

Spring 5-2016

Les Femmes Guides de Montagne: Negotiating Gendered Spaces in Morocco

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Les Femmes Guides de Montagne: Negotiating Gendered Spaces in Morocco

An Honors Thesis

Presented to

The Faculty of the Department of Anthropology

Bates College

In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the

Degree of Bachelor of Arts

By

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Lewiston, Maine

March 28, 2016

Acknowledgements

Conducting fieldwork for this thesis was the most rewarding experience of my life. Thank you to Dr. Souad Eddouada for your guidance as I was beginning this process. I'm so grateful to the Bates College Department of Anthropology, the Office-Campus Study Office, and the Dean of Students Office for supporting my research. It has been an incredible opportunity for my academic and personal growth.

I'm grateful to the Anthropology Department for inspiring my intellectual curiosity, as well as the French Department for teaching me a language that has allowed me to connect with people both across the world and in Lewiston.

Thank you to Professor Danforth for teaching me throughout my time at Bates that I can use anthropology as a tool for social justice. Your guidance and feedback have made me a better thinker and writer.

To my friends and fellow thesis writers, it's been a delight to hear about the projects that have inspired you.

Mom, Dad, Kara, and Caitlin, your hard work has always been the best example for me to follow. I'm always grateful for your support (including your affirmations that, *yes*, I would finish my thesis in time.)

Finally, thank you to the five incredible *femmes guides de montagne*: hero women. It was a privilege to hear your stories, and you have taught me that there are so many different ways to be a strong woman.

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Introduction

Zohra was one of the first two women to attend Morocco's only school for mountain guides, *Le Centre de Formation aux Métiers de la Montagne* (CFAMM) (The Training Center for Mountain Professions). We first met in April 2015 at her guesthouse in Ouarzazate, Morocco, where we drank mint tea and talked about her experiences as a *guide de montagne*. She shared this story of an exchange she had with one of her professors at CFAMM. It had happened over twenty-one years ago in 1993, but she remembered it vividly. Here, I present the story in Zohra's voice as it was told to me.

“Un jour pendant le stage—ça je ne vais pas oublier. Pendant le stage, un professeur, il pensait que je l'ai pas entendu—ou peut-être qu'il l'a dit pour j'entends. Moi, j'étais derrière, il était devant moi. Il a dit en arabe, 'Ah, celle-ci'—il n'a pas dit Zohra, il a dit, 'Ah, c'est comme celle-ci qui va pourrir les femmes de vallée, les femmes de Bouguemmez.'”

“J'ai dit, 'Ah, Zohra, tu ne peux pas répondre parce que c'est ton professeur.' Si je réponds, il va me donner zero! [...] C'est note éliminatoire. Il peut me mettre dehors. Qu'est-ce que je vais faire? 'Zohra, tu ne peux pas répondre maintenant.'”

“Après quand c'est la fin de l'examination, je savais que j'avais le papier à la main. J'allais voir le professeur. Je lui ai dit, 'Tu te souviens qu'est-ce que tu as dit au début de l'année?' Lui, il a oublié. J'ai dit, 'Voilà ce que vous avez fait. [...] Est-ce que vous pensez quand vous aurez des filles vous allez pas les mettre à l'école?' Il m'a regardé comme ça.” [Zohra avait l'air en choc.]

“J’ai dit, ‘Je vais aider les femmes, et je vais leur dire il faut aller à l’école. Je vais leur dire, si vous avez les filles, il faut les mettre à l’école. C’est moi qui va le dire et je vais le dire jusqu’à je meurs.’”

“One day during the training—I won’t forget this. During the training, a professor thought that I didn’t hear him—or perhaps he said it so that I could hear. I was behind and he was in front of me. He said in Arabic, ‘Ah, this one,’—he didn’t say Zohra, he said, ‘Ah, it’s this one who will rot the women of the valley, the women of Aït Bougguez.’

“I told myself, ‘Ah, Zohra, you can’t respond because this is your professor.’ If I respond, he’ll give me a zero! [...] With that grade, I’ll be eliminated. He can send me away from the school. What am I going to do? [...] ‘Zohra, you can’t respond right now.’

“At the end of the exams, I had the diploma in my hand. I went to see the professor. I said to him, ‘Do you remember what you said at the beginning of the year?’ He forgot. I said, ‘Here’s what you did. [...] When you have daughters, do you think you aren’t going to put them in school?’ He looked at me like this.” [Zohra raised her eyebrows in shock.]

“I said, ‘I’m going to help the women of the mountain, and I’m going to tell them they must go to school. I’m going to tell them, ‘If you have daughters, they must go to school.’ It’s me who will say this and I’m going to say it until I die.’”

Zohra and Laila were admitted to CFAMM in 1993, but before then only men had worked as *guides de montagne*. The Moroccan government began regulating the profession in 1986, the year that CFAMM had opened, and less than one percent of all *guides de montagne* have been women since then. My research was conducted in Morocco from April 2015 to July

2015 and January 2016, and Morocco's Ministry of Tourism recognized five *femmes guides de montagne* (women mountain guides) at the time of my research.

