayor made it his business to keep the sentence as it was, and he always won.

In spite of the progress that the Haratine have made in shaping their new sense of community and equality vis-à-vis the old nobility of the valley, they still face resistance in some villages, where they are denied and prestige political participation in the management of local resources. Berber and Arab community members compare and contrast villages where power has been shared with the Haratine with those where it has not; for most villagers such power sharing is a shameful situation. In the village of Afla, for instance, an old Berber woman told me that her village is much

better than the one I was raised in because in hers the Haratine are not allowed to govern. In her village, the council would not allow the entrance of the Haratine into the decision-making council, even if they owned land. The council would not incorporate non-Berbers. The Haratine “cannot say a word about how to run the *blad*.” In order to impress the anthropologist and lecture him about the effectiveness of ethnic solidarity that his village seems to have lost a long time ago, she related the following story.

In the 1980s, during the provincial parliamentary elections in which there were two candidates, one Arab and the other Haratine, the Berbers supported the Arab candidate while the Haratine voted for the Haratine. Before the vote count, the Berbers started celebrating the not-yet-sure results of the elections. Later, however, they were surprised when the Haratine candidate actually won. As a result, the Haratine took to the village streets to vent their joy and started singing a song in which they were telling the Berbers “go, you flies to sleep, our man and candidate won.” The next morning, the Berber men and women gathered and agreed to boycott Haratine labor. The Haratine were instructed not to work the Berber fields, not to gather grass in the palm grove and on the riverbanks, not to fetch deadwood from the fields, and not to pick up olives and dates. Essentially, the Haratine sharecroppers found themselves unemployed overnight, and their labor arrangements were eliminated. Furthermore, when the Haratine were encountered throughout the palm grove, they were questioned as to the reasons that brought them to that part of the grove, and they were reminded that the fields and trees that been feeding them for generations were not the property of the Haratine candidate they supported.

Since almost all the village Haratine depended on the Berber fields for subsistence, the Haratine were “squeezed” and sought the good offices of a holy man in the next village to mediate the conflict between them and the Berbers. On his way to the Afla village, the holy man fell into an irrigation ditch; he took this mishap as a bad omen, or *ukhazit*, and returned to his village, leaving the Haratine on their own. The Haratine would, in the end, sacrifice a sheep in honor of the elders of the Berbers and ask for forgiveness, to iron out the problem. In granting forgiveness, the Berbers accepted the sacrifice. “We are not like your village [Amazdar]; you have let the Haratine represent you and ride all over you,” the old Berber woman said in a forceful way. I tried to convince her that the times are no longer the same and that democratic representation principles are similar to what the Koran advises, but she refused the logic of one-man-one-vote, although she agreed with the Hadith of the Prophet Mohamed that states that there is no difference between people except in their deeds in this life and in the Day of Judgment before God. To my arguments, she held her hand closer to my face and said in Berber “no, go, go. There is nothing like that. You have lost, and we don’t

allow the Haratine in the elders’ council. We decide, and they carry out the decisions.”

Discussion

Under these transformative circumstances, the bounded physical morphology of the old village has evolved into a continuous spatial organization, although it still constitutes an administrative framework in which communal functions are performed (see Bisson and Jarir 1986; Hammoudi 1970; Mennenson 1965; Naciri 1986; Pascon 1968). The old meeting place of the people and the council has given way to multiple places of gathering and decision making that seem to follow a religious pattern or agricultural cycles. The meetings of the council are held in the homes of the members of the council instead of the old council room found at the gate of the village. Most of the communal functions dealing with the management of the palm grove are announced in the mosque or in central places like the olive oil press or in the threshing fields depending on what crop is in season. These village decisions, as well as the sale or distribution of village land for housing, constitute the core of the ethnic council business.

