Amazigh culture and media: Migration and identity in songs, films and websites

Dahraoui, A.

Publication date
2014
Document Version
Final published version

[Link to publication](#)

Amazigh Culture and Media

Migration and Identity in Songs, films and Websites

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Amazigh Culture and Media: Migration and Identity in Songs, Films and Websites

ACADEMISCH PROEFSCHRIFT

ter verkrijging van de graad van doctor

aan de Universiteit van Amsterdam

op gezag van de Rector Magnificus

prof. dr. D.C. van den Boom

Ten overstaan van een door het college voor promoties ingestelde

commissie, in het openbaar te verdedigen in de Agnietenkapel

op woensdag 30 april 2014, te 12:00 uur

door

Abdel Basset Dahraoui

Geboren te Ighmiren, Alhoceima, Marokko

Promotiecommissie

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ACKNOWLEDMENTS

I would like to thank my supervisor Prof. dr. Patricia Pisters for her continuous support of my PhD research, for her motivation and patience. Her guidance and expertise helped me in all the time of research and writing of this thesis. I could not have imagined having a better supervisor for my PhD study, and without her aid and encouragements I could not have completed this journey. She is one of the most enthusiastic, energetic and smart people that I know.

I also would like to thank my co-supervisor Dr. Daniela Merolla for her immense help and support. She has always been there when I need advice and guidance. She has been a strong co-supervisor, and I am grateful for her helpful suggestions which have helped me to proceed in this research.

I would like to thank the rest of my thesis committee: Dr. Murat Aydemir, Prof. dr. Rosemarie Buikema, Prof. dr. Léon Buskens, Prof. dr. Jeroen de Kloet and Dr. Alexandra Schneider for their time, participation in this process and their intellectual contribution to this research.

I am also thankful for my friends and family. They have been always there for me, especially my mother for raising me up to be who I am today, and my wife, whose encouragement and support have been crucial to the completion of this thesis.

Introduction

The exodus of Amazigh people from the Moroccan Rif region and their settlement in Europe began five decades ago. Since then, the notion of migration is constitutive to their subjectivity. Imazighen perceptions of migration are usually ambivalent and problematic. Although parts of the Amazigh community tend to identify migration as a threat to their cultural identity and memory, there other parts consider it a journey or a process during which the identity of an Amazigh migrant is partially re-constituted. This thesis deals explicitly with this tension.

Although it is a never-ending endeavour to try to cite all the reasons that have driven Imazighen emigration from the Rif region, it is important to name few major events that accelerated the process. Either 'voluntarily' towards Algeria, or forcefully, such as the case with young Riffians who were kidnapped and sent to Spain to fight in the Spanish civil war, the Spanish occupation of the Rif area during the first half of the twentieth century undeniably played a major role in the exit of Imazighen (Casanova 225).[1] The brutality of the Moroccan state after independence against the Rif population was another major factor that pushed many Riffians to leave the region.[2] Migration was one way to escape a bitter reality in the Rif region, and Amazigh cultural artefacts not only document such phenomenon but also discuss its causes and consequences. Importantly, media, such as songs, films, and websites, have been used as tools to raise consciousness among the Amazigh community as well as a weapon to resist oppression, subjugation, and injustice in the Rif region and in diaspora. These cultural artefacts highlight the condition of Amazigh subjects as they move between places and spaces in search of self and dignity.

In effect, migration is a fluid process that has a beginning and an uncertain end, and many Imazighen attempt to articulate their identity within this uncertainty. In this condition, many reify their culture, trying to create a sort of temporal certainty in their existence by portraying Amazigh culture as a stable, rooted culture born and developed in North Africa. However, these reactions show the attitude of a community *in extremis* struggling against oppression in Morocco and against rejection in diaspora. It is important to note that Arab nationalists oppress Imazighen in Morocco and North Africa, while,

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[1] Imazighen of the Rif region migrated in the past to Algeria because of poverty and famine in their region.

[2] After Moroccan independence in 1956, there were a few uprisings, such as in 1958 and 1984, in the Rif region against the central government as a reaction to oppression, poverty, and injustice. These incidents are addressed later in the thesis.

simultaneously, many European states are recently becoming less-welcoming places for immigrants. Like other minority groups in Europe, Imazighen have been the scapegoat of many extreme-right parties and their supporters. Diasporic Imazighen are now trying to articulate their identity in this uncertain condition.

In view of the contemporary uncertainty, I question the roles Amazigh media play in highlighting and assisting the construction and re-articulation of identities that concern the situations in which many Imazighen live. To respond to this questioning, I build on and extend Benedict Anderson's model that regards a nation-state as an *imagined community* that acquires a political consciousness through the exposure of its inhabitants to printed media (B. Anderson 6). I argue that Amazigh media form a common ground for Imazighen both in Morocco and in diaspora, and that these media shape Amazigh consciousness and play a part in enhancing and (re)generating a transnational Amazigh identity. That is to say, this imagined community makes use of media, such as songs, films, and websites, to enhance Amazigh transnational identity.

Imazighen live in various countries and continents and make use of media to create their imagined community, which thrives across borders and defies geographical distances. However, this process is not without setbacks, and uncertainty is one typical hindrance that affects such process. Amazigh media not only highlight this uncertainty but also assist in the re-articulation of Imazighen identity. Identity is a dynamic process that changes continuously, but it keeps cultural elements to assist in creating a community.[3] These elements give birth to new elements which become the cultural glue that bonds diversified identities to make a community and collective memory.

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[3] By cultural elements I mean parts and elements of a culture, such as languages, traditions, memory, art, customs, rituals, habits, and modes of life. These elements are continuously evolving; and they provide their users with the sense of belonging to a particular culture and identity. These parts help create cultural continuity among a community and might prevent its disintegration. I see the past as a limited source of cultural elements and the negotiation of this past at present requires as set of rules that can vary between one culture and another. I build on and extend Appadurai's point in which he argues that the past is governed by a set of norms, therefore finite, cultural resource, and that the role of these norms which govern the debate about the past is to ensure that "when change does occur, it is not entirely at the cost of cultural continuity"(Appadurai 'The past'218). I argue that parts and elements of a culture are the result of negotiations of the past at present. It is the past of a culture in which the idea of change is inherent and a culture that recognises division and debate.

My thesis is situated in the interdisciplinary fields of media studies, literary theory, cultural anthropology, and socio-economic theory. My methodological framework is intertextual reading, based on Mikhail Bakhtin's idea of the dialogic interaction between what he calls 'real and represented worlds'. On this issue, he writes,

> However forcefully the real and the represented world resist fusion, however immutable the presence of that categorical boundary line between them, they are nevertheless indissolubly tied up with each other and find themselves in continual mutual interaction, uninterrupted exchange goes on between them, similar to uninterrupted exchange of matter between living organisms and the environment that surrounds them. (*Dialogic* 254)

Here, Bakhtin underscores the interaction between the real and the represented worlds, and he alludes to this interaction as the matter that unites the two regardless of the existence of a line that may separate them. Importantly, significance emerges in these interactions. Bakhtin, often regarded as the father of contemporary intertextuality, advocates an approach to reading that allows the simultaneous interaction of divergent voices. He emphasises the idea that dialogical interactions reveal the meaning of these voices (324). Bakhtin considers all utterances rooted in language as dialogue or dialogues, and they involve voices that represent various perspectives, social classes, genres, and ideologies. This methodological framework is not just suitable for the analysis of novels and other literary forms but also for an analysis of many cultural phenomena where voices interact. Regarding the possibility of dialogic relationships among cultural objects in general, Mikhail Bakhtin writes, 'Dialogic relationships in the broad sense are also possible among different intelligent phenomena, provided that these phenomena are expressed in some semiotic material. Dialogic relationships are possible, for example, among images belonging to different art forms' (Bakhtin, *Problems* 184-85). Bakhtin speculates the existence of dialogic relationships among any cultural objects and intelligent phenomena as long as there are some forms of semiotics involved.

I make use of this methodology to highlight the meanings yielded from semiotic interactions within and resulting from cinema, music, and Internet forums. I build on Bakhtin's idea of interaction to demonstrate that the media I address in this thesis have internal dialogues, dialogues with other texts, and dialogues with 'the environment that surrounds them'. Further, these dialogic interactions have consequences for understanding Amazigh identity in the contemporary. For instance, I highlight the idea that a song

includes multiple voices interacting amongst each other as well as with voices in other songs and media: these discrete songs interact intertextually with the help of a dialogic analysis. The research I conducted through interviews (with singers, website managers, and a filmmaker[4]) I consider as part of the contexts in which the selected media interact.

Using an intertextual reading to study the selected media helps me to understand them. This framework allows me to scrutinise each song, film, and website, as well as the stories present in them at the levels of content, rhetorical impressions, and overall meaning. Given that meaning emerges in interactions, the media I address in this thesis reveal the way represented, imagined worlds interact with real worlds. As I go through songs I focus on the meanings yielded out of the interaction of voices and utterances present in or around them. Various interactions bear meanings, and there are, among others: the interactions between characters, generations, Amazigh migrants and host societies, the artists and the songs, and the lyrics and music. Songs interact with other songs of similar or different genres, and they also interact with other media. In addition to these interactions in the films addressed, I expose the interaction of images and sound, the filming crew, and the filmed subjects or characters.

While in the first four chapters I use Bakhtin's intertextual reading as a general framework to highlight the meaning yielded from interactions, in the last chapter Mikhail Bakhtin's theories become crucial tools in my focus on and analysis of dialogic interactions and their meanings. That is, in this last chapter, Mikhail Bakhtin gets a more important role, another status, than in the previous ones, since I make use of dialogism to emphasise the interaction of voices of the official national media with voices of ordinary citizens in dialogic websites; in these websites, the local meets the national and global, and in written languages interact with sounds and images. These dialogic websites open the floor for dialogue between: amateur and professional journalism; Tamazight and other languages; web managers, speakers, and respondents; and past, present, and future.

Materials and thesis division

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[4] I interviewd Elwalid Mimoun in Belguim, Khalid Izri and Said Essanoussi in the Netherlands, and Mohamed Bounda and Abdelwahid Dahmani in Morocco.

Amazigh cultural artefacts are endless, and I decided to limit my analysis to a few songs, films, and websites I submit are most representative for the issues of identity and migration.[5] These cultural elements are polyphonic and incorporate heteroglossia.[6] As I go through the materials, I will highlight the idea of interaction in which various voices are dialogically interrelated.

The songs are 'A ḏwer-d a mmi-nu' ('Come Back My Son', 1980) and Khalid Izri's 'Ṭaqeṣṣiṣt Inu' ('My Story', 1997). Elwalid Mimoun, an Amazigh artist currently living in Belgium, performs the first song. The song 'Come Back My Son' concerns the state of confusion of migrants in diaspora, and the example of the perplexed son in the song accentuates confusion and uncertainty. In addition, I select this song for analysis because, in addition to Elwalid's 'Ḏḏšar inu' ('My Village', 1980) and 'Aqbuš's' ('Water Jar', 1986), it has been one of the most popular songs among Riffian Imazighen.[7] It encompasses feelings, such as confusion and uncertainty, which many migrants experience in their host countries. That is, 'Come Back My Son' reflects both the suffering Imazighen have endured in their homeland and their condition as migrants in diaspora. Khalid Izri, who is the most celebrated artist from the Rif region at the moment, performs the second song chosen. Khalid Ichou, or Izri, is a well-known artist in the Amazigh diaspora and throughout North Africa, and he is a migrant who lives in Belgium.[8] 'Ṭaqeṣṣiṣt' is a complex song, since it envelops stories that reflect the intricate livelihood of an Amazigh subject either in his or her host country or in his or her homeland. That is, it depicts the way an Amazigh subject negotiates cultural identity in a fragmented and hostile world, and highlights the importance of cultural elements in creating an Amazigh identity and community.

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[5] Although there is a Moroccan national television channel broadcast in Tamazight, I decided not to lengthily address it in this thesis because it is not representative of Imazighen of Morocco or in diaspora. It is a state-financed television channel that folklorises Amazigh culture at present.

[6] Bakhtin defines polyphony as 'A plurality of independent and unmerged voices and consciousnesses' (*Problems* 6). Heteroglossia are multi-voiced discourses in which various voices dialogically interrelate (*Dialogic* 324). These concepts are addressed later in the thesis.

[7] Elwalid Mimoun is a popular artist both in diaspora and Morocco. He is always invited to song festivals throughout Europe and Morocco. He has thousands of videos on social media such as YouTube, and his name and songs are present in many Amazigh websites. There are many articles and comments on his artistic works. For instance, his songs are available online in the section of *Rif music* on the website agraw.com.

[8] Such as Elwalid Mimoun the name of Khalid Izri is present on all social media, he has thousands of videos on YouTube and all his songs are available on the website agraw.com.

The films I analyse are Jose Luis de No's documentary *Ciudad De La Espera* (*The City of Wait,* 2004) and Said Essanoussi's *The Lost Donkey* (1996). The first film, *Ciudad De La Espera* (hereinafter *The City of Wait*), is a documentary that accentuates the various facets of migration, mainly in Morocco. The filmmaker, in collaboration with the Amazigh artist Belkacem Elouariachi (Qusmit) and the Riffian migrant and anthropologist Dr Mohatar Marzok, explores the phenomenon of migration and its implications on the population in the northern Moroccan city of Al Hoceima. I select this online film because it is the first documentary that tries to show the effects of migration on the inhabitants of the Rif region, particularly in the city of Al Hoceima.[9] The second film is *De Verloren Ezel* (*The Lost Donkey*, 1996), directed by the Amazigh filmmaker who resides in the Netherlands, Said Essanoussi, and is shot both in the Moroccan Rif region and the Netherlands. I choose this film because it is a didactic film that follows the path of an illegal immigrant seduced by the journey of migration and Europe. In addition, the film reveals what remains hidden in the Moroccan national media regarding the experience of migration, such as uncertainty and hardship in Europe, and deeply explores the journey of illegal immigration and its effects on Amazigh culture.

The websites I analyse are dalil-rif.com, agraw.com, and timazighin.nl,[10] each of which is well known throughout the Amazigh diaspora and Morocco. They highlight Imazighen culture, specifically of the Moroccan Rif. For instance, the site dalil-rif.com, which is based in northern Morocco, averages 20,000 visitors a day, mostly Imazighen who live in Europe (Dahmani). In addition, each site relays different materials and approaches to events. Each provides spaces that build 'hominess' online for their users who are usually overwhelmed by uncertainty.

Many reasons motivate my selection of these types of media and these specific objects. First, all the objects I address in this thesis highlight in one way or another the theme of uncertainty. Second, the Amazigh websites I selected create spaces where Amazigh migrants and their compatriots in their country of origin interact. Third, the Amazigh songs and the documentary films listed above are available on the majority of the Amazigh websites and also on YouTube. One may easily access and listen to these songs or

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[9] The Moroccan Rif region is known for its high rates of migrants in Europe.

[10] It is important to note that timazighin.nl and its domain name have folded since the time of writing this thesis. However, the prior owner of the site, Vereniging Timazighin Nederland (Dutch Timazighin Association), still maintain a Facebook page (accessible at *Facebook.com/Timazighin).*

watch the documentary online. Fourth, these items encode and foreground the issues of migration and cultural identity. In addition, these objects reach an audience of multiple cultural formations. That is to say, the selected Amazigh films and websites use both Tamazight and European languages. The songs consist of music, a material, I contend, that has the power to overcome cultural barriers. Additionally, the selected websites, songs, and films typify the massively produced artefacts by Imazighen during the last two decades.

In chapter one, '"Come Back My Son": History and Uncertainty', I analyse 'Come Back My Son' (1980), a song constructed in the form of a dialogue between a mother and her son. While the mother is sad because her son migrated to Germany, the son himself is sad and confused: sad because he does not feel at home in this host country, and confused because he is unable to comprehend the experience of migration or life 'in between' two cultures. In this chapter I provide a historical overview of the migration process of the Amazigh community from the Rif. I see the role of Amazigh media—in light of Appadurai's model of a 'community of sentiments' that describes community as a group who feel and imagine things together—in highlighting the uncertainty that engulfs Imazighen in diaspora as they try to re-articulate their identity (Appadurai, *Modernity* 8). Thus, I argue that uncertainty affects Imazighen communities in diaspora and that their media reflect such confusion and its implications for Amazigh identity.

In chapter two, '"My Story": Memory and Cultural Identity', I look at how Amazigh subjects in diaspora and their homeland strive to articulate their Amazigh cultural identity in an increasingly fast-moving setting through Khalid Izri's song 'My Story' (1997). 'My Story' not only reflects the intricacy of the livelihood of Amazigh subjects, either in host countries or in their homeland, but also depicts the way subjects negotiate their cultural identity in this fragmented and hostile world. Therefore, I look at how cultural elements —parts from traditions, rituals, and memory represented in 'My Story'— constitute, at least temporarily, a remedy that assists Amazigh subjects in articulating their identity in uncertain and unstable settings. Here, I build on Stuart Hall's theory that regards identity as a continuous process that uses history and culture in 'becoming rather than being' (Hall, 'Who Needs' 4). I argue identity is about becoming, being, and belonging. That is, identity is not just changeable but also retains a few shifting markers that promise continuity for a person's identity or a community; further, subjects, as social beings, have a natural need to associate themselves with their families, friends, cultural groups, and communities.

In chapter three, '*The City of Wait*: Mobility and Immobility', I study mobility and immobility in De No's documentary film *Ciudad De La Espera* (*The City of Wait*, 2004). The film, which is mainly a compilation of interviews conducted in the northern Moroccan city of Al Hoceima, explores the phenomenon of migration and its implications on the population of this coastal city. That is to say, the film highlights the state of uncertainty as an aspect which is not only characteristic of Imazighen living in diaspora, but also of their relatives, friends, and compatriots living in the Moroccan Rif region. While migrants are depicted as more mobile than their compatriots in Morocco, *The City of Wait* brings to light various levels of mobility that yield different uncertainties. In the light of Vincent Kaufmann's articulation of the concepts of motility and mobility, I argue that the low levels of acquired motility and access to mobility in *The City of Wait* create uncertainty regarding subjects' current and future existence. Vincent Kaufmann argues that mobility is social, spatial, and virtual and that there are people who have access to mobility and others who do not (Kaufmann 29). I propose there are various levels of access to mobility that affect subjects and their identities. To be precise, there are not only those who have access to mobility and others who do not, but there are also various groups who have different levels of access to mobility. Through *The City of Wait* I argue that the scarcity of possibilities in the Rif region, in addition to low levels of access to mobility, affect the identity process of many inhabitants in this region.

In chapter four, '*The Lost Donkey*: The Subject's Quests in the Realm of Fantasy and Desire', I analyse Said Essanoussi's film *De Verloren Ezel* (*The Lost Donkey*, 1996). The film is shot in the Moroccan Rif region and the Netherlands. Mustafa, the main character in *The Lost Donkey*, sees immigration to Europe as the way to paradise, where he can lead an 'ideal' lifestyle. To fulfil his dream he begins his journey from the Rif region and crosses the Mediterranean to reach Spain and, later, his final destination, the Netherlands. The police catch him and send him back to his village in Morocco. This film highlights two kinds of media: media that incite people to immigrate to Europe (images of 'paradise', and an experience that might bring confusion and uncertainty), and media that help Imazighen comprehend the roots and routes of the journey of migration and assist subjects in escaping the monotonous uncertainty associated with illegal immigration. In light of Jacques Lacan's and Slavoj Žižek's articulations of the concepts of desire and fantasy, I suggest that the experience of illegal immigration depicted in *The Lost Donkey* is

the subject's endless struggle with desires and fantasies.[11] I highlight the emotional state of migrants as they move between various settings and journey in search of self as well as how the film depicts both the journey and the evolution of a migrant's identity.

In the final chapter, 'Home Online: Websites and Dialogism', I study dalil-rif.com, agraw.com, and timazighin.nl. These Amazigh websites allocate spaces in which different voices express their divergent perspectives vis-à-vis subjects which are vital for Imazighen in the Rif area and in diaspora, especially in relation to the idea of home and cultural identity. In addition, I argue these Amazigh websites assist the interactions of voices and elements at various levels that yield utterances addressing and reflecting issues important for Amazigh subjects both in Morocco and in diaspora. I show that home, which usually symbolises stability and roots, takes another dimension online and becomes a complex process that involves various elements. That is, in light of Mikhail Bakhtin's concept of 'dialogism' I contend that Amazigh websites create spaces for identity articulation and help elevate uncertainty, even temporarily, since they provide momentary homes online for their users.[12] Although Bakhtin's work serves as general methodology for the entire research, here it serves as a particular theoretical reference that allows me to unpack dialogical processes on the Internet.

With this research I hope to illustrate the stakes involved with contemporary migration among Imazighen (especially the feeling of uncertainty associated with it). The analysis sheds light on the roles that key media play in dealing with the process of migration and helping Imazighen in the re-articulation of their cultural identity.

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[11] I take my cue from Žižek's *The Plague of Fantasies*, Žižek in *Interrogating the Real*, and Lacan's *Écrits*.

[12] Bakhtin addresses dialogism in *The Dialogic Imagination* (1981) and *Problems of Dostoevsky's Novel* (1984); he refers to the literary genre of the novel as an instance of dialogism that conceives of meaning as the interaction of various voices.

Chapter I: 'Come Back My Son': History and Uncertainty

Come back my son

Come back my dear

Oh mother, *aqq-ayi ḏa* [I am fixed here] in *Rumi*'s land[1]

I saw misery in my land

I saw hardship and suffering

I saw hardship and suffering

Come back my son

Come back my dear

Oh mother, I cannot return to the graveyard

Aqq-ayi ḏa in Germany, in bars drinking whisky

I am married to *ṯaṛumešṯ*,[2] with whom I got children

I am married to *ṯaṛumešṯ*, with whom I got children

Come back my son

Come back my dear

Mother *aqq-ayi ḏa* a stranger

The departure from my homeland (entered in my bones) broke my heart

Oh Mother! Reckon me a loser

Mother! Reckon me a loser

Come back my son

Come back my dear

[The mother crying:] *Aaaah, Aaaah, Aaaah, Aaaah*

Come back to your land to fight alongside your brothers

Come back to your land to get your share. (Elwalid, 'A dwer-d'; my trans.)[3]

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[1] *Rumi*: the word is derived from the word Roman and it is used in North Africa as a synonym for a European or westerner.

[2] *Ṯaṛumešṯ* or *romia*: refers to a female *Rumi*.

[3] One can listen to 'Come Back My Son' and all revolutionary songs listed in this chapter online. Visit the website www.Agraw.com, select 'Rif Music' from the menu, then select the singer from the list.

Introduction

In this chapter I study the song 'A ḏwer-d a mmi-nu' ('Come Back My Son'), which is found on Elwalid Mimoun's first album *Ajjaj* (*Lightening*, 1980). His second album, entitled *Ameṭluɛ* (*Vagabond*), and his last album, *Ṯayyuṯ* (*Fog*), were released in 1986 and 1996, respectively. Elwalid Mimoun addresses various subjects in each of the three albums, like Moroccan-regime oppression of Riffian Imazighen (such as in the song 'Ajjaj'), Amazigh women's rights (notably, 'Ṯeqqim x ijj n weẓru' ['She Sat on Rock']), the phenomenon of migration (such as with 'Ameṭluɛ' and 'Ṯaḏbirṯ' ['Pigeon']), and, as in 'Aqbuš' ('Water Jar), aspects of the Amazigh culture.

Elwalid Mimoun was born in 1959 in the village of Ait Sidel in the suburbs of Nador in northern Morocco (or what is known as the Rif area). He began his career as an artist in the 70s when he was still a young student. Many of his songs, which are inspired by his surroundings, not only highlight the daily life of Imazighen in the Rif region but also of those living throughout Amazigh diaspora. In fact, Elwalid is considered one of the promoters of modern Amazigh music, and he uses his songs as a means to denounce *Almakhzan*.[4] His artwork has gotten him into trouble several times (his debut album was banned in Morocco in the early 1980s, and he has been arrested various times). It seems his

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[4] To trace the origins of the concept *Almakhzan* it is important to examine it within its historical and sociological contexts. In *Tribe and Society in Rural Morocco* (2000), David Montgomery Hart argues that the concept of *Almakhzan* was primarily political. It has been used since the mid-seventeenth century in combination with the word *Bilad* ('land'), such as in the phrase *Bilad Almakhzan*. On the one hand, *Bilad Almakhzan* was used to categorise the regions under the control of the central government for tax purposes. On the other hand, *Bilad Siba* ('Land of abandonment') was used to name the regions that did not pay taxes and over which the central government had little or no control (Hart 8-9). After the arrival of French colonial power in Morocco, the concept of *Almakhzan* was overworked in French colonial sociology. Currently, the concept is widely used in various academic disciplines and also in parliament, media, and the street by all Moroccans. I see *Almakhzan* as the ruling system throughout Morocco, of which the first priority is the well-being of the active elements that guarantee *Almakhzan*'s continuity. That is, metaphorically, I compare Morocco to a circle that includes elements such as institutions, businesses, associations, groups, and individuals; *Almakhzan* is a circle inside this circle that includes institutions, all political parties, businesses, associations, syndicates, *Zawiats* ('religious centres'), groups, and individuals throughout Morocco. The elements inside the circle of *Almakhzan* are active in protecting and regenerating the system, whereas the elements outside the circle of *Almakhzan* are passive as far as the protection of the system is concerned. Those within *Almakhzan* consider Moroccans outside its circle *Raaya* ('passive citizens'). In effect, ordinary people in Morocco generally name anyone associated with the Moroccan government or the ruling system (such as the police, soldiers, governors, ministers, and other official appointments) as *Almakhzan*.

strong motivation and love of music helps him persevere. In the 1990s, he immigrated to the Netherlands, but not feeling at ease there, he resettled in Belgium. Now, he spends most of his time writing short stories and composing lyrics for other Amazigh singers.

'Come Back My Son' reflects both the suffering that Imazighen have endured in their homeland and their uncertain condition as migrants in diaspora. In this chapter I provide a historical overview of the migration process of Amazigh community from the Rif. I see the role of Amazigh media—in light of Appadurai's model of 'community of sentiments' that regards community as a group who feel and imagine things together—in highlighting the uncertainty that engulfs Imazighen in diaspora as they try to re-articulate their identity (Appadurai, *Modernity* 8).[5] I argue that uncertainty affects the Amazigh imagined community in diaspora, and that their media reflect such confusion and its implications on Amazigh identity. Appadurai argues that a modern nation-state grows out of a quintessential cultural product of collective imagination (8). I extend this point to argue that Amazigh transnational identity grows out of the quintessential cultural product of collective imagination. Collective sentiments play an imperative role in creating a transnational Amazigh identity. That is, Imazighen imagine belonging to a transnational Amazigh community due to the collective distribution, interaction, and consumption of the images selectively related to Amazigh culture.

This chapter consists of four main sections. In the first part, I describe the evolution of migration patterns of Imazighen of the Rif region since the 1830s. This general historical overview of the flow of migrants from the Rif area assists in contextualising the song 'Come Back My Son', particularly the uncertainty in it, and elucidates the evolution of the experience of Amazigh migration throughout the whole thesis. In addition, I consider the way the past is reflected in 'Come Back My Son' and other contemporary Amazigh songs, and how this past affects the present identity of Imazighen. The second section investigates the link between songs and the exodus of Imazighen from the Rif region. Given that I will study in detail the role of other media, such as films and websites, in the coming chapters, at this stage the emphasis is placed mainly on Amazigh songs and their role in the process of migration and its implications. The third section considers the journey of

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[5] It is important to note that 'the community of sentiments' in this chapter is not primordial but imagined: Appadurai attributes current group politics to what he names 'the work of imagination' rather than primordial sentiments which he associates with the project of the modern nation-state (*Modernity* 146).

migration and the condition of diasporas. I contemplate the interchangeable use of 'migrant' and 'diasporan' which is followed by an analysis of 'Come Back My Son' and the way it depicts the condition of the Amazigh diaspora, especially in Europe. The final section in this chapter is 'Socio-economic and political condition of Imazighen of the Rif'. These conditions are reflected in the song and partially contribute to the uncertainty that predominates it. The main character realises he is unwelcome in Europe, but he does not want to return to Morocco because of the dire socio-economic and political conditions in the Rif region. In this final part I consider how both the lyrics and the music of 'Come Back My Son' reflect the socio-economic and political conditions in the Rif and the way they affect Amazigh migrants. Importantly, in this section I address one of the main ingredients of each song: music.

Amazigh Migrants between Past and Present

The first element in any song is its title, and the title 'Come Back My Son' contains the idea of return. The title evokes movement from 'a place' to another.[6] Yet, the son does not want to 'return to the graveyard'. The term graveyard comes as a shock, since it raises the question of whether the son used to live in a graveyard. Inspecting the recent history of the Rif area highlights one aspect of this term, namely, the death of a nation-state project.[7] The song, in general, portrays the state of confusion and uncertainty in which the son is entangled. Here, we see that the son is a migrant who feels bound up in uncertainty since he can neither return to the Rif area nor settle down in Europe. This experience is highlighted in the song as a confusing process that affects its sufferers. To comprehend the roots of this uncertainty, it is important to trace the routes Imazighen of the Rif region have taken.

The movements of Imazighen of the Rif region during the last two centuries can be summarised in three major, closely interrelated events: the consequences for the Rif of

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[6] People usually attribute movement between places, but the son's response in the song highlights another stratum of movement that occurs between place and space: between the Rif region as a place and the Amazigh imagined community as a space.

[7] Appadurai, in *Modernity at Large*, argues that the general project of the nation-state is weakened, and this may apply to Morocco as a nation-state now in crisis because of globalisation. However, in the case of the Rif region, the project of the Rif Republic is not simply weak but dead. The idea of an Amazigh nation-state died with the dissolution of the Rif Republic in 1926, which lasted only five years.

the French invasion of and conflict in Algeria, the establishment of the Spanish protectorate in northern Morocco and the early attempts of independence by Riffians, and the exodus of Imazighen towards Europe after the independence of Morocco in 1956.

Before the nineteenth century, many Imazighen of the Rif area enjoyed immigration to foreign countries, and internal migration was also popular. They traveled, particularly during harvest seasons, from the Rif Mountains to work at the farms in the middle and west of Morocco. These seasonal migrants used their earnings to support their families in the rural areas of the Rif. Dutch anthropologist Paolo de Mas argues that those individuals who internally migrated were heads of families, usually fathers who moved when draught hit the Rif region in search for an additional income ('Overlevingsdynamiek'). This form of migration was common among Imazighen of the Rif area in the past, and it is still popular among countryside Riffians. Even if migration cannot always be explained in terms of causes and consequences, highlighting the various aspects of this experience might assist to comprehend the uncertainty associated with it.

Imazighen of the Rif region, Spanish protectorate, and Algeria

Algeria was the first foreign destination for Riffian migrants. After their occupation of Algeria in 1832, the French structured an agricultural system composed of vast farms designed to produce a variety of vegetables and fruits, especially grapes for the French wine industry. As a result, lucrative salaries and the other services the French provided for their employees, such as free housing, tempted many Riffians. Riffian seasonal migrants were the hard workers the French desperately needed to continue their productions. In a national report, Abdellatif Fadlollah et al. assert that the increasing opportunities for wage labour at the French farms—situated mainly in the northern Algerian cities of Algiers and Oran— attracted a large number of Riffian seasonal migrants (51). In view of the fact that unemployed Riffians regarded the job opportunities in Algeria as a gold mine, many of them decided to migrate. Migration of Imazighen of the Rif to Algeria was not only popular during the nineteenth century but also even after the Spanish and French invasion of Morocco in 1912. In addition to the lucrative wages and free housing, the proximity of Algeria to the Rif region was another reason that popularised this destination for Riffian migrants. Initially making the trip to Algeria on foot or on mules, migrants' journeys between Morocco and Algeria became easier after a railway system was completed in 1934.

This railway marks what Arjun Appadurai names a 'new condition of neighborliness', since the trip between Morocco and Algeria shortened from weeks or months to hours.[8]

The hardship in the Rif area, then occupied by Spanish colonialists (1912–1956), also pushed many Imazighen to migrate to Algeria. The Spanish occupation of the Rif region was far worse compared to the conditions in the French protectorate in the rest of Morocco. The Spanish taxed Riffians heavily and exhausted the natural resources of the Rif area by sending raw materials, especially steel, back to Spain. Spanish occupiers only invested in projects like small primary schools and offices for medical consults, which served to gather intelligence for the Spanish military (Mediano 141). Unlike the French, the Spanish neither constructed infrastructures nor made any significant investments in the region. In addition, they restricted the movements of Imazighen from the Rif area to the main Moroccan cities situated in the French zone. Consequently, unemployment in northern Morocco was high and famine widespread. In his article 'Riff War', specialist in military history Douglas Porch argues that many Riffian tribes were driven to starvation or to Algeria after the Spanish invasion. The Spanish occupation of northern Morocco brought disastrous consequences on the socio-economic condition of the population who left *en masse* for Algeria in the early twentieth century.[9] In effect, the flow of Moroccan migrants to Algeria did not stop until 1962 when the border between the two states closed. Undeniably, the Spanish occupation of the Rif area caused suffering for the majority of the population living in this region.

While 'Come Back My Son' records and highlights the uncertainty that characterises Riffian migrants in Europe, only few oral stories record the uncertainty those Riffian migrants in Algeria and their left-behind families experienced during the time of Spanish occupation.[10] Currently, there are means of communication, such as telephones, fax, e-mail, and social media, which facilitate interaction between migrants and their families back in the Rif region. In addition, there are all kinds of media that document and

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[8] Appadurai notes that the development of transport and media create a 'new condition of neighborliness', which sets the stage for the creation of transnational identities (*Modernity* 29).

[9] The French occupation of Algeria also had disastrous consequences on the local population: the French not only destroyed the traditional system of agriculture in the country but also killed half of a million of its inhabitants (Bourdieu and Sayad; Kantowicz).

[10] There are only few personal stories narrated by relatives of former migrants that document the uncertainty in which the Riffian migrants lived in Algeria.

highlight the uncertainty of migration and the condition of left-behind families, such as songs, films, books, and websites. However, there are only a few oral stories that document the uncertainty that both young Riffian migrants experienced in Algeria and the confusion in which left-behind families lived for extended periods. One can imagine the uncertainty with which families live when the one whose earnings are the primary source of support for the entire family, who was usually a young man, travels on foot to Algeria. They do not know whether he made it to Algeria or not, whether he is still alive or dead, or whether he might come back or not.[11] Riffian migrants in Algeria lived in uncertainty too, since many of them had not heard from their families who remained in the Rif region. They did know whether their families were still alive or had died as a consequence of famine and diseases.

Examining 'Come Back My Son' within a historical perspective highlights a few crucial aspects. Elwalid Mimoun elaborates: 'The main character, in the song, describes the suffering in his motherland that actually reflects the dire socio-political condition of Imazighen. In the past, Imazighen, such as Mohamed Abdel Karim Elkhattabi, Mohamed Amazian, and others fought the Spanish occupation and sacrificed their lives in order to live freely in their own land' (Elwalid, interview). Here, the artist traces the sufferings of Imazighen back to the early days of the Spanish occupation when Imazighen endured brutal war, starvation, and persecution.

Imazighen, who were living in the flat lands of the Rif region, escaped to mountainous areas after the Spanish invasion in 1912. They left their houses and proprieties behind and retreated to the mountains beyond the reach of Spanish artillery. They took either refuge with relatives (if they had any in the Rif Mountains) or with voluntary host families who helped refugees during the war. In fact, the Rif Mountains served as a natural shield. The Spanish anthropologist G. A. Meneses claims that because mountains are difficult to access and have harsh weather, ranges like the Atlas, the Rif, the Kabyle, and the Aurès proved ideal shelters for refugees of war. Imazighen in both Algeria and Morocco sought refuge in mountains during wars. The Rif war taught Imazighen of the Rif area the meaning of being a refugee or migrant in one's own land. Even the word used to describe such forced movement—ɛaaq—is pejorative, as it connotes both movement and affliction. Regardless of the hardship of their condition, Riffians not only hoped to defeat the Spanish army stationed in northern Morocco, but also to create their own state.

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[11] It was not unusual to witness, especially in the 1970s and 1980s, the return of elderly Riffians from Algeria assumed dead by both their families and the Moroccan state.

Abdel Karim Alkhattabi, who is also known as Mulay Muḥend, was the leader of Riffian resistance that attempted political self-determination for the Rif region even before Moroccan independence. In 1921 he declared the Rif Republic in northern Morocco independent, with the small town of Ajdir as its capital. Alkhattabi fought the Spanish and defeated their armies on many occasions, notably in the battle of Anoual (22 July 1921) in which a few Riffian fighters annihilated the sophisticated Spanish army (Killingray 8). Various songs portray and praise Alkhattabi and the victories of the resistance against the Spanish occupiers: Tifyur's song 'Moulay Muḥand' (2007), Thidrin's 'Moulay Muḥend' (2002), and Nabil Thawiza's 'Moulay Muḥend' (2000) are few examples. In Ayawen's song 'Aḍar ubarran' (1992), we hear the verse 'Moluay Muḥend the great fighter / with bombs around his neck and his rifle tight to his chest / he annihilated the Spanish in *Aḍar ubarran*' (my trans.). Here, *Aḍar ubarran* refers to the place where the first battle between Rifian freedom fighters against the Spanish army took place. Describing the losses of the Spanish army during the battle of Anoual, historian Manuel Suárez Cortina argues that Riffian freedom fighters killed 10,000 Spanish soldiers imprisoned hundreds (395). To revenge the defeat of the battle of Anoual the Spanish king Alfonso XIII made use of chemical warfare, which demoralised Riffian fighters (Pita 96-102; *Arrhash*). In addition, the eventual Spanish-French alliance ultimately proved catastrophic for the Riffian resistance, marking the end of the five-year Rif Republic and the war as well as the surrender of Alkhattabi. The French captured the Riffian leader and sent him into exile on La Reunion Island, where he remained for twenty years. In 1947, he sought refuge in Egypt, where he lived until his death in 1963.[12]

The name of Abdelkarim Alkhattabi described and praised in many songs and evoked in Elwalid Mimoun's interview above represents a point of reference and identification that might provide temporary stability to many diasporans scattered through the world and feel confused. Here the name of Abdelkarim Alkhattabi becomes, in the imagination of many Riffians, the synonym for a lost nation. Regarding the role of images of home in relation to identity construction, Arjun Appadurai writes, 'Images of a homeland are only part of the rhetoric of popular sovereignty and do not necessarily reflect a territorial bottom line' (*Modernity* 161). Appadurai emphasises the idea that images of homeland, which come to substitute place, are the key ingredients in identity construction. While places were once references and essential elements in constituting identities and

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[12] For more information on the legacy of Alkhattabi, see Woolman.

identifications, we currently see that images and symbols of these places have substituted territory in identity construction and identification. Because, like so many of his compatriots, he lived in diaspora and remained a diasporan even after his death, Alkhattabi becomes for many Riffians the emblem of a transnational community.[13]

After the end of the Rif war, the Spanish forced young Riffian fighters to participate in Franco's army. De Mas affirms that Spain conscripted more than forty thousand Riffians to travel and participate in Franco's army during the Spanish civil war ('Marokkanse Migratie' 113). It was the first time Riffians 'migrated' outside Africa, and it was a traumatic experience. In Massin's song 'Taziri Tamiri' ('Moon Love', 2003) we hear, 'General Franco where are my brothers / are they dead or alive, or frozen by fear'. This verse describes the grief among the inhabitants of the Rif region as a consequence of 'abducting' young Riffians to fight in Spain. This song revolves around the story of a young Riffian girl whose lover was snatched by the Spanish army and sent to the frontline of the Spanish civil war. The lyrics of this song date back to 1936 and were transmitted orally from one generation to another.[14] These Riffians were young men who helped Francisco Franco crush the Republican fighters in Spain.[15] After the end of the Spanish civil war in 1939, the majority of the Riffian fighters returned to their families in the Rif. The rest chose to serve as auxiliary soldiers in the Spanish enclaves of Ceuta and Mellia. Although the act of conscripting Riffian fighters in the Spanish civil war is not a conventional type of migration, it nonetheless marks a new chapter of Imazighen movement to Europe.

The shortage of labour after the Second World War pushed France to recruit Imazighen of the Rif in Algeria to work in Europe. Singer Elwalid Mimoun asserts that European countries imported labour from North Africa (although the process of recruitment was unofficial in Algeria, since the state was still under occupation), and France was active in recruiting Moroccan immigrants (Interview). French employers usually approached many Imazighen of the Rif region in Algeria and offered job contracts to work in France. The majority of those migrants took the offer and traveled to France where they then

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[13] Alkhattabi's relatives and closest friends rumour that his testament was to remain in Egypt as long as the remains of colonialists rule Morocco.

[14] On the issue of transmitting the lyrics of 'Taziri Tamiri', see Yasser Farhat's documentary film S*inging for Survival* (2008).

[15] Both Franco and the Republicans used fighters from different nationalities in their armies (Keene).

settled. In his article on Moroccan migration, Dutch historian Herman Obdeijn argues that in the period between 1949 and 1962 Moroccan migrants in France increased from 20,000 to 53,000, and the majority worked either in the steel industry or in mines. This Algerian recruitment campaign was low in comparison with the mass recruitment that followed Moroccan independence in 1956, and especially after the Rif uprising of 1958.

Imazighen exodus towards Europe

The second verse of the third stanza in 'Come Back My Son' reflects both the idea of deterritorialization and the emotions that accompany such a process: 'The departure from my homeland (entered in my bones) broke my heart'. There are three significant elements in this verse: 'departure', 'my homeland', and 'broken heart'. Diasporans expressing their distress is a message declared through the song, partly because of 'departure' and migration. Here, the song becomes the field in which the Amazigh diasporas interact with their imagined homeland. In this song, the mother, who represents this imagined homeland, is able to interact with her deterritorialized son, or Imazighen generally. Appadurai argues that deterritorialized populations need to keep contact with the homeland, which is partly invented and exists only in the imagination of these populations (*Modernity* 49). Songs like 'Come Back My Son' are a means to keep Riffian Imazighen in touch with their homeland, which has become only an idea in their imagination after they departed for Europe. These means are also important in highlighting the state of emotions of diasporans especially their uncertainty in host countries.

The Rif uprising of 1958 is an event that partially contributed to the early migration of Imazighen of the Rif area towards host countries in Europe. After Morocco's independence and two years of hardship and starvation, Riffians became frustrated with the Moroccan regime. Speaking of this event, Elwalid Mimoun claims that freedom fighters after independence were oppressed, persecuted, and murdered by the Moroccan regime and mercenaries of colonialism in the period from 1958–59 (Interview). In addition, the policy of seclusion and starvation enacted by the Moroccan regime in the Rif area led to millions of Imazighen, in particular, and Moroccans in general, to migrate (Interview). Elwalid points to two factors which led to mass migration to Europe: the persecution of freedom fighters, culminating with the 1958 uprising, and the anarchy and economic distress that followed the invasion of the Moroccan army to the Rif region. Riffians were not only troubled by their economic distress but also by their exclusion from the corridors of power

in the kingdom, which was mainly in the hands of the institution of the monarchy and its close allies with the military and civilian political figures. In his detailed account of the uprising in the Rif, cited in the *Washington Report on Middle East Affairs*, Greg Noakes states that to stop the revolt the crown prince Hassan led an army composed of two thirds of the Moroccan military in a campaign that lasted more than a year and ended with the seizure and control of the region (56). Among Riffians, the expedition is known as the *Iqqabban* ('helmet') campaign, since the dark-green helmeted Moroccan armies were spread throughout the Rif area.

The Helmet campaign is another traumatic episode in the modern history of the Rif, as the inhabitants of the region again began to escape to mountains. Escapees fled the ruthless Moroccan soldiers, who lacked discipline, raped women, killed men, and robbed and burned houses.[16] Since then, the inhabitants of the region continue to suffer from oppression, underdevelopment and poverty. The population's only hope seems limited to further escape or migration to Europe. In their song 'Abriḏ inu ḏ wa' ('This Is My Way', 2002) the musical band Thidrin sing:

> Although they sent me away to the limits of the world and left me naked and barefooted,
>
> Although they broke my bones with the warplane, and electrified my ears endlessly,
>
> This is my way, I have always wanted it.
>
> Do not cry mother, do not shed a single tear for me.
>
> This is my way, I have always wanted it. (my trans.)

Elements in the above verses are indicative of historical and contemporary events. The 'warplane' refers to the events of 1958–1959, during which the Moroccan regime used warplanes to attack the Rif area. The word 'electrification' refers to the torture of Amazigh activists in Moroccan prisons during and after the events of 1958–1959. The words

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[16] There are still thousands of eyewitnesses to the atrocities committed in the Rif during 1958–59; the current king, Mohammed VI, appointed The Equity and Reconciliation Commission in 2004 whose tasks, among others, is to record stories from eyewitnesses and victims of the 1958 campaign. To learn more about the events, see Yasser Farhat's documentary film *Singing for Survival* (2008).

'barefooted and naked' refers to poverty that characterises the Rif.[17] Finally, 'the limits of the world' refers to host countries where Imazighen of the Rif currently live. The band uses the pronoun 'they' to refer to the ruling system in Morocco that 'sent' Imazighen to foreign countries. While in 'Come Back My Son' we hear the word 'departure', here we hear the word 'sent'. Although the first impression of both words does not indicate forced movement, the expressions that follow them illustrate that indeed both words mean *ɛaaq*.[18]

'This Is My Way' engenders a tone of defiance that characterises Imazighen of the Rif and assists in raising consciousness among these people. Regardless of the fact that the singer and other Imazighen of the Rif region are either pushed directly or indirectly to migrate to 'the limits of the world', they are defiant and resist against the oppression from *Almakhzan*. The 'My Way' in the title denotes this resistant path. 'This Is My Way' narrates a Moroccan migrant in Europe who can raise resistance against the tyranny of *Almakhzan*. Unlike the son in 'Come Back My Son', who is bewildered and does not know what to do, the speaker in 'This Is My Way' confidently addresses his mother (also an imagined homeland) and pleas with her not to cry because he believes he migrated in order to raise resistance against the oppression of Imazighen in Morocco. Arjun Appadurai contends that mass media provokes agency (*Modernity* 7). In fact, media in general and songs in particular raise consciousness among an oppressed population; 'This Is My Way' and 'Come Back My Son' typify this. The band's biography on their website (www.thidrin.com) offers illustrations of the song 'This Is My Way'. Thidrin explain that the band members decided to migrate and escape to Europe after being persecuted in the Rif region because they wanted to perform what they most love: making music that portrays the condition of Imazighen while freely expressing their views without fear. Like the members of Thidrin, ordinary Amazigh citizens also choose to emigrate from Morocco.

After Morocco's independence, many European governments began seeking Moroccan candidates for immigration. West-Germany, France, Belgium, and the Netherlands all signed agreements with Morocco to recruit guest workers in 1963, 1964,

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[17]It is important to note that poverty forced other non-Amazigh groups to migrate from the rest of Morocco.

[18] The word 'departure' followed by 'broke my heart' means that there is unhappiness, and Elwalid Mimoun in interview, as previously indicated, claims that he and other Imazighen were forced to immigrate. The word 'sent', accompanied by expressions like 'limits of the world', 'naked', and 'barefooted', indicates not just forced movement but also expulsion and punishment.

and 1969, respectively, and recruitment agencies were active throughout Morocco. Yet, due to bureaucracy, the recruitment process by European agencies was slow (Obdeijn). Regardless of how well the Moroccan regime facilitated the exit of Riffians, the official procedure followed by the European agencies took a long time. That is to say, the Moroccan government was initially keen to let Riffians leave the country, since this group had caused enough trouble for Rabat. To circumvent the slow guest-worker bureaucracy, many Riffians were allowed to obtain a Moroccan passport, a document difficult to acquire at the time. Meanwhile, Riffian migrants and their European employers discovered new tactic of recruiting new potential migrants: Riffian migrants began to travel to Europe as tourists. In addition, European employers who offered work and shelter welcomed many Riffian migrants who entered Europe illegally. A tourist visa, rather than a work visa, was the easiest way to arrive in Europe. Georges Reniers asserts that many Moroccan migrants in Europe started to help their Moroccan friends or relatives who wanted to work in Europe. They acted as intermediaries between European employers and potential migrants. The first legalisation campaign of the illegal and seasonal migrants during the 70s in Europe prompted large flows of migrants (Reniers 683).

A migrant's selection of destinations in Europe follows a specific pattern. Since the 1970s, Riffian immigrants largely select destinations where relatives and friends live. Thus, it is common to see migrants from the same village or city live in one particular European town, area, or country. For instance, Riffians originating from the city of Al Hoceima and Beni Bouayach tend to migrate to the Netherlands. People from Imzouren and Ait Touzin typically settle in Belgium. Riffians from Aknoul and Taza usually live in France. In *Migration and Development in Southern Morocco*, G. H. de Haas states that migration flows 'follow a specific pattern, since migrants originating from the same village, region, or town usually settle and live in the same cities and sometimes even in the same quarters in Europe' (102). Interestingly, the works of diasporic Amazigh artists, particularly singers, often reflect migration patterns that their fellow Amazigh migrants have established.

In examining the second verse of the second stanza in the song 'Come Back My Son' one favorite destination of Riffian migrants emerges: 'Oh Mother, I am here in Germany'. The song's nod to Germany confirms of a pattern established by Nador's inhabitants, who have a tendency to migrate to Germany. In effect, Elwalid Mimoun, an artist born in the village of 'Ait Sidel' and raised in Nador, performs the song. Accordingly,

Elwalid Mimoun and numerous other singers from the Nador province have a tendency to depicting Germany in their songs.

