

## 1. Description

1.1 Name(s) of society, language, and language family: Imazighen, Tamazight, Berber

1.2 ISO code (3 letter code from ethnologue.com): tzm

1.3 Location (latitude/longitude): central region 29°30' to 34°00'N and from 3°30' to 6°30' W (2, p2)

1.4 Brief history: The transhumant Imazighen tribes of Central Morocco are more recent than the sedentary tribes of other Berbers. (2, p4) "The great northwest passage of Imazighen from the Saghro massif across the Atlas in search of grass for their sheep began about 1550 and was still unfinished when the Franco-Spanish protectorate was established in 1912." (2, p4) Between 1912 and 1956, wars between France and Spain occupied the territory, and in 1956 Moroccan independence was declared, and the Berber Dahir was rescinded, and normal Muslim law courts were installed in the Berber-speaking areas. (2, p4)

1.5 Influence of missionaries/schools/governments/powerful neighbors:

- "To stem the rapid loss of culture and language, several Moroccan universities are opening Imazighen programs. Several Imazighen Web sites on the Internet aim to foster a sense of unity within the Berber diaspora outside North Africa. Selected schools offer courses in Tamazight, Tachilit, and Tarifit, three of the most commonly used Berber languages." (7, p1)
- "'First the Arabs came and wanted to take our land," Omimoun recounts, "then the French came and wanted the same. The French not only wanted our land, they even demanded that we work for them and pay them taxes." This was an affront to a man who used to receive payment himself in return for his services to the community. Upon realizing the French threat to the Imazighen way of life, the scattered families of the region took up arms. In a decisive but now long-forgotten fight, they defeated the approaching French army in the battle of Marmoucha. Morocco continued to be a French colony, however, and life was not the same for the Imazighen. When Morocco gained independence in 1956, Omimoun celebrated by building the most impressive ksar in his hometown. Many Moroccans moved into the hurriedly vacated, modern French houses. Omimoun has fought all his life to preserve the culture and customs of his people. Other Imazighen opted for a different path. Some collaborated with the French in an effort to diminish Arab domination. For their services, the French rewarded them handsomely. Some, like the Glaoui family of southern Morocco and especially the French-appointed pasha (governor) of Marrakech, gained notoriety due to their excessive lifestyles and cruelty. After independence, this collaboration with the European colons led to suppression of all things Berber in the Maghreb. (7, p1)
- "In 2000, 84 percent of foreign direct investment in Morocco originated from the European Union." (5, p45)

1.6 Ecology (natural environment): especially mountainous, the Middle Atlas has agricultural and stock-raising potential (2, p2)

1.7 Population size, mean village size, home range size, density:

- In the cultural region of Northwest Africa, the Imazighen account for at least 13% of the regional population. (5, p37)
- Tamazight dialect group estimated population 3,150,000 (5, p39)

## 2. Economy

2.1 Main carbohydrate staple(s): wheat and barley (2, p5), and an introduction of apples and potatoes in the last two decades by the Ministry of Agriculture (8, p1)

2.2 Main protein-lipid sources: sheep (2), goats and donkeys (7, p1)

2.3 Weapons: Bow and arrow, blowguns

2.4 Food storage: N/A

2.5 Sexual division of production: "In precolonial times, feuding and warfare were everywhere male occupations, as is true today of agriculture, driving animals, and, very occasionally, hunting. Women do all the housework (except for making tea for guests, a male occupation) and perform two agricultural tasks: helping the men with the harvest and taking newly cut grain in baskets to the threshing floor. Men build the houses but women whitewash the walls and blacken and smooth the floors, bring in manure to the collective manure pile, milk the animals, and fetch water and firewood. Poultry and rabbits are also exclusively female concerns. Marketing was traditionally a man's job, but, even in colonial times, poorer and older women could be seen vending at market stalls, and today women are as numerous in the markets as are men. Smaller boys and girls both herded goats on the slopes, and girls tended younger children. At home the sex division of labor has remained much as it was traditionally, but both sexes have become exposed to more varied occupational opportunities. Greater emphasis on schooling has made small boys especially less available for household chores." (2, p7)

