

Moroccan Family Studies: A Historical Review

Zakia Salime

Rutgers University

Abstract: I propose a literature review of studies on the family by addressing these questions. 1) What are the main paradigms through which colonial ethnography understood family life and organization in Morocco? 2) What kind of shifts did the emergence of a postcolonial (domestic) Social Science enable? 3) How did the rise of feminism as a political and cultural movement change the focus and terms of the debate? I organize this review as debates among, and between, these approaches while pointing to ruptures and continuities. Like any project of this scope, the availability of sources, space and time constraints, do not permit for a more exhaustive account. I am conscious that this selection remains incomplete in light of the colossal colonial legacy and postcolonial developments, and constraints on ethnographic research. To couch this literature in a postcolonial academic platform *Hespéris-Tamuda* is to acknowledge these entanglements, for the past one hundred years.

Keywords: Family, Colonial, Modernization, Development, Gender, Youth.

Morocco has been firmly rooted in the European imagination since the early 18th century. The fall of Algiers in 1830 increased the French interests in penetrating Morocco through data collection. This was the task of the “French Scientific Expedition” created in 1904, in the Moroccan Northern city, Tangier. French administrators institutionalized research by compiling “data” in periodicals including the *Archives marocaines* created in 1914, the *Archives berbères* in 1915, and *Hespéris* published by l’Institut des Hautes Études Marocaines, opened in 1920. The birth of sociology and anthropology in the 19th century put Morocco at the locus of European experiments¹ by giving substance to the competing naturalist, evolutionist, empiricist, positivist, symbolic, and culturalist approaches.² The work of Westermarck on marriage rituals and beliefs in Morocco³ as well as the work of Robert

1. Lila Abu-Lughod, “Zones of Theory in the Anthropology of the Arab World,” *Annual Review of Anthropology* 18 (1989): 267-306.

2. On these debates, see Mohamed Berdouzi, *Structures du Maroc précolonial: Critique de Robert Montagne*. Publications du Conseil national des droits de l’homme (Casablanca: La Croisée des Chemins, 2012); Hassan Rachik, *Le proche et le lointain: Un siècle d’anthropologie au Maroc* (Marseille: Parenthèses, 2012).

3. Edward Westermarck, *Marriage Ceremonies in Morocco* (London: Macmillan, 1914); Edward Westermarck, *Ritual and Belief in Morocco* (London: Macmillan, 1926).

Montagne⁴ on the Berbers remain a staple of this earlier phase. The second half of the 20th century saw the birth of an “indigenous” social science that carried the mark of the colonial legacy though reframed and challenged through the new paradigms of decolonization of knowledge;⁵ Marxism and development⁶ and feminism – under which most approaches of the family took place. In what follows I offer a brief overview of this work.

“Berber Republics” and Colonial Studies

French colonial science did not develop family studies as an independent area of inquiry. Driven by the needs to discover the overall patterns of social, economic and political organization, colonial studies produce “topography” of the Moroccan society, through the lens of “human geography,” “demography,” and “political economy,” all important for the colonial domination.⁷ The longer period of pacification of the Amazigh populations inhabiting the Rif and Atlas Mountains, instigated another set of studies about the Berbers and tribal life, as “political organization” initiated by Basset,⁸ Laoust⁹ and Berque.¹⁰ But it was Montagne and his notion of “Berber republics” that put the tribe as the center of colonial studies.¹¹

4. Robert Montagne, “L’Aghbar et les hautes vallées du Grand Atlas,” *Hespéris* 7 (1927): 1-32; Robert Montagne, *Les Berbères et le makhzen dans le sud du Maroc: Essai sur la transformation politique des Berbères sédentaires* (groupe chleuh), (Paris: Travaux de l’Année Sociologique, F. Alcan, 1930); Robert Montagne, “Méthodes,” *L’Afrique L’Asie* 1 (1948): 1-5.

5. Mohamed Guessous, *Rihānāt al-fikr al-sociologī bil-maghrib* [interviews with Mohamed Guessous] (Rabat: Publications of the Ministry of Culture, 2002); Mohamed Guessous, *Ṭurūḥāt ḥawla al-mas’ala al-Ijtimā’iyya*. Publications al-Aḥdāth al-Maghribiyyah (Casablanca: Dar al-Nashr al-Maghribia, 2003); Abdelkebir Khatibi, *Maghreb Pluriel* (Paris: Denoël, 1983).

6. Malika Belghiti, “Les relations féminines et le statut de la femme dans la famille rurale dans les trois villages de la Tessaout. Résultats d’enquêtes et commentaires,” in *Études sociologiques sur le Maroc*, ed. Abdelkebir Khatibi (Rabat: Société d’études économiques, sociales et statistiques, 1971), 289-361; Abdelkebir Khatibi, “État et Classes Sociales au Maroc,” in *Études sociologiques sur le Maroc*, ed. Abdelkebir Khatibi, 3-15 (Rabat: Société d’études économiques, sociales et statistiques, 1971); Paul Pascon, *Le Haouz de Marrakech* (Rabat: Publications du Centre de la recherche scientifique, 1977); Paul Pascon, “Segmentation et stratification dans la société rurale marocaine,” in *Actes de Durham*, 13-15 July 1977 (Rabat: Bulletin Économique et Sociale du Maroc, 1978), 105-20; Paul Pascon, *Études rurales: Idées et enquêtes sur la campagne marocaine* (Rabat: Société marocaine des éditeurs réunis, 1980).

7. Mekki Bentahar et Ettibari Bouasla, “La sociologie coloniale et la société marocaine (1830-1960),” in *La sociologie marocaine contemporaine* (Rabat: Publications de la Faculté des Lettres et des Sciences Humaines, 1988), 15.

8. René Basset, *Recherches sur la religion des Berbères*, Revue de l’histoire des religions (Paris: Ernest Leroux, 1909).

9. Emile Laoust, *Mots et choses berbères: Notes de linguistique et d’ethnographie, dialectes du Maroc* (Paris: A Challamel, 1920).

10. Jacques Berque, *Étude d’histoire rurale maghrébine* (Tanger-Fès. Afrique Nord: Les Éditions Internationales, 1938); Jacques Berque, “Cent vingt ans de sociologie maghrébine,” *Annales Économies, Sociétés. Civilisations* 11, 3 (1956): 296-324; Jacques Berque, *Al-Youssi: Problèmes de la culture marocaine au XVII^e siècle* (Rabat: Centre Tarik Ibn Ziyad pour les études et la recherche, 2001[1958]). See Rachik, *Le proche et le lointain*, 108-15.

11. Montagne, *Les Berbères et le makhzen dans le sud du Maroc*.

Islam occupied a prominent place in this production¹² and was put to work as a dividing line between the Arabs and the Berbers.¹³ Colonial studies saw these two main components of the social fabric in Morocco, along the diving lines of Arab land falling under the realm of the *sharia*, and the Sultan, and the Berbers escaping both and following their own *'urf*, or customary law.¹⁴ Administrators, educators and sociologists tried to capture the subtlety of family life in both rural and urban areas through the key notions of mentality, customs, rituals, and superstition among others.¹⁵ The imperial cities of Fès, Rabat, Marrakech, Meknès became popular in this literature. Characterized by a rich historical past, the presence of an intellectual and religious elite¹⁶ that later on led the struggle for independence, the City attracted a wealth of studies about its history, its inhabitants, its transformation in contact with the Europeans,¹⁷ and occasionally its social and gender dynamics.

Segmentation or Dyads

The second half of the 20th century brought the family closer to empirical inquiry with British and American anthropologists studying tribal life in the North, the South, or exploring small cities like Sefrou.¹⁸ These two schools competed over defining the history of political and social organization in Morocco through the contrasting arguments of segmentation, and cultural

12. Basset, *Recherches sur la religion des Berbères*; Berque, "Cent vingt ans de sociologie maghrébine;" Berque, *al-Youssi: Problèmes de la culture marocaine au XVII^e siècle*; Edmond Doutté, *Magie et religion dans l'Afrique du nord* (Paris: Jean Maisonneuve et Geuthner, 1908 [1984]); Moulieras 1895.

13. Edmond Doutté, "Les Marocains et la société marocaine," *Revue générale des sciences pures et appliquées* 14 (1903): 190-208; Doutté, *Magie et religion*.

14. F. De la Chapelle, "La formation du pouvoir monarchique," *Hespéris* 8 (1928): 263-83; Montagne, *Les Berbères et le makhzen dans le sud du Maroc*.

15. Charles de Foucault, *Reconnaissance du Maroc* (Paris: Société d'édition géographique maritimes et coloniale, 1938 [1888]).

16. Roger Le Tourneau, *Fès avant le protectorat* (Casablanca: Société Marocaine de Librairie et d'Édition, 1949); Jérôme Tharaud and Jean Tharaud, *Fès ou les bourgeois de l'Islam* (Paris: Plon, 1930); Jérôme Tharaud and Jean Tharaud, *Marrakech où les seigneurs de l'Atlas* (Paris: Plon, 1939).

17. Denise Masson, "Les influences européennes sur la famille indigène au Maroc," in *Entretiens sur l'évolution des pays de civilisation arabe* (Paris: Centre d'études de politique étrangère, 1938); Robert Montagne, *Naissance d'un prolétariat marocain. Enquête collective (1948-1950)* (Paris: Cahiers de l'Afrique et de l'Asie, 1951).

18. Hildred Geertz, "The meanings of Family Ties," in *Meanings and Order in Moroccan Society: Three Essays in Cultural Analysis*, eds. Clifford, Geertz and Lauren Rosen (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979), 315-91; Ernest Gellner, *Saints of the Atlas* (London: Duckworth, 1969); David Hart, "Conflicting Models of a Berber Tribal Structure in the Moroccan Rif: The Segmentary and Alliance System of the Aith Waryaghar," *Revue de l'Occident Musulman Méditerranéen* 4 (1970): 93-99; David Hart, "Segmentary Systems and the Role of the Fifth in Tribal Morocco," *Revue de l'Occident Musulman et de la Méditerranée* 3 (1967): 65-95; Paul Rabinow, *Symbolic Domination, Cultural Forms and Historical Change in Morocco* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1975); David Seddon, *Moroccan Peasants: A Century of Change in the Eastern Rif 1870-1970* (England: Willian Dawson, 1981).

interpretation. Segmentation versus dyadic forms of organization in family life and beyond has been extensively debated by Moroccan sociologists and anthropologists.¹⁹ In this paper I will only point to the relevance of this debate to the family.

Birth of Development

During the 1970s the paradigm of development marked academic research. The work of Moroccan sociologist Paul Pascon was a benchmark. Pascon, a son of colons who opted for Moroccan citizenship in 1964, was a professor at the Ecole Hassan II de l'Agronomie, where he trained his students into the art of fieldwork. Pascon formed the first multidisciplinary research teams on rural development in a university setting in independent Morocco. His approach was embedded in Marxist paradigms of class struggle, demarginalization of the subaltern populations of peasants, modernization and development of rural structures.²⁰ Though Pascon was more interested in the technical, ecological and legal aspects of labor and land tenure, his students and colleagues approached the family and gender roles through empirical studies highlighting rural youth's voices²¹ and exploring women's status in the Moroccan countryside.²² It is the birth of liberal feminism in the 1980s that expanded this interest to new areas and paradigms, the most important of which was gender subordination and inequality.

Feminist Debate

The scholarly interest in the family expanded with the rise of feminist research groups in the 1980s. The politics of women's rights shaped the research agenda by putting family dynamics at the center of debates about socialization patterns, gender representations, labor and migration,

19. Lahouari Abdi, *Deux anthropologues au Maghreb: Ernest Gellner and Clifford Geertz* (Paris: Éditions des archives contemporaines, 2013); Berdouzi, *Structures du Maroc précolonial*; Abedallah Hammoudi, "Segmentarité stratification sociale pouvoir politique et sainteté: Réflexion sur les thèses de Gellner," *Hespéris* 15 (1974): 147-79; Abdellah Laroui, *Les origines sociales et culturelles du nationalisme marocain (1830-1912)* (Paris: Maspero, 1977); Pascon, *Le Haouz de Marrakech*; Rachik, *Le proche et le lointain*.

