



friends of morocco

اصدقاء المغرب

spring 2004

www.friendsofmorocco.org

Earthquake Hits Al-Hoceima Region in February

By Scott Estergard (Al Hoceima/Toubkal 91-93)

On the morning of February 24, an earthquake rocked the region of Al Hoceima and was felt into southern Spain and throughout much of Morocco. The earthquake (6.5 on the Richter scale) hit at approximately 2:30 a.m. local time with its epicenter approximately 15 kilometers southwest of Al Hoceima. Al Hoceima is one of the largest cities in northern Morocco located 185 miles (295 km) northeast of Rabat. Towns and villages to the southeast of Al Hoceima were hardest hit. Six villages, including Imzouren and Bri-Hadifa, with a combined population of well over 300,000, were badly affected. The town of Ait Kamara, with its mud-brick houses, was completely destroyed.

By the end of the day on February 24, the estimated death toll was 560 with hundreds more injured. Television pictures showed people digging through rubble with pick-axes, while others dug with their bare hands. People poured into the area's main city, the resort of Al Hoceima, where hospitals struggled to cope. In the village of Imzouren, 18 km (11 miles) south of Al Hoceima, the streets were littered with debris. "Many people are still trapped under the rubble; we have no equipment," Hassam Hmidouch, head of



the town council, told Reuters television. "It's a total disaster; the world needs to help us."

That day, aid started to arrive with Moroccan civil defense and Red Crescent on-site; the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies launched an appeal for \$2.3 million to assist 30,000 people and the international community was offering assistance. TV and radio were reporting, however, that 30,000 people were homeless and a cold rain was falling.

On February 25, aircraft from several countries, including Algeria, France and Spain, began arriving in Morocco loaded with food, blankets and rescue equipment. At the same time early morning aftershocks had hit 5.1 and 5.2 and caused at least one death. The rough mountain terrain and treacherous roads made quick delivery of supplies and assistance slow. "The earth, the mountains danced. And us, we cried. But such is the will of God," Omar Sellam added as rescue services said hopes were fading of finding more people alive. Search and rescue teams said late Wednesday they had all but given up hope of finding any more survivors.

"We can't sleep in our houses. Most of them have fallen down and the problem is getting to such isolated places," said Koubia Sahed, who dismissed as "mere political window-dressing" a promise by Interior Minister Mustafa Sahel that the government would pick up the reconstruction bill. "Our needs surpass what we are getting," explained Koubia, pointing to a dozen or so plastic tents erected by soldiers earlier in the day. "We need at least 1,500 tents here. We can't stay outside the

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Ash Khabarna?

أش اخبارنا ؟

Editor's note: I sincerely apologize for any errors in the last installment of Ash Khabarna. Most of these entries are typed and not cut and pasted, so it was just simple human error. I also rely on the information sent to us by the National Peace Corps Association. Please check with them and make sure your contact information is accurate. Clear handwriting also helps. If you don't want your personal information to appear in Ash Khabarna, please indicate this request on your membership renewal.

Joyce Bouvier—Rabat/Maaziz 65-67 is a church musician in Washington, DC.

Bruce Spicer—Salé/Beni Mellal is an instrumentation technician and lives in Hastings, MN. Contact Bruce at <bruce13590donna@cs.com>.

Lisa Dalferro Abuhamad—Sidi Yahia/Rabat 82-85 writes, "Just moved to live in Dallas with my husband, Karim, and 3 kids. Spent many years in Yemen and shorter stints in Niger and Madagascar. Our children are bilingual French/English and are attending the Dallas International School". Contact Lisa at <kabuhamad@hotmail.com>.

Jeffrey Ankrom—Marrakech 84-86 is finishing law school in Indiana and looking for a job. Contact Jeffrey at <jankrom@indiana.edu>.

Melissa Wyers—Rabat 89-91 lives in Washington, DC. Contact Melissa at <melissawyers@hotmail.com>.

Holly Hardy Daley—Fez 83-85 writes: "I've taught school (elementary and junior high). I went back to school and got another bachelor's in African-American Studies. I married a wonderful man named Chris. He and I did a 2½ month backpacking trip in Europe, eastern Europe and Morocco! We spent time with a dear Moroccan friend of mine. Chris and I now live in

the mountains and we have a 4 year-old boy named Harrison. We are currently adopting a little girl from the Philippines". Contact Holly at <saint_catherine@airbits.com>.

Steve Hallgren—Rabat 72-74 is an associate professor of forest ecology at Oklahoma State University. He has 3 children and is married to Gerry Auel, a Tunisia RPCV. Contact Steve at <hallgren@okstate.edu>.

Dale Eickelman is a professor at Dartmouth College. Contact Dale at <dale.f.eickelman@dartmouth.edu>.

Kerry Foley—Beni Mellal 97-99 teaches English at Beekmantown Central School in Peru, NY. Contact Kerry at <highpeaks10@aol.com>.

Betty Pope—Rabat 83-86 is the registrar at South County Hospital in East Greenwich, RI. Contact Betty at <elizabethpope1944@hotmail.com>.

LouLou and Mark Kane—Fes/Casablanca 68-72 write, "Loulou is the new associate director of Salisbury House, a historic estate in Des Moines. She'll curate the painting, sculpture, books, and furniture, manage events, and raise funds. She's also raising money for a "green" roof on the new public library (a roof covered with plants). Mark is unemployed, still looking for a publisher for *Yamna*, the novel by Francois Bonjean, designing gardens and counting his blessings, still well four years after treatment for cancer of the brain. Cornelia has moved to Ft. Collins, Colorado, and resumed her education after a two year hiatus. She loves the mountains and concerts by jam bands, a first generation spiritual child of the hippy era." Contact the Kanes at <markkane@att.net>.

Mounira Maya Charrad, Assistant Professor of Sociology, Middle East Studies, and Women's Studies at the University of Texas at Austin, recently received the following awards for her

book, *States and Women's Rights: The Making of Postcolonial Tunisia, Algeria, and Morocco* (University of California Press, 2001):

- Best Book in Politics and History Greenstone Award (co-winner), American Political Science Association, 2003.
- Distinguished Book Award for the Outstanding Book in Political Sociology, American Sociological Association, 2002.
- Highest Award for the Outstanding Book in Any Field, Hamilton Award, University of Texas at Austin, 2002.
- Best First Book in History Award (co-winner), Phi Alpha Theta International Honor Society in History, 2002.
- Best Book in Sociology Komarovskiy Award (honorable mention), Eastern Sociological Society, 2003.

Contact Mounira at <charrad@mail.la.utexas.edu>.

Friedl Van den Bossche, PC Morocco medical officer in the late 70s and early 80s, can be contacted at <friedlvdb@yahoo.com>.

David Peshkin can be contacted at <dpushkin@pavementsolutions.com>.

Marilee McClintock—Chtouka Ait Baha 00-02 is the country director of PC Micronesia. Contact Marilee at <marileemcc@yahoo.com>.



The Hand: Hand Iconography in Islamic and Other Cultures

By Dagmar Painter



Images of the human hand have had powerful appeal throughout the ages. In Pecherle, France, a cave painting of horses, circa 20,000 BC is silhouetted with

human hands, which scholars believe may have been painted by a shaman to induce magic within the hunting culture. In Catal Huyuk, Turkey, excavations have revealed frescoed walls with rows of hands from 7,000 BC.

Similar prehistoric hand imagery has been found painted on rocks in Wadi Sera, Libya and in the Dumboshawa region of Zimbabwe. In the Punic era (from 250 BC) Carthaginian funeral stele incorporated carved stone hands as symbols of divinity. In addition, cave paintings and carvings of hands have been found in Algeria dating from 3,000 BC.

In ancient Egypt, the hand was the symbol of fortitude and power. Tomb paintings in Tel el Amarna depict the Pharaoh Akenaten and his queen Nefertiti receiving hands radiating power from Aton the Sun God.

Anasazi petroglyphs found in New Mexico depict hand-shaped talismans in this pre-Pueblo culture (AD 900-1200). A 3-inch terracotta gorget from the Mound Builders, a pre-Columbian culture found in Alabama, depicts a solar symbol above a hand with a central eye motif. Also found at Moundville is a pre-Columbian stone plate, in which the eye-in-hand motif has been carved. Surrounded by two snakes. In Illinois/Indiana, a similar culture existed, with life-sized hand-shaped pendants made of mother of pearl.

Other American Indian cultures using hand imagery include the Toltec Mound Builders from the Mississippi Valley (AD 700-950) and the Navaho, whose Naja with healing hands silver pendant originates in silver horse

brasses brought to the Southwest by the Spanish from their Moorish culture in the 16th century.

More than a way to mark man's passage, the image of the hand has long been linked with prophylactic magic. Gesturing to proclaim, to protect, to ward off evil, to give blessings or comfort, is culturally universal. From this it is only a step from the literal depiction of the hand to symbolically associating it with desired outcomes or philosophies.

Hand as amulet imagery arose in many cultures: Ancient Egyptian, Phoenician, Roman, Nubian, Berber, and Arab as well as Christian and Jewish. As



trade, travel and war spread iconography from one culture to another, similar imagery took on special meaning particular to each new locale.

During the Roman period, the hand appears in mosaics, often abstracted as a triangle (symbol of the female) and associated with the fish or serpent (symbol of the male). The Roman numeral V, references this triangle/hand, sometimes written as IIII to symbolize the five fingers. Berbers and Arabs adopted this symbol, to which they were exposed because of the proliferation of Roman mosaics in Roman territories of North Africa and beyond. They subsequently imbued it with a richness of meaning drawn from their own religious and folk cultural beliefs.

For example, from its association with the number V came the symbolic amulet *khamisa* (Arabic for five), associated with the five fingers of the hand, the five tenets of Islam (*shahada*, *salat*, *hajj*, *saum* and *zakat*), the five letters of the name of God (*Allah*), the letterforms of which seem to be spelled

out on the open hand. Later, the hand itself took on the symbolic meaning, and became an amulet known as the Hand of Fatima, after the daughter of the prophet Mohammed by his first wife Kadajah, esteemed for her virtues. (The particular association with Fatima derives, scholars speculate, from its association with Venus (Roman) and later Mary (Christendom).)

