
INTRODUCTIONS

I. THE VILLAGE

Tagharghist is a village in the High Atlas Mountains of Morocco, a humble cluster of mud and stone houses hand-built over centuries, and currently home to about 200 souls. Like most villages wedged into the creases of the mountains, Tagharghist has long been relatively isolated. Ultimate political control descends from beyond the valley, and there has been consistent emigration for work and study, but relatively few resources from the outside have seeped back in. The villagers built their own dirt road in 1995 to try to change this. It is a total of 17 kilometers along this road from Tagharghist to the junction with the paved tarmac at Ijoukak, and from there another 90 winding kilometers down to Marrakech. With the arrival of the road, trucks were able to access the upper reaches of the valley. This has encouraged villagers to grow market crops, especially fruit. The road also makes it easier to reach the medical center at the base of the valley, since you no longer need to ride a mule. The villagers capped a spring to bring drinking water to the village in 1999, and that same year a government school began its first kindergarten classes. Cement canals, solar power, and solar hot water in the mosque followed. Electric lines arrived in 2010, and now health teams periodically come through to do immunizations, though no patient records are kept, and despite some improvement the village remains largely illiterate.

Today the people of Tagharghist still produce most of their own food, principally barley, which they plant in an intricately irrigated system of over 1,400 terraces. They also grow maize and other animal fodder, some vegetables, and they harvest walnuts, almonds, and olives in good years. Young men graze small herds of sheep and goats in the surrounding mountains, and many people augment the subsistence economy by selling labor, especially that of their children, to less-poor Moroccans who live in the city. The new road and installation of cell phone towers make it easier to track migrants and ensure their wages return to the village. With the money remitted by emigrants, village households can upgrade their meager purchases of plastic shoes and second-hand clothes to luxuries like dentures, spectacles, and gas stoves. Some have even purchased satellite dishes, video disk players, and battered televisions. These are becoming more popular now that power lines and meters have been installed.

Despite these transformations, Tagharghist remains a quiet place. Small trucks rumble through a few times a day, and occasionally someone will fire up the diesel-powered grain mill to turn a huge sack of grain into bags of flour. The putt-putt of the machine echoes through the valley, a raucous substitute for the defunct water mill down in the river. Five times a day the call to prayer lofts from the roof of the mosque, drowning the sputter of a radio or girls ululating as they haul wood or fodder. The younger children squeal as they careen along the village paths, chickens scatter, goats gargle officiously as shepherds cajole them to their evening paddocks. Cows low mournful and impatient in their dark cells beneath the houses. The irrepressible wind wraps itself around everything, whistling through the pane-less windows of the village and across the denuded slopes. Beneath everything is the throb of the river as it winds past the boulders in the depths of the canyon.

I lived in Tagharghist for much of 1998 and 1999 and I have returned almost every year since then. I have watched buildings go up and some fall down, children grow up and marry and have children of their own, and old people (and some young people) die. I have come to care about the place. I am an anthropologist, and part of my job involves explaining what goes on in this village. However, this book is not exactly about that, about my professional responsibility to track and publish what is happening. This book aims to reveal this place in a different way, through the eyes of another—or the lens, really—of the photographer Bart Deseyn.

II. THE PROJECT

I met Bart in 2007 in Marrakech. He had emailed me with evidence that he knew my writing, and something about anthropology, and he showed me his previous work on Berber communities. His photographs immediately impressed me, but I have never liked photographers very much—or at least the *act* of photography. Few anthropologists do. There is something intrusive about a camera stuck in people's faces, the aiming of a thing that looks like a gun at people who cannot escape (Mueggler 2011:57, 174). Photographic subjects look vaguely traumatized, caught—at least if you let them know you are making a photo of them, which many photographers seem to try to avoid. Moreover, most photography books on Berber communities render the people as exotic, from a mythical time, with bright costumes (or veils) on the women, luridly colored carpets, and every hint of modern life carefully cropped from the scenes. I can understand why such books sell. They are alluring. The “indigenous” feels more authentic without the rusting sardine cans and degrading soapboxes, plastic prayer mats and cement canals that are ubiquitous in villages like Tagharghist.

Bart, however, did not excise the small testaments to contemporary existence. His work captures the ethereal beauty of the people and place, but without purifying the photos of the reality I know. When I saw his first book (Deseyn 2006), I loved the framing of the people, the palpable quietude of the rooms and landscapes, but also the way the details of everyday life could be found lurking in the shadows. A basket here, a broken pot there, an awkwardly placed light switch. The pictures seemed to retain their original language, by which I mean that you had to know something of the village to comprehend what was going on in the photo. The images were not self-contained, they did not, or at least did not always, speak for themselves, and I liked this enigmatic quality. I could see things in the frames that spoke to me, that felt intimate and authentic and personal. My time in Berber villages made Bart's photos legible to me in the way that personal snapshots are, a way that is different from how I see an Ansel Adams landscape or a southerner captured by Robert Frank. I appreciate the work of Adams and Frank, but it communicates in a more generic language of images rather than a dialect grounded in the place the photos were taken. Bart's photos speak in Berber.