20. Pascon, "Segmentation and Stratification dans la société marocaine;" Pascon, *Le Houz de Marrakech*; Paul Pascon, *Études rurales: Idées et enquêtes sur la campagne marocaine* (Rabat: Société marocaine des éditeurs réunis, 1980).

21. Paul Pascon, Mekki Bentahar, et al, "Ce que disent 296 jeunes ruraux," *Bulletin Économique et Social du Maroc* XXXI, 112-3 (1969): 1-143.

22. Malika Belghiti, "Les relations féminines et le statut de la femme dans la famille rurale dans les trois villages de la Tessaout. Résultats d'enquêtes et commentaires," *Bulletin Économique et Social du Maroc* 31, 114 (1969): 1-73; Malika Belghiti, Najat Chraïbi, and Adib Tamou, "La ségrégation des garçons et des filles à la campagne," *Bulletin Économique et Social du Maroc* 33, 120 (1971): 81-144.

urbanization, and rights.²³ A survey of this feminist literature reveals a desire to challenge the gender blind academic teaching and knowledge production, through locally grounded narratives, life stories, quantitative analyses, and ethnographic research about women. This desire to voice women from various socio-economic backgrounds, geographical locations²⁴ and to document their family life – in both its personal and relational aspects – drove most approaches of the family, in the 1980s and 1990s.

Youth and Representations

The turn of the 20th century knew a shift in focus from women to youth. As a category of analysis, “youth(ness),” became crucial for understanding social change and the impact of economic policies (structural-adjustment, neoliberalism) in relation to urbanization, unemployment, desire for migration abroad, and increasing manifestations of religiosity. Several studies tackled the theme of youth in the context of the competing frameworks of Islamism, arabism, berberism and “terrorism” among others. The family made its entry into this literature through the cultural categories of representations, parental authority, and gender, networks of support, sexuality and family values.²⁵

In the following sections, I will first introduce some of the most influential colonial paradigms about the organization of life and family structures and dynamics; second I will connect these paradigms to the segmentary debate in British Anthropology and its American cultural critics; third, I will introduce domestic studies about the family that grew out of feminist research in the 1980s; and fourth, I will review some of the literature about youth that emerged by the turn of the 20th century and show its relevance to debates about the family in Morocco.

23. Aisha Belarbi, *Le salaire de madame* (Casablanca: Le Fennec, 1991); Fatima Hajjarabi, “Les souk féminins du Rif central: Rareté des biens et profusion sociale,” in *Femmes partagées (travail-famille)*, éd. Fatema Mernissi (Casablanca: Le Fennec, 1988); Fatema Mernissi, *Doing Daily Battle: Interviews with Moroccan Women*, trans. Mary Jo Lakeland (London: The Women’s Press Limited, 1988); Fatema Mernissi, ed., *Femmes partagées (famille-travail)* (Casablanca: Le Fennec, 1989); Fatima-Zohra Zryouil, “Ishām al-mar’a fi minṭaqat Sous min khilāl al-ma’sūl,” in *Femmes partagées (travail-famille)*, éd. Fatema Mernissi (Casablanca: Le Fennec, 1988).

24. Mohamed Benali, “Al-mar’a al-qarawiyya wal-majāl: namūday al mar’a fi qaryat ’ait taa fi al-Rīf al-awssat,” in *Femmes rurales*, éd. Aicha Belarbi (Casablanca: Le Fennec, 1995); Rahma Bourqia, “Espace Social, femmes et environnement: Les Beni Guil du Maroc Oriental,” in *Femmes rurales*, éd. Aicha Belarbi (Casablanca: Le Fennec, 1995); Haji Touriya Tamsamani, “La femme rurale au Maroc: Une bibliographie annotée,” in *Femmes rurales*, éd. Aicha Belarbi (Casablanca: Le Fennec, 1995).

25. Mounia Bennani-Chraïbi, *Soumis et rebelles: Les jeunes au Maroc* (Paris: CNRS Éditions, 1994); Rahma Bourqia, Mohamed El Ayadi, Mokhtar El Harras et Hassan Rachik, *Les jeunes et les valeurs religieuses* (Casablanca: Eddif-Codesria, 2000); Rahma Bourqia, “Les valeurs: Changement et perspectives,” (2012): <http://doc.abhatoo.net.ma/doc/img/pdf/GT2-3.pdf>; Mohammed Chekroun, *Citoyenneté et lien social au Maroc* (Rabat: Faculté des Lettres et des Sciences Humaines. Édition & Impressions Bouregreg, 2010).

I will be stressing domestic studies including publications in French and Arabic, which I hope to make more accessible to an English-speaking reader. Like any project of this scope, the availability of sources, space and time constraints, do not permit for a more exhaustive account. I am conscious that my own selection was much more driven by what was available through the interlibrary loan, yet I remain confident that this literature will point to some of the landmark studies of the family in Morocco.

Colonial Paradigms

The Tribe, an “Order-ed Anarchy”

The imperatives of colonial administration shaped the framing of Moroccan diverse geographies, multilingual communities, and multiethnic social fabric along “Arab” and “Berber” dividing lines. Both Berber tribes and urban elites became a source of inspiration for studies that aimed to discover the key to the political organization in the cities and the mountains. A champion of the study of the Berbers’ social “morphology”²⁶ remains Montagne.²⁷ Montagne borrowed the “khaldounian model” of mechanical solidarity “*aṣṣabiyya*,” which points to the way in which tribal solidarity is mobilized during cycles of dynastic rise and fall. He “provided this model with a “socio-psychological base”²⁸ by firmly positing a basic Berber “metabolism” of an “order-ed anarchy.”²⁹ He saw the tribe as “a microcosm in space and time,”³⁰ which by its independence and economic autonomy, “points to an earlier stage of social evolution where tribalism had not yet paved the way to the rise of the nation state.”³¹

Montagne broke down this microcosm into its various components: first, its morphological organization in *kānūn*, *Ikh’s moud’a*, *jma’a* and *taqblit*. Each of these units represents a level of grouping that is closer to, or farther away from the family unit, *kānūn*. Second to its economic organization – systems of irrigation, sedentism, nomadism, and labor; and third, to its cultural system of kinship, costumes and traditions;³² and last, but not least, its political structures and system of alliances.³³ Montagne saw the *taqblit*, fraction of a tribe, as a

26. Rachik, *Le proche et le lointain*: 120.

27. Montagne, *Les Berbères et le makhzen dans le sud du Maroc*.

28. Mohamed Berdouzi, *Structures et dynamique sociales du Maroc: Evaluation des analyses angloaméricaines*. Thèse de Doctorat d’État en droit Public. Faculté de Droit de Rabat (Casablanca: La Croisée des Chemins, 1987), 14.

29. Montagne in Berdouzi, *Structures et dynamique sociales du Maroc*, 14.

30. Montagne, *Les Berbères et le makhzen dans le sud du Maroc*, 146.

31. Bentahar et Bouasla, “La sociologie coloniale et la société marocaine (1830-1960),” 30.

32. *Ibid.*, 29.

33. *Ibid.*

stable entity reproducing itself into small “independent” “republics.”³⁴ Not only the presence of these “republics” point to the weakness of the central power but also to a system of political egalitarianism.³⁵ *Jma'a*, is the most active political organ in tribal organization, according to Montagne. It is a people’s assembly of (men) heads of households that supervises the commons (public goods) deliberates to make decisions, and takes arms to defend its territory.³⁶ As we will see, this positing of a berber equalitarianism will have a deep impact on segmentary analysis that dominated studies of Morocco in the 1960s by British Anthropologists.³⁷ As Montagne,³⁸ Berque,³⁹ and others were establishing the foundations of the studies of tribal organization in Morocco, other colonial agents and scientists were penetrating the urban family.

Bourgeois Life under the Protectorate

The 1940s witnessed an increasing interest in social stratification, viewed through the lens of wealth and prestige in the cities, and through labor organization.⁴⁰ “Varying between description and sociological analysis,” these studies took up the task of describing the habitat,⁴¹ aspects of daily life in the urban family, and the bourgeoisie.⁴² Before the independence of Morocco, the study of the city emerged as an important area of inquiry among colonial officials, bureaucrats and social scientists.⁴³ For instance Le Tourneau produced several volumes on Fez,⁴⁴ providing a detailed account about the city, its geography, history, its social, cultural and economic fabric and organization. His study *La vie quotidienne à Fès en 1900* and *Fès avant le protectorat* were both based on archival research, and the author’s own observations and contact with the population, during ten years of residency and teaching in Fez, between 1930 and 1940. Le Tourneau captured family life through marriage ceremonies, the rituals related to circumcision, birth and

34. Montagne in Berdouzi, *Structures et dynamique sociales du Maroc*, 15.

35. Ibid.

36. Rachik, *Le proche et le lointain*, 120-1.

37. Hart, “Conflicting Models of a Berber Tribal Structure in the Moroccan Rif,” Gellner, *Saints of the Atlas*.

38. Montagne, *Les Berbères et le makhzen dans le sud du Maroc*.

39. Berque, *Étude d'histoire rurale maghrébine*; Berque, “Cent vingt ans de sociologie maghrébine.”

40. Bentahar et Bouasla, “La sociologie coloniale et la société marocaine (1830-1960),” 37-38.

41. Mohammed Chekroun, “Al-‘āila kamawdū’: Mina al-sociologiyyā al-‘afwiyya ilā al-sociolojjiyya al-‘ilmiyya,” in *La sociologie marocaine contemporaine: Bilan et perspectives* (Rabat: Publications de la Faculté des Lettres, 1988), 39.

42. Le Tourneau, *Fès avant le protectorat*; Roger Le Tourneau, *La vie quotidienne à Fès en 1900* (Paris. Hachette, 1965); Tharaud and Tharaud, *Fès ou les bourgeois de l’Islam*.

43. Le Tourneau, *Fès avant le protectorat*; Tharaud and Tharaud, *Fès ou les bourgeois de l’Islam*.

44. Le Tourneau, *Fès avant le protectorat*; Le Tourneau, *La vie quotidienne à Fès en 1900*.

the sense of shame as a motivation for the “Fessi” behavior, and superstition as a female characteristic.⁴⁵

Despite the limited number of pages Le Tourneau devotes to family life, per se, probably because of uneasy access, we find insights about bourgeois life as lived, and performed by women in the courtyard, cemeteries, during family visits, and on the terrace. Le Tourneau penetrated the women’s daily life through his own observations and through previous descriptions provided by the colossal colonial production. Curiously enough, Le Tourneau did not simplify this life through the usual category of segregation and seclusion;⁴⁶ neither did he assume homogeneity in family structures across social classes. Instead, he stressed women’s relative “freedom of movement,” in and outside of their homes,⁴⁷ their “sovereignty as property owners,”⁴⁸ and the “neutrality” of husbands, vis-a-vis the education of children, considered a woman’s responsibility.⁴⁹

Le Tourneau traced a portrait of the city in which men and women’s world, and intellectual capabilities and interests were totally at odds, due to the illiteracy of women and their absence from the male-dominated circles of knowledge production.⁵⁰ Setting the French family as a normative type, Le Tourneau argued that in “these bourgeois families husband and wife live separate lives” because of differing “modes of living,” “ideas” and “belief system,”⁵¹ “which makes it difficult to think of their family life as organized like ours.”⁵² Despite the relative freedom that he witnessed women enjoying, and despite the complicity between husband and wife in relation to issues of life at large that he noted,⁵³ Le Tourneau fell back onto orientalist representations to reproduce a model of power in which the patriarch rule is unlimited and uncontested.⁵⁴

A Core Moroccan Personality

As urban families started to slowly accept the French schooling system, and send their sons to schools, questions rose by the French bureaucrats and educators about the appropriate education for these little minds. Developments

45. S. Federico Vidal, “Fès Avant le Protectorat,” *Middle East Journal* 4, 4 (1950): 501.

46. Le Tourneau, *Fès avant le protectorat*.

47. *Ibid.*, 545-6.