The hand amulet protects and wards off the evil eye, *ain al-hasad* ("eye of envy"). It appears in many forms throughout the Arab and Islamic world, augmenting its protective powers with the addition of inscriptions, stones (especially blue stones, "the eye of the other" said to repel the evil eye) and animal figures such as birds, lizards, salamanders, and bees. Algerian tribal hands, as well as those from Mauritania often have elaborate enameling. In Morocco, hand amulets appear in many forms, including right-handed and symmetrical, as well as in the realistically shaped *mains citadines*. Other symbolic forms in Morocco include an abstracted version with a sun or moon shape in the "palm" surrounded by five semicircular forms; a style from the central High Atlas region in the shape of an arched doorway with two key-shaped cutouts and hands protruding from the sides; and the *mains tribolees foulet*



khamisa, a squat rounded-off cruciform shape with five design elements, either incised or hammered on the four corners and the center.

Similar abstractions of the number five appear in Mauritania and India.

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Transform the Peace Corps for a Post 9/11 World

By Jason Ben-Meir

Several years ago, during a staff training session of Peace Corps managers from around the world, I asked former agency Director Mark Gearan a question as old as the agency itself. "Should Peace Corps volunteers primarily help organize community development, or should they be agents of cultural exchange who promote friendship in the countries where they serve?" Peace Corps volunteers and staff have long



debated this question, for they've understood that the way it is ultimately answered at the top will define the soul of the agency, including the design of Peace Corps programs, the kind of impact volunteers have on communities, how volunteers are trained, their image and how this reflects on the United States, and their accessibility to financial resources for community projects. That day Director Gearan said that the volunteers themselves must find a balance between these twin goals of the Peace Corps mission, depending on where they're serving.

Today, there is greater urgency to this long-standing internal debate. President Bush is now asking Congress to increase the Peace Corps' operations budget from \$323 million in 2004 to \$401 million in 2005, the largest amount ever sought for the agency. But to maximize its enormous potential, a decision on top has to be made to make community development the main priority. As Secretary of State Powell succinctly summarized in a speech in December

2002, "This kind of development undermines the root causes of extremism." With over 7,500 volunteers serving in 71 nations and plans for a dramatic expansion, the Peace Corps can, if the agency as a whole moves in this direction, become a truly vital instrument for peace.

The Peace Corps is perfectly situated to play this role. Typically, volunteers are assigned to work with local government and non-government agencies dedicated to improving the education, health, small businesses, agriculture, information technology, and environment of the communities in which they serve. Usually living in these communities, they are thus natural links between community members and development agencies. If volunteers do not effectively function as development organizers and focus instead on "learning about another culture," valuable as this experience is, they lose the opportunity uniquely open to them of being able to create partnerships of potentially enormous benefit to entire communities. And with such development, the poverty that is one of the root causes of terrorism is lessened.

Such an emphasis does not simply benefit the local communities and the nations of which they are a part. The volunteers themselves better understand the history, social relationships, economy, language, and physical environment where they serve by being absorbed in community development. Through successfully facilitating local development projects, they build trust and enhance the image of both the Peace Corps and the United States.

This is why today an expectation must be made of the over 7,500 volunteers world-wide that organizing community development is their primary duty and the vehicle they use in functioning as agents of cultural exchange—and social, political, and economic change as well. Otherwise, much of the agency's potential for enhancing the lives of local people, the personal growth of volunteers, interpersonal and international trust, and

the global image of the Peace Corps and of the United States, will remain unrealized while global stability continues to deteriorate.

The urgent need to make the world a safer place makes it imperative for the Peace Corps to finally reconcile its dual nature. Fortunately, realizing one identity need not be at the expense of the other; by the agency training all volunteers to be facilitators of community development, they will more deeply immerse themselves in



the cultures they serve while helping communities around the world realize opportunities that until now seemed impossible.

Jason Ben-Meir, a former Peace Corps Volunteer and Program Manager who served in Morocco, is currently President of the High Atlas Foundation.



American School of Marrakech Celebrates Its 10th Anniversary

By Malin Halladay (Tidili Fetouaka 95-97)

Did you know that there's an American School in Marrakesh? Until a few years ago, you probably wouldn't have. Housed initially in one and then two rented villas in the Semlalia neighborhood, the school is now located on the Route de Ouarzazate,



Front of school

some 12 kilometers from the center of town, in a brand-new \$2+ million building facing the impressive High Atlas range.

Since 1995, the school has been offering English-language education and an American-style curriculum to students in Marrakesh, following in the footsteps of its older sister, the American School of Tangier. The school's enrollment is over 90% Moroccan, and faculty come from as far away as Singapore, Australia and South Africa. Despite the school's name, there are only 6 American faculty members and a handful of American students!

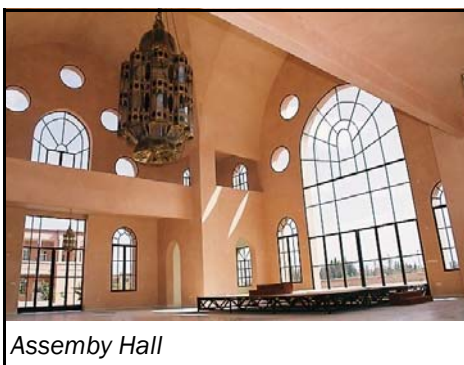
For Fall 2004, the school will offer Pre-K - 9th Grade education to approximately 300 students and is set to graduate its first 12th Grade class in June 2008. Most graduates are expected to pursue higher education either abroad in the U.S. or Europe or at any number of Moroccan universities or private colleges.

The Carolyn McPhillips Library will be inaugurated this fall to coincide with the school's 10th year in Marrakesh. Until now, the library has been housed in a regular-sized classroom, and students have

accessed books in conjunction with a weekly music lesson occurring in the same room. Students will now have regular access to a much larger library, housing separate collections for the elementary and upper grades, and a full-time librarian.

Librarian Malin Halladay (Tidili Fetouaka 95-97) seeks to make the students' library experience similar to that of any student in a typical American school - computerized card catalog and circulation, visiting author and poet days, supervised Internet research, carpeted and furnished reading areas and other activities to coincide with special events and holidays.

The current collection contains fewer than 2,000 volumes, but the new library can house approximately 20,000! In order to begin expanding the collection quickly, the school is relying on donors to provide new and



Assembly Hall

used works of fiction and non-fiction to meet the needs of students at all grade levels (Pre-K-12). It is hoped that Peace Corps authors and Morocco RPCVs will help the school in this effort!

For more information about the school or to arrange visits or donations, please contact Malin Halladay, Librarian (amerschmarr@menara.ma) or 00212.44.32.98.60.

To avoid overseas postage, new and used book donations can be shipped to the school's expeditor in Maryland, who will forward them to the school. Donated materials may be shipped domestically in care of our book and supply consolidator, Mr. John Randolph, who will be responsible for

shipping them to Morocco. His address is:

Mr. John Randolph
c/o Global Education Systems
ACE World Wide
4710 Trident Court
Baltimore, MD 21227

Please make sure to specify on the box or envelope that it's for the American



School library

School of Marrakesh (MTANG). We expect the first container to depart in May, with possibly a few others to follow in June and July.

Books can also be ordered from Amazon.com and sent directly to the school.

American School of Marrakesh
B.P. 6195
Route National No. 9,
Route de Ouarzazate
Marrakech 40000
MOROCCO

The school is a non-profit corporation registered in Delaware, so any cash donations are tax-deductible. Checks should be made out to the American School of Tangier, with a notation that the check is for the American School of Marrakesh Library. Checks can be mailed directly to the school, using the above address, and I will forward them to our Treasurer in Tangier.

An Early Moroccan Immigrant

Ahmed Mokhriby was born on January 1, 1909 in rural farmlands, 45 miles south of Essaouria, Morocco. His birth marked the beginning of a remarkable life; one that would take young Ahmed on a nomadic journey, beginning at a young age when he ran away from home. Chronicled below are the unique highlights of Ahmed Mokhriby's life.

Tragedy marks Ahmed's life early when at the young age of three, his mother was killed inadvertently by someone who was trying to assassinate his father. Ahmed's father was a regional marshall and a territorial feud prompted the assassination attempt on his life. While working on his father's farm, the conditions became intolerable for young Ahmed.

As a result of his home life, at the age of ten, with no money and only the clothes on his back, Ahmed decided to run away. One can imagine how easy it would be for a young, homeless boy to fall prey to unscrupulous plans of exploitation. Such was what happened to Ahmed. A man befriended him with promises of work in a traveling carnival as a musician and dancer. Ahmed was excited at such a prospect, and he was subsequently given work in the carnival. It didn't take too long for Ahmed to soon realize that his friend had betrayed his trust and had actually made a profitable deal with the owners of the gypsy carnival.

What unquestionably transpired was that Ahmed had been "sold" to work for the carnival, not as a performer but such like an indentured servant. Although Ahmed left home due to living conditions, his life in the circus was equally as hard for the young man. But the stronger fear of the wrath of his father was the reason Ahmed remained with the carnival for several years longer.

Eventually, Ahmed abandoned his harsh life and returned to Marrakech. Besides being an attraction for performers and entertainers, Marrakech was far enough geographically from Essaouria that

Ahmed could live without worry that he would be found by his father and taken back to his previous harsh farm life.

Ahmed soon found work in a café' located in the famed Square DJEMAA EL FNA in Marrakech. The Square is well known for attracting performers and artists. It was not long before Ahmed's ability to effectively oversee café operations became evident and he was promoted to a new position that of manager.

While the job was good, Ahmed's daily exposure to the troupe of circus performers and artists continued to pique his interest. His desire to become a musician and dancer became even stronger than ever before. When an opportunity came his way, he joined the Royal Order of Sidi Hamad Amousa, an acrobatic troupe! This is what marked the beginning of a new career for Ahmed.

Because Ahmed had worked in a café prior to joining the troupe, he was quickly designated as the troupe cook. He now had the responsibility of cooking the daily meals for the troupe even though he had no prior experience in cooking while working at the café in Marrakech. Every evening, when no one was in the vicinity, Ahmed would practice over and over again in an attempt to execute the same movements he saw the acrobats perform during that day's performance. What was an unfortunate incident for one of the acrobats became an opportunity for Ahmed. When the acrobat sustained an injury, it left an opening for a performer. Ahmed stepped up and offered to substitute for the injured troupe member. After that first performance the manager of the troupe was so impressed with Ahmed's performance that he offered Ahmed a permanent position to perform with the troupe.

Although Ahmed became an acrobat, he continued to cook for the troupe, as well. The troupe was not about to give up their cook! In addition to cooking and performing for the troupe, Ahmed's skills at designing and creating costumes for the members became an additional responsibility.

Ahmed, now a 16-year old self-

taught acrobat, found himself in Europe. He began working with a group of performers, Papa Hadji's Acrobat Troupe, and continued, for the next ten years, to perform in all of the major circuses throughout Europe, Russia, North Africa and the United States. Besides the Ringling Brothers Barnum and Bailey Circus of the United States, a few of the other great circuses included the great Moscow State Circus of Russia, Circus Renz and the Busch Circus of Germany.