Defense and the management of the mosque and its land and trees are now in the hands of the specialized agencies of the government. Despite the erosion of the corporate functions of the village, the decay of its built form, and the expansion of housing outside its old ramparts, the village, for the most part, has kept many aspects of the past: a social organization in which the performance of agriculture and its irrigation infrastructure mandates a certain level of corporate cooperation. This situation is succinctly captured by the answer I got to a question on the nature of cooperation among villagers from a Berber farmer who said, “the village is ethnically heterogeneous, and all we share is the irrigation canals and the mosque space for prayers.”

The village is not only a corporate community with its legal, economic, and social frameworks but also the arena for political rivalry and status differentiation among its groups and members. As the accounts above—along with the references made to the past and present issues facing different ethnic groups and their standing for and resistance to the tenets of social stratification of the past—show: “we will oust the old patrons” or “the Haratine must leave and regain their black brothers in Black Africa” (Ilahiane 1998). Statements declaring that the Haratine are not fit to vote despite their recent accumulation of land, that only the old landed groups should be involved in the process, and that the Haratine must not be betrothed to carry out the community “word” indicate that status and social mobility are not achieved through financial success in the framework of the village, at least for the Haratine.

The point I wish to emphasize here is that the village is part of a larger society, and that what happens outside the village shapes the village community, and eventually

becomes an active and constituent ingredient for social change. The Haratine struggle, and their hard work against the old system in which they were not allowed to have access to land, were matters worked out within the structural framework of the village. Only with the advent of the colonial policies that provided peace, order, and labor opportunities within and outside Morocco could the Haratine begin their resistance to the domination of the Arabs and the Berbers. The Haratine had to leave the village in search of labor opportunities and cash so as to negotiate and strengthen their status and political position in the valley.

Equally, if not more, crucial than the observation that the means for activating status change in the village are brought from the outside where matters of ethnicity and roles are permeable is that the making of community is cyclical and that social mobility within it appears to be a product of regional, if not global, frameworks. The integration of the Haratine into colonial and postcolonial systems has gained them cash with which they have been able to buy land, a process that has decreased the status of the Berbers and the Arabs and forced some of them to leave the village for good. As the village becomes more Haratinized in terms of its population, political ascendancy, and control of resources, the declining Berbers and Arabs are pondering the idea of leaving the village, provoking a decrease in the price of land. This situation, as I was told, provides the ideal scenario in which the village will become a Haratine community from its council membership to control of its irrigation canals.

Despite the ethnic tensions and debates that have emerged in reaction to the Haratine's social mobility in the valley, the role of Islam in the social life of the community must not be overlooked. The valley is also a community of believers, or *ummah*. Five times a day the villagers come to pray in the mosque. Every Friday sermons and daily prayers led by the village *fqih*, or Imam, deal with Islamic ethics, ranging from obligations of prayer and alms to fasting and pilgrimage. During the sermon the *fqih* makes references to events that are taking place in the village and outside of it and how they should be avoided for the betterment of the community and for the sake of conducting an equal and friction-free Islamic way of life. Religious advice and guidance intensifies in the holy month of Ramadan. Muslims regard Ramadan as a month of reconciliation, repentance, and intense worship of God. Because the month of Ramadan is one of the holiest months of the Islamic calendar and a month in which the Koran was revealed to the Prophet Mohamed, the *fqih* reminds the congregation that forgiveness and resolving disputes and old arguments among groups and individuals in Ramadan has no price in terms of rewards or merits tomorrow in front of God. According to the *fqih* as well as the entire congregation, "All the community is disputing over is *wsakh dunya*, or the filth of life, and the real disputes should be on the worship of God in preparation for the Day of Judgment." Hence,

tensions are muted, at least, by the Islamic ideologies of respect and preference for working things out. Still, these things are still caught in a multiplicity of secular points of view, ethnic and economic.

