

Riffians

also known as “Berbers of Morocco”

Data source: eHRAF

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** Data Source entry, prepared based on data sourced from an external project.*

Entry tags: Religion, Islamic Traditions, Sunni, Maliki

The Berbers are a group of agro-pastoralists residing primarily in Northern Africa, and are united by the shared use of the Berber language. This entry focuses more specifically on the Riffians of Morocco, who are Sunni Muslims of the Maliki school. In the case of the Riffians, the religious group is coterminous with the society itself, as religion, politics, and culture are interwoven. This entry focuses on Morocco ca. 1926, when Morocco was a French Protectorate (1912-1956). Principal ethnographic sources have limited details on supernatural beings (Allah, specifically).



Date Range: 1900 CE - 1930 CE

Region: Le Rif

Region tags: Africa, Northern Africa, Morocco

Approximate extent of Riffian speaking Berber tribes.

Status of Participants:

✓ Elite ✓ Religious Specialists ✓ Non-elite (common people, general populace)

Sources

Print sources for understanding this subject:

- Source 1: Divale, W. 2004. Codebook of Variables for the Standard Cross-Cultural Sample. *World Cultures: The Journal of Cross-Cultural and Comparative Research*.
- Source 2: Murdock and Wilson, 1972. Settlement Patterns and Community Organization: Cross-Cultural Codes 3. *Ethnology*, 11(3), 254-259.
- Source 3: Tuden and Marshall, 1972. Political Organization: Cross-Cultural Codes 4. *Ethnology*, 11(4), 436-464.

Online sources for understanding this subject:

- Source 1 URL: <http://ehrafworldcultures.yale.edu/document?id=mx03-000>
- Source 1 Description: Hart, D. M. (2011). Culture Summary: Berbers Of Morocco. New Haven, Conn.: Human Relations Area Files.
- Source 2 URL: <http://ehrafworldcultures.yale.edu/document?id=mx03-001>
- Source 2 Description: Coon, C. S. (Carleton S. (1931). *Tribes Of The Rif*. Harvard African Studies. Cambridge, Mass.: Peabody Museum of Harvard University.
- Source 3 URL: <http://ehrafworldcultures.yale.edu/document?id=mx03-003>

– Source 3 Description: Hart, D. M. (1954). Ethnographic Survey Of The Riffian Tribe Of Aith Wuryaghil. *Tamuda*, 2(1), 51-86.

Notes: Hart (1954) completed field work about 25 years after the focal dates, so this source should be viewed as general information.

– Source 1 URL: <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Quran>

– Source 1 Description: Sinai, N., and Ringgren, H. (September 25, 2017). Qur'ān. *Encyclopædia Britannica*. Encyclopædia Britannica, inc.

– Source 2 URL: <http://ehrafworldcultures.yale.edu/document?id=mx03-002>

– Source 2 Description: Westermarck, E. (1926). *Ritual And Belief In Morocco*. London: Macmillan and Co.

General Variables

Membership/Group Interactions

Are other religious groups in cultural contact with target religion:

– Yes

Notes: "Riffian religion, although of course officially Islam, is a blend of that faith with old...ideas, and with factors apparently Christian and Jewish, some of which may antedate the arrival of Islam. The kings of Nekor were rigid adherents to the Malekite school, and the Islam of the Riffians from that time to this has been officially orthodox" (Coon, 1931:146).



Is there violent conflict (within sample region):

– Yes

Notes: "Sometimes a murder spreads into a feud and from a feud into a war so rapidly that before a tribal council can come together to deliberate the councillors find themselves fighting on one side or another, in a tribal war" (Coon, 1931:105).



Is there violent conflict (with groups outside the sample region):

– Yes

Notes: SCCS Variable 1650 indicates that "external warfare seems to occur almost constantly and at any time of the year", and SCCS Variable 1654 indicates that the society is "inferred to be unpacified because warfare frequency is greater than or equal to 3" (Ember and Ember, 1992; Retrieved from Divale, 2004).

Does the religious group have a general process/system for assigning religious affiliation:

– I don't know

Does the religious group actively proselytize and recruit new members:

– I don't know

Does the religion have official political support

Answer 'yes' also in cases where the religious and political spheres are not distinguished from one another, but the religious group's activities are tied up with, and supported by, the functioning of the society at large.