Ahmed soon became one of the top acrobats in the world, as well as the youngest person to manage the troupe. Ahmed recalls the day in Italy when he did a handstand, on a dare, on the inner rail of the Leaning Tower of Pisa, ten stories above the ground? with no safety equipment of any type. He later learned that what he thought were pigeons on the ground below, were in reality, people, people watching him. Thinking back, Ahmed realizes that it was foolish, youthful confidence that allowed him to perform such a stunt.

Even though years of physical and geographical isolation from his father occurred, Ahmed maintained a connection with his father by writing letters and continuously providing what monetary support he could manage. It was not until Ahmed was 21 years of age before he returned home to reconnect in person with his father. It was a rewarding reunion as Ahmed's father was later assassinated for political reasons when working for the French Colonizers.

In 1935, while working a circus in Frankfort, Germany, Ahmed's life was about to take a sudden change in direction again. One evening while attending a performance of the Manhardy Ballet, Ahmed's eye caught the beauty and movement of one of the graceful dancers performing on stage. Although there was a hint of recognition, Ahmed could not recall why the female performer seemed to strike a special chord with him. After the show, Ahmed was determined to

(Continued on page 20)

Membership Renewal/Application

PLEASE NOTE: Prior to filling out this application, consider making a few copies to pass on to others. While many of our members are former Peace Corps Morocco volunteers, membership is open to anyone interested in the people, culture and development of Morocco.

DIRECTORY INFORMATION

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Home phone: _____ Fax: _____ Email: _____

Current occupation: _____

Employer/school: _____

Experience in Morocco: (RPCVs and PC staffers list Peace Corps jobs. Academics: list field and research topics. Moroccans: list profession or field of study)

Years in Morocco: _____ to _____ Site/hometown: _____

I give permission to FOM to print the above information in the FOM newsletter: _____ Yes _____ No

Areas of interest: Check potential FOM activities in which you would be interested:

<input type="checkbox"/> newsletter	<input type="checkbox"/> local FOM chapter	<input type="checkbox"/> speakers' bureau
<input type="checkbox"/> trips to Morocco	<input type="checkbox"/> recruiting PCVs	<input type="checkbox"/> putting RPCVs/Moroccans in touch
<input type="checkbox"/> hospitality	<input type="checkbox"/> reunion/gatherings	<input type="checkbox"/> career/readjustment services
<input type="checkbox"/> fund raising	<input type="checkbox"/> development education	<input type="checkbox"/> FOM officer position
Other _____		

We need your support for the *Friends of Morocco Newsletter* and other FOM activities. Membership categories appear below. Joint membership includes membership in FOM and the National Peace Corps Association (NPCA). NPCA members also receive the award-winning magazine *World View*, and the newsletter 3/1/61. NPCA and FOM dues and contributions are tax-deductible.

JOINT MEMBERSHIP IN FRIENDS OF MOROCCO AND NATIONAL PEACE CORPS ASSOCIATION

Individual _____ \$50.00
 Multiple (two people, one address) _____ \$65.00

MEMBERSHIP IN FRIENDS OF MOROCCO ONLY

Individual _____ \$15.00
 Multiple (two people, one address) _____ \$20.00

Overseas NPCA members - please add \$20 for postage _____ \$20.00

Additional contribution to Friends of Morocco (tax-deductible) \$ _____ (shukron!)

TOTAL AMOUNT ENCLOSED (make check payable to *Friends of Morocco*) \$ _____

Spring 04



THE FOM SOUK

► Over 300 Moroccan internet recipes now linked from the FOM web site

The growing collection of Moroccan recipes on the Internet has been made more accessible by the work of Karen Van Roekel (88-90) who has reorganized them according to component of the meal rather than by hosting organization on the Internet. Over time, FOM had identified more than 15 web sites that hosted collections of Moroccan recipes, but identification of a specific recipe such as "Chicken With Lemon And Olives" was difficult as one had to visit all the sites to compare and determine the "right" recipe. Visit the web page at <http://friendsofmorocco.org/Food/recipes.htm>. Suggestions for improvement and additional recipes are welcome.

The categories are as follows.

Appetizers	Crepes, Beghrir, Pancakes	Mini Pastries
Bastila Pastry	Soups	Salads
Breads	Sauces	Fruits
Tajine and Roasted Meat: Veal and Beef		Tajine and Roasted Meat: Lamb and Mutton
Tajine and Roasted Meat: Chicken and other Poultry		Tajine and Roasted Meat: Fish
Rice	Couscous	Vegetable Dishes
Cakes, cookies and pastries (including meat pastries)		
Mint tea	Other Beverages	

► Scottsdale, AZ and Marrakesh Sister Cities

The Scottsdale (Arizona) Sister Cities Association has sister city relationships with Alamos, Mexico; Interlaken, Switzerland; and Cairns, Australia. Recently we have been approached by residents of Marrakesh, Morocco about the possibility of forming a sister city relationship with them. Our Sister Cities Association is a non-profit volunteer organization with no direct connection to Scottsdale city government. For this reason we have to consider whether we will be able to attract community support in the form of Sister City memberships and volunteer support for Moroccan-themed activities, as our budget is small.

Any RPCV's in Arizona are welcome to contact me; you need not live in Scottsdale to be involved. Thanks, Margo Wilson (Tangier 71-73). Contact Margo at: Margo Wilson, Chair Morocco Sister City Committee, Scottsdale Sister Cities Association, 8039 E. Cholla St., Scottsdale, AZ 85260, Phone (480) 483-6572 email: <mewslp@swlink.net>

► Study Islamic Gender Studies in Fes

www.jimmel.com/sadiqi/index.htm is the web site of the first gender studies program to receive government support from a Muslim government and represents a breakthrough for women's rights in Muslim society.

► New Cookbook by Paula Wolfert



Paula Wolfert, the author of the essential cookbook on Moroccan cooking, *Couscous and Other Good Food from Morocco*, has written a new cookbook: *The Slow Mediterranean Kitchen: Recipes for the Passionate Cook*. The cookbook includes recipes from Morocco, Tunisia and other Mediterranean countries. Editor's note: I had the pleasure of meeting Paula Wolfert and enjoying a 6-course meal of dishes from her new cookbook at Philadelphia's annual "The Book and the Cook" event. The food was incredible, Ms. Wolfert was very excited to talk about Morocco and had nice things to say about Peace Corps volunteers in Morocco.

Morocco at the Movies #6 - "The Wind and the Lion" (1975)

By Dan Cahill (Kenitra 68-70)



In a future column, I intend to discuss Morocco's role as a location for films that actually take place elsewhere-- Kafiristan, Somalia, Israel, even Tibet. This time, however, I'm tackling the opposite syndrome: a movie that takes place in Morocco which appears to have been filmed entirely in Spain.

The story is loosely based on an actual event which occurred in and around Tangier in May 1904. The writer-director, John Milius, has changed the date by six months, and altered the spellings of the characters' names. He has also changed the gender of a principal character, not to mention the outcome of the events. Hollywood at work.

Sherif Moulay Ahmed Ben Mohammed el Raisuli (Sean Connery) kidnaps Eden Pedecaris (Candice Bergen) and her two children, ex-pats living in a sumptuous villa, in order to embarrass the reigning Sultan of Morocco, whom he thinks is a puppet of the eager-to-colonize European powers. Pedecaris is feisty and resistive, a modern woman for her time, while her children are in awe of Raisuli's splendor, brutality, and charm. She retains her spirit, even after he slaps her in the face for laughing at him while he struggles to mount a balking horse. Over the course of her captivity, she comes to admire and sympathize with him without demonstrably falling in love with him.

The kidnapping provokes the rage of President Theodore Roosevelt (Brian Keith), facing an election and eager to display his trademark Gunboat Diplomacy to "Arab desperadoes". We are introduced to TR as he's posing for a

photograph with his hand positioned on a large globe. The arc of his palm encircles the Moroccan coastline in an imperial, commanding gesture-- there is no mistaking his objectives. Keith brings a marvelous swagger to his portrayal of a leader described by his own Secretary of State John Hay (John Huston) as a "cowboy". His whistle-stop campaign rallies the populace with slogans threatening Raisuli, and he orders an invasion of the Sultan's palace by a contingent of US Marines. [In case you're noting a similarity between these events of a century ago and today's world situation, let me remark that the only book (other than a bible) ever seen in the hand of George W. Bush so far during his term of office is Edmund Morris's biography, "Theodore Rex".]

In actuality, according to Douglas Porch's excellent "The Conquest of Morocco" (1986, Fromm International), the outcome was somewhat different: Pedecaris, a man in real life, was released unharmed after negotiations overseen by the Sherif of Ouezzane. And the Marine invasion was limited to a social one: officers were "feted and shown the town" by wealthy ex-pat American hostesses. But that wouldn't make a thrilling desert epic in Hollywood style.

Enter John Milius, a macho motorcycling surfer, well-known as a right-wing gun enthusiast (note his cameo as an arms merchant demonstrating a machine gun to the Sultan), to make of this a Kiplingesque Victorian era adventure, which must, as most big budget films do, play into and not challenge audience expectations. We must therefore have violent confrontations, including sweeping cavalry charges into artillery fire and a prominent display of the stars and stripes hoisted over the conquered palace.

To his credit, Milius succeeds in his goal, making the best film of his career (for a genuine hoot, check out his "Red Dawn", 1984, a paranoid fantasy about Nicaraguans and Soviets invading the US). In his DVD commentary, he justly praises David Lean's inspiring "Lawrence of Arabia" for setting a high standard,

and he rises to it in his craftsmanship. Billy Williams's camera is always in the right place, capturing painterly images in crisp, colorful light. Master composer Jerry Goldsmith's score lingers pleasantly in the mind for days. The casting of Sean Connery is nearly perfect-- who else could have created such a charismatic combination of guile, spirituality, and savagery... "the last of the Barbary Pirates"? Bergen has limited acting range but gamely leaps into her role with enthusiasm and excellent equestrian skills.

Looking for Morocco in this film is another matter. For every accuracy, there is a glaring error. The incidental Arabic spoken by the extras and minor characters is true to Moroccan dialect, but Sultan Abd-el Aziz is played by Indian-born Mark Zuber, who speaks his English dialogue with an accent right out of Bollywood. Many of the locations seem quite authentic, using Moorish Spain (Almeria, Sevilla) as an architectural backdrop, but the geography is out of whack: big sand dunes in the Rif? A town East of Rabat that is on the seacoast?