In the Ziz Valley's reality, the spatial isolation and coherence of the village community in precolonial times allowed for the development of distinct cultural forms for the organization of community life. Spatial isolation interfaced with a particular mode of ethnic production, and ritual control reinforced the notability notions of tradition, which provided behavioral frames for the villagers. These frames were based on the Berber codes or village constitutions. They specified the obligations and responsibilities of the village ethnic groups and provided cultural references for all sorts of village activities as well as avenues for involving participation in the maintenance and operation of village traditions and resources. Members did not carry the burden of inventing, imagining, or resisting the dominant cultural streams, because no opportunities were available toward that end. Because the agricultural base of the village required collective effort for its cost of operation and maintenance, individual or group endeavors to resist the structures of traditions were always excruciating and time consuming undertakings, particularly in times of dissidence. Social conflict was almost absent within the village walls because the community had a hierarchy of values and status that maintained to its critical interest in communal integration—only the Arabs and Berbers could own land, and a certain level of shared wealth or poverty was kept in balance so that Berber or Arab solidarity would not give way to dissensions and thereby threaten the cohesion of the dominant ethnic groups.

Traditions of the village's composite ethnic communities were and still are expressed in its cultural and resource institutions. The absence of specialized agencies for conflict resolution and the nondivisibility of labor were represented and managed by kinship ties, religious institutions, and sharecropping arrangements. In such a milieu, groups and individuals, although faced with social and economic inequality, constituted the integrative tradition patterns of the community. Having a sense of individuality was seen as an assault on or threat to the collective tradition that the dominant groups jealously guarded. Once again, because the community of the village remains a collective at its core, and despite the recent infusion of large sums of foreign remittances into the valley, most of the village institutions are still far from specialization and actually seem to privilege a stronger orientation toward ethnic solidarity and revival of the role of past tradition in spite of its subjugation to reformism by others, as the above accounts of the community's voices concede.

Consequently, labor migration has resulted in the transformation of remittances into land and status change. The value originally invested in land, a constant capital, not only satisfies human wants and remains out of circulation

but also adds a cultural capital in the form of power and gender dividends. The Haratine, for instance, perceive themselves as real men who wear white turbans (just like the Berber and Arab notables) and are no longer considered “like women,” as Arabs and Berbers framed them in the past. It is these strategies of investing in land, I argue, that have reconfigured the local field of power, prompting status change and rootedness of the Haratine.

In conclusion, despite all the difficulties the Haratine are facing on their way to a Haratinized way or Habitus of organizing social life at the village level, with the acquisition of land they have laid the groundwork to re-negotiate the terms of Berber power—the religious capital of holy Arabs—and thereby express their particular sense of community and insert the validity of their own Habitus in managing village institutions and resources. This attempt has become real for some Berbers and Arabs who deplore the fact that they have seen the Haratine evolve from sharecroppers to having sharecroppers and from debt-burdened souls to creditors. This, some who are combating the Haratine tide or revolt say, is “nothing but an indication of the end of the world in the fifteenth century of the Islamic calendar” (in which we are now). According to some people, these changes echo the prophecies passed on from generation to generation. Times have changed a great deal. In the eighth century, the century of writing and all predictions, the people of knowledge predicted that the fifteenth century would be one of major changes and of plenty. This same century also is believed not to have any books written about it, since it seals the end of the world and there would not be anyone left afterward to write about it. Revolutionary breakthroughs in all sorts of knowledge will take place, and these changes will coincide with untold and devastating upheavals. In the fifteenth century, “Iron will speak and the farther will become closer, values will deteriorate, respect will degenerate, and all that sustained the community will dissolve.”

In conclusion, the ethnographic description and analysis of the Haratine experience underscores the relevance of Bourdieu’s notion of Habitus in understanding processes of social change in complex stratified societies. This approach shifts our attention to analyzing how heterogeneous communities locally craft strategies to take advantage of national and transnational possibilities, even when these possibilities are not intended for them. This paper has also, within a historical-structural context, provided an approach for understanding the dynamics and processes of social change—linking Haratine strategizing within the ongoing local, national, and transnational social and political changes to the empowering and contested field of landholding.