– Yes

Notes: The religion has official political support in the sense that political leaders are roughly equivalent with religious leaders. Mosques are a common meeting place for councils, and these councils enforce religious law (attendance at prayers, for example), appoint religious officials (such as the office of fqih), and deal with major criminal offences (Coon, 1931:96-104).

↳ Are the priests paid by polity:

– No

Notes: There are no official priests. The fqih, or schoolmaster, is often the "preceptor" and will lead prayer services in addition to teaching students the Koran. The fqih is more of an educated religious leader rather than a priestly figure (Coon, 1931:113-116).

↳ Is religious infrastructure paid for by the polity:

– Yes

Notes: Yes, in part. Legal punishment often consists of fines, and this money goes to the mosque (Coon, 1931:99-105).

↳ Are the head of the polity and the head of the religion the same figure:

– No

Notes: There is neither a single head of the polity, nor a single head of the religion. Rather, councils make up the religious and political leadership units.

↳ Are political officials equivalent to religious officials:

– Yes

Notes: Yes, roughly. In the sense that political council members are in charge of civil and religious duties (see Coon, 1931:96-104).

↳ Is religious observance enforced by the polity:

– Yes

Notes: The village council is responsible for ensuring attendance at prayers, for example (Coon, 1931:99-100).

↳ Polity legal code is roughly coterminous with religious code:

– Yes

Notes: Many laws are based upon the Koran (see Coon, 1931:99-104 for specific laws).

Size and Structure

Number of adherents of religious group within sample region (estimated population, numerical):

– I don't know

Notes: The principal ethnographer did not provide a specific population figure. In 1912, the Berber population was estimated to be about 4.5 million (Hart, 2011).

Number of adherents of religious group within sample region (% of sample region population, numerical):

– Estimated population, percentage of sample region: 100

Notes: "All Moroccans, whether Berbers or Arabs, are Sunni (i.e., orthodox and mainstream) Muslims of the Maliki rite, which predominates in North Africa" (Hart, 2011).

Are there recognized leaders in the religious group:

– Yes

Notes: "In Islam, there is, in theory, no intermediary between man and God, but every Moroccan rural community, whether Berber or Arab, has its fqih or schoolmaster, who teaches the boys to recite the Quran" (Hart, 2011). The village council, council of the great, and tribal council might be considered religious leaders as well due to the overlap with religious responsibilities (Coon, 1931:96-104).

↳ Are leaders believed to possess supernatural powers or qualities:

– No

Notes: The fqih is an educated leader, but not with supernatural powers. The council leaders do not possess supernatural powers either. (See Coon, 1931:96-104, 113-116).

↳ Are religious leaders chosen:

– Yes

Notes: "The older men of each bone informally decide on a fqih, (plural fuqaha') or "schoolmaster," to teach the boys in the village mosque" (Coon, 1931:113).

↳ A leader chooses his/her own replacement:

– No

Notes: (Coon, 1931:113)

↳ Other leaders in the religious group choose that leader:

– Yes

Notes: Older and well-respected men of the community select individuals for the council of the great, which in turn selects individuals for the village council. These councils play a role in selecting the fqih as well (Coon, 1931:96, 113).

↳ Other members of the leader's congregation choose the leader:

– Yes

Notes: "The older men of each bone informally decide on a fqih, (plural fuqaha') or "school-master," to teach the boys in the village mosque" (Coon, 1931:113).

↳ All members of the religious group in the sample region participate in choosing the leader:

– No

Notes: (Coon, 1931:113)

↳ Communication with supernatural power(s) believed to be part of the selection process:

– No

Notes: Selection is based off ability and knowledge (Coon, 1931:113-116).

Scripture

Does the religious group have scriptures:

Scripture is a generic term used to designate revered texts that are considered particularly authoritative and sacred relative to other texts. Strictly speaking, it refers to written texts, but there are also "oral scriptures" (e.g. the Vedas of India).

– Yes

Notes: The Muslim faith follows the Koran.

↳ Are they written:

– Yes

Notes: The Koran is written most commonly in Arabic (see Coon, 1931:113-115).

↳ Is there a story (or a set of stories) associated with the origin of scripture:

– Yes

Notes: See questions below for more details on the Koran's origin.

↳ Revealed by other supernatural being:

– Yes

Notes: The Koran is said to be revealed by the angel Gabriel to the Prophet Muhammad.

