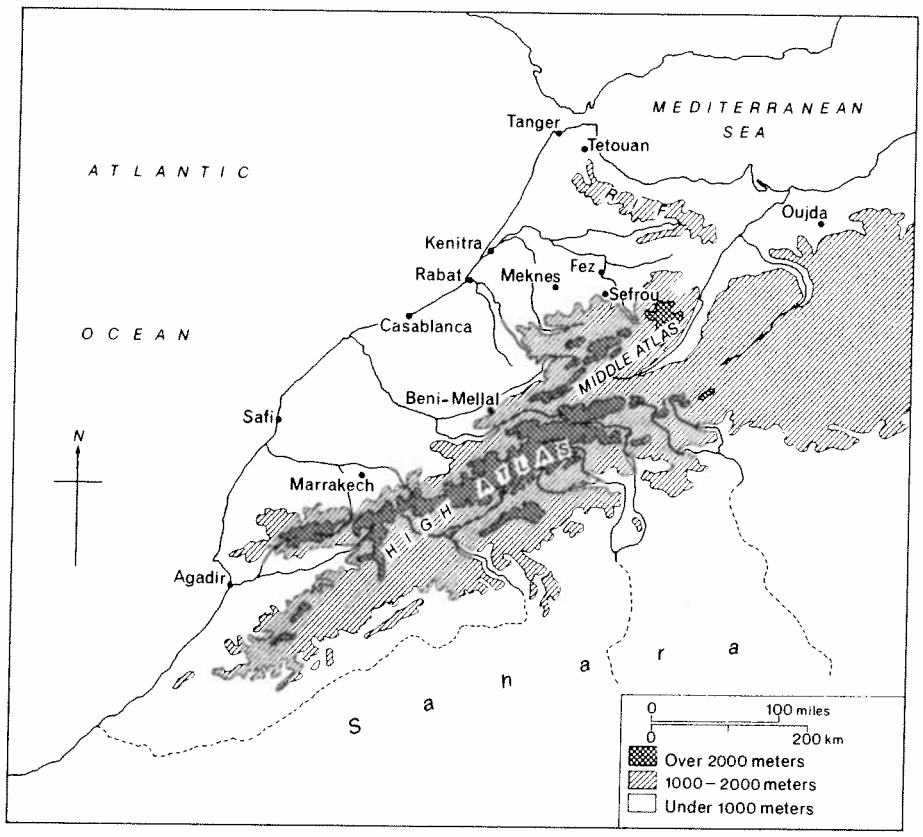
Introduction

The study

The movement of anthropologists toward a concern with complex agrarian societies has accelerated over the past quarter century until now it probably accounts for the bulk of the work in the field. Yet many problems of method, theory, and data presentation remain, and the sense that the classical monograph forms of anthropology – the "people" study (Nuer, Tikopia, Trobriand, Navajo) and the "community" study (Chan Kom, Amazon Town, Ramah, Lesu) – are awkward and ungainly in this context grows steadily deeper. Studies of "the Chinese," "the Brazilians," or "the Arabs," though suggestive, seem to claim too much for local findings; studies of this or that village, town, or settlement as such, though informative, seem caught in a kind of data parochialism. Committed by training and heritage, and in most cases by conviction, to microsociological investigation, anthropologists working in places like India, Mexico, or (the case at hand) North Africa find themselves faced with what looks like a Hobson's choice between dissipating the circumstantiality their narrowed focus provides in order to escape a sense of inconsequence and resigning themselves to adding a few footnotes to broader streams of scholarship in which they play no central role.