Anthropologist Rachel Newcomb writes, "Situations in which the gendered quality of a space is challenged reveal the current fault lines within Moroccan culture, and the issues that are contested" (Newcomb 2006: 306). As Zohra's story may suggest, women who were *femmes guides de montagne* were not simply entering an all-male space. They were contesting ideas of what work was deemed culturally acceptable for women; reconciling their families' wishes with their own personal choices; interacting with other women whose lives had been very different from their own; and negotiating the balance between professional and caretaking responsibilities.

By analyzing the experiences of *femmes guides de montagne*, I will study what their work reveals about gendered spaces in Morocco. Many scholars of Morocco have long discussed a gendered division between public and private space wherein women occupy private space and men occupy public space (Sadiqi and Ennaji 2006: 88). Newcomb, however, suggests that adherence to these rigid dichotomies perpetuates Orientalist discourses through focusing on the old while ignoring the new (Newcomb 2006: 292). In my thesis, I aim to avoid perpetuating reductionist discourses built on stereotypes in order to understand how *femmes guides de montagne* have constructed and negotiated gendered spaces.

However, I am also mindful of my position as a white American woman. Deborah Kapchan warns that "emphasis on transgression has been associated with a subtle form of Orientalism—making exotic objects of those who break the law" (Kapchan 1996: 17). Although I am indeed interested in studying the work of *femmes guides* as an example of a challenge to notions of rigid public and private spatial dichotomies, I do not wish to render the *femmes guides* "impotent constructions of a Western gaze" (Kapchan 1996: 17). As such, I have sought to

present the women (and men) whom I met as individuals. I recognize their distinct experiences while also taking note of how their experiences were in dialogue with each other's. Their own words are included in the original language in which they were spoken, and through my translations from French to English I have attempted to preserve their meaning and maintain readability for English readers.¹ I use pseudonyms throughout the thesis.

In Chapter One, I present a brief background of Morocco and its geography, political history, education system, and economy. This chapter also includes a brief history of the *guide de montagne* profession. In Chapter Two, I discuss the theoretical frameworks with which I analyze the experiences of *femmes guides*.

Chapters Three and Four begin with brief narratives that serve to introduce important themes that I analyze in each of the chapters. I discuss in Chapter Three the women's experiences at CFAMM and the discourses surrounding women's participation there. In Chapter Four, I focus on *femmes guides*' interactions with women who live in the valleys of Morocco's Atlas Mountains. Finally, I study the *femmes guides*' negotiations of both professional and domestic responsibilities in Chapter Five.

I use a feminist geographic theoretical framework to inform my analysis of the experiences of Moroccan *femmes guides de montagne*. As I study their experiences at a previously all-male *guide* school; their interactions with tourists, co-workers, and women who live in mountain valleys; and their negotiation of familial and professional obligations, I adopt a feminist geographic approach that is attentive to the fluidity of the construction and meaning of gendered spaces. With a theoretically-informed awareness that women experience gendered

¹ I have consulted my fieldnotes and transcribed voice recordings in order to accurately present the words that were spoken to me. Native French and English speakers may recognize sentence structures that do not conform to conventions of academic writing.

spatiality in different ways depending on a given cultural context, I analyze what the work of *femmes guides de montagne* reveals about the range of gendered spaces in Morocco.

Chapter One: Background

I. Ethnographic Background: Morocco

Geography

The Kingdom of Morocco, *al-mamlaka al-maghribiyya* or “the Western Kingdom” in Arabic (Eickelman 2013), is located at Africa’s northwestern corner. Adjacent to the Mediterranean Sea and the Atlantic Ocean, Morocco shares its eastern border with Algeria and its southern with Mauritania. The Rif Mountains stretch across Morocco’s northern coast, while the Middle, High, and Anti-Atlas Mountains constitute the Atlas Mountains. This mountain range “[extends] northeastward for 460 miles... from [Morocco’s] Atlantic Coast to the Algerian border” (“High Atlas” Britannica). In total, mountains make up about twenty percent of Morocco’s surface area (El Bouchati 2010: 7). The northern Sahara Desert lies to the south of the Anti-Atlas section of the Atlas Mountains.

Political History

The first Muslim dynasty ruled Morocco in 788 C.E., which was “a century after the Arab conquests of North Africa” (Eickelman 2013). The legitimacy of the current royal family, the Alouite dynasty, is based on “descent from the prophet Muhammad and the periodic renewal of a covenant (Arabic, *bay’ah*) between the ruler and the people, as represented by a combination of community leaders (the *umma*) and Islamic scholars” (Eickelman 2013). The Alouites ascended to power in 1666 (Njoku 2006: 15), making this dynasty “one of the longest-ruling families in world history” (Cohen and Jaidi 2006: xi).