↳ Inspired by high god:

– Yes

Notes: "The Qur'ānic corpus, composed in an early form of Classical Arabic, is traditionally believed to be a literal transcript of God's speech and to constitute the

earthly reproduction of an uncreated and eternal heavenly original, according to the general view referred to in the Qur'ān itself as 'the well-preserved tablet' (al-lawḥ al-mahfūz; Qur'ān 85:22)" (Sinai and Ringgren, 2017).

↳ Originated from divine or semi-divine human beings:

– Yes

Notes: The Koran was revealed by the angel Gabriel to the Prophet Muhammad, who came to be a semi-divine human being.

↳ Are there formal institutions (i.e. institutions that are authorized by the religious community or political leaders) for interpreting the scriptures:

– Yes

Notes: In village and cantonal mosques, students learn to read, write, and memorize the Koran from specialized teachers (Coon, 1931:113-115).

↳ Is there a codified canon of scriptures:

– Yes

Notes: See "Qur'ān" by Sinai and Ringgren (2017).

Architecture, Geography

Is monumental religious architecture present:

– Yes

Notes: SCCS Variable 66 (Divale, 2004) indicates that "the most impressive structure (or type of structure) in the community is a temple, church, commemorative monument, or other essentially religious or ceremonial edifice" (Murdock and Wilson, 1972).

Are there different types of religious monumental architecture:

– Yes

Notes: "There are three types of building which serve both social and religious purposes: the thamsyitha n jkthobath, or cantonal mosque, the thamsajoth, or village mosque, and the amrabt (plural imraben) or saint's tomb" (Coon, 1931:112).

↳ Tombs:

– Yes

Notes: The tombs of saints. "...the saint's tomb, may be a structure of some magnitude, a mere pile of stones, or simply an unmarked but nevertheless well-known place. It is supposed to be the grave of a saint, although often it is merely some place noted for the possession of some unusual natural feature, such as a large boulder, a spring, or a clump of trees, revered long before the advent of Islam. Whether it be a definite building, a marker, or merely a place, in any case it fulfills a definite function" (Coon, 1931:112).

↳ Temples:

– Yes

Notes: Cantonal and village mosques (Coon, 1931:112)

Are there specific sites dedicated to sacred practice or considered sacred:

– Yes

Notes: "...the saint's tomb, may be a structure of some magnitude, a mere pile of stones, or simply an unmarked but nevertheless well-known place. It is supposed to be the grave of a saint, although often it is merely some place noted for the possession of some unusual natural feature, such as a large boulder, a spring, or a clump of trees, revered long before the advent of Islam. Whether it be a definite building, a marker, or merely a place, in any case it fulfills a definite function" (Coon, 1931:112).

Beliefs

Burial and Afterlife

Is a spirit-body distinction present:

Answer "no" only if personhood (or consciousness) is extinguished with death of the physical body. Answering yes does not necessarily imply the existence of Cartesian mind/body dualism, merely that some element of personhood (or consciousness) survives the death of the body.

– Yes

Notes: "Anyone who dies during Ramadan will go to paradise immediately, far faster than at any other time of year. The Quran is quite specific on the subject both of paradise, ajinna, and of hell, jahannama..." (Hart, 2011).

Belief in afterlife:

– Yes

Notes: "Anyone who dies during Ramadan will go to paradise immediately, far faster than at any other time of year. The Quran is quite specific on the subject both of paradise, ajinna, and of hell, jahannama..." (Hart, 2011).

Are there special treatments for adherents' corpses:

– Yes

Notes: The corpse is interred within a cemetery grave (Coon, 1931:144).

↳ Interment:

– Yes

Notes: The corpse is interred within a cemetery grave (Coon, 1931:144).

↳ Corpse is flexed (legs are bent or body is crouched):

– No

Notes: Corpse is interred on its side (Coon, 1931:144).

↳ Corpse is extended (lying flat on front or back):

– No

Notes: Corpse is interred extended, but on its side (Coon, 1931:144).

↳ Corpse is upright (where body is interred in standing position):

– No

Notes: Corpse is interred on its side (Coon, 1931:144).

↳ Corpse is interred some other way:

– Yes [specify]: On side

Notes: "Arrived at the place of burial, some of the men busy themselves with digging the grave. It consists of two holes, one inside the other. The upper hole must be twelve foot-measures long, a leg-straddle wide, and navel deep. The inner hole must be one span wide, the length of the corpse, measured with a rope, and knee deep. The corpse is put in the inner hole on its left side, its feet to the east" (Coon, 1931:144).