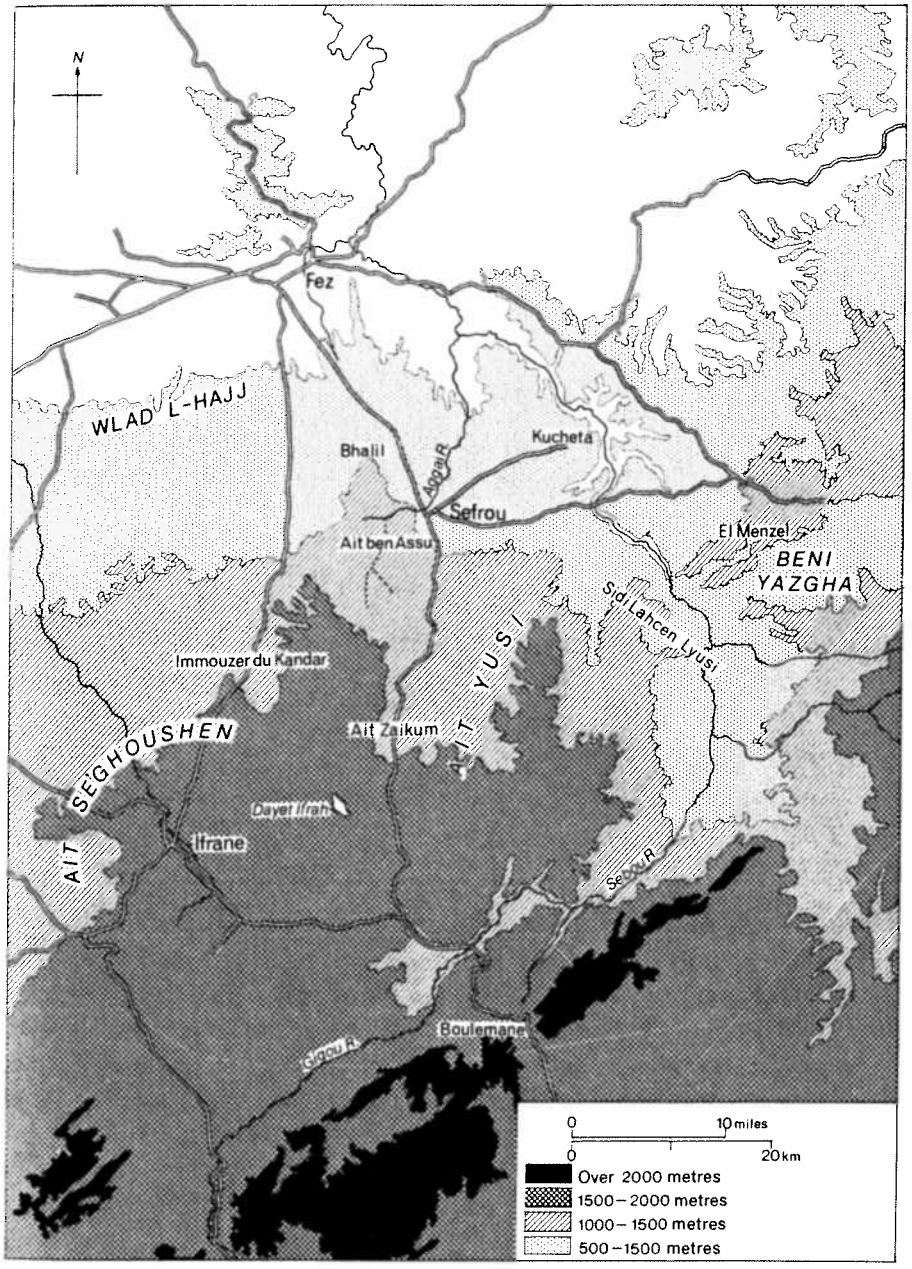
Matters are not, perhaps, all that desperate. Not only do important contributions continue to be made within the older formats that are neither provincial nor globalistic – as witness, so far as Morocco is concerned, David Hart's recent "people" study of the Aith Waryaghar and Kenneth Brown's "community" study of Salé – but a growing number of problem-oriented works – Dale Eickelman's on maraboutism, Vincent Crapanzano's on popular psychiatry, for example – manage to connect local findings with general considerations with great effectiveness.[1] Yet, the search for more adequate ways to render the special contribution of nook-and-cranny anthropological work to the



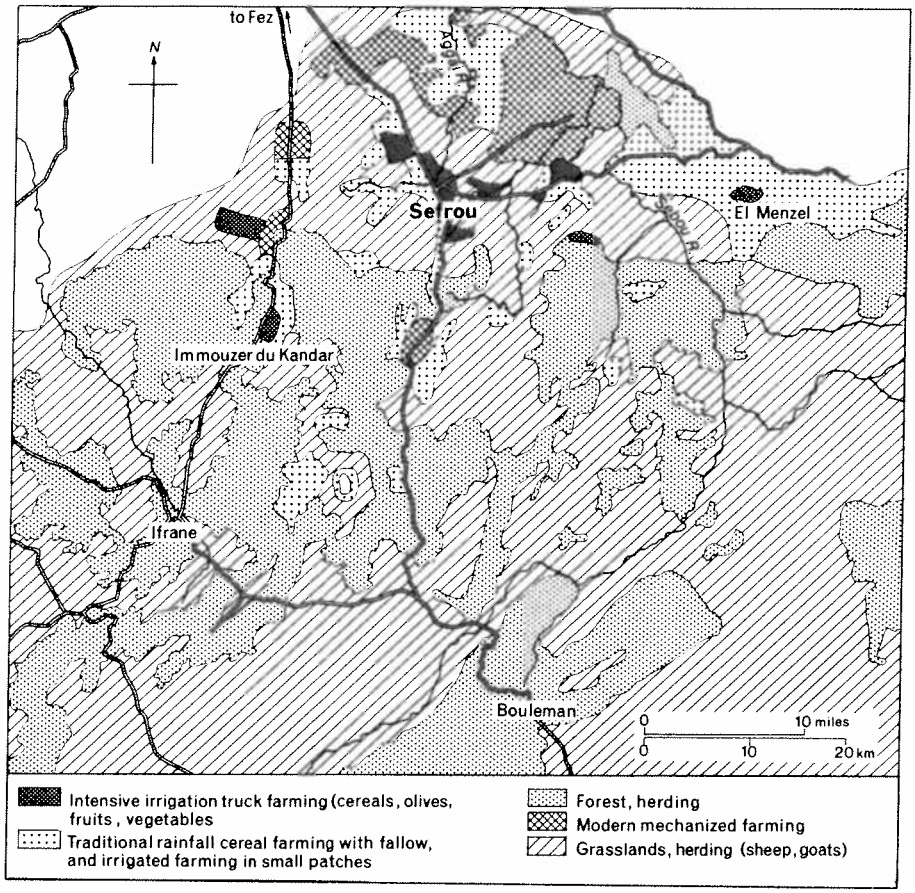
Map 1. Morocco

wider, multidisciplinary effort to comprehend . . . Morocco . . . the Maghreb . . . the Middle East . . . the Third World . . . the Modern World Order . . . continues, because new approaches to new issues in new settings demand them. As in any other field, genres evolve as intentions do.