The line 'Oh Mother, I am here in Germany' is also the son's desperate attempt to convince himself he is not a confused and uncertain subject entangled in the process of migration, but a person who lives in a place called Germany. He is lost in himself and his own world, but he is still in state of denial. Highlighting the situation and the difficulty many migrants confront as they try to find stability in an uncertain world of migration or exile, Appadurai writes, 'what is new is that this is a world in which both points of departure and points of arrival are in cultural flux, and thus the search for steady points of reference, as critical life choices are made, can be very difficult' (*Modernity* 44). Here, Appadurai explains the difficulty many diasporans encounter in creating points of reference to keep them in balance in a globalised, unstable world. Imazighen departed from the Rif area took images of that place with them, which become increasingly blurred as they try to integrate in new host societies with different cultures. They also find it difficult to articulate their identity in light of these representations of their imagined homeland.

The song 'Come Back My Son' was created and released in a period characterised by the large flow of Moroccan migrants to Europe. The song, composed at the beginning of the 1980s, belongs to an epoch known in the Rif region as the 'period of migration boom'. According to national statistical services in Europe, from 1980–2000, the number of Moroccan immigrants to the Netherlands, Belgium, Germany, Spain, and Italy almost tripled (Basfao and Taarji). This period probably witnessed the largest number of migrants arriving to Europe from Morocco. Riffians entered Europe in various ways, but legal migration was the rule at the time.

Since the 80s family reunification has been the most efficient way to immigrate to Europe. The son in 'Come Back My Son' is married to a German woman. This character is an exception to the trend, because, in the last three decades, the majority of migrants prefer bringing a documented partner from the home country (Werdmolder 95). That is, Imazighen in Europe tend to choose partners in Morocco and bring him or her to Europe. Family reunification also describes Amazigh migrants, who have remaining family in Morocco, bringing their family to Europe. Another factor encouraging Amazigh migrants to bring their families to Europe is a fear that European countries may attempt to halt the process of family reunification. Sociologist Han Entzinger argues that the increasingly

restrictive migration policies adopted by many European countries stimulate the process of family reunification, simply because many migrants fear this process may be restricted or forbidden (267). According to Entzinger, family reunification is a process that has been the rule as far as Moroccan migrants are concerned. Nevertheless, this process does not apply to the central character in the song 'Come Back My Son'.

In 'Come Back My Son', we hear: 'I am married to a German woman'. The case of this Amazigh individual seems to correspond to the case of Imazighen who entered into Europe illegally or as tourists and overstayed their visas. The son in this song seems to have opted to get married to a German woman in order to legalise his status. Although entering illegally into Europe was not preferable during the 80s and 90s, many were forced to undertake this hazardous journey. The flow of large numbers of Amazigh migrants to Europe has led to the creation of an important migratory group there.

Songs and the Journey of Imazighen to Europe

Amazigh artists use songs to address the daily worries the Amazigh community face both in Morocco and in diaspora. The diaspora consumes and interacts with Amazigh songs, which assist in the process of re-generating its identity. Songs are the most common media amongst Imazighen. They are produced in Tamazight and in my review of dozens of Amazigh music albums made by Riffian artists over the last 30 years I have found that all of them contained at least one or two songs that address the theme of migration and its implications on diasporans or on the population in the Rif region.[19] This indicates the importance and resonance of such issues in the Rif area as well as throughout the Amazigh diaspora. Amazigh songs are consumed by Imazighen in diaspora throughout the world, and they continuously (re)shape the identity of this diaspora. This identity defies nation-states and borders, becoming transnational. Regarding the role of media in creating settings or 'diasporic public spheres' in which such transnational identity is generated, Appadurai argues that deterritorialized viewers' consumption of and interaction with media from the homeland create phenomena that confound theories dependant upon the idea of nation-states as vehicles for any social change (*Modernity* 4). Appadurai draws attention to the rise

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[19] All the songs I mention in the first and second chapters are from albums that include at least one or two songs that deal with the issue of migration.

of these deterritorialized public spheres, in which the identity of diasporas are articulated, and he calls them 'phenomena' since they defy borders and nation-states.

Songs are popular amongst Imazighen of the Rif partly because they are distributed in audiocassettes and CDs that are cheap and easy to use, and can therefore reach broad socio-economic strata. They do not require any acquired knowledge, such as with the Internet, since there is a large group of illiterate Moroccans. Speaking to the importance of cassette recorders to Riffians, the Amazigh scholar Amar Almasude writes, 'Cassette recorders provided Moroccans not only with the option to record and play their favorite music, but also to utilise them as form of communication on a mass scale' (120). Almasude describes the historical role that the audiocassette played within Morocco in general and the Rif region in particular. Cassette recorders conquered Moroccan markets at the end of the 60s, and were initially used by local poets and Amazigh militants to educate the public regarding Amazigh causes. Later on, Riffian singers used audiocassettes to distribute their songs. Currently CDs and MP3s are starting to fill the market shelves of Morocco, but the old audiocassettes are still popular in parts of the Rif region and throughout Morocco.[20]

Contemporary Amazigh songs evolved from folk songs. Women perform Amazigh folk songs, or *Izran*, during all kinds of festivities, such as marriages, feasts of harvests, and birth ceremonies. The women use the *Ajjun/Bendir* (a local tambour) and perform a dance called *Arrays* as they sing. The lyrics usually reflect the daily worries, love stories, and other social aspects of Riffian livelihood.[21] Riffian folk music has affected the artistic career of many Amazigh singers, including Elwalid Mimoun. Currently, the majority of recorded songs by Riffian artists make use of the lyric form *Izran*. Only a few artists make use of poems written by Amazigh poets who compose *Izran* professionally. As indicated earlier, Elwalid composed the lyrics to the song 'Come Back My Son'.

Notably, there are two main genres of Amazigh songs, the *šaɛbi* and the *revolutionary*. The Amazigh *šaɛbi* refers to songs usually produced in a short time and distributed on a massive scale. These types of songs are made for commercial purposes and there are thousands of albums of this genre in Riffian markets. The lyrics of these songs

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[20] The majority of cassettes and CDs in the Rif region are illegal copies.

[21] There are also few Amazigh male singers of *Izran*, such as Chikh Mohand and his sons, Moudrous; to learn more about *Izran*, see Bounfour and Amezian.

often revolve about festivities and fun. For instance, in one of his songs 'Salm-ayi ya baba' ('Allow me Father') the prominent Amazigh Shaabi singer Said Mariouari, sings:

Allow me father to wed an Amazigh migrant in the Netherlands;

We will get married *Inshallah* ['God willing']; this year in Holland *Inshallah*

Or here *Inshallah*; and all relatives will be invited *Inshallah*. (my trans.)[22]

'Salm-ayi ya baba' portrays the intention of an Amazigh man living in the Rif area to wed a migrant living in the Netherlands and asks for his father's permission. The Amazigh *šaɛbi* plays some role to raise awareness of being an Amazigh in diaspora, since this music is performed during the majority of Amazigh weddings. Still, the danceable beat and its festive character are the only elements that attract people either in Morocco or in diaspora to this kind of music (Gazzah 118). Further, *šaɛbi* songs do not highlight the uncertainty and confusion many migrants experience; instead, they tend to depict the livelihood of migrants as joyous or ideal. Regarding the role of the *šaɛbi* songs vis-à-vis the subject of migration, Elwalid Mimoun argues that *šaɛbi* songs do not perform any rational analysis of the exodus of Imazighen to Europe, and therefore, are doomed to disappear (Interview). Here, the singer compares *revolutionary* songs with *šaɛbi*; he attributes the long-term popularity of *revolutionary* songs to the themes they address. He argues that because *šaɛbi* songs do not address serious social, cultural, and economic issues their popularity last only for a short period.[23]

Indeed, sometimes there are conflicting messages in Amazigh songs, which do not help to reduce the uncertainty in the world of Amazigh migrants. That is, while songs such as 'Allow Me Father' depict the world of migrants as an ideal world, 'Come Back My Son' depicts the uncertainty and confusion by which many Amazigh diasporans are entwined. There are two different messages that add to—instead of reduce—the uncertainty in the world of migrants. Regarding the fluidity and sometimes conflicting messages in diaspora and their impact on migrants, Appadurai writes, 'It is in this atmosphere that the invention

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[22] Said Mariouari is a *šaɛbi* singer who lives in Belgium and his songs are easily accessible online. The song 'Salm-ayi ya baba' is available on Youtube, anzuf.com, and rifmelody.com.
[23] There are many revolutionary songs still popular after many decades, such as the songs of Elwalid Mimoun, Twatoun, and Ithran, while the popularity of the *šaɛbi* songs typically only last for a month or few years.

of tradition (and of ethnicity, kinship and other identity markers) can become slippery, as the search for certainties is regularly frustrated by the fluidities of transnational communication' (*Modernity* 44). Appadurai draws attention to the atmosphere of uncertainty characteristic of many diasporas; the attempts of these diasporas to create some certainty is usually confronted with the complexity and fluidity of transnational communication. It is difficult for Amazigh deterritorialized subjects to navigate in this murky world and gain certainty among a flux of messages.

The *revolutionary* songs are another genre and they have a specific audience, mainly Amazigh intellectuals and activists. The lyrics of these songs usually address more serious issues. *Revolutionary* singers compose songs that not only address themes related to Amazigh culture and identity but also create songs that scrutinize the socio-economic and political condition of Imazighen in Morocco and diaspora. Usually, *revolutionary* singers hold low esteem for *šaɛbi* singers, because they believe that *šaɛbi* singers have no purpose other than monetary gain (Elwalid, interview). In recent years, *revolutionary* songs have lost ground to *šaɛbi* in Morocco. Currently, the number of *revolutionary* albums does not exceed two hundred. Given the fact that a large number of the *revolutionary* songs' audience have migrated to Europe, it has become difficult for *revolutionary* singers to find a music recording company in Morocco. Often, producers prefer to work with artists who create songs that suit the interests of the company and not the artist. The *šaɛbi* singers always create what the producers require and, as a result, dominate Riffian markets.

Unlike the *šaɛbi* songs that describe migration in terms of happiness, love stories, and perfect marriages, 'Come Back My Son' portrays migration as a hazardous journey. In the line, 'Oh, mother reckon me a loser, oh mother reckon me a loser', the son acknowledges his dilemma and views his ordeal as a failure. He can neither lead a happy life in his host country nor return to his homeland. The artist uses this moment to show a possible outcome of migration without any preparation. In the 80s, 'Come Back My Son' was seen as the artist's plea to his compatriots in Morocco to remain in their homeland where they could work together for the well being of Amazigh community. It is also a warning to young prospective immigrants about setbacks they may encounter in the journey and destination; the feeling of uncertainty is a typical example of migratory setbacks when a person feels unwelcome in a host country.

The song highlights issues constitutive to Imazighen both in the Rif region and in diaspora. As a result of migration patterns, in the past, the song's audience likely lived in the Rif area, but, currently, part of them are scattered throughout Amazigh diaspora and Morocco. Although the character of the son in 'Come Back My Son' marries a German woman (an act seen as a way to integrate in German society), he does not feel 'at home'. In another line we hear: '*Aqq-ayi ḏa* mother, a stranger'. Here, the singer portrays a gloomy picture of Europe, because this line indicates that diasporic Imazighen and other ethnicities might never be accepted as equals. In his comments on the character of the son in the song, Elwalid claims that migration can bring some forms of economic benefit, but it can be disastrous for Amazigh identity and culture. The character of the son shows the implications of the pressures to assimilate in Europe (Elwalid, interview). Elwalid underscores the role of host societies in creating uncertainty among Amazigh diasporans. In the song, the son is sad and confused, since he cannot articulate his cultural identity. He feels estranged because the host country does not accommodate his cultural identity. Instead of integrating Imazighen in Europe, host societies either promote assimilation, isolation, or, sometimes, expulsion. This environment contributes to the uncertainty in which the character of the son and other migrants are entangled.

Coincidentally, the songs, which are meant to discourage potential migrants, might have triggered another wave of migrants. That is, Amazigh songs that usually emphasise the dire condition of Amazigh migrants in Europe do not seem to frighten potential migrants. Instead, potential immigrants, who listen to songs like 'Come Back My Son', feel tempted by the journey. Speaking of the communicating role of media, Appadurai notes, 'The role that the media play in people's imagination, in the past expressed in dreams, songs, fantasies, myths and stories… has now acquired a singular new power in social life' ("Global" 469). This implies that the ideas spread through media in general and songs in particular can have considerable social impact. The *revolutionary* songs together with the *šaɛbi* might have shaped migration as forbidden fruit, capturing the imagination of many young Imazighen in Morocco. Elwalid Mimoun denies the fact that 'Come Back My Son' and other *revolutionary* songs promote migration (Interview). Nevertheless, Riffian singers might have contributed to the exodus of Imazighen from Morocco. Repetition of the theme of migration in songs is probably enough to enchant an audience's unconscious and plant the idea of migration in their imagination.

Amazigh migrants and Diaspora

> The song 'Come Back My Son' embodies the uncertainty and in-betweeness in
> which migrants live as they are torn between their motherland and host country.
> Although the character of the son is somehow unified, the call of the mother
> torments him, and his existence is nothing but uncertainty. He is the same as
> Sisyphus and the rock who lives in constant agony.[24] The son is caught between
> two worlds; on the one hand, he attaches importance to his motherland and
> cultural identity, and on the other hand, he tries to settle in a world which is
> strange and hostile. (Elwalid, interview)

The position of the son can be located between what Appadurai names 'diasporas of hope'
and 'diasporas of despair' (*Modernity* 6). In effect, the son embodies these two: he has
escaped his homeland hoping to improve his social, economic, and cultural condition, but
he remains in despair because he realises he is not accepted in Europe and can hardly
integrate in his host society. The singer attributes the son's confusion and uncertainty to his
attempt to reconcile the strange world where he lives and the thoughts regarding his
homeland and culture. Here the son carries heavy weight of many migrants' feelings. It is
the burden of living in a heavy place, not just in-between two cultures. The son's livelihood
in the space of migration, especially his attempt to combine the two cultures, proves
tormenting, and his cravings to find peace never end. While Homi Bhabha underscores the
importance of in-between cultures or *inbetween* space in the process of generating new
cultural meanings, he does not mention the continuous torment of many subjects that
inhabit these spaces (*Location* 56). The son, who represents Amazigh migrants, not only
lives in-between cultures, but also in a blurred space since the borderline between a migrant
and diasporan is distorted. Conventionally, migrants are defined as people born outside of
the country where they live; however, various groups who do not fit this description are
currently still categorised as migrants. For instance, Imazighen born in Europe are still
labeled as the third and fourth generations of migrants.[25] In *The Media of Diaspora*, Karim
states that diaspora, while denoting the exodus of Jews outside the land of Israel, currently

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[24] Elwalid Mimoun cites the example of Sisyphus rock from the Greek mythology, in
which Sisyphus is punished by the Gods to roll a round-shaped rock up the hill. As
Sisyphus approaches the top of the hill the rock rolls down to the bottom and he has to
restart from the beginning again.

[25] Diasporas as a term is derived from the Greek word *diaspeirein* that entails the scattering
of seeds.

connotes a variety of migratory groups (1-2). Scholars use various criteria to differentiate between diasporas and migrants.

Many theorists argue that the distinction between a diasporan and migrant is measured by the duration of the time spent in the host country. In *Diaspora Politics*, Gabriel Sheffer argues that ethnic diasporas are the result of forced and voluntary migration of ethnic groups that settle permanently in a host country (16). Others point to an individual's right to acquire citizenship in a host country as another aspect that separates a diasporan from a migrant. Bearing this in mind, the majority of the first generation of Imazighen died in Europe, while a large number of the second, third, and fourth generations hold European citizenship. Nevertheless, it may be ineffectual to argue that European Imazighen are exclusively diasporans because they are still perceived in their host country as migrants.

Imazighen in Europe have been affected by the continuous shift in their status. For instance, in the 60s when Imazighen arrived in the Netherlands they were first labeled as *gastarbeiders* ('guest workers'), but as they failed to return to their native country, their status changed into migrants or foreigners. After the birth of the third and fourth generations of Riffian Imazighen on European soil, the term *allochtoon* began to replace 'migrant' and 'foreigner'.[26] This new marking is perceived by many Imazighen as an unwillingness of host countries to accept them. As a reaction to the use of these markers by the so-called natives in host countries, the majority of European Imazighen reject *allochtoon* and usually react with disgust upon hearing it. Addressing Imazighen and other groups in Europe as guest workers, migrants, foreigners, or *allochtoonen* has only aggravated the condition and the self-esteem of these groups.

The song 'Come Back My Son' highlights the condition of Imazighen in Europe generally and their psychological state particularly. Elwalid sings: '*aqq-ayi ḍa* mother in *Rumi*'s land, *aqq-ayi ḍa* mother in bars drinking whisky'. *Aqq-ayi ḍa* translates as 'I am fixed here', and evokes boredom, distress, and misery when repeated. This verse reflects the uncertainty in which many Amazigh diasporans have been engulfed since the 80s. 'Rumis' land' refers to Europe, since the word *Rumi*, as mentioned before, refers to Europeans. The use of the marker *Rumi* in the song highlights the use of markers such as

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[26] The word *allochtoon* in the Dutch dictionary *Van Dale* defines a person originating 'van elders' ('from elsewhere').

foreigners or *allochtoonen* to address other ethnicities within Europe.[27] Nonetheless, the use of *Rumi* in another verse of 'Come Back My Son' has other implications.

The use of the word Rumi by the son to refer to his wife is telling. Elwalid sings: 'I am married to *ṯaṛumešṯ* with whom I got children'. The use of the word Rumi to refer to Europeans is common in North Africa, but the use of such marker to address one's own wife is strange. The marriage of an Amazigh man to a German woman seems a perfect example of a successful marriage of cultures, but there are markers in the song that indicate otherwise. By using the word *ṯaṛumešṯ*, the son emphasises the growing tension in his relationship with his wife. Neither the son nor his German wife feel at home in their marriage. There is tension between the centripetal powers of Europeanness and the centrifugal pull of diasporic diversity in this continent. In fact, what may seem a successful marriage of cultures starts to show cracks that may develop into a break that threatens cultural diversity not only in Germany but also in the rest of Europe. The line 'Mother *aqq-ayi ḍa* a stranger' hints at the anti-immigration sentiments that brew in Europe and stereotyping of migrants.

The stereotyping of migrants as the unwanted other has widened the gap between the so-called European nationalists and migratory groups like Imazighen. Imazighen, similar to many ethnic groups in Europe, feel the increasing intolerance of their host countries as they are categorised as strangers. In her discussion of the topic of hospitality and in her definition of the word stranger, Mireille Rosello states, '"the stranger" [is viewed as] a foreigner, a recently arrived immigrant, the naturalized child of immigrants, or even a French child born to non-European parents who continues to be treated as other' (5). This definition applies not only within France but also in the rest of Europe. In addition, Rosello's analysis does not include an important category: children born to European parents whose ancestors arrived from outside Europe. For instance, Amazigh children born in the Netherlands to parents who were also born in the Netherlands and hold Dutch citizenship are still labeled as *buitenlanders* ('foreigners'). Currently, these children see themselves as the unwanted other. In fact, this sense of hostility prevails in European media, especially after the 9/11 attacks on the US. North African migrants are regularly depicted as a Muslim threat, criminals, or unsatisfied foreigners. In his essay 'Deconstruction of Actuality', Jacques Derrida asserts that unconditional hospitality is the

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[27] It is important to underscore the fact that the idea of 'strangeness' is reciprocal; i.e., Imazighen are 'Others' in the eyes of Europeans and vice-versa.

basis for justice to prevail in any society (35). He suggests that in order to have a harmonious society, it is vital for migrants or ethnic diasporas to feel they are accepted without any prejudices or stereotypes. This unconditional tolerance of ethnicities, or the 'Other', may both enhance the incorporation of these groups in their host countries and create a harmonious society.

Europe, anti-immigration, and diasporic Imazighen

The song's line '*aqq-ayi ḏa* mother in bars drinking whisky' is of great significance. A few Europeans may interpret this as a happy moment, since the main character enjoys himself drinking whisky. Nonetheless, for the majority of Imazighen, a married man who goes to bars to drink alcohol and leaves his wife and children at home is immoral. Therefore, this line portrays a frustrated, miserable, and fraught Amazigh individual. Typically, someone as young as the character of the son in 'Come Back My Son' should be at work or at home with his family, but this person chooses to spend his time in bars. This verse indicates that something is wrong in the livelihood of this Amazigh individual. Many listeners may think that the miserable condition of this person is caused only by nostalgia toward his mother/land. This idea is not completely true because the son compares Morocco to a graveyard ('Oh mother! I cannot return to the graveyard'). The son loves the idea of his homeland but he compares it to a graveyard—because of *hardship and suffering*, or political oppression and poverty—and does not want to return to it in its current condition. The son is depressed and confused because of his inability to return to Morocco and cope with his present condition in Europe.

The rise of anti-immigration sentiments in Europe may be one of the reasons behind the son's inability to feel at home in his host country. In Europe many immigrants feel discriminated and their cultural identity disregarded. To highlight this point, Elwalid Mimoun claims that European practices do not officially recognise Amazigh culture and identity for many reasons. According to Elwalid, member states do not want to see a recognised Amazigh group; the European Union wants to keep Imazighen as 'reserve employers' in time of need.[28] Any official recognition of Amazigh culture and identity would entail an increase of Amazigh awareness leading to Imazighen demanding full civil, cultural, and identity rights like other European citizens (Interview). The case of Imazighen

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[28] The singer claims that the European authorities treat Imazighen as a spare wheel, only used in time of need, to keep the growth of their economies.

in Europe is not different from other cultural groups. Even if discriminatory attitudes toward others are not new to Europe, the recurrence of such behavior is appalling. During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries discrimination in Europe was common (Rich 80). Currently, discrimination is still practiced against migrants. In *Guests and Aliens*, Saskia Sassen argues that discrimination against migrant workers was frequent in the nineteenth century, and current discrimination has only changed the argument, since the focus nowadays is based on both race and culture (135). This new-old obsession raises many questions and the most urgent one is whether this attitude is confined to a given country or widespread throughout Europe.

Unfortunately, current political phenomena in Europe show that discrimination against migrants is more of a rule than about isolated incidents. These political phenomena reject cultural diversity by remaining suspicious about a group's loyalty to an origin country over the host country or that groups will refuse to assimilate into the host society. Indeed, the latter argument is accurate since, for instance, many Imazighen in Europe refuse to assimilate and call for integration based on mutual respect, and that cultures should be treated equally without the domination of a particular one. However, the first argument is not entirely accurate since these transnational communities have no loyalty toward a territorial nation-state, but, rather, toward an imagined nation constructed and maintained across borders. Regarding the issue of diasporas and loyalty, Appadurai argues that diasporic diversity creates loyalty toward no territorial transnation (*Modernity* 173). In fact, there are many examples of political parties that openly reject cultural diversity in Europe. In 1993, *Le Monde* reported that the former French Interior Minister Charles Pasqua clearly stated that he is against a multiethnic and multicultural France ("M. Pasqua"). Similarly, the German Republikaner Party platform of January 1990 declares, 'We say No to a "Multicultural" society and thus to a multiethnic state' (Republikaner 18; my trans.). The rise of extreme-right parties in Europe, such as the Party For Freedom (PVV) in the Netherlands, Belgium's Vlaams Belang, the Danish People's Party, and the French National Front, echo the anti-immigration sentiments that brew amongst the European masses.

These sentiments not only create uncertainty and confusion among migrants but also alienate them. The Amazigh music band Thifridjas sing in their latest album *Ṯamurṯ iṛumiyen* (*The Land of Rumis*, 2008) about the feelings of estrangement among migrants and the pain among their relatives remaining in the Rif region. One song, giving the album

its title, is constructed in a dialogue form like 'Come Back My Son'. The only difference is that the dialogue in 'Ṭamurṯ iṛumiyen' is between a father who migrated in Europe and his young son left behind in Morocco. The father sings sadly:

> The land of Rumis took my imagination,
>
> I followed your path and left my land,
>
> I forgot my relatives and my dears.

His son responds:

> Why did you leave me father
>
> I have never felt happy,
>
> and life without you is worthless. ("Ṭamurṯ")

The members of Thifridjas band live in the Netherlands and their latest album depicts the regret of many Amazigh migrants initially enchanted by the idea of living in Europe. Like the son in 'Come Back My Son', who left his country and traveled to Europe without any preparation, the father in 'The Land Of Rumis' followed the footsteps or *path* of other Amazigh migrants and migrated to Europe without thinking about the consequences of his act. This father experiences the same uncertainty many migrants undergo, since they can neither return to their left-behind relatives nor integrate in their host society. As the case with many migrants they see themselves as unwanted aliens in their host country. Through their daily exposure to anti-immigrant sentiments in the host country and their sense of guilt vis-à-vis their compatriots left behind in the homeland, they come to the conclusion that they are despised in both Europe and their country of origin. Although some European leaders try to portray Europe as an assembly of liberal countries, recent anti-immigration feelings on the continent prove otherwise. Worse, the level of discrimination practiced against migratory groups is dire.

North Africans are on the top list of the most despised minorities in many European countries. Imazighen constitute a large part of the North African migrants living

in Europe.[29] So-called nationalists seem to have an aversion to North Africans for reasons like race, culture, and religion. Recent arguments about the 'War on Terror' become the basis for all kinds of discrimination, and European nationalists regularly launch verbal attacks on migrants in the name of a fight against terrorism. Other reasons generating such attitudes among ordinary people can be seen in Dutch society. On attitudes of the Dutch regarding migrants, Frank Van Tubergen and Ineke Maas argue that natives ('autochthonous' people) tend to reject outsiders ('allochthonous' groups) because they see their arrival as a threat to their own culture and see migrants as competitors for job opportunities and housing (10). North Africans are blamed for high levels of unemployment in the Netherlands. It is somehow ironic, since the majority of migrants arrived in Europe because of labour shortage. The song 'Come Back My Son' mirrors the implications of such discriminatory attitudes on non-Europeans, and the son's agony is partly the consequence of such attitudes. There seems to be a tendency amongst the European societies to blame the 'other' for their unhappiness and shortcomings.[30]

Albeit the growing tension between European nationalists and migrants, there are still optimistic scholars debating the future of cultural diversity in Europe. For instance, in her approach to the idea of cultural diversity in Europe, Saskia Sassen writes:

> There is only one enlightened road to take for Europe today: that is to work with settled immigrants and refugees toward their full integration, and to do so through frameworks that ensure cultural and religious diversity will be part of civil society, that is, part of what binds us rather than what segregates us. (133)

Sassen emphasises the importance of cultural diversity as a legacy that can bring different groups in Europe together. She believes that cultural diversity may allow various groups to participate in the construction of a European society based on the idea of equality. She underscores how elements that unite communities should be the basis for such a model of integration, stressing integration as a reciprocal process. Indeed, current Dutch cuisine, for example, is a simple case of a cultural element that unites communities. It is a package that includes a variety of recipes in which both 'migrants' and 'locals' are involved. This kind

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[29] Recent public opinion polls conducted in France and Germany show that almost half those polled are unsympathetic to migrants from North African origins (Fetzer 110-24).

[30] Regarding the issue of migration and the resurrection of the 'other', see Ponzanesi and Merolla's introduction to their anthology (1-9).

of integration is a complex process that requires an open attitude from 'host and guest' alike. In effect, the experience of migration does not stop with the end of a migrant's transit from one location to another, but is a dynamic process that can last forever.

Space and Migration

Migration is an open-ended journey. In the 80s and 90s, numerous Amazigh migrants believed their resettlement in host countries would allow them to disconnect from the marker 'migrant'. Nonetheless, a few are now realising that migration may have an origin but no simple end. They no longer conceive of their identities as belonging to one particular place, but belonging to a process in which migration constantly redefines their identities. The active process of migration affects subjects as much as subjects affect migratory practices. For today's audience, 'Come Back My Son' emphasises the metaphoric meaning of migration as a journey, which, on the one hand, embodies the dream of a better life of migrants escaping the hardship of their homelands, and, on the other hand, sustains the fear of an irretrievable loss of cultural identity as their image of homeland increasingly blurs. In addition, the song reveals an important idea to many Imazighen: that the only way to dispose of the marker 'migrant' is to return to the homeland. Singer Elwalid Mimoun highlights this belief and says, 'There is always the hope and dream of return to the motherland' (Interview). In fact, the singer's use of the term 'dream' is significant, since it reflects the nature of this transnational Amazigh identity created through cultural products of collective imagination. That is, as mentioned before, migration might have a beginning but no end, since it is a process that subjects cannot easily exit. Therefore, the idea that an Amazigh diasporan can simply dispose of his or her migrant's identity remains not only a dream but also an illusion. Still, many Imazighen hope to return to their homeland and escape hostilities in Europe and discard the label migrant'. Regarding the attachment of diasporas to places of origin, Appadurai argues that diasporic collectivity retains a special link to a putative place of origin (*Modernity* 172). Indeed, in the case of the Amazigh diaspora, the constructed homeland is not the Rif as a territory, but as a space partly shaped by diasporans' own experiences and representations. The son in 'Come Back My Son' is obviously affected by the journey of migration and the melancholic tone that dominates the whole song reflects his state of mind.

The character of the son seems to live in a dilemma that torments him evermore. In fact, I see the overall negativity that characterises the lyrics of this song as a sign of a

struggle within Amazigh migrants. The son is at a point at which he cannot or does not understand the journey of migration. He is fixed in a phase dominated by confusion and uncertainty. Arjun Appadurai attributes the uncertainty in the world of migrants to the confrontation of migrants with images outside the nation-state. On this issue he writes, 'Both persons and images often meet unpredictably, outside the certainties of home and the *cordon sanitaire* of local and national media effects' (*Modernity* 4). Appadurai sees national media as an umbrella that usually provides certainty for subjects; therefore, as they exit this umbrella and the nation-state and become an imagined community they face all kinds of images that contribute to their uncertainty. Uncertainty is that which the son struggles against in Elwalid's song. He seems unable to realise that the experience of migration has become part of his own identity and starts to internalise it. His distress seems obvious as he lives in a deadlock, and his movements are restricted to walking from one bar to another. It is a phase that many immigrants experience, especially when they are neither capable of returning to their homeland, nor able to enjoy their livelihoods in the host country. Extracts taken from the song 'Quiero Estar Con Mi Familia' ('I Want To Be With My Family'), performed by La Banda Loca, whose members currently live in New York, emphasise the idea of being caught in the journey:

> Cuanto diera por estar
>
> reunido con los mios
>
> pero no puedo salir
>
> de aqui donde estoy metido. (La Banda Loca, "Quiero")

> How much would I give to be there
>
> reunited with my family
>
> but I cannot get out
>
> of this place where I am stuck. (my trans.)

Typically, the idea of being fixed refers first to the inability of a person to move between places, but, importantly, also to the difficulty of understanding the experience of migration

or the journey. That is to say, it may be easy to physically travel and visit relatives or places, but it is difficult to comprehend the position or function of a migrant within the complex process of migration.

The journey of migration as an active process affects the livelihood of Amazigh migrants. In Elwalid's song, the character of the son is on a quest to rediscover and explore his self-identity. As mentioned before, the unclear source of his distress confuses the son. There are various possible causes to his distress, but it is not clear which one of them is the generative source. The complexity of contemporary migration cannot be solely grasped in terms of causes and consequences. Rather, migration and its relationship with space contributes to the transformations that occur in the livelihood of migrants. In *The Turbulence of Migration*, Nikos Papastergiadis writes, 'It is important to acknowledge the transformative effect of the journey, and in general recognize that space is a dynamic field in which identities are in a constant state of interaction' (4). Here, Papastergiadis accentuates the fluidity of the experience of migration and argues that perceptual changes are formed throughout and because of movement. The case of the son in the song reflects the transformations that occur in subjects as they enter the journey's experiences. The son can neither comprehend his status nor the implications of migration on his own existence.

It is important to note that Elwalid Mimoun migrated to Europe after the release of the song 'Come Back My Son'. Migration is indeed a process in which numerous Imazighen become entangled long before they actually relocate from their village or town. Elwalid, through his song, portrays the livelihood of diasporic Imazighen as if he is living among them; and similar to many potential Amazigh migrants, he became involved in the process of migration before he physically moved to Europe. The case of this singer is significant, as it highlights the knowledge that local people gather regarding their compatriots living in Amazigh diaspora. His knowledge of the livelihood of diasporic Imazighen, especially of migrants living in Germany, is based solely on his interactions with Amazigh diasporans. For instance, Elwalid's account of identity problems of Amazigh migrants shows that Amazigh artists in their homeland are well aware of the details of the lives of their compatriots living elsewhere. In his comments on the role of the artist, Elwalid agrees with the image of an artist as the link between what is local and global (Interview). These words indicate the capability of an Amazigh artist to process what is happening in his immediate surroundings and the data about the condition of his compatriots in Europe and imprint it in his artworks.

In effect, the heterogeneity of the Amazigh community can be a model host countries could follow. Imazighen are composed of various groups who speak various dialects, with different religious backgrounds, and live in places scattered all along North Africa. In addition, Imazighen include dark-skinned and white people (Dahraoui 58). Hence, the idea of a homogenous Europe has become a concern for diasporic Imazighen. European Imazighen see themselves as marginalised both in a host country and their homeland. That is, the Arab-nationalists in North Africa advocate a homogenous Arab Maghreb. Likewise, many European leaders openly express their desire to have a homogenous Europe. Diasporic Amazigh artists, through their artefacts, try to establish a model for dynamic and porous communities. 'Come Back My Son' highlights the dream of many Imazighen to pluralise Europe and create spaces in which various cultures can interact and cohabit.

Socio-economic and political condition of Imazighen of the Rif

Certainly the dire socio-economic and political condition in the Rif area has contributed to the agony of the son in 'Come Back My Son'. The singer Elwalid states that the implicit desire of the son in the song is to return to the Rif because he does not feel accepted in his host society, but the socio-economic and political condition in the Rif region hinders the fulfilment of his aspiration (Interview). 'Come Back My Son' depicts a severe socio-economic and political condition of Imazighen in the Rif area.

The socio-economic condition of Imazighen in the Rif

The homeland is represented in the song 'Come Back My Son' in a way that it frightens migrants who want to return. In the second and third lines of the first stanza, the singer describes an alarming condition for Riffians in Morocco as he sings: 'I saw misery in my land, I saw suffering and hardship'. The two lines summarise the socio-economic condition of Imazighen during the 80s, but they are still applicable to the Rif today. Regarding the socio-economic condition of young graduates in the Rif region in his song 'My Dear Father' (1998) the *revolutionary* singer Allal Chilah sings:

Dear father, where is my educated brother?

The father responds: dear son, he is wandering the streets and begging for money to buy hashish.

The son asks again: Dear father where is my educated sister?

The father responds: dear son, they closed doors on her, she is crying day and night. (my trans.)

The song is a dialogue between a son and his father, and these verses describe the condition of young university graduates who cannot find a job or lead a decent life in the Rif area. These verses show the condition of graduates and allow the audience to imagine a worse condition for the uneducated. While there have been a few positive developments recently, they remain limited and the general standards of living in the Rif are low. Both 'My Dear Father' and 'Come Back My Son' depict the country of origin as the land of poverty, unemployment, and hardship. These images highlight the position of uncertain migrants, who hear such gloomy images in songs, and can hardly contemplate the idea of returning to a place of hardship and suffering. I sense these songs reach and affect Amazigh diasporans who become aware of the condition of their compatriots living either in the country of origin or in diaspora. Regarding the role of media in the decision to move between countries or return to the homeland, Appadurai writes, 'For migrants, both the politics of adaption to a new environment and the stimulus to move or return are deeply affected by mass-mediated imaginary that frequently transcends national space' (*Modernity* 6). Here, Appadurai emphasises the idea that subjects and groups formulate their plans and ideas regarding immigration or return in the light of the media they consume and interact with. If this insight is applied to Amazigh media, one could claim that artefacts, like songs, play a crucial role since they inform and are informed by groups regarding the conditions of their compatriots, and therefore, affect their ideas, decisions, and plans.

Media, and the interaction between Riffian Amazigh diasporans and inhabitants of the Rif region, are important in highlighting the social and economic conditions in the Moroccan Rif. The majority of the first and second generation of Riffians, who live in Europe, can easily identify with the character of the son in 'Come Back My Son' and recognise his sufferings because they witnessed it in Morocco. The third and fourth

generations of Amazigh migrants learn about the sufferings in Morocco through their direct contact with relatives during summer holiday as well as through media. For instance, under the section of general topics in the website amazigh.nl, a participant under the username 'Amsraraf' posted in February 2010 a film entitled *Poverty in Rif*. The film shows the miserable condition of a family who lives in the Rif region. Another user, 'Hadou', commented on the film four days later, writing, '*Almakhzan* does not care about them [family]'. From the circulation and citation of stories on the Internet about the awful socio-economic conditions of many families in the Rif area, one may deduce that a young generation of Imazighen in diaspora are well aware of the conditions of locals in the Rif region. In 'Come Back My Son', the main character describes his livelihood in the Rif in terms of misery, suffering, and hardship. This grim condition not only adds to the uncertainty in which he is engulfed, but also epitomises the socio-economic state of potential Amazigh migrants in Northern Morocco.

In addition to migration, traditional fishing and agriculture are the two bases of an underdeveloped Riffian economy. Given that the Moroccan government has hardly invested in the Rif during the last century, the amount of unemployment in the region is high. Traditional farming predominates in the whole region. The lack of sophisticated agricultural methods, enduring draught, and arid mountains that characterise the Rif area have seriously affected farming production. The harvest gathered in the region is substantially low in comparison with other Moroccan regions. Likewise, fishing is still practiced in an old fashion that relies on small, wooden boats. Further, fishing currently faces other contemporary problems, such as declining fishing stocks from illegal catches and excessive by-catches of juvenile fish.[31]

The social and economic conditions in the Rif are closely interrelated. In effect, Riffian migrants have build houses and started private enterprises in their country of origin and these investments have contributed to a strong bond between migrants and their compatriots in the Rif region. It is important to note that migrants' projects in the Rif provide the local residents with job opportunities. Hence, migrants are usually praised and respected by local residents. Sometimes international migrants are praised and envied at the same time. In his article in *Migrantenstudies*, Ruud Strijp argues that in the Rif, migrants and their household members are praised but also vilified. Even if the locals consider

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[31] For more information on the local economy of the Rif region, see the official site of the Moroccan High Commission for Planning (www.hcp.ma/).

Amazigh diasporans as 'S'ḥab Elxarij' ('Riffians coming from abroad/foreign Riffians'), they still tend to envy them for their material possessions regarded as status symbols. In 'Come Back My Son', the character of the son refuses to return to the Rif partly out of fear that locals might interpret his return as weakness and failure.[32] Elwalid sings: 'Oh mother! Reckon me a loser'. The son is aware he has not yet been able to achieve anything in Europe, and does not want to return empty handed to his homeland where he might be belittled.

The imagery of being torn between two worlds and the implications of this impasse on identity is reflected in many works that address migration. In Karim Traïdia's film *De Onmacht* (*The Impotence*, 1991), for instance, the main character Ahmed, a North African migrant who lives and works in Paris, becomes impotent and cannot return to his homeland. In their analysis of this film, Patricia Pisters and Kaouthar Darmouni argue that Ahmed represents the North African immigrant who arrived in Europe in the 70's and led a miserable lonely life, dreaming about his homeland where sun is always shining ("Migrantenfilm"). Both Ahmed in *De Onmacht* and the son in 'Come Back My Son' become 'impotent' and live in miserable conditions in Europe. While the former cannot return to North Africa because he cannot face his relatives and reveal his secret of being sexually impotent, the latter is impotent and passive because he cannot decide and act. In effect, neither Germany nor Morocco are depicted as ideal settings in 'Come Back My Son', and the son cannot select one of the two places to live in. That is, the son is confronted with a dilemma without a solution, which considerably impacts his identity.

Despite the economic distress during the 80s in the homeland, 'Come Back My Son' does not portray Europe as paradise. There is no sign of leisure or wealth in the whole song, and the singer describes Germany as a place of estrangement. The disassociation of Europe from material wealth in the song suggests that the idea of wealth is, after all, not the ultimate goal of all Riffian migrants. Nevertheless, a healthy economy, according to many Amazigh migrants, is an undeniably important factor in the selection of a possible host country. Ignoring the idea of a wealthy Europe in 'Come Back My Son' raises the question of whether there are other motivations behind the Amazigh exodus from Morocco.

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[32] It is important to note that illegal immigrants caught by police in host countries and sent back to Morocco feel ashamed, and this point will be discussed later in chapter 4.

The political condition of Imazighen of the Rif area in Morocco

Examining the song in light of the political conditions of Imazighen in the Rif region is constructive. The song was recorded in the 80s, a period known for several unrests in Morocco, particularly in the Rif region. There were several protests organized by students and teachers, demanding a better socio-economic condition for the Riffian population. The growing unrest involved primary schools, secondary schools, and universities, and the Moroccan government responded by dismissing many teachers from their jobs, many university students from various faculties, and arresting an unknown number of protesters (Iskander 112-13). Elwalid Mimoun, who was a university student at the time, was among the victims of the ruling system in Morocco and was arrested after participating in a protest at Sidi Mohammed Ben Abdellah University. Moroccans were dismayed, and Imazighen in the Rif area were affected by the brutality of the Moroccan regime. Specifically, protests in the Rif region are usually handled by the Moroccan regime with a disproportionate show of force for fear that a peaceful protest might develop into a rebellion that may topple the regime.

In the first line of the second stanza, the son describes the mood in the Rif during the 80s and sings: 'Oh mother! I cannot return to the graveyard'. The use of the word 'graveyard' to describe life in the Rif is telling. The song marks the place as a graveyard by implicitly referring to the ruling system that has made the Rif a graveyard. It is important to note that Elwalid's first album *Ajjaj,* which includes 'Come Back My Son', was seen by the Moroccan regime as inciting mass disobedience in the Moroccan kingdom and was initially banned. Given that the Moroccan regime imposed unannounced sanctions on the Rif, many artists started to flee the Rif region. Khalid Izri, Elwalid Mimoun, Thifridjas, and Ayawen are few examples of the musical bands that immigrated to Europe. When I asked Elwalid about his decision to migrate and his current assessment of Morocco, he responded, 'It was not my decision to immigrate. It [*Almakhzan*] forced me and other Imazighen to leave the country. *Almakhzan* isolated our region and persecuted us' (Interview). The idea of being forced to immigrate is also obvious in 'Come Back My Son'. The line 'the departure from my homeland (entered in my bones) broke my heart', as indicated above, portrays the moment of departure from the homeland as a tragic experience.

The son's response to the request of the mother in 'Come Back My Son' is vague and hesitant. The mother calls her son, 'come back to your land to fight alongside your

brothers; come back my son to fight for your share'. The call of the mother symbolises the call of the land to Amazigh migrants who have left to return to the Rif and fight alongside the locals against corruption and tyranny. Nonetheless, the son is seemingly overwhelmed by other problems in his host country. He seems fixed and bewildered, since he can neither solve his problems in Europe nor is he capable of returning to Morocco to help his compatriots. However, Elwalid Mimoun, like many Amazigh migrants, believes that migration is a journey that can be used in the struggle for Amazighness and might eventually take Imazighen back to their homeland (Interview). In fact, *Almakhzan* regards the struggles of many Amazigh activists in Morocco as a threat to the country's national security.[33] Elements such as Arab-nationalists, accuse both Amazigh cultural movements and artists for stirring division within Moroccan society. Appadurai argues that a nation-state makes use of force and fear of exterior homogenization to impose its own homogenization on its minorities (*Modernity* 32). In Morocco, Arab-nationalists, in order to impose Arab culture, spread fear by equating pluralism in Morocco with anarchy. That is, Arab-nationalists depict pluralism as a doomsday scenario that may lead to the division of the country and in which various groups will clash with one another and provoke anarchy.

There are Amazigh artists who strongly believe that the settlement of Imazighen in Europe is temporary, and that they might one day return to their homeland. They usually depict an Amazigh diasporan as someone with a mission to fulfil; Elwalid, in the song 'I Left My Land', sings:

I wish I could leave foreign countries,

To return to my land with my head high in the sky,

To a sunny place, where the sky is blue. ("I Left")

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[33] The Moroccan regime sent many Amazigh activists belonging to the 20th February Movement in the Rif region to prison in 2012. This movement is the Moroccan iteration of other movements that rallied against dictatorships and oppression in the Arab world in the spring of 2012.

These lines describe the experience of migration as a momentary transfer. They clearly depict migration as a journey that may eventually draw to a close with the return of Imazighen to Morocco, where there are no clouds of corruption, exclusion, and subjugation. As mentioned before, the idea of return is not only an illusion but a fantasy that keeps many Imazighen dreaming in their uncertain world of migration.[34]

The lines 'come back to your land to fight alongside your brothers' (in 'Come Back My Son') and 'To a sunny place, where the sky is blue' (in 'I Left My Land') are important in creating ideas about a community that might return. In effect, songs-as-media constitute the basic material for a collective imagination that may raise resistance against oppression and homogenization clouding the skies of the homeland. It is in this journey of migration that imagined communities not only struggle to escape the uncertainty in which they are caught, but also through imagination they create togetherness or 'brotherhood' that may allow them to 'return high headed' to the homeland. Appadurai writes, 'It is the imagination, in its collective forms, that creates ideas of neighbourhood and nationhood, of moral economies and unjust rule … the imagination is today a staging ground for action, and not only for escape' (*Modernity* 7). Appadurai alludes to the various roles that collective imagination plays as far as creating ideas, escaping uncertainty, and struggles for the well being of community are concerned. Indeed, for migrants, imagination reflected in media like songs constitute the field in which ideas are generated and brotherhood and nationhood are constituted. It is not a blood-brotherhood but an images-brotherhood.

The music of 'Come Back My Son'

Elwalid uses the music in 'Come Back My Son' to draw attention to the unhappiness of the son who represents a large category of diasporic Imazighen who are fixed in-between two different worlds. As explained before, the son is unhappy because he cannot settle in his host country. He is also tormented by the call of the homeland, since he can neither return nor lend a hand to his compatriots who live in seclusion and distress in the Rif. The tempo of the music is slow, and Amazigh singers usually use this tempo to emphasise sameness and slow development of events. The pace of events in the son's worlds corresponds to the

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[34] In my interview with Elwalid Mimoun, he mentioned that the idea of return of Imazighen to the Rif region is a dream.

tempo of the song. That is, on the one hand, the son is distressed by his condition in the host country, and, one the other hand, he cannot return to Morocco where the struggle of his compatriots for the improvement of socio-economic and political condition of the Imazighen is slowly evolving.

Music is an intrinsic material that addresses emotions of the audience and, therefore, can overcome language barriers. In *Music and Meaning*, Jenefer Robinson argues that music is not just 'structures of sound' but can express thoughts and feelings that may be of profound human significance when attention is paid to the historical context in which a piece of music is composed and listened to (3). The song 'Come Back My Son' is performed in Tarifit, an Amazigh variant understood by a limited audience (namely the inhabitants of northern Morocco). Hence, various Amazigh factions in southern Morocco or Algeria and non-Amazigh speakers do not understand the lyrics of the song.

However, music as a medium can transmit messages to audiences who cannot understand Tarifit. Although these audiences cannot comprehend the exact themes discussed in the verses of the song, they can at least identify whether the tone of a song is joyful or not. Consequently, it is not difficult to see that a melancholic tone indicates that a song revolves around a negative or unenthusiastic experience. Conversely, a cheerful tone points to the fact that a song celebrates something pleasurable. In fact, the melancholic tone in 'Come Back My Son' allows the listener to recognise that something is wrong in the livelihood of Riffians. Importantly, for various audiences the melancholic tone might become a puzzle that raises many questions. This puzzle not only allows the listener to use his or her imagination to try to decipher the content of the lyrics, but can also motivate him or her to explore Amazigh culture.

The use of three musical instruments in 'Come Back My Son' may have different interpretations. A flute, a tambour, and a flamenco guitar are the three instruments used. The first two instruments are usually fabricated in the Rif region: the flute is made of a local variety of bamboo plant called *ɣanim*, and the tambour is made of a circular wooden frame and a cow or sheep hide. The flamenco guitar is an instrument imported from the Spanish enclave of Melilla, meters away from the birthplace of Elwalid Mimoun.[35] One of the reasons that may explain the use of three instruments in the song may lie in the time of

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[35] To learn more about the use of instruments, such as the Spanish guitar in Amazigh songs, see Dahraoui.

the song's composition. The song was recorded in the 80s, a period known for economic distress in the Rif region, and Elwalid and his Riffian companions were poor and could hardly afford a large set of musical instruments. It is interesting to note that Elwalid and the other members of his band did not attend any musical academy, having self-taught their musical techniques. Elwalid acknowledges the difficultly an artist undergoes to master a musical instrument without any help (Interview). That the music of 'Come Back My Son' is made only with three instruments is also due to the scarcity of talented artists able to play on various musical instruments. In Elwalid's response to a question I posed regarding the music that affected his style he states, 'I used to listen to Amazigh folk music and western music. But what affected my early career is Riffian folk music' (Interview). Elwalid, like the band Twattoun in the Rif region and the singer Idir in Kabylie, is among the first Amazigh singers who started to combine local musical instruments with other instruments to create new styles, tones, and songs. These artists use Amazigh folk music as a basis to create something innovative. It is one of the reasons that these artists use instruments like the local tambour (*Bendir*) and flutes in combination with other instruments in their songs. Currently, the majority of revolutionary singers adopt a similar rule, since they combine local knowledge about music with the global to create new styles and sounds. Here, the nature of Amazigh music reflects a transnational Amazigh identity in which the local interact with the global.

