The Role and Organisation ~~ORGANISATION AND ROLE~~

OF A

BERBER ZAWIYA

by

Ernest Gellner

"The inhabitants of these mountains .... are agile, robust and brave in war. ... They employ stones which they throw with great skill and force. They are continuously ~~are~~ at war with the population of the Tadla plain, so that traders cannot pass the mountain without a safe-conduct and the payment of high duty.

Dades is also a high and cold mountain where there is much forest ..... The habitations are appalling and infested by the smell of the goats kept there. In all these mountains one finds neither castle nor walled town. The people are grouped in villages of houses of dry stone ... The rest of the population lives in caves. I have never seen so many fleas as in those hills.

The men are treacherous, theives and assassins. They will kill a man for an onion. Violent disputes break out amongst them for nothing. They have neither judges nor priest: nor anyone possessing a competence with respect to anything whatever. Traders do not come to trade in this land; where laziness prevails, where there is no industry and where one robs voyagers. When traders equipped with safe-conducts from some local chiefs transport their wares, which are of no interest to the mountaineers, they make them pay, for the right of passage, one quarter of its value.

The women are as ugly as the devil and even worse dressed than the men. Their condition is worse than that of the asses as they carry on their backs the water they draw at the wells and the wood they collect in the forest, without ever an hour of rest.

To conclude, I do not regret visiting any part of Africa except this. I had to pass this mountain to go from Marrakesh to Sijilmassa, being obliged to do so by an order. That was in 918 A.H. (1512/13 A.D.)"

Observations on the central High Atlas by Leo Africanus, translated from French edition, "Description de l'Afrigue," (Paris 1956), pp 150 - 153.

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CHAPTER I THE BACKGROUND

1. The Static Frontier

Power, belief, wealth: the questions about human society are clustered around these notions. The manner in which a society controls its members; the manner in which it forms their thought, and in which their thinking sustains it; and the manner in which it keeps alive and uses its resources.

The study is concerned mainly with power and belief, and less specifically with wealth. It is concerned with the politics and religion of a tribal people, who are mixed pastoralists and agriculturalists. Their ecology does enter into the analysis of local religion and local power, but concerns us only to the extent necessary for the understanding of politics and faith.

The Berbers of the central High Atlas of Morocco are, or were, an ungoverned people. Until 1933, no effective or outside government exercised authority over the region. Its tribesmen lived in the state of siba. This term, in local as well as in general use in Morocco, is best translated as 'institutionalised dissidence'. Moroccan and French writers sometimes translate it as 'anarchy', but this is too strong a term.

Siba was a political condition, and a condi tion of which people were explicitly aware: local tribesmen them-

selves employ this concept.

There is perhaps some difference between tribes-without-rulers for whom this is the only known condition, and tribes whose political structure is otherwise similar but who are conscious of an alternative, and who indeed in some cases may have deliberately rejected or resisted that alternative. The tribesmen of the central High Atlas fell into this latter group. Until recently they were self-consciously dissident.

If their previous condition were to be described as 'anarchy', then it was, so to speak, an anarchy opposed to something, contrasted with the central Moroccan government, or, to give it its usual and still surviving name, the Makhzen. The history of Morocco until the nineteen-thirties is written largely in terms of the relations between the land of Makhzen, the Pale, and the land of siba, beyond the Pale. Each of these constituted a permanent menace to the other.

It is usual to think of tribal societies, prior to their incorporation in the modern world, as self-contained, politically, economically and culturally. There is still a half-conscious tendency to see such tribalism as a condition which has generally preceded the emergence of more complex, centralised and effective government.

But siba or dissident tribalism is not of this kind. Siba tribes are, indeed, politically independent. But they

are not culturally independent. They are in this case embedded in the wider civilisation of Islam. In some measure they share a religion, concepts, symbols with the whole of the Muslim world.

Thus, their tribalism and political autonomy is not a tribalism 'prior to government', but a rejection of a particular government. Perhaps one should distinguish between 'primitive' and 'marginal' tribalisms: 'primitive' tribalism would cover a tribal group which is not merely a closed political unit, recognising no obligations outside itself, but which is also a kind of ultimate cultural unit, lacking conceptual or symbolic bridges to the outside world. A tribe which did not share its language with neighbouring groups and had only wholly unregulated hostile relations with them would be an example of this.

'Marginal' tribalism of the siba kind, on the other hand, would cover the type of tribal society which exists at the edge of non-tribal societies; it arises from the fact that the inconveniences of submission make it attractive to withdraw from political authority, and the nature of mountain or desert terrain make it feasible.

For some purposes of social anthropology, the distinction between 'simple' and 'marginal' tribalism may be of little significance: the internal mechanics of, say, a unilineal segmentary society may be much the same whether or

not the society is a dissident from a more centralised civilisation. Nevertheless, for other purposes the distinction may be essential. Muslim tribes are, almost by definitior marginally rather than simply tribal. Generally they exist on the margins of larger political units with urban capitals with whom they are liable to be on partly hostile and partly symbiotic relationship. They may be a danger for the central society, but also its shield. Muslim tribes, even if they hap not to be treated physically on the border of non-tribal political units, must moreover be 'marginal' in the sense of recognising the wider community of Islam. There is presumably a variety of reasons which may lead to marginal tribalism, both political and economic.

It seems to be a striking feature of the history of Muslim countries that they frequently, indeed generally, have such "penumbra" of marginal tribalism. In European mountain areas, excluding the Balkans which in any case were the penumbra of a Muslim power, the phenomenon is much rarer. It would be interesting to explore how far the Scottish Highlands prior to 1745, or traditional Corsica, Abruzzi etc., could usefully be described in these terms.

A significant fact concerning Morocco (and North Africa generally), is that, prior to European penetration in the 19th and 20th centuries, it remained tribal within as well as without the pale. The rural population within the land of makhzen, like that of siba, remained clustered in large

tribal groupings as well as the microscopic lineages on the village scale. It was only the superimposition of an European administration which led to the atrophy of the upper levels of tribal groupings. In Algeria, this has taken place (though kin groupings at village level have retained, or even increased their vitality). In Morocco, the French conquest came only in this century, and it is still possible to draw a tribal map for the whole of Morocco and to identify larger tribal groupings on the ground, but in a large part of the cases these tribes no longer have much political and social reality - though they may still have ritual existence, in the form of periodic festivals, etc.

Morocco prior to the XXth century sounds like a parable on the human condition in general. The country could be seen as composed of three concentric circles: the Inner Circle of tribes who extracted taxes, the Middle Circle of tribes who had taxes extracted from them, and the Outer Circle of tribes who did not allow taxes to be extracted from them.

The Outer Circle, is, of course, the land of siba. The inner circle of privileged tax-extracting, dynasty-supporting tribes were known as guish. The history of Morocco can be written as the story of the struggle of successive dynasties to maintain their power and authority. The two main problems facing them were the recruitment of the guish and the holding or expanding of the land of government against the land of siba. The history of America is sometimes written in terms

of its receding Frontier: the history of Morocco can be seen in terms of this stable or oscillating one.

It is probably fair to say that no definitive solution was found for either of these problems. Successive Moroccan dynasties used, in part or in whole, a number of different principles of recruiting their military support: the tribes from which they had sprung and with which they had kin links; foreign (e.g. Christian) mercenaries; Arab tribes imported after ~~defeating~~ having been defeated them in expeditions abroad; trained Negro slave armies; or combination of privileged tribes and standing army. This failure to solve the Platonic problem of finding watchdogs effective against the wolves but gentle with the sheep is not the subject of this study, which is concerned with the wolves beyond the Pale rather than with the sheep-dogs. We are concerned with the political organisation of some of the wolves, and not with the sheep-dogs or the sheep, and also with the social and political transformation of the wolves when, in the XXth century, the Frontier finally does expand and engulfs them in the national body politic.

The existence of the wolves outside the wall, of a permanent external proletariat to use Toynbee's term, has of course profound implications for the society which has to keep them out. At the worst, they present a permanent threat to the existing dynasty: a permanent reservoir, as it were, of potential new conquerors and new dynasties. At best,

they are still raiders and robbers, a scandal and an offence, instances of unpunished sins against les bons moeurs as well as against public safety, a standing example of the defiance of central authority.

In fact, successive Moroccan dynasties have historically emerged from this outer realm which is thus also a kind of womb of new concentrations of power. If one thing mitigates the danger from the outer margin of tribes, it is its own anarchy. The internal organisation of the outer tribes is such that they do not easily unify. Indeed, the new dynasties emerging from this political womb generally did so only thanks to a kind of crystallization of authority by religious charisma, which enabled them to fuse tribal support into a unified force.

If siba meant, for the ruling dynasty, an ever-present danger and source of raiders or even rivals, central authority in turn, or its nearest representative*, also meant for the inhabitants of siba an ever-present danger and source of possible aggression and oppression.

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* With the coming of Moroccan Independence in 1956, it was, in the then atmosphere of patriotic fervour centered on the ruling house, somewhat embarrassing for the inhabitants of erstwhile siba lands, and for any Moroccan intellectual given to reflection about his country's past, to remember the traditions of dissidence. The characteristics reaction to this was to say that dissidence was not against the Sultan as such, but against his oppressive local representatives. There is an element of truth in this: reverence and some kind of religious acceptance of the sherifian dynasty on the throne may in certain cases have been combined with resistance to his political representatives.

The curious consequence of the existence of an internal Frontier, as described, is that the inhabitants of the State of Nature, of siba, were faced with a rather Hobbesian choice between accepting or rejecting the Social Contract: they could submit to the inconveniences of Power and escape the inconveniences of Anarchy, or vice versa. Not all of them, clearly, chose the alternative commended by Hobbes as rational. Indeed it was more often a matter of struggle rather than choice.

It is important to stress that the line between the State of Nature and Leviathan was neither stable, nor sharp nor unambiguous.

Urban life in Morocco was of course concentrated in the area of the Inner and the Middle Circle. There were no towns in siba-land.

2. Arab and Berber.

The population of Morocco is now in the region of ~~ten~~ a half million. Of these, somewhat less than half are Berber.

Excluding Europeans, the classification of Arab/Berber is linguistically exhaustive. No other indigenous language exists in Morocco.

A religious classification would (excluding Europeans again) also have to account for the Jewish population of Morocco, of whom most are Arabic speakers and some Berber-speakers. (Some also speak French or Spanish.)

An ethnic classification might also classify the Negro population of Morocco separately from Arabs and Berbers. People of Negro physical characteristics are found scattered throughout Morocco. In the South and in particular in the oases at the edge of the Sahara, they are grouped together in communities. These are referred to as haratin (sing: hartani).

Geographically, Morocco is sandwiched between the Mediterranean to the North, the Atlantic to the North-West, and the Sahara to the South. Only to the East is there a geographically more arbitrary frontier with Algeria.

There are four mountain ranges: the Rif, and the Middle, Great and Anti-Atlas (the last including the Jebel Saghro).

The boundary between the Arab-speaking and Berber-speaking areas of Morocco are, roughly, the contour lines

separating the mountains from the plains, of which the largest is the 'Atlantic' plain. There are however, certain exceptions. In the North, the mountainous regions of Ghomara and Jebala are Arabic-speaking. In the centre, there is a Berber-speaking wedge thrust deep and wide into the plain and very nearly reaching the Atlantic. In the south, in the oases at the edge of the Sahara, the linguistic boundary forms a complex patchwork which cannot be summed up briefly.

In turn, the boundary between siba and makhzen correlates with, but is not identical with, the Berber/Arab division. Not all Arabic tribes were Makhzen; not all Berber tribes were dissident.

Nevertheless, the tie up of mountain Berber and dissidence is sufficient for it to be suggestive to refer to the old government lines as a 'Highland line'.

3. What is a Berber?

To be Berber is to speak Berber:* and hence, not to be urban, and to have (or have only recently lost) a niche within some more specific Berber tribal grouping.

* Unless one belongs to Berber-speaking Jewish or Haratin groups. Further qualifications would be necessary in Algeria and Tunisia, where urbanised Berber-speakers are less uncommon in traditional society.

In Morocco there are virtually no Berber towns or Berber townsmen. Though many Berbers migrate, for instance, to Marrakesh, this soons means their Arabisation.

Next to the absence of urban Berberism, and connected with it, are the following characteristics: the Berber language generally is not written, and there is no one dominant dialect. The lingua franca is Arabic, which is also the language of correspondence.

Berber dialects vary from valley to valley, tribe to tribe, and even from village to village. As one proceeds over larger distances, the cumulation of minor changes ends in real differences. Moroccan Berber dialects fall into three groups: Tashlehait in the South, Tamazight in the centre, and Tarifit in the North.

These three are not easily intelligible between themselves though speakers of one do not find it very difficult to learn one of the other two. The transitions from one of these groups to another may however, be gradual.

Berbers are enthusiastic if ill-informed Muslims;

moreover, many Berber tribes claim genealogies which imply an Arabic Oriental ancestry. Enthusiastic identification with Islam and pretensions to Arabic origin however co-exists with semi-conscious heterodoxy and, in the past, a tribal (though not national) political separatism.

4. Morocco's Recent History.

Morocco remained remarkably unaffected by the outside world and its development until the 20th Century; much less so than the Middle East. This insulation, comparable perhaps to that which persisted in the Yemen, until recent years, is all the more remarkable if one considers Morocco's geographical proximity to Europe, that on its eastern border there was French controlled Algeria, and above all, that this insulated society was not only a tribal one, but contained large and flourishing cities and an urban civilisation. The sociological reasons for this imperviousness to outside influence would no doubt repay investigation: it would be interesting to know why Morocco was comparatively so short of 'young Turks' and similar stirrings. Such influences as did reach it came from the Muslim world, notably the puritanical Islamic 'Reform Movement' from Egypt and the rest of the Maghrib. The political and military factors aiding the preservation of isolation are easier to discern. The great powers neutralised each other, and indeed it was not until some ~~vigorous~~ horse dealing took place in this century that the way was open to western military penetration.

This penetration began seriously in the first decade of this century. French landings began in 1907. The Moroccan government was caught between the external enemy and its own dissident subjects. A certain circle manifested itself: government was unable to cope with the latter without foreign

assistance, but the acceptance of such aid only exacerbated the xenophobia of its own subjects and increased the number of its own internal enemies. A Sultan might be deposed for being insufficiently firm with the foreigner, but his successor, carried to the throne on a wave of xenophobia, would soon be forced to pursue a similar policy. This process culminated in the establishment of the French protectorate in 1912. With Berber tribesmen under the walls of Fez, the Sultan, who had himself supplanted his predecessor in the name of hostility to alien penetration, was forced to seek foreign aid and come to terms with the French.

The French occupation of most of what had been the old governmental pale was completed by the beginning of the first World War. A new wave of xenophobic pretenders was defeated. The traditionally dissident areas however, were only conquered slowly and painfully after the war, in a series of campaigns only terminated in 1933 and 1934.

Only in the Rif did these campaigns face a united enemy. In other areas, including the one we are concerned with, it was a piecemeal matter of coping with small tribal units, almost one by one. This 'pacification' was as much a political as a military affair. It was the ambition of those who engaged in it to achieve as much of it by political means as possible, and the view was expressed that ethnographic reconnaissance and exploration was the best preliminary to successful pacification./ The consequence was a

V. Monteil: Les Officiers. 1958. ?, 130.

sociological orientation and curiosity from the very start, a tradition which persisted in the administration - much of which remained military - after pacification had been achieved. It should however be added that this ethnographic and sociological work was done largely by military officers, and such theoretical bases as it had are not, I think, to be sought in the sociological faculties of Paris or other universities. Presumably there was an alienation between the predominantly right wing orientation of the army, particularly the part of it located in Morocco, and the rather different orientation of the sociological tradition.

Apart from the pacification and its conclusion, the most significant political event was the promulgation in 1930 of the famous Dahir Berbère. This decree was to regulate the legal status of the pacified Berber tribal territories. Its essence was to give these areas the option of remaining separate from the national Moroccan Muslim legal system, and to continue to be ruled by tribal customary law under supervision of the new French administration. The promulgation of this decree triggered off modern Moroccan nationalism. It offended traditional Muslim sentiment by appearing to underwrite hetrodox non-Muslim practices, and indeed to encourage them: moreover, at the time it aroused the suspicion that this was merely the first step in the attempt to convert the Berbers from Islam. It equally offended emergent modern nationalist feeling by exemplifying

a policy of divide and rule, and attempting to alienate the Berbers from the rest of Morocco.

Some aspects of this decree were subsequently abrogated, but a very large part of the Berber tribes did continue to maintain their customary law until the end of the protectorate in 1956. (Some did not, notably the ones in the Rif where it had been abrogated by Abdel Krim; and those in the areas dominated by the great chieftains such as the Glawi, who found customary tribal law inconvenient, not so much for its content, but owing to the fact that it required for its administration the survival of independent tribal assemblies.)

From the sociologists' view point, the consequence of the Dahir Berbère was the placing of tribal custom and institution into a kind of ice box, between the time of 'pacification' of the tribes and 1956. This ice box did not, of course, preserve that custom exactly in the form in which it existed originally. For instance, things incompatible with a modern administration or repugnant to its more fundamental moral convictions, such as blood feuds or slavery, were abolished. (But blood money in case of murder was not.) For another thing, the sheer fact that some practice or rule was operating in the context of a superimposed colonial administration gave it a different social significance from that which it had in the context of tribal anarchy. Again, the administration of tribal customary law was reformed and stylized: the competence and hierarchical ordering of

various tribal tribunals was settled with greater order and less inherent ambiguity, than they had in their original form.

Nevertheless, the preservation even of a distorted and stylized traditional Berber tribal society did greatly facilitate the reconstruction of the earlier situation for the observer. The function of an institution might change, but its nominal continuities provide valuable clues to the previous working of it. Moreover, throughout the period of the French protectorate many of the Berber areas were comparatively isolated from the rest of Morocco where change was more rapid. Before the second World War, extensive areas were still classed as 'zones of insecurity' and movement from and into them was restricted. This situation reappeared when the Franco Moroccan political crisis developed not so very long after the second war, except that it was the new urban areas which were now politically 'insecure' rather than the old tribal ones: still, the insulating effect was the same.

The conflict between Moroccan nationalism and the French authorities gathered momentum after the Anglo-American landings in North Africa during the war.

The leadership of the Moroccan nationalists had roughly speaking two kinds of components: an elder in generation of people with a primarily Muslim traditionalist orientation, formed by the ideas of the Muslim Reform Movement, and a younger generation of mainly French trained intellectuals whose ultimate ideological inspiration was modern European rather than

Islamic. In the struggle for independence, the opposition between these two tendencies on the whole remained latent. Such splits as occurred then did not follow this fundamental line of fission.

The nationalists succeeded in obtaining the support of the new urban proletariat, notably in Casablanca, and in some measure, limited by caution, that of the monarchy. The French attempted to use against them traditional elements such as the religious fraternities and the 'bled', which literally means country and became an adapted French word, meaning the countryside or rural society, and which in effect meant the authorities in rural traditional society. Of these, the most formidable were the powerful Berber chieftains, notably the Glawi.

The crucial event in the struggle was the exile of the late Sultan by the French in 1953. He was exiled in response to a questionably spontaneous movement against him organised by various rural chieftains under the leadership of the Glawi, and supported more or less overtly by both official and unofficial French groups. This gave the Nationalists their chance, and they made use of it with very great effectiveness. The symbol of the exiled King enabled them to rouse opposition to the French not merely from the intelligentsia and the new proletariat, but in due course from the countryside as well. When, in the end, this opposition threatened to spread even into the recesses of the mountains,

this in conjunction with the outbreak of the Algerian war decided the issue, and the French surrendered. Morocco became independent in 1956.

The high period of the crisis from '53 to the end of '55 meant increased isolation for the mountain areas, but also an increased awareness of the outside conflict, into which the tribesmen were beginning to be drawn. Nevertheless, in the deeper recesses of the mountains, the Nationalists had not yet succeeded in forming effective cells, though individual tribesmen were in contact with cells in the market towns on the edge of the plain. When the French surrender and Moroccan independence came, it took the tribesmen, and perhaps others, somewhat by surprise.

In the tribal areas with which we are concerned, independence meant ~~the following~~ not the abrogation of a superimposed centralised administration, but after an interregnum, simply its continuation with the French personnel replaced by Moroccans. Secondly, it meant after a little delay, abrogation of the hitherto preserved customary law, and its replacement by a centralised legal system which does not differentiate between Berber and Arab, nor between one tribe and the next. Thirdly, it meant the end of the ~~[illegible]~~ tribal notables as intermediaries between larger groupings and the administration. Finally, it meant easy movement between the villages and the towns, and the emergence of a new institution, the rural cells of political parties.

In due course, it also was to mean the establishment of 'rural communes' not necessarily corresponding to the older tribal groupings, with elected rural councils. After various postponements these councils were finally elected in the late spring of 1960. ~~During the intervening four years the tribes, had~~ Headmen for units of about village size were appointed by the administration after "consultation with the population".

5. The Struggle for Morocco's Past.

Anthropologists are given to seeing tribal legends as charters of current practices. Similarly, national history tends to be written and interpreted so as to charter current national sentiment and aspiration.

In Morocco, however, the situation is complicated further. The French, whose Protectorate co-existed with the Makhzen from 1912 till 1956, are a historically minded people. Indeed, the French occupation of Morocco was, partly for the reasons indicated, remarkable for its historiographical and sociological preoccupations.

Hence, there is not merely a Moroccan, but also a French interpretation of Moroccan history and the salient features of Moroccan society. At present, until Moroccan scholars have had time enough, and until Morocco can spare enough of its trained men to devote itself to the subject, it is inevitable that one should lean heavily on French historiography. Moreover, the young Moroccans who have presented alternative interpretations are themselves frequently French-trained, write in French, and have a great affinity with secular French culture than with traditional Morocco.

But, the issues and features described in sketching this general background - *siba* versus *makhzen*, custom versus Koramic law, Arab and Berber - are and were heavily charged with political feeling in the recent past.

It is impossible to abstract from these things, or

again not to use the recognised historiography, however politically oriented it may be. It is possible, however, to take two precautions: (a) To specify explicitly those aspects of the general picture which could be checked, and were checked, 'in the field'. (b) To give some account of the 'battle for Morocco's past.' This should enable the reader to draw his own conclusions, and it is in any case of considerable intrinsic interest.

The conflict between the French "protecting power" and the Moroccan nationalists of course had its intellectual or ideological aspect. Moroccan nationalism began as a religious or xenophobic movement, but it became in due course a ~~[illegible]~~ nationalist one, having absorbed the doctrine that an independent national state is the natural political unit. The French attack on this position concentrated on stressing, as is customary, in such circumstances, that no genuine national political unit had existed prior to their own intervention.

In fact, however, Morocco is not an arbitrary territory carved out by colonial map makers. It has quite a marked geographic unity and a definite historical personality. Hence the attack could not - and did not - proceed from any premise of the arbitrariness or non-existence of Morocco as a unit. Its main premise was not that in some sense a Moroccan unity had never existed, but that within it there was a profound division between the area controlled by the

central state and the as extensive dissident areas of the independent tribes. It seemed important for the French to assert that this division was fundamental; hence it came to seem equally important for the Moroccans to deny it.

This historical and sociological issue was, throughout most of the period of French rule, of acute contemporary relevance owing to the judicial and administrative separation of Berber regions from the rest of Morocco. It was this, as described, that triggered off the beginnings of Moroccan nationalism, and it continued to be a source of grievance throughout.

It should not be assumed that the ideology was homogeneous on either side of the fence. Within the French camp, there was a division of view between those who believed that Berber separatism should or should have been encouraged, to the very extreme of establishing a separate "Berberistan" and those who believed that the essence of French action in Morocco was or ought to be through the dynasty. On the Moroccan side, there were those to whom the idiosyncrasies of Berber life were simply a scandal to be terminated as speedily as possible, and others, especially of late, who see in the historic fact of dissidence an evidence of democratic conditions and principles useful in combatting the thesis that Morocco is an absolute theocracy, principles which they wish to see translated and re-established in modern terms.

The ideological use of these historical and sociological issues I do not propose to explore here, having done so elsewhere,x) but it is necessary to state that and how these issues are of political significance.

Of certain facts, there can be no dispute: Siba, self-conscious tribal independence or dissidence, did exist. This is agreed by both sides, and of this I am also sure on the basis of field experience, which on this point is quite unambiguous. What is at issue is just what it meant in various respects and what interpretations are to be put on it. Some light will I hope be thrown on this question in the course of describing in detail the religious and political forms of one particular part of Siba-land.

x) Middle East Journal, Winter 1961.

. The central High Atlas.

The area which can be described in this way (and will be so described in this study) is in the centre of Morocco, where the Middle Atlas range merges with the High Atlas. (It is sometimes described as a part of the Middle Atlas or as the Eastern High Atlas. Geographical terminology is not consistent on this point.)

The mountain massif rises steeply and sharply out of the flat Tadla plain. Thereafter, it becomes a kind of undulating plateau riven by numerous deep gorges. The final watershed, which rises to above 4000 meters, is reached after some distance. The uplands then slope off to the Dades valley, on the southern side of the Atlas, which in turn separates it from an easterly continuation of the Anti-Atlas, the Jebel Saghro range. Beyond the Jabel Saghro, there is the Sahara.

The linguistic boundary here follows the beginnings of the mountains, except in as far as the Berber-speaking area spills over into the plain, to a depth of a few villages, so to speak. The whole of the (easily discernible) mountain area is Berber-speaking.

A good deal of the Atlantic-ward slping part of the uplands is forested. None, or virtually none, of the Sahara-ward slopes have any forest.

The most significant features of the landscape are: much of the plateau, in its higher reaches when approaching the Atlas watershed is more or less uninhabitable in winter

and heavily snowed up for a number of months. During the summer, however, this upland provides satisfactory pasture. The uplands are generally short of water, but not disastrously so: the flock can be watered at wells. The valleys and gorges often have permanent streams running through them, and irrigation agriculture is practicable and practiced in them.

Facing the plain, the mountains present a formidable and sudden wall, interrupted by fierce and narrow gorges. Any would-be invader from the plain would have either to venture on to the arid plateau-land, with its scarce wells, or try to force a passage up one of the gorges, where rocks and forest make ambushes easy. In fact, there is no record of a successful invasion of the uplands straight up from the plain: there are local memories of unsuccessful attempts during the reign of Mulay Hassan (1873 - 1894). These attempts were defeated at a narrow point in the principal outlet-gorge. (This point has since been blocked by a hydro-electric barrage, the biggest in North Africa, which thereby created a huge lake in the area above it, where the gorge opens up.) The French conquest of the region came not directly from the plain, but mainly from the South West from more accessible uplands, and also from the South.

Most of the inhabitants of the region are, in some measure or another, transhumants. By far the biggest annual movement of transhumancy is the one arising from the repeated occupation and evacuation of the high plateau adjoining the watershed.

Annually in spring, families and flocks of the large Ait Atta tribe from the South move up to this plateau, only to vacate it again in the autumn.

Zawiya Ahansal, the centre-piece of the political system to be described and the focal point for this study, is a shrine and a village located very nearly at the final point in the cul-de-sac, of one of the main gorges as it thrusts into the final plateau towards the watershed.

7. Comparative Berber Politics.

There exists an interesting literature on the political sociology of Berbers in general. The study of this subject culminates in the work of Robert Montagne, and its conclusions can be summarised as follows: the crucial Berber political institution is the moiety, known as a leff in Southern Morocco, and as a soff in Algeria. Such peace and order as is maintained is due to the even balancing of moieties. Occasionally the balance is upset by some skilful manipulator, and then one gets a highly transient concentration of power: it does not take many generations before there is a relapse to the initial condition. Thus there is a kind of permanent oscillation between the egalitarian balancing of moieties, and transient crystallisation of personal tyrannies. During the first condition, the assembly is the paramount power: during the second, these are abrogated in the interests of the tyrant. ~~Religion is not of great political importance.~~

This account is in some ways strikingly similar to the general theory of tribal politics, based primarily on North African material, elaborated by Ibn Khaldun (1332-1406) in the fourteenth century. Ibn Khaldun does not give us an account of the internal mechanics of tribal politics, but his theory does involve the doctrine of the oscillation. Presumably Montagne was influenced by Ibn Khaldun's doctrine and he certainly used his material. His theory makes use both of

mediaeval and of much modern political tribal history. Ibn Khaldun is very nearly the only source for the former.

Ibn Khaldun also has a theory which makes the ordinary kinship-based tribal cohesion sufficient, and indeed very effective, but opposes to it the one other source of cohesion, religion. Tribal cohesion fused with religion becomes an explosive force. If one gives this theory a sharp outline, one finds religion of no particular importance in normal tribal contexts, where it is redundant, and only of importance as the necessary element in the big tribal explosions. The system of the Ahansali holy lineages of the central High Atlas forms an interesting exception or counter example to these theories, on a number of counts. It is fairly stable. There is no oscillation. Both the egalitarian diffusion of power in the lay tribes and their assemblies, and the concentration of influence amongst the holy lineages, are stable and permanent. The stability of each depends on the other and they complement each other. The stability of each requires the existence of the other. Moreover, the religion is important, and it is not, in tribal life, politically explosive. Moreover, there are no moieties: there is indeed segmentation, but the number two has no pre-eminence.

Montagne was aware of this. See p. 30 n.

CHAPTER 2 The Problem

1. The Problem Stated

The problem is, essentially, the working of a hagiarchy, the 'rule' - if this is not too strong a term - by hereditary saints in an anarchic segmentary environment.

The area surrounding Ahansal displays a number of interesting features: a strong religious influence in political matters, and, apparently a stable one. On the other hand, it does not manifest those regular societies which have been claimed to be the characteristic features of Berber political life.

To what extent may one speak of a 'maraboutic* state', a dynasty, an hagiarchy? Or, to put it the other way, how is an anarchic State of Nature mitigated by hereditary saints?

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*The term "marabout" has become an adopted French word. (The local Berber word is agurram.) For instance: "Ainsi associés aux républiques independantes, les marabouts participent souvent de leur étonnante stabilité et de la force qu'y conservent les traditions. Certaines dynasties religieuses - celle des Ahansal, que les traditions locales font remonter au XIIIe siècle... parviennent ainsi à conserver le pouvoir plus longtemps que les chorfa maitres de l'Empire."
R. Montagne: "Les Berberes et le Makhzen dans le Sud du Maroc", Paris, 1930, p.411.

It should be noted that this passage appeared in a book published three years before the final conquest of the dissident two thirds of the "dynasty" of Ahansal, and of Zawiya Ahansal itself, and of the ~~[illegible]~~ major part of Ahansal-land.

In brief - how did the Rule of Saints, or Anarchy Mitigated by Holiness, maintain itself and function? And

what forms did it assume in its decline under the impact of the modern world?

2. Segmentation and Ancestors

The Berbers of the Central High Atlas, like all other Moroccan tribes, are a segmentary patrilineal people. The general nature and functioning of segmentary societies is a familiar and well explored theme in social anthropology. In this respect, the situation in the Central High Atlas is perhaps not particularly original or specially interesting, and accounts applicable to similar societies elsewhere are probably valid here. Nevertheless, it may be useful to restate some of the general features of segmentation for the sake of the completeness of the analysis, and indicate their relevance to the local situation in slightly more detail.

The affiliation of a Berber to a social group is generally expressed in terms of his alleged patrilineal descent. Most of the rights and duties allocated him are such in virtue of his male ancestors in the male line. Social groups in Berber society generally have the name Ait X. X is usually but not always the name of a person, such as Brahim or Mohamed. In principle a man is a member of a group Ait X in virtue of being a descendant of X.

A man's name generally consists of three linked parts: first, his own proper name, second, his father's name, and third a name indicating the immediately larger group which will often also be the name of a recent ancestor, possibly even his grandfather. The name of the woman has a similar structure and does not change on marriage: apart from her personal name, it will include her father's

name and his immediate group. In daily life, the names are of course often abbreviated by omitting the last or the last two constituents.

For instance, a man's name might be Daud u Said n'ait Yussif, David son of Said of the people of Yussif. Ideally, Yussif would be the name of his grandfather, and the Ait Yussif, the people Yussif, would cover all other families descended from the same grandfather. In fact, various adjustments may take place: Yussif may have had no sons other than Said, the Ait Yussif thus being co-extensive with the Ait Said, and there is little point in dwelling on the grandfather's name; but there may be some point in stressing the little-clan affiliation inside the village, Daud's clan being (say one of the three in the village) the Ait Ahmad. He will then describe himself as Daud u Said n'ait Ahmed. Other adjustments of such kinds occur.

In daily intercourse, a man may be called by his own name, or that in conjunction with his father's, or it in conjunction with the clan's name, or by his father's name alone (prefixed by "u"), or by an accepted nickname.

Daud's sister Tuda would describe herself as Tuda Said n'ait Yussif (or n'ait Ahmad), or might in imitation of Arab ways describe herself as Tuda bint Said etc. ~~Her name does not, of course, change on marriage.~~

Feminine names seldom appear "higher up" in the name, so to speak, though occasionally they do. A slave, particularly

a female one, may be identified by her mother rather than her father, e.g. Fatma n'Zida, Fatma of Zida's; or parallel village clans, claiming descent from the same ancestor, may name themselves not after the sons of the common ancestor but after his respective wives who are alleged to have given birth to the segmenting sons, as for instance Ait Sfia, Ait Aoh'sha in Zawiya Ahansal.

The basic feature of the local law of inheritance is that brothers inherit equally. The whole system is symmetrical as between brothers.

Social groups are strongly endogamous. The preferred form of marriage is to the patri-lateral parallel cousin. This preference is expressed negatively, as the right of all male parallel cousins, including more distant ones, to object to and prevent a marriage of a girl to someone outside the agnatic group. The suitor from outside the group has to obtain the consent of the male patri-lateral cousins of his would-be-bride before he can marry her.

In order to conceptualise and express the patri-lineal segmentary organisation of Kel- society, Berbers do not generally draw diagrams. The situation is expressed and described genealogically. The most standard kind of Berber genealogy is Occamist: Ancestors are not multiplied beyond necessity. The individual knows the name of his father and of his grandfather: after that, he will name or know of only those ancestors who perform the useful task of defining

a social group. Ancestors who do not earn their keep by performing this task are not worth the wear of remembering (or inventing).

It is a commonplace of the treatment of such genealogies that they cannot be taken at their face value. For one thing, and the most obvious one, the remembered ancestors are simply too few: - If one believed these genealogies, one would have to assume a most phenomenal growth of population over the recent centuries, and imagine the Atlas, not so very many years ago, inhabited by a very small number of extremely virile old men, ancestors of virtually the whole of the present population. But genealogies of this kind are inaccurate not merely through their omissions, through 'forgetting' all socially redundant ancestors. It would be equally rash to assume that the remembered ancestors are survivors from genuinely real lines of descent, islands of true memory sticking out of a sea of oblivion. The islands themselves may be spurious. To realise this, one needs only reflect that the existing social groups generally need an ancestor as a kind of conceptual apex: an ancestor, however real, does not need a social group. Indeed he is past needing anything, and not in a position of bringing it into being if he wished. The presently existing social group on the other hand is in a position to satisfy its need for a concept which it requires to express its very existence (leaving aside the need, ~~postulated~~ suggested by anthropological theory, of reinforcing its solidarity).

The most typical Berber genealogy, the Occanist one, with a remembered father and grandfather, and thereafter only ancestors who in fact define existing groupings, is however but one form a genealogy may take, though the most common and basic type. Two factors may lead to a modification to this type of genealogy: extreme sedentarisation and sanctity.

Very sendentarised tribes, i.e. those in whose lives agriculture (with irrigated and hence immobile fields) plays a far larger part than pastoralism, may dispense with genealogical definitions of the larger, higher level social groupings. In their case, the wider and more general groups may be defined geographically. There may be, at the top, levels of segmentation where the word Ait is followed not be a personal name but by a place name. The genealogical conceptualisation of groups only comes in at the lower levels. Within the region I am concerned with, there is one tribe where this has unambiguously happened. It is worth noting that the situation seems similar in the western High Atlas, where most or all tribes are very sedentarised. All this

* Cf. Jacques Berque. Structures Sociales du Haut-Atlas. 1955

however, does not disturb the tree-like neatness of the segmentary system, though it does conflict with some widely accepted theories about Berber mentality.*

* "A ce sujet, le lecteur, peu familiarisé avec les façons de penser arabes, doit se pénétrer fortement de cette idée,

qu'Arabes et Berbères ont une conception "biologique", non territoriale de la patrie; ils ne disent pas: "Je suis de tel village", mais "J'appartiens à telle tribu". (Récemment, nous avions en main un livre sur la préhistoire en Angleterre; il s'intitullait: The earliest Englishman; qu'il ait pu y avoir des Anglais, en Angleterre, avant l'arrivée des Angles, est un point de vue qui échapperait a nos indigènes!)"
(G.H. Dousquet, Les Berbères, Presses Universitaires de France, Paris,1957, p.52.)

In general this is true, but exceptions exist, notably amongst well-sedentarised groups. Consider the following quotations from Prof. Jacques Berque's "Structures Sociales du Haut Atlas", (Presses Universitaires de France, Paris, 1955, p.63):

"Montagnards, Sédentaires.

...Or le premier résultat de l'analyse c'est qu'ils sont des immigrants, et que, fait plus instructif, ils n'ont aucune gêne a avouer une origine étrangère. Ils y mettent meme ... quelque coquetterie....On sent que leur snobisme n'est pas de revendiquer une ascendance arabe ou chérifienne. Il est de subsister ensemble, alors qu'on vient de si loin... On ne pose pas au beau fils venu d'orient, mais plutôt a l'actucieux petit bâtard qui s'encastre à sa juste place."

A similar description would apply to the important highly sedentarised tribe of Bu Gnes in the central High Atlas, and possibly to some others, though not to the four really large groupings who make up most of the clients of the saints of this study.

The manner in which sanctity affects genealogies is far more important for our purposes. Saints do not have Occamist genealogies. On the contrary, they have Veblenesque ones, indulging in a kind of conspicuous display of genealogical wealth. The more ancestors the merrier, and certainly the better. A typical successful saint will possess a genealogy which contains a long string of names of whom only some have the role of defining existing corporate groups, by standing at the apex of their genealogy; and indeed only some have any kind of image or personality attached to their name. (In the case of the Occamist ancestors of lay tribes' segments, an image may also be lacking - but such a face-less ancestor defines a

group instead.) Such ancestors, faceless and groupless, simply add to the richness of the descent line.

3. Divide that ye need not be ruled (The Concept of Segmentation

As stated Berbers of the Atlas are patrilineal and segmentary, though there are important differences between the segmentation of holy and of lay groups, and minor differences within each of the two general classes.

The notion of a segmentary society comprises several connected elements:

(1) It contains a theory of social cohesion, a theory which describes a way of improving on the maxim Divide and rule. That maxim recommends a technique for facilitating government. Segmentary societies employ the same technique for doing without government altogether: divide that ye need not be ruled.

The idea underlying the theory is that the functions of maintaining cohesion, social control, some degree of "law and order", which normally depend largely on specialised agencies with sanctions at their disposal, can be performed with tolerable efficiency, compatible with the survival of the society as in some sense one unit, simply by the "balancing" and "opposition" of constituent groups. That defines a segmentary society is not that this does occur, but that this is very nearly all that occurs.

The possibility of achieving so much by so simple a device depends on other features of segmentary society:

(2) A "tree-like" structure: groups to which a person can belong are arranged in a system such that, starting from

the largest group, there is a set of mutually exclusive and jointly exhaustive subgroups of it, and each of these similarly has a set of sub-subgroups, and so on, until one arrives at the ultimate atoms, be they individuals or families.

Again, what defines a segmentary society is not that a system of groups satisfying these conditions can be found within it, but that only such a system (or very nearly) can be found within it.

The consequences of this are obvious and striking: from the viewpoint of any group, its composition can be specified without ambiguity, and without any danger of using criteria of membership which might cut across each other. The social universe in such a case consists of groups always definable in the ~~simplest~~ logically simplest and neatest way, by genus and differentia, by specifying the next higher-level group (genus) and the principle separating the subgroup-to-be-defined from the others within it (differentia). One ancestor provides the genus, another the differentia. Such a social world is of course in this respect very different from those numerous other universes, social or other, in which principles of subdivision untidily cut across each other, leaving open or ambiguous borderlines, conflicting criteria, and so on.

From the viewpoint of any individual, the consequence is that he finds himself at the centre of a series of concentric "nested" circles, a series of larger and larger groups to which he belongs, whose boundaries can never cut across

each other. A member of a segmentary society can perhaps experience a conflict of priorities (should he attend to a feud between sub-groups before attending to a war between groups?), but he can hardly experience an outright conflict of loyalties, groups being so arranged that there are no overlaps.

Segmentation is a kind of model of abstraction at its neatest. Distant ancestors are like abstract concepts, denoting more (people alive now) and connoting less; close ancestors are more concrete, "denoting" fewer descendants and connoting more ...

It is a formal properties of "trees" in the mathematical sense that there is only one route from any point to any other point.*

Segmentary systems, as expressed for instances in the genealogies* of persons involved in them, are indeed "trees" in this

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Berbers use the Arabic word for tree to describe genealogies.

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sense. The formal property of uniqueness of connection between any two points on a tree has its important social correlate - the social relation between any two individuals is unambiguous and unique.

A tree-like structure of the kind described would seem essential if the first feature, reliance on opposition to

stimulate cohesion, is really to characterise the society. The tree-like structure ensures that for any conflict that may arise, there are some groups that can be activated and which will "balance" each other. A balance of power does not need to be devised, pressure-groups and counter-pressure-groups do not need to be invented and recruited: they are ever-ready, they exist potentially all along the line, "in all sizes", and their rivalry, even if latent, ensures the activation of the relevant groups when a conflict does crop up.

For any society, a common threat, a common enemy, is the easiest and perhaps most efficacious catalyst of cohesion. A segmentary society is one for which this is very nearly the only important factor making for cohesion, and which is so conveniently arranged that common threats and enemies are available all along the line, facilitating co-operation at all kinds of levels. A <u>pure</u> segmentary society would be one in which groups came into being <u>only</u> in opposition, in which no co-operation took place which was not, as it were, a negation of something. I doubt whether completely pure segmentary societies in this sense exist, but those which are normally called segmentary approximate to such a simplified type to a greater or smaller extent. (One obvious qualification of 'pure' segmentariness is that groups combine not only in opposition to others, but also in opposition to nature, in joint work to control or resist natural forces.)

The point that a segmentary society provided cohesion-precipitating hostile groups "all along the line", in all

sizes, needs a crucial qualification: it may fail to do so at the top and at the bottom of the scale. At the bottom, a conflict such as may result in (say) fratricide activates no group which would be concerned with righting the wrong; at the top, once we get beyond the outermost of the nested groups, there is no notion in terms of which a larger group still could be brought into effective operation.[1] The society with which we are concerned is not a purely segmentary one by either

[1] Of course, the topmost nested group may be the total society, and foreigners in general may be the catalysts of its unity.

of these touchstones. Fratricide may or may not be the concern of the wider group, "according to the moral character of the killed brother"*, but it can be treated as an offence against the wider group for which it exacts a retribution from its own

* In the case of a brother who is held to be a scoundrel, fratricide may be not merely permissible, but even laudable or obligatory. This is an important feature in connection with the way in which balancing groups provide each other with sanctions, and with the mechanism of collective oath. To kill one of one's own group may be the only way of avoiding conflict with outside groups.

member: in other words, a group can be activated by an offender within it and not merely by an opposed group outside, and it can take corporate action, qua groups, against a part of itself. This is un-segmentary behaviour. (This can happen in the cases of offences other than fratricide - for instance, adultery may be expiated by a donation towards the group to which both adulterer and cuckold belong, and not just to the offended subgroup. A group here is demanding and obtaining

restitution for the violation of its moral order - rather than that a subgroup is obtaining restitution for a wrong suffered.

At the top, this society does possess devices for activating groups irrespective of whether a pre-existing notion of such a group (territorially or in terms of kinship) is available. One such device is the possibility of affiliation, which of course also operates at lower levels where pre-existing groups are available, and which is quite essential in facilitating re-alignments, the threat of which in turn is a necessary sanction of cohesion inside groups (e.g. when facing the ordeal of collective oath). But more important for our purposes is the leadership provided by the saints and the common sentiment of allegiance of Islam, which finds it expression in respect for the saints as descendants of the Prophet and for their arbitration as (supposedly) Sharia or divine law. (The general illiteracy has, until very recent years, obviated the danger of checking their pronouncements against documentary evidence of the divine law, i.e. the Koran.) Saintly leadership makes it possible, given the need and favourable circumstances, to weld together groups, particularly large scale-groups, which do not correspond to any of the groups latent in the segmentary system, or even groups which even cut across them.

The saints themselves are also segmentary: but just as their services modify the pure operation of the segmentary principle amongst the lay tribes, so also its working is

modified, in a different way which is to be described, amongst the saints themselves.

(3) Unilineal descent. The connection between this and the notion of a segmentary system is not always wholly clear. In "Tribes without Rulers"*, John Middleton and David Tait

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* London, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1958.

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write (page 7)

> "...the essential features (of being segmentary) are the 'nesting' attribute of segmentary series and the characteristic of being in a state of continual segmentation and complementary opposition. The series may be one of lineages .... or it may be one of territorial groups ..."

This seems to imply that segmentation cannot be <u>defined</u> in terms of unilineal kinship for the segmentation may be simply in territorial terms. Nevertheless I wonder whether the two - segmentation and Unilineal kinship - can be wholly separated My own view is that the crucial defining characteristic of segmentary societies is not merely the presence of segmentation (in terms of something), but the absence (or very nearly) of anything else. But if this is so, what happens in a segmentary society whose segmentation is territorial? It is essential (on my argument) that there should not be effective groupings or loyalties cutting across the segmentary lines. Hence, what happens, in a territorially segmented society, to links generated by kinship,[2] Such links might theoretically simply be non-existent or without significance, but this is unlikely at the lower levels, though quite plausible at the higher levels.* Alternatively, kinship is significant in

As described this is just what does happen in the "very sedentarised" Berber tribes, i.e. those in whose life pastoralism and transhumance play a part much smaller than dependence on irrigated - and hence permanent - fields. The higher levels of segmentation are in territorial terms, but the conceptualisation of smaller groups remain patrilineal.

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determining allegiance and loyalty at the lower levels, but then it must not - by definition - cut across the segmentation determined territorially and generated more complicated and contradictory loyalties. But it can only remain parallel to it if it is, as it were, at most unilineal,* for if there is

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* Cf. the belief of the Unitarians, according to Professor A.N. Whitehead: "There is one God at most". Quoted in Professor W. van Quine's "Methods of Logic", New York, 1950. p.211 n.

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more than one significant line determining allegiance, they could not <u>both</u> remain parallel to whatever the territorial lines of segmentation are. (This of course does not prevent the connection between kinship and membership being optional and/or variable: but it necessitates its being, in any one case, unique.)

Unilineality is required at lower levels, in the rather weak sense of one-but-no-more-than-one important kin link, so that it can overlap with group-membership, given that <u>some</u> kin link is very likely at the lower levels. (So it'd better be <u>only one</u> ...) But none at all may be present at the higher levels of segmentation. This ties up with kinship being a fiction at the higher levels (or irrelevant if true), not corresponding to any actual process in life, whilst at the lower levels it is connected with the actual process of

bringing human beings into the world.*

Cf. "The concept of Kinship", Philosophy of Science, 1960.

The crucial premiss in the above argument is of course the contention that segmentary societies are to be defined in the well-nigh total absence of principles of grouping other than their segmentation. This seems to me necessitated by the consideration that if we adopt either feature (1) or (2), either cohesion-by-opposition or the presence of a "nesting" pattern, without insisting on the absence of rival principles, we arrive at the paradoxical conclusion that all or most societies are segmentary, and even more curiously, that perhaps the societies normally called "segmentary" are less so than others .... England can be described as a territorially segmentary society: a neat nesting system of locating all places in England does exist - <u>amongst others</u>. Moreover, the phenomenon of combining against outside threats is well known amongst subgroups in England - <u>and</u>, thanks to the existence of various special sanctions which can be added to reinforce it, it may well work more effectively than in a proper segmentary society. Also, the sheer fact of a multiplicity of cross-cutting classifications may make it harder to shift from one 'activated' group to another, whilst in a proper segmentary society it is <u>relatively</u> easy, if only owing to the essential similarity of the various opposing groups...(Switching from one balanced group

to another may be harder in specialised societies, when each of the groups has to preserve an inner balance of specialists?) In the society with which we are specifically concerned, it is not merely fairly frequent and comparatively easy (though not without certain disadvantages) to re-align oneself in the segmentary system, but the possibility of doing so is absolutely essential to its working, as will emerge.

Hence I conclude that segmentary societies must be defined in terms of the absence of anything other than segmentation (rather than merely in terms of the presence of segmentation) and this in turn seems to imply, for the lower levels, a connection with unilineal kinship. Any plural principle of kin-alignment would go against the uniqueness of the segmentation.

(4) Monadism: I use this term for the characteristic which is sometimes predicated of segmentary societies as such, namely that groups of all sizes resemble or mirror each other's structure. The smaller group is an embryo tribe, the tribe is the smaller group writ large.*

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*Professor E.E. Evans-Prichard, in "African Political Systems" (edited by M. Fortes and E.E. Evans-Prichard), p.283:

"A tribal section has most of the attributes of a tribe: name, sense of patriotism, a dominant lineage, territorial distinction, economic resources, and so forth. Each is a tribe in miniature, and they differ from tribes only in size, in degree of integration, and in that they unite for war and acknowledge a common principle of justice."

With Berbers the recognition of common principles of justice has no such neat upper social ceiling. It is not quite clear from this passage how far down the scale of segmentation Professor Evans-Prichard intends his assertion of similarity to extend: but granting a kind of formal similarity, and the

importance of the fact that units of different sizes look similar and are conceptualised similarly by their members, it seems to me also important to stress the differences in function of groups of different sizes.

The extent to which this characteristic actually holds of societies normally called segmentary seems to me rather limited: I suspect the attribution of this characteristic to be something of an exaggeration, or alternatively a case of taking too literally a mode of conceptualisation which is indeed found within segmentary societies. For it is indeed true that the relationship between two large clans may, by the clansmen, be conceived as the relationship between two brothers, in virtue of the supposed descent of the two clans from two men who were brothers to each other. But in reality, the operations and functions of various sizes, at different levels of the segmentary system, is inevitably very different. The concerns of the lowest groups with daily life, of the next group with balance of power within the village, of the village with the preservation of its territory and fields, of the wider clans with collective pastures, and of wider groups still with the defence of the region as a whole - the types of concern which activate the groups at various points of the segmentary "nested" scale are very different and call for different types of relationships and activities.* This fact

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For instance: disputes between small groups tend to be focused on some one personality, and co-jurors in collective oaths are selected by agnatic proximity to that personality. Disputes between large groups are different: they tend not to have a person as their focus, and co-jurors are/selected representatives rather than co-responsible agnates. Interestingly, these In effect

representatives are liable to be selected by the opposing group rather than by the group they represent.

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emerges most clearly if one examines the consequences of the superimposition of a modern administration on a segmentary society: the higher-level groupings tend to wither away, whils those at the lower end of the scale continue, ~~unaffected~~.

No doubt it would be possible to construct a model of a "pure" segmentary society, in this sense, in which the structure of groups at any level was the same as at any other. But actual segmentary societies would be rather further removed from purity in this sense than they are in the other respects.

4. Density of Segmentation (General considerations)

An intriguing area for comparative research would be the question of what determines the number of steps in a segmentary system, the number of nested units: or in other words, given an Occamist genealogy in which ancestors are not multiplied beyond necessity, what determines the number of necessary ancestors? Various possibilities suggest themselves: (a) that the number of steps in the system depends on the number of common interests-bonds, each step corresponding to a shared interest. The lowest group is a set of people who are liable to inherit from each other and have priority over each others' daughters, for instance: the next group might be one sharing a continuous stretch of irrigated land and hence sharing a joint stake in the defence of it and its water-rights, the next group might be one corresponding to the joint use of an extended pasture, and so on. (b) Shared interests, by generating a group, may also generate segmentation downwards: if, for instance, a group X is generated by shared rights in a pasture, the self-administration of X, given that it is a segmentary society, requires that there be sub-groups of X which should balance each other in the running of X, irrespective of whether these subgroups correspond to some natural shared interest inherent in the local ecology. (c) It may be argued that the steps or nestings are determined simply by the need of a certain density of it: a ladder is not a ladder unless the rungs are reasonably close to each other. This could be simply a matter of definition: a "segmentary" society (in

other respects) with only very few nested steps might simply fail to be classified as such. But perhaps there is more to it than that: it is difficult to see how a society with very few nestings - say a large tribe with only one step between the total tribe and the extended family - could <u>function</u> as a segmentary society, that is to say maintain some degree of order by means of the balancing of groups. Ex hypothesi, there is only a large multiplicity of small units belonging to a large one, but not ~~melding~~ fusing into subgroups within it. Either such a society would not function at all and be genuinely anarchic, or some principle other than segmentary fusion and fission would be involved... So one may argue that just as, for instance, a physical inverted pyramid of acrobats requires that the "expansion" from the solitary man at the apex on the ground to the <u>n</u> men at the top, should be by gradual steps leading from <u>one</u> to <u>n</u>, so a segmentary system can only work if the multiplication of segments at any one level is not too great. (This argument is by no means wholly separable from argument (b)).

This point can be put in another way: The question of the density of nesting is connected with the important feature of segmentary societies - in such a society, one does not simply belong to a group, one has a definite position in it, a <u>niche.</u> (And this does not mean, of course, what it would mean in our context: it does not mean that the society is stratified and one belongs to some stratum, nor does it mean

occupational specialisation. Indeed, in general segmentary societies are unstratified and without occupational specialisation.) These niches are located vertically, as it were, and not horizontally, and in a social rather than a geographical space (though the two have a certain limited correspondence, the nature of which varies a great deal.) A Berber's niche can be located by inquiring after the identity of his co-jurors, who are those who will be called to account for his acts - and vice versa - and with whom he shares inheritance expectations (unless he is an accepted stranger) and rights over brides. When as an exile or for some other reasons he has to settle in a new location, the first thing to do is to find co-jurors.

It is a feature - perhaps a defining one - of segmentary society that it pre-arranges (but does not fully pre-determine) what in fact are alliances, (and thus in principle products of human volition,) in terms of real or putative facts about kinship, or sometimes in terms of territorial allocation. (A neo-Marxist might say that, as the industrial worker is alienated through congealed past labour, and which capitalist production makes appear as external facts, so the segmentary tribesman is alienated by congealed past alliances, which make the consequences of his own dispositions and actions <u>appear</u> dictated by external, past events of his kinship history...) The game differs from some international free-for-all in that there <u>are</u> "natural allies" and that the rules are heavily biassed in favour of honouring these natural alliances. At the same time,

the game presupposes that they will not always be honoured, that the option of re-alignment exists and that it is sometimes advantageous to take it.

The need for "density" of nested segments arises from the need for pre-arranged alliance. Suppose nesting not to be dense, so that from a large group one descends immediately to, say, 32 subgroups. If conflict arises within the larger group, and no pre-arranged alliances, expressed in terms of special joint rights and in terms of kinship myths exist, the possibility of maneouvre in seeking alliances is so great as to make the situation excessively unstable. Hence, if stability-without-government is to obtain - and this I take it to be a central characteristic of segmentary societies - it is essential that there be some further step or steps between the one and the thirty-two...

Of course, tribes in other ways segmentary where there is such a great jump from one to thirty-two do exist.* But

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I have two examplies in mind, one from Arabia and the other from Iran, and I am indebted to Dr. Fredrik Barth and to Al Faour of the Fadl tribe for this information.

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then they have, and needs must have, a permanent reasonably strong leadership, a politically specialised and elevated subgroup, and to this extent they then are not purely segmentary, in that the relationship of this subgroup to the rest cannot be simply explained in terms of "balance". Central Atlas Berbers are more purely segmentary in this sense, and manage

avoid the use of specialised permanent power-holders within tribes, in a way to be described. Correspondingly, nesting is generally dense.

(d) The precise extent and density of segmentation may in part genuinely depend on historical factors. There are amongst Berbers, for instance, phenomena which strongly suggest this: the survival of small groups or even mere families who "structurally", in terms of the genealogy, have the position of clans and ideally should balance a whole populous clan or (whilst in the actual life of the group it has to affiliate to some structurally - in principle - smaller group); the existence of functioning territorial groups comprising parts of larger segmentary groups who then locally operate merely as segments of the territorial group. There is indeed often a good motive for clinging to positions in genealogical systems which have effectively lapsed; such retained positions imply claims which it may be impolitic or impracticable to assert at the time, or even for the foreseeable future, but which one day it may be opportune to re-activate ... Perhaps Berbers are not unique in clinging to more or less dormant claims, ready for re-assertion should the time come (like the alleged custom of some Fez families to retain the keys of their houses in Granada, should the 15th century expulsion of Muslims be one day reversed....) A step in the segmentary ladder, a nested group, may be kept in being not by a present shared interest, but by a past one coupled with the possibility that it may one day become a present one again.

This kind of consideration, arising out of field material, makes me inclined to retain this category, in terms of the survival of past factors, despite the otherwise very reasonable reluctance in anthropology to invoke the past when independent evidence of it is lacking, ~~of which there are certainly instances and in fact there ought to be quite a few.~~

5. Self-maintaining Order and Disorder

There are several other questions concerning segmentary society in general which must be raised. One is - how efficient is in fact this balancing mechanism? A sceptic might well object that the idea of a beautiful natural equilibrium looks too good to be true: what prevents it toppling over? The answer is, I think, that it frequently does topple over. The segmentary mechanism has some efficacy, but in part its "functioning" is a kind of optical illusion: when it fails, when it does topple over, the subsequent arrangement come once again to exemplify the same pattern as obtained before the break-down: what other pattern is available? The participants may lack the concepts or customs required for anything more elaborate (whilst those of segmentary organisation are easily available to them), and in any case, a segmentary organisation is a kind of minimum of what can be re-established: anything more would require not merely the break-down of the previous equilibrium but positive inventiveness and great effort. If the surrounding area is segmentary, the pattern has an obvious tendency to spread, by a kind of imperative (Or both!) emulation; either combine like us or join us! The result is the same. So, in all but the name of the groups - and possibly even in name - the order is re-established ...

In order to work at all, the system must not work too well. (The same will be seen to hold in connection with a specialised application of the system, the legal procedure of collective oath.) The driving

force behind the cohesion of the groups is fear, fear of aggression by others in an anarchic environment. If the balancing system really worked perfectly, producing a kind of perpetual peaceful balance of power at all levels, the society would cease to be anarchic, and fear would cease to be a powerful spring of action. (It would be too much to expect people to be motivated by a distant memory or awareness of the theoretical possibility of anarchy ...) In this most unlikely contingency, we might perhaps find ourselves with a perfect anarchist (but not 'anarchic') society without constraint or violence, in which both violence and government were absent - but not with a segmentary society. The persistence of a segmentary society requires, paradoxically, that its mechanisms should be sufficiently inefficient to keep fear in being as the sanction of the system.

6. Equality

A further question is - to what extent are segmentary systems, by definition, egalitarian? ± To what extent must it be equal segments that balance? In fact, societies which may plausibly be described as segmentary are not always egalitarian and unstratified. ±

± Middleton and Tait (p. 8.) observe that Durkheim's use of the term "segmentary" is different from the one relevant here. But there does seem to me to be an essential connection between the two uses (though perhaps Middleton and Tait do not wish to deny this), through the notion of non-specialisation and repetition contained in Durkheim's concept. These ~~are~~ entail, the egalitarianism which is essential for the mechanics of a "segmentary" society in the current sense. If specialisation of groups - politically or economically or ritually - occurs, they cannot simply "balance" each other, but their complementarity gives rise to a new factor of cohesion; conversely, if they do simply balance each other, they cannot be specialised.

± Cf. E.R.Leach *Political Systems of Highland Burma*. 1954

Nevertheless, it seems to me desirabl to retain e alitarianism in the definition of segmentary society, or at any rate of a pure segmentary society, for the following reason: in as far as inegalitarian and/or unsymmetrical r lationships exist and are sustained in a society, it can hardly be the segmentary principle alone which is responsible for sustaining them, for keeping them in being. Indeed, these unsymmetrically related groups may have a tree-like structure internally, and they may be incorporated in a wider "tree"; and, moreover, the opposition of segments at each level may be a factor in maintaining the tree. Nevertheless, the asymmetries themselves cannot be explained similarly, at least not without qualification. "Segmentary" explanations always cut both ways: asymmetrical relationships are those which do not cut both ways.

± Professor E. E. Evans-Prichard makes a similar point, in connection with the Bedouin of Cyrenaica who, unlike the Berbers, do have permanent heads of segments("The Sanusi of Cyrenaica", Oxford, 1949, p. 59): "The tribal system, typical of segmentary structures everywhere, is a system of balanced opposition .. and there cannot therefore be any single authority in a tribe. Authority is distributed at every point of the tribal structure and political leadership is limited to situations in which a tribe or segment acts corporately ... There cannot, obviously, be any absolute authority vested in a single Shaikh of a tribe when the fundamental principle of tribal structure is opposition between its segments ..."

However, segmentary systems are seldom pure. The "pure" ideal type is useful primarily in highlighting the kinks and unevennesses of segmentary societies. Some of these may require extraneous factors for their emergence, others may be precipitated, as it were, out of the even, undifferentiated texture through its own needs without an initial asymmetry. (This is, I believe, the case with the "saints" with whom we shall deal, who are a kind of uneven excrescence from a segmentary society.) Societies are not like Buridan's ass, and if a need exists for an unsymmetrical institution, it will not be frustrated by the fact that the initial situation is symmetrical and cannot provide, as it were, a reason for why the kind should be just here rather than just there. If the kink is required, it will turn up somewhere. We may, or may not, be in a position to suggest explanations for the precise location of the kinks. (In the case of our main saintly kink, I think we are in a position to suggest a very convincing explanation for its particular location, though of course the impossibility of experimentation and the absence of controls makes it impossible to clinch the case. The status and merits of the arguments showing the need of kinks of that general ("saintly") kind are of course quite independent of the former argument.)

7. Disposition and Process

Finally, there is the matter of "complementary fission and fusion" which is held to be central to the working of segmentary societies. This is of course merely another name for what we have described as the activation of groups or their cohesion by negation, by outside threat, and the arrangements guaranteeing its presence at every required level. But the customary language of "fission and fusion" is liable to be somewhat misleading.

Segmentation denotes both a ~~state~~ process and a condition. Segmentary societies borrow the ideas applying to the event, (the splitting of families) as it actually occurs in small-scale groups, and apply it to the condition, as it applies both in small and in large-scale groups (opposition inside, cohesion against the outside). In both cases the episodic description in terms of events only "symbolically" applies to the social condition, though in the one (small-scale) case the "symbolic" events describe what really happens, and in the other (large-scale one), something that probably never happened. This leaves the descriptions equally true qua "symbolic representations of social relationship", but most unequal in their veridicity as narratives. One might say that unilineal segmentary societies borrow the actual pattern of the growth of small units, made elegant by the omission of one sex, and use it as a model for society at large.