In such terms, the present work, in its organization and in the assemblage of ideas that in an overall way animates it, is but another attempt, hardly final and in no way ideal, to find a form in which particular facts can be made to speak to general concerns. The research on which it was based was mostly conducted between 1965 and 1971 in a single small-city-and-dependent-environs of north central Morocco: Sefrou (see Maps 1–4). It was carried out by several hands, all of them American and all but one of them associated with the University of Chicago, working in tandem in such a way that their



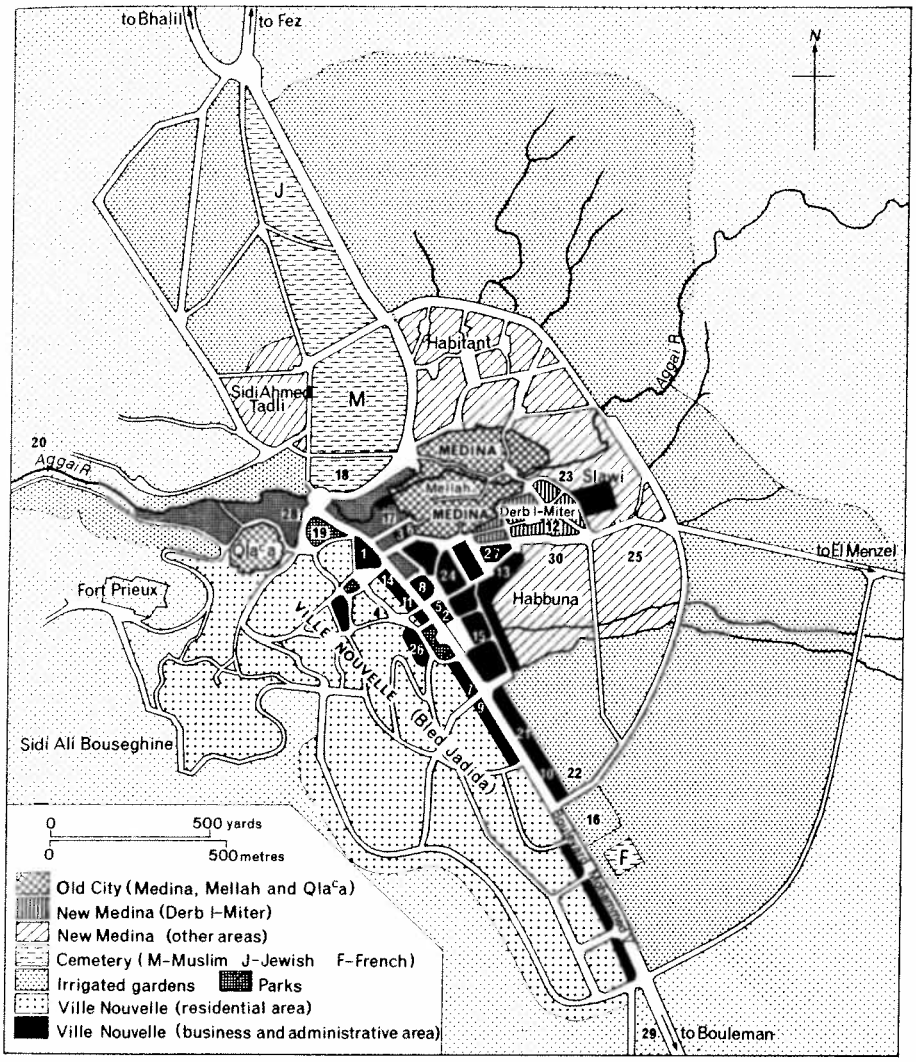
Map 2. The region of Sefrou



Map 3. The region of Sefrou: the economy

stays in the field were arranged in chain-link fashion so as to provide almost continuous coverage during the whole six-year period, without more than one or two, occasionally three, being there at once.[2]

All the researchers sought to gain a general picture of the ecology, economy, history, social structure, and culture of the region, but each also directed his or her efforts toward two or three special topics: Thomas Dichter concentrated on adolescence, youth culture, and the school system; Clifford Geertz on religion, the market, and ecology; Hildred Geertz on kinship and family, the role of women, and oral poetry; Paul Hyman, a professional photographer rather than an anthropologist, on catching the look of the place, its people, and its life; Paul Rabinow on religious, political, and economic life in a particular village; and Lawrence Rosen on urban social structure, law, and



Map 4. The town of Sefrou: major areas. *Key*: 1. Super-Qaid's office; 2. Qaid's office; 3. Pasha's office; 4. Police station; 5. Civil court; 6. Qadi's court; 7. Gendarmerie; 8. Rural tax office; 9. Forestry and irrigation office; 10. Fire house; 11. Post office; 12. Nadir's office; 13. Hospital; 14. Bank; 15. Movie house; 16. Soccer field; 17. Swimming pool; 18. Bus and taxi station; 19. Tennis club; 20. Power station; 21. Livestock market; 22. Vegetable market; 23. Dry-goods and rug market; 24. College; 25. Lycée; 26. Former Jewish school; 27. Jewish school; 28. Public prayer ground (mṣellā); 29. Military barracks; 30. Prison.