2.6 Land tenure: Agricultural land is traditionally inherited patrilineally throughout Morocco, but whether or not it is divided up among sons on their father's death or remains in indivision is a question that, in most cases, must be resolved on the spot. Transhumant Imazighen were more inclined to remain in indivision. Land closest to settlements is, in all areas, generally used for agricultural purposes, with or without irrigation; land farther away is used for grazing and tends to be held by the community in indivision. (2, p7)

2.7 Ceramics: The Imazighen and Ishilhayan are the only two tribes where pottery making carry occupational stigmata. (2, p6)

2.8 Specified (prescribed or proscribed) sharing patterns: The Imazighen have "traditionally managed their common property with an ancient system of pasture and rangeland regulation, called the agdal system." (8, p1) Communities also traditionally have practiced touiza, volunteer labor at community and family level when mutual benefitting work needs to be done. (8, p1)

2.9 Food taboos: N/A

2.10 Canoes/watercraft? N/A

## 3. Anthropometry

3.1 Mean adult height (m and f): N/A

3.2 Mean adult weight (m and f): N/A

#### **4. Life History, mating, marriage**

- 4.1 Age at menarche (f): Sometime between the ages of eleven and fourteen is the general age of the first menstrual cycle. (6, p48)
- 4.2 Age at first birth (m and f): N/A
- 4.3 Completed family size (m and f): “The nuclear family of father, mother, and unmarried children constitutes the domestic unit, all of those members eat together when guests are not present, but - owing to the prevalence of male labor migration to Europe – women are now often de facto heads of rural households.” (2, p9)
- 4.4 Inter-birth-interval (f): N/A
- 4.5 Age first marriage (m and f): Puberty is, traditionally, not long before the age to marry. (2, p9)
- 4.6 Proportion of marriages ending in divorce: 3% (2, p8)
- 4.7 Percent marriages polygynous, percent males married polygynously: “Polygynous marriages accounted for 11 percent” of the total marriages (with each wife having a separate household) (2, p8)
- 4.8 Bride purchase (price), bride service, dowry?: Bride-price is minimal (2, p9)
- 4.9 Inheritance patterns: Patrilineage (2, p9)
- 4.10 Parent-offspring interactions and conflict: Women spend most time with children, and teach Tamazight to their children. (5, p1)  
Men however are gone with the sheep during spring and summer, so don’t get to spend that time with children. (2, p5)
- 4.11 Homosexual activities, social attitudes towards homosexuals: N/A
- 4.12 Pattern of exogamy (endogamy): endogamy (2, p9)
- 4.13 What is the belief of the role of males in conception; is paternity partible? Are these “other fathers” recognized? N/A
- 4.14 What is the belief of the mother’s role in procreation exactly? (e.g., “receptacle in which fetus grows”): “Motherhood is highly esteemed and the status of a woman increases when she has children” (6, p1)
- 4.15 Is conception believed to be an incremental process (i.e., semen builds up over time)? Not from what was researched
- 4.16 Occurrence of sexual coercion, rape N/A
- 4.17 Preferential category for spouse (e.g., cross cousin) Parallel-cousin marriage with the father’s brother’s daughter is strongly favored (2, p9)
- 4.18 Do females enjoy sexual freedoms? N/A
- 4.19 Evidence of giving gifts to extramarital partners or extramarital offspring N/A
- 4.20 If mother dies, whose raises children? N/A
- 4.21 Adult sex ratio: number of adult males divided by number of (reproductive) females N/A
- 4.22 Evidence for couvades: None
- 4.23 Different distinctions for potential fathers (e.g., lesser/younger vs. major/older) N/A
- 4.24 Kin avoidance and respect? N/A
- 4.24 Joking relationships? N/A
- 4.25 Patterns of descent (e.g., bilateral, matrilineal) for certain rights, names or associations : Descent is patrilineal and residence is patrilocal (2, p7)
- 4.26 Incest avoidance rules: No, parallel cousin marriage is preferred (2, p9)
- 4.27 Is there a formal marriage ceremony? Yes, “the marriage ceremony is the most important, lengthy, elaborate ritual for both sexes” (2, p13)
- 4.28 In what way(s) does one get a name, change their name, and obtain another name? N/A
- 4.29 Is marriage usually (or preferred to be) within community or outside community? (m/f difference?) “Among the Imazighen of south-central Morocco, parallel-cousin marriage with the father’s brother’s daughter is strongly favored...” (2, p9)
- 4.30 Are marriages arranged? Who arranges (e.g., parents, close kin)? Women can marry freely (7, p1)
- 4.31 Evidence for conflict of interest over who marries who: none