Thus two kinds of thing are liable to be envisaged or called to mind by these words "fission" and "fusion": (a) a process and (b) a disposition. The first is a process in time, occurring at some definite date; the second is

permanent disposition, whose manifestations and perhaps beginning and end can be dated, but which itself is a kind of persisting un-dated condition.

It is (b) which is crucial and essential for a segmentary society. It is composed of a series of groups, ever ready (disposed) to combine against other groups, whilst their own subgroups are equally ready (disposed) to enter into conflict with each other, and this readiness or disposition from time to time manifests itself in action. A society is conceivable in which (a) the process did not take place at all (but this is unlikely at the lower levels: some fathers must have more than one son, with the sons' families proliferating sufficiently to necessitate a fission. At the higher levels, however, absence of new fission is quite easily conceivable.)

But whilst not essential to the notion and the working of a segmentary society, (a) does in fact also occur. At lower levels, it occurs mainly through the growth in size of families; at higher levels, possibly through the growth of population, and/or through territorial expansion, migration, or simply internal political conflict. All this is an important feature of segmentary societies, though not as crucial as (b), nor properly a defining property of them.

At this point, however, some confusion may set in. To begin with, the process tends to serve as a symbol for the disposition, in the minds and language of the participants. Dispositions, latent states, are something which is perhaps a little too abstract to be easily conceptualised or verbalised: it is natural for tribesmen to express this

characteristic disposition of the groups in which they are involved in terms of (real or supposed) historic episodes, processes, and indeed this is what, notoriously, they do. This habit may be takenover by anthropologists who, although by no means taken in sufficiently to give credence to the supposed episode, are liable to adopt the episodic or process mode of expression.*

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* For instance, Middleton and Tait may have wished to guard against these confusions when they remark (p. 7) "Segmentation should be distinguished from fission. By fission a group ceases to exist as an entity ... by segmentation a group merely divides in certain contexts but retains its corporate identity in others". This is in substance, I think, the same distinction as mine. But the formulation is such that it is liable to be read as describing the contrast between two processes, one more drastic than the other, rather than as a contrast between an episode or process on the one hand and a permanent disposition on the other. The point is that the differentia chosen - whether the "fission" leads to dissolution of the initial larger group - is not a good one. Fission or a split may occur in a largish group which yet retains a corporate identity for some purposes of common concern, and yet such a process or episode must be distinguished from the segmentary state - which in this case it happens to preserve.

The confusions which are generated by this are manifold. For one: for although the process serves as symbol to the disposition, and a process (sometimes) also occurs, the two are not the same ... Indeed, it is very difficult for them to cover the same sub-groups. Suppose a largish group splits - though not absolutely and for all purposes - through, say, the acquisition of a new territory some way off and the settlement of a part of its population on it. The segmentation at quite a high level (i.e. one level below that of the total group under consideration) has already occurred (in the episodic

sense) - if it ever occurred in the sense locally believed at all - a long time ago, when the (say) two brothers and sons of the general ancestor separated their households ... So this cannot be done over again. Once is enough. What was done cannot be re-done. All that could be done, perhaps, is to move or stay in the (old) blocks, so that the existing genealogical distance becomes a greater physical distance and the latent cohesion of the total group becomes more tenuous.

But it is not likely to be as simple as that. For one thing, the sizes of the two groups reckoned in terms of the segmentary genealogy are not likely to correspond to a division required by the new ecological circumstances (arising out of the postulated new territory, say). And worse still: the new territory was presumably acquired by a joint effort of both the initial groups. (Had it not been so acquired, they would hardly be willing to share the advantages accruing from it ...) Of course, they <u>might</u>, if the new territory were known to be equal in value to the old shared one and there was no inconvenience attached to migration, agree that one of the two partner-groups will "stay at home" and the other migrate. But it is far more likely to be equitable to divide the new territory (equally, or in proportion to effort, or size) and stick to the old division in the "old home". The actual distribution of clans and segmentary units amongst the big tribal groupings around Ahansal, who believe themselves to have expanded and acquired new territories, does in fact

follow this pattern.* Sometimes they explicitly attribute the pattern of territorial clan-distribution to the sharing of spoils.

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* This is true of the Ait Atta, the Ait Yaffelman, and the Ait Sochman. It is not true of the fourth, the Ait Mcssat, whose clans tend to occupy continuous territory. Perhaps this is a "newer" tribe, i.e. one whose present clan-structure does not antedate its occupation of its present territory.

So, to restate the argument: fissions do take place, and stories of fission (separation of brothers) are retailed as accounts of segmentations, but the fissions in the stories are not the same as the fissions which do occur. Fissions must indeed be separated from segmentation, as historic episodes from dispositions of the social structure, and <u>not</u> in virtue of leading to a break down of the segmentary cohesion, which may happen but need not happen, and generally doesn't.

This moreover brings one back to an earlier point - that in actually existing segmentary societies, the segments "at the top" are not larger replicas of the segments "at the bottom", except on the genealogical diagram and in the language of the participants. A striking difference is that fissions at the bottom happen now or in the recent past and can and do correspond, reasonably closely, to the actual segmentary ordering of the society and really do give rise to it, whereas episodic fissions at the top stand in a much more complex, and less veridical, relationship to the segmentary structure. The <u>stories</u> about what happens at the top must always, ex hypothesi, be in the past, at least as many generations back

as there are nested steps in the segmentary structure; hence they do not correspond to such present fissions as occur (if they correspond to them at all) in virtue of being true, (i.e the episode narrated cannot be treated as the cause of the fission, as a story of the division of brothers one generation ago can really describe the cause of the relationship of two families now); if they correspond to a present fission at all, this is either fortuitous, or due to some social mechanism which ensures that a present fission follows the lines of previous segmentation. But, for reasons stated, it seems to me unlikely that where fissions occur, there is such a mechanism, that they do follow those lines, and indeed amongst Atlas Berbers it does not look as though they had done so.

The difference between high-and low-level fission beliefs is that the latter occur and really explain current segmentation directly, whereas the former occur more rarely and such correspondence as may exist is subtler and requires more careful interpretation. (At the top, there is a treble disparity in cases of fission: between what happened in the past, between what is believed to have happened, and between what is happening now. At the bottom the three coalesce more closely if not altogether: what happened one generation ago corresponds more closely to what is said to have happened, and it does really affect what is happening now.)

The asymmetry between the higher and lower levels of a segmentary system - the fact that at the bottom, segmentation and current fissions more or less correspond to each other, whereas at the top this is much more difficult - is also connected with the question whether or not a segmentary system must also be a lineage system. At the bottom, it is hard to see how it could be otherwise; at the top, it could easily be otherwise, and indeed it would be simpler (i.e. less conducive to cross-cutting categories or to the need to "re-adjust" genealogies or terminologies) and perhaps more convenient to express the segmentation just territorially.

Finally, there is one further complication connected with "complementary fusion and fission". The distinction between the two, between fusion and fission, cuts across (of course) the distinction between process-episode and disposition. But the resulting cross-classification is not neatly symmetrical.

As episodes, both fusion and fission occur. Groups split, and groups also combine. But in terms of the segmentary ideology, symbols are only available for fission, but not for fusion. The segmentary ideology borrows its symbols from the facts of procreation, disregarding one of the sexes. A father can easily have two sons, but two fathers simply cannot have one son. The disposition of fusion does have a symbol in the genealogy - the disposition of opposed segments to cohere against a common enemy finds expression in their belief in a common ancestor behind their respective specific genealogical

apices - but the episode of fusion cannot have such a symbol, and has to seek it elsewhere - and indeed, finds it, in prestation.

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* It is an important principle in studying Berber society, that whenever one observes a social relationship, one must look either for kinship or for a prestation. (This principle will reappear in the study of the relationships between the saints and others.) Fusion as a disposition is justified by a kinship belief; fusion as a process, by a prestation.

In the case of fission, both the disposition and the episode (the latter more easily if it occurs at a low level, and otherwise may require a new rearrangement of genealogy) finds expression in the kin beliefs.

8. Humpty Dumpty can be put together again

Finally, something needs to be said about fusion. Ideally, it seems that there is no place within a segmentary system for the process of fusion (though of course it quite plainly requires the disposition and its periodic manifestations). As we have seen, the unilineal ideology of segmentary peoples lacks the machinery for coping with it. Ideally, it would seem, a segmentary system should just sprout and sprout, like a tree which is indeed its appropriate symbol, without its branches ever growing back into each other. Of course, natural increase, the breath-taking rapidity of geometric progressions, would make a segmentary lineage system proliferate quite unmanageably if there were no discreet pruning - and some anthropologists have concentrated on the entertaining manner in which this pruning is done.± But fusion in the sense of process has received less attention.± The idea is perhaps

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± For instance, M. E. Peters' work in Cyrenaica + the Lebanon.

± Except perhaps in the less difficult case of expansion, in connection with the phenomenon of the lineages of a conquering and expanding people coming to incorporate and embrace people who are then assimilated into the system.

that fusion (always in the sense of process, the coming-together of previously disparate groups, as opposed to the mere activation of a latent segmentary loyalty) is marginal to the processes of segmentary society. This would be a natural mistake particularly for members of segmentary societies to make, for, as indicated, in connection with fusion they lack the striking and suggestive imagery which they have and employ for fission. All the same, it is, I think, a mistake.

Fusion may be supposed to be marginal to segmentary societies in as far as it may seem simply a by-product of its break downs - the assimilation of groups that have grown too small to play their genealogically appropriate part in the structure; or, alternatively, it may seem just the by-product of a certain looseness in the structure, a failure to allocate people unambiguously and compulsorily to given groups, with the consequence that they freely choose to "fuse" with whomsoever will have them, following nothing but convenience or fancy. This may be the case particularly when there is a stratification such that only the top stratum possesses a clearly articulated and extensive segmentary genealogy, whilst the rest of the population simply fits into the framework provided by the aristocracy, in a way leaving ample scope for free play.

These adventitious factors making for fusion (which no doubt operate in various contexts) seem to me to miss the real essence of the role of fusion in a segmentary society. Fusion cannot be just "frictional", so to speak, a by-product of the failures in the system, nor can it be just an aspect of that part of

the society which is incompletely segmentary (e.g. a free-floating plebs with shallow and hence incompletely segmentary genealogies and attachments).

For one thing, given stability of population and constancy in the density of the segmentary system - assumptions which must have been somewhere near the truth for at least considerable parts of the history of segmentary societies - there must, over a given period of time, be just as much fusion as there is fission. - minus extinctions. This shows that, if fusion is frictional, a by-product of break-downs, then friction is a very essential part of segmentary societies - which is indeed the case, I think. (This connects with the earlier observation that a segmentary society can work only if it does not work too well.)

Moreover, the reasons why there must be such breakdowns, re-alignments and re-allocations of groups, can be made more specific (as opposed to just deducing them from the assumption of general stability, in which fusions have to occur in order to balance out fissions). What are the sanctions operating in segmentary societies, inside given groups, when they face those oft-cited outer threats? The outside threat may not always be quite enough to make the group co-operate, to make individuals or subgroups give way, unless there is a threat of expulsion or secession. This threat does indeed exist, and finds its clearest expression in the collective oath. The threat can also be used by the minority in the group: if driven too far, they threaten, they will not come along, they

will not testify, they will not fight, they will take their guns, resources and flocks elsewhere. Now a general type of threat cannot be efficacious unless it is, sometimes, carried out. When carried out by a minority group, these secessionists find themselves no in too small a group to survive. Co-juring agnates are in Berber called 'the ten people' and ten is really the least number of potential co-jurors and allies anyone could be seen with - and for important cases, such as murder, forty are required (the forty people'). This is merely a way of expressing, with special reference to collective oaths, the fact that the immediate first group in the nested system to which one belongs cannot be too small.

This being so, the secessionists must re-allocate themselves. And indeed, they can, and do. In theory they can do so because, by "sacrificing to" someone or some group, they place them under an obligation to accept them. In fact, however, this obligation is honoured because on the whole groups are willing and anxious to accept recruits, particularly those who in their request are too weak to insist on terms (e.g. allocation of good land) or those who, having landed themselves with a feud elsewhere, are doubly reliable in their new habitat ...

Amongst Berbers, the number of people who, in their own lifetime, have changed habitat in the course of changing groups, "fusing" with a new group, is I should guess, well under 10% in any one community. (There are also people who change their segment, their co-jurors, without changing their habitat. Within a village, this is quite feasible.) The number may have

been higher in the days before 1933, before pacification and the suppression of feuding - the most potent factor making for re-allocation. Of course, the process goes on at all levels - large near-maximal segments re-allocate themselves (without change of habitat) with a new maximal group owing to violent open hostility with an opposed segment in the original group. In these cases one can speak of fusion in a very real sense, as large numbers are involved on both sides.

Thus the possibility and the practice of fusion, which may be described as a kind of "naturalisation" when one of the fusing elements is much smaller than the other and receives a location within the larger group - is an essential part of the system. Without it, the segmentary society would disintegrate into a kind of anomic dust each time fission definitely splinters off some minor group. But this doesn't happen: the segmentary system "re-sets".

At the same time, however, one should not think of the system in the Berber case as excessively fluid, with a vast flotsam and jetsam ever readjusting its position within the structure. As indicated, whilst the possibility of movement is essential and hence some measure of realisation of this possibility is also essential, nevertheless the mobile ones make up a small minority of the total population. There are good reasons making for this: it is <u>possible</u> to re-allocate oneself, but in normal circumstances hardly advantageous. One does it if one must. One may be given a new niche, but not

inheritance rights in the new context. One's claim to brides depends on local good will, and is precarious. It is time that if a group accepts a man, it will also "set him up" sufficiently to enable him to survive - but hardly much more. An important part of property amongst Atlas Berbers are irrigated fields - and these one cannot take with one. (Rain cultivation one can try in the new place, naturally.) One is liable to receive only limited pasture rights in the new place.*

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* For instance, the numerous client families at the village of Temga, offsprings of refugees locally received in the past, do not share in the right to use Temga's best pasture

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It is along these lines that one would also reply to a critic arguing along these lines: given this freedom or possibility of movement, the whole segmentary system seems a bit of a myth. There are alliances, which at the start may have kin myths attached to them, but one can change them at the more cost of the sacrifice of an animal to the new allies - so how does this differ from any anarchic situation in which there are alliances which, as elsewhere, are alterable? These complementary fusions and fissions, the uniting in face of common enemies - all this seems a myth. To some extent they are, indeed: Berbers groups, and I suspect groups of other segmentary societies also do not in fact always combine in face of an outside enemy. Sometimes or frequently they do, but not always. The answer is that whilst it is possible to re-align oneself, it is, as described, inherently a disadvantage. Each naturalisation costs the mobile group or person something - and not

merely the animal involved in the sacrifice - notably in terms of local rights. One does not at once acquire as good right in the new place as one had in the old. Hence the segmentary system is indeed only a kind of starting point, in a game of alliances in which diplomatic revolutions are possible, but departures from it are costly and risky, and one does not depart from this starting position unless there are very strong reasons for doing so. There are important disadvantages attached to each move, each "transfer". As the game proceeds, there will of course at any given time be a certain (not very big perhaps) proportion of players who nevertheless do find it advantageous, or indeed imperative, to make a move and transfer..

Thus, to sum up: Berber society is agnatic throughout. (It is not a case of cognatic clusters around an agnatic skeleton.) The odd uxorilocal family does turn up here and there, but it is rare, and the practice is held to be dishonourable. The ecology and the vested interest in local inherited rights - in irrigable fields, in forest, in pasture use - are such that the whole system has a considerable stability and rigidity: people simply do not plough here one year and somewhere else the next, or fluctuate in their annual uses of pastures. Horizontal mobility between groups does exist and it is essential, but it is not the rule. This mobility does not arise out of a certain looseness of the structure or lack of constraint in the existing property rights: on the contrary, just these canalise men, as it were, and cause them to stay within their

niches. The mobility does/arise out of the social mechanism of the system: it arises from the fact that groups are willing to receive recruits, and that exile from the previous group, self-or other-imposed, occurs from time to time as the result of homicide or other disputes. The status of being a "person of the sacrifice", that is to say an immigrant naturalised member of the group who has acquired local citizenship, a niche in the structure and the essential co-jurors, and who has acquired them not through birth but by making a sacrifice to the group, is a familiar and readily recognised one. It is not an inferior status (except perhaps in the case of such immigrants into stratified holy lodges), but it is a status which, in the logic of the situation, is not likely to be associated, at any rate at the start, with wealth or influence.

9. The Problem Restated.

Initially, the problem has been stated as concerning the existence and the nature of a hagiarchy, or rule by hereditary saints. Was there, in the central High Atlas, something describable as a state, based on the religious prestige of baraka-possessing holy lineages?

This formulation is perfectly legitimate. A visitor to the central High Atlas would be assured, and in the past could have observed, that igurramen, possessors of baraka, are held worthy of reverence and with it of obedience; he would have noticed that baraka is highly concentrated, more so than its explanation in terms of descent would warrant, but in a way conducive to the effective concentration of power; he would be assured by the igurramen that they appoint the annual secular chieftains (though he might notice that this is a misleading exaggeration), that they are the supreme court of the region, and that they are legislators in the sense in which there can be legislators in Islam, i.e. that they communicate the unique Shra'a, Koranic legislation (though again the visitor might have his doubts about the accuracy of this). He would, in turn, be puzzled by some features of this "state", such as the lack of clear boundaries, the fact that it has more than one capital and centre of power, that its citizens may have multiple allegiances within and without its boundaries, sometimes depending on the season, and so forth.

But the visitor might approach the region not with the

categories of political theory in mind, but simply with an interest in kinship and segmentary organisation, [illegible]. A different set of phenomena would then strike him, notably that two different types of organisation are to be found, though both falling within the general category of patrilineal and segmentary. He would find holy and lay villages and lineages, and a tendency towards the following correlations:

Lay groups tend to be symmetrical, egalitarian, larger tribal groups occupy continuous territory, (their clans may not but even in their case adjoining villages will often be of the same clan,) they revere shrines of saints who are not their own ancestors, their genealogies are Occamist (i.e. include about enough ancestors to account for a suitably dense segmentary system), their segmentation is dense enough for what one would suppose the requirements as discussed above, but no more; there is a fairly strong tendency to endogamy, but the tribesmen make no claims to asymmetrical rights (e.g. to import but not to export brides).

Holy groups, on the otherhand, display an unegalitarian organisation, with uneven and sometimes very sharp concentrations of wealth and prestige (particularly the latter), an unsymmetrical kinship system with some groups (the prestigious ones) appearing to have more ancestors than their other kinsmen,(or lay tribesmen), thus providing a kind of genealogically rich spinal column with poorer, shorter branches sprouting off it; as their genealogies are richer, the nesting is sometimes denser

and goes beyond what the internal balancing of segments would require; their settlements are highly discontinuous, and it is only rarely that there are adjoining villages of the same general kinship groups; they claim unreciprocated rights to wed other tribes' daughters (a kind of droit de marabout); their settlements are centred on shrines housing their own ancestors, and so forth.

The problem concerning
This differentiation, within the same territory, and the problem of the nature of the saintly state, are in fact the same, or rather they have an identical solution.

Chapter 3 Distinctions.

1 ~~Hierarchy.~~ Sacred & Profane.

The Berbers of the region we are concerned with can be divided into ordinary, 'lay' folk, who do not need to be characterised by any further name - they simply as it were exemplify the natural condition of human kind as locally conceived - and Igurramen (singular: agurram), latent and actual, or shurfa. Igurramen are, shall we say, hereditary saints. They are people endowed with special status and the capacity to mediate between humanity and the Deity, which they owe to their birth.

In fact, three conceptually distinct (but not always socially distinguishable) notions are involved:

(1) Igurramen

(2) Shurfa

(3) Ihansalen

Ihansalen are all descendants of Sidi Said Ahansal, a saint locally believed descended from the Prophet Mohamed through King Idris of the first Muslim dynasty in Morocco, and to have arrived (1317/8 A.D.) in the region in 800 A.H. and to have founded Zawiya Ahansal and fathered the lineages associated with it.

Shurfa, a term in general use in Morocco, designates the descendants of Prophet Mohamed. In Morocco, a very sizable proportion of the population is believed to be of this descent, and shurfa are distributed in towns (where they form a kind of corporation) and country (where they form lineages), amongst

Berbers as well as Arabs. When they occur amongst Berbers, it is nowadays assumed, by those who take the claim of sherifian origin seriously (and this includes, in my experience, most or all the even with a "modern" education who come to Berber regions as part of the administration), to have become Berberised despite their Arabic origins. It is my impression that the question of how this Berberisation came to pass is not one which would frequently have occurred to people prior to our modern period. One should add that the historical fact that Berbers, or at any rate the Berber language, is in Morocco older than Arabic, is not something locally reflected in the folk mind

Being an agurram is to fulfil a certain role and/or to be in a certain state, and the definition of this state or condition would include transcendental elements. An agurram can only properly be defined in terms of what an agurram does and has done unto him, and this will be done in the next section.

Logically, Ihansalen are clearly a subclass - indeed, a segment - of shurfa, whilst the notion of an agurram cuts across the notion of an ihansal and seems to be a subclass of shurfa, in both cases the differentia being in terms of role or spiritual condition. I say that igurramen "appear to be" a subclass of shurfa, in as far as there are no people in the region surrounding areas who claim to be igurramen who do not also claim to be shurfa, and being a sherif is somehow the ground of agurram-like qualities, and sometimes claimed to be a necessary condition of those qualities. Nevertheless the notions are separable conceptually, even in local terms, and

functions similar to those of Murramon are sometimes performed in other parts of Morocco by people not claiming sherifian descent.

Whilst logically, and in national and pan-Islamic terms, Ihansalen are but a subclass, and proportionately an extremely small one, of shurfa, nevertheless in local terms sherif and Ahansal are almost - but not quite - co-extensive. In the heartland of Ahansal - that is, say, within a day's march in any direction from Zawiya Ahansal - there are almost no permanent inhabitants claiming to be shurfa other than the Ihansalen themselves. Such other permanent ones as may exist are of no particular importance for the local social structure; such impermanent, wandering sherifs as come are of some significance,

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≠ See below, p. 484-421.

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but not very much. Given this near-equivalence, locally, of Ahansal and sherif, the terms may in some local contexts be used interchangeably.

The matter is of course further complicated by the fact that, as in all social situations, it is not the case that someone simply "is an X", but is an X in the eyes of Y speaking to Z in situation S ... Contextual considerations do affect these particular classifications in some measure. For instance, although sherif is defined genealogically, in practice it tends to be applied only to those (genealogically qualified) who claim the rights of and live in a manner befitting a sherif.

Even the notion of an Ahansal may be narrowed down within the descendants of Sidi Said Ahansal.± For instance, the inhabitants of Amzrai, whose descent from Sidi Said Ahansal is acknowledged by all

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± Henceforth, I shall sometimes use the abbreviation SSA for him, or also the locally used expression Dadda (ancestor, grandad) Said.

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and denied by none, nevertheless are liable to refer to the inhabitants of the near-by Zawiya Ahansal itself as Ihansalen, as distinguished from themselves, the Ait Amzrai. Roughly speaking, where Ihansalen are scarce, any Ahansal is an Ahansal, but where they are two a penny, some are more so than others.

The notion of an <u>agurram</u> is of course more context-bound than the others, in as far as it does not have a formal definition in terms of descent, though one becomes an agurram in virtue of ±* Ahansal descent plus other qualifications, and in

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* To ask whether agurramhood <u>equals</u> being a real shérif, or whether it is a consequence, would be to impose logical determinateness on concepts which don't in fact have it in their actual employment.

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adjoining regions also in virtue of sherifian but possibly non-Ahansal descent.± It is however quite clear that agurram-hood

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There is no formal delimitation of zones of influence. Agurram-hood, the possession of <u>baraka</u>, is in God's hands. If social processes underlie the manifestations of divine will, they are not explicitly regularised or consciously recognised.

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is a status, and not a membership of any actual or potential corporate group.

It will be noted that, on the diagram, not all Ihansalen are igurramen. This is indeed so - when normally speaking of igurramen, one means certain, but not all, Ihansalen - yet it is possibly misleading, for all Ihansalen are, as it were, latent igurramen. The main and first explanation given locally for why someone is an agurram is that he is descended from 'S. - though this applies to all Ihansalen, including those not normally, or in most contexts, described as igurramen. This matter, the conflict, so to speak, between the connotation (descendant of 'SA) and the denotation (some descendants of 'SA) of agurram, will be discussed in some detail.

Finally, members of ordinary Berber tribes, who make up the majority of the population, are neither sherifian nor Ihansalen nor igurramen.

2. Explanation of Diagram

Arab and Barbar are not corporate groups; they are simply linguistic classifications.

Agurram is a role and a condition, but one tied fairly closely to being a sherif and, locally, to being an Ahansal sherif.

Shurfa as such are not a corporate group - though their being such is conceivable (for locals if not for the administration), e.g. for taxation purposes - but they are or can be such in local contexts in many localities.

Ihansalen are a kinship group with a segmentary structure and thus potentially a corporate group. Nevertheless, in fact they never act as one body, partly because of their dispersion; but even over a more limited area where dispersion would not be an absolute obstacle, they do not do so, for sociologically interesting reasons which will be discussed, and which are connected with the status of some of them as igurramen.

There is no local term which would isolate the region (i.e. the area of the influence of Ahansal igurramen). Despite this name-less-ness, the region is capable of acting as a corporate group, in virtue of Ahansal agurram leadership. It should be noted that some important tribal groupings are partly in and partly outside the region; others are wholly inside it; and some groupings are in and out of it seasonally.

There is no local term corresponding to my notions of

"heartland" and "rim" of the Ahansal Region, though there is a social reality corresponding to them.*

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* I shall not here argue the case, which I think valid, for the permissibility in interpretation of the use of concepts which do not have indigenous equivalents.

The possible overlap of some of these concepts gives rise to some problematical categories, about whose existence or social possibility there may be some doubt. (p 90:1) On the diagram, VI indicate these overlaps which generate doubtful products by marking the overlap area by [illegible] number. None of these doubtful categories are of significance for the region investigated; the doubts concerning some of them could not be settled locally; others are either essentially terminological ("Who'd one call certain similar phenomenon by a similar name?") or concern what locals would say if pressed, given that actually they have no occasion to make a terminological decision either way. The various doubtful 'areas" are discussed individually below.

(1) Non-Ahansali Berber in the region. The basic answer is that there are [illegible] none. [illegible]. Partly it is a matter of definition. Annually, the descendants of Sidi Mohamed Salah visit the region,* Shluh Berber, are viewed as marabouts: are they

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* See below, p. 421 et seq.

igurramen? The question does not arise, but if pressed, locals might, or might not, say yes. They are called "cherifs" or Ait Sidi Bu Mohamed Salah. Again, a village, with a "latent" Ahansal one, may invite a "foreign" cherif to settle amongst them. - I have known of such a case - and treat him with respect. They might well describe him as an agurram - or not. No such

* It is worth noting that Sherif, like Hajj, is used and favoured by Ahansal families as a family name - i.e. occurring in the third place of the fully expanded name (see above, p.), despite the fact that the meaning of "sherif" applies not only to the family bearing it but to its related segments as well, and whilst the ancestor who actually earned the appellation hajj by an actual pilgrimage tends to be nebulously distant in the genealogy. Agurram, on the other hand, is not used in this way.

phenomenon of importance has actually occurred. Partly, of course this question is terminological. The "region" can be delimited in a number of ways and the area of Ahansal influence fluctuated not merely from time to time, but from issue to issue. There is an Ahansal "heartland" where in fact the Ihansalen have a monopoly: there is a wider region, the "~~Glaoua~~ Rim", inhabited by tribes who divide their religious allegiance between the Inarsalen and others. None of these boundaries or spheres of influence are sharp or very stable. It is a matter of transition, and sometimes of choice. Even the tribes of the heartland can take their disputes elsewhere if they do not like the decision of an Ahansal agurram. In the outer rim of the "region" there are also Ahansal settlements, and its Ahansal igurramen of course have much less c

a monopoly than do those of the central and founding lodge.

(2) Are there altogether non-sherifian i urramen in other Berber regions? Yes, but they are rare & not of great importance.

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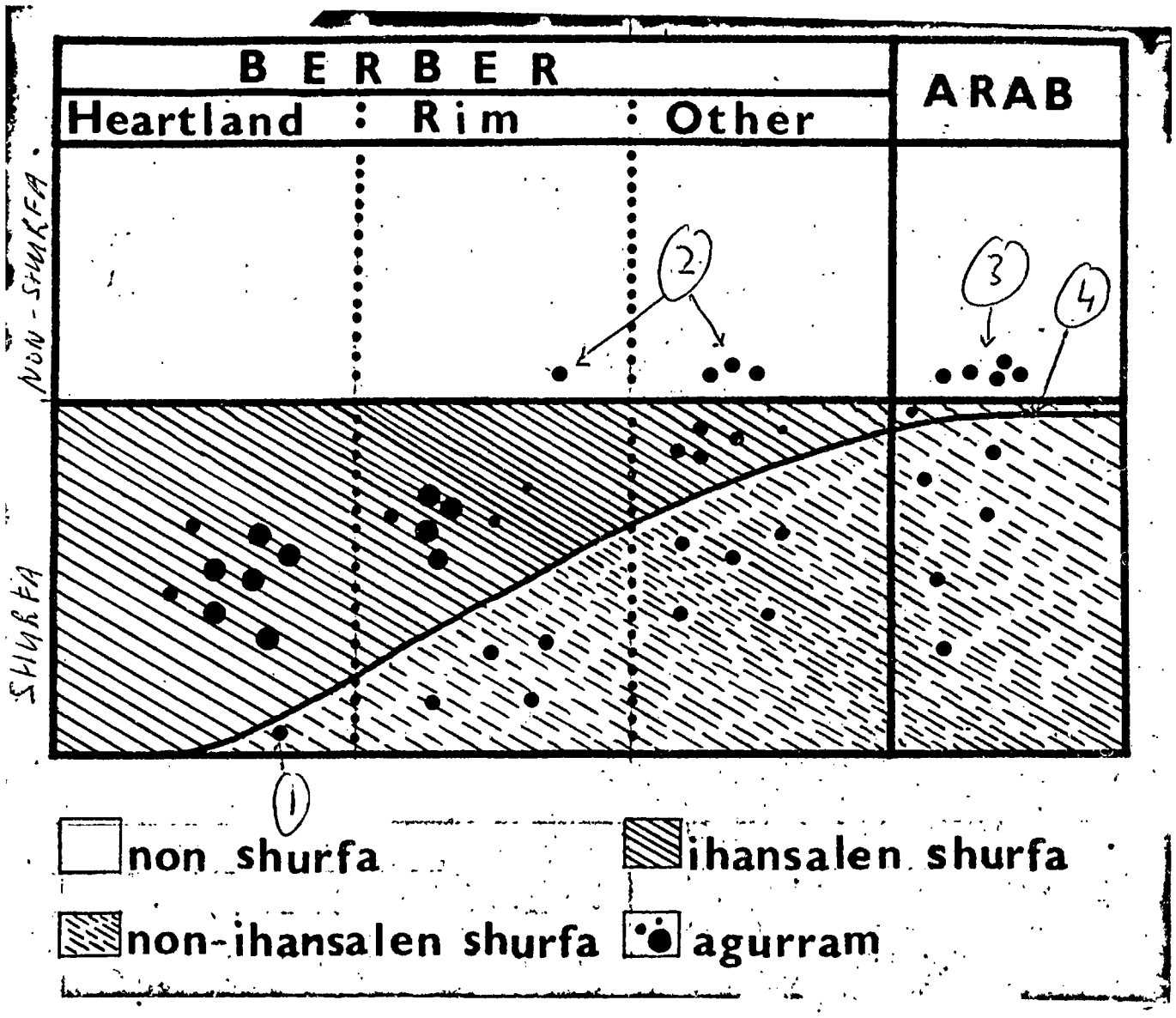
* I need hardly stress that I use the term "sherifian" simply in the sense of held to-be-descended-from-the-Prophet, and not in the sense of descended-from-the-Prophet.

~~elsewhere, possibly. It is not unplausible that Berber-speakers of credited distinguished descent other than sherifian should perform similar services elsewhere.~~ The question is further complicated or made terminological by the fact that "agurram" is not a term used universally - e.g. Berbers of the Rif do not use it. The question does not affect our inquiry.

(3) Are there non-sherifian i urramen amongst the Arabs? The term agurram is not used by non-Berbers: otherwise the answer is Yes. Revered lineages of non-sherifian origin do exist in the plain. The matter, again, does not affect our study.

(4) Are there Arab Ihansalen. There is, in fact, a dispersion of Ihansalen over Morocco. Most of the groups I actually know are in Berber-speaking territory. On the other hand, there are Ahansal shrines elsewhere, e.g. in Marrakesh (which I visited). It is not clear how far these shrines were also a focus for a supposed local kinship group, and how far they were simply a rin and the focus of a local religious club. There can be no doubt that Ahansal settlements in Arabic-speaking areas occurred and exist - there certainly are some in the market-town of the

adjoining plain - though it is not clear how far they would remain anxious to keep up the connection. In the past, they might be anxious to maintain a connection with a nationally famous saint, Sidi Said Ahamed but not with berber life. At present, they might not be anxious to perpetuate a rural connection, and no longer care about the connection with sanctity. One way or the other, it does not affect this study.



"Heartland" means Ahansal Heartland.

3. Igurramen

Definition (1)

Ideally, an agurram is one who

is descended from the Prophet, (in our region: through Sidi Said Alansel), and is thus a sherif (and an Ahansel)

mediates between men and God and dispenses blessing, baraka therefore possesses magical powers

is a good and pious man, observes Koranic precepts (or any held to be such) is generous and hospitable and rich,

visibly a recipient of divine blessing, baraka

does not fight or engage in feuds (nor, by extension, in litigation), hence turns the other cheek.

Definition (2)

An alternative definition might be offered: An agurram is simply he who is held to be one.

One attains agurram-hood by being held to have it. Agurram-hood is in the eye of the beholder.

But that still isn't quite right: agurram-hood is in the eyes of the beholders - all of them in a sense squint to see what is in the eyes of other beholders, and if they see it there,

then they see it also. Collectively, this characteristic is an ascription, but for any one man, it is an objective fact, an inherent characteristic - for if all others see it in a man, then, for any single beholder, that man truly has it.

It would be impossible to say just which of the characteristics in the above list are the essential minimum for being an agurram. Let us say, as a first approximation, that in order to qualify for agurram-hood one must have at least some of them. But this objective qualification, the passing-of-the-test, as it were, has to be seen in the light of the second definition, which seems potentially to conflict with it and whichsays, in effect, that this status is simply ascribed, that the qualities follow the ascription.

But yet it would also be wrong to say that it is simply ascribed. For a number of complications arise. It is held that it can only be justly ascribed to someone who satisfies at least some of the listed characteristics. But here we come upon a crucial circularity: these characteristics tend only to be acquired in consequence of (a previous state of) being an agurram .. a state which they are also invoked to explain:

These circles, the manner in which possessing some of these characteristics is a consequence of being held to be an agurram and vice versa vary in kind and in length:

Genealogy: a man who is recognised to be an agurram will be believed when claiming and citing a holy genealogy.

Possession of baraka: this, again, will automatically be

predicated of i urramen. This circle is very brief. It can however become longer. Stories of magical powers, of greater or less complexity, will be told and believed of i urramen. Casual connection between objective blessings or disasters (good or bad harvests, cures or illnesses, etc) and the acts, blessings and curses, of igurramen will be postulated and believed.

Generosity and wealth: an agurram will receive donations (ziara) from people seeking blessing, which will enable him to be generous and hospitable. This is a very crucial circle.

Pacifism: an agurram will be revered and not be an object of aggression, and so will be able to survive without defending himself - and be expected to do so, and allowed to do so without earning contempt. Being pacific, he will be able to carry out the tasks of an agurram.

One can approach the meaning of being an agurram in two ways: by asking Berbers what an 'agurram' is, and by observing, as far as we can, the social processes by which people come to be igurramen. But neither method by itself will give us the essence of agurram-hood - which lies in the ambiguities and inconsistencies between the two.

If we request definition, two difficulties arise. First, the definition offered may not correspond to the characteristics which igurramen in fact possess, or possess distinctively. Berbers, like everyone else, may be bad at defining. In fact, of course, I have often requested, or obtained unasked, accounts of what it is to be an agurram. The various characteristics

listed were variously brought up. One might be tempted to say that divine mediation (baraka) was the essence of agurramhood, that sherifian descent was the (quasi) causal explanation, and the other characteristics the signs and the consequences of it.

If we consult the actual social reality, itmay again be difficult to sort out what are merely the causal conditions of achieving agurramhood (i.e. agurramen are schemers who accumulate wealth and influence), from the activities carried out in virtue of being agurramen.

The answer is, of course, that there is no 'correct' account. We understand agurramhood when we see the interrelation between the image, the rationale, and the realities of the situation. It would be preposterous to expect these to be consistent. Indeed, in this case they cannot be.

The circles involved are some of them "logical" and some causal. It inheres in the notion of agurram, in its "logic", that if a man is held to be so by all or many others, then he *is* one: for an agurram is one chosen by God, and God reveals His will in the hearts of men, and if other men recognise him as an agurram, that is the best sign of his being one. But corresponding to this tacit "reasoning", there is of course a social reality: an agurram is he who has enough authority to be able to arbitrate and have his verdicts respected, and if a man is *held* to have enough authority to do this, then indeed, ipso facto, he *is* one.

concept of baraka itself is very full explored by E. Westermarck, Ritual & Belief in Morocco, London 1926 Chapters II & III

(When formulated sociologically, there isn't even an inference from the sign to the reality - the two are identical.)

But apart from this logical interdependence of recognition and reality, there are also the causal circles. A very important sign of agurram-hood is riches and the willingness and ability to entertain all comers. But only a successful agurram, one effectively recognised to be such, will receive the donations sufficient to enable him to live and entertain as an agurram should ... (There are of course subsidiary circles of various kinds: only an effective agurram will attract the clients, refugees and so on to enable him to have the entourage necessary for a proper agurram ...)

These circles, of course, also involve contradictions between the ascribed image or definition, and the necessary steps in keeping the circles in motion. Ideally, an agurram must be spontaneously, unconditionally, indeed impulsively generous: concerned with others, and also secure in possession of baraka and the knowledge that God will provide, he does not count his reserves when the needy or the visitor come to the lodge. Even a agurram who really did entertain in this fashion would soon dissipate his resources and, unable to fulfil the expectations one has from one endowed with baraka, lose his status ...

Agurramen are jealous and irritated with each other in this connection. The chief possessor of baraka in one lodge assured me regularly enough that his rivals sit by their windows and watch whether a visitor comes with gifts or not: if well laden,

they went out to bring him to their houses, but if empty-handed, they hid. The rivals of this baraka-possessor said as much about him, of course.

Agurram is, as agurram does, and only he can do who is suitably done by ...

4. <u>The Actual Role of Igurramen</u>.

The services performed by igurramen are:

The supervision of the election of chiefs (imgharen, sing.: amghar) amongst the lay tribes.

Mediation between groups in conflict.

Acting as a court of appeal in the settling of disputes.

Providing the machinery and the witnesses for the main legal decision procedure, namely trial by collective oath.

Providing a sanctuary.

Acting as a <u>bureau de placement</u>, as it were, for those who are forced to seek a new place within the tribal structure. (I prefer the French term to 'labour exchange', for what is at issue is <u>placing</u> a person, rather than finding him work.)

Providing continuity: (ordinary lay tribal functions have impermanent occupants).

Providing leadership if large units need to combine, e.g. against outside aggression.

Providing a rationale for the existing inter-tribal status quo, and indeed, if necessary, for changes in it: notably in connection with the complex spatio <u>temporal</u> territorial boundaries which arise from

transhumancy (Right of pasture are limited in time as well as space - for instance, a tribe may only enter a given pasture after a certain date).
Providing á rationale for the religious establishment, so to speak, of the area.

The protection of travellers, of intertribal trade and of inter-tribal religious festivals and other activities.
Being centres of information.
The establishing and guaranteeing of such inter-tribal links as exist.
Working divine blessing, performing magic etc.

This list comprises both services which are clearly seen for what they are by those who benefit from them (e.g. mediation), others which are perhaps not seen or at any rate not spoken about explicitly or clearly conceptualised (e.g. continuity), and some which are seen subjectively in a different way from what they 'really', sociologically are (e.g. acting as guarantors of collective oaths.)

The power to invoke divine blessings in the form of prosperity, curses, and so forth - and, indeed, the accompanying power to cause harm by transcendental means - I have deliberately left at the end of the list. In any account based on superficial impressions of the role of igurramen, or on the Berbers' own account of what igurramen are, they

would figure near the head of it. They would be structured as their primary distinction and the one which - possibly in conjunction with the shrifian descent which in turn would be invoked to explain the magical powers themselves - accounts for all the others. In fact, this aspect of sanctity, central though it is to the image of an agurram, seems to me epiphenomenal. To be sure, an agurram should have tales about magical powers, performances and achievements circulated and believed about himself. In a sense, someone must - on the questionable principle that everything must have a beginning - have invented them: though I rather doubt whether any conscious disingenuousness is necessarily or frequently involved.* To be an agurram, one must

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* My experience with a previous study of the interaction of an ideology, and a set of practices and social relations, makes me chary of even seeming to impute disingenuousness.

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be a person who has the skill or luck, or more likely to be a person in the position which evokes, the circulation of such beliefs. But the point is that agurrams are in a position which makes the attribution of such powers a necessary consequence, as a kind of rationale, accompaniment or manner of conceiving of the position.

Berber beliefs in the transcendental powers of agurrams, shrines, and holy places, have two relevant characteristics: Berbers have a low or negligible insistence on the falsifiability of such beliefs, and readily invoke the ultimate dependence of

everything including magical powers on the will of the Deity, as an ad hoc hypothesis which accounts for individual failure without refuting the initial belief. Secondly, the beliefs about igurramen vary from inherently incredible attributions (e.g. direct and extremely speedy flights to Mecca unaided by any mechanical contrivance) to perfectly plausible attributions which really only testify to intelligence, cunning or common sense on the part of the possessor (e.g. the ability to surmise that a man sent to fetch some butter from an upland shelter will have consumed a little of it on the way ....)

CHAPTER 4: HOLY AND LAY

1. Elections.

Igurramen and ordinary tribesmen are complementary: the various services performed by igurramen can only be properly understood in the context of the organisation of the other lay tribes. The role of igurramen in supervising elections pre supposes the context of the nature of chieftancy amongst Berbers of the central High Atlas, and the mode of electing chiefs.

Chiefs are, in principle, annual: as a rule immediate re-election is excluded (though it may occasionally occur by consent of all the interested parties). The principles governing election are rotation and complementarity, as follows: suppose a tribe to consist of three sub-clans, A,B, and C. If this year it is the turn of A to provide the chief for the tri as a whole, then the electors will be the men of B and C. Next year, the chief will be chosen from B, and it will be A and C who provide the electors; and so on.

The consequence of this mode of election are obvious enough. It prevents the emergence of real and permanent concentration of power in anyone's hands. The effect of the rules of complementarity and rotation may be and frequently is reinforced further by the existence of more than one chief i.e. by the independent election of further chiefs with special responsibilities (for instance, the supervision of the market, or of the restricted pasture, or of the collective storehouse-

forts). Nevertheless, there is the chief -of-the-year, Amghar-n-asmas, the man responsible in the first instance for the maintenance of order. (But the others are annual too, or even merely ad hoc.)

It may sometimes be supposed that even segmentary groups need some sort of a focus and symbol of their latent unity, in the form of reasonably permanent leadership, a dominant lineage or something of the kind. Central Atlas tribal groupings manage without dominant lineages, and not merely is leadership elective rather than inherited, but the mode of election is such as could hardly be bettered if one wishes to prevent the the emergence of permanently dominant individuals or subgroups.*

* To say this is not to deny, of course, that some families are "bigger" - in both size and prestige - or richer or more influential than others. But there are limits to the degree of such differentiation, limits very narrow by comparison with other societies, and which exclude both the emergence of a special privileged social category - here rich and poor exemplify unambiguously the same kind of human being, in the view of all participants- and also exclude the congealing of power, as it were.

If one considers that, by all accounts* the main danger to most other Moroccan Berber societies, outside the central Atlas

* Cf. R. Montagne: La Vie Sociale et la Vie Politique des Berbères. Paris 1931:

was the periodic if ephemeral emergence of petty tyrannies, one cannot but admire the elegance and effectiveness of the check-and-balance constitution of the central High Atlas Berbers.

But this lack of any permanent internal office-bearers, symbols or providers of continuity, is made easier, or perhaps is only made possible, by the existence of external ones - the saints.

The transient nature of chieftancy turns all chiefs into 'lame ducks'. The conduct of the chief is not that of a ruler guided by the concern with the long-term stability and possible increase of his power. It is the conduct of a citizen temporarily enjoying power, responsibility and prestige, or having them thrust upon him, or accepting them lest they fell into worse hands, but who, in accepting them, knows that whatever he does will be counted in his favour or against him when, in a very short time, he once again, becomes, so to speak, a private citizen. Within the rules of the game, he cannot aspire to becoming a tyrant, to usurping permanent and real power; moreover, the general situation, the relative strength of forces and their lay-out, reinforce the formal rules and make any such aspiration, any hope of breaking the rules, vain, or at any rate unlikely of fulfilment. The current chief has been elected by the members of clans other than his own, by rival clans in effect, who are the last people to wish for the concentration of power in his clan, and who could be expected to bear this in mind when making their choice.

One should not conclude from this last consideration, important though it is, that the electors from B and C clans will actually choose the feeblest and most ineffectual members of A to

be the annual amghar. It is to their interest that he should not be wholly ineffective: one does not wish every feminine row at the well, or every dispute about the location of tents, or a mix-up of flocks, to end in violence. The chief should be a forceful personality - that much is to everyone's interest. The formal criteria given me by the chief of the Ait Bu Iknifen in 1959 as the general recognised tests of fitness for amhrar-hood were very close to the classical Islamic criteria of the Khalifate, as cited in M. Lahbabi's "Le Gouvernment Marocain a l'Aube du XXe Siecle (Rabat, 1958, p.28): they include, apart from moral characteristics, the requirement of sound sight, hearing, speech, and limbs. (Lahbabi suggests that these criteria spring, on the part of the XV century lawyer cited from an attachment to the social forms of seventh century Arabia. It seems that there is here a case of diffusion of proper Islamic learning amongst the illiterate tribesmen for although the need to exclude the physically infirm may spring from the conditions of the central High Atlas as much as from those of Arabia, the stressed explicit formulation of them does not - for how many blind, deaf or dumb men were likely to present themselves for election for chieftancy? The problem is a more plausible one for the Arab societies which, unlike central Atlas Berbers, are liable to acquire their political leaders by accident of birth rather than by election.

But if the tribesmen will not elect a man they hold dangerous, they clearly also will not elect someone whom they

have reason for suspecting to be a danger to them. His own clansmen, the natural profit-sharers of any usurpation by the chief, are without franchise at the very moment when one of their own number is eligible for election .... Of course, an apparently innocuous personage might reveal unsuspected, Caesarean aspirations after election: still, a single solitary year is not much good to him. It is not a very long time, even for a skilled manipulator, to graduate from an elected and limited functionary into a permanent tyrant. Most dictators generally operating in a much more favourable natural and social environment than this one, require much more time than this ....

The system, in brief, constitutes a very effective check and balance against excessive - indeed against any - political ambition. Its weakness lies in the opposite direction: the discontinuity and feebleness of leadership. The chiefs are so weak that, in effect, they only govern by consent; hence elections must end in unanimity. There is indeed no rule specifying the proportion - such as simple majority, or two-third - of electors who would constitute a majority sufficient for election. In the end, there has to be unanimity.

For after all, the chief after election hardly possesses much greater means of enforcing his decision other than such physical and moral force than he possessed anyway, as an ordinary tribesman, as head of household or influential member of his clan. He is allocated no levy, no resources, no personnel

of any kind - only representatives (idbaben-n'imur -elders-of-parts) in sub-clans, whose position in this respect however is no different from his own. Hence, if he is reduced to having to <u>enforce</u> a decision, he is, not quite but very nearly, in no better position to do this than if he were enforcing a private decision on his own with the sanction of violence.

His moral force is indeed much augmented by his being chief: he who defies him is also defying the public opinion which had elected the chief. But this kind of moral strength is precarious and volatile. Public opinion, in taking up a position in a conflict, will be partly swayed by the fact that he <u>is</u> chief and that his authority must be reinforced, right or wrong; but it will also, inevitably and in proportion to the importance of the issue to them, be swayed by substantive considerations of the rights of the case and indeed by the might of the parties and their alignments ... Suspiciously, Berbers are liable to protest too much about how much obedience and respect is due to the chief. The underlying power realities of the situation make this doubtful.

A chief whose election were not, at the end of the process of election, recognised by some part of his constituents, would be in a weak or hopeless position vis a vis that part from the very start: who would, at best, be in the position of a leader of those who do accept him against those who do not. But the point of having a common chief is to be a political unit with internal peace, and this central purpose would be

defeated from the start, and the whole process of electing a chief lose its point, if it were merely a prelude to fission and strife. So the annual chief must be, inescapably, one who is accepted unanimously. And if you accept him, you might as well acclaim and elect him: there is no point in accepting him <u>and</u> yet at the same time antagonising him by openly ending as one who had voted against him. So, Berber elections <u>end</u> in unanimity - or, shall we say, at least the external appearance of unanimity. Elections end in a snowball. A resolutely unappeasable opposition could only mean secession by the recusant subgroup. This is the one alternative - fission. But otherwise the snowball effect takes place, and in the end everyone accepts the successful candidate for the year.

Perhaps one should not call this a snowball-effect and a case of bandwaggon-jumping: for the "election" is not strictly comparable with what we call "elections" in other contexts. These elections really comprise - in a fused form - two elements which in non-segmentary societies are distinct: election proper (i.e. chose from amongst candidates) and <u>acceptance-and recognition</u> of his authority (which in non segmentary societies can be taken for granted, or if not, may follow on a separate occasion). Even here, the two are partly distinguishable: the actual ritual of election is only the acceptance and recognition, whilst the process of decision takes place before, during the preceding negotiations and palavers.

In these negotiations, mediation, persuasion and pressure by the saints plays an essential role (as it does in the

settling of inter-group disputes, in legal cases). This part is so great that when the saints describe the procedures of elections in lay tribes, they frequently claim that they, the saints, appoint the lay tribesmen's chieftains for them. This is not simply a boastful exaggeration of their own role: from their viewpoint, when the tribesmen in their opposed groups and with rival candidates turn up, it may really look like being requested to make an appointment.

The actual mode of election is that whilst the electors assemble in one place, accompanied by some of the igurramen, the men eligible for election sit in a circle in some other place or outside. When the decision is reached, the electors walk around the inward circle of potential chiefs and after circling it three times, place a tuft of green grass - so that the year be 'green', prosperous - on the clean, newly washed turban of the now chosen chief. The person actually performing this 'crowning' may be, but need not be, an agurram. The discussions and negotiations constituting the election or its preliminaries may of course have gone on for days: the elections take place during the period when the tribe, or a large representative part of it, assembles at the zawiya, the village of the igurramen, generally for eight days.

Thus the necessity for igurramen is manifest: it is they who, as benevolent hosts and outsiders to the fissions of the tribe, who smooth over the election and persuade reluctant electors to accept the emergent trend. They also provide a

kind of continuity from one election to the next.

But if they are essential <u>at</u> elections, they are equally invaluable during the period between elections. The precarious annual chief may succeed in dealing on the spot with minor issues. It is in his interest, and that of the disputants or litigants, and everybody, that if possible disputes should be settled rapidly: for one thing, everyone involved in a dispute as an arbitrator or adjudicator will require a recompense, and there is also a loss of time and effort. But important or bitter disputes will not be settled rapidly, and the igurramen are there as the court of appeal when settlement fails at the level of the chief or arbitrarily elders chosen to arbitrate. Moreover, if it comes to trial by collective oath, all important matters, requiring ten or more co-jurors, automatically go up to be sworn at the shrine of the igurramen. (Smaller matters may be settled at a local mosque or shrine, or holy place.) Furthermore, there are also issues between groups larger than those which currently have an elected chief at all: such disputes of course need a mediatorn for any negotiations.

Despite the general polarity of holy-permanent-agurram-by-the-will-of-God contrasted with the lay-annually-rotated-amhrar-by-the-will-of-the-complementary-segments, it should not be supposed that even chieftancy was seen in an altogether secular manner. A good chief meant that the harvest would be good and the flocks prosper; if these things occurred, it showed that the chief was good. Where kinks occur in the

neatness of the complementarity-rotation system, e.g. when certain segments are excluded from eligibility for election*,

* The only kink which I have properly explored is of course the crucial one of the saints. I don't believe that the others were of great importance. A saint could not, of course, be an amḥcar, though ineffective saints could be and were elective inḥraren within their own saintly communities, for purposes of their internal administration, though of course under the much stronger authority of non-elective effective igurramen acting primarily vis-a-vis the lay tribes and not directly concerned with the daily issues of the saintly village. (In laicised saintly villages, the internal amḥcar would of course not have local effective agurram above him.) By a distortion of the system under French indirect rule, during the period 1952-56 an effective saint was the elective amḥcar of the administrative unit 'Ihansalen' consisting of the four villages (Zawiya Ahansal, Taria, Amzrai and Tiγcanimum) - with that title, though politely he was called caid, which he aspired to be and would have become if/when he was made permanent (and not elective) by the French central authority, which however never occurred, Independence intervening.

they are again expressed or justified in terms of transcendentally mediated negative effects - i.e. if they were elected, the harvest would be bad etc. In the one case of this kind about which I know a little (in the Ait Isha chieftaincy election rotation system) the excluded segment are also credited with much wisdom and held to be very suitable people to consult on such issues as may arise. It is of course tempting to connect these two attributes of theirs by an argument similar to that connecting the exclusion and pacifism of the saints themselves with their influence, and to conclude that we have here something like the saintly system in embryo, and a potential and in some measure even actual rival of it. (Even consultation of the excluded lay segment means one consultation less- and one donation less - for the saints.) But I do not know enough

of this case to come to any definite conclusion, having heard of the excluded segment from other Ait Isha but not from the members of it themselves.

The supervision of lay tribal elections, the assistance in reaching a concensus of chieftains, the provision of a neutral locale for the occasion (and one which is safe as a holy sanctuary), the provision of a transcendental sanction and ratification for this process and its conclusion - these are, of course, only part of the services performed by the saints for the surrounding lay tribes. It is however one which, apart from its intrinsic importance, deserves to be listed first, for it brings out most clearly the differences and the complementarity of saints and lay tribesmen: the permanence of sanctity and the transient nature of lay chieftaincy; the pacific saints and the feuding, "balancing" (i.e. reciprocally frightening) lay tribes; the rotation and consequent equality amongst the tribes, and the concentration of baraka and influence amongst some few of the igu̇ramen (who in any case, even without this further and also essential concentration, are already much less numerous than the lay tribes).

Whilst the ritual accompanying the elections receives some mention in the literature*, the intriguing and important rules

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* For instance, in R. Montagne, "La Vie Sociale et la Vie Politique des Berbères", Paris 1931, p.58, etc.

governing the actual content of the election have been neglected or wholly ignored, even for instance by the otherwise very detailed <u>fiche de tribu</u> established by the district officer at Zawiya Ahansal. The probable reasons for this neglect are various: elections were not a part of that "customary law" which was underwritten by the indirect rulers, for the choice of chieftains was one of the powers in practice they reserved for themselves (though they sometimes chose to institute elections). Secondly, French ethnography in Morocco was over-fascinated by the notion of the moiety (<u>leff</u>), after the importance of it had come to Robert Montagne in a kind of flash of illumination,* a flash whose unfortunate long-term conse-

* R. Montagne, "Les leff-s-berbères au début du XVIIIe siècle chez les Masmouda", <u>Hesperis</u> 1941, p.93: cited in Jacques Berque, <u>Structures Sociales du Haut-Atlas</u>, Paris, 1955, p.218.

quence was to blind some of Montagne's successors.* A third reason is interestingly connected with the very function of the

* French ethnography was also badly hampered by the lack of an explicit formulation of the notion of "segmentary society". This led to attempts to locate <u>the</u> crucial group along the segmentary ladder, then discounting others as 'survivals' or 'in decline', and it also led to a failure to see that the famous moieties, even in cases where they really did exist along one level of segmentation, could not be a sufficient explanation of the maintenance of some degree of order throughout at all levels. It also led to the seeing of moieties where they do not exist, a tendency aided by the fact that the word - <u>leff</u> - is used in some regions simply in the sense of "alliance", or even just "political co-operating" group, and can then be applied either to ad hoc allies, or to units at any level of segmentation, or both.

elections itself: an institution such as that of the saints, even in case when deprived of its role and priveleges, survives

with its signs of distinct behaviour, wealth and so on. But the function of the rotation-complementarity elections was precisely to avoid any permanent differentiation, and it succeeded in this. Hence when the institution itself was abolished, it left few traces: that had been its task.

~~Chapter 4 (Continued)~~

2. Segmentation and Elections.

The contention is that the lay tribes' mode of electing and restricting the duration of their chiefs enabled these tribes, as groupings, to avoid crystallisations of permanent and concentrated power in their own midst, to dispense, surprisingly, with any permanent personal symbol of unity and permanent leadership: the personal symbols and agents of continuity were found outside, amongst the igurramen.

But we are dealing with a segmentary system, and hence all problems are liable to be duplicated at a number of levels, and solutions must likewise (though not necessarily in identical form) be found at a number of levels. (This point is something which was not present with sufficient clarity, I think, in the minds of French investigators of the subject.) The corollary of this for the institution of annual elections by complementarity-and-rotation is that this must occur not at one but at a number of levels, that there must be a complex system of elective wheels within wheels.... This is precisely what one does find. But the manner in which superimposed complementarily elected and rotated annual chieftains, and their choice, are related, is a theme sufficiently complex and intriguing to require treatment in a separate section.

Much of the French literature on the political life of the Berbers tends, I think, to overstress the role of

the jemaa*, the assembly (though rightly noting that there

* This word, with slightly different pronunciations too subtle for my ear, does service for mosque, for Friday, and for assembly. One assembles on Fridays at the mosque.

is a hierarchy of such). These accounts tend to be misleading in as far as they give the impression that these assemblies have a kind of corporate existence. But of course they have no existence independently of the social group, the segments, of which they are the jemaas. They simply are the natural form of discussing and settling issues for groups which are reasonably egalitarian and which have no other machinery available to them.* During French days of course,

* The one piece of evidence which seems to suggest that these assemblies did after all have a kind of conceptual existence is that in one of the few documents available in the region, the crucial land deed made out between Sidi Lahcen u Othman and the previous inhabitants, some of the signatories for the latter are described as signing 'for the jemaa' of the so-and-so. But this may equally be interpreted as simply being the way of representing the so-and-so ....

there were jemaas, both 'administrative' (composed of headmen of villages) and 'judicial' (composed of nominated or elected elders as a kind of permanent jury), which were small in number, had definite functions and a kind of continuity, in other words which were a kind of specialised and genuine institution. Some time after independence I observed a 'natural' jemaa, so to speak, called into being by the need to cope with a crisis arising out of the disclosure of the corruption of a number of headmen. The jemaa was largish,

there was no formal election to it nor formal procedure, and quite young men were on it, especially from households where no older man was available.

To sum up, one can say that Berber jemaas have no sense of corporate identity distinct from that of the group of which they are the jemaa; they have no continuity other than that of that group; they have, of course, no kind of secretariat or records. On the other hand, they can, and generally do when larger groups are involved, consist of people who are delegates, who represent subgroups. In dealing with the important matter of the mode of election of chiefs, we are, at the same time, describing the assemblies and hierarchies of assemblies in the fulfilment of their most characteristic and perhaps most important function.

In dealing with this matter, we are inescapably committed to attempting a reconstruction: the indigenous system of elections did not survive 1933, though of course many attitudes and assumptions which have found their expression in it did. In attempting such a reconstruction, it is a little difficult to sort out various kinds of contradiction: those inherent in the system itself, those arising from inconsistent accounts given by informants (in the sense that one informant may be accurate in his account whilst another, or the same one at a different time, may be simply wrong), and those arising merely out of an attempt to have a unitary picture when in fact there was regional and perhaps

temporal diversification. I believe that the basic principles involved were identical throughout the region, though the details of their application varied, and that I have succeeded in eliciting them: but the fact remains that it is a reconstruction. As indicated in the previous section, this institution was one designed to obviate traces, and it did not leave many - at any rate not obvious ones - when it was abolished after foreign conquest. It is perhaps a minor point of interest for anthropological theory, that some institutions may contribute towards stability of the society in which they are found by erasing consequences of something, by destroying the continuity of something which, if allowed to be continuous, would itself grow to proportions incompatible with other desired features. There may be social patterns (for instance, crystallisation of power) which, like physical refuse, may require regular periodic disposal...

The general principles of multi-level elections are these: there are a number of superimposed wheels-within-wheels, but the system displays special features at the top and at the bottom, for different reasons.

Top Level

The top level of annual chieftancy is only activated by the recognised need to have common leadership for very large units. When such a need is not felt, no chiefs are elected at this topmost level. The last occasion on which

this need was felt, was during the period preceding the abolition of the system itself: the need arose from the requirements of joint resistance to the French advance. (Thus the power which abolished the system, also ~~effect~~ began by re-activating its most extensive manifestation ...) The "total region" activated into co-operating by such a stimulus is larger than any unit definable in terms of either descent beliefs or even territorial units: it can only be described, not named, as the area of influence of the given saintly lineage under whose supervision the co-operation is ratified and the top chief elected. (Apart from being larger than any given unit in the local systems of segmentation, this area can also cut across some of them: the area of Ahansal influence, for instance, included some but not all Ait Haddidu, and some but not all Ait Bu Gnez.) The chief so elected is then known as "chief-of-the war", and is annual, and further elections for this position obey the rules of complementarity and rotation. The "rotating" are the large groups whose relation to each other, apart from the relationship created ad hoc by a "sacrifice" and a joint meal, is simply that of fellow-veneratorg of the same shrine and holy lineage. The significance of the igurramen is manifest with particular clarity in this context, in connection with the machinery for obtaining large scale co-operation transcending the limits of supposed kinship or common habitation of a valley.

Grass Roots

The formal procedure of the lay tribes in electing their chiefs (or rather, in expressing their choice) is remembered as follows at Zawiya Ahansal,[c] the main lodge:

All the 'eligibles' sit on a flat place, large enough to accommodate them all when seated in a circle. The remaining segments have each provided one or two men towards a group which, with grass in their hands, walk around the seated men. They go around them once, twice, and after the third turn they place the grass on the right side of the newly-elected chief's turban ... Thereafter, they pray, and a passage from the Koran is read.