Berber village organization.[3] But, though a multiple effort, the work was not closely integrated—a team study in the proper sense. Each investigator worked in his own way on his own problems, and normally alone, and there was, from the very start, no intention—indeed, there was a conscious disintention—to produce a unified, joint report governed by a consensual interpretation of pooled data. This is still the case, and the present book does not represent such a report.

Instead, it represents three separate sorties (four, if as they should be, Hyman's photographs are seen as perceptions, not illustrations) designed to depict the way in which the people of Sefrou relate to one another within a complex structure of historically created cultural symbols. The focus of each essay is different: The first is concerned with the general shape of Sefrou social organization; the second with a single major institution; the third with a particular dimension of everyday life. Different, too, are their scale and purpose: The first is comprehensive and summary; the second, bounded and analytic; the third, thematic and intensive. And so too, their structure: the first, discursive; the second, monographic; the third, systematic. Insofar as they converge, it is in their view of how collective meaning and social order come together in Moroccan life.

What we all hold is not any particular interpretation of any particular aspect of Moroccan society (there are, indeed, some sharp differences among us on a fair number of matters), any overarching "theory of society," or even any shared attitude toward the moral and political implications of what we imagine we have found out (save, of course, that there are some). What we all hold is the view that the systems of meaning, whether highly explicit like Islam or rather less so like hospitality, in terms of which individuals live out their lives constitute what order those lives attain. We see social relationships as embodying and embodied in symbolic forms that give them structure, and we are concerned to identify such forms and trace their impact.

It is in this *"famille d'esprit"* sense only that the following work represents a collective enterprise. As such, it is a product, not merely of the authors of the several essays, or of all of them together, but of all those who worked in Sefrou. Paul Rabinow, who was to have contributed a study of his own but was prevented from doing so by other obligations, was directly involved in the planning of the book from the beginning and has allowed us to incorporate some of his materials in the discussions of ecology and social organization of Sidi Lahcen Lyusi. Thomas Dichter has not been directly involved in this book, but both through his thesis and through extended discussions with those who have been involved, he has contributed importantly to it.

The place

Sefrou is the name for both the city and the countryside that surrounds it. Although finer discriminations, geographical and social, are constantly employed in this extremely variegated region, residents usually apply the generic term *bled* to embrace the whole of it. Ideally, the term means "region" or "locality," and insofar as a locality can refer to a wide range of entities bled can, depending on the context, mean "city" and "country," "town" and "village." But the term bled projects a deeper sense of place than the merely locational: It also conveys a sense of relation between men and the landscape they inhabit. It is the region from which a particular individual or group draws its nurture, its sustenance, its most distinctive traits and ties. To identify someone as being from bled Sefrou – to say he is a "Sefroui" – is to imply those characteristics of manner, knowledge, relationships, and modes of interaction that have come to be associated with it, to connect a "who" with a "where."

This sense of place as an index or source of social identity is more directly implied in the idiom *mūl l-bled* (pl. *mwālīn l-bled*). Mul means "owner," and to speak of someone as mul l-bled, when referring to a given parcel of land, is simply to mean that he has possession or control of that property. But the phrase is also used to refer to the natives of a particular region, the people who characterize – and are characterized by – that place. Virtually every plot of land in the Sefrou region – each garden, field, and irrigation ditch – has a name, and every part of the region has one or more specific designations. To speak of particular individuals or families as mwalin l-bled, however, is to imply that they are the true embodiments of that which is distinctive to the locale, the people who carry its distinguishing qualities with them even when they leave the place or become a minority among the hosts of newcomers. To know a man's origins, the place in which his people are mwalin l-bled, is to know something of the ways he may think, act, and form relationships with others.

Physically, bled Sefrou refers both to the city proper and to the territory for which it constitutes the urban hub. The city of Sefrou is situated near the northern edge of the region just at the point where the foothills of the Middle Atlas Mountains meet the western plain of Morocco. Although the 30,000 inhabitants of the city have important ties to the large metropolis of Fez, which can be reached by a half hour's bus ride to the north, it is toward the south that most of the city's activities have long been directed. Here, in a 30-kilometer-wide strip that cuts through the foothills and plateaus of the Middle Atlas

Mountains, lies the territory of the Ait Yusi Berbers. Nearer to the city are found several larger settlements, among them the saintly complex of Sidi Lahcen Lyusi and the Arab-speaking village of Bhalil.[4]

But to see bled Sefrou as a place on the cartographer's map – a roughly bounded area containing various populations and settlement types – is to miss its true character. Bled Sefrou is really a social space – a network of relationships mediated by markets, public institutions, local identities, and densely interwoven bonds of kinship and alliance. No less importantly, it is a conceptual domain – a perceived set of populations, territories, pathways, and meeting places that are intimately, if not always harmoniously, linked to the nurturance and identity of those who live there. As an indigenous conceptual category, bled Sefrou underlines the interdependency, as well as the interaction, of its component parts. It stresses the conceptualization of the region as an arena within which social life is played out through institutions that crosscut internal divisions of geography and society, even as the substance and course of social life are deeply influenced by the contexts in which its various manifestations are found. So conceived, bled Sefrou also presents itself as an appropriate unit for analysis. It establishes, as the subject of study, a cultural field comprising a number of domains and frameworks within which Sefrouis' own concepts of selfhood and social relationship can be explored for their bearing on the organization of collective life.