Milius tells us that his film is revered in the Islamic world for its rare portrayal of a Muslim hero. Positive as that is, Jack Shaheen's "Reel Bad Arabs" cites the movie 22 times for negative or clichéd Arab images, one of the longer lists in his comprehensive report about Western films' depictions of them.

Sadly, none of this matters to the intended audience, so we Morocco-philes must accept the movie as predictable, mainstream commercial entertainment. The best way to appreciate this handsome new DVD release is on a 32" screen with a big bowl of popcorn. Kick back and be swept along with el Raisuli leading his sword-wielding brigands across the sands of someplace that only looks like Morocco.

Contact Dan at <cahilld@nyc.rr.com>

The Einstein of Argan

By George McFadden (Ksar Souk '77, Rabat 78 - 79)

Dr. Zoubida Charrouf's gentle demeanor and ability to operate in any social setting belies her status. She exudes the confidence and joy of someone who is doing exactly what she wants to do. At ease among scientists at international technical conferences or among the *shilha*-speaking Berber tribeswoman in rural southern Morocco, her ability to navigate between many worlds is only one facet of a uniquely complex personality. Dr. Charrouf is the world's leading expert on the argan tree. Like Einstein in the world of physics, she is not only foremost expert in the technical aspect of her chosen field, but in the social, economic, humanitarian and political dimensions as well.

A biochemical engineer schooled in Europe, she returned to Morocco to find the world of commercial chemistry too confining on many levels. Her doctoral work was in organic chemistry and while research was scientifically interesting, she felt a need to reconcile the work of the laboratory with the real world realities of Morocco. Combining her interests in Moroccan traditional life, biodiversity, women's issues and economic growth, she launched a career around the quintessence of Moroccan flora: the argan tree.

Visitors to southern Morocco usually return with a photo or postcards picturing goats perched in trees. The goats climb the low branches and nibble the leaves of the indigenous argan (*arganina spinosa*) – a small, sturdy tree found in southwestern Morocco and nowhere else in the world. It is well suited to that semi-arid land. It can withstand the fierce Saharan heat and set down roots that go over 30 feet into the earth. In turn, its shade provides protection for grain and other crops not as resistant to the intensity of the southern Moroccan sun.

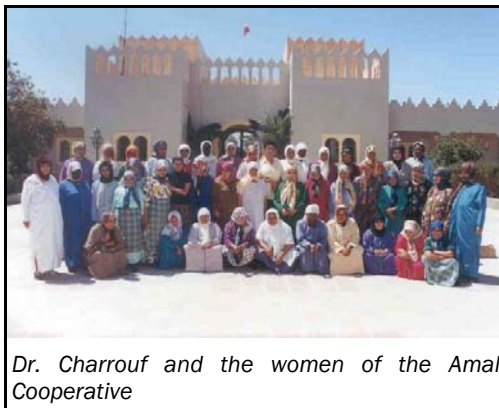
It has been cultivated by Berbers in that area for centuries and its by-products are hallmarks of traditional



His Majesty Mohammed VI and Dr. Charrouf with a variety of argan products

Soussi life. In addition to providing forage for the tree-climbing goats and other animals, it provides wood for construction and cabinet-making. It is also used as fuel in the form of wood and charcoal.

The most unique of its bounties is found in the nut contained in the fruit it produces. Each almond-like nut contains from one to three large kernels that are ground and pressed to produce unique oil. The dregs of this process are used as



Dr. Charrouf and the women of the Amal Cooperative

animal fodder.

Argan oil is an essential ingredient of Soussi life. It is used to cook tagines and couscous, though it is not commonly used for frying. The ultimate argan oil food preparation is *amlou* – a mixture of argan oil, almond butter and honey that is served with bread and tea for the traditional Soussi Berber breakfast. The oil also has traditional cosmetic and medicinal uses. It is used as an emollient for hair and skin,

as well as a folk medicine used in the same manner as olive oil in southern Europe. Its dietary, cosmetic and medicinal benefits have long been extolled by the Berbers.

Argan oil production has always been the domain of Berber women. Harvesting the fruit is similar to harvesting olives, but that is where the similarity ends. The oil extraction process involves separating the kernels from the fruit and then roasting and grinding them in stone mortars to extract the oil. It is hard, tedious work involving skills passed down from mother to daughter for generations on end.

Like most Moroccans, Dr. Charrouf grew up hearing the claims about the virtues of argan oil. After receiving her doctorate, she decided to prove them as she sought an alternative to a career in industrial chemistry. Taking a position as a professor in the Faculty of Sciences at Mohammed V University in Rabat, she set about analyzing the chemistry of the argan tree and its by-products. Since that time, she has overseen extensive analyses of argan by products and put together a body of work that show the chemistry the claims are based on.

In the course of her research, she also began encouraging a greater degree of organization in the production of argan oil. She established cooperatives run by women in the Souss and Anti-Atlas areas, starting with the Amal Cooperative. The groups grew in number and are now part of a greater Union of Women's Cooperatives for the Production and Marketing of Biological Argan Oil and Agricultural Products (UCFA). This represents the first women's agricultural cooperative in Morocco dedicated to the improvement, advancement and marketing of a suite of agricultural products. Dr. Charrouf is proud of the fact that this unique oil no longer has to be sold by the side of the road in old,

(Continued on page 21)

Our Man in Morocco

By Jack Sundell, PCV Azilal

Well, I've been in Morocco for at least three months now. This dawned on me when I received a second issue of the quarterly folk music magazine I subscribe to. Training is over, and we're all sworn-in, fully armed and operational volunteers. I'm writing from Azilal, my final site, a small city in the foothills of the High Atlas Mountains. I'm sitting on the roof of my host family's house, watching a cloudy sky fade to sunset, drinking a cup of what's as close as I can get to American coffee (which means I didn't boil the milk). A quiet, solitary moment like this is a rare thing in Morocco, a chance to sit back and relax without the sound of a TV in the background or several host-family members curiously gathering around to see what I'm doing. So I've been busy, and life has been a pretty public affair for the last 12 weeks, but I'm settling in slowly and enjoying the novelty and excitement of every waking moment.

Training was a fast, wild, and fun ride that seemed like it was over almost as soon as it had begun. The youth development sector spent the first week in Rabat along with the small business development folks. Here we continued getting to know each other, began language training, and started walking the long, slow road to acculturation. The rest of training was split between Fes and our community-based training (CBT) sites. This gave us a close look at two totally different sides of Morocco: a large, developed, Western-style city, and a small, rural, Moroccan-style village, and they were as different as night and day. My CBT site was Tissa, a small town 45 minutes northeast of Fes by taxi. Five other trainees and I spent a total of about a month there. Our days in Tissa consisted of four hours of Arabic language class, teaching at the local youth center, and learning as much as we could about the people, their customs, and the rhythm of life.

Language training was the most essential thing right off the bat. When you are in a place where you don't

speak a word of the local language, you realize the glory and general importance of verbal communication. It's amazing



Jack (back row, second from left), and his CBT group in Tissa

how in the United States, it almost never occurs to me that when I speak I am putting ideas and thoughts into words. Here in Morocco, I find that being deprived of my ability to express these thoughts and ideas is almost like being stripped of personality. At this point I am able to communicate basic ideas and carry on a simple conversation, but there have been a lot of frustrating (and humorous) situations along the way, like being unable to properly explain the rules



Jack, PCVs Brian Barnett and Tim Shriver with two of their language teachers in Fes following the swearing-in ceremony.

of Simon Says to a roomful of students, or accidentally saying something terribly vulgar to my host-family while trying to describe a Bugs Bunny cartoon. Overall, learning a new language is an exercise in humility and patience, and it requires you to put your pride on the shelf and not mind being bad at something in front of other people. It seems a shame that we tend to make language learning such a

low priority in the United States. In Azilal, where I am now, most people grow up speaking Moroccan Arabic and Tamazight, one of the languages of the original inhabitants of Morocco. In school, they start studying classical Arabic immediately and French two years later. In ninth grade, they begin studying English. This means that by the end of high school, students have been exposed to three different alphabets and five different languages, four of which they speak fluently! By contrast, when I was in high school, I had two years of French, the first of which was taught by the cheerleading sponsor and consisted mostly of playing card games (in English).

Teaching at the youth centers was a memorable, but fairly secondary, part of training. At first, our classes were of an unmanageable size because everyone in town wanted to see these aliens who had come to teach English. I'm just kidding; we're not really aliens, but I certainly felt like one for awhile in Tissa, a town where foreigners never, ever go. We drew a lot of attention, especially at first, but the people of Morocco, both young and old, have proven to be some of the nicest, friendliest, and most hospitable people I have ever met. Looking back on my time in Tissa, it seems like the majority of my time was spent talking to people (or trying to talk to people) and soaking up all the brand new sights and sounds. To me, this says a lot about what we're doing here with the Peace Corps: teaching English is important, as it gives us a role in our Moroccan communities, but the real beauty of this experience seems to be the cultural exchange that is going on 24 hours a day. Peace happens when people get to know each other well enough to see that they're not really that different after all. Living in Morocco, learning the language and adapting to the culture, I see that the people here are human beings just like me who happened to be born in a different part of the world; and by exposing the people here to the language and culture of the United

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Morocco RPCV Wins Fulbright to Return to Morocco



Jim Heaton, a Peace Corps Fellow and graduate of Western Illinois University (WIU) Master of Arts in Economics program, was selected as the Fulbright Award

winner by a competitive national selection process. The prestigious national honor offers grants to U.S. and foreign students, educators, scholars, and other professionals to conduct career launching study and research abroad in over 100 countries. Established in 1946 in honor of William J. Fulbright, former Arkansas senator, the program aims to increase mutual understanding between the U.S. and other countries through the exchange of persons, knowledge, and skills.

"We are very proud of Jim's accomplishment. This is one of the most prestigious scholarships in the United States. He submitted a very strong application and is very interested in his project and the country of Morocco," states Gloria Barr, Assistant Director of Extended Learning within the Travel and Study Abroad Program at Western Illinois University. Barr mentions that this is the first Fulbright Research Scholarship in WIU history.

Jim, of Wilton, California, is conducting research in Morocco where he served as a Peace Corps Volunteer from 1998 to 2000. He served in the High Atlas Mountain village, Ighrem n-Ougdai, as a Rural Community Development and Agriculture Volunteer. Together, Jim and native Moroccan's designed project plans for the construction of a two classroom school, teacher housing, and restroom facilities; the construction of a bridge to provide year round road access; and the planting of fruit trees to fight erosion.