↳ Cannibalism:

– No

Notes: No evidence for cannibalism was found in the principal ethnographic sources.

↳ Feeding to animals:

– No

Notes: No evidence for feeding corpses to animals was found in the principal ethnographic sources.

↳ Re-treatment of corpse:

– No

Notes: SCCS Variable 1850 indicates that "secondary contact with the body or bones of the deceased does not occur", and SCCS Variable 1851 indicates that "disarticulation does not occur or is not recoverable archaeologically" (Schroeder, 2001; Retrieved from Divale, 2004).

Are formal burials present:

– Yes

Notes: See Coon, 1931, pages 143-144 for a description of a typical burial.

↳ In cemetery:

– Yes

Notes: "The corpse, resting on the door of the village mosque, is carried by four men, constantly changing, so that everyone in the village may be said to have borne it part of the way. Each man runs up and takes a corner of the door for a few feet, when he is replaced by another. In this way the corpse is carried to the cemetery" (Coon, 1931:144).

Supernatural Beings

Are supernatural beings present:

– Yes

Notes: "Besides the Deity and the historic characters concerned with the Semitic religions, such as the prophets and the so□aba, the Riffians commonly believe in nine types of supernatural being, only two of which are intimately associated with Islam" (Coon, 1931:154).

↳ A supreme high god is present:

– Yes

Notes: SCCS Variable 238 (identical to Ethnographic Atlas Column 34) indicates that "high god present, active, and specifically supportive of human morality" (Murdock, 1967; Retrieved from Divale, 2004). Although God/Allah/The Deity is extremely important in Islam, the principal ethnographers do not go into detail when describing this deity's relation to the Berbers of Morocco.

↳ The supreme high god is a sky deity:

– Yes

Notes: "On the twenty-seventh night of this fast they believe that the sky opens and that a man who gazes fixedly at it may see God. If he does he dies instantly and is carried to heaven" (Coon, 1931:152).

↳ Previously human spirits are present:

– Yes

Notes: "er khier, a ghost. Ghosts are said to be very tall and thin, and to travel about at night, especially in the neighborhood of cemeteries. They are sometimes able to strike at men with tongues of fire, and can appear and disappear at will" (Coon, 1931:154).

↳ Non-human supernatural beings are present:

– Yes

Notes: See questions below for more details on non-human supernatural beings.

↳ These supernatural beings can be seen:

– Yes

Notes: "jnun, the jinns or genii, including the afari□ and the shaiya□in. This class also includes the thajinnishth, a female jinn in the form of a beautiful woman, who meets men on the path or in the wilderness at night and seduces them" (Coon, 1931:154).

↳ These supernatural beings have indirect causal efficacy in the world:

"Indirect causal efficacy" refers to not being seen as consciously, directly and actively intervening in the human world, but their overall well being or general attitude has effects on, e.g., quality of harvest, success in war, health, etc.

– Yes

Notes: "er ria, a hot whirlwind which comes in summer, and is supposed to be a baleful supernatural being" (Coon, 1931:154).

↳ These supernatural beings possess/exhibit some other feature:

– Yes [specify]: Capable of possessing humans and animals

Notes: "The jnun which disturb the Riffians most are those which take the forms of dogs or jackals. Dogs with light eyes are believed to be jnun, and fierce jackals, transformed jnun, are said to guard treasure hidden in the bottoms of caves. Doors and shutters are closed at night to prevent jnun from entering and possessing the occupants. Hydrophobia is thought to indicate the entrance of a jinni into a man's body" (Coon, 1931:154).

↳ Mixed human-divine beings are present:

– Yes

Notes: Saints are present and important among the Riffians. See questions below for more information about these mixed human-divine beings.

↳ These mixed human-divine beings have deliberate causal efficacy in the world:

– Yes

Notes: "Another Rif saint, Sidi Buhaiyar of the Ait Waryager, is said to make stones fall down from the sky and kill anybody who is guilty of theft, homicide, or any other offence inside his horm; and should anybody attempt to take away earth from the mountain on which Sidi Buhaiyar has his grave, the saint would make him blind" (Coon, 1931:27).

