10

WOMEN AND PROPERTY IN MOROCCO
OTHER TITLES IN THE SERIES

1. *The Political Organization of Unyamwezi*
   R. G. ABRAHAMS

2. *Buddhism and the Spirit Cults in North-East Thailand*
   S. J. TAMBIAH

3. *Kalahari Village Politics: An African Democracy*
   ADAM KUPER

4. *The Rope of Moka: Big-men and Ceremonial Exchange in Mount Hagen, New Guinea*
   ANDREW STRATHERN

5. *The Majangir: Ecology and Society of a Southwest Ethiopian People*
   JACK STAUDER

   JANE BUNNAG

   ESTHER N. GOODY

8. *Marriage among a Matrilineal Elite: A Family Study of Ghanaian Senior Civil Servants*
   CHRISTINE OPPONG

9. *Elite Politics in Rural India: Political Stratification and Political Alliances in Western Maharashtra*
   ANTHONY T. CARTER
WOMEN AND PROPERTY IN MOROCCO

Their changing relation to the process of social stratification in the Middle Atlas

VANESSA MAHER
Contents

List of tables vii
List of illustrations viii
Preface ix
Note on orthography xi
Introduction 1
1 The background 6
2 Estates, tribal groups and the market today 24
3 Patron-client relations 40
4 How it looks on the ground 53
5 The cultural corollary: education and social stratification 73
6 Religion and social stratification 89
7 Conjugal roles, kinship roles and the division of labour 104
8 Relationships among women 121
9 Fostering 132
10 Marriage 149
11 Marriage and the market 163
12 The position of the bride after marriage 180
13 Divorce and property 191
   Conclusions 222
   Glossary 226
   Select bibliography 229
   Index 235
### Tables, Figures & Map

**Tables**

1. Distribution of land in Morocco  
   *page 34*
2. Muslims in the labour market, by age-groups  
   38
3. Family heads and their wives born within 50 km of Akhdar  
   45
4. Sorting grain: an example of co-operation and patronage among women  
   50
5. Summary of landholding in Aghzim  
   54
6. Householders’ occupation or market status  
   54
7. Occupational structure of men in the town quarter  
   65
8. Housing and amenities in Aghzim  
   67
9. Relation of population to housing in Aghzim  
   67
10. Housing and amenities in the town quarter  
    67
11. Relation of population to housing in the town quarter  
    68
12. Agricultural activity of men and women compared  
    116
13. Articulation of husband’s and wife’s activities  
    118
14. Visiting patterns of women  
    119
15. Distribution of tasks  
    123
16. Distribution of foster-children  
    133
17. Circumstances of various foster-children  
    135
18. Distribution of children fostered voluntarily  
    139
19. Distribution of children fostered in crisis  
    143
20. Circumstances of foster-children at school  
    147
21. Bridewealth and dowry in some Akhdar marriages  
    176
22. Regional origin and divorce rates in the town  
    194
23. Divorce rates in the *ksar* Aghzim  
    194
24. Divorce and remarriage as a function of age: town quarter  
    200
25. Residence of women after termination of marriage: town quarter  
    200
26. Divorce and remarriage as a function of age: Aghzim  
    201
27. Residence of women after termination of marriage: Aghzim  
    201
FIGURES

1 Matrilateral solidarity page 130
2 The integration of the dowered wife into her husband’s agnatic group 188

MAP

Map of the Akhdar region xii
Preface

This study was carried out in three phases: a first year during which I studied Berber and classical Arabic, and acquired a grounding in North African and Islamic sociology and history; I then spent nearly eleven months in the field interrupted by a long period of illness; and finally two years on research and writing a Ph.D. thesis (if the period of illness is included). This book is based largely on the thesis, with quite radical reproportioning, so that the emphasis should fall on women rather than ‘social stratification’. I am indebted to the British Department of Education and Science for a three-year Hayter Studentship, to the Wenner–Gren Foundation for Anthropological Research for a generous field-work grant, to the Faculty of Archaeology and Anthropology, Cambridge, for awarding me the Anthony Wilkin Studentship in 1970–1, and to Girton College, Cambridge, for the J. E. Cairnes Research Scholarship which was generously awarded to me in 1969, 1970 and 1971.

My intellectual debts are many and their value more difficult to measure. I have to thank Dr James Bynon of the School of Oriental and African Studies for a patient and expert introduction to the subtleties of Berber language and culture, and Dr Robin Bidwell of Cambridge who generously opened his entire bibliography to me, commented with humour on some of the preliminary chapters and even acted as my supervisor at one stage. I am grateful too to Commandant Malekot and the staff of the Centre de Hautes Etudes sur l’Afrique et l’Asie Modernes in Paris for making available to me the memoirs written by French administrators of the Protectorate, and to Colonel Guy Boula de Mareuil for giving me the benefit of his immense experience of Morocco. I am indebted to Dr Debbasch of the Centre d’Etudes et des Recherches sur les Sociétés Méditerranéennes in Aix-en-Provence for allowing me to make use of the Centre’s excellent library and for his kind hospitality. I have derived many insights from discussions in the Research seminars at Cambridge, the ‘Sociology of Islam’ seminar at the London School of Economics and particularly in the ‘Anthropology of Women’ group
Preface

established in London early in 1972. While the stimulus and analytical perceptions of many friends and fellow-anthropologists have been invaluable, I would like to thank especially Dr Audrey Richards for her ‘training’, Dr Esther Goody for her encouragement and Anne Whitehead, who read the thesis in draft, for her astute and valued criticism.

My parents heroically visited me in the field, surrounding me with an aura of respectability, and undertaking major haulages of field-equipment. Their comments on how Akhdari society looked to them, and my father’s insights into the agronomic aspect of things were as valuable as their moral support. But there would have been no play without the ‘actors’. My debt in general and in particular to the inhabitants of Akhdar is inestimable, and I will always wonder at the way in which my friends and adopted families took me into their midst with such tolerance and sympathy and ‘told me things’. I have the greatest admiration for the intelligence, imagination and humour with which they live their hard lives.

Finally, I wish to acknowledge a debt of gargantuan proportions to my supervisor, Dr Jack Goody, whose interest, careful criticism and friendship have been a constant source of inspiration, and to thank Mrs Edna Pilmer and Mrs Varney for their painstaking work in typing the various drafts.

V.A.M.
NOTE ON ORTHOGRAPHY

I have used the French transcription for proper names, as is done in Morocco; I have attempted to avoid the orthographic confusion over Berber and Arabic transliteration by keeping as close as possible to the phonetic transcription. I have used the roman capital letter H for the voiced _VO_ and the capital letter T for .digest.

Most of the place-names and personal names are fictitious. However, I have not changed the names referring to cities (e.g. Meknes, Rabat) or tribes.