The landscape

The interplay of environment and culture is one of the basic themes to which anthropologists have devoted themselves. If their studies have established anything, it is that the environment is no mere given, no neutral constant, no passively endured condition. Rather, it is an integral part of man's life-world, as deeply shaped by social conditions as social conditions are mediated by it. The natural setting is more than a context to adapt to, a store of resources to draw on, or a stage on which the drama of social life is played out; the ways in which a civilization works out its relation to its setting over a long period of time makes the environment a vital aspect of that civilization itself. To explore the irrigation or land use patterns of people in the bled Sefrou is to explore how its inhabitants use the available resources, how they make the resources a part of their own social drama, and how their ecological adaptations relate to other aspects of their culture.

The Sefrou region, like most of Morocco, is characterized by a highly irregular and uncertain set of climatic conditions and a wide

variety of microenvironments capable of responding quite differently to the alterations of the weather. The French, in grand colonial fashion, simply divided the country into "useful" and "useless" Morocco, a distinction that embraced in the former the wheat lands of the nation's western plain and foothill oases and included in the latter the mountains and deserts surrounding them. But Sefrouis themselves draw a finer distinction among three main ecological zones: the plains (*wetya*), the mountains (*jabel*), and the piedmont (*dir*).

Extending back from the Atlantic coast almost to the edge of the Middle Atlas Mountains, the Moroccan plains embrace most of the western part of the nation. As the main wheat-growing section of the country it was the area in which colonial farming was most actively pursued, and the foothills lying at its edge were used as winter pasturage by highland tribes until the French began limiting access to these sites. Although subject to wide climatic variations, the plains afford comparatively good conditions for the intensive cultivation of wheat and barley.

The Middle Atlas Mountains begin immediately south of the city of Sefrou. Although they rise in places to peaks of 3,000 meters, the Middle Atlas are mainly composed of a series of forested hills broken in spots by highland plateaus and small protected valleys. Herds of sheep and goats are grazed throughout the zone, and small-scale farming on the more accessible hills and plateaus is interspersed with irrigated cultivation in many of the valleys. The area is less densely populated than the plains, but pockets of more concentrated settlement exist around available sources of water. Of the 55,000 hectares of mountainous terrain in the Sefrou region, only about 10,000 hectares is cultivable land, and much of this must be left fallow in any given year. Overgrazing and extensive wood cutting have sharply reduced the forests near Sefrou, and erosion has become a serious problem.

Lying between the mountains and the plains is the dir, or piedmont zone. The dir—an Arabic term related to *darra* ("to flow copiously, be abundant") and *dirra* ("breast")—is a zone some 10 to 15 kilometers wide that runs along the foot of the mountains just before they join the plains. Here, springs bubble up from beneath the surface to supply a relatively stable source of water for irrigation and larger concentrations of population. It is within this oasislike zone that all the larger settlements of the area—most notably, the city of Sefrou—are found.

The interaction of these three ecological zones is intimately related to the overall climatic features of the region. The climate of the area is characterized mainly by its variability and unpredictability. For any given feature—temperature, rainfall, hours of sunlight, wind—the

range of variation over a series of years is quite extreme. More importantly, perhaps, the variation within each year can be enormous. The response to this situation–by farmers, herdsmen, and merchants alike–takes the cultural form of a complicated set of strategies affecting all domains of life. Diverse crops are planted within a single garden or field to hedge against uncertain weather and markets; rights to fields or pastures are distributed in various microecological niches to spread the risk of changing circumstances; social ties are formed beyond the bounds of kinship or locality to cope with the whole range of environmental and social uncertainties, religious rituals are employed to coerce supernatural aid against the fluctuation of the elements. All these strategies intertwine and have mutual effects extending far beyond the confines of any simply adaptive solution.

The environmental uncertainties themselves are very real. Take, for example, the variation in temperature for a given month over several years. In June of 1958 the mean temperature varied from 87 to 48 degrees Fahrenheit, a range of 39 degrees in a single month. The following year the range was only 7 degrees (66 to 59); the third year, 19 degrees (85 to 66). Equally large fluctuations could be cited for any other month of the year. Indeed, no significantly predictable pattern emerges over longer spans of time. This is not to say that there is no regularity whatsoever, but only that changes of a magnitude that can seriously affect agricultural productivity occur as a matter of course, and the Moroccan farmer must arrange his affairs to compensate for this unpredictability.

The variation in temperature, which has an impact on growing cycles and evaporation rates, is matched by the more serious variation in rainfall. Because most of the plains and mountain regions are unirrigated, crops are dependent not only on the sheer quantity of rain that falls but, more importantly, on when it comes. Both these factors are extraordinarily erratic. For example, over one five-year period the total rainfall in the Sefrou region varied from 379 to 728 millimeters. In October 1956 there was 7 millimeters of rain; the following October there was 105; and in October of the third year, 55 millimeters. The variation is equally great within and among other seasons of the year. It is no comfort to the Moroccan farmer to say that the average rainfall in October of 1956–8 was 55.6 millimeters because the actual distribution of rainfall could never be even roughly guessed in advance.