Morocco was a French protectorate from 1912 until its 1956 independence, after which Mohammed V became king of Morocco and thus continued the Alouite dynasty (Cohen and Jaidi

2006: xv). King Mohammed V ruled from 1957 to 1961, and his son, King Hassan II, ruled from 1961 to 1999 (Njoku 2006: 2). The four-year rule of Mohammed V, and particularly the 38-year rule of his son, Hassan II, were marked by arbitrary detentions, torture, executions without trial, and forced disappearances of enemies of the state (from both the political left and right) (Slyomovics 2005: 6-7).

The current king, Mohammed VI, assumed the throne in 1999 following the death of his father. As both head of state and commander of the faithful, his authority is both political and religious: “all division of power in Morocco, even that of the ulemas (the authoritative council within the Islamic clergy), falls below the status of the monarch” (Cohen and Jaidi 2006: 60). Although Morocco is a constitutional monarchy, the king is central to politics (Cohen and Jaidi 2006: 60): “[he promulgates] legislation, [chooses] the prime minister from the largest party in parliament, and [approves] government appointments” (“Morocco” Britannica 2016).

Some Moroccans consider Mohammed VI to be a reformer given his promises upon assuming the throne to “tackle poverty and corruption, create jobs, and address Morocco’s poor human rights record” (Njoku 2006: 10). In 2004, Mohammed VI established the Equity and Reconciliation Commission in response to the human rights abuses occurring under the rules of both his grandfather and father (“Truth Commission”). Furthermore, his reform in 2004 of the Moudawana (the family code based upon Islamic law) is considered by UNICEF to be “one of the most progressive [family codes] in the Arab world” with respect to women’s rights (“Morocco: MENA Gender” 2011). This new code revised the 1994 version of the Moudawana that “considered the primary purpose of marriage to be procreation and underscored the authority of the husband” (Cohen and Jaidi 2006: 87). The 2004 Moudawana raised the marriage age for both men and women (“We adopted... equality between women and men with respect to the

minimum age for marriage, which is now fixed at eighteen years for both”); gave women the right to have custody of their children (“Children’s interests with respect to custody are also guaranteed by awarding custody to the mother, then to the father, then to the maternal grandmother”); and, among other changes, allowed both women and men to pursue a divorce (“[Spouses] may mutually agree on the principle of ending their conjugal relationship with or without conditions”) (“The Moroccan Family Code” 2004).

However, there may be a gap between the new law and lived experience. The International Foundation for Electoral Systems and the Institute for Women’s Policy Research conducted a survey project in 2009 and 2010, “Status of Women in The Middle East and North Africa.” Two thousand women and five hundred men from both urban and rural regions of the Morocco were interviewed. Eighty-three percent of women respondents either “strongly” supported or “somewhat” supported the new Moudawana (“Data Tools” 2010). However, the survey’s findings indicate that not all women were aware of the law’s changes. While just five percent of urban women had “heard nothing at all” about the 2004 Family Code, twenty-percent of rural women had never heard of it (“Data Tools” 2010).

Demography

Over ninety-nine percent of Morocco’s thirty-three million people practice Sunni Islam, and about sixty percent of its total population lived in urban areas in 2015 (“Morocco” Central Intelligence Agency 2016). The distinction between urban and rural areas of the country, which I will frequently refer to throughout my thesis, can be better understood through a discussion of women’s education and economic participation.

Education

Since the 1960s, education has been free and compulsory in Morocco for students ages 6 to 15, but attendance is not universal (Clark 2006). I use 1993 as a year of reference in order to demonstrate changes over time, given that this was the year that women first accessed the *guide de montagne* profession. In 1993, approximately one million girls were not enrolled in primary or secondary schools. In comparison, nearly 700,000 boys were not enrolled (“Data: Morocco” The World Bank 2016). By 2014, school enrollment had increased for both genders, but a discrepancy between girls and boys had persisted. About 25,000 girls of primary school age range were not enrolled while about 17,000 boys had not enrolled (“Data: Morocco” The World Bank 2016). Increased literacy rates have reflected increased attendance patterns. In 1994, seventy-one percent of male youth ages fifteen to twenty-four were literate in comparison to forty-six percent of female youth (“Data: Morocco” The World Bank 2016). In 2014, eighty-nine percent of male youth were literate compared to seventy-four percent of female youth (“Data: Morocco” The World Bank 2016). In these measures, girls had made gains in access to education but still ranked behind boys.

Inequitable access to education was particularly pronounced for girls in rural regions. Soubhi Tawil of the International Committee of the Red Cross highlights this disparity through the findings of the Morocco Living Standards Measurement Survey of 1991:

Although access to primary schooling is almost universal in urban areas, close to 45 percent of rural children in the 7-12 age range have never been enrolled in school. This urban-rural bias is compounded by a very significant gender-bias that is reflected in the extent of educational exclusion among girls from rural households with over 60 percent having never received any formal education (primary or Quranic). (Tawil 2000: 66-67)

There were significant gains since 1991, as enrollment rates in primary school reached 98.2 percent throughout Morocco (Hoel 2012). In fact, the World Bank reports that “the gap between

urban boys and rural girls at the primary education level [narrowed] to just 3.5 percentage points by the 2012 school year” (Hoel 2012). Beyond primary school education, however, the disparity remained gendered. Only twenty-six percent of girls in rural areas had enrolled in lower secondary school in comparison to seventy-nine percent of urban boys in 2012 (Hoel 2012). Furthermore, sixty-percent of women in rural areas were illiterate as of 2004 (Sadiqi and Ennaji 2006: 95). These statistics support the conclusion that gendered disparities in educational access were greatest in rural regions of Morocco and that rural girls had less access to schooling than other demographic groups.