↳ These mixed human-divine beings can punish:

– Yes

Notes: "Another Rif saint, Sidi Buhaiyar of the Ait Waryager, is said to make stones fall down from the sky and kill anybody who is guilty of theft, homicide, or any other offence inside his horm; and should anybody attempt to take away earth from the mountain on which Sidi Buhaiyar has his grave, the saint would make him blind" (Coon, 1931:27).

↳ Does the religious group possess a variety of supernatural beings:

– Yes

Notes: "Besides the Deity and the historic characters concerned with the Semitic religions, such as the prophets and the soqaba, the Riffians commonly believe in nine types of supernatural being, only two of which are intimately associated with Islam" (Coon, 1931:154).

Supernatural Monitoring

Is supernatural monitoring present:

This refers to surveillance by supernatural beings of humans' behaviour and/or thought particularly as it relates to social norms or potential norm violations.

– Yes

Notes: SCCS Variable 238 (identical to Ethnographic Atlas Column 34) indicates that "high god present, active, and specifically supportive of human morality" (Murdock, 1967; Retrieved from Divale, 2004). Although God/Allah/The Deity is extremely important in Islam and is involved with supernatural monitoring, the principal ethnographers do not go into detail when describing this deity's relation to the Berbers of Morocco.

↳ There is supernatural monitoring of prosocial norm adherence in particular:

Prosocial norms are norms that enhance cooperation among members of the group, including obviously "moral" or "ethical" norms, but also extending to norms concerning honouring contracts and oaths, providing hospitality, coming to mutual aid in emergencies, etc.

– Yes

↳ Supernatural beings care about taboos:

– Yes

Notes: See questions below for specific taboos

↳ Food:

– Yes

Notes: "Milk and butter [among other food items] are very liable to be injured by the evil eye, witchcraft, or other evil influences [including jnun spirits], and are therefore in need of many precautions" (Westermarck, 1926:30). "...you should offer milk even to a person who does not know that you are carrying such a thing; for if you conceal milk from him God will always conceal it from you (Andjra)" (ibid, page 31).

↳ Supernatural beings care about other:

– Yes [specify]: Sacred Animals

Notes: "The horse, which is such a holy animal, must be well guarded against pollution. It seems to be a universal belief in Morocco that if a person who is sexually unclean rides a horse some evil will happen to him: he will tumble down, or be late in arriving at his destination, or will not succeed in his business, or will have boils, or become ill or die" (Westermarck, 1926:29).

↳ Supernatural beings care about murder of coreligionists:

– Yes

Notes: "Another Rif saint, Sidi Buhaiyar of the Ait Waryager, is said to make stones fall down from the sky and kill anybody who is guilty of theft, homicide, or any other offence inside his

horm; and should anybody attempt to take away earth from the mountain on which Sidi Buhaiyar has his grave, the saint would make him blind" (Westermarck, 1926:27).

↳ Supernatural beings care about lying:

– Yes

Notes: "Supernatural sanctions of death or blindness in the event of perjury acted as a powerful incentive against swearing falsely" (Hart, 2011).

↳ Supernatural beings care about honouring oaths:

– Yes

Notes: "Supernatural sanctions of death or blindness in the event of perjury acted as a powerful incentive against swearing falsely" (Hart, 2011).

↳ Supernatural beings care about property crimes:

– Yes

Notes: "Another Rif saint, Sidi Buhaiyar of the Ait Waryager, is said to make stones fall down from the sky and kill anybody who is guilty of theft, homicide, or any other offence inside his horm; and should anybody attempt to take away earth from the mountain on which Sidi Buhaiyar has his grave, the saint would make him blind" (Westermarck, 1926:27).

↳ Supernatural beings care about conversion of non-religionists:

– I don't know

↳ Supernatural beings care about economic fairness:

– I don't know

↳ Supernatural beings care about personal hygiene:

– Yes

Notes: "Like sexual uncleanness, excremental impurity is injurious to baraka [spiritual well-being]. A person ought not to sleep inside a mosque, because during sleep he may have a nightly pollution or break wind or make water. If anybody breaks wind in a mosque he kills thereby the angels in it or makes them blind, or at any rate displeases them, and he will himself fall ill or become poor. I have seen men remove their trousers before prayer, since no prayer will be accepted from a person in a state of uncleanness. Nobody is allowed to pray in a place where there are excrements of any other animals but such as are used for food, that is, cattle, sheep, goats, and camels. Urination and evacuation must not take place in the direction of Mecca; in the case of the former the person should have his face turned westward, in the case of the latter north- or south-wards. It is forbidden to do one's needs or urinate in the sea. It is also forbidden to do such things in a river or a pond. He who urinates in water will be struck by a jenn (Hiaina, Ait Sadden) or urinate blood after his death (Ait Waryager)" (Westermarck, 1926:30).