48. *Ibid.*, 545.

49. *Ibid.*, 548.

50. *Ibid.*, 546.

51. *Ibid.*, 548.

52. *Ibid.*

53. *Ibid.*

54. *Ibid.*, 549.

in the field of psychology in the 1940s informed the school officials' search for a "core Moroccan personality."⁵⁵ Hence, the discrepancies between the "Moroccan mentality"⁵⁶ and Western rational schooling were posed. For instance, Bourgeois⁵⁷ outlined some of these gaps in his book, *l'univers de l'écolier Marocain*, by penetrating the world of religious beliefs, superstitions, and traditional upbringing that the young students bring with them to the school. Marty,⁵⁸ a school inspector spoke to the alleged racial differences between the Berbers and Arabs in his book *les caractères essentiels de la mentalité marocaine* the "basic characteristics of Moroccan mentality."⁵⁹ Marty contrasted the "lazy, fatalistic, fanatic, lacking in foresight, and polygamous Arab" to the "monogamous and far-sighted Berber."⁶⁰ Making full use of August Conte's stages, he suggested that the French education should not force Moroccan children into positive thinking. Rather, educators should keep them in "the theological stage" that is necessary for their "moral balance," while slowly incorporating rational positive thinking.⁶¹

It is through the paradigms of patriarchy, seclusion, a core Moroccan personality, and specific Moroccan mentality that studies introduced here tried to penetrate the essence of the Moroccan family. Mass migration and the rise of labor power will soon become the main entry point to studies in the late 1940s and 1950s. Dominated by sociologists this literature produced the main paradigms of social stratification, family disintegration, and social change.

Stratification and Disintegration

Accelerated migration to the city raised also the issue of the informalization of labor, and the concentration of labor power in new marginal zones. The labor conditions in the emerging industrial urban centers came for the first time under scrutiny when colonial sociologist Louis Massignon mandated a collective study about the Moroccan Proletariat, conducted by Montagne.⁶² Montagne

55. Bentahar et Bouasla, "La sociologie coloniale et la société marocaine (1830-1960)," 39. See also Louis Bruno, "L'esprit marocain: Les caractères essentielles de la mentalité marocaine," *Bulletin de l'enseignement public au Maroc* 45 (1926): 35-59; George Hardy, *L'ame marocaine d'après la littérature française* (Paris: Librairie Larose, 1926); George Hardy and Louis Bruno, *L'enfant marocain: Essai d'ethnographie scolaire*, Bulletin de l'enseignement public au Maroc, vol. 63 (Paris: Larose, 1925); Paul Marty, *Le Maroc de demain* (Paris: Comité de l'Afrique française, 1925).

56. Bruno, "L'esprit marocain."

57. Paul Bourgeois, *L'univers de l'écolier marocain* (Rabat: Ministère de l'éducation nationale, 1956).

58. Marty, *Le Maroc de demain*.

59. See Bentahar et Bouasla, "La sociologie coloniale et la société marocaine (1830-1960)," 39.

60. Ibid., 39-40.

61. Ibid., 39.

62. Montagne, *Les Berbères et le makhzen dans le sud du Maroc*.

and his team, attributed the emergence of a proletariat in the cities, to several factors including the “disintegration” of old forms of social organization and family life in rural areas.⁶³ Many indications of these transformations were found in changing family structures, as stated by Montagne:

“in less than a generation, we are witnessing the collapse of the institution that sustained rural organizations: the patriarchal family. This social unit that had engendered the tribe dissolves in new cities, without giving birth to new social ties that could form another whole.”⁶⁴

As an indication of this disintegration, Montagne found an equal number of divorces and marriages in the new medina of Casablanca, showing a pattern of forming new unions rather than engaging in polygamous marriages.⁶⁵ Montagne also noted the “lower fecundity rate” of rural migrant living in shantytowns, in comparison to the countryside.⁶⁶ He posited the possible use of contraception, that is widely adopted by the “prostitutes” and might be used in the case of “free unions.”⁶⁷ Obviously, Montagne and his team were more concerned about the impact of this concentration of this informal labor force on the colonial order.⁶⁸ “Disintegration” [désagrégation] of the family, Pelletier believed,⁶⁹ would result in a greater collective consciousness by the new working class.⁷⁰ No wonder that Casablanca became the center of sustained forms of resistance against the French rule by the 1940s.

The paradigm of disintegration was dominant in French publications, even after the independence of Morocco.⁷¹ Adam’s groundbreaking study, *Casablanca*, reserved several volumes to social change in Casablanca and among its various populations. Adam explored the transformation of this city and its inhabitants since the Protectorate, stressing the nexus of modernization, industrialization, and education. He confirmed the rapid changes among the inhabitants of a shantytown Ben Msik by looking at the number of marriages among women and men. He showed that the percentage of marriages among women was 1.7 against 2.4 for men, stating the same pattern of family

63. Bentahar et Bouasla, “La sociologie coloniale et la société marocaine (1830-1960),” 38.

64. Cahiers de L’Afrique et de L’Asie, “Naissance du prolétariat marocain,” *Population* 9, 1 (1954): 158.

65. Montagne, in Aicha Belarbi, *Le salaire de madame* (Casablanca: Le Fennec, 1991a), 15.

66. Cahiers de L’Afrique et de L’Asie, “Naissance du prolétariat marocain,” 159.

67. Ibid.

68. Ibid.

69. Pierre Pelletier, “Valeurs foncières et urbanisme au Maroc,” *Bulletin Économique et Social du Maroc* 5 (1955): 5-51.

70. Bentahar et Bouasla, “La sociologie coloniale et la société marocaine (1830-1960),” 38.

71. Anne Marie Baron, “Mariages et divorces à Casablanca,” *Hespéris* 15, 3-4 (1953): 419-40; Masson, “Les influences européennes sur la famille indigène au Maroc.”

“disintegration.”⁷² Referring to his 1951 study in the shantytown Ben Msik, Adam found that more than 51% of women were at their second marriage.⁷³ This disintegration of the family through divorce was however, more pronounced among the working class, Adam argued.⁷⁴

Adam used various sources of data, including interviews, French census, and previous studies about Morocco. He explored class formation and reserved parts of his book to social and economic activity in marginal suburbs noticing the “survival of traditional economic activity, petty commerce and a certain social conservatism” among the lower socio-economic categories.⁷⁵ He also analyzed social dynamics among the multiple components of the population of Casablanca and their tensions along the line tradition/modernity, rural/urban, workers/employees, proletariat/neo-bourgeoisie, illiterate/educated, and so on and so forth.⁷⁶ Comparing the transformation of the family structure in Morocco and in the West,⁷⁷ Adam contrasted the long *durée* that shaped this transformation in the “Western family” to the swift changes that impacted the “patriarchal” family in less than half a century, in Morocco. To Adam the Moroccan family is a place “contaminated with archaisms,” yet undergoing abrupt changes.⁷⁸ Following Baron,⁷⁹ Adam saw indicators of social change in the shrinking size of the family, and the marital choices of young men, 73% of who viewed marriage as a personal choice, not to be supervised by parents.⁸⁰ Adam’s study could be viewed as a rupture with the colonial literature, which was mainly based on the author’s observation and re-production of old texts about families in an Islamic context.⁸¹ Adam provided an important historical background for assessing the impact of colonial intervention and capitalist penetration – industrialization, modern education – on changing family dynamics and structures.⁸² He nevertheless relied on modernist binaries of tradition, archaism, and progress to assess this penetration.

72. André Adam, *Casablanca: Essai sur la transformation de la société marocaine au contact de l'occident* (Paris: Éditions du Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, 1968), 747.

73. Adam, *Casablanca*, 747.

74. *Ibid.*, 746-7.

75. See Robert Mantran, “André Adam. Casablanca, Essai sur la transformation de la société marocaine au contact de l'Occident,” *Revue de l'Occident Musulman et de la Méditerranée* 9 (1971), 214.

76. See Mantran, “André Adam,” 214.

77. Adam, *Casablanca*, 733.

78. *Ibid.*, 741.

79. Baron, “Marriages et divorces à Casablanca.”

80. Adam, *Casablanca*, 743; Baron, “Marriages et divorces à Casablanca,” 31.

81. Le Tourneau, *Fès avant le protectorat*; Tharaud and Tharaud, *Fès ou les bourgeois de l'Islam*.

82. Adam, *Casablanca*.

Chekroun rejected Adam's comparison of the "Moroccan family" and the "Western family,"⁸³ as well as the criteria he used in that comparison. The family is not a "homogenous and stable entity," that is "fixed in space and time,"⁸⁴ Chekroun argued. Chekroun also rejected Adam's claim about marriage with the cousin as a dominant form in independent Morocco. He introduced class to the debate by claiming that both marrying one's cousin and polygamous marriages were class-based.⁸⁵ In contrast to polygamy that signaled wealth and social privilege, marrying one's cousin was a practice found mainly among disadvantaged groups, who were lacking in social and economic capital.⁸⁶

As the protectorate was coming to an end, a new wave of studies put Morocco at the center of anthropological debates on the nature of fieldwork and the importance of "segmentation" versus "dyadic" forms of social and political organization.⁸⁷ I will now turn to this debate. Championed by Evans-Pritchard⁸⁸ and by Ernest Gellner in Morocco,⁸⁹ segmentation was informed by structural functionalism, grounded in Durkheimian and Parsonian understanding of society as a system of interdependent parts whose function is to grant the stability of the whole. In Morocco, the development of segmentary studies was greatly indebted to colonial sociology, notably the work of Montagne on Berber egalitarianism. I will now discuss this legacy in relation to family in Morocco.

Segmented Versus Dyadic Patterns of Organization

It was British-American anthropologist Ernest Gellner who "formulated the most sophisticated version of segmentary theory"⁹⁰ during his work in the Haut Atlas in the 1950s and 1960s. Gellner's monograph "*Saints of the Atlas*,"⁹¹ made its author "the main advocate of the segmentary model for the

83. Chekroun, "Al-'āila ka mawḍū'."

84. Ibid., 44-45.

85. Ibid., 45-46.

86. Ibid., 45.

87. Hart, "Segmentary Systems and the Role of the Fifth in Tribal Morocco;" Kevin Dwyer, "The Cultural Bases of Entrepreneurial Activity: A Study of Moroccan Peasant Community," (Ph.D. Dissertation, Yale University, 1974); Kevin Dwyer, *Moroccan Dialogues: Anthropology in Question* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1982); Rabinow, *Symbolic Domination*; Gellner, *Saints of the Atlas*; Clifford Geertz, Hildred Geertz, and Lawrence Rosen, *Meanings and Order in Moroccan Society: Three Essays in Cultural Analysis* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979).

88. E. E. Evans-Pritchard, "The Nuer of the southern Sudan," in *African Political Systems*, eds. M. Fortes and E.E Evans-Pritchard (London: Oxford University Press, 1940).

89. Gellner, *Saints of the Atlas*.

90. Radim Tobolka, "Gellner and Geertz in Morocco: A Segmentary Debate," *Social Evolution and History* 2, 2 (2003): 93.

91. Gellner, *Saints of the Atlas*.

years to come.”⁹² Gellner was inspired by Montagne’s thesis of the egalitarian nature of the Berber Republics.