Through his research efforts in Morocco, Jim plans to utilize his knowledge of the Moroccan culture, language, and social environment to discover practical development techniques that will assist Moroccan institutions and associations in supporting development in communities that can be easily maintained by native Moroccans. Jim will interview members of communities and associations and study past community development projects to find successful community development techniques used in the past. He will then combine his research findings with participatory principles to form a method of development that allows for successful, manageable growth in the region. Jim also hopes to encourage partnerships between government, private, and community entities so that everyone's needs are met.

Working with the High Atlas

Foundation, where Jim currently serves as board vice president, the Toubkal National Park Management (Department of Water and Forest) and other NGOs, Jim will be evaluation past projects and laying the groundwork for current and future community development efforts.

Jim hopes that his vast array of experiences both nationally and abroad assists him in becoming a leader in the realm of community development. When asked about the premise for his research, he stated that: "There are a great number of development organizations that have practiced economic development with a top-down approach and had limited success with little sustainability. By focusing on efforts within communities, I think we can demonstrate that a methodology based on public participation will not only see greater success and long-run sustainability but will capture the hearts and spirits of people and inspire continued localized efforts for betterment."

For more information on the specifics of his research or to see a log of his Fulbright or Peace Corps experience, you can visit his website www.brimadventures.com

RPCV Kate Jeans-Gail Killed in Car Accident

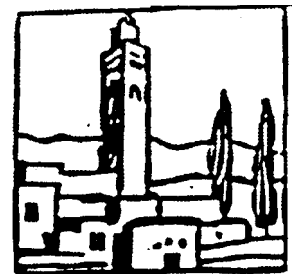
Kate Jeans-Gail (Beni Zola—) and her mother Victoria were killed in a car accident on December 28, 2004. They were on their way to Victoria's sister's 50th birthday party in Bend, OR, when they had a head-on collision with another vehicle due to ice on the road from a recent snowfall.

Kate and Victoria will be missed by many friends and family members, including Kate's brothers Sean, a freshman at the University of Oregon, and Conor, who is still in high school.

Kate was a Health Extension Volunteer in Beni Zola and was

instrumental in securing funding for its first birthing center. She stood 5'10" with flaming red hair, resembling Morocco's queen. Her contribution to the community of Beni Zola made her a beloved volunteer there.

Condolences can be sent to Kate's father, Kevin Jeans-Gale at 2635 NE 38th Avenue, Portland, OR 97212.



(Continued from page 1)
rest of our lives."

Protests

Homeless survivors blocked a main road in Al Hoceima to protest the lack of government aid to rebuild their shattered lives. As hopes dimmed of finding survivors in the rubble of mud-brick homes in villages surrounding Al Hoceima, dozens of demonstrators staged a sit-down protest on Wednesday on the road linking the Mediterranean port to the interior, interrupting all traffic. "We spent the night under the rain, in the cold. We want this to stop," said Ahmed Mnabhi, 26, and unemployed. "We want building material, bricks, cement, iron to rebuild our homes." But as the country grieved, survivors vented their anger. Mohamed Benhaddou, taking part in the sit-in outside Al Hoceima, complained aid promised by the authorities had not materialized. "On TV, they say food, blankets are being delivered. We've seen nothing of this relief aid. Grocery shops are closed (for fear of looting), so we can't even buy food," he said." In Imzouren, where many houses were flattened, survivors were also bitter. "They brought us two tents that could accommodate maybe 20 people when there were more than 200 of us out there," said Abdelmajid Nachat, 47. "We got no bread, no milk, no potatoes".

Assistance

It took several days for full-scale assistance effort to get underway and to organize transport to remote villages and rugged terrain. At one point so many aircraft were delivering aid to Al Hoceima that they had to be rerouted to the Fez and Nador airports and deliveries made by truck.

Numerous nations made contributions of both needed relief items and cash. From the United States, this included the USAID Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance providing blankets, tents, generators, rolls of plastic, and health kits. A USAID Disaster Assistance Response Team was on site by February 25. The U.S. European Command (EUCOM) also provided emergency assistance with deliveries of medical supplies and blankets. A Humanitarian Assistance Survey Team also arrived to evaluate the situation. Support to Morocco is nothing new to the United States, said Marine Lt. Col. Charles Brady, EUCOM humanitarian assistance branch chief. "Morocco is one of our closest friends and has long been an ally," he said. "EUCOM provides more than \$400,000 annually to Morocco through its Humanitarian Assistance Program. In one quick flight, we were able to provide \$150,000 in essential medical and relief supplies." The survey team will also determine what the United States can do long term. "We will also assess what we can do when the dust settles," Colonel Brady said. "It could be rebuilding schools or medical clinics – this would go beyond the short-term humanitarian relief. This goes into long-term planning to improve Morocco's infrastructure."

While aircraft and trucks can deliver supplies to the cities and larger towns such as Imzouren much of the damage and badly needed assistance lies in the mountains. Everything from helicopter to donkey were used to deliver supplies to

the remote locations.

In addition to international assistance the Moroccan Government set up bank accounts accepting donations, a donation station was set up in the Bay Area, funds were raised at Peace Corps Day at Brunswick Community College, and many contributed to international organizations. One fundraising effort of note is that of Khalid Gourad who initiated a fundraising campaign at www.wafin.com/ "Moroccan Connections in America" where to date over \$22,000 has been raised. In addition a fundraiser is being held in New York on April 3 (www.wafin.com/dance/).

His Majesty Mohammed VI visited the region for several days following the disaster and has paid visits several times since. The government is working on a plan for reconstruction and assistance in the region. Funds and pledges of assistance for rebuilding continue to accumulate from everywhere. The king has granted the status of "Orphans in State Care" to all children who lost their parents in the earthquake. The Government will provide financial assistance, including education, to these children.

Damage

As many as 629 people died and 926 others were wounded, while, 15,230 were left homeless. Among those injured, 101 are still in hospital, including 14 who were transferred to Rabat and 2 others to Nador. An estimated 2,539 houses collapsed including 2,498 in rural areas.

Many schools were also damaged or destroyed in the earthquake although school resumed the first week of March. UNICEF reported that four school buildings formerly housing over 5,000 students are completely unusable, and that another dozen are partially damaged. In addition, at least 35,000 children have lost their houses, school supplies and clothing. The Ministry of Education announced that the estimated total cost to repair schools in the area is approximately USD 6.5 million.

The March 9 IFRC Operations Update reported that with the aftershocks occurring nearly all of the half million residents in the region continue to sleep and live outdoors. Therefore the demand for tents remains high. The last of several hundred aftershocks to date was reported on March 12.

Additional Information

The popular news will not likely cover the earthquake much longer. To follow continued recovery efforts the following websites should have status updates for some time. These include: Relief web at www.reliefweb.int and International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent at www.ifrc.org. Of course the Friends of Morocco newsletter and website will always have news stories from Morocco. We will hope that they continue to improve.



Morocco Free Trade Agreement Advances, but Not Yet Ratified

By Tim Resch, FOM president

U.S. Trade Representative Robert Zoellick and Moroccan Minister Delegate Taib Fassi-Fihri announced the successful conclusion of negotiations on a Free Trade Agreement between the two countries at a press conference in Washington, DC on March 2, 2004.

"It builds a very strong relationship with a longtime partner and friend, the Kingdom of Morocco," said Zoellick, "but it also serves a larger aim because together, the United States and Morocco can show many others throughout the Middle East the power of free trade to try to support democracy and promote prosperity and build a more tolerant, stable and peaceful world." Fassi-Fihri added, "The conclusion of this accord confirms the strong will of the two countries to promote their strategic partnership and to carry their contribution to the development of the global economy, particularly within the Middle East and North Africa region." He said Moroccan textiles and agro-alimentary products are industrial niche sectors of the economy that will likely benefit from the FTA. He went on to say that the agreement provides interesting opportunities to U.S. producers "not only in [Morocco's] relatively narrow market but because there are also real, concrete and effective possibilities to use Morocco as a platform for the European and African markets."

The two countries began negotiations in January 2003. The FTA intention was first announced in April 2002 during a visit to Washington, DC by HM King Mohammed VI. The agreement was concluded after eight formal negotiating rounds, with teams of experts meeting in Rabat, Washington, Geneva and via frequent digital videoconferences. The president has referred the FTA to the Congress, consistent with the Trade Act of 2002, which requires that the US chief executive notifies Congress within 90 days of plans to enter into free trade agreements with other countries. Congress must yet develop appropriate

legislation to approve and implement this free trade agreement. Zoellick said that while his office is faced with a tight window of opportunity to move the agreement through Congress in this election year, he believes that there is tremendous Congressional interest in seeing it pass.

Morocco's export market is small at only \$11 billion. Morocco exports around \$450 million worth of products to the United States, including phosphates and other minerals. They largely enter the market duty-free. Currently the United States exports an average of 475 million dollars worth of products to Morocco each year. These include aircraft, corn, machinery and, more recently, fabrics and pharmaceuticals.

Concerning the sectors deemed «sensitive» such as agriculture, the US official insisted on the "particular attention" paid to this sector by both parties, noting that the American side is "fully aware" of the number of people living on the sector in Morocco and the difficulties facing small farmers.

Morocco had initially pushed to keep wheat out of the free-trade agreement with the United States but U.S. negotiators won terms they said would let the United States eventually compete on an equal footing with the EU, while providing safeguards for Morocco's large farm population. Morocco is a large producer and importer of wheat, including durum wheat used in pasta and the Moroccan staple couscous. A U.S. trade official said U.S. market access for non-durum wheat was modeled after a recent agreement between Morocco and the EU that linked EU exports to the size of the Moroccan crop.

The Civil Society in Morocco has repeatedly voiced concerns over the future of farmers in Morocco, calling on the Moroccan negotiators to bear in mind these people's interest. The same concern was voiced regarding pharmaceutical drugs and textiles. The accord, said Zoellick, provides for mechanisms of exceptional safety and

prolonged transition periods to the benefit of the Kingdom's agricultural output.

The FTA grants the Moroccan textile sector a ten-year adjustment period and a 10-year derogation for the implementation of the rule of origin, said the Moroccan lead negotiator before stressing that the agreement offers an immediate and considerable openness for Moroccan apparel sector and represents a strong signal to foreign investors who want to have access to the American market.

The FTA's investment rules will make Morocco extremely attractive to U.S. companies searching for opportunities in the Mediterranean, Middle East, or Africa. The investment provisions combined with new market access and IPR protection makes Morocco the ideal platform for foreign investors to produce products for export to the United States and Europe, as well as to the Maghreb and West Africa.

The agreement strips away most barriers to U.S. trade into Morocco and gives Washington trade privileges that have mostly been rejected by other developing nations interested in doing deals with the United States.