Do supernatural beings mete out punishment:

– Yes

Notes: See questions below for more details on supernatural punishment

↳ Is the cause or agent of supernatural punishment known:

– Yes

Notes: See questions below for more details on the causes of supernatural punishment.

↳ Done only by high god:

– No

Notes: Supernatural punishment may be done by God (Westermarck, 1926:31), saints (ibid, p.27), angels and jenn (ibid, p.30).

↳ Done by many supernatural beings:

– Yes

Notes: Supernatural punishment may be done by God (Westermarck, 1926:31), saints (ibid, p.27), angels and jenn (ibid, p.30).

↳ Done through impersonal cause-effect principle:

– Yes

Notes: "The horse, which is such a holy animal, must be well guarded against pollution. It seems to be a universal belief in Morocco that if a person who is sexually unclean rides a horse some evil will happen to him: he will tumble down, or be late in arriving at his destination, or will not succeed in his business, or will have boils, or become ill or die" (Westermarck, 1926:29).

↳ Is the reason for supernatural punishment known:

– Yes

Notes: See questions below for details.

↳ Done to enforce religious ritual-devotional adherence:

– Yes

Notes: See Westermarck, 1926, various pages including: 30-35.

↳ Done to enforce group norms:

– Yes

Notes: "Another Rif saint, Sidi Buhaiyar of the Ait Waryager, is said to make stones fall down from the sky and kill anybody who is guilty of theft, homicide, or any other offence inside his horm; and should anybody attempt to take away earth from the mountain on which Sidi Buhaiyar has his grave, the saint would make him blind"

(Westermarck, 1926:27).

↳ Done to inhibit selfishness:

– Yes

Notes: "...you should offer milk even to a person who does not know that you are carrying such a thing; for if you conceal milk from him God will always conceal it from you (Andjra)" (ibid, page 31).

↳ Supernatural punishments are meted out in the afterlife:

– Yes

Notes: "...murder was forbidden by the Prophet and that a murderer will go to hell..." (Westermarck, 1926:57).

↳ Supernatural punishments in the afterlife are highly emphasized by the religious group:

– I don't know

↳ Punishment in the afterlife consists of mild sensory displeasure:

– I don't know

↳ Punishment in the afterlife consists of extreme sensory displeasure:

– I don't know

↳ Punishment in the afterlife consists of reincarnation as an inferior life form:

– I don't know

↳ Punishment in the afterlife consists of reincarnation in an inferior realm:

– I don't know

↳ Other [specify]

– Yes

Notes: "...murder was forbidden by the Prophet and that a murderer will go to hell..." (Westermarck, 1926:57).

↳ Supernatural punishments are meted out in this lifetime:

– Yes

Notes: See questions below for more details on supernatural punishments in this lifetime.

↳ Supernatural punishments in this life are highly emphasized by the religious group:

– I don't know

Notes: Not enough information on this topic was available in the principal ethnographic sources.

↳ Punishment in this life consists of bad luck:

– I don't know

↳ Punishment in this life consists of political failure:

– I don't know

↳ Punishment in this life consists of defeat in battle:

– I don't know

↳ Punishment in this life consists of extreme sensory displeasure:

– Yes

Notes: "Another Rif saint, Sidi Buhaiyar of the Ait Waryager, is said to make stones fall down from the sky and kill anybody who is guilty of theft, homicide, or any other offence inside his horm; and should anybody attempt to take away earth from the mountain on which Sidi Buhaiyar has his grave, the saint would make him blind" (Westermarck, 1926:27).

Do supernatural beings bestow rewards:

– I don't know

Notes: Not enough information on this topic was available in the principal ethnographic sources.

Messianism/Eschatology

Are messianic beliefs present:

– Yes

Notes: "In the Rif, the Ali and Jesus prediction is replaced by the legend that a man, identity unknown, will come and smite both the Muslimin and the Christians until but a tenth of each remains. Then the slayer will introduce a new religion, the nature of which has not yet been revealed. He will come across the sky with the sun from the East in a single day" (Coon, 1931:147).

↳ Is the messiah's purpose known:

– Yes

Notes: To introduce a new religion (Coon, 1931:147).