Bart and I agreed to go up to Tagharghist together along with his friend and translator Abdelkrim Bamouh. In the village, Bart and Abdelkrim quickly made friends with my friends, and the idea of this book was born. It is grounded in Bart's photos, but to call them "his" is not right. Most of these were carefully constructed with the help of the villagers pictured in them, and with Abdelkrim (and occasionally his brother Mustapha). Sometimes I helped, too. Abdelkrim's deep understanding of rural Morocco and fluent *Tachelhit* (Berber) facilitated a dialogue that in many of the portraits emerges through a fusion of formality and intimacy. The pictures illuminate many subtle things that I have struggled to convey in my written work, a combination of beauty and brutality inherent to rural life in this part of the world. They also give a sense of what villagers want to show about their world, or at least what they decided to show in conversation with a few odd outsiders interested in building pictures together.

I agreed to work with Bart and Abdelkrim because I liked them and I respected their method, one developed through extensive work in other Amazigh communities (Deseyn 2006). In general, Bart uses a 4 x 5 inch field camera, a large, heavy device that has to be mounted on a tripod and manipulated from beneath a black cloth. The photographer has little leeway; he is relatively immobile and is always visible to the subjects. Improvisation is difficult, and the process is profoundly public. Exposure with this type of camera is limited to a single shot, unlike the fast repetitive takes allowed by hand-held cameras. The ritualized operation of Bart's equipment transforms the process of picture-taking into a necessarily collaborative picture-making. There is constant dialogue between the subjects of the photos, Abdelkrim, and Bart while the shot is in creation.

What I found was that Bart and Abdelkrim make photographs the way I do ethnography. They did not roam around and "take pictures" in the sense of capturing them. This is not photography as theft. Instead, the photographers worked slowly, deliberately, through active conversation. You see this especially in the portraits. The subjects are calm and still. The gaze does not feel intrusive. People are presented at eye level—on the same plane as the photographer, neither below nor above, neither too near nor too far away. The distance evident in the photos is the approximate distance Bart stood from the people; the lens is not used to claim a false sense of intimacy, to get closer than a subject would like in real life. Villagers present themselves with some of their defining context—a wall, a door, a field, the world they live through and work in. This is a world they have actively constructed; it is part of who they are. We did not pay anybody for his or her image or otherwise cajole (though one man offered to pay us). All of the photos are voluntary. We did contribute money to the village as a whole on several occasions, but there was no obligation or pressure for anyone to agree to be photographed. The people who are in these pictures are in them because they wanted to be, because Abdelkrim helped them to grasp the larger project of documenting rural Berber lives—a project many felt proud to join. Those who wanted to be named are named, and others are represented by pseudonyms. Villagers uninterested in being part of the book remain absent from it. Those who are pictured received copies of their photos.

Mostly the subjects chose the poses themselves. If there is a feeling of propriety or formality in the photos, it is because being professionally photographed is a rare event for a villager, one to be taken seriously. The somber tone in most of the portraits does not reveal the inner state of individuals, or a cultural trait generally shared. What the facial expressions and body language do show is the consciousness of villagers in the self-objectifying process of crafting photos. Each person practices a form of "participant objectification," to modify one of Pierre Bourdieu's concepts slightly (1990:68): we see villagers watching Bart intently as he moves around his big, slow camera fiddling with things to complete a shot. We can sense that they are trying to fathom what Bart is doing, and what they should be doing in the long string of moments before the "click" that will finalize the composition. Most of the portraits exude studiousness, a focused curiosity born of the familiar struggle over the presentation of self that cameras universally inspire (Barthes 2010[1980]:10).

III. THE PEOPLE

The people of Tagharghist think of themselves as *Ishelhin* (pronounced ish-al-heen), by which they mean the speakers of the southern Moroccan Berber variety called *Tachelhit* (tash-al-heet). Berbers are the indigenous people of North Africa, the people who met with Phoenician traders in antiquity, who fought Greek and Roman armies in the classical era and Visigoth invasions after that. Berbers were adopted into the Islamic world via the arrival of Arabs in the 8th century, and became part of the vital thrust of Islamic civilization into Spain. Since then Arabs and Berbers have coexisted and intermingled with their Jewish neighbors in North Africa, generally peacefully, though not always. There were many Jewish Berber villages, especially in the High Atlas, and many Berber speakers moved to the city, came to speak Arabic, and eventually became “Arabs” for all practical purposes.

Recently activists have emphasized Berber distinction from Arabs, and they have promoted the term “Amazigh” to refer to the people, culture and language native to North Africa (Chaker 1985, 1989; Maddy-Weitzman 2011; Silverstein 2004b, 2007, 2010). For activists, “Amazigh” is preferable to “Berber” because the former term is indigenous (it is usually translated as “free person”) while “Berber” comes from the same Greek root as “barbarian.” A rich literature has grown up in recent years as Amazigh people explore their history and culture in Morocco and work to reconceptualize their relations with their cousins in Algeria, the Canary Islands, Libya, Mali, Tunisia, Europe, and elsewhere. However, the villagers of Tagharghist are not overly concerned with such debates. If you press them, farmers will tell you they are *Ishelhin*, but this identity is mostly relevant to dealings with outsiders, Arabic speakers like schoolteachers or government officials, or Amazigh people from other parts of the country. In English, the term “Berber” harbors no negative connotations (Boukous 1995, Sadiqi 1997), and in this book “Berber” will be used interchangeably with “Amazigh.” *Ishelhin* is more specifically the term the villagers of Tagharghist use for themselves, and refers to Amazigh people in the Moroccan south.