#### **Warfare/homicide**

- 4.31 Percent adult (male) deaths due to warfare: N/A
- 4.32 Outgroup vs ingroup cause of violent death: “In Morocco, several Amazigh groups unsuccessfully attempted failed separatist movements for their respective regions during the colonial period... Since then, Amazigh separatist movements have been rare, but Imiazighen have remained a substantial military factor in the region.” (5, p42)
- 4.33 Reported causes of in-group and out-group killing:
- “By colonial times (after the Rifians were defeated in 1926), vengeance killings became far less common than they had prior to 1921” (2, p12)
  - “In Morocco, the government has generally accommodated the Imazighen, thus averting conflict in the 1970s.” (5, p52)
- 4.34 Number, diversity and relationship with neighboring societies (external relations):
- “Contending with the unwanted intrusions of foreigners and protecting their land and herds have always been critical issues.” (7, p1)
  - “In the Middle Atlas tensions between the founding families and the newcomers derive from disputes about access to land and other resources.” (3, p36)
- 4.35 Cannibalism? None

#### **5. Socio-Political organization and interaction**

- 5.1 Mean local residential (village) group size: local communities consist of three or four fortlike structures called igharman. Each has a central courtyard and internal staircases leading to individual rooms of the various nuclear families, comprising the several patrilineages that constitute the tribal section (2, p5)
- 5.2 Mobility pattern: (seasonality): The Imazighen take their sheep on transhumance up into the Atlas in spring, pasture during the summer, and return to their permanent igharman in the fall for agricultural operations (2, p5)
- 5.3 Political system: (chiefs, clans etc, wealth or status classes):
- “Their social structure is highly decentralized. Each settlement, extended family, and nomadic group is a self-contained entity, and there has never been an Amazigh political entity larger than a village” (7, p1)
  - In pre-colonial years, “Among the Imazighen tribes, annual elections for chiefs at the tribal, sectional, and community levels were held in spring through rotation and complementary of participant seasons. Each year, it was the turn of one of the sections to provide the chief; its members sat apart, and members of the other section selected the chief from among them. The chief’s badge of office was a blade of grass that the electors placed in his turban.” (2, p11)
  - “As of the 1990s, tribes were nominally eradicated administratively, and the tribal sections were given way to the rural commune. At the same time, the communal councils were still elected and representative bodies met every week in the markets to deliberate on local issues.” (2, p1)
- 5.4 Post marital residence: N/A
- 5.5 Territoriality? (defined boundaries, active defense): “...one study of communal land access in the Tamazight communities of Morocco’s Middle Atlas Mountains found that Arab settlers from other regions of Morocco generally do not integrate into these Amazigh communities. This is due to the hostility of the local community, and unwillingness of the settlers to respect land use customs of local residents.” (5, p43)
- 5.6 Social interaction divisions ? (age and sex): “Grandparents and grandchildren are close, but sex segregation begins when boys and girls reach 6 or 7 years of age and start to herd goats. By the time they reach puberty, which traditionally is not long before the age to marry, it is fully ingrained.” (2, p9)
- 5.7 Special friendships/joking relationships: “Tattooing was a rite of passage, marking a girl’s transition into womanhood. Usually small groups of girls were tattooed at the same time, making it a very social activity, shared and passed on among women.” (6,p48)
- 5.8 Village and house organization: “Traditionally, an extended family lives together in close quarters, called ksar. These are large houses, built from pise, sunbaked, ocher-colored earth bricks. So seamlessly do these buildings blend into their surroundings that they are hard to detect from a distance. Though constructed from presumably fragile materials, a ksar can be up to four stories high; its rooms are built around a central courtyard with an internal staircase” (7, p1)
- 5.9 Specialized village structures (mens’ houses): N/A
- 5.10 Sleep in hammocks or on ground or elsewhere? N/A
- 5.11 Social organization, clans, moieties, lineages, etc:
- “In the latter half of the twentieth century and particularly since the 1970s as a result of labor migration, the patrilineage has been overshadowed in importance by the nuclear family. About the patrilineage is the local community, and above this the tribal section, and finally the tribe itself.” (2, p10)
  - More recently, the class system is based mainly on wealth and economic considerations. (2, p10)
- 5.12 Trade: “All trade in rural North Africa is carried out in the suq (market), found in almost every tribal territory of sufficient size and named both for the day of the week on which it is held and for the tribe in whose land it is located. The Imazighen region markets are often located on the fringes of tribal territories (2, p6).
- 5.13 Indications of social hierarchies? Evidence of a tribe elder was reported by Gray, “It is not uncommon that visitors who take the half-day trek up the mountain to see the elder bring bad news. Perhaps they come with word about a relative who is seriously ill or has died. So custom demands that approaching guests yell greetings and reassure Omimoun from afar that all is well. The old man takes a few steps downhill and then awaits the customary greetings from the approaching company. Graciously he bows to receive kisses on the center of his turbaned head, a sign of respect.” (7, p1)