Economy

Some of Morocco’s primary industries included “mining, food processing, leather goods, textiles, construction, and tourism” (Njoku 2006: 9). The World Travel and Tourism Council estimates that tourism directly contributed to about eight percent of Morocco’s GDP and directly supported 775,500 jobs (“Travel” 2015). Although I do not have statistics about women’s participation in Morocco’s tourism industry, Hamza, a former professor of communications at Morocco’s school for *guides de montagne*, told me, “*En tourisme pour le moment, le rôle des femmes n’est pas très grand.*” (“In tourism for the moment, the role of women isn’t very big.”)

While cities had higher rates of unemployment than rural areas (36 percent unemployment compared to 8.4 percent, respectively) (Mansour and Castel 2014), poverty rates remained higher in rural regions (14.4 percent) than urban regions (4.8 percent) as of 2014 (Mansour and Castel 2014). The World Bank defines living below the poverty line as “the share of the population that cannot afford to buy a basic basket of goods” (“Choosing”). International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) writes, “Poverty is essentially a rural phenomenon in

the Kingdom of Morocco... [The] country's mountain areas, steppes and arid south are home to most of the poorest Moroccans" ("Rural Poverty" 2014). According to IFAD, "women in all categories" were among those most vulnerable to poverty ("Rural Poverty" 2014), which suggests that rural women experienced poverty at particularly high rates.

Women and Work

According to data from the United Nations from 2013, about seventy-six percent of Morocco's adult male population participated in its labor force in comparison to 26.5 percent of women ("Morocco" UNdata 2013). The percentage of women participating in labor force has stayed near 26 percent since 1993, which was the last year that the World Bank reports statistics of his particular measure ("Data" The World Bank 2016)

Fatima Mernissi writes, "The phrase *lmra lhaddama* (the working woman) refers to women who work in an economic space separate from their domicile and who receive a wage. This is a specific phenomenon—female labour performed outside the home, for an employer wholly foreign to the family, and paid for with a wage" (Mernissi 1987: 157-156). General attitudes about women working for wages outside of the home have shifted over time. Fatima Sadiqi and Moha Ennaji write that "women started to take jobs outside the home from the 1960s onward (although in rural areas women have always worked on their families' farms)" (Sadiqi and Ennaji 2006: 89), though it should be noted that work on family farms was unpaid. The first women to have jobs in Morocco's cities were "either rural women who had emigrated to urban areas or women who lived in the suburbs of big cities. Most of these women were poor" (Sadiqi and Ennaji 2006: 89). As such, those of the urban upper class during the 1960s regarded

women's work outside of the home as "dishonorable" (Sadiqi and Ennaji 2006: 89), given its associations with poverty.

During my fieldwork conducted over the course of three and a half months from 2015 to 2016, I noticed that attitudes towards women and waged labor had shifted. Many people whom I spoke to, both men and women, emphasized that women in Morocco now held many different types of jobs: they were pilots, taxi drivers, train conductors, lawyers, members of parliament, professors, and doctors, among other professions. However, it is important to note that attitudes towards and participation in waged employment varied depending on where women lived. While the 2009 and 2010 SWMENA survey had a small sample size of two thousand women and cannot represent a country with thirty-three million people, it does allow for comparison between rural and urban women's attitudes towards work. Sixty-nine percent of urban women who were surveyed said that they planned to pursue a career, and seven percent responded that they already had careers ("Data Tools" 2010). In contrast, forty-nine percent of rural women who were surveyed answered that they planned to pursue careers. When women were asked if they had performed "compensated work last week," sixteen percent of urban respondents and five percent of rural respondents said yes ("Data Tools" 2010). While it appears that the idea of waged labor was favorable to nearly half of rural women, their participation rates were low.

II. Background: *Guides de Montagne*

Education

In 1983, the Moroccan and French governments formed a partnership, *Le Projet Haut Atlas Central* (The Central High Atlas Project), to develop the rural economy of Morocco's High Atlas mountain region (El Bouchhati 2005: 18). Among the results of this partnership was the

creation of a school for *guides de montagne* (mountain guides) called *Le Centre de Formation aux Métiers de la Montagne* (CFAMM) (The Center of Training for Mountain Professions) (El Bouchhati 2005: 18). It opened in 1986 (Ministry of the Interior: 1). Annabelle Charbonnier, a doctoral student in anthropology at *L'école des hautes études en sciences sociales* in Paris, conducted research at CFAMM about the role of Moroccan *guides de montagne* in promoting durable and environmentally sustainable tourism. She wrote, “*La création du CFAMM relève d'une politique étatique générale visant la réduction des disparités sociales et régionales et la création de conditions de vie décentes en contexte rural. [...] Il s'agissait [dans ce projet] d'intégrer et de faire participer les jeunes montagnards à la relance de l'économie locale*” (Charbonnier 2011: 9). (“The creation of CFAMM revived a general state policy aimed at reducing social and regional disparities and creating decent living conditions in a rural context. [...] [The Project] was about integrating and engaging young people of the mountains in the revival of the rural economy.”)