↳ Other purpose:

– Yes [specify]: To introduce a new religion

Notes: "In the Rif, the Ali and Jesus prediction is replaced by the legend that a man, identity unknown, will come and smite both the Muslimin and the Christians until but a tenth of each remains. Then the slayer will introduce a new religion, the nature of which has not yet been revealed. He will come across the sky with the sun from the East in a single day" (Coon, 1931:147).

Is an eschatology present:

– I don't know

Notes: Not enough information on this topic was available in the principal ethnographic sources.

Norms and Moral Realism

Are general social norms prescribed by the religious group:

– Yes

Notes: Social norms are prescribed by the religious group and transmitted during childhood and through education (Coon, 1931, various sections including Chapter IX, section "Education", Chapter X, and Chapter XI).

Is there a conventional vs. moral distinction in the religious group:

– I don't know

Notes: Social norms and moral rules are prescribed by the religious group and transmitted during childhood and through education. The nature of this distinction is not entirely clear. (Coon, 1931, various sections including Chapter IX, section "Education", Chapter X, and Chapter XI).

Practices

Membership Costs and Practices

Does membership in this religious group require forgone food opportunities (taboos on desired foods):

– Yes

Notes: Yes, during Ramadan. "Ramadan is kept strictly by the Riffians, who do not deviate from the orthodox regulations in any way. Those who ordinarily eat pork, smoke, or drink, abstain from these practices during Ramadan, and scour with ashes any cooking or eating vessel which has been used for unclean food at other times" (Coon, 1931:152).

Does membership in this religious group require sacrifice of time (e.g., attendance at meetings or services, regular prayer, etc.):

– No

Notes: Men attend weekly services at the cantonal mosque. Old women may attend, but must sit in a

separate room as to not be seen. Younger women do not attend. Students are not required to attend. (Coon, 1931:146).

– Yes

Notes: Men attend weekly services at the cantonal mosque. Old women may attend, but must sit in a separate room as to not be seen. Younger women do not attend. Students are not required to attend. (Coon, 1931:146).

Society and Institutions

Levels of Social Complexity

The society to which the religious group belongs is best characterized as (please choose one):

This question refers to the wider society in which the religious group is located.

– A chiefdom

Notes: The Riffians have one level of jurisdictional hierarchy beyond the local community, which is reflective of a petty chiefdom (Ethnographic Atlas column 33, Murdock, 1967; retrieved from Divale, 2004). For detailed information on the Riffian's political organization, see Coon, 1931 Chapter VII: Government and Warfare.

Education

Does the religious group provide formal education to its adherents:

– Yes

Notes: "[The older men of each community] select some man of their village or a stranger, more frequently the latter. He must be a man of considerable ability in writing and with a fair knowledge of the Koran. He stands in front of the mosque at sunrise and at noon to call the pupils. School is held from sunrise (sba) to ten o'clock (d-har), and from noon (d-hor) to about four o'clock (asr)" (Coon, 1931:113).



Is formal education restricted to religious professionals:

– No

Notes: See Coon, 1931:113-115

Is formal education available to the group's adherents through an institution(s) other than the religious group:

– Yes

Notes: Secular education is available (Coon, 1931:115).

Public Works

Does the religious group in question provide public food storage:

– No

Notes: SCCS Variable 20 indicates that food is stored in individual houses (Murdock and Morrow, 1970; Retrieved from Divale, 2004).

Is public food storage provided to the group's adherents by an institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

– No

Notes: SCCS Variable 20 indicates that food is stored in individual houses (Murdock and Morrow, 1970; Retrieved from Divale, 2004).

Does the religious group in question provide water management (irrigation, flood control):

– Yes

Notes: "Irrigation ditches which water the tillage of more than one man are subject to communal care. Each farmer is assigned a definite amount of water during each season when it is required, the amount depending on the amount of land requiring irrigation. The water is measured by days and half-days. Each season the farmer must send out a man for every day's water he receives, to work a day repairing the system after the heavy rains. Farmers who have each but a half-day's water pair off and draw lots to see which will work, since no one is allowed to work half a day only" (Coon, 1931:54).

Is water management provided to the group's adherents by an institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

– No

Does the religious group in question provide transportation infrastructure:

– No

Notes: "Land transport in the Rif, Senhaja, and Ghomara is confined to the bearing of burdens by man and by domestic animals. Wheels and all types of vehicles are unknown. Human transport consists usually of the carrying of loads on the back" (Coon, 1931:42).