## **6. Ritual/Ceremony/Religion (RCR)**

- 6.0 Time allocation to RCR: Muslim religious festivals collectively last for over a month, spread throughout the year, and a Friday sermon happens weekly (2, p13)
- 6.1 Specialization (shamans and medicine): There is no intermediary between man and God, but all have a fqih (school masters), who teaches the boys to recite the Quran, leads the prayers in the masque, gives the Friday sermon, writes charms intended to cure diseases. (2, p13). For medical issues, traditional healers continue to flourish, but hospitals and clinics are much in use (2, p13)
- 6.2 Stimulants:
- 6.3 Passage rituals (birth, death, puberty, seasonal): Circumcision is performed around age 5-6, and the boys are told to be brave by their elders. Together with the first haircut, these are the rites of passage for boys. There is no circumcision for females. There are also major ceremonies for birth, marriage, and death for individual life cycles. (2, p13)
- 6.4 Other rituals: Normal Muslim religious holidays/festivals are observed by everyone. These include ‘Ashura (celebrated the first ten days of the first month, presents are given to children during this holiday), Ramadan (in the ninth month), ‘Ayd al-Saghir, (“Small Feast” to break the fast of Ramadan), the ‘Ayd al-Kabir (“Great Feast”, when a sacrifice of a sheep is given from each household, occurs in last month), and the pilgrimage to Mecca. (2, p13)
- 6.5 Myths (Creation): the Amazigh belief in metaphysical powers. This is expressed in various forms. Belief in djinns, spirits that intervene in human life for good or evil purposes, is widespread. Tales of the djinn in the bottle or the magic lamp are familiar to Western audiences. (7, p1)
- 6.6 Cultural material (art, music, games):

- Pottery decoration and rug weaving, and are performed by women (2, p13)
- Ahidous: a public poetry and dance performance. Men and women face each other in parallel lines, dance by swaying back and forth, men perform verses of oral poetry and women repeat them. (6, p47)

#### 6.7 Sex differences in RCR:

- “Women dominate the weaving process, metaphorically giving life to textiles. In rural areas they comb, spin, and dye wool for the blankets, shawls, and carpets that they weave on upright vertical looms. Wool has considerable baraka, or "blessing," and some of this baraka is transferred to the weavers. Amazigh women who work wool are highly respected, and it is said that a woman who makes forty carpets during her lifetime is guaranteed passage into heaven after she dies.” (6, p44)
- “The loom and the act of weaving are also believed to have baraka and, like the wool itself, are related to fertility and ultimately to motherhood. When the warp threads are attached to the vertical loom, the textile is said to be born and have a "soul" or ruh, echoing women's role in human reproduction. In some areas of Morocco, weavers physically straddle the warp threads and beams of the loom before they are raised, symbolizing the birth of the textile (Messick 1987:213). The textile then moves through youth, maturity, and old age as it is woven. (6,p44) Women have the power of life over a textile, and when a weaver finishes it, she cuts it from the loom and the textile is said to die. This personification of the textile underlines women's reproductive and creative powers and, by equating textiles with humans passing through the life cycle, reinforces women's roles in the propagation of Amazigh identity. (6,p44)