The consequences of this environmental variation are diverse. Harvests, naturally, fluctuate considerably as the weather shifts. Between 1952 and 1962 the national output of cereals, measured in millions of

quintals, was as follows: 22, 32, 36, 28, 30, 18, 25, 26, 21, 10, 22. For a country in which a year's harvest of the staple crop can vary over a range of 26 million quintals (roughly 3 million tons), and where the change from one year to the next may be of the order of 100 percent, this is indeed a precarious situation. True, severe droughts and floods occur infrequently, and the availability of foreign aid has eased some of the insecurity. Most important for our present purposes, however, is the fact that the success or failure of crops is itself unevenly and uncertainly distributed over a given region. Adjoining hillsides in the bled Sefrou may have very different yields in a single year, and people have, therefore, arranged their ties and their concepts of the social world in which they live to account for these events.

To say that the environment suffuses social and cultural life is not to reduce the one to a function of the other or to conceive of the natural setting as a thing apart from social life. Tracing the relationships that surround the approach taken by the Sefrou people to their environment, one can see the importance of a town like Sefrou, which is set in the intermediate dir zone and whose steady supply of water and interstitial position makes it a natural entrepöt for the region. Similarly, one can see how the uncertainties of the environment have influenced the interdependence of all three zones, rendering the bled Sefrou an interacting entity in which simple dichotomies of urban and rural possess little explanatory force. Moreover, one can see that although there is no necessary reason why people of the area have adapted as they have, the environment and their view of it are as much a characteristic part of the social being of the Sefrou people as their kinship, their politics, or their religion. Indeed, the relationship of each of these domains and the commonality of many of their defining features are particularly striking.

Situated in the piedmont, between mountain and plain, and surrounded by a wide expanse of irrigated gardens, the city of Sefrou has often been referred to by travelers as an oasis. In many respects its physical design and setting convey an almost storybook vision of a Middle Eastern city. The old city, or *medina,* is surrounded by a high, crenelated wall pierced in a number of places by gates that were formerly used to seal the city off nightly from the gardens and countryside beyond. Within, the city is further subdivided by a number of quarters and byways. Rows of small shops, specialized trade areas, narrow streets lined by the characterless facades of dwelling places, and all those features – mosques, baths, fountains, ovens – that give to this Islamic city its distinctive urban character are found within the walls. With the exception of a small urban sector, the Qlaᶜa, located

just to the east of the medina, Sefrou was, until the beginning of the colonial period, wholely contained within its ramparts.

With the advent of the Protectorate, the design of the city began to change. It was the policy of the Protectorate's first resident general, Lyautey, that the structure of indigenous cities be supplemented, rather than fundamentally altered, by the French presence. Accordingly, a new area, the Ville Nouvelle, was constructed along the eastern edge of the oasis' gardens. This sector now comprises a long street with cinemas, shops, cafés, and government buildings, as well as a number of residential streets lined by Western-style villas. After World War II, several new residential areas were constructed just outside the walls of the old city. These "new medina" areas contain houses of more traditional design, but the streets, laid out in rectangular pattern, are wide enough to carry the automobiles and trucks that are unable to traverse the narrow streets of the medina proper. Many of the residents of these new medina areas are better off financially than those who continue to live in the old city proper, although some of the oldest and most important families of the city still occupy sections of the medina.

The postwar years also saw a substantial influx of rural people to the city. The poorest of these immigrants tend to reside in the mellah, the former Jewish quarter. Those who can afford to often move later into other sections of the city, including a barrackslike set of structures, called Slawi, originally built to house victims of a flood that occurred in 1950.

Physically, then, the city of Sefrou has long been characterized by the presence of those institutions – economic, cultural, and administrative – that could serve as an urban focus for the surrounding region. The waters of the Aggai River and its network of irrigation canals gave to the city a reliable agricultural baseline that contrasts with the more uncertain supply of rainfall available in the countryside. Far from being a totally self-contained unit closed off from the surrounding hinterland, the city of Sefrou is, and probably always has been, thoroughy intertwined with the ecology and the history of the whole region.

The past

Just as their working of the environment becomes an integral part of the culture and organization of a people's distinctive existence, so too their history – seen not solely as a succession of people, places, and events, but as a gradual alteration of patterns, associations, and concepts – is a vital aspect of their characteristic nature. The history of

Sefrou and its region – at least as it bears on an analysis of contemporary social life – situates and indeed serves to explain how the concepts and institutions distinctive to this place in this setting inform the actions of its residents.

The city of Sefrou was probably established in the ninth century, when the founder of Fez, Idris II, is said to have settled there briefly. Not, however, until the latter part of the seventeenth century, with tribal movements and the restructuring of governmental legitimacy, did the Sefrou region begin to crystallize in a still recognizable form. The great Berber dynasties of the eleventh to fifteenth centuries – the Almoravids, the Almohads, and the Merinids – arose from the mountain and desert fringes of the country and, fueled by religious zeal, successively established themselves as the primary forces. Moreover, they helped to establish the pattern of a central government, or *makzen,* that was focused on a few major families and that sought – through alliance and military foray, intrigue and negotiation – to maintain solidity at the center and control over the tribes on the periphery. Regions of governmental control and local independence – *bled l-makzen* and *bled s-sība* – were not, however, geographically defined because constellations of power were numerous, shifting, and not organized along simply territorial lines. Even when makhzen dominance was amenable to actual enforcement – especially in the major cities – it was constantly subject to internal and external pressures. Rather than hierarchical, the pattern of political organization, from this formative period, became horizontal, and the bases of recruitment, alliance, and power were fractionated and multiple.