Conclusion

Understanding the causes and consequences of Amazigh migration is intricate, if not impossible. Nonetheless, the song 'Come Back My Son' highlights a few aspects of the experience of migration. In effect, there are several places Imazighen have migrated, and the song 'Come Back My Son' reflects one of these destinations (Europe). Before Riffians began to travel to Europe, they had migrated within the borders of Morocco (internal migration) as well as migrating to neighboring Algeria. After the Second World War and the 1958-59 Rif rebellion, Riffians massively migrated to the European continent. Even today, migration of Imazighen to Europe is still active, although it does not match previous levels. The European Union now tries to strictly limit immigration from outside of Europe.

The causes and consequences of Amazigh migration are not always clear. Causes can vary between economic, social, and political reasons, or just movement for the sake of movement itself. Likewise, the consequences of migration are diverse and difficult to

delineate. Migration can have positive effects for Amazigh migrants, such as economic benefits and freedom of speech. Yet, it can be disastrous for Amazigh identity and culture, and 'Come Back My Son' underscores the side effects of this journeying.

Importantly, contemporary migration proves to be more than movement between places. It is a process that involves places and space and it is affected by images of homeland. Migration, as the song highlights, is an experience people can explore and be involved in without moving from their location. In addition, migration, in light of the flux of cultures, is a process that can create uncertainty and confusion.

This chapter addresses Imazighen migration from the Rif and the way migrants' songs reflect this journey, its lasting uncertainty, and its efforts to sustain identity. Through the song 'Come Back My Son', I highlight the roles many Amazigh songs play in creating and maintaining a 'community of sentiments'. These songs reflect Imazighen feelings of uncertainty as they try to articulate their identity in diaspora. I argue the songs play a crucial role in identity construction despite the uncertainty created within a host society, globalization, and the journey of migration itself.

The confusion of the son in 'Come Back My Son' not only represents the general effects of the journey for Amazigh migrants but also involves a number of factors that add uncertainty to already confused migrants. For instance, the idea of being stuck in the journey is experienced by many migratory groups throughout the world, and numerous migration researchers regard it as a classic aspect of migration. Nevertheless, the current boost of anti-immigration sentiments throughout Europe has pushed migrants, including diasporic Imazighen, to question their own existence in host countries and their future prospects.

Chapter II: 'My Story': Memory and Cultural Identity

My story is cold fever, my story is cold fever.

I will write it down on roads, I will write it down on roads.

It will neither be washed away by floods nor carried away by waters.

I will sow it in the fields, and it will be cultivated by peasants

It will neither be picked up by a falcon, nor pecked at by craws.

It will neither be washed away by floods nor carried away by waters.

It will neither be picked up by a falcon, nor pecked at by craws.

My story is tomorrow that children are waiting for.

Children will observe it as the crescent of *Elɛid*,[1] they will play and be happy.

They will play it *Fuleɛleɛ* in the soil on which they have grown up.[2]

They will play it hide and seek, and the reward is for thy who finds.

It will neither be washed away by floods nor carried away by waters.

I will sow it in the fields, and it will be cultivated by peasants

It will neither be picked up by a falcon, nor pecked at by craws.

It will neither be washed away by floods nor carried away by waters.

It will neither be picked up by a falcon, nor pecked at by craws.

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[1] *Ɛid* or *Elɛid* is the name of the two major Islamic festivals: Ɛid al-Fitr is the ceremony that marks the end of Ramadan; Ɛid al-Adha marks the end of the annual pilgrimage to Mecca (Hajj), and culminates with the sacrifice of a lamb.

[2] *Fuleɛleɛ* is a typical Riffian game children played in the past, and has now disappeared. The game consists of making small holes in the ground and uses them for the game.

My story is tomorrow that children are waiting for.

Children will observe it as the crescent of *Elɛid*, they will play and be happy.

They will play it *Fuleɛleɛ* in the soil on which they have grown up.

They will play it hide and seek, and the reward is for thy who finds.

[The tempo becomes fast]

My story is tomorrow that children are waiting for.

Children will observe it as the crescent of *Elɛid*, they will play and be happy.

They will play it *Fuleɛleɛ* in the soil on which they have grown up.

They will play it hide and seek, and the reward is for thy who finds.

My story is a dream of the future; my story is a dream of the future.

I will write it down with a pen, my heart and blood.

Women will use it to draw henna tattoos on hands.

Women will use it to draw henna tattoos on hands.

Women will sprinkle it on babies as curing water of *Maṛṛu*[3]

…on babies. (Izri, "Ṯaqeṣṣiṣṭ"; my trans.)

Introduction

In this chapter, through Khalid Izri's song 'My Story' (1997), I look at how Amazigh subjects—either in diaspora or in their homeland—strive to articulate their Amazigh cultural identity in an increasingly fast-moving, globalised world. 'My Story' not only reflects the intricacy of the livelihood of Amazigh subjects (both in host countries and homeland), but also depicts the way these subjects negotiate their cultural identity in this fragmented and hostile world. Therefore, I look at how cultural elements, such as parts of 'traditions', rituals, and memory, represented in 'My Story' constitute remedies that assist

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[3] The plant of *Maṛṛu* is *Mentha Aquatica*.

Amazigh subjects in articulating their identity in uncertainty and unstable spaces.[4] Here I build on and expand Stuart Hall's theory that regards identity as a continuous process making use of history and culture in 'becoming rather than being' ("Who Needs" 4). I contend that identity is about becoming, being, and belonging. That is, I argue that identity is not only changeable but also keeps fluid markers that provide a sense of continuity (either of a person's identity or a community), and that subjects, as social beings, have a natural need to associate themselves with their families, friends, cultural groups, and communities.

Khalid Ichou (or Izri) is a well-known artist in Amazigh diaspora and throughout North Africa, who adores music and poetry. The singer began his carrier when he attended the Mohammed V University in Morocco. His artistic drive and the urge to discover the experience of migration encouraged him to venture out of Morocco. His journey first took him to Spain in 1992 and later to Belgium, where he currently lives. He advocates cultural diversity in Europe and has created a musical band that reflects such diversity. His band includes artists from various cultural backgrounds. He is an artist committed to infusing a range of sounds to create innovative Amazigh songs, and won Radio France International's 'Prix Decouvertes' in 1991. He is also the first African artist to participate in the project 'Le Monde est un Village', organised by RTBF (Radio Television Belge Francophone) in 2007.

Taqeṣṣiṣt, the title of his second album, is the outcome of many years Izri devoted to studying new sounds and combining them with lyrics written by today's famous Amazigh poets. The lyrics of the song 'Taqeṣṣiṣt Inu' are written by one of the best female Amazigh poets in Morocco, Fadma Elouriachi. 'Taqeṣṣiṣt Inu' ('My Story') is a song that contemplates Amazigh identity, identity politics, and memory.

This chapter includes four sections. First, I study the role of identity politics vis-à-vis the (re)construction of Amazigh identity and how this identity is negotiated in various spaces and conditions. The second section highlights how these aspects interact and affect the cultural identity of Amazigh subjects through the song 'My Story'. Here, I argue that 'My Story' reflects routes and not roots.[5] In the third section, 'My Story and My Culture', I investigate the way the song 'My Story' depicts elements like festivities, customs, and

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[4] I regard 'tradition' not as primordial, but as an ensemble of changing cultural elements continuously shaping and affecting subjectivities as much as they are affected by them.

[5] Routes, in this context, means that the story of *Taqeṣṣiṣt* addresses identity construction as processes that involve flows and intersections of discourses in various spaces.

traditions as part of an Amazigh culture that informs Amazigh identity. The last section, 'Music and Amazigh Collective Memory', highlights memory as an indispensable element in identity (re)construction, since it uses past events and practices to help Imazighen understand their present and construct their future. In addition, this section analyses the music of 'My Story' as an extension of the lyrics that mirror the conditions and emotions of Amazigh subjects.

The (re)construction of Amazigh identity and identity politics in *Ṯaqeṣṣiṣṯ*

> *Ṯaqeṣṣiṣṯ Inu* means, my culture, my words and my identity. (Izri, interview)

When the word *Ṯaqeṣṣiṣṯ* is translated in English, it literally means 'story'. Nonetheless, according to the artist, *Ṯaqeṣṣiṣṯ* in the song implies culture and identity. In effect, the context and the way the word *Ṯaqeṣṣiṣṯ* is constructed in and through the song have shaped its meaning drastically. *Ṯaqeṣṣiṣṯ* has evolved in the song to become a synonym of identity that represents Amazigh culture. Regarding the role of cultural practices in creating and shaping meanings, Stuart Hall argues that meaning is constructed through cultural practices. That is, the way a person, thing, or event is represented is what shapes its meanings: 'In part, we give things meaning by how we represent them—the words we use about them, the stories we tell about them, the images of them we produce, the emotions we associate with them, the way we classify and conceptualize them, the values we place on them' (*Representation* 3). Here, Stuart Hall emphasises the role of representation in shaping the contours of objects, subjects, and events. Therefore, it is constructive for any research that focuses on media and identity to first highlight the meaning of identity construction. Identity has been so conceptualised and overconceptualised that it has become incommensurable. Trying to understand the implications of such a concept is challenging; yet, without it, many key questions related to identity construction and culture cannot be addressed.[6]

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[6] The outlining of the concept of identity can vary according to the disciplines in which it is used. In psychology, for instance, identity usually refers to the psychological sense of continuity or what is known as 'the ego identity', or the self (Erikson 24). However, identity in social and political theory is distinct from the self in psychology. In *Reasons and Persons*, Derek Parfit writes that there is no separately existing entity, 'no Cartesian ego', no sense or substance that constitutes a self. Instead, he emphasises a spectrum of more or less related events of body and mind, and he argues for multiple selves over an individual's lifetime (Parfit 211-17). Unlike Erikson, Parfit sees no sense of continuity in identity; instead, he argues that identities change over time. He pictures the personality of a subject

For my research the demarcation of cultural identity and identity politics is relevant, since these two concepts will help me to examine the song 'Ṭaqeṣṣiṣt Inu' and Amazigh consciousness. Although the concept of cultural identity overlaps with identity politics, the two remain different. On the one hand, identity politics refers to the political actions of a 'minority group' who struggle against oppression by a 'dominant group' (L.A. Kauffman). It implies the empowerment of an oppressed group by articulating their experiences in a process of consciousness-raising. Cultural identity, on the other hand, refers to the feeling of identity of a group or a culture; it is a sense of belonging to a particular group or culture.

It is noteworthy to look at the processes of identity construction in order to comprehend the implications of identity. Scholars like Van Beek argue that identities are constructed according to specific interests, by using traditions and ideas that might have been either regenerated or created for the purpose (119). In view of that, group's identities are considered as highly situational and not primordial. In 'The Dialectics of Cultural Pluralism: Concept and Reality', Crawford Young also argues that identities emerge as a strategic choice that, in some instances, an individual would choose other group membership in order to gain some privileges and power (24). For these scholars, identity is considered the changeable product of an ongoing process of social interactions in which individuals chose particular identities according to their benefits.

Identity cannot only be regarded as either fixed or changeable (where emotions and interests play key roles), but must consider a fragmented process.[7] Stuart Hall asserts

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as a multiplicity that adapts or changes according to a particular period of time and space. Parfit's conceptualisation draws attention to the relevance of experience in identity (re)construction, but it disregards the importance of continuity in a subject's identity. It renders identity hollow, because it portrays it as a process of various phases disconnected from one another. A subject, as a social being, may change a job, house, country of residence, hobby, lifestyle, and name but there are always few cultural elements that link her or him to a particular culture, community and place or space.

[7] In *Ethos and Identity*, the social anthropologist Arnold Epstein states that processes of identity formation cannot be described in terms of the strategic defence of one's own interests alone. Although he does not negate the possibility of an intentional or unintentional role of interest in the process of identity reconstruction, he undermines its relevance in such process. The US-American anthropologist, Jonathan Friedman, in *Cultural Identity and Global Processes*, highlights another aspect in identity construction. He claims that affect and emotions are vital in any identity (re)construction process, and he rejects the idea that suggests people take on a new identity according to a costs-benefits

'Identities are never unified and, in late modern times, increasingly fragmented and fractured' ("Who Needs" 4). Stuart Hall emphasises an important factor in the construction of identity. He attributes such fragmentation to the current condition in which subjects' identities are constructed through a spectrum of discourses and abide by globalisation. Indeed, the process of globalisation plays a central role in the (re)construction of identities in the present.

Identity (re)construction is an intersubjective process, and communities and individuals make use of elements that evoke continuity and unity, which are present in the process of expressing one's story.[8] Identity is the manifestation of an individual as well as a group existence. It determines who an individual or what a group is. It is significant to accentuate the idea that identity is a continuous process of becoming, just as culture is a changeable and a never-ending process. Stuart Hall depicts identity as a process of becoming: 'Though they seem to invoke an origin in a historical past with which they continue to correspond, actually identities are about questions of using the resources of history, language and culture in the process of becoming rather than being' ("Who Needs" 4). Stuart Hall underlines the idea of continuity in the process of (re)generating identities. Indeed, identities involve the process of becoming but history forms part of that process as well. Hall frames identity as a process in which elements from history are used without directly linking the two. In effect, past forms to a degree a starting point of any identity construction because without it there might be no identity at all.[9] Importantly, the sense of belonging is a constitutive element in the process of identity construction. People have a natural need to belong because they tend to associate themselves with their families, organizations, linguistic groups, religious groups, nations, and societies. Hall's conceptualisation of identity construction highlights an important point, especially regarding the role of representations in identity construction. As I discuss later, cultural artefacts like songs play a major role in the process of identity construction, since they

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balance. Unlike Young, Friedman sees emotions as key elements in the equation of identity (re)construction. Both Friedman and Epstein regard identity as primordial.

[8] Is important to underline the fact that narrative identity constructed in the process of creative expression of one's story is the substance that somehow creates the sense of continuity and coherence in the life story of individuals and groups and provides a purpose for their existence; for more about narrative identity, see Ricoeur's *Time and Narrative* and *Memory, History and Forgetting*.

[9] Here I use the idea of past as an evolving process that provides subjects with the 'sense' of certainty as they try to articulate their identities.

affect the dynamic relationship between, on the one hand, variability and unity of such identity, and on the other hand, between continuity and alteration. In effect, I inspect identity politics in Morocco and throughout the Amazigh diaspora through the idea that identity is about becoming, belonging and being.[10]

Amazigh songs are a means of identification with community. To what extent is there a need for identification through songs and other cultural phenomena? What are the functions of Amazigh songs and what might they enact, or shape? In effect, they construct meaning and transmit it; they are media that create significance that members of Amazigh community can understand, identify with, and make use of in the process of shaping and re-articulating their identities. Identification is, for subjects, a process that gives meaning to existence, and importantly it provides subjects with what Stuart Hall calls 'sense' of identity (*Representation* 3).

Various Amazigh movements promote a goal of fostering an Amazigh identity. To promote this identity they tend to underline the importance of cultural elements, such as language, rituals, and artefacts in the process of redefining an Amazigh identity. Many Imazighen of the Rif region in Morocco defend the right of their community to exist against the continuous attempts of the supposed hegemonic group in Morocco (i.e., Arab nationalists, who try to restrict the cultural activities of Imazighen). Therefore, a song like 'My Story' becomes an element with which people identify in order to have some relative certainty in their uncertain worlds.[11] Amazigh subjects both in diaspora and country of origin identify with songs that they consume and appropriate in their daily lives, because these songs adopt and accommodate their stories.

In effect, Amazigh songs not only accommodate diaspora and homeland stories, but also create symbolic boundaries that 'keep' threats away.[12] In 'My Story', Izri sings:

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[10] It is worthwhile mentioning that identity politics can encourage people to rectify their group identities (Fraser). Therefore, few Amazigh movements intentionally or unintentionally promote Amazigh identity as a 'thing' rather than a process.

[11] Here I see identification as a continuous process; accordingly, I make use of Stuart Hall's definition of identification, which he regards 'as a construction, a process never completed—always "in process"' ("Who Needs" 2).

[12] There is wide belief among many Imazighen that Amazigh culture and identity are facing many threats in diaspora and in the homeland, and songs tend to highlight such threats in order to enlighten Imazighen who are supposed to keep these threats away and defend their culture.

'[My story] would not be snatched by a falcon nor pecked by craws'. This line evokes a threat looming over the skies of Amazigh culture. It emphasises the fact that there are elements, or craws and falcons, that want to annihilate Amazigh story and identity. This line highlights both the danger that threatens Amazigh culture and the process of identification that creates symbolic boundaries. That is, the process of identification with 'Ṭaqeṣṣiṣt Inu' provides the sense of identity to the identifiers or 'insiders', and draws virtual boundaries that create the outside where the threat is.[13] This outside, which 'Ṭaqeṣṣiṣt Inu' represents as a threat, becomes crucial in strengthening a process of identification among Imazighen. Regarding the importance of such process in creating and shaping 'frontier effects' and the role of such boundaries in consolidating the process of identification itself, Hall writes, 'identification is, then, a process of articulation, a suturing, an over-determination not a subsumption… as a process it operates across difference, it entails discursive work, the binding and marking of symbolic boundaries, the production of 'frontier effects'. It requires what is left outside, its constitutive outside, to consolidate the process' ("Who Needs" 3). Here the process of identification remains incomplete and obeys the logic of multiplicity. As a process, it shapes and reshapes 'frontier effects' and operates across difference in order to continue. Identification as an irresolute continuum requires symbolic boundaries that shape the sense of certainty among insiders, giving them the feeling that they belong somehow and somewhere and share a culture and identity.

'Ṭaqeṣṣiṣt Inu' creates the idea of a threatening outside to emphasise a sense of identity. In 'The New Mass Media and the Shaping of the Amazigh Identity', Amar Almasude argues that an Arabo-Islamic ideology constitutes a major threat to the culture of the Amazigh people in North Africa (19). Although Almasude's claim has some truth to it, it includes elements that are not quite accurate. For instance, the majority of Imazighen in Morocco are Muslim, and the threat against Amazigh identity does not stem from all Moroccan Arabs. Rather, the so-called Arab nationalists are those who actively try to eliminate Amazigh identity. The mentioning of these threats recurs in many Amazigh songs, and they are usually countered by defiance and emphasis on one's identity. For instance, in his song 'We Are Imazighen' (1998), Amazigh artist Allal Chilah sings: 'we are Imazighen, either they like it or not, we have always been Imazighen, we will die as Imazighen'(my trans). The tone of defiance is clear in this verse and the pronoun 'they' in

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[13] 'Insiders' refers to subjects who feel that they belong to a certain culture; they become insiders in relation to that particular culture.

it refers to those who try to deny the existence of Amazigh identity. Importantly, this verse emphasises the sense of identity: 'we are Imazighen'. This tone of defiance characterises many Amazigh songs. Regarding the reasons for selecting the poem 'Ṭaqeṣṣiṣt' to be sung, Khalid Izri affirms that it reflects the defiant character of Imazighen (Interview). Throughout Europe are Imazighen who feel their identity is marginalised and constantly under threat. Consequently, many of these Imazighen see the promotion of Amazigh culture as a constructive step to enhance Amazigh identity.[14]

Many Amazigh associations and groups organise events that promote Amazigh culture and contribute to a process of constructing and re-articulating Amazigh identity. Bouya and Tafsut (Morocco), Syphax (the Netherlands), Telelli (Belguim), CADE (Spain), Association Culturelle Amazigh (France), Awaswa (England), Awal Imazighen (Germany), and the Amazigh Cultural Association in America (USA), are few examples among hundreds of Amazigh organizations active in Morocco and throughout the Amazigh diaspora. They create a network that arranges meetings and activities, such as Amazigh festivals, lectures by Amazigh academics, and debates. There are several key ideas on the main webpage of Syphax association, for example, that are significant: 'It is constitutive that we are aware of our culture and identity … and we regard Amazigh culture both as a reflection of the past and a perspective of the future' (my trans.). The majority of Amazigh associations promote and advocate a similar message that Syphax broadcasts. The past of Imazighen is taken as a flowing background against which to construct the future for next generations. Here, Amazigh culture, including works of diasporic artists, help to enhance Imazighen senses of identity in the present.

The song 'Ṭaqeṣṣiṣt Inu' is part of what is called 'cultural memorization' (Bal).[15] It articulates the idea of temporal fluidity at present. That is, a line in the song highlights the extension of the past into the present and further into the future: 'My story is tomorrow'. This is not to be understood as a simple repossession of the past. Instead, the song refers to the past as a constructive element that helps in the process of constructing the present and future. This verse interestingly correlates, in a delicate plot, the past with the future. People usually tend to associate the idea of a story with events that belong to the past. In other

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[14] For more information on this process of promoting Amazigh culture, see Salem (20-25; 54-56) as well as Merolla's *Gender and Community* (28-31).

[15] In the introduction of *Acts of Memory: Cultural Recall in the Present* (1999) Mieke Bal, defines Cultural memorization as an activity that takes place at present in which the past is continuously modified even as it continues to shape the future.

words, even though there are stories regarding the future (like science fiction), people seldom speak of their future stories or stories of their future. In fact, the story in 'Ṯaqeṣṣiṣt Inu' not only bridges the past with the future through the present, but also becomes the future itself, my story *is* tomorrow. Yet, this moment in the song is indeed problematic, because by the use of the present tense it may evoke the idea that Amazigh identity is static. Nevertheless, the same line implies change when the emphasis is on the word 'tomorrow'. That is, apart from the word 'story', which is associated with the past, there is no mentioning of past tense in either 'my story is tomorrow' or in the whole song, and the present is 'cold fever'. Thus, the future provides an improved alternative in which 'children will play and be happy'. In this context, 'Ṯaqeṣṣiṣt Inu' occurs in the present and it adjusts a past that gives birth to a better, new future. Khalid Izri accentuates this point and argues that 'Ṯaqeṣṣiṣt Inu' is about future and hope (Interview).

The interplay of tenses in 'Ṯaqeṣṣiṣt Inu' is an intriguing detail that may shed light on the line 'my story is tomorrow'. The song begins in simple present tense, then shifts to the present continuous and concludes in the future. This chronology is telling, and when this shift in tenses is explained in light of Stuart Hall's point that identities are constantly in a process of change and transformation, it implies that the song simultaneously underscores the idea of change and continuity. The (present-present, continuous-future) formula indicates that Imazighen continue to be equal to themselves in light of a changing temporality. In effect, this chronology suggests that regardless of whether Amazigh culture is constantly in a process of change, Imazighen continue to believe in their past and 'joint' belonging. Ayawen's song, 'We Are Imazighen' (1992), highlights this point too:

> We are Imazighen, we are the sons and daughters of this land,
>
> We, men and women shall die for *Tamazgha*,
>
> Let us focus on the future, the past is gone…
>
> keep your way to yourself, we, Imazighen will walk on the path of our ancestors. (my trans.)

There are few interesting elements in these verses. The first part underscores the idea of belonging, and *Tamazgha* (Maghreb, or North Africa) represents a space many Imazighen believe they belong to. The second part evokes the past as something trivial, while the last part underscores the path of ancestors. These last two elements seem contradictory, but they

are not. Indeed, the past is gone and nobody can reinstall it, therefore the focus should be on future. Still, there are important elements in making this future identity or 'story' of 'tomorrow', and these elements are inherited from 'ancestors' like language, traditions, customs, and arts.[16]

In effect, any culture is imminently exposed to change, especially in today's globalised world, and Amazigh culture and identity are no exception as far as the affects of globalisation are concerned. The world has become a globalised village. People become involved in activities that occur across nations and continents. Amazigh culture and identity are, indeed, shaped by events that are the result of globalisation. In *The Consequences of Modernity*, Anthony Giddens argues that currently distant localities are linked in a way where local happenings are influenced by events taking place thousands of miles away and vice-versa (64). The interactions of Imazighen with other cultures contribute to the formation of current Amazigh identity and bring uncertainty with them. On the impact of migration and globalisation on peoples and cultures, Hall argues that globalisation and migration are processes that disturb and affect relatively 'stable' characteristics of many populations and cultures ("Who Needs" 4). This disturbance is partly responsible for generating the sense of uncertainty among diasporans. Globalisation affects Imazighen senses of identity, as with the case for many other identities.[17]

Mobility, which is another aspect of the phenomenon of globalisation, considerably affects Amazigh identity. Many Imazighen are able to access multiple places and spaces, and the Amazigh diaspora has been encouraged to attach itself to multiple locations and spaces. In 'Diasporas', Clifford argues that diaspora is usually understood as a phenomenon that promotes 'multi-locale attachments, dwelling and traveling within and across nations' (306). This raises the question as to how diasporic Imazighen understand or perceive the idea of 'belonging'. In effect, identity might be addressed as a process that evolves in relation to what Grossberg names 'ways of belonging' (102). That is, an Amazigh identity is the result of interactions of places and spaces and the distribution of

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[16] Here, the idea of belonging to an Amazigh community means belonging to a porous community 'routed' through the Maghreb and diaspora. It is a transnational imagined community that makes use of cultural elements represented in media like songs to construct and redefine its identity and provide it with relative certainty in this endless route and this globalised world.

[17] For more information on the issue of Amazigh identity and globalisation see Hoffman and Gilson's anthology.

Imazighen within this multiplicity. In these new delirious spaces, in which various discourses interact and clash, Amazigh identity is articulated and redefined. Speaking of such new spaces and identity construction, Hall argues that identity becomes a constantly changing process created in and affected by a range of discourses and practices which often crisscross and are opposed to one another ("Who Needs" 4).

Examining the different aspects of identity, it is worth mentioning that identities are never fixed; they change and transform to suit a given situation, but that does not mean that any change is a conscious, well-calculated act. In other words, identity can neither be described in terms of the promotion of interests alone nor entirely about emotions and affections: it is an outcome of interacting factors and processes. Identity is a question of being, belonging, and becoming.

'My Story': Being, Belonging, and Becoming

Many Imazighen regard their shared past as an important basis for their sense of identity. Almost all the lines in the second stanza of 'My Story' start with negation: It [story] is *not* going to be taken by flood; it [story] is *not* going to be snatched by a falcon. By using negation at the beginning of each line, the song hints to the fact that it is impossible to deny Imazighen beliefs in their shared story and belonging. Allal Chilah, in his song 'We Belong To This Land' (1998), sings: 'We have always lived here, we did not come from the Middle East, they are lies, they are lies' (my trans.). These lines refute the claims of the Moroccan Arab-nationalists who allege that Imazighen are Arabs in origin, and the verses accentuate the fact that Imazighen 'belong' to the supposed North Africa, and that they did not come from the Middle East. Importantly, these verses reassert the sense of belonging among Imazighen. Speaking of the psychological security that accompanies identification with one community, Eugeen Roosens argues that this type of community identification provides a sense of belonging and a belief that one knows one's origin (16). Roosens emphasises identification's positive role: that it creates a kind of certainty among the identifiers, who are living in constant uncertainty.

It is important to note that the story or the stories that inform Amazigh identity and the sense of belonging are here represented in the songs 'My Story' and 'We Belong To This Land'. The titles of both songs are significant, since they include the words 'belong' and 'story', linking one another and reflecting the nature of spaces and processes in which identity is constructed. Hall argues that the idea of 'belonging' that binds an identity-

creating story partly occurs at an imaginary and symbolic level, and therefore identity is partly constructed through fantasy ("Who Needs" 4). Here, Hall not only shows the role of belonging in making identity-shaping stories but also introduces another word important to any identity construction: fantasy. Fantasy, which is generated by desire, partly contributes in creating spaces in which identity is articulated. The desire to have a space to which Imazighen can belong has created the fantasy of 'soil' in 'My Story'. In creating this 'soil' on which 'children play *Fuleɛleɛ*, hide and seek', the song is not an exception as far the creation of imagined spaces to which subjects refer or belong. For instance, *Tamazgha* is invoked in Ayawen's 'We Are Imazighen' and 'land' in Chilah's song 'We Belong To This Land'. In fact, the term 'soil' in 'Ṭaqeṣṣiṣt Inu' is the most complex and significant word in the entire song. It represents the idea of belonging that an imagined Amazigh community shares. The term soil in the song becomes a space 'routed' in representations.

Yet, this Amazigh-'routed' belonging evokes its counterpart: closure. Every cultural group has visible and invisible rules that regulate the inclusion and exclusion of individuals and other groups. Therefore, difference is inherent in the process of identity construction, and anyone who does not share that sense of common belonging may feel excluded. In his reflection on the nature of identity process, Hall argues that the unity that identity asserts is not primordial but adopted through a process of closure, and what is left out constantly challenges and weakens this identity ("Who Needs" 5). The falcons and craws in 'Ṭaqeṣṣiṣt Inu' are instances of what are left out, constituting not only a challenge but also a threat to Amazigh identity. Still, these virtual boundaries do not stop the interaction of various groups with one another, and art usually plays a role in bonding communities. Regarding the role of 'Ṭaqeṣṣiṣt Inu', Khalid Izri argues that it is not a message sent exclusively to the Amazigh community but to the entire world; and it is an Amazigh cultural product to be enjoyed by everyone (Interview). Although Izri claims 'Ṭaqeṣṣiṣt Inu' is to be enjoyed by everyone, this does not refute the fact that the subtexts of the song are exclusionary. For instance, the Moroccan Arab-nationalists cannot enjoy a song addressing them as threatening 'falcons' and 'craws'. Nevertheless, everyone can enjoy the musical aspects of the song, and the idea of being Amazigh suggests similarities with innergroup or 'insiders'.

Being Amazigh evokes similarities with members of one's own cultural group.[18] There are norms, values, beliefs, languages, cultural symbols, and practices that members of the Amazigh community share and tend to accentuate. In 'Living Apart Together', Snauwaert and colleagues argue that the perception of belonging to an ethnic group leads people to highlight shared similarities with members of the innergroup (136). The song 'Ṭaqeṣṣiṣt Inu' presents few examples that highlight perceived similarities among the innergroup. The expressions '*Fuleɛleɛ*' and '*Maṛṛu* water' are two elements that draw attention to and compel a sense of belonging among the Rif Amazigh community. *Fuleɛleɛ* is a traditional game played by Riffian children.[19] *Maṛṛu* water is an essence extracted from the *Maṛṛu* plant (*Mentha aquatica*, which grow widely in the Rif region) known for its medicinal benefits; this essence is used on various illnesses that affect infants and children. These two examples are mentioned in the song as specific elements from the Rif region for Imazighen to identify with. These two elements are evocative, as they represent how real places and elements shift and change to become images and ideas represented in media and consumed by diasporans.

Many Imazighen make use of Amazigh songs to enhance their cultural traditions and renew their cultural identification.[20] The consumption and appropriation of these songs not only enhances cultural identity but also raises the importance of these cultural products in people's daily lives. Hall argues that the consumption and appropriation of cultural elements both gives and raises the value of these elements (*Representation* 3). Here, songs become important and significant since they draw attention to elements that evoke Amazigh culture. Songs are cultural elements themselves and represent other Amazigh cultural elements that may help Imazighen to articulate their identity. 'Ṭaqeṣṣiṣt Inu' is a creative reconstitution of an Amazigh past that transforms into a unique image for the present. In his comment on the game of *Fuleɛleɛ* in the song, Khalid Izri claims, 'I would love to see Imazighen in Europe remember Amazigh "traditions". I put traditions in inverted comas

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[18] Here the idea of 'being' is an ongoing process, and not a finished static phase. It relies partially on cultural elements represented in media such as songs to highlight and articulate identity.

[19] The song highlights *Fuleɛleɛ* as a cultural element that has disappeared from reality and kept alive in Amazigh media.

[20] It is worthwhile mentioning that there is a population of Imazighen who subvert the narrative of a unified imagined community and a coherent Amazigh identity. These Imazighen teach Arabic to their children because, since it is the language of the Koran, they believe it more important than Tamazight.

because traditions such as cultures are dynamic; I want Imazighen to honour the elements that make them who they are: Imazighen' (Interview). Izri underscores the importance of elements represented in Amazigh songs, such as dress codes, festivities, language, and Amazigh games, in celebrating Amazigh culture and redefining cultural identity. Many of these cultural elements are constantly changing and few of them are on the verge of disappearance, but there are usually new elements that appear and become important in the livelihood of a community.

The imagery in the song 'Ṭaqeṣṣiṣt Inu' reflects Amazigh traditions and the Riffian scenery. For instance, the verses in the second stanza take an Amazigh diasporic listener into a world and a dimension that are hard to experience in a present-day cosmopolitan city. The artist sings: 'I will sow it [my story] in the fields, and it will be cultivated by [Riffian] peasants'. This line evokes Riffian countryside scenery in the imagination of the listener, and, by underlining specific words, creates another layer of suggestions. In this line, the speaker promises to sow his story in fields. Here, the song, as media, fulfils its own promise of sharing its story, which signifies a narrative of Imazighen, with people living in North Africa and Amazigh diaspora. Therefore, the song becomes the first field in which the artist cultivates the story; after, this story will be cultivated in other 'fields', which may be places, spaces, or discourses.

The second part of the line—'and it will be cultivated by [Riffian] peasants'— includes some polysemous keywords. The word 'cultivate' is one of these keywords. The majority of peasants in the Rif region cultivate small amounts of barley and wheat in the autumn and, in the summer, harvest enough grains to sustain families for months and sometimes even for years. People cultivate little in order to harvest a lot. Therefore, the cultivation of an Amazigh story in the song is significant. There are two particular social actors awarded the task to cultivate 'the story': Riffian artists and peasants. In this verse Izri, the singer who cultivates the story in his song, represents artists. Peasants are explicitly mentioned as the second category that holds the burden of cultivating an Amazigh story. Both the words 'cultivate' and 'peasants' occur regularly in Amazigh songs. For instance, in another song, Elwalid Mimoun sings:

Our dear land, we will take care of your soil,

We will water your trees with our sweat,

We will cultivate you and create farms,

We will take care of you and protect you with all our might. ("We Belong")

Similarly, in their song 'Imazighen' (2009), the band Sorif sing: 'This is our land, we will cultivate it, and if it rains peasants and babies will be happy, our sun will rise, we are Imazighen, we have always been Imazighen'. Here, Sorif sing about identity and land. They put emphasis on peasants and babies because they evoke continuity. Peasants are the current cultivators and babies will cultivate the land in the future. Yet, reasoning behind the selection of peasants and artists in 'Ṯaqeṣṣiṣt Inu' still needs clarification. One answer may lie in the contemporary history of the Rif region, in which Riffian peasants and artists have played critical roles. Peasants fought the Spanish colonial army in the Rif at the beginning of the twentieth century and rebelled against the tyranny of the Moroccan regime in 1958. Amazigh artists are fighters of another category, as they use their artefacts 'to highlight the cultural, socio-economic and political condition of Imazighen in North Africa and elsewhere' (Izri, interview). Yet, the cultivation of the story in the song raises more questions than answers, as the audience may wonder about the kinds of possible harvest(s).

The seeds planted in the song suggest the upcoming harvest for the listener. The artist sowed his story in 'fields', and he is now observing the results. We know that 'story', as mentioned above, plays an important part in identity construction. There are three key words: 'story', 'cultivate', and 'fields'. The last word is plural, for it is not in one field that the story is cultivated, but in field*s*. This reminds us again of the process of identity construction, in which various discourses interact to shape and reshape identities. On this process, Hall argues that identity is the articulation of the subject into the flow and intersection of discourses (*Representing* 1). Here, 'fields' becomes synonymous with evolving, intersecting, and changing discourses. It is in this flow that the story arises to shape and redefine an Amazigh identity.

The act of sowing the story of 'Ṯaqeṣṣiṣt Inu' is to enhance the process of identity (re)creation (i.e., becoming). The artistic, discursive practice creates the space in which identity is redefined. On the role of discursive practices in identity construction, Stuart Hall argues that identities are 'points of temporary attachment to the subject positions which discursive practices construct for us' ("Who Needs" 6). Here, Hall reflects on both the relevance of discursive practices in the process of identity construction and the provisional character of such process. Amazigh culture has been sidelined for a long time, and

Amazigh artists now act and perform in order to (re)create this culture.[21] Commenting on 'Ṭaqeṣṣiṣt Inu', Khalid Izri states that the song is as an identity card revealed to the whole world, for it reflects Amazigh culture and identity (Interview). Therefore, revealing the process of constructing and articulating an Amazigh identity is part of the intended harvest in 'Ṭaqeṣṣiṣt Inu'. The story (*Ṭaqeṣṣiṣt*) in the song is part of the process of creating, or re-creating, an Amazigh identity, since it highlights a specific group (i.e., Imazighen). That is, the song brings into light a story/identity of Imazighen. Amazigh language and art are two explicit mechanisms involved in the cultivation of 'Ṭaqeṣṣiṣt Inu' that not only benefits artists and peasants, but also a larger Amazigh community.

Imazighen can neither be categorised as marginal nor as ethnic minorities. In effect, Imazighen are a community, whose civilisation is 'routed' through North Africa for thousands of years, and whose cultural fabric is part of contemporary Europe while continuing to evolve and spread throughout the world. *Ṭaqeṣṣiṣt* is a seed planted and cultivated in the song and in the imagination of the audience that seeks to create a moment of reflection on the culture of Imazighen.

My Story and my Culture

Amazigh culture is a structure that unifies the Amazigh community under what Benedict Anderson terms an 'imagined community'. Imazighen are a community who do not necessarily share a piece of territory, but share an idea of a 'nation' and what it stands for.[22] In fact, there are nationalist Imazighen who dream of a geopolitical *Tamazgha*, which is represented in various Amazigh songs. While this modern conception of an Amazigh nation will not likely see political self-determination as a nation-state, there are many Imazighen throughout the Maghreb who cherish the idea of *Tamazgha* for its symbolic, unifying value in representations (i.e., a virtual nation). Amazigh culture, and especially media, is a powerful source of ideas and meanings that constitute Imazighen identities in a globalised world. Regarding the circulation of ideas in a current globalised world, Stuart Hall argues that meaning is 'produced in a variety of different media; especially, these days in the

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[21] It is important to note that Amazigh culture has been sidelined since Moroccan independence (1956). However, during French and Spanish occupation of Morocco France promoted Amazigh culture in order to create two poles that might collide in the country, Arabs and Berbers. The occupiers attmepted to "devide and rule". See, Maddy-Weitzman (153).

[22] Here the idea of nation means a borderless nation united under the umbrella of Amazigh culture.

modern mass media, the means of global communication, by complex technologies, which circulate meanings between different cultures on a scale and with a speed hitherto unknown in history' (*Representation* 3). Hall alludes to the speed of circulation, the complexity and the flow of media in our current world, in which both media and the meaning they carry are affected by events occurring at various spaces. Amazigh media—particularly songs—are no exception. They are renovated spaces that provide people who identify with the Amazigh a continuous flow of meanings that give shape and significance to their 'present' lives.[23] 'Ṭaqeṣṣiṣt Inu', as a cultural production, is full of ideas that imply the sense of togetherness of the Amazigh community and constitute and enhance their cultural identity.

In light of this unstable temporality, Amazigh culture highlights Amazigh identity and provides provisional certainty. In his definition of the notion of culture, Stuart Hall argues that the culture of a group or class is the particular way of life of that group or class, and among the crucial elements of that mode of life are the meanings, values, and ideas reflected in their system of beliefs, customs, and the uses of objects (*Representation* 3-4). These values, ideas, and objects are the elements that assist many Imazighen to acquire some certainty vis-à-vis their identity and direction among the uncertainty that strikes their existence. Izri's song, 'World's Boat' (1992), reflects both the uncertainty that globalisation brought with it and Imazighen persistence to continue and adapt to this new condition. The speaker addresses the boat and sings:

> On your back we are sailing to the outside world, we are trying to stop you, we are patient, your paths are intertwined at crossroads, your sea is lost and you lost your sails, the cold air from the sea affects our bones, your wooden bones are insensible to the cold.

Here the song depicts Imazighen sailing a rough sea of globalisation, and ineffectively trying to slow their boat down in order to take a breath in this fast-moving ship. They are affected by the winds of globalisation, but they still have patience. They are confident that they will survive and adapt. In these rough conditions, ideas and common beliefs are relevant in providing guidance and temporal certainty.

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[23] Here the term present is not stable, it is a continuity.

Rituals and beliefs are important to provide a 'sense' of identity and belonging. In the second line of the second stanza of 'Ṭaqeṣṣiṣt Inu', a common belief emerges: Islam. Islam is the main religion of Imazighen in North Africa or diaspora, and the Ɛid Crescent (and the joy it creates among Amazigh youth) represent the significance of this faith in the song. The use of religious terminology is current in Amazigh songs. In their song 'Henna' (2010), which revolves around a bride's henna ritual, the band Tifyur, sing: 'My henna is blessed, may God bless it, in the name of God we will begin'. Here, we see how Islam implicates the old tradition of the henna ritual among Imazighen.[24] The examples of Henna ritual and Islam are among other elements that help Imazighen in coming-to-terms-with their 'routes'.[25] In effect, these elements are not only important in the process of identity construction but also in the politics of recognition.

Exerting control over the right to write one's own story remains one of the priorities for Imazighen in their process of cultural struggle. In the second line of the last stanza, Izri sings: 'I will write it [my story] down with a pen, my heart and blood'. In this line, the speaker insists that an Amazigh should record Amazigh stories, and not anyone else. Similarly, the band Thifridjas sing:

Give me a mallet, I have a chisel in my left hand,

I will carve *Tifinagh*, I will write them on rocks,

I will measure words, and season them with a chisel

With wisdom and allegories I will weave a *Ṭaqeṣṣiṣt* [story]

Come and sit with me sister, we will write our letter and leave it behind to babies

We will explain sayings and give them good advice. ("Tifinagh")

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[24] In addition to Islam as the majority religion of Imazighen, Christianity and Judaism are two important religions too. Judaism and Christianity were the main religions among Imazighen in Morocco before the arrival of Islam and Arabs (Njoku 34-36).
[25] I borrow this expression from Hall, who emphasises 'routes' instead of roots since current identities are constituted inside representations, and therefore, constantly shifting ("Who Needs" 4).

This stanza highlights the insistence of many Imazighen to write Amazigh stories themselves. It also asserts that men and women together should participate in the process of writing and that Tifinagh should be the alphabet used. In the past, Arab nationalists decided how and what accents of Amazigh culture should be represented. Currently, many Imazighen want to represent and record their own (hi)story. This process is part of a decolonisation of the mind, or in Franz Fanon's words, 'the veritable creation of new men' (36). Thus, when Izri sings about writing an Amazigh story by an Amazigh, it underscores a conscious liberation strategy among the Amazigh community. On the one hand, there are Imazighen who want to prevent the misrepresentation of Amazigh culture; on the other hand, this group wants to utilise Amazigh cultural productions in their struggle for cultural liberation in North Africa and throughout the Amazigh diaspora. Izri argues that the Amazigh community, especially artists, might contribute to decolonising minds, or what he calls 'to allow Imazighen to lead a life of an Amazigh' (Interview). Importantly, diasporic Imazighen can play a major role in such a decolonisation given that they live in quite liberal countries.

The coexistence of tradition and innovation for diasporic Imazighen has contributed to the diversification of European societies and cultures. No one can deny the fact that contemporary Europe is more diversified than it was five decades ago.[26] With the arrival of Imazighen and other so-called 'ethnic minorities' to Europe, Amazigh cultures and traditions have interacted with 'European' cultures and traditions to create what is known as 'multiculturalism' or cultural diversity.[27] Current Amazigh culture is a mix of innovation and tradition. It is formed in a way that enables Imazighen to be culturally marked but not exclusionary. Thus, this old and new Amazigh culture forms part of a diversified Europe where communities cohabite and continuously interact to form new cultures.

Despite the fact that diasporic Imazighen remain open to innovations, they tend to bring into play their traditions to counter any attempt of assimilation. Izri, for instance, supports the idea of cultural interactions between various communities and what these interactions yield (Interview). Nevertheless, diasporic Imazighen may strongly resist any

[26] Although Europe has never been homogenous, as indicated by many internal and international conflicts, there are many groups in the continent who advocate homogeneity.
[27] On a migrant's creative expression and his or her role in reshaping European identities, see Ponzanesi and Merolla.

attempt by a so-called majority to try to assimilate them. Here, Amazigh diasporas are inclined to defend their cultural identity by clinching to traditions. That is to say, Imazighen tend to maintain their cultural practices in their 'host' countries without being saturated by them, but whenever they feel confronted with assimilation their level of attachment to tradition increases.

There are European Imazighen who want to be treated with justice, concurrently coupled with the demand for the recognition of their cultural identity. Currently, many Imazighen live in Europe and, by bringing their own culture into play, aspire to affect host society. Speaking of the arrival of migrants to Europe and its implications, Kevin Robins remarks, 'These new and various global mobilities and movements brought with them new kinds of cultural diversity and complexity into the western societies, involving new kinds of cultural encounter, exchange and mixing' (276). The idea of cultural encounter between host and guest is an important process as far as cultural diversity in Europe is concerned. The important elements cited by Robins are 'exchange and mixing'. They indicate interactions that take place among cultures and their effects. Amazigh culture, in combination with other so-called 'minority' cultures, has created complex cultural connections that interact and, when necessary, challenges the modes of cultural productions and distributions of the so-called dominant majority in Europe. In fact, cultural diversity of 'minorities' have elements, such as stories, images, and art that might drastically affect any future European societies. The manifestation of cultures of the so-called minorities throughout Europe highlights the emphasis of these minorities on their rights to be treated as equals and for their cultural differences to be respected.

Given that culture is produced through representation, understanding and practicing Amazigh cultural repertoire is indeed a necessary step toward engaging other cultures. Hall claims that representation is a practice that produces culture (*Representation* 1). Amazigh songs, as examples, are media through which thoughts, ideas, values, and emotions are represented in Amazigh culture. Here, the cultural repertoire is the ensemble of the artistic productions and cultural phenomena of Imazighen who live in North Africa and Amazigh diaspora. The story of 'Taqeṣṣiṣt Inu' is a metaphor that evokes the story of Imazighen. The song has overcome spatial barriers to reach audiences worldwide. Likewise, Amazigh cultural repertoire is currently available everywhere. It is there for those who seek to study, understand, and practice it. In effect, common characteristics from

an Amazigh cultural repertoire with other repertoires may help Imazighen engage other traditions and find common ground.

My Story, Music and Amazigh Collective Memory

In the song 'Ṭaqeṣṣiṣt Inu', the second line of the third stanza depicts religious emblems that are significant for all Muslims. The artist sings: 'They [children] will witness it [*Ṭaqeṣṣiṣt*] as the *ɛid* crescent; they will enjoy it and be happy. Both *ɛid* (Eid) and the crescent are indeed symbolic. The importance of *ɛid* for Muslims can be compared to that of Christmas for Christians. It is an event that brings relatives close to one another and creates a moment of joy among families. The crescent stands as a symbol of Islam.

For Imazighen, *ɛid* and the crescent evoke another layer of meaning. The use of these two symbols in 'Ṭaqeṣṣiṣt Inu' as means of identification shows that Islam is part of an Amazigh identity. In addition, the mentioning of these symbols suggests that they are part of Amazigh collective memory. Islam is an active process of identification Imazighen use to make their identity visible. Certainly, the act of being visible is important for both the *ɛid* crescent and Imazighen. Imazighen use media like 'Ṭaqeṣṣiṣt Inu' as a means to divulge their cultural identity. Trying to detect the *ɛid* crescent can be a difficult task indeed, especially if the sky is cloudy. Apparently, the difficulties of witnessing the *ɛid* crescent are used in the song to highlight the difficulties Imazighen face in order to be visible in North Africa or Europe.

The *ɛid* crescent suggests both visibility and invisibility at the same time, for the *ɛid* crescent appears shortly at dusk and then disappears. In the song, the *ɛid* crescent is linked to the story of the Imazighen. Therefore, 'Ṭaqeṣṣiṣt Inu' becomes entangled by visibility and invisibility. The idea of an Amazigh being invisible in North Africa and Europe can be compared to what Kobena Mercer describes as the invisibility of Blacks in Britain as a consequence of marginalisation and imposed silence (7). There is a long-standing history of invisibility of Imazighen in Morocco and Europe. For instance, there are many people in Europe who have never heard of the Amazigh community.

In effect, 'Ṭaqeṣṣiṣt Inu' emphasises the idea that cultural memory is a generational endeavor in which generations establish a kind of continuity. However, this continuity requires cultural elements that establish an imaginary thread that links these

generations. In addition, to have this continuity, generations should somehow be able to understand cultural codes embedded in this thread to correctly interpret and develop these elements. On this issue Hall writes, 'members of the same culture must share sets of concepts, images, and ideas which enable them to think and feel about the world, in roughly similar ways. They must share, broadly speaking, the same cultural codes' (*Representation* 4). Hall underscores the importance of cultural codes in transmitting meaning between members of the same community. This also applies to the process of transmitting significance from one generation to another in the same community. Here, the role of songs, as media, is crucial both in transmitting and highlighting the significance of elements represented to various generations. 'Ṭaqeṣṣiṣt Inu' presents categories that correspond to various generations of Imazighen. The second line of the second stanza describes peasants or '*ifedjaḥen*'—who are usually grown men—plowing fields. In the first line of the third stanza, the song depicts children ('*iḥenjiren*') playing games. The last stanza the song describes young women—'*Tiḥramin*'—with henna on their hands. In the same stanza, another line portrays babies—'*iseyman*'—cured with *Maṛṛu* water. In sum, the song describes babies, children, young women, and grown men. Each of these categories represents a Riffian generation, and their presence in 'Ṭaqeṣṣiṣt Inu' is telling.