At the domestic level, said Fassi-Fihri, Morocco has been liberalizing for several years its economy and foreign trade, signing similar agreements with important partners, including Arab and European ones. To consolidate this reform process, it was deemed suitable to go ahead on the same path with the US.

In addition to FOM, another source of details is at the US Embassy in Morocco web site at <http://www.usembassy.ma/>.



New Recipe from Kitty Morse: Couscous Fritters

Kitty Morse, author of *Cooking at the Kasbah* and *The Scent of Orange Blossoms: Sephardic Cuisine from Morocco* will lead her gastronomic tour to Morocco in May and in October 2004 (details at www.kittymorse.com.) In November 2003, Kitty was featured in the Moroccan daily *L'Economiste*, (<http://www.leconomiste.com>) under the headline *Azemmour: Des Américains sur la piste de l'art culinaire*. Kitty was also featured in the January 2004 issue of *Coastal Living* magazine.

Here is a recipe for your readers: Couscous Fritters with Fresh Corn and Tomato Salsa (serves 4). This is a new interpretation for couscous, my all time favorite comfort food!

Ingredients

2 large, ripe tomatoes, peeled, seeded, finely diced, and drained
 2 ears sweet corn, shucked and cooked (about 1 1/2 cups kernels)
 15 sprigs fresh cilantro, finely chopped (about 1 1/2 tablespoons)
 2 tablespoons finely diced onion
 1 teaspoon fresh lime juice
 3/4 teaspoon ground cumin
 1 tablespoon ketchup
 3/4 teaspoon salt
 2/3 cup broth
 1 teaspoon chili powder
 1 tablespoon butter
 1/2 cup couscous
 1 egg, lightly beaten
 Vegetable oil for frying
 8 ounces turkey sausage or pork sausage, casing removed
 Fresh cilantro leaves for garnish

In a medium bowl, combine the tomatoes, corn, half of the cilantro, the onion, lime juice, 1/4 teaspoon of the cumin, the ketchup, and salt. Set aside.

Prepare the fritters: In a medium saucepan over medium-high heat, combine the broth, chili powder, butter, and remaining salt. Bring to a boil. Add the couscous in a stream. Stir once. Cover and remove from the heat. Set aside until the couscous is tender, 12 to 15 minutes. Transfer to a medium bowl and combine with the egg.

Preheat the oven to 200 degrees F. In a medium skillet over medium-high heat, pour vegetable oil to a depth of 1/2 inch. Heat until a pinch of couscous sizzles instantly. Place the couscous mixture, in 1/3 cup increments, into the skillet. With a spatula, flatten into croquettes 3 to 3 1/2 inches in diameter. Fry until golden brown, 6 to 8 minutes on each side. Transfer to a plate lined with paper towels to drain. Keep warm in the oven.

In another medium skillet over medium heat, cook the sausage, breaking it up with a fork, until thoroughly cooked, 6 to 8 minutes. With the spatula, transfer the meat to a plate lined with paper towels to drain. Set aside. Spoon some of the salsa onto 4 individual dinner plates. Set a fritter in the center of each plate. Top with equal portions of sausage and additional salsa. Garnish with cilantro leaves and serve.

Excerpted from *Couscous: Fresh and Flavorful Contemporary Recipes* by Kitty Morse (Chronicle Books, 2000)

Thank You!

Merci!

شكرًا

Many thanks to the people listed below who contributed to Friends of Morocco above and beyond their membership fees.

Steve Hallgren
 Joyce Bouvier

Lisa Dalferro Abuhamad

Bruce Spicer

George McFadden



· **HIGH ATLAS FOUNDATION**
 · **MARRAKECH 21 FOUNDATION**
 · **HIGH ATLAS REGIONAL MANAGEMENT OF WATERS AND FORESTS**

Dear Friends:

On behalf of our partnership of government and non-government organizations for the community development of Morocco, we are writing to ask for your support of our distribution drive of medical supplies.

This project serves communities in the High Atlas Mountains (50,000 people) – statistically some of Morocco's poorest. Geographic isolation, poor infrastructure, and drought have impeded opportunities for economic advancement. Unhealthy drinking water causes frighteningly high infant mortality rates (many families lose half their children to water-borne diseases), shorter overall life spans, and reduced energy for livelihoods. Our medicine distribution drive is part of a broader initiative to implement projects in potable water, agriculture, health and environmental education, and women's cooperatives.

One hundred percent of your support will reach Morocco's communities. Below is a list of medical supplies that have been requested by local health specialists during community-wide meetings. If you are able to provide medical supplies for this important project, we thank you in advance and kindly ask that you send donated supplies to: **Fondation Marrakech 21, Faculté des Sciences Semlalia, Avenue Prince My Abdellah, Marrakech, Morocco.**

If you can support this public health and development initiative with a financial donation, please mail a check payable to: **High Atlas Foundation, P.O. Box 40314, Albuquerque, New Mexico 87196, USA.** Become a member of HAF and join our cause!



We thank you for your consideration and we hope that you are able to help bring a healthy and prosperous future to the communities of Morocco's High Atlas Mountains.

Medical supplies requested for the rural villages in the High Atlas Mountains of Morocco:

- Antibiotics for respiratory infections, rheumatism, water born illnesses, and gastro-intestinal diseases
- Anti-bacterial agents for cuts and burns
- Bandages of various sizes
- Milk of Magnesia
- Remedies for skin problems, including dermatitis, fungal infections, ringworm, shingles, measles, and hives
- Remedies for diarrhea and hemorrhoids
- Aspirin and other fever remedies

- Tranquilizers
- Remedies for eye problems, including conjunctivitis (pinkeye), blepharitis (inflammation), and cataracts (B5 drops)
- Suppressors
- Iodine (goiters)
- Birth control (male and female condoms, oral contraceptives, diaphragms and cervical caps, spermicides, vaginal sponges, and IUDs)
- Meters (for measuring blood pressure)
- Ophthalmoscopes

Volunteers Needed for a Study on Serial Migration

My name is Rajae Nami. I am Moroccan-American and hold a Masters degree in Arab Studies from the Center of Contemporary Arab Studies at Georgetown University. Currently, I am a consultant on Middle Eastern and North African issues. I am independently participating in a study on serial migration, and am seeking potential interviewees. The project is described below, as is the general criteria for participation.

Though most people that study migration think of it as a trajectory between two places, from the country of origin to the host country, I am participating in a study that introduces another place, nation-state, or language. The project is interested in the way people who have lived in several places tell their life story, how their experience is different from the usual idea of

migration "between" two places. Most studies have focused on assimilation and acculturation in the host country, and have ignored a more complex set of identity issues. I am particularly interested in exploring the idea of "home" and how people who have lived in several places develop their concept of "home" as they navigate through life. The study I am engaging in revolves around the country of Morocco

If you are originally Moroccan and have lived in another country besides Morocco for at least three years before deciding to move to the United States, and have lived in the United States for at least one year, you may qualify for this study. If you are American or from another country and have lived in Morocco for at least a year, you would also qualify to participate in the study. Please contact me at the following address if you would like to be contacted for an interview <rajouta@yahoo.com>.

On March 19, 2004, I participated in a

stimulating workshop at Georgetown University with a team of participants and researchers for the project on serial migration. As previously stated, my particular focus has been on the issue of "home" and the way one imagines or recreates their home or multiple homes, whether temporary in nature or permanent. Why do some people consider as home their place or country of origin, whereas others readily adopt their host country or host countries as their home? Similarly, some never lose their sense of "home," despite being serial migrants, yet others live through life without having a sense of home or belonging. As many of us evolve through the global space, between continents, languages and cultures, does "home" reflect national, ethnic, or cultural identity or identities?

Morocco-related Events in the USA

Courtesy of M'hamed El Kadi, PC Morocco staff

Zartman Festschrift at SAIS Johns Hopkins The African Studies Program of SAIS Johns Hopkins is pleased to announce a very special event to honor the scholarship and teaching of Professor I. William Zartman (IWZ), on the occasion of its 23rd annual conference of the Africa, April 16-17, 2004, in the Kenney Auditorium of the Nitze Building of SAIS, 1740 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W., Washington, DC. The conference/festschrift is organized by Zartman's former students, Gilbert M Khadiagala, acting director of the SAIS African Studies Program, and Terrence Lyons of George Mason University. Dr Zartman is also a member of Friends of Morocco and President of the Tangier-American Legation Museum Society (TALMS). Unlike with past conferences, there will be no registration fee for Festschrift Zartman, but reservations will be required for conference luncheons and

an evening reception on Friday the 16th April. RESERVATIONS need to be confirmed by payment no later than 9 April. Please contact Theresa Simmons at (202) 663-5676 or <tsimmons@jhu.edu>.

Moroccan Cooking Workshop! Sunday, April 18 3PM-5PM or just come for the North African Feast at 5-7PM! Join Chef Kyle of 3Citron in his kitchen to prepare a Moroccan Feast! Learn how to make an array of your favorite Moroccan dishes, including couscous and Tajine. Afterwards, enjoy your feast with other RPCVs. If you cannot join us for the cooking workshop, come for the traditional Moroccan meal. This event is presented in collaboration with RPCVs of Washington, DC. WHERE: Foreign Service Club, 2101 E. St., NW, Washington DC 20006 WORKSHOP FEE* (Includes cooking class, dinner & drinks): \$30. DINNER ONLY* (Includes dinner/drinks): \$20 *You may pay at the door, but please confirm your space early. RSVP: <rpcvwevents@yahoo.com>.

Benefit Reception for Tangiers American Museum Legation Society (TALMS) at the residence of the Ambassador of Morocco to the US, Aziz Mekour and Mrs. Aziz Mekouar on Friday April 23, 2004 at 6:30 pm. Contribution \$60. For further information and reservations contact Tim Resch 703 470 3166 or <tresch@att.net>.

Ambassador Richard Parker: "Our First Hostage Crisis and its Resolution - The United States and the Barbary Corsairs in the 18th Century." Ambassador Richard Parker is a Middle East scholar and distinguished career diplomat, serving as Ambassador to Algeria, Lebanon, and Morocco under the Ford and Carter administrations. The Center for Contemporary Arab Studies Georgetown University <http://www.ccasonline.org/>. Please RSVP to all C C A S e v e n t s a t <ccasevents@georgetown.edu>

Moroccan Prime Minister Advances US-Moroccan Relations

Moroccan Prime Minister Driss Jettou, in a visit to Washington, DC in early January, promoted negotiations and ultimate ratification of a Free Trade Act between Morocco and the USA. He met with the US Deputy Secretary of State, Richard Armitage, who said he was convinced that Morocco-US Free Trade Agreement negotiations, at the level of specialized commissions, will be completed before end of January. The Moroccan premier also met Robert Zoellick, US Trade Representative and chief negotiator for a free trade agreement with Morocco. The two men surveyed the status of negotiations and bilateral ties at large. Jettou, who recalled Morocco's economic reforms and openness, stressed the importance of the farming and textile sectors in Morocco's economic tissue.