Thereupon the newly elected Top Chief exclaims - Supply me with the Little Chiefs. Then each of the segments-clans repeats the same performance as before, identically but for the fact that each of the groups involved is one unit 'lower down' on the segmentary ladder. This repeat performance on a lower level completed, the 'little chiefs' "demand their 'elders of parts'", that is, the minuscule headmen of the segments on the lowest level. These are then supplied, by consultation between the little chiefs and the segments supplying their own heads, but this nomination in turn no longer involves the ceremony with circles, grass etc.

This account is based mainly on a description supplied by U Ben Ali, a respected elder (though not of Top Saintly family) of the main lodge, old enough to have witnessed

many such elections. This picture leads one to expect three levels of chieftaincy, and fits in admirably with the actual structure of such typical tribes as, for instance, the Ait Isha or the Ait Mhand, who regularly came to elect their chiefs at Zawiya Ahansal. Hence one must conclude that at times of its maximum development, i.e. when a topmost chief was also elected to co-ordinate inter-tribal activities (e.g. resistance to the French), four levels of chieftaincy existed, of which the upper three were rotated. (There is no doubt about there having been such a topmost inter-tribal chief, nor about the rotated elective nature of the office. This has been independently confirmed by many people at a great variety of places. What is a little difficult to obtain was a simultaneous account of it and its relations to the lower levels. Informants - often one and the same informant - tend at any given time to stress either the elective chieftaincy, or the arranged nomination which seems to apply only to the lowest level group when it is incorporated in wider ones; but they have difficulty in talking of the two at the same time and relating them.)

Without the saints, there are no means of obtaining inter-tribal co-operation. Thus, for instance, the main body of the important and large tribe of the Ait Haddidu (to the East of the Ahansal region) has a numerically small lodge of (non-Ahansali) shurfa-igurramen settled in their midst, whom they employed for mediation internally but not externally

(Their location made them ill-suited, of course, for external mediation. Certain segments of the Aid Haddidu also had relations with and regularly presented donations to the Ahansali saints at Tenga, and others to those at the main lodge: this was, for the segments concerned, a matter of maintaining external contacts, having saintly protectors available for mediation with non-Haddidu groups.) These local Saints "internal" to the Haddidu, did indeed provide the leadership for the resistance of the Ait Haddidu who, with the tribesmen of Ahansal-land, share the honour of having resisted longest: but the Ait Haddidu did not combined in any supra-tribal coalition, and on the contrary did not impede the French advance as it approached their own frontiers. On the contrary, they on occasion impeded the other tribes who were at the time engaged in the struggle with the Rumi. The relevant moral of this is not the lack of sufficient pan-Islamic or even national sentiment - this is hardly surprising in a segmentary society - but that, in a segmentary society with impermanent, "rotated" chieftains, common action is not to be expected from units larger than the range of influence of some one saintly centre.

The limits of this range are not rigidly fixed, of course. Had the Ait Haddidu for some reason strongly wished to combine in a wider unit in opposition to the French, they could have joined the charmed circle of Ahansali influence,

using those of their segments which were within it already as mediators, by way of introduction so to speak...

On the other hand, there is a certain amount of inertia built into the systems of allegiances-to-saints: to have joined the circle of Ihansalen-recognising tribes would have meant (a) going against the interests and hence no doubt the decisions of the local igurramen*, who after all were

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* It is interesting to note that this centre of sanctity, like the Ahansali one of Temga which similarly led the resistance almost to the bitter end, was "without influence", as the French reports said, during the period of the French Protectorate. This seems to indicate that reverence for individual saints or lineages is not deeply and incradicably "internalised": this reverence does represent a most cogent motivation and social force, but its mechanics are connected with the social structure rather than the individual psyche. In simplest terms, one reveres and obeys because all others do - and this gives the saints' baraka a very real force - the force of all the other clients combined. Once broken and isolated, the charisma and reverence are gone too...

I visited this little centre of sanctity during the summer of 1956, when in this particular region the transfer of power completed elsewhere, was still in progress. A French captain and a rather depressed Caid, power-holder under the French, was initiating a detachment of the new Moroccan Royal Army - not quite happy in this most isolated of posts - in the intricacies of local administration.

The head of the little zawiya of local igurramen was busy trying to persuade the higher echelons of the new administration to confer upon him a post under the new dispensation, thus helping the local powers of agurram-hood to emerge from twenty-three years of eclipse. As I have not been to the region since I do not know whether he succeeded nor what the subsequent local political transformations were. The opportunities for intrigues and turning the wheel of fortune remained considerable: The Istiqlal party was established and provided, as elsewhere, a new channel of information and advancement. The then provincial governor, Addi u Bihi, subsequently rebelled against the central government, and further changes must have occurred during and after his suppression.

The Haddidu, who are noted for providing the poets and the wandering minstrels of the Atlas, at that time also composed new sets of couplets glorifying the exploits of the nationalists who had so suddenly and surprisingly brought a change of regime to these distant valleys. If only one possessed all the couplets, with their political and social commentary, invented and sung since the start of the century or earlier, one would have a most vivid account of the social history of the Atlas imaginable... After 1940, these couplets ironised the humility of the defeated French in German prison camps (Cf. V. Monteil, Les Officers, p. 132); in 1960, in Bu Gmez, they ironised the instabilities and vacillations of the Moroccan administration by comparison with the French (information supplied by Rye College Expedition, 1960) ....

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the media and agents of such local intra-Haddidu co-operation as already existed - and this would have had to be a joint, co-operative act! - and who paradoxically would have had to be ignored and/or contradicted in a new joint venture, and (b) more specifically in this case, would have required the resolution of the dilemma as to which Ahansali centre is to be recognised - main lodge or Temga?, and whichever choice was made, this would have necessitated one of the two already Ahansal-committed Haddidu segments, if it was to remain in the general Haddidu body, to transfer its loyalty ... It is obvious that new crystallisations of a saintly range of influence is not an easy matter.

. Where, on the other hand, there was a pre-existing range of influence of a saintly centre, transcending the apices of tribal segmentation, as it were, the consequence of the French advance was to activate wider co-operation and a top-level of chieftaincy. Two such political units are remembered in the general region in this period, between about 1915 and

and 1933, one each for each of the main centres of Ahansali sanctity, namely for the main lodge and for the Temga group. Tribesmen can recall the names of the individual annual chiefs-of-war. It is however very significant for our general analysis, that the saints under whose auspices these inter-tribal annual "generals" were elected are remembered more clearly and admitted to be "senior" and more influential than the annual chiefs-of-war, and this is confirmed by the fact that it is the saints, and not the elective generals associated with them, whose names figure in the French military literature concerning the "pacification". The figures who are noted in it, both as opponents and as, in the end, as those with or through whom peace was to be concluded or whose submission and co-operation it was necessary to obtain, were Caid Sidi Mha and Sidi Mulay of the main lodge, and Sidi Hussein "of Temga", as the French described him (though his actual home was the associated lodge of Asker, and to the Berbers he was known as "of Asker".) then head of the Temga group.

The intermediate and ground levels.

At the "ground level" of segmentation, rotation might be absent if it occurred at the next higher level. A chief elected by rotation and complementarity for a given group would name his representatives in the various subgroups of the group of which he is chief. In naming them, he would consult with its members but not necessarily observe any principle of rotation: by the time we have reached this ground level, the groups involved might be so small, and co-extensive with the range of daily contact of its members and almost co-extensive with actual blood relationship, that the jealousy of opposed segments is, if not mitigated, at least much complicated by a variety of other immediate relationships and affinities. Hence in naming these representatives (idbaden'imur) of a higher-level chief, whilst obviously note had to be taken of local susceptibilities, there was no need or room for a formal regular rotation principle (which however could still be invoked if the little group found itself on its own and without a chief of a higher level), and not effectively incorporated in a larger grouping whose chief it recognised. Nor was there, in the case of such a nomination from above, an occasion to invoke complementarity. The 'upper chief' (amɣar n'afella) would consult all the notable members of the sub-group, including, naturally, the sub-sub-group from which he finally draws his

representatives. There is no occasion for excluding some sub-group for voting and at the same time making it uniquely eligible for providing the office-holder: the sub-groups involved are too small.

It should be noted that, when an Outsider or a Superior is lacking, when there is neither an Upper Chief nor a Saint to mediate, the principle of complementarity is recognised not merely in "natural" groups, i.e. reasonably permanent groups with some kind of stable identity, but equally by ad hoc groups which may be brought together temporarily by nothing more than a mutual dispute. For instance, if two groups come in conflict and no outsider is available (or none is invoked for some reason, e.g. economy, or the triviality of the issue) to mediate negotiations for a settlement, a master-of-ceremonies, so to speak, is elected "internally", from amongst one of the two disputing groups by the members of the other. Here of course complementarity is not supplemented by rotation, as these cases of conflict are, in theory, to be settled rather than permanent, and the total group, consisting of the two parties to the dispute, is an ad hoc one ... (In fact, of course, disputes are often endemic or latent, and are re-opened when one side holds the time propitious.) The identity of the electing and the eligible groups can be settled by lot; alternatively, as the situation of such conflict is obviously tending towards a solution by collective oath, a possibility which will certainly be

invoked even if the crisis isn't allowed to go that far, the rules determing who is to testify (i.e. the accused party) may be applied to the choice of the mediator. These rules are, in theory though not in fact, unambiguous; the mediator will be from the non-testifying group.

To return to the theme of election of chiefs and representatives of chiefs in subgroups: as described in the case of the final, ground-level subgroups there generally (though not always, is a mediator in the form of an 'upper chief' of the next larger segment, and complementarity is not invoked any more than rotation. One has reached the limit, where political structure is co-extensive with a wide set of daily intimate relationships which complicate and overlay the simple segmentary principle.

In some ways, it is the intermediate levels which are the most bewildering. At first, interrogations tend to bring forth three kinds of mutually incompatible answers. 1) The minor chiefs (and indeed major and top ones) are nominated by the Saints - so the Saints are liable to claim. 2) They are nominated by the Upper Chiefs, whose representatives they are. 3) They are elected, as in the case of upper chiefs, by the tribe (taqbilt, whose chiefs they are to be.

From the viewpoint of the Saints, it may indeed look as if they "appointed" chiefs, Upper and Little ones alike. The tribesmen arrive at the lodge for the election, many

holding their counsel, others in disagreement, and it is the recognised task of the igurramen to aid in the achievement of consensus - after all, elections must end in agreement (or fission of group..!) and there is no ballot, secret or other. Yet the igurramen have no means of enforcing, at any rate directly and immediately, an unpopular appointment. What they generally can do is to assess the feeling and the prospects of the potential candidates and "appoint" in the sense of ratifying what they guess to be the most acceptable choice anyway. Their ratification of him will make him more acceptable to such dissidents as may remain. Their prestige can only gain by their success as agents of harmony; and recourse to the ultima ratio of an agurram - magical curses or turning of other tribes on to the recusant group - is something which a Saint cannot use too frequently without excessive risk. It is not so much the danger that the curse would not work and divine punishment not be forthcoming (for sooner or later, something disagreeable always does happen, and it is recognised that this kind of punishment is liable to time-lag and to be shared by the innocent with the guilty - in fact, just this is its terror for the guilty, who fear the wrath of the innocent); what does matter is that if the curse lies on too many people, it loses the terror it has by isolating some. A Saint can curse some of the people all the time, and everyone at some time, but he cannot

curse all the people all the time - this is a crucial maxim of saintly politics.

So, the Saints think and claim they appoint when in fact they ratify and mediate. No doubt, occasions occur when a very well placed saint can indeed simply impose his will on a weakly placed group.

The same arguments apply in connection with the nomination of little chiefs by Upper ones: the nomination may, in fact, be simply a ratification. The extent to which it is the one or the other must vary from case to case according to context and the strength of parties involved.

One should add that Saints or Upper chiefs who claim to nominate lesser ones (as opposed to accepting and ratifying the verdict of an election) have less excuse for their exaggeration in as far as the public and conspicuous ritual act of election, as described in the previous section, sharply underlines the elective nature of chieftaincies, Upper and little (but not minimal, as described). All the same, this objection to the claims of a boastful Upper chief or Saint is not absolutely conclusive: whilst the act of "election", the march around the candidates by the other men of the tribe, the placing of green grass on his turban and so on, is solemn and conspicuous, its significance is not necessarily clear: is it the act of choice or the ratification of a choice already made?

And if it is the latter, it is not crystal clear who made the real choice. My own view is that, in the case of non-Top chiefs, all the three interested parties in fact contribute to the decision: and in the case of Top chiefs, the same holds of the two parties concerned - the tribesmen and the Saints.

In the case of the ground level "representatives", there is, as stated, no ritual with circle, green grass etc. and, superficially, the plausibility of interpreting the selection as a nomination from above are to that extent more plausible. Nevertheless, for reasons specified (connected with the intimacy of groups at this level) the matter is equally ambiguous or variable here.

There is, however, a strong probability of rotation being observed, if for some reason the group is acting in isolation and thus becomes, for the time being, a 'top group' as well as a minimal one. Such isolation is quite liable to occur, and not merely as a result of a kind of diplomatic insulation, but simply because for some reason wider groups have not been activated that year. Then, rotation is to be expected, for such a group is of course in a position similar to an ad hoc one brought into being simply by some dispute: There being no outside mediator, it is only fair that if the mediator is chosen from subgroup A, it is the members of not-A who elect, and vice versa...

Groups which find themselves permanently, and

voluntarily, in conditions of such 'diplomatic isolation' such that their own annual chief is the topmost one in his particular series, however small the range of his parish, are the laicised saintly villages. Their saintly origin, however latent and merely potential its actual saintly use, tends to be valuable enough to be safeguarded by avoiding permanent involvements or identification with surrounding groups that are lay in origin as well as in function - identifications such as would be entailed by regularly participating with them in a system of rotating and complementary annual elections. At the same time, the fact that such groups of saintly origin, are laicised, means that there are no outstanding subgroups, families 'born to lead', to be found amongst them, so that the normal elective process takes place. Hence with these groups, the system operates but finds its 'ceiling' very rapidly, i.e. at village level.

The situation is more complicated in effective, non-laicised saintly groups. Here leadership is, in the nature of things and by the will of God manifested in the flow of Grace, vested in the leading families and the leading individuals within these families. At the same time, it would be somewhat below the dignity of an important saint to concern himself with the day to day minor issues of the saintly village: the commander-in-chief, so to speak,

is not generally also the captain of the HQ company. Thus within the effective saintly village there will be a rotating-complementary system for the internal annual chief, whose importance and authority will of course not be comparable with the local top saints, and whose concern will generally be only with internal and minor matters. In the internal elections of these local annual headman, top Saints would of course not participate either as candidates or as formal voters, though naturally their informal view might be decisive. In the main lodge, an internal system of this type existed, there being two "rotating" halves of the village... The effective saints all came from one of these two segments, but this did not give that segment any political preponderance: the elections were really from among and by the residual majority of ineffective saints, whether close or distant relatives of the effective ones. This system in the main Lodge survived into the post-pacification period, though only intermittently: for during both a major part of the French period, and during the early years after independence, headmanships were not annual but made permanent, until revocation...

A SPECIAL KINK

One of the odder kinks in the rotation-complementarity system of chieftaincy election is found amongst the Ait Abdi of the Koucer plateau, overhanging the Ahansal valley. These Abdi on their stony, high and inhospitable plateau, falling off in steep escarpments on a number of sides, are fairly isolated from their clan-brethren, the other Abdi, by geography, and rather more sharply isolated from most of their other neighbours by mutual hostility. In normal circumstances, they do not appear to have been a part of a wider system of common chieftaincy. But their internal system, restricted to the Abdi of the Koucer, is curious.

For purposes of chieftaincy election, four levels of segmentation must here be taken into account: first of all, there are the Ait Abdi of Koucer as a whole. This social group can only be defined geographically, as 'just those Abdi who live on the Koucer': for more than one clan of the Abdi live there, and neither of the clans who do live there are exhausted there, so to speak, but have members elsewhere too.

The next, second level are the two clans represented on the Koucer, the Ait U'Affar and the Ait Ahuia 'Hmad. x/

The third level: each of these is in turn bifurcated.

x/ Le diagram, p. 137.1

The Ait Khuia 'Hmad are divided into the Ait Brahim and the Ait Whand. The Ait U'Affar are divided into the Ait U'Affar proper, so to speak, and the affiliated Ait Vidir. (Within the wider, general geneelogical system of the Ait Abdi, the Ait Vidir occur as a notion co-ordinate with the Ait U'Affar, and thus should, logically, occur on the previous, second level. But on the Koucer plateau there aren't enough of them to form a group co-ordinate with the Ait Khuia 'Hmad, so they fuse here, socially, with the Ait U'Affar to form, at that level, one group. They happen to use the name of U'Affar at the upper level, though there are roughly as many Vidir as there are U'Affar on the Koucer, and one might equally have done it the other way. The fact that the name of the U'Affar rather than that of the Vidir is used for the group consisting of both, does not give the U'Affar proper any privileged or special position within the wider group. In fact, the little subclan which during the period preceding the French conquest, during French rule, and during early period of independence until the abortive little rising of 1960, secured a pre-eminent position on the Koucer - the Ait Tus - came from the Ait Vidir.)

Fourth level: each of the four groups on the previous level is divided into four (and in one case, three) subclans, which in turn are composed of individual cohabiting families).

The system of annual chieftaincy was as follows: Chiefs for levels numbers one and two were elected by rotation and complementarity. Top level chief had two rotating segments from which he was elected (these being on level two). Chiefs at level number two had seven or eight segments, respectively. (For him, the rotating subgroups were drawn from level four.) The nominated 'elders of parts' were chosen as follows: at level three, by top chief; at level four, by chiefs at level two. Thus the top chief would work through four 'elders of parts', and the two second level chiefs through seven or eight.

The striking thing about this is that we have here two overlapping systems of rotation and of authority. It is as if a military unit existed in which the colonel dealt with and through lieutenants, whilst captains dealt with and through sergeants (and colonels were elected from amongst lieutenants, and captains from amongst sergeants.)

Obviously the most interesting question about this intricate system is whether the two set-ups, the first-and-third levels one and the 2nd and 4th levels ones, existed simultaneously: the question whether elections and nominations with each of them occurred during the same years (as opposed to the possibility that either of the two systems was only activated, according to circumstances, in different years). Informants assert that the two systems did co-exist simultaneously.*

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* The most important of these informants, [illegible] n'ait Tus a

much respected elder of the Tus clan, now retired since some years from formal political functions, repeated and stressed this when independently and systematically re-examined concerning this point by Mr. David Hart in 1960.

Some have asserted, most plausibly, that during years when there was no need of it, the top level system was not activated; others (notably Moha n'ait Tus) deny this, claiming that both systems were in operation all the time.

No system of similar complexity has been found or reported either by me or by Mr. Hart (who has since 1959 been engaged on a study of the lay tribes of the region). But even if exceptional, it constitutes an elaboration of the characteristic local elements, and seems to me quite in the spirit of central High Atlas Berber society. In a non-segmentary society, an overlapping double hierarchy, with one chain of command as it were 'shot through' another, would be difficult to conceive, and would presumably lead to

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* The "parallel hierarchies" of revolutionary communist armies are, after all, parallel: the chains of officers and of political commisars do not "leapfrog" each other (as they do here), and their functions are not identical, and indeed include mutual supervision.

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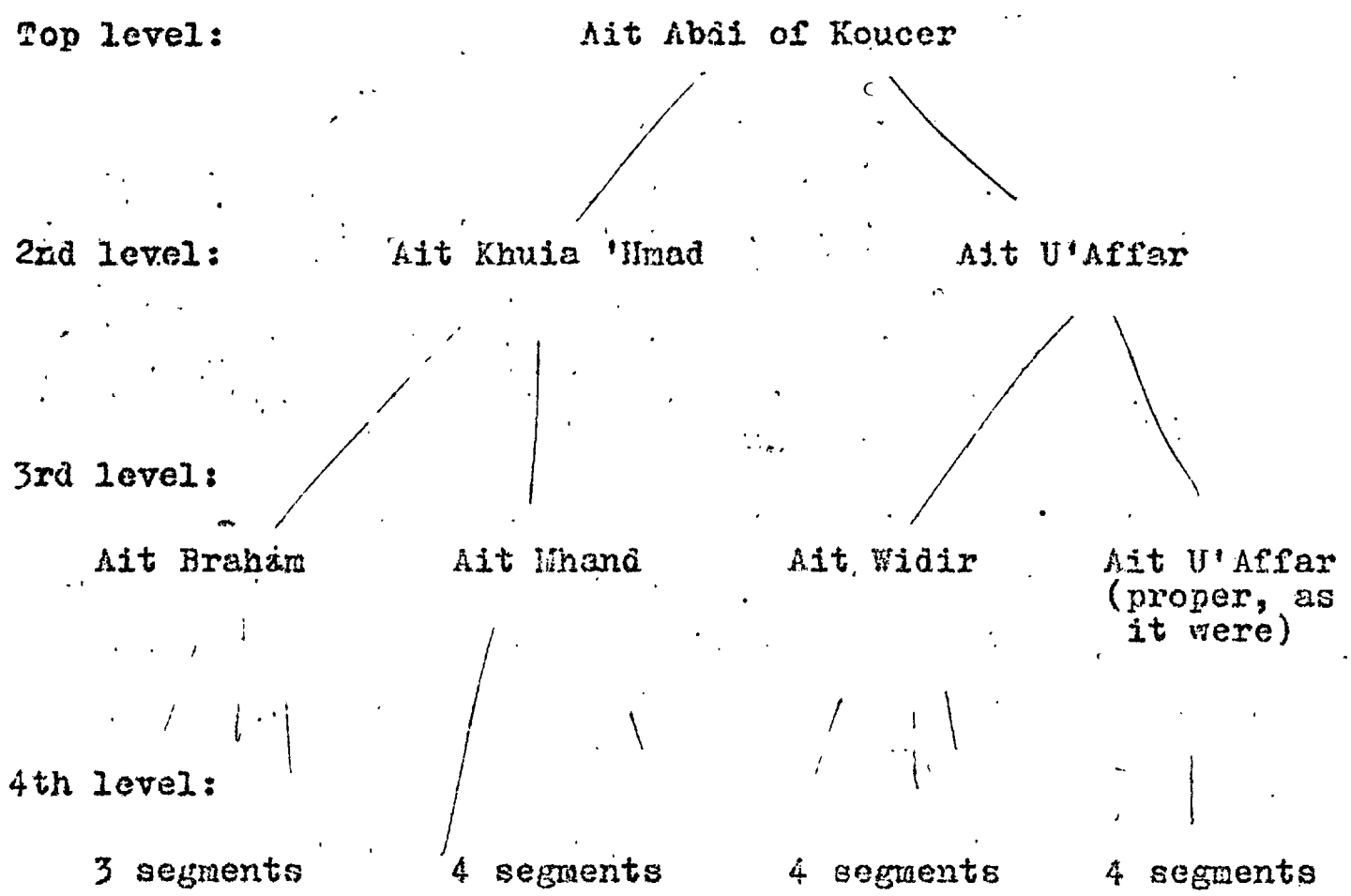
an unmanageable confusion of authority. In a segmentary society, the system <u>is</u> conceivable and even plausible. After all, the conflicts which arise and call for arbitration, mediation or settlement by chiefs, arise at one or another of the levels, and involve groups of this or that size, so that the two levels of authority are perhaps unlikely to be

activated and invoked for the same occasions: hence confusion and conflict of authority is not likely to arise. All the same, the smooth-working of this does presuppose a considerable tidyness and neatness in the working of the segmentary structure ... But then again, failures to observe the required tidyness in it may well be matched by a corresponding failure in the neatness of this system of chieftaincy, which may also in application be less neat than the orderly schema would suggest....


Top level:
Ait Abdi of Koucer
2nd level:
Ait Khuia 'Umad
Ait U'Affar
3rd level:
Ait Braham
Ait Mhand
Ait Widir
Ait U'Affar (proper, as it were)
4th level:
3 segments
4 segments
4 segments
4 segments

3. Collective Oath. (All for one.)

Collective oath has been described as the most characteristic feature of Berber customary law.* It is certainly the most interesting. It is of course not an institution unique to Berber society. It does however appear to have been present in all or most Berber societies, and is indeed characteristic of the type of social organisation which they exemplify. In recent times, advances either of full Islamisation or of modern type administrations have effected a decline of this institution, a decline culminating in the establishment of a national, non-tribal and non-variegated legal code in Morocco after Independence in 1956. In the central High Atlas, conditions had however favoured its survival until then. It was of course in full operation until the end of tribal independence in 1933, but it continued to operate, underwritten by the administration's recognition of tribal customary law throughout the period 1933-55. (Naturally, it would be rash to suppose that the

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* "Selon Marcy, le pierre de touche du droit berbère est le serment collectif comme mode normal de preuve. C'est une institution extraordinairement archaique qu'on retrouve en effet un peu partout, parfois à l'état de traces, de survivance, parois en pleine vigeur; ... On peut aussi ajouter le besoin pour beaucoup de Berbères de ne pas arriver à une décision judiciaire proprement dite, mais bien à un arrangement amiable, à un stade plus on moins avancé de la procédure". G.H. Bousquet, Les Berbères, Paris, P.U.F., 1957, p. 113.

effective o eration of the same notions, rules and practices, was really identical under the conditions of the Protectorate and those of the preceding siba.)

Berber tribal law varies from tribe to tribe, and the four major and further minor groupings represented in the area of Ahansal influence differ in their respective customs, and indeed differences occur within each of them. Moreover, it would 1 course be a mistake to subscribe to a myth of a fully determinate, unambiguous custom, safe in the keeping of the memory of elders, which can be non-arbitrarily invoked at will and which subsists, unwritten but fully formed, in a kind of tribal Platonic heaven mediated by tribal assemblies. The determinacy and freedom from ambiguity hich is not generally achieved by written law in the keeping of specialist lawyers, could hardly be achieved by an u codified law in the kee ing of, more or less, all members of the society it serves.

It is significant that 'urf or adida (these Arabic words are locally used for custom) is conceived in contrast to hra'a (Koranic law dispensed by those qualified by the appropriate learnin or, supposedly, by the i urrsmen); but it would be wron to conclude that the tribesmen have a clearly worked out theolo ical notion of the distinction between custom and holy law, and necessarily or alw ys conceive the former as opposed to the latter. This may be

so at some times, particularly if there are motives for feeling hostile to Arabs; at other times, I have heard it asserted that there really is no difference between the two. In a certain sense this is true - in that the only 'Koranic law' locally available was dispensed by people ill-qualified in Koranic scholarship, to put it mildly, and did in fact not differ in any systematic way from local views on right and wrong and on proper procedures, which also find their expressions in the procedures and verdicts of 'customary law'. In the traditional situation, the really significant difference between the two types of code was not so much their content but the source of the pronouncement, the identity of the judge or arbitrator. If he was a fellow lay tribesman, it was custom, but if he was an agurram, it was Koranic law.

A further significant point concerning the nature and conceptualisation of customary law is this: it was seen as something either produced by social convention, or at any rate alterable by it (though unanimity was required, at any rate in theory, to effect a change in tribal custom). In this sense at any rate, tribal custom was secular. What is more remarkable, and in conflict with certain widely held preconceptions of the nature of tribal society in general, is that this was seen and stated to be so by the tribesmen themselves. The existence of a contrastable Holy, written, and theoretically unchangeable Law may have assisted this

interesting sophistication.

For a variety of general and specific reasons, it is not possible to include a full study of tribal law, or even its aspects related to collective oath, in the present study.

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* These reasons include: lack of legal competence; lack of space; lack of conclusiveness of evidence on many points of detail; the fact that legal cases in the days of the French were held in presence of a French officer, and I was not given permission to attend those which concerned the village in which I lived, whilst those cases I did attend concerned issues whose background I could not assess; that the notion of custom became politically septic after independence, and always was so for the igurramen, who in terms of their own ideology should have had not custom but Holy Law - a belief they have found hard to sustain in modern conditions; the fact that collective oaths are generally held up till after the harvest, thus coinciding with a period when I had to be back in London; etc.

It is to be hoped that a really adequate study of local tribal law, as it was prior to the legal incorporation of the tribes in the wider national unit, may yet be possible; but it cannot be attempted here.

But whilst a detailed account of tribal law and its tribe-to-tribe variations cannot be given, a general sketch of the essential features of collective oath is both possible and essential to the general argument.

Collective oath (tagellit) is a legal decision procedure. It is a method for determining the truth or falsity of an accusation, and thereby terminating (at any rate in theory) the dispute occasioned by that accusation. It is a

method which invokes supernatural sanctions. It consists of a number of 'co-jurors' (imgellen) testifying, according to a prescribed formula, in a fixed order, and in a holy place, that the accusation is false. If they do so, the accusation is held to be false. If they refuse to do so or fail to do so or make a slip when doing so, the accusation is held to be established, and the accused party obliged to make to the injured party the reparation foreseen by customary law for the offence in question. (In theory, the 'fine' is predetermined, though in practice this too is subject to negotiation and adjustment according to circumstance.)

The order of testifying of the co-jurors is the same as their proximity to the alleged culprit in terms of inheritance rights, by agnatic proximity, (with certain obvious exceptions: a man's minor son is the first claimant to his inheritance, but of course will not testify if he is under age.) If the man's closer agnatic kin is insufficient to provide the required number of co-jurors, whilst a wider segment would provide too many, additional co-jurors can be provided by one of two methods: either one segment is selected from all the equally close segments within the wider one, by lot, to provide the jurors, or one or more is chosen from each of those segments to make up the number.

The connection between obligation to testify and rights on property is clearly understood by the participants:

property rights and oath responsibilities follow the same kin lines. The co-jurors are of course also identical with those who must fear or exact vengeance in the case of feud. They are referred to as Ait Ashra'a, people of ten, though the number of ten need not be taken literally: a man may have more or less than ten people of ten. Indeed, for serious offences he needs more. The co-jurors are of course not witnesses: it is not supposed that they necessarily or indeed generally have access to knowledge concerning whether the alleged culprit is or is not guilty. It is merely supposed that they know his general character, are or are not willing to vouch for his good conduct, and are prepared to share the penalties imposed by mundane or extra-mundane forces in punishment for their testimony, should it be false.

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* Professor G.H. Bousquet tells the story of French officers who had so completely misunderstood the institution of collective oath that they penalised co-jurors for bearing false witness. Though a misunderstanding indeed, its effect was that they blasphemously usurped a function of the deity. On these occasions, vengeance was not the Lord's but the District Officer's.

The number of co-jurors required varies according to a sliding scale with the gravity of the accusation. For instance, the theft of a single sheep may require two co-jurors, a rape four, a murder of a male forty, the murder of a woman twenty.

There is also the kind of conflict in which two large groups (consisting say of several thousand people each) face each other, and the issue is something like the contested rights over a pasture. In this kind of case, in which the oath is also liable to be invoked (and was invoked though not used even after Independence, despite its non-recognition by the new national code), there is no culprit to act as focus and in terms of whose agnatic connections one could select the co-jurors. In such a case, the co-jurors are selected from the elders of the testifying side by agreement of both parties.*

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* The main case of this kind I have in mind concerns the pasture of Talmest. It is interesting that the territorial settlement of the area is attributed to a certain Ahansali saint, and that the parties to the dispute - both segments of Ait Atta - swear at the shrine of this saints great-grandfather, SSA. The lineage of the erstwhile arbitrator also provides the guarantor of the oath.

The time at which the oaths may take place are restricted. Some tribes lay aside certain days, a kind of sessions, at which oaths concerning disputes that have accumulated in the preceding period, are settled. An important rule, generally observed*, is that of a kind of

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* Though I know of minor violations of it, of oaths undertaken in smaller disputes and involving fairly few people.

'closed season': no oaths are allowed from a certain date in spring, in April of the agricultural calendar, until one in the early autumn, in September, when the first and important harvest is in. The justification of this rule is that a perjuring party at an oath may bring divine punishment on a whole valley or region, in the form of drought or flood or pestilence. Who would be so foolish as to place his own harvest in jeopardy because some scoundrel has stolen some sheep, and his godless, irresponsible and mendacious kinsmen are ready to swear him out of his predicament? Much better wait until the harvest is in. And so it is. The effective consequence of the rule resembles its overt justification, in helping to safeguard the harvest: the rule prevents wastage of time on oaths, on the negotiations, manoevres or possibly hostilities associated with it, until after the harvest is in. (The matter is inconvenient only for the present observer, who by the time the harvest was safely in, had himself to be getting back for the university term.) Oaths are generally banned during Ramadan - though an exception may be made at night.

The <u>place</u> of the oath varies according to the gravity of the issue, the identity of the parties in conflict, and within certain limits also depends on their agreement. The place may be a village mosque, a holy place (<u>timzguida</u>), which is not a mosque or the shrine of a saint. The really important rule is this: minor issues are sworn at the

nearest mosque or holy place, but major issues, generally defined as those requiring ten or more co-jurors, are taken to the shrine of the igurramen. This of course turns the igurramen into witnesses or informal masters of ceremonies at the settlement of major disputes, (which they are in any case for disputes not culminating in oaths), in which their deceased saintly ancestor provides or mediates the transcendental sanctions of the veridicity, witting or unwitting, of co-jurors. This role can be seen in its full importance if it is observed that the demand and the offer of a collective oath are moves in prolonged and complex negotiations, in which there is much bluff on both sides, negotiations which are frequently settled 'out of court' (or perhaps one should say 'out of shrine') without actually reaching the point of oath - though the possibility of doing so or having to do so is one of the factors making for prior settlement. As in elections, the igurramen have ample opportunity for mediation and neutral persuasion in this pre-oath stage.

There are various other considerations affecting the choice of place for an oath. It is held that co-jurors should not be obliged to walk too far: various shrines or holy places tend to be strategically located so that each should serve its own catchment area of disputes, so to speak. Disputes between members of tribes X and Y will customarily be settled at a shrine fairly easily accessible to both X and

Y, whilst another shrine in a different place will be used for disputes between X and Z, and another shrine still for disputes internal to X. The shrine at which the X habitually swear in response to the accusation made by the Y, need not be identical with the shrine at which the Y deny charges brought against them by the X. For instance, the Ait Abdi swore at Timzgida n'Zagmusan when swearing 'against' the Ait Hadiddu, whilst the Ait Hadiddu, swearing 'against' the Ait Abdi, did so at Ait Tasiska near Imdghas. Or again, the Abdi swearing 'against' the Ait Amzrai did so at SSA, whilst the latter reciprocated at Sidi Bushaq.

But really major disputes will go to fully 'personalised' shrines, i.e. shrines of saints whose real or supposed descendents are extant and function as effective igurramen. Here again, there are very logical considerations governing the choice of the shrine. It goes without saying that, in kinship terms, the saint at whose shrine the oath takes place must be equidistant from the two contending parties. It would be unthinkable, for instance, if one of the laicised (and hence feuding, litigating and oath-indulging) Ahansal group were involved in a dispute with a non-Ahansal one, to settle the conflict by an oath at a shrine of an Ahansali saint. It would of course be assumed and said, plausibly enough, that the deceased saint would be partial to his descendants or kinsmen, and that they could easily perjure

themselves in the hope or expectation that, in consideration of the bonds and obligations of kin, the saint will refrain from punishing or invoking divine punishment on them. In the second example cited above, the Abdi are a lay group whilst the Amzrai are a thoroughly laicised village of Ihansalen - though their descent from SSA is in local eyes simply not in doubt and beyond challenge. It would plainly be absurd for the Ait Amzrai to swear at the shrine of SSA, for in consideration of natural ties and affection SSA could well be expected to be lenient to his own offspring and be tempted to overlook a little matter of an untruthful oath. A Berber agurram is not expected to behave like a Roman judge; he would scarcely be admired for doing so, and to put him in a situation where he might have to do so borders on the irreverent.

Moreover, as one would expect, the habit of tribes X and Y to testify at the shrine of the (long-deceased) saint Z, correlates with the use by tribes X and Y of the descendants of Z (or rather, of his descendants in the effective saintly line) for such purposes of mediation etc as can only be performed by living rather than dead saints. One should add that the geopolitics of sanctity may be but need not be identical for the living and for the dead: the geographical-strategic location imposed by the situation on the dead and

on the living are sometimes but not always the same. In the case of the main and original Ahansal lodge, it is identical: the shrine of SSA and the village housing his descendants in the most effective and, as it were, the 'straightest line, are at the same location. In the case of the next most important shrine, there is a divergence: the shrine of Sidi Ali U Hussein is deep in the middle of the territory of the Ait Daud u Ali of Anergui, a segment of the Sochman tribe. The three villages of his effective descendants however are on the borders between Sochman and Messat tribes, and between Daud u Ali and Said u Ali segments of the Sochman. These villages also have their shrines with revered deceased saints, who indeed are, like the villagers, held to be descendants of Sidi Ali u Hussein, but who are recognised to be lower in the hierarchy of sanctity, of baraka-saturation, than their ancestor enshrined at Anergui. His effective saintly descendants must themselves undertake the voyage to the Anergui shrine to collect the proceeds of their ancestor's Grace which accumulate there at times of festivals etc. The permanent inhabitants in the vicinity of the shrine are no more than guardians of the tomb, as it were: they are laicised. (They form a little community of about ten families. All claim Ahansali origin, but only two of these families have this claim generally recognised.)

The theory of the oath is as follows: if the testifying group testifies falsely, they will be punished by supernatural agency. To swear is to challenge the possibility of supernatural punishment. Stories are told of men paralysed or going mad or dying soon or even immediately after taking part in a collective oath and swearing falsely. There is a slight ambiguity in popular theology concerning whether the punishment is arranged by the deceased enshrined saint himself, directly, or whether he merely mediates, as it were supplying the deity with information on the facts of the case, the punishment then being meted out by God himself. (The same ambiguity exists concerning whether grace or blessedness or plenitude spring directly from the saint, or comes from God and are merely mediated by them.) There is a definite tendency for locals to protest that only God can dispense baraka (or the punishment), so that igurramen are merely the middlemen of Grace rather than independent springs of it.*

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* When I first started working in the region, I was inclined to explain this insistence on the deity as the prime mover, and others as mere secondary or mediating causes, to a recent diffusion of more orthodox Islam at the expense of local cults. I am now inclined to think, from the general tenor and distribution of these kinds of remark, that this insistence on the deity has been there traditionally and is not something merely emerging in recent decades. The social implications of this belief is not so much to make the position of individual igurramen precarious, as to explain and justify a fairly low level of expectation from saintly or magical interventions. One prays or makes a sacrifice,

~~sacrifice~~, the saint mediates the request, but it is God's inscrutable will if the prayer or sacrifice are ineffective. In this respect, local tribesmen fully conform to the stereotype of 'Islamic fatalism'.

It is socially very significant, of course, that the supernaturally initiated punishment which follows false testimony often strikes indiscriminately. If, as in the stories that are told, it takes the form of sudden mysterious death or even of the appearance of a monstrous snake, it can of course, and does, wreak its vengeance only on the culprit, who by his act and mendacity has led his fellows to bear false witness. But if, as more frequently it does, the supernatural punishment works through natural forces such as floods or droughts, it strikes not the culprit alone but a whole valley or region. Hence indirectly, one who swears falsely and involves his agnates in false testimony, has not merely a sinned against God, but equally, and perhaps more significantly, endangered his kin and his neighbours, ~~has wronged them~~: for they will have their share of the painful consequences of his ill deeds. (And, of course, anyone responsible for involving his kin in an oath is liable to make himself open to accusations of responsibility when later a flood or drought comes, as sooner or later it will.)

The general rules for the operation of the oath as a decision procedure are as follows: if all the required co-jurors turn up, testify, and make no error, this, at any rate

in theory, ends the matter: the accused man is vindicated, and the dispute settled in favour of the accused and his kin. (If they swore falsely, it is their look-out - and, alas, of anyone else unfortunate enough to be in the path of the same flood, or similar disaster, that will strike them ...)

If however one or more of them fail to turn up or refuse to testify or make an error in the course of their testimony, the case is settled in favour of the accusing party, and the accused must pay the compensation which custom foresees for the offence in question. The rules on this point are variable, ambiguous and adjustable, but I am schematically presenting the simplest case.

The procedure requires a master of ceremonies, an anahkam. He is not an agurram: he is preferably a neutral outsider to the two groups in conflict. If the two groups already jointly have an amghar, or are parts of a wider group having one, the anahkam will be chosen by this chief. If not, he may be chosen by lot or by agreement, and if necessary may even be one of the two parties in conflict. (If so, complementarity obtains: if chosen from one group, the other does the choosing.)

The anahkam manages the proceedings, is empowered to allow and forbid participants to speak, and so forth. He tells the first of the co-jurors what it is that he is

required to swear. He in turn is entitled to a certain number of 'rehearsals' for the benefit of the succeeding co-jurors, rehearsals during which a slip does not count. The number of such preliminary repetitions varies. (The figures given tend to be six and three.) After that, the real testimony begins. The co-jurors are lined up, and each moves forward as his turns come, beckoned on by the first co-juror who has already dismissed the previous one, after his oath, saying 'Thou hast spoken the truth'. A mistake counts as a failure to testify, but the amahkam is entitled to excuse a slip if he chooses.

The oath formulas (in Berber) tend to be as follows:

O Lord (three times)

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* One minor rule of procedure is often cited, namely, that no-one must turn up with a stick. This rule is claimed to have its origin in an episode when a man came to testify, falsely, that he had repaid a debt. He turned up with a stick, and requested the accuser to kindly hold it for him whilst he, the accused, was testifying. Unknown to the accuser, the money owed was hidden inside the stick. So the culprit testified and of course escaped supernatural punishment, for whilst he was swearing, the money was indeed, in a sense, in the plaintiff's hands ...

This rather popular and much recounted tale would seem to indicate that the agencies responsible for supernatural punishment are narrowly legalistic in its application. I do not think this is the implication of the story. Tales of cunning, successful and outwitted, are very characteristic of Berber oral literature.

I present myself before Sidi X (the saint before whose shrine the oath is taking place)
I have not killed your brother (for example).

Or again:

O Lord (three times)
All the way from here to Mecca,
The thing in this case I have not stolen nor seen.

Who pays the fine? The rules vary, but one rule frequently cited, and most characteristic and also most intriguing, is this: the minority within the set of agnates 'defeated' at the oath. If, for instance, the majority of the required agnates did testify, and a minority refused, thereby ensuring the defeat of their own party, then it is this recusant minority who is responsible for meeting the cost of the defeat which they have caused! If, on the other hand, the majority refuses to testify, it is the minority who did testify, and nevertheless lost, who bear the burden arising out of a suit in which the majority of their agnates had refused to participate. *

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* This rule is sometimes varied, and informants claim that the recusant majority will nevertheless make a contribution towards the cost, unless there is unanimity, everyone except the accused man refusing to testify, in which case he alone is responsible for meeting the cost as best he can.

The striking thing about these rules is that they are clearly designed to reinforce, not the sense of obligation or fear militating against perjury, but the sense of agnatic solidarity, conduct along the principle "My clan - right or wrong!" The rules penalise the dissident, minoritarian non-conformist clansmen, whichever way things go: they place a premium on intra-clan conformity. That they do so could only lead one to suppose that internal clan cohesion is not always all it could be: and observation and evidence confirm that this precisely is indeed the case.* In as far as the system

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* During the French advance in the 'twenties and 'thirties, social units resisted or made their peace with the lumi in a way which often cut across neat lines of kin solidarity. During the local political intrigues of the years following Independence, alignments by no means always followed kin lines.

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of trial by collective oath is precarious, it is so not in virtue of the excessive sense of clan loyalty - which is what the outsider would fear - but for exactly the opposite reason! - Namely, lack of agnatic cohesion: the rather surprising rules of 'liability' for fines bear eloquent testimony to this.* Berber society, at any rate, seems closer to

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* In the Isha tribe, it appears that during the French period, rules against unwilling co-jurors had to be strengthened, because "people feared the power of the shrines so much that they were unwilling to take the risk of testifying". In fact, there is no reason to suppose that the hold of transcendental beliefs over people increased during the

:rotectorate: one can plausibly surmise that the need of kin support declined with security, :n therefore also the willingnes: to take part in oaths.

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the danger of Hobbesian anarchy than to that of a claustrophibic Closed Society in which group-membership and loyalty overriden all else ...

The popular belief that tribesmen, whilst opposed to each other, will always and automatically and wholeheartedly combine in their kin groups when in opposition to outside groups, seems a myth. Berber kin groups can sometimes be no more than, as it were, the diplomatic starting-position, the alignment which has geography, habit, inertia, inheritance and co-operation expectations, or information on its side, and which will not be altered by a diplomatic revolution without a positive incentive and some initiative - but which may well be broken if that incentive or initiative are present ...

How could this system work? Let us begin with the theory held by the participants themselves, which is also the (in my view) naive theory sometimes held by observers. This theory is, of course, the one which invokes the transcendental sanctions, or the <u>belief</u> in their operation, and explains the efficacy of collective oaths in terms of it. "God or the Saint will in fact send punishment on perjurors; therefore co-jurors will not swear falsely; therefore collective oath is a good way of determining the truth of an

accusation and ending a dispute." This, indeed, is the official local belief. Or, in the third person, in the words of the beholder - "The co-jurors <u>believe</u> that supernatural punishment will strike them if they testify to a falsehood; therefore they will not willingly do so; therefore, collective oath is a good way of determining truth and ending disputes".

The proposition asserted in the Third Person, as an explanation, seems to me false, redundant and insufficient. Empirically, the belief of Berbers in the transcendental sanctions is not so strong, or if strong not so compelling, as to prevent quite frequent occurrences of perjury. On general grounds, it is difficult to believe that some social arrangements could be sustained simply by a belief, though a belief may help: thus the theory is, on its own, insufficient. Moreover, it is redundant, for if the social mechanisms are considered, they turn out to be sufficient, without any additional assumption of a compelling superstition. (The unpredictability of the punishment for perjury, and the fact that it strikes the innocent with the guilty, both of which are clearly recognised by the locals, are relevant here.)

What <u>is</u> necessary is that the belief should be part of the social atmosphere: that everyone should be able to take it for granted, and notably that others seem to take it for granted, and hence that invocations of it should be possible

without justific tion, indeed without any eyebrows raised. What else does <u>belief</u> mean? There are indeed circumstances and forms of life when it can mean a good d al more. But tribesmen, or even their village scribes, are not philosophers wrestling with faith and doubt. In this kind of context, believing, and acting as though one believed, are not to be distinguished. And the type of conduct required is not that of a man fully confident of a material consequence and allowing for it in his calculations, but merely that of a man who, in the short run, allows for the fact that everyone else will pay reasonable deference to the belief ... There is no good answer to the question whether the tribesmen "really believe" the assumptions on which the oath is based. They say they do. The fact that they are willing to perjure themselves indicates that sometimes they do not. Yet they are not sceptics either.

In order to work, a decision procedure must not be predetermined. A penny which always comes down heads, and is known to do so, is no use for a toss. A judge who always or never condemns is no judge. The first question which a theory of the functioning of collective oaths has to answer is - how does this procedure avoid being predetermined in favour of the testifying party, who can "swear themselves out" of any accus tion?*

* This question must be answered, despite the fact, stressed above, that actually these clans are not as cohesive and loyal as they are sometimes held to be: which provides a further problem, but does not allow one to evade the first and crucial one.

What would one think of a law court in our society in which the accused and the jury were identical, and in which nothing but a transcendental fear (of consequences well known to be capricious and unpredictable in their coming!) stood between the accused and his acquittal of himself by himself in the capacity of juror? Yet it is precisely this which is what collective oath really amounts to.

Collective oath is made possible by segmentary organization. The two groups which face each other in conflict lack not merely an effective overwhelming power standing between them and enforcing law and order in the wider society of which they are both a part (and whose language, values and concepts they indeed do share); but equally, they lack such effective and specialised enforcement agencies internally. Conflicts are latent, and sometimes ramant, inside each of them as well as between them. The existence and nature of these internal conflicts is of course highlighted by the existence of the rules concerning the consequences of disunity amongst the co-jurors.

What sanctions does a group possess against its own

members (e.g. one whose acts cause trouble between it and other groups)? Ultimately, death. The tribesmen distinguish two kinds of fratricide - good and bad. Bad fratricide is such as is held to have been unjustified by the acts or character of the killed brother, and it calls for the payment of blood-money by the killers to the wider group of which both they and the killed man are members. * Good fratricide is

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* This possibility shows how this tribal society does not altogether conform to the ideal type of a pure segmentary society, in which groups existed only in opposition to other co-ordinate groups. It shows a group possessing a kind of corporate identity in opposition to its own erring members.

There are other, analogous respects in which Berber groups of about village size (300 people or so) are not "purely" segmentary but do have a corporate existence vis-a-vis individuals or subgroups, (as opposed to the "pure" segmentary situation in which groups are "activated" into overt existence only by opposition to other co-ordinate groups at the same level.) Thus bride-price paid to the bride's father is extremely small and nominal, whilst the real expense of marriage is the wedding-feast, paid for by the groom, which however profits the group as a whole and not the bride's family specifically. Or again, the traditional punishment for the adulteror is the provision of a feast for the community. Adultery-price, like bride-price or blood-money for "bad" fratricide, is to "society" rather than the wronged group.

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the killing of a brother who is recognised to be a nuisance to his kin and to others: and through being a nuisance to others, he automatically is a nuisance to his kin - for they will have to "bail him out" by testifying, or by contributing to a fine, or by getting engaged in a feud. Informants remember cases of such "good" fratricide: men taken off

into the woods by their own kin and disposed of.

But things need not generally get so bad as to require killing, the ultima ratio of the kin group. There is also a penultimate sanction: let the culprit down at the oath! If there is a majority of those favouring and adopting this course, they do not even incur a formal liability (though if the group is to persist despite its division and defeat at the oath, the odds are that they will nevertheless contribute to the fine incurred by the defeat). But it may be unpredictable till the last moments what the internal "voting" in the co-juring group will be, and reluctant co-jurors may take the risk, or may even prefer the certainty of incurring a liability of a fine, to facing the consequences - transcendental and social - of testimony in a bad case. Leaving out the transcendental fears, which however are significant in providing the reluctant co-juror with a good excuse, there are the social considerations. Of these, the most obvious is that a social group which habitually and persistently makes use of the collective oath to "bail out" its own members, is inviting its various enemies to protect themselves jointly against it, and to form a defensive or indeed aggressive coalition. (The group itself may hope to form a counter-coalition - and indeed such opposed groupings, in the state of latent or overt hostility, exist anyway: but to

rely on one of them, the least a group can do is not to abuse the opportunities provided by collective oath in its dealings with fellow members of it!) The oath, particularly if it is one concerning a major issue and taking place at a saintly shrine, ensures publicity for the dispute and its context ...

But equally, co-jurors, though reluctant to swear, may be reluctant to risk the open internal fission that may follow on a refusal to testify. There are thus two conflicts going on simultaneously (or at any rate, there may be): one between the accusing and the testifying parties, and the other inside the testifying party itself - a segmentary situation indeed. In fact, the putting of this strain or potential strain on the party of the accused is part of their ordeal or punishment.

Another consideration is this: the sanction of overt violence, of a feud, is in any case open to the injured group. They can embark on this course anyway, not giving the group of the offender the opportunity of an oath; or they may allow the oath to take place and when it has been (from the offenders' viewpoint) successfully accomplished, seize on some pretext (or, for that matter, without pretext) re-open hostilities. So the accused party does not have such an overwhelming incentive to make use of the oath in all circumstances: when the opponent is too profoundly incensed,

or very well placed to commence , aggression, perjury is no way out ...

It is noteworthy that the actual development of an oath-situation cannot be inferred simply from the formal rules (even if those rules when cited were always consistent, which is conspicuously not the case: on the contrary, it is contextual interpretation which alone seems to be able to make sense of these inconsistencies). For instance, it is claimed that the significance and the consequences of an oath 'broken' by a recusant co-juror depends on that co-juror's reputation and standing. If he is of low repute and his unwillingness is held to be just one further example of his moral turpitude and failing sense of loyalty, he is made financially responsible for the consequences of the lost oath, i.e. the fine. Recusant co-jurors are not beyond the suspicion that they have been bribed by the opposite side. This possibility of corruption is easily invoked, and I was once given a list of corrupt recusant co-jurors by an eager informant. If on the other hand he is a man of standing, with a reputation for responsible conduct, his failure to testify is held to indicate that the accusation was just, and the responsibility for compensation shifts to the culprit and those who would stand by him. Thus the oath (like elections) is never merely a matter of counting heads or following a rigid legal formula. It is a procedure which restores

(perhaps only temporarily) the unanimity of the group, which invokes the future verdict of a supernatural authority on those who had imperilled it (a verdict which, however, is generally open to interpretation), and which in <u>two</u> conflicts - between the two groups and within the testifying group - shifts responsibility for compensation and restoration of balance onto the weaker group, numerically or otherwise, on pain of remaining in the wider group at all. Swear, or pay, or find a new group! Another significant rule is that a man who is without 'thin milk' (milk from which butter has been extracted), i.e. a man too poor to have much to risk by false testimony or to be able to contribute to the consequences of a lost oath, is not allowed to swear.

One might well ask what sanctions can induce the defeated minority to pay up. Part of the answer is the official one - the pressure of public opinion requiring that right be done, an opinion mediated by the amghar and

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* Berber saying: <u>Abrid abrid</u>! literally 'the way is the way', and uttered in semi-earnest, semi-ironic tones accompanying the English 'Orders be orders'. It means, of course, that right must be done, though alas, it sometimes is not. It is perhaps characteristic of a non-segmentary society that <u>orders</u> are orders, and of a segmentary one, that the <u>way</u> is the way, for there is no authority to enforce orders.

sanctioned by the respect due to him.* This, and the desire

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* One who answers back to the amghar, they say, finds all his goods taken away by the incensed fellow-tribesmen ... This picture, though it may have applied to given episodes, would in my opinion if taken too literally or generally give a quite false and exaggerated idea of the real power of the annual amghar.

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to placate the kinsmen or the other side of (the minor or the major) fence in the case, do count for something.

But the real answer is that, really, there is no sanction. If the group is to continue as a co-juring group, co-responsible as objects or as pursuers of vengeance, the individual who does <u>not</u> swear with his group must either make up - or substantially help towards making up - of the resulting loss, <u>or</u> find himself another group. The correct way to look at the situation is to see that there is this <u>alternative</u>, rather than sanction.

And this alternative is actually formalised in the rules cited as governing the oath. A man who is unwilling to testify with his co-jurors may do so by finding himself a similar number* of co-jurors to accompany him in his refusal.

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* The rule has been given me in various forms, one requiring him to find the <u>same</u> number of co-jurors as those initially required, another requiring him to find <u>double</u> their number. I have no actual knowledge of such a case, and am not clear

just what the second lot testify - whether merely their reluctance or the validity of the initial accusation. Nor is it clear whether the identity and order of the second lot is prescribed - e.g. to be drawn from further available agnates in order of proximity - or whether this is simply a case of finding a new group. Within village communities, this distinction would not be a sharp one. The first alternative is suggested by the fact that informants concede or even highlight the possibility of a regress, a chain-reaction of loyalty - that one of the second lot may again opt out and invoke further ones ...

All this is probably just one of those cases of elaborate folk jurisprudence one frequently comes across. But though of not too much significance when interpreted literally, it does highlight the reality of the oath-situation and the alternatives facing those involved: swear or find a new group with whom you will swear and who will swear with you!

Having succeeded in doing so, the co-juror need not swear - in two senses: the rules say so and, more significantly, he has found a new co-juring group. *

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* There is another recognised way of avoiding the oath. A co-juror may approach the plaintiff and request to be excused the oath, for a consideration or even without. If he does so overtly because he holds the accusation to be justified, this would of course 'break' the oath: but what he will characteristically do is to claim ignorance of the merits of the case, and simply profess fear of the transcendental commitment. The plaintiff may (but need not) accept the request, in which case the accused does not require to fill that particular gap in his list of co-jurors. The plaintiff may of course have motives for remaining on cordial terms with some of the agnates of the man whom he is accusing: if he insists, he might indeed drive them to loyal behaviour ... If he lets them off, without thereby yet winning he may advance the isolation of the alleged culprit.

The initial question concerning the sancti ns of the oath-procedure is perhaps misplaced. The oath is an opportunity not an obligation. (An opportunity for the accusing or testifying group to give in, and appear to give in to a supernatural uthority, and not to a mundane rival.)

This rule is balanced by another, or rather by a valuation characteristically expressed: a man unwilling to testify by a kinsman should in all decency notify him in good time, so that his kinsman in trouble and facing the possibility of an oath should have time to find himself new co-jurors to fill the gap by the usual procedure of making a sacrifice 'to' a new juror or group. If it is improper not to swear with one's agnates, it is doubly improper not to do so without good notice.

Within Berber villages, there is in fact a good deal of jockeying for position and changing of oath-alliances, quite apart from the more important and permanent inter-village and inter-area re-allocations following serious feuds and violent conflicts. A self-re-allocation does not appear to be too difficult, even for notorious trouble-makers, and has on its side the belief that one should not, or even could not, refuse one who has 'sacrificed to one'. There is the cost of the sacrifice (one beast) to be considered ... More important, a man who re-allocates himself in this manner does not acquire inheritance rights, or

necessarily claims such as pasture rights where this is relevant (in the case of larger groups) in his new position. Nor does he lose his rights of this kind in his old position, though if distance is involved, he will do so in effect. It would be interesting to know whether the pull of inheritance rights causes these internal re-alignments to tend to come back to the initial position in the fullness of time. Having lived in a saintly village where internal politics are somewhat different in this respect and does not find its expression in co-juring (top saints don't swear), I cannot answer this question.

It is in the intermediate situations, when the rights and wrongs of the accusation are not all that crystal clear, or when the accusing party itself welcomes a justification of not starting a feud (always provided it does not lose too much face), that the oath is useful. The oath provides the injured party with a way of retreating for apparently objective reasons, and accepting a transcendentally underwritten verdict, without appearing to confess weakness: if the accused are still guilty, it is now for the transcendental powers to punish them. It also provides an opportunity for the accused party to give in, for co-jurors to let down an agnate, without necessarily and finally destroying the cohesion of their own group or confessing fear of their opponents: for they can invoke their fear of the shrine,

their moral concern with the wellbeing of their kinsmen and neighbours, not to mention abstaining from perjury. The accused man would take a poor view of an agnate and potential co-jurors who refused from pure moral scruple, who claimed to be actuated in his refusal ~~from~~ by a kantian respect for the moral law as such: such a puro-mindedness would be construed, not without reason, as sheer and unforgivable disloyalty. It is different if the reluctant co-juror can point to the dangers for the whole group - which is wider than the testifying one itself - inherent in the oath and its dangers.

Just as it would be wrong to suppose the oath always predetermined in favour of the testifying party, so it would also be mistaken to see it simply as a cloak of right over mere might. It is true that the oath procedure favours a cohesive and determined group. Such a group, loyal towards its accused member, whom it does not consider a liability likely to involve them in endless oaths and feuds, and determined to help him out, will come out victorious from the ordeal by oath, quite irrespective of the "objective" merits of the case. But just such a group could in any case only be constrained by force to make reparations for the wrong done, and there is, after all, noone other than the injured group to apply the force. But it is precisely in such a case - when facing a cohesive and determined group - that it is least desirable to try and apply force ... So one may

welcome this opportunity for not having to do so. It is still open to the injured party to try and do so after all: not much is lost through the possibilityof invoking the oath.. And something is gained - the possibility of retreat, and the exploration of the possibility that the group may not be so cohesive, or so determined concerning the current issue, after all. The oath tests the cohesion and the feeling of the group. In brief, the oath is the continuation of the feud by other means ...

It is a decision procedure whose verdicts are sensitive to a number of factors: the determination and loyalty of the testifying set of co-jurors, of their conviction concerning the merits of the case and in particular the character and likely future conduct of the accused man, of their assessment of the feeling and determination of their opponents. The feelings of 'public opinion' concerning the merits of the use and the strength of the parties, and the parties' assessment of those feelings ... Thus <u>one</u> of the factors influencing the verdict is the feeling on both sides concerning the justice of the accusation. This is only one consideration, but it is at least one. Thus justice does not fare as badly as it might. * In cases when all other factors are

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* If this account of the inner mechanics of the oath is valid, there are obvious and striking analogies between it and various other procedures for settling conflicts, procedures whose verdict is sensitive to the merits of the case <u>and</u> the

strength and the cohesion and the determination of the parties. Strikes are one example. Others can be found in international relations, in the voting by 'blocks' at the United Nations where also the loyalty of one's block 'co-jurors'cannot be wholly relied on. I have sketchily explored this analogy in "How to Live in Anarchy", The Listener, April 3rd, 1958.

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posed against it, justice will be neglected - but in those cases, who could help it anyway? But in cases when those other factors are neutrally poised, or not quite determinate or unpredictable - and this is often the case, for who can really gauge the determination of the parties, of the accusers, or of the willing, and of the reluctant co-jurors? - in those cases, justice may as it were slip in between the balance or obscure other factors ...

The living igurramen as such do not have any necessary connection with the oath: it is only their dead, enshrined ancestor who sanctions it, who through his prestige, his supposed powers or influence with the deity, provides it with its rationale. The living igurramen may but need not be the masters of ceremonies at the oath. But the fact that the oath does take place at their shrine has obvious consequences: not only does the prestige of dead saint lend the proceedings solemnity - and the prestige of the dead saint has considerable correlation with the influence of his effective saintly descendants - but it also insures much publicity to the merits of the case and the comportment of the contesting parties.

Moreover, if parties turn to arbitration rather than decision by oath, it is to the igurramen they go as a neutral court of appeal.* But it is generally not clear till the

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* Bousquet remarks, (Les Berbères, Paris 1957, p.102) in connection with the systematisation of tribal legal procedure and organisation under the French, that " ... on a créé de juridictions d'appel, supratribales, tout à fait contraires à l'esprit de la coutume." It does not seem to me true that the notion of a court of appeal outside the tribe is contrary, let lone wholly contrary, to the spirit of Berber tribal law. This may be so in some places, but it is not so in the Central High Atlas. Traditionally, the tribes did employ extra-tribal appeals of at least two kinds: to the igurramen, and to neighbouring tribes with whom reciprocal arrangements existed for this purpose. It is true that generally, though not always, these reciprocal arrangements would be with a tribe to whom one was linked at possibly some high level of segmentary abstraction. Intra-tribal systems of appeal also existed, and were sometimes highly developed, e.g. with the Ait Atta.

It is true that in the earlier days of the French rules, going up to the second-world-war period, the grouping of tribes for purposes of appeal did not always follow affinities of custom, and did to this extent violate the spirit of it and lose some of its attractiveness to litigants, who were disinclined to make use of a court of appeal which might put them in the hands of men ignorant of their own circumstances. This was largely remedied during the later years of French rule.

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last moment whether an oath really will take place or whether the parties will settle "out of shrine", ... So it is, naturally, convenient that the dead and the living arbitrators should be located so close to each other.*

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* When the tribesmen come to the igurramen for arbitration, they consider this to be an appeal to the Shra'a, Koranic law. One of the many ironies of this is that in fact Koranic law

does not countenance collective oath. With independence, collective oath was abolished, and all that survives is solemn swe ring "on the Koran" by the accused man himself. The potency of this solitary testimony on a mere book, even the Book, without collectivity and without the mediation of a personalised saint, is held in contempt by the tribesmen...)