Amazigh generations in the song represent a sense of continuity for Amazigh cultural memory as well as agents of change. This statement may seem anomalous, since change is supposed to be the opposite of continuity. Nonetheless, this is not always the case, since many generations of diasporic Imazighen have witnessed change. That is, these generations are, after all, responsible for negotiating the past in a constantly shifting present. In addition, the image of generations suggests that some elements from older generations may be transmitted to current and future ones. In their song '**Abdelkarim**' (2002) the group Thidrin sing: 'I still remember what my grandmother told me about our grandfather'. This line is an introduction to the story of the heroic acts of the Riffian leader Mulay Muḥend (AbdelKarim Elkhattabi, or the grandfather against the Spanish colonialists during the Rif war at the beginning of the twentieth century). It is valuable for the Rif to transmit this knowledge from one generation to the next, either in Morocco or throughout the Amazigh diaspora, and songs are among the cultural vehicles that transmit this knowledge. In *Migrant Belongings: Memory, Space, Identity*, Anne-Marie Fortier implicates the importance of generations for migrants with the idea of continuity and change:

Generations, in migration, are the living embodiment of continuity and change, mediating memories of the past with present living conditions, bringing the past into the present and charged with the responsibility of keeping some form of ethnic identity alive in the future. (150)

Fortier highlights an important task as far generations in migration are concerned. These generations represent continuity in the sense that they are bridging the past, present, and future, and they are agents of change since their own identity is continuously redefined. As with many migratory groups, Amazigh generations in diaspora are vital for the survival of Amazigh cultural identity in the present and future. In other words, the livelihoods of these Amazigh generations are continuous acts of (re)living one's own cultural identity.

The use of memory in 'Ṭaqeṣṣiṣt Inu' allows Amazigh subjects to witness their cultural identity in the making. In fact, the past in the song is re-lived and (re)membered through a set of practices: the henna ritual, the witnessing of an ɛid crescent, and playing games with children. These acts help the Imazighen to come to terms with understanding their own cultural identity. For instance, Tifyur's song 'Ṭamẓa' ('Ogress', 2006) recounts one of the scary oral stories for children in the Rif. Similarly, Banaman's song 'Nunja, mani tedjid' ('Where Are You, Nunja', 1992) recounts the sad story of a beautiful girl, Nunja, and her jealous stepmother. The majority of the Riffian oral stories for children have disappeared in cities.[28] They vanished because they are not recounted as they used to be in the past, and many Amazigh songs try to draw attention to these neglected stories that form part of an Amazigh collective memory. Thus, the act of singing about Amazigh rituals, forgotten children stories, and legends cultivate in Amazigh subjects a sense of identity and belonging.

With regard to the sense of belonging and identity, the allusion to *Maṛṛu* water in 'Ṭaqeṣṣiṣt Inu' is significant. People cannot extract the water of *Maṛṛu* unless the plant is fresh. Therefore, mentioning the use of *Maṛṛu* water suggests that people should visit the Rif and collect fresh *Maṛṛu* in order to extract its essence. Here, this plant becomes a symbol of continuity and collective memory. The invitation is directed to all Imazighen, but

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[28] Oral stories for children are still popular in the Riffian countryside.

particularly to those who do not regularly live in the Rif region. The tradition of using the *Maṛṛu* plant and its link to the Rif area is what creates the sense of common history for the Amazigh (Riffian) community at present. In 'Beyond Culture: Space, Identity and the Politics of Difference', Gupta and Ferguson argue that senses of belonging, continuity, and common history are created by a community's link to places imagined or real (10). *Maṛṛu* is a plant found in abundance in a real place (the Rif), but it remains a symbolic element in current Amazigh diaspora.

In 'Ṭaqeṣṣiṣt Inu', *Maṛṛu* also functions as a site of memory that has lost its physical character outside the Rif region and has been re-created in the song. Here, the represented Rif becomes a virtual space a listener can visit and make use of its medicinal plants. The presence of *Maṛṛu* in 'Ṭaqeṣṣiṣt Inu' raises the question of whether non-physical elements may still be classified as sites of memory. Definitions of sites of memory can be intriguing. Revealingly, Pierre Nora's definition sheds light on ambiguities of *lieux de mémoire*. Nora writes, '*Lieu de mémoire* is any significant entity, whether material or non-material in nature, which, by dint of human will or the work of time, has become a symbolic element of the memorial heritage of any community' (17). Nora clearly states that under certain conditions any object—physical or not—can function as a site of memory. Accordingly, *Maṛṛu* is a site of memory because of its symbolic value to Riffians in Morocco and diaspora despite that it has lost its material nature outside the Rif region. *Maṛṛu*, as a site of memory, is a cure against forgetting; it has become the side effect of a fast and changeable present.

Uncertainty and forgetting are epidemic in a current globalised world. Forgetting, which is another factor that triggers uncertainty, is an aspect of work of memory that seems worrying in 'Ṭaqeṣṣiṣt Inu'. The artist sings: 'I will write my story down on roads, I will write my story down on roads'. This line raises many questions vis-à-vis remembering and forgetting. The emphasis on recording the story reflects a deep concern about Amazigh stories and identity, rooted in a fear that forgetting and uncertainty will prove disastrous for Amazigh identity. The song's line 'my story is tomorrow' indicates that there are Imazighen uncertain about the future of their shared story; therefore, they want to keep records to help them to remember. One of these records is the song 'Ṭaqeṣṣiṣt Inu' itself, which represents several cultural elements that may help later generations understand their routes. Still, the writing of 'Ṭaqeṣṣiṣt Inu' may be for other reasons.

The emphasis on *writing* the story in 'T̲aqeṣṣiṣt Inu' reveals the need to translate Amazigh memories into words. In *Memory against Culture*, Johannes Fabian argues that memories cannot be narrated except as stories, and that one way of having access to the study of memory work is through narration (84-85). Accordingly, the aim behind the interest in narrating memories in 'T̲aqeṣṣiṣt Inu' is to allow people to study the memory work of Imazighen. In the last stanza of 'T̲aqeṣṣiṣt Inu', Izri sings, 'I will write it [my story] with a pen'. This line corroborates the idea that the artist wants to narrate and carve a few Amazigh memories in the song. The idea of writing in Tamazight has a political significance, because the act promotes this language to join the club of other languages considered prestigious since they are 'written languages' (Chaker 20). In effect, the song's emphasis on memory leads one to think of memory in terms of temporality.

Memory in the song functions as a link that relates past with present and future, articulated by combining tenses and events. The song, for instance, describes both the act of curing babies with *Maṛṛu* water and the henna tattoo ritual. The song describes events that occurred in the past, but they are delivered in present- and future-tense sentences. In 'Fragments of Fictional Memory as Building Blocks of Identity', Christine de Lailhacar describes the intricate relation of memory to time: 'Memory is one of the most complex phenomena, philosophically speaking, because it participates in both present and past and has a future dimension' (253). The projection of the past into the present and future is what keeps memory alive and updated. In the last line we hear, 'my story is a dream of tomorrow'; here, memory is presented as a mode of re-presentation that belongs to the present and the future rather than the past. The singer Izri states, 'I found myself in 'T̲aqeṣṣiṣt Inu' and it is a song which is full of elements that speak of future; when I reconsider 'T̲aqeṣṣiṣt Inu' I see the image of hope before my eyes, a future in which our [Amazigh] children and community lead a normal life, without subjugation' (Interview). 'T̲aqeṣṣiṣt Inu' can be compared to a seed that has grown into a tree with its 'routes' in past, its trunk in the present, and its branches projecting into the future.

Memory is reflected in 'T̲aqeṣṣiṣt Inu' as a motor of change with a 'stabilizing' factor on identity.[29] In the third stanza, the artist sings: 'My story is tomorrow that children are waiting for'. Amazigh children are waiting for tomorrow, which, according to

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[29] Here the idea of stability is relative. My use of the word stabilizing in combination with memory and identity can be here misleading, because it may give false impression of identity being fixed.

'Taqeṣṣiṣt Inu', should be better than the past. Here, memory is portrayed as an element that promotes a blossomy future for Amazigh children. Yet, memory, in the same song, seems to have the function of re-articulating Amazigh identity. In fact, memory shapes identity by reworking past at present. In *Gendered Memories*, John Neubauer and Helga Geyer-Ryan argue that 'memory has a preserving, maintaining and stabilizing function on identity' (6). In effect, memory functions as a means to bind experiences and create the sense of continuity in the process of identity construction and redefinition. In the last stanza of 'Taqeṣṣiṣt Inu', we hear: 'I will write it [my story] with a pen, my heart and blood'. There are three important dualities in this line: the artist or subject, pen and writing, and heart and blood. This line suggests that remembering through artefacts is an act that helps to shape and re-shape Amazigh identity in the present and future. A pen helps subjects or artists to keep writing, and it is blood that keeps hearts beating. The artist or subject uses a pen to rework Amazigh story, and, to keep Amazigh identity alive, a beating heart with flowing blood. That is, the Imazighen' past is reworked in 'Taqeṣṣiṣt Inu' to shape the present and future of Imazighen.

Music

In addition to the content of lyrics, the music of 'Taqeṣṣiṣt Inu' enhances and underlines the themes discussed in the song. The tempo of the music is one element that contributes to transmitting lyrics to the listener. At the beginning of the song the tempo is *andante*. In his comment on the slow tempo at the beginning, Khalid Izri argues that he uses *andante* tempo to allow the listener to digest the content of the lyrics and enjoy the delicacy of Amazigh music (Interview). Here, the *andante* tempo allows listeners to reflect on the issues of identity and memory present in its lyrics. In the middle of the song the tempo shifts to *allegretto*. The change in the tempo emphasises the hopeful future depicted in the lyrics of 'Taqeṣṣiṣt Inu' in which Amazigh babies are well and children are happy. In addition, Izri alleges that the tempo is fast at the end of the song because Imazighen want to hasten the process of cultural liberation in North Africa (Interview).

Instrumentation is another intriguing aspect of 'Taqeṣṣiṣt Inu'. Two types of instruments are used: percussion instruments, such as a drum kit and congas, and melodic instruments, such as an acoustic guitar, a bass guitar and a flute. Khalid Izri reports that his selection of these instruments, especially the acoustic guitar and flute, is mainly to create an

acoustic music that is easy to penetrate the ear, the heart, and the mind of the listener (Interview). Many emotions in the lyrics of the song are not precisely translatable; however, music is a medium that can translate feelings and emotions (Hertz 51). For instance, at the beginning of the song through the rhythm and the overall music, we can feel a distressing tone. In addition to the capability of music to translate emotions, the music of 'Ṭaqeṣṣiṣt Inu' embodies innovation and traditions. While the flute is one of the traditional Amazigh musical instruments, the drum kit and bass guitar represent innovation. This marriage of innovation and tradition is an aspect that not only characterises the majority of Amazigh songs but also the identity of Imazighen. It is an identity that develops and changes but at the same time keeps cultural markers fluid and give it its fleeting distinctiveness. In effect, the whole song 'Ṭaqeṣṣiṣt Inu' represents an image of a community that cherishes its values and ideas and strives to improve its life condition and that of the coming generations. Here, we see innovation goes hand in hand with respect to 'traditions'.

Conclusion

Though cultural identities have a fluid character, they always keep some cultural elements that shape subjects into what or who they are. The song 'Ṭaqeṣṣiṣt Inu' is an example of this fluid character and of Amazigh cultural elements. This song not only reveals how identities evolve and the role of cultural artefacts—particularly songs—in the process of shaping and reshaping these identities, but also depicts elements that form part of Amazigh collective memory that provide some certainty in this globalised world.

It draws attention to neglected or forgotten elements that have characterised the livelihood of Imazighen of the Rif region. The act of listening to 'Ṭaqeṣṣiṣt Inu' renders forgotten elements such as *Fuleɛleɛ* and *Maṛṛu* water alive. That is, they are remade and recreated as representations in the song to be remembered and enjoyed at present by Imazighen worldwide. In addition, 'Ṭaqeṣṣiṣt Inu' shows how cultural productions utilise ideas, meanings, and values to inform Amazigh identity, and how music plays a role in transmitting these ideas and reflects feelings and emotions.

Through the song 'Ṭaqeṣṣiṣt Inu', I demonstrate that diasporic Amazigh identity is a continuous process that uses history and culture in being, becoming, and belonging. Cultural elements help to sustain this identity and create continuity in this fragmented and

fluid world. Importantly, cultural elements and the idea of belonging help to alleviate, even temporarily, uncertainty as a side effect of the journey of migration.

While in chapter one Elwalid Mimoun's song 'Come Back My Son' highlights the uncertainty in which many Imazighen live, especially in diaspora, in this chapter the song 'T̲aqeṣṣiṣt Inu' represents cultural elements that give some guidance and enlighten the journey of Imazighen through the labyrinth of uncertainty and assist them in articulating their identity. In the coming chapter we will see the role of another media, film, in highlighting other factors that contribute to uncertainty (especially among local Imazighen in the Rif region) and affect the process of identity construction and re-articulation.

Chapter III: *The City of Wait:* **Mobility and Immobility**

Introduction

My object of analysis in this chapter is the documentary film *Ciudad De La Espera* (*The City of Wait*, 2004). This film highlights the level of mobility various individuals have access to, and how these disparities in access affect daily lives and identities. *The City of Wait* was released during a time of many Moroccan audio-visual productions addressing the issue of long-term mobility (i.e., international migration).[1]

      The City of Wait is a 'city film' directed by the Spanish filmmaker Juan Luis de No and released in 2004. The documentary accentuates various facets of mobility, mainly in Morocco. The filmmaker, in collaboration with the Amazigh artist Belkacem Elouariachi (Qosmit) and the Riffian migrant and anthropologist Dr Mohatar Marzok, explores the phenomenon of migration and its implications on the population in the Moroccan Northern city of Al Hoceima. The film is constituted mainly of a compilation of interviews conducted in the city of Al Hoceima. A tailor and his friends, university graduates, a feminist group, artists, a group of children, a homemaker, a businessman, a teacher, a taxi driver, and a wife of a migrant are examples of subjects interviewed in the documentary.[2]

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[1] Since the early 1990s, films produced in Morocco tend to accentuate various facets of the phenomenon of migration. Yasser Ferhat's *Singing for Survival* (2008)*,* Mohamed's *Et Après* (2002), Leila Kilani's *Tangier* (2003), Mohamed Lotfi's *Returnees* (2004), Yasmine Kassari's *L'enfant Endormi* (2004), and Hassan's *Testament* (2004) are few works that draw attention to the experience of migration.

[2] Although the word 'document' entered English language as early as eighteenth century, it was the Scottish filmmaker and documentary theorist John Grierson who first introduced the word 'documentary' in a review in *The New York Sun* in February 1926. It emerged in his comments on Flaherty's *Moana* (1926): 'Of course *Moana* being a visual account of

Usually, the expression 'city film' denotes non-fiction films that revolve around urban areas. These films usually include scenes of buildings, streets, traffic, and people as individuals or masses circulating in the city. Yet, many filmmakers currently extend the codes of such films. They tend to use scenes of the city in combination with other scenes shot in rural areas, depicting countryside dwellers and their modes of life. In addition, filmmakers tend to use scenes outside the city, such as mountains, forests, and sea, throughout films classically categorised as city films. My object of analysis, *The City of Wait*, is one example in which such mixing occurs. The title may indicate that the film is about the city of Al Hoceima. Nonetheless, the filmmaker uses scenes shot in the villages and mountains surrounding the city. It is in this film that the poetic, the expository, the observational, and the interactive modes come together.[3] Although the expository and

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events in the daily life of a Polynesian youth and his family has documentary value' (Jacobs). Grierson used the word as an adjective in combination with the term 'value' and its meaning is somehow vague. Even if he later uses the term to denote some kind of film that he calls 'the creative treatment of actuality', he notes that it is an awkward word (qtd. in Rotha 70). Grierson's interest in documentary can be described as his deep belief in filmmaking, especially, documentary as an art form, and his devotion to use media to educate and inform the masses. Even today the majority of film theorists face many difficulties when they try to articulate the word documentary. In a comment on Grierson's remarks on documentary in the introduction to his book *Documentary Display,* the Australian film theorist Keith Beattie underlines the clumsiness of the term documentary. He describes it as an 'awkward' and 'maladroit' word (Beattie 1). Although Bill Nichols accepts the clumsiness of the word documentary, he cautiously ventures in a superficial outline of the term and states, 'The definition of documentary is always relational or comparative. Just as love takes on meaning in contrast to difference or hate, and culture takes on meaning in contrast to barbarism or chaos, documentary takes on meaning in contrast to fiction film or experimental and avant-garde film' (Nichols, *Introduction* 20).

[3] Despite the resistance of documentary films toward attempts of categorisation, theorists like Bill Nichols have tried to impose patterns on them, or what is known as modes of documentary film. He has identified six modes: observational, expository, interactive or participatory, poetic, reflexive, and performative (Nichols, *Introduction* 99). Nichols outlines the mode of observational as a documentary that is somehow neutral and objective in which the filmmaker tries to unfold subject matter as it is, without recourse to interpretive techniques such as voiceover and editorializing. The expository mode is a type that uses rhetorical techniques to construct a documentary. The voiceover is usually used in this mode to guide the viewer through the documentary and try to connect the scenes. The interactive mode is a documentary in which the filmmaker takes an active role within his film, interacting with the people and the material filmed. The poetic is an illusive mode because the filmmaker tends to focus on a mood in the documentary instead of making an argument. The reflexive is a mode in which the filmmaker uses methods of filming and editing to make the viewer question not only the film in particular, but also the category of documentary in general. The performative mode is a type of documentary that highlights the idea of performance and raises questions regarding the role of the filmmaker in such a

observational modes are dominant in the film, the filmmaker utilises the interactive and the poetic modes as well. Seldom do we hear the filming crew interact with the interviewees. Throughout the entire film we do not see the crew behind the camera. Nevertheless, for instance, when the taxi driver drives through the city and speaks to the crew behind the camera, we can hear their answers. The taxi driver asks the crew about their destination, and they respond, 'go to the mosque'. It is important to note that the difference between these modes is sometimes important, since they create other dimensions in a film. For instance, in the interactive mode, the audience have the chance to see the levels of access to mobility of the characters and of the filming crew.

In this chapter, '*The City of Wait*: Mobility and Immobility', I investigate how this film approaches the idea of mobility and immobility in light of Kaufmann's concepts of motility and mobility.[4] Importantly, it highlights the idea of 'wait' as another stratum related to low levels of mobility that generates uncertainty. The film shows that this uncertainty is not only characteristic of Imazighen living in diaspora—as revealed in the first chapter—but also of their waiting relatives, friends, and compatriots living in the Moroccan Rif region. The film draws attention to the struggles of several subjects attempting to acquire motility and transform it into mobility, as well as how these struggles affect these subjects' existence and identity. While migrants are depicted as more mobile than their compatriots in Morocco, the film draws attention to the scarcity of possibilities that render the transformation of motility into mobility a difficult process in Al Hoceima. That is to say, low levels of acquired motility added to the scarcity of possibilities not only complicates the process of mobility but creates uncertainty. Vincent Kaufmann argues that mobility is social, spatial, and virtual and that there are people who have access to mobility and others who do not (29). I contend that irregular levels of motility in *The City of Wait*, and in the light of scarce possibilities, considerably transform into wait and low levels of mobility that affect subjects and their identities.

This chapter includes four topics. 'People's Restricted Free Movement in *The City of Wait*' is the first. This section examines the movements of people in the film, the

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performance. Given that there are many documentaries where these modes overlap, the emergence of new hybrid modes is not infrequent.

[4] Vincent Kauffman has defined the term motility as the way a subject makes use of the available possibilities in the field of mobility and put this potential to use for her or his activities and projects.

obstacles that hinder it and how the film manages to make of this (im)mobility a noteworthy occurrence. It also reveals the levels of mobility of various subjects with highlights from two other Moroccan films, *Ten'ja* (*Testament*, 2004) and *Returnees* (2004). '"Waiting people" in the Cafés of Al Hoceima' is the second topic. Here, the focus is on the juxtaposition between waiting and intention to be mobile in the city of Al Hoceima in general and its cafés in particular. Additionally, this topic draws attention to the role of cafés in the (im)mobility of their visitors, with highlights on the same topic from the films *Et Après* (2002) and *Tanger, Le Rêve des Brûleurs* (*Tangier: The Burners' Dream*, 2003). The third topic is 'Women's Mobility in *The City of Wait*'. Here, the focus is on women's mobility in Al Hoceima, the division of male and female spaces, and women's resistance to patriarchal values. In effect, the emphasis is on the representation of the issue of gender and (im)mobility in *The City of Wait* in the light of the film *L'enfant Endormi* (2004). The final topic in this chapter is 'Amazigh Identity and *The City of Wait*: Crave for social fluidity in Morocco'. This final section reveals how *The City of Wait* draws attention to the association of the idea of freedom with mobility (namely, immigration to Europe). Here it highlights the kind of freedom that the interviewees dream about, and the reasons that push them to seek to immigrate in light of Ferhat's documentary S*inging for Survival* (2008).

People's restricted Free Movement in *The City of Wait*.

The presence of the theme of mobility in the film *The City of Wait* is momentous. To shed light on the various connotations of mobility, I will look at *The City of Wait* in light of Legzouli's film *Ten'ja* (hereinafter *Testament*). The latter is a fiction film in which the emphasis on the theme of mobility is notable. There are three main aspects of mobility: spatial, social, and virtual; in fact, it is in mobility that these three elements are interrelated.[5] They are in constant interactions that yield different categories. At least some of these categories can be observed in the films *The City of Wait* and *Testament*. For instance, the majority of interviewees in *The City of Wait* avow their desire to become more mobile. However, to have access to mobility requires motility.[6] Therefore, we shall look at

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[5] Spatial mobility has different meanings depending on context; it can refer to physical movement and metaphorically it can allude to movement of goods, information, ideas, etc. Spatial mobility of people refers, among others, to residential mobility, migration, travel, and daily mobility, such as commuting (Kaufmann 35). Therefore, virtual mobility is usually used under the category of spatial mobility in its broad definition.

[6] Indeed, motility is one of the most complex concepts in Kaufmann's *Rethinking Mobility* (2002). He explains that motility has three constituents: access, skills, and appropriation.

the struggles of these subjects to transform motility into mobility in a setting where possibilities are limited, and see how these struggles affects them. Before examining the various categories of people and their levels of access to mobility in the two films, I will consider these films and how cars are depicted in them as a potential motility and symbol of freedom.

Auto-mobility

Early in *The City of Wait*, we can see that the camera focuses on migrants' cars. The documentary begins with a sequence of fifteen short, static shots. The sequence can be seen as an enthusiastic introduction and a journey into a world that consists of panoramic views of the mountains and sea that surround Al Hoceima city. After the sequence we see the outside of the city that appears as one mass or block of buildings. The shots that follow are taken from within the city. Even the sounds accompanying the first images are overwhelming. We can hear sounds of chatter in streets, a whistle, bird sounds, and a song from the singer Qosmit. In fact, the initial shots seem promising as far as the idea of mobility is concerned. The short consecutive shots, added to the filmed scenes in which we see traffic jams and crowds of people wandering in parks and streets, indicate that the film is going to present nothing but mobility. Given that the first part of the film occurs in a summer period, the presence of migrant vacationers, driving their luxurious cars, is obvious in *The City of Wait*. Viewers can see the cars of migrants as they drive along crowds of passers-by. The colourful registration plates of migrants' cars are easy to distinguish from the white registration plates of locals.[7] Interestingly, in almost all the shots in which cars of migrants are present local people are always shown nearby. Locals stand or walk and migrants drive or park their cars. This fact highlights the scale of migration as far as the city of Al Hoceima is concerned.

Access means a range of possible choices in a place. This includes networks and flows, such as means of transport, information, and communication technology, and the ability of a person to have the sufficient knowledge, time, and money to utilise these networks and transport. In addition, this range of choices vary between one place and another. For instance, the possibilities available in a big city close to other big cities are not like small remote villages in the middle of nowhere. Skills means: first, the physical ability to walk to see and perform an activity; second, acquired skills like a driving licence and learning languages; third, organisational skills like researching information. Appropriation is the way a person interprets access and skills, and this appropriation is shaped by aspirations, plans of individuals, values, perceptions, and habits.

[7] Moroccan registration plates are white and include Arabic letters, while European registration plates are of different colours and use the Latin alphabet.

In *The City of Wait*, migrants' cars are symbols of migration and liberty. The first voice we hear in the film belongs to a person who works as a tailor in Al Hoceima. In a voiceover he speaks of migrants and their sacrifices and successes. In the images that accompany the voiceover we see cars circulating in the city. Here cars are associated with migration. Catherine Wihtol de Wenden, who leads the research group 'Migrations' in the International Association for Sociology, underscores the symbolic value of Western goods throughout the world especially, in poor countries and writes, 'The circulation of Western goods, far from being an alternative to migration, encourages people to move. The more Western goods circulate, the more they create a desire to acquire these symbols of freedom and prosperity, and to travel to the countries that produce them' (54). There are two significant elements in this quote: the circulation of Western commodities throughout the world and the impact of such commodities on people especially in poor countries. Wihtol de Wenden attributes people's aspirations to move from their poor countries to the West as a desire to acquire commodities they cannot afford in home countries. She emphasises the symbolic value of Western products circulating in other countries and describes them as emblems of freedom and prosperity. Yet, the meaning of the term freedom is too broad and can have various readings.

The freedom many locals in Al Hoceima attribute to migrants' cars is principally about a freedom of movement. Regarding the meaning of cars Vincent Kaufmann argues that automobiles are expressions of values like speed and privatization, and are also symbols of liberty (67). Local people regard cars as products of migration and a means that may enable them to leave the confinement of their city. Importantly, cars facilitate autonomous mobility and this automobility is usually regarded as the 'Avatar of mobility' (Thrift 272).[8] In the first comments from the tailor in *The City of Wait* we see the link between cars, mobility in general, and migration in particular. In his off-screen remarks regarding migrant vacationers who return to Al Hoceima during the summer, he says, 'Migrants started their journey from here…now they come back from Europe with their families and their own *steel* [cars]'.[9] An image of an unsuspected migrant vacationer closing the door of his parked convertible car accompanies these comments. The car has a Dutch registration plate. In the shots that follow, the camera zooms in on two young boys who stare at the car, highlighting the aspiration of local people to acquire this means of

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[8] Here I use the term of automobility to evoke autonomous mobility.

[9] *Steel* is the term that many Riffians use as synonym for cars.

mobility. According to the tailor, owning a car is a difficult dream to achieve unless one immigrates to Europe. Here we see how locals perceive a long-term mobility like migration to Europe. In another shot we see a car driving at night blaring pop music. Then we see three bystander girls who turn their heads and stare at the European-plated convertible as it drives by. The film presents European cars, with their colourful registration plates in Al Hoceima, as enmeshed in a discourse of mobility, while the stares of locals as part of a discourse of immobility. That is, European registration plates are symbols of migration, journeys, and mobility, while the close-ups of frozen stares of ordinary local people represent their sense of immobility. Here, cars are depicted as owned by migrants and few local people, while the majority of people have no other choice but to stare at those cars as they drive by.

In the Moroccan fiction film, *Returnees* (2004), cars are similarly depicted as a means of mobility, symbols of international migration, and prosperity. In a long take at the beginning of the film we see a Mercedes laden with luggage driving on a highway. This shot takes almost a minute. The car's owner is Sadia (performed by Amal Tamar), a migrant widow and a mother of four. She decides to return to Morocco and settle permanently. Once in Morocco, and when confronted with financial problems, she sells her car to sustain her family. In nearly all the shots we see Sadia confined inside her house. A 'lack of an automobile drastically restricts potential everyday activities', argues Kaufmann (82). Indeed, a person must adjust his or her schedule when he or she loses a car. Sadia's automotive loss comes at a time when she realises the loss of her status as migrant too. Consequently, she also loses her money, car, and a great deal of her daily mobility. To highlight the consequences of losing her migrant status and car, the film introduces the character Ali (Farid Ragragui), who is the fiancé of Sadia's sister, Fatma (Souad Khouyi). Unlike Sadia, he decides to immigrate to Spain, purchases a car, and improves his economic condition. He becomes socially and spatially mobile. The contrast between Sadia and Ali underscores the symbolic value of cars within Moroccan society.

In *The City of Wait*, the only interviewee depicted owning a car is a businessperson. In his first interview, the camera is placed in the passenger seat next to him as he drives alongside Al Hoceima beach. The camera captures the left side of his face and the beach in the background where people sunbathe. The movement in the background emphasises the mobility of this person, while the camera itself remains static. In addition, the act of filming the businessperson as he drives alongside the golden beaches of Al

Hoceima indicates the wealthy of the city: his ownership of various businesses, including hotel resorts, restaurants, and travel agencies, gives him access to spatial, social, and virtual mobility. Unlike the businessperson, many Al Hoceima dwellers are either unemployed or perform temporary jobs and have limited access to mobility.

Character motility and im-mobility

Fadailla, in *The City of Wait*, represents a part of Al Hoceima society without sufficient skills or enough access to be mobile. Fadilla is the example the film depicts in order to highlight the sense of immobility many dwellers of Al Hoceima experience on a daily basis. Although there is large flow of migrants from the Rif region to Europe, and this category enjoys a relatively high level of mobility, that does not mean all the people from the region are mobile and have the means to be mobile. Kaufmann argues that faster transport and new information and communication technology create great potential for mobility, but this does not mean an automatic increase of mobility (14).

Not everybody in Al Hoceima has the required skills and access to enjoy this potential. Fadilla is a widow and a mother of four. In her first encounter with the camera she is filmed in her small apartment house as she prepares breakfast for her children. We hear loud Spanish songs coming from her daughter's room. Here, the film makes use of the hand-held technique to create movement in the shots. In less than a minute, we see fifteen short cuts, with many trackings and close-ups on pictures, furniture, and individuals. These filming techniques in combination with continuous Spanish music create a continuity and movement in the shots. Importantly, by using this technique the film empowers Fadilla by showing that she has a space of action although limited. Regardless of the compactness of Fadilla's apartment, the camera expands Fadilla's space of movement by using trackings and close-ups. Similarly, in her second encounter with the camera, she is filmed while walking to the market. Unlike the static shots in which we see the camera filming from the passenger seat of the businessman's car, the camera and the crew here walk behind the woman to a market. This is depicted in the movement of the camera as it tries to frame Fadilla. Once in the market, the camera tours the marketplace and zooms in on Fadilla as she buys vegetables and other products. Here again the movement created by the hand-held technique compensates for Fadilla's sense of immobility and confinement in Al Hoceima, even if she tours the streets and markets of her city. In a diegetic off-screen voice, Fadilla

begins to narrate her life story.[10] She reveals her illiteracy and how her socio-economic condition is dire. She has neither the financial means to travel outside Al Hoceima nor the necessary knowledge that enables her to have access to virtual mobility. She is a hard-working woman who tries to survive and raise her children. Her daily mobility consists of few trips on foot to the houses where she works and the market.

The condition of the artist Ali in *The City of Wait* is somehow better than Fadilla's. Ali starts his story by claiming that he is an artist, owns an artshop, and has a university degree in English Language and Literature. Throughout the film we see that Ali speaks fluent Spanish, and, as an artist, he is able to attend festivals and travel around Morocco. Due to his education and artistic activities Ali accesses virtual mobility. Ali enjoys a high level of motility, but whether he is able to transform it to mobility is another issue. He laments the limited possibilities available in his city and as a Moroccan citizen. He hopes to travel outside the country but he cannot. Fadilla on the other hand, has low level of motility and she also laments her situation. Both characters are frustrated because their plans are not congruent with the possibilities available. One can imagine the uncertainty this condition causes for these subjects, since they live in continuous psychological torment. In effect, the extent of mobility realized through motility depends on the possibilities available for a person to access, and on this issue Kaufmann writes, 'the degree of congruence between motility and mobility is always the expression of the more or less restrictive nature of the range of possible choices to which the person in question has access' (45). Kaufmann underscores the idea of choices and access to them in deciding what becomes mobility. Like Ali, who has high level of motility, he is able to transform only small part of it to mobility due to a restricted range of possibilities.[11] The combination of narratives with images of Al Hoceima and its surroundings in *The City of Wait* draws attention to the level of mobility of few subjects.

Ali is an individual able to move outside his city, yet he cannot travel outside his country. Ali is visually introduced in the film while he is working on one of his paintings in

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[10] Bordwell and Thompson highlight the term diegetic (291-23), as well as Patricia Pisters (*Lessen* 161-64).

[11] Here the idea of choices applies to personal choices as well as 'external' possibilities available. For instance, the businessman, like Ali, has a high level of motility, but transforming it into mobility remains his personal choice. Unlike Ali, who cannot travel to Europe because of restrictions out of his control, the businessman has no problem travelling outside Morocco (whether he wants to make use of that privilege is up to him). These two individuals have high levels of acquired motility, but different possibilities.

his small art shop. The shots are initially taken from behind, and the viewer can only see Ali's back. Then, Ali turns to face the camera and starts to speak off and on screen of his academic career and his current works. While he explains the details of his works and his acquired experience, the camera shifts and zooms in on his paintings and the objects he has recently created. When Ali begins to complain about his inability to attend festivals outside Morocco because of European visa obstacles, the camera zooms in on a pack of cigarettes in his hands. In this shot the film tries to draw attention to Ali's frustration with the restriction imposed on his movement outside Morocco. The frequent use of close-ups in Ali's encounter with the camera is to highlight his sense of frustration and uncertainty. When he tries to describe his mobility the camera zooms in on his hands as he nervously turns the pack of cigarettes. While he recounts his unsuccessful attempts to participate in an art festival in Madrid, the camera zooms in on a flyer for a Spanish festival. Ali tries to explain his inability to travel to Spain and says, 'I cannot travel. They [Spanish authorities] think that I want to immigrate and not attend the festival'. In another shot we see that the camera is tracking the inside of Ali's shop. Here the emphasis and use of images of Ali's small studio demonstrates analogically his sense of confinement within his country. In addition, the close-ups are used to visualise Ali's frustration as far his spatial mobility is concerned.

Qosmit is another artist whose congruity between his motility and mobility is limited. In a sequence of shots we see both Ali and Qosmit walking a long distance from Al Hoceima to a nearby village together. The two do not own a car and they have to walk far to arrive at the friend's house in a neighboring village. The focus of the camera on the two artists walking and not driving is significant because it highlights the limitations of transport possibilities. In another shot in the film Ali strangely repeats an unedited question and says: 'what do I like in Al Hoceima city? I like the scenery when the fishing boats leave the seaport…and I like the beaches of Al Hoceima'. Ali's off-screen voice is accompanied with images of the fishing boats in the sea and images of Al Hoceima's scenic beaches. Ali's repetition of the unedited question reflects, to a degree, his irritation and sense of confinement. He feels unable to explore the rest of the world or 'the small balloon', and compensates for his confinement by cherishing the view of the fishing boats leaving the seaport of Al Hoceima each afternoon.[12] Ali and Qosmit have some access to

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[12] Ali repeatedly uses the term balloon to refer to the globe.

virtual mobility, but their spatial mobility in general is limited and does not match their hopes and plans.

Unlike Ali and Qosmit, Nourdine (Roschdy Zem) in the film *Testament* (2004) is represented as a migrant who enjoys more access to mobility. *Testament* is a scripted film that revolves around the character Nourdine, the son of a Moroccan migrant in France. Nourdine wants to realise the wish of his deceased father. The father's testament is that his coffin should be transported in a car from France to Morocco. In effect, the testament becomes the riddle of the entire film. No one knows the reason behind the father's testament. The events of this film begin in France, the place where Nourdine has to initiate his journey. Then he makes a trip to Morocco to the hometown of his father, a small village situated in the Atlas Mountains. From the beginning, the film depicts Nourdine as someone mobile. In his first encounter with the camera, Nourdine is presented sitting in his car as it is automatically dragged through a carwash. The camera is placed in the passenger seat next to the driver, and we can see the gigantic brushes in the carwash cleaning the window behind Nourdine. Here the camera occupies the same position as the car in the sense that they are both means of mobility but at this point they are static and dragged in the carwash. That is, they do not need to generate any mobility because the dragging machine and the brushes are creating movement in the shots. Nourdine then receives a phone call from his mother who notifies him about the death of his father.

This first scene shows the levels of access by migrants. Access to potential means of mobility typically broadens the spectrum of possibilities and consequently access to social mobility. This idea, as I mentioned above and as highlighted in *The City of Wait* and *Returnees,* reflects the perception of many locals to means of mobility. The focus on the car and the mobile phone at the beginning of *Testament* reflects the range of possibilities that migrants have access to in comparison with their compatriots in the country of origin.[13] Importantly, these means generate spatial and social mobility. These new means of transport and communication may generate new possibilities that affect one's social status; Kaufmann argues that more means of transport and communication are currently available and that these means are possibilities and accessing them creates factors for social distinctiveness (19). Moroccan and diasporic films usually depict migrants as having more access and possibilities than the majority of their compatriots in Morocco. After exchanging

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[13] Although a mobile phone was owned almost by everybody at the time of shooting *The City of Wait*, we do not see any mobile phones in the entire film.

condolences at his mother's house, Nourdine immediately places his father's coffin in his car and begins his journey. The trip through Europe is summed up in few shots of French highways and road signs. The majority of the events of *Testament* revolve about Nourdine's drive through Morocco.

The camera highlights Nourdine's mobility by focusing on the sense of immobility of locals in Morocco. The camera constantly places Nourdine's car in the spotlight. The first glimpse viewers have of Morocco is filmed from within a ferry. The camera is placed behind Nourdine's car and films gigantic, slow door of the boat opens completely. Immediately, a Moroccan border officer, dressed in a blue uniform, comes into sight. The shot that follows is of Nourdine's car moving out of the boat, and the camera is placed in the traveler's seat as the car descends from the boat. The first events of the film focus mainly on the character of Nourdine and his high level of mobility. The introduction of the character of Mimoun (Abdou Elmasnaoui) in the film comes to highlight Nourdine's mobility and underscore the sense of immobility among many Moroccans. Mimoun is an illiterate young man who lives in Tangier and has a low-paying job as a cleaning employee at a morgue near the seaport. He has neither a driving licence nor an automobile. At work he comes to know Nourdine. I interpret Mimoun's character as representative of a large group of Moroccans who feel imprisoned in their own country and dream of immigrating to the West.

Spatial mobility is part of Nourdine's daily routine and identity, and for Mimoun a dream beyond his reach. Kaufmann argues that the most mobile people are the ones who have a high level of congruence between their motility and mobility (56). Nourdine is a young French-Moroccan man born and raised in France, and he has a career, speaks at least two languages, has a driving licence, and owns an automobile. The film *Testament* portrays this character as being constantly mobile. Here we see that his level of motility is congruent with his mobility. On the one hand, Nourdine represents the high level of motility a few international migrants have acquired in congruence with their mobility. On the other hand, Mimoun represents the low level of acquired motility among many Moroccans and the difficulties they face as they try to transform it into mobility. Given that Nourdine can travel between cities, countries, and continents he does not pay much attention to his spatial mobility. Ironically, the film depicts him as an individual frustrated by being constantly mobile. In one scene we see him asking Nora (Aure Atika), whom he picked up on a Moroccan highway, to drive him to southern Morocco. From that point we see that Nora

drives all the time. The character Mimoun, who is indeed aware of the limitations of both his motility and mobility, feels imprisoned in Tangier, and has only one dream: to leave his city and join the girl of his dreams in Australia. For Mimoun migration abroad becomes the main purpose of his life. As revealed in the film, Mimoun witnesses the arrival of corpses of illegal immigrants to the morgue on many occasions. The remains belong to Moroccans and sub-Saharans who attempted to immigrate illegally to Spain and drowned. Yet, the lifeless bodies of those migrants do not deter Mimoun. Mimoun and Nourdine's second meeting takes place at a sidewalk café in Tangier. They sit together and drink mint tea. When one of the customers at the café makes fun of Miomoun, he responds: 'drink your tea and let me dream'. Mimoun's dream is of living with a beautiful Australian girl whom he has never seen except in a photo. To achieve his dream he hopes that one day he might get enough money to pay for his illegal exit from Morocco. Mimoun wants to immigrate, but his level of motility is low.

In *Testament* the movements of the camera underscore the idea of (im)mobility. Mimoun appears to be an eccentric figure in the city and is known for his Australian dreams. At the beginning of the film we see Mimoun and Nourdine walking in the streets of Tangier and the camera walks with them as well. The camera's walking movement in *Testament,* as also demonstrated in *The City of Wait,* reflects the limitations of mobility of a large part of Moroccan society, particularly spatial mobility. As a member of that society, Mimoun seeks consolation in his daydreams. Nevertheless, at the end of the film Nourdine invites Mimoun to accompany him in his car. As they travel around, the camera accompanies them in the car. The dissimilarity in the shots of walking at the beginning and driving at the end of the film evokes a sign that some changes are going to occur in Mimoun's life. Indeed, the sum of money he receives later is going to be his ticket out of Morocco.

The emphasis on spatial mobility is apparent in the final shots of the film *Testament*. When Mimoun and Nourdine approach the borders with Spain, the camera zooms in on their faces. On the one hand, the close-up expands the space Mimoun occupies as his face fills the frame; on the other hand, the sadness apparent on his face reflects his awareness that his space of movement is diminishing as the Spanish border comes closer. Nourdine then stops the car, and gives a large sum of money to Mimoun, who steps out. Mimoun, inspecting the sum of money, becomes excited and starts to dance and jump for joy. The shot highlights the contrast between a Moroccan immigrant, who has the means

and ability to travel around freely, and locals like Mimoun who cannot enjoy the same privileges. In addition, this shot brings to light the solidarity of migrants with their compatriots who live in Morocco. Even if free movement of people is something articulated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the statement remains impractical in reality. The declaration states that 'Everyone has the right to leave any country, including his own and to return to his country' (UN). Here Mimoun represents a group of Moroccans who want to leave Morocco but face closed Spanish borders. The right to leave one's country, which is guaranteed in the declaration, is ineffectual as long as the right to enter another country is not certain.

The film reveals two important points. First it highlights how migration, which was in the past a big step into the unknown, is gradually changing. The theme and experience of migration is currently discussed on a daily basis among students, colleagues, relatives, and families in various settings and spaces.[14] Candidates for immigration usually regard migration as an experience or a process that may improve their livelihood. Second, locals regard the high level of mobility enjoyed by many international migrants as freedom. This idea is not accurate because this freedom is always constrained by structures. On this issue, Kaufmann argues that means of transport and telecommunication do not provide freedom that goes beyond social constraints (100). Nourdine has financial means and an automobile but his mobility is chained by social norms. That is, he makes the trip to Morocco because he cannot reject the request of his mother and the wish of his father. At the beginning of the film we see that he struggles for a while with the idea of taking the coffin in his car and making the voyage to Morocco, but he eventually succumbs to his mother's insistence. Mimoun represents a large category of people in Morocco still waiting in their villages and cities to acquire motility and get the chance to leave Morocco.

'Waiting people' in cafés of Al Hoceima

The City of Wait simultaneously depicts cafés as spaces of hope and of despair. People use these spaces to gather on a daily basis in order to kill time, plan for immigration, and escape the shabby streets of their city; yet, the idea of cafés among many of their patrons are negative since they are associated with social and spatial immobility. That is, people find

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[14] It should be noted that this familiarity is perceived by local people in Morocco vis-à-vis migration, because as I show in the next chapter, the experience of migration itself is still a complex journey that can have disastrous consequences on migrants themselves and their families.

solace in these locales as they escape the streets of their city and hope that one day they might acquire enough motility to transform it into mobility. Then they can cross the sea and arrive in a European paradise where they might enjoy unlimited access to social and spatial mobility. Waiting for that moment, they remain immovable in these cafés.

The City of Wait reflects an important aspect related to identity: wait becomes part of the identity of the inhabitants of this city. The title The City of Wait is indicative as it draws attention to the condition in which the inhabitants of this city find themselves. It is not a city of opportunities or mobility; it is a city of wait, the film argues. Two questions then arise. One addresses the nature of the places or spaces where people wait and the other deals with 'what' it is for which they are waiting. The entire film is an attempt to answer these two questions. Kaufmann writes, 'all mobility has repercussions on identity and, increasingly, that an identity is built on mobilities' (21). Kaufmann argues that mobility affects the identity of a subject. In fact, the various levels of mobility differently affect a subject's identity. For instance, nomadic people are constantly on the move; these people are categorised as a group in constant movement, and therefore, 'nomadic' becomes part of their identity. The inhabitants of Al Hoceima, however, are depicted in the film as people confined to their city with hopes to access the world of high mobility. That is to say, in the case of Al Hoceima, it is a lack of mobility that affects the identity of its inhabitants. They are not mobile but 'people in wait'. Here the idea of wait becomes part of their identity: they are waiting to become mobile. Importantly, the idea of wait is usually associated with uncertainty. For instance, people wait for a train and are not certain whether it will arrive on time; others wait for their exam results and are not sure about their outcome. Similarly, people of Al Hoceima wait for an opportunity that may or may not materialise; consequently, they continuously live in the agony of uncertainty. Then comes the second question which concerns the settings where these people wait.

The idea of wait is apparent throughout The City of Wait, and even the audience is forced, on many occasions, to wait in order to make sense of the shots. At the beginning of the film there is a sequence of five shots in which we see a figure walking at night in dark streets and ascending stairs. The final shot in the sequence is shot from a low angle. The camera tracks the street and ends up framing the top of a building, which appears as a dark block with a blue sky in the background. In the next shot the audience gets to see a door through which thin light comes, and a figure enters the door. It is only in the following shots the viewers discover that the door is to a café. The audience can then see people

sitting around tables, with a Spanish-league football match on TV placed high at one of the corners of the café. Only then that the audience learns about the figure who has been walking in the dark and eventually enters the café. He is a tailor, and he walks to a table and sits in front of the camera. Interestingly, the film always uses the hand-held technique to shoot this subject on the street, at work, or in a café. There is no need to use an automobile to follow this character as he performs his daily routine, because his space of mobility is limited to a small triangle. That is to say, his daily mobility consists of a short trip on foot to work, then another walk to a café, and eventually a third trip back home.

In *The City of Wait* the tailor has his first interview in a café. The interview is mostly in voiceover. He starts to describe the café and its customers. At the beginning of the interview we see many close-ups that reveal the details of the café and its customers. As the tailor starts to speak of international migrants, the images we see are shot in the main avenue of Al Hoceima city. There are people walking, cars driving, and streetlights. These images indicate that the world of migrants is a lively atmosphere in which people are active and mobile. Nonetheless, when the tailor starts to speak about locals, the audience sees nothing but shots taken in dark, quiet streets. These images are shot at night in the suburbs of the city where streetlights are scarce. These images represent the world in which locals live. It is an uncertain world in which there is nothing but inactivity, darkness, and immobility. These gloomy images and their presentation at the beginning of the film serve as an early indication of the condition in which many local inhabitants feel entangled.

The importance of cafés in the livelihood of the people of Al Hoceima is reflected in the filming techniques used and in the filmmaker's devotion to filming within and outside cafés. The largest part of the process of filming takes place within cafés. Various interviewees, such as a tailor, two university graduates, the singer Qosmit, a homemaker, and a waitress, are all interviewed in different cafés in Al Hoceima. In addition, the audience can also notice that the camera captures unsuspecting customers who are drinking coffee, watching TV, or just sitting in the terrace of a café. Bill Nichols argues that the aim behind the technique of filming unsuspecting subjects is 'to film things that would have occurred if one had not been there' (Nichols, *Ideology* 278). Nichols emphasises the advantageous aspects of filming unsuspecting subjects. It is a technique that can yield astonishing images and the results of this technique remain the same as those of hidden camera. In *The City of Wait* the audience can see how people perform their daily activities unaware of the presence of the camera. Here the idea of filming unsuspecting people is an

attempt to understand the act of frequenting cafés in Al Hoceima and to depict the inhabitants of the Rif region in their 'undisturbed' daily routines. Importantly, the process of filming repetitively within and outside cafés reflects the centrality of such places to their users. In addition, not everybody gives permission to be filmed, and if the filmmaker of *The City of Wait* would have asked permission from all the customers, more than half would likely refuse and leave. Besides, once customers are aware of the presence of the camera they may behave differently, and those shots might not reflect the 'reality' of crowded café terraces in Al Hoceima.

The inhabitants of Al Hoceima have formed meaningful relationships with cafés. Many interviewees in *The City of Wait* regard cafés as a refuge from the shabby streets of their city. They also see them as places where they inspect possibilities of immigration. In his first on-screen comments about the café where he was interviewed, the tailor claims, 'It is in this café that I meet my friends, have a talk, watch football, and speak of next attempt to immigrate'. In another excerpt, a jobless university graduate, who shares a table with the artist Qosmit at a café, speaks enthusiastically about the café he frequents on a daily basis and states, 'After my graduation, it is in this café that I spend each day, luckily I am not yet bored'. On the one hand, this interviewee is happy that there is a café where he can take refuge every day from the shabby streets of his city; on the other hand, he does not hide his concern that one day he might get frustrated with the limitations of his social and spatial mobility. In the film we see that the majority of the interviewees feel they are in 'prison'. They struggle to understand their own condition and the available possibilities in their city and plan their future accordingly, and cafés become spaces in which such contemplation occurs. In this film we notice that for many inhabitants of 'the city of wait' visiting a café has become a daily ritual.