First, the Haratine’s use of remittances to purchase land has led to major transformations in traditional structures, notably in the direction of democratic change, political representation, and liberation from the old exploitative ties of sharecropping (cf. Hammoudi 1997). Second, the money

remitted by the Haratine has served to enhance the Haratine’s social status and economic position in the ever evolving traditional system of the village of origin. Third, and most important, migration revenue streams have been significant in enabling the Haratine to communicate their sense of humanity and honor and to challenge the old notables who monopolized and framed the sentiments of honor and shame. Nowadays, because of landownership, the Haratine have recouped their shares of honor: they have moved from the shameful position of “womanlike,” the ultimate index of dishonor, to a place of manliness and turban wearing and political representation, from a childish and stupid status to being people of *awal*, or the word, “that is to say pledges, debts of honor, and duties”; and they have made the transition from a Haratine universe of inferior status, bereft of honor, to one in which equality in the ethos of honor and agency are being negotiated and activated (Bourdieu 1966).

In the Ziz Valley’s social world, despite the end of this world discourses and prophecies, ownership of land represents a set of claims to power to do certain things. Through land transfers, new relationships are being established to reconfigure the old traditional power and social bases of behavior—a reworking of Habitus. At this point, it is worth pointing out the difference in the application of customary laws to issues of land and water in the oases realm of southern Morocco. While Hammoudi (1985) and Ouhajou (1993) note an association between ethnic stratification and the unequal allocation of water shares in the Dra’a Valley, in the Ziz Valley, landownership, and not the legal distribution of water, serves as the legal framework for the social treatment of the subalterns. In the Ziz context, land is the very basis of claims to honor and recognition. Hence, ownership of property breeds honor. This ongoing historical change—Habitus—is being enacted in “an enchanted, perverted, topsy-turvy world, in which *Monsieur le Capital* and *Madame la Terre* do their ghost walking” (Marx 1977:504), as the Haratine keep on appropriating the Berber/Arab sense of origin while the bitterness of this threatened nobility gets greater and greater, day after day.

Notes

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1. As for the Haratine's origins, the etymology of the term *Haratine* means many things, and it has evolved through time: from the root of the Arabic verb *haratha*, to plant, one can say that these people were referred to by the conquering tribes as *harathine*, or cultivators of land, which could also imply that they might be the ancient inhabitants of the Saharan oases. The other meaning is derived from breaking down the term *Hartani* into two components, *hor* and *thani*, two separate words meaning the second free people as opposed to freeborn or Arab Ahrars or commoners. In Berber, however, the black population is referred to as *iqbliyn* (singular *aqbliy*), meaning the people of the east or the inhabitants of the southeastern oases, a term that could have been coined during the Berber invasions of the sedentary communities of Haratine and Arab commoners in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Iqbliyn are, in turn, divided into *iqbliyn imalalan*, or White Easterners who own land, and *iqbliy ungaln*, or Black Easterners who are landless and thus subject to subordination, the Haratine. Iqbliyn imalalan are also called *qbala*, people of Arab descent, such as the Beni Hcine, who still populate a few ksars in the Upper Ziz Valley. In Berber, the term *ahardan*, which is closer in meaning to Haratine, refers to a dark-skinned person. The term *Haratine* does not exist in Arabic, and this might suggest the Arabization process of this Berber term from its original form of *ahardan* to the locally arabized version of *Hartani*. Outside the Tafilalt, the Haratine are referred to as *drawa*, natives of the Dra'a Valley, an oasis to the west of the Ziz Valley, or *'azzi* (plural *'awazza* Bambara) in reference to the Bambara people of sub-Saharan Africa.

2. In my view, I define the term *community* (1) as a set of complex social relations among a collection of people residing in a more or less defined geographical area, (2) as a unit of economic production and consumption of goods and services by the residents and nonresidents for their own subsistence needs and the market requirements, and (3) as an integrated part of the larger society.

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