Originating in Émile Durkheim’s idea of mechanical solidarity,⁹³ and Evans-Pritchard’s work,⁹⁴ segmentation is considered the primary mechanism of political organization in the absence of a strong central power.⁹⁵ Segmentation proposes first, “interplay between blood (kinship) and soil (territory),” second “an interplay between family (conceived as bilaterally traced web of kin members) and clan (conceived as unilaterally traced kin members).”⁹⁶ Segmentary theory defines a society by its “mutually resembling and economically independent segments,” linked by kinship.⁹⁷ To Gellner “kinship is to the tribe what bureaucracy is to modern society.”⁹⁸ The segmentary model triggered heated debates among Moroccan social scientist and beyond.⁹⁹

Moroccan studies of tribal life departed from the egalitarian assumption that the model endowed Berber tribes with to show how the foundation of tribal unity stem from everyday collective practices. For instance, Rassam rejected segmentary lineage and described tribal organization in terms of political and ecological adaptation.¹⁰⁰ She stated that even in the absence of private property, and even when patrilineal relationship was still important; segmentation was not a dominant form of organization.¹⁰¹ Boyle reached similar results in his study of Beni Mguild.¹⁰² After analyzing the channels by

92. Tobolka, “Gellner and Geertz in Morocco,” 88.

93. Émile Durkheim, *De la division du travail social* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1960).

94. Evans-Pritchard, “The Nuer of the Southern Sudan.”

95. Gellner, *Saints of the Atlas*; Ernest Gellner, “Saints and their Descendants,” in *Muslim Society*, ed. Ernest Gellner (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981); David Hart, *The Ait Waryaghar of the Moroccan Rif, an Ethnography and History* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1976); Hart, “Segmentary Systems and the Role of the Fifth in Tribal Morocco;” Hart, “Conflicting Models of a Berber Tribal Structure in the Moroccan Rif;” Elaine Combs-Schilling, “Friend in a Moroccan Boom Town: the Segmentary Debate Reconsidered,” *American Ethnologist* 12, 4 (1985): 659-75.

96. Tobolka, “Gellner and Geertz in Morocco,” 89; Bentahar et Bouasla, “La sociologie coloniale et la société marocaine (1830-1960),” 330.

97. Tobolka, “Gellner and Geertz in Morocco,” 89.

98. Gellner, *Saints of the Atlas*; Abdi, *Deux anthropologues au Maghreb*, 218.

99. Hammoudi, “Segmentarité stratification sociale pouvoir politique et sainteté;” Laroui, *Les Origines sociales et culturelles du nationalisme marocain*; Pascon, “Segmentation and Stratification dans la société marocaine;” Rachik, *Le proche et le lointain*; Mohamed Berdouzi, *Structures du Maroc précolonial: Critique de Robert Montagne*. Publications du Conseil national des droits de l’homme (Casablanca: La Croisée des Chemins, 2012); Abdi, *Deux anthropologues au Maghreb*; Amal Rassam, “The Socio-political Organization of a Berber Tribe: pre-Protectoral Morocco,” in *Arabs and Berbers, from the Tribe to Nation in North Africa*, eds. Ernest Gellner and Charles Micaud (London: Duckworth, 1973); Abu-Lughod, “Zones of Theory in the Anthropology of the Arab world.”

100. Rassam, “The Socio-political Organization of a Berber Tribe: pre-Protectoral Morocco.”

101. Rassam in Bouasla, “Tendances actuelles de l’anthropologie Anglo-Saxonne,” 59.

102. Walden Phillip Boyle, “Contract and Kinship: the Economic Organization of the Beni Mguild Berbers of Morocco,” (PhD dissertation Los Angeles: University of California, 1977).

which kinship had an impact on the organization of productive exchanges, he showed how the search for profit gave birth to new strategies, practices and private economic initiative beyond lineage and concluded that Beni Mguild society was deeply unequal.¹⁰³

But never was the segmentary model more contested than with the culturalists, whose work coincided with the independence of Morocco.¹⁰⁴ Assuming continuity in cultural perspective, the culturalists suggest, “personally constructed dyadic constellations are what is fundamentally Moroccan about Moroccan sociocultural imaging and organization.”¹⁰⁵ Combs-Schilling argued that dyadic cultural orientation existed in the past as well as in the present and that “segmentation may well have been in the anthropological eye of the kinship-oriented beholder.”¹⁰⁶

Dyads and Cultural Symbolism

In the 1960s a group of American sociologists made the small city of Sefrou part of the intellectual and methodological traffic.¹⁰⁷ This group highlighted the importance of cultural frames in the way people organized and understood their lives as a constellation of “dyadic” rather than along line segmentary lineage.¹⁰⁸ Hildred Geertz articulated this position in her article *The Meanings of Family Ties*. She delineated kinship patterns and practices in the context of early industrialization in Sefrou, in 1968 by focusing on a group of 250 Arabic-speaking individuals, with the same surname, the Nas Aldun family. She examined the “essential characteristics of life” within the many-roomed Medina homes, shared by 12 extended family members. She argued that the concepts of “family,” “friendship,” and “patronage” were ordered by the same cultural principles, and they all involved calculations of mutual advantage.¹⁰⁹ According to her, Moroccans understood forms of affiliation in a fundamentally dyadic form, and not exclusively along line segmentary patrilineal ties. Geertz saw family relationships as tangled, interwoven, rather than a clear cut. The most important norms, she contended, were personalistic

103. Boyle, *Contract and Kinship*; Ettibari Bouasla, “Tendances actuelles de l’anthropologie Anglo-Saxonne: Cas du Maroc (1830-1960),” in *La sociologie marocaine contemporaine* (Rabat: Publications de la Faculté de Lettres et des Sciences Humaines, 1988), 64.

104. Geertz, Geertz, and Rosen, *Meanings and Order in Moroccan Society*; Susan Slyomovics, ed. *Clifford Geertz in Morocco* (London, New York: Routledge, 2010).

105. Combs-Schilling, “Friend in a Moroccan Boom Town,” 662.

106. *Ibid.*

107. C. Geertz, H. Geertz, and Rosen, *Meanings and Order in Moroccan Society*; Geertz, “The meanings of Family Ties;” Rabinow, *Symbolic Domination*.

108. See Combs-Schilling, “Friend in a Moroccan Boom Town,” 662.

109. Geertz, Geertz, and Rosen, *Meanings and Order in Moroccan Society*, 317.

and sensitive to situational conditions.¹¹⁰ Geertz focused on five aspects of family dynamics: successive intermarriage and living in close quarters, seclusion of women and lengthy visits with family living elsewhere, activities dispersed among a wide network of relations, and patron-client relationships that cut across familial, domestic, residential, and personal networks.¹¹¹

Discussion

Pascon entered the debate through his notion of “société composite” [composing society]. A composing society delineated, Pascon argued, “the co-existence of diverse social, cultural, and economic forms over time, with each retaining a measure of internal coherence.”¹¹² Pascon claimed that the changes that these forms underwent involved “more adjustment and articulation to each other, than an overall transition.”¹¹³ Thus, the social formation in Morocco “is a composition of a segmented stratification, and stratified segmentation.” He claimed that “the segments lead an old fight” while “social classes will lead the future struggle.”¹¹⁴

While discussing the validity of the segmentary versus the dyadic model among the Imin-Tanout in the South in the 1970s, Combs-Schilling offered a new perspective on the significance of the segmentary versus dyadic ties. Drawing on ethnographic research Combs-Schilling argued that interpretations of the importance or irrelevance of segmentation varied due to the historical period and location under investigation. She argued in the context of rapid industrial change and uncertainty in the 1970s, segmentation remains an important underlying conceptual model but dyadic ties took precedence.¹¹⁵ She showed how between the 1960s and the 1970s Imin-Tanout’s emerged as a commercial center, in which livelihoods and family arrangements were being transformed. “The men who were the town’s merchants in the 1970s, were in the 1960s small-scale farmers in the countryside.”¹¹⁶ As these men moved into town, they left their extended family households and formed nuclear ones. Despite the geographic mobility of men Combs-Schilling argued that segmentary ties remained a very important social and economic asset, providing enduring and stable long-term bounds that “are less

110. Ibid.

111. Ibid., 324.

112. Pascon, *Le Haouz de Marrakech*, 20; see Kenneth J. Perkins, “Capitalism and Agriculture in the Haouz of Marrakesh,” *Middle East Journal* 42, 1 (1988): 117.

113. Perkins, “Capitalism and Agriculture in the Haouz of Marrakesh,” 117.

114. Pascon, “Segmentation and Stratification dans la société marocaine,” 116.

115. Combs-Schilling, “Friend in a Moroccan Boom Town,” 668-9.

116. Ibid., 666.

dependent upon quid pro quo calculations.”¹¹⁷ Given the continuing long-term importance of segmentary patrilineal ties, Combs-Schilling contended that segmentary patrilineality continued to exist as “a basic sociocultural definition of the nature of the world” while the opposite held true for dyadic ties.¹¹⁸ As this debate over segmentation versus dyadic forms was raging in the 1970s, an indigenous local science was emerging within new paradigms, the main of which is class development, and modernization.

The Birth of an Indigenous Social Science

In the first decade of Moroccan independence sociological inquiry grew at the nexus of postcoloniality, Marxism and development. Central to this decade are questions of modernization of “traditional” and rural structures, due to the influential work of Paul Pascon.¹¹⁹ Pascon described the Moroccan society through the Marxist notions of “social formation,” “mode of production,” and “class conflict.”¹²⁰ The notion of social formation refers to the Moroccan society as historically constituted through the penetration of capitalist economy and mode of production based on the creation of waged labor and the exploitation of the peasants as a laboring class.

Studies argued that the dominance of Marxist paradigms in early domestic studies produced a “holistic approach”¹²¹ to the society, which according to Chekroun impacted the formation of family studies. The latter were relegated to the realm of the “particular” (the family) or the “personal” (the individual), both viewed as “diverting attention from (the collective) class struggle.”¹²² The scarcity of studies on the family during this first decade of the independence of Morocco was also shaped, Chekroun argued,¹²³ by developments in French sociology in which the family had remained marginal up to the 1970s, and by the close ties between domestic and French scholarship.¹²⁴

Early investigations of family structures carried the mark of the colonial legacy and paradigms. Chekroun pointed to the binaries of tradition/

117. *Ibid.*, 660.

118. *Ibid.*, 669.

119. See Rachik, Hassan et Rahma Bourqia, “La sociologie au Maroc: Grandes étapes et jalons thématiques,” *Sociologies*, (2011): <http://sociologies.revues.org/3719>; Mohamed Tozy, “Paul Pascon: Un pionnier de la sociologie marocaine,” *Sociologies*, (2013): <http://sociologies.revues.org/4322>

120. Pascon, *Etudes rurales*, 202-6.

121. Rachik and Bourqia, “La sociologie au Maroc.”

122. Chekroun, “Al-‘āila ka mawḍū’,” 37.

123. *Ibid.*,

124. *Ibid.*, 36-37.

modernity, extended/nuclear and patriarchal/modern, which dominated early family studies in Morocco.¹²⁵ A case in point is Radi's study which restated the patriarchal nature of the family, and attested to its disintegration.¹²⁶ Chekroun¹²⁷ contested Radi's model¹²⁸ based on what Chekroun called "a de-contextualized and ahistorical use" of the "patriarchal family," as an "ideal type."¹²⁹

Chekroun rejected both the "abstract" notion of patriarchy, and the Parsonian model of sex roles that inspired Radi's approach.¹³⁰ He attested that the nuclear family was not a dominant form, despite the changes brought by urbanization. Though Chekroun stated the importance of family-based social networks among the city inhabitants, he saw Kinship as both a "symbolic" referent and a "family imaginary"¹³¹ in the sense that members of a group "imagine" their families and selectively "include or exclude members" from that imaginary, according to their social and economic position.¹³² Kinship was then not necessarily about blood ties but could also work as a social distinction, a system of indicators, about one's class and social location in the city hierarchy.¹³³

Gender Hierarchies and Differentiations

The earliest investigations about women's place in the family appeared in *Bulletin Économique et Sociale du Maroc*.¹³⁴ Working within the framework of Pascon's rural development, and feminist sensibilities, this group conducted fieldwork with women to uncover the "social mechanisms by which sexual differentiation take place."¹³⁵ The research included 90 families, one third of which was composed of women from poor and middle-income families.¹³⁶

What is striking about this early study is the level of feminist reflexivity about fieldwork, representation, and voice. The researchers expressed concerns about the way in which peasant women would endorse or rather

125. Abdelwahd Radi, "L'adaptation de la famille au changement social dans le Maroc urbain," *Bulletin Économique et Social du Maroc* 135 (1977): 37.