Given its goals to incorporate “young people of the mountains” into the rural economy, CFAMM was constructed in Tabant, a rural town in Aït Bouguemez. El Bouchhati writes that Aït Bouguemez, a valley with altitudes ranging from five thousand to ten thousand feet, was “*géographiquement et symboliquement au cœur du Maroc montagnard. [...] Jusqu'au début des années quatre-vingt dix, cette vallée était très enclavée*” (El Bouchhati 2005: 17). (“geographically and symbolically at the heart of mountainous Morocco. [...] Until the beginning of the 1990's, this valley was very isolated.”) The opening of CFAMM marked the formalization of the guiding profession under the direction of Morocco's Ministry of the Interior (El Bouchhati 2005: 18), and the French government remained a partner until 1994 (Charbonnier

2011: 8). While men had informally worked as *guides de montagne* prior to 1986, the government had never before regulated their work until CFAMM's opening.

Students at CFAMM studied guiding techniques and skills that were necessary for a profession that involved overnight trips, hiking in mountains of above four thousand meters (over thirteen thousand feet), and interacting with tourists from around the world. These skills included orientation, cartography, mountain safety, hygiene, foreign languages, history, and other disciplines. CFAMM's instructors included university professors, high school teachers, engineers, doctors, veterinarians, and "*les anciens guides lauréats du CFAMM*" ("*guides* who formerly studied at CFAMM") (Ministry of the Interior 4).

Projet de Loi N. 05-12, released by the Ministry of Tourism in 2012, mandated that *guides de montagne* complete training for two years as opposed to one (Projet de Loi N. 05-12 2012). According to Youssef, its Director of Study at the time of my research, CFAMM closed in 2015 in order to redesign its training program in order to comply with the law. There is no scheduled date for its reopening. Since 2013, however, the Ministry of Tourism offered a two-year training program for *guides* at *l'Institut Spécialisé de Technologie Appliquée Hôtelière et Touristique* (ISTAHT) (The Specialized Institute of Applied Hotel and Tourist Technology) in Ouarzazate. (Ouarzazate was not a mountain town like Tabant. Lonely Planet calls it a "launching pad for mountains, desert, and gorges" (Clammer et al 2014).) Students who have completed the ISTAHT guiding program received certifications as *guides des espaces naturels*.²

² Following the release of *Projet de Loi N. 05-12* in 2012, the Moroccan Ministry of Tourism redefined two categories of tourist guides. *Guides des villes et des circuits touristiques* offered guided historical tours of Morocco's larger cities, and *guides des espaces naturels* were accredited to lead tourists on trips in both deserts and mountains of Morocco (Projet de Loi N. 05-12 2012). Despite the 2012 law change that changed the job's official name to *guide des espaces naturels*, I will use the term *guide de montagne* throughout my analysis. Although some of the people whom I interviewed have led groups of tourists on trips in Morocco's desert areas, the female and male *guides* whom I interviewed worked primarily in Morocco's High Atlas Mountain range; the term *guide de montagne* thus provides specificity to the locality of their profession. Furthermore, most guides referred to their profession as *guide de montagne*, which serves as an indication of their years of experience in the guiding industry before the

Its Director of Study at the time of my research, Omar, reported that ISTAHT's first cohort of students obtained their certifications in March 2015.

According to Mehdi, who served as director from 1986 to 1997, CFAMM had been unique as Africa's only school for *guides de montagne*. As such, admission was often competitive with 200 applicants for approximately 30 spots. Applicants needed to be Moroccan citizens between the ages of 20 and 30 years old (Ministry of Interior 1), and their admission was determined by their performance in three areas.

First, students must have passed their baccalaureate examination and submitted their test scores to CFAMM. Secondary education in Morocco culminates with this exam, which is necessary for entrance to higher education (Clark 2006). Secondly, CFAMM's instructors and administrators interviewed applicants in order to assess their motivations for pursuing the profession; their knowledge of Moroccan culture, geography, and history; and their personal qualities that prepared them to become *guides*. Some of these qualities included dynamism, curiosity, openness, capacity to communicate in multiple languages, and the ability to learn quickly (Ministry of the Interior: 4).