4. The Feud

I have concentrated on the oath in order to sketch in the type of relationship for which the igurramen, living and dead, provide mediation, appeal and sanction: but one might equally have taken the feud. Indeed, as stated, the two are correlative or alternatives: serious offences, supposed or real, are followed either by oath or by saintly mediation or by a feud, or indeed by combinations or successions of these.. But the feud was abolished, and indeed suppressed with remarkable effectiveness, by the French during the period of their rule. The oath was not: it continued to be the centre-piece of the (now somewhat stylised and systematised) customary law. Under the Protectorate, a man who committed murder went to prison and his kinsmen paid blood-money to the family of the victim. (This fitted in nicely with the traditional arrangements, when blood-money was paid and the murderer went into exile.)

It is very tempting to believe that the effectiveness of the suppression of the feud by the French was connected with the perpetuation of the oath. Of two possible reactions to a situation, which had always been in some measure complementary alternatives, one was suppressed but the other remained, providing an invaluable outlet. The intrigues and passion which clearly accompanied litigation under the French were striking features of Berber legal life: so were the

cheapness, ease and frequency of litigation. Sessions were frequent and prolonged, the cost minimal, involving little over and above the required bribe of the members of the 'customary law tribunal' - now a permanent, formalised jemáa, with a small number of regular members - a bribe which was not very significant.

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* The effectiveness of the suppression of the feud in Morocco is in marked contrast to the failure to do so in Berber parts of Algeria, notably Kabylia. The explanation lies partly in differences in administration: Kabylia was under-administered by lawyers; Berber areas of Morocco were administered by the army, by quite a well developed and fairly extensive system brought into being by the long years of the "pacification". Cf. Professor G.H. Bousquet, "Le Droit Coutumier des Ait Haddidou des Assif Melloul et Isselaten", in Annales de l'Institut d'Etudes Orientales (Faculté de Lettres de l'Universite d'Alger), Tome XIV, Année 1956, p. 206.

Effective igurramen (amongst whom I mostly lived) almost never feuded (nor, by extension, litigated): this part of their self-image is I think genuinely true, and indeed it follows from their central role. A mediator who himself was involved in a network of hostilities and alliances would not be much use for mediation and sanctuary. The laicised igurramen who formed the immediate entourage of the effective ones, i.e. who lived in the same village (in the sanctuary), also did not feud (though these did litigate or appeal for arbitration). Of laicised Ihansalen who lived in separate villages, some did and some did not feud; some did so

overtly, some claimed not to do so but in fact did, others did but only if very gravely provoked, etc: just this is one of the crucial features on the spectrum of effective-lay along which the tribesmen of saintly descent are strung out, and which will be explored more fully below.

A murder, if it was not followed by simple overt hostility (feasible for larger or for more distant groups), was followed by the flight of the murderer and ten agnates, his Ait Ashra'a, people of ten. The flight would aim at safety by distance, or by flight to the tribe traditional 'enemies', or to the sanctuary of the saints. Negotiations would then be opened through the saints, and after some days the group of the murdered man would allow the agnates, though not the killer himself, to return. Peace would be restored by the eventual agreement and payment of blood-money, and the exile of the murderer. The second condition might or might not sooner or later be withdrawn by the group whose member had been killed.

The rule cited as governing the payment and distribution of blood-money is as follows: the culprit pays one half and the rest of his Ait Ashra'a the remaining half, whilst the sons (or failing any, the brothers) of the murdered man receive one half, and the Ait Ashra'a share the other half.

Concerning the flight of 'the ten' I often used to pose the following question: suppose there are nine agnatic relatives of a man of a given closeness, and at the tenth and eleventh place in order of proximity, there are two men - brothers, say - who are, of course, equally close to the murderer. Must they both flee, or may one of them procure immunity by claiming - I am the Eleventh?

The question of The Eleventh raised somewhat, if I may say so, my reputation for wit: it was received with much hilarity. The implication is, plainly, that it would be a most unwise Berber who placed his trust in such arithmetical considerations. In other words, the rules should not be interpreted too literally, despite the fact that numbers such as 'ten'occur in them. Similarly, the fact that 'custom' is said to prescribe given fines for offences, or a specified blood-money, should not be allowed to obscure the fact that the precise sum was a subject for negotiation and no doubt varied with the strength of the offended party, the wealth of the offending one, ~~etc.~~

Amongst the Ait Atta of Talmest I was assured that the rules governing the murder of a woman by a woman were parallel to those governing male homicide, except that, as usual, the numbers involved were halved: only five women had to flee. It is to be assumed that they would have to be from her currently effective group (her husband's

household, if married). I do not know whether cases of such feminine murders did really occur significantly: I am rather inclined to think that this particular rule is a case of the folk jurisprudential elaboration in an l'art pour l'art spirit to which North Africans are often given. (All the same, feminine quarrels between women of different families are most plausible amongst pastoralists such as the Ait Atta: for it is the women who generally go to the wells to fetch water and water the sheep and goats, and at the well they are naturally inclined to quarrels over precedence.)

Concerning the feud in general, there is an obvious difference between feuds according to the size and relationship of groups involved. Those involving small groups living in close vicinity of each other are settled, and needs must be, by blood-money and/or exile of the murderer or, if beyond settlement, by the exile of one of the two groups. Feuding of larger groups may be more permanent but still be occasionally in abeyance in the interests of a wider conflict, in which the two feuding parties find themselves on the same side. But such conflicts too may become so serious as to require a re-affiliation of one of the two groups, if not its migration. (Thus, for instance, the important segment Ait Hussein of the Ait Isha was involved so seriously and for so many years with other clans of the Isha, that it

reaffiliated itself to the Ait Mhand, on whose borders it is situated.) The widest conflicts still, between very large tribal groupings, also do not generally manifest themselves as a "war" in a civilised sense, i.e. a permanent state of total hostility involving all sub-groups: but those hostilities, though sometimes latent, tend to be of long duration. The only wider shared loyalty mitigating them is a partial overlap in the range of saints to whom the two groups bring donations, and who can be invoked for mediation and settlement.

Finally, there may also be - contrary to ideology and principle, but nevertheless a reality one must shamefacedly confess - feuding between saintly groups. This has only, to my knowledge, occurred between groups some distance (geographically) from each other. (The genealogical distance between the top saintly stratum in each of the groups involved was not so great.) Sharp tensions between neighbouring saintly villages has occurred but real feuding and violence was avoided (though only just, by all accounts.) Moreover, saintly groups may feud by proxy, setting their respective clients against each other. But these matters will be discussed in more detail in connection with the saints.

5. Further Services.

The services performed by igurramen for lay tribesmen were simply listed above (Chapter 3, Section 4). The general features of the political life of the lay tribes, which provide the context in which the saints perform their services, were described, in connection with their key institutions, in the preceding sections of this chapter. It remains to describe in slightly fuller detail the services which in earlier passages were merely listed, or only seen from the viewpoint of the beneficiaries rather than the agents.

Their role in supervising elections and tending the shrine used for major collective oaths is already clear enough.

Arbitration is a connected but separate function. Just as minor oaths go to the local mosque of the lay tribesmen's villages, and major oaths go to the shrine, so minor disputes destined by the parties for arbitration, go to the lay chief, whilst major ones go to the saints. The saints are, inevitably, arbitrators rather than judges: they cannot enforce their verdicts, but depend on the acceptance of that verdict by the tribesmen. It is illuminating to cite the rule given by members of the Ait Abdi tribe, in the close proximity of the main Ahansal lodge: if a dispute cannot be locally settled by appeal to the chief, it is taken to the saints to be arbitrated Koranically, according

to the Shra'a. Three saintly centres are cited, and the two parties go from the first to the second if the verdict of the first is not acceptable, and then on to the third if the verdict of the second is not acceptable either. There is no fixed order for appealing to the various centres. Not all three are Ahansal. (Generally even tribes well enmeshed in the Ahansal set of lodges also have some contact with non-Ahansal ones outside the region.) The verdict of the saints appealed to in the third instance is binding on both parties - so the theory runs.

In fact of course the saints can be more than arbitrators in as far as defiance of their verdict, is a serious matter, and their verdict is those supported by considerable moral authority. If one of the parties in conflict is willing to accept their verdict, it is in a strong position - it can then challenge the reluctant party to an oath ...'

It is of some interest to note the internal inconsistency of the theory: the saints are appealed to so that they should adjudicate according to (theoretically unique) Koranic law. The fact that three saintly centres can be invoked in succession, entails the possibility, indeed the likelihood, of the various saintly verdicts - all Koranic - not being identical ... This contradiction, obvious enough to the observer, is not something which bothers or is present to the minds of the tribesmen. One might be tempted to say

that there is for them no contradiction, as for them, Shra'a has come to mean simply That Which the Saints and Prophet's Own Flesh Decree, rather than that which is contained in the Book.

But this, again, would not be altogether correct. The 'proper' meaning of Shra'a is not completely ignored. The most striking feature of this is the - rudimentary, indeed - internal judicial organisation of the saintly lodges, and in particular of the main lodge. It contained one or more persons known as the Kadi, (Koranic judge), and it was his job to pass the (supposedly Koranic) verdict, under the general authority of the saint, the agurram. The Kadi was in fact a member of the saintly kin group, of the lineage of the lodge - but a minor member, much inferior in authority and power to the igurramen of the dominant sub-lineages. As this institution has not survived the French conquest, one can only speculate about the precise details of the relationship of the Kadi and the Baraka-endowed saint. But there can be little doubt that the real decisions of importance rested with the agurram: the Kadi must have been, or rather acted the part of, a legal advisor, perhaps he also dealt directly with minor matters.

There are at present, in the main lodge, a number of (related) families called Ait LeKadi, who claim that their

name derives from men who fulfilled this function two or three generations back. These Kadis are claimed to have possessed Koranic learning, acquired by long periods of study and legal practice, allegedly in Fez (the recognised centre of legal learning in Morocco) and Tafilelt (a trans-Atlas oasis of great importance, and centre of the shurfa from which the present Moroccan dynasty derives.) Their period of study and legal practice in these foreign parts tend to be, somewhat suspiciously, multiples of seven years .. The post and function certainly existed, though one may have doubts about the genuineness of the Koranic knowledge and of the preparatory studies. To possess the services of a member so well qualified as to have served as a Kadi in Fez and Tafilelt is just the thing to raise the prestige of the lodge with the tribesmen. But tribesmen - even Ihansalen - from the region of Ahansal do not generally make careers in Fez or in Tafilelt, and men who do make good in those places are not generally willing to go - or go back - to backwoods such as Ahansal-land: and in as far as all this was probably at least as true in the Morocco of a few generations back as it is now, one can only view these stories with some suspicion. But the significant fact is that claims of such Koranic learning were held to be necessary or useful.

There is at present in the main lodge another family

(the Ait Troilest) whose head was frequently village headman (at any rate until implicated in a case of corruption in 1959), in which the brother of the head-of-house has been away for many years, and is claimed to be undergoing extensive and prolonged legal training. From time to time I was told that he was due back shortly, to collect a bride. What in fact he was doing, and where, I do not know, but legal training or practice in foreign parts is, I think, a favourite occupation of absent kinsmen in a lodge.

Another minor family bears the name of U'Talb, sons of the scribe, and claim descent from one so qualified. One should remember that a scribe or cleric (fquih or talb) is generally anyone who can read (Arabic, of course, Berber not being written), and not very much at that; rather than a person who necessarily fulfils the functions of a Koranic teacher; and that indeed the notions of scribe and lawyer are hardly distinct, as the word fquih (derived from the word for law) indicates.

The role of lodge Kadi became extinct with the French conquest. By an irony of fate, the French presented the saintly villages, as they did other subjugated Berber tribes, with the alternative of choosing Koranic law and tribal custom. But a choice of Koranic law would have meant not what had passed for such in the hills, but a relatively more genuine article administered by a real Kadi with relatively

more genuine qualifications ... So the saints opted for custom, which in theory they did not have and would have had to invent. But this did mean the end of the title of Kadi in the lodge. *

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* I am not quite clear whether the Kadi-ship was abolished in the lodge immediately after the French conquest in 1933, or only very shortly after. I have been told that when first offered the choice by the French, the saints chose the Shra'a, but changed their minds soon after, being dissatisfied with the Kadi. I am not clear whether this was someone brought along in the baggage of the French, or whether it was their own old 'Kadi', now elevated to a more genuine importance.

The igurramen who held important administrative posts under the French did tend to have private secretaries-scribes, foquaha, in their service, and this may in some measure be seen as the institutional successor of the old lodge judges...

In connection with the possibility open to lay tribesmen to appeal to various (and rival) centres of sanctity, it should be stressed explicitly that of course there are no clear boundaries of the jurisdiction of various saints. The frontiers of the shepherds of flocks may be laid down (more or less clearly), but the frontiers of the shepherds of shepherds, of the saints, are not. Indeed they overlap. Each tribe has access to a number of saints - a significant limitation to the power of any of them - which it can use as alternatives or in succession as courts of appeal. Just as

each saintly centre is surrounded by a number of lay tribes whose mutual opposition is the source of its strength, so every lay tribe is surrounded by a number of centres of sanctity whose mutual rivalry limits the power of each one of them.

There is, moreover, a kind of domino-like pattern. Tribe A has access to neighbouring zawiyas X,Y, and Z. Its neighbour, tribe B, "shares" in the use of and reverence displayed to X and Y, but is too far from Z to have relations with it, but does have relations with zawiya T, which is too far to have any effect on tribe A. (There is of course no fixed numerical ratio between tribes and zawiyas, and indeed the segmentary nature of the tribes, and to some extent the segmentary nature of the saints, would make any such ratio meaningless. But it is safe to say that every effective lodge has more than one client tribe. Large tribes may or may not have more than one lodge with which they are associated: here again, the tendency is to a one-many relationship, if only in virtue of the fact that a tribe has frontiers in a number of directions. But its relations with all but one lodge may be relatively tenuous.) The consequence of this kind of series of overlaps is that one could move from one end of the Atlas to another without ever crossing an absolute frontier, so to speak, i.e. one not under the jurisdiction of any saintly centre whatever. (The

consequence of this is that if one applied Professor Evans-Prichard's definition of a tribe, one would get the paradoxical conclusion that there is but one tribe in the whole of the Atlas, or even the whole of Morocco.)

There is a further limitation on the power of the saints: not only is no saint indispensable in virtue of the existence of rival saints (in his own lodge as well as in others), but also in virtue of the fact that lay tribes may and sometimes do use <u>each other</u> as courts of appeal. Tribes A and B may have an arrangement such that an internal dispute in A, which the local chief and influential elders have failed to settle, may be taken for arbitration to B, and vice versa. I am not clear about the precise mechanics of such appeals (i.e. just how the mediators from the other tribe were to be selected: presumably by agreement of the parties in conflict and with the aid of the local chief); nor is it clear how in such cases use of arbitration fitted in with use of the collective oath procedure. I have come across two such sets of tribes related by (the <u>possibility</u> of) such reciprocal arrangements, and no doubt other such sets existed.

There is thus <u>a</u> sense in which the lay tribes as such are in opposition to the saints as such, a sense in which there is a tug of war, an exchange of advantages and an application of sanctions, between these two general (though

hardly corporate) groups. (The lay tribes only become jointly corporate through the saints; the saints, never.) The lay tribes could refrain from making use of the saints. It is true that their courts of appeal, their collective oaths, and their internal elections all run more smoothly with the aid of the saints: but all these things can be done without them. Neither individual saints, nor saints as such, are totally indispensable. I regret this, for the "functional" interpretation would come out more neatly if it were possible to argue that saints are necessary, that if they did not exist they would have to be invented. But one has to record the fact that lay alternatives for the functions performed by the saints do exist ... I do not think that these alternatives are as good as those provided by the saints; and their existence only proves that on occasions, saints can be dispensed with, and not that they could be dispensed with throughout.

In the preceding paragraphs I have concentrated in showing, and even stressing, the existence of alternatives in seeking mediation or protection. The importance of these alternatives should not be overestimated. In concrete situations, there will often, perhaps most often, be no real alternative. A village A is under aggressive pressure from its powerful neighbouring tribe B: it will generally be obvious that the only people with sufficient authority over B

and at the same time accessible to A, happen to be the saints of X ... In such a situation, the theoretical possibility of also invoking the saints of Y will be of no practical significance. Again, individual saints may and do become so influential, carrying the authority of their recognition by so many lay tribes and other nearby saints, that the parties to a dispute would hardly wish to offend so influential a baraka-holder by taking their troubles elsewhere ...

In connection with the tribesmen's appeal to 'Koranic' arbitration from the saints, it is worth noting that the saints constituted a brake rather than an aid to the full Islamisation of the tribesmen.* French studies of Berber

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* This is one of the ways in which these Berber zawiyas differ from the Sanusi ones described by Professor Evans-Pritchard.

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customary law tend to say that this 'custom' tended with time to approximate more closely to Koranic law. This is probably true - the 'custom' certainly includes at least lip-service to Koranic principles such as feminine inheritance of one half of a son's share - though it is difficult to assess these trends except for the French period, when it certainly obtained. But this trend was rather hindered by the Saints' practice of handing out custom and calling it Shra'a, thus adding the survival of custom by giving it,

locally, the cover of a respectable name. Ironically, the spread of true Islamisation reached the saints via the lay tribesmen, through a general diffusion unmediated by the saints, rather than vice versa ...

But whilst not aiding the "real" Islamisation of the area, (in the sense of the promotion of genuine conformity with what the Book really says), the saints do greatly assist the very significant "nominal" Islamisation, i.e. the sense of identification, and above all the sense of enthusiastic and warranted identification, with Islam. The tribesmen are not unaware of the fact that they are held in contempt as bad Muslims by Arab townsfolk. (Certain legends of, for instance, the Ait Abdi bear eloquent testimony to this awareness.) This may or may not be of concern to them. But by giving donations to the Prophet's own flesh and blood, and accepting their arbitration and leadership, they make up for their ignorance of the inaccessible Book ...

Apart from this rather general, undifferentiated service, the saints also underwrite the political and territorial status quo - and its changes. The complicated spatio-<u>temporal</u> boundaries connected with transhumance need witnesses with moral authority to have such stability as they have. For instance, the territorial settlement in the neighbourhood of Zawiya Ahansal is generally justified by a land-deed said to have been drawn up by Sidi Lahcen u Othman,

the alleged great-grandson of SSA, which records the vesting of local land rights in him by the previous inhabitants. They were rewarded by new lands much further West, in which Sidi Lahcen found them new springs by magical means. The settlement of some Ait Atta around Talmest and the transhumance rights there of others is justified in terms of a reward for military services rendered to the saint (and his great-grandfather, and presumably the intervening saintly generations) by the Ait Atta. (It is tacitly understood that these services were required to help persuade the previous inhabitants, saintly baraka and the magical provision of springs or wells having proved insufficient arguments.)

In connection with the oath and the feud, another service of importance provided by the saints is of course that of sanctuary. This enters in at least two ways: for one thing, it is useful to have a secure place in which rival tribes or groups in conflict can meet to negotiate without danger. Secondly, the lodges are useful for murderers fleeing vengeance, and for their kin during the early period following a murder, before blood-money is agreed and accepted. The murderers may spend prolonged periods of time in the lodges, before being either 'forgiven' and allowed to return home, or resettled by the igurramen, or, if the lodge is understaffed, as it were, swelling the lower, non-saintly ranks of its population.

The saintly services in connection with providing continuity, information and leadership for larger temporarily activated units have already been described.

There are also certain reciprocal services between pairs of lay tribes: these arrangements (tada) are said to have been initially organised, and can be sustained, by the saints. This relationship is such that the families of tribe A and tribe B are paired off, in a one-to-one relationship (and of course in some cases one-many, the sizes of the two tribes not being identical), after which the paired families are said to be in a tada relationship. This, romantically, involves them in the obligation of returning booty to each other if in the course of conflict between A and B, the family of one side finds itself, on the division of spoils, with some of the property of its own tada. (Perhaps steps are taken during such divisions to ensure that everyone gets the property of other people's tada. Or, there is the interesting possibility, which I cannot confirm, that the tada relationship is invoked when the return of booty is held desirable as a step towards making peace.) More significantly, tada aid each other on their respective territories, providing shelter and protection, and thus making possible travel for trade etc.

There is the general problem of trade. Central High Atlas tribes are not islands unto themselves. They are not

autarchic, in some cases strikingly not so. Pastoral tribes often need to buy cereals; there is trade in salt and dates from the south; in more recent times (this century), in tea and sugar, the main local luxury, and more recently in more sophisticated goods. The saints provided guarantees, for both sides, enabling people to visit the weekly markets in the territory of other tribes. Thus, for instance, Zawiya Temga is situated between the Ait Abdi and the Ait Isha. The Abdi, very short of cereals but famed for their wool, must export or die. They regularly visited the Isha markets, passing through Temga, where they left their arms and were accompanied by saints or their agents, who guaranteed both their safety and their good conduct.

Finally, of course, there are the more "purely" religious or transcendental services offered by the saints. I have left this to the end not because it is unimportant, but because it is something not specific to the Atlas saints, not, as far as I can see, specifically connected with the local social structure, and something which could perhaps be supplied by others; therefore it cannot easily be invoked to explain such importance as the saints had. The saints do request divine assistance; good and black magic are rather liable to be confused, and some of them are credited with power over devils as well as with influence with the deity of His angels. These services may be performed for

collectivities or individuals: a tribe may wish its harvest to prosper, or a tribesman come to be cured, or a woman come to request supernatural assistance to get pregnant.

An interesting custom is that the tribes who brought grain for the saints as donations, received some seed grain in return, with the saints' blessings, thus aiding next year's harvest. Like European royalty or other functionaries, saints may lay the first stone of bridges, though they have had the sense to do so only for the magnificently placed bridge over the gorge at the capital of the Ait Isha tribe, which gives it its name (Bridge of Isha). This bridge, unlike any other in the region, is so well placed that it is not periodically swept away by the river when in spate. Its permanence is however credited to the Temga saints' assistance. Since after 1933, this bridge has been supplemented by another, constructed by French engineers, and this unhallowed bridge has also, so far, survived.

This general function of providing opportunity of intercession, of requesting aid, of enabling men to feel they are "doing something" - though not controlling, for that is recognised to be impossible - about important things which are out of control, the natural forces and events of life and death - that also is provided primarily by the saints, in addition to the X "structural" services described. In

providing the minor services of this kind to individuals, they meet some competition from two classes of people: women, often from their own agurram ranks, and from the village scribes, whose indulgence in magic is aided by their partial literacy. (Koranic tags are known to be potent. When written in reverse, or recited whilst retreating, they constitute powerful black magic.) This is the small change of sanctity. Unlike the more important aspects of the role of the saints, this has not, I believe, declined in recent decades with the impact of the modern world, though it does co-exist with some modern variant techniques. It does not seem to me very important, nor of course in any way uniquely characteristic of the region.

Chapter 5

Lives of the Saints

1. The expanding universe

When dealing with the saints, we find ourselves in a malthusian world. Saints multiply geometrically. Their predicament arises from the fact that the demand for their services does not even go up arithmetically. It does not really, in any one place, go up at all.

The reasons for the proliferation, the population growth of the saints can be divided into the objective and subjectiœ ones. The latter are describable as a kind of optical illusion.

The objective reasons first: thanks to the donations they receive, the saints are better off than the average lay tribesmen, and hence stand a better chance of having children and bringing them up to maturity during periods of shortage. Secondly, the pacificism which successful saints practice, (and more important, are <u>able</u> to practice without incurring disastrous consequences), in some measure makes a member of a saintly lineage a better life insurance risk than a lay tribesman. Thirdly, saints have a stronger position in the matter of obtaining brides than other people. Their ideology forbids them to give away their daughters outside the lineage. It does not however prevent them, in fact if not in theory - there is some ambivalence, and contradictory

views on this - from accepting and getting brides from outside, lay lineages. (Also, the slave population in holy lodges contains womenfolk who are not without attraction for the saints and indeed who are at any rate now liable to be married to them. However, I know of no important saintly lineage which has become coloured through such an alliance in the past.)

The "optical illusion" reasons for saints having a relatively much higher reproduction rate, over a time, than lay tribes, are these: belonging to the saintly lineage, even without knowing precisely by which genealogical steps, is a prestigious and almost always to some extent an advantageous matter. Hence members of this lineage, who in any case have a better chance of settling (in groups, and on favourable terms, not as individual refugees) in the territory of other tribes than have ordinary tribesmen, continue to remember their origins during the generations which follow such a settlement. A lay tribesman who settles in another tribe in consequence of an unforgiven feud, for instance, will have offsprings who in all probability will forget their origins in a very small number of generations. Hence, the small-scale <u>lay</u> migrations do not lead to as it were genealogical pocknarks on the faces of the tribes amongst whom it takes place. Members of the saintly lineage, however, <u>do</u> "remember" and thus continue to count as members

of their original lineage, at least for nominal purposes.

Moreover, the saintly descent is not only seldom forgotten,* but it may be "remembered" in cases where it never had been the case in the first place. In other words, given a suitable opportunity, it will be invented. There are two social groups I know of (one consisting of about eight families, the other a whole village of somewhere about 300 members) who claim membership of a holy lineage, but whose claim is disputed. Other "entrants" into the saintly lineage may have been more skilful, diplomatic or fortunate, and have brought off their entry without challenge.

Others, who have entered into some partial community of rights with a holy group (sharing a village) without yet being absorbed genealogically, are biding their chance.

Thus the objective and the illusory factors between them result in the saintly lineages having a greater rate of growth than others.

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* There may however be a desire to forget it if a member of it settles so far away that he is right outside the region where that particular lineage is prestigious. In such a case, the advantages of being a full member of the local group may outweigh the advantages of this particular saintly genealogy. Ahansal families settled in the plain are liable to find membership of a backwoods holy lineage of little advantage.

2. The Saintly Diaspora

But whilst the saints proliferate, their saintly functions do not. On the contrary, as described, it is of the essence of those functions that they should be very concentrated into one person or a small number of them, and of course, that there should be a considerable degree of continuity. Sanctity is not, like chieftaincy, an annually ascribed office. It is a permanent state. Though God may cease to use some given saint as a channel of divine blessing, it is assumed that the deity is not very capricious or changeable in its choice of channels. Ideologically, the way in which continuity enters into the notion of a saint is most manifest if one remembers that the first explanation invoked of the sanctity of any one man is that his father and ancestors were also saints. The permanent and pacific saint complements the transient and non pacific chiefs.

But he can only usefully complement them if he is not merely pacific, but also either unique or at least rare. Useful saints could hardly be in a one-to-one relationship to chiefs or lay clans.* They need to be in a one-many relationship to them. Their power and position depends on being a

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* At the same time, I have to concede that elsewhere in the Muslim world, similar saints do stand in such one-to-one relationships to lay tribal groups. This is the situation, for instance (if I understand Dr. E. Peters' material properly) amongst the bedouin of Cyrenaica, where the

marabtin bil baraka appear to be attached as clients to lay tribes. At the same time, it may be just this which made it easy and desirable for the Sanusi to take over mediation and leadership functions amongst the tribes: they were not already performed by the marabtin.

They need to be in a one-many relationship to them. Their power and position depends on being a/kind/of telephone exchange, a neutral central sanctuary which provides a common ground for many other tribes and clans. Their force, in any one group, is the respect given them by all the other groups.

So the deep contradiction of sanctity is that on the one hand saints multiply, on the other they must, of the very essence of their role, be rare. The contradiction also exists between the nature of sanctity - concentrated, and continuous over generations - and the local and Islamic rules of inheritance, which being egalitarian as between brothers leads to diffusion, not concentration. These inheritance rules are recognised by the saints as they are by the lay tribes. Other goods do indeed get diffused: sanctity and its fruits cannot, of its very nature. But the manner in which it remains concentrated, and is not inherited evenly, is a subtle matter, and indeed crucial to the understanding of this kind of sanctity.

The contradiction is resolved through the fact that only

a very small proportion of the people entitled to be saints by their descents actually operate as saints: the others, whilst retaining the lineage-membership and the claim implicit in it, go lay. I shall refer to these others as "latent saints". Members of the saintly lineage can go lay in various ways and to varying degrees. Sometimes, also, the process can take place in the opposite direction: latent sanctity be reactivated. (In the nature of the Malthusian situation, however, this is rarer than the opposite process.)

In the wider sense, sanctity covers all those who claim the appropriate descent. In the narrowest and fullest sense, it covers only those who are highly, respectfully and widely acclaimed and usedas saints by the lay tribes, and who exhibit or are held to exhibit all or most of the characteristics of sanctity on the list. Between these two extremes, these is a spectrum of more or less laicised saints, manifesting more than the minimum, and less than the full attributes.

The political life of the saints is totally different from that of the lay tribes. The lay tribes know the politics of a kind of fatalistic merry-go-round: <u>in</u> one year, and <u>out</u> for two or three or whatever it is, and little or no hope of individual or clan political advancement. Everything remains the same: only the personnel change, everyone gets his turn, if that, and not much more than his turn. The

system is egalitarian, and it is also fairly safe. It checks ambition with very considerable effectiveness. If it sins by insufficiently mitigating anarchy, it is correspondingly effective in obviating the danger of tyranny.

This is the politics of the merry-go-round. But the political fate of the saints is quite different. The rhythm, for one thing, is far slower. But also the principle is totally different. This is no fatalistic and regular merry-go-round. This is a game of musical chairs, played out slowly over generations. It is played not by removing chairs but by adding (through the natural and illusory increases) to the number of contestants. The number of chairs available for effective sainthood remains fairly constant, or only grows very slowly at any rate for any one region. (It can only be augmented by expanding into other areas where the market for sanctity is not saturated.) So, over time, or at any rate whenever there is a growth in the saintly population, some must go lay.

There is a variety of strategies open to a man or group who are on the verge of being pushed out into the cold, into the laity. He may struggle, he may settle for some intermediate status, he may give in. But the most important of the alternatives, however, is emigration to a place distant enough not to be a rival of the original centre of sanctity and thus not to have its activities curtailed by the shadow

cast by the original centre. Such a leap into the dark is not necessarily easy: there are always perils and dangers facing him who wishes to set up a branch of a going concern in a new territory. Moreover, it requires a positive invitation, or at the very least a willingness, of the people amongst whom the settlement is to take place. But, it should be noted, such a willingness or invitation are most likely to be forthcoming in the very cases which are also those which offer the best prospects for the future of a new holy settlement: namely, in the perilous territory between two major and potentially or actually hostile lay tribal groupings. It is there that the cultivation of land is difficult for either of the two lay parties, and it is there that the loss is least to them and the gain greatest, for at that point it will also be convenient to have an arbitrator, a sanctuary and a kind of holy guarantor of a frontier. One should also add that the invitation to form a new settlement is most likely (though not necessarily) to come to a group which hasn't yet declined very far, or at all, in the direction of laicisation. In ideological terms, they still have <u>baraka</u>. In practical terms, they have some experience of how to be an effective saint. The simplest case of receptivity to such an invitation occurs when a very effective and influential saint has more than one son, and solves the problem of succession by helping some of them to form new settlements elsewhere.

For this kind of reason, the holy settlements are dispersed over a wide area in a discontinuous kind of way. Saints, like galaxies in some theories of the expanding universe, so to speak repel each other: if no other factors intervened they would diffuse over even larger areas, and never be too close to each other. (There are of course other factors working in the opposite direction: an already laicised group may have little opportunity for new settlement, and profit from the protection of a nearby fully effective holy group. Or, none of the sons of a saintly father may be willing to move, each one hoping in due course to inherit the original central place.)

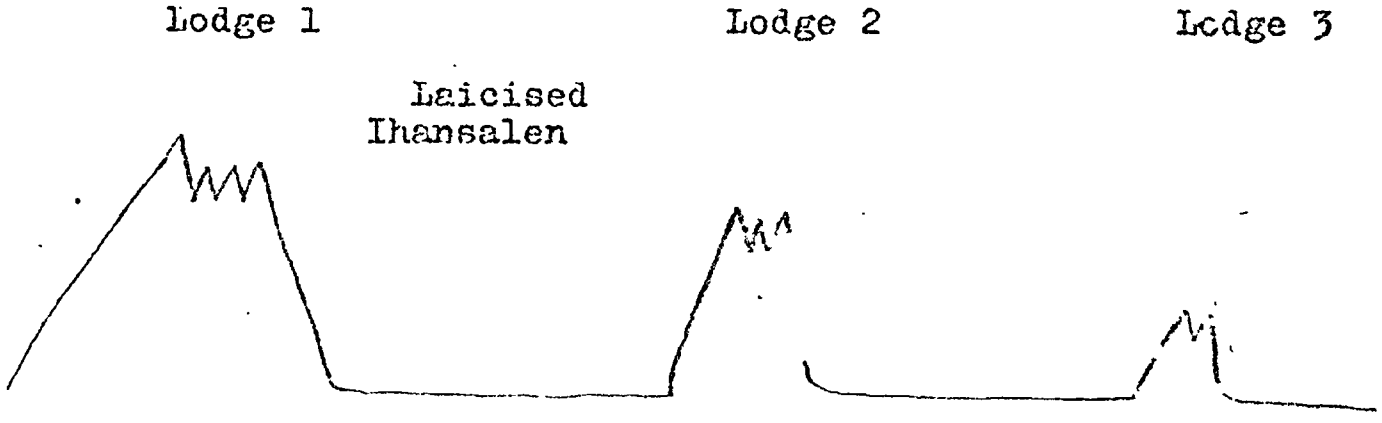
One should add however that not only the top layer of fully effective saints disperse, though they do so more than the laicised ones. Even the others, whilst in general not having the opportunity to reactivate their effective sanctity even by moving far off, may nevertheless have opportunities for settlement, and for surviving in the new place without changing their identity, better than those of ordinary lay tribes without any pretensions at all. (In some cases - and there is at least one striking instance of this - moving far off may be an opportunity for positive reactivation of effective sanctity.)

The short term merry-go-round of the lay tribes and the long term musical chairs of the saints complement each other.

5. The Flow of Grace

The factors described earlier make for the concentration of holiness and influence amongst some of the totality of holy lineages and personnel.[c] As described, the surplus of potential holiness is, from generation to generation, ever being pushed out into what is a mere lay condition, despite the possession of the qualifying, holiness-conferring ancestry.

But this process of elimination is not carried to its extreme conclusion. It is not like the football cup after the Final has been played and only one solitary team remains. It is rather like the football cup before the semi-finals have been played. At any given time, more than one serious competitor remains in the game. And, of course, new ones enter as some of the old ones are eliminated. If one were to draw a diagram, it would look something like this:



The peaks of influence do not taper off to a sharp point but have at their summit a little plateau on which there is room for more than one family. For instance, in the main Zawiya, there were in the 1950s six or seven families of full saintly status, of which two were markedly more prominent than the others though most of the others were by no means knocked out of the race in the next generation. For one thing, the mere accident of distribution of male births might well put them into the running again. In as far as within each of these families, one individual will tend to be pre-eminent, the plateau itself may be seen as composed of little pinnacles, separated by lower points represented by those individuals in the families who are themselves of lesser importance.

Moreover, the general peak representing the principal Zawiya is not a solitary mountain rising from an un-differentiated plain. In the distance, but the not very great distance there are other peaks: the centres of holiness established by previous emigration, as described. Why do the peaks not taper to a sharp unique point, falling off precipitously into the plain of lay tribes and laicised saints?

When a holy father leaves more than one son, and their families finally undergo fission and separate (which often they will not do immediately on his death but only much later), there is as it were no immediate and rapid way in which the

elimination match could be played and the succession decided. In a real state, where there is a real centre of government and the instruments of power can be seized, there could be a war of succession or at least a rapid palace intrigue. But this saintly quasi-state has no such central instruments, symbolic, bureaucratic or military, which could be seized. Its power depends entirely on habitual recognition by the lay tribes: in their use of the saints for arbitration, elections etc. (The tribes could as it were go on strike.) So, for a long time, perhaps for a very long time, the race may go on and be very even.

Berber law of inheritance, like Islamic law in this case, is egalitarian as between brothers. In practice, where there are indivisibles such as influence, or sanctity, there is a slight presumption in favour of primo-geniture, but by no means a decisive one. (In one of the two chief families in the main Zawiya in recent years, succession did not go to the eldest son. In the other, there was only one son.) Thus there is little in the order of births which would provide a sure basis for the decision. Again, it is hard for the closely related competing saints, brothers or close cousins, to kill each other off, much as they would like to. For one thing, ideologically their pacificism precludes this. If the Zawiya were a seething hot-bed of violent feuds (as

opposed to being merely a centre of constant intrigue,) this would diminish or destroy its usefulness as a centre and sanctuary for the surrounding tribes. Thus, if the competition between the remaining holy teams in the cup got out of bounds and became physically violent, both sides would suffer - and not merely in the immediate literal, physical sense. In fact, they do not go this far, and it would be disastrous for them if they did. They have other motives for mitigating their rivalry by co-operation: a good Zawiya should not be too small. When the lay tribes come to bring their donations and perform their elections, a great deal of entertaining has to be done. Indeed, the amount of this entertaining is such that it would be beyond the powers of any one family. Donations are large enough to make the sharing of them less painful, whilst a sharp diminution in the size might reduce the influence of the Zawiya, and thus lead to a net loss even to the surviving family. (It is true that they could, and would, recruit clients who would aid them in providing services and claim less than their kinsmen do. But there is no guarantee that they would be rapidly available.)

In more than one way the situation is not unlike the economics of hotel-keeping in a summer resort. It would be rash to assume that the principal hotel would necessarily profit by the destruction of all its rivals. Though this would give the principal hotel a local monopoly, it might also

reduce the size and hence the reputation of the resort as a whole and thus lead to a loss even for the surviving hotel.

There are rival centres of holiness in other Zawiyas in the distance, as a consequence of the opportunities of emigration and setting up new centres. The lay tribesmen may need Zawiya at a place where two powerful lay tribes meet, where a guarantor of trade and free passage is required, and so forth.

The consequences of this simultaneous presence of a number of rival centres of holiness, both clustered in one lodge and dispersed in a number are important: as described, it provides the lay tribesman with <u>alternatives</u> in their devotion to the saints. It also provides a great check on the real power of the saints. It imposes a very great limit on it indeed. An important and venerated saint may seem to have a good deal of power; he has, as it were, concentrated the respect of so many of the lay tribesmen on himself that he speaks with the authority of their respect. Facing any one group, let alone one individual, amongst the lay tribes, his power may indeed be overwhelming. If they ~~xxxxx~~ defy him, he may be able to call in <u>all</u> the other lay tribesmen, who had remained loyal to him. (These may be all too delighted to have the holy sanction for a pillage, and without the authority of the saint they would probably be unable to unite amongst themselves.) Such things have occurred. But

the situation is quite different if the saint wanted to do something which a large proportion of his lay clients did not like. Faced with a widespread reluctance, he is quite powerless. And of course, he would not wish to get into the position of asking for something which he will not be granted, so that a refusal would display his powerlessness and further diminish his influence.

Thus his power to impose unpopular policies or decisions is limited by the fact that close by, and also two valleys away, there are his near and his distant cousins only too willing to inherit his popularity and the respect and donations of the tribes. His cousin after all has the same ancestry and hence, in terms of the local ideology, as good a claim as he. All he needs in addition to the genealogy is perhaps a reputation for transcendental powers, but that can easily be made to follow on the recognition of the tribes.

The consequence of this situation can be plainly seen in, for instance, the kind of legal decisions which emanate from the saints. In theory, the saints' judgments are supposed to be those of proper Koranic law, and indeed thus derive their prestige, or are said to do so, from this fact. As the saints are descended from the Prophet it is locally assumed (or was), that of the very nature of things they would not make any decision other than a properly Koranic one: after all, they are the Prophet's flesh and blood.

Koranic propriety emanates from their essence, as it were. Islam *is* what they do. They *are* Islam.

The reality of the situation is of course quite different. The legal custom of the local tribes diverges from the Koran in a variety of ways. The tribesmen would find it inconvenient to have their issue judged in accordance within what in effect is an alien, urban code. When they come to the saints for judgment, what they want, or are prepared to accept, is a verdict which, apart from being in accordance with the real power relations of the situation, also fits in with their own preconceptions. If a saint in fact, behaved like a learned urban Kadi and imposed the proper code upon them, he would soon lose his popularity and hence, in due course, his effective saintly status. He really has no choice but to give the tribesmen the kind of verdict they want. And, indeed, he has no desire to give them anything else, nor indeed the ability. He lacks the learning, indeed the literacy, which would enable him to give the proper Koranic verdict if he wanted to. Descent is, alas, no substitute for book learning, of which he is generally quite innocent.

But the important point however is that even if he were willing and able (and he is neither) he would not be able to do so politically. The tribesmen would transfer their loyalty to a more complaisant cousin. In terms of the

general conflict between tribal custom and proper Islam, the real function of the saints is to judge by custom, and call it Koranic law. The substance remains unchanged, but a new name and cloak of respectability is imposed on it by the saintly authority. From the viewpoint of the spread of Koranic learning, and propriety, the saints are, objectively, a hindrance: they slow down its diffusion. They reinforce custom by giving it a counterfeit cloak of Islamic orthodoxy. In reality the custom practised or taught by the saints is barely distinguishable from that of the surrounding tribes. It is only believed to be different.

The functional utility of the alternative governments provided by the saintly cousins, can be seen not merely from the legal practices, but most clearly from the crucial decisions which faced the local tribes during the twenties of this century and the early thirties.

The tribesman faced the alternatives of either submitting or resisting the French. One might suppose that they would be swayed in this matter by the decision of their saints, and indeed in some cases this was so. But on the whole tribesmen made their own decisions, dictated by various factors, amongst which the main was geography: those who were well placed geographically for resistance did resist, and those who were not did not. But - and this is the

important point - which ever they did, an important saint was available to ratify their choice and provide them with leadership. Various Saints were the leaders both of submission and of resistance. In fact, three alternatives strategies were pursued by three different branches of the saintly lineage: all-out resistance, open collaboration, and thirdly a double game of seeming to resist but in fact co-operating. The practitioners of the second and the third strategy were in concert. (When the final French victory came in 1933, the leaders of the second and the third group were rewarded with administrative posts, whilst naturally the leaders of the first strategy were not.)

Thus in a sense the authority and leadership of the saints is to some extent a mere matter of appearance. They follow whilst appearing to lead, for the least they have to do if they are to survive as effective Saints is to express and ratify popular will.

4. Vox Dei Vox Populi.

How is this slow-moving elimination waltz decided? In theory, by the flow of Grace, of baraka. God chooses those whom he wishes to use as his intermediaries. There are no rules such as primogeniture etc. other than the elimination of all those who are unambiguously lay. The love of God, the preference of the effective father-saint for one of his sons, the love of men - these signs show where baraka is to be found.

The tribesmen do not, of course, have a written or an elaborate theology. But if one were to write it for them, I feel it should correctly be of a rather Calvinist kind, in the sense that the various signs of baraka are signs rather than causes, of election. But there is perhaps no point in asking oneself what people would say in reply to questions of a logical sharpness which are precluded by the kind of society they constitute.

What are the signs? They have already been listed in the account of what it is to be an agurram. Given the initial qualification of proper ancestry, the signs are - wealth (one sense of baraka is plenitude) provided of course it is accompanied by generosity, a Consider-the-Lilies style of entertaining which appears to be indifferent to the cost in the trust of God; magical powers; influence with men as well as God and supernatural powers, pacific behaviour;

upright and pious conduct, perhaps /:;c

As described in the course of analysing the notion of 'agurram', the possession of these attributes is, through a set of logical and causal circles which I think are most characteristic of the life of societies, the consequence of being held to possess them in the first place. A man reputed to be an agurram will receive donations which will enable him to receive visitors in style. A man used to arbitrate will find that the wisdom required to give weight is ascribed to his verdicts. Stories of magical powers will be credited when told of him. And so forth.

So the flow of Grace is really in the hands of the lay tribesmen: Vox Dei is, in the end, Vox Populi. Whilst the lay tribesmen overtly and formally elect their annual chieftains (under the guidance of the saints), they tacitly and almost unwittingly decide the long-drawn out competition for the possession of baraka. By attributing it to this or that saint, they indeed give it to him. (But, of course, it would never do to have this overtly conceptualised: if baraka were merely the consequence of the decisions of the lay tribesmen, it could not claim authority over them. What is in reality a choice - albeit not by an individual and not on any one occasion, but by many over a longish time - must appear not as a choice but as the recognition of an objective transcendental fact. This 'objectivity' of the allegedly

recognised characteristic has the social consequence of absolving him who 'recognises' it from the responsibility for it, which would attach to such an act if it were seen to be a choice. - This is very important.)

How does one compete for this recognition? Naturally, by performing the services required of saints to the satisfaction of the lay tribes. The struggle is a very slow one; it is a struggle for recognition by an audience, and there are a number of circles into which the audience can be divided: there are kinsmen, there are the immediate fellow-inhabitants of the lodge, there are tribesmen of surrounding and of more distant villages. The near and the distant audiences have repercussions on each other: the tribesman who arrives at a lodge will be guided in his choice of person for reverence by the respect shown locally to this or that saint. But likewise, a saint's standing within his own lodge will reflect the reverence in which he is held by distant tribesmen, a reverence which pays off to the lodge as a whole in the form of donations. In brief, the First Law of Sociology (to him who hath) applies very fully. (The Second Law, which contradicts the First - i.e. 'The first shall be last, etc' - does not apply to the saints.)

The struggle for recognition is subtle as well as prolonged, in that, as in other reputable professions, it is unseemly (but not unknown) for a saint to solicit. A

successful saint will proudly point to the fact that he has no need to go wandering around the countryside like a beggar collecting donations - his clients come to him. Within the main lodge, one can gauge the status distinction between the top effective saints and upper-middle semi-effective ones by the fact that the former wait passively in the lodge, the latter go out and solicit. One should add however that if a <u>really</u> effective saint chooses to go out and travel around, this breaking of the rules on <u>his</u> part is permissible and does not diminish his status - whilst if the marginal saint, who <u>had</u> to travel, gives up the practice, this will not by itself raise his prestige but only indicate that even when soliciting he cannot get much, and thus cause him to sink further still ... (In French days, this matter was further complicated by the fact that the travel or non-travel habits of saints were affected, in the case of some, by the holding of office, and in the case of others, by being held to be 'politically unreliable', i.e. hostile to the administration. Either of these circumstances would greatly inhibit travel. The chief possessor of baraka in the main lodge did not travel to collect donations outside the area of the nearest district office in the period until 1956, but did undertake major donation-collecting trips in 1959. In the mean time, he had lost both an official position and some saintly prestige and his change of habit can be attributed to either of these factors.)

The struggle is complex and interesting, as well as subtle. It is important to know which claims to make and which to fulfil, when to make them and when to withdraw. It would not be possible simply to make the maximum claims, hope for the best, see whether they bear fruit, and if not retire to ordinary lay tribal life. There are penalties attached to attempting and failing, and some may prefer not to take the risk. A man who wanders about collecting donations to that extent neglects his fields, and if he fails to obtain his donations may find himself falling between two stools. Also, saintly life is habit forming, and it may be difficult to revert to ordinary modes of livelihood.

The risks may occur in other ways. A community which claims saintly status and boasts of its pacifism in evidence of it, may find itself attracting aggression of, through insufficient recognition and reverence, it cannot deter the aggressor by fear of its supernatural powers or of its lay clients.

If requested, igurramen assure one that there is no rule by which a successor can be recognised, but maintain (implausibly) that it has always in the past been obvious: God's favour was manifest. Nevertheless, the conflict is expressed even for the past in legends. For instance, considerable numbers of segments in the main lodge trace their separation from each other to the various wives of one

and the same effective saint: all the wives are said to have desired the succession for their respective sons, and to have given each one of them the name * which according to prophecy

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* This name was Sidi Mha, indeed a characteristic name amongst the Ihansalen. The abbreviation 'Mha' of Mohamed is unusable without the preceding 'Sidi', and hence the name itself is hardly usable outside the ranks of effective saints who can expect others to address them with a 'Sidi'.

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would be the name of the leader of the lodge. The actual selection of the successor was done by a test imposed by the old man, a test which in fact was bound to select the most uncalculatingly generous one of the competing sons ...

As for the present, the competition for leadership amongst the effectively saintly families is manifest, indeed blatant. It is characteristic of them to claim to receive the poor visitors to the lodge, who bring no gifts, whilst their rascally rivals hide when the poor arrive and rush out to welcome the rich who bring gifts ... (A saint who lived up to these protestations would find himself impoverished and soon divested of his sanctity.) Needless to say, during the period of 1933-55, the will of God made manifest its choice more through the voice of the Franks than that of the local people - though the Franks were not always unheedful of local sentiment, particularly when conjoined with other considerations - and this affected, during that period, the rules of inter-saintly competition.

5. Types of Holy Settlement

The reasons for the slow but persistent expansion of the saints into dispersed discontinuous settlements have been described. There is the demographic pressure, appeal of the possibility of remaining an active saint rather than declining into a latent one (or even to re-activate latent sanctity) and, from time to time, the opportunity in the form of the willingness of lay tribes to tolerate or invite holy settlement. This is the 'expanding universe': holy settlements when they reach a crucial size as it were explode, albeit gently, and the exploded parts repel each other and tend to separate some distance from each other, and then, after further lapse of time, the process may be repeated. (Moreover, if they are effectively saintly, they are most likely to reach the critical size. They will attract clients to fill the lower ranks of the lodge, from ranks of refugees from feuds etc. At the top, success itself, by bringing in wealth and brides, is likely to lead to multiplication.) This retreat of holy galaxies from each other then goes on indefinitely, until some of them disappear beyond the horizon at the speed of light, or rather, in this case, until they get out of the area in which Ahansal descent has magic and carries prestige.

In the region investigated, there are certainly well over 20 and perhaps as many as 30 Ahansal settlements. They

differ in type, in size, influence, internal structure, ideology. Presumably, and certainly according to their own belief, (in some cases demonstrably) they also vary in age, in the length of time which has elapsed since their foundation and their hiving off from some other more central Zawiya.

By providing us with this multiplicity of centres at a different stage, nature has kindly provided us with a kind of insight into the past. Like the cosmologist, we cannot look into the past directly. But we can observe the present, and note that what is simultaneous in time is not necessarily at the same stage of growth: it is as if specimens had been arranged for us to illustrate the various possible stages, and thus gives us some insight into the life story of a Zawiya. It would of course be both dangerous to assume that Zawiyas are bound to some unique unilineal development: we cannot take for granted that they are all on various rungs of one identical and inescapable ladder. Indeed, it is certain that they are not. There are a number of paths of development, and some are not irreversible. Some ladders can be climbed down as well as up.

Nevertheless, the hypothesis that the various lodges illustrate each other's past and future can be very illuminating if used with caution. Given an account of the kind

of factors which can affect the life history of a holy settlement, we can conclude to the stages that can plausibly be expected. After all, the general environment of a Zawiya is not all that complex and varied. The number of possible life histories that a lodge can have, though more than unique, is not endlessly various. It is, in fact, comparatively limited. If we list the types and then find them in reality, this in some measure confirms our analysis, and justifies our Evolutionist Theory of Lodge Types. Such a theory finds its confirmation in two ways: in the account of the internal factors in each lodge making for growth and fission, and in the description of the various types of lodge actually found.

Whilst having no wish to argue for an evolutionist theory of societies in general, an approach of this kind does seem to me to have some usefulness when applied to the various lodges of the Ihansalen. They claim a common descent and boast genealogies illustrating it. The alternative hypothesis - to assume lodges immutable and stable, except in the case of externally impinging events - seems to me improbable. An account of given lodges would lead one to expect them to change over time. The quite considerable number of Ahansali lodges available does give one a good sample of the possible states of a village composed of people claiming saintly origin. The background environment is

fairly stable and does not intrude through some inherent excessive complexity. Hence, I think one may, tentatively, use the dispersion of forms over space as providing us with a sample of what we should find in time if we could go back. This doesn't, of course, enable us to reconstruct the history of any one lodge, but it does perhaps enable one to see the type of history - not unduly complex, at that - which saintly villages can undergo.

A kind of classification of types of lodges was already implicit in the earlier criteria of what it is to be an Agurram. One can classify them by how many, and which, of the features of agurram-hood are present. Some Ahansal settlements are as it were 'extinct' with regard to sanctity. Though they claim Ahansal descent, (and the claim is not challenged), they no longer have other attributes of effective sanctity. They feud, receive no donations, etc.

Consider the factor of <u>size</u>: the actively 'saintly' lodges tend to be large. Some extinct ones are large as well, and there is also one which is both small and effective, but it is plainly a product of very special circumstances in modern times as will be shown.

Effective 'saintly' settlements are internally <u>strati-</u>fied. There is no exception to this rule. The reason for this is obvious: sanctity, as indicated, cannot usefully be diffused (though it needs assistants) but tends to be

concentrated in individual personalities and families. There are subsidiary important factors making for internal stratification within Zawiyas: (a) there is the ideological factor that it is held proper for saints if possible not to work, and to employ slaves instead.* Consequently,

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* Muslim tribal people are sometimes supposed, in the image of the Arab bedouin, to value pastoral activities above agricultural ones. Perhaps this is so amongst the lay tribes around Ahansal, though I cannot say that I have experienced anything which would strongly give one this impression. One might, for instance, expect something of the kind from the Ait Atta, with their supposedly but recent sedentarisation: yet the Ait Atta of Talmest are most anxious and eager to plough up the pasture they are obliged to share as unploughed pasture with their clansmen from the South, and they display no sign of shame or conflict of values about this.

But what is curious is that with the saints, this expected valuation is positively reversed. The general idea is that ideally, a saint should not work at all. But this ideal can seldom be attained. If work he must, it is much better that he should work in the fields, and that his slaves or clients should do shepherd's work on the high pasture. Saints 'must' have slaves so as to be spared this indignity - though often it is not granted them, especially nowadays, to be so spared. Work in the fields is justified in terms of the saints' need to have bread to offer his guests. Amongst the big saintly families, it is somehow the employed shepherd who has the lowest status. Often, he is a boy —

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successful lodges tend to have a bottom stratum of negro slaves who had been purchased. The existence of such slaves is not unknown in lay tribes but it is extremely rare amongst them. (b) An effective lodge will tend to accumulate around itself - if it has not reached the point of

saturation - a number of permanently settled clients, people who for some reason or other have had to leave their original homes, (because of a feud or poverty), and who form part of the village but do not share in the sanctity.

They may not share in full pasture rights and so forth, in virtue of their alien origin. It is possible that with the passage of time, they will "forget" these origins and be allowed to forget them, and the descendants of the locally settled refugees will come to look like lay saints, that is to say claim participation in the general descent without being able to trace the specific genealogical links.

There are other respects, apart from size and the existence of stratification, in which lodges or Ahansal settlements differ from each other. There is no need to list them again, for they are implicit in the lists of characteristics and functions of igurramen given earlier. Lodges and settlements differ in possessing or not possessing these various characteristics, in performing or not performing those various functions. A variety of combinations is possible, with respect to such features as pacifism, the possession of a shrine of one's own general ancestor, deep genealogies, abstention from immorality such as dancing, participation in a lay alignment or tribe, and so forth. The various combinations will be discussed in connection with individual settlements.

CHAPTER VI The Main Lodge and its Location

1. The Village Itself.

Zawiya Ahansal is the undisputed centre of the system of Ahansali lodges and villages. It is itself a village of about 300 inhabitants, and adjoining the shrine in which the body of Sidi Said Ahansal, and of some others, is said to be found. The village itself immediately adjoins its cemetery: on the other side of the cemetery, there is Sidi Said Ahansal's shrine, and those of some others. Sidi Said Ahansal's shrine also contains, or is held to contain, the bodies of some other notable igurramen of recent generations, who are of course descended from Sidi Said Ahansal in the "straightest" line, i.e. in the dominant lineage which is held to have been influential uninterruptedly and whose members have not migrated from their ancestor's home.

It is a curious testimony to the fame and influence of Zawiya Ahansal that it occurs - as, simply, Ahansal - on map (plate 77) of the Times Survey Atlas of 1922. It is (with one exception much closer to the plain) the only ~~village~~ inhabited place of the region to be so distinguished, and indeed there are no other places in the heart of the mountains which share the honour. Yet Zawiya Ahansal is no bigger than many Berber villages, and smaller than some - particularly if one counts some of the near-continuous settlements on the edges of alluvial valleys as one village,

as reasonably one could. The fame and significance of Zawiya Ahansal of course reflects the fact that the main thing which could really distinguish a settlement in the days of the traditional social system was that it was a centre of agurram-hood, of "sanctity". But of the many centres which possessed this, Zawiya Ahansal was perhaps the most noteworthy, and probably the one which had held it in the most stable manner. It was also a centre of a whole system of kin-related sanctity, unlike some other centres which were either isolated, or if parts of a system, were parts of a territorially most discontinuous one, whereas the Ahansali one was neat and fairly compact.

The inclusion of Zawiya Ahansal in The Times Atlas of 1922 is seen to be the eloquent testimony which it is, if one remembers not merely that the inclusion was wholly unwarranted in terms of its size, but also that at the time it had never been visited by a European ... and that its occupation by the French in 1933 was still eleven years away.*

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* The actual first entry of Europeans into Zawiya Ahansal preceded the conquest by a year or two, and consisted of a reconnaissance group led by Lieutenant - as he then was - Alexandre, later the first local administrator and now an official at the town hall of Colmar. I am indebted for the confirmation of this story, to which my attention had first been drawn locally, to Monsieur Alexandre himself, whom I visited in Colmar in 1958.

Zawiya Ahansal is located on the Ahansal river (Asif Ahansal) about two hours walk below its springs, which

are themselves underneath the cliffs falling away from the main Atlantic-Sahara watershed in the central High Atlas. The village is on the right bank of the river. Like many agricultural Berber villages, in the central Atlas, it is placed on the rocky ground immediately above the irrigated, flat alluvial "plain" on the side of the river, a plain which at this point only has the breadth of two or three small fields; and only achieves even this breadth through terracing (each of the successive flat fields being at a different level). The point of this kind of characteristic location is of course that the buildings themselves do not waste any potentially valuable agricultural land, but are as close to the fields and the river as is compatible with not impinging on arable land.

The river is extremely fast flowing but fordable and bridged, and supplies villages along it with excellent water. From time to time, and especially in spring, it becomes a ferocious uncrossable torrent when in spate, at which times it invariably carries away all local bridges (built of planks and stones), frequently changes its course somewhat, and carries away the lower fields and their crops. This is not an unmixed disaster, as the mud it brings down is, plausibly, said to be very fertile.

The central part of Zawiya Ahansal is built on the fairly steep slope between two normally dry gullies which

descent towards the river. This central part is extremely compact. The walls of one house are frequently also the walls of the next. The compactness and the steepness of the slope have as a consequence a kind of three-dimensional quality - the flat roof of one house is sometimes also a part of the base or courtyard of the next house higher up. There is a network of narrow and winding "streets" suggestive of streets of an urban slum rather than of open spaces between farm buildings.

Everyone of importance, and the majority of the inhabitants, live in the compact part of the village between the two gullies. A smaller number of houses, inhabited by people of no great prominence, are more dispersed on the outside of the two gullies, - on the wrong side of the gullies, so to speak. The only important people on the wrong side of the gully are the dead: the cemetery is immediately adjoining the lower part of the East gully, and the shrines of the great or immediately beyond it.

Within the compact central part of the village, it is easy to distinguish the houses of the great from the houses of the ordinary. The houses of ordinary people are of a kind common to the central and Middle Atlas - unpretentious, square, with one or at ~~the~~ most ~~two~~ stories, flat-roofed and not tapering. (This is different further South, where the common style even ordinary people often have imposing houses ...)

The houses of the great display the characteristic and most attractive "castle-like" style of the south: tapering towers, flat-roofed but decorated with a kind of alcove which accentuated the fairy-tale-castle appearance. In Zawiya Ahansal, these towers never rise to more than three storeys.

One noble family (the Ait Sidi Yussif) have chosen to inhabit a house which is not of the castle type, but exhibits rather solid bourgeois comfort and security without ostentation. Two-storyed, well built and securely enclosed, it does in fact express the spirit of the family inhabiting it, a family which has chosen to pursue solid wealth and safety rather than fame, ostentation and influence. The Ait Sidi Yussif are one of the richest families in the village (perhaps the richest), and very well-born, close to the main current of Grace, but they neither play nor aspire to play any political role.

No non-noble family has a castle-like dwelling; but at least two noble familes combine the possession of one with dire poverty, and fail to live up to their status and habitat.

In recent years, since the French conquest, the very beautiful tower-type houses with their designs in dried mud, have lost some of their prestige. They are associated with the past and with types of prestige which are known to be

waning: they do not resemble urban dwellings of either Arabs or Europeans: the mud crumbles, the interiors tend to be dark, and they are unsuitable to types of entertainment which have come with the modern world. Hence conspicuous building assumes a new form: the building of more spacious and whitewashed rooms, with the use of boards rather than just branches, brushwood and mud for the roof, etc. Externally, in imitation or urban Arab styles, this leads to whitewashed patios with alcoves. Both the two top families in Zawiya Ahansal have acquired "state-rooms" of this kind, which were quite essential for the entertainment of French officers which was crucial in the political game of 1933-55. These state-rooms are normally kept unused and locked; and opened for guests of note (including locals). Traditional entertaining was less fastidious, and frequently took place out of doors. For the daily informal meetings and gossip, the area outside the mosque or outside the house of the top family adjoining the cemetery and shrine, are used.

One other innovation in style of house which is "coming" in the region ~~in~~ is not a consequence of new forms of political influence and prestige, but simply of the new tastes of returning soldiers. They tend to build houses more solid and with more light than the traditional unpretentious dwellings, but less decorative than the traditional conspicuous ones. A characteristic innovation with them is the use of chimneys. In traditional houses, smoke makes it exit as

best it can, mostly through a hole in the roof.

The new style affects the dead as well as the living. Traditional shrines resemble Berber houses, except that they are smaller: they are square and flat-topped. When of stone rather than dried mud, (pisé), they tended to be decorated by producing a zig-zag pattern, rather like an angular wavy line, at one or two levels by the positioning of the stones. In modern times, the shrines are altered to resemble those of the Moroccan plain: whitewashed, with sloping tiled roof and a brass thingumbob on top. At Zawiya Ahansal, Lalla Said Ahansal SBA's tomb has been redecorated in this fashion. Other shrines of dignitaries retain their traditional appearance, and the shrine of Sidi Mohamed ut'Baba, the founder of the dominant lineage from which all the top saintly families are drawn, is in disrepair and roofless. It is claimed that supernatural powers pull down the roof during the night whenever one attempts to repair it during the day. I do not know what motives and identity, if any, is ascribed to these powers. On the face of it, it is simply claimed to be a fact that the roof of this shrine mysteriously collapses whenever one rebuilds it, and recently no attempts to defy these powers has been made.