126. Radi, "L'adaptation de la famille au changement social," 18.

127. Chekroun, "Al-'āila ka mawḏū'."

128. Radi, "L'adaptation de la famille au changement social."

129. Chekroun, "Al-'āila ka mawḏū'," 46.

130. *Ibid.*, 42.

131. *Ibid.*

132. *Ibid.*, 43.

133. *Ibid.*, 42.

134. Belghiti, Chraïbi, Tamou, "La ségrégation des garçons et des filles à la campagne;" Belghiti, "Les relations féminines et le statut de la femme."

135. Belghiti, Chraïbi, Tamou, "La ségrégation des garçons et des filles à la campagne."

136. *Ibid.*, 82.

reject the presence of the researcher, and analyzed peasant women's resistance to being "ethnographiées," and becoming the objects of the ethnographic gaze.¹³⁷ Rather than offering an analysis of the interviews, the researchers laid out for us the questionnaire's themes in tables without much intervention to explain. In another study, Belghiti conducted interviews with women in three villages of Tassaout to explore gender differentiations in land tenure, political positions inside of *Jma'a* (local assembly), and economic activity of men and women.¹³⁸ The author used both quantitative and qualitative methods, including biographies, questionnaires, observations and statistical analysis to explore the factors that impact the status of women. She pointed to the various forms of segregation faced by women within the household and in the community at large. "Women are missing from the Quranic schools, they rarely received their share of inheritance, are rarely property owners and have no access to the commons," stated Belghiti.¹³⁹ The author noted that labor was very gendered, for instance while cultivating the land was mainly a male activity, weaving and artisanal work were exclusively female activities.¹⁴⁰ Even women were free to undertake market activities; their presence was both minimal and marginal.

Despite all the discriminations that women faced within these communities, their range of activity was very wide. They worked in the land, wove clothes and carpets, and performed the house chores. But their contribution to work in the land was perceived negatively, as an indicator of a low social status.¹⁴¹ Class, but also sex and age, regulated a strict division of labor. For instance, little girls would often perform the tasks considered less important, including the house chores, carrying water, and bringing fuel-wood for cooking.¹⁴²

These factors of differentiation were not stable, however. Age also provided women with more freedom in both their movement and activities. Marriage and procreation facilitated their entry into women adult's circles, and authorized their investment into fashion and cosmetics.¹⁴³ As they got older, women were respected healers and midwives who were not secluded but who moved around freely and intermingled with men.¹⁴⁴ Belghiti used

137. Belghiti, Chraïbi, Tamou, "La ségrégation des garçons et des filles à la campagne," 84.

138. Belghiti, "Les relations féminines et le statut de la femme," 290.

139. *Ibid.*

140. *Ibid.*

141. *Ibid.*, 360.

142. *Ibid.*, 290.

143. *Ibid.*, 295.

144. *Ibid.*, 291.

seclusion in the meaning of “a system of restrictions on women’s bodily circulation within a geographical space and her evolution in a given social space.”¹⁴⁵ She contended that seclusion limited the possibility of change in the women’s status. Paradoxically, and because of its class-base, seclusion also provided women with a higher social status. “The least contact a woman has with the outside world, the more prestige she enjoys within her community,” stated Belghiti.¹⁴⁶

Symbolic Versus Material Power

Focusing on women’s decisional power, Martensson explored changing sex roles in the context of industrialization, in the end of the 1960s.¹⁴⁷ She interviewed a population of 586 women living in the capital city Rabat and posited that decision-making power is greater among women from the upper social categories and smaller in the lower ones. She contended that certain elements of the traditional family structure survived more in the middle and upper social strata, where there is an interest in keeping them, i.e.; patriarchal authority, division of space, age and sex hierarchies.

Paradoxically, while this matrix of authority persisted, according to Martensson there is also a growing opposition to it among the youth and the most educated men and women¹⁴⁸ who claimed more rights for women, notably to education.¹⁴⁹ It is among the lower social socio-economic categories that the “nuclerization” of the family was taking place in the city, notably among the migrant population. Martensson examined the impact of migration to the city on rural women’s changing socio-economic status. She concluded that the social and economic condition of these women deteriorated because they lost the contribution they used to make to the rural subsistence economy.¹⁵⁰ On the other hand, because of economic hardship faced by these new city dwellers, women usually sought a waged job, which enhanced their economic position in relation to their husband.¹⁵¹ Though the “traditional ideology” concerning the family and women’s place persisted among these categories, women’s access to a paid job provided them with more rights and decisional power in the family.¹⁵²

145. Ibid., 297.

146. Ibid., 361.

147. Mona Martenson, “Rôles de sexe dans la famille à Rabat: Pouvoir de décision de la femme dans le domaine domestique,” *Bulletin Économique et Sociale du Maroc* 138-9 (1979): 85-103.

148. Martenson, “Rôles de sexe dans la famille à Rabat,” 87.

149. Ibid.

150. Ibid.

151. Ibid.

152. Ibid.

In contrast to Martensson's liberal and modernist understanding of decision-making power, Chekroun highlighted women's symbolic power. He rejected Martensson's claim that illiterate women have a low decision making power within the family¹⁵³ by stressing the "strategies" that women used "for the reproduction, dissemination and interpretation of a feminine culture," which provided them with a lot of authority and influence in their own communities.¹⁵⁴ Linking the reproduction of a what Chekroun named a "feminine culture,"¹⁵⁵ to women's revenue-generating activities in the late 1940s and early 1950s, Salime¹⁵⁶ proposed that these activities were also contributing to several aspects of symbolic, social, and economic reproduction and change¹⁵⁷ explored the way small businesses created and run by migrant women to the cities, and by former slaves were responding to the specificities of social organization of Bourgeois life style and how these women mediated the reproduction of social norms within these bourgeois families in Fez city.

Shifting the paradigm of power from the meso-level analysis to the nation-state, as a new framework for studying women's power, Mernissi argued that the traditional power of the patriarch was being supplanted by the power of the welfare state.¹⁵⁸ She showed how capitalist transformations that had led to the increased mobility for men in search for jobs had removed the agricultural base that underscored the extended family networks and affected the tribal ties that secured patriarchal power. Mernissi contended that the large bureaucratic state had taken on the role of caregiver by providing education, health care, and employment previously held by the patriarch.¹⁵⁹ In addition, she saw women emerging as agents of dialogue between public services and the family, a role previously held by men. The transition from an agricultural to a technological economy, led to the collapse of "previous sexual roles and authority patterns [...] and the emergence of a new family authority to whom wife and husband bow equally, the civil servant, the bureaucratarche."¹⁶⁰

Ghemires's findings did not confirm this reliance on the developmental state that Mernissi upheld.¹⁶¹ Ghemires claimed that the "family is still the

153. Chekroun, "Al-'āila ka mawḍū'," 47.

154. Ibid., 48.

155. Ibid.

156. Zakia Salime, "l'Entreprise féminine à Fès, une tradition," in *Initiatives féminines*, éd. Aicha Belarbi (Casablanca: Le Fennec, 1999).

157. Salime, "l'Entreprise féminine à Fès, une tradition," 31.

158. Fatema Mernissi, "The Patriarch in the Moroccan Family: Myth or Reality?" in *Women's Status and Fertility in the Muslim World*, ed. James Allman (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1978), 313.

159. Mernissi, "The Patriarch in the Moroccan Family," 325.

160. Ibid., 328.

161. Naima Ghemires, "Approche démographique du couple au Maroc," in *Couples en question*, éd. Aicha Belarbi (Casablanca: Le Fennec, 1992).

central unit of reproduction, socialization, and production.”¹⁶² She extended the meaning of the term “family” from kinship, to other ties gained through marriage.¹⁶³ She showed how several members put their resources together in what she called “complex families,” 42 % of which live in cities, and 80% of which are still headed by a man.¹⁶⁴ Complex families are ones where many members live together in a single household (aunts, married siblings, grand-children, cousins and so on). Ghamires’s study supports Chekroun’s rejection of the binary nuclear/extended family types that characterized most studies about urban transitions, and which posited the dominance of the nuclear type in urban settings.

As I conclude this section, I want to bring to the debate Pascon’s notion of “composition,” that I have introduced earlier. Pascon suggested it as a way out of the binaries of modernity versus tradition, which travelled across studies of social transitions in Morocco, including studies of the family.¹⁶⁵ Pascon, saw the family as site in which co-existed side by side “working class members, peasants, artisans, small business owners, intellectuals and unemployed.”¹⁶⁶ Discussing Pascon’s contribution, Perkins suggested that the notion of composition provides a novel way for looking at social change in a less linear fashion.¹⁶⁷ Emerging feminist studies in the 1980s, did not necessarily engage with Pascon’s paradigm, or with Khatibi’s post-colonial critique. They nevertheless put the family at the center of their inquiry providing the largest debate about this institution, through new feminist paradigms articulated around the notions of citizenship rights, equality, and gender oppression, among others. I will now explore this literature.

The Feminist Turn

Gender and Labor

The 1980s and 1990s saw a proliferation of publications about gender as a new lens to study family dynamics due to the importance of the debate about reforming family law. In *Doing Daily Battle*, Mernissi used labor as an entry to challenging the definition of women as dependent housewives in the family law.¹⁶⁸ She used life stories of women interviewed in the late 1970s and early

162. Ghemires, “Approche démographique du couple au Maroc.” 14.

163. Ibid.

164. Ibid., 17-18-19.

165. Pascon, *Le Haouz de Marrakech*; see Perkins, “Capitalism and Agriculture in the Haouz of Marrakesh.”

166. Pascon, *Le Haouz de Marrakech*, 116.

167. Perkins, “Capitalism and Agriculture in the Haouz of Marrakesh,” 20.

168. Fatema Mernissi, *Doing Daily Battle: Interviews with Moroccan Women*, trans. Mary Jo Lakeland (London: The Women’s Press Limited, 1988), 7.