In Hakim Sahraoui's *Et Après* (2002), another Moroccan fiction film, cafés are portrayed as places that play a vital role in the process of immigration. Ironically, these spaces, which are part of the daily routine of the inhabitants of many Moroccan cities, towns, and villages (and which are usually associated with immobility), play a major role in generating long-term mobility. In this film Lamallam Taher (performed by Mohammed Miftah) is the owner of a café in Tangier where many illegal immigrants arrive. He negotiates with them the price of the trip and then takes them to another smuggler who gives them shelter and food while they wait for their crossing. A sequence of shots filmed within Taher's café demonstrates the role of cafés in the process of illegal immigration. The

first shot in the sequence is of a bearded man (Mohammed Albastaoui) sitting at a table watching television and smiling. The second shot is of the TV screen accompanied by the voice of a person in the TV. A close-up of the TV reveals a Moroccan man (Salaheddine Benmoussa) driving a convertible car accompanied by a Western woman. The man speaks to the camera about his excitement to return to Morocco to spend his summer holiday. The shot afterward is of the bearded man looking startled by the images shown on TV. The camera captures the bearded man from a high angle as he watches TV. The technique of filming from a high angle is to enhance and show the feeling of the smallness this bearded man experiences vis-à-vis migrants who return from Europe to spend their summer holidays in Morocco. The shot afterward is of Lamaalam Taher standing next to the man. Taher lets the bearded man know that if he decides to immigrate his condition might get better than the person on TV. Here again we see that the film underscores the common idea circulating in Morocco that associates spatial mobility—especially international migration—with social mobility. The shot that follows zooms in on the bearded man as he answers Taher confidently, saying 'I am ready'. In the last shot in this sequence we see Taher moves to another table where two individuals are sitting. The two are also candidates for illegal immigration.

Et Après depicts low levels of acquired motility as the main reason people seek refuge in cafés and consider illegal immigration. In a long take in the film we see the three friends Mustafa, Laarbi, and Khalid sit at a table. They request a glass of tea to share and a game to play. Mustafa (Rachid Elwali) addresses his friends and states that the person who loses in the game should pay for the tea. Mustafa is a small drug dealer, who still lives with his widowed mother, who supports him, his young sister, and nephew. Laarbi and Khalid are unemployed most of the time. Laarbi endeavors to gather enough money to pay for his exit from Morocco. In a long shot, which spans more than a minute, a young man approaches Mustafa and asks him for drugs. The young man seems desperate and Mustafa, unwilling to give him anything, and constantly makes excuses. At the end of the shot Mustafa gives him some drugs and insists that it is the last time until he pays his debts. Then, the three friends start to play the game. The three friends do not have any diplomas, careers, skills, or financial means. Their level of acquired motility is indeed low. They consider illegal immigration the immediate solution that will solve all of their problems and change their existence drastically. Kaufmann argues that long-term movement like migration shapes the identity of subjects, since migrants have to live in a new place, with a

new routine, new social networks, and perform a new job. These new things drastically shape subjects' identity (25). Kaufmann emphasises the negative side of international migration, since migrants must completely rearrange their condition in the new setting. However, the three friends consider migration abroad a positive step that will enable them to have access to spatial and social mobility. Like many characters in *The City of Wait*, the three friends in *Et Après* meet at the café to kill time, think about their conditions in Morocco, and wait for a chance to immigrate.[15]

In Leila Kilani's documentary film *Tanger, Le Rêve des Brûleurs* (*Tangier: The Burners' Dream*, 2003) the idea of wait among candidates for illegal immigration is indeed current. The first voiceover of a local resident of Tangier describes the ambiance in his city and sums it up in a local saying. He says, 'A Tangawi is always sitting on a rock and watching the sea'. A crowd of people sitting in a café terrace at night looking at the sea accompany this voiceover. The local saying describes how the inhabitants of Tangier are always in wait and in a state of anticipation. They observe people arriving or leaving Tangier. As the events in the documentary unfold, the saying becomes more apparent. Tangier is a city of contrast: it has a high level of mobility, as people from Europe and Africa transit from this city continuously, and, at the same time, it is a city of wait, since candidates for illegal migration remain waiting for the right opportunity to 'burn' (i.e., cross illegally to Europe). *Tangier* films the population who have nothing to do but wait to leave for Europe illegally. In fact, most of those who wait are not local inhabitants of Tangier. They are either Moroccans from other cities or sub-Saharans who wait to immigrate illegally to Spain.

Many events and shots in *Tangier* and *The City of Wait* are similar. Near the end of *Tangier*, a group of Moroccan candidates for illegal immigration sit in a café and smoke cigarettes. They recount their failed attempts to immigrate and discuss their plans for a next try. This sequence, when compared to the interview with the tailor in the café in Al Hoceima, seems remarkable indeed. The experiences depicted in cafés are almost identical in *Tangier* and *The City of Wait*. Some shots seem identical in the two films, too. For instance, a shot taken from the entrance of a café shows the backs of customers who watch

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[15] The idea of killing time among candidates for migration is not limited to migrants in Africa or Asia, but also in Europe. For instance, it is common to find people killing time in the Albanian city Vlore, waiting for the right time and good weather to cross into Italy (Ribas-Mateos 319).

a Spanish TV channel. This shot is identical in the two films, except that the subjects in the two films are dressed differently. The similarities between these two films indicate the similar role that cafés play in many Moroccan cities, especially in coastal cities on the Mediterranean. They accommodate waiting candidates for immigration who want access to long-term mobility.

In *The City of Wait*, visits to cafés are depicted as parts of a vicious circle many inhabitants of Al Hoceima hate but cannot escape. Importantly, these spaces represent the state of immobility of many Moroccans waiting to become a migrant (i.e., mobile). In several excerpts interviewees portray cafés as places frequented by unemployed and failed persons. In a shot in the middle of the film, when asked about his idea of migration, the tailor responds: 'I want to immigrate, to go there [to Europe] to work. I want to leave to support my family and not to go there to cafés'. To highlight his deep desire to immigrate, the tailor says: 'look at those who have not been able to immigrate'. The camera then zooms in on a group of adult men around a table in the café. They smoke cigarettes and drink coffee. The tailor continues: 'they are in their forties and fifties…they have not achieved anything…they have neither a job nor a family…nothing'.

Here the film underscores the idea that many inhabitants of Al Hoceima believe that having access to the process of migration leads to social fluidity.[16] That is to say, the interviewees in the film regard access to spatial mobility, especially international migration, as a ticket to access social fluidity. In another shot, one of the two university graduates interviewed in the café on the seaside, responds to a question regarding his social life in the city of Al Hoceima: 'Men wake up in the morning and come to a café, there is nothing to do in Al Hoceima'. We see that this comment vis-à-vis Al Hoceima is the same as Ali's. In addition, both the tailor and the university graduate associate the idea of café with unemployment, failure, and immobility. Yet, both are filmed several times in cafés, which are part of their daily routine and mobility. The irony lies in the fact that these people, especially unemployed graduates, leave their houses in the morning to go to cafés where they spend long hours. Here the trip to the café is part of their daily mobility. In effect, the contrast between verbal narratives and the physical presence of these subjects in cafés highlights the vicious circle these places represent. That is to say, the presence of these subjects in cafés bears witness to their attachment to visiting these places, while their verbal

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[16] Kaufmann defines social fluidity as 'the dream of a classless society guaranteeing equal chances for all' (4).

narratives bear witness to their dislike of cafés. Therefore, many customers of Al Hoceima cafés are waiting to leave in locales they hate but cannot escape.

Throughout *The City of Wait* we can notice the repetition of many shots, especially, shots taken within cafés. The use of this technique considerably affects the audience's experience of time. The repetition of shots in *The City of Wait* allows viewers to experience the feeling of being confined in the cafés of Al Hoceima. Given that the filming of *The City of Wait* takes more than one year, the filmmaker has been able to understand the feelings of local inhabitants, especially of those who feel tired of visiting cafés. Importantly, he has successfully achieved visualising those feelings. His use of large sequences to film within cafés and also his close-ups on the faces of interviewees in cafés draws attention to the sense of boredom, monotony, and uncertainty that mar the livelihood of these subjects.

Many women in Al Hoceima opt for virtual mobility—the Internet—to substitute their lack of other forms of spatial mobility within their city. In her interview in *The City of Wait,* the waitress at the women's café draws attention to the cyber café within the same building. It is a cyber café exclusively for women. Women visit cyber cafés to escape the confinement of streets, houses, and their city for a moment. While many large European cites try to make use of virtual mobility to reduce traffic jam on their roads, the inhabitants of 'the city of wait' make use of virtual mobility to compensate for their lack of physical mobility.[17] In both cases virtual mobility originates from a necessity, but the purpose behind the use of such mobility by people in European cities and women in *The City of Wait* are indeed paradoxical.

There are dozens of cyber cafés in Al Hoceima where people of different ages and sexes are active and mobile. Visitors gather in these spaces to socialise and discover the world. They are involved in all kinds of activities online, such as discussions in chatrooms, forums, online dating, listening to music, watching films, interacting on social media, writing e-mails, reading online books and other materials, and searching data. These cyber cafés, unlike ordinary cafés where people are almost passive except of few attempts to plan for immigration, represent activity and virtual mobility. There are many visitors who regard cyber cafés as a means to help to realise their dream of immigration. That is, people try to find jobs that may allow them to immigrate, a girlfriend or boyfriend who may help send a

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[17] See Glogger et al.

visa, or just browse the immigration laws of different countries and try to find a gap in those laws that may allow them to acquire a visa somewhere else.

Women's mobility in *The City of Wait*

Regardless of the association cafés may have with the idea of immobility, women in *The City of Wait* use these spaces to generate mobility or at least increase their level of acquired motility. In fact, women in Al Hoceima generally have lower levels of acquired motility in comparison with men. That is to say, many women in Al Hoceima are confined to houses; only few have careers or access to education and other skills. However, the film shows that women struggle to acquire more motility that may allow them to access social and spatial mobility. Kaufmann argues that the process of fluidification affects only a 'few social categories in the western world', and what can be said about big population centres or mega cities cannot apply to rural areas or small towns; between northern countries and countries in the south, gender and race inequalities demonstrate that social fluidity is still a dream beyond the reach of many (33). Indeed, *The City of Wait* draws attention to such inequalities between men and women in Morocco. The idea of a café in the film is there to generate discussion regarding gender and access to spatial and social mobility.

Despite the fact that there are cafés in Al Hoceima visited by both male and female customers, *The City of Wait* avoids these spaces. Emphasis in the film is on the mainstream, and that is sex-segregated cafés. Most scenes in the film depict women and men separately. While many mixed-sex cafés and cyber cafés exist in Al Hoceima, the only idea the audience assumes regarding the existence of such places/spaces is deduced from the verbal narrative of a young girl interviewed at a women's café. She claims that she regularly visits cyber cafés where both men and women are welcome. Yet, she emphasises the difficulty she encounters as a single young woman when she visits cafés alone. Single women find it difficult to venture into cafés alone, since their presence is usually interpreted suspiciously. In *Patriarchy and Pub Culture*, Valery Hey reports a similar attitude of suspicion against single women in London pubs, and Anouk de Koning conveys a comparable patriarchy in Cairo cafés (Hey 4; De Koning 126). Valery Hey states that it is indeed difficult for single women to go alone to a café in London, because men assume that cafés are a male territory. Similarly, during her fieldwork in Egypt, Anouk de Koning observes that some cafés have exclusively male customers, such as *Ahawi Baladi*, or the sidewalk cafés of Cairo. She notes that there are cafés single women cannot visit unless accompanied by female friends

or a male family member. *The City of Wait* seems to document that a similar sexism has contributed to the creation of Al Hoceima's café for women in order to allow local women to socialise.

The City of Wait depicts the women's café as a place where women acquire motility. The café in Al Hoceima is situated in a compound that includes a cyber café and other facilities where women enjoy access to computer tutorials, and other skills like learning foreign languages and needlecraft. While men's cafés serve as places where men plan to immigrate, the women's café is a space where patrons acquire motility that may allow them to access the world of virtual mobility in particular and spatial mobility in general. In addition, the depiction of socializing women in the café is one aspect of their challenge to patriarchal values dominant in their region. The film exposes the events that take place within the women's café and reveals the significance of this space to its female customers and the reactions to it from men.[18] The film provides the audience a tour inside the café. We can see a bar attendant making coffee, pressing orange juice, and serving women customers. We can also see the café customers and their activities: reading newspapers, watching TV, and making conversation. The act of filming within this café is a precedent in itself, since this place is normally beyond the reach of men. Yet, the women in the café open the door for the camera and the male crew who accompany it. The women's participation in the film can be seen as the ultimate challenge to the power paradigm that dominates the city of Al Hoceima. It is a paradigm that is based on keeping women at home and excluding them from public social life. It is the first time that men in Al Hoceima realise that there is a 'public' space that they cannot access. In a patriarchal society like Morocco, men usually believe they are powerful and can have access to whatever they want. The film's focus on the exclusiveness of women's café is to highlight the sense of exclusion the majority of women experience on a daily basis in Al Hoceima. Importantly, the film draws attention to and generates discussion of the issue of women's exclusion from many public spaces.

In the film, female café costumers make use of the camera to generate mobility in their immobile world. In effect, the film succeeds in generating mobility in issues that are

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[18] Although there are mixed-sex cafés in Al Hoceima, these spaces remain exceptions, and local women who visit these spaces are indeed few. The idea of café is always associated with men in Moroccan society. Therefore, the creation of a women's café is to question the idea of exclusion.

significant for women of Al Hoceima (such as their equal rights with men vis-à-vis access to social public spaces and media). Despite the asymmetric relationship that exists between the filmmaker and the filmed subject, both parties not only share mutual interests but form an alliance as well. A psychoanalytic reading might forward that the protagonist in a documentary film fulfils his or her 'need to be heard, a need to be seen, a wish for mirroring, a wish for sympathetic ear, for an admiring eye, for an interested eye, for an emphatic eye/ear combined' (Berman, Rosenheimer, and Avid 221). Regardless of whether the filmmaker has the privilege to select the topic of the documentary, manage the process of filming, and control editing, the filmed subject has advantages when filmed as well. The women interviewed in *The City of Wait* use the camera to send their message, making use of this communication system to acquire symbolic power. That is, the camera enables these women to have a voice, and encourages them to share their stories and beliefs with an audience. For instance, the interviewed waitress makes use of the camera to describe the social condition of Riffian women, the difficulties they face, and the significance of having an exclusive café for women in Al Hoceima. Women utilise the camera, which becomes an empathetic ear and an admiring eye, to challenge patriarchal values.

Interestingly, the camera sometimes becomes more than an eye and an ear. Michael Chanan states, if 'people behave differently in different social spaces, then as the documentary camera enters spaces that were previously inaccessible to it, it encounters the subject in situations where they are not used to being under scrutiny' (218). For instance, the remarks and behavior of the youngest girl interviewed at the women's café are significant. In *The City of Wait*, as the camera films two women at a table, we suddenly hear the voice of another woman who interrupts the interview. The camera about-faces to frame the person who interrupts: a young girl who wears a T-shirt and blue jeans. The interruption occurs when the two interviewed women begin to discuss cafés and cyber cafés outside the compound. The two claim that men mostly frequent cyber cafés in Al Hoceima. The young girl interrupts and starts to speak fast and firm. She does not want to miss the opportunity to express herself and give the chance for the two to interrupt her. She says, 'Indeed there are cafés that are reserved only for men…but I always visit gender-mixed cyber cafés outside this compound, I visit other places where men go too…there is no difference between men and women, we are equal'. The young girl speaks fluent Spanish, she is a student, regularly visits cyber cafés, and does not hesitate to defend her beliefs.

Here, the motility of this young girl is depicted as a valuable capital, and at the same time, as an indicator of social inequality. It is a form of capital because she has acquired many skills, means of access, and appropriations that enable her to defend women's rights. At the same time this shows that women's rights in this country are not that robust, because she represents the few women who have gained such privilege among a majority who have extreme low levels of motility. The young girl perceives the complaints of the two women in front of the camera as belittling women. Consequently, she tries to emphasise and defend the idea of equality between men and women. Based on the tone of her voice, which is high, and the speed of her speech, it appears the camera has triggered the young girl interrupting the two female interviewees.

The women's café in *The City of Wait* is more than a place where local women gather. It is a space where the position of men's power is questioned and disrupted. The female bar attendant comments on her job at the women's café and the idea of a café designated exclusively for women in Al Hoceima and says: 'Men are shocked by this idea… women's café! They do not believe that it exists in Al Hoceima… and a female bar attendant handling a coffee machine and serving female customers is beyond men's understanding in this city'. This comment is partially on-screen with the rest voiced off-screen. In the middle of this sequence of shots, filmed within the women's café, there are shots inserted that show the typical male sidewalk cafés in Al Hoceima. The film shows to its audience another face of Al Hoceima. It is a city that does not include only cafés for men, but women's cafés as well. The women of Al Hoceima have succeeded to erect a building that they call their own café in the midst of hundreds of cafés for men. It is their first spot on a map that used to be dominated by men. The comments of the bar attendant in combination with the shots of the two different cafés underscore women's endeavors to produce changes in their own society. *The City of Wait*'s juxtaposed images of sexed cafés draws attention to the struggles of women in Al Hoceima, in particular and the Rif region in general, against the dominance of men. The images emphasise the idea that women's struggle are beginning to yield results. Women start to rearrange and mark spaces—classically men's territory—as theirs. This applies to urban women. In effect, rural women usually work harder than men and also live in harsher conditions than their compatriots in cities.

Leila Kasari's feature film *L'enfant Endormi* (2004) depicts rural women, particularly the left-behind wives of migrants, as a forgotten immobile populace. In his

approach to the concept of motility and the contexts in which it can transform into mobility, Kaufmann argues that people's endeavor to be mobile depends on the structural and cultural dimensions in which such acts take place (38). Shot in a village in the Atlas Mountains, the film draws attention to the condition of left-behind women, who are illiterate and live in a conservative society almost isolated from the rest of the world. When one of the main characters, Zineb, discovers she is pregnant, she decides to freeze the fetus in her womb. The act is tinted with magic, since no one can freeze a fetus in a womb and then reactivate it when needed. However, this act is symbolic as it highlights the degree of uncertainty in which left-behind women are entangled. Zineb has just married, and her husband is an immigrant living in Europe. The act of refusing to have children is indeed common among left-behind women in Morocco, especially women who live in rural areas. Speaking of this phenomenon in *Migration and Gender in Morocco* (2008), Moha Ennaji and Fatima Sadiqi argue, 'Newly married women left behind often refuse to have children because of the insecurity; having no guarantee their husband would return or would want to start a family' (173). The insecurity Ennaji and Sadiqi illustrate is reasonable, given that 17 per cent of left-behind women of migrants are divorced and many more feel that they are neither married nor divorced (160-71). The film draws attention to these women's condition and low level of motility. Given the isolation and cultural environment in which they live, their chances of having access to spatial and social mobility is negligible.

Many left-behind women refuse to have children as a symbolic act against patriarchal values that dominate the Rif region and Morocco. The desired mobility of many women is not congruent with their motility, and marriage in the eyes of these women usually means more confinement and immobility. *The City of Wait* illustrates a particular case of a woman who owns the house where a feminist group gather to drink mint tea. The film makes use of this subject to express the view of many left-behind women vis-à-vis mobility, marriage, and having children. She states: 'They [Riffian men] lock up women in houses and ask them to fabricate children'; the women in her house together add, 'To become a children's factory'. These comments not only emphasise the women's sense of confinement, but also allude to the unwillingness of women to have children. The owner of the house has children, but her attitude reflects an aversion to childbirth synonymous with patriarchal society.

The women's use of the terms 'fabricate' and 'lock up' underlines their understanding of how their bodies become the centre of contest. In her article 'Refusal of

Reproduction: Paradoxes of Becoming-Women in Transnational Moroccan Filmmaking', Patricia Pisters writes about the paradox surrounding Riffian women's refusal to reproduce:

> As the reproduction of the body is refused, the reproduction of dominant and patriarchal history is refused. The paradox is that reproduction is refused not in order to extinguish the nation, but precisely to open it up to the future, creating new possibilities for a less constrained life. (81)

Pisters highlights the paradox of refusing to have children in order to create hope for future generations. Many Moroccan women, especially in the Rif region, regard childbirth a reproduction of the same patriarchal values that dominate their society. Refusing reproduction is not aimed at annihilating society, but a gesture against repressive men. The women's rejection of the idea of 'fabricating' children in the film's scene is an example of symbolic objection to men's tyranny. The use of the term 'fabricate' in combination with the term 'lock up' by the left-behind wife in the film reflects her deep sense of immobility, and injustice inflicted on her by 'Riffian men'. Women feel deprived of their humanity and degraded to machines merely for fabricating children. Importantly, women in *The City of Wait* wisely use the camera to send a message of discontent about their conditions. They protest and rebel against imprisonment and subjugation and they aspire to allow the next generation of women to have a better life than theirs.

Yet, the conditions of left-behind women in *The City of Wait* are slightly better than those depicted in the feature film *L'Enfant Endormi*. In the documentary film the owner of the house where the women's meeting takes place is a left-behind wife of a migrant. Unlike Zineb, she has children and receives remittances from her migrant husband. Nonetheless, emotionally she is depressed, and questions the meaning of marriage in the light of the absence of her husband. She is left behind in the city of Al Hoceima imprisoned in her own house with the task of bringing up her children alone. Allowing the camera in her house seems to be her only way of protest against not being able to go out (i.e., to access spatial mobility). It is a risky act that might seriously affect her marriage. The camera in this scene frames what used to be *The Hurma* (the forbidden/inaccessible), which is the privacy of the inner house. The woman uses the camera to break the walls of confinement. In her comments on the imprisonment of women in their houses, she claims, 'Men think that by providing their women with potatoes and bread they earn the right to imprison them'. This woman and many others come under extreme pressure from society,

and they are more isolated and confined to their houses. In the absence of the husband a woman becomes careful about her acts and movements, because of fear that relatives and neighbors might regard her acts as a misuse of the absence of the husband. Added to the pressure of society, these women have the task of raising their children alone. In fact, in *L'Enfant Endormi*, one of the reasons pushing Zineb to stop her pregnancy is to avoid the burden of raising her baby alone. It is a burden her friend Halima struggles against, since her husband has abandoned her. The women in *L'Enfant Endormi* are confined to their small village. Except from the few letters and home videos they receive from their migrant husbands, they are almost disconnected from the rest of the world.

L'Enfant Endormi depicts women's access to media differently than *The City of Wait*. The former draws attention to rural women while the latter focuses on urban women. In *L'Enfant Endormi* women live in extreme poverty, isolation, and have limited access to media. In a sequence of shots we see women walking in the dark and then entering a house. Within the house a group of women are gathered to watch television. It is an old TV set, and the women watch home videos sent by their migrant husbands who live and work in Europe. In a shot we see that the camera focuses on the old TV set and video recorder. The film wants to show the scarcity of the media in the village. There are few people in the village able to afford a television or a video recorder. In another scene we see the two main characters, Halima and Zineb, sitting at a corner of a house and excitedly examining photos. The act of meeting in one house to watch the home videos and the scene of the two women hungrily inspecting the photos demonstrate that rural women can hardly have any access to media.

The City of Wait depicts urban women as having 'considerable' access to information and communication technology, mainly virtual mobility.[19] Through a combination of images and verbal narratives *The City of Wait* portrays Al Hoceima's women as having substantial access to media. The poorest woman in the documentary, Fadilla, owns a TV set. In the sequence shot within the women's café we can see a TV set behind the interviewed women and we can also notice that there are women reading newspapers. We have also learned from the interviews of the women that they visit cyber cafés and use the Internet. The women in *The City of Wait* make use of media and the

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[19] Urban women have considerable access to media in comparison with rural women in Morocco, because if we compare the access to media of Moroccan urban women with their compatriots in Europe, it is indeed low.

Internet to learn about the outside world, especially the condition of women worldwide. Kaufmann argues our fluid world is the result of a compression of time and space generated by the current widespread use of transportation and telecommunication systems (1). In comparison to the high level of women's access to mobility in the west, women's levels of access to mobility and its use in *The City of Wait* seem minimal. This minimal access contributes to uncertainty among these women, especially in light of their awareness of a higher level of access for their compatriots in Europe and elsewhere. It is somehow paradoxical that women in the west have little time to take a breath in their fast-moving world, which provokes a sense of uncertainty, and women in southern countries like Morocco are uncertain because they are aware of the high flux in the northern countries while their world seems static.

In addition to their access to media, urban women generally have more levels of motility than women in rural areas. [20] That is, urban women have more chances to have a job, acquire education, and improve their overall socio-economic condition than rural women (Ennaji and Sadiqi, *Migration* 76). These socioeconomic disparities not only affect their daily lives but their way of struggle against patriarchy. On the one hand, urban women tend to use their education, access to the Internet, and other means of communication to form networks that collaborate in their struggle against patriarchy. These networks are constituted mainly of small groups of women pertaining to various socioeconomic strata. They combine their efforts, knowledge, and ideas to form a united front against patriarchal values that dominate Moroccan society. On the other hand, rural women, given that they rarely have any skills and access to means of communication and transport, cannot use the same means as urban women to try to gain mobility and face patriarchal values in their society. They usually visit saints, and use superstitions to try to resist and counter the oppression of men. Many groups and individuals in Moroccan society in general and in the Rif region in particular try to improve the economic, social, cultural, and political condition of Moroccans.

Amazigh Identity: Craving for change in Morocco

To show the factors behind the mass migration from the Rif region to Europe, *The City of Wait* includes a number of causes contributing to the exodus. Many subjects in the film

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[20] Mobility and access to media not only valid for women but also for urban/rural opposition in general.

argue that their Amazigh culture and identity are marginalised. The interviewees also claim that their city is socially and economically underdeveloped. Throughout the film, and as the interviewees recount their stories and express their views, we see images or visual proof of their arguments and claims.

The City of Wait interviewees agree that many people immigrate because they see their culture marginalised. In the first encounter with the singer Qosmit, the camera inspects the place where he lives. It is a small room situated on the roof of a house. We can see that he lives in dire conditions. Although he never attended a music academy or received any help from the state, he strives hard to make Amazigh music. Near the end of the film Qosmit stands in front of the camera and explains his ordeal, while the camera zooms on his bearded face: 'Look at me, you may wonder why I do not have a band. Every time I make up a band, the artists immigrate and leave me behind alone'. His situation is somehow paradoxical: many Amazigh artists leave the Rif region to democratic countries in Europe in order to find space to promote Amazigh culture. Nonetheless, they leave behind destitute solitary artists like Qosmit, whose only dream is to have a band with which to create and develop Amazigh music in its native Rif area. Another artist, Ali, in response to an unedited question about cultural life in Al Hoceima, says, 'cultural life in Al Hoceima is zero or almost zero… there are no festivals, no workshops, nothing… we do not get any help from the state… we survive relying entirely on ourselves'. Indeed there are few cultural activities in the city of Al Hoceima in which Amazigh artists can participate. The majority of local artists chose to migrate to Europe where they have the chance to develop and refine their talents. They see migration as the only way that enables them to gain some freedom.

Indeed, the link between migration and freedom is not only current among Amazigh artists in *The City of Wait*; it also occurs among all the other interviewed subjects. The tailor and his friends are another example. When Mustafa asks the tailor about his reasons for wanting to immigrate to Europe, the latter responds, 'tarzzuɣ řehna' ('I want peace /freedom'). The tailor then continues to elaborate: 'I want to lead a decent life, I want to live in a country where I would be respected and my rights guaranteed'. Like the tailor, many people in Morocco believe Amazigh identity is neglected. Therefore, they prefer to live in countries where human rights and freedom of speech are respected rather than stay in Morocco. On the issue of mobility and freedom, Kaufmann writes, 'Mobility gives new freedom to those people who would not otherwise have any' (58). Kaufmann tries to underline the nature of acquired freedom through being mobile. It is a freedom that

broadens the possibilities of subjects, and enables them to have access to previously inaccessible spaces and other potentials. The status of Amazigh identity in Morocco is an important issue for Imazighen decisions to immigrate. Many Moroccan Imazighen immigrate abroad to escape oppression, especially cultural subjugation. They believe that they are labeled as secondary citizens in their own country. Evaluating the position of Imazighen in Morocco, Moha Ennaji and Fatima Sadiqi state:

> The Moroccan population is basically Berber (Amazigh), in spite of the fact that this ethnocultural heritage is only very recently evoked at the official level. The Arab population, though numerically limited, is culturally important. Through Islam, the Arabic language has gradually been imposed to the point that Amazigh has been relegated to a secondary position. (*Migration* 49)

They go on to elaborate that Imazighen consider migration as a response to their 'secondary position' in Morocco. Through mobility (particularly internation migration), Imazighen want to be able to express their cultural identity without fear.

In the documentary *Singing for Survival* (2008), the main protagonist draws attention to the link between fear and the decision many Imazighen make to immigrate. *Almakhzan* creates this fear, he argues. *Singing for Survival* is a documentary film created and presented by the Al Jazeera Documentary Channel. The documentary revolves about the life story of legendary Amazigh singer Hassan Elfarissi, whose stage name is Hassan Thidrin. Elfarissi describes one of the major reasons that has pushed many Imazighen to immigrate to Europe as follows: 'People prefer to die in sea rather than stay here, not because of the city of Al Hoceima itself, but because of the dreadful ambiance created here by *Almakhzan*'. In the past, the ruling system in Morocco tried to slow down or stop the flow of migrants from the Rif region to Europe. The anthropologist David M. Hart argues that, initially, *Almakhzan* tended to block Riffians from leaving the country by denying them Moroccan passports, because *Almakhzan* realised that Riffian migration proved a kind of rejection of the system (97). After lifting the blockade on passports a great deal of the Riffian population left for Europe. The flow of migrants from the Rif region is still active.

The film *Singing for Survival*, by using a combination of music and images, tries to highlight the origin of fear among Riffians. In a series of shots taken at dusk we see graves at one of Al Hoceima's graveyards. The tombs are marked by white paint near a forest, and the singer Hassan Thidrin walks nearby. The graveyard is there as a reminder of

the fate of the people who tried to defend their land, culture and identity. The music that accompanies these shots is a song performed by the band Thidrin.[21] The lyrics of the song, like the images, depict a gloomy picture of *Almakhzan*: 'who would forget you, you were murdered by the bullets of *Almakhzan*' ("Wa ɣa yettun"). It seems as if the song addresses those lying in those marked tombs near the forest. In fact, the song, 'Wa ɣa yettun' ('Who Would Forget', 2002), revolves around all Riffian victims murdered by agents of *Almakhzan* in the past. The film depicts the atrocities committed in the past by agents of *Almakhzan* in the Rif region as the origin of people's fear and the dreadful ambiance Hassan Thidrin initially describes.

The song, which accompanies the images of the graveyard, reminds the audience that migration—though a complex and difficult journey—can provide some form of freedom. The band Thidrin itself has acquired some freedom through mobility and is able to sing freely in Europe. Importantly, it shows how Amazigh identity, against all odds, has prospered in Amazigh diaspora. Early in the documentary Hassan Thidrin remembers his career and says, 'because of my songs I spent half of my artistic career in prison'. However, the song 'Who Would Forget' proves there are positive aspects related to migration and one of these aspects is freedom of speech and expression. Artists who have migrated to Europe are able to make songs that speak openly of the crimes committed by agents of *Almakhzan*.

Characters in both *The City of Wait* and *Singing for Survival* believe that members of the Moroccan regime try to eradicate Amazigh culture and homogenize the Kingdom. In a meeting at Mustafa's house in *The City of Wait*, Aziz and Mustafa are both disturbed by the restrictions the Moroccan regime impose on Amazigh culture. During this meeting the audience can notice that the camera focuses on the body language of the interviewees as they express their annoyance regarding the regime's conduct toward Imazighen. The camera regularly zooms on the movements of their hands and their facial expressions. Aziz irately describes his unsuccessful attempt to register his newborn nephew under an Amazigh name. Aziz sees the rejection of Amazigh names by the government as a way of trying to arabise the Rif region in particular and Morocco in general. Likewise, Mustafa complains about the prohibition to speak Tamazight in official institutions like the courts, public schools, and city council halls. In S*inging for Survival,* in which the interviews are

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[21] Hassan Thidrin created the band in the 1970s. Now the band has changed and includes new, young artists and is located in the Netherlands. It still makes Amazigh music and includes Amazigh as well as Dutch artists.

masked, Hassan Thidrin responds to an unedited question about the relationship between Imazighen and Arabs in Morocco and articulates,

> We love the other [Arabs], we want to embrace the other, but Arab-nationalists want to send our culture to hell. … Amazigh culture is part of this country, those Arab-nationalists who claim that they are nationalists … in fact, they have nothing to do with this nation … they try to abolish Amazigh culture … they are ignorant, because they do not know that undermining Amazigh culture means undermining the country all together. (my trans.)

In both films subjects see Morocco threatening their Amazigh identity because the regime includes Arab-nationalists who do not want a multicultural society for Morocco.

Regardless of the lure of long-term mobility, Amazigh associations in the Rif region work hard to promote Amazigh culture and encourage students to continue their study instead of considering immigration. In a sequence of shots in *The City of Wait* a school teacher allows the camera to follow him into a building that turns to be an Amazigh Association. In a heading in the middle of the image we see 'Association Thanout'. Once in the building we hear the voiceover of the teacher, who describes the association, the date of its creation, and the many tasks the association performs. Although the association has financial problems it tries to fulfil multiple tasks in society. Its main purpose is to promote Amazigh culture, but it organises free extra courses for students from the region as well. In a shot we see a room where a teacher who stands next to a board teaches a group of children. By organising free courses the association tries to discourage students from dropping out and eventually leaving (illegally) for Europe. The teacher explains to the camera, 'look around you, there are young men at street corners everywhere, they have nothing to do and nowhere to go, they are waiting … almost fifteen individuals leave to Europe every year … and that is only from this neighbourhood'. As the teacher speaks in voiceover, the viewers see images of young people at street corners. Association Thanout, like many other associations in the Rif area, organises many activities for young students, including free schooling, to discourage them from immigrating.

In *The City of Wait* and in *Singing for Survival* many interviewees express their disappointment in the social fluidity of the Rif region and Morocco. Aziz, at the house of his friend Mustafa, expresses his frustration with the promised changes in Morocco and states, 'It [*Almakhzan*] speaks of freedom of speech, human rights, democracy … etc, but

we see nothing of that on the ground, they are just words or lies'. In *Singing for Survival*, Hassan Thidrin describes the changes he has noticed in Al Hoceima and says, 'The only change I can see in Al Hoceima is that it [*Almakhzan*] builds more military bases, nothing else positive'. Mustafa, another friend of the tailor, expresses his discontent with *Almakhzan* and sums up his feelings in the word *injusticia* ('injustice'). In their survey, Moha Ennaji and Fatima Sadiqi found that many university students mentioned social injustice, unequal opportunities, and corruption as major reasons for considering internation immigration (Ennaji and Sadiqi 132).

Corruption and injustice are two main elements that prevent change and provoke frustration and antagonism among the inhabitants of the Rif region. At the end of the interviews in Mustafa's house in *The City of Wait*, the group laugh as Aziz portrays the ambiance that dominates the city. He sarcastically says, 'Almost all the inhabitants of Al Hoceima would leave the city if they get the opportunity to immigrate to Europe … only *Almakhzan* would be left here behind'. Therefore, leaving to *Alxarij* ('the outside') seems the only hope left for many inhabitants of Rif.[22] Many Imazighen have left Morocco out of despair for change and after suffering political, economic, social, and cultural oppression. They have left the country with mixed feelings, such as fear, discrimination, discontent, and bitterness. The tailor's response sums up the major reasons that push many Imazighen to immigrate or consider immigration. That is, he wants to improve his socio-economic condition and lead a decent life. He also wants respect for his cultural identity.

Conclusion

The City of Wait implies long waits and little mobility. Throughout the film, the audience can see that the majority of the inhabitants of the city of Al Hoceima are waiting. While they wait for their chance to immigrate to Europe, they hope to see social fluidity in their country to persuade them against immigrating. Many left-behind women in the city also wait, either for the return of their migrant husbands or a visa that might allow them to become mobile and join their husbands in Europe. Likewise, many countryside women endlessly wait to hear or see news about their husbands working overseas. The films I

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[22] In the Riff region and throughout Morocco the local inhabitants call migrants *S'hab Alxarij* ('people of the outside'). Yet, the use of the term *Alxarij* ('outside') in the Riff Region and in the rest of Morocco does not carry a negative connotation.

address in this chapter depict local people's views on international migration in terms of mobility, prosperity, and freedom.

The mobility of the camera itself in *The City of Wait* is noteworthy. Symbolically, it succeeds in breaking walls as it enters previously unfilmable settings. The film is able to generate some mobility and highlight issues, such as gender, access to spatial and social mobility, freedom of speech, and discrepancy between wealthy northern and poor south countries. It draws attention to this discrepancy by focusing on the level of access to means of mobility in southern countries like Morocco.

Through a reading of the film *The City of Wait*, I seek out how irregular levels of motility transform into endless waits and low levels of mobility in the Rif region. These low levels of mobility and long waits considerably affect the identity of Al Hoceima's inhabitants. The inescapable presence of waiting contributes to the feeling of uncertainty among the Imazighen in the Rif region and becomes integrated in their identity: waiting subjects. Some wait for the return of loved ones from Europe, others wait for the opportunity to immigrate, and the rest wait for changes that may or may not occur in their country, Morocco.

The City of Wait depicts Morocco as a country where time is almost static and where only a few individuals—migrants and the wealthy—are mobile. These low levels of access to mobility significantly contribute to creating uncertainty among the majority of the inhabitants of the Rif region. In this condition they must articulate their identity. They become waiting subjects who think highly of Europe and hope to acquire enough motility to possibly become a migrant living 'happily ever after' in European paradise. Unfortunately, it is a paradise where many illegal immigrants from the Rif region are lost and hope for salvation. The next chapter will investigate this aspect of illegal immigration.

Chapter IV: *The Lost Donkey:* **The Subject's Quests in the Realm of Fantasy and Desire**

Introduction

While the previous film implies long waits in the country of origin, Morocco, *De Verloren Ezel* (*The Lost Donkey*) reveals the journey of migration and its implications.[1] *The Lost Donkey* is directed by Said Essanoussi and shot in the Moroccan Rif region and the Netherlands. Many characters in the film are dressed as donkey puppets living among people. The main character Mustafa, performed by Said Essanoussi, wants to leave his village and travel illegally to the Netherlands where he hopes to achieve perfection. To fulfil his dream he starts his journey from the Rif region and crosses the Mediterranean to reach Spain and his final destination, the Netherlands. It becomes difficult for Mustafa to find a job and shelter in the new host country. After spending a short while working on a farm and finding himself unable to cope with the hard work, Mustafa quits his new job. Eventually, he ends up sharing shelter with the homeless in Rotterdam. Police catch him in the act of attempting to sell drugs and immediately deport him from the Netherlands. The film reveals various topics important to Imazighen of the Rif area and diaspora. First, it presents the Amazigh alphabet to Imazighen throughout the world. Second, it highlights the role of media vis-à-vis Imazighen and their culture. Third, it discourages Imazighen of the Rif from illegally immigrating to Europe. Finally, it encourages the inhabitants of the Rif region to accept repatriated illegal immigrants.[2] *De Verloren Ezel* (hereinafter *The Lost Donkey*) is obviously the work of an amateur: the audiovisual style is of poor quality, and

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[1] *The Lost Donkey* is filmed in Tamazight with Dutch subtitles.
[2] Said Essanoussi cites these elements as the main reasons for making the film in my interview with him from 2011.

the imprecision in choreography, cuts, and changes indicate the filmmaker's lack of experience. The use of puppets in the film and the simplicity of language indicate that the film targets mainly young Imazighen. In my study of this film I consider both form and content, critically engaging issues the film raises.

In this chapter I analyse *The Lost Donkey* using psychoanalytic theory (particularly Jacques Lacan's and Slavoj Žižek's articulations of the concepts of desire and fantasy). I argue that the experience of illegal immigration depicted in *The Lost Donkey* is the subject's endless struggle with desires and fantasies. Regarding the implication of desires and fantasies, both Jacques Lacan and Slavoj Žižek argue that desire realised in fantasy is, in fact, not the subject's own desire but the Other's desire (Žižek, *Plague* 118; Lacan, *Écrits* 345). Here the question of desire becomes an enigma the subject tries to comprehend using fantasy. Therefore, desire is not what the subject wants but what the Other wants from the subject.[3] Žižek tries to explain this scenario: the desire of the subject is the desire of the Other, and, he argues, there is a difference between female and male desire. While the masculine version is based on envy and competition, the female's desire excludes envy and competition (*Plague* 118). What the two have in common is that an object is desirable as long as another desires it. This chapter demonstrates how it is the experience and process of migration that becomes desirable.

In the previous chapters I mainly used social and media theories to address the way an Amazigh identity of migrants has evolved in various settings and spaces (such as the journey of migration), and how various media depict the process of identity reconstruction. In this chapter I mainly use psychoanalytic theory in combination with media theories and the interview I conducted with Said Essanoussi to specifically highlight the emotional state of migrants as they move between various settings through the journey in search of the self, and how both the journey and the evolution of a migrant's identity are pictured in *The Lost Donkey*. This chapter is a continuation of what I began in the previous chapters. That is, I consider how Amazigh media—here, a video film—portray an Amazigh

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[3] In this chapter I use the term Other exclusively from the field of psychoanalytic theory. This Other should not be confused with the term Other, which has a completely different meaning in the field of postcolonial studies and anthropology. Although Lacan makes a difference between the small *other* that implies the imaginary, and the big *Other* which insinuates the symbolic order, here I use the term *Other* as an effect of the intermingling between the symbolic and the imaginary. I assume that the symbolic and the imaginary are not entirely separate; on this issue Žižek argues that imaginary identification occurs 'on behalf of a certain gaze in the Other' (*Sublime* 106).

subject as he or she tries to articulate his or her own identity. It is an identity affected by many experiences, and migration is one of the significant experiences present in *The Lost Donkey*. My focus in this chapter is not on desire *per se*, but on its implications vis-à-vis fantasy.

Mustafa, in *The Lost Donkey*, sees immigration as the way to the European paradise where he can lead an 'ideal' lifestyle. In fact, what he wants is exactly what makes this lifestyle exceptional, important, and desired. The thing that Mustafa seeks to acquire seems materialistic at first, but what Mustafa desires is certainly not an object. He is fascinated by the quality that makes the experience of migration and Western lifestyle special in the eyes of his compatriots within Riffian society; his fantasy is an endeavour to resolve his role within this intersubjective network he can hardly comprehend. His lack derives from his sense of acquiring something that has rendered the European lifestyle desperately desired by the Other.

In *The Lost Donkey*, the subject's experience of lack is usually explained in terms of the experience of migration. Importantly, the field of the Other explains the subject's desires and identifications. On the issue of the subject's affiliation with the big Other, Žižek argues that the inconsistency of the symbolic order forces the subject into alienation. This 'takes place when the subject realizes how the big Other is itself inconsistent, purely virtual, "barred" deprived of the Thing—and fantasising is an attempt to fill out this lack of the Other, not of the subject: to (re)constitute the consistency of the big Other' (Žižek, "Da Capo" 253). Therefore, the lack here is not of the subject but of the Other. Accordingly, *The Lost Donkey* illustrates three important aspects. The first one is that the experience of illegal immigration in the film is the Other's desire and not Mustafa's own. This is reflected in the events of the film in general, and the acts of the main character in particular, as he tries to negotiate his identity within an intersubjective network. Second, the film is an attempt to highlight the reality of illegal immigrants in Morocco and Europe ('paradise'). Finally, the film endeavours to raise awareness among the young generation of Imazighen vis-à-vis the implications of the phenomenon of illegal migration for Amazigh society, culture, and identity.

Due to the fact that my topic in this chapter is the subject's quest in the realm of desires and fantasies, I will try to briefly highlight these two concepts. Jacques Lacan, Slavoj Žižek, Sean Homer, and many other psychoanalytic theorists all agree that these two

concepts are fully interrelated. They argue that the subject's desire is not its own but the Other's, and fantasy becomes the surface whereupon desire is manifested or projected.

It is argued that desire is the Other's desire, but the role of fantasy remains unaddressed yet. Various disciplines widely use the concept of fantasy, especially in the sub-fields of psychology and psychoanalysis. For instance, many theorists of developmental psychology argue that the role of fantasy is essential in the development and maintenance of a subject's identity, especially among children (Piaget; Vygotsky). Others, like Sean Homer, argue that fantasy is a response to the question regarding the role of a subject in the Other's desire (Homer 86). That is, Homer claims that fantasy is the immediate answer to the question regarding the subject's role in the Other's desire. In view of that, the question that arises concerns the way the subject's fantasy functions. In this chapter I address the concept of fantasy exclusively in the field of psychoanalytic theory, because I want to emphasise fantasy's implications regarding desire in my object of study, the film *The Lost Donkey*.

Fantasy is not a desire for something, but a platform whereupon desires are manifested and a screen that prevents the intrusion of the Real.[4] In his comment on the relationship between desire and fantasy Slavoj Žižek writes:

> The fundamental point of psychoanalysis is that desire is not something given in advance, but something that has to be constructed—and it is precisely the role of fantasy to give the coordinates of the subject's desire, to specify its object, to locate the position the subject assumes in it. (*Looking* 6)

Here fantasy creates desiring subjects and teaches them how and what to desire. In addition, fantasy assumes a second role and regarding this function: Žižek argues that fantasy is a cover or a screen that prevents the intrusion of the Real (*Plague* 65). Therefore, fantasy assumes a twofold role: it serves as a space whereupon desire is manifested and a cover that prevents the subject from any confrontation with the Real. In the symbolic reality fantasy

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[4] In *The Ego in Freud's Theory*, Jacques Lacan defines the Real as that which precedes language, exceeds the symbolic and the imaginary, and emerges as the impossible (119-20). In *The Ethics of Psychoanalysis*, he describes Freud's death drive as the void of The Real. In his definition of the Real, Slavoj Žižek writes, 'It erupts in the form of a traumatic return, derailing the balance of our daily lives, but it serves at the same time as a support of this very balance' (*Looking* 29). Indeed, The Real remains an intricate concept in Lacan's world.

seems to produce satisfaction not by achieving something but by projecting desire. Thus fantasy always remains incomplete. At this stage another ingredient plays a major role in sustaining the subject's desire. Although Homer argues this ingredient is, objectively speaking, 'nothing', its function is noteworthy (88). This 'nothing' is called the *objet petit a*. Highlighting its role Žižek writes, '*Objet* [*petit*] *a* is a kind of "positivization", filling out, of the void' (*Tarrying* 122). There are two central components in this quote: positivization and the void. Here *object petit a* is the void that, at the same time, it tries to fill. For this reason it is called object-cause of desire. The *objet petit a* remains an illusive thing, a filling of the void and lack that causes desire. *Objet petit a* is an imaginary element, but its absence is exactly what renders it wanted. It is that constant sense of lack in the subject that sustains his or her life and drives a subject to always be in search of the supposed missing object. In the process of seeking to find, to possess and acquire, the subject may achieve few demands. Then, new demands and goals to be attained emerge, and this keeps the subject continuously desiring. It is almost an endless process in which the subject is entangled.

I have chosen to study the film *The Lost Donkey* in light of particular North African films which address the issue of migration and highlight aspects of the concepts of fantasy and desire and their implications on subjects. Because this chapter follows the subject's trajectory as he goes through the journey of migration it will include three sections.

The first one is 'Moroccan Candidates for Illegal Immigration and Fantasies'. In this part, I examine *The Lost Donkey* in light of another Moroccan film I addressed in the previous chapter, Leila Kilani's *Tanger, Le Rêve des Brûleurs* (hereinafter *Tangier: The Burners' Dream*, 2003). My focus is mainly on the fantasies of candidates for illegal immigration in their country of origin, and I build on the idea that fantasy assumes a twofold role, since it serves as a space whereupon desires are manifested and a cover that prevents the subject from any confrontation with the Real.

The second section is 'Migrant's Struggles for Identity in a Muddle of Desires and Fantasies'. Mustafa in *The Lost Donkey*, Rahal in Mohamed Ismaïl's film *Here and There* (2005), and Ahmed in Karim Traida's *Onmacht* (1991) all try to find the illusive paradise. When they cross the sea and arrive in Europe, they still feel the void and lack. Consequently, they start to feel that they are caught in a dilemma difficult to understand

and handle. In this part I study the point in which subjects fail to articulate their fantasies and how it affects them.

The third section is 'Amazigh Identity and Symbolic Constraints'. Here I reveal a few implications of illegal immigration for Amazigh identity. Family and society usually regard Amazigh illegal immigrants repatriated back to Morocco disgracefully. Nonetheless, in *The Lost Donkey*, his father welcomes back Mustafa with festivities and joy. In this part I examine the acts or the performances of the filmmaker in *The Lost Donkey* and the implications of his individual political acts for the entire society. To highlight this point I use also Merzak Allouache's film *Harragas* (*Burners*, 2009).