Within the village, there are four or five abandoned houses, which attributed to extinction of the families inhabiting them. In fact, there are reasons to suppose that Zawiya Ahansal is in demographic decline. Even without it,

there would I think be a tendency to abandon very old houses: the pisé style of building does lend to structures which are none too lasting, and it is sometimes easier to re-build on a new rather than the old site. A fair amount of building tends to go on between agricultural seasons, notably before the harvest. For ordinary habitations, the work will tend to be done by the family concerned aided by kinsmen or friends on a basis of reciprocity. In the case of the traditional tower-like buildings, more specialised masons will be employed, from the Southern side of the range (where this type of building is very common) or for instance from amongst the Ait Haddidu. No such building was erected at Zawiya Ahansal in recent years, but I watched one going up at Zawiya Asker in 1959, built for a local politically prominent personage by Haddidu masons. In brief, there is both the opportunity and the incentive for building. Labour is in easy supply during the slack agricultural season, as is the rocky land on the slopes above the valley bottom. At the same time, habitation - with carpets - is one of the few ways open to express status and accumulate durable property.

The really large families, with dependents of various kinds (the Ait Sidi Mulay, Ait Amhadar and the Ait Okdim) tend to have sprawling compounds, products of successive growth and building-on, and which do not always manage to be continuous. The houses of the saints, including these three top families, tend to be along what might be termed the

pilgrim's way through the village, i.e. the natural path taken by a visitor from down the valley making his way to SSA's shrine.

Such a visitor would, if he takes the most natural route, begin by passing between the house of the Ait Okdim and the village mosque. He would then pass through a gateway built under one of the Ait Amhadars' houses, emerging on to a courtyard surrounded by houses of the Ait Sidi Mulay household and those of their hived off cousins, the Ait Sidi Mu'a (and also of the household of the disinherited brother of the same name). He would then pass under another gateway, built under a part of the Ait Sidi Mulay household, and emerge at the edge of the cemetery at a point where a diagonal path would take him straight to the shrine. The last gateway is referred to as Imi n'zawuyit (mouth of the lodge). An imi n'zawuyit can sometimes be found at other lodges (e.g. at Tamgrut, the chief lodge of the Nasiri set of lodges), and it is a kind of generic concept. It is as it were the place where the head of the lodge receives incoming visitors. It is also the place round which most sacrifices are made at the Aid l'Kebir, and the place which, next to the wall of the Okdim house opposite the mosque, is most favoured as an informal meeting place for the villagers of Zawiya Ahansal - though use of it tends vaguely to imply political affiliation to the Ait Sidi Mulay family, as it

virtually forms their doorstep. (It would be difficult to conceive members of the rival Ait Amhadar family unnecessarily passing the time of day there.)

To possess the area of the imi n'zawuyit, or perhaps to have the area one possesses considered to be such, is of course a significant thing in the struggle for leadership of a lodge and for the ascription of baraka.

The proximity of most of the big families to the shrine or to the natural path towards the shrine is of course not accidental. The only important exception are now the Ait Amhadar (family No. Two in importance), who no longer inhabit the gateway-house on the way to the shrine, though they still own it, but have an extensive, compact and highly fortified compound at the top of the village. There simply wasn't room for them to expand in the original and hagio-strategically better placed position. Expansion was necessary for them during their influence and affluence during French days (prior to their fall from grace and favour in 1952), and it is during this period that the development of the new compound, in the upper part of the village, took place.* In these later

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* By a fortunate accident, there is available a photograph of Zawiya Ahansal as it was before the major recent outburst of Amhadar architectural expansion, a photograph taken from fairly high up the opposite side of the valley. The rather melodramatic ~~cover of~~ photograph 20 in René Euloge's "Les Derniers Fils de l'Ombre" (Editions de la Tighermt, Marrakesh, 1952, p.81) shows Berber tribesmen in the forground, a village and cliffs in the background, ~~which is described as such~~. The photo is clearly composite, and made up from at least

three separate photographs. The village is in fact Zawiya Ahansal, but without much of the present Amhadar compound. The rest of the background of the photograph, and the foreground are added on ....

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days the battle for power was no longer, in any case, fought out in terms of whose door would receive the "pilgrims".

Something should be said of the mosque. It is perfectly easy for a visitor to pass through a Berber village without realising that it had a mosque at all. One's expectations are conditioned by European village churches or mosques and minarets of the Moroccan plain, and one simply doesn't notice the total undistinguished and indistintinguishable buildings which serve as mosques in the villages of the Atlas. The houses of saints stand out: the village mosque never does. It looks like any other of the minor houses. If it is distinguished at all, it is by the fact of sometimes having a kind of covered area for cover for waiting believers or use by passing visitors, who may use it if they fail to have a specific connection and host in the village. The fquih (village scribe and coranic teacher) is also liable to use a part of it as his sleeping place if he is unmarried or does not have his wife with him.

Finally, a terminological point. In Zawiya Ahansal, the castle-like houses of the better saints are referred to as ighirmen (sing. igherm), whilst ordinary houses are called tigmi or zhgua (literally 'interior'). Elsewhere, and more commonly, the term igherm is used to dscribe collective store-

houses-forts (which do not exist in the lodge, though they do in neighbouring villages), which, architecturally, are most often very similar to the good saints' houses in the lodge. (For instance, in Amzrai, only the igherm - in the functional sense of collective storehouse - is also on igherm in the architectural sense. No individual family presumes to have a distinguished house.) Moreover, in neighbouring tribes, the term tigmi (house) can also denote a social group larger than the family. Meanings of these terms vary from place to place and context to contect, and shift between type of house, or group of contiguous houses, function of house, and social group using the dwelling or dwellings.

2. The Location.

Why is Zawiya Ahansal where it is?

Or alternatively, one might ask: why is the village, located in this place, a zawiya of importance?

In terms of the inhabitants' beliefs, the location was determined by supernatural signs and agencies. When SSA had finished his saintly, scholarly and magical apprenticeship with Sidi Bu Mohamed Salah, he was sent off with an ass and a cat to find a home and found a lodge of his own. He was instructed by his master to make his home at the place where the cat jumped off the ass. (Another version says that the place was to be where the ass sat.) There is still, near Zawiya Ahansal but nearer still to Amzrai, "the place of the cat". S.A. is said to have wandered with his animal companions until the portents took place and the location was determined.

What mundane and natural reasons can also be offered? It is worth noting that no special explanation is required why there should be a village in this position at all: Zawiya Ahansal is not one of those places where religious faith and human ingenuity triumph over an adverse and unfavourable natural environment. On the contrary, the environment is favourable, indeed charming. S.A. had chosen his place well, and it is in my view destined, when roads become adequate and the rise of national income in Morocco

creates the demand, one of the favoured tourist spots in the Atlas. Quite apart from most outstanding natural beauty, which may well have been a matter of indifference to SSA, there is ample and magnificent water in permanent supply, there is much forest and pasture, and there is some area suitable for irrigated farming.

What does require an explanation why the village situated here should be well placed to become a centre of a quite outstanding concentration of baraka, of saintly influence. I believe the explanation to lie in the ecological possibilities of the surrounding area, in the fact that it is almost destined for large scale transhumancy, and this in turn requires some kind of machinery for the adjustment of relations between permanent inhabitants and the annual "invaders" who occupy the high pastures when the snow has receded. Given the institutional range open to the Berbers of the central High Atlas, the existence of a powerful lodge, respected and revered by both sides, would seem the most plausible - perhaps the only possible - solution of this problem.

The various services performed by saints described earlier were not specific to any particular Zawiya. They are of course great differences in the extent to which they are performed by various saints, even among effective ones: some saints are more saintly than others. There are

also minor details in the manner in which they are performed. But, by and large, the same type of service is performed by all effective saints.

But there is one particular service which is extremely characteristic to the main and founding Zawiya in the Ahansal constellation, and which must now be singled out. This service is indeed only a modification of the normal role of mediation between important groups: it is however a very important modification, and one which is the clue both to the origin, and to the location of the centre of gravity, of this particular saintly system.

3. The Politics of Transhumancy.

The Atlas Mountains near the main Sahara/Atlantic watershed in the Ahansal area, is in effect a high plateau cut by deep gorges. Much of the plateau is more or less uninhabitable in winter, but provides good pasture in summer. The area to the South of the main Atlas range, on the other hand, becomes extremely scorched every summer. This geographical background, as indicated, calls for transhumants pastoralism. The grass on the high pastures, after the snows have gone in about April, constitute a standing and virtually irresistable invitation from nature to the shepherds in the South, who by coming up provide their flocks with a far better chance of survival than if they remained in their own scorched homeland. The permanent inhabitants(mainly in the gorges)on the upland, on the other hand, cannot use up all the summer pasture there is.

Hence, there is a kind of annual and inevitable invasion from the South. Each spring, the wave of tribesmen with their tents and flocks sweeps up, and it recedes again in the autumn.

This of course creates the problem of their relationship to the permanent inhabitants of the uplands (in the main, of the gorges, valleys and hollows in it.) Indeed when the annual visitors from the south are on the plateau, they greatly outnumber the permanent inhabitants of the longest gorge which stick out like a pointing finger towards the water shed. Indeed, the inhabitants of this gorge, which thrusts deepest

into the mountains, would in the normal course of events find themselves each summer in a hopelessly precarious position. Their fields and flocks would be a standing temptation to the numerically superior temporary occupants of the plateau.

And indeed, this inherently indefensible outpost of the northern barriers is not defended: this extremity is inherited by the saints, who only 'defend' it by their saintly prestige. It is at this point that the saintly system has its alleged origin - most plausibly - and its recognised centre. This is the location of Zawiya Ahansal.

The arrangement existing between the permanent inhabitants of the uplands, (of north facing slopes and gorges), and the annual 'invaders' are complex and unstable. Boundaries are drawn not only spacially, but also temporally. In general, the pastoralists have 'closed pastures' which must not be entered by anyone before a certain date on pain of heavy fines. The arrangements with the men from the South only reproduces this feature on a much larger scale. The incoming transhumants may go as far as a certain line by a certain date and then move on to another line to another date and so forth. There are furthermore boundaries between various segments of the incoming hordes.

These arrangements, even more than ordinary all-the-year-round tribal frontiers, need mediators and guarantors. From the viewpoint of the permanent northern inhabitants, the exposed promontory inhabited by the saints constitutes in effective general frontier mark, a kind of trip wire and a guarantee. But the same is also true for the men from the south:

for them too, the arrangements made through the saints are a guarantee that they will not one spring, find their way blocked as they try to move in on the high pastures.

The conflict about these particular high pastures is endemic and still very much alive, year in year out.

The legends concerning the circumstances of the foundation of Zawiya Ahansal are in terms of cooperation between the general ancestor of the incoming transhumants, Dadda Atta, and the founding ancestor of the saints, Dadda Said. The one provided the temporal and the other the spiritual arm, as it were, and between them they established the present status quo. (This was only ratified, however, by a deed of treaty between the previous inhabitants and the founding saint's great-grandson, Sidi Lahsen u Othman.)

The situation is complicated by the fact that three tribal groupings of the "southerners", the Ait Atta, have by now permanently settled north of the water shed, and no longer retire annually to the south.

One of these groupings, the one actually nearest the water shed and on the edge of the crucial plateau, is itself in sharp opposition to its own "brethren" who come in annually. The function of the saints is to provide mediation at two different and important levels: between the local and migrating segments of the Ait Atta, and also between the Atta as a whole and the various old established locals. The violence of the former

'internal' conflict does not mitigate the simultaneous vehemence of the larger conflict.

Indeed the first conflict has probably become sharper recently through the general pacification of the area. The Atta who, are permanently north of the water-shed (a) now need the support of their southern cousins less and (b) are very strongly tempted to turn some of their pastures into fields, an ambition which is furiously resited by their 'cousins', who do not wish to see their summer pastures diminished.

4. The Secular Arm.

The relationship of the Ihansalen of the main lodge to the Ait Atta is, as indicated, a special one: the Ait Atta provided the secular arm, so to speak, in support of the spiritual authority of SSA, when the lodge was founded.

The Ait Atta are a very large and self-consciously Berber tribe: when asked they will stress that their founder and ancestor, 'Dadda Atta' was a Berraber. The Atta 'confederation' (as French historians describe it) appears to have been founded in the 16th century* and to have united the Berber tribes in

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*) Date given in Capitaine George Spillman's "Les Ait Atta du Sahara et la Pacification du Haut Draa", Editions Felix Moncho, Rabat, 1936, P.32.

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or around the Jebel Saghro (still held to be the Atta 'homeland') in the struggle for the oases and pastures surrounding it, the oases being the linear-shaped effects of the rivers flowing Sahara-ward from the Atlas. The Ait Atta now occupy a great deal of the territory between the Tafilelt Oasis to the East (held by Filali shurfa, who produced the present Moroccan dynasty), the Atlas to the north, and the Draa oasis-valley to the West, (including a large part of this valley).

The crucial features of the internal organisation of the Ait Atta is this: the clans of the topmost level of

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[illegible]

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segmentation are highly discontinuous geographically. Each of

the major clans tends to be represented both at the centre, the 'capital' in the Saghro (in the vicinity of Igherm Amezdar, where the Ait Atta held their 'national' court of appeal), and in each of the major areas of Atta settlement and on each of the Atta frontiers. The consequence and function of this dis-continuity was that not merely membership of the Ait Atta as such, but equally membership of the constituent clans, could be and was a force enlisted in support of continued 'national' co-operation and loyalty. In fact, the Ait Atta do appear to have continued to operate as one unit, to support each other in war and have (intermittently) common leadership and legal institutions, right up to modern times.

The loyalty of the constituent clans despite their dis-persion along the various frontiers was reinforced and sustained by the fact that such clan-membership carried and indeed carries pasture rights. The Ait Atta are transhumants and indeed move over very considerable distances in the course of their transhumance. The areas into which a man may drive his flocks within the general Atta territory depends on his clan. A man of clan A, settled (say) in the central territory in the Saghro, may in summer take his flocks to the land of the A clan on the northern frontier, where some of the A will also be settled permanently. (Some B will also be settled along the northern frontier, but at a different point, and the centrally-resident members of clan B will transhume to this point.)

Apart from pasture rights, marriages amongst the Atta seem to follow clan-affiliation rather than geographical proximity (as indeed is underwritten by tribal law and its priority rights), judging at any rate from the fact that members of clan A will claim to have close relatives amongst the A of another region. (Affiliations through a mother would of course not generate such a relationship, but they are indices of a belief in its existence: the term connoting 'father's brother' is used in a virtually classificatory fashion, and two families believing themselves to be in such cousinly relationship may continue to believe this over generations and exchange brides in the process.) Given the size of the Ait Atta and above all the size of their territory, the fact that they succeeded in continuing to some extent to operate as one unit is a considerable achievement for a segmentary society. They are themselves clearly aware of the difficulties inherent in this and significantly tell a story of a failure of one clan to repay the help previously provided in war by another. Their present distribution, as described, is such that clan loyalty is a lever aiding 'national' loyalty.

They possessed a double system of leadership: territorial chiefs, elected by rotation etc from the geographical units, and a hierarchy of complementary-and-rotated chiefs based on the (non-geographical) clan system. This double system was activated and concerned with quite different problems: the geographically-based one with local and internal issues, the other, in which the units eligible for voting and providing

rotated candidates were 'kin' ones, for those occasions when the Ait Atta co-operated as one unit. In the region of Ahansal it is firmly maintained that this non-territorial system did operate up to modern times and that the Ait Atta did have a 'national' (annual chief) and that tribesmen from the far South came to aid their local clansmen.

So, in one sense, the saints of the main lodge were intimately connected only with one territorial settlement of one Ait Atta clan: with the settlement around the pasture of Talmest of some of the members of the Ait Bu Ikhifen clan of the Ait Atta. But, through the internal mechanisms making for Ait Atta cohesion, they are also connected with the Ait Atta as a whole - quite apart from the fact that many (though not all) Ait Atta are connected with them by being involved in the general donation-and-arbitration system. But an interesting thing about many of the long-distance annually-commuting Atta transhumants is that, more than with other tribes, their clientship vis-a-vis the saints is a seasonal matter.

5. <u>The Legend and the Land Deed.</u>

Concerning the early life of Sidi Said Ahansal, we know so far of his saintly (scholarly and magical) accomplishments, his urban training and affiliation to another prestigious saint, and his mission to found his own centre, whose location was to be identified, and was identified, by a supernatural sign. Now read on:

Having found the spot, Sidi Said Ahansal proceeded to call by telepathic means for Dadda Atta, the supposed ancestor of the Ait Atta, to aid him in establishing himself locally. He had to call for seven years, seven months and seven days before his call was answered. Dadda Atta came, and jointly the saint and the leader of the Berber warriors drove out the original inhabitants, who included the Ait Waster - in my view a mythical tribe, some times identified with the "Portuguese"* - and also the Ait Tegla, who still live between Azilal and Marrakesh.

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*. The belief that the proto-inhabitants of the area were cave-dwelling Portuguese (Portkiz, Portikze) is general not merely in this region, but throughout the Atlas and other Berber regions of Morocco. For instance, it is current amongst the Seksawa of the Western High Atlas (Cf. Jacques Berque, "Les

Structures Sociales du Haut-Atlas"), amongst the Glawa (reported by Oxford Univ. Exploration Society expedition of 1955), the Anti-Atlas (reported by Mr. Andre Adam) and the Rif (reported by David Hart).

My own view of the most probable explanation of this strange belief is that during the period of the Portuguese occupation of various places on the Moroccan coast, from the 16th till the 18th century, when they were in constant conflict with Moroccans and by far the most prominent of Europeans from a Moroccan viewpoint, the term 'Portuguese' came to be used interchangeably with 'Christian' (Nasrani) or even with non-Muslim. Thus the belief in 'Portuguese' proto-inhabitants is really a way of alluding to a non-Muslim or specifically Christian population prior to the coming or the conversion of the tribes presently in occupation.

This may indicate the existence of Christianity amongst the Atlas Berbers prior to Islam (plausible enough); but equally, the belief may originate from the need to attribute non-Islamic status to the previous and dispossessed inhabitants. During the period of Portuguese presence on the coast, the dispossession of Portuguese would be just the kind of thing which was not merely permissible, but laudable. Thus it would be to the advantage of a tribe to believe this of its predecessors. A Muslim predecessor might come back to claim his own, as men and groups in fact do within tribes.

Beliefs in partial (maternal) Christian ('Portuguese' or 'Rumi') ancestry exist concerning various tribes or their segments, (e.g. the Ait Bu Gmez or the Ait Isha). The 'Portuguese' are generally credited with ruins (real, or such as in reality are but cliffs) and the previous habitation of caves.

A confirmation of the above tentative theory can be found in the 16th century Arab traveller Leo Africanus, who passed through the region (which he described as Dades, but plainly meaning the mountains as well as the present valley of that

name) and was told of ruins left behind by Romans, without actually seeing them, a fact which puzzled him as there were no Roman records of a town built in this area. If he passed through the region today, he would still be told of such ruins, but their builders would be described, even more implausibly, as Portuguese. At some point between the 16th century and the present, the term 'Portuguese' appears to have replaced 'Roman' in this particular context (though Rumi is still the general way of describing Europeans.) Cf.Leo Africanus, The History - Description of Africa, London, Hakluyt Society.

No Stories are told of what happened during the life of Sidi Said Ahamed's son and grandson. The story is resumed during the life of his great-grandson, Sidi Lahcen u Othman (buried at the village of Amzrai, and its patron saint, and himself, owing to lack of any kind of multi-lineal proliferation between Sidi Said Ahamed and himself, the general ancestor of all Ihansalen, with the exception of one much disputed lineage.) Somehow or other the settlement made by Dadda Said and Dadda Atta could not have been wholly successful or definitive, for we find the great-grandson, Sidi Lahcen u Othman, making it once again: only he

took trouble to ratify it by a land-deed. He finally settled the Ait Tegla in their present distant habitat, compensating them and making the arrangement attractive for them by finding new springs and wells for them in the new area, by magical means. (This theme, of a saint making a territorial settlement and consoling those forced to migrate by magical water-divining, reappears in the lives of the later descendants of SSA, including some of recent generations.) The legend says that the saint saw one of the women of the displaced persons-tribe crying, and on inquiring into the cause of her distress was told that she bewailed their forced migration into an arid land. He consoled her and in his kind way made arrangements for the prompt appearance of new sources of water. The important thing, however, is the land deed he drew up with the jemaas (assemblies, so described, and named one by one on the document) of the departing groups. This document, apart from naming the individuals representing the collectivity ceding the territory, also delimits it. The territory delimited is that at present inhabited by the Ihansalen of the main lodge and the three neighbouring Ahansal villages (Amzrai, Taria, and Tighanimin) and that occupied by the local segment of the Ait Atta, the Ait Bu Iknifen of Talmest.

This land deed is the crucial document concerning the local territorial claims and rights. In as far as the land is ceded to Sidi Lahcen u Othman, the territory delimited is rightly the property of his descendants, the Ihansalen. Nevertheless a very large part is occupied by the local Ait Atta. Their

occupation is not disputed by the Ihansalen, for it is conceded that it was their help which enabled the original saints to impose their settlement in the first place. On the contrary, they are inclined to remind the Ait Atta that they were brought to Talmest as a kind of protecting army for the saint and his lodge. The deed is however invoked in opposing claims of the southern Atta who come to the pasture of Talmest and surrounding areas as summer transhumants. In the annual and perpetual disputes with these groups, the documents invoked are 1) Sidi Lahcen u Othman's land-deed, 2) a settlement made by senior French officers during the years following the pacification, and 3) a settlement made by Moroccan officials in the years following Independence.

The land-deed is much-copied and numerous copies are in the possession of various interested parties in the region. (The text is not in dispute.) Some of these copies are plainly recent, and some are old. I have come across two families (each moderately prominent but neither effective saints though of Ahansal lineage) claiming to possess the original document, and there are probably others making the same claim. In view of the agreement of the various copies and the fact that the text is not disputed, the possession of the actual original copy is not a matter held to be of great importance.

Thus in terms of the early history of the main lodge, the Ait Atta and in particular its Bu Iknifen segment has a special relation the the Ahansal saints, being its appointed protector and being (locally) settled on land which 'legally' belongs to the saints themselves. From the viewpoint of the total Ait Atta tribe, the Bu Iknifen at Talmest are the guardians of the northern summer pastures (guardians who, since the Pax 'Gallica, would much prefer to plough up the pasture and be rid of their annually incoming 'cousins'.) and the Ihansalen are the spiritual guarantors of these northern marches, who are also used as igurramen when convenient. For use at their centre and in terms of legends of their origins, the Ait Atta are connected with another holy lineage, the Ait Abdallah ben Hussein.*)

*) Cf. G. Spillman, "Les Ait Atta et la Pacification du Haut Draa", p. 32.

Since the early days, of course, the Ihansalen are much dispersed and all except the four above-named villages, and the hamlet of the Ait Troilest, are settled outside the territory delimited in Sidi Lahcen u Othman's document. It is interesting to note that the legends of the main lodge's foundation which are found in other centres of sanctity, for instance in the Temga-Asker-Sidi Aziz group, tally with the stories retailed in and around the main lodge, except in that

they omit the part allegedly played by the Ait Atta. These other lodges are on frontiers between tribes other than the Ait Atta, and have no need to perpetuate and "remember" services performed by a tribe with whom they are not in constant relations.

Whilst the Ait Atta thus do, in terms of legend and deed, have a special relationship to the main lodge, the main lodge nevertheless sees itself as quite neutral between them and their northern adversaries, notably the Ait Mhand and the Ait Isha, and negotiates as a neutral and saintly arbitrator between these opposed parties. The Ihansalen of the main lodge and adjoining villages are also quite clear that the Ait Isha protect them <u>against</u> the Ait Atta, as indeed the Ait Atta would protect them against the Ait Isha. The special relationship is not such as to be in contradiction with the usual agurram status and position.

One special case is the clan of Ait Troilest, which has moved out in fairly recent times (in terms of the genealogy) from the main lodge and settled in the territory of the Ait Bu Iknifen of Talmest, i.e. in territory which in terms of <u>the</u> deed is 'theirs' but which by customary occupation belongs to the local Ait Atta. This small group has largely identified itself in rather non-neutral fashion with its lay hosts and provides it with leadership in its disputes with its own southern 'brethren'. This is a special and interesting case and will be discussed later.

CHAPTER VII Internal Structure of the Main Lodge

1. Top families.

There are at present six or seven top agurram families. (At least one constitutes a borderline case - hence the ambiguity in the enumeration.) As indicated in the earlier analysis, the notion of an agurram, of an effective saint, is ambiguous: it is all a matter of degree and all depends on the context, on the observer, on the number and above all proximity of rival claimants, etc.

The range here given, which gives us six or seven families, is a little broader than 'those and only those naturally used by lay tribes for arbitration': some of the 'top seven' are not so used. And the range is a little narrower than the one defined by descent from the crucial special ancestor within the main lodge (Sidi Mohamad n'ait ut'Baba), whose descendants are credited with monopoly of effective sanctity within the lodge.

The range is based on the criterion of a certain agurram-like style of life, whose main constituent is the seclusion of women. All these families either do, or at least make some show of aspiring to, arranging their households in such a way that no stranger can see their wives and daughters.*

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* This is the only form of seclusion practised by central High Atlas Berbers, and only rarely by them: the

veil is never used, and is only seen, if at all, when worn by wives of government officials, or by prostitutes settled round large and de-culturated markets, so to speak, (such as at Azilal) where customs are now those of non-Berber Morocco rather than of the region.

All these families are, so to speak, within the innermost layer of the onion-like structure of holy genealogy: at each point in the genealogy when one segment can be stripped off as having become laicised or having emigrated or both, they remain in the 'inner' layer which is still in the running. Some no doubt are at present in the process of being stripped off, or would be if the whole system weren't due, as presumably it is, for a general secularisation... All of these families also have (with possibly one exception, see below p. 2(4)) fine castle-like homes of the type locally described as an igherm.* No

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* Elsewhere and more generally, this term designates a collective storehouse (of which there are none at the main lodge), but these storehouse-forts are indeed generally built in the same style as the top-family houses of lodge. For instance, the neighbouring Ahansal village of Amzrai has two, both built in this style, and no private citizen, so to speak, of Amzrai has presumed to elevate himself above his fellows by building a house in this style. Elsewhere still, (e.g. in the Imdghas valley) igherm designates a whole cluster of such houses, a hamlet, and the social unit inhabiting it. (In the Imdghas region and South of the Atlas generally - and in some regions north of it - this high type of house is very much more common and hence hardly provides a discriminatory status symbol. In Zawiya Ahansal, it does.)

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other family presumes to have such a house. No individual or family in any of the neighbouring Ahansal villages has one either, and it would clearly be a very offensive and provocative attempt to be one up on the Joneses for a family which is out of the saintly running to erect one. Sketches of these families are to follow.

2. The Rivals

(a) The Last of the Marabouts, Ait Sidi Mulay.

This family was the last to hold power and, as it were, maximum baraka before the final blow to the saintly political prestige with the coming of independence in the winter of 1955-56. Even now, the head of this family is the most influential memeber of the main lodge, and he can also collect donations from a wider area, though he is nowadays sometimes obliged to go and fetch it. (He undertook one such journey, of considerable length, during the summer of 1959.) The family came out as clear victors in the first modern elections, the 'communal' elections of May 1960, in which the main lodge constituted one 'constituency', as it were, in electing the nine members of the newly designed rural council covering the four local Ahansal villages and the segments of the Ait Atta and Ait Abdi who 'depend' on the administrative outpost opposite Zawiya Ahansal. The effective head of the family, Sidi Mha, did not stand for election, in view of his record of office-holding under the French, but his younger brother Sidi Mø'a did, and came by far and away head of the poll.

This family belongs to the half segment of the dominant families branching off at Sidi Mohammed Ben Ahmed, but it and the group of two additional families similarly defined take their general name not from their apical

ancestor but, slightly illogically, from his grandson. (This is particularly illogical in the case of those two collateral families, as they spring from brothers and not sons of the man who gives them their name.)

This means that in the case of the central family, the normal 'three-term' Berber name - X son of Y of the people of Z - has the same term (Sidi Mulay in this case) in both the second and the third place, both at point Y and Z. In the case of the two collateral families, it means that at point Z they have a name which is in fact not one of a direct ancestor at all, but of a brother of a direct ancestor - in this case, a brother of the father of the present effective, middle-aged generation.

Sidi Mulay was one of the personalities involved in the crucial intrigues during the slow French advance in the twenties and early thirties. He and some others stayed behind at the main lodge whilst the main leader, with whom they remained in touch, moved to French occupied territory and set up the centre of power there. After the military occupation of the main lodge during the summer of 1933 it was he who mediated the surrender of the final resisters, the Abdi who were holding out in caves on the plateau. As a reward, he was appointed their caid, a post he held until his death. There was thus a somewhat curious position of a chief who was not merely not a member of the

tribe of which he was chief but not even resident in it. That the saint should be resident outside the lay tribe is not odd, but that the administrator into whom he was now transformed should be was perhaps slightly odder. In due course, when he was old enough, his son Sidi Mha became his deputy in this post. (He was later to become the last chief in the lodge itself.) The elder of his two sons did not live to succeed his father: he is reputed to have been a scoundrel and adept at black magic, rather like some women in the family. The next eldest, who is alive and whom I know well, must have been an outstanding scoundrel at any rate in his father's eyes, because he was formally repudiated by his father, an act which requires a formal pronouncement three weeks running, and lives in great poverty with his children and is in fact a client of his younger brother. I do not know the full story of his repudiation, but the reasons given are that he prostituted his sisters to the soldiery quartered near the lodge during the French conquest, and that on one occasion he took a shot at his own father. Repudiation to the point of disinheriting is formally contradictory to the customary law as given by the elders to the chief of outpost, but it certainly took place in this case.

As of 1954, his extended household contained thirty-nine people. These were distributed over a number of

houses, the main being in the lodge, in the lodge's main centre of transhumancy at Tisselmit, and at a place within the tribal area of the Ait Mhand.

Of these, sixteen were kinsmen of a fairly close and so to speak 'continuous' kind (i.e. by local criteria of proximity, assuming they did not hive off, there was no other household of greater genealogical proximity of which they could be members, though there are some of as great a proximity.) Three further ones (a married couple and a young shepherd) were kinsfolk of more distant 'discontinuous' kind. The remaining twenty-one were retainers of various kinds and their wives and children: two slaves, husband and wife, the husband's father having been bought by the family (these now technically emancipated by the French conquest but continuing to live with their masters); an old kind of court hanger-on, whom we used to call Polonius, who had been a close friend of the deceased Sidi Mulay and whom the present head of the household kept on out of piety to his father's memory; employed workers, who generally have annual contracts and generally stay with the family for very long periods and virtually settle, drawn, apart from one family locally recruited, from various areas of Ahansal influence (Abdi, Usikis, Azilal). It should be noted that some of the close kinsmen were in fact also clients or retainers: they had chosen to be small

figures in a large household rather than independent ones in their own: humble security rather than risky and precarious freedom. They have thereby forfeited the possibility of effective sanctity, and evaded the dangers of failure or of lay life, for they share in some of the rewards of the effective sanctity of their master - in security, at least. It is they who come and serve tea and sit in respectful distance - waiting to be beckoned on - when the effective saint is entertaining visitors. Their presence, their numerous presence, their willingness to serve the saint, all illustrate his affluence and influence, his baraka, and indeed - their own fall from baraka. This is one policy one may adopt if one is born near - but not right in - the stream of baraka.

The Ait Sidi Mulay household is the biggest in the village. Its size has no local rival in the four Ahansal villages, and I do not believe it has one in any of the surrounding lay villages. Anything much bigger is locally held to be well nigh unmanageable: the size it possessed prior to the (perfectly amicable) hiving off of its close cousins in the last fission was held to be phenomenal and impracticable, a fact which (truthfully, I think) is given as the cause and reason of the separation.

(b) The Kulak Family, Ait Sidi Yussif.

This family is at present centred on three brothers living in indivision. Of the three, the eldest exercises a dominant influence over the others. He looks rather like Charlie Chan, is fat whilst the other two brothers are lean and do the kind of work which involves going long distances, such as going to distant markets. Thus the relationship of the dominant brother to the others is not unlike that of Sidi Mha to the brothers with whom he lives in indivision, but in this case it is difficult to explain the phenomenon. There is great similarity in the two sets of relationships - for instance, in both cases the younger brothers are unwilling to smoke in the presence of the elder dominant one, or have him know that they do smoke.

The manner in which this family recognises the ascendancy of Sidi Mha's family comes out most clearly in their use of the name: in the third position in the deceased father's name, the place after the personal name and the father's name, the place reserved for the clan affiliation, there figures the name of what was the deceased father's brother, namely Sidi Mulay. This is as it were an "illogical" way to construct one's name, but it is an implicit admission of as it were being a collateral branch, a sideline of the main line,

~~[illegible]~~

At the time corresponding to the census of the preceding family, the household consisted of fourteen members. Five of these were non-kin retainers, all paid workers or wives of such: two of the five being women, and one of these simply the wife of a worker. One of the male workers was recruited from an area of Ahansal influence across the hills (Usikis). Of the four wives of the three brothers who are the nucleus of this household, two are from top agurram and close patrilateral families, one from a 'latent' saintly family of the lodge, and one is from an entirely lay client tribe of the Ihansalen - the Ait Hadiddu.

This family is sometimes claimed to be the richest in the lodge. Such riches as it possesses do not spring from donations, from which it can only have a very small share, surrendered by its cousins who are more active practitioners of sanctity: but then, it does not have much of the saintly expenditures either. Its wealth lies in the careful husbandry of its flock, which is said to be about 200 sheep and goats - a good number in Zawiya Ahansal. It seeks protection under the saintly prestige and renome of its Sidi Mulay cousins and manifests this in

its name - Ait Sidi Yussif n'ait Sidi Mulay (contrary to genealogical logic, Sidi Mulay having been the brother of the now deceased apex of this family, Sidi Yussif.)

(c) Comparatively Poor Cousins

Sidi Mu'a, brother of the deceased Sidi Mulay and of Sidi Yussif, left five sons. Of these two have remained in indivision (and are sons of the same mother), and established a house which in its style of life implicitly lays claim to holy status. The one wife is carefully secluded, though in this case I was invited to see her. At the same time, this household is neither particularly rich nor influential and lives under the shadow and protection of the Sidi Mulay household.

The remaining three brothers who have individual households have become unambiguously clients and dependents of the Sidi Mulay household and live within its general compound.

(d) The Repudiated Brother

This is a household of the repudiated brother. He is without wealth and without influence. He is also reputed to be lazy, a reputation no doubt justified in view of the fact that he seldom seems to be busy with agriculture or other work and is usually about. His poverty is genuinely betrayed by a lean and hungry look. I know him to be in debt and when I have dined with him, the food consisted of nothing but thin spaghetti with very little grease (these kind of packed spaghetti being, with sardines, one of the few consumption foods that have reached the local market from the outside). When he has the opportunity he goes on donation collecting trips, but this is not very often nor very productive.

He is in fact a client of his younger brother, though his household is separate, and not an important one at that.

We have here a family which seems definitely on the way out of the charmed circle of holiness. Poverty prevents the poor man from keeping up the marks of saintly-status such as the seclusion of womenfolk, and he is even forced into the position of going counter to the ethos not only of saints but even of lay tribesmen by dishonourably accepting rent. The fact that he has antagonised lay tribesmen makes him of little use as a mediator, and the

fact that he is publicly recognised as having no influence within the Lodge also diminishes his usefulness as a patron to outsiders. (Saints in a Lodge are like underwriters at Lloyds; though competitors they also underwrite each other. One who is not at all underwritten by his fellows is of little use.)

3. More Rivals

We now proceed to the other half, the Ait Ahmad u Ahmad. The apical ancestor who gives this half its name was the son (and not, as in the case of the other half, a grandson) of the common ancestor of both groups.

This apical ancestor had five sons, whose generation only died out in the 1940's, and whose lives are reasonably well documented from French sources. Each of the five gave rise to a family of note.

Two of these families moved en bloc to what has in effect become a new lodge in the territory of the Ait Mhand tribe, this settlement taking place in the special conditions created by the French advance. These two families appeared well on the way to providing a kind of rotating dynasty for the Ait Mhand under French rule, a dynasty lasting from the early twenties till independence in 1956.

(e) <u>The People of the Upper Castle, Ait Amhadar</u>

This is the second most important household in the lodge, second only (and not always that...) to the Ait Sidi Mulay. Within its own half of the holy lineage, it can hardly have a rival at present in view of the permanent departure of some, the decline in wealth and influence of others, and the absence <u>now</u> of healthy adult males amongst the Ait Okdim.

The present head of the household is a young man, Ahmad, who is the grandson of one of the five brothers who included Caid Sidi Mha. The crucial personality of the household however was his father, known as Caid Amhadar, who died in 1954 a few days after our first arrival at the lodge. He had been a person of great energy, ambition, ability and influence, though it is unlikely whether he understood the modern world in which he latterly had to operate. He was involved in the Ahansal intrigues accompanying the slow French advance. He took active part in the military operations, on the French side during the latter stages, and according to the French outpost archives distinguished himself during the final capture of the capital of the Isha tribe in 1933, the most formidable if not the last opponents of the French in this region. Apparently on this occasion he displayed "une très belle conduite sous feu" (so stated the archives

of French administrative outpost...). He later became a Chevalier of the Legion of Honour, like Caid Sidi Mha.

Under the protectorate he began as Caid Sidi Mha's deputy, and later on his decease became an independent Caid in charge of both the four Ahansal villages and the Ait Atta of Talmest.

He was ambitious and longed for greater powers, more tribes, and a modern symbol of prestige in the form of a motor car. The latter he acquired though the family had to sell it again after his fall from power. His ambitions led him to intrigue not only against Sidi Mulay for the chieftaincy of Abdi, but also, and more dangerously, against the Glawi. His ambitions led to excessively extortionate behaviour towards his villagers and the hostility aroused in high places by his intrigues finally coincided with popular discontent at home and he was requested to resign, which he did two years before his death. During the two years of his life after his resignation he could hardly bear his humiliation to be witnessed by those over whom he had ruled with an iron hand, and he was never seen outside the finely fortified household of his family.

The inherently most interesting episode in his career, however, was the five years in the late forties and early fifties when his rule coincided with the presence at the outpost of an interesting and also ambitious French officer.

Caid Amhadar himself did not perhaps understand the modern world, as can perhaps be gauged from the fact that whilst coveting a car he did not provide a modern education for his sons: but jointly with this officer, they provided a kind of tribal Ataturk.

The officer in question himself was a man who had risen from the ranks and by that time well in his thirties was merely a lieutenant. Jointly they got going ambitious schemes for local development such as the building of a road to Tillugit, the construction of new irrigation ditches and a new market place, and so forth. All this was obtained without credits from above, which of course could not have been forthcoming anyway, by "voluntary" labour as is usual in forced economic development. Each of the two halves of this Ataturk needed the other: the officer would not have the power to conscript local labour for such schemes, but acting through the native chief the thing could be described as voluntary work. The native chief unsupported by the protecting authority might have come up against disastrous opposition. As it was, opposition manifested itself in emigration or in magical rites against him such as the naming of a stone after him which was then broken up by other stones into little bits.

At the time of my census, this household, the second in size in the village, had twenty-two members. Like that

of the Ait Sidi Mulay, it was dispersed over possessions in Zawiya Ahansal itself, at Tisselmit (the nearby upper valley, parallel to main stream, to which the people of the main lodge transhume), and places at, and on the way to, Ait Mhand. The nucleus of it consists of the head of household and of his father's uterine half-brother (who was also his father's parallel patrilateral cousin). These two are effective saints. There are no male offspring, and the rest of the household consists of male retainers (seven at that time, of whom one an ex-slave, bought by family in his mother's womb prior to his birth, a fact commemorated in his nickname), the daughters of the head of household, and the various wives of the saints and retainers. The elder of the two saints has two wives, one from the Hadiddu tribe, but this woman fled home following the prescribed ritual for wifely flight (requesting protection from a local in the village) in 1956. There were also two widows of the deceased Caid.*

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* One of the old women in the household was the mother of the Ahansali who had achieved fame as a Berber Robin Hood in the Tagzirt region around 1950, and who was later, though not at the time, claimed by the Nationalists as a precursor of violent resistance. With his fame he is now retrospectively referred to as Sidi Ahmad Ahansal, though coming of undistinguished Ahansal lineage from the undistinguished village of Taria, it is certain that in his lifetime he would have been known simply as Ahmad (no Sidi), and 'Ahansal' only in contexts when no others were close by. A street in Casablanca is now named after

him. The name of Ahansal has left many marks on the map of traditional Morocco, which is, as much as anything, a map of saints and their shrines: but this is the only example known to me of the Ihansalen leaving their mark on the map of <u>modern</u> Morocco.

(f) Into Decline

At the lower end of the village, near the river, there is a fine decorative igherm, belonging to the Ait Sidi Mu'a. The Sidi Mu'a in question (deceased) is one of the four brothers of the Caid Sidi Mha of Bernat, and himself left five sons, of whom three are alive. One of these, and the son of another, inhabit the house. They are bdän, i.e. they have separated their property, and the house is rearranged so as to have two entrances and constitute, as it were, two self-contained flats. The uncle only inhabits his part very rarely, being more frequently with his property at Ait Mhand, and can hardly be considered any more a part of the main lodge, except in the sense in which all recent migrants still possessing property or a reasonable possibility of inheritance keep a foot in. The nephew, on the other hand, lives there most of the time, though he does frequently go off on donation-collecting trips.

This family is really a fragment of a family which has hived off, following the major move of top-saintly families, to Ait Mhand after 1920. What remains of the sanctity of those who have remained? A close genealogical proximity to the really effective saints; a highly decorative house with a good address, i.e. close to the shrine, but one now rebuilt in a manner hardly compatible with

saintly prestige. (A real saint would not break up the unity of an igherm, he would build another.) There remains an aspiration to the saintly style of life and the enclosure of women - but one which poverty does not allow to be fulfilled.

The household consists of the young man (the nephew mentioned above), his two unmarried sisters (one young and one divorced), their mother, and one client girl. The daughters of the house present something of the aspect of distressed gentlefolk, or saintlyfolk: according to their mother they are ill-suited for marriage into a lay family, being unused to hard work. For some reason which is not clear to me, they have not been claimed by a saintly family. The young man himself illustrates the fate of those near the mainstream of baraka who neither become effective saints, nor clients of such, nor firmly go lay. His life is in some ways one of mendicancy. He is, it so happens, extremely likeable. He has failed to get married - no doubt because his poverty makes him an unattractive groom.

But this household clearly is on the way out; little baraka is left, only the aftertaste of the baraka of recent generations. The present generation is paying the price of defeat in the game of musical chairs.

(g) House of the Little Prince

This household is under a temporary eclipse owing to lack of adult males. The father and apex of the household is deceased. He had been the youngest of the five brothers who included Caid Sidi Mha, and seems to have inherited both the major house and family name by a kind of ultimogeniture. When alive he was not very influential, though the family owns some fields amongst the Ait Mazigh tribe, who till it for them, and with whom this segment consequently has special connection and influence. This practice of ploughing fields for the saints was still alive very recently, though the saints themselves didn't know from year to year whether the fields would be sown with wheat or barley.

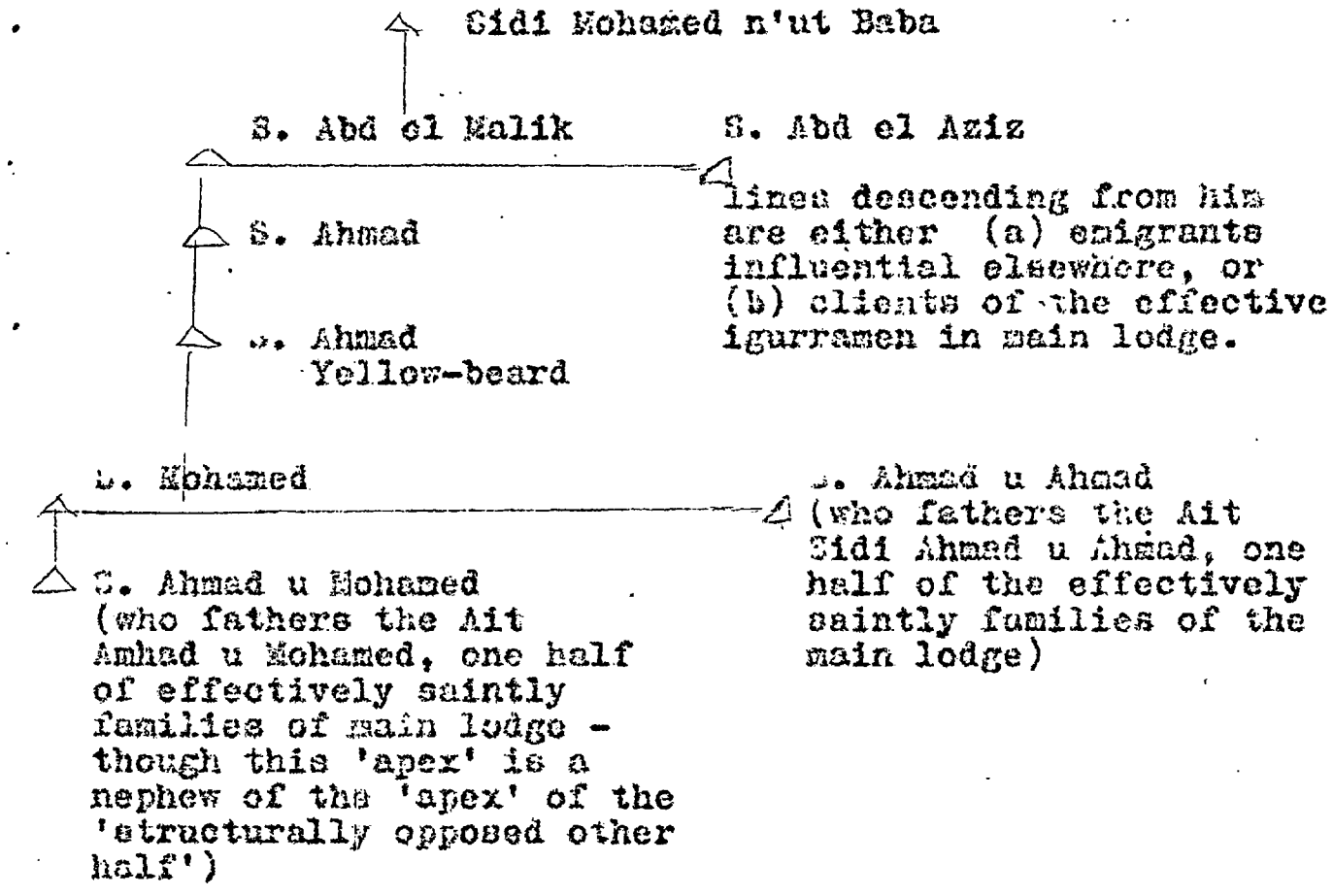
Of the three sons the only adult is mentally ill and totally ineffective.

At the time of my census, this household contained seventeen members. It thus comes in third place in size in the lodge, which indeed corresponds to its ranking in saintly prestige. The nucleus is the three brothers, of whom the eldest is incapacitated by mental illness. In addition there are two retainers, one an ex-slave, and assorted wives, widows and female children.

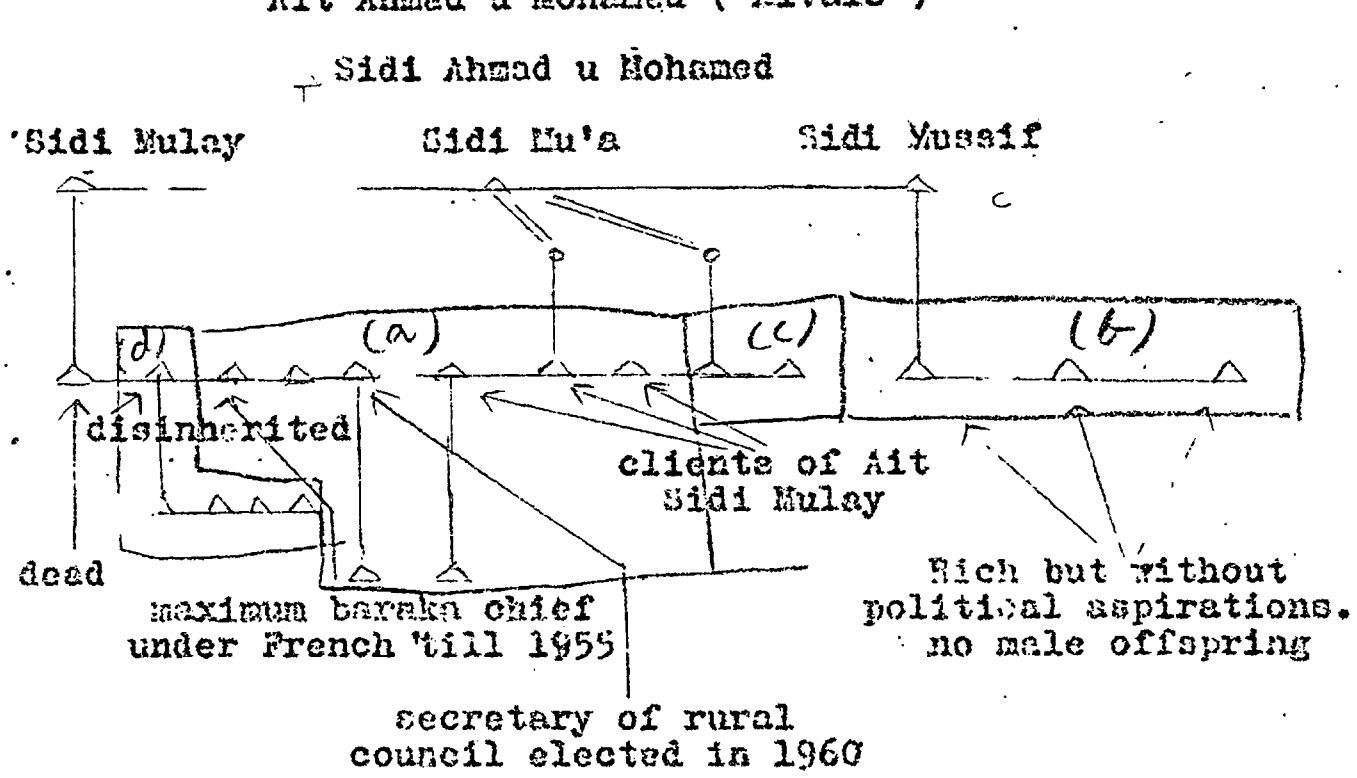
Despite the temporary eclipse of the household owing to the absence of sane male adults, there is no doubt

about the remaining influence of the household, in terms of wealth, respect, the beauty and good maintenance of its dwelling and so forth. At present (1961) the two sane brothers are emerging from adolescence, and an important group of pilgrims from the Ait Isha bringing donation to the main lodge paid their homage and were entertained by the three top households (Sidi Mulay, Amhadar and Okdim). During the summer of 1959, a crucial assembly called ad hoc to deal with the case of the five corrupt headmen included the elder of the two sane brothers, though only an adolescent.

Top Families. (The main segmentation dividing them into two halves.)



Each of the two 'halves', the Ait Ahmad u Mohamed, and the Ait Ahmad u Ahmad, have special further diagrams devoted to them.



As stated, all the descendants of Sidi Ahmad u Mohamed now have an 'illogical' tendency to describe themselves as 'Ait Sidi Mulay' (i.e. even those not descendended from him but from his brothers) in view of the prestige of this (now deceased) personage.

There are now four independent households in this segment, described in the text as

(a) The Last of the Marabouts.

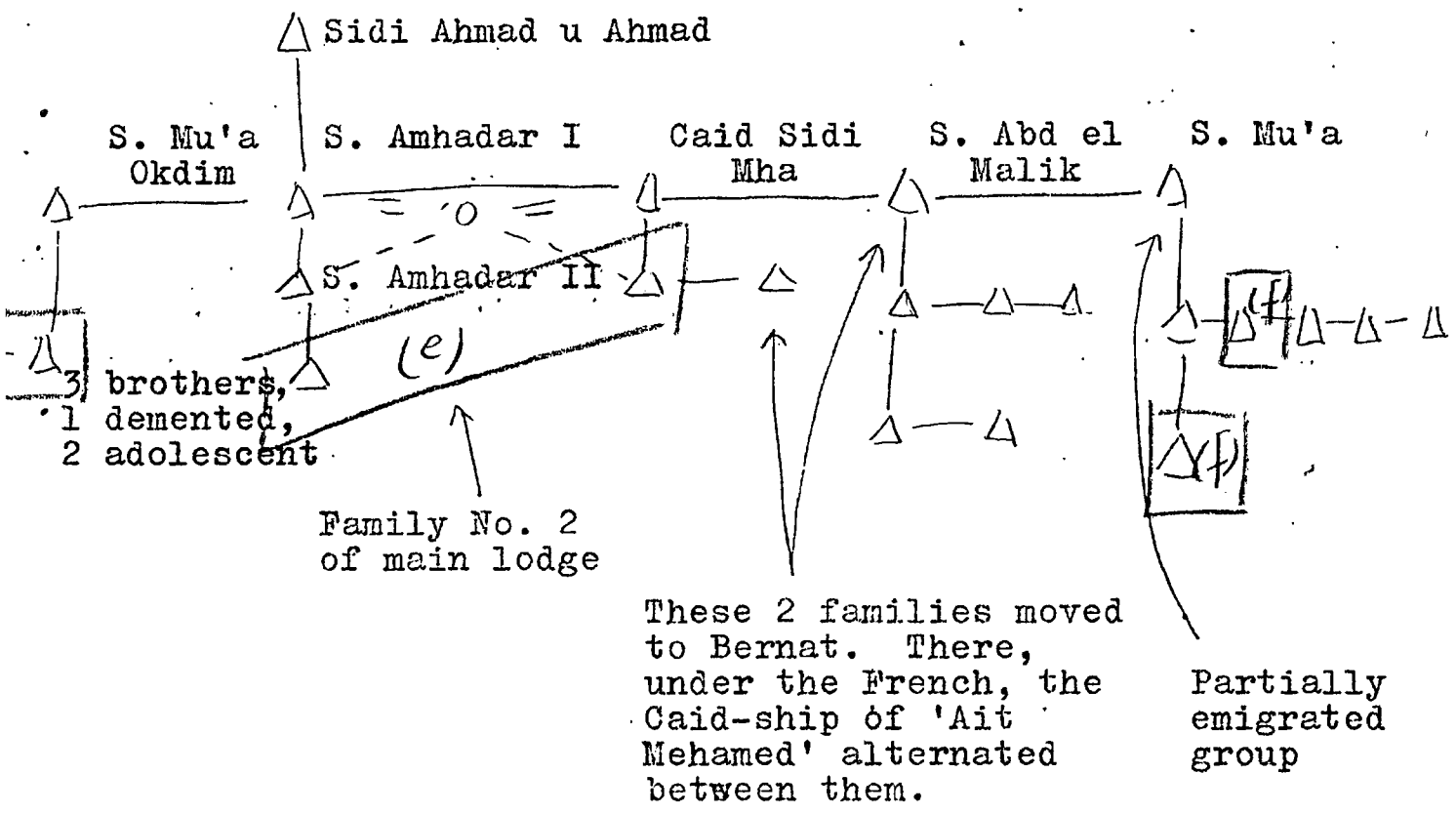
(b) The Kulak Family.

(c) Comparatively Poor Cousins.

(d) The Repudiated Brother..

On this and the next diagram, limits of existing households are indicated in red. Only living male saintly members are of course here indicated - i.e. the saintly nucleus of the agurram households.

Ait Ahmad u Ahmad. (Described in the text as 'More Rivals').



The following households remain in the main lodge (the names here given are those of their respective section-headings in the text):

(e) The People of the Upper Castle.

(f) Into Decline. (In fact, two independent households occupying the same but divided house, are involved. But one of these has its centre of gravity outside the main lodge.)

(g) The House of the Little Prince.

On this and the preceding diagram, the ordering of names from left to right does <u>not</u> necessarily correspond to the order of births.

4. The population of the main lodge

The population of Zawiya Ahansal according to my census, 1954.

Saints

			No. in "nucleus"
Ait Sidi Mulay (whole household)	1	39	3
Ait Amhadar	1	22	2
Ait Okdim	1	17	3
Ait Sidi Yussif	1	14	3
Repudiated brother	1	6	1
'On way out'	1	5	1
'Fairly poor cousins'	1	3	2
Total	7	106	15

Others

	No. of families	No. of people
Families with 12 members	1	12
11		
10	1	10
9	1	9
8	2	16
7	3	21
6	2	12
5	7	35
4	7	28
3	7	21
2	15	30
1	9	9
Total (non-saintly households)	55	203
all	62	309

In the 'totals' for households, 'saintly' and 'lay' can meaningfully be separated. But this cannot be done for the total of individuals by simply adding the totals of saintly families, because of course not everyone in an effectively saintly household is an effective saint - far from it. Taking only the male 'nuclei' of the households counted as saintly on the above table, we get 15 effective saints.* But this includes some impoverished ones, one feeble-minded, one adolescent...

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* But I have excluded from being 'nuclear' the four sons of the disinherited brother, though the eldest is older than the included youngest of the three Ait Okdim brethren. If 'nuclear' is to correspond to more or less recognised individual igurramen, this is correct.

Since the census, the only surviving increase of the agurram population has been an infant in the Ait Sidi Mulay family. A much celebrated infant boy born to the Ait Amhadar subsequently died.

The criterion of being 'one household' is, in general, that the people so described are kin who are <u>män</u> (i.e. whose property remains undivided, who are not <u>bdän</u>, divided), and who consequently work and enjoy it jointly. They may or may not have a recognised head and they will generally live in one dwelling.

In the case of the larger units described as one household, the relevant criterion is that all the members take their orders, receive their rewards and nourishment,

from a
~~on~~ nucleus which is a single household by the previous criterion. The client members of these larger households may of course also own property in their own right, but they are members of the larger household in as far as the major part of their time and energy is devoted to work in connection with that larger household, from which they take their orders. The degree of permanence and the status of such clients vary, from 'labourers' theoretically engaged for a season (though in Zawiya Ahansal, they tend to stay season after season), to kinsmen who become clients and bring their own small property into the pool from which they could withdraw it, and to slaves who in the pre-1933 situation were the property of the household. (Slaves could also be the property of the lodge as such, i.e. be at the service of the igurramen without being specifically the property of any one agurram family.)

It would not be correct to say that different criteria have been applied to the two categories, for the expanded criterion applied to the latter group of large units could also be applied to the smaller ones and would lead to the same classification. It would just so happen that the client relationship allowed for in it would seldom apply to anyone.

Roughly, the general criterion for 'household' is property-sharing, economically co-operating group under

one direction. One must add that the clients have no rights in the property in whose administration they co-operate, but receive rewards in kind or money.

Despite theoretical difficulties of definition, the limits of households are fairly obvious. In most cases, co-habiting in the same dwelling is a fair criterion (though this does not apply to the larger 'households').

Nevertheless, there are ambiguities. The (to me) surprisingly large number of small or even solitary 'units' is in part explained by the fact that they are clients of larger units but that the dependence is not expressed in co-habitation or the inhabiting of a house owned by the larger unit. If these informal dependencies were included, the result would be a further increase in the size of the large saintly households and of some others. It would rather complicate matters in that some of these small units may receive charity and be dependent on more than one other group.

The inhabitants of Zawiya Ahansal, like all other surrounding villages and other Moroccan Berbers, practise a form of self-taxation: there is a self-imposed income-tax which is to claim <u>one-tenth</u> of both the harvest and the flocks. Of this one-tenth, theoretically one-third is to go to the poor, one-third to relatives, and one-third 'to the mosque', i.e. to the scribe and for collec-

tive feasts. It is doubtful whether these 'thirds' are equal. (Lay tribes who tax themselves to supply donations to the saints, which may be as low as 1/144 of the harvest, do this in addition to the 'internal' tax.) It is difficult to say how strictly this self-imposed taxation is carried out, but certainly a show is made of separating the tenth when the harvest is being brought in. Its relevance here is that it helps to account for the survival and status of the small (solitary and other) household units, who are near-clients, or larger, more viable and effective ones, in virtue of receiving this kind of systematic charity, without being properly incorporated in the larger households.

Another factor contributing to the existence of the small family units in Zawiya Ahansal is the frequent occurrence of childlessness. This can be attributed to venereal disease, presumably introduced at the time of the 'pacification', and particularly rampant among the saints in view of their immorality and particular proximity to the concentration of troops. The theory of V.D. was held by the French administrator prior to 1955, whose wife, a trained nurse, did medical work in the villages. The phenomenon of frequent childlessness does not seem to be found in other villages, but has struck the main lodge, and its inhabitants themselves comment on it, as did the

archives of the French administrative outpost after the war. Once the troops involved in the 'pacification' had departed, it is my impression that an infectious disease of this kind would not easily spread from village to village, intermarriage or cross-clan immorality being fairly rare, but would spread and maintain itself in any one village, marriages, divorces, re-marriages and just amorous episodes inside a village being frequent and with as it were a high turnover.

A further factor in the childlessness might be a local contraceptive or abortion practices on the part of women preferring the enjoyment to the fruit of sex. Such practices exist, and were investigated in 1960 by the Belgian musicologist F. de Hen who visited the region and village with the Wye College Expedition (who chose this area at my suggestion). Just what demographic consequences these practices have I should not like to guess, nor how widespread or effective they are. Women normally profess a desire for offspring, and I have made no deeper investigation into the real truth of these matters.

Another noteworthy fact is that the large 'households' contain members not locally resident at all, in as far as the properties - houses, fields, and flocks - of the large households extend into quite distant areas. The top families own property - houses, fields - in other regions of

Ahansal influence, in Usikis, Sremt (of the Ait Bu Gmez tribe), amongst the Ait Mazigh, and amongst the Ait Mhand. These acquisitions are the results both of purchase and of simple gifts from the tribesmen in whose territory they are located. In the case of fields, these distant properties will be worked by the local tribesmen, thus performing a kind of voluntary corvée for their saintly patrons, who then deliver the produce during the annual visit to the shrine. As a result of the diminution of the wages of sanctity under the French, the saints, becoming poorer, found themselves selling some of these distant properties.*

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* Those in Usikis, for instance, which were sold to the then influential and rich amghar at Usikis, Sidi Said Ahansal, himself of the contested Ahansali lineage of Ait Tighanimin. Sidi Said Ahansal lost his chieftaincy in connection with the "left-wing" revolt of the Ait Abdi in 1960, though not implicated sufficiently to go to prison. In the context of Usikis affairs, his name can be used without ambiguity, i.e. without any danger of confusion with the Sidi Said Ahansal, the ninth century A.H. ancestor of all Ihansalen... Even the "real" Ihansalen of Zawiya Ahansal refer to him by this name, though at the same time they deny real Ahansali status to the Ait Tighanimin and their offspring. See below, p. 325.

Of these foreign investments, so to speak, by far the most important at present are those in the territory of the Ait Mhand. The reasons for the establishment and expansion of saintly property in this area are connected with the

political condition of this tribe and its area in recent times, both before and during the French advance between the first World War and 1933.

The possessions in Ait Mhand are also the only ones which are actually inhabited and administered by members of Zawiya Ahansal households. The consequence of this is that included within the census of Zawiya Ahansal are some people, members of the big saintly households in the sense of identifying with them, recognising their authority and taking orders and wages from them, who in fact live elsewhere and may even seldom actually come to the lodge.