In a lecture he gave at Washington's Center of Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), the Moroccan Prime Minister said, "We are in the final phase of (FTA) negotiations. There is a will to reach a conclusion and find a solution to a few remaining difficulties". Jettou was a guest speaker at a forum on challenges and opportunities of economic and democratic liberalization in Morocco, organized by the Center.

In a presentation on Thursday January 8 at the Washington-based Heritage Foundation, the Prime Minister insisted on the fight against poverty as the only means to consolidate democracy in the Kingdom. Mr. Jettou said that Morocco has been endeavoring to curb what he called "social deficits," insisting that "it is not

possible to consolidate democracy, liberalism, respect of human rights and the rule of law without strengthening, at the



Moroccan Prime Minister Driss Jettou with Ruth Ann Skaff, FOM Board and Tim Resch, FOM President

same pace, the struggle against poverty."

The Moroccan official also met head of the World Bank, James Wolfensohn, on Morocco-World Bank relations and the kingdom's economic development. Wolfensohn hailed the economic performance of Morocco, which he termed as "exemplary," and announced the visit of a delegation from his institution to Morocco in February, to carry on consultations with Moroccan officials and executives and identify projects needing World Bank support.

Earlier, the Moroccan premier held meetings with top US officials, notably Vice President Dick Cheney, Secretary of State Colin Powell, Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld, National Security Advisor Condoleezza Rice, Assistant Secretary of State William Burns, and Commerce Secretary Donald Evans.

Driss Jettou also conferred with head of the USAID, Andrew Natsios. He said cooperation between Morocco and the US agency, which covers mainly micro-credits, rural areas, education, SMEs and self-

employment, especially among rural women, has given good results. He voiced hope that his meeting with Natsios will enlarge the scope of this cooperation and reinforce Morocco-USAID ties. Natsios, on his part, praised Morocco's efforts to consolidate its democratic assets and foster development in several fields.

Finally, at a reception at the residence of the Moroccan Ambassador, Aziz Mekouar, the Prime Minister met briefly with Ruth Ann Skaff, Director of Development for ACCESS and member of the FOM Board of Directors and FOM President Tim Resch. They noted Morocco has many American friends who have worked, lived or traveled in Morocco and who are watching with great interest the developmental progress that Morocco is making. Skaff and Resch were subsequently interviewed by Moroccan television stations RTM and 2M and shared the same message.



(Continued from page 6)

meet this young female performer and talk with her. It was during that meeting back stage after the performance, that Ahmed learned that the female performer was Fatima, the daughter of an acquaintance from many years ago. As the story goes, Fatima's father, who was one of Ahmed's earliest trainers, used to joke with Ahmed when he was just a lad of sixteen years. Fatima was only seven years old when her father bragged to Ahmed that he had two daughters, and would Ahmed like to marry one of them? Ahmed to this day, still jokes that he "was promised" one of the daughters. It could only be fate that enabled Ahmed and Fatima to meet many years later! After a few meetings, Fatima and Ahmed were engaged. Plans for a wedding were postponed; however, while Ahmed left to travel with the Dimnati acrobatic troupe in a tour of the United States with the Ringling Brothers Barnum and Bailey Circus.

Soon after the circus season ended in 1936, Ahmed wed Fatima Bent Boujema, in Milan, Italy. Born into a family of performers, she was a member of the Manhardy Ballet in Frankfurt, Germany. She was a perfect match for Ahmed they not only became marriage partners, but show partners, as well.

Now married, Ahmed no longer wished to continue with big circus life. Instead, he formed acts with only four to seven people incorporating his wife into the mix. Additionally, for a period of time the act also included the performance of Fatima's sister, Aischa. Ahmed and Fatima learned from each other, combining their talents, to create a spectacular show of acrobatics and dance. They performed for the next 15 years in major theaters and resorts throughout Europe (i.e., Italy's leading opera house, LaScala; Moulin Rouge in Paris, France; the famed Wintergarten in Berlin, Germany) until they immigrated to Erie, Pennsylvania in 1951.

Ahmed and Fatima continued to perform, as a duo, in clubs and

theaters, until 1953 when they retired from show business. However, that was not the end of the couple's working careers. Ahmed worked at Marx Toys for 17 years, and then owned and operated Baskin Robbins Ice Cream Store in Erie, PA for 14 years. Fatima retired after 30 years of service as a nurse with Hamot Hospital.

However, transitioning to "civilian" life was not easy. "Performers," said Ahmed, "live in their own world. It's very hard to come out of something you have done your whole life. It's like going into a strange country." Even though the adjustments they made were difficult, their tenacious natures brought them success and a new way of life.

When Ahmed is asked about how he ended up in America, he often responds with "It was all about a coyote." As Ahmed's recalls, he was herding the sheep and goats in the pasture as a young boy, when a coyote suddenly killed one of the sheep. Because of the fear of repercussion from his father over the loss, Ahmed fled the farm. And that incident marks the beginning of his remarkable journey and life story.

During this time, the couple also raised four children: Aischa, Abdel Kadir, Abdullah, and Jamma. Abdullah resides in Erie, Pennsylvania; Jamma resides in Penrose, Colorado with his wife and five children; Aischa passed away in Paris at the age of two; and Abdel Kadir succumbed, at the age of 25, to injuries sustained in an automobile accident while serving with the United States Army.

Ahmed and Fatima, after long and diverse careers, retired to the circus town of Sarasota, Florida, taking with them a lifetime of memories which include Ahmed performing in the presence of Hitler, Mussolini, and King Victor Emmanuel III of Italy, to mention only a few. Ahmed opened the show at Madison Square Garden when he was performing with the Ringling Brothers Circus. Ahmed once interpreted for General Patton while he was in Morocco during World War II - he perfect choice because he is multi-lingual, speaking nine languages. Another time Ahmed had the opportunity to perform for a special benefit at the request of the Queen of England. Both Fatima and Ahmed

worked with greats such as The Flying Wallendas, Clowns Emmett Kelly and Lou Jacobs, trapeze artists, Lillian Leitzel and Alfredo Cordona, Maurice Chevalier, and Josephine Baker.

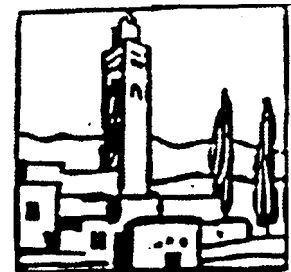
Ahmed and Fatima celebrated 60 happy and fruitful years together in a world that most of us would never have the opportunity to experience. Sadly, Fatima passed away in 1994. Ahmed now resides at Westlake Woods in Erie, Pennsylvania.

v Ahmed, in his youth, was an avid fisherman and an excellent bowler.

v According to the Ringling Museum, Ahmed is one of the oldest living circus performers.

v Ahmed never attended a single day of school in his life.

v Ahmed is devoutly religious and has always cherished the value of family and friends.



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chipped bottles.

The cooperatives are also dedicated to replanting argan trees, which are notoriously difficult to regenerate. After severe deforestation through over-cutting and a string of severe droughts in the 1990's, the argan tree was headed for extinction. Dr. Charrouf instigated research in that area as well and has spearheaded efforts to preserve and expand argan groves and forests in the 320,000 square mile area in which it is traditionally grown. Her efforts have led to the designation of the Arganeraie Biosphere reserve, a 2.5 million hectare reserve in which the trees are replanted by village sections of the Moroccan Water and Forest Service in conjunction with village NGOs.

Dr. Charrouf also participated in efforts to modernize extraction, institute recognized quality control and international marketing. There are now over 30 cooperatives in the area. They serve a variety of purposes, from reforestation and production to educational centers. Dr. Charrouf began her organization by establishing basic literacy training for the women

working in them, as most were illiterate. There is now a program to make the cooperatives into travel destinations to allow visitors a first-hand view of this remarkable tree, its products and the traditional way of life in a unique part of the world.

The success of her work has surprised her. She has seen the cooperatives grow into businesses that make the women who run them the primary bread winners in their families. Recently enacted changes to Moroccan family law (*Mudawana*) will only help to further empower the cooperatives. Commercially packaged argan oil won the international SlowFood Award for Defense of Biodiversity in 2001, conferred by an international organization (www.slowfood.com) dedicated to preserving regional traditional foods around the world. Just three years ago, a search for 'argan oil' on any major search engine on the Internet yielded a handful of citations. Today, the same search on Yahoo brings up over 3,000.

Dr. Charrouf is also being recognized for her indefatigable work on the argan in one of the poorest areas of Morocco. She has recently been nominated for Morocco's Khmissa Prize 2004 for social

action and development. The prize is awarded annually to women who have distinguished themselves in any of five areas: arts and culture, human rights, enterprise development, media and communications, and social action and development.

Beyond awards and recognition, Dr. Charrouf has attained the ultimate achievement. She has succeeded in making her life a win-win accomplishment that satisfies her personal and professional goals, improves the lives of those most in need and makes the earth a better place for all of us. Einstein would not only be proud of her - he'd also be envious.

(To learn more about Dr. Charrouf's work, argan oil, the cooperatives and the culture of the Souss, visit their web site at www.targanine.com . Equally informative is the web site of a North American distributor and friend of Dr. Charrouf, retired Moroccan journalist Aziz Alaoui who now lives in Montreal. His site can be reached at www.argan3.com.)

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States, I think the Moroccans probably understand the same thing about me.

That said, life in Morocco is totally different than life in the United States. The most obvious instance of this is religion. Islam is a part of this society the way that water is a part of ice. In the United States, people talk about the separation of church and state, but in Morocco that would be a totally unimaginable concept. Unlike Christianity, which is often a once a week activity for Americans, the Muslim religion reminds its adherents of their faith on a semi-constant basis. For example, Muslims are required to pray five times a day, and each call to prayer is sounded through the streets from the tower of every mosque. Another good example of this is Ramadan, the Muslim holy month of fasting. Ramadan happened to fall during training, so we got to witness

and participate in this enthralling, month-long religious event. Fasting during Ramadan is not a choice for Muslims, but a duty. From dawn until dusk, everyone abstains from eating and drinking anything, and because of this the entire rhythm of life changes. Business and school hours are different because no one takes a lunch break, and restaurants and cafes are not open at all until after sunset. I fasted for about half the days of Ramadan, and it made me realize that religion and culture are so inextricably linked here that you can't really take part in one without taking part in the other. In other words, it would be impossible to integrate into Moroccan society while completely ignoring the existence of Islam.