Enforcement

Does the religious group in question provide an institutionalized police force:

– No

Notes: "Police functions are not specialized or institutionalized at any level of political integration, the maintenance of law and order being left exclusively to informal mechanisms of social control, to private retaliation, or to sorcery" (Column 10: Tuden and Marshall, 1972).

Do the group's adherents interact with an institutionalized police force provided by an institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

– No

Notes: "Police functions are not specialized or institutionalized at any level of political integration, the maintenance of law and order being left exclusively to informal mechanisms of social control, to

private retaliation, or to sorcery" (Column 10: Tuden and Marshall, 1972).

Does the religious group in question provide institutionalized judges:

– Yes

Notes: "There are in the Rif two classes of officials who concern themselves with judicial and clerical functions: the "clerk," or adl (plural adul), and the "judge," or □odhi. The former is something between a town clerk and minor judge, and the latter a supreme court of appeal. Both concern themselves only with civil, never with criminal, disputes" (Coon, 1931:117). Criminal disputes are settled through the village council, council of the great, and the tribal council (Coon, 1931:96-104).

Does the religious group in question enforce institutionalized punishment:

– Yes

Notes: See questions below for more details.



Do the institutionalized punishments include execution:

– Yes

Notes: Coon, 1931:102-104



Do the institutionalized punishments include exile:

– Yes

Notes: Coon, 1931:100



Do the institutionalized punishments include ostracism:

– Yes

Notes: Coon, 1931:100-104



Do the institutionalized punishments include seizure of property:

– Yes

Notes: Cood, 1931:104

Written Language

Does the religious group in question possess its own distinct written language:

– Yes

Notes: "The Riffians speak a ... dialect of Berber called thamazighth..." (Coon, 1931:4). The Berbers are united by a shared language, and the Riffians have their own dialect. This language is not exclusively religious, but used by the society at large.



Is use of this distinct written language confined to religious professionals:

– No

Notes: Religious professionals are specially trained in reading and writing, and teach this skill to students.

Is a non-religion-specific written language available to the group's adherents through an institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

– Yes

Notes: Arabic is available and widely used in Morocco (Coon, 1931:4, 115).

Calendar

Does the religious group in question possess a formal calendar:

– Yes

Notes: "Agriculture in the Rif and in the Senhaja country is conducted on the basis of the old Roman calendar, the names of the months surviving in a form very little altered from its original character. I was unable to transcribe these names exactly since I could find no one who knew them accurately and was willing to reveal them. Knowledge of them is confined to the fqih, the preceptor or religious head of each group of villages, and to his students. The fqih, while delivering sermons at the mosque on Fridays, reveals the agricultural program for the following week and tells the farmers just what activities the season merits. To reveal this calendar system and the agricultural annotations which go with it would be to relinquish a portion of the awe in which the religious leader is held. The preceptor likewise knows the Arabic lunar calendar and is the only one able to tell when religious feasts of Arab origin are due" (Coon, 1931:49).

Is a formal calendar provided for the group's adherents by an institution(s) other than the religious group in question:

– No

Notes: Knowledge of the calendar is restricted to the religious officials and student (Coon, 1931:49).

Food Production

Does the religious group in question provide food for themselves:

– Yes

Notes: The Berbers of Morocco are agro-pastoralists, relying primarily on intensive, permanent agriculture utilizing techniques such as terracing, plows, and irrigation. Pastoralism is an additional significant source of subsistence. Hunting and fishing make supplement the diet as well. Source of information from *Ethnographic Atlas* (Murdock, 1962-1971), retrieved from Divale, 2004; Variables 203-207, 232.



Please characterize the forms/level of food production [choose all that apply]:

- Hunting (including marine animals)
- Fishing

- Pastoralism
- Small-scale agriculture / horticultural gardens or orchards
- Large-scale agriculture (e.g., monocropping, organized irrigation systems)

Notes: The Berbers of Morocco are agro-pastoralists, relying primarily on intensive, permanent agriculture utilizing techniques such as terracing, plows, and irrigation. Pastoralism is an additional significant source of subsistence. Hunting and fishing make supplement the diet as well. Source of information from Ethnographic Atlas (Murdock, 1962-1971), retrieved from Divale, 2004; Variables 203-207, 232.