The reverse also holds: some actual inhabitants of Zawiya Ahansal may be members of households, family units, whose main centre of gravity, in terms of numbers of resident members and of property, is elsewhere. One such is the saintly family which owns half of the lovely igheram at the lower end of the village of which the other half is owned and inhabited by the people described as 'on the way out'. This couple is not included in the census on the grounds that they spend more time in Ait Mhand than at the lodge. (In fact, I have never seen the wife at the lodge, but then, as she is the enclosed wife of a more or less effective saint, I would not be supposed to. But it is my impression that she was at the lodge even more rare-

ly than her husband.) There may be other such families who are really local fragments of families centred on Ait Mhand.*

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* I am sorry to say that my census data do not conclusively answer this question. They do not indicate that this occurs, but this may show either that it does not, or merely that at the time I compiled it I was not on the look-out for this possibility.

All this is merely the consequence of Zawiya Ahansal being in the late stage of a recent schism or hiving off: in the early 1920's, in consequence of the political situation arising from the French occupation of Ait Mhand and their failure to occupy the Ahansal heartlands, a number of top saintly families, led by Caid Sidi Mha, with their retainers, migrated to the land of the Ait Mhand, in effect setting up a new territorial centre of sanctity there (though one which, owing to the special circumstances of the time, never came to be called a <u>zawiya</u>, for Caid Sidi Mha's main source of authority henceforth was not that he was an agurram, but that he was a Caid).

The lines along which this fission took place illustrate a point made above (p. 70), namely, that when ('episodic', event) real fissions, hivings-off take place, the line of such a fission is not identical with that of the segmentary, 'dispositional' division. It is not the case that one segment stays and another goes: within each group, [illegible] stay.

5. A Note on Slave Population.

It will be noted that the negro slave population is rather small. (They were technically liberated by the French advance.) There is one such family in each of the three top saintly households - no more. This is a little in conflict with the saints' image of themselves - it would be improper for an effective saint to work, and most proper to have slaves to do his work for him. In practice, the great agurram families appear to have just enough slaves - a family each - to establish the principle, whilst relying for their retinue and services of the 'court' on retainers, poor cousins, etc.

Sometimes saints claim that in the old days they had far more slaves and really lived in a fitting manner. This no doubt is an exaggeration, boasting and the painting of a Golden Age, but there is an element of truth in the claim that there has been a diminution in the slave population of the top households. At least two negro ex-slave women live in a semi-client status vis-à-vis the top families, not incorporated but performing services and dependent on their good will. One of these is married, the other not. Another is incorporated in a laicised household. Furthermore, some negro ex-slave families are settled on land owned by the igurramen in the neighbouring village of Amzrai and in Ait Mhand. These slaves were

liberated and given this land to till. There is not enough of it and they are poor: in French days they added to their income by working as labourers at the administrative outpost, and they were badly hit by the decline in quantity of public works after independence.

I am not fully clear about the terms on which they were given the use of this non-local saint-owned land nor of the motives for this. The saints naturally claim that goodness of heart and the desire to do what is pleasing in the eyes of God were the motives. The operation is a little surprising in that one might have expected saints to be anxious to retain the services of Negroes, whether their slave status was underwritten by the administration or not, for prestige reasons. One may suspect the following: with the decline of the income from donations to saints after the French conquest, a decline due to the emergence of new authorities and political boundaries and particularly sharp for the main lodge, poor cousins came to have first claim on the client status in a saintly household. Secondly, the lands given them were those located in lay or laicised villages or tribes, and not very large or valuable: to hand them over, even on terms, to free lay locals involved the risk that in due course the local in question would claim them for his own. This is precisely what did happen in the course of some lands

temporarily ceded to lay local tribesmen in Ait Mhand: they became a subject for protracted litigation between saint and occupier. (A saint's prestige is ephemeral, and certainly not effective in helping him get his own way once the prestige is no longer underwritten by the general pattern of reverence, so to speak, i.e. once he can no longer speak with the authority of the respect of numerous religious clients. After pacification, lay tribesmen litigated against their own saintly leaders concerning lands; after the 'breaking' of Caid Amhadar, and particularly after Independence, the villagers of Tighanimin litigated against the Ait Amhadar and the whole of the main lodge concerning land at Tisselmit.) By giving the use of it to people whose colour made their non-belonging to the local tribe manifest, people also more dependent perhaps on the good will of the saints, the generous saint retained more hope of keeping some control over it and disposal of it later if he wished; the generous act, by leading as it were to a conspicuous new pattern in settlement, also stood out more noticeably and permanently.

If the semi-independent and the resettled slaves are allowed for, the slave population in the top families of the main lodge becomes more than double what it now is. This gives a more accurate picture, I think, of the size

of the black slave population in the lodge in the traditional situation.

Lay and laicised tribesmen only had slaves very rarely, and not to any significant extent.

6. Tisselmit.

Most of the inhabitants of the region are, in one way or another, transhumants, in the sense that they have more than one habitation. The form which transhumance takes varies a good deal: the use of tents to migrate very large distances from their permanent villages, by the Ait Atta; or the combined use of tent, cave and tree (a stone wall round a tree and the tent canvas fixed between the branches and the stones) to migrate frequently but over very small distances, by the Ait Abdi; the physical reduplication of the socially identical village at a number of places, by the Ait Tighanimin, etc.

This transhumancy is of course a consequence of the mountainous nature of the terrain, the fact that even within small areas places differ a very great deal climatically and in the kind of use for which they are suitable, and of the type of agriculture which is suitable and practised. One major factor making for this transhumancy is of course that various pastures are usable, suitable or unusable at various times of the year. Fairly complicated social arrangements exist governing the use of pasture, their closure (agudal), etc. Complex movements are necessary to ensure the survival and prosperity of the various flocks. Local land can be divided into irrigated fields (dawamen), non-irrigable fields

(*tbur*), forest and pasture. A distinction is also drawn between ordinary pasture and good meadow (almu), which generally becomes agudal, i.e. with regulated entry, with severe penalties for anyone attempting to use it prior to the agreed date. Pastures are owned by collectivities, fields by families (though with restrictions on sale outside the group, fellow-members having the option of first refusal and the price being determined by local elders. This feature of customary law remains operative, as part of 'local economic custom', even after independence). Forest is or was owned collectively amongst the Ihansalan (though now technically owned by the state) who have plenty of it and are fairly rich in other resources: amongst the Ait Abdi, very poor in other resources, trees are owned individually.

One common pattern is for a village to be physically reduplicated in the following way: each family owns a house at the village proper, whilst each family also has another dwelling in the forest or near the pasture, used mainly as a base for surveying the flocks. Thus one village will be rather concentrated and have the appearance of a village, whilst the other will be highly dispersed. (Only the former being endowed with a mosque, only it will be considered a village, a douar, by the locals.) Of the four Ahansal villages in the area of Sidi Said Ahansal's

shrine, this pattern applies strikingly to two, Zawiya Ahansal (Ait Aggudim) itself, and Amzrai, rather less to Taria and less still to Tighanimin.

The dispersed second habitation ('azib, amazigh) is of course generally (and with the local Ahansal villages always) much higher than the concentrated proper village, and the pattern of movement of a family between its two habitations is roughly one of being up in summer and down in winter. (But it is not as simple as that: trees, crucial in feeding the animals in winter and under snow, are often more plentiful higher up, which may partially reverse this pattern.)

This habit of frequent movement, on the part of families often too small to keep some representative at each of their two homes, helps to explain the survival and vitality of collective storehouses (igherm, ighirmen, in one sense of that word) in which each family has a locked cubicle for its stores, with a permanent warden surveying the whole. (Amzrai and Tighanimin have such ighirmen, the main lodge and Taria do not.)

If one thinks of a Berber household as a 'farm', it is of course quite unlike a reasonably continuous (territorially) farm in a European plain. A characteristic Berber household will own: some discontinuous irrigated fields (which commit it to contributing towards the col-

lective labour, particularly in spring, on the irrigation ditches), and which it owns in virtue of inheritance or possibly purchase; some non-irrigable fields which, though they too can be inherited and purchased, it owns essentially in virtue of working them, for more such territory is available, and rights arise and lapse through use and non-use, though of course only members of the group owning the general territory may acquire fields in it in this manner. (Also, since the French conquest, both French and Moroccan authorities attempt to prevent the expansion of fields in ~~foreign~~ forest lands, in the interest of mitigating erosion); rights in the communally owned forest, except when very close to the fields of others; and rights in the communally owned pasture, limited by agreed rules which restrict entry to the better pastures to certain periods.

The area in which the homes of the households of Zawiya Ahansal are reduplicated is named Tisselmit. Tisselmit is a valley, tributary to the main Ahansal valley, but running parallel rather than at right angles to it. The homes owned there by most households are very dispersed and less well built than those at the zawiya itself, though naturally they often have a good capacity for giving shelter to animals. Two top families - Ait Sidi Mulay and Ait Okdim - have decorative

ighirmen there, but most dwellings there are not built for display. There are a few irrigated fields near the ighirmen. 'Tisselmit' is a place name: it makes no sense to refer to 'people of Tisselmit' (Ait Tisselmit) as some kind of social unit, for none such exists. Only one family, to my belief, lives at Tisselmit only,* in the sense of having a house there but not in the lodge: and that house is located in a rather unusual position, Imi n'Tisselmit (the mouth of Tisselmit), i.e. the point where the valley and river of Tisselmit empties into the main Ahansal river, at a point separated from the lodge by the village of Amzrai and its lands, but nevertheless near enough to make it feasible to live there whilst remaining part of the village of the main lodge itself.

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* It is just possible that there are others who have eluded me, as I made no systematic survey of Tisselmit, and if a family of no consequence at all somehow came to have no pied à terre in the lodge, no one and nothing might have drawn my attention to it.

Zawiya Ahansal itself is, as a cluster of buildings, amongst the most compact kind of Berber villages of the region, and unusually compact for a village of its size. It is, for instance, much more compact that its neighbour, the laicised people of Amzrai, and also much more compact than the ecologically similar villages of the adjoining areas north of the watershed. One must go to the more

agriculturally oriented villages situated on the edge of more extensive irrigable fields, in the alluvial bases of valleys such as Bu Gmez and Imdghas, to find similar compactness, and even there the actually continuous groups of buildings do not often, I think, rise to a population of 300. It is as if everyone here were pushing to live as close to the shrine of Sidi Said Ahansal as possible, and indeed in a sense this is so: the competing saints require this proximity in order to compete successfully, and the minor client families stay close to their patrons.

At Tisselmit, on the other hand, one sees the saints as they are when, so to speak, not saints. This is perhaps a good point to stress that every saintly household and every lodge is, apart from being a centre of sanctity, also a Berber household or village like any other: sanctity is an extra, which only rarely (and then only in the case of individuals, not of households) becomes an as it were wholly absorbing speciality. Berber society is on the whole unspecialised and undifferentiated, and this in the end is true even of the most differentiated feature of it, agurram-hood. At Tisselmit, one sees the life of igurramen as it is when least affected by their also being igurramen: at Zawiya Ahansal, as it is at its most differentiated. Tisselmit possesses no special shrines

connected with the cult of Sidi Said Ahansal and his descendants, despite the fact that it is owned by his most celebrated offspring.

As the income from sanctity has declined and continues to decline, the importance of Tisselmit in the life of the villagers of Zawiya Ahansal, already considerable, continues to go up. The main valley, in which the lodge is located, is in effect a gorge, even if one less fierce in the vicinity of the lodge than it is both higher and lower, and it contains little other than room for some irrigated fields in the bottom of the valley and relatively poor slopes covered with shrubs. Its main asset is plentiful and permanent water in the river-bed. (It is conceivable that a determined effort could extend the irrigable areas.) Tisselmit, on the other hand, is a much broader and gentler valley, and much richer in trees.

7. Small Families.

The count of numbers of lay households on the table (p. 279) for Zawiya Ahansal gives the figure 55. This figure is perhaps misleading. It does indicate that, after the seven top saintly families, one can locate no less than fifty-five doorways in the village leading to interiors (zhgua - sometimes also used in the sense of 'house') whose inhabitants are as it were autonomous units,* entitled to take their economic decisions without convoking any conseil de famille larger than the inhabitants of that 'interior'. Nevertheless, a very large part of these households are very small, consisting of two people or less: 24 out of the total of 55. If households of three people or less are counted, we get more than half of the total of non-saintly families:* 31.

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* There is of course a far larger total number of doorways, for the larger households consist of whole complexes of buildings.

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* It is important to remember the shiftiness and ambiguities of the notion of saint, agurram. I am using "non-saintly" here simply in the sense of "those other than the seven top families". There are some families in the lodge included in this non-saintly count who are as close genealogically to the top saints as they are to each other, and who would in some contexts be classed as igurramen, though they fail by the criterion of wealth and style of life; there are others, who come to approximate to some features of the style of life, but are genealogically far; and, in wider contexts, all inhabitants of Zawiya Ahansal (or all

claiming descent from Sidi Said Ahansal, i.e. the great majority) are referred to as igurramen.

But it is doubtful how many of these smaller households - not to mention the nine solitary individuals. - are autonomous to any very real extent.

My belief about the situation is as follows: more wealth flows in the form of charity in an effective zawiya than does in an ordinary Berber village. It is obvious that more charity (religious donations, ziart) flows into it, for that is virtually the definition of a zawiya. But I believe that more also flows inside it. This is partly a consequence of the need on the part of the effective saints to allow some of the incoming donations to spill over to the non-effective ones. (In the days of the French, this was formally regulated, the rule being that half of the donations should go to the non-saintly part of the village. It is more than doubtful whether this was enforced or enforceable.) The saints need clients and support, locally as well as in the distance among the lay tribes. What reaches them as a donation partly goes further as patronage. Furthermore there are the consequences of stratification and of the concentration of wealth and power which is characteristic of a zawiya as opposed to ordinary villages. This means that work, wage-labour, is available. (This was customary in the traditional situa-

tion prior to the French, though labourers were engaged by the season or the year and generally paid in kind.) This in turn means that families relying in large part on such employment will, as wage-earners, have little incentive to remain together as larger groups (except when taken under the wing of a large saintly family as a whole). Similarly, security for age lies relatively more often in being a client of a top family than in being a member of an ordinary one.

Thus a good proportion of the smaller 'households' are, in one way or another, dependents of the larger ones. As stated, the local belief is that it is a duty to impose a 10% tax on one's income, both from fields and flocks, and a show is made after the harvest of fulfilling this and measuring of this tenth. There is however no harm in combining this fulfilment of duty with extending or confirming one's influence, and distributing it with this end in view.

The various minor families - minor in size and in wealth - are thus dependents of the major ones in a variety of ways: sometimes as labourers, sometimes as part-time labourers, sometimes as one member of the household working for the major family whilst the others work on their own fields, and in old age as recipients of straight charity. (They may then also have such fields as they

possess tilled by others on a share-cropping basis. Similar arrangements exist concerning flocks.)

Owing to the complexity, frequent informality, and the exaggerations and boast of charity involved, I am unfortunately quite incapable of giving an accurate and quantitative assessment of the operations involved, and must content myself with simply sketching the general situation in this way.*

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* The proper study of the economics of a Berber village in general and of Berber sanctity in particular remains to be done. Some material of this may be in the possession of the administration, and a beginning may also have been made by the Wye College agro-sociological study in 1960. A study of the economics of sanctity in particular would of course be specifically hampered by two facts: (a) This aspect of sanctity has been more severely affected by modern developments than most other features of the saints' lives, and (b) the ideology of sanctity is in conflict with the willingness to provide accurate information. But saintly receipts and saintly charity are liable to be exaggerated, and a saint should, according to his own ideal, have a Consider the Lilies attitude.

The present study can claim no more than to throw as much light on the matter as is essential for making sense of the political and religious life of the saints.

The general conclusion concerning the inner structure of a zawiya as opposed to a lay or laicised village is this: there is the obvious feature that it is stratified; there is the almost as obvious feature that the household units in the top stratum grow to a size larger than those in the lower stratum and those of unstratified, lay villages; and

finally there is the least obvious fact that the lower stratum in a holy village is more fragmented, possesses more really small units, than do the populations of lay villages, which consist only of an undifferentiated population corresponding to the lower stratum of a zawiya. This, I suggest, is due to the fact that material aid in a zawiya flows relatively more along the channels of patronage and charity, and relatively less along the line of kinship, than it does in an ordinary village.

This in turn illustrates a general point of some interest. A zawiya, like any other Berber social unit, possesses a 'segmentary' genealogical structure: but the actual economic life follows its lines rather less than in a lay village. Concerning political life there can be no doubt that this is also true, and this will be discussed and supported rather more fully, and indeed follows from the general account of agurram-hood; concerning economic life it can only be supported rather less conclusively, as done in this section. At the same time, however, the argument concerning politics also supports the conclusion concerning the pattern of wealth and subsistence: in a society such as this, in which, given the lack of specialised and order-enforcing agencies, what a man or group owns is also what he or it can defend (by influence or force), the political situation must to some extent colour the economic.

8. Some aspiring semi-igurramen.

It is of course necessary in describing a zawiya to describe the small, fragmented and semi-independent households living in the shadow of the great agurram families. But it would be quite wrong to think of the whole village as nothing but a court of hangers-on, buzzing around the competing agurram monarchs and giving their support to the most rewarding patron. There is an element of truth in such a picture, but on the other hand Zawiya Ahansal also contains a sturdy yeoman population, as it were, no different from the mixed farmers of ordinary villages, except in as far as they receive some overspill of the wages of sanctity and that they are involved in a political life different from the simpler one prevailing in ordinary villages. But it would be quite unfair to assimilate these families to court hangers-on. The Bel Lahcens, the Sidi Husseins, the LeKadis, the Sidi Lahcens, the Troilests, Moha u Hamo, U Ben Ali, are names that roll off the tongue and ring with solid respect and sterling worth. They may give their support to one or another of the agurram families - or, sometimes, not - and be discreetly respectful to all: but they are not economically dependent on them.

The point is, really, that a zawiya is two things at once: a centre of competing sanctity, and a Berber village

like any other. The two images are superimposed on each other, ideologically not quite consistent with each other, and in conduct either may emerge and manifest itself according to context and occasion. The competing-sanctity, zawiya-proper aspect is visible in its symbols of stratification in housing of the living and the dead, the existence of conspicuous shrines of Sidi Said Ahansal and other crucial ancestors side by side with the more normal nameless graves of the cemetery: the ordinary village aspect is manifest in its mosque and its fquih, its prayers (in which igurramen have no specialised ritual role) and informal assemblies, its ordinary economic life - notably at Tisselmit - and its regular internal festivities, both those tied to the Muslim calendar and those tied to agricultural life and its calendar (notably the spring irrigation-ditch-maintenance festival and the autumn harvest festival) in which, again, igurramen play no specialised role: it is also manifest in the use for these festivals (and other purposes, including oaths) of non-Ahansali shrines, in which the area is as rich as would be any lay territory, if not richer.

If one is to believe the theory that ritual expresses, reinforces and reminds of the social status and position of the various recipients, then it is most revealing that a zawiya takes part in two kinds of ritual, those in

which igurramen do have a special position and those in which they do not. The former are centred on the shrines of the ancestors of the igurramen and of course mainly on that of Sidi Said Ahansal, and are connected with the relationship between the lodge and other tribes, whilst the latter rituals are those drawn from the common pool of Islamic and 'Islamic' practices of the region, and are connected mainly with the internal life of the village. (There are borderline cases between the two types, such as the annual pilgrimage to Azurki, which are inter-tribal, but not specifically agurram-tied, but in which agurram families strive to be conspicuously represented.)

There is of course no explicit terminology for distinguishing the two types of ritual, and in the nature of things there cannot be: for it is of the essence of effective Ahansali saintliness to believe that reverence for it <u>is</u> Islamic, is indeed the culmination and core of Muslim reverence.

9. The village of Taria.

The structure of households in this village is according to my census carried out in 1956 as follows:

		No. of people:	
Households with	9 members	1	9
	8	2	16
	7	2	14
	6	1	6
	5	3	15
	4	2	8
	3	5	15
	2	3	6
	1	2	2
Total number of households		21	Total: 91

There are two reasons for giving this specific account of the village of Taria: it is, in one sense, 'part of' Zawiya Ahansal (which also accounts for its inclusion in this chapter, devoted to the main lodge), and secondly, it is my belief that in size and internal structure it is a fairly typical Berber village or hamlet of this region, so that this comparatively detailed account of it helps to illustrate the contrast which can be expected between a successful saintly lodge, described in the previous sections, and an ordinary village.*

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* Also, there is now in existence a survey of its agriculture and economy, carried out by a team of students from Wye College (University of London) during the summer of 1960, who chose Taria at my suggestion.

Taria is not 'part of' Zawiya Ahansal in any physical or geographical sense: it is as far from the lodge as Tighanimin (much further than the closest of the numerous physical habitats of that most multiple village) and a good deal further than Amzrai. It is however part of the main lodge in being <u>män</u> and not <u>bdän</u> with it, i.e. never having divided its property from it but on the contrary remaining in indivision. The inhabitants of Taria do of course have individually owned irrigated and non-irrigable fields, but there is no delimitation of the general territory and of pasture between the people of Taria and those of Aggudim. In fact, the people of Taria do take their flocks to Tis-

selmit: I have not come across any case of Aggudim flocks near Taria, but there is nothing to stop a person from the main lodge from making use of the pasture and forest around Taria. This unity with Zawiya Ahansal, in terms of land tenure sense of identification, did not prevent the people of Taria from possessing the de facto features of village autonomy, namely their own mosque and annual village headman.

In what sense are the inhabitants of Taria igurramen? As indicated, they do not possess the saintly attribute of pacifism, and indeed are credited with unsaintly ferocity. They do not aspire to play the characteristically saintly political game. They possess no shrine nor even an apical ancestor* to enshrine in it, in terms of which they could

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* Though this would not necessarily be an absolute obstacle. The effectively saintly Ait Temga only possess an apical ancestor whose shrine is geographically distant and whom they share with other lodges, and locally have a cluster of shrines none of which has achieved pre-eminence, thus mirroring the competing local top families - unlike the main lodge, where the situation is one clearly pre-eminent shrine, but a number of families struggling for pre-eminent connection with it.

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attempt to play it. Their hagiological position, so to speak, is as follows: they emphatically claim that their chief patron is Sidi Said Ahansal, whom they share with the main lodge and, in a sense, with all Ihansalen; locally they have the shrine of the non-Ahansali saint known

as Sidi l'Hajj, one of the Seven Saints,* none of whom have left any descendants, and whom they can also use; and also - though this is a matter of some shame and ambivalence - they are liable to make sacrifices at and to the

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* See below, p. 427.

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superb source of the Ahansal river, which gushes out of the rock in a large number of close places, like the wounds of a saint, a matter of a few minutes' walk above the village.

But there is one respect in which they are and do claim agurram status: they are 'pacific' in the sense that they do not feud and fight with the surrounding lay tribes. These, as far as the Ait Taria are concerned, are mainly the Ait Atta, notably of the Ilemshan clan, who every summer occupy the plateau in which the village's gorge is embedded. Of course, there is no question of their being able to do so: when the Ilemshan are on the plateau, the Ait Taria are vastly outnumbered, encircled and cut off. They are quite clear that it is the Ait Isha who protect them from the Ait Atta. From the viewpoint of the Ait Isha, the saints or semi-saints of Taria are a kind of first but important frontier trip-wire: Atta aggression against Taria would be the first sign of a new Atta move against the North, and an overt attempt by the Atta to

upset the existing and accepted territorial settlement.

CHAPTER VIII. Other Ahansal Centres

1. Amzrai.

Of all other Ahansal settlements, the village of Amzrai is the one closest to Zawiya Ahansal. It is less than half an hour's walk downstream from it, and, unlike it, on the left rather than the right bank of Aɣif (river) Ahansal. The uppermost part of its territory is within sight of the lodge. Whereas the main territory and pasture of the lodge (Tisselmit) stretches to the right of the river, the upper pastures and forest of the Ait Amzrai stretch upwards from the left bank of the river towards the Ait Atta of Talmest. The fact that the Ait Amzrai are separated from the Ait Abdi by the belt of saintly territory does not prevent them feuding with the Ait Abdi, who are their bitterest enemies. The fact that the Ait Amzrai are allies (l'ff) of the Ait Atta does not prevent them having pasture-border disputes with them either, and occasionally fatal disputes. My interpreter was a native of Amzrai, and his father, for instance, whom I knew, had killed the father of the post-1956 chief of the Ait Talmest, Zuza, and had for years been in straitened circumstances owing to the blood-money required, Zuza's father turning out to be somewhat expensive.

The addiction of the Ait Amzrai to external feuds

already indicates their most striking feature, namely, that they are almost wholly laicised. Yet in their case, as in the case of the Ait Taria, there is no doubt whatever concerning their descent from Sidi Said Ahansal. (I mean, of course, that there is no doubt in the mind of any of the parties concerned that the Ait Amzrai are the progeny of Sidi Said Ahansal.) The Ait Taria are 'one' with the lodge. The Ait Amzrai, rather emphatically, are not 'one' with the people of the lodge, but nevertheless their genealogical standing is as good, and in a way even better, than that of the other two villages mentioned: for it is, on various grounds, generally admitted that Amzrai is the first place of settlement of Sidi Said Ahansal and the Ihansalen.

It is from Amzrai that the Ihansalen separated out in their dispersion, or so they believe. It is near Amzrai that there is 'the place of the cat', the place where the cat jumped off the back of the donkey, this having been the magical sign pre-arranged by the Founder's Teacher, Sidi Bu Mohamed Salah, to indicate to Sidi Said Ahansal that he had reached the place at which he and his offspring were to fulfil their mission. Moreover, and this perhaps is the most important in local eyes of the indices of Amzrai being the original place of settlement, though the shrine of Sidi Said Ahansal is at the lodge,

the tomb-shrines of his son, etc., for a number of generations, including the crucial Sidi Lahcen u Othman, are at Amzrai. No explanation is given concerning how it came to be that whilst the father's shrine is in one place, those of the son, grandson and great-grandson should be in another, nor are there any legends explaining how and why the present saints should have hived off and moved upstream. It would be a little difficult in terms of the logic of local beliefs to make up such a legend, for the rules are that the original place of settlement is the holiest and those who stay near the home and graves of the ancestors are the most meritorious; these, at any rate, are arguments used by the saints of the main lodge against their rival-cousins of Temga and elsewhere. (This argument could be used by the Ait Amzrai against the Ait Aggudim if the Ait Amzrai aspired to sanctity, which they do not. The only reply would be that the shrine of Sidi Said Ahansal himself is at Ait Aggudim, though this in turn leaves the mystery of how it comes to be there or, alternatively, how that of his son, etc., comes to be at Amzrai. This question is not raised any more than the question of how there comes to be another shrine of Sidi Said Ahansal at Marrakesh...) A further relevant piece of evidence of Amzrai being the original place of settlement is that it contains the shrine-tomb of the general

ancestor of the Ait Tighanimin, a man claimed by his offspring to be a son of Sidi Said Ahansal, whilst all others consider him to have been merely one of Sidi Said Ahansal's servants, who was at best given a daughter of Sidi Said Ahansal in marriage.

In a sense, the absence of a legend explaining the differentiation between Aggudim and Amzrai only highlights the total mutual acceptance of this de facto situation, and any retailing of stories and justifications explaining it would only indicate that this relationship is precarious, which it is not, and could only give the Ait Amzrai ideas and encourage them to resent a situation which in fact they accept. In this connection, legends explaining intra-Ahansal differentiations are to be found mainly to justify relationships which, in reality, are fluid and not quite accepted.

To say that the Ait Amzrai accept unquestioningly their own non-agurram status, and have no choice about the matter, is not to say that their relationship with the Ait Aggudim is good. It is not. But it takes the form not of resenting that they, the Ait Amzrai, are not igurramen, but on the contrary of resenting that the Ait Aggudim fail to live up to the standards of lay tribesmen. The Ait Amzrai see the pacificism of the igurramen not as a necessary concomitant of baraka, but as simple

cowardice, and resent the fact that the Ait Aggudim are useless to them as neighbour-allies for defence, thus forcing them to turn to the Ait Atta for help. Admittedly, they also resent that the saints cannot or do not use their saintly influence to protect them, the Ait Amzrai, thus forcing them to display the martial virtues of which they are also proud and whose alleged or real absence among the saints they treat with scorn.

The hostility between the two villages does not reach overt violence, but it did apparently go as far as mock demonstrations. On one occasion, some Ait Amzrai disturbed a festival of the Ait Aggudim, and in order to add insult to injury then proceeded to hold one right 'under the walls' of the lodge, i.e. facing the noble house of the Ait Okdim, which limits the lodge on its downstream side, scornfully daring the saints to come out and interfere. The craven saints did not do so.

All the same, despite these occasional outbursts, the Ait Amzrai were part of the general system of saintly adjudication based on the main lodge, as the following story illustrates. Some Abdi passing through Taria territory forced the Ait Taria to give them hospitality. The Ait Amzrai heard of this and set out to capture the Abdi, who, they maintained, had stolen some of their sheep. They successfully caught them and informed the

Ait Abdi that, unless ransom and compensation were paid, the captured Abdi would be killed. No compensation came, and one of the Abdi was killed by being thrown off the igherm, the high collective fort of Amzrai. Another, however, succeeded in fleeing, and was only caught after he had reached the territory of the lodge, which is sanctuary. He was nevertheless killed by his pursuers, who, however, thereby made themselves liable for the blood money, not to the killed man's family, but to the saints. The saints arranged the affair by secretly giving the appropriate sum to the killers, who then publicly paid it as a fine to the saints. It is said that the Ait Abdi still do not know what really happened. In this way, all parties were, more or less, satisfied: the Ait Amzrai had done a killing in sanctuary on the cheap, the Ait Abdi at least saw the violators of sanctuary properly penalized, and the saints saw their prestige augmented in both directions - in the eyes of the Abdi, by demonstrating their own authority over Amzrai, and in the eyes of the Amzrai by showing good will, skill, and even partiality to their fellow Ihansalen. (I have come across stories concerning disputes in which settlement involved a fine to the saints, or a fine to the wronged party, and in which either the saints themselves provided the fine with which they were paid, or even provided the means to pay the third, wronged party.

These stories are not to the saints' discredit locally, for they illustrate both generosity and skill in mediation, and it is not impossible that some of them are put about or encouraged by the saints themselves.)

In size, Amzrai is approximately the same as Zawiya Ahansal. In internal structure, it is markedly different from it. It possesses no large, differentiated families, but is rather like the lodge without its top saints, but also without the hangers-on of saints. There are, of course, individuals who are influential, but it is a matter of individual personality rather than family. No one in Amzrai has presumed to build himself an _igherm_-like dwelling, and all houses are equally undistinguished.

Whilst no individual family presumes to have a high _igherm_-like dwelling, there are two proper _ighirmen_ in Amzrai: these fine buildings are such in two senses of the word, being both collective storehouse-forts and possessing the architectural features which qualify for this name in the lodge and elsewhere. These buildings, or rather the ordinary houses immediately attached to them, are permanently inhabited by wardens, who possess the key to the building as a whole, whilst the individual families hold the keys to their respective cubicles inside. This institution is as lively as ever it was. Though one factor, general insecurity, which provided it with

its role is now absent, another source of its usefulness is as operative as ever: given frequent and seasonal movement between the homes in the village and the second dwelling in the forest and high pasture, and given fairly small household units which cannot always be represented at both ends, it is preferable to have stores jointly guarded. The only effect of security brought by the Pax Gallica is that the warden is now sometimes a woman. The work is paid for in kind by all users. The task was an onerous one in the old days, as is suggested by the rule which forced the first man to touch the igherm's keys, if the warden resigned, to take on the job. As indicated, the height of the buildings makes them useful as places of execution of Abdi hostages if necessary. The structures are elegant but not adorned with decorative mud patterns like those of the lodge.

A priori, one should expect these buildings to have some ritual significance: they are striking, and the wealth and security of the village is concentrated in their walls. They are the place where visitors who do not have individual hosts are liable to be entertained; they are the place of refuge; they are also the places left guarded if, owing to failure of the harvest, the village or a large part of it is forced to migrate temporarily. (This appears to have happened to the Ait

Amzrai in the past, and being allies of the Atta they moved for a time to the Southern Atta across the watershed.) But though one should, for all these reasons, expect some recognition of the fact that the soul of the village is within the walls of the collective igherm, in fact there is no ritual connected with it at all.* The

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* I was pleased to have my a priori reaction to the ighirmen confirmed to this extent, that they do have ritual significance in other parts of the Berber world, notably in the Aures. Cf. Pierre Bourdieu, "Sociologie de l'Algérie", PUF, 1958, p. 38. In the Aures they are called guelaa, and in Southern Morocco agadir. It is wrong to say that throughout the High Atlas the term agadir is used in this way. In the central High Atlas, agadir means simply "wall", and, as indicated, igherm designates collective storehouse.

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village has two ighirmen but one mosque (which is what by local definition makes it one village), and if its soul is anywhere it is in its assembly at the mosque. The two ighirmen are some distance from each other, and most of the dwellings in the village are grouped around one or the other, which gives rise to a distinction between 'upper' and 'lower' Amzrai. But these quarters do not appear to have any political significance,* nor do they

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* At any rate, they do not now. One would suppose that at any time the ighirmen were used for defence they would have to have some significance, in as far as those sharing an igherm would also share in its defence.

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correlate with the internal segmentation of the village.

Internally, the Ait Amzrai are segmented into three subclans, who rotate the chieftaincy, or did until the French came, along the normal rotation-and-complementary rules customary among the lay tribes. The genealogical beliefs associated with the segments are again of the 'Occamist' pattern usual among lay tribes, that is to say there are not many more ancestors than required to express the relationship of nested groups. There are one or two units which in terms of genealogical belief do not fit into the three major groups (e.g. one family believed to be of Ait Aggudim origin) and these, as usual, are for purposes of the rotation etc. incorporated in the major groups.

In its external politics, Amzrai fits into two systems: its own chieftaincy rotation is not part of any wider system in which Amzrai would itself be a rotating segment, but on the contrary in case of a dispute getting beyond the powers of the local chief, there would be appeal to the effective saints of the lodge. On the other hand, in case of major inter-tribal conflict Ait Amzrai would activate their alliance with the Ait Atta, though they do not share a chief or a rotating-election with them.

The internal segments also find some ritual expression. For instance, during the spring and autumn festivals, the

occasion is terminated by a prayer during which participants form a complete circle. Ill people desiring cure and women desiring pregnancy congregate in the middle, and are touched by three men each representing one of the clans, whilst the rest request divine assistance.

The actual central shrine of the Ait Amzrai, the alleged tomb of Sidi Lahcen u Othman, is as suggestive as any of the theory that the 'personal saint' cult now prevalent covers an earlier nature cult: for the shrine does not even look like a tomb. It consists of a space separated off by four low walls, which is overhung by an immediately adjoining holy tree. The numerous branches overhanging the 'tomb' are covered with bits of cloth left behind by women who had come to request favours of the saint. This is not the only holy tree in Amzrai: the other, less important, has not been personified. (There is also a holy tree in the vicinity of the more plausibly tomb-like shrine of Sidi Said Ahansal, a tree particularly noted for its power to assist pregnancy.)

The worship and sacrifice at Sidi Lahcen u Othman is more Durkheimian than most, in as far as giving something 'to the saint' is giving it to the community, and the saint is identified with the community as the ancestor of all its members. Such a fairly neat situation is exceptional, and can only arise among laicised saints: fully

lay tribes worship saints who are not their ancestors, whilst effective saints utilise their ancestors for encouraging worship and donations from others, and, as indicated, in fact have a tendency to perform their 'internal' rituals at other shrines. It is only a laicised saintly village which is likely both to have an ancestor of its own to worship and not to share his worship very much with anyone else: to practise a kind of social narcissism.

2. Tighanimin.

This is the fourth of the four Ahansal settlements on the upper end of the Ahansal river. Going upstream, the Asif Ahansal divides into two branches about an hour and a half's walk before coming to the ultimate sources, thus forming a Y. Zawiya Ahansal is on the lower branch of the Y, below the point where the two branches meet, and so is Amzrai, further down still. Taria and Tighanimin are one each on each of the separate branches, Taria being on the right one (looking up) which is a gorge cut into the plateau, whilst Tighanimin is on the left one, in a curving valley located between the mountain Timghazin and the lower and gentler ridge separating the main valley of Ahansal from Tisselmit. The territory of the Ait Tighanimin is constituted by this upper left branch of the valley plus some additional land in upper Tisselmit and some across the ridge on the plateau of the Ait Abdi.

In some respects, the Ait Tighanimin are the most interesting phenomenon amongst the Ihansalen. In the eyes of all other Ihansalen, they are <u>pseudo</u>-Ihansalen: they are descended, not from Sidi Said Ahansal, but from the clients/servants of Sidi Said Ahansal. According to their own firm conviction, they <u>are</u> descended from Sidi Said Ahansal - and indeed they feel they are, by certain criteria, his most worthy descendants: they have the purest

Ahansal blood, for there is no one, male or female, in the village of Tighanimin who was not born there and of Tighanimin stock. Unlike the fickle top saints of the lodge, the Ait Tighanimin do not, they proudly point out, import brides. (This virtue is somewhat of a virtue of necessity, but this does not prevent the Ait Tighanimin proudly stressing it. They have on their side a belief widespread in Morocco, that sherifians should not mix their blood with the laity.)* This is a belief not lived up to by mountain

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* Bousquet comments on this and a similar failure to observe it by the small (non-Ahansali) Zawiya among the Ait Hadiddu.

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igurramen (nor, incidentally, by the Moroccan Royal house), and particularly not by the successful saints. They compromise by allowing import but not export of brides, and by claiming that even the import is restricted to certain tribes from whom it is traditionally allowed. (The Ait Tighanimin comment particularly unfavourably on the marriage of Sidi Mha n'ait Sidi Mulay to a woman of the Ait Abdi, an alliance unhallowed by any such tradition, though in fact it made excellent sense as a dynastic alliance in terms of local politics under the French.) There are emigrants from Tighanimin, both individual and collective, but there are no immigrants into Tighanimin.

The collective status-ambiguity of the Ait Tighanimin

is something which thoroughly pervades their life and relations with surrounding communities. The surrounding communities, and particularly the Ihansalen and among these particularly the Ait Aggudim, consider the term and notion of Tighanimin to be something between an insult and a joke. This does not, of course, preclude individuals or even the community as a whole being treated courteously if the context demands it. It is for some reason held to be a particular defect of the Ait Tighanimin that they are Ait Sus, people from the Sus (an important region in Southern Morocco). There is no very good logic about this, as otherwise being a Susi is not a bad thing, and in any case Sidi Said Ahansal himself came from Asfi, which is not far from the Sus and almost as distant from the present home of the Ihansalen...

In size and internal organisation the Ait Tighanimin are similar to the Ait Amzrai. The internal division is into three clans, who annually rotate the chieftaincy amongst themselves (or did until modern superimposed administrations led to permanent village headmen). Genealogically, there is in fact a fourth clan, but as it is too small to operate in the rotation system it is for this and other purposes affiliated to one of the three large ones. In case of internal dispute getting out of hand, the next court of appeal for the Ait Tighanimin,

as for the Ait Amzrai, would be the top saints of the neighbouring lodge (and the 'Cadi' dispensing judgment with their authority); but unlike the Ait Amzrai, the Ait Tighanimin not merely do not form part of any wider system of rotating chieftaincy, but also have no lay or other allies. They are diplomatically, as it were, quite isolated, a feature connected with the severe ambiguity of their agurram status. For, with far less of a recognised genealogical claim to this status than the Ait Amzrai, the Ait Tighanimin are in fact far more anxious to claim it. Claiming it, they also stress their agurram-like pacificism, which they practise unless provoked too hard.* But these protestations make them unsuitable

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* There is memory of the Ait Tighanimin avenging the murder of one of their own number. Also, this is one of the villages in which a murder occurred in French days. This was a somewhat political affair, as it is claimed that the murder was instigated by the then headman at the higher instigation of the then Caid, Amhadar, in order to get rid of a man who was undermining authority.

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allies, assuming some were available,* and in any case to

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* In fact, the Ait Tighanimin are on good terms with the Ait Atta and on bad terms with the Ait Abdi, in this respect like the Ait Amzrai.

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seek lay alliances would from their own viewpoint be incompatible with their saintly pretensions. There is a

certain circle here: their isolation drives them to seek what safety there is in agurram-like pacifism, which in turn further reinforces their isolation. In practice, they confessedly have to seek protection, notably against the Ait Abdi, from the more effective saints of Aggudim and Temga.

The concomitants or consequences of the position of the Ait Tighanimin include the fact that they have a most marked and distinctive accent. In general, most local Berbers can do a Professor Higgins and locate a man by his speech, but this is quite outstandingly easy with the Ait Tighanimin. Their manner of speaking is very high-pitched and sing-song, so much so that when first encountering it with an individual one supposes one has come across a personal idiosyncrasy - until one finds this trait very common among them. For what psychological significance it may have, it is worth reporting that the Ait Tighanimin are of all locals the most addicted to smoking, except perhaps for some of the top saints of the lodge, among whom all available vices flourish. (This matter of smoking is easy to assess impressionistically: a European is considered to be a source of cigarettes, and of course an anthropologist anxious to encourage contacts and information quite particularly so.)

The stereotype possessed of the Ait Tighanimin by

the others includes both the complaint that they are too poor (look at their miserable hovels) and that they are too rich (they do very well), that they are comic (consider their accent, and they come from the Sus, too), they deprive the real Ihansalen of their due by going on donation-collecting missions on false pretences, they have the impertinence to litigate with the Ait Aggudim over a piece of land when all the territory belongs to the descendants of Sidi Lahcen u Othman, of whose number they are not, instead of being grateful for being allowed to settle locally at all - they make grotesque claims of being descended from Sidi Said Ahansal when everyone knows they are descended from Sidi Said Ahansal's servants, etc. It is very tempting to see an analogy between the attitude to, and of, the Ait Tighanimin, and what one finds among collectively status-ambiguous groups elsewhere.

In fact some parts of the stereotype do hold or have come to hold. The homes of the Ait Tighanimin are generally poor and badly built, conspicuously so, as though they were inhabited by people wishing to avoid attracting envy or aggression by Conspicuous Poverty. They are anxious to claim agurram status and receive donations. (The Ait Amzrai do not, and no theory exists why they should not: the Ait Tighanimin do, and a theory - concern-

ing their origin - does exist why they should not.) The flocks of the richer ones among them seem to do at least as well as those of the top saints; they do also remember extreme poverty in the days of siba, poverty which on occasion reached the point of starvation, whilst the saints remember the old days as days of affluence and plentiful donations; they do appear to practise more internal mutual help than the others, and to be more cohesive* and inward-turned.

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* When in 1959 the four headmen and one top-headman were arraigned for corruption in connection with collecting contributions to the present for the then King, who was visiting the provincial capital at Beni Mellal, the Ait Tighanimin were the only village who did not join in the movement to get the headmen punished and to make them pay compensation. The top-headman was of their own number - owing to the drawing of a lot in 1956 which had decided this - and they stuck to him loyally. I very much doubt whether members of the other villages would have been so loyal even if the top-headman had been one of their own number. They were not inclined to spare the local 'little' headmen.

A striking feature of their ecology is that, within the small territory they possess, the village as a physical place is multiplied more frequently than is usual. (The usual thing, as with Aggudim and Amzrai, is for the village to be double, for every household to have one home down and one up, as it were.) Tighanimin is multiplied almost six times. In their main valley there are four

villages, two on the (true) right bank, each low by the river near irrigated fields, one higher upstream and one lower, and two on the higher slopes under Timghazin, near pastures. Moreover, some families have homes in the Tighanimin's part of Tisselmit, and some near Tafraut of the Ait Abdi, where they also own territory, though they were only assured of its possession under the French.* If one

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* My belief concerning the disputed territory of Tisselmit is that during siba neither Aggudim nor Tighanimin could use this land much, owing to its dangerous and extreme proximity to the boundary of the Ait Abdi.

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counts their representation at Tisselmit and near Tafraut, the village is sextuply represented; otherwise, it is still multiplied four times.

It is worth noting that the miserable quality of their housing (not merely not comparable with the conspicuous display of the saintly ighirmen, but equally not with the bourgeois solidity of lay houses elsewhere) obtains where they are together. Their houses at Tisselmit, for instance, are about the same standard as the ordinary, non-igherm houses of the Aggudim at Tisselmit. Their villages by the fields are ordinary houses of bad quality, their pasture villages consist of what are no more than rough walls of stones plus some branches. This, one should say, is no worse than the pasture habitations of the Ait Abdi,

but they too, after all, are looked down on as barbarians by surrounding tribes. I think it would be a mistake to attribute the poor quality of their dwellings to some consideration such as that if a family has its dwelling multiplied fourfold or more, it cannot afford to make any one of them decent. (In fact, between seasons, there is time to build.) The need for a protective colouring of poverty is a much more convincing explanation.

Insecurity is also the clue to the unusual degree of village reduplication. The more normal pattern found in Aggudim and Amzrai - compact down villages, dispersed up habitation - does have the consequence that the upper pasture dwellings are relatively isolated. The territory of the Ait Tighanimin is not so great (on the contrary) nor are local Berbers averse to walking, as to make it difficult for them to make do with only one upper dwelling and one lower for each household. But the arrangements they usually adopt have the consequence that they always remain grouped together. For a politically isolated group such as they are, this must have been a significant consideration.

The Ait Tighanimin do have and use ighirmen, collective store-houses. In fact they have two buildings serving this purpose, close to each other, so that one warden is sufficient for both. Even in these collective buildings

the Ait Tighanimin have avoided all ostentation. The buildings are solid, well-built (incomparably more so than their individual dwellings), and have two storeys; but they have none of the elegance or the height of the three-storeyed ighirmen usual elsewhere. They are located in none of their villages, though fairly near the lowest, at a point as far away as possible from the Ait Abdi and fairly close to the main lodge, both features relevant to its security. In parts of them grain etc. is stored not in locked cubicles but in large jars, so that apart from the locking of the building as a whole, there are no physical precautions of one family against another - a curiously striking testimony of the internal cohesion of the Ait Tighanimin. Of the two buildings, one is owned by and was built at the expense of Sidi Yussif of Zawiya Tidrit (see below, p. 338)[9], who however places it at the disposal of his kinsmen of Tighanimin proper.

The story of the Ait Tighanimin is however not one of unredeemed gloom - quite apart from the fact that their flocks seem to have prospered, at any rate since the French peace. Some have hived off and settled elsewhere: individuals live as workers at the main lodge, some women have married out, and I know of one Tighanimin naturalised family among the Ait Isha and another among the Ait Atta. But of all emigrants from their village, two at any rate

are conspicuous success stories: one is the settlement at Tidrit, and the other the family settled at Usikis. Both will be described separately.

For ritual purposes, the Ait Tighanimin lack a shrine of a common ancestor or their own ancestor. Their own specific and general ancestor (i.e. ancestor of all of them and of no one but them) is buried at Amzrai, and his shrine does not appear to be used for festivals, or possibly at all. On their own territory they have the shrine of one of the non-Ahansali 'Seven Saints',* whom they do

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* See below, p. 427.

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use; and they also use the shrine of Sidi Said Ahansal and another of the Seven Saints, Sidi Bushaq, who is also close to the lodge on its territory. (The two can be used simultaneously. At one harvest festival which I attended, the men spent most of the time at Sidi Bushaq, whilst the women were in the shrine of Sidi Said Ahansal or dancing outside it. The men prepared the meat, the women prepared the sksu, the North African dish more generally known as kus-kus.) The existence of rival views about the true nature of their relationship to Sidi Said Ahansal does not cause the guardians of the tomb, the saints of the lodge, to object to the Ait Tighanimin using it.

The lack of a shrine of their own ancestor on their

own territory is of course a hindrance in wishing to set up as igurramen (or an index of the failure to do so), as Ait Aggudim are willing to point out to them. The Ait Tighanimin claim to receive a regular donation from the Ait Atta, who pass through their territory on the way to pay homage to Sidi Said Ahansal. The Ait Aggudim deny the truth of this, maintaining that all donations from pilgrims to Sidi Said Ahansal are due to them. (I have never been present at the time the Ait Atta passed through to be able to verify this. It is probably true that some Atta segments do pay a minor homage, en route, to the Ait Tighanimin.)

To sum up, the Ait Tighanimin, like the Ait Amzrai, are prevented from being effective igurramen by their proximity to the effective main lodge; but they do explicitly strive to be recognised as such and display some agurram-like qualities (e.g. pretensions to pacifism and abstention from intermarriage with the laity, though both are somewhat of virtues of necessity). They are, however, the only Ihansalen, if such they may be called, who have successfully hived off across the Atlas watershed. All other Ahansali settlements are as it were downstream - or at least not against the stream - of what historians are agreed is the direction of the Berber 'push towards the Atlantic plain' from the area between the mountain and

the desert. (Tribal legends confirm this.) The Tighanimin settlements at Tidrit and in Usikis are 'upstream' of this pattern of migration.

With Tighanimin, we complete the description of the four villages which, since the French conquest, have formed the administrative unit 'Ihansalen'.

3. Tidrit.

Zawiya Tidrit is on a small tributary of the Dades river, near the Dades river itself. The Dades is one of the most important valleys on the Sahara side of the Atlas.

The place at which Zawiya Tidrit is situated is on a frontier between the Ait Atta and the Ait Seddrat. This is a 'new' frontier, believed to be due to a settlement some four generations back. The inhabitants of Zawiya Tidrit place the origin of their own lodge, founded by emigrants from Tighanimin, in the same period as the establishment of the present Atta/Seddrat frontier. Whether either dating is correct I know not: the Ait Tidrit support their theory about the age of their own lodge by an appropriate 'genealogical memory', but then it is not difficult to have one of four generations. (Many lay tribesmen can do as well as that...) Whatever the truth about the age of either this lodge or the local frontiers, the tie-up of the two is obviously significant. The Ait Tidrit receive donations and respect, and if necessary arbitrate, for both their lay neighbours; their position is a kind of living document certifying and giving religious authority to a status quo. The scale on which they operate is of course much smaller than that of the main lodge: they deal with two tribes, or rather two segments of much larger tribes, who happen to have a 'live' frontier here.

They are used for festivals by these tribes, and even by tribes further up the valley (Ait Meghad).

Apart from being known by its place name (Tidrit), it or its people are also sometimes referred to by the name of their alleged ancestress, as the sons of Lalla (Lady) Aisha, who was a tagurramt (female of agurram), and also by the name of the present head of the zawiya, Sidi Yussif. The use of the female name is explained by the alleged fact that the male founder was born after the decease of his father, so he used his mother's name. The shrine at the lodge, however, is said to house him, not the tagurramt. I have found no legends connected with the founding of this lodge.* The fact that the lodge is often

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* I do not believe there are any. But when I stayed in this lodge briefly, the head of it was absent and the young men - son and nephew - may well have been shy of giving away unauthorised information, as often happens. I did meet the much-respected head of this lodge on other occasions, when he was travelling about, but he was reserved and uncommunicative. There may be more to be found out.

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referred to by the name of its present and not its deceased head testifies to his influence. We may well here be in the presence of a genuinely young lodge and centre of sanctity, where legends are being made rather than inherited.

The lodge is sharply stratified and indeed has a most pointed pyramidal structure. Leadership is concentrated

unambiguously in the hands of one man, Sidi Yussif. There does not seem at the moment to be any saintly rat-race, for his position is not challenged. (A circle is operative: as he is known far and wide, it is not to the interest of the locals, fellow-members of the lodge, to challenge him; and being recognised as leader inside it, he will be recognised as such by visitors coming to use the lodge as a holy centre.) There isn't a wide range of people who could challenge him, for the top saintly stratum here hasn't multiplied to being more than one'family'. The effective saints remain in 'indivision', and partly thanks to the extinction of some collateral lines do not seem to be further removed from each other than ego to father's brother's son.

Apart from this one family centred on an undisputed leader, there are about ten plainly lay families (lay but for the fact of their Tighanimin origin) who are said to have followed the original saintly settlement at various times, having been granted permission or even been invited to come and settle.

The difference in style of life between this lower stratum of the lodge and the top undivided family is extremely striking. The top family has an extensive and truly elegant and well-kept dwelling, a compound of high buildings forming a fully enclosed easily defensible unit,

not far from the shrine and above the area of irrigated fields. The petit peuple live in a line of hovels dug into the hillside between two strata at a steep place, so that they are half-houses, half-caves. This humble style is all the more striking if one considers that Zawiya Tidrit is in the southern region where high mud buildings are common and do not express an aspiration to leadership, as they do in the region immediately around Zawiya Ahansal.*

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* It is not clear to me why this should be so. There seems nothing in the way of availability of material to dictate this regional difference in style. The high buildings have as their main ingredient mud, which is plentiful anywhere, and timbers, which in fact are much more plentiful in the north. This phenomenon seems to require at least in part an explanation in terms of 'diffusion'. On the southern slopes of the Atlas and the Sahara-edge oases, this style is common, almost universal. In the North of Morocco it is not to be found, and in the Middle Atlas either unknown or very rare. The central High Atlas is a border-line region in this respect, and the social significance of a high castle-like building varies a good deal from valley to valley.

(In the Imdghas valley, where so many of the clients of Zawiya Tidrit dwell, simply everyone has them...)

It should be stressed that the 'clients' of Zawiya Tidrit are not such in anything like the complete sense in which some of the clients of the main lodge are its clients. They use it only on some occasions for some purposes. They do not hold their elections there. Indeed the upstream clients of Zawiya Tidrit are, in the first

instance, clients of Zawiya Ahansal itself, where they did hold their elections (or at least they had their elections supervised by its igurramen), for whom they regularly taxed themselves, etc.

In fact, the people of Imdghas had a number of alternative saints to use in different contexts: the main lodge above all, but also a local shrine called Sidi Said (but not Ahansal) who has left no one claiming to be his descendants and hence no Zawiya, and also, among the Ait Meghad, one clan recognised as igurramen but not claiming to be sherifian.* They can use others still, in the other

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* This is the only instance of non-sherifian igurramen I have come across. Elsewhere this may be more common. This does however support the idea that such a conjunction is not contradictory - though immediately around Ahansal it almost appears so - and also gives some support to the plausible view that the 'shurfa' among the Berbers, performing agurram roles, are a continuation of a pre-Islamic institution given a Muslim cloak by the attribution of sherifian origin to its holders.

The small clan in question, which I shall not describe in detail as it is not part of the Ahansali system of sanctity, does, and does not, live up to agurram qualities in various ways. It apparently feuds and otherwise lives like any others. All it does in a specialised kind of way is to collect donations and then transmit - presumably a part of them - to another saint, its saints, who are an influential group near Tazzarine, in the heart of Ait Atta country.

The function of this is fairly obvious. The Ait Meghad are enemies of the Ait Atta, indeed form a major part of the Ait Yafelman group who 'balance out' the Ait Atta in the politics of the Sahara-ward

valleys. Here we have a clan of the Ait Meghad religiously affiliated to the national saints, as it were, of the Ait Atta, with annual access to them. This is a way of permanently keeping a channel of information and even of pressure and persuasion open, under an impeccable religious cover.

The legend justifying the practice is: a virgin founder of this clan was the only person in the region to take in and succour a man of the holy lineage at Tazzarine when he was wandering about the country. In gratitude he revealed his saintly powers and transferred some of them to her and her progeny. (She later ceased to be a virgin, evidently. There is no suggestion that the other wandering saint fathered them.) This is a variant on a theme common in the Atlas - the anonymous poor-seeming saintly stranger who rewards the hospitable host - a theme well-calculated to underwrite the obligation of hospitality. The founding lady of this special clan is remembered as Tafqirt - a Berber feminisation of the Arabic 'f'qir' - and she has left the name to the clan she has mothered.

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areas of Ait Yaffelman settlement. There are almost always alternatives in sanctity.

The most interesting light thrown by Zawiya Tidrit on the possible form centres of sanctity can take is this: Zawiya Tidrit unambiguous has one and only one leader. Baraka flows pure and deep in one central channel. This is interesting for the following reason: in other lodges (especially in the Temga group) one is told that in the past leadership was clearly concentrated, the possession of baraka was so manifest that no rules of succession were required. (This is not the situation there at present, any more than it is in the main lodge.) But for the existence of the situation found so clearly at Tidrit,

one might well suspect - and it might still well be true - that this past unity and unanimous recognition exists only in retrospect. Tidrit demonstrates that this is, on the contrary, a possible situation in a zawiya.* But it

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* In the main lodge, there is no such emphatic claim made for past unity. In recent generations, it is perfectly manifest that there was inter-agurram rivalry such as one finds at present. For the preceding semi-legendary generations, the legends claim not unanimity, but the resolution of implicitly admitted competition by a wise father. (See above, p. 219.) Unity is only implicit in the very early generations when, as far as the beliefs go, there was, in the time of Sidi Said Ahansal and for several generations subsequently, only one agurram, no one else being mentioned. (The early fissions which follow are only such as explain hivings-off. After that, there comes the generation-in-conflict, with multiple offspring all bearing the names of rival wives of one father, in whom baraka was still uniquely concentrated...)

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is reasonable to suppose that this possibility is connected with the smallness of a lodge. If it prospered in influence and grew, attracting resident as well as donating clients, could its top stratum fail to grow - if only through supply of brides to it? (There may be some truth in the main lodge belief that the various sub-clans spring from co-wives...) And if the top effective-saintly layer grows in size, could it fail to undergo fission? Giving the equal rights of brothers to inheritance, Berber family units, even saintly ones, seem to have a fairly low upper ceiling of size. There isn't enough concentration of power

in any one person in lay families to prevent fission, and even holy ones, among whom the possibility of concentration of baraka mitigates the segmentary diffusion of authority, the same principle in the end operates: or so it seems to have in other lodges which have grown.*

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* The past of Zawiya Temga, for which there is interesting evidence in the form of ruins, appears to have been similar to the present of Zawiya Tidrit. But by now, Temga has grown and its baraka diffused.

Another outstandingly interesting feature of Tidrit is its relation to its 'village of origin', the status-ambiguous Tighanimin. Tidrit itself has, of course, lost this feeling: baraka is known by its fruits, and having prospered, even moderately, the taint appears to be removed from the source... (In any case, the local prestige enjoyed by Tidrit is somehow connected with the prestige of the present head of the house rather than with stressing the contested descent from Sidi Said Ahansal.)

The relationship has two aspects, one being what I shall call the Inverse Pilgrimage, and the other a kind of village-scale Marshall Aid, or rather, in this case, Sidi Yussif Aid.

Inverse Pilgrimage: in all logic (given the local concepts) people should visit the tombs and shrines of their ancestors. (It is a corollary of this belief that

those who stay put at the shrine of the ancestor are the ones who receive the pilgrims and thus have higher status, other things being equal: fidelity is better than migration.) But, in fact, it is the Ait Tighanimin who annually visit Tidrit and have a feast there in the autumn, whilst the Ait Tidrit do not in general visit the larger and older Tighanimin village* (though their leader does).

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* Actually they claimed to do so when I visited them, but it was quite plain from what they knew and did not know about Tighanimin that in fact they had not done so for some time.

So ancestors visit descendants rather than vice versa... Of course, in a sense everyone now alive and available to go visiting or receive visitors is roughly equally distant from the common ancestor, so that one might say that equal is visiting equal. But the common ancestor defining either all Ait Tighanimin, or Ait Tighanimin plus Ait Tidrit, is much further back than the common ancestor of the Ait Tidrit alone, and the latter is a descendant of the former.

In terms of the logic of local concepts, no explanation can be offered of this strange behaviour. In social terms, on the other hand, there is no difficulty: the Ait Tidrit, or rather the nuclear <u>agurram</u> group within Tidrit, have successfully reactivated their sanctity, mainly by

moving away to a suitable place out of the stifling shadow of the main lodge, and they thus provide a suitable focus of prestige and influence. It may be contrary to all reason for 'ancestors' to visit 'descendants' and bring gifts, but there is nevertheless much point if the influential hosts' good will is well worth having, and if they possess the material and spiritual facilities of a good centre of pilgrimage - a shrine (whereas the common ancestor of the Ait Tighanimin is not on their own but on Amzrai territory), a fine house, centralised authority (i.e. someone who can make arrangements for the minor graces of prolonged entertaining: the visitors bring the beasts for slaughter, but the locals see to all the details...)

And so it is. The arrangements between Tighanimin and Tidrit are of course advantageous to both sides. The difference of climate makes them suitable for seasonal commuting of flocks, though in this respect it is Tidrit who profit most, for the Ait Tighanimin with their forest have a better chance of keeping flocks alive in winter, than their southern cousins have during their scorched summer. Given the hostility of the people of the main lodge to Tighanimin, I often wondered how the precariously placed Ait Tighanimin survived in the days of <u>siba</u>, in the days of maximum Aggudim influence and power. Tidrit provides the most plausible explanation: it was impossible

for the main lodge to commit or initiate some real major act of aggression against Tighanimin without at the same time offending Tidrit, who would certainly spread the news with a Tighanimin angle to the story, and thereby risk alienating a large part of the population of the Dades valley.

Sidi Yussif Aid: Sidi Yussif, head of the lodge at Tidrit, at his own expense constructed one of the two adjoining ighirmen of the Ait Tighanimin, which he continues to own but which is used by other Ait Tighanimin (and not even only those from the clan from which the Sidi Yussif has sprung: lay emigrants to Tidrit are only from this clan, though.)

This is, in my Berber experience, a most unusual act of benevolence on the part of an individual or family towards a community - and one from which they have hived off, at that. It is hard to conceive of such an unsymmetrical act among either the segmentary lay tribes or the competing effective saints of Zawiya Ahansal itself. This unusual relationship confirm's one's impression of the Ait Tighanimin being an unusually isolated and at the same time status-ambiguous group, and making up for it by extra cohesion: the fact that a successful son of such a group is exceptionally active in helping out the poorer brethren left behind reminds one, at the very

least, of similar phenomena among other status-ambiguous groups. (And, incidentally, the construction of this adjoining second igherm of the Ait Tighanimin but owned by Tidrit has as its consequence a strengthening of the Ait Tighanimin's safety on their downstream border: any act against their igherm is ipso facto one against its owners, the igurramen of Tidrit - and an act hostile to them is also in some measure a hostile act against their clients. So, through the success and loyalty of their offshoot, the Ait Tighanimin escape some of their isolation.)

4. 'Sidi Said Ahansal' and Some Other Atomic Emigrants.

Sidi Said Ahansal of Usikis is of Tighanimin lineage, i.e. of a segment whose genuine descent from the like-named original saint, Sidi Said Ahansal, is generally denied. Thus this man's very name is a kind of defiance of those who would deny the Ait Tighanimin the right to class themselves as Ihansalen: or, the fact that he is generally known by this name, an index of his success...

Sidi Said Ahansal is one of three brothers, who remain in indivision. The family has in the last generation acquired some property in Usikis, i.e. among the highly sedentarised Ait Atta in this part of the Dades valley. In this generation, this undivided family straddles the Atlas watershed, possessing property both at Tighanimin and at Usikis.