6.8 Missionary effect: “When the Arabs arrived in the seventh century, bringing Islam, they intermarried with the natives and made their new brothers in the faith their equals. In fact, the Maghreb countries are among the few places in the world where Islam was not spread by the sword; here the peoples submitted (Islam means submission) peacefully.” (7, p1)

6.9 RCR revival: “To stem the rapid loss of culture and language, several Moroccan universities are opening Imazighen programs.

Several Imazighen Web sites on the Internet aim to foster a sense of unity within the Berber diaspora outside North Africa. Selected schools offer courses in Tamazight, Tachilit, and Tarifit, three of the most commonly used Berber languages. It is important to note that this newfound support for Berbers serves a political end as well. Thus, the late King Hassan II encouraged use of various Imazighen languages in an effort to counter the rise of fundamentalist Islamic groups.” (7, p1)

#### 6.10 Death and afterlife beliefs:

“Death may be attributed either to natural or supernatural causes, and every community has its cemetery. If the deceased is a man, his body is washed and enshrouded by the fqih, and if a woman, by another woman. Anyone who dies in the morning is buried the same afternoon and anyone who dies at night is buried the following morning, in a hole that must be only a spread handspan plus an extra half-thumb length in width. Of overriding importance in the orientation of an Islamic grave is the qibla, the direction of Mecca. In Morocco, the body is therefore placed in the grave more or less on its right side, with its face turned toward Mecca, while the fqih intones an appropriate chapter of the Quran. Only men attend funerals, and among the Imazighen the kinsmen of the deceased give a feast seven days after the death for those who mourned at the burial. In the Rif, a widow gives a feast forty days after her husband's death, which theoretically marks the end of the mourning period. Ideally, it should also correspond to the obligatory 'idda, or three-month period between widowhood, or divorce, and remarriage, in order to determine paternity in case of pregnancy. Anyone who dies during Ramadan will go to paradise immediately, far faster than at any other time of year. The Quran is quite specific on the subject both of paradise, ajinna, and of hell, jahannama ; it also teaches that two invisible recording angels sit on everyone's shoulders, one recording good deeds, the other bad ones.” (2, p14)

6.11 Taboo of naming dead people? None found

6.12 Is there teknonymy? No

6.13 Briefly describe religion (animism, ancestor worship, deism, magic, totems etc.)

- All Morroccans are Sunni Muslims of the Maliki rite. (2, p12) Their beliefs are the same as Sunni Muslims everywhere, “with a strong emphasis on Baraka (“blessing”), the charisma and miracle-working abilities of shurfa’, descendants of the Prophet, whose shrines dot the countryside and whose living representatives have traditionally been mediators of conflicts between lineages or sections of lay Berber tribesmen.” (2, p12)
- “Imazighen continue to seek the advice of local saints, known as "friends of God," whom they believe cure physical and mental ailments and offer comfort and counsel in times of crisis.” (7, p1)

## 7. Adornment

7.1 Body paint: Faces, hands, and ankles adorned with tattoos, hands and feet dyed with henna, and faces painted with saffron (6, p42)

7.2 Piercings:

7.3 Haircut: “Sometime between the age of one and tow years, rural Amazigh and Arab children alike are given gender-specific hair styles, which vary slightly in each region of Morocco. The hairstyles of both boys and girls include an azag, a thin, vertical band of hair that runs from the front or middle of the head to the nape of the neck, although the azag worn by girls is longer and thicker. Boys sometimes grow a single lock of hair on the right side of the head called a takiot in Tamazight, while girls wear longer, thicker locks on both sides of the head and grow tawenza, ‘a fringe of bangs.’” (6, p48)