Moroccan Candidates for Illegal Immigration and Fantasies

Moroccan mass media have manufactured Europe as a paradise worth sacrifice for and a place where Moroccan migrants lead a luxurious lifestyle. *Canal Atlas*, *Nojoum El Hijra* (*The Stars of Migration*), *Qantara* (*Bridge*), and *Biladi* (*My Homeland*) are a few examples of regular programs broadcast on national Moroccan television. These programs depict the world of migrants as ideal, and all the participants in the programs are 'successful' international migrants. The majority of the characters have succeeded in creating businesses in Europe and gathering substantial amounts of money. The programs highlight either the luxurious lifestyle of a few Moroccan migrants in Europe or illustrate examples of migrants who have invested their savings in Morocco. In fact, the majority of Moroccan migrants do not lead a luxurious lifestyle.[5] Unlike the official media in Morocco, the film *The Lost Donkey* shows a different image of migrants.

The relevance of the title of the film *The Lost Donkey* is noteworthy. The donkey in the title hints at the main character Mustafa, who is dressed in a donkey puppet costume and makes the journey between Morocco and the Netherlands. The word donkey is used worldwide as an insult to indicate stupidity. In the Rif region, the use of the word donkey as an insult is common. Nonetheless, a donkey is essential to the livelihood of Rif inhabitants because it is used as means of transport in remote mountainous villages; without it, life might be almost impossible in these areas (Essanoussi, interview). In addition a donkey is known as a stubborn and cunning animal, and therefore, the use of the animal donkey in the title of the film enfolds a paradox of stupidity and cleverness. The term lost in the title

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[5] Many Moroccan migrants live in dire conditions, especially in southern Europe (Geiger).

initially seems unclear because Mustafa is able to reach his destination (the Netherlands) and find his way to his uncle's house, but the events of the film unfold its meaning. Mustafa appears to be lost in himself and his fantasies. He is neither capable of channelling his desires and fantasies, nor able to articulate his identity.

The use of puppet costumes and the narrator's first statement in *The Lost Donkey* entails a presentation of elements from the fantasy world. The filmmaker Said Essanoussi comments on the choice of puppet costumes and states 'generally speaking, the idea to use puppets is based on the fact that the film addresses children' (Interview). Ostensibly, for a film to address children, it therefore has to include elements from the fantasy world. Similarly, at the beginning of the film the narrator addresses the audience and says, 'I am going to show you *t̲ḥajit* of the lost donkey' (my trans.).[6] Nonetheless, as the film develops, indications that the *t̲ḥajit* in the film may be a real story begin to compile. For instance, the film reveals many factual elements, such as the high scale of immigration from Northern Morocco to Europe as well as the creation of small businesses in the Rif region by immigrants. At this point the audience is perplexed because they do not know whether the *t̲ḥajit* of *The Lost Donkey* is factual or fictitious. Speaking of the intermingling of the imaginary and the real in discourse, Robert Ferguson writes, 'The line between fiction and non-fiction can, in the field of discourse, sometimes appear blurred' (59). Since many elements in the field of discourse are unclear the meaning of the word *t̲ḥajit* becomes a riddle. Questions are raised as to whether that *t̲ḥajit* is a fable or dream. The example of a festivity in honour of a deported illegal immigrant is one of those dreams. In effect, *The Lost Donkey* allows the audience to see and experience a real dream, a blend of reality and fantasy.

Similar to *The Lost Donkey*, the importance of the title of Leila Kilani's film *Tangier: The Burners' Dream* is notable. The word dream reflects the fantasy aspect, which is an important mark in the film. The title of the documentary film underscores the fact that the film is a representation of fantasies of candidates for illegal immigration. Throughout the film the audience may notice that the main goal of the film is to depict the thoughts, ideas, and dreams of the candidates for illegal immigration. There is no single shot in the documentary wherein we witness an attempt of migrants to cross to Europe. We can only hear about these attempts through the stories that candidates for illegal immigration recount

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[6] The word *t̲ḥajit* is an Amazigh term that means 'fable'. All quotes from *The Lost Donkey* reproduced in this chapter from the original spoken Tamazight.

in front of the camera. Thus the film is an attempt to depict the stories of those who intend to immigrate illegally to Europe. Even though *The Lost Donkey* and *Tangier: The Burners' Dream* are different in genre, they both emphasise fantasy as an important constituent in making, shaping, and sustaining the identity of candidates for illegal immigration.

It is important to underscore the content of fantasies of candidates for illegal immigration, and the way this content affects and sustains the identity of these subjects. Discussing the function of fantasy Slavoj Žižek states, 'The way fantasy space functions as an empty surface, as a kind of screen for the projection of desires: the fascinating presence of its positive content does nothing but fill out certain emptiness' (*Looking* 8). A fantasy is almost a continuous process and the content that keeps it operational—filling the emptiness in it—is as important as the fantasy itself. In both *The Lost Donkey* and *Tangier: The Burners' Dream* characters fantasise about Europe. Mustafa, in *The Lost Donkey,* dreams of driving a new car and leading a luxurious lifestyle in Europe, while one of the candidates for illegal immigration in *Tangier* dreams of touring Europe by train. In both films we see that the fantasies of the two subjects serve as a surface whereupon their desires are projected. Interestingly enough, at the time of dreaming both subjects are not migrants. Nonetheless, in their dreams they see themselves as migrants leading a new life in Europe. Although the two individuals live in Morocco, they have opted to take on a migrant's identity and live accordingly in their (day)dreams. That is, these two subjects are physically still living in Morocco, but they live out a fantasy in which they have acquired the identity of a happy Moroccan migrant living in Europe (paradise). This highlights how the fantasy of migration affects the identity of candidates for illegal immigration in Morocco and how the content of this fantasy sustains this identity.

Media usually enrich the content of the fantasies of candidates for illegal immigration. Mustafa learns about the outside world, particularly Europe, through television. In a scene in *The Lost Donkey*, the camera frames Mustafa from behind while watching television. Then the camera zooms in on the TV screen, where we see a nice car circulating in a street, accompanied by Mustafa's voiceover. He sounds astonished by the beauty of the car. This scene reveals the role of media in the making and enhancing of subject's fantasies. In addition, it draws attention to the way information in general—and fantasies in particular—circulate among communities. Regarding the parameters of fantasies, Sean Homer claims that fantasies are not private. They circulate among the public through media such as films, literature, and television (85). The depiction of the television

set in *The Lost Donkey* is to demonstrate the dual function of media as they spread fantasies among the public in the Riffian countryside, and their roles as representations that assist in the creation and constitution of identities. After watching television Mustafa begins to dream of becoming a migrant because he wants to acquire a car like the one he saw on TV.

Media not only help the spread of fantasies but also teaches the masses how to use other media. At the beginning of the film we see a personal computer the narrator uses to present the story of Mustafa. He invites the audience to watch the film on the computer screen. This scene is significant, since it accentuates the increasing use of computer-mediated technology among Imazighen in the 1990s (when the film is set). In his comments on this scene, Said Essanoussi argues that the use of the computer in the film has two goals: it encourages Amazigh children to access and use computer-mediated technology to exploit and share information in general, and download and watch Amazigh films in particular (Interview). The film teaches the masses to use other media that might enable them to access new fantasies. Providing that fantasies 'Teach us how to desire', media help to spread these fantasies throughout regions and countries quickly (Žižek, *Plague* 7). Most importantly, the film *The Lost Donkey* reveals how media like television and the Internet contribute to the exodus of Imazighen from the Rif region.

The element of fantasy in both *The Lost Donkey* and *Tangier: The Burners' Dream* alludes to escapism, but also serves as a remainder for the audience. Many characters in the two films live in hard and unforgiving conditions. Consequently, they chose the element of fantasy to console themselves. Mustafa is depicted at the beginning of *The Lost Donkey* as an indifferent character. Still, he unenthusiastically helps his brother Abdul to perform work in the fields. In *Tangier* many characters struggle to survive in the streets of Tangier. They sleep in streets and can hardly afford to buy food. Both films make use of fantasy to escape an unforgiving present. Vicky Lebeau comments on Freud's understanding of the role of fantasy in social reality: 'fiction, daydreams are conjured by a subject who feels the need for protection. Fantasy intervenes. It comes between the self and its history, consciousness and reality—making use of things seen, heard, and experienced to rework the world' (29). Here fantasy is depicted as a barrier that intercedes between subjects and their history and Real.[7] It is a talisman that protects subjects in a ruthless,

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[7] Žižek comments on the barrier separating reality and Real and argues that it is a thin line—or what he calls 'minimum normalcy'—and that madness takes over when the Real takes over reality (*Looking* 20).

unforgiving present from becoming mad. Nevertheless, fantasy in both films denies the audience of such escapism, because it places them in front of serious social problems like migration, unemployment, and poverty.

The Lost Donkey depicts Mustafa's daydreams or fantasies as a platform whereupon his desired objects are manifested. The film makes use of fading in and out to represent the beginnings and the ends of Mustafa's daydreams. At the beginning of the film Mustafa is depicted dreaming in a wrecked car near his house. In this shot we see Mustafa sitting in an old car frame and thinking about Europe. At this point we see the image fade out, indicating the beginning of a daydream. Then we see Mustafa in a comfortable new car driving. For a moment he feels the comfort of his new car. In fact, the price he pays for this comfort is the loss of continuity between 'the inside' and 'outside' (Žižek, *Looking* 15). That is, there is comfort inside his new car but this cannot be enjoyed in the reality outside of his fantasy. The windowpane of his new car acts as a barrier between the comfortable reality in 'the inside', or in his dream, and 'the outside' harsh reality which seems distant. When this barrier falls down, indicted by fading in to signal the end of Mustafa's daydream, we notice that Mustafa wakes up in the wrecked car, which has no glass windows or windshield. Both the fade in technique and disappearance of the glass windows of the car indicate that Mustafa is back again in a reality where he has to survive.

Fantasy plays a central role within and outside the symbolic order with regard to objects of desire. Mustafa's daydreams in *The Lost Donkey*, for instance, are concerned with commodities related to migration and Europe. He believes his dreams cannot be achieved unless he emigrates elsewhere. In a monologue he claims that immigration is the answer to all his dreams: 'I want a new car and a house, I want to go to Europe'. Indeed, Mustafa desires a new lifestyle, and to realise it he intends to immigrate in Europe. Here fantasy reconciles the symbolic order and the allure of the objects Mustafa encounters in his daily life, like cars, houses, and businesses of migrants. Regarding the role of fantasy in reality and the symbolic order, Slavoj Žižek comments, 'It provides a "schema" according to which certain positive objects in reality can function as objects of desire, filling in the empty places opened up by the symbolic structure' (*Plague* 7). Žižek illustrates the fact that the symbolic order opens certain empty gaps in the reality of a subject and in order to fill that emptiness he or she has to employ fantasy to teach him or her how to turn ordinary objects into objects of desire. In the case of Mustafa, fantasy turns elements, such as cars, houses, lifestyles, places, and the experience of migration, into desired objects.

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Both *The Lost Donkey* and *Tangier* allude to the discourse of migration as the substance that fills in the content of fantasy. Indeed, fantasy offers an idealistic solution to problems of characters in the two films. Immigration in *Tangier: The Burners' Dream* becomes the main goal for all characters. The burners believe that living in the dream or fantasy of migration facilitates their daily living in Morocco. The burners spend most of their time recounting experiences of successful migrants who succeed in crossing the sea and leading an ideal life in Europe. In her analysis of *Tangier*, Pisters argues that the images and personal stories of the characters in the film find each other in a free indirect discourse that creates a modern political film (Pisters, "Arresting" 189). This film highlights the way so-called 'accented cinema' addresses the subject of immigration and marginality.[8] The point of depicting various stories and conditions candidates for illegal immigration may have is to show that the subjects share the same dream regardless of their differences. They want to immigrate to Europe and lead a lavish lifestyle. Their daily routine and their whole existence in Tangier are nothing but attempts to illegally immigrate to Europe. The main topic that the subjects discuss in all the shots of the film is immigration and the way to accomplish it.

The Lost Donkey illustrates the way discourse feeds the desire to immigrate among Amazigh community in the Rif area. Some of Mustafa's comments seem absurd, but ironically, reflect the thoughts that circulate among people in the Rif regarding immigration. In one scene, we see Mustafa travelling in an expensive luxurious car from Spain to the Netherlands and asks the driver, 'How much time it will take me to buy a car like yours ... one week?'. While the car is worth a fortune, Mustafa thinks that he can afford it by working one week in the Netherlands. Said Essanoussi comments on this scene and argues that it reflects the mistaken perception of migration and life in Europe. That is, there are many incorrect ideas that circulate among the inhabitants of the Rif region regarding migration and Europe. People believe that by crossing the sea they will arrive in paradise (Essanoussi, interview). People in Morocco in general and the Rif region in particular believe that Europe is a paradise and the stories they exchange about successful migrants and the images they see on television strengthen their decisions to immigrate. Both

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[8] Media theorist Hamid Naficy first coined the term 'accented cinema'. He defines it as the cinema made by the filmmakers who came to live and work in the West, and, because of their displacement, have earned the right to speak. In his mapping of this cinema, he divides it into three categories: exilic, diasporic, and ethnic films (10-11).

Tangier: The Burners' Dream and *The Lost Donkey* try to highlight these false ideas or fantasies that contribute to the exodus of many young Moroccans.

Notably, fantasy offers temporary protection from any confrontation with the Real. Fantasies not only contribute to the phenomenon of migration, but also act as barriers that prevent subjects from becoming crazy. Regarding the kind of protection that fantasy offers Žižek explains, 'Fantasy … serves as a screen against the direct intrusion of the Real' (*Plague* 65). The actions of characters in *The Lost Donkey* and *Tangier* highlight the way fantasy works. Characters in both films are content to live under harsh conditions, believing that one day they will reach Europe (i.e., paradise). They do not want to face reality on the ground and acknowledge the fact that there is a real possibility that they will spend the rest of their lives in Morocco. Mustafa, in *The Lost Donkey*, admits that if he fails to immigrate he will become crazy. Similarly, many candidates for illegal immigration in *Tangier: The Burners' Dream* acknowledge the fact that their failure to cross the Mediterranean means madness. For the candidates for illegal immigration in these two films, fantasy not only provides temporary relief against socio-economic problems but also serves as a talisman that protects them from insanity. Fantasy is both a desire for something and a shield that prevents the intrusion of the Real.

Migrant struggles for identity in a muddle of desires and fantasies

The Lost Donkey indeed portrays a paradox. The character Mustafa feels miserable despite the fact that his mode of life in the Riffian countryside does not seem overly harsh. Mustafa and his older brother Abdul live together with their father in a traditional clay house in the Riffian countryside. They own cows and sheep and live mainly by growing their own food. They cultivate vegetables and fruits in the fields. They seem to be a happy family and usually go together on vacations, but Mustafa is never satisfied with his lifestyle. He feels that something is missing in his life and is obsessed with a lifestyle he sees on television. Believing that Europe is the key to his delight Mustafa is prepared to sacrifice everything in order to attain this paradise. One particular place—the Netherlands—becomes his favourite destination. Mustafa decides to sell the jewelleries of his family to pay for his journey to the Netherlands, which holds out the promise of his happiness and satisfaction.

In the film *Et Après* (2002), many characters view Europe as a paradise where life is wonderful and without worries. They feel unsatisfied with their lives in Morocco and intend to immigrate in Europe to realise their dreams. All of those who want to immigrate

in the film *Et Après* want to lead the life of Mustafa's older sister who lives and works in Spain. She owns a red car, has a considerable amount of money, and is an example of enacting the role of the Other in the symbolic reality. The subject desires the Other's secret, which only appears to be a secret. The subject believes that the discovery of the unknown desires of the Other might fulfil its own desires, but it is wrong. Although subjects may know the secret of the Other, they may still desire another secret in the Other. In *The Real Gaze* (2007), Todd McGowan writes about the subject and the Other's desire:

> The subject's desire focuses on what it believes is the secret of the Other, but this secret has no positive content. It is merely an effect of language itself, the form in which the Other's demand arrives. If the Other told us its secret and revealed its hidden desire, we would find this dissatisfying and posit another desire beneath this revelation. The Other cannot satisfy the subject's desire simply by revealing what the subject appears to have. (97)

McGowan articulates the impossibility of subjects to satisfy their desires, because there might always be other secrets associated with the Other. This intricate relationship between the subject and the Other can be illustrated in the film *Et Après*. The Mustafa's older sister initially appears to be a wealthy and happy immigrant. However, the audience and her brother Mustafa later learn she is working with criminals and the money she collects is the price for her collaboration with them. Her only desire is to settle down in Morocco and raise her one child. Mustafa and his young sister are not deterred by the facts they discover about their older sister, nor are they satisfied by the revelation of her desire. They ignore their older sister's situation and continue to plan to immigrate to Europe. They believe— despite what they know—that there is still something positive waiting to be discovered when they immigrate.

The journey, or what is known as *ḥrigg* ('burning'), becomes a desired object or experience in *The Lost Donkey*, *Tangier: The Burners' Dream*, and *Et Après*. Given that desires are usually hidden and associated with the darkness of the unconscious, the film *Et Après* pictures the revelation of desires through a nighttime beach scene. It is only at that moment Mustafa discovers that his young sister, who is still a student at a secondary school, wants to burn/immigrate illegally, and she discovers her brother wants to immigrate too. When Mustafa discovers his sister's dreams, he tries to deter her. Nevertheless he succumbs under the pressure of her persistence. That is to say, when she insists that she

wants to realise her dream of crossing the sea like others she knows, Mustafa realises that her dreams are like his own. The camera zooms in on Mustafa's face as he digests the words of his young sister and tries to make a decision in the seconds remaining before the fishing boat leaves. He then takes her hand and they both jump in the boat bound for Spain. Here, we notice that the film depicts the journey as a magic trip where subjects solve their problems and live joyfully thereafter. While *The Lost Donkey* and *Et Après* depict characters embarking a boat, the film *Tangier* only shows characters and boats in the background docked or at sea. Many characters in *Tangier* state that they wish to burn at any cost.

In *The Lost Donkey*, Mustafa wants to immigrate to the Netherlands because the journey itself lures him, and not because he is short of money or unemployed. Thus the journey becomes an aim in itself, an alluring experience that has the potential to 'satisfy' subjects. These films represent the paradox knotted in the psychoanalytical notion of drive, created by the interaction between the drive's aim and goal. On this point Slavoj Žižek argues that the real purpose of drive is not its *goal* but its *aim* or the reproduction of drive itself; this is achieved by returning to its circular path and continuing on this path to and from the goal. Therefore, the movement in this closed circuit remains the actual source of joy (*Looking* 5). The journey in the three films is the closed circle and we see that this closed circle entangles many characters in these films. Few managed to escape it and others are still entwined in it.[9] For the characters in *Et Après*, the fishing boat takes them to their death, the characters in *Tangier* are still entwined in the closed circle enjoying the free ride in their daydreams, and only Mustafa is able to go to Europe and back to his village in *The Lost Donkey*.

The film's depiction of Mustafa as he reaches the Netherlands is intriguing. At this phase, Mustafa in *The Lost Donkey* and Rahal in Mohamed Ismaïl's film *Ici et Là* (*Here and There*, 2005) try to find the illusive paradise where happiness and joy are everlasting.[10] Yet, after realising their dream of living in Europe, they still feel a void and lack. They begin to realise that their exploration to find the satisfying paradise may be an illusion, a fool's errand. This conclusion not only shows how fantasies and desires shift, but also

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[9] Candidates for immigration in Morocco are not the only ones caught in this circle, for those living as migrants in Europe are as well. See footnote 24 in chapter one, where Elwalid Mimoun compares the life of the Moroccan migrants in Europe with Sisyphus: migrants may neither return to Morocco nor feel at home in their host country.
[10] The film *Here and There* is in Arabic with French subtitles.

demonstrates the effect of the experience of migration on a subject's identity. Both Rahal and Mustafa undertake a journey in search for the self and try to articulate their identity in an unstable setting.

After reaching Europe migrants may achieve some of their objectives, but their desires always remain unsatisfied. Collected in *The Ego in Freud's Theory*, Lacan lectures that desire is not fulfilled by effective satisfaction, but by introducing a new fantasy (212-13). In this way the new fantasy makes of everyday things desired objects again and completes the circle. In Karim Traida's film *Onmacht* (1991), the life and condition of the character Ahmed (who is an immigrant living in France) abruptly changes. He dreams of leading an ideal lifestyle, but when he becomes impotent his only dream is to regain his masculinity in order to be able to face his family. Ahmed's impotence metaphors the failure of many migrants to materialise their desires. They can neither return to their country of origin nor successfully integrate in their host country. The unattainability of desires can also be observed in the film *The Lost Donkey*. As explained above, Mustafa used to see cars, houses, migration, and a new lifestyle in the Netherlands as objects of desire. Nevertheless, when he succeeds at crossing the sea and arriving in the Netherlands he forgets about these objects: overwhelmed by the difficulties he faces in his new host country, he loses interest in owning a house or a car and his desires remain unsatisfied. Shocked by what he discovers in 'paradise', he starts to dream of a job and shelter. Here we see how subjects manage their desires. Mustafa's objects of desire keep shifting from specific objects to other things. In this way, as he fails to achieve his initial goal that held the promise to satisfy him, he sets a new goal to be attained. In fact, subjects continue to desire by projecting their desires on things that promise satisfaction.

The Moroccan film *Ici et Là* (*Here and There*) depicts the failure of objects of desire to satisfy subjects. Mohammed Ismaïl released the film in 2005. It is a feature film that revolves around the life of a Moroccan immigrant in France, Rahal Benaissa, performed by Hmidou Bensaid. Rahal was married to a French woman but his marriage ends in divorce. Believing that a successful marriage is the key to his happiness, he remarries a Moroccan woman, Fatima (Mouna Fattou). They have three children, Rachid, Samira, and Elbashir. Yet, the new marriage fails to provide Rahal with any happiness. After forty years in Europe Rahal decides to take his family with him and return to Morocco. Convinced they are going on vacation, the family accompanies Rahal to Morocco. After a period of time Rahal's children and wife begin to realise that Rahal

intends to remain and keep them in Morocco permanently. They take their passports and return to France. Rahal chooses to return to Morocco believing that he will be happier in his birthplace than in Europe. Nonetheless, Morocco fails to provide any happiness for Rahal and his stay is marred by problems caused by his brother (*M'barek*), performed by Mohamed Elkhalfi, and his own family. Neither his second marriage nor his stay in Morocco satisfies Rahal, but, among these disappointments, he gets a moment to contemplate and seek satisfaction again. Here we see how desired objects fail to provide any satisfaction for subjects, but the failure becomes essential in the constituting of new desire.

The story of Rahal illustrates the failure of a subject to satisfy his or her desires, and how this failure shapes his or her new desires and identity. The film *Here and There* focuses on the intricate relationship between Rahal and his children. The character Rahal reveals the way a relationship between a migrant father and his children can affect the dreams and desires of both parents and children. At the beginning, the film presents Rahal as a character born in Morocco who strives to achieve a balance between his traditions and conditions in France. He respects his Moroccan origins and desires to see his children successful in France. Since all his children are brought up in France, they are exposed to French culture more than Moroccan culture. His son Rachid becomes a criminal and was arrested in a hold up. When his daughter Samira tries to live and act as a French woman, Rahal feels betrayed. He assumes she does not respect Moroccan traditions. In a rage one day, Rahal beats Samira and is sent to jail as a result. After his release he begins to change and so do his desires. He interprets the conduct of his daughter as his own failure to balance between his Moroccan culture and French lifestyle. At this point, Rahal becomes an egocentric character not interested in the success of his children in France anymore. His new desire is to deceive his family and take them to Morocco. He starts to dream about a new lifestyle in Morocco and a way to prevent his family returning to France. At the end of the film, the audience can hardly recognise the Rahal from the beginning of the film. He has completely changed and adopted a new identity in Morocco.

Coincidentally, the failure to achieve any satisfaction is the factor behind the subject's persistence in seeking desire. Regarding the failure of objects of desire to provide any satisfaction for subjects, Sean Homer writes, 'Although the desire of the Other always exceeds or escapes the subject, there nevertheless remains something that the subjects can recover and thus sustains him or herself. This something is the *objet petit a*' (87). Sean

Homer highlights the role the *objet petit a* performs vis-à-vis subjects and desire. Therefore, *objet petit a* not only represents an absence in the subject as indicated above, but also the failure of object of desire to satisfy the subject. In *The Lost Donkey* and *Here and There* nothing seems to satisfy Mustafa and Rahal, yet for these subjects failure, or the *objet petit a*, that represents it still creates the illusion of satisfaction. That is, the *objet petit a* (or the object-cause of desire) can never be attained, and both Mustafa in *The Lost Donkey* and Rahal in *Here and There* have spent a great deal of their time running behind luck and happiness in vain. Still, this *objet petit a* makes of both Mustafa and Rahal desiring subjects, and this act grants temporary 'hallucinatory satisfaction' (Lacan, *Ego in Freud's* 212). Thus the act of desire becomes itself an objective.

Both film narratives of *The Lost Donkey* and *Here and There* underscore the struggle of migrants within a maze of desires to discover the self. The protagonists' deep desire is to articulate their own identity. Both Mustafa and Rahal are portrayed in *The Lost Donkey* and *Here and There* consecutively as subjects who are lost in a stetting they cannot understand. They have dreamt of Europe, but when they realise that are indeed in Europe they feel bewildered. Mustafa searches for a job, but when he finds one he abandons it. He has struggled hard to arrive in the Netherlands. Once there he becomes a criminal, whose unexpressed wish is to be captured and returned to Morocco. Likewise, Rahal wanted to come to France, but after a while his sole dream becomes his return to Morocco.[11] These two examples illustrate the paradox knotted in the experience of migration and its subjects. It is worthwhile to reveal how the desires of migrants sometimes collide and contradict. These desires show the state of mind of many migrants. Both *The Lost Donkey* and *Here and There* illustrate the position of migrants within the journey. They are depicted as miserable and confused subjects who try to make opposites meet and articulate their identity within this absurdity.

Fantasies resemble media to an extent, since they both interconnect with the symbolic order and reality. That is, media operate within a blurred field that endeavours to reflect reality, yet phantasmatic. Correspondingly, fantasies have strong links with both reality and symbolic structure. Fantasies outline the map according to which certain concrete ordinary objects can function as objects of desire in imagination. It is through media that certain fantasies circulate. Similarly, fantasies function as screens whereupon

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[11] *Rahal* is an Arabic word that means traveler or migrant. This name indicates that migration forms an important part of this subject's identity.

desires are manifested and disseminated. In effect *The Lost Donkey* aims to shed light on the phenomenon of illegal immigration from the Rif region as well as the discourse that feeds it.

Amazigh Identity and Symbolic Constraints

Riffians in Morocco often immigrate in times of economic or political distress. It is useless to recite the individual reasons that have pushed many individual Imazighen to immigrate. Nevertheless, mentioning the general reasons that have driven many Riffians to immigrate is worthwhile. As indicted in the first chapter of this thesis, Riffians migrated in the past for two major reasons. The first one is economic, which was a major factor in the past. At the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth centuries, unemployment was high and famine common in the Rif region. This economic factor initially pushed many people to immigrate to Algeria and later to Europe. The second reason is a political one: fearing the persecution of agents of the Moroccan regime, many Riffians fled to Europe in the past. It was a wave of migrants or refuges that included artists, activists, and politicians struggling to achieve economic, political, and cultural rights in the Rif area. During that period the Moroccan regime imposed restrictions on Riffians acquiring passports. However, the Moroccan regime has recently realised that immigration is an important policy because it not only alleviates the pressure Riffians exercise on the Moroccan authorities, but it is also a treasure mine for the government. Migrants regularly send remittances—a valuable source of foreign currency—back to their relatives in Morocco. Currently, many Riffians immigrate not out of political havoc or famine, but because they believe that there is a 'paradise' overseas.

The Lost Donkey was released in 1996, a period when illegal immigration thrived. Although legal immigration was the rule during the 1990s, the scale of illegal immigration from the Rif region to Europe was high too. At the time, the European Union began to impose severe restrictions on legal immigration from outside Europe. Consequently, many Riffians tried to immigrate illegally in Europe. The film is not only a representation of the experience of illegal immigration, but also an exploration into the desires that feed it in the Rif area. The film, through the story of Mustafa, highlights how desires and media contribute to the exit of Imazighen from the Rif. To highlight this point in *The Lost Donkey* I have selected another North African film in which the experience of illegal migration and the functioning of media are central. The film *Harragas* (*Burners*) is a 2009 feature film

directed by Algerian filmmaker Merzak Alloauche. One of the main characters in the film, Rachid (Nabil Asli), narrates the film. *Harragas*, which I will present below, revolves around a group of friends who want to escape the boredom of their neighbourhood (situated in the Algerian coastal city of Mostaganem).

In *The Lost Donkey* Mustafa and Abdul are two brothers who represent two different ways of thinking. The first subject is full of energy and enthusiasm as far as learning new things is concerned; meanwhile, Abdul is content with his condition. Mustafa's donkey ears are standing, which indicate his attentiveness and extroversion, while Abdul has a hat on his head that symbolises the limits he imposes on his spectrum of thought. The two brothers reflect two different identities: Mustafa changes and progresses continuously, and Abdul is fixed. Mustafa, regardless of his shortcomings, is eager to discover the world and himself through a journey; meanwhile, Abdul is unwilling to discover the world or himself.[12]

A great deal of the Moroccan mass media is in the circle of *Almakhzan*, which makes use of media to affect the masses and suit its own interests. Many Moroccans are passive consumers of these media representations. *The Lost Donkey* unravels the influence of these media on Imazighen in the Rif region, as well as the implications of illegal immigration on Amazigh cultural identity. The messages the Moroccan media often spread about immigrants are overstatements. They also depict illegal immigrants—especially those who are repatriated—as a disgrace to their family and society. Being sent back means shame for Mustafa in *The Lost Donkey*. Indeed, illegal immigrants who are sent back usually feel useless vis-à-vis their friends, family, and society. Yet, in *The Lost Donkey*, his father receives Mustafa with festivities. In effect, the acts of the filmmaker, who performs the role of Mustafa (Said Essanoussi) in *The Lost Donkey*, are individual political acts with implications for the whole society. The film aims to shed light on the phenomenon of illegal immigration from the Rif area as well as the regime that encourages it.

The films *The Lost Donkey* and *Harragas* illustrate the way certain media bind the past with the present to validate phenomena like illegal immigration. In other words, the films expose the way media and the system that controls them bridges the past and present

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[12] Essanoussi argues that Abdul represents a small category of Riffian society that live either in Morocco or in diaspora. This category is introverted and does not accept innovation and interactions (Interview).

to convince subjects of the smooth transition of events and as justification for the future. Here we see how state-controlled media mask and conceal the socio-historical contexts and present events as if they are natural. Interestingly, the idea of immigration to Europe is not only presented as a natural event but also as an important and fascinating experience, a ticket to paradise. Regarding the conditions required in any ordinary object in order to become and function as object-cause of desire, Žižek writes, 'Although any object can function as the object-cause of desire—insofar as the power of fascination it exerts is not its immediate property but results from the place it occupies in the structure—we must, by structural necessity, fall prey to the illusion that the power of fascination belongs to the object as such' (*Looking* 33). Žižek underlies the idea that the power and importance particular objects acquire is because of their position in the structural system, but this link between the two should be masked. For instance, the idea of migration is fascinating for many North Africans because they are made to believe it is a wonderful experience and a trip to heaven. The films do work to undermine this depiction by introducing the possibility of a disastrous immigration experience. In *Harragas*, Rachid, describing his decision to immigrate illegally to Europe, remarks, 'We want to burn like others have before us and others will after us'. Likewise, the first scenes of *The Lost Donkey* depict migration as a habit Riffians practiced in the past, and still perform presently. Accordingly, the decisions (of both Mustafa in *The Lost Donkey* and Rachid in *Harragas*) to immigrate seem reasonable because the films portray their actions as ordinary and conventional.

Intriguingly, *The Lost Donkey* reveals the socio-historical contexts of Riffian migration and therefore questions its logic, especially in the light of Moroccan state media. The narrator in *The Lost Donkey* repeats points out that Mustafa's family is financially self-sufficient.[13] The narrator also reveals that Mustafa's family is well respected in his village. The narrator's emphasis on these two points is meant to show that Mustafa's family, like many families in the Rif region, leads a normal life. That is to say, while immigration as a consequence of dire socio-economic conditions seems rational, when the narrator claims that Mustafa's social and economic conditions are comfortable, questions could arise around the role of state-controlled media in urging Imazighen emigration from the Rif area. Here the film depicts emigration from the Rif region as unnatural; consequently, it questions the symbolic authority embedded in the state-controlled media that disseminate

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[13] Wealth in the rural community is usually weighed in terms of the possession of land, cattle, and crops.

the idea that the majority of the Riffian population have always migrated regardless of their socio-economic and cultural conditions.

Harragas reveals desires as the main reason stimulating people to immigrate, but the power behind it (the media) remains hidden. Ten individuals constitute the group of people who want to immigrate. Five of them originate from the Sahara and the rest from the same neighbourhood in the city of Mostaganem.[14] The audience knows scant details about the reasons that encourage the five individuals from Mostaganem to leave. For instance, the audience knows that Hakim, who is from Mostaganem and a candidate for illegal immigration, is involved in an international network of Islamists. His exit is related to the activities of that network. Nevertheless, not much about the rest of the group is known. Containing a few clues, Rachid describes his neighbourhood as a 'home for people life forgot, the neighbourhood of boredom, poverty, unemployment, trafficking, births and deaths everyday, where dreams stay just dreams, if you did a poll here 90% would say they want to leave [immigrate]'. Three phrases in this description may summarise the reasons for illegally immigrating: 'the neighbourhood of boredom', 'births and deaths everyday', and 'where dreams stay just dreams'. The three phrases demonstrate the narrator's view that the majority of Mostaganem inhabitants are convinced their own lives are nothing but deadly routine and impasse. In addition, the police officer that tries to immigrate with the group highlights the same point. He alludes to the socio-economic status of the two groups on board the boat and states, 'it is funny, you all here together, the peasants and daddy's golden boys'. This quote, in combination with the scenes depicting the friends from Mostaganem in Algeria, demonstrate that Rachid and his friends are educated and previously lead a relatively decent life in Mostaganem. Yet the group decides to immigrate. This group believes that Europe is a place where there is no routine, where dreams materialise instantly, and where even the sun is better than in Mostaganem.[15]

At the symbolic level in *Harragas*, desires and media provide the subjects with an identity and fantasies that sustain this identity. That is to say, the symbolic order provides fantasies that keep Rachid and his friends temporarily 'satisfied' in Mostaganem. Rachid,

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[14] The use of male and female characters from the northern coastal city of Mostaganem as well as characters coming from the Sahara is to show that international migration affects all of Algerian society.

[15] When the boat's engine breaks down, the group of illegal immigrants are stranded near Spanish shores. When the sun rises Rachid describes the scenery and swears that the Spanish sun 'smells of paella'.

Nasser, and Iman believe that the paradise overseas might compensate for the deficiencies they think they experience in Mostaganem on a daily basis. They take solace in the future and forget the present. When Rachid arrives at the Spanish shore, he immediately removes his wet clothes and dresses in a suit. Still on the shore he uses his mobile phone and calls a friend in France. He notifies him that he may be there in few days and asks him to prepare beer for celebration. For a moment we believe he has achieved his fantasy. In the next shot we see Rachid sitting on the ground, handcuffed, with two Spanish coastguards at his side. The guards stand on a hill and observe Nasser and Iman swimming to the shore. At this point Rachid has realised that his fantasy has just evaporated. His friends, who are still at sea, are unaware of the Spanish coastguards observing them. They are also not aware that the policeman in Mostaganem observed them. They are oblivious to the fact that they are victims of their own desires.

In contrast to the Moroccan state-controlled media that produce programs that deny the majority of migrants the ability to express themselves, *The Lost Donkey* gives voice to Amazigh migrants and reveals their condition in Europe. There are many homeless Moroccan migrants in Europe who rely on alms to survive. These migrants are neither recognised by 'host' countries nor by their country of origin. *The Lost Donkey* draws attention to Mustafa's case. He is an Amazigh illegal immigrant who shares a shelter with the homeless in Rotterdam. Here the film reveals important aspects of migration that the Moroccan national media ignore. It shows that many Imazighen, who used to lead a decent life in Morocco, end up living on the streets of European cities. What these immigrants imagine as paradise turns to be an illusion, a nightmare.

Throughout *The Lost Donkey* we see how desires, in combination with media, work. Desires promise subjects completion. People believe illegal migration in Europe is the way toward perfection. Mustafa is doing exactly what is expected of him to do: dream about immigration to Europe. Media become the engine for subject's fantasies of migration. Notably, fantasies keep subjects alive and within the hold of their desires. For instance, the fantasy of migration keeps subjects satisfied with social reality (which is in fact an imaginary satisfaction). In the film we see that Mustafa's private fantasies play an important role vis-à-vis symbolic authority and society as a whole. In his attempt to realise his fantasies he becomes a model figure other villagers follow. In *Harragas* Rachid, hours before leaving, describes the moment when he was packing his clothes in front of his young

brothers: 'My brothers saw me a real hero; to them, I was Steven Segal or Bruce Willis'.[16] Adding to media messages, the private fantasies of subjects contribute significantly to the process of creating new candidates for illegal immigration and sustaining desires. Consequently, desire requires conformity and as a reward it provides subjects with fantasies.

The Lost Donkey portrays the way media create desires that shape and affect Amazigh identity. Regarding the link between media, desires, and identity Mark Pizzato states, 'children and adults play at becoming whole selves, through the Other's desires, especially through the mirror-stage rites of today's mass media screens' ("Beauty's Eyes" 85). The Other's desires, present in mass media, are the engine of individual identities. In fact, media not only produce identities but shape and sustain them. Mustafa's identity in the film is an example of a product of media. Mustafa decides to sells his family jewellery. The jewellery consists of traditional ornaments that represent Amazigh culture, and their symbolic value within the community is highly prized. Mustafa could have sold cows, sheep, or other commodities, but he sells his family jewellery instead. This act of selling family traditional ornaments is symbolic and it shows the devastating effect of media on Amazigh identity, as it changes their lives forever. Mustafa not only burns his Amazigh identity but also adopted an imaginary identity the media provides him with. He becomes an illegal immigrant, or a shadow, wandering European streets. That is, Mustafa changes his mode of life in the Rif region for the illusion of a paradise that does not exist. When his uncle, who lives in Rotterdam, learns about Mustafa's selling of the family jewellery, he immediately expels him from his house. The film shows that media encourages people to burn, and the act of burning has made the Imazighen of the Rif area—who used to live in dignity within their community—anonymous subjects.

Reading allegorically, the film *Harragas* depicts state-controlled media as a vehicle to exert almost total control over subjects in Algeria. Normally, the power of media remains unseen, but *Harragas* personifies it. In a fantastic approach, the film tries to reveal the functioning of media through personification. From the beginning of the film, a bald man Mustafa (performed by Samir Elhakim), observes the activities of the group of candidates for illegal immigration. Neither the audience nor the characters know anything of this man. Initially, he observes the group from a distance and later he interferes by using

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[16] Here the use of 'brothers' represents all Algerian brothers and sisters who regard illegal immigrants as heroes.

physical force to control the group. He gathers the group on the shore of Mostaganem and uses his handgun to control them. He is a policeman who becomes a criminal, indicative of the corrupt regime in Algeria. He addresses the group and says, 'Have you heard of selective migration? Today I am doing the selecting'. Rachid responds, 'All our life someone has chosen for us, even now'. Rachid's response shows two important points. First, he is aware that he is under the control of the Algerian totalitarian regime and its media. Second, he fails to resist such control. That is, the unwariness of people to the functioning of media normally makes them vulnerable to their content. Nevertheless, Rachid is aware of the fact he is controlled by the Algerian regime through its media but, strangely, has not resisted or rejected it. The bald man then sends two men away: an old man and a mute disallowed to immigrate with the rest. Here the film shows the way state-controlled media works as far as targeting candidates for immigration is concerned. Only young, healthy people are encouraged to immigrate. On the one hand, the Algerian regime sees no threat in an old man and a mute; on the other hand, European countries only need healthy and cheap labour. Consequently, the weakest have to stay in Algeria.

The Lost Donkey is a political gesture that aims to draw attention to the implications of desires on subjects. Mustafa, in *The Lost Donkey*, succeeds in immigrating but discovers that there is no paradise. The Dutch authorities repatriate him to Morocco, and when he arrives at his village children start to surround and insult him, shouting, 'Mustafa is a donkey, Mustafa is crazy'. He becomes the village mockery. In the eyes of the villagers Mustafa is a failure and disgrace for the community. This incident, which occurs at the village's outskirts, illustrates few important points. First, in his journey in pursuit of the illusion of fame in paradise Mustafa fails to identify the fact that he is a donkey. That is, the insult incident designates Mustafa's failure to recognise his weaknesses and lack as the source of his unhappiness. Second, Mustafa is portrayed as a donkey because he cannot see that he is under the control of others and their media who want him to immigrate. Thirdly, Mustafa is a donkey because he stops cultivating his land and culture, and assisting his family and society (Essanoussi, interview). Finally, the insult incident is self-reflective. The children insult a donkey by telling him that he is a donkey. The insult seems absurd. Nevertheless, this absurdity is used purposefully to highlight the way symbolic authority rehabilitates and disciplines subjects. If Mustafa were received without insults he would have informed the villagers about the non-existence of paradise. The information would have led the other subjects to question their own private fantasies regarding paradise. It is

an act that threatens the symbolic authority. As Mustafa is received with insults, he forgets to share the information about 'paradise'. His main concern is his own disgrace and how to handle it, and the secrets of migration and paradise remain hidden within him for the moment.

The insult incident is the act that leads Mustafa to traverse his fantasy. As the children escort Mustafa to his father's house, Mustafa walks in shame and humiliation. Slavoj Žižek argues that in order to topple the domination of the master, the subject must traverse the fantasy that has established this relationship of domination (*Plague* 48). Mustafa must traverse his own fantasy and encounter a piece of the traumatic Real in order to break the control imposed on him. To achieve that Mustafa must abandon his dream of achieving perfection in Europe, and recognise that paradise is an imaginary product disseminated partly in Moroccan media and sponsored by *Almakhzan*. Mustafa must also recognise that paradise can be enjoyed within his village and country. His father observes him from a window. He sees his own son dragging his tail with defeat and embarrassment. This event becomes an embarrassment for the father as well. It is not only Mustafa who traverses the fantasy but his father too, and he does not succumb to the pressure of the villagers. Instead, he decides to organise a feast in honour of his son, an innovative idea in a society used to punishing deported illegal immigrants. The father's act reveals his disagreement with the idea of denigrating and belittling repatriated illegal immigrants. For him, these returned immigrants are heroes who have broken free from a fantasy and overcome their illusions.

Migration as a journey exposes subjects to the traumatic Real, and consequently teaches them to resist and channel their desires. Near the end of *Harragas*, the boat's engine breaks down just before reaching Spain. The group on board have no food or water left. They have no chance of leaving the boat to swim to the shore because they are still under the control of the policeman. They begin to despair, and under the dark of the night one of them attacks the corrupt policeman. Grappling, the two fall overboard and drown in the Mediterranean. Facing part of the traumatic Real pushes these subjects to raise resistance against domination and control. Only under these circumstances does this group react. The political act of the filmmaker is to raise awareness among young Algerians to resist the control of the regime and its media.

There are two subjects in *Harragas* who traverse their own private fantasies but cannot bear the drive's monotony. The first one is Omar, who we learn about through his left-behind letter. He is the brother of Iman, who has attempted to immigrate illegally to Europe many times and failed. Omar's letter reflects the state of mind of a subject who traverses fantasy and moves from desire to the drive's deadly monotony. In the letter he writes:

> At last I am leaving … writing these words I have a strange feeling, I don't know how it got into my head, my country has become a black spot, that has grown and taken my brain … if I leave I will die, and if I don't leave I will die, so I am leaving without leaving and I will die, it's simple that way.

In this letter we see that Omar loses hope completely. Omar tries to leave but he is caught and returned to Algeria. He is caught in a circle of drive, and unable to face the drive's monotony he commits suicide. The case of Ali, one of the five peasants on board the boat leaving to Spain, is somehow different. Ali cannot swim and feels he is imprisoned in the damaged boat. He recognises that he will not achieve his dream. Facing the traumatic Real overwhelms him. He becomes mad, jumps into the sea, and drowns. Luckily for Mustafa in *The Lost Donkey* things take a more positive turn.

The last scene in *The Lost Donkey* is indeed significant. It summarises one of the messages the film aims to reveal. In this scene we see Mustafa sitting together with his brother, father, friends, and villagers enjoying a feast in his honour. This scene shows that joy and pleasure can be found at home (the Rif region) and in one's own country (Morocco). In his comments on joy, Žižek writes, 'We always find ourselves in the same position we have tried to escape, which is why, instead of running after the impossible, we must learn to consent our common lot and to find pleasure in the trivia of our everyday life' (Žižek, *Looking* 8). Here Žižek alludes to the way subjects experience pleasure believing that something has changed in their lives, which positively affects their existence. Nothing, in fact, has changed, but what creates this joy is what he calls 'the elusive make-believe' that drives people to seek change. Therefore, the best way to experience delight is to learn to enjoy what one has and does in one's daily life. Mustafa, by making the journey, believes he has completely become another subject. He feels reborn and not interested in leaving his family and village again. He is pleased to see his family welcome him.

This scene shows that the acts of characters are individual political acts with implications for the whole community. Speaking of the individual and group and the ethical dimension of psychoanalysis, Lacan claims that 'there is no satisfaction for the individual outside of the satisfaction of all' (*Ethics* 292). Mustafa's act, staged by the filmmaker, tries to convince people to accept repatriated migrants, with a deterring message for new candidates for illegal immigration. That is to say, the film demonstrates that there is no paradise overseas. It is better for those who try to illegally immigrate to Europe to remain in their village or city and try to take care of their land and culture where the actual paradise is.

I argue *The Lost Donkey* not only reflects the filmmaker's views of illegal immigration but also reveals his own limitations. Regarding the role of the filmmaker in what Hamid Naficy categorises as 'accented films', Naficy argues that many accented-cinema filmmakers focus on social and political issues to show their political commitment, and this approach may contribute to the decline of the quality of films. There are filmmakers who believe that shooting a few scenes is enough to prove their point, but their carelessness leads to the diminishing of creativity, analysis, and depth (Naficy 127). Here the filmmaker Said Essanoussi performs his identity, which becomes public and political. As a migrant himself, he chooses to address the issue of illegal immigration that has led to a Rif exodus. I do not read Essanoussi's case as carelessness: his shortcomings in the film are derived from the fact that he was and still is an amateur filmmaker. Examining the quality and content of the film corroborates Naficy's analysis of films that filmmakers create merely to make a political point. Yet Said Essanoussi, as with many other accented-cinema filmmakers, makes use of his experiences and interactions with both homeland and host country to create a performance with political implications within his community and society.

Conclusion

In addition to its entertainment, *The Lost Donkey* tries to show young Riffian Imazighen the effects of immigration on the Amazigh community and its cultural identity. Importantly, it highlights the role mass media in the Riff region play in the recruitment process of illegal immigration. The film also reveals that it is better for Imazighen of the Riff area to live in

dignity and respect in their own village rather than leaving illegally to Europe to live as anonymous subjects continuously hiding from the police.

Given that many migrants live in the uncertainty brought on through the phenomenon of migration, many Amazigh films try to highlight this ambiguity and observe its implications. The example of Mustafa in *The Lost Donkey* is a case familiar to many Imazighen who are lured by the experience of immigration depicted by the Moroccan mass media. As they start to dream of Europe, candidates for illegal immigration start to feel the daze. They do not know what they want, and if they do have a goal they forget it on their way to obtaining it. The film portrays how Amazigh migrants succeed to burn their identity and cross the Mediterranean, but they usually fail to escape the anonymity of being immigrants. They become nameless and forgotten individuals wandering Europe.

The film shows another side of the process of immigration. Migration can take subjects on a journey where they face themselves and their psyche. They traverse fantasy, face the traumatic Real, and reconcile themselves with their deficiencies and lack. That is, the subject who ventures into the journey of migration does not articulate his or her fantasy, but learns a way to live with lack. Mustafa, as a Riffian Amazigh, starts his journey as a foolish young man who desires to leave to Europe. At the end of a long journey that takes him from the Rif region to Europe and back he becomes wiser and cleverer, living happily among his family in his village.

I offer an interpretation of the film *The Lost Donkey* to highlight how many candidates for immigration endlessly struggle with desires and fantasies when trying to achieve the illusion of an ideal life. I shed light on the emotional state of Amazigh migrants as they involved themselves in the process of migration, especially illegal immigration. I draw attention to the way their identity evolves in and during their journeys and the way these subjects learn to comprehend and contain their uncertainty.

While *Harragas* is mainly political, as it highlights the corrupt regime that pushes people to emigrate from Algeria, *The Lost Donkey* is more didactic, since it informs Imazighen in the Rif and diaspora about issues like Amazigh cultural identity and migration. Nevertheless, *The Lost Donkey* also has political aspects, because it highlights the role of media in the process of migration and the powers that control these media. While *The Lost Donkey* was released more than 15 years ago, the rise in popularity of other media

(especially the Internet) shapes the experience of migration and its impact on Imazighen'
cultural identity into other meanings and other dimensions.