The period from the mid-fifteenth to the mid-seventeenth centuries was one of great disequilibrium throughout Morocco. European intrusion and the decline of the last Berber dynasty led to the dissolution of the country into a host of competitive, independent centers of power. Partly in reaction to the Christian intrusion on the coast, partly as a result of the threat to Moroccan civilization posed by the Christian recovery of Spain, and partly owing to intellectual influences from the Middle East, there developed throughout Morocco a number of mystical sects, headed by men (called *murābtīn*) conceived to be divinely inspired and divinely propelled. Although the most important of these maraboutic centers were defeated in the latter part of the seventeenth century, the emergent dynastic regimes sought to reestablish the makhzen on a more solid foundation by fusing the moral intensity of the Berber dynasties and the maraboutic centers with claims of legitimacy based on descent from the Prophet Mohammed. Founded in 1668, the still-ruling Alawite dynasty thus incorporated

features of genealogical and charismatic legitimacy while nevertheless constituting a regime that, like its predecessors, was confronted with multiple sources and centers of power and itself only as good as its powers of intrigue and enforcement.

In the early period of the Alawite dynasty, local marabouts continued to threaten the existence of the regime even as they sought to associate themselves with the sources of legitimacy now mobilized around it. In the Sefrou area, for example, a scholar and saint, Sidi Lahcen Lyusi, whose descendants still constitute the main saintly focus of the tribal region surrounding the city, sought to have his own legitimacy as a descendant of the Prophet underwritten by the Alawite sultan.

The seventeenth century was also a period of great movement of the Berber tribes in central Morocco. Propelled, in part, by drought in the Sahara, segments of a loosely organized Berber confederation pushed into the Middle Atlas Mountains and down onto the plains beyond. Separate groupings, hiving off all along the way, settled in the area and engaged the Alawite sultans in battle and alliance as each group sought to establish itself in the area. In the Sefrou region the Ait Yusi tribe predominated, and, like other loosely organized groupings throughout the Middle Atlas, lived in agonistic symbiosis with one another and the settled, mainly Arabic-speaking townsmen of Sefrou and other urban centers.

Contemporary residents of the bled Sefrou are not unmindful of this history, and because many of its institutional features – the sherifian dynasty of the Alawites, the spiritual force of saints, the aggressive individualism of each nodal point in the body politic – are very much a part of their present-day lives, this history is, whether or not they are conscious of its details, very much a part of what they now are. But it is in more recent and more localized events, persons, and periods that the consciousness of the people described in this book was formed, and their delineation of that history points up the contexts in which their own historically based perceptions have been forged.

The decade from 1894 to 1904 is notable to the Sefrou people as the period dominated by Qaid Umar al-Yusi. A Berber from high up in the mountain reaches of the Ait Yusi territory, Umar was one of those rural figures who created a network of alliances of such significance that the makhzen, by officially appointing him as *qaid* ("administrator") of the region, hoped to contain or coopt his power. Umar's appointment followed an all-out fight with a rival Berber contender, after which – in a highly unusual move – he was appointed not only qaid of the region but its urban analogue, *pasha* of the town, as well. His days were those in which caravans still moved through Sefrou to

the Sahara, when almost all the Arab townsmen were engaged in some form of agricultural activity, and when a powerful local figure ratified by a weak central government could control the entire region so long as he was able to keep one step ahead of his ever-present rivals.

The assassination of Umar in 1904 came at a time when the Moroccan government, headed by the ineffectual sultan Mulay Abdel Aziz, was under constant pressure from European intrusion. Beginning with the direct incursion of the French in the Casablanca area in 1907 and continuing until the actual formation of the French Protectorate in 1912, the disarray of the makhzen was reinforced, was part of, the widespread political disorder on the local level. The little makhzen of Qaid Umar and the interlocking relations between tradesmen, agriculturalists, and tribesmen that characterized the economy and social organization of his time, were replaced, in this disorderly period, by a weak form of collegial rule by notable families in the city and the oscillation of rural figures competing for the role Umar had formerly played.

But the arrival of the French had unalterably changed such roles. Establishing a kind of colonial police rule through the pasha Lamouri, the French consolidated their contol of Sefrou and the Ait Yusi territory and, after World War I, gradually began to obtain the best areas on the plains for colonial farms. A separate European quarter was also constructed alongside the old walled city of Sefrou. The early colonial period saw a greater distinction drawn by the French between the city and the countryside and among various sectors of the population than had characterized the area in earlier times. Later, during the high colonial period of the interwar decades, when the technological and economic impact of the French was more significant, the institutional differentiation of city and countryside, Arab and Berber, became even more important. New marketplaces were constructed in the countryside, new administrative boundaries were drawn throughout the region, the population of the city grew as rural people came in search of jobs and education, and an elaborate infrastructure of roads and communications accelerated the contacts of people within and beyond the city and its surroundings.

Already in the 1930s the first elements of modern Moroccan nationalism were clearly in evidence. The attempt to split Berbers and Arabs by means of the Berber Dahir of 1930, which sought to place the Berbers under French rather than Islamic legal jurisdiction, actually reinforced the ties between city and countryside, and the deposition and exile by the French of the sultan Mohammed V in 1953 coalesced sentiment around the nationalist movement. Some rural people worked

with the irregular Army of Liberation, and many of the urban people contributed to the activities of the nationalist political party, Istiqlal. The importance of the Sefrou region to the newly independent government was demonstrated by the fact that, following the return of Mohammed V and the acquisition of national independence in 1956, the pasha of the city, Si M'barek Bekkai, was appointed the nation's first prime minister, and the qaid of the Ait Yusi, Qaid Lahcen Lyusi, was designated the country's first minister of interior.