7.4 Scarification: None

7.5 Adornment (beads, feathers, lip plates, etc.):

- “Body adornment-such as tattoos, henna designs, and hairstyles-and jewelry-such a fibulae-draw attention to the human form, playing off the balance of the body’s bilateral symmetry.” (6, p47)
- Adornment and dress and body art has changed in recent years. Jewelry, hairstyles, and tattooing have all reduced in numbers, tattooing changing the most. “. . .in the recent past, when a girl reached puberty. . .her mother, aunts, or family friends would tattoo her face and wrists. Tattooing was a rite of passage, marking a girl’s transition into womanhood.” (6, p47). Currently, however, Islamic beliefs have put and end to most tattoos. (6, p47)

#### 7.6 Ceremonial/Ritual adornment:

- "...on special occasions women wear elaborate silver and amber jewelry." (6, p42)
- "substances containing baraka, such as saffron or henna, are believed to infuse the body with positive healing energy and are applied during rite-of-passage ceremonies that typically include blood flow, such as male circumcision or the loss of female virginity during a wedding ceremony". (6, p49)

#### 7.7 Sex differences in adornment:

- "Berber women are artists. They weave brightly colored carpets, and they adorn their faces, hands, and ankles with tattoos, dye their hands and feet with henna, and paint their faces with saffron (Fig. 2). They embroider brightly colored motifs on their indigo head coverings and on special occasions wear elaborate silver and amber jewelry (Fig. 1). Women both create and wear the artistic symbols of Berber identity, making the decorated female body itself a symbol of that identity" (6, p42)
- "Women also convey their gender identity through dress...both in the way it is worn and in its design. It is through the objects and materials that adorn the body that gender is first inscribed.." (6,p48)

#### 7.8 Missionary effect: see 6.8

#### 7.9 Types of clothing:

- "the woven, hooded cloaks, djellabas, which are no different in style for men and women" (7, p1)
- "The prevalence of fertility symbolism in Amazigh aesthetics is also revealed in the motifs, colors, and composition of the textiles. Weavers organize the composition of a textile so that a single design is repeated within a horizontal band...certain motifs are repeated throughout Morocco, suggesting that they have deep cultural and historical significance." (6,p43)
- Red, green, yellow and black are common to Amazigh textiles throughout Morocco, varying from region to region. "These colors are referred to as the hues of henna. Green is the color of henna leaves and of henna paste when it is first applied to the skin, and good henna will stain the skin nearly black and fade to red and then to a yellow-orange color. The association of these colors with the natural life cycle also extends to the fertility of women and their ability to give life, as demonstrated by the fact that Amazigh brides are commonly dressed in red, green, yellow, and black textiles." (6,p47)
- Men wrap an arezziy, "turban," that symbolize honor and respect. (6,p52)

### 8. Kinship systems

#### 8.1 Sibling classification system: Sudanese kinship terminology (2, p8)

#### 8.2 Sororate, levirate: none

8.3 Other notable kinship typology, especially cross-cousin (MBD/FZD) typology (Crow/Hawaiian/Omaha etc.): "All close kin, whether patrilineal or matrilineal, are addressed either by the appropriate kin term or by name, or, especially if in an ascending generation, by the kin term plus the name. The same holds generally true for known elders of any sort in terms of their kinship distance from the speaker." (2, p8)

### 9. Other interesting cultural features (list them):

#### Language:

- "Women are more likely than men to be monolingual and speak Tamazight in their homes, teaching it to their children. The Moroccan scholar Fatima Sadiqi describes the status of Tamazight and writes that "as a language of cultural identity, home, the family, village affiliation, intimacy, traditions, orality, and nostalgia to a remote past, [Tamazight] perpetuates attributes that are considered female in the Moroccan culture" (Sadiqi 2003:225)" (6 p42)
- "Berber" has been rejected as a pejorative term from the Latin word for "barbarian." Instead they prefer the term Imazighen, defined as "free people." (6, p42)
- "Today, at least 2.1 million Tamazight speakers reside in France, Spain, Belgium, and the Netherlands." (5, p45)

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