Ishelhin are stereotypically understood as traders and shopkeepers more than agriculturalists. Hardworking, thrifty, humorous, and often devout, they dominate the dry goods business in Morocco. Because of their location in the barren south of the country, they also have a reputation for migration, and you find *Ishelhin* working in construction sites and restaurants, studying in mosques and working in factories all over Morocco and in many foreign countries. In this sense, the villagers of Tagharghist are somewhat unusual: the snowmelt in the Agoundis River is reliable enough for them to farm successfully. There is migration from Tagharghist, but it has been less socially significant than in drier, lower altitudes (where in some villages nearly all the men are absent: see Hoffman 2008). Tagharghist today remains an agricultural community: a viable, vital Amazigh village.

Despite the fact that it is becoming rare to find *Ishelhin* surviving predominantly by agriculture, the rural ideal is powerful. Many Amazigh people, and *Ishelhin* in particular, idolize “the village” as a place of purity and peace, cultural authenticity and moral rectitude. Popular Berber-language videos routinely feature villages as sites where the hero (generally a migrant, often a pop singer) finds the personal strength to survive the evils of city life. It is not only villages that serve this cultural purpose; the entire landscape of homeland, the *tamazirt*, is a powerful cultural ideal (Hoffman 2002). The terrain of southern Moroccan is easily identifiable in *Tachelhit*-language movies, and it is deeply meaningful to the people who watch them. The rural homeland is a constituting place, a defining place, and this can be potent even for urbanites who do not live in the countryside—and perhaps never did. One’s *tamazirt* travels with a person, infusing and defining him or her. When a stranger asks “*menza tamazirtnik?*” (which means, “where is your *tamazirt*” or “where are you from?”) the answer is a geographical place. It can be where you are born, but often it is where your family is from, your ancestors. In southern Morocco, such a place name reveals much of what

you need to know about a person. Asking where someone is from is asking who he or she *is*. To live away from one's homeland is to live alienated from a part of oneself. In this sense, even the landscapes presented in this book are a form of portraiture.

The beauty of Tagharghist and its people should not cause us to romanticize village life. I find such villages very difficult places to live in, and this is not always evident in the photographs. (Which reminds us that just because photos capture things prose cannot does not mean they reveal everything.) There are flies and mosquitoes in the summer, heat and dust, bedbugs, lice, and scorpions, and windstorms that fill every pore with dust so fine that it comes to circulate in your blood; in the winter there is snow, rain, mud; roofs leak, walls drip, firewood sputters and smokes, resisting the flames. The damp sucks the heat from your bones. There is always illness: stomach sickness, dehydration, headaches, rotting teeth, infected eyes, broken bones, mothers dead during childbirth, stillbirths, cancer, ulcers, goiter, malnutrition. When I am in Tagharghist, I inevitably suffer gut-wrenching distress, but worse than this is the visceral pain of communing with good people in deep poverty. I feel useless. I am useless. The generosity of people who share the very little they have, the harrowing conditions in which they laugh and love and plan and hope—it is hard to take. I give so little back. Just a little money. Some clothes. Some medicine. The great structural inequality that separates Tagharghist from my world is not soluble in my good wishes. Neither the difficulties nor the beauty evaporates when I am not there. I miss Tagharghist when I am away, but I do not know exactly what I miss, or why. This book emerges from a longing, a kind of nostalgia I feel but cannot properly explain.

IV. THE WEIGHT OF THE PAST

Photography has a long and vexed history in Morocco, one intimately bound to ethnography, European colonialism, tourism, and what scholars call “Orientalist” visions of an exotic other. To start with colonialism: France blockaded and then invaded neighboring Algeria beginning in 1830, and Spain occupied the northern Moroccan city of Tetouan in 1860. The Alaouite family—the longstanding rulers of Morocco—opposed the Christians, and fought to maintain national independence from Europe (and from the Ottoman Turks before them), but by the end of the 19th century the writing was, so to speak, on the wall. Germany, Spain, France and England jockeyed for domination (of Morocco and much of the rest of Africa) and a weakened Moroccan state could do little to control its destiny. In 1912, the Treaty of Fes divided Morocco into French and Spanish zones of influence; the Alaouite dynasty was allowed to reign nominally, but not to effectively rule. The bulk of Morocco remained a French protectorate from 1912 to independence in 1956.

Moroccans did not passively accept French domination, and resistance took different forms in different times and places. Berbers were sometimes among the most intractable of France's foes, as when the Ait 'Atta tribal confederation continued to battle the French army into the 1930s, or when Abdelkrim al Khattabi, the leader of the Aith Waryaghar Berbers, formed an independent republic in the northern Rif Mountains in 1921. (It took the combined forces of the French and Spanish to end his Republic in 1925.) However, in some cases Berbers provided the colonizers with willing partners. Pasha al Glaoui, for instance, was perhaps the most powerful native leader under the French, and Tayeb al Goundafi, who controlled the mountains pictured in this book, was eventually awarded a French Legion of Honor medal for his campaign against the Ait Baamaran allies of Spain in the Moroccan south. (The Ait Baamaran were also Berbers.) Some Berbers fought as proxies of European powers, in both World Wars and in wars of colonial oppression, such as French Indochina. Back home, some were Europe's allies and some her fiercest opponents.