In the years since Independence the city has grown at an accelerated pace, as rural migrants have sought what schooling and employment are available in the city. Most of the Jews of Sefrou, once a major presence there, have departed since Independence, seeking in the cities of the Atlantic coast and abroad the opportunities Berber immigrants now seek in Sefrou.

Through these periods of rapid but clearly distinguishable change the present inhabitants of the Sefrou region have come to receive and work with the categories and conventions, political forms and cultural concepts that inform their view of their social world. It is not just that the aged remember a time when rival Berber tribesmen shot at one another from the city's rooftops or that today's youths focus their ambitions on obtaining jobs in the national bureaucracy. It is, rather, that the concerns with which the institutions of kinship, marriage, trade, and the like are approached vary with the historical career of the groupings involved, and hence the means by which culture is shared and interpreted within these groupings are linked to the changing circumstances of experience and perception. But for all that, the institutions of social life and the categories of persons and relationships employed remain common among the various generations and segments of the Sefrou population, and it is in the flexible application of these concepts and institutions that the shared distinctiveness of the region is to be found.

The authors of this book caught a particular society in a particular place at a particular time. From that encounter, as unique to us as to those we confronted, we have tried to construct a picture—or, more accurately, a related set of pictures—of what that society is like, how it got to be that way, and, so far as we can figure it out, why. To this last question—unanswerable, unavoidable, and the one by which such enterprises as this are justified—our response has been to conceive of social order as meaningful form and to conceive of meaningful form as embedded in the life, from one angle deeply singular, from another deeply familiar, the Sefrouis live.

Notes

1. Hart, D., *The Aith Waryaghar of the Moroccan Rif,* Tucson, 1976; Brown, K., *People of Salé: Tradition and Change in a Moroccan City 1830–1930,* Cambridge (Mass.), 1976; Eickelman, D., *Moroccan Islam,* Austin, 1976; Crapanzano, V., *The Hamadsha: A Study in Moroccan Ethnopsychiatry,* Berkeley, 1973.

2. The researchers and the periods they spent in the field are as follows: Clifford and Hildred Geertz: summer 1963, general survey by C. Geertz; July to November 1964, Rabat; July 1965 to August 1966 and July 1968 to March 1969, Sefrou; Lawrence Rosen: January 1966 to August 1967 and summer 1969, Sefrou; Paul Rabinow: 1968 to 1969, Sidi Lahcen Lyusi; Thomas Dichter: October 1969 to February 1971, Sefrou. The entire project was conceived and organized by Clifford Geertz. With the exception of Paul Hyman, the photographer, the researchers worked mainly in colloquial Moroccan Arabic and, occasionally, in French.

3. The following studies, directly related to research in the Sefrou region, have previously been published by members of the project:

Clifford Geertz: *Islam Observed,* New Haven, 1968; "The Wet and the Dry: Traditional Irrigation in Bali and Morocco," *Human Ecology,* 1:23–39 (1972); "'From the Native's Point of View,' On the Nature of Anthropological Understanding," in Basso, K., and H. Selby (eds.), *Meaning in Anthropology,* Albuquerque, 1976, pp. 221–37; "Art as a Cultural System," *MLN,* 91:1473–99 (1976); "The Bazaar Economy: Information and Search in Peasant Marketing," *American Economic Review,* 68:28–32 (1978).

Lawrence Rosen: "The Structure of Social Groups in a Moroccan City" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Chicago, 1968); "A Moroccan Jewish Community During the Middle Eastern Crisis," *The American Scholar,* 37:435–51 (1968); "'I Divorce Thee,'" *Trans-action,* 7:34–7 (1970); "Muslim-Jewish Relations in a Moroccan City," *International Journal of Middle East Studies,* 3:435–49 (1972); "Rural Political Process and National Political Structure in Morocco," in Antoun, R., and I. Harik (eds.), *Rural Politics and Social Change in the Middle East,* Bloomington, 1972, pp. 214–36; "The Social and Conceptual Framework of Arab-Berber Relations in Central Morocco," in Gellner, E., and C. Micaud (eds.), *Arabs and Berbers: From Tribe to Nation in North Africa,* London, 1973, pp. 155–73; "The Negotiation of Reality: Male-Female Relations in Sefrou, Morocco," in Beck, L., and Keddie, N. (eds.), *Women in the Muslim World,* Cambridge (Mass.), 1979, pp. 561–84.

Paul Rabinow: *Symbolic Domination: Cultural Form and Historical Change in Morocco,* Chicago, 1975; *Reflections on Fieldwork in Morocco,* Berkeley, 1978.

Thomas Dichter: "The Problem of How to Act on an Undefined Stage: An Exploration of Culture, Change, and Individual Consciousness in the Moroccan Town of Sefrou, with a Focus on Three Modern Schools," (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Chicago, 1976).

4. The area for which Sefrou constitutes an important urban focus also includes a number of other localized groupings, among them the Ait Seghoushen, Beni Warrain, Beni Yazgha, Beni Mguild, Beni M'tir (Ait N'dhir), and those groupings living on the Sais Plain. These groups were the subject of brief, often narrowly limited, inquiries by members of the project.