The third component of the admissions process was participation in a running race (*concours*) through the varied and mountainous terrain near Tabant, with an elevation of about 9,800 feet (Ministry of Interior: 1). Some *guides* reported the race's distance to be forty-five kilometers (approximately twenty-eight miles). Omar, former CFAMM professor and current ISTAHT director, told me that the race had been a shorter (albeit still-challenging) distance of thirty kilometers (about 18.5 miles) while carrying about eighteen pounds on their backs.

official name change had occurred. Some guides acknowledged the changed name but preferred the former. Further, most became accredited mountain guides by attending that exclusively specialized in preparation for *guides de montagne*. For these reasons, I continue the usage of *guide de montagne* in my analysis.

Applicants were expected to complete the course in under five hours, but a candidate's failure to do so resulted in disqualification from the admission process.

Women's role in the history of CFAMM and, by extension, the history of the officially regulated *guide de montagne* profession, has been contested. According to former director Mehdi, women were first accepted to CFAMM six years after its 1986 opening. He, the Moroccan Ministry of Tourism, and French partners and administrators at CFAMM jointly made the decision to admit women to the school. Mehdi told me, "*Pourquoi pas?*" ("Why not?") Two women applied and were admitted to CFAMM in 1993 and finished their training in 1994. One of the two women who had completed her training there from 1996 to 1997, however, told me that this year marked the last training cycle that women were accepted to the school. Mehdi, too, confirmed that women were no longer accepted at CFAMM around this time. In the four-year period from 1993 to 1997, Mehdi said that "eight or nine" women had studied there.

Others involved in the industry disputed the claim that women's access to CFAMM had been prohibited. In fact, prohibiting women would have been illegal. UN Women writes that Morocco's Labour Code, amended and adopted in 2004, "prohibits gender discrimination in employment, salaries, and promotion" ("Morocco" UN Women 2014). Omar said that women were accepted as long as they passed the exams. A member of the Ministry of Tourism's tourist business support division, Yassine, explained that women had simply not applied to CFAMM. "It's more a choice of women," he told me.

Regardless of the conflicting accounts of women's access to CFAMM, the *guide de montagne* profession was and has remained a predominantly male profession. At the time of research, Morocco's Ministry of Tourism recognized approximately six-hundred *guides* who had completed training at either CFAMM or ISTAHT. Five of the six-hundred *guides* were women.

Additionally, there were an unknown and uncounted number of “*faux guides*” (false guides) who led groups of tourists without having received official training at either of the two guide schools: their work was unregulated by the government and generally frowned upon. In his guidebook, *Moroccan Atlas: The Trekking Guide*, Alan Palmer writes, “Not only is a ‘*faux guide*’ untrained to cope with unforeseen circumstances, he works illegally and faces prison should you have an accident... [He] neither declares his earnings nor pays tax” (Palmer 2014: 25).

Despite the fact that the total number of both *faux* and official *guides de montagne* was uncertain, it was clear that women accounted for less than one-percent of the profession. I personally interviewed four of the five official *femmes guides de montagne* whom the Ministry of Tourism recognized. While Palmer uses the male pronoun, I also met one woman who was a *faux guide*.³ The experiences that these five women have shared with me serve as the foundation of my study.

³ Nadia, the woman to whom I refer, told me that she was a *faux guide* when we first met at the start of my research in April 2015. When I returned to Morocco in January 2016, she showed me that she had received government paperwork that rendered her trekking company legal. She technically remains categorized as a *faux guide* because she had not studied at CFAMM or ISTAHT.

Chapter Two: Theoretical Frameworks

I. Cultural and Feminist Geography: Place and Space

In addition to being a natural science, the discipline of geography includes scholars who “identify with the humanities and... cultural studies” (Staeheli and Martin 2000: 138). As Lynn A. Staeheli and Patricia M. Martin argue, common among geography’s subfields is a shared focus on “the spatial organization of phenomena, the processes that organize the world spatially, and the implications of the spatial organization for particular issues and people” (Staeheli and Martin 2000: 138). Cultural geographers, representing one subfield of the broader discipline, assert that “social relationships are inscribed in and organized through space...[,] specific places become imbued with particular social meanings... and... the meanings and representations associated with certain places are contested, negotiated, and transformed through individual and collective action” (Nagel 2005: 4). Cultural geography’s study of meaning and space renders it compatible with cultural anthropology: “Both geographers and anthropologists are interested in difference and diversity in social relations and meanings and symbols across space and over time” (McDowell and Sharp 1997: 2). Through a cultural geographical framework, scholars analyze the meanings of and responses to cultural places and spaces.

According to the Women and Geography Study Group (WGSG), geographers once identified “place” as a “bounded and rooted” physical location (Women and Geography Study Group 1997: 8). WGSG refers to Doreen Massey’s expanded definition of place. Instead of viewing it as “bounded... singular, fixed and unproblematic in its identity,” Massey suggests that place should instead be conceptualized as “a particular articulation of [social interrelations], a particular moment in those networks of social relations and understandings” (Massey 1993: 5). WGSG further asserts, “The distinctiveness of place is seen to rest in the combination of social

relations juxtaposed together in place” (Women and Geography Study Group 1997: 8). Therefore, “place” becomes not just a physical location, but a site of cultural meanings.