France's bloody experience in Algeria tempered the way it went about subduing its new protectorate. Marshal Lyautey, France's resident general from 1912 to 1925, sought to overlay French civilization on the Moroccan milieu rather than obliterate it; it was supposed to be a "civilizing mission," not a deracination. In this vein, Lyautey established "modern" French cities next to ancient Moroccan ones, such that Fes and Marrakech, for instance, each have a "traditional" medina surrounded by ancient walls and a separate *ville nouvelle* of concrete apartments and wide boulevards—always placed nearby but not quite adjacent to the old. The intention was to demarcate traditional and modern zones, and to this end Lyautey even banned Christians from entering mosques. The idea was to provide a potent example of civilized modernity, one that would lure Moroccans to French ways without destroying the native fabric of life.

Like colonial powers everywhere, France sought to understand what it hoped to govern, and trained ethnographers were dispatched to document the natives. There was a special emphasis on social and political organization, for obvious reasons, especially in the wild hinterlands of the country that urban-based elites had always struggled to control. Tribal names and divisions, alliances, boundaries, traditional enemies, even habits of dress and dining were carefully collected, collated, and systematized in reports. Efforts were made to build on indigenous modes of political control, perhaps most famously in the Berber *dahir* of 1930. The *dahir*, or edict, allowed rural Berbers to use "customary courts" for civil disputes and freed them from the Islamic law regnant over urban Arabs. France thought it was appeasing rural Berbers, but the distinction inherent in the *dahir* was perceived by many as an attempt to "divide and rule." It backfired, consolidating pan-Moroccan religious identity and inflaming nationalist passions for independence. However, France was equally willing to eschew appeasement and use local strongmen to govern intractable tribes, notably the "Lords of the Atlas," three powerful leaders who together ruthlessly dominated the High Atlas and much of the south of the country for the first half of the 20th century.

The ethnographic research produced in the Protectorate era was often excellent, especially work by Robert Montagne (1930, 1931) and Jacques Berque (1938, 1955). This was not purely academic anthropology focused on recondite debates, but careful, strategic inquiry with the explicit aim of governance (Roberts 2002). From today's vantage point, there are grave ethical issues in the way ethnographic engagement was undertaken in the service of a powerful, exogenous state; our only contemporary consolation is that we have the ethnographic record to study. By the end of the 20th century anthropologists were asking themselves hard questions about the purposes of their work, their relations with their interlocutors, and the debts they owed to the communities they studied (Crawford and Newcomb 2013).

Photographers were involved in the colonial experience, too. The *Service des Affaires Indigènes* encouraged the visual documentation of every corner of the country. Often this involved landscapes, rural markets, and picturesque scenes of the countryside, but photographers showed a pronounced interest in what were considered the racial characteristics of different factions of the population (Arabs, Berbers, and Jews, for instance) as well as the specific visual signature of different "tribes," with an emphasis on women's clothes and ornamentation, especially tattoos. (What counts as a "tribe" is a complex question that the French never wholly settled: see Berque 1953.) Pictures of types and traits were collected and organized like botanical specimens.

This government-sanctioned photographic documentation fitted with an emerging consumer market for Moroccan images, one that played on the Orientalist stereotypes famously analyzed by Edward Said (1979). Said's argument, in short, is that European scholarship presented "the East" as a kind of stereotyped inversion of "the West." If the westerner

was modern, rational, and free yet self-controlled, the oriental—including Moroccans—was traditional, fanatical, and oppressed yet libidinous. This framework has been especially pronounced in its treatment of women (Abu Lughod 2001). Opponents of Said have argued that the Orientalist thesis is overly simplistic (Eickelman 2002:27), but at least some of the photographic record of Morocco would seem to support Said's assertions.

The book *The Magic of Morocco* (Ben Jelloun, D'Hooghe and Sijelmassi 1999), for instance, provides many telling examples, including photographs from Marcelin Flandrin, René Bertrand, Jean Besancenot, and Laure Albin Guillot. The images are irrefutably beautiful, but they also collectively structure a vision of Morocco that Moroccans themselves long "rejected with indifference, or even indignation and contempt" (see the essay by Sijelmassi in *The Magic of Morocco*, pg. 23). Repeated images of shrouded women, for instance, are counterpoised with shots of women nude or in states of erotic abandon. Flandrin, in particular, seemed to specialize in depictions of Moroccan women naked (a Google search of "marcelin flandrin images" provides a spectacular, if non-scientific, sample). Said's critique of Orientalism is that such images were constructed for European consumption by European men playing on European appetites (Melis 2004); such constructions eventually led to a particular—and particularly skewed—understanding of Morocco.

Flandrin's work demonstrates the contradictory power of Orientalist photography. Posed in classic European style, photos of Moroccan women establish a familiarity between the two cultures (Moroccan women were subject to the male gaze in the same way as their European cousins) while at the same time marking off a certain cultural distance (through the carpets, traditional headdresses, and other props with which the models were posed). Such photos work anthropologically, we might say, in that they simultaneously assert a commonality (though not exactly a common humanity) as they emphasize cultural distinctiveness. Moreover, while Flandrin's photo postcards were sometimes labeled generically, such as "pretty Moroccan girl," other shots specifically identified the subjects as "slaves," a trope meant to support the *mission civilatrice*, or "civilizing mission," that France used to justify its occupation of the country in the first place. Photographs of nubile slave girls could titillate at the same time as they served to bolster the sense of moral superiority enjoyed by the Frenchmen staring at them.