1980s, in the city of Rabat. Mernissi wanted to disrupt the male's discourse on "beauty" and "sexuality," as the main definer of womanhood, by focusing on women's labor and their economic contribution.¹⁶⁹ In the introductory pages of the book, Mernissi claimed that regardless of their socio-economic status, women were at the throws, rather than on the sidelines, of development.¹⁷⁰ Middle class women were earning education and entering professions and lower class women were becoming heads of households, because of men's unemployment, their absence or their migration.¹⁷¹

In her study *Le salaire de madame*, Belarbi also focuses on women as economic agents in the city of Rabat.¹⁷² Her interviews included ninety people from both sexes, one third of which was composed of women. Belarbi's respondents came from various socio-economic and educational backgrounds. The study showed the contribution of women to the labor market, the challenges they faced, and the changes they brought to the family structure and dynamics. Belarbi argued that "women's access to wage labor is the most important change that took place in Modern Morocco."¹⁷³ Shifting the lens to the informal market, social psychologist Benabdenbi contended that the informality of women's labor was in fact "rehabilitation,"¹⁷⁴ a re-negotiation of women's place in a changing society.¹⁷⁵ To put it differently, it was a form of inclusion/exclusion that enabled women to access jobs while remaining tied to the traditional sectors of production (reproduction, care work, secretaries, and sexual jobs).¹⁷⁶

Benradi-Khachani examined female labor in the artisanal sector, specifically in the carpet-industry. She conducted her study both in a private business and a state-run artisanal cooperative, in Fès. Her study included 150 female employees within the age category of 15-25-year old, 59% of whom live in "precarious" housing, most come from large families of working-class background.¹⁷⁷ Benradi-Khachani linked the socio-professional structure of women's labor to the integration of the Moroccan economy into the international market.¹⁷⁸ She argued that while the economy was progressively

169. Mernissi, *Doing Daily Battle*, 1.

170. *Ibid.*, 7.

171. *Ibid.*, 2.

172. Belarbi, *Le salaire de madame*.

173. *Ibid.*, 5.

174. Benabdenbi, "Histoire de couples."

175. *Ibid.*, 65.

176. *Ibid.*, 66.

177. Malika Benradi-Khachani, "La jeune fille dans l'artisanat: Vécu et aspirations," in *Être jeune fille*, éd. Aicha Belarbi (Casablanca: Le Fennec, 1994), 17-18.

178. Benradi-Khachani, "La jeune fille dans l'artisanat," 15.

moving away from family-run production, low-income families were increasingly dependent on women's low-wage jobs in marginal sectors.¹⁷⁹ The carpet-making industry, viewed as an important source of foreign currency, had drawn large numbers of women and benefited from a number of protections and legal allowances, which gives it enough leverage to exploit these workers.¹⁸⁰ Benradi-Khachami showed that with the exception of the *m'aalma*, subcontracting woman, these young workers did not come close to making the minimum wage,¹⁸¹ for long hours of work in very poor conditions.

Women's agentic representations of their work place, was also subject of study in the 1990s. Cairoli looked at how women change the factory into something more familiar by drawing on their kinship representations. The author drew on a three-month ethnographic study of the garment industry in Morocco, and concluded that, "workers sought to imbue the factory with their most cherished cultural values, thus transforming the factory rather than allowing the factory to transform them."¹⁸² Through this process, "the factory becomes a uniquely Moroccan space, and workers find meaning in their labor there,"¹⁸³ Cairoli concluded.

Representations

Exploring "culture" and representations as they relate to women's place in the Moroccan society, was an important contribution of gender analyses in the 1980s and 1990s. Sociologist Abdessamad Dialmi questioned gender representations in mainstream religious discourse. He claimed that the theologian transformed the dual relationship men/woman into a "quadripartite" relationship "between a man, a woman, God and Satan."¹⁸⁴ According to this perception, "the woman object of desire represents a danger for the Muslim because of the temptations he is subjected to, and which distract him from the love and worship of God."¹⁸⁵ Other studies point to the way in which women indeed internalize this patriarchal order and their stated inferiority, in a way that affect their power and agency.¹⁸⁶

179. Ibid.

180. Ibid., 16.

181. Ibid., 19.

182. M. Laetitia Cairoli, "Factory as Home and Family: Female Workers in the Moroccan Garment Industry," *Human Organization* 57, 2 (1998): 181

183. Cairoli, "Factory as Home and Family," 181.

184. Abdessamad Dialmi, *Al-mar'a wal-jins* (Casablanca: Dar al-nashr al-maghribiyya, 1985), 153.

185. Dialmi, *Al-mar'a wal-jins*, 24.

186. Fettouma Benabdenbi, "Histoire de couples," in *Couples en question*, éd. Aicha Belarbi (Casablanca: Le Fennec, 1992); Soumaya Naamane-Guessous, *Au-delà de toute pudeur: La sexualité féminine au Maroc* (Casablanca: Eddif, 1987).

In contrast to this liberal understanding of patriarchy, Mernissi challenged the alleged acceptance of male-dominated representations of femininity and women's place by the women themselves.¹⁸⁷ She delineated three areas where the gender gap in representations is the most noticeable by looking at sex roles, marriage and contraception. She contended that her respondents saw the men as the "weaker sex," not women. Being in charge of their families, and heads of households, working class women rejected the notion of the husband provider, and considered it a "fantasy."¹⁸⁸ These women held a "subversive view of marriage as one of economic and affective equality, rather than one of female subservience."¹⁸⁹ Many women demanded fidelity and refused marriage partners chosen by their parents. They wanted access to birth control in contrast to the "progressive discourse" that rejected "population control" as an "imperialist "intervention."¹⁹⁰ Mernissi's study revealed the gaps between dominant representations of women as housewives and homemakers, and the women's perceptions of themselves, as economic and social agents. The study also highlighted the complexities of women's lives, their own agency as they navigated across the intersecting forces of sex, class, and patriarchal representations.¹⁹¹

Taking the study of representations to the schooling system, Belarbi found indications of change and/or resistance.¹⁹² Instead of witnessing a gender gap in representations, Belarbi claimed that both males and females respondents believed that higher education was important for both boys and girls. Both urban girls and boys attested the right to education, and equal opportunity, in contrast to rural areas where 30% of young girls, and only 5% of boys believed in equal opportunity in schooling and education between sexes.¹⁹³

Legal sociologist Zineb al-Maadi explored the representations of women in "legal texts" and the type of social reproduction these representations generated. Al-Maadi argued that the production of the law is at the same time a production of certain values and norms that worked to organize patterns of behavior.¹⁹⁴ Al-Maadi pointed to the dualism that characterized the Moroccan legal system, which oscillated between discriminatory laws that defined women as "minors" and "dependents" on husbands, and stipulations that

187. Mernissi, *Doing Daily Battle*.

188. *Ibid.*, 7.

189. *Ibid.*, 8.

190. *Ibid.*, 11.

191. *Ibid.*, 20.

192. Belarbi, "La préparation à la vie de couple."

193. Zineb Al-Maadi, *Al-mar 'a baina al-taqāfi wa-al-qudsī* (Casablanca: Le Fennec, 1992), 82.

194. Al-Maadi, *Al-mar 'a baina al-taqāfi wa-al-qudsī*, 18.

men and women were equal.¹⁹⁵ Al-Maadi concluded that the “schizophrenic nature of Moroccan laws is one of the main obstacles to development” since it prevents half of the society from reaching its full potential.¹⁹⁶

The Couple as Unit of Analysis

As the debate about reforming family law was reaching a peak in the 1990s, a group of scholars interrogated the “couple” as a new category of analysis.¹⁹⁷ As a notion, the “couple” is “entangled with marriage,” and enmeshed in “the binary modernity/tradition,” which “dominates the perceptions of family life” Belarbi claimed.¹⁹⁸ Sociologist Bouqar’a explored the discourses that produced these binaries and claimed that men and women’s relationship was enmeshed with a plurality of discourses ranging from mythology to religion and philosophy, all of which sustained the inferiority of women within the couple.¹⁹⁹ Bouqar’a explored theological texts, sufi writings and philosophy, as well as mythological narratives about the meaning of the couple and women’s place in it. He argued that any attempt to modernize gender relationship within the couple would have to engage the variety of these discourses. This will create space for a “sexual equality talk” as a proper discursive field and as an area of inquiry that is not subsumed under the assumption of marriage as an institution.²⁰⁰

Al-Mhifd proposed a class analysis of the couple, which would take into account the changing material conditions of the 1980s.²⁰¹ Socio-economic constraints, such unemployment among educated men, she claimed, favored a more pragmatic, if not opportunistic understating of a couple and marriage.²⁰² Based on her interviews with men and women between the age of 15 and 50 in the cities of Rabat and Kenitra, al-Mhifd pointed to the changing representations of marriage as an act of choice, based on respect and love.²⁰³ She also pointed to the importance of “a good financial situation” as a

195. Ibid., 22, 24, 35. See also Abdelkbir Al-Alaoui al-Mdeghri, *Al-Mar’a baina aḥkām al-fiqh wa-al da’wa ilā al-taghīr* (Al-Mohammedia: Fdala Press, 1999).

196. Al-Maadi, *Al-mar’a baina al-taqāfi wa-al-qudsī*, 31.

197. Aicha Belarbi, “La préparation à la vie de couple,” in *Couples en question*, éd. Aicha Belarbi (Casablanca: Le Fenec, 1992), 69-84; El-Khamar Bouqar’a, “al-Zawjān wal-khitāb: Nahwa waq’ ishkālī jadīd li-mafhūm al-zawjain,” in *Azwāj wa tassāulāt*, éd. Aicha Belarbi (Casablanca: Le Fenec, 1992); Hniya Al-Mhifd, “Dirāsa maydāniyya limushkil al-ikhtiyār dākhila al-azwāj,” in *Azwāj wa tassāulāt*, éd. Aicha Belarbi (Casablanca: Le Fenec, 1992); Najat Razi, “Al-alāqa al-zawjiyya: mawāqif wa ’arā’,” in *azwāj wa tassāulāt*, éd. Aicha Belarbi (Casablanca: Le Fenec, 1992).

198. Belarbi, “La préparation à la vie de couple,” 70.

199. Bouqar’a, “al-Zawjān wal-khitāb,” 32.

200. Ibid., 37.

201. Al-Mhifd, “Dirāsa maydāniyya limushkil al-ikhtiyār dākhila al-azwāj.”

202. Ibid.

203. Ibid., 54.

desirable factor influencing single women's preferences for their life partner.²⁰⁴ Al-Mhifd also noted the increasing rates of divorce, increasing age at first marriage for women, and decreasing fertility rate among women.²⁰⁵ She attributed these changes to education and to the women's work outside of their homes.

Other studies confirmed these findings. Razi conducted interviews with 100 men and women from Casablanca, between the age of 20 and 40.²⁰⁶ She confirmed that 46% of women stated their preference for a good economic condition, as main criteria for choosing a husband, versus 62% of men who stressed beauty as main criteria for their female partner.²⁰⁷ Among her female respondents 86% expressed their wish to form a couple where there is a true partnership, and where the husband "is fully present" in their lives. Work and education enabled women to enter friendships with men, from outside of kinship structures and marital alliances. Her male and female respondents approved at a similar rate (68% men and 69% women) of these relationships "as long as they remained within the framework of work, or cultural and other social activities."²⁰⁸

Benabdenbi interrogated husband and wife's understating of life "as a couple,"²⁰⁹ and found many gaps in the needs and practices of men and women. Neither men nor women referred to leisure time, as time spent together, as a couple. Women saw their sexual encounter with their husband as "time spent together as a couple."²¹⁰ This "time spent together" also occurred exclusively at the men's initiative, the author stated.²¹¹ In addition, leisure time was gendered male, and situated outside of the home, "despite the fact that some men would like to just stay home during their day off."²¹² It is clear that an ideal type informed Benabdenbi's notion of the couple according to which conjugal "life is structured around the notions of togetherness, common interests, love, understanding, and communication [...]."²¹³

Moving the debate about the couple to the marital choices of women, Barkallil and Naciri stressed the "matrimonial strategies" of professional

204. Ibid.

205. Ibid., 52-53.

206. Ibid., 88.

207. Ibid., 88.

208. Ibid., 102.

209. Benabdenbi, "Histoire de couples."

210. Ibid., 61.

211. Ibid.

212. Ibid.

213. Ibid., 62.

women.²¹⁴ They contended that class and social status were still defining factors in the marital choices of this category of women. These choices were characterized by “endogamy,” marriage within the same social category, and “homogamy,” marriage with men having the same educational degree.²¹⁵ Barkallil and Naciri stated a rupture with the traditional spaces within which unions were previously formed, by noting the emergence of new spaces, notably in schools, universities, and the work place.²¹⁶

The Body and Sexuality

In *Beyond the Veil*, Fatema Mernissi argued that the male-dominated interpretation of Islamic texts viewed women’s sexuality and presence in the public space as both disruptive and destructive.²¹⁷ As sexual beings women could generate disorder if their presence in the public space was not strictly regulated and controlled by men. Hamdani focused on the psychological, and health issues associated with teenage maternity.²¹⁸ Her study concerned 108 mothers under the age of 20 who had come to deliver their babies at the hospital, Ibn Sina in Rabat. Most of these young mothers lived in the city, but half of them were from a rural background. 83% of Hamdani’s respondents had little or no schooling. Hamdani conducted semi-direct, face-to-face interviews during the women’s stay at the maternity hospital. She noted that single mothers were less represented in her study because they were less likely willing to reveal their identity.²¹⁹ Hamdani related teenage pregnancies to the lack of sexual education and the taboos around puberty. She claimed that puberty was generally greeted with either negative emotions (fear, shame, confusion), or with indifference.²²⁰

Naamane-Guessous’s study *Au-delà de toute pudeur* transgressed this muting of women’s sexuality.²²¹ The study took place between 1981 and 1984 in Casablanca, and included 200 women from various socio-economic and educational backgrounds. It was a feminist intrusion in the various stages of life, for three generation of women, through the lens of their embodied

214. Nadira Barkallil and Rabia Naciri, “Femmes diplômées du supérieur: Conditions de formation du couple et choix du conjoint,” in *Couples en question*, éd. Aisha Belarbi (Casablanca: Le Fennec, 1992), 44.