Staeheli and Martin cite Massey’s definition of space, which refers to “the broader network of relations and processes that connect places with each other” (Staeheli and Martin 2000: 141). WSGS writes that “space is the medium, as well as the outcome, of social action” (Women and Geography Study Group 1997: 7). Space therefore encompasses different places and their multiple meanings; as an “outcome” and a “medium” of action, it reflects and perpetuates cultural patterns. If place is micro, then space is macro; each one “is part of the construction of the other” (Massey 1994: 9).

Cultural geography and feminism are compatible academic traditions. In *Writing Women and Space: Colonial and Postcolonial Geographies*, Alison Blunt and Gillian Rose assert that “Western feminisms have always been concerned with the spatial politics of difference” (Blunt and Rose: 1994). (It should also be noted that non-Western feminists have also studied gendered spaces and their constructions of power. I will discuss the spatial paradigm of Moroccan sociologist Fatmina Mernissi later in this chapter.) Linda McDowell and Joanne P. Sharp define feminist geography, one of the cultural geography’s subfields, as “a geography which explicitly takes into account the socially created gender structure of society” (McDowell and Sharp 1997: 20). Attention to a geography of gender therefore exposes the meanings of culturally produced gendered spaces:

The spaces in which social practices occur affect the nature of those practices, who is ‘in place’, who is ‘out of place’ and even who is allowed to be there at all. But the spaces themselves in turn are constructed and given meaning through the social practices that define men and women as different and unequal... [They] reinforce power, privileges and oppression and literally keep women in their place. (McDowell and Sharp 1997: 3)

Just as scholars classify gender as culturally constructed, McDowell and Sharp assert that gendered spaces are cultural constructions.

Furthermore, Setha M. Low and Denise Lawrence-Zúñiga write that gendered spaces are “the particular locales that cultures invest with gendered meanings, sites in which sex-differentiated practices occur, or settings that are used strategically to inform identity and produce and reproduce asymmetrical gender relations of power and authority” (Low and Lawrence- Zúñiga 2003: 7). Gendered spaces, constructed by cultural practices that differentiate between men and women and the spaces they inhabit, serve to perpetuate and enforce power differentials between women and men.

II. Gendered Spatial Dichotomies

Since the 1970s, some scholars have claimed that gendered spaces are rigidly divided between public and domestic spaces, whereby women occupy the domestic and men the public. In “Women, Culture, and Society: A Theoretical Overview,” Michelle Zimbalist Rosaldo argues that this dichotomy is both universal and necessary to understanding gendered relations. She defines “public” as “activities, institutions, and forms of association that link, rank, organize, or subsume particular mother-child groups” (Rosaldo 1974: 23). “Domestic,” in contrast, “refers to those minimal institutions and modes of activity that are organized immediately around one or more mothers and their children” (Rosaldo 1974: 23). She further asserts that “women’s status will be lowest in those societies where there is a firm differentiation between domestic and public spheres of activity” (Rosaldo 1974: 36). While Low and Lawrence-Zúñiga note that Rosaldo does not explicitly discuss “a spatial dimension,” they write that “the organization, meaning, and use of space could be inferred” (Low and Lawrence-Zúñiga 2003: 9): Rosaldo

implies domestic space has a universally low cultural value in comparison to the male domain of public space, and these spatial distinctions serve to reflect women's low status and enforce male power (Low and Lawrence-Zúñiga 2003: 9).

Fatima Mernissi's book first published in 1975, *Beyond the Veil*, complements Rosaldo's claims. Mernissi writes about spatial distinctions in "modern Muslim societies":

Strict space boundaries divide Muslim society into two sub-universes: the universe of men (the *umma*, the world religion and power) and the universe of women, the domestic world of sexuality and the family. The spatial division [...] reflects the division between those who hold authority and those who do not. [...] The division is based on the physical separation of the *umma* (the public sphere) from the domestic universe. (Mernissi 1987: 138)

Like Rosaldo, Mernissi contends that the "universe of men" represents power while the "domestic world" of women is marked by the absence of power and authority. These boundaries, she writes, are strict and dichotomous. In claiming that these spatial divisions typify Muslim cultures, however, Mernissi writes about a particular cultural context and provides specificity to counter Rosaldo's universality.

In "The Feminization of Public Space: Women's Activism, the Family Law, and Social Change in Morocco," Sadiqi and Ennaji note that much past scholarship on Morocco's gendered spaces has established a distinction between public and private:

Within the tradition of research on Morocco, this approach makes the separation of the public and private spaces so rigid that the two spaces are mutually exclusive: the public space is the street and the marketplace, where men evolve, and the private space is the home, where women live. [...] This view associates the public space with the outside/exterior and the private space with the inside/interior [...]. (Belarbi 1997 and Bourquia 1997, as cited by Sadiqi and Ennaji 2006: 88)

Putting Sadiqi and Ennaji's summary of scholarship in dialogue with Mernissi's categorization, dichotomies of men's and women's spaces in Morocco emerge. The private space, which Mernissi calls the "domestic world," is linked with the home, family, and interiority. As such,

some scholars have characterized the private space as one of invisibility (Navez-Bouchanine 1991: 136). Public space, however, is marked by economic activity (“the marketplace”), work with nonfamily members (Davis 1983: 171), exteriority, and visibility (Navez-Bouchanine 1991: 136). In the public and private spatial divide, the public space represents power while the private represents its absence (Mernissi 1987: 138).