"Traditional" scenes of "typical" ethnographic types functioned similarly: they established categories, a visual code for how Europe would see, and govern, Morocco. "Jews," "Arabs," "Berbers," and "slaves" were frequently included in captions coupled to photographs, and "Captions serve to steer viewers to an appropriate response: not merely how to look at a picture but what to feel when looking at a picture" (Slyomovics 2010:138, drawing on Sontag 1977). Evidently, we are meant to "feel" (more than rationally consider) that Morocco is inhabited by distinct "types" of people. Slowly and subconsciously, such terms and images fused into a framework for comprehension.

Unsurprisingly, then, contemporary anthropologists harbor some anxiety about all this, a discomfort with the politically retrograde origins of the discipline, and a suspicion of the ethics of photography. One consequence, perhaps, is that photographs are absent from, or relatively unimportant to, most contemporary ethnographic texts. Early ethnographic work used far more photographs than we do today, despite the fact that the equipment then was much more difficult to manage. A quick perusal of classic anthropological texts, like Malinowski's *Argonauts of the Western Pacific* or Evans-Pritchard's *The Nuer*, reveals how salient they thought photography was to their ethnographic mission (both had dozens of photos and other images). There are generally *few* pictures in today's published ethnographies, and they seem afterthoughts rather than material integral to the work. This is true of my own publications. There are only seven photos in *Moroccan*

Households in the World Economy (Crawford 2008) despite the fact that I have many hundreds of wonderful images. I never petitioned the press to include more; I was ambivalent about those I did include. I know other anthropologists who are better photographers than I am who use even fewer pictures. Anthropologists are reluctant to include photography as part of our ethnographic work—even anthropologists native to the country (see for example Amahan 1998, Hammoudi 1993, Mahdi 1999, Rachik 1990, 1992).

Exceptions to this rule illustrate our ambivalence. For example, the celebrated *Meaning and Order in Moroccan Society* is one of my favorite books, a classic in its own time. As a graduate student with limited funds I spent nearly a hundred dollars in London on a used copy of *the book*—it was long out of print even then, and I know it has sold for as much as \$600 more recently. It has been inspirational in a number of ways and sits on my desk as I write this.

Why am I embarrassed to admit that my favorite part is the photos? Taken by Paul Hyman, a professional photographer who came to Morocco to visit a childhood friend (the anthropologist Paul Rabinow), the images are inserted into the center of the book with little to explain them except a “list of illustrations.” This includes minimalist epithets like “butcher, Sefrou medina” or “student of the Quran.” The photographs are deliberately bereft of text and are self-consciously separate from the three long essays that make up the main substance of the book as a whole; the photos are labeled by C. Geertz as “perceptions, not illustrations” (1979:6) to emphasize their independence from the text. Hyman is often excluded in bibliographic references to the book. On the title page the three authors are listed alphabetically; then it reads “With a photographic essay by Paul Hyman,” which is numbered separately from the rest of the book, of which it is clearly not a part.

What does all this say about the relationship between anthropology and photography, at least in Morocco? Susan Slyomovics writes insightfully about these photos in her edited volume (see Slyomovics 2010), and Paul Hyman too provides a kind of historical context to the making of the pictures in the same place (Hyman 2010). We know that Clifford Geertz successfully lobbied the press to include the photos, but also that he wanted photos and text definitively separated. The substantive text of the book does not comment on, or respond to, the photos. It is as if there are two books packaged in one cover.

A second, more recent example from neighboring Algeria helps to underline the point. *Picturing Algeria* features photos taken by the eminent sociologist and anthropologist Pierre Bourdieu during his early research in North Africa. The book is particularly concerned with everyday life amidst the social dislocation of colonial domination, which was Bourdieu’s main research focus at the time. In an opening interview in the book Bourdieu has a number of intriguing things to say about anthropology and photography, including the way both rely on “objectifying and loving, [a] detached and yet intimate relationship” (2012[2003]:17). This hugely influential intellectual, author of more than two dozen books, including some on the topic of photography itself (1965), says that “it is perfectly natural to link the context of my research and my photos” (2012[2003]: 24). But in fact he never did. He died before he had a chance.

The text in *Picturing Algeria* was drawn from the aforementioned interview and grafted to selections from a number of different works Bourdieu produced over more than forty years. The writing is not about the photos explicitly, nor were the photos made in response to the text. Why did the author not engage his photos earlier in his career? Bourdieu suggests in the interview included in the English edition that he “self censored” some of his “literary impulses,” especially in his

early work, and he discusses the constraints of academic propriety. It is breathtaking to read so influential a scholar admit to feeling constrained in this way. In another context, Deborah Kapchan writes “No doubt Bourdieu was... torn by his affective attachments to the place [Algeria] and his inability to endorse those attachments” (2013:186). Kapchan is surely right, but why was Bourdieu unable to “endorse” his “attachments” via photography? Why, indeed, do books ostensibly about “visual anthropology” use so few pictures, or present pictures without reference to text, or feature text that does not refer to the photos included in the book (Potsma and Crawford 2006, Bourdieu 1965)?