215. Barkallil and Rabia Naciri, “Femmes diplômées du supérieur,” 40-42.

216. *Ibid.*, 47.

217. Fatema Mernissi, *Beyond the Veil* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1975).

218. Souad Hamdani, “Trop jeunes pour être mères,” in *Être jeune fille*, éd. Aicha Belarbi (Casablanca: Le Fennec, 1994).

219. Hamdani, “Trop jeunes pour être mères,” 63.

220. *Ibid.*

221. Soumaya Naamane-Guessous, *Au-delà de toute pudeur: La sexualité féminine au Maroc* (Casablanca: Eddif, 1987).

needs and desires, as well as through the prism of social regulation. This was the first study that challenged the taboo surrounding women's menstruation, defloration, hymen and virginity.²²² Naamane-Guessous interrogated the deep-seated social 'norms' about women's bodies and the policing of that body through '*L'hchouma*' a complex signifier that encompasses the meaning of shame, modesty and honor.²²³ She explored the changing representations of the body and sexuality among younger generations of educated women, and the growing importance of "gaining sexual experience" before marriage, for this category.²²⁴ Naamane-Guessous also underlined the "diminishing" authority of "tradition" among these young women and the "strategies" they used to negotiate sexual norms by "faking" virginity through chirurgical intervention,²²⁵ or self-performing abortions.

Sociologist Rahma Bourqia²²⁶ looked at what Fattouma Benabdenbi called the "phallic reign"²²⁷ through the architectural landscape and organization of space in the socially conservative regions of East and North East of Morocco. The author analyzed spatial control over women's bodily movement in relation to the notion of "men's honor."²²⁸ As a "publically determined source of power," masculine honor, Bourqia argued, was "particularly vulnerable and thus must be aggressively protected."²²⁹ According to Bourqia, the architectural landscape of the region, "reflect cultural norms of the family as a source of patriarchal honor and particularly of female submission, domesticity, and protection" even more strongly than do the architectural fabric of other regions of Morocco. The same logic of protection of patriarchal honor was applied to the very fact of home-ownership, to the general spatial segregation of men and women (both in public and in private) which corresponds not only to a desire to separate the sexes but to cultural conceptions of space, as well as to "looking" (*le regard*), to attire.²³⁰ To Bourqia, the veil ""functions as a detour" for "the honor code," so it can manifest itself under a different guise, creating new spaces in a changing landscape that includes greater education and mobility of women, and socio-economic changes that make past patriarchal models difficult or impossible to apply."²³¹

222. Naamane-Guessous, *Au-delà de toute pudeur*, 8, 15, 18.

223. *Ibid.*, 5, 18.

224. *Ibid.*, 46.

225. *Ibid.*, 50, 51.

226. Bourqia, "Espace social, femmes et environnement."

227. *Ibid.*, 66.

228. *Ibid.*, 15.

229. *Ibid.*

230. *Ibid.*, 32.

231. *Ibid.*

Family and Migration

Moroccan migration to Europe raised several issues of about integration family reunification and strategies of return. The 1997 survey on migration by the Netherlands Interdisciplinary Demographic Institute/Eurostat, aimed to explore “the differential roles of family networks and migration culture for migration intention, in a gender context.”²³² Using statistical analysis, the authors drew upon immigration literature that posits three migration types: “the trailing wife, female labour migration, and escape migration.”²³³ The study found gender differences in the way men and women relate to these three types. “For men, it is migration culture that matters” in their decision to leave their country, while for “women, family networks are more important.”²³⁴ This conclusion pointed according to this study, to “the applicability of the theory of cumulative causation for men, and social capital theory for women.”²³⁵ While these early studies emphasize the important of an existing culture of migration in men’s decision to migrate, most recent studies looked at the impact of internal and international migration on the position of women left behind in rural Morocco.²³⁶ De Haas and Van Rooij’s study of household decision making power in the Todgha oasis – a rural area located in the province of Ouarzazate in south-eastern Morocco – aimed to assess how internal and international migration of men has affected the daily activities of women left behind. The research is based on an analysis of survey and qualitative data collected between 1999 and 2005 in this region. The authors argued that, “as gender inequalities shape decisions on access to migration and remittances, the same inequalities are also likely to have an impact on the intra-family allocation of social and financial remittances.”²³⁷ The authors showed that “out-migration of men tended to have negative consequences for the autonomy of spouses left behind if they followed the traditional pattern of continuing to live within the extended family households of their in-laws.”²³⁸ One of the reasons is that “in extended family households, remittances are rarely sent directly to the migrant’s wife, but to one of the men in the household, such as the father-in-law or a brother-in-law.” The authors

232. Liesbeth Heering, Rob van der Erf and Leo van Wissen, “The Role of Family Networks and Migration Culture in the Continuation of Moroccan Emigration: A Gender Perspective,” *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 30, 2 (2004): 324.

233. Heering, van der Erf and van Wissen, “The Role of Family Networks,” 335.

234. *Ibid.*

235. *Ibid.*

236. Hein De Haas and Aleida Van Rooij, “Migration As Emancipation? The Impact of Internal and International Migration on the Position of Women in Rural Morocco,” *Oxford Development Studies* 38, 1 (2010): 43-62.

237. De Haas and Van Rooji, “Migration As Emancipation,” 3.

238. *Ibid.*, 11.

also show how the conflicts over remittances between the wives and their in-laws “stimulated the “lifting out” of nuclear migrant families from extended households.”²³⁹

Discussion

Feminist research contributed to the study of the family through the new framework of gender construction, sexual talk, women’s choices, counter-power and agency, while situating women within the two categories of educated versus uneducated poor. This research showed the way in which geography, culture, class, sex, gender and education have had an impact on family life and types in Morocco. Despite a great deal of interest in the materiality of family life, we can see a general tendency for culturalism. Patriarchy, Islam, tradition and cultural norms, are used as an explanatory framework for the stability of gender hierarchies and differentiations. As we have seen, most studies discussed earlier, also heavily relied on modernist binaries, and liberal notions of “individualité” individuality, and self-realization and choice, among others.²⁴⁰ This is not to diminish the importance of this production that voiced women and highlighted their experiences across geographical, class and sociocultural boundaries. Hajjarabi²⁴¹ described the corpus of research on women as “rich in diversity of approaches and themes”²⁴² but criticized its “static vision of society”²⁴³ in which the modernity-tradition binary prevented the recognition of the complexity of change and the evolution of women’s status. Driven by scholars/activists this literature bears the mark of the political debate-taking place in women’s groups, about reforming state laws, and improving women’s rights. More importantly, during the 1980’s “the formation of a feminine sociology as a scientific field started first with self-affirmation for women as researchers.”²⁴⁴

Early feminist research, she claimed, sought mainly to “understand the working structures of Moroccan society and to valorize women in the framework of a patriarchal ideology.”²⁴⁵ Hajjarabi also argued that the 1970s “were characterized by sociological conformism.”²⁴⁶ Some of the most popular topics of feminist research about rural communities included an examination of

239. Ibid.,

240. Naamane-Guessous, *Au-delà de toute pudeur*; Belarbi, “La préparation à la vie de couple.”

241. Fatima Hajjarabi, “Recherche sur les femmes rurales: Essai de bilan,” in *Femmes rurales*, éd. Aicha Belarbi (Casablanca: Le Fennec, 1995), 18.

242. Ibid.

243. Ibid.

244. Ibid.

245. Ibid., 16.

246. Ibid.

first, the primary role of rural women in the “production and reproduction of their rural communities;” second, their role in the rites of initiation and passage; third, their role as “guardians of the system which legitimizes their inferiority;” and last but not least; the formal and informal powers that women may exercise in a “social fabric” characterized by “complementarity and complexity.”²⁴⁷ Other studies, the author showed, highlighted the importance of “group cohesion in the face of change and innovation,”²⁴⁸ as well as the importance of education “as a claim to general well-being”²⁴⁹ and a factor of social change. It is during the 1980s that the concept of *gender* began to emerge as a research focus allowing for a re-conceptualization of women’s issues.²⁵⁰

I must add that despite the leftist sensibilities of feminist researchers, a critical analysis of capitalist modernity, and an engagement with postcolonial approaches, as well as analyses of the neoliberal transitions of the state, are usually mentioned, but rarely seriously analyzed. The family is utterly patriarchal, ‘tradition’ still shapes the sexual division of roles and labor, and the women are willingly or unwillingly participating to the reproduction of a system that oppresses them. One must keep in mind that this knowledge production took place at the intersection of feminist activism, political debates about reforming family law, and European funding agencies working within the discursive field of modernization, democratization, citizenship and development. Curiously enough, analyses of capitalist transformations and their impact on the family dynamics in the same period came from state-sponsored studies and reports, involving social scientists, state bureaucrats, and the United Nations funding programs in Morocco.

The proliferation of new religious signs in the public space, and the rise of religiosity among the youngest generation of men and women, drew a scholarly interest in studying youth as a new cultural category, since the 1990s. The large demographic base of the youth population in Morocco, the crisis of un-employment and the increasing desire for a middle class life style among urban youth instigated studies about intergenerational dynamics, family relations and socialization, political membership and affiliation, as well as religious sensibilities and nationalist identities. This is the task of the following section.

247. *Ibid.*, 17.

248. *Ibid.*, 18.

249. *Ibid.*, 19.