From the viewpoint of classification of Ahansali settlement, Sidi Said Ahansal provides an example of one particular species, the solitary family which acquires land by donation, by purchase, or by privileged purchase in a lay village. (We have also seen an example of a member of holy lineage other than the Ahansali settling <u>into</u> a laicised Ahansal village, above, p. 363.) Such solitary family settlements are not called <u>zawiyas</u>, and they are not centred on a shrine. They may or may not be influential. If not, they tend simply to become like their lay

neighbours, with nothing but the preserved memory of Ahansal origin distinguishing them.

At least two such settlers, however, are influential in the communities in which they have settled. One is the Sidi Said Ahansal described here (who is also somewhat special in that the links with the village of origin are kept alive, an ambiguity of rights which would hardly be tolerated from a wholly lay person); the other is a solitary Ahansal family settled among the Ait Habibi near Tagzirt, on the edge of the Tadla plain (part of the Atlantic plain of Morocco). This family claims to have moved away from the effective saintly lineage of Zawiya Ahansal (the Ait Mohamed n'ut Baba) some four generations ago, and to have acquired land locally by purchase. It still claims land in the main lodge, and it is interesting that its claim and associated genealogical position are recognised. During the summer of 1956, a close affine of this family visited the region by accident, and overtures were made to him for the purchase of the land. (The land had in the meantime been held in trust and used by others, without payment.) I also visited this solitary Ahansal family in its settlement near Tagzirt: it retained a 'memory' of certain aspects of the legends and ideology of the main lodge, notably those connected with the self-image of insouciant wealth and generosity. For instance,

allusions were made to the reputedly magical bowl possessed by one of the top lodge families (the Ait Okdim, the 'Senior People', temporarily eclipsed through lack of sane adult males), a bowl used for giving sksu to visitors and pilgrims and magical in that it is inexhaustible and remains full however many eat however much from it... It is also interesting that this fragmented item of Ahansal-hood had a lively image of the main lodge which he supposed to be applicable to the present, but which was in fact based on the lodge as it was some three or four generations ago (i.e. that there were three main clans, two saintly and the rest: indeed, a few generations ago there were the Ait Ahmad u Ahmad, the Ait Ahmed u Mehamed, and the Rest...

This section has specifically commented on two cases of Ahansali families settling in lay villages and achieving influence. There are also more numerous examples of such individual family settlements which do not attain local prominence. For instance, from among the Ait Tighanimin, I have come across one family settled among the 'Southern' Ait Atta, and another among the Ait Isha. From the Ihansalen proper, there are such families among the Ait Haddidu of Imilchil administrative district, among the Ait Bu Gmez, and no doubt in many other places. In the nature of the case, having failed to achieve prominence and being small in number, one does not discover

them unless one happens to hit upon them by accident or has one's attention drawn to them by kinsmen who 'remember' them over generations.

5. A Case of Identification.

The Ait Troilest form a small hamlet in the territory of the Ait Atta of Talmest. They have hived off a not very large number of generations ago directly from the main lodge,* sufficiently near to spring from the 'better' half of it, i.e. the half from which the really effective saints spring, but far enough back to be related less closely to the top families than to some other semi-igurramen. One family of the Ait Troilest has moved back to Zawiya Ahansal and is prosperous and influential there, though only in intra-village affairs rather than in an agurram-like intervillage manner.

* Cf. discussion of the genealogy below, p. 402.

The Ait Troilest are settled in the territory of the Ait Atta of Talmest, but then the whole territory of the Ait Atta of Talmest 'belongs' to the Ihansalen in virtue of the land-deed left behind by Sidi Lahcen u Othman. Thus in a sense they have been allowed to settle what is theirs anyway: they are like a man who is a lodger in a flat which is itself rented from the lodger's father. The Ait Troilest are keen advocates of the validity and respect-worthiness of this document, but not at all out of hostility to their hosts, the Ait Talmest, but from a shared hostility with these to the annually commuting

transhumants from the South, their 'brothers' the Ait Atta from the South.

Though the sheer fact of their descent from Sidi Said Ahansal and Sidi Lahcen u Othman should provide them with sufficient justification for being able to settle where they are (though this rationale would not explain why they should occupy <u>just</u> the spot they do within a much wider area), they <u>also</u> possess a legend explaining the settlement of their own segment in particular on their own territory in particular. Indeed their name reminds all of the legend, being derived from the Berber word for panther (<u>uriles</u>). The legend is, in substance, that the immediate area of the present Hamlet of the Ait Troilest was made uninhabitable by a ferocious panther with whom the lay tribesmen could not cope. The first of the Ait Troilest peacefully disposed of the panther family including its cubs, by carrying it elsewhere. Handled by the <u>agurram</u> and sensitive to his baraka, the panthers allowed themselves to be dispossessed and resettled. (In fact, there still are panthers in the wider region, and from time to time one is shot.)

The hamlet is small (well under ten households), but never referred to as a zawiya and not really very saintly in the <u>agurram</u> sense: for one thing, it possesses no shrine around which a pilgrim cult could be centred. It does possess a very prominent family, but its prominence seems a

consequence of its accomplishments and achievements in this generation and in the fairly recent past: it does not reflect any deep, saintly social stratification in the hamlet. The Ait Troilest do claim when interrogated to have been recipients of donations from a wide area in the days of siba, but it seems likely that they are exaggerating the size and importance of this.

The Ait Troilest are not saintly in the sense of acting as arbitrators and being the centre of a cult, but they are influential and prestigious with the Ait Atta of Talmest, in whose territory they are. But it does not seem that they are invoked by them so much for internal disputes: for instance, these Ait Atta use other internal (descendant-less) shrines or mosques for internal oaths, and as a court of appeal or for major issues still go to the main lodge itself. The Ait Troilest are used by them as leaders and spokesmen in their literally perennial conflict with the southern Atta who arrive each spring.

If one considers the geographical location of the Ait Troilest and considers a kind of pure theory of saintly geopolitics, one might suppose them well placed to prosper as mediators between the Ait Atta of Talmest and the transhumant Ait Atta from the South: for they are placed on the southern border of the Talmest Atta, facing the crucial holy mountain of Azurki which constitutes the

limits for the transhumants up to a certain date. But, whatever one might suppose a priori, in fact the Ait Troilest have, in all the endless disputes about pasture boundaries and the extent to which the southern Atta are entitled to use local land, identified with the permanent inhabitants and made themselves their spokesmen. (One of their arguments is that as descendants of Sidi Lahcen u Othman, they are in any case entitled to arbitrate and decide the use of the land delimited by him.)

Why has this happened? One can think of two sets of reasons. Firstly, they are not so genuinely 'on a frontier' as a merely static view of the boundary lines might suggest. In winter, when Azurki and the surrounding high ground are covered in snow, the southern Atta have not merely departed, but departed behind the high, snow-bound and rugged ground which separates this area from the southern slopes of the Atlas. Then, the Ait Troilest would be in no position to balance the wholly absent and distant southerners against the local Ait Atta,* who then

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* It might be said that the same argument could be applied to the main lodge. But the Ihansalen of the main lodge and the adjoining three Ahansal villages occupy a fairly self-contained valley, and they are not numerically hopelessly outnumbered vis-à-vis their close neighbours: the four villages, though not as numerous in population as the Ait Atta of Talmest, are comparable in size to them, and they are equal in size or superior to those Ait Abdi actually living on the plateau above them.

If on the other hand one considers all the permanent inhabitants of the north-facing valleys and slopes, then of course the Ihansalen are outnumbered by them. But: (a) the large and important groupings are as distant as many of the Atta south of the watershed - it is as far to the Ait Isha or Ait Bu Gmez as it is to Usikis - and in any case, they also balance each other out, as they form no nominal, political, or geographical unity other than in virtue of being joint clients of the saints: and (b) despite not being separated by a watershed, in the depth of winter they are virtually as separated from Zawiya Ahansal as are the southerners.

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become their only close and numerically overwhelming neighbours. These neighbours do not need the igurramen (or semi-igurramen) of the Ait Troilest lineage to unite, for they form a political unit with an annual chief, a shared group of storehouses, etc. So the Ait Troilest are ill-placed not to identify with them in winter, assuming they wished not to do so. On the other hand, in full summer when the southerners pass beyond the high pasture and are allowed to graze on and around Talmest, the Ait Troilest are fellow sufferers from the incursions of their flocks, and so again ill-suited to be mediators in this issue...

6. Sidi Ali u Hussein.

This saint, a descendant of Sidi Said Ahansal and Sidi Lahcen u Othman, is the apical and revered ancestor of the igurramen of the Temga-Asker-Sidi Aziz group of lodges, whose inhabitants contain the most important live saints and rivals of those of the main lodge: and indeed, the shrine of Sidi Ali u Hussein is second in importance only to that of Sidi Said Ahansal. The supposed progeny of Sidi Ali u Hussein defines the most important hiving-off in the regional dispersion of the Ihansalen, and the most important opposition within the specifically saintly segmentary system. (Though it is worth noting that the genealogical system is not so neat as to oppose him by a correspondingly prominent general ancestor of the specifically stay-at-home igurramen: they define themselves either by reference to an ancestor further back who is his ancestor too, or by differentiating ancestors 'lower-down', i.e. later, who help to distinguish them from lineages which have also stayed put. The stay-at-home effective saints do not appear to need genealogical aid or stress to conceptualise their distinctness from and opposition to the rival and emigrant group. Having the old and shared ancestors and staying so close to their shrines is enough. For the genealogical pattern, see below, p. 402 et seq.)

But the effectively saintly descendants of Sidi Ali u Hussein do not live around his shrine in the zawiya bearing his name. They live elsewhere. The explanation is simple and obvious. Like the saints of the main lodge, the igurramen of this lineage fulfil (among others) two important roles: the supervision of transhumancy arrangements in connection with a really important summer pasture, and the guarding of frontiers (with the associated mediation, protection of travellers, etc.).

But the local tribal geopolitics are such that these two main jobs cannot conveniently be done in the same spot. So the shrine of the crucial ancestor is in one place (convenient from the viewpoint of the transhumancy problem), whilst the permanent settlements, zawiyas of his effectively saintly descendants (three such settlements, in fact) are elsewhere, located on three septic frontiers. These three settlements are described below (p. 368 et seq.). This section is concerned only with the minor and less significant settlement around the very significant shrine itself.

It follows that this shrine does not belong to the people settled around it but to the effectively saintly lineages living elsewhere, whose genealogies connecting them with this ancestor are complete and recognised, and who have the respect, prestige and saintly know-how to

be influential igurramen. The donations to the shrine are concentrated into certain festivals, and at these times - and others if convenient or necessary - the effective descendants come to collect their due and to perform their duties. The division of the saintly spoils of Sidi Ali u Hussein is, in principle, one-third each to the saints of Temga, Asker and Sidi Aziz, with a minor informal reward to the resident guardians of the shrine.*

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* The picture given by these local guardians of the proper division is quite other: one-third to them, one-third to the saints of the main lodge, and one-third to those of the Temga-Asker-Sidi Aziz group. There can be little doubt but that this merely corresponds to their own desires and not to the real past or even present practice. It is the view of the effective saints descended from the saint-of-the-shrine which corresponds to reality, for their effectiveness enabled them to impose their view, and indeed their effectiveness is a reflection of the fact that they did. Their view of the role of the saints from the main lodge in this connection is that they are merely entitled to respect and proper entertainment if they choose to turn up, but that is all. This is confirmed at the main lodge, if not in such almost disrespectful terms, in as far as no one there claims to collect or to have collected any donations from the shrine of Sidi Ali u Hussein.

It is however worth noting that the difficulties one encounters in trying to discover the rules governing the division of the spoils of sanctity are inherent in the situation. There is no unique and correct answer. The ambiguities of this division correspond to the ambiguities of the rules of saintly succession. Indeed it is the flow of donations which determines the flow of baraka and the succession, and each interested party strives to direct these flows to itself: possibilities and opportunities for influencing the flow may continue to arise over a long period of time. In order to affect it, one must first have or display a

firm conviction that one is entitled to the flow (although no doubt one would not display it in the presence of those who both disagree and are influential enough to penalise the presumptions). Thus, there is only the de facto division, which one can guess at, more or less reliably according to circumstances, and a multiplicity of competing views concerning the de jure division.

> During the years following independence, this shrine, like some others (though not Sidi Said Ahansal's), was enlarged and structurally (I mean the building, not the social structure) and decoratively improved. This was not due to a religious revival, but the fact that the weight of the administration, which in French days was friendly or at least not hostile to saints, was now not on the side of diverting donations to what seemed either an archaic cult or like corruption, and when consulted advised that donations should be turned towards the improvement of the shrine which has earned them.

The inhabitants of the little lodge around this shrine amount to ten families. Of these, in the past only two were recognised to be proper Ihansalen, actual descendants of Sidi Said Ahansal, etc., whilst the others were held to be descendants of clients settled locally to assist in the guarding of the shrine. (This situation was recorded in the archives of the French administrative outpost, and the report based on inquiries which must have been made in the late 'thirties or early 'forties.) Latterly, however, (though still in French days) the eight excluded families claimed to be full citizens of the lodge and took their case to court (i.e. the local customary law tribunals operating in French days). The full story of this intriguing court case has eluded me, but the party claiming full and

equal citizenship appears to have won, whether formally in court or informally, in as far as now there is a reluctance to talk to strangers (at any rate to me) about the internal genealogical differentiation of the lodge, and an - admittedly unenthusiastic - tendency to admit that all are equal and Ihansalen. The victory of the egalitarian party, whether formal or informal, was clearly aided by the fact that even the two families whose Ahansal descent was not in dispute, and who originally wished to maintain their local pre-eminence, are fairly thoroughly laicised, and are not very distinguishable in influence or in style of life or habitation from their genealogically ambiguous neighbours. They are incapable of tracing their genealogy accurately to their illustrious saint. It is true that they did not take part in the feuding and alliances of their lay neighbours, but then, neither did their genealogically ambiguous neighbours. (The case of this lodge, next to that of the Ait Tighanimin, is the most prominent case of contested Ahansal descent.) They too, well born though they may be, were little more than guardians of the shrine, whose blessing had flown in other directions.

The position of the shrine in connection with local transhumancy patterns is as follows. The main lodge is well placed to regulate disputes arising from the trans-

humancy of the Ait Atta from south of the Atlas, and also to give them an attractive place down in the valley to come and celebrate and ratify their coming and going: the shrine of Sidi Ali u Hussein is similarly placed with regard to the transhumancy of one half of the big and important tribe of the Ait Daud u Ali. This tribe is, like the Ait Abdi, a segment of the large grouping of the Ait Sochman. It is itself bifurcated in the following way: each of its segments is represented in each of the two main territories of the Daud u Ali, the two territories corresponding to the modern administrative areas of Anergui and Taguelft. The tribe has, like the Ait Atta, both a territorial and a clan organisation and the two cut across each other. The tribe believes, plausibly enough, to have 'begun' at Anergui and to have expanded to Taguelft, each of the clans dividing in such a way that some 'stayed at home' and some went to the new location. This direction fits in with the general direction of the drift or Drang of Berber tribes reported by historians. But Taguelft is 'lower down' in the direction of the Atlantic plain, and the members of the tribe who settled there come back annually in summer to the high pastures which are closer to Anergui and where they share rights with their 'brethren' who stayed behind at Anergui. The shrine of Sidi Ali u Hussein itself is also in Anergui. Just as the Ait Atta

come down to Sidi Said Ahansal from the high plateau above the main lodge, so the incoming transhumants among the Ait Daud u Ali come, both at the beginning and the end of transhumance, but especially the latter, down to the shrine of Sidi Ali u Hussein. And his effective descendants, who do not live there, are at the same time the guardians of the same tribe's frontiers, where they do live. Fustel de Coulanges' ancient city may have required both home and shrine: in the life of the Atlas saints it may be necessary to have the two at different places, as both shrine and home perform functions for others - that is why they are saints - and these functions, in this case, have to be divergently located.

7. Ait Mhand u Yussif.

This is a very small lodge consisting of four families, which performs within one of the segments, Ait Bulman, of the Ait Daud u Ali what the shrine of Ali u Hussein (cf. previous section) does for that tribe as a whole. This little lodge is located within one of the segments of the Daud u Ali tribe and provides a kind of focus for the festivities, occurring mainly towards the end of the summer transhumancy period, when the opposite numbers of the local lay segment come down before returning to Taguelft.

It was claimed to me in 1959 that this little lodge does not receive donations but merely provides locale for the festivities for which of course both the visitors and the locals provide the sustenance. This is probably a slight exaggeration. The lodge is situated well within the segment, adjoining a cemetery which is not a specialised cemetery of these little saints but of the adjoining villages as well. The cemetery contains the bodies of two local men who had lost their lives in the tribal battles against the French in the early 30's, and after independence their tombs received some decorations - a stick with a white cloth attached to it, in belated recognition and a kind of reinterpretation of what had been a tribal struggle as a national one.

The members of the lodge claim in recognition of the sanctity ideology to be endogamous, but in fact are not: they not merely receive wives but give away daughters to the surrounding tribes. I have met a man whose mother came from the lodge and whose father was a lay tribesman.

Local beliefs about the founder of the lodge are very similar to those to be found at Temga, and concern annual flights by the founder direct to Mecca and the failure of a lay companion, owing to worldly interests in immediate pleasure, to join him on this pious and remarkably swift trip. This trip is held to be continued by the spirit of the founding saint each year. The members of the lodge however are not capable of tracing their precise genealogy in relation to the main saintly lineages nor even to that of the important shrine of the previous section, which is merely an hour or two downstream from it. They also have no views - or profess none - about the priority of their settlement in relation to that shrine.

8. Temga.

The igurramen of the lodges of Temga, Asker and Sidi Aziz form a group which on the whole co-opérates (which of course does not exclude internal conflict), which shares descent from Sidi Ali u Hussein and a connection with the Ait Sochman. Each of these groups guards a Sochman frontier: Temga is situated between the Ait Abdi (Sochmanis) and the Ait Isha (Messat), Asker between the Ait Daud u Ali and the Ait Isha, and Sidi Aziz between the Ait Daud u Ali and the Ait Said u Ali (both Sochmani tribes).

In as far as they are genealogically and in terms of periodic festival centred on the shrine of Sidi Ali u Hussein of Anergui, well inside Sochmani territory, these igurramen can be seen as national Sochman saints, but in as far as they live on the frontier, they exemplify the main Ahansali tendency of being a form of the sacred which symbolises not a group, but a boundary between groups...*

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* In general, as indicated, there is a one-many relationship both ways: one saintly centre has many clients, but each lay tribe is client to more than one saintly centre. There are few lay tribes who can be said to be uniquely oriented towards one zawiya. The Ait Mhand come close to this in their relationship to the main lodge, which they visited twice a year. The important Ait Isha tribe also come close to being exclusively Ahansal-oriented, but they nevertheless divide their reverence between both the main lodge and Temga, visiting both, in

that order, in the autumn. The elections are held at the main lodge, to whom they bring grain, and they then also visit Temga, to whom they bring beasts.

These three lodges are not as yet fully separated off from each other, in the sense that the top saintly stratum in each still have close kin links with each other which cut across residential proximity: a man from one may be a closer agnatic kinsman of a man from another lodge than he is of some fellow-inhabitants of his own lodge. Similarly, families are liable to own land in more than one of the three lodges. This is quite unlike their relationship to the main lodge, from which their separation is complete: there are no cross-cutting agnatic or indeed other kin links with it (other than, of course, the one which can be found by going back to the common ancestor), and they do not even claim to have retained land in the main lodge, still less actually to control any. This trio of lodges is, in fact, the main rival of Zawiya Ahansal itself.

In internal structure, these lodges in some ways resemble and in some ways differ from the main lodge. They are, each of them, severally somewhat smaller than the main lodge, though larger than villages such as Taria or Tidrit. They display their "youth" by the fact that the lay families incorporated in the village unit possess non-Ahansali genealogies: they are plainly seen as 'people of the sacrifice', who have been allowed to settle locally

as refugees from feuds etc. elsewhere. Non-incorporated genealogically, they are also non-incorporated legally: they do not share in all the rights (e.g. pasture rights) of the igurramen's village. Whereas all the members of the main lodge who are not effective saints look alike (in their own eyes and those of others) as lineages eliminated in the saintly ratrace - and no doubt a good many of them are just that - most of the lay part of these lodges are lay rather than laicised, resident outsiders whose exclusion from sanctity is due to their origin rather than elimination. Presumably with the passage of time, as on the one hand branches of the prospering saints were eliminated and laicised, and the client lineages slowly slip in under the cover of shared prestigious origin, these lodges would come to look, socially and genealogically, more like the main lodge.

In the past there was the fascinating conflict between Temga and the main lodge.

Berber tribes have no war dance. But they can boast - or at least, the saints of the central Atlas can - a war of the dance.

At about the turn of the century, or shortly before, an oecumenical council, so to speak, of the igurramen both of the main lodge and of the northern trio of lodges agreed that dancing is immoral and un-Islamic and not to be

indulged in by igurramen. Dancing (notably the haidus dance) is widely indulged in in the central High Atlas, including women (though on the whole not married women) and some forms of it even involve men and women dancing shoulder-to-shoulder (!). It is a pastime particularly favoured at festivals, including religious ones, or during the nights of Ramadan. That the practice is immoral is widely conceded, though on the whole this does not affect its popularity.

Thus the saints imposed a self-denying ordinance upon themselves. Some kept to it. (For instance, up to very recent times, if not even now, the villagers of the Sidi Aziz lodge impose a fine on anyone indulging in dancing.) But not the igurramen of the main lodge, who, then as now, secure in their saintly origin and proximity to the most revered of shrines, and surrounded by tribes concerned much more with their real local functions than with their technical orthodoxy or propriety, were easy to tempt and seldom inclined to resist temptation. A male infant was born in one family in the main lodge, and the overjoyed father, unmindful of either propriety or of covenant, organised a feast which included dancing. The chips were down, etc. The casus belli was there. The Ait Temga, secure in their faith, and incensed by this affront both to respect for intervillage agreements and

propriety and Islam, took up arms.

Or so they say. The War of the Dance is somewhere on the borderline between memory and legend. On one occasion I was assured that it lasted seven years, and on another that there were seven casualties on one side: the figure is suspicious. On the other hand, the event is firmly correlated with the 'reign' of plausible recent figures in the main lodge, and I was assured that the man whose birth occasioned the fateful birth-party is still alive, and he was once pointed out to me.

There can be no doubt about the extraordinary moral laxity of the saints of the main lodge, nor about the careful puritanism of the saints of Temga. For instance, whereas nowadays most males of the main lodge smoke, no one in Temga does so, and so forth. Nor is it very difficult to give an explanation of this divergence of moral development.

The clients of the main lodge are tribes in the heart of the mountains, and ~~xxxxxxxxxxxx~~ from the fastnesses between the Atlas and Sahara. They have no conceivable

motive for concern with whether the saints they revere live up to the standards of Islamic propriety held valid in the cities of the plain, with which they have little if any contact. On the contrary, they clearly prefer it if their joint visits to the shrine, a break in the monotony of pastoral life, are joyous ones. But the clients of the Ait Temga and the related lodges are, some of them, on the edge of the plain. They were certainly in direct contact with the plain, both military and economic. The Ait Temga could not be insensitive to the charge that they were immoral mountain heathens. Moreover, as saints they were on the make, whereas the position and functions of the old igurramen of Sidi Said Ahansal's shrine were not in doubt.

The extent to which that which is expressed by collective memories or legends is explicitly present to the minds of the people involved no doubt varies a good deal. In this case, however, it is plain to everyone concerned that the issue of dancing was only a pretext of at best a last straw. Nevertheless, accounts of the dancing war invariably begin by telling of this formal issue. There is also another, extremely involved episode, which I have neither fully unravelled nor properly understood, which involves the failure of the main lodge to punish a slanderer: in outline, two men, one from each side, jointly slandered

the saints, and a joint council of both parties agreed that each should be responsible for penalising their own man. The lax saints of the main lodge took no action, however. (This story is not an alternative but complements the dancing matter.)

Everyone concerned, however, is clear that the real issue was the saintly rivalry between the main lodge and the northern saints and cousins. An amusing aspect of the affair is its man-bites-dog dénouement: the scandal of pacific saint fighting pacific saint was terminated by peaceful persuasion by the surrounding lay, feud-addicted tribes. It appears that even quite distant clients came in on the pacification of their saintly patrons.

Neither side scored a victory, and both divine grace and mundane donations continued to flow into each of the channels. Each had its own clients, and one most important source of revenue, the powerful Ait Isha tribe, was a client of both: so were the Ait Abdi of the Koucer plateau, and possibly others.

The manner in which the Dancing War is remembered is interesting. Anthropologists sometimes speak of "structural amnesia", by which what is inconvenient or irrelevant to the social organisation of the group is forgotten; the corollary of this notion is of course that what <u>is</u> remembered is so in virtue of a "structural memory", i.e. it

is recalled because circumstances systematically arise which give someone a motive for recalling and/or repeating it. On the face of it, the remembering of the Dancing War is not to anyone's interest: such conduct goes dead against the image of a pacific agurram, and indeed contradicts the very motive which actually inspired it. Strange peaceful Elect of God who have to demonstrate their election by striving to eliminate rivals by force!

All the same, the episode is remembered and retailed, and not specifically (as is the case with certain other stories) by the enemies of the igurramen. It is told with an air of amused ambivalent shame: "It wasn't a proper thing to do, but that is how we are." Almost as if to say igurramen will be igurramen. To ask about the Dancing War is a sure way of provoking amusement (as it is to ask an Abdi about feuding and the story of Ohmish, the telling of which is both forbidden and utterly familiar among them). On this point, the igurramen have a kind of joking relationship with their own past or their own self-image. It is noteworthy that the pretensions of igurramen are not something to be taken always or wholly seriously,* not even by themselves.

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* The same appears true elsewhere, e.g. in the Middle Atlas. Cf. S. Guennoun, La Montagne Berbère, Paris 1929, p. 42.

But the paths of the two centres of sanctity diverged

sharply with the appearance of the French danger. As described, the Ait Temga and associated lodges became the leaders of the genuine and determined resistance: as neutrals between tribes they became their leaders, unneutrally fighting the infidel. The saints of the main lodge, on the other hand, persisted in their saintly habits and strategies, and acted as skilful mediators not merely between tribes but equally between them and the French. Their success in dealing with the French as one further tribe, and the necessary modification of their strategies in doing so, are described below (p. 380 et seq.).

The final victory of the French left the saints of the northern (Temga) group without power.

9. Zawiya Sidi Aziz.

This lodge is one of the Temga group, sharing a common ancestry with it, and like it looking towards its apex at the shrine of Sidi Ali u Hussein at Anergui, where, like Temga, it has a claim to one-third of the main bulk of the donations.

It is a smallish village located on a slope whose summit - not very distant - is the frontier between the Ait Said u Ali and the Ait Daud u Ali, both major segments of the Ait Sochman: this lodge, like other important lodges, is a frontier guard. Its direct donations came from these two tribes on either side of it. The members of this lodge are very clear about their intimate relation to Temga, and describe it as a part of their function to provide a local service for those people or circumstances when the litigants or seekers after mediation with the deity cannot be bothered to go as far as Temga.

The local version of the story and legends of the founding saint of the <u>main</u> lodge tally with the stories told around the main lodge, except for one interesting divergence: it is denied that the initial general founding saint received any help from anyone - in other words he did not receive any help from the Ait Atta. The 'remembering' of this 'fact' would of course be pointless locally, the Ait Atta being far away and of no local relevance.

10. Zawiya Asker.

This lodge was settled after that of Sidi Aziz, although its apical ancestor was an uncle (and thus one generation back) of the apical ancestor Sidi Aziz. This apical ancestor was the great-grandson of the great saint at Anergui in whose donations he had a one-third stake. From him, four generations lead to the great Hussein, [illegible] who was the great leader of the resistance to the French in the 1920's and early 1930's. This man had ascendancy over all three of the related lodges (apart of course from the surrounding lay tribes), and the French literature of the 'pacification' wrongly describes him as being 'of Temga'. He moved about but his main court is said to have been at Anergui, in other words at none of the three permanently settled lodges.

Like the Ait Sidi Aziz, the families of this lodge also have lands at Temga.

This lodge guards the frontier between the Daud u Ali and the Ait Messat.

There are about 30 households, of which 14 are Ahansali and the rest are either refugee clients or black slaves.

A legend told locally and not encountered elsewhere concerns the semi-legendary dancing war. It concerns Sidi Ahmed u Moha, a leading figure of the lodge and pos-

sessor of baraka at the time of the dancing war: the general founding saint rose from his tomb and appeared to him, tied up his horse's legs and warned him that if the northern lodges continued to make war on the founding lodge, all Ihansalen would be as cinders; he assured him that they who have left the homeland of the founding saints were not as good as those who have stayed behind, even if the latter do dance. Moved by this intervention, the man in question voted for peace.

This story is not known to the members of the founding lodge who are the beneficiaries of the supernatural intervention described in it.

11. Bernat.

The Ahansali settlement at Bernat is not a typical zawiya at all: and, in fact, it is never referred to as a zawiya. Nevertheless it deserves to be classed as such, albeit as an exceptional case. Bernat is the product of the adaptation of the Ihansalen to early twentieth century conditions which, in Morocco, means to the expansion of French power. This being so, the general facts concerning its establishment (over a decade sooner than the submission of the northern Ihansalen of the preceding section) are on record in writing.

Herewith the French account of the conduct of Sidi Mha, then head of the main lodge:

> En 1916, il tente de s'opposer à la marche de la colonne du général de Lamothe sur Azilal mais sa harka est battue...
>
> Notre installation à Azilal... pose avec acuité pour Sidi Mha le problème des relations avec le nouveau Maghzen.
>
> Il comprend qu'il ne faut pas adopter une attitude systématiquement hostile. Il cherche à gagner du temps... Soucieuse de menager l'avenir, sa politique consiste à empêcher toute manifestation susceptible d'attirer trop vivement notre attention sur les tribes de son fief. Il conclut avec nous des trèves et veille à leur respect.
>
> En 1918, la colonne de Bou Yahia /i.e. in the territory of the Ait Mhand/ ne décide pas Sidi Mha à la soumission...
>
> En septembre 1922, les troupes du colonel Nauges et la harka du pacha de Marrakesh, forte de huit mille hommes, menacent directement son fief. Avec huit cents guerriers seulement, le marabout fait

face au pacha et arrête sa progression en pays Ait Bou Guemmez.

Puis il se tourne contre la colonne Nauges, arrivée à Bou Yahia, au coeur des Ait Mhammed (Ait Mhand). Là, un sanglant combat le convainct... Une trève est à nouveau conclue et Sidi Mha promet sa soumission à la première occasion.

Au cours d'hiver 1922-1923, Sidi Mha plusieurs entrevues avec le ... chef du cercle d'Azilal /i.e. French commander/...

Le 27 juin (1923), Sidi Mha, fidèle à ses promesses, se soumet avec les Ait Mhammed /Ait Mhand/ et les Ait Hakim des Ait Bou Guemmez...

Sidi Mha, bien que marabout, est alors investi du commandement des Ait Mhammed et des Ait Hakim. On l'appelle desormais le caïd. Cette volte-face est d'autant plus audacieuse que le Maghzen n'occupe qu'une partie de son fief... /Italics mine. This is the crucial fact./

Officiellement, il rompt avec la dissidence, mais, comme il ne veut pas que sa zaouia tombe avec ses serviteurs sous l'influence de... Temga, il laissa à la maison mère /main lodge/ ses frères... et son cousin... qui lui sont dévoués.

Les parents demeurés en dissidence critiquent ouvertement sa trahison et gardent ainsi la confiance des tribus. Ils restent toutefois en relations suivies avec Sidi Mha, le renseignent et le servent. La fissure n'est qu'apparente.*

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* Georges Drague, Esquisse d'Histoire Religieuse du Maroc. Confrèries et Zaouias, J. Peyronnet & Cie, Paris, 1951 (?), pp. 176-8. The author's name is a pen-name: in fact he is General (as he now is) G. Spillman, who as a young man took part for many years in the conquest and administration of this and adjoining regions, and who is the author of an excellent study of the Ait Atta (G. Spillman, Les Ait Atta et la Pacification du Haut Draa, Rabat, 1956).

The above-quoted passage to my mind calls for only

one critical caution: it seems to me doubtful whether Sidi Mha really feared that, if he disavowed dissidence completely and caused his agnates and fellow-saints to join him in French-occupied territory, Temga would take over the main lodge. There is in the main lodge no sign that there was at any time a fear of a Temga take-over of the main lodge itself, and indeed it doesn't make very good sense. For another thing, whilst primus inter pares among the igurramen of the main lodge, it is doubtful whether his influence over the others was so complete as to be able to force them to follow him, even if he wished to do so; and finally, there is no reason to suppose that he and his cousins and brothers wished to do so, for it would have been contrary to their interests. More than half their clients and sources of donations were still in dissidence, and to go over completely would have cut them off from these resources. What they did do was perfectly rational: they divided themselves in such a fashion that each of the bifurcated parts should 'catch' half the available donations, one part in French-occupied, one in dissident territory. Thus there is no need to postulate a fear of actual Temga occupation to explain their conduct: the possibility that the saints of Temga, or some others, should take over the flow of baraka and donations in their absence is quite sufficient. But it is plausible to sup-

pose that this is the reason he saw fit to give to the French.

What the passage does in fact admirably describe is that the igurramen succeeded, once again, in placing themselves along a septic frontier and deriving influence from mediation on it. At this time, the main lodge and the settlement at Bernat were, spiritually and socially, one lodge. In the main lodge, it is remembered that this strategy was decided by a top saints' reunion to discuss policy, and that the apparent traitor to Berber dissidence, Sidi Mha, used to visit Zawiya Ahansal, arriving and departing at night. The way in which this bifurcated lodge differed from traditional ones was, of course, that physically it had to be situated in two places: it was impossible, given the requirements of administration in the French-occupied zone on the one hand, and the hostility of dissident tribesmen to the French on the other, to set up a shrine on the frontier and have annual festivals for both, electing their chiefs in the process. For one thing, the French appeared to have their own non-annual methods of nominating their chiefs, and for another, the French had new ways of subsidising igurramen, presting them not with sheep but with a proportion of the newly imposed taxes ... Of course, it was necessary to tell different things to clients on each side of the septic frontier - but there

was nothing very new in this.

Resembling in this matter traditional lodges, this doubly incarnated centre of baraka played an important part in facilitating trade across the boundary bridged. The laicised Ihansalen cohabiting with the saints in the main lodge and in the adjoining Ahansal villages were perfectly well in on the secret, as perhaps were others, and profited from the arrangement by carrying on trade between the dissident and the occupied territory. With their help, the impact of cheaper consumption goods - notably the great popular passion of modern Morocco, tea - hit the mountain Berbers even before the actual pacification of the area.*

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* The French tolerated the trade across the frontier with dissidence. They distinguished dissident tribes into two classes: and one, those who refrained from attacking French-occupied territory, were allowed free access to its markets.

Another aspect of the cited account which may be queried is the assumption that the final resolution of the situation, when conquest was completed, can be seen, in as far as it was aided by the saints, as a fulfilment of a promise on their parts. They did make the promise, and it did come to be fulfilled, but I find it hard to believe that they intended, initially, to see it fulfilled. Qua <u>igurramen</u>, their future lay in the perpetuation of the

frontier, not in its termination. The slowness of the fulfilment of the promise supports this hypothesis (which, I admit, is no more than that): it took the French army, much of whose élite appears to have been concentrated on this frontier (one of the few septic ones at that time), ten years from the submission of Sidi Mha to cover a distance which a Berber can walk in a day. If the igurramen were anxious to fulfil the promise, they were not in any undue hurry.

It so happens that there exists an English description of this septic frontier. In 1925, Rear-Admiral Hubert Lynes, C.B., C.M.G.,*visited the region in order to study

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* Also, one should add, Commander of the Legion of Honour, the membership of which he thus shares, though at higher rank, with at least two igurramen...

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its birds. The record of his trip* unfortunately tells us

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* Rear-Admiral H. Lynes, Ornithologie du Cercle d'Azilal, Mémoires de la Société des Sciences naturelles du Maroc, No. XXXVI, 31 mai 1933, Rabat, Paris, London (Janson & Sons).

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nothing about its human inhabitants other than French ones, but it does give a very good picture of the impingement of dissidence on submission:

> The Cercle d'Azilal... was one of the politico-military districts... towards the east and south it was "dissident" with an indefinite boundary controlled by a series of small military outposts...

At Marrakesh I had been told that not until I got to Azilal... would I be able to know exactly where and where not it would be safe... to go, since that would depend on conditions local and somewhat transitory. To my dismay I now found that practically all the high ground was actively "dissident" and that it would be impossible... to get anywhere near ... the high ground up at the junction of the Great and Middle Atlas ranges...

> ... the whole workable part of the Cercle - that part of it limited eastward and southward by the ring of outposts - ... except for the southern part, which was only workable under heavy chaperonage... (pp. 10 and 11).

> In 1925 I gathered that the state of dissidence in the Cercle d'Azilal did not necessarily imply active hostility to the Government, but that a great deal of it represented mere brigandage and robbery, as, for instance, the ambushing of a few soldiers in order to get their rifles and cartridges for the purpose of better raiding a neighbouring tribe (p. 63).

This was the boundary which, unfavourable though it was to ornithological research, suited the doubly-based saints well enough, and they enjoyed it for ten years.

Ironically, but not surprisingly, it was the unification of the territory by French conquest in 1933 which led to the fission and hiving-off of the Bernat settlement. As long as the frontier of dissidence existed, the two halves of what structurally, if not geographically, was one zawiya needed each other: structurally, they were on that frontier. With its disappearance, they split, and indeed in due course ceased to be igurramen in any real sense, becoming Caids or would-be Caids instead.

12. Others.

Other Ahansal settlements exist. For instance, there are various medium-sized villages of recognised Ahansal descent and varying degrees of complete laicisation - Aganan, Akka n'Ahansal, Tamderrut, Igli, U'Tarra, Tabarocht. Each of these I have visited, and a brief sketch will help towards completing the typology of saintly settlement.

Tassamert: is wholly laicised. They believe themselves, plausibly, to be descended from emigrants from Amzrai, and they consequently do make pious pilgrimages there from time to time, to the shrine of Amzrai's Sidi Lahcen u Othman, where their cousinly status is recognised. Their beliefs concerning the proto-population they displaced in their present habitat, in the general area of the Ait Mhand, are similar to the legends concerning the displacement of the original inhabitants of Zawiya Ahansal itself: the arrangements were made under the aegis of an effective saint (though not of their own number), who found new springs by magical means for the displaced population.

They feud, emphatically, and early in the century drove out their neighbours, the Ait Wamluk (a segment of the Ait Mhand: and the story is confirmed from both sides) who then settled in poorer land near Azilal. Later, Caid Sidi Mha gave judgement in their favour and enabled them

to re-occupy their original lands: an interesting case showing that influential saints are not swayed in their judgement by kin links. (There are good reasons for believing this to be so anyway. It is interesting that living saints should be unlike enshrined ones: parties in a dispute culminating in collective oath would not allow the testifying group to swear at the shrine of a kinsman, on the assumption that he would be partial to them even if they swore falsely.)

Apart from their maintenance of a connection with the ancestral shrine at Amzrai, the people of Tassamert are totally laicised.

Tabarocht: this settlement is also completely laicised. It is deep in the heart of the Ait Isha tribe, and it is said to have been founded at the same time and by the same prominent saints as the northern trio of lodges, and at that time, it is said, it was referred to as a zawiya. This is not the case now. It does not possess a shrine, though the Ait Isha do use a nearby non-Ahansali shrine for internal oaths. It is of some interest that it is near one of the traditional markets of the Ait Isha (though one which has lost importance in modern times in virtue of the new pattern of communications, unlike those situated near modern administrative centres). The explanation of the decline of Tabarocht seems obvious: it

is not near any important frontier. Whether effective saints in this location transferred to (not very distant) Asker, etc., of the same group, or whether by staying at Tabarocht they declined into lay status, would be hard to determine.

Akka n'Ahansal: this is at the edge (or almost beyond it) of the area of Ahansal influence. This is a gorge (Akka means gully) emptying into the Tadla plain (part of the general Atlantic plain of central Morocco) in the vicinity of Tagzirt. The geopolitical position is actually quite favourable, as beyond the gorge there are the plainward frontiers of the Ait Sochman, whilst downhill there are non-Sochmani Berber tribes on the edge of the plain. Nevertheless, this is not an effective centre of sanctity: no shrine, no inner stratification. The explanation seems to be that whereas the Ait Sochman group of tribes used Ihansalen as mediators on their mountainward frontiers, on their plainward side there were other, well established centres of sanctity who did not allow themselves to be easily displaced. Again, these local Ihansalen may simply have lacked saintly know-how and, above all, a continuous tradition of effectiveness: re-activation is not easy, for it is difficult for the son of a laicised saint to decide on the day that he will be effective. How are clients to be notified of this re-emergence? Other Ihansalen believe

this group to be descended from Amzrai emigrants, which would support the supposition of long-standing extinction of sanctity.

But whilst thoroughly laicised in fact, they do (unlike for instance the people of Amzrai or Tassamert) have a desire to re-assert their saintly position, a desire springing presumably from the exiguity of their actual resources. I visited them in the summer of 1956, just after Independence, and they were wondering whether to improve their position by vigorous political activity or by reasserting their Ahansal status. (My visit coincided with an intra-village feast at which these possibilities were discussed.) They over-estimated, I am sorry to say, the effectiveness of either alternative. They were hampered in the second strategy by having no clear idea of just how they were descended from the Ahansal tree, though they were clear that they were descended from it, and this is denied neither by their local lay neighbours nor by their distant Ahansal cousins. (Their only close Ahansal neighbour is the influential single top-descended family among the Ait Habibi on the edge of the plain - see above, p.360 - and its members do not deny it either.) They requested me to aid them in their genealogical research, but I have unravelled only that, in the Ahansal heartlands, they are held to be descended from Ait Amzrai.

Aganan is also a fairly fully laicised village at the westerly end of the land of the Ait Mhand. It does have a shrine - that of a brother of Sidi Said Ahansal, Sidi Ahmad u Amr, who left no progeny. They themselves are descended, like all Ahansalen, from Sidi Said Ahansal himself. They are fully laicised except in as far as they claim not to feud and take no part in the system of alliances of surrounding lay groups. But they receive no donations, are not stratified, etc.

Igli is a smaller settlement between the main lodge and Ait Mhand, in which there are possessions of top families and emigrants both from the main lodge and from Taria and Amzrai.

U'Tarra is a similar settlement, mainly with possessions of the top main lodge and Bernat families, and with clients originating from other nearby Ahansal centres.

Finally, within my range of knowledge but not personal acquaintance, there is an influential small settlement of Ihansalen at Demnate: an influential shrine near Ouaouizaght, enshrining a legend-adorned founder of the Hansalyin fraternity of the plain and Algeria, who is also said to be the ancestor of the Demnate group; and there is a minor laicised settlement in the land of the Ait Isha, other than those mentioned, whose members I only encountered when in 1959 they made a pious pilgrimage to their ancestor, Sidi

Said Ahansal, and in particular to his present effective stay-put descendants, the Ait Sidi Mulay.

The shrine of the fraternity-founder does enter into the life of the Ahansal mountain-system in as far as the saints of the northern group do claim to make pilgrimages there and do have legends concerning him. His descendants at Demnate are too far to interact with the main body of Ihansalen in the mountains, at any rate at present. I have visited neither them nor their ancestral shrine, and cannot say whether this shrine is surrounded by a settlement of claimants to Ahansal origin. If so, they are neither numerous nor prominent.

I do not believe my study of Ahansal settlements to be complete. The lacunae which still exist fall into two classes: local gaps and non-local ones.

With the area of the Ahansal mountain-agurram system, I am confident that I have not missed out any settlement of importance. But it is quite likely that I have missed out small and unimportant ones. I am led to this conclusion simply by the fact that some of those which I have found I only stumbled on by accident in the course of cross-country wanderings. The region is badly mapped and the map does not indicate the tribal affiliations of smaller groups (nor of larger ones reliably). Apart from a thorough and complete survey of the whole area, extensive,

very rugged and ill-mapped, the only way of discovering settlements is being led to their existence by kinsmen or by lay tribes. But not all the settlements claiming Ahansal origin are related to the others in any clear way: in fact, the less important they are, the less likely are they to be able to place themselves with any accuracy on the Ahansal tree. Similarly, the smaller and less important they are, the less likely is one to have one's attention drawn to them by lay tribesmen. So unnoticed small and unimportant Ahansal settlements may well exist. This naturally does not affect my picture of effective and semi-effective sanctity. It does however indicate that the central High Atlas tribal map may be even more pock-marked with Ahansal settlements than one would suppose from my listing of those I do know.

Ahansal centres <u>outside</u> the region are a different matter. There is in fact an Ahansal diaspora not merely of the kind described, in the frontier interstices of central High Atlas tribes, but all over Morocco, and indeed the Maghrib. These are partly mountain kin groups analogous to those described here,* and partly lodges,

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* For instance, one turns up in the only published really intensive study of the social structure of a Berber tribe, Jacques Berque's <u>Structures Sociales du Haut-Atlas</u>, an account of the Seksawa in the <u>Western</u> High Atlas: see p. 66 of that work.

zawiyas in quite a different and 'proper' sense, i.e. urban shrines - religious clubs, deriving from the fraternity founded by an Ahansal agurram around 1700. Neither the distant mountain villages also claiming Ahansal origin, nor the quite different phenomena of urban shrines or religious clubs, affect my picture of the system found in the central High Atlas. But the question of the 'fraternity' sharing the name, and part of the history, of the mountain saints should be treated separately.

13. Summary.

Thus we have a whole range of settlements, ranging in size, effectiveness of sanctity, and other respects.

Effective centres tend to be large, frontier-located, shrine-centred, stratified. Lay ones may be resigned to or even glory in their laicisation; others when in straitened circumstances may strive to re-activate their sanctity. Many are content with possessing some of the advantages of saintly descent (lesser likelihood of aggression by neighbours, worship at shrine of own ancestor) without striving for others.

Saintliness is competitive, and an effective centre extinguishes the effectiveness of its neighbours. This feature, jointly with the tropism of Berber frontiers for the flow of grace, determines the lay-out of sanctity and its dispersion: and it must be borne in mind that in an area of such extensive transhumancy, frontiers are temporal (seasonal) as well as physical, and the saints may have to resort to complex devices (geographical separation of shrine and habitat) in order to cope with the complexity of frontiers.

CHAPTER IX. The Ahansal Genealogy.

1. The status of the genealogy.

The previous chapter surveyed the Ihansalen 'on the ground', in space; one can of course also consider them in depth, over time, in terms of their genealogical beliefs and connections.

The two approaches are of course neither strictly comparable nor separable: the spatial survey was based on actual observation and fact, whilst the backward sweep of their genealogy is based on their own assertion and belief, and requires interpretation, and doubly so - both for the light it throws on their current organisation, and for such tentative conclusions as one may actually draw from it concerning the real historic past. The two approaches are also not separable in as far as the spatial survey of the present Ahansal settlements could not but invoke genealogical considerations in their description, analysis and classification, whilst an account of their genealogical beliefs would make no sense without specifying the social contexts in which those beliefs are held or invoked.

Nevertheless, it is convenient for purposes of exposition to do both in turn and to supplement the spatial by the genealogical description.

What is the status of the information contained in the total Ahansal genealogy? Who, when, believes and invokes the genealogical connections recorded on it?

Members of effective saintly families can rattle off the list of ancestors between themselves and Sidna Ali, the Prophet's son-in-law, without difficulty and with assurance. Both the matter of being descended from Sidna Ali, which they share with more laicised Ihansalen, and the fact of being able to tell at a moment's notice <u>just how</u> they are descended from him, which distinguishes them from the laicised ones, are sources of pride and prestige, and keep alive the knowledge and the skill in invoking it. One might suppose that a lay Ahansal, for whom the information concerning his ancestry requires some thought, research, consultation and/or invention, might some time take the necessary trouble and thereafter be as proficient as his effectively saintly cousins. But in fact they are not. A skill requires practice for its maintenance, and practice requires occasion and motivation. Who was going to ask a lay tribesman (or a laicised one for that matter?) to go over his distant ancestry? He often has occasion to be aware of those ancestors who define his group membership, his pasture rights, and, closer by, his co-juring group with marital priority rights, etc.; but to know about others would be a case either of pure scholarship

or a demonstrative display of ambition to achieve saintly effectiveness.

Thus the 'memories' of effective saints are the main source for the long lines of names along the genealogies. The saints in question generally know only the line leading from Sidna Ali to themselves, plus the ramifications relevant to their own 'cousins', where both rivalries and shared rights keep the relationships relevant and remembered. Thus saints of the main lodge know their exact relationships to each other, and those of the Temga group are equally familiar with the pattern of the saintly proliferation in that group. Concerning other groups their knowledge is naturally more hazy and schematic; those of Temga know about the general segmentation pattern of the main lodge and are familiar with the chief families and personalities, and can give a kind of minimal account of their kin alignments, and vice versa, but in each case the knowledge of the other group will be of an 'Occamist' kind, invoking no more, or not much more, ancestry than is required to explain the present situation. Similarly, their knowledge of the lay groups will go no further than a belief which places the alleged hiving-off point of that group (and sometimes even this knowledge is lacking); whilst the lay groups' own beliefs include no more than this, plus of course the necessary minimal occamist beliefs

required for the internal segmentation of the villages concerned.

Some of the effective saints aid or insure their 'memories' by possessing written lists of ancestors. Such copies of these lists as I have seen were, as evident from the paper, etc., recently recorded documents (unlike the crucial land-deed of Sidi Lahcen u Othman's, the alleged original of which looked like a genuinely old parchment to me). These lists are just lists, i.e. they specify one line, the one leading to the possessor of the list, and do not bother about the collateral lines. The only family which possesses a schematic tree which actually records on paper the relationship of the various branches of the Ahansal lineage are the Ait Amhadar of the main lodge, and I believe that this schema was worked out by them in co-operation with a district officer interested in genealogy after the second World War.

Skill in recounting genealogies is markedly in decline. The skill can be found in its most marked form among the saints of the Temga group who, having been out of power since the French conquest, are least corrupted by the modern world; it is found in a much lesser form among the saints of the main lodge, where most of the old generation of siba effective saints died by the early fifties and where the younger generation is far less sure-

footed, if still fairly well oriented, among the names of their ancestors. The skill is totally lacking among the young men of the top saintly families in Bernat, who have been operating in a modern context since the 1920's: genealogical inquiries among them soon showed that the anthropologist was much better informed than they. Among the lay and laicised, the loss has of course been much smaller, if indeed there has been a loss at all: there, genealogical knowledge never went much beyond what was necessary for accounting for the existing social groups, and as these have in no way disintegrated in the Atlas but are as clearly delineated on the ground - or very nearly - as ever they were, the genealogical lore associated with them has not declined.

In speaking of genealogical skill, it is of course necessary to distinguish two things which are essentially rather different: the skill of giving an account of the interrelationships of existing groups, and a skill in giving an account - and, indeed, possessing - a really impressive long list of ancestors terminating a prestigious origin.

A crucial matter in interpreting my total genealogy, constructed out of partial pictures, is of course the lacunae, and, above all, the contradictions between those partial pictures. The contradictions found fall into two

classes: some minor ones 'higher up' (i.e. further back in time) in the genealogy. I don't believe these have any particular significance, other than that some people remember better than others, or that when invention took place there was a failure of full co-ordination, whichever of the two may apply. Some people rattle off a slightly shorter list than others, omitting a couple of ancestors here and there, even in their own line, and of course more often in a collateral one.

Then there are the "structural" contradictions in the genealogy, corresponding to or perhaps really causing the ambiguous and contested status of certain groups. This has been discussed in connection with the Ait Tighanimin and the guardians of the shrine of Sidi Ali u Hussein.

The lacunae, as also indicated, occur mainly at the 'joins' of the less distinguished groups, corresponding to vagueness concerning the precise point of their hiving-off.

2. Some Lines.

There is at the moment in Zawiya Ahansal a little boy of about three years of age. The ancestry of this boy, like that of other children in the village, can be enumerated by some of the locals, and by others after head-scratching and consultation. In his case thirty-five steps lead from the prophet Mohammed to the little boy. (In the case of some less important families in the village, the steps would be somewhat fewer. In the case of other less important villages of Ahansal origin, the steps would be much shorter. For lay tribes, shorter still. The reasons for this have been discussed.)

This is the saintly genealogy of the Ihansalen. It it useful to break it up into parts.

From the first - and incidentally the only feminine - link* in the chain, the Prophet's daughter Fatima, one

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* But when the locals refer to this first link in their genealogy, they mention not the good lady but her husband, referred to as Sidna Ali.

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gets in six further steps, in the seventh place, to the founder of the first Moroccan Muslim dynasty. It is at the eighteenth step (in some versions the seventeenth - the accounts of this purely decorative part of the genealogy do not tally) that one gets to Sidi Said Ahansal, the founder of the lineage, descent from whom defines member-

ship of it. He is known to have had three brothers (possibly more), but these are not known to have left any descendants. Only one of them has his tomb, revered as a shrine, within the same region. The others have their shrines elsewhere, one of them in the Middle Atlas. Sidi Said Ahansal is locally believed to have arrived in the region in the year 800 A.H. (1397/8 A.D.).

Three further steps bring us to number twenty-one, Lahcen u Othman, the author of the land-deed. No multiplication and hence no segmentation takes place between Sidi Said and Lahcen, so that Lahcen is, like his great-grandfather, an ancestor of all the Ihansalen (except for the highly contested Ait Tighanimin, who, if their claim were accepted, hived off after Sidi Said Ahansal). He is buried at, and the chief patron saint of, the village of Amzrai. His even more important great-grandfather has his tomb at the Zawiya Ahansal itself. It is generally recognised, however, that Amzrai was the first habitation of the Ihansalen.*

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* See above, p. 313.

Lahcen had ~~four~~ five sons, and with him the segmentation of the Ihansalen as a whole (bar Tighanimin) begins. Not all of these ~~four~~ five either left offspring: those who did

not are, oddly enough, 'remembered'. One of his sons is the general and specific ancestor of the village of Amzrai. Another is the ancestor of the lineage which produced the founder of the Ihansalen fraternity in the plain. Two left no issue. The fifth son is the one who provides the line we are following (Generation 22). His name was Ali.

He had five sons. Of these two are of particular interest: they provide the ancestors of the two main effective holy lines.

At Generation 23, there are a number of brothers who generate various collateral branches: some of these are lineages of no great present importance, and constitute laicised export groups of Ihansalen. One of them, however, Ali u Hussein, is the apical ancestor of the main rival group, of the Temga group, and is buried at a very important shrine described above.

At Generation 24 we again get some brothers who generate collateral branches including some who figure as ancestors of some minor lineages in the main lodge itself and in the neighbouring affiliated village of Taria. Similarly at Generation 25 two brothers generating collateral branches are ancestors of groups in Taria.

It is number twenty-~~six~~ five on the main rail, as it were, who is the first, not counting the main saint himself, who is buried at the Zawiya. Between him and number twenty-

to be one of either five or seven brothers. (The version giving him five brothers turns the others into cousins.)

It is at the 'join' between twenty-five and twenty-seven, which is untidy, shadowy, internally inconsistent, and concerning which one gets contradictory reports. (One internal inconsistency consists of the fact that the figure at number twenty-six is given a patronymic inconsistent with the actual name of his father.) That this particular join should be untidy and inconvenient is perhaps not surprising. Nevertheless, this is the lineage as enumerated.

The whole village of the main lodge has no specific symbolically stressed apex, because it uses for all symbolic purposes the chief saint, Sidi Said Ahansal, although of course it shares him with all other Ihansalen in their many settlements. But of course this sharing is not a loss - it establishes a kind of priority for them. Logically, number twenty-five should perhaps be the symbolic focus of unity of the chief lodge: but in fact he is not, having no image or legends attached to him other than a place in the genealogy. He is in no way a folk figure or a ritual focus.

We thus jump straight from a person in generation number eighteen, providing the symbol of unity, to generations twenty-six and twenty-seven, which provide the symbols for the internal segmentation of the top lodge.

The main feature of a lodge is that, unlike an ordinary village's lay or laicised groups, it is an unegalitarian place: lineages inside it are not equal and are differentiated in function. Hence the richness of image and legend at the twenty-seventh (or according to some variants also the twenty-sixth) generation. The existing inequalities between segments are explained and justified in terms of events which occurred in this generation. The internal segmentation begins with two brothers in the twenty-sixth generation, one of whom had five and the other two sons. The stories however are told in terms of the singling out of one of the five brothers, who is the ancestor of the dominant lineage of effective holy men. Sometimes however the story is told in terms of seven brothers, which alone of course would explain why the remaining two lineages should also be excluded.

From the twenty-seventh generation we get fairly rapidly to figures who are fairly obviously historic. Generation thirty-three consists of people who have died very recently and who held office under the French. Generations thirty-one and also thirty if we proceed along a different line consist of their (literal) grandfather or grandfathers, who are well remembered both owing to their proximity and their political importance. That leaves us with personage number twenty-nine, far

enough back not be be remembered clearly, but not actually having any role within the segmentation system: and no wonder he is sometimes omitted and forgotten.

To recapitulate - who are the image-loaded and significant characters in this long line of ancestors? There is the founding saint himself at eighteen: there is his great-grandson, the author of the land settlement of the region as a whole and the supposed author, jointly with his great-grandfather before him, of the general political status quo of the region. He is also the point at which segmentation begins. After him three (or five according to a different version) generations down along a collateral line, there is the founding saint of the main rival lodge.

Of recent ancestors, it is number thirty, Ahmad Yellow-beard, who is remembered in a lively way, as of course are his two sons who are merely grandfathers of men now living, and who were both prominent in the life of the lodge and leaders of it. Events are dated roughly in terms of their 'reigns'.

Minor lines within the main lodge, which branch off the main apostolic succession at ancestor twenty-six and twenty-seven tend to have shorter genealogies. This foreshortening need not be drastic. For instance in the family Bellahcen, which provided one of the more influen-

tial internal little chiefs of the lodge, in order to get a little boy of three one reaches generation thirty-three from the prophet - compared with thirty-five in the top family. The ratio of nine to seven generations is nothing inherently implausible - it might even be true. It might equally however be an instance of the lesser use of ancestors by minor lines, the major line needing more of them to mark the points of the hiving off or sloughing off of the minor lines and the loss of their importance.

The foreshortening gets the more drastic the further back a line is said to have separated off from the main spinal column. Take for instance the unfortunate Ait Tighanimin, who according to their own (contested) genealogy hived off immediately after the son of the founding saint. They have thereafter only a very simple Occamist genealogy, with about as many ancestors as are required for apices of social groups, so that they get from the founding saint to the present adult generation in about six or seven steps - compared with the sixteen steps in the top families in the main lodge.

Schema of line running from the Prophet's son-in-law to the present family No. 1 in Zawiya Ahansal. (The locals do not, of course, number generations in this way.)

1. Sidna Ali. Descent from his union with the Prophet's daughter Fatima defines shurfa.

7. Driss Achater (i.e. Idriss the Elder). Descent from him defines 'Idrisid Shurfa' - but this concept is not in use in the region.

18. Sidi Said Ahansal. Descent from him defines Ihansalen. Is believed to have arrived in the region in 800 A.H. (1397/8 A.D.). Had three brothers who are not credited with offspring, but who do have shrines. Only one of these in the region (at Aganan).

19. First segmentation of Ihansalen - but only of the Ait Tighanimin, whose descent from Sidi Said Ahansal is denied by other Ihansalen.

21. Sidi Lahcen u Othman. Patron saint of Amzrai, where his shrine is located. Left behind important land deed dated Shawal 1006 A.H. (May/June 1598).

22. Five brothers - first recognised segmentation of Ihansalen - hiving off of main part of Amzrai. Also of line leading to founder of Hansaliya fraternity in the plain and throughout North Africa.

23. Five brothers again. Here hives off line leading to principal rival group outside main lodge, the Temga-Asker-Sidi Aziz set of lodges.

24. Four brothers. Hiving off: part of Taria, and first segmentation within main lodge.

25. First in main line to be buried in main lodge, apart from Sidi Said Ahansal himself. (Intermediate generations buried at Amzrai.) Three brothers here - the two 'off' main line provide two of the three ancestors of Taria.

26. Two brothers. Real beginning of intra-main-lodge segmentation. This is the segmentation in terms of which internal main lodge headmanship is 'rotated'. (This is a post of only internal-administrative and not religious or otherwise great significance.)

27. Two brothers plus five brothers, totalling seven

cousins. Sometimes referred to as seven brothers. The differentiation of effective holy lineages from the rest is located in this generation, by a legend about a test imposed by father, a test selecting for uncalculating generosity. Ancestor of effective igurramen - Sidi Mohamed n'ut Baba (though some of his descendants too have since become laicised - and others have emigrated). In this generation one finds the connective 'ut' in names, as in ut'Baba, ut'l'Zhid (son of elder, son of benefactor) which indicates differentiation in terms of co-wives or their patriclans. (Ordinary connective would be just 'u'.)

28. Two brothers, sons of Sidi Mohamed n'ut Baba. One 'sloughs off', providing ancestor for people who have either become laicised clients of effective saints, or emigrated.

29. A personage without brothers, i.e. no segmentation in this generation. Sometimes he drops out from accounts (a concession even in saintly practice to 'Occamist' principles of genealogy).

30. Ahmad Yellow-beard - on the horizon of living memory.

31. Two brothers. Both leading figures. Time of 'dancing war', with Temga. One of the brothers, Ahmad u Ahmad, fathered branch which provides saintly migrants to Bernat, and also family No. 2 of main lodge (Ait Amhadar) and No. 3 (Ait Okdim). The other brother, Mohamed u Ahmad, had one son, namely

32. Ahmad u Mohamed, whose three sons included

33. Sidi Mulay, prominent both before and after French conquest in 1933, much revered, died in 1952.

34. Had five sons, one dead without offspring, one (eldest surviving) disinherited and impoverished, and three living together in a joint household. Of these, eldest was chief during the last years of the French, and remains informally the most influential. The youngest became secretary of the rural council elected in 1960. Of all these sons, only the youngest and the disinherited one have offspring:

35. the former has one son, the latter four sons.

Saints of the Atlas

3. Interpretation of the Genealogy, and Social Change.

The manner in which the genealogy serves the current arrangements of its society and the current purposes of its members are obvious, though it is interesting to note the points at which the genealogy curiously fails to ratify or even goes counter to current arrangements. For instance, there is nothing in it to explain the difference in status and function between the main lodge and its neighbouring village, Amzrai.

But apart from the light it throws and the services it performs in current relationships, it also illuminates the past. It would of course be absurd to argue from the genealogy and legends towards the past directly. But it is not absurd, and indeed it is necessary, to do so indirectly.

The genealogy and the history contained in it tell a story of growth, expansion, dispersal, the survival of power in some lines and the elimination from power of others. This story I believe to be correct in substance - if not necessarily in detail and genealogical reckoning.

What would be the alternative? To suppose that the situation is in principle stable. One could suppose that the lodges were always distributed in more or less the way they are now, and that the story of expansion and

elimination is just a convenient way of expressing their present relationships.