One possibility is that the “affective intentionality” of photographs (Barthes 2010[1980]: 21) makes them alien, or even dangerous, to intellectuals more comfortable with disembodied ideas. Barthes writes suggestively that photographs yield “those ‘details’ which constitute the very raw material of ethnological knowledge” (Barthes 2010[1980]:28) and I believe this rawness undermines our disciplinary purpose, the metaphorical cooking of ethnographic material into something intellectually digestible. To simply *look* feels touristic, sophomoric, voyeuristic rather than anthropological. Or perhaps we anthropologists fear that the texts we so laboriously produce may devolve into a “mere” caption, since a great photo ensures there is “no caption needed” (Hariman and Lucaites 2011). Perhaps the sensuousness of photos calls us to *acknowledge our sensuous selves*—to “endorse our attachments,” in Kapchan’s words. Or possibly, as Becker argues, the problem lies in the relationship between anthropology and science (2007:191), with photographs divulging our shameful humanistic inclinations. For whatever reason, Bourdieu only managed to publish his extraordinary photographs of colonial Algeria at the very end of his storied career, and by then he had run out of time to craft a text to fit them. To me the photos of Bourdieu and Hyman are viscerally powerful; they help me feel the world behind the anthropological analysis. I wish there were words to further illuminate them.

Beyond this, what I find most striking is the role that taking photos played methodologically in the two works. Hyman is candid about using his camera to successfully open conversations—despite the fact that he spoke almost no Arabic and was told he could never photograph Moroccans because of their religious beliefs (Hyman 2010:112). Bourdieu, by contrast, was working out the practice of fieldwork, and for him the photos were experimental tools of social inquiry. He was often stealthy in his attempts to “take pictures,” but his meditation on this produced insights into the “objectivizing” nature of research and writing, an insight derived from photography. Neither case seems crudely Orientalist, much less colonialist. I believe that we have nothing to fear from photos, and yet both works remain opportunities at best partly realized. These books present photography attempting a dialogue with North Africans, but the lack of integration between photos and text limits their symbiotic power. Ethnographic and photographic work in other contexts confirms the collaborative potential of text and image, as when João Biehl worked with Torben Eskerod to produce *Vita*, Philippe Bourgois and Jeffery Schonberg created *Righteous Dopefiend* or Filip De Boeck and Marie-Françoise Plissart produced *Kinshasa: Tales of the Invisible City*. These works often focus on the abject, and show the power of photography to humanize the rejected. It is a topic for another essay why misery seems to make for more anthropological photography than mundane, everyday beauty.

There are precedents for a dialogical photographic approach in the North African context, too. More than thirty years ago, in *Moroccan Dialogues*, Kevin Dwyer sought to ground ethnographic inquiry in reciprocal exchange more than one-sided observation and interpretation (1982). Dwyer framed his ethnography explicitly as a conversation, one focused on the tension between “events” and a set of “dialogues” about them. While he certainly retained authorial control, he included reams of what Malinowski might call the “imponderabilia of everyday life,” the sort of details that can lurk in the corners

of well built photos. Vincent Crapanzano, too, pursued a dialogical approach (1985), as did Dale Eickelman somewhat less explicitly (1985). More recently, Silverstein has stated flatly, “anthropology is ultimately a dialogical encounter” (2013:117), and clearly photography can be part of the dialogue (Biehl 2005:19, 25).

In their previous work—and in this book—Bart Deseyn and Abdelkrim Bamouh bring such collaboration to rural Morocco. They pursue photography as a patient and respectful conversation, inclusive of the people being photographed. This may be an elaboration of Hyman’s approach, but Hyman was “innocent of academic social science” (Geertz, Geertz and Rosen 1979:1, Hyman 2010:111) while Deseyn and Bamouh understand Berbers *and* the anthropologists who study them. *Nostalgia for the Present* does not include “photographs by...” as an afterthought to the text, and does not erase the photographers as makers of the book; the pictures are central, and the text built around them, in response to them. Through careful conversation with Amazigh people, Deseyn and Bamouh demonstrate that what makes a photo “ethnographic” is the *way it is made* and the context in which it is used, not the nature of the subject in the picture (Becker 2007:191). *Nostalgia for the Present* aims for something like a dialogical visual ethnography.

V. SNAPSHOTS

Morocco is a photogenic country. Whatever reservations anthropologists have about taking pictures or displaying them, tourists have long been avid consumers of Moroccan images. The ancient walls of the *medinas* in Fes and Marrakech, Roman ruins at Volubilis, seascapes and deserts, mountains and palm oases have formed a staple of tourist photography. During my trips I always find striking postcards to send home: shots of twisting alleyways in Fes or spice sellers in Marrakech, the massive walls of Rabat or Essaouira, pastoral scenes of goats grazing in trees or men praying before a stark landscape of snow and bright sprouted barley. By contrast, when I am in the U.S. I find it difficult to locate postcards to send to Morocco. I could mail a shot of the Empire State Building or the Grand Canyon—the U.S. certainly has its iconic features—but I do not live in New York or Colorado. I live in suburban Connecticut. There are no commercial images of the suburbs I call home, for what would seem obvious aesthetic reasons. This is true for Moroccans who live in middle-class suburbs of their country, too; there are few tourist photos of the concrete apartments of Casablanca or Rabat (Ossman 1994). However, my particular Moroccan interlocutors—rural farmers—*do* inhabit places framed in postcards; my friends live and work in one part of the bucolic imaginary that foreigners love to romanticize, to *look at*. And the look of this place seems to come from another time.