So that's a little bit about life in Morocco as it's been for the first three months. One last part of training that I enjoyed very much was getting to know the other volunteers and the Moroccan

Peace Corps staff. It occurred to me towards the end of training that one of the reasons I chose to join the Peace Corps was to spend some time on my own. Ironically, by the end of training I was thirsting to spend more time with all of the interesting and wonderful people who I felt I had only just met. Now we are all in our final sites, scattered across the country, and training seems like a sharp, vivid dream that I just woke up from. It was a busy, challenging, but incredibly rewarding three months, and I think I will probably spend the next three months just processing all of the information I've been given. Above all, it was a time of intense personal growth shared with amazing people. If the rest of my experience is as exciting as training, I'd say I'm in for a great two years.

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Larger amulets are often incised or have added-on hinges, especially on large *khamsa*, called *luha*, (small board) which are hung in homes. In the Maghreb, children's scholars' boards, used in the past in schools to teach Koranic texts, often have a hand symbol painted on the top.

Protection and adornment go hand in hand, as it were, in the tradition of painting the hands of the bride with henna. Whether painted with black henna as in sub-Saharan

placed strategically near points of particular vulnerability to evil spirits such as the head, or guarding the bride's virginity. Hands, often associated with fish in the masculine/feminine dichotomy, made of felt or embroidered with colorful sequence, are found in the wedding *souks*, to be hung as talismans for the bride and groom.

Some controversial research has show Anatolian kilim rugs bearing hand imagery linked to the ancient hands and goddess figures of Catal Huyuk. These comb-like forms probably also influenced

bear abstracted hand imagery, such as from printing blocks.

Incorporated into architecture, the *khamsa* can be seen carved into the keystone of a doorway in the Alhambra in Grenada, Spain; pressed into cement or plaster to protect new construction sites in Tunisia, painted on houses from Jerusalem to Nubian upper Egypt as signs of completing the *hajj* pilgrimage; cast in metal as finials for processions or rooftops; used as doorknockers in the Maghreb and the Mediterranean, often clutching a pomegranate, symbol of fertility, in Portugal. In the Sahel desert of Mali there is even a mountainous rock formation known as the Hand of Fatima.

The hand is seen everywhere in the Islamic world, dangling from the rear-view mirrors of taxis, painted on trucks in Pakistan and Turkey, hanging above shop doorways and the walls of homes from India to Nubia. In North Africa, it is found above baby cribs and carved into wooden trousseau chests.

Similar iconography is found in non-Islamic cultures. The hand figures in the Hebrew Kabala as the *hamseh* (five), often inscribed in Hebrew with the words *Tfu, Tfu, Tfu*, an onomatopoeia for the sound of spitting three times to drive away the evil eye. The talisman is said to bring good luck and to commemorate the virtues of Merriam, the sister of Moses and Aaron. The *yad* (hand) is used as a placemaker for reading the Torah. (A similar hand-shaped placemaker with a pointed finger is used identically for Koran readings.)

Hindu and Buddhist cultures incorporated multiple meanings into the hand positions used on their respective statues of gods and Buddha. On standing Buddha images, for example, the left hand is held palm up, granting desires and bestowing blessings (*Dana*), while an upright hand takes away fear (*Abhaya*). The other positions include *Bhumisparsha* (earth-touching), *Dhyana* (meditation), *Vitarka* (debate) and *Dharma chakra prayartana* (teaching).

The hand appears both as talisman and symbol in Eastern cultures. In Thailand, protective amulets with hands

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Africa, or with brown or red as in Islamic countries and India, the bride's hands, palms, sometimes just fingertips, are dabbed with color or painted with elaborate patterns during special pre-wedding ceremonies. In many cultures, a ceremonial showing of the bride's hands is part of the wedding ceremony, said by some scholars to be linked to images of ancient goddesses. A contemporary Indian wedding invitation features an image of hennaed hands.

The symbol appears as well on textiles, especially in Tunisia, where it is woven into Berber kilims and is embroidered onto both rural and urban wedding garments, often

the hand imagery found on Berber rugs, especially in Tunisia, where Ottoman troops were garrisoned across the desert, bringing with them the Turkish rugs that were adapted by Berbers and urban rug weavers as well. Today, Anatolian knitters create tiny hands to embellish textiles and be worn as talismans for children and animals, each decorated with a glass evil-eye bead for additional power.

In sub-Saharan Africa, hand imagery appears in indigo starch resist *adire* cottons from Nigeria, woven strip *adanudo* wraps from Ewe, Ghana, and wax prints produced by the Haarlem Cotton Company in the early 1900's for the East African market. Indian block prints and Indonesian wax resists, being the antecedents of these textiles, also

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covering bodily orifices are carried in pockets for protection from marauding spirits. In China, the five fingers of the hand symbolize the elements air, fire, earth, water and energy, and small jade hand amulets are worn or carried (the jade stone offering further protection and luck.) In India, the ancient practice of suttee in which a man's wife kills herself upon the death of her husband, is memorialized in stone at the gate of Meherangarh Fort in Jodhpur. As each woman passed through the gate on the way to immolation on her husband's funeral pyre, each left a hennaed palm print on the wall. These would then be carved into the stone and anointed with red dye and silver leaf to mark her achievement of redemption for herself and her husband. Indian amulets such as those from Tamil Nadu have tribal origins, and certain stylistic similarities with those from Nepal and Tibet, with the eye-in-hand and solar symbols.

European Mediterranean cultures use a symbol of the first and fourth fingers of the hand outstretched to bedevil the devil and pierce the evil eye; small charms of this form called *mano cornuto* are sold in jewelry shops. Romans and Etruscans had a form of this hand called a *figa*, similar to that found today in Italy and Latin America.

In Latin America the *figga* or *fico* is a hand symbol with the thumb tucked between the first and second fingers, often worn by children as an amulet in ebony, jet or crystal, with a bit of coral, all as protection against the evil eye. In Peru, the *mano poderosa* (powerful hand of God) is found as charms and package amulets and on votive candles.

Mexican *milagros* are small symbols in metal or silver that are attached to pictures or statues of religious figures in supplication or gratitude for answered prayers. Metal hands are popular *milagros*, often appearing in painted versions as part of the tree of life symbols found in Mexican homes and at festivals.

The wearing of wedding rings, a Western Christian custom, links the hand to the heart by the third finger of the right hand, the veins of which are said to connect directly to the heart. This hand/heart imagery appears worldwide in

ornaments, talismans and household objects, usually in the form of hands holding hearts in the fingers or palm, from Asia through the Middle East, to Latin America and North America. Other Christian hand symbolism, such as swearing an oath with an upraised hand, or placing one hand on the Bible, are customs actually originating in Asia.

The hand's connection with the occult originated in Far and Middle



Eastern history. Palmists display a porcelain hand outside their stalls, delineating the lines they read to predict events in the lives of their clients. Palmistry, also known as chiromancy, is an ancient art referred to in Vedic and Sumerian scripts. Legend has it that Aristotle sent an Arabic treatise on reading the hand to Alexander the Great. Sanskrit writings refer to *samudrik hastra*, interpreting lucky marks of the hand.

Tarot cards, derived from the ancient Egyptian "Book of Toth" have hand iconography in each of their suits, symbolizing power, abundance and happiness. One of the symbols in the Major Arcana of the Tarot is the Hierophant, often depicted with a hand symbol on the cards, and associated with the number 5 (that famous *khamisa* associated with so many traditions from the Romans onward) in both the Tarot and the Kabala. The Tarot is also linked to the ancient Hebrew Kabala, in which the 22 letters of the Hebrew alphabet correspond to certain universal elements. The preparation of talismans based on the Kabalistic system has influenced other groups such as the Freemasons.

Western art and craft has made ample use of the hand symbol, often pairing it with a heart to indicate love or

willingness to work. The Irish claddagh love trinket, in which a hand holds a heart, is linked to ancient Celtic lore, probably from similar Roman influences. American quilts and folk art, especially among the Amish, feature the hand and heart motif. The hand-in-heart design appears carved or painted on everything from barns to benches, to "love spoons," as well as worn as jewelry. Cookies baked with the design were said to be love tokens.

National commemorative flags feature hands, such as the red hand of the Algerian Liberation flag, (a later flag was green). The Lebanese Jumblatian flag features a hand holding a sword, while the hand holding a rose is found on the flag of the Russian Social Democrats.

In the 1930's through the 1950's, the hand was a popular accessory motif. Famously designed as a pin by Coco Chanel, the hand with ring design alluded to luxury and love. Similar to the door knockers of the Mediterranean basin, the bejeweled hand appeared in art deco bakelite jewelry, pins, sweater holders and decorative objects, from soap to letter holders.

Hands do indeed cross cultures. The ubiquity and similarity of hand imagery around the world and across the centuries speaks a universal language.



Are you still an FOM member?

Membership in Friends of Morocco brings you, in addition to all issues of our newsletter, special mailings announcing the annual meeting, reunions, seminars, and special Moroccan arts and craft showings. Membership also brings you the satisfaction of contributing to the goals and aims of Friends of Morocco. At least once a year we do a system-wide mailing to keep our address database accurate and to give people the opportunity to join us. The mailing label below indicates when your membership expires

If you have not paid your membership dues of \$15.00 (individual) annually to the Friends of Morocco, please consider doing that now. We appreciate any additional contributions and recognize special contributors in the Friends of Morocco newsletter.

Contribute to the FOM newsletter

FOM members are encouraged to submit original contributions for the newsletters. Please send any contributions by email as a Microsoft Word attachment (I can't guarantee a typo-free contribution if I have to re-type it) to Kate Trayte, FOM newsletter editor at <k8tr8@yahoo.com>. Any type of contribution is appreciated: photos, book reviews, recipes, fiction or non-fiction, but please make it Morocco or Peace Corps-related.



اصدقاء المغرب

Friends of Morocco Newsletter is published quarterly by the Friends of Morocco and is circulated to its members and other interested parties. The organization was formed in 1988 to reunite PCVs who have served in Morocco, to inform members about current events and conditions in Morocco, to promote a better understanding of Morocco and Moroccans on the part of Americans, and to fund or otherwise support development activities in Morocco. Membership is \$15 annually. FOM is governed by a nine-member national advisory board. Mailing address: Friends of Morocco, P.O. Box 2579, Washington, DC 20013-2579. For further information, contact FOM president Tim Resch at 703-660-9292 or by email <tresch@worldnet.att.net>.

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