But such an assumption of stability seems to me as strong (and less plausible) as the assumption of change. (If we do not know what kind of change could have taken place, the assumption of stability seems the least exposed and weakest guess. But is it? And when independent evidence exists, the situation is different.)

The independent evidence does exist if we compare the various types of lodges and consider the internal situation in each. Here we have a basis of a kind of small scale evolutionary theory - not indeed of societies in general, but of a particular kind of institution in a reasonably stable environment, this last point being an essential pre-condition of any such evolutionary interpretations. Without it, assumptions about the direction of past change are extremely tricky. But if we are granted it, we have ipso facto some knowledge of the factors making for change.

The lodges carry within themselves the seeds of change, unlike the lay tribes where endeavour, disturbance or accident can only produce, as in the child's pattern-producing toy, merely a new version of the same basic pattern. The lodges are different. Here endeavour and the minor changes do have a cumulative effect which leads to

relatively more fundamental changes in pattern.

Lodges must grow. The influx of refugees, the natural growth consequent upon prosperity, the use of clients to buttress saintly prestige, desire to move in under the protective umbrella of the holy descent - all these are to be expected a priori, and all these are also to be found in fact.

Within the lodges, destined to grow if operating as effective centres of sanctity, we can also see the spectrum which we should expect: the dominant and secure holy families; the secure but not dominant; those on the way out and those virtually pushed out of effective status, though their fathers and grandfathers had it; those out, but waiting for an opportunity to reactivate the status; those out and resigned to staying out.

Outside the lodges, there are the segmented tribes. Segmentary tribes are almost like the number series, they are (almost) infinitely rich in frontiers, as the number series is rich in numbers. There is always a further number between any two. So, there is a vast number of frontiers on which holy men about to be pushed out of holiness or desiring to reactivate it may settle. Of course, most of these frontiers, being as it were a great number of decimal places down, are not very lucrative. A profitable frontier is an as it were non-decimal one, between very

large groups. The main lodge is not merely at a crucial frontier, indeed near a number of frontiers - it is at a place destined by ecology to be a frontier, and in a gorge which, if not protected charismatically, would be indefensible. Opportunities for settlement along such frontiers are very likely to arise: the land there is unsafe for settlement for either of the two sides. Like United Nations troops along the Gaza frontier, the holy men are sooner or later invited to settle along it, the place being not much use to anyone else, and a frontier guarantor, who is at the same time a kind of bridge for trade, is welcome.

4. A Segmentary System.

The genealogy of the Ihansalen is and is not an example of a segmentary system: it is necessary to separate the respects in which it is, and the respects which are rather special modifications of its own.

It possesses the characteristic tree-like structure, which places everyone (with some ambiguities, contradictions and lacunae) and accounts for most of the relationships other than those known to be initiated by voluntary action and ratified or enforced by a sacrifice. (It is sometimes claimed that in such agnatic unilineal societies, a stress of the genealogically expressible aspects leaves one with merely the legal relationships of the groups involved, and ignores the equally important informal relationships such as those expressed or ratified in the passing of brides, etc. As far as legal rights in women go, these follow the agnatic lines among the Berbers of the central High Atlas: most tribes, including the saintly ones, practise the shefa'a over women, i.e. priority rights over brides by members of agnatic groups. An outsider wishing to marry a girl requires first the permission of her father's agnates eligible to marry her. If they refuse to give it, claiming that they themselves wish to marry her in due course, he cannot marry her. In the saintly lineages, this is further reinforced by their

belief that it is improper for others to have their daughters. There is also the implication that saints do take in brides from some lay tribes, according to a certain pattern.)

But the tree-like structure is unsymmetrical. Those branches on which holiness grows are longer...

Moreover, as in the case of lay tribes, the tree cannot account for those relationships which spring from geographical, territorial considerations - though it is connected with the territorial distribution in interesting ways. As indicated, saintliness makes for dispersal. These are diacritical saints. The long branches with saintly fruits tend, as explained, not to be close to each other. Branches only grow to genealogical length and produce saintly fruits if no other such is near.

Territorial and genealogical distance do not correlate. Ahansal settlements leapfrog lay tribes to frontiers, and the dispersion is not such that further settlements would also be those which are indicated as having hived-off further back, longer ago.

But there are two really important ways in which the structure of Ihansalen is not like that of a 'proper' segmentary society:

a) One cannot simply 'read off' the structural oppositions and alliances of the groups concerned by consider-

ing their genealogical relationships - one cannot simply say that those which are closer genealogically are opposed on the local plane, but unite in opposition to a balanced segment at a higher level, etc. And the reasons one cannot do this are more profound than merely the co-existence of voluntary or territorially based alignments cutting across kinship. The reasons are that the crucial oppositions are those arising from the conflicts for the wages of sanctity: thus genealogically close effective saints are much more opposed to each other, in a kind of slow 'war of succession', than they are jointly opposed to local laicised groups, who are complementary rather than opposed to them. These lay groups (e.g. the laicised families in the main lodge) again are aligned more as clients of effective saints than in terms of their respective genealogical position. Again, the effective ones together, and the lay ones together, cannot generally oppose each other - this would be an admission of the inefficacy of the saintliness of the would-be effective saints.

Thus the crucial conflicts do not spring from the segmentary position as such and cannot be explained from it, though they leave their mark on it. One can tell that there will be conflict among the fellow-members of the long branches, and <u>between</u> various long branches (as be-

tween Temga and the main lodge), and this latter kind of conflict ignores the short intermediate branches.

b) The Ihansalen as a whole cannot unite and fuse in opposition to non-Ihansalen. They cannot, for a variety of reasons: their territorial dispersion and discontinuity; the fact that, facing any group of comparable genealogical 'abstractness', they would be hopelessly outnumbered; their ideology and customs, which preclude violence anyway and which have habituated them to being complementary to the lay tribes rather than ordinarily opposed to them. In brief, it is inconceivable, for all these quite decisive reasons, that all the descendants of Sidi Said Ahansal should unite against all those of Dadda Atta, say, or Sochman. (But local clusters of laicised Ihansalen can and do unite against lay tribes of comparable size. But faced with larger ones, they must either strike up alliances with other lay tribes or retire, at that level of segmentary conflict, into agurram-like pacifism.)

Thus the Ihansalen are a group with a segmentary genealogy, whose crucial political alignments however are not to be interpreted in its terms, but in terms of the role they play among lay tribes, and in terms of the geographical dispersion which is its consequence; and in terms of the conflict for the fruits of that role, which has its own non-segmentary principles.

CHAPTER X. Other Forms of the Sacred.

1. Classification.

Even within their immediate region, the igurramen do not exhaust the forms of the sacred. They are merely the most important form of it.

There is a variety of other forms, classifiable as follows:

a) The meta-saints, the progeny of the Founder's Teacher.

b) Shrines of non-Ahansal saints who have left no progeny.

c) Un-personified holy places (cliffs, trees, springs, caves).

d) Mosques and foquaha (the Uses of Literacy).

2. The Meta-Saints.

Sidi Bu Mohamed Salah was the teacher, in holy learning, sanctity and magic, of Sidi Said. It was he who sent Sidi Said Ahansal to found his own lodge. This is a fact the local legends stress: this is a way of making concrete the original 'missionary' aspect of the role of the lodges.

But the local tribes give donations to the saints in virtue of, ideally, their ancestry and their powers. But the ancestor of the saints had learnt his trade from Sidi Bu Mohamed Salah, whose ancestry is also distinguished. If the lay tribes are morally indebted to the saints, by the same token are not the saints indebted to the teacher of their ancestor? And if their teacher has left any progeny, should they not, by the same token, present donations to them?

Such progeny (or rather, men who hold themselves to be such) does exist, and the saints do give them donations. In fact there are a few families living in various places in the plain, including at present Beni Mellal (the nearest market town at the edge of the plain), who claim such-ancestry, have the claim recognised and derive some profit from it. Annually, individuals come up and are entertained and are given presents by the saints, including those of the main lodge, in virtue of their descent from the Founder's Teacher.

These men are of no political or other significance, either in their homes, or in the places which they visit. The donations received by the local saints themselves can be explained structurally: but this is not so for these second-order donations by the saints to their saint.

In 1955 the annual visit of a descendant of the meta-saint did not take place, owing to the general restriction on movement in and out of the region due to the political crisis and 'terrcrism'. Subsequently there were violent floods around the main lodge which at the time caused great damage. People in the main lodge, including the chief saint of the chief family, attributed this disaster to the failure to give the appropriate donations to the meta-saint, although the failure was not their fault but due to his not having turned up. The damage caused by the floods was the destruction of bridges, carrying away of cattle and the destruction of fields adjoining the river. Later on however the harvest turned out to be extremely good, compensating for what was lost in the fields adjoining the river. Moreover it was agreed that the mud brought down by the floods was good for the fields. What had seemed to be a sanction turned out to be a blessing. The failure to make donations to the descendant of the meta-saint was then forgotten.

The general principle underlying the giving of donations might be schematically summed up as follows: donations

are not on the whole called for amongst kin, where aid in assistance can be taken for granted. (There is an exception: emigrant saints sometimes bring donations to those who remained at the "home shrine".) Where an obligation and/or affiliation exists between people of groups who are not kin, donations are called for by the inferior to the superior (although of course the superior is liable to exhibit superiority by generous entertainment). Thus the lay tribes give donations to the saints, and the saints to their saint, the meta-saint. Similarly, a person joining a new group gives the donation to them, thereby putting them under an obligation to accept him (though this kind of donation, unlike that to saints, is once-and-for-all, and is not repeated annually).

In this way, a chain can be created - A reveres and brings donations to B, and likewise, B to C. The chain here described has only three links, but there is no reason why it should not have more, and one could find more if one tried. (Some among the religious clients of the Ihansalen themselves receive reverence and donations, and doubtless the progeny of Sidi Bu Mohamed Salah themselves occasionally make a pious pilgrimage to some meta-meta-saint.) But this is not significant, for reverence, donations, etc. are not transitive in this way: A's reverence for B, and B's for C, does not necessarily commit A to any reverence for

C. There is no pyramid of power or reverence built up in this manner.

It is also said (by Spillman, op. cit.) that the Ahansal saints were affiliated to the Kadiri religious fraternity. It is certainly true that there are many shrines dedicated to the patron saint of this fraternity, who gives it its name, these shrines being places where it is claimed that he sat down on his travels, that his name is invoked in explctives, and that those locals who have rosaries, the specific emblem of fraternities, will say it is a Kadiri rosary. On other occasions the rosary has been attributed to Sidi Said Ahansal or to Sidi Bu Mohamed Salah. (In Morocco, rosaries - ouerd - are emblems of religious fraternities.)

It should be mentioned here that an offshoot of the Ihansalen did found a fraternity of his own, the Hansaliya. This would have to be studied separately. It is of interest for the comparative study of Maghrebin religious life, but of no importance for the social and religious life of the Ahansal heartland, where the fact is hardly known and makes no impact.

Some saints of the Temga group do claim to be agents, or to have been such agents, of the Kadiri fraternity and to have collected donations for it. This would be a not unusual relationship of rural populations to these dif-

fused fraternities. But whereas I have come across wandering descendants of the meta-saint, I have never come across wandering agents of the fraternity. This does not exclude their having done so in the past. During the last years of French rule there were few people coming up wandering from the plain, of any kind, and the period after Independence was one highly unfavourable to fraternities, so that it is unlikely that anyone should have gone out of his way to proclaim himself such. Moreover, claims of affiliations to it were made more convincingly in the area of the Temga set of lodges rather than around the main lodge, and they are far more likely to have been a reality in that set, with its closer proximity to the plain, than in the area of the founding lodge.

It is not wholly clear what political function, if any, affiliations to either meta-saints or fraternities*

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* Spillman suggests that this was important. Cf. Drague, Esquisse d'Histoire Religieuse du Maroc, p. 175.

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based on the plains they had never had in the old pre-Protectorate set-up. It is true that in the modern post-Independence period local persons of influence need and have patrons in the plain (obtained mainly through and for either a political party or trade) - but then, the situation is different now; the region is incorporated in

the wider society and the local dignitary, saint or not, needs a friend at court. In the days of siba this was not so. One can only surmise that it may have been partly the way of obtaining information and having contacts without immediate use (though also possibly for mediating trade, though the top saints did not themselves engage in it), or that it was an institution simply called into being because it was a logical corollary of a local legend and a logical extension of a local custom. If donations are due to the saint, by the same token they are due from him to the meta-saint.

One should add that the founding saint of the Kadiri fraternity also plays a crucial role in the legends of the origin of the Isha tribe. The founder and general ancestor of this tribe earned his merit by kindness to a poor wandering stranger, a great saint in disguise, who rewarded him for the kindness shown to him. Stories of this kind, in which a poor stranger turned out to be an important religious personage incognito, are common in Morocco. They are rather reminiscent of the incognito adventures of Greek gods, and may likewise be interpreted as a rationale of the obligation of hospitality: you never know who it is that you are entertaining. It is not held certain in the case of the legend of the origins of the Isha tribe that the stranger was indeed Mulay Abd el Kader, but it is locally held to be likely.

3. The Seven Saints.

In the heartland of the Ihansalen, in the region of the four villages, there are seven saints who are grouped together, generally mentioned together and indeed connected by the legend of their origin. One holy place, in the vicinity of Amzrai, is simply referred to as sbaat-urizhel, seven-men. The others have proper names of their own. The legend is that they jointly flew from the summit of Timghazin, the mountain which finally closes the Ahansal valley in the direction of the watershed, and each landed on his appointed place lower down. No motive is ascribed to the flight.

Of the seven, one is near Taria - Sidi l'Hajj, the pilgrim; Sidi Bu Yaacub and Sidi Bu Tumlalen at Amzrai; Sidi Bushaq and Sidi Maruin near the main lodge; and Sidi Abd el Aadim and Sidi u'Basus at Tighanimin.

These personified saints can be used for prayers and requests, for village festivals, and for collective oaths. They are, in fact, used extensively in this way by the four villages. Spring and autumn festivals are held more frequently at these shrines than at ancestral ones. The point is, that ancestral ones are more generally used for relations with outside tribes. (The Ait Amzrai do more frequently use their own ancestor's shrine, that of Sidi Lahcen u Othman.) Just as, ecologically, the Ahansal villages are

simply ordinary villages with flocks and fields apart from also being groups of actual or potential saints, so hagiologically, they also possess all the shrines etc. which they would possess if they weren't saintly centres. Underneath the successful bid for sanctity, there is an ordinary Berber village...

No particular legends attach to the seven saints, but it is said that they antedate the local settlement of Sidi Said Ahansal. It is my impression that they do indeed antedate the effective development of Ahansal settlement, but in any case the belief reflects this - that they represent a more basic, widespread form of worship, the undifferentiated form of village religious life which these villagers share with others and to which they can revert if their grace dries out and particular claims are abandoned.

The preference for using them for internal purposes, festivals, etc., springs naturally from the fact that in the face of all these shrines all members of the village are equal. Even though the overwhelming majority of the inhabitants of the main lodge could claim to be equal at the shrine of Sidi Said Ahansal, as his descendants, yet somehow Sidi Said Ahansal is specially linked with the effective <u>igurramen</u>, if only because his shrine now also includes some recent saints who of course are the ances-

tors only of a small part of the main lodge. Not so the non-Ahansali saints.

The Ait Tighanimin sometimes use Sidi Bushaq for their festival despite the fact that they have two of the seven saints nearer home, whilst they have to come and hold their feast right by the main lodge by choosing him. By doing so however they can combine it with a use of Sidi Said Ahansal's shrine itself: whilst the men play games and roast meat by Sidi Bushaq, the women prepare sksu and dance by Sidi Said Ahansal, having previously spent some time inside the shrine, requesting good health and pregnancies...

Oaths between Ihansalen are also generally held at these non-Ahansali saints, when they are not held at the mosque.

4. The Impersonal Saints.

The seven personal saints - plus the one named 'seven men' (which is held to refer to the others) - are, as was described, barely personal. No clear image or stories attach to them. They have buildings, from shacks to small houses, attached to them - though never distinguished dwellings. In their anonymity they differ clearly from the Ahansal shrines, whose inmates, as it were, are connected with the world both by a fairly rich store of legend and, of course, by their living descendants.

There is a kind of spectrum,* or perhaps a number of

*Cf. Jacques Berque, Les Structures Sociales du Haut-Atlas, p. 256.

spectra, starting from the fully personal and ancestral saints such as Sidi Said Ahansal. One spectrum connects the distinguished and the undistinguished dead: both share a cemetery, but one has a building and retains a name, whilst the other has a grave which does not rise above the level of the surrounding and cannot but lapse into total anonymity after some time. Another and more important spectrum however ranges not so much along the level of distinction as along the degree of personification.

The spectrum begins with fully personified saints such as Sidi Said Ahansal, endowed with both name and character, and ends with what is almost undisguised nature

worship, of holy springs or trees, etc., whose worship is justified - if at all - by beliefs about the presence of unnamed spirits in it or near it. At intermediate positions along it one finds named but characterless saints (such as the Seven) or places held holy in virtue of a connection with a person.

The purer forms of Islam are opposed to the worship of saints. The Berbers of the Atlas are not acquainted with such high standards in the rejection of graven images or intermediaries between God and man: they are, however, aware of another, less rigorous standard, one which condemns unpersonified saints and sees proper Islam in the worship of personages connected with it, preferably shurfa. (Both Sidi Said Ahansal and Sidi Bu Mohamed Salah are such, and hence, by what one might call genealogical induction, so are all their offspring - who between them amount virtually to the totality of live saints locally worshipped or revered.) Thus there is a tendency to use the impersonal ones less or with some shame, if other things fail: thus a given spring held to be well-connected with rain may not be used for a ritual sacrifice if rain is plentiful, but will still be used if there is a drought and more proper appeals have failed. You never know, and it is worth trying.

Berque, in the work cited, gives (p. 260) a statisti-

cal break-up of personified and other saints and holy places among the Seksawa. I am somewhat reluctant to do the same in as far as at one end of the spectrum, among the impersonal holy places, it is almost impossible to feel that one has covered the total of available local holiness... The more impersonal and undistinguished the type of holy place, the less likely one is to have one's attention drawn to it, unless one happens to pass in the vicinity. But the general picture would be similar to Berque's: a few fully personalised saints, more semi-personal ones, and still more wholly impersonal ones. The picture is however complicated by the prominence - numerically and politically - of the Ihansalen in the central High Atlas. (Berque's Seksawa, though they do have igurramen and even Ahansal ones at that, do not appear to have as many, nor do they seem to be of such political significance.) This complicates the picture in as far as living igurramen provide a supply of new shrines - in two ways: in the obvious one, in that a revered live agurram on decease provides the basis for a new shrine, and indirectly, in that live igurramen have an incentive for encouraging worship at the shrines of their real or supposed ancestors, and keeping up the shrine, in appearance and reputation... (A further complication arises from the fact that the number of shrines may be a function of the sharpness of stratifica-

tion, the degree of concentration of grace, among living saints. At the main lodge, the prestige of Sidi Said Ahansal is such that living families strive for control of this shrine and prefer to place their distinguished members within it, as the Ait Sidi Mulay succeeded with Sidi Mulay himself; whereas at Temga, the competing families each keep up a kind of family vault.)

An interesting kind of holy place, very common, is one connected with a personage who however is not supposed to be enshrined in it. In the area around Ahansal, there are numerous ones of Mulay abd el Kader [illegible]. This distinguished saint is not supposed to be interred in these places - generally a simple cairn - and in any case his body could hardly be found in <u>all</u> of them: if an explanation is sought, it is said - without insistence or any elaboration by way of legend - that he is presumed to have passed through the region and to have sat and rested and thus hallowed the place now named after him. These places too are eligible for the making of prayer-requests, oaths, etc.

There are (at least) three holy mountains in the area close to (within a day's walk) of the main lodge: Azurki, Aruden, and one in the land of the Ait Abdi. The most interesting justification of holiness is that in the case of Azurki (to be discussed below, p. 440). The holy place

on Aruden is personified only by a vague and plural name - Aitrudent, the people of Aruden. (Spirits congregate...) Holy springs, trees, caves, passes abound. (In 1955, a holy tree among the Abdi, which its devotees had made quite shiny with the butter they rubbed into its trunk,[1] was burnt down by a brother of the chief - secretly - in order to demonstrate its impotence. This was a progressive act by people active and secretly inscribed in the Independence party. In fact, after Independence the new authorities did not bother to combat local cults.)

Berbers are liable to class their mosques with the saints in as far as they believe the Archangel Gabriel (Sidna Jibril) to be resident in them.

5. Mosques and foquaha. The Uses of Literacy.

Mosques are said to be the home of the Archangel Gabriel; but otherwise they are also, sometimes, more literally the home of the fquih (pl. foquaha), the village scribe. (If he does not have a family, or does not have it with him, he may sleep in the mosque.)

The term fquih (or t'alb, teacher) generally designates the village's scribe-Koranic teacher, but it can be used to designate simply a man who is literate (in the traditional and Arabic-Koranic sense, of course); and some foquaha earn their living not as scribes to villages but as secretaries to men of note.

Mosques, or the area just outside them, often with a shelter, are also the centres of the male social life of a village, and though not used for festivals do resemble shrines, etc., in being usable for oaths. They and the scribe who runs a rudimentary Koranic school in it - the syllabus of which goes no further than the teaching of some of the set Muslim prayers and some Koranic sayings - are however the one piece of local religious life which does more genuinely derive from Islam proper.

The scribe is an employee of the village. He is very seldom local. In the area around Ahansal, foquaha are almost invariably men from south of the watershed, generally the Dades and Draa valleys. The fquih is on

an annual contract and is paid by arrangement by a levy on households. His perks are invitations to weddings, collective festivals, or pious parties individual families may sometimes give.

If the igurramen are a religious institution which seems to emanate from the local social structure, then foquaha are one which does not, and which is the tribal concession to real Islam... Foquaha being non-local have no local kin affiliation and are in a very weak position. They often quarrel with their parishioners and are often sacked. It is not much of a commendation for them to be too learned or ambitious. Turnover is fairly rapid. In my years of visits to Ahansal-land, I have often come across the same scribes, but not in the same village... (In the main lodge, there is a scribe who is, for once, well dug in, and has the sister of the head of the Ait Sidi Mulay family in marriage. It is even claimed that, contrary to local custom but correctly by Muslim law, she claimed her inheritance and obtained it. This fquih was secretary to his brother-in-law during his days of power under the French: subsequently, after Independence, the village scribe was sacked in order to give him the post. Later still, when this well-connected fquih managed to find a post with the administration, a new scribe was found.)

Apart from teaching Koranic school, the foquaha write and read letters, deeds, etc. Unlike the Western High Atlas and Southern Morocco proper (the Sús region), the use of writing for deeds, family records, or kanun was not very extensive.

The foquaha are also technologists of magic; knowing how to write, it is widely held that they can effect cures, invoke the devil (by, for example, reciting Koranic passages whilst retreating, or writing them backwards), etc., and some make extra income by these means.

6. Summary.

It is difficult not to view 'the Sacred' in Ahansal-land as composed of a number of layers: the sanctity concentrated in live and dead igurramen and their connecting lineages and their specific social role; the lineage-less and anonymous, but named and personal saints, with their different social role and one which is rather unvarying in kind from village to village (unlike the saintly lineages, whose role is connected with more long-distance relationships and is thus unsymmetrical as between holy, laicised and lay villages); the mosques, tied partly to village assemblies, partly to the universalistic religion of Islam and the wide Muslim world, and partly to the individual's identification with it in addition to his local niche; the shrines which are not tombs, such as those dedicated to Mulay abd el Kader, tied to something more-than-regional but also differentiated within Islam; the impersonal holy places, sometimes endowed with a Muslim rationale and often not, playing a part both in village and inter-village, tribal and inter-tribal relationships.

The temptation to speculate about the disparate historic origins of these strata is reinforced by the fact that they are not welded into a fully coherent whole: their 'joins' do show up. No clear explanation is given why the saints, the Prophet's flesh and blood, should need

foquaha to teach them the Prophet's Koran... Not all the local holy places and named but progeny-less shrines are connected with the cult of the igurramen; and this is not merely a consequence of a failure to think up a suitable synthesising rationalisation, but is also functional, for under every saintly village there is also an ordinary one, which needs the normal religious resources to fall back on in its non-holy and unstratified life, or should baraka run out.

It would of course be preposterous to abstract everything which cannot be deduced from 'proper' Islam (i.e. doctrines and precepts recorded in writing and recognised in urban Muslim centres) and conclude that the residue gives us Berber religion as it was prior to Islam. This once fashionable method in Berber studies has its defects - not everything in England which does not follow from Christianity can be assumed to be Saxon or Celtic, etc. The chemistry or algebra of religious life is not a matter of such simple addition and subtraction. Nevertheless, the logical incoherence and the social co-existence - on the whole quite smooth - of the various elements does more than suggest that we are in the presence of a syncretic religion, and that the various elements have diverse sources.

CHAPTER XI. The Religious Role.

1. Some Legends.

a) The Cloak of Islam.

It was mentioned in the previous chapter that one of the holy places in the area of Ahansal is the mountain of Azurki. Specifically, a large hole near the summit, and a cave much lower down, are holy and the focus of a pilgrimage on the eve before Aid el Kebir (in other words a festival tied to the Muslim and not to the agricultural calendar). As at other holy places, women leave bits of cloth there in the hope of obtaining their requests. On the appropriate night, spirits congregate here - a kind of Brockennacht.

The really significant thing about Azurki is, however, the legend explaining its holiness.

Azurki was destined to be the burial place of the Prophet Mohamed. The cave near the summit was to be his grave. The camel carrying the body had already arrived, but was thoroughly frightened off by the noise habitually made by the inhabitants of Bu Gmez valley (at the foot of one side of Azurki) in order to frighten birds off their fields. So the camel returned to the Hejaz, and thus, unfortunately, the Muslim pilgrimage has to be made to Mecca:*

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* The locals suppose that the pilgrimage is based on the location of the tomb of the Prophet, as local

pilgrimages are to the shrines of the saints.

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otherwise, it would have been to Azurki, much to the convenience of those living around it.

The pilgrimage to Azurki is much favoured, and the pilgrims go either to the summit or to a very striking cave lower down, and come from a wide range of surrounding tribes. When I went, the party included a representative of the top main lodge family (who, impiously, spent the night on the bare mountain smoking hashish), women desiring pregnancy, and brothers of such come on their behalf. My wife accompanied me, and we at any rate have had three children since.

b) Muslim learning and missionary work.

The origin of the word Ahansal is said to be from an Arabic root* signifying achievement, and to have been

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* hasala, to succeed.

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a name ascribed to Sidi Said Ahansal in virtue of learning the Koran by heart when an apprentice with Sidi Bu Mohamed Salah. Thus apart from sherifian origin, and great magical powers, the Founder was also a great Muslim scholar. The story of the origins has been told before, but it is worth stressing this aspect here.

c) Problems of Leaders of Dissidence.

This is a story told of Sidi Yussif u Said, founder of the Hansalia fraternity of the plain. The story is more relevant to the northern (Temga) group of lodges, who go on an annual pilgrimage to the shrine of this saint, but it is also known in the main lodge.

His dad (Sidi Said u Yussif) and predecessor in sanctity had warned him: if anyone comes to your lodge and places his foot on a certain rock (which he pointed out) - refuse his request, whatever it be!

After the father had died and Sidi Yussif u Said was running the zawiya, one day a man called Ahrmud turned up. Ahrmud was a tribal leader of the Ait Attar tribe on the edge of the plain, and was at the time having trouble with the Sultan. Ahrmud requested the agurram to raise the tribes in his support, to organise a harkt (military following) - and as he asks this, he places his foot on the rock!

Naturally, Sidi Yussif u Said refuses. So Ahrmud places a shame compulsion on him by making a sacrifice to him. This would normally be conclusive, but under the circumstances, much as it may go against the grain to refuse a man now, Sidi Yussif is firm.

So Ahrmud threatens to sacrifice his own son unless the agurram complies with his pleading. So Sidi Yussif gives in.

He supplies Ahrmud with seven horsemen. A mere seven! exclaims Ahrmud. This plainly is insufficient. Sidi Yussif reassures him and urges him to have faith. When you get near Fez, look to the heavens! - and continue. But, the saint adds, there is one condition: when you conquer Fez there must be no massacre!

Ahrmud sets off to Fez with his own supporters plus the seven supplied by the saint. Approaching Fez, he looks to the heavens as instructed, and lo! - further horsemen come down like snowflakes, and as numerous. They conquer Fez, but, alas, contrary to the instruction, they do massacre.

The saint also turns up at Fez. He comes to discuss with a local learned and saintly man who, in order to save Fez from the savage tribes brought in by the agurram, deprives the saint of his magic sword. This Fassi learned man manages this by possessing even more baraka than the agurram.

In the meantime, the victors have quarrelled: the saint and the tribal leader are at loggerheads. They turn on each other, and the saint, being now without his magic sword, is defeated. He has to flee and is pursued by Ahrmud's men, who burn down his zawiya. All the utensils in his lodge had been of gold, but happily the saint had time to bury them before his enemies arrived. After their departure the saint emerged from hiding and went to settle at Krud near

Demnate* where his descendants still live.

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* A little outside the present area of the main body of Ahansal settlement.

About 1900 three foquaha tried to find the gold buried by Sidi Yussif u Said. But the treasure is protected by spirits, and the three foquaha were blown into the air by them. Two were never seen again, and the one who lived to tell the tale was found on a distant pass, badly mauled and, for some reason, with a woman's kerchief. (This he sold for a very good price.) He was interrogated by the informant's father about the adventure.

I was told this story a number of times, but the most detailed and confident version - on which the above was based - came from a prominent member of Zawiya Asker, since deceased. This informant himself claimed to have visited the emplacement of Sidi Yussif u Said's original lodge and to have seen imprints of money on rock in red and yellow. These have, it appears, disappeared since.

The son of the saint, of Sidi Yussif u Said, named Abd el Aziz, also had trouble with the Sultan, who attacked his new lodge at Krud. He went to hide in a cave. The sultan had a cannon fired at him. The saint caught the projectile, which did not explode,* and kneaded it in his

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* This element in the legend dates itself...

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hands as though it were dough. It is still kept as a souvenir at Krud (so the people in the northern lodges say: only recently someone who had visited Krud had seen it and told them). The Sultan, seeing this and impressed by such potent barāka, took the hint and left them alone.

d) The King-Maker Story.

This story is popular in the region of the main lodge. Its hero is Sidi Mohamed n'ut Baba, the ancestor of the effective-saint lineage within the lodge. (But the story is as popular in the laicised villages, if not more so.)

The Sultan sent a messenger to the Ahansal agurram of that generation (namely, Sidi Mohamed n'ut Baba) wishing for more information concerning how he managed to have quite so much baraka. The agurram amazed the messenger by a special display of saintly powers, by making a mule give birth to a young mule. (An implausible parturition reinforces the faith of the faithful.) But in return he requested the Sultan, Mulay Rashid, to liberate some Ait Atta whom he had imprisoned. The Sultan refused. The incensed agurram decided to 'break' the monarchy by magical means: he hammered a magical tagust into the ground. A tagust is a metal peg used for attaching mules and other animals.* This not merely led to the end of Mulay Rashid,

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* The tagust is extremely phallic in appearance and function. Mr. David Hart tells me that in the Rif the term is in fact also used to mean penis. I do

not know whether this is also so in the central High Atlas. But in any case, the Freudian suggestiveness of the whole of this legend is striking. It is as neat an example of a "Waste Land" story as any.

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but caused an anarchic interregnum in the governed part of Morocco, in Fez...

Mulay Smail, the next Sultan-to-be, failing to overcome the troubles and frondes, came to the agurram for advice. (There were many other claimants, and he could not overcome them...)

He stayed at the main lodge a few days, presenting his case. In the end, the agurram told him: you must go to Amzrai, and must ask the first person you encounter for food.

Mulay Smail followed the irrigation ditch in Amzrai and encountered a woman of the Ait Amzrai surveying a cow. Woman says - welcome!

After a while she asks - may a person owning one cow, one chicken and one measure of wheat entertain a King? She proceeds to use eggs, butter, and one half of her store of flour. Whilst she mills down the flour, she unwittingly uses more than the half she intended - but her original store remains undiminished!

She gives Mulay Smail to eat and prepares a place for him to sleep. A child comes to tell her - I have slept better than a King! (in a manner of speaking). The woman childes him - think not of becoming King! (i.e. excessive

ambition is harmful). The King embraces her in recognition and gratitude. She proceeds to grind more flour, singing - Mulay Rashid is dead, Mulay Smail survives and will be King, if God wills. Whereupon the would-be and incognito King embraces her gratefully again.

Thereupon she instructs him: you must take three steps without looking. He does so: the first takes him to Oua-ouizaght, the second to Tizi (pass) n'ait Aissa, the third to Tizi n'ait Amir. On the third step he finds himself placing his foot in the middle of a cairn. He removes the stones and finds a tagust underneath (as pre-arranged by Sidi Mohamed n'ut Baba). He liberates it by pulling it out, and with it makes the fourth step - to find himself in Fez and acclaimed by the populace as King...!

e) The Enemies' Tale.

This story is never told by the Ihansalen themselves. It was told me by an enemy of theirs, a certain fquih. This scribe had been in the employment of a number of them, as a secretary. Able and intelligent, he was not, like other foquaha, content with his position, and attempted to intrigue against the igurramen - quite unsuccessfully. (I have told the story of this in detail, with changed names, in Encounter, 1957.) He now makes a fairly good living as a free-lance scribe - largely as a technologist of magic -

among the Ait Isha.

He claims to have been told this story by the Ait Tagla - who could be expected to be enemies of the Ihansalen, being the recognised original inhabitants of the Ahansal valley (or rather, the only ones of the original inhabitants who do not seem mythical). They are somewhat outside the general area of the Ahansal lodges now and I have never visited them, and hence cannot say whether this story is current among them and whether they still harbour a resentment, and whether there exists some kind of Tegla Zionist movement for the return to Ahansal-land.

The story: a man of the Ait Tegla went to the main lodge. He was nine-times-a-Hajj, i.e. had performed the pilgrimage to Mecca nine times... (The point is: a man of such piety must be wholly trustworthy in his report.)

He saw the then top agurram, Sidi Ahmad u Ahmad, saintly, prosperous, well-attired, and felt due reverence. He did not dare approach anyone in the lodge in which such saintliness was evident, so he modestly went to the mosque to take shelter.

He was unnoticed: the igurramen who had failed to notice a humble and modest pilgrim thereby did themselves harm, for they were not aware of his presence in their mosque.

At night, the top agurram went to the mosque. Now

he was ill-dressed, in torn clothes. He pissed three times into the water prepared for the ablutions of the faithful - thus invoking the devil. The devil turned up, and Sidi Ahmad u Ahmad paid his homage to him... thus disclosing his true nature, unaware of the presence of the witness!

2. Interpretation.

I have selected these legends for the significance of their implicit comment, but in fact all of these except the last are prominent in local minds, and would be the first to require mention even if one were selecting purely by popularity as stories, rather than for revealing the nature of their content.

The legend of Azurki, with its associated annual ritual, eloquently testifies to the fusion of local particularism and Islam. We are Muslim and Prophet-oriented, yet properly Islam should have been centred on our local mountain... The story of Sidi Said Ahansal's scholarly prowess, and the whole story of the origin of the main lodge in Muslim missionary work, testifies to one aspect of the role of the Ihansalen, namely as aids to Muslim identification (whilst functioning in fact as parts of a highly local structure).

The legend of the raid on Fez deals with the issues likely to arise for an influential agurram whose clients are on the borders of the land of government: coping with requests to organise raids into the plain (and the legend contains a caution against conceding such requests, and a precedent and reason for refusing); the probability that petitioners will be disappointed by the meagre number of supporters (a mere seven in the story) which an agurram

can call up rapidly - and the legend contains an answer to this, that when an agurram-led movement gets going, the following of the igurramen snowballs and becomes plentiful - which is probably true! it alludes to the danger of allowing the tribesmen united under their aegis to massacre when victorious (thereby provoking reprisals); the persisting threat to saints both from lay chiefs who acquire prestige, like the evil and ungrateful Ahrmud after his victory,* and

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* There is no historical evidence to support this story; there is no record of a central High Atlas expedition sacking Fez. But the tribesmen of the Middle Atlas were often under its walls and sometimes inside them, and there is a great cultural continuity between these two adjoining regions, so that themes would easily pass from one to the other.

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from the central power with, latterly, its cannons... Also, the recurring theme that effective igurramen are not merely potent magicians but also conspicuously rich.

The King-maker story illustrates both the real and the desired relationship of the saints in the recesses of the Atlas vis-à-vis the central monarchy: it begins with the plausible episode of the central power imprisoning some members of the saints' client tribes, and to the existence of anarchic and violent interregna in the plain; it fuses this with episodes bringing out the superior baraka of the saints (the fecund mule, the power to make kings and to terminate chaos; I shall not insist on the Waste Land in-

terpretation giving the igurramen control over national prosperity through the virility of the monarch). It also contains a virtue-of-necessity commendation of abstention from political ambition - in fact, these igurramen had no opportunity of replacing the dynasty, but it is made to appear that modesty, a condemnation of excessive ambition, stopped them from trying; and it also contains two themes frequently encountered, namely the need to be hospitable to wandering strangers who turn out to be people of distinction in disguise (in this case, a Sultan), and the theme commending insouciant generosity when entertaining them, a generosity rewarded by a supernatural replenishing of supplies.

The Enemies' Tale inverts all, as enemies would. The igurramen, seemingly wealthy and well-clad, are in fact humble and torn servants of the devil, before whom they appear in their true abasement - and it is only with his aid that they cut a fine figure in the daytime... (But something analogous is often told among the Ahansal igurramen themselves and within the main lodge. Some members of the top agurram families are credited by others with black magical powers and intercourse with the devil.) The story confirms all the values, but only redistributes their application.

In fact, it is remarkable how very economical and

functional these tales are. Needless to say, the locals who retail these stories do not offer such explanations of them. Yet, under a superficial appearance of logical inconsequentiality, and even extravagance, there is very little in these tales which does not have close relevance to the real life of igurramen, to the problems, opportunities, fears and hopes of saint-arbitrators of illiterate tribes in dissidence on the margin of a centralised, town-and-literacy-based Muslim monarchic state.

3. Spiritual Lords of the Marches.

The main role of the saints has already been described. It is connected with the structure of the lay tribes whom they serve and who revere them, and their own structure complements that of their lay clients. This part of their role is reflected in most of their genealogy, i.e. in that part which starts with Sidi Said Ahansal and then "fans out" after Sidi Lahcen u Othman, his great-grandson: for this part accounts for the distribution of the lodges and settlements in the interstices of lay tribes, it gives the effective saints longer lists of ancestors, accounts for the differentiation between effective and laicised Ihansalen and its perpetuation, and so forth.

But the part of the genealogy 'above' Sidi Said Ahansal, between him and the Prophet, seems to have no specific local role. Why had anyone bothered to invent it?

There is one other service performed by the saints: and that is to aid the inhabitants of the region as a whole in their Islamic self-identification. This is a subtle and elusive matter, but very important. Not to mention it would be to leave out something essential. On the other hand, it is very difficult to document or substantiate this properly. We are here in the realms either of psychology or of social relationships which are very diffuse indeed.

The earlier services of the saints could be substan-

tiated in a comparatively specific way, and their 'functions' indicated by describing the consequences that would follow the non-fulfilment of those services. This matter, however, can only be made concrete by appealing either to a kind of intellectual atmosphere which the individual Berber would not know how to verbalise, or by appealing to perhaps rather far-fetched and rather general consequences.

I shall attempt to approach the matter in the latter way first. Morocco, like other Moslem countries, is, or was, enthusiastically Moslem. Being 'Moslem' and being 'good' are very intimately linked. One is for Islam just as one is against sin. Partly, the adherence to Islam is formal: substantive moral allegiances will be conceived as Islamic whatever they happen to be. In this respect, the generally accepted religion, like the word 'good', is formal in that it provides the means for expressing approval rather than itself containing a specific commitment.

To put the matter in another way: it would be an unthinkable scandal for a major region of Morocco not to be Moslem. No such scandal has occurred for a very long time. (There were of course Jews but they suffered from great disabilities and were, at any rate in theory, not allowed to own land. Major European settlement and colonisation of course occurred only subsequent to the modern French conquest.) But given all this, every individual village

group and region must somehow possess the means of expressing its Islamic adherence. But Islam is a religion of the Book. Berbers, on the other hand, are illiterate. Islam in Morocco has its acknowledged centre in urban centres of learning, notably in Fez. But the citizens of Fez despise and disapprove of the barbarian illiterate brutal mountain tribes. Tribesmen are not unaware of this. Again, official and good Islam is rather puritanical: it disapproves of feminine freedom, of dancing and so forth. But Berber morals in these matters are not above reproach. Berbers, again, are aware of their own deficiencies in these respects. They are aware of them and yet keen on Islamic identification - and nevertheless very attached to their own enjoyable moral defects. Like another and earlier North African, they may wish to be pure - but not yet.

Some of the (technical) needs of participating in a Moslem civilisation by illiterate mountain tribes are made up by the foquaha (sing. fquih). Each village has, as described, its Koranic scribe-schoolmaster.

The fquih is one of the rare instances, among Berbers, of the professional. He is employed, and has a salary. He attains his post in virtue of more or less genuine qualification and capacity rather than in virtue of descent. (Though it should be added that like other skills and

trainings, it is generally passed on by a similarly skilled father.)

But, as indicated, their political position is weak. Their appointment is annual and often terminated. They have no local clan alignment and they do not, like priests in other societies, have any organisation whatever behind them.

Owing to their insulation and weakness, and the fact that they are at the mercy of their parishioners, foquaha do not have a great deal of prestige or power. They are essential for villages incorporated in the wider universal Moslem culture. But they are perhaps not sufficient. They may have a little respect as men who can read the Book, and a little more, on occasions, as men capable of magic (the technology of which is connected with the ability to write inscriptions, sometimes backwards), but in the end, as ill paid and politically weak employees of the village, frequently sacked, and also essentially 'no better than anyone else', they are not very suitable and awe-inspiring symbols of Islam. One should add that the mosques, over which they preside and where they instruct the village boys, are not impressive buildings in a village. If one can identify a mosque at all, it is never for its splendour or impressiveness. It is in this respect quite unlike shrines or unlike the houses of import-

ant saints.

Hence it is in revering the Saints, believed to be the descendants of the Prophet, that the Berber manifests his identification with Islam. He is aware somehow of the fact that his own law and custom are not quite orthodox. He can, however, reassure himself by revering the Saint, and in accepting his verdict in disputes (which in fact will be based on the same principles as his own custom) and believing that in so doing he is submitting to Koranic doctrine. Even without using the Saint as arbitrator or adjudicator, he will give him donations and obtain his approval and blessing. After all, the region as a whole was in dissidence against a central dynasty, which was also identified with Islam and believed to be descended from the Prophet. It was reassuring to have one's own, local Sherifs. Through venerating them one could defy the central power, and yet show as much respect for descendants of the Prophet as anyone. One had one's own local supply. Their existence and the respect in which they were held provided an answer to any suspicion of a lack of Islamic loyalty. The Saints may first have come as missionaries but they remained as protectors of heterodoxy.

The legends which are locally believed about the origin of the saintly dynasty illustrate both aspects of

the saintly functions. They describe the founder Sidi Said as a kind of missionary endowed with magical powers and trained by a recognised and famous saint in the plain, who had come to found his own Zawiya in the mountains, and endowed with special holiness. They also describe him as the author of the local territorial intertribal settlement. If one may lapse into speculative history, one is tempted to say (a) there must have been Moslem missionaries responsible for the Islamisation of the remote areas, and (b) that pre-Moslem Berber tribes must have had special lineages performing something of a function like that of the saints under Islam. Indeed, the existence of an unambiguously non-Arab word, agurram, suggests this. Sociologically, two things have fused: to describe the present saints seems to be some kind of testimony to the pre-Islamic existence of the role, and two roles have become one.

Thus we have two possible theories of the origin of the saints: they may have started as missionaries, who subsequently acquired all the local characteristics, or alternatively, they may have started as non-Islamic holy lineages who assumed a Moslem garb with the coming of Islam. The legends assert the former but contain ample suggestions of the latter.

There is, of course, in the total absence of real

records, no way of deciding which of these theories is true. In a sociological sense, both are true. One may look at the saints as necessary 'artificial foreigners': many societies, consisting of balanced and mutually jealous parts, need foreigners either to rule them or to arbitrate between them (after all, most dynasties are of foreign origin). But if foreigners are lacking, they have to be invented. The culture of the saints is as Berber as that of all the surrounding tribes: and presumably they are as much or as little Berber in a genetic sense as anyone is. But, by being ascribed an outside origin, they are the region's artificial foreigners. The isolation, poverty, the physical and human perilousness of it would probably have made it somewhat difficult to persuade real foreigners to come there, and, if they had come, they might have proved unsatisfactory.*

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* At least one local legend, concerning the Ait Abdi inviting a man they supposed was a learned foreign fquih, suggests this.

Better to make one's own foreigners than to import real ones.

Equally, however, one may look at the saints as missionaries who have betrayed their trust, albeit unwittingly. No Berber tribe has either the desire or the ability to opt out of Islam: nor, on the other hand, has it either the ability or the desire to behave like the bour-

geoisie of Fez, the recognised paradigm in Morocco of Islamic behaviour. As indicated, the Berber does not even wish to give up his music and dancing and other practices which are not held to be correct. Under the circumstances, could anything be better than to receive and recognise permanently installed missionaries, who will preach and practise what is locally desired and understood, but at the very same time provide one with a means of identification with Islam. Who is there to know any better? The fquih? His own learning is only rudimentary and he is unlikely to know much better. And if he does, he will know better than to criticise the local powers that be. (The whole situation is slightly different as one gets nearer the plain. It is not that the foquaha are any more powerful: but awareness of the standards and prejudices of the plain do percolate and impose some pressure on the saints. Descent is not enough: one must also give up dancing.)

Historically, we shall never know whether Sidi Said was a missionary who adapted his teaching to local needs, or whether he was a member of a local lineage who reinterpreted its position in Islamic terms, if indeed he ever lived at all. In as far as there are many saints in the Atlas, the historical truth may vary from case to case. But sociologically both theories are true: the activities

of the saints can only be understood by reference both to the needs arising from the local social structure, and those arising from the fact that the local society as a whole is a marginal one, or dissidence from a wider culture whose validity it recognises, albeit ambivalently.

From the viewpoint of the structure of the local tribes, the saints are frontier posts: they are not so much tribal saints (though they approximate to this for the Ait Mhand, the Ait Isha, and to certain segments of the Ait Sochman) as frontier or diacritical saints. It is usual in anthropology to try and see in the sacred an expression of the social group: the saints 'express', in this sense, not groups but the boundaries of groups.

But they are also spiritual Lords of the Marches in quite another sense: from the viewpoint of Muslim culture in general. The secular and transient Lords of the Marches of southern Morocco proper* were men who stood

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* Cf. Robert Montagne, Les Berbers et le Maghzan au Sud du Maroc.

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somewhere between pacifying a mountain region for the central government, and protecting its inhabitants from it. In the central High Atlas - thanks mainly to the efficacy of the saintly and chieftaincy-rotating system - no such secular Lords emerged: but the old-established

spiritual ones, the igurramen of Ahansal, similarly played (in the main unwittingly) a kind of double-faced role. Like the legend concerning Azurki, which invokes the Prophet to perpetuate the worship of a local mountain by connecting it with him, they provide an appearance of Islam for the local practices and cults, or, to put it the other way round, introduce a reverence for Islam by giving it locally a personal anchorage, a concreteness, and a role.

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GLOSSARY

abrid,	the way (also, in moral sense, the right way).
achater, pl. ichatern	big (one, ones) used in physical as well as social sense.
agadir,	in the central High Atlas, this word means simply 'wall', but in southern Morocco proper it is used to denote collective storehouses.
agudal, pl. igudlan	reserved pasture, i.e. pasture which by agreement or custom must not be used before a certain date.
agurram, pl. igurramen	hereditary holy man
Aid, often 'Id,	feast, as in Aid l'Kebir, the Great Feast.
Ait	Berber word used for forming names of groups, Ait X, where X is (most commonly) the name of an ancestor, but can also be the name of a place or function, E.g. Ait Brahim, Ait Talmest (Talmest being a place name), or Ait l'Caid, Ait le'Kadi (names of functions). 'Ait' does not occur on its own. Combined with another word, as described, it can name a group of virtually any size, from elementary family to a group of federated tribes.
akka,	gully or (generally) dry water-course. Figures in place names, e.g. Akka n'Ahansal.
almu,	pasture, generally <u>good</u> pasture. Figures in place names, e.g. almu n'igurramen.
amazir	The (generally much more rudimentary)home used by transhumants during summer months, on high pasture or in the forest.
amghar, pl. imgharen	chief, generally elective chief (though the term may be retained for chiefs who have succeeded in making themselves permanent and independent of election). This word is also used in the sense of 'old man' or, from the viewpoint of the woman, as 'father in law'. The term often also figures in compounds such as

anghar n'afella, the chief of the above, i.e. chief of larger group as opposed to the simple ingharen of its constituent subgroups; or

anghar n'asguas, chief-of-the year, or

amghar n'suk, chief of the market (i.e. responsible specifically for maintaining order in the market).

anahkam, person fulfilling function of directing a collective oath or directing proceedings in the settlement of a dispute.

asif, river or stream

'azib, Arabic term, also used in region, equivalent to amazigh.

baba, used sometimes in sense of elder brother, sometimes in the sense of 'elder', responsible member of group, esp. in the compound.

bab'n'imur, pl. idbab'n'imur leader of part (group): one who is designated by or responsible to the leader of a larger group of which his 'part' is a segment. This term is thus differentiated from 'amghar' who is generally elected and commands a larger group.

baraka, plenty, plenitude, blessing manifested by prosperity, a power inherent in or transmitted by igurramen which leads to blessedness.

bdân (a plural) condition of being divided, separated, i.e. the condition in which brothers or wider agnates (or larger social groups) find themselves when they have divided their property. Opposed to 'mân'.

bled, land, countryside - an Arabic word adopted into the current usage of North African French.

Bortkiz, Portuguese. Alleged proto-population of the Atlas, presumed to be non-Islamic and identified by Berbers with the Portuguese.

Caid (Kaid, Qaid). p.t.o.

Caid (Kaid, Qaid). historically, the head of a tribal unit recognised or appointed by the central power. Under the French, until 1955, the Caid was generally selected from the tribal unit of which he was to be head and continued to live within it. Since 1956 and Independence, the term has been applied to the Moroccan successor of the previous French district officers, and is a civil servant, living in a governmental outpost, transferable from place to place and in general administering a social unit of which he is not himself a part.

dadda, term used by some tribal groups in sense of 'grandfather' (for which the Ihansalen used 'bahalo'). Used by the Ihansalen mainly in naming certain important ancestors, e.g. Dadda Said (Sidi Said Ahansal, ancestor of all Ihansalen), or Dadda Atta, (ancestor of all Ait Atta).

dawamen, irrigable land (opposed to 'l'bur', non-irrigable fields).

douar, now a general Moroccan term for 'village', from Arabic through North African French into administrative language.

fquih, pl. foquaha scribe, cleric, lawyer — applied to village scribes and to anyone literate in the traditional (Arabic) sense. Virtually equivalent to tal'b (pl. tolba).

Habus, a form of property ownership. In the plain, often a pious foundation, the proceeds of which support a mosque. In the hills, 'familly' habus is a kind of entailed property, precluding sale by inheritors, and excluding female inheritance.

Hajj one who has made the pilgrimage to Mecca. Occurs in names.

harka, Berberised form harkt. A band of men grouped together for a warlike expedition.

ighern, pl.ighirmen	Characteristically, this term means a collective store-house fort. But it can be used to mean simply a type of building (tall, tower-like) irrespective of its use, or any building used as a collective storehouse, or in other areas or contexts the social unit inhabiting a dwelling or continuous block of dwellings.
ighs, pl. ighsan	clan, a segment of a tribe (taqbilt). Can be applied at a variety of levels (of size), e.g. one may speak of the ighsan of (within) a village, or of the ighsan of a large tribe which themselves comprise a number of villages.
imgilli, pl. imgellen	conjurors, those who jointly take part in a collective oath.
imi,	mouth; also used in various figurative senses and frequent in place names. E.g. Imi n'Ilissi, mouth-of-(the valley of)-Ilissi, i.e. the point where the valley empties out into a larger one. Or, a generic term: imi n'zawuyit, the mouth of a lodge, the point, possibly a gateway, through which one approaches the principal shrine.
jemaa (or jema'a)	assembly, Friday, mosque. In the literature, on Berbers, used mainly in the first of these three connected senses.
Kadi (Cadi, Qadi)	judge, specifically Koranic judge, or one held to be such.
kanun	codified, recorded laws or rules. Neither the thing nor the word are much in evidence in the central High Atlas.
l'bur,	non-irrigable fields. Opposed to 'dawamen'.
leff,	a term prominent in literature on Berbers in the sense of systems of alliance, which are permanent, transitive (if A is 'leff' with B, and B with C, then A is with C), and geograph-ically discontinuous in a chessboard pattern, an which constitute one of two exhaustive moieties of the area.

(continued - over)

leff, continued	In the central High Atlas, the term is in frequent use, but not in this sense. It means simply alliance, which may be ad hoc, impermanent, which is intransitive, and which entails neither a system of moieties nor a chess-board pattern.
makhzen, maghzen.	government, and particularly traditional Moroccan central government.
mān,	the state of being in indivision concerning property, opposed to 'bdān'.
marabout,	a word which has become part of French, particularly in North Africa, in roughly the same as 'derwish' has been naturalised in English. May mean either prominent member of religious fraternity or of mountain holy lineage.
n'	of. Frequently occurs in names, both of places and people. Tillouguit n'ait Isha, bridge of the people of Isha; or Fatma n'Zida, Fatma of Zida's (i.e. her daughter).
qaida, quaida,	Arabic word used by Berbers, meaning custom or customary law or habit, (equivalent to 'urf), and opposed to Holy or codified law.
Sherif, pl. Shurfa,	those who are (or are held to be) descendants of the Prophet.
Shra'a,	Moroccan and Berber way of referring to Sharia, Holy Koranic law.
siba	condition of political dissidence, independence of central power
Sidi,	a respectful form of address, incorporated into the names of those who habitually command respect, especially the effective hereditary saints. The Ihansalen are particularly prone to use names which are such short abbreviations of the Prophet's name that they are virtually unusable without the 'Sidi' -- Sidi Mha, Sidi Mu'a, Sidi Moha.

Sidna,	(Arabic) our master, when used without qualification refers to the Sultan or King of Morocco. Used in compounds: Sidna Ali, the Prophet's son-in-law, or Sidna Jibril, the Archangel Gabriel.
t---t,	standard Berber feminisation of a word. Used also in sense of diminutive. (E.g. aghbalu spring, taghbalut little spring.) Foreign loan words tend to get this treatment.
tada,	a special kind of cross-tribe relationship between families or groups, ideally permanent, involving mutual aid, and particularly significant in facilitating extra-tribal travel.
tagellit,	collective oath.
tagust,	a metal peg hammered into the ground to attach animals.
tal'b, pl. tolba.	Teacher, scribe, virtually equivalent to 'fquih'.
Tamazight	Dialect of Berber spoken in Middle Atlas.
taqbilt,	tribe.
Tarifit,	dialect of Berber spoken in the Rif.
Tarika, pl. turuk.	(Arabic) literally a way, but meaning specifically a religious fraternity (a religious way).
Tashilhait	dialect of Berber spoken in Southern Morocco.
tigmi,	house, also used in sense of the social unit inhabiting a house or continuous block of houses.
timzguida,	generally the Berber for mosque, though in central High Atlas used rather for open places used for oaths and prayer.
tizi,	pass (in the geographic sense), frequently figures in place names, e.g. Tizi n'Ilissi, the pass at the top of (the valley of) Ilissi.

u, a patronymic connective in general use in male names, e.g. Moha u'Brahim, Moha son of Brahim. Can also be simply attached to subsequent name, e.g. u'Sherif, son of the Sherif, member of Sherif family.

'urf, custom, as for 'qaida'.

ut connective in names, indicating that the subsequent word is a name not of the father, but of the mother or of her patric¢lan. For instance, Ait ut'Sfia are the clan descended from the woman Sfia; Mohamed n'ut Baba is descended from a woman whose father or patriclan was 'Baba'. In Zawiya Ahansal, many intra-village clans claiming common male ancestor differentiate themselves in their names by means of this common ancestor's co-wives.

u'tada, one who is (in the relationship of) tada.

u'tighsi, one who is member of a group by voluntary association, through having made a sacrifice to it and being accepted - as opposed to members by birth.

zawiya, Berberised form zawuyit. in the mountains, a settlement either centred on an important shrine or containing important igurramen. Elsewhere, may mean shrine or centre used for religious purposes.

ziara, Berberised ziat, religious donation.

Note

Aid, 'azib, baraka, caid, harka, Hajj, jemaa, kadi, kanun, qaida, sherif, shra'a, tal'b, tarika, 'urf, zawiya, ziara, are all Arabic loan words. Berber use tends to assimilate the Arabic particle ('l' or reduplication of initial consonant) into the word.

Bled, douar, marabout, with this spelling of Arabic origin, have become parts of North African French.

p.t.o.

Spelling

Those words which are already prominent in the literature or on maps etc., I have continued to spell in one of their customary forms. With regard to words without such use I have followed my own quite untalented and linguistically untrained ear. Both these practices are offensive to linguists, and I here give some spellings recommended by them:

akhater, ikhatarn, aqqa, amghar n-ufilla, amghar n-ussegwas, or amghar n-ussugwass, bahalla, suq or ssuq, bddan, or bd'an, blad, Qaid, dau w-aman, or ddaw-waman, lbur, fqih, d'uwar, or duwar, Qadi, qanun, mann, (for män), tagallit, tigemmi or tigimmi, tikhsi, timzgida, zawit or zzawit (for zawuyit), zzyart or ziyart (for ziart), ziyara (for ziara).

I have not adopted these more correct spellings in the text for a number of reasons. Accuracy is in any case not to be had without phonetic spelling devices, and the linguists themselves are not in full agreement. In the meantime, it is inconvenient to 'disguise' words familar from sociological writings, and I am also reluctant to persuade myself retrospectively that I heard what I 'ought' to have heard: without, at the same time, wishing to contradict the linguists. But anyone treating this study as a source of information on phonetics would be misguided. On the other hand, I take responsibility for what my study says or implies about the semantics of the words employed.

Appendix on Method

I first visited the central High Atlas, though not inner Ahansal-land itself, during the Christmas vacation 1953/54. Subsequently, field-work proper was undertaken during the following periods:

(i) Summer vacation 1954.
(ii) Easter till Summer vacation inclusive, 1955.
(iii) Summer vacation 1956.
(iv) Christmas vacation 1957/58.
(v) Summer vacation 1959.
(vi) Easter vacation 1961.

The total period spent in the field was over a year. Field periods (i) and (ii) were spent in Zawiya Ahansal (i.e. the 'main lodge') itself, occupying a house in it and in effect constituting, with my wife, one of its households. The house occupied during period (i) belonged to the Ait Sidi Mulay, family No.1 of the lodge, and the house occupied during period (ii) belonged to the Ait Amhadar, family No.2. These two families are the Montagues and the Capulets of Zawiya Ahansal.

Our house during the second period was much better than that of the first, and it was provided for us by the Ait Amhadar to demonstrate their superiority to the Ait Sidi Mulay. During the second period and even towards the end of

the first, we tended to be identified with the Ait Amhadar, though not to the point of overt hostility with the Ait Sidi Mulay. The reason for this, from our viewpoint, was that the Ait Sidi Mulay were not very willing or gifted informants: partly because they are not over-endowed intellectually, and mainly because at that time they were and had to be extremely cautious. This was the time of the Moroccan political crisis, involving a great deal of violence and culminating in large scale massacres at Oued Zem and elsewhere, and the Ait Sidi Mulay, as office-holders under the French, were in a difficult position. So, when we were courted and adopted by the Ait Amhadar, who being out of power had more time on their hands and were far more willing and capable to discuss matters.

But despite such alignments, in the main lodge I never worked through special informants. During the first field trip I carried out a sociological census of this lodge, and I always continued to gather information on it from a range of people and by observation and participation. Neither there nor anywhere else did I ever use paid informants.

During period (iii), which was also the time during which the newly Independent Moroccan administration was beginning to run the region, I was given a house, of the type normally given to government soldiers, in the administrative outpost, and I used this as a base. But I continued

to spend most of my time in the lodge or camping at other villages.

During periods (iv), (v) and (vi) I did not establish a household or base in any one place but did a great deal of travelling, staying in numerous villages in the Ahansal area.

Thus my knowledge of the main lodge itself is based on prolonged residence and frequent and prolonged visits subsequently. The Ahansal settlements of Amzrai, Tighanimin and Taria are all within two hours' walk of the main lodge, and I know them and their inhabitants both from visits there whilst living at the main lodge and from frequently staying in them. I also repeatedly camped at Taria and took a sociological census of it.

I have also stayed repeatedly at the following more distant Ahansal settlements: Temga, Bernat, Troilest. I have stayed once at Asker, Sidi Aziz, Tidrit, Sidi Said Ahansal of Usikis, the settlement among the Ait Habibi of Tagzirt, Ait Khand u Yussif, and Akka n'Ahansal, and I visited more than once, without staying, Sidi Ali u Hussein and Aganan. I visited, without staying, Tassamert, Tamderrut, Igli, u'Tarra and Tabarocht. Thus the description of saintly settlements and their diversity is based on observation and not reports, though the thoroughness of the observation varies from settlement to settlement.

I frequently stayed with members of the lay tribes served by the Ihansalen, but in as far as I did not live with any one of them for a protracted period my knowledge of their organisation depends in a greater degree on informants. It should be said that the saints and the lay tribes are so complementary that I found out a good deal about the saints from the lay tribes, and vice versa (without, needless to say, taking such reports at face value). Also, lay tribesmen are of course frequent visitors in the lodges. I have frequently stayed with the lay groups close to the main lodge - the Ait Abdi, the Ait Atta of Talmest and the Ait Atta of Usikis, and I have stayed with members of Ait Isha, Ait Mhand, Ait Meghad, Ait Bu Ulli, Ait Mazigh, Ait Bu Gmez, Ait Bendeq, and passed through and camped in the territory of others.

Language: for various reasons (lack of talent, discontinuity of periods in the field, non-existence of books on the local dialect) I have never learnt Berber properly. I could communicate and understand in it well enough to <u>live</u> locally without an interpreter (and I often did so sometimes for longer periods and whilst moving about), to follow what was going on (particularly in social contexts with which I was familiar), and to be able to check whether my interpreter was on the right lines: but for complicated interrogations I did have to rely on an interpreter. I used mainly one interpreter (except in 1956 when I imported one from the plain) who happens to be the only Ahansal to speak French at all

adequately: a local boy - as he was when he began working for us - who had had two years' French schooling at a school attached to a garrison where his uncle was serving.