250. *Ibid.*

Family as “Shelter”

Pascon and Bentahar’s study *Ce que disent 296 jeunes ruraux* (words of 296 rural youth) remains a benchmark of early investigations about youth’s representations about the family in Morocco. In this study Pascon and Bentahar used the technique of focus group, to have a conversation with young males between the ages of 12 and 30. They questioned these young people’s representations about marriage, women, parental authority, the city, work, education, religion, sexuality, hobbies, and friendship among others. As far as the family is concerned, the authors found youth’s representations “much more conventional than their responses about the other themes in which we can see much more criticism, independent thinking, denunciation of injustices, and feeling of marginalization.”²⁵¹ Their representations of the family are embedded, the authors argued, “in religious values of due respect, gratitude and obedience.”²⁵² Young people rarely did openly revolt, or felt the right to rebel. In the opposite, the authors concluded that the family was the last shelter, and main support that these young people can rely on in those deprived rural communities, within which young people still feel accepted and understood.”²⁵³

One decade after his first study of youth, Bentahar questioned the family’s adaptation to the modern world. He interviewed young men and women between 15-30 years old, and found that the “patriarchal family was not adjusting well to structural changes and was challenged by modern education.”²⁵⁴ “Incapable to adjust to modern schooling and unwilling to abandon its traditional and patriarchal modes of socialization,” “the family hindered the necessary adaptation of its members to the modern world.”²⁵⁵ Nevertheless, these tensions between modern and traditional education, were mostly felt among the young people whose responses ranged from rejecting the family and living in the streets, to performing compliance as an avoidance mechanism or full compliance with parental authority considered sacred.²⁵⁶ Despite the ambivalence related to youth’s relations to parental authority, his respondents still perceived the family as the place where preparation and transition to adult life took place.²⁵⁷ Bentahar also noted gender differences in the desire for liberty and freedom of expression. It was among the young

251. See Pascon, Bentahar, et al, “Ce que disent 296 jeunes ruraux,” 1-143.

252. Ibid., 108.

253. Ibid.

254. Mekki Bentahar, *La jeunesse arabe à la recherche de son identité* (Rabat: Al-Kalam, 1989), 78.

255. Bentahar, *La jeunesse arabe à la recherche de son identité*, 81.

256. Ibid., 79.

257. Ibid., 78.

women that these rights were the most acclaimed and upheld.²⁵⁸ Bentahar noted that in their family settings, this freedom of expression was a given for most female respondents.²⁵⁹ This study also attested to the generational gap between the youth and their parents explained by the wider horizon offered to these young people and “their opening on a plurality of values” compared to the parents.²⁶⁰

In contrast to this, Belarbi explored the changing social representations of childhood and socialization,²⁶¹ among Moroccan parents. She argued that young parents “tended to individualize their children,” “wanted to know them as individuals” and “respected their childhood.”²⁶² Parents were beginning to value autonomy at the expense of unquestioned obedience.²⁶³ She concluded that children had more freedom and were better understood than in previous generations. Belarbi’s study also found that the barriers between older and younger siblings were dissolving to some extent, which resulted in relationships that aimed at friendship rather than authority alone. This ideological transformation is particularly pronounced among rural families, who saw it as an opportunity for social advancement and entry into modernity.²⁶⁴

Belarbi called this type of parenting “transitional”²⁶⁵ because it was situated between the traditional family model of socialization, and the modern system propagated by private schools, the media, and certain psychological and pedagogical knowledge. This model is characterized by ambiguity because while the “construction of the child’s identity operates in relation to the parental reference model”²⁶⁶ this model often “lacks a firm foundation, and a coherent application, and contrasts with the more homogeneous model of education offered by schools.”²⁶⁷ Bennani-Chraïbi’s study explored the impact of the media on youth. She conducted her study in 1989 and looked at how the state formation and the emergence of a new economic order, allowed for the emergence of the individual, and decentered the family as an ultimate vehicle of socialization. However, the crises of the “extra-familial” institutions e.g.; school, job market, and the resulting decrease in social mobility, “reinstated the family as the ultimate place of integration”

258. Ibid., 79.

259. Ibid.

260. Ibid., 80.

261. Aicha Belarbi, *Enfance au quotidien* (Casablanca: Le Fennec, 1991b), 113.

262. Belarbi, *Enfance au quotidien*, 127.

263. Ibid.

264. Ibid., 162.

265. Ibid., 126.

266. Ibid., 127.

267. Ibid., 128.

(instance d'intégration).²⁶⁸ According to Bennani-Chraïbi, the family may be functioning as a "compensatory structure,"²⁶⁹ "in which we observe the re-emergence of certain traditions in new forms."²⁷⁰

Bennani-Chraïbi explained the process of autonomization of young people in Morocco – that she named *mutants* – "as a process of coming and going, of *bricolage* which involves decomposition and recomposition of group identity."²⁷¹ She argued that the "paradoxes that characterize this process stem from the dialogue between the nascent individual and the social being."²⁷² Bennani-Chraïbi saw the social behavior of these young people "as a site of experiment and construction of personal norms."²⁷³ In many respects, the author added, "it seems that young people's relationships with their family helps keep them socially integrated and prevents "an anomic mass in total rebellion."²⁷⁴

In her discussion of sexual identity of the young *mutants*, Bennani-Chraïbi contended that the youth's difficulties in social integration, was accelerating changes in the "space of the thinkable."²⁷⁵ She saw evidence of this in the "erosion of traditional values, despite the fact that these values retain considerable importance."²⁷⁶ She claimed, "the individual who emerges in this climate of insecurity hesitates more than ever between the normative and the pragmatic."²⁷⁷ Bennani-Chraïbi confirmed what previous accounts stated about youth's choice for non-confrontational modes of behavior to outright transgression or rupture with the traditional value system.²⁷⁸

In a survey conducted among 865 students in 1995, El Harras examined the role of the family in the transmission of religious values and the formation of religious identity, at a time of significant social, economic, demographic, and political change.²⁷⁹ His students were recruited from various high schools and from the Université Mohammed V in Rabat. He concluded "despite a shift towards a greater individualization and autonomization of social relations,

268. Mounia Bennani-Chraïbi, *Soumis et rebelles: Les jeunes au Maroc* (Paris: CNRS Éditions, 1994), 143.

269. Bennani-Chraïbi, *Soumis et rebelles*, 143.

270. *Ibid.*, 157.

271. *Ibid.*, 23.

272. *Ibid.*

273. *Ibid.*

274. *Ibid.*, 158.

275. *Ibid.*, 118.

276. *Ibid.*

277. *Ibid.*

278. *Ibid.*

279. Mokhtar El Harras, "Famille et jeunesse estudiantine: Aspirations et enjeux de pouvoir," in *Les jeunes et les valeurs religieuses*, ed. Rahma Bourqia et al., (Casablanca: Eddif, 2000).

young students continue to perceive the family as an important site of moral, emotional, and material support due to longer periods of schooling and lack of employment opportunities.”²⁸⁰ While his respondents placed greater value on an informed and individualized choice of religious identity²⁸¹ they still continued to be influenced – consciously or unconsciously – by the belief system and religious practices of their parents. He saw evidence of this in the continuing trust in the family as a site of transmission of “authentic” values.²⁸² However, El Harras saw the family as “doubly paradoxical”²⁸³ for his respondents, who display ambivalence and tension in the negotiations of their religious beliefs and individual identity.²⁸⁴ He attributed this ambivalence to the “construction of a (Moroccan) modernity that places significant importance on the articulation of traditional values.”²⁸⁵

Mohamed Guessous named this paradox “autonomy without autonomization.”²⁸⁶ While young men and women have gained a great deal of autonomy from parents, they nevertheless still bind by certain norms such as patriarchy. Guessous described a gap between active “personal emancipation” (*taharrur*) and the normative, legal and social order that regulated youth’s lives. “The latter are lagging behind the former” he claimed.²⁸⁷ Guessous coined the notion of “disarticulation,” to understand these gaps between the Moroccan family (ies,) and its traditionalist models, and all the other institutions, in a context of swift social changes.²⁸⁸ It is rather through the notion of “articulation” of knowledges, *articulation des savoirs*, that Salime posed the question of socialization during the 1980s.²⁸⁹ Salime conducted an ethnographic study within six families from various socioeconomic backgrounds, living in rural and urban settings in the mid of 1980s. Her study looked at how socialization within the family was shaped by the educational status of the parents and siblings, as well as the notions of “time” and future. The study showed how the various social, economic and symbolic capitals, available to the child affect the type of knowledge that the child put into practice in his/her daily activities and practices. Rather than focusing on

280. El Harras, “Famille et jeunesse estudiantine,” 215-6.

281. *Ibid.*, 216.

282. *Ibid.*, 215.

283. *Ibid.*, 214.

284. *Ibid.*, 215.

285. *Ibid.*

286. Guessous, *Ṭurūḥāt ḥawla al-mas‘ala al-Ijtimā‘iyya*, 84.

287. *Ibid.*

288. *Ibid.*, 162.

289. Zakia Salime, “De la transmission scolaire à la transmission familiale: Modes d’articulation des savoirs chez l’enfant marocain,” (Thèse de Doctorat de Troisième Cycle. Département de Sociologie Université de Toulouse-Le Mirail, 1985).

gaps, Salime's study showed how pre-Teens negotiated and navigated the variety of knowledges and influences coming from the school, the family setting, the peers, the street and the media.

As we have seen, with the turn of the 21st century, research on youth connected the meso-level analysis to the global economic forces shaping youth's lives within family settings and beyond. Most of this research took the form of surveys and was geared toward finding general trends and indicators of social change and sought to discover the mechanisms through which youth were adjusting to macro-economic changes. The rise of religiosity in the public space provided some of these studies with an entry point to addressing issues of identity, Arabism, national belonging and subjectivity.

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دراسات في مواضيع الأسرة المغربية: مراجعة تاريخية

ملخص: أقترح مراجعة الأدبيات ذات الصلة بالدراسات حول الأسرة وذلك بمعالجة هذه الأسئلة. (1) ما هي النماذج الرئيسية التي يمكن من خلالها فهم الإثنوغرافيا الاستعمارية للحياة الأسرية والتنظيم في المغرب؟ (2) ما نوع التحولات التي أتاحتها ظهور العلوم الاجتماعية بعد الاستقلال (المحلي)؟ (3) كيف أدى ظهور التيارات النسوية كحركة سياسية وثقافية إلى تغيير اتجاه مسارات النقاش وشروطه؟ أقترح القيام بهذه المراجعة في هيئة نقاشات داخل هذه المناهج وفيها بينها، مع الإشارة إلى حالات القطيعة والاستمرارية. وعلى غرار أي مشروع من هذا القبيل، فإن توفر المصادر وقيود المكان والزمان، لا تسمح بتغطية مسهبة وأكثر شمولاً. إنني على بينة من أن هذا الاختيار لا يزال غير مكتمل في ضوء الإرث الاستعماري الهائل والتطورات الحاصلة ما بعد سنوات الاستقلال، والقيود المفروضة على البحث الإثنوغرافي. إن العودة إلى صياغة هذه الأدبيات ومراجعتها في منصة ما بعد الاستعمار الأكاديمية، وأعني بها مجلة هيسبريس-تمودا، هو الاعتراف بحقيقة هذه التشابكات وواقعها، على مدى المائة سنة الماضية.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الأسرة، الاستعمار، التحديث، التنمية، الجنس، الشباب.

Études familiales marocaines: Une revue historique

Résumé: Je propose une revue de la littérature des études sur la famille en abordant ces questions: 1) Quels sont les principaux paradigmes à travers lesquels l'ethnographie coloniale a compris la vie familiale et l'organisation au Maroc? 2) Quel genre de changements l'émergence d'une science sociale postcoloniale (domestique) a-t-elle permis? 3) Comment la montée du féminisme en tant que mouvement politique et culturel a-t-elle changé l'orientation et les termes du débat? J'organise cette revue comme des débats entre et au sein de ces approches tout en pointant des ruptures et des continuités. Comme tout projet de cette

envergure, la disponibilité des sources, les contraintes d'espace et de temps, ne permettent pas un exposé plus exhaustif. Je suis conscient que cette sélection reste incomplète au regard de l'héritage colonial colossal et des développements postcoloniaux, et des contraintes de la recherche ethnographique. Présenter cette littérature dans une plateforme académique postcoloniale *Hespéris-Tamuda*, c'est reconnaître la longue durée de ces enchevêtrements, depuis cent ans.

Mots clés: Famille, colonial, modernisation, développement, genre, jeunesse.