Chapter V: **Home Online: Websites and Dialogism**

Introduction

In this final chapter, and similar to the previous ones, I address Amazigh identity and media.[1] In light of Mikhail Bakhtin's concepts of dialogism and polyphony, I argue that my selected Amazigh websites allocate spaces where different voices express their divergent perspectives on topics vital for Imazighen in the Rif region and diaspora (especially in relation to the idea of home and cultural identity). In addition, I highlight how these Amazigh websites assist the interaction of voices and elements at various levels addressing and reflecting issues of communal interest to Imazighen. I contend that home, which usually symbolises stability and certainty, takes another dimension online and becomes a complex process that involves various elements. In *The Media of Diaspora*, Karim writes, 'Diaspora (re)create home by instilling such resonance into the spaces they occupy; they do it with their languages, customs, art forms, arrangement of objects and ideas' (10). Here the meaning of home is the resonance of the livelihood of a particular community living in a geographical location carved in spaces occupied by subjects who are far away from this location and believe that they are part of that community. There are Imazighen throughout the world who believe they belong to *Tamazgha* (a politically and territorially unified Maghreb, or North Africa) and try to (re)create home in the spaces they occupy. For instance, there are Riffian Imazighen in diaspora who consider Amazigh websites homes because in and through these spaces they can gather, interact, re-articulate their cultural identity, learn the latest news about the Rif area, see the role of the past in the re-

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[1] It is important to mention that in chapter three I addressed the role of cybercafés and internet in generating virtual mobility among Alhoceima's inhabits, especially among women. Here I look at particular websites and their role as virtual spaces that assist in the process of articulating their users' identity and provide temporary certainty.

construction of their current identity, and discuss and stimulate the use of their native language. Importantly, these websites provide provisional certainty for their Amazigh users concerning their identity and the idea of 'belonging'.[2]

Amazigh websites address a range of issues (including subjects I discuss in previous chapters, such as the evolution of the Amazigh migration from Morocco, the uncertainty of migrants in their host country, cultural identities of Amazigh diasporas, memory, mobility of both migrants and Imazighen in their country of origin, and fantasies and desires relating to migration). In this chapter I focus mainly on the subject of 'home' online on the Amazigh websites dalil-rif.com, agraw.com, and timazighin.nl. These sites allow their visitors to access free articles, music, and films. They also provide spaces like chat rooms and discussion forums where participants can interact and share data. In effect, I use a combination of media, literary, and social theories to show the dialogic nature of these Amazigh websites many Imazighen consider as online homes and the meanings that emerge out of these dialogues. I argue that home online—or the hominess procured online—for many Imazighen is an inspiration created by a necessity to interact and bond in an increasingly fragmented and chaotic world. Home online is also an idea projected by diasporic Imazighen into Amazigh websites to help to alleviate uncertainty, and sustain and assist them in the process of (re)articulating their cultural identity.

Acquiring qualitative research for all existing Amazigh websites is complex; therefore, I select only three sites for analysis. Nevertheless, as I research these three websites I incorporate a few examples from other Amazigh-focused websites to illustrate my arguments. Each of the three selected sites is constructed in a particular way. The first website (dalil-rif.com) primary uses Arabic, the second (agraw.com) uses English, and the third (timazighin.nl) uses Dutch. None of the three sites uses Tamazight and the Tifinagh alphabet, mainly because the Amazigh alphabet was only recently introduced in several primary schools and a few universities in Morocco. All three websites are well known in Dutch-Amazigh diaspora, and the first two in Morocco as well; they highlight cultures of Imazighen, and specifically of the Moroccan Rif region. For instance, dalil-rif.com (which is hosted from Northern Morocco) averages 20,000 visitors per day from mostly Imazighen

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[2] Here I employ the idea of belonging consistent with what I mention in chapter two: it is an idea created by, among others, Amazigh diasporans to provide relative psychological security in this unstable world.

who live in Europe (Dahmani). In addition, each site has different materials and approaches to events.

This chapter includes three sections. The first addresses how dalil-rif.com keeps Imazighen who access the site informed about and involved in events in diaspora and in the Rif region. The second section looks to agraw.com through the content and the layout of the website, and studies the way the site engages the past of the Rif area and opens spaces for discussion of issues like identity and memory. My focus is mainly on the role of the interactions of participants in this site in the construction of Amazigh cultural identity in the present. Further, I search the materials posted on agraw.com and how they may affect visitors' conceptions of 'home'. In the last section of this chapter, 'Language, memory, and identity in Timazighin.nl', I scrutinise the use of language on timazighin.nl in the light of another website, amazigh.nl. Dutch appears as the primary language on the two sites, yet these two websites (and similar to the other Amazigh-focused websites I discuss in this chapter) enfold a complex system of utterances in which various languages interact. Here I investigate how this amalgam reflects the idea of home and the implications of this complex system for Amazigh cultural identity.

While I considered the concepts of memory and identity through songs and films in the previous chapters, my aim in this chapter is to shed light on these concepts mainly in websites. It is important to underscore that I use various theories throughout my thesis to address the same issues. Given that memory and identity implicate different issues in films and songs, it is necessary to use the right theories to approach them in websites. For instance, music and lyrics constitute a song and it involves a singer and listeners, but a website is an evolving process in which there are a range of active and passive subjects, and in which elements such as songs, films, articles, and videos are in continuous interaction and change. Thus, dialogism and polyphony can shed light on and tackle these concepts in a shifting space like a website. I read all the websites listed above dialogically and reveal how these readings highlight the various perspectives of divergent voices vis-à-vis each other, the websites, and their content. I also emphasise the various aspects and events in these Amazigh websites 'now', and demonstrate that these sites reveal three patterns. They accommodate divergent voices that reflect and express multiple and even contradictory perspectives regarding issues like home, migration, cultural identity, truth, memory, and language. Continuously updated, they are in the middle of an ongoing process that involves other media, and assist the interactions of multiple voices.

To keep in touch with one's own 'routes', imagined community, and culture, many diasporic Imazighen make use of Amazigh websites where utterances regarding the journey or process of migration, the idea of homeland, and Amazigh culture are represented and discussed. Amazigh websites are in continuous evolution: they not only interact with changes in their surroundings and shift accordingly, but also keep a few cultural elements that evoke cultural identity and collective memory.[3] In addition, websites are dynamic, have primary monologic qualities, a plurality of logics and voices, and involve broad connections to various networks in 'real life'.[4] Since both the content and layout of the websites continuously shift everyday, I investigate the utterances on the listed Amazigh websites and see their implications for both visitors and website designers at 'present'. To this end, I regularly indicate the date I browsed the data on these sites.

Whereas in previous chapters I focus on the meaning generated by interactions of voices and utterances, in this chapter I focus both on dialogic interactions and their meanings in order to address the dynamic and interactive nature of websites as a location of culture. Dialogism and polyphony are the central concepts I want to use in this chapter, although dialogism proves to be a problematic concept itself. Mikhail Bakhtin's use of it is always surrounded by ambiguity. In his works, *The Dialogic Imagination* (1981) and *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics* (1984), he emphasises the literary genre of the novel as an example of dialogism that conceives of meaning as both the interaction of various voices and a process in which language renews itself. Novels 'become more free and flexible, their language renews itself by incorporating extra-literary heteroglossia and "the novelistic" layers of literary language', writes Bakhtin, and in approaching objects this way, 'they become dialogized, presented with laughter, irony, humour, self parody and finally—this is the most important thing—the semantic openendedness, a living contact with unfinished still evolving reality [the openended present]' (*Dialogic* 7). The crucial point in Bakhtin's dialogism is interaction at various levels; it is an openended process that involves multiplicities. Bakhtin opposes dialogism with monologism, which he posits as single-voiced authoritative meaning. In *Dialogism: Bakhtin and his World*, Michael Holquist further elucidates the meaning of dialogism:

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[3] I highlight cultural elements in chapter two. They are the shifting cultural parts that evoke a relative continuity and belonging among a particular group, which may include elements like rituals, languages, and memory.

[4] By 'real life' I mean here a life not in the virtual world. 'Real life' is difficult to define because virtual life is also a real life for many Internet users.

> Dialogism assumes that at any given time, in any given place, there is a set of powerful but highly unstable conditions at work that will give a word uttered then and there a meaning that is different from what it would be at other times and in other places. (69-70)

Several important elements in this quote reflect the particularities of this concept. Holquist argues that dialogism embraces the fact that the conditions in which an utterance occurs affects its meaning; therefore, an utterance can have various meanings in various circumstances. However, his use and combination of the words 'powerful' and 'unstable' suggest that the conditions at work resist categorisation and consequently remain indefinite. This indeterminacy exposes dialogism to the critique of a few theorists, who claim that this process remains open-ended. Leslie Baxter, a scholar in communication studies, focuses on this indeterminacy and claims that she initially tried to write a book that might articulate the concept of dialogism or 'fix [its] meaning', but she realised that pursuit's impossibility in light of dialogism itself (44). Baxter's statement shows that one cannot unravel dialogisms outside Bakhtin's logic in which the end itself is part of a process continuously updated by a unique world. In concourse, Morson and Emerson write, 'Real dialogism will incarnate a world whose unity is essentially one of multiple voices, whose conversations never reach finality and cannot be transcribed in monologic form. The unity of the world will then appear as it really is: polyphonic' (61). Morson and Emerson underscore the way dialogism turns the world into a unity of divergences and multiplicities. It is a world in which an array of voices interact and exchange perspectives without one dominant voice overriding. It becomes a polyphonic world, and Bakhtin defines polyphony as 'A plurality of consciousnesses, with equal rights and each with its own world' (*Problems* 6). This definition reveals the close link between dialogism and polyphony despite the fact that the two are slightly different. While dialogism is portrayed as an active process that 'will incarnate the world', polyphony is described as a phenomenon that depicts multiplicities *in* a world. Regarding this slight difference in the two concepts, Raj Nadella simplifies: dialogism hears what 'occurs' in a text while polyphony 'describes what a text is' (23).

Both dialogism and polyphony are two significant concepts in Bakhtin's world in which there is not a thing by itself. Bakhtin considers all social processes as interactions between forces of unity and difference. In his comment on the idea of self and the other he

states, 'I cannot do without the other, I cannot become myself without the other, I must find myself in the other, finding the other in me' (*Problems* 287). For Bakhtin there cannot be a self without the mentioning of the other. It is in these interactions—between linear and multilayered forces—where multivocality and meanings emerge, and these give shape to both the self and the other. Importantly, for him there cannot be a single entity without reference to other entities, and this applies not only to subjects but also to language and all existing elements.

In addition, Bakhtin focuses not only on elements but also on their relations and interactions; that is to say, he honours both things and the relations between them—one cannot be understood without the other. The resulting simultaneity is not a private either/or, but an inclusive also/and. Mikhail Bakhtin considers text not as a process that evolves only within the field of literature but as part of dialogue that takes place in various spaces and evolves among a multiplicity of subjects. Thus, text is the fruit of encounters of subjects and of present and absent texts. Text for Bakhtin insinuates any cultural product that entails subjects, language, and dialogue, and Bakhtin attaches importance to the dialogic aspect of cultural products rooted in language and their simultaneity. That is, 'the logic of Bakhtin's simultaneity is dialogic' (Holquist xxiii).

Simultaneity is the cornerstone of Bakhtin's dialogism. According to Holquist it is one of the most complex elements in Bakhtin's world, since it functions at various levels.[5] Holquist tries to list a few levels on which this cornerstone works and argues that at the highest level it is a dialogue between centripetal powers that seek coherence and centrifugal forces that try to keep things separate. At a different level, he describes it as interactions between language at the level of given meaning and discourse. At another level he considers it as a dialogue between different meanings of the same element in various spaces and conditions. He also suggests that simultaneity can be found in a dialogue that takes place between author, characters and audience, and readers with characters and their author (Holquist 69). In effect, simultaneity is a dialogic exchange between various elements, spaces, levels, and times, and out of this simultaneity arises new meanings and knowledge. For Bakhtin a conclusion is understood in relation to various contexts and elements; therefore, the meaning remains momentary. This ongoiness, which is characteristic of dialogism, makes of this theoretical framework an adequate epistemology to analyse

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[5] Bakhtin defines simultaneity as 'the coexistence of everything in eternity' (*Dialogic* 157).

websites. Given that websites are usually complex, versatile, fast moving, and constantly changing, dialogism can 'articulate' the way meaning emerges in this fluidity and continuity.[6] Accordingly, I conceive of websites as spaces that are in the middle of an evolving process, a dialogue, and an encounter of voices, other texts, and contexts in everyday life.

News about Home on Dalil-rif.com

Diasporas and intercontinental networks of communication are two important aspects that currently characterise a globalised world. In the *Media of Diaspora*, Karim argues that to keep in touch and stay informed about 'home', diasporas develop a range of media, such as audiotapes, videotapes, satellite television, and the Internet (1). Today, migration flows are unprecedented, and the physical distance between individuals, communities and diasporas

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[6] 'Articulate' should be understood as a temporary, and therefore changeable, action.

is large. The need to connect, socialise, and bond among one another has encouraged diasporas and other communities to create and develop vast networks of communications.

Dalil-rif.com is a news website that strives to inform Imazighen throughout the world regarding events in the Rif region, Morocco, and the Amazigh diaspora. This site is an initiative of an Information Communication Technology student, who has been experimenting with building and optimising websites. In 2006 this student, in collaboration with a group of friends who call themselves amateur journalists, built dalil-rif.com as an online news outlet. There are other Amazigh news websites created by a few enthusiastic individuals or groups in the Rif area (such as asdaerif.info, aljazeera-rif.com, rifnow.com, and arrifinu.net). Two Moroccan online newspapers—lakome.com and hespress.com—have gained popularity among both Imazighen and Arabs in the country. I analyse dalil-rif.com in the light of theses news sites. It is also important to mention that there are a few works that addresses the use of the Internet by Moroccan migrants, and these works are useful in highlighting my arguments in this section and the rest of the chapter.

Layout

Through an analysis of the layout of dalil-rif.com, I illustrate the polyphonic character of this site. The first impression a visitor may deduce from the address title is that this site is devoted to the Rif region, because 'dalil-Rif' means 'Rif-guide', and a visitor may expect to see and read news exclusively about the Rif. This feature seems monologic as it evokes the idea of exclusion rather than inclusion.[7] The background of the site is light blue and there is a dark blue box at its top.[8] There is also a map of the Rif area in the background at the right side of this box, and the title 'dalil-Rif' is placed in the middle of the map. Under the title, a statement that reads, 'dalil-rif is a Moroccan electronic newspaper updated on the hour', and at the left side of the box there is a picture of the globe. Inspecting this page—specially, the arrangement of elements like the name dalil-Rif, next to the statement that considers the website as a Moroccan outlet, and next to the image of the globe—shows the polyphonic aspect of dalil-rif.com in which the local meets the national and global. The site also includes a range of media such as videos, cartoons, still images, written texts, paintings, and audio records realised by various authors, filmmakers, painters, and

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[7] It is important to note that the logic of Bakhtin's dialogism in particular and his world in general is inclusive rather than exclusive, and it is in this inclusiveness where 'heteroglossia and mutliple voices' are (Bakhtin, *Dialogic* 60).

[8] Dalil-rif last accessed on 15 November 2013.

photographers.[9] This polyphony allows divergent voices and utterances regarding the region of the Rif, Morocco, and the globe to work in harmony on the same page. This polyphony in the layout can also be observed in sites like aljazeera-rif.com ('the island Rif') and asdaerif.info ('Rif echo'), in which multimedia regarding local and global elements are not only placed next to each other but also try to highlight issues in various contexts. For instance, on asdaerif.info (accessed 15 June 2011), the title is at the top right side of the site and on its left there is a world map. On aljazeera-rif.com (accessed 15 June 2011), the title is printed upon the world map. Here, the noun Rif in combination with the world map demonstrates that the events in the Rif region are addressed at various levels, such as the hyperlocal, local, national, and international, and in various contexts, such as in live discussions at chartrooms, or in blogs, articles, and videos. In addition, the sites address national and international events.[10]

The arrangement of elements on dalil-rif.com not only reflects the polyphonic aspect of this site but also shows the way 'hominess' emerges in this virtual world. This hominess develops from the ability of the website to accommodate local and global news and events. The printing of the Rif map next to the globe in the box at the top of the site highlights the character or the meanings of home online. The map is a symbol that stands for a real geographical location in northern Morocco and, on dalil-rif.com, becomes a symbol of the function of Amazigh websites as virtual homes Imazighen in both Morocco and diasporas can occupy. The Rif map is placed in the background of the dark box while the picture of the globe is depicted in the foreground. This demonstrates how locality tries to grasp space in this era in which globalisation is the main currency. In my interview with Abdelwahid Dahmani, one of the web administrators of dalil-rif.com, he comments on the layout of the site and its visitors and explains that the use of the image of the globe represents world news and that the majority of visitors of this website are Imazighen who live in Morocco, the Netherlands, Belgium, France, and Spain (Dahmani). Dahmani's comment draws attention to the users of and participants on dalil-rif.com. Importantly, his comment underscores the role of the site in bringing together local Imazighen with Amazigh diasporans. Dalil-rif.com reflects a balanced view, because one may expect that the news on the site are linear (i.e., exclusively from and about the Rif region), but a visitor

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[9] On the composition of diasporic websites, particularly Moroccan ones, see Merolla ("Migrant" 222).

[10] To learn more on this issue, see Van Summeren.

discovers a range of news, varying between a feast taking place in a remote village in the Rif area, to a strike in the Moroccan capital, Rabat, or a bus incident in India. It is interesting to note that all the Amazigh websites listed above use the same approach, since they try to satisfy the needs of visitors who are eager to know the latest news regarding the Rif area, at the same time, they are aware of the need to post pieces of news regarding the rest of the globe.[11]

Dalil-rif.com is a relatively coherent website that interacts with other media. The site has a top navigation menu and at the centre of the page there is a pop-up menu where the latest news is displayed. There is also a right-side navigational area for opinion articles, world events, and commercial ads. The left-side navigational area is for videos, sport news, and national and international news.[12] At least four individuals supervise the site, one of them, as indicated above, is a professional computer programmer, while the rest are amateur journalists. Generally, the layout of the site includes graphics and designs that reflect a modern appearance and professionalism. The website administrators gather and produce news, perform analysis, and edit stories before publication. Dalil-rif.com reposts news and other materials available from other media outlets, as well as data on the Internet but perhaps need time to be found. This aspect underlines the idea that Amazigh websites are part of networks in which various media interact. Importantly, the events and news that evolve on dalil-rif.com reflect the dialogic character of this site.

Content

While the layout shows the polyphonic aspect of dalil-rif.com, the content reflects the dialogic aspects of the materials posted on the site. For instance, a piece of news posted 14 August 2011 highlights this point. The site claimed it received a letter sent by the employees of a luxury hotel in Al Hoceima to the Moroccan king, Mohamed VI. The letter describes the dire work condition of the employees at the hotel, their meager wages, arduous working days, and need for health insurance. Six days later, dalil-rif.com publishes another piece of news in which they explain that the site received a second letter in the form of a statement written by the managers of the hotel accompanied by the signatures of many employees denying the existence of the first letter. On the same day three online outlets, asdaerif.net, aljazeera-rif.com, and rifnow.com post news regarding the second letter and

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[11] On the approach that Moroccan websites use see Merolla ("Migrant" 224).
[12] The majority of videos are links to YouTube.

the first two sites accuse dalil-rif.com of publishing false news. On 23 August 2011, the news regarding this incident triggered many comments from readers on dalil-rif.com and rifnow.com. Many of the participants claim they are former and current employees at the hotel. They claim that the majority of the employees have temporary contracts, work more than 14 hours a day for less than 150 dollars a month, and do not have any health insurance. They argue that the employees were forced to sign the second letter under the threat of termination. Nonetheless, there were no comments under the article that was posted on the site asderif.net, and aljazeera-rif.com was offline at the time.

Here we see a dialogic encounter in which various voices interact without the domination of one single overriding voice. What started as a simple letter, supposedly written by a few employees of a hotel to dalil-rif.com, becomes a major event attracting attention both online and offline. Initially, we see that the letter interacts with a second letter and becomes involved in a discussion of legitimacy and truth. The second letter accompanied with separate lists of employee signatures renders the first letter an important element, because it draws attention to the idea of truth. Regarding the subject of truth in *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics* Bakhtin writes, 'Truth is not born nor is it to be found inside the head of an individual person, it is born *between people* collectively searching for truth, in the process of their dialogic interactions' (110). Bakhtin underscores intersubjectivity as far as truth is concerned, and that truth is to be found in a unity of divergences of voices. The example of the letter shows that truth can be the result of subjects' interactions at different levels. On the one hand, employees claiming that they were confident the site would publish a letter and forward it to the king supposedly sent the first letter. They also claim that they sent it to this website because they consider it a second home, after their own homes, and believe in its integrity. On the other hand, the second letter is sent by the managers of the hotel accompanied with signatures of many employees. It does not refute the employees' complaints mentioned in the first letter, but it denies the existence of the letter and questions the credibility of dalil-rif.com. It claims that the original letter is a fabrication of dalil-rif.com and that the problems at the hotel can be addressed and solved within the institution.

At a different level, we see that the letter has become the axis of interactions between various online outlets. Each of them tries to use this element to gain popularity and discredit the other. While asdaerif.net and aljazeera-rif.com maintain that dalil-rif.com lacks professionalism and works according to the political agendas of a certain party, the

indirect response of the site can be found in the comment section under the news regarding the first and second letters. There, many commentators thank dalil-rif.com for its integrity and accuse the other outlets of defending the owner of the hotel and trying to discredit dalil-rif.com because they receive money from online advertisements from the hotel.

Whether the letter exists or not is trivial. What is important is that the incident highlights the way an utterance evolves and takes meaning. The meaning or meanings of the utterance here arise out of dialogues that involve multiplicities. That is, the meaning of the letter incident emerges out of interactions of various elements and at various levels. Regarding the rise of an utterance, in general, and the way it acquires meaning Bakhtin writes:

> The living utterance having taken meaning and shape at a particular historical moment in a socially specific environment cannot fail to brush up against thousands of living dialogic threads, woven by socio-ideological consciousness around the given object of an utterance; it cannot fail to become an active participant in social dialogue. After all, the utterance arises out of this dialogue as a continuation of it and as a rejoinder to it. (*Dialogic* 276-77)

Bakhtin draws attention to the environment in which an utterance is born and evolves. It is a sphere where dialogue and interaction are crucial. In the case of the letter incident, which is the object of utterance or utterances, we see dialogues—what Bakhtin names 'living dialogic threads'—and the historical/social environment. The letter triggers a social debate that begins offline and proceeds online. It is a debate that highlights work conditions in Al Hoceima and Morocco in general. Indeed, the letter incident has not only succeeded in attracting a large number of visitors to dalil-rif.com but also in opening a dialogue between the hotel employers, mangers, owner, media, and public. The letter becomes an issue because it is supposed to be sent to the highest authority in the country, the king, who has discharged various personalities from office in Al Hoceima since 2009. The letter also appears at a time when various protests of unemployed university graduates in Al Hoceima increase. In effect, the interaction between online and offline worlds is remarkable, since websites have acquired the power to affect the behavior and attitude of people in the Rif region. People are aware of the power of this new media, and any news published online can make or take the reputations of important businesses, persons, and institutions offline.

Consequently, many people in the Rif regard news websites as hidden cameras that trace their conduct in offline world; therefore, they are always careful about their actions.[13]

The example of the story of the letter shows how a website becomes a home for its visitors since it accommodates their stories and allows its audience to interact. That is to say, the example of the letter shows the plurality of dialogues that can be generated online. It is an interaction between various elements and their 'dialogical interrelationships'.[14] The letter becomes an intriguing point that unleashes a dialogue online that involves website visitors and website administrators, and evolves offline to include other people. Dalil-rif.com's audiences write the majority of the stories posted on the site, and it is in these stories the meaning of home is revealed.

Dialogism in dalil-rif.com can be seen in terms of the work mechanisms that characterise the website. That is to say, websites like dalil-rif.com prefer to confer part of its control to its audience to become a meeting point where audiences share information and news with the rest. A long-established distrust of the Moroccan mainstream press by Imazighen of the Rif has contributed to the success of many online outlets like dalil-rif.com. The Moroccan mainstream press always prefer to avoid publishing stories that may offend *Almakhzan* or important advertisers. Additionally, these outlets usually have complete control over the mechanisms of their publishing system.

People not only visit dalil-rif.com but also produce news that suits their own tastes. Significantly, many visitors have started to exercise the power they have earned as readers and participants. Regarding the power of the audiences in online news sites, media researchers Mark Deuze and Leopoldina Fortunati argue that audiences not only generally chose free news online, but also become owners of the production means as they make news about and for themselves (170). It is for the first time that the audiences begin to realise that they have gained some control over the means of production. Dalil-rif.com's audiences mostly create the content on the site. Unlike the Moroccan mainstream press, where editors and managers both edit and police content, dalil-rif.com is a space directed by both the web administrators as well as the audiences, who are in constant dialogue and

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[13] To learn more on the 'effectiveness' of online-offline interaction as far as the Imazighen are concerned, see Merolla's "Digital Imagination."

[14] The dialogical interrelationships between languages, images of languages, voices, other elments and their organization are the important tasks for stylistics as far as the study of novel is concerned, observes Bakhtin.

interaction. Dalil-rif.com has become a space where a subject may be the producer and consumer at the same time. This is another aspect of the dialogic tendency in dalil-rif.com, since the site allows its visitors and web administrators to be involved in a dialogue through the published material and share the burden of being producers, without the domination of a single individual or a group. In effect, what remains hidden in official media is exposed in online news outlets such as dalil-rif.com and lakome.com.

Daill-rif.com and lakome.com generate dialogue by opening the 'virtual floor' for discussions and plurality of opinions that draw attention to the monologic character of mainstream media.[15] These alternative media not only emphasise important issues ignored by state-controlled media, but also present valuable alternative views in a country where freedom of speech is still a new phenomena. The Moroccan state-controlled media are examples of monologic texts in which one single voice (*Almakhzan*) overrides the rest. While opinion in the jargon of state-controlled media means statements of *Almakhzan*, in the jargon of online outlets such as lakome.com and dalil-rif.com it means multiplicities of views regardless of their ideology, gender, or beliefs. Therefore, in a state like Morocco where media are censored, *Almakhzan* regards online outlets as threat to be contained or eliminated. On 3 June 2011 the Moroccan newspaper *Alalam* (the newspaper of the *Istiqlal Party* ['Independence Party'], one essential element in the circle of *Almakhzan*), published an article accusing the founder of the website lakome.com, Ali Anouzla, of treason. The article explains how hackers successfully intercepted an email of a Moroccan dissident from the United States of America to Ali Anouzla, in which the dissident thanks Anouzla for his cooperation and attack on *Almakhzan*. *Alalam* explains that this email proves that lakome.com works with outside agendas and questions the legitimacy of the financial resources of the site. This incident highlights both the fearful conditions in which the managers and users of these online outlets operate and at the same time the fact that there are citizen-journalists and voices who do not fear persecution and threats and continue to develop these virtual spaces that allow people to express their multiple views. While state-controlled media prefer to have speakers and listeners, online outlets like dalil-rif.com and lakome.com chose to have speakers and respondents.

The innovative character of these online sites is that they try to dissolve the line or boundary between fact and opinion. It is an inclusive logic in which utterances and voices

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[15] There is only one single 'opinion' in mainstream Moroccan media, which is the discourse of *Almakhzan* (Amaney 114-15).

are dialogic, and dalil-rif.com facilitates encounters and dialogues between fact and opinion. The majority of the stories posted on dalil-rif.com contain factual sources (such as eyewitness accounts and official documents) in addition to personal opinions and comments. Here the site accommodates divergent utterances that claim different narratives. The site publishes articles based on eyewitnesses or its citizen journalists. Under all articles is a comment facility in which many participants or eyewitnesses corroborate, refute, or support the content of the articles. Examining this simultaneity underscores the logic of the site in which opinion and fact are in continuous dialogue.[16] It shows the logic of Bakhtin's simultaneity at work in dalil-rif.com. It is notable that a small piece of news can generate a huge discussion in online dialogic outlets. An unlimited numbers of comments are possible on one single piece of news, and, usually, comments contain more news than the original article itself, since people corroborate, analyse, or contextualise the news. The fusion of facts and opinions is an aspect that has increased the popularity of sites like dalil-rif.com and lakome.com.[17]

Dalil-rif.com opens channels for communication for its visitors and tries to motivate participation, dialogue, and interaction. It follows the motto of Cory Doctorow (a blogger for *BoingBoing*), who affirms, 'conversation is king. Content is just something to talk about' (Doctorow). It seems it is for a similar reason dalil-rif.com gives importance to the comments section, because through this tool participants can discuss topics and articles. Importantly, the site opens debate to more voices and for a long duration. The site has an archive section where old news is gathered and visitors can comment on topics months or even years old. The archive on the site shows that there is continuity and interaction between past and present. Importantly, these past stories sometimes help contextualise current stories. For instance, on 29 May 2012, dalil-rif.com posted a piece of news entitled 'Protests Against the Method of Auctioning Kiosks in Al Hoceima', describing unemployed university graduates protesting auctions (my trans.). The article does not mention the date of the auction or the interested groups allowed to participate in the auction. The readers are also not presented a link between the unemployed graduates and the auction. Nonetheless, inspecting the archive, an article concerning the auction emerges on 27 May, entitled 'Major Irregularities Characterise the Auctioning of Kiosks in Al

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[16] Dalil-rif.com always publishes all comments unless they contain threats or insults to other participants (Dahmani).
[17] On the idea of generating dialogue on websites in which various perspectives are presented, see J. W. Anderson.

Hoceima' (my trans.). It is in this article the reader can find the missing information. In the comments section of the two articles participants add other pieces of news absent from both articles. This is another dialogical feature in which the past stories interact with present and absent stories and in which texts and contexts are in constant dialogue.

The interaction of professional and amateur journalism is another form of dialogic encounter present in several websites hosted in the Rif region and the rest of Morocco. For instance asdaerif.com and lakome.com include professional as well as amateur journalists. Ali Anouzla is one of the professional journalists for lakome.com.[18] Although dalil-rif.com does not retain any professional journalists, it reposts works from professional journalists who gather news in field (Dahmani). The combination of professional and amateur journalism is the new strategy many online outlets use in order to survive and develop. It is a step that usually boosts the production of consistent and high-quality information. On the need to combine these two poles Axel Bruns writes:

> Neither professional nor citizen journalism is going to disappear any time soon (though the same cannot be said without confidence about anyone specific publication in either camp), and it is likely that the best opportunities for sustainable journalistic models lie in an effort to combine the best of both worlds—in the development of hybrid, 'pro-am' journalism organizations, which may substantially transform journalistic practices while maintaining continuity with a long history of (professional *and* citizen) journalistic efforts. (132-33)

This quote emphasises the need for both professional and amateur journalism to fuse in order to create a hybrid sustainable journalistic model Bruns names 'pro-am'. This 'pro-am' media reflects the idea of inclusivity inherent in dialogism and its necessity in the rise of new media like these online outlets. Currently, these models are emerging in reality and have proven successful too: the best articles in Morocco are typically published on online outlets that have adopted the model of pro-am.

It is apparent that news sites like dalil-rif.com are dialogic in the sense that they present pieces of news that generate dialogue between online and offline worlds, speakers and respondents, and opinion and fact. They also generate other news, which is the product

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[18] Ali Anouzla began his career more than twenty years ago at the daily newspaper *Asharq Al Awsat* in Rabat. He is the founder of lakome.com.

of a channel of communication between amateur and professional journalists that interact with pieces of news either on the same website or on other online outlets. Importantly, they attract visitors who later become active producers that publish news and other materials that suit their own tastes, create the basic material for interactions and attract new candidates for becoming future producers.

Memory, home and Amazigh Cultural Identity on Agraw.com

This section reveals the role of Amazigh websites concerning memory, the idea of home and cultural identity, and highlights the volatility of these elements as they shift between offline and online worlds. Here I study agraw.com as a dialogic space in which memory and cultural identity continuously interact at different levels. Additionally, I consider agraw.com in light of other Amazigh websites like anzuf.com.

Agraw.com is a website that promotes Amazigh culture. Mohamed Bounda, a university student, in collaboration with two other students, Hisham Boughaba and Miloud Ayadi, created the site in 2000. Mohamed Bounda describes the main idea behind the initiative of creating agraw.com and explains, 'because of my love for contemporary Amazigh music and since Moroccan official media ignore this type of music has pushed me to gather the majority of the Amazigh artists' albums and create a website in the year 2000 in which visitors can freely listen to Amazigh music' (Bounda). Bounda's main goal is to share the songs he loves the most with Imazighen and other visitors of the website. The creation of agraw.com can be considered a result of exchange of experiences and expertise

between a few individuals who love Amazigh music (especially revolutionary songs), and want to share this devotion with others. Importantly, the dream has evolved to become a virtual space that accommodates stories, forums, music albums, videos, and articles involving the visitors of this site.

Layout

Agraw.com is a polyphonic space that provides its visitors with symbols and structures that assist diasporans to remember and construct stories that enable them to (re)construct their identity in the present.[19] Unlike the name of the site *dalil Rif'*, which is an Arabic word, *agraw* is an Amazigh term that means 'gathering'. Therefore the name of the website evokes collectivity and a meeting point, and anyone who understands the meaning of *agraw* enters the site expecting to find elements that suggest the idea of 'a gathering'. The layout of the site is simple, yet sophisticated. At the top right side of the site there is an Amazigh flag which has blue, green, and yellow colours and a red Tifinagh letter ⵣ(Z) in its middle. While the three colours of the flag represent the nature of North Africa—namely: sea, forest, and sand—the red Z in its middle stands for Amazigh language and culture. The red colour of the letter Z is the colour of blood, which is a symbol of life that evokes continuity and sacrifice. Therefore, the flag not only evokes a unity of Amazigh culture and nature, but also represents an idea of a home in which Imazighen might live in freedom and prosperity. Given that it is almost impossible to gather Imazighen in a particular geographical location, an *agraw* ('gathering') is able to fulfil the task of assembling Imazighen from the entire world. The flag imbedded on the website becomes an innovative totem that symbolises the attachment of Imazighen to their culture and 'routes'.[20]

The layout of agraw.com, as with dalil-rif.com, evokes another aspect of dialogism: inclusiveness. At the left side of the flag, Tifinagh letters float in the light blue space.[21] At the top left side of the site a woman dressed in a traditional Amazigh dress holds an *ajun* or *bendir*, Amazigh musical instrument. The picture of the woman indicates the site is devoted mainly to art. The masthead agraw.com is placed between the flag and

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[19] Agrw.com last accessed on 12 October 2013.

[20] Routes, as mentioned in chapter two, substitutes the idea of roots, because, in the spread of Imazighen throughout the world, understanding one's position in the process of migration becomes an important aspect that may assist in the re-articulation of one's identity.

[21] This kind of layout is a recognizable characteristic of many Amazigh websites (Lafkioui, "Interactions Digitales").

the woman, and under the title there is a statement written in English that says, 'Portal dedicated to the Amazigh culture'. Initially the layout of the site seems exclusive and creates a monologic tendency on the site, since there are items only Imazighen may understand (such as the term *agraw*, the Amazigh letters, and symbols displayed). However, examining the layout shows that the website includes various voices and utterances that indicate otherwise. The combination of the Amazigh flag, the picture of the woman with an *ajun*, and the use of English as a primary language on the same page shows the polyphonic tendency on the entire site. In addition, in my interview with Bounda, he emphasises the fact that the site avoids posting local news unrelated to art and cultural events because it tries to speak to all nations and peoples, and the site focuses on art because this trespasses borders, ethnicities, and language barriers (Bounda). Here the comments of this web manger reveal the fact that the site focuses on art because it seeks to involve as many participants as possible and generate dialogue.[22] That is, agraw.com tries to involve individual subjects and groups by using art as a basis for dialogue. It is no surprise to learn that the most visited pages in the site are music pages and chat boxes; therefore, the site becomes an umbrella that brings together communities from countries such as Morocco, the Netherlands, France, Spain, and Belgium (Bounda).

Content

For Amazigh diasporans home always emerges as a shifting idea in the middle of a dialogical process that involves both offline and online worlds. Realising that they live in the process of migration Amazigh diasporans invent new homes to provide relative certainty and sustain their identity. Highlighting the idea of home in diaspora, Karim writes, 'Forced or voluntary migration diminish the physical link of those who leave the homeland, but they take with them the mythical and linguistic allusions to the ancestral territory' (3). Karim describes a home that migrants take with them to their new host countries. They take with them allusions and ideas, and try to give shape for these ideas in order to maintain their identity. Means of communication and media are a few results of these evolving ideas, and currently the idea of home is imprinted onto the media that Amazigh diasporans make use of. There are Amazigh individuals who re-construct websites that evoke the idea of hominess online.

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[22] In fact, websites and arts are also regarded as a context for establishing local, national, and transnational dialogues from a gratifying or rewarding starting point and environment. For more on this issue see, Merolla ("Migrant" 224) as well as Van Summeren (291).

Agraw.com is a virtual space that evokes 'hominess' through art and art-related events. Importantly, the site succeeds in creating dialogue through what used to be monologic elements. That is to say, it renders elements usually depicted as being monologic into the basic material for discussion, analysis, and interactions. Food recipes, photos, and biographies are few examples that create monologic tendencies on a website. Nonetheless, on agraw.com participants are invited to comment or discuss them. Agraw.com fulfils the aspirations of web managers and Imazighen who want to have virtual spaces in which memories of home are evoked through art. 'I have not created agraw.com to fulfil only my own dream, but also to satisfy the needs of Amazigh diaspora, because you know … when you are far away from your motherland you feel the urge and need to smell home' (Bounda). Bounda emphasises the role of cultural objects, particularly websites, in the process of identity re-construction. The process of identity re-articulation is achieved through the interactions of participants regarding the material present on agraw.com. There is an increasing demand for websites on which Amazigh diasporans can interact, watch Amazigh films, listen to music, and read articles regarding Amazigh culture. This increasing demand is obvious because when agraw.com was created there were only a few Amazigh websites, but nowadays there is a large number of such websites. Currently, agraw.com is still considered a meeting point for ordinary participants as well as for artists. In an interview posted 20 March 2006 under the interviews section on agraw.com, one artist from the band Imatawen (i.e., Farid) claims that artists regularly visit the site because it accommodates their stories and works. He also emphasises the fact that the Internet in general and Amazigh websites in particular help promote Amazigh music because they post written materials like biographies and articles regarding artists, songs, and filmed concerts. Imazighen in the Rif region and diaspora attach importance to webpages that inform and involve them.

The issue of Amazigh cultural identity becomes a focal point discussed lengthily online. Here Amazigh websites generate dialogue vis-à-vis issues like Amazigh identity, which is not sufficiently discussed offline. That is to say, the issue of Amazigh identity is discussed in a few conferences and meetings offline, but websites broaden the floor for discussions to include multiple views from all continents and for a longer duration. It is another dialogic feature that characterises websites and allows participants to freely express their views. In fact, there are many examples of such topics on Amazigh websites. In the discussion forum on amazigh.nl, for instance, one participant under the username 'Reader'

posted on 19 January 2008 a question entitled 'what is Amazigh identity for you?' Initially, no one answered, and they all threw the question back at the questioner. Then the question began to generate hundreds of responses. One user, 'Dora', wrote that Amazigh identity is equivalent to Amazigh language. This answer provoked another participant ('izem_aghiras') to write that individuals who encapsulate Amazigh identity in language are hollow individuals and their futility is the consequence of their devotion to Iraq and Palestine more than to their homeland. He or she blamed what he or she called an 'Arab ideology' that dominates North Africa for the uncertainty created among Imazighen. The prelude of the whole discussion, especially the inability of participants to answer the question, suggests that the issue of Amazigh identity is not sufficiently discussed offline and therefore few are able to understand their own identity. Importantly, its shows that spaces like websites are capable of facilitating online meetings in which issues of communal interest can be addressed. The discussions are usually lengthy and with multiple views. The example of the topic of identity illustrates the way identities are negotiated between online and offline worlds.

Memory is an element that regularly emerges on Amazigh website interactions. Past events interact with present ones and a text interacts with various contexts. This dialogic encounter between times—or, in Bakhtin's words, 'the interrelationships of times'—discloses the way by which 'The interrelationships of times is important ... what is served here is the future memory of a past, a broadening of the world of the absolute past, an enriching of it with new images (at the expense of contemporaneity)—a world that is always opposed in principle to any *merely transitory* past' (*Dialogic* 19). Bakhtin underscores the importance of temporal interactions to highlight the past and open it for dialogue in order to allow this past to escape fixation and death.

The following example taken from amazigh.nl illustrates the significance of interaction of times in highlighting the past of the Imazighen of the Rif region. On 6 December 2001 in the discussion forum on amazigh.nl, username 'Tsaylal' writes a topic under the section 'Society and Politics' entitled 'should we forget what happened in 58/59 and 84?'[23] This question raised a heated discussion among amazigh.nl visitors that lasted almost five years. The majority of responses are against the idea of forgetting the crimes committed against the population of the Rif region during 1958-59 and 1984, and demand

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[23] The dates refer to the uprising of 1958-59 and the unrests of 1984 in the Rif region.

formal inquiries for justice to prevail.[24] Others argue that before opening any investigation the relatives and descendent of the victims should give permission for such an inquiry. On 6 May 2002 another participant, 'Sister', argues that there is no need for the permission of the victims' relatives because what happened in the Rif region is part of the history of all Imazighen, their collective memory and identity; therefore, anyone is entitled to know it.

However, there are other participants who argue differently. On 6 July 2002 a visitor with the username 'Zara' argues that, while she or he would like to do something about the crimes committed, what happened in the past is vanished and Imazighen should not reinstate grief and sorrow in their lives in the present. The comment from 'Zara' is somehow paradoxical because she or he wants justice to be done, which implies remembering, but insists on forgetting. In his book *Memory*, US-American sociologist Richard Sennett argues that memories of past traumas open wounds that cannot be forgotten (11). Here Sennett emphasises the importance of memory but he warns against its difficult-to-heal wounds. The question from 'Tsyalal' plays on the same theme, whereupon both remembering and forgetting glide. We see that these issues are discussed in various spaces, such as chartrooms, forums, and in the interactive facility under songs and videos on both amazigh.nl and agraw.com. In effect, through the comment from 'Tsylal', we note that memory requires forgetting and vice-versa, and that elements like amnesia, memory, and identity need one another. Importantly, discussions of past events in Amazigh websites draw attention to the role of memory in highlighting past events at present. It is also noticeable that visitors of Amazigh websites like agraw.com and amazigh.nl want to articulate their identities by reading, listening to, and watching the materials and comments of others who corroborate, question, and refute the stories present on these websites (through pictures, videos, audio materials, and articles regarding Amazigh identity). Sometimes this process help subjects to articulate their identities, if they are able to manage and process information wisely, other times it adds to the uncertainty when a subject loses control and falls prey to amnesia.

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[24] The events of 1958-59 are addressed in many websites and cultural artefacts, such as songs and films. I addressed this event and its implications on Imazighen either in the Rif region and diaspora in chapters one and two.

Imagined Flag and dialogism

Websites like agraw.com not only contribute to the creation of what Benedict Anderson calls an 'imagined community', but also to the dissemination of imagined symbols that sustain such a community and their divergent perspectives (B. Anderson). The following example illustrates how these imagined symbols create dialogic tendency in a website like agraw.com. The Amazigh flag on agraw.com illustrates how elements—real and imagined—are crucial for collective memory and identity. In fact, individuals (alone or collectively) always perform the act of remembering, but collective memory can be described as the act of remembering in a group. The act of remembering is usually performed when a group of individuals believe they share certain symbols based on real and imagined elements and events. Allan Megill argues contemporary fluid identities lead to constructing memory with an eye on the construction of identity itself (47). Indeed, identity cannot be articulated without memory. Regarding the value of memory Bakhtin writes, 'One may, and in fact, one must, memorialize with artistic language only that which is worthy of being remembered, that which should be preserved in the memory of descendents, and this image is projected on to their sublime and distant horizon' (*Dialogic* 18-19). Bakhtin lays emphasis on selective memory by prizing the important elements that contribute to the well-being of descendents. Collective memory, in terms of symbols (like the imagined flag), provides stories that shape and re-shape the cultural identity of Imazighen not only now but also for future generations. Examining the example of the Amazigh flag shows the role of invented symbols in the creation of unity within divergence among website visitors.[25] These types of symbols are usually dialogic with multiple interpretations and can generate intense discussions online. Currently, the (tangible) Amazigh flag is flown more often, and it has become a symbol Imazighen throughout the world 'believe' in.[26] It was raised on the tanks that librated Tripoli from the hands of Gaddafi, in the spring of 2011 by diasporic Imazighen demanding freedom of speech in North Africa in Amsterdam's Dam Square, and in May 2009 at the Amazigh festival in Sydney, Australia.

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[25] The flag was invented by a group of Amazigh activists few decades ago. They wanted to create an imagined community across borders and geographies through this flag.
[26] The idea of 'belief' is what creates the sense of common belonging and identity among a group.

Importantly, this Amazigh flag has become a symbol of a transnational imagined Amazigh identity and creates the sense of unity among diversified people who identify with it; it also creates dialogue that involves its adherents and opponents. For instance, in the 2011 final game of the European Champions League, F.C. Barcelona won against Manchester United. When Barcelona players raised the trophy various players draped a flag over their shoulders and they were almost all national flags. Among the multitude of players there was an Amazigh flag on the shoulders of one player, Ibrahim Afellay.[27] He could have chosen the Dutch or Moroccan national flags but he chose the Amazigh flag instead, a symbol of transnational imagined Amazigh identity. His act is not a rejection to the Moroccan and Dutch national flags, but a gesture that draws attention to Amazigh culture suppressed in media and public sphere for too long. Importantly, the symbol's appearance at a major sporting event raised discussion.

This act was immediately posted almost on all Amazigh websites and generated intense debate, especially between Imazighen in diaspora, who cherished the act, and a few Moroccan Arab-nationalists who were in dismay because they interpreted his act as a betrayal to Morocco. On 3 June 2011 in the sub-forum section of 'Sport' on maroc.nl (under the title 'Ibrahim Afellay waives Amazigh flag after winning the champions league final'), a commentator with the username 'Marroki horr' (which translates to 'Free Moroccan') condemned the footballer's act. He argued that the act of the player shows that Afellay supports the policy of the anti-Islam and anti-immigrant Dutch political party (PVV), (my trans). The comment is somehow vague and paradoxical because there is no link between the flag and the Dutch party, and the flag was invented in North Africa and not Europe. Also, the flag does not represent any country, political party, or policy. Finally, the flag is an expression that underscores cultural oppression of Imazighen. The comment of 'Marroki horr' shows the absurdity that individuals and groups might make use of to try to silence or suppress others. While Moroccan Imazighen, who demand equal rights, are usually accused of separatism, diasporic Imazighen are accused of being anti-Islam. Yet, the importance of this flag incident is that it succeeded in generating dialogue regardless of the divergent perspectives of website visitors. That the flag may be read as a symbol that has untied divergences offline as well as becoming an intense topic online is significant.

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[27] Afellay is of Moroccan heritage, but was born in the Netherlands and previously played on the Dutch national team.

The flag example highlights the role of symbols in raising debate regarding cultures that have been undermined, and illustrates the fact that symbols are powerful elements within societies. The US-American sociologist Jeffrey K. Olick argues that symbols remain powerful elements as long as individuals treat them as such. Individuals and groups create and empower symbols to serve in the re-articulation of identities and shaping of collective memories (Olick). Symbols are among the basic materials of memory, and without them there might not be any collective memory. Similar to the Amazigh flag, the site agraw.com will remain a symbol that sustains Imazighen and their imagined community, as long as its occupants and dwellers regard it as 'home'. Agraw.com has become important in the lives of many individuals because it enables them to interact, and the Amazigh community either in North Africa or in diaspora uses this space to communicate. Individuals who believe they belong to a certain community need to communicate with other individuals who believe or support this community. Communication theorist Arthur Berger argues that communication is the glue that holds a community together; therefore, a community always needs communication (10). As the Amazigh community is dispersed over a large geography, websites are ideal for this purpose. Here agraw.com becomes a space for conviviality and social bonding for the Amazigh community and non-Amazigh individuals who want to interact with this community.