Time has long been a problem for anthropologists. As a discipline, we necessarily trade in cultural distance. We go to *other* places, at least we used to, but these other places serve to index other times. We implicitly convert space to time. We suffer from what Michael Hertzfeld calls “structural nostalgia,” a “representation of an Edenic order—a time before time—in which the balanced perfection of social relations has not yet suffered the decay that affects everything human” (1990:305, also Silverstein 2004a). We stand accused of a “denial of coevalness” or *allochronism* (Fabian 1983:31-32), the inability to countenance the contemporaneousness of the people we represent.

If this is an ever-present danger to ethnographic writing, photos are worse. Photos freeze time, and black-and-white images have a particularly profound tendency to muddy our temporal senses and retroject our subjects back in time. This doubles the problem for a book like this. Photos of rural Morocco fit a particular framework already embedded in the eye of the (Western)

beholder. Donkeys, mud walls, agricultural labor: the pictorial elements seem to say something in themselves before the creator of the text can say anything at all. We risk presenting a contemporary place as if it is from another time, from “biblical times,” to quote guidebooks and postcards of Morocco. There is a way that rural Morocco evokes an idealized past of rustic harmony, a warm imaginary time before our *Gemeinschaft* (community) had given way to anonymous *Gesellschaft* (society). There is no avoiding the legacy of ethnography and photography. But can we pit the two against one another, use the tension between them, without romanticizing the place we are trying to show or even more firmly establishing it as a place out of time?

Rural Moroccans themselves have no such problems with these images. The stone walls, high pastures, and humble shepherds’ huts so vibrant in tourist photography did not interest my Moroccan friends, at least not in a photogenic sense. Such things are from the “now” they inhabit, from a quotidian reality where the elements have proper names. Villagers did not see mythical time or an idealized past when they looked at these photos; they searched instead for something that told them *exactly* when Bart took the photo—a particular season, for instance, a good or bad harvest year, or the month a certain migrant was back from the city. For villagers these photos are highly particular, in other words, references to some specific *tamazirt*, a telling place in a specific moment. Absent a relationship to people grounded in space and time, the photos held no meaning. Intriguingly, this seems true of video too. Once the technology became available, one of the first forms of electronic entertainment my village friends sought was video disks of other communities’ wedding ceremonies. These they would scrutinize for the songs, lyrics, dancing, the clothes, and what they told you about the particular people living in other places at the specific moment consolidated into the event. This interest was anthropological, except that the Others were understood as contemporaries. If photos “quote from appearances,” in John Berger’s words (1982:111), and such “appearances in themselves are oracular” (1982:118), villagers patiently attempted to explain their oracular photos and videos in the specific language of the place, not in a general discourse of images.

Photographs were part of my own personal engagement with the country also. When I first moved to Tagharghist in 1998, one of my techniques to engage people involved my camera. I had a 35 mm Pentax K-1000 that my mother had given me for my sixteenth birthday. Almost two decades later, I still carried it with me; and when I first arrived in the village, one sure way to enter into discussions with people was to leave the camera visible. Sometimes folks, especially women, would point to it and indicate that they did not want to be photographed. Okay, I would say, and slide it inside my bag. It was a chance to show that I respected their wishes, played by their rules. At other times people would specifically ask to be photographed, or ask me to photograph someone, usually a visiting relative from the city, a baby, or small child. Mothers were particularly keen to have me take photos of their babies, and a disproportionate number of my personal photographic corpus of the village involve women with their children.

Once I took a photo, I would make sure to develop it the next time I visited the relative metropolis of Taroudant and bring copies back to the village. These small tokens of my affection became objects of discussion. I would ask who was in the photo and we would talk about them over tea. Such talk became foundational to building my language skills and to learning about the relations between families in the village. Over time, I started to see my photos pinned to the mud walls of nearly every house I visited. (There are still a few up, as I notice in photo 13 above the window.) Later, as digital cameras became inexpensive, I took many more photos, often of people posing before walls spangled with earlier shots of the family. Eventually we were taking pictures of pictures.

This was a huge change in what we might call “visual literacy” from when I first arrived in Tagharghist. In 1998, I remember sitting on the floor with Omar Lukstaf, then a boy of about eight years old (his father is in photo 58). I had a few magazines

with me, among them *Sports Illustrated*. Omar was leafing through it, looking alternately amused and confused. He arrived at a double-page spread of the golfer Tiger Woods on a putting green, a huge crowd in the gallery behind him. At first Omar could not figure out which way the photo went. He looked at it sideways, upside down, turning the magazine round, but in discussion with his younger brothers it was finally determined where the horizon was and thus how to view the photo. Then they had to figure out what might be going on. This took a while, but eventually the group pronounced their conclusion. The guy in the middle with the golf club, Tiger Woods, was an *imam* leading prayers. The gallery was the congregation of the faithful. I remember thinking that was probably pretty accurate. I did not correct the boys on the conflation of golf and religion; I did record the fact that these kids had not yet learned to look at images. They literally did not know which way was up in a photo.