Dialogic memories and identities

Noticeably, identities are usually dialogic, and in certain cases—and under particular circumstances—one or several aspects of one's identity might be highlighted. Subjects may highlight certain aspects of their identity according to certain conditions. For example, subjects tend to underscore their job in a time of high unemployment. The fact that Amazigh culture has been undermined in North Africa is a factor that encourages many Imazighen, especially in diaspora, to remember and highlight their cultural identity (i.e., they underscore their 'Amazighness').[28] The past is an important constituent that has contributed to the making of this identity. In 2005, Olga van Ditzhuijzen wrote an article in the Dutch *NRC* newspaper entitled 'Am I Muslim, Moroccan or Berber?' (my trans.). Van Ditzhuijzen describes the cultural position of Imazighen in the Netherlands and accentuates the fact that, because Amazigh culture has always been suppressed in Morocco, Imazighen

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[28] 'Amzighness' means the *sense* of belonging to Amazigh culture.

in the Netherlands are increasingly interested in their past (Van Ditzhuijzen). The article highlights what characterises debates about Amazigh identity either online (such as with the case of the Amazigh flag) or offline. Importantly, the article ends with a quote written by Dutch anthropologist and Morocco specialist Paolo de Mas regarding the search for identity of Imazighen who live in the Netherlands. De Mas sees a particular risk in the trendiness of Imazighen-Dutch identity claims, wherein some see that their Amazighness sounds better than marking themselves Moroccan or Muslim. Here we see aspect of one identity interact with other aspects of the same identity, and how subjects accentuate one or another aspect according to a given context. That is to say, the focus on one aspect of one's own identity, which is the result of the interaction among the other aspects, is generally temporary and occurs under particular circumstances, but it reflects a particular condition in a given time. Certainly, the debate online regarding the issue of identity raises questions regarding the role of Amazigh websites in raising consciousness among their visitors. Importantly, websites such as agraw.com, amazigh.nl, and anzuf.com not only illustrate the role of past in the making of current Amazigh identity but also emphasise the dialogic character of memory itself.

Memory is intersubjective and dialogic, and sites like agraw.com re-construct the past by recovering what was hidden and forgotten. In effect, memory on agraw.com involves appeals to the past to construct a present and future. Mikhail Bakhtin emphasises the idea that the world is always involved in a continuous process of clustering and unclustering to create new elements and aggregates that will interact and form new clusters leading to new interactions (Morson and Emerson 61). On many Amazigh websites there are historical materials: materials written in the past, and materials written in the present regarding the past. These materials form the basis for discussions, debates, and unforeseen interactions. For instance, there are Amazigh subjects who want to remember and recover what has been suppressed or confiscated in the past, and the current surge of memory can be attributed to a feeling that Imazighen have long been oppressed in Morocco. Indeed, the Moroccan regime has tried to suppress symbols of Amazigh collective memory. The refusal of the Moroccan regime to the return of the legendary leader Abdelkarim Elkhattabi's remains to his birthplace in Al Hoceima, Morocco is one such example. In addition, hiding of pictures, filmed materials, and other evidence of atrocities committed by the Moroccan army during 1958-59 in the Rif region is another example that demonstrates how *Almakhzan* systematically hides and suppresses the past.

Websites recover and expose what is concealed and forgotten. Agraw.com's homepage contains articles about history and civilization, with various articles written about Abdelkarim Elkahttabi and links to books written about him. Another example is an article entitled 'Search for my Father, Uprising in the Rif Mountains', written by Robert Chesal about the son of the leader of the 1958-59 Rif uprising, Mohamed Sallam Amazian. The son (Amazian Mohamed Jr), who was born in a Moroccan prison, recounts the search for his father, who spent most of his life in exile. Interestingly, there is a comment under the article dated 9 September 2009 written by the username 'Majid Achalhi', who writes, 'Through the story of Mohamed Sallam Amazian we conclude that we should go and learn about the past to know about the rights of Imazighen in future, because you may forgive for what happened but not forget. The Father of Riffians (Mohamed Sallam Amazian) is dead but such as my love to the prophet Mohammed (Peace be Upon Him) he lives on in my heart' (my trans).

The post from 'Majid Achalhi' is another dialogic encounter in which a multiplicity of utterances interacts on agraw.com. This encounter involves interacting individual subjects and groups and materials stocked or transiting the website itself. In fact, many Amazigh websites recently have become part of extensive Amazigh memory.[29] These new habits have become part of contemporary life. Amazigh websites, as new media, have become part of such an extended memory, and Imazighen stock data in these websites and make use of them when they want to remember. Both the comment and the story of Amazian on agraw.com show how individuals and groups extend their memory by making use of material collected on websites to help sustain individual and group identities. 'Majid Achalhi' begins his comment by emphasising the story of Mohamed Sallam Amazian, which is partly based on an interview between a Dutch journalist and Amazian's son (who is a journalist and historian too). In the article, Mohamed Jr describes his first meeting with his exiled father as a strange moment, because, while he expected a big, strong man to match the figure carved in his memory, he was surprised to meet a normal, humble person. Amazian Sr escaped from Morocco and never had the chance to see his son in this country again. Jr was still a baby when his father fled Morocco, and collective memory taught him

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[29] Speaking of the ability of individuals to extend collective memory, Jeffery Olick argues that the ability of people to record things through media drastically increases their capacity to remember (228). Olick alludes to the role of media in general in assisting people to remember. Importantly, he emphasises the extensions created by people to allow them to stock data for later use in times of need.

about his father while he grew up. Here we see that the story of Amazian Jr is the result of dialogic interaction between pieces of individual and collective memories.

One learns about the nature of the dialogic memory websites evoke through the comment from 'Majid Achalhi'. In his comments on the story about Amazian Jr, 'Majid Achalhi' uses the pronoun 'we', then the pronoun 'you', and ends with the pronoun 'my'. Initially, the commentator regards himself as a part of Imazighen as a group who share the same past, and the story is one of those past elements. Then, switching to the pronoun 'you' addresses the readers and visitors of agraw.com as individuals and groups who are united under the roof of this virtual space and by their common collective memory. At the end of the comment, he lays emphasis on his own personal interpretation of collective memories. This website comment shows two dialogic aspects, both related to memory when subjects try to remember. The first is the way this collective memory affects subjects. That is to say, it has triggered a dialogue in the commentator's mind that involves the 'I', 'we', and 'you'. Secondly, this quote shows that memory involves a variety of discourses. The mentioning of a religious personality—the prophet Mohamed—in the context of the Rif events of 1958-59 seems incongruent. Nonetheless, this shows how memory works, since it involves various interacting discourses to which subjects are exposed. Through Amazigh websites like agraw.com, where documents, collections, articles, digitalized inventories, chronologies, and archives are posted, Imazighen interact and seek to re-construct and understand their shared past and its role in the present.

The fluidity of the events on Amazigh websites highlights the dialogic nature of these virtual spaces. The majority of Amazigh bloggers and visitors to Amazigh websites have not witnessed the atrocities that took place in the Rif region in 1958-59, but they remember them. On agraw.com's discussion forum, under the subsection 'History and Civilization', there are many comments regarding the atrocities of 1958-59. In a small article entitled 'the secret behind the hatred of *Almakhzan* to the Rif region and Riffians', a participant describes the atrocities of agents of *Almakhzan* in the Rif area (especially the events of 1958-59). At the bottom of the article is a link to a Facebook page named 'The Rif Republic 1921–1927'. The Facebook page focuses mainly on the Rif region's past.[30] The article in the discussion forum on agraw.com draws attention to two important aspects.

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[30] After google.com, social media sites—such as Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube—are the most visited sites on the Internet by Moroccans in general and Moroccan diasporans in particular (Kadri; Leurs).

It shows that even though a young generation of Imazighen, such as Amazian Jr, did not witness the traumas that happened in their region, they remember them through memories that presently circulate either in media or through personal experiences of survivors. Speaking of this phenomenon Mariann Hirsh argues that cultural and collective traumas are transmitted to the younger generations (who have not directly witnessed these traumas) through stories, images, and behaviours (Hirsh). These post-memories are imprinted in today's narratives that circulate either in the Rif area or throughout Amazigh diaspora. Second, the article about *Almakhzan* and Rif in agraw.com highlights the role and position of Amazigh websites in a digital world in which various media are in constant dialogue, and they continuously exchange materials. Indeed, Amazigh websites are major source or transit of incoming and outgoing data regarding memory.

Agraw.com, anzuf.com, and amazigh.nl are few examples of websites part of media networks on the Internet through which Amazigh memories circulate. These sites not only form a part of other media (such as Facebook and YouTube), but also offer their visitors the chance to share the posted materials on a range of other media. The website designers/composers of the three sites draw aspects of daily life into the web pages to create a heteroglossic amalgam that gives rise to new meanings. There is almost always a comment section present at the bottom of each article, image, or video that allows visitors to comment either on the posted materials, the web managers, or on the comments of other visitors. For instance, on agraw.com under the discussion forum is a page for suggestions and feedback. On this page we can see the feedback of visitors and responses from the web managers. In fact, agraw.com, amazigh.nl, and anzuf.com attempt to share their content as much as possible with websurfers. For this reason we see that they always try to broaden the media network in which they operate. In general, the majority of Amazigh websites do not obligate their visitors to 'sign in' using personal information. Signing in is an optional feature on agraw.com, and visitors can access all pages without restriction.

Amazigh websites like agraw.com are popular because visitors are anonymous and the process of communication in them is relatively dialogic. While the Internet stands for anonymity and a liberating experience, it also includes participants who want to make their identity or culture known to other participants. [31] Given that the majority of Internet surfers do not prefer to disclose their identity, agraw.com gives the opportunity to access content

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[31] Anonymity is an aspect that encourages many Moroccans, especially women, to be active online (Brouwer, "Yasmina" 212).

without signing in: 'we do not know about the age, gender or education level of the visitors of agraw.com, the only thing we know is the whereabouts of a visitor at the time of his/her access to the site, for instance, I know that the majority of the visitors are from Morocco, in the second place is the Netherlands, the third is France and fourth is Spain' (Bounda). The web managers of the site prefer to gather as little information as possible regarding visitors of the site, apart from those who voluntarily identify themselves. The site does not want to be categorised as monologic communication, because this type of communication is usually regarded as a way to command, coerce, manipulate, and exploit others solely for the communicator's self-serving purposes (Johannesen 69). In the top menu of agraw.com under the tab 'About Us' is a link to rules and guidelines. They are standard rules, such as avoiding insults to other participants, not posting links to pornographic material, and not using the site for commercial purposes.

In effect, websites like agraw.com allow its visitors to interact and generate a continuous dialogue that shifts between offline and online. This online dialogue on agraw.com becomes the space in which Amazigh identity is (re)articulated. Additionally, this dialogue becomes important in highlighting Amazigh collective memory with an eye on the divergent perspectives of Imazighen throughout the world.

Language, memory and identity on Timazighin.nl

In this section I study one of the most recurring aspects of Amazigh culture online: language. I argue that a website like timazighin.nl has a dialogic tendency as far as the issue of the Amazigh language is concerned. The topic of the Tamazight, or Berber, language has been the centre of an extensive debate throughout North Africa and among Imazighen in

diaspora. It is no surprise to see that this topic has become the basis for intense online debates, especially on Amazigh websites. I select timazighin.nl because it accentuates the link between Tamazight and 'home', especially for women.[32] Timazighin.nl is a website created by a group of Amazigh women in the Netherlands to promote Amazigh culture and provide Amazigh women with a space where they might feel 'at home'.[33] The timazighin.nl team consists only of women (an act that seems to exclude men), but the site welcomes all participants—regardless of their gender, race, and culture—to contribute to the content of the site and help promote Amazigh culture and defend the rights of all women. Amazigh.nl is also a website based in the Netherlands that strives to involve Imazighen, especially in diaspora, in discussions regarding the questions of identity and culture.

Layout

The layout of timazighin.nl includes elements that evoke a polyphonic tendency.[34] It is a simple and minimalist website that includes a greenish box at the top of the page and a menu at the bottom. At the top right side of the box is a new picture of young girls performing folk dances in a row, clapping their hands. At the top left side is a picture, which looks old, of a group of adult women. The two groups in the green box face each other, with a red figure of a jumping woman between the two groups. I interpret this to symbolise freedom and happiness, and to insinuate that women should lead a joyful and autonomous life. The young girls in the picture have learned to perform an old folk dance from their predecessors. The picture of groups evokes togetherness and multiplicity, which is a crucial element in any struggle to achieve a communal objective. In addition, I read the folk dance performance by the young girls as implying the generational interaction and dialogue through which young people learn from elders and vice-versa. Importantly, the pictures highlight the importance of individuals in making groups and the importance of groups in any dialogue that involves other groups. The green in the box is the colour of nature, fertility, and life. This colour reminds the visitors of timazighin.nl that women are the source of life, and therefore, should be treated with the highest respect. Another important point is the fact that an old picture is placed next to a new one. This suggests that

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[32] It is important to note that in chapter three I addressed how women make use of virtual mobility to escape the confinement of their city in my description of *The City of Wait*.

[33] There are other Moroccan 'female' websites in Europe and Morocco, such as lamarocaine.com, femmesdumaroc.com, and yasmina.nl, which strive to involve Moroccan women in cultural and social issues (Brouwer, "Yasmina").

[34] Timazighin.nl last accessed on 29 June 2011.

past pictures, or events in general, and present pictures and events are imperative in any dialogue that seeks to construct a future. This idea is highlighted through the content of the website as well.

Content

Many Amazigh websites are dialogic in the sense that they open the floor for large audiences and participants across borders and continents and contribute to extensive dialogues regarding issues such as cultural identity. In effect, the Internet significantly contributes to the discussion and promotion of the Tamazight language in particular and Amazigh culture in general. In the pre-internet era, each part of the Amazigh community, either in North Africa or diaspora, focused on its own separate agenda without regard to other parts elsewhere. Currently, a great deal of the Amazigh community makes use of websites to defend local agendas and participate in dialogues that involve Amazigh culture in other places. For instance, on 18 July 2007 in the discussion forum of marokko.nl was a topic entitled 'Khaddafi is Anti-Imazighen'. Many participants on this forum—and with hundreds of other Amazigh websites—condemned the Libyan leader's speech from 1 March 2007 in which he denied the existence of Imazighen in Libya and associated Amazighness with colonialism. Regarding this incident we see how websites assist the Amazigh community throughout the world to combine their voices and condemn Gaddafi's speech. Interestingly, it draws attention to the role of websites in creating dialogue and interaction among groups worldwide.

It is through websites that Amazigh culture displays itself, and Imazighen tend to promote cultural elements, such as art and language, on them. Amazigh subjects in diaspora have created websites and other online networks to promote Tamazight and address their cultural identity. With regard to this promotion, Moha Ennaji and Fatima Sadiqi write, 'with the Internet, Berbers from all over the world have established a Virtual Speech Community through which they have access to the various problems relating to their language and cultural identity' (*Multilingualism* 180).[35] Ennaji and Sadiqi highlight the use of the Internet by Imazighen to create a virtual community through which they access problems related to their culture and identity. In fact, Imazighen do not access the Internet

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[35] On the role of the Internet vis-à-vis Amazigh language and identity, see Almasude as well as Merolla's "Digital Imagination".

merely to read and see materials, but to create their own spaces in which they discuss and provide solutions to their daily problems and speak of their sense of belonging and identity.

Amazigh websites, as innovative and interactive spaces in which dialogue is the main currency, contribute to the democratisation of the public sphere in countries like Morocco and among other cultures and societies. While in the pre-internet era regimes that controlled mass media and rejected democratic multicultural societies marginalised Amazigh culture in North Africa, Amazigh websites currently assist in the development of Amazigh culture. Through these media, Amazigh culture evolves to establish itself as a recognised culture in Morocco, North Africa, and worldwide.[36] There are thousands of stories and articles posted on these websites written by Amazigh contributors who live in and outside Morocco. In addition, Amazigh women have used these new media to fight for equal rights in North Africa and diaspora. Timazighin.nl's motto is 'equal access to knowledge, power and wealth'. Although these women accentuate their 'Amazighness', they see their struggle as a part of the struggle of all women throughout the world to achieve rights as women as well as an Amazigh group.

As one crucial component of Amazigh culture, Tamazight is thriving in the Internet era and almost all Amazigh-focused websites devote pages to discuss and reveal its various characteristics. Importantly, many of these websites try to draw attention to the issue of language and place it in the centre of online dialogue. For instance, on syphax.nl (the website of an Amazigh association in the Netherlands), the website strives to bring to light aspects of Tamazight, Imazighen, Morocco, and North Africa. Here, language is placed as the first keyword since it represents a crucial element in Amazigh culture. The Tamazight language has been at the heart of a struggle for recognition in North Africa and diaspora for a long time. As Ennaji and Sadiqi argue:

> Academics, linguists, researchers and artists contributed to the revitalisation of Berber language and culture. They have produced several textbooks, grammar, dictionaries, anthologies, music and art, as well as computer fonts. As a result of such commitment, the authorities in Morocco (and Algeria) have been pressured to recognise Berber language and culture. (*Multilingualism* 180)

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[36] The Tamazight language (Tifinagh) became an available user option for Microsoft's Windows 8 operating system when launched in 2012.

The comment underscores three important elements. They list various media that Imazighen make use of in order to promote the Amazigh language and culture, such as books and computer-mediated technology. Second, they place the Amazigh language almost at the same level as culture, by using the coordinate conjunction 'and' to connect language and culture twice in this quote. Additionally, they use the present perfect to demonstrate the continuity and development of both the works of Imazighen and their struggle in North Africa. Speaking to this continuity, the past has always been important in the promotion of Amazigh language in the present.

Ancient Amazigh script today

> After all, every great and serious contemporaneity requires an authentic profile of the past, an authentic other language from another time. (Bakhtin, *Dialogic* 30)[37]

Bakhtin emphasises the significance of the past to create a porous and flowing present, where elements from the past interact with current elements to create meaning and significance. The following example shows how simple carvings become utterances that cluster and uncluster as they travel in time and across media—especially websites—to give birth to new meanings now. Currently many websites focus on ancient Amazigh artefacts to explain the evolution of the Amazigh language and culture. Under the heading 'Messages and Memories of Sahara Rocks', solane.org explains that Tifinagh scripts originated on carved rocks in North African deserts thousands of years ago. The website invites visitors to travel and see the deserts of North Africa, which they consider 'the largest open-air museum in the world', where art is everywhere. The Amazigh script rock carvings are important today because they significantly shape Amazigh culture. That is, without these Tifinagh scripts on carved rocks the Amazigh alphabet would not have prospered in Morocco and Algeria.[38] The artefacts on the rocks have played an important role in settling the issue of Amazigh language in Morocco. In 2001 when the Moroccan king Mohamed VI created IRCAM (which translates as the Royal Institute of the Amazigh Culture in Morocco) there was intense debate among Arab-nationalists, political parties, Amazigh

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[37] Bakhtin defines contemporaniety as a flowing and transitory 'life without begining or end' (*Dialogic* 20).
[38] It is important to note that though oppressed in Mali and Chad, Tuaregs have managed to keep the Tifinagh script alive in these countries.

scholars, and Amazigh activists about which alphabet Imazighen should adopt to write Tamazight.[39] Eventually, the majority of Amazigh researchers, backed with the support of the king, supported the Tifinagh option because of its historical use. Evidence that Imazighen in North Africa carved the ancient script on rocks and caves in nearby deserts convincingly supported the existence of a written form of Tamazight.

Amazigh rock art in North Africa reveals the dialogical interaction between oral and written forms of language and of past, present, and future on Amazigh websites. In Morocco, for instance, Amazigh scripts on rocks in the Draa River valley have been vital in the redemption of Tamazight as a written language. While anti-Imazighen groups and a few political parties in Morocco claim that Tamazight cannot be equal to Arabic because it has always been an oral language, thousands of archaeological sites in Morocco and North Africa prove otherwise. A visitor to these sites can see that Tamazight has been a written language for thousands of years, and Tifinagh is its alphabet. In the 1970s, the Algerian regime persecuted Imazighen who tried to use and spread Amazigh magazines written in Tifinagh because the re-emergence of this alphabet would undermine the regime's claim that Tamazight was only oral and therefore could not be a national language (Goodman 39).

Here we see that the interaction between oral and written forms of language is another point to be considered in the dialogical perspective. In addition, this interaction alludes to the important role of media, especially websites making the issue of language a main ingredient for their visitors to discuss. In the Arab-nationalist discourse in North Africa, prestige is attributed to written languages; as with other dominant discourses, the idea of an oral tradition is regarded as an inferior, 'primitive' cultural form in comparison with written languages. Therefore, regimes in North Africa attempting to frame Tamazight as an oral language is not surprising.[40] In comparison, some Amazigh webpages post pictures of the ancient Amazigh scripts accompanied with extracts from academic research that analyses and deciphers the glyphs.[41]

Debates about the ancient Amazigh script show how meanings arise through the process of clustering and unclustering of dialogue. That is to say, we notice that the meaning of the Tifinagh texts on the rocks is different from their meaning thousands of

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[39] There were three camps: the first supports the use of the Arabic alphabet, the second the adoption of the Latin alphabet, and the last supports the use of Tifinagh.
[40] On the symbolic value attributed to writing in Tamazight, see Chaker.
[41] Cfi-ouarzazate.voila.net is an instance of this type of websites.

years ago. While these carvings were most likely an art form that Imazighen performed in the past, these carvings, or Tifinagh texts, today mean hope for Tamazight as a written language. In other words, the scripts on the rocks have survived to rescue the written form of Tamazight from extinction today and assist its development in the future. Importantly, the texts lay the basis for the development of Tamazight as a written language. Nobody can deny the fact that it is due to the texts imprinted on rocks and walls of caves in North Africa that Tamazight currently thrives as a written language in North Africa, and particularly in Morocco. After the discovery of Amazigh texts written in Tifinagh in Morocco, researchers began to study them and examine ways to revive this alphabet for use today. The Royal Institute of Amazigh Culture in Morocco published their first book, *Tirra: Aux Origines de L'écriture au Maroc*, in 2003. *Tirra* (*Writings*) is a culmination of works from archeologists and linguists concerning written languages in ancient Morocco, with particular attention to Tamazight and its alphabet Tifinagh. This publication paved the way for IRCAM to propose the alphabet to King Mohamed VI, who adopted it as the official alphabet for Tamazight in 2004. Here the past has been crucial in shaping the present of Tamazight as a written language, and these acts ultimately led to its inclusion in Morocco's constitution in 2011.

Websites and Tamazight: revised Moroccan constitution

There is still a long way before Tamazight can achieve the same status as Arabic in Morocco. A close look at the reformed Moroccan constitution regarding the place of Tamazight in the country reveals the worries reflected on many Amazigh websites.[42] The way Tamazight is introduced as an official language in the modified constitution shows that there is a long way for it to become an official language, and its current precarity raises questions about whether it may ever achieve equal status with Arabic in Morocco. Many Imazighen on Amazigh websites reflect concern. For instance, on 21 June 2011 under the heading 'Language' on timazighin.nl, one participant with the username 'Almanzah' comments on the topic of 'Tamazight as official language in Morocco' and argues that she or he does not believe that there may be improvements as far as the status of Tamazight is concerned, and it may take decades before any change appears. What is assumed and not verbalised in Article Five of the reformed constitution is more worrying to 'Almanzah' and

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[42] After the release of the last version of the Moroccan constitution on 30 July 2011, many Amazigh websites either posted a PDF document of the document on their main webpage or a link to Morocco's Interior Ministry, where it is available.

other Imazighen than what is actually written. Regarding the intricacy of this duality of utterances, Michael Holquist and Katerina Clark argue that Bakhtin insists on the dual nature of the utterance, which consists of what is actually said and what is not said but assumed both by the speaker and addressee (206). Therefore, this duality is what makes utterances complex and difficult to grasp. Article Five of the Moroccan constitution states:

> Arabic remains the official language of the state.
>
> The state works for the protection and development of the Arabic language and the promotion of its use.
>
> Similarly, Amazigh is an official language of the state as a common heritage for all Moroccans without exception.
>
> A regulatory law defines the process of implementation of the official character of this language, and the terms of its integration in teaching and priority areas in public life, in order to enable it to fulfil its function as an official language.
>
> There shall be a National Council of Languages and Moroccan culture; its main function is the protection and development of languages of Arabic, Amazigh, and the various Moroccan cultural expressions, which are an authentic heritage and contemporary inspiration. It includes all the institutions involved in these areas. A regulatory law determines the powers, composition and operating procedures. (my trans.)

An examination of this extract from the modified Moroccan constitution shows what Bakhtin calls 'hidden dialogicality'.[43] There are indeed many elements that support the opinion of those who lament the formulation of Article Five. The first line in the excerpt appeases Arab nationalists and political parties like the *Istiqlal* Party ('Independence Party') and the *Aadala Wattanmia* ('Justice and Development Party'), who have raised

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[43] To explain hidden dialogicality Bakhtin compares this type of dialogue to the example of a dialogue between two persons in which one of the speakers is present invesibly; his words are not there, but traces left by these words have determining influence on the present and visible words (*Problems* 197)

fierce resistance against the recognition of Tamazight in the constitution. The two parties were opposed to the adoption of Tifinagh as the alphabet of Tamazight. The second clause in Article Five goes a step further, as it consolidates the position of Arabic in Morocco and guarantees that the state will protect, develop, and promote its use. This second clause can be read to imply that Arabic is endangered, as if it is on the verge of extinction, and both the state and a National Council of Languages and Moroccan culture need to protect it. This clause is indeed ironic, for Arabic is an official language in numerous countries and spoken by hundreds of millions of people; Tamazight, on the other hand, has never been an official language in any country but, while its written form was on the verge of extinction, does not here receive the 'protection' of the state. The third clause, which states that Tamazight is an official language, has another important element that refutes that claim that supporters of the constitutionalisation of Tamazight wish to divide Moroccan society. The phrasing of Tamazight as a 'common heritage for all Moroccans' aims to discard the idea of division in society, and it is one of the best elements in this Article. However, the clause that follows plants major obstacles for Tamazight to become an official language, because it associates its full official status with the outcome of a regulatory law that may be dictated by political parties, such as *Istiqlal* and *Aadala Wattanmia*, who were against the constitutionalisation of Tamazight. In addition, the reformed constitution does not mention the period of time within which Tamazight should fulfil its full function as an official language. The article underscores the idea of an indefinite process that may take decades.

While the Amazigh alphabet, Tifinagh, has survived, its use online remains limited. Imazighen tend to use the Latin or Arabic alphabets online. The menu of the majority of Amazigh websites is written in the Latin alphabet, with few words or sentences written in Tifinagh. On amazigh.nl the main content is written in Dutch, and there are a few articles written in Tamazight with the Latin alphabet. For instance, on 21 August 2011, Said Essanoussi wrote an article entitled 'Taneggarut n Kaddafi' ('The End of Gaddafi') in Tamazight with the Latin alphabet. Similarly, on amazighworld.org, visitors can chose one of four languages from the menu: Tamazight, French, English, and Arabic. When Tamazight is selected, the content is written in Tamazight with the Latin alphabet, and the only element written in Tifinagh is the Amazigh calendar on the left side of the page. In the case of timazighin.nl, the main page is written almost entirely in Dutch with the Latin alphabet except one sentence written in Tifinagh, which translates as 'The Association of Amazigh Women in the Netherlands'. The minimum use of Tifinagh as an alphabet on

Amazigh websites reflects the difficulty many Imazighen, who have never studied this language at school, face as they start to use an alphabet repressed by various rulers in North Africa for a long time.

Amazigh Websites and multilingualism

Multilingualism on Amazigh websites is another dialogic aspect in which languages interact, and this interaction can objectivise Tamazight. Bakhtin argues that the process of objectivising a particular language can be achieved only in the light of other languages (*Dialogic* 62). It is noticeable that Imazighen make use of an amalgam of alphabets and languages to communicate, especially on the discussion forums of Amazigh websites or in comment sections under articles. On timazighin.nl and rkempo.nl, participants make use of games to involve Amazigh visitors as much as possible, and to learn and teach Tamazight in a fun way. Under the subsection 'Language' on the discussion forum of the websites are various topics that address Tamazight through games, such as 'Test your Amazigh Vocabulary', 'Funny Amazigh Words', and 'New Amazigh Words''. On 12 March 2010 on timazighin.nl, a participant with the username 'Mohammedoen' suggests a game to test the Amazigh vocabulary of participants. The game is simple: the first participant writes an Amazigh word accompanied with a Dutch translation, and the next participant has to use the last letter of the Amazigh word to suggest a new Amazigh word. For example, a participant writes '*Asrem = vis*' ('fish'), and the next participant writes '*Mija = keel*' ('throat'). The game attracted over 40,000 visitors. In this illustration we see that participants use two languages and one alphabet.

There are examples in which participants make use of various languages and alphabets to discuss one single topic. On 27 August 2011, dalil-rif.com published an article entitled 'Great public sympathy for the homeless family'.[44] Participants commenting on the article made use of various languages and alphabets. Regarding the multilingual nature of Amazigh websites, the researcher in African Literatures and Media Daniela Merolla argues that Amazigh websites are often multilingual, which is an aspect that demonstrates that these websites address individuals and groups who use different languages and live in

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[44] This article addresses an incident during Ramadan in the town of Beni Bouaych in the Rif region in which a family (composed of a single mother and her three children) became homeless as a result of family problems. Many inhabitants of the small town showed their sympathy with this family and pressured the authorities to shelter them. Protests lasted more than a week and eventually the local authorities found a house for this family.

different parts of the world such as North Africa, Europe, Canada, and the US ("Digital Imagination"). Indeed, Amazigh websites make use of English, French, Spanish, Arabic, Tamazight, and Latinised Arabic. To comment on the article published on dalil-rif.com, participants used most of these languages with both Latin and Arabic alphabets. These instances show a dialogic tendency on Amazigh websites that allow participants to use all languages in order to share their opinions and interact with others.

Importantly these websites focus on the idea of interaction that involves various languages without the domination of a single one. Regarding the issue of interaction of different languages Bakhtin writes, 'The period of national languages, coexisting but closed and deaf to each other comes to an end. Languages throw light on each other; one language can, after all, see itself only in the light of another language (*Dialogic* 12)." Bakhtin emphasises the importance of interaction of languages in order to highlight the particularities of each of them. Amazigh websites draw attention to the topic of language to involve groups and individuals in a dialogue regarding the re-articulation of Amazigh identity. Sometimes on these virtual spaces one single utterance can have various implications at different levels. For instance, on 30 September 2009 user 'Eto' posted a topic entitled 'Learn Tamazight' on the forum on amazigh.nl. 'Eto' wanted to learn Tamazight, and asks other participants for help. A respondent with the username 'Lysa' posts a few names of CDs and books in Tamazight. Then, two participants with the usernames 'Gurkan' and 'Inuit' entered the discussion forum and began to communicate with each other about private issues such as their jobs and school. While the main language of the discussion is Dutch, the two communicated in Turkish. Even if the two deviate from the topic, others continue to exchange information about how to learn Tamazight. Near at the end of the discussion, another participant with the username 'Señor Canardo' posted a picture of the wall built by Israel separating the Palestinians and Israelis in addition to an English-language article by a blogger that discourages learning Tamazight. The post infuriated another participant with the username 'Alasyan', who wrote that 'Señor Canardo' was ready to defend the identities and causes of others but does not care about his own Amazigh language and identity.

Through this example we see how Amazigh websites accommodate divergent perspectives and try to make a unity of differences united under one or multiple forums in which dialogue is key out of this amalgam. On the one hand are subjects who try to foster a coherent discussion about the materials to use and the best ways to learn Tamazight. On the

other hand are subjects who use the same topics to draw attention to things unrelated to it, such as the Israel and Palestine conflict, jobs, and school. At another level we see the difference between the meaning of language to 'Eto', who tries to learn few words of Tamazight in order to communicate in this language, and 'Señor Canardo', who addresses language in the context of ideology. For 'Eto' languages are key to learn about other cultures, and for Señor Canardo', languages like Tamazight are trivial because people should only learn languages that are dominant in the world such as English and French. At a different level, there are dialogues between various languages. Even if the main topic is Tamazight, the languages of discussion are Dutch, Turkish, and English. This reveals the role of Amazigh websites in involving various groups and communities, through the topic of language, in the re-articulation of Amazigh identity throughout the world. Importantly, the use of various languages in the discussion forum, especially Turkish and Dutch, refutes the argument of 'Señor Canardo' who argues that Imazighen should only learn the leading languages of international discourse such as English and French. At another level we see that there is dialogue between web managers, participants and readers. On 13 September 2011 one of the web mangers with the username 'Amnusinu' posted a message under 'Learn Tamazight' in which he informs the other participants and visitors regarding educational material to learn Tamazight in both the Latin and Tifinagh alphabets. Usually, web managers do not participate in discussion forums, but in this case we see that they post information and two emails for visitors who need more information regarding Amazigh educational materials. This shows that Amazigh websites are dialogic as they create temporary homes for people who visit them regardless of their views, beliefs, and ideologies.

Conclusion

Indeed, Amazigh websites are a blessing to both Amazigh culture and community, since they give voice to people who have been silenced in Morocco and diaspora for a long time, and the content of these media reflect the multivocality of their contributors and audiences. They play a major part in the redistribution of symbolic power as they give people the licence to speak.[45]

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[45] It should be noted that it may be a blessing for people able to access these websites, because there is also another category that does not have the know-how or means to access the Internet and these websites.

Websites like dalil-rif.com, agraw.com, and timazighin.nl have become spaces in which opinion and fact interact and in which materials normally are regarded as monologic become the basis for lengthy and intense debates that involve web managers as well as visitors. In addition, these virtual spaces use an amalgam of languages and alphabets to discuss issues like Amazigh collective memory, and it is on these online discussions or dialogues that Amazigh identity is (re)articulated.

Indeed this chapter shows that Bakhtin's concept of dialogism is not only applicable to literature, but also to new media like websites. Through the many examples listed above we can see this concept at work. The listed websites are not only polyphonic, but their content generates continuous dialogues that involve a multiplicity of reactions and interactions that not only reflect the various perspectives of Imazighen in Morocco and diaspora, but also of all visitors to these sites. Importantly, through the analysis of the three websites I draw attention to the nature of 'hominess' these spaces provide for their visitors. This hominess not offers an eternal certainty, but a dialogic one. It is a temporal and relative certainty that partly contributes to the process of articulating the identity of website visitors. I highlight the idea that the selected Amazigh websites become a home for their visitors, since they allow them to interact, bond, and feel a kind of temporary certainty. Users may feel certain they belong to an imagined community that shares dialogic imagination and interaction online. I argue that 'hominess' online is a temporary remedy against uncertainty. This hominess is achieved through dialogical interactions in the selected Amazigh websites.

Conclusion:

> Don't be bored, drag your sandals and walk in them proudly
>
> We will be what we want to be
>
> Tell others that we want to be
>
> We will fix flags and walk fast[160]
>
> Tell others that we want to be
>
> We are Imazighen. (Imtalaâ; my trans.)

This is an extract taken from the song 'We Will Be' by the band Imtalaâ, who currently live in the Netherlands. Many other Amazigh singers, such as Najib Amazigh, Sullit, and Qusmit, cover the same lyrics in their own versions of the song. The firm and imperative tone in it counters the state of uncertainty in which many Imazighen live as they struggle to articulate their identity. This song encompasses the core of current Amazigh identity, which is fluid and shifting continuously. It highlights the way this identity is celebrated through media.

Flags, in the song and as mentioned in the last chapter, are symbols. In this extract they become media that invite people to come and participate in, witness, and celebrate the re-articulation of Amazigh identity. Amazigh songs and media perform the same role as the flags raised on top of houses in the Rif area: signalling to the world that there is a reborn community that wants to be.

Social media, such as Facebook, Youtube and Twitter, played a major role in organizing the Imazighen of Morocco to what is known as the 20 February Protests, which demanded official recognition of Amazigh culture. Amazigh songs played a major role in the Libyan revolution, or what is also known as the Libyan spring: the singer Dania Ben Sassi became an icon of that struggle. With her two famous songs 'Our Rebellious Star'

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[160] It is important to note that whenever there is a party or celebration in any particular Amazigh house, especially in remote villages in the Rif region, flags are raised on the top of the house. Any colour can be used for the fabric of the flag except the colour black.

and 'Numidia' (2012), she not only encouraged Imazighen in Libya to topple the regime but also contributed to the re-construction of Amazigh identity in this country.

The first big artistic event that took place in Libya after the fall of Gaddafi's regime was an Amazigh music festival in Tripoli. For the first time in more than a century, Amazigh artists from North Africa and diaspora—like Khalid Izri (Moroccan diaspora), Takfarinas (Algeria), and Dania Ben Sassi (Libyan diaspora)—came together to celebrate the Amazigh New Year of 2963 (that corresponds to the Gregorian 13 January 2013). The symbolic event shows the role of media in raising consciousness and creating certainty among a population that was not allowed to celebrate its culture and identity before or throughout Gaddafi's rule.[161]

It should be stated that Amazigh media like films, songs, and websites have contributed significantly in opening new spaces of debate in which both Imazighen and other communities interact and seek common ground. In addition, these media allow Imazighen a voice that was previously silenced in North Africa and ignored in host societies in which Amazigh diasporans live. Importantly, these media facilitate the re-articulation of Amazigh identity as well as a means to create spaces in which such a process can be materialised.

Whereas some works address Moroccan media and migration in general, my work addresses particular media—namely songs, films, and websites—of a particular community, the Imazighen from the Rif region. I uniquely offer research that addresses films and revolutionary songs created by diasporic Rifian Imazighen. Few works study songs, films, and websites created in Morocco or in Moroccan diasporas. The particularity of my work is that it addresses Amazigh media created mostly by Amazigh diasporas, the role of these media vis-à-vis the uncertainty characteristic of the experience of migration, and the creation and maintenance of this imagined community.

The Amazigh community has become an imagined community sustained by stories and imagined symbols which are represented in an array of media. In effect, as demonstrated through this thesis, Amazigh identity is a process enhanced by various experiences. The experience of migration is one aspect of the process, and media are elements that represent stories and imagined symbols that shape these identities. This

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[161] After the fall of Gaddafi's regime, Amazigh media—such as TV channels (Ibrabren TV), radio channels (Tammurt), and newspapers (Libya Free Jadu)—began operations.

continuous process is the result of negotiations and interactions of multiplicities both in daily 'life' and through representations that the same multiplicities generate.

Although the Amazigh media I address in this thesis seek to pluralise societies in host countries and in North Africa, there may always be elements that struggle against such pluralisation. In Morocco there are a few positive changes, such as the inclusion of Tamazight as an official language in the constitution; nonetheless, this constitutional inclusion still represents a long way to go in combating individuals and groups who believe in homogenous Morocco. Similarly, in Europe, Amazigh diasporans try to contribute to the creation of a heterogeneous society in which everybody has a voice, and in which cultural groups live in harmony with one another, but there are and will always be elements that struggle against cultural pluralisation of the continent.

Through this thesis the reader may deduce that Amazigh songs, films, and websites not only shape Amazigh consciousness and create an imagined community, but also play a part in highlighting the issues that affect articulations of Amazigh identity in Morocco and in diaspora. As demonstrated through this thesis, the issue of uncertainty is a side effect of migration that can have severe implications both on diasporans and their loved ones in a country of origin. Amazigh media shed light on this uncertainty, alleviate it even temporarily, and try to draw attention to its causes and possible solutions.

That is, various Amazigh media perform various tasks. While a few try to highlight the uncertainty in which many Imazighen live, others seek to understand the origins of such uncertainty and present possible solutions. Additionally, there are media that provide temporary 'homes' in which these uncertain communities feel relative stability. In effect, migration has proved to be a complex process that enduringly affects subjects. Importantly, the media I study in this thesis reveal how Imazighen strive to live, adapt, and articulate their identities in this porous process. That is to say, these subjects try to highlight and articulate their identities not in light of their 'roots' but 'routes'.

As Amazigh subjects become transnational citizens, they create more fluid communities that can socialise, interact, and bond in shifting spaces that partly fulfil their needs and continuous development. The resulting identities, as is the case with the Amazigh diasporic community, are hybrid ones. These hybrid identities maintain a few cultural elements that create the sense of belonging and cultural identity as part of a process where new cultural elements eventually refresh the old ones.

Many Imazighen began to emigrate from Morocco more than a century ago, first to Algeria and later to Europe and the rest of the world. People left a country in which they saw poverty, subjugation, and despair. Nonetheless, they did not leave their homeland empty-handed. They brought with them ideas, images, and memories of this homeland that partly sustain their identities and become a virtual anchor as they continue to sail in the journey of migration.

These Imazighen left their country, hoping to find a better world where they, their children, and grandchildren can live in dignity, and importantly to be able to create spaces in which they can express their sense of cultural identity without any fear. The process of migration is still active among Imazighen of the Rif region, both legally and illegally, and the production of Amazigh media is on the rise to satisfy the needs of this growing, dispersed, and imagined community.

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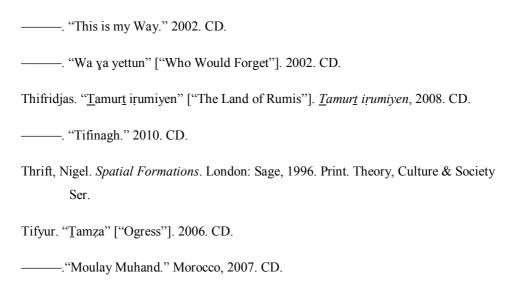
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Dutch Summary (Samenvatting)

Deze studie onderzoekt de rol van media in de beleving en constructie van Amazigh identiteit. Een van mijn doelen is het aantonen, dat Amazigh- media een rol speelt in het benadrukken van de onzekerheid waarin veel Imazighen leven. Die media helpt ook deze mensen tot het in stand komen en verbinden van hun identiteit. Ik maak gebruik van Benedict Anderson's idee van een denkbeeldige gemeenschap welke grenzen en geografische afstanden overbrugt. Ik beargumenteer namelijk dat Amazigh media een gemeenschappelijke basis vormt voor Imazighen in en buiten Marokko. Deze media maakt Imazighen bewust van hun identiteit en speelt een rol bij het verbeteren en het her voortbrengen van een transnationale Amazigh identiteit. Mikhail Bakhtin's concept van intertekstualiteit dient als een methodologisch kader welke mij zal helpen om mijn corpus, die voornamelijk bestaat uit liedjes, films en websites te bestuderen. Intertekstualiteit is een belangrijk instrument die de betekenissen van semiotische interacties van die liedjes, films, en internetfora benadrukt. Mijn uitgangspunt is Bakhtin's idee van interacties en dialogen. Mijn dissertatie laat zien dat Amazigh media zoals liedjes, films en websites voortdurend in dialogen zijn op verschillende niveaus. Mijn dissertatie bestaat uit vijf hoofdstukken.

In het eerste hoofdstuk behandel ik de kwestie van onzekerheid waarin veel Imazighen die in het buitenland leven karakteriseert, als ze hun identiteit proberen te (her) formuleren. Ik maak in dit hoofdstuk gebruik van Arjun Appadurai's model van "Gemeenschap van gevoelens" om het liedje "Kom terug mijn zoon"(1980) te bestuderen. Appadurai ziet een gemeenschap als een groep mensen die samen dingen kunnen voelen en verbelden. Dit hoofdstuk beschrijft ook de evolutie van de migratiepatronen van Imazighen van het Rif regio, sinds het begin van de negentiende eeuw. Deze beschrijving maakt wat betreft de kwestie van onzekerheid in dit hoofdstuk duidelijk. Daarnaast belicht dit hoofdstuk tevens de evolutie van Amazigh migratie in de rest van de dissertatie. Ik onderzoek het verband tussen de liederen en de uittocht van Imazighen uit het Rif regio. Tegelijkertijd kijk ik naar wat de rol van Amazigh liederen is in het proces van migratie en de gevolgen ervan. Hierna richt ik me op de toestand van Imazighen vooral naar hun sociaal-economische en politieke omstandigheden in Europa en het Rif-regio. Zo kijk ik ook naar hoe zowel de teksten als de muziek van het lied "Kom terug mijn zoon" deze omstandigheden weerspiegelen.

In het tweede hoofdstuk bestudeer ik het lied "Mijn verhaal"(1997). Mijn onderzoek laat hier twee dingen zien. Ten eerst demonstreert dit hoofdstuk hoe Imazighen hetzij in het buitenland of in Marokko ernaar streven om hun Amazigh culturele identiteit te benadrukken in een steeds sneller veranderende geglobaliseerde wereld. Ten tweede laat deze case studie zien hoe culturele elementen Imazighen helpen bij het benadrukken van hun identiteit in onzekere situaties. Mijn uitgangspunt is Stuart Hall's theorie die suggereert dat identiteit een continu proces is welke bij voorkeur geschiedenis en cultuur gebruikt in plaats van "het zijn". Ik bouw voort op deze theorie en beargumenteer dat identiteit een kwestie is van het worden, het zijn en erbij horen. Ik bestudeer de rol van identiteits-politiek ten opzichte van de heropbouw van de Amazigh identiteit, en hoe deze identiteit in verschillende omstandigheden wordt onderhandeld. Dit hoofdstuk laat zien hoe deze aspecten (het worden, het zijn en erbij horen) in het liedje op elkaar inwerken en de culturele identiteit van Imazighen beïnvloeden. Ik beredeneer dat het lied routes weerspiegelt en niet roots. Ik laat zien hoe culturele elementen in het lied een onderdeel vormen van de Amazigh cultuur die de Amazigh identiteit mede vormt. Dit hoofdstuk benadrukt ook het geheugen als een onmisbaar element in de identiteits (re)constructie, omdat het geheugen gebeurtenissen gebruikt uit het verleden om Imazighen te helpen bij het begrijpen van hun huidige bestaan, en bij het bouwen van hun toekomst. Ik analyseer de muziek van het lied en leg uit hoe dit medium de situatie en emoties van Imazighen weerspiegelt.

Het derde hoofdstuk behandelt de film *The City of Wait* (2004). Ik bekijk het idee van mobiliteit en immobiliteit in de context van Vincent Kaufmann concepten van motility en mobiliteit. Ik bestudeer hoe verschillende niveaus van mobiliteit onzekerheid creëren. Dit hoofdstuk beschrijft de mobiliteit van de mensen in de film, de mate van mobiliteit van verschillende personen en de belemmeringen die de mobiliteit (ver)hinderen. Ik concentreer me op het samenvallen tussen wachten en de intentie om mobiel te zijn in de stad Alhoceima en zijn cafés. Ik benadruk de verdeling (beeldvorming) tussen mannen en vrouwen en de kwestie van (im)mobiliteit in de film. Daarnaast richt ik me op de mobiliteit van vrouwen in de film en de rol van de cafés in de (im)mobiliteit van hun bezoekers. Ten slotte reflecteer ik op de associatie van het idee van vrijheid met mobiliteit vooral met de immigratie naar Europa.

In het vierde hoofdstuk analyseer ik de film *De Verloren Ezel* (1996). Ik gebruik hiervoor de psychoanalytische theorie van Jacques Lacan en Slavoj Žižek over hun opvattingen wat betreft verlangen en fantasie. Dit hoofdstuk laat zien dat de ervaring van illegale immigratie een eindeloze strijd is van verlangens en fantasieën. Hierna richt ik me op de fantasieën van de mogelijke illegale immigranten. Ik ga er vanuit dat de fantasie een dubbele rol speelt. Het dient als een mogelijkheid om verlangens te kunnen manifesteren en biedt daarnaast bescherming tegen de confrontatie tussen een subject en de Real. Dit hoofdstuk laat ook zien het punt waarop de persoon er niet in slaagde om zijn fantasieën te benadrukken en hoe dit falen hem/haar beïnvloedt. Ik laat enkele gevolgen zien van illegale immigratie voor de Amazigh identiteit. Ik bespreek de handelingen van de filmmaker en reflecteer op de implicaties van zijn individuele politieke besluiten voor de hele samenleving.

In het vijfde hoofdstuk maak ik gebruik van Mikhail Bakhtin's concepten van polyphony and dialogism om te beargumenteren dat Amazigh websites ruimtes creëren waar verschillende "stemmen" hun uiteenlopende inzichten op onderwerpen (zoals culturele identiteit en thuis) die van vitaal belang zijn voor Imazighen om zich te kunnen uiten. Dit hoofdstuk laat zien hoe deze websites Imazighen die toegang hebben tot deze sites, informeren over en betrekken bij gebeurtenissen die plaatsvinden in het buitenland en het Rif gebied. Daarnaast beschrijft dit hoofdstuk de manier waarop deze sites zich richten op het verleden van het Rif gebied en een opening bieden voor het bespreken van zaken zoals identiteit en geheugen. Ik kijk ook naar wat de rol van deze discussies is, over het idee van thuis en in de opbouw van Amazigh culturele identiteit. Ik sluit dit hoofdstuk af met het bestuderen van taal gebruik op deze websites. Er wordt complexe taal online gebruikt waarin het idee van thuis weerspiegeld wordt. Daarnaast kijk ik naar de implicaties van dit taal systeem voor de Amazigh culturele identiteit.

In de conclusie geef ik een update over en reflectie op de huidige toestand van Imazighen vooral in Noord-Afrika en diaspora. Ik benadruk het belang van het gebruik van Amazigh media zoals liedjes, films en websites in het zoeken naar nieuwe mogelijkheden waarin zowel Imazighen als andere gemeenschappen samenwerken, en naar een gemeenschappelijke basis zoeken. Het proces van migratie is nog steeds actief onder Imazighen van de Rif regio, zowel legaal als illegaal. De productie van Amazigh media is stijgende om aan de behoeften van deze groeiende, verspreide en verbeelde gemeenschap te

voldoen. Ze creëren mogelijkheden die gedeeltelijk voldoen aan hun behoeften en continue ontwikkeling waarin hun identiteiten bloeien.

Mijn onderzoek biedt een unieke kijk op liedjes, websites en films, gemaakt door de Rifian Imazighen in diaspora. Imazighen zijn transnationale burgers geworden. Ze creëren evoluerende gemeenschappen die kunnen socialiseren en communiceren. De ontstane identiteiten, zoals het geval is met de Amazigh gemeenschap in het buitenland, zijn hybride identiteiten die constant in dialoog zijn met historische en sociale ontwikkelingen en grotendeels worden geconstrueerd via een spectrum aan verschillende media.