VI. NOSTALGIA

The photos in this book evoke a sense of nostalgia, a longing. The word “nostalgia” is built on “algia,” pain. It is normally understood as a kind of intense homesickness or a wistful desire for an imagined past. But there are many pasts in these pictures. There is the past I remember from the time I lived in Tagharghist (surely one source of nostalgia, for me). Since I went so many different times to the mountains, perhaps this is best conceived as a punctuated series of different pasts (Crawford 2010a, 2013). There are also the pasts of the people in the pictures, personal histories I try to understand and occasionally reveal in my writing. There are the moments of the photos themselves, the stories behind the making of each picture, the minutes, hours, and days when Bart was up in the hills. Beyond all of this is a history of village life generally, and the transformation of it that I have focused on elsewhere (Crawford 2008). At an even more abstract level lies our common agricultural past, one that most readers have left behind in what we perceive as our march to the modern. This pastoral past (in black and white) is perhaps the most generic and legible aspect of this book, even if the Moroccan context tinges it with exoticism. All these pasts emerge from the photos simultaneously. If they have “evidential force” (Barthes 2010[1980]:89), what are these photographs evidence of? How do we see them? Which pasts are we seeing, and what are we seeing in them? What do we hope to take from these pasts?

I do not think I am alone with such questions. For emigrants, in particular, Tagharghist is both an iconic place and a real, personal one. It may be surprising, given the awful poverty, but many migrants who make comfortable lives down in the cities still aim to return to the village, or say they do. Some build houses that stand empty but for dreams. Others come back and establish families, or raise their families here, and then leave again. There is something bewitching about this hard place. Migrants are bound to the warm nest of people into which they were born, their community of relatives, friends, and neighbors who have known them forever, who know all their siblings, family, fields, and ancestors, and the names of every rock and tree. This is powerful, alluring, a deep force that draws people back up the asphalt roads into the thinner air. Those who leave for the city take the whole community with them in their hearts, or in the liver, as they would say. And the community evoked by one’s gut persistently calls you home, a call that competes with others but is never fully silenced (Spadola 2013).

I have my moments, too, my pasts. I sat on a warm rock with Lahcen Belaid one day in July 1999, for instance, when he was up visiting from Casablanca (Lahcen is not pictured, but his nephew’s wife and children are in photo 31—his only remaining blood relatives in the village). It could have been any of a million fleeting seconds in any of hundreds of days, but this one, this moment, has settled in, made a home in me, and is still there today. It is a little like a photo, but it plays on more senses: The

day's failing light streams into the canyon in broken shafts; the west-facing cliffs glow red like embers as the valley floor fades into purple. Smoke from the evening bread ovens curls into the remaining pale blue above; you can smell the juniper twigs crackling in the hearths while sweating women trudge back from the fields stooped under their massive loads of fodder. A group of women saluted us, I remember, laughing and joking, gossiping among themselves. Lahcen and I greeted the women casually and fell back into our shared and silent rapture.

Does Lahcen remember this day as I do? Did this particular moment come to dwell within him as it did in me? In this book, Bart Deseyn has conveyed something of the grandeur of the place, of the awe and ache of moments I still feel: the majesty of the rock, the breathtaking chasm of vertical space, a stupefying peace. Bart has, I think, allowed outsiders to grasp something of the people who commune with such grandeur in their daily lives. This was not the only time Lahcen and I were caught in reverie for this hard world, nor are we the only ones to appreciate it.

Versions of this nostalgia are widespread. Thousands of Berbers in Europe have never lived in villages like Tagharghist but still pine for something about it, still see social spaces like this as a vital part of Amazigh culture, as important to their identity. A past does not have to be real and personal to work its magic in your heart. All histories are works of the imagination, and imagination is slave to no material force, no time or place. A known past is known only because it has been conceived in us presently for our immediate purposes. It is the presence of something manifestly absent that makes the past like photographs, and that makes photographs call up such pasts.

And the people of Tagharghist themselves? The mythical past that urban readers feel in these photos is the everyday present in Tagharghist. Our urbanly conceived history of face-to-face community, a cooperative of intimates with tough lives and powerful bonds, is the contemporary world villagers wake up to every day. They are not ignorant of this. It is not only outsiders who understand that there are other places, other realities that one can leverage for making sense of the present. Villagers are capable of comparing unlike times and places in their own ways. They have their own imagined pasts, in other words, their own understanding of tradition, of what they have surmounted or abandoned or left behind—and their own modernity. This may be represented by headscarves worn the “modern way” (see photos 24, 26, 28 and 36), or Fatima's urban dress (1), or the fashionable callus on Aburrahman's forehead that he achieved through repeated and enthusiastic prayer (photo 5)—a mark he consciously shares with exceptionally pious Muslims across much of the world. A village modernity may not be recognizable to outsiders, but it is conceived by villagers as distinctly modern nonetheless. This suggests that they have their own nostalgia. For those of us who nostalgically find “tradition” in these photos, there is something yearned-for or haunting in them (Sontag 2003:89). Such nostalgia is born of the present.