III. Beyond the Dichotomies

Some feminist geographers, many of whom were writing in the 1990s, offer a different theoretical direction for the field. Blunt and Rose, for example, acknowledge that “feminist analyses of the power relations embedded in such geographies for a long while focused almost exclusively on the distinction between public and private space” (Blunt and Rose 1994: 2). They instead argue for a more nuanced understanding of gendered spaces that extends beyond dichotomous binaries: “Contestation and renegotiation of the meaning of spaces is also always possible” (Blunt and Rose 1994: 3). Caroline Nagel suggests in the introduction of *Geographies of Muslim Women: Gender, Religion, and Space* that contestation can occur through individual or collective action (Nagel 2005: 4). In acknowledging the possibility for contested and renegotiated gendered spaces, Blunt and Rose push back against “essentialist and universalist perceptions” of space (Blunt and Rose 1994: 3). They assert that the meanings of gendered spaces are neither static nor fixed.

Blunt and Rose also recognize that interactions of gender, class, race, and sexuality mean that women’s experiences within spaces are not universal: “the politics of difference with which many feminists are now concerned is not only the politics of difference *between* two genders, but also the politics of diversity *among* women” (Blunt and Rose 1994: 7). Feminist geographers,

they suggest, must recognize that experiences of gendered spaces are not monolithic; rather, they are the result of intersectional cultural influences. Blunt and Rose's model of cultural feminist geography acknowledges difference in order to understand the variations of gendered spatialities and the ways in which women experience them.

Scholars who write about predominantly Muslim countries in the Middle East and North Africa also reject claims of rigidly defined public and private gendered spaces. In "Contesting Space: Gendered Discourse and Labor among Lebanese Women," Malek Abisaab criticizes "artificially [separating] 'public' from 'private' [...]. Private and public sources of women's labor, social experiences, and self-image shift and evolve under distinct historical conditions, which make it difficult to generalize about them across class, culture, or geography" (Abisaab 2005: 250). In "Gendering the City, Gendering the Nation: Contesting Urban Space in Fes, Morocco," Rachel Newcomb also rejects the public/private dichotomy, thus reflecting Abisaab's claim that gendered spaces shift. She writes, "An analytical division of Muslim social spaces into 'public/male' and 'private/female' is inadequate for comprehending the ways city dwellers [...] actively construct gendered social space" (Newcomb 2006: 288).

Newcomb further argues that discourses of rigidly fixed public and private gendered spaces in Muslim contexts perpetuate Orientalist discourses: "Conceptions of space rigidly associated with public/male and private/female [...] [illustrate] what Edward Said has described as the Orientalist tendency toward citationary practices, whereby new representations were built upon old ones and 'the actualities of the modern Orient were systematically excluded'" (Said 1978: 177, as cited by Newcomb 2006: 292). Newcomb implies that a rigid conceptual divide between public and private gendered space is an "old" representation of Morocco that does not reflect lived experience. In order to avoid perpetuating essentialist categories, I will consider the

ways that Moroccans, and particularly Moroccan women from both rural and urban areas, construct and define gendered spaces.

In considering these scholarly challenges to rigid and dichotomous spatiality, Don Mitchell suggests that Rose offers a model for a “progressive feminist geography” that challenges ideas that gendered spaces are rigidly fixed and dichotomous (Mitchell 2000: 215). According to WGSG, she adopts a type of feminist geography that “tries to break with boundaries and bounded spaces... [and] to think about space in non-dichotomous ways” (Women and Geography Study Group 1997: 193). In *Feminism & Geography*, Rose proposes a new way to conceptualize space, thus shifting feminist geographical discourses away from dichotomous classifications:

The sense of space which I argue is associated with the emergent subject of feminism [...] is multi-dimensional, shifting and contingent. It is also paradoxical, by which I mean that spaces that would be mutually exclusive if charted on a two-dimensional map—centre and margin, inside and outside—are occupied simultaneously. (Rose 1993: 140)

Rose refers to Patricia Hill Collins’ concept of the “outsider-within” to provide an example of paradoxical space (Rose 1993: 152).

In *Black Feminist Thought*, Collins discusses the spatiality of Black women in the United States who worked as domestic help for White families before World War II. While these women were intimately acquainted with the lives and families of White elites, they were not members of the White families for whom they worked: “They were economically exploited workers and thus would remain outsiders. The result was being placed in a curious *outsider-within* social location” (Collins 1990: 11). Rose uses Collins’ example to demonstrate a key principle of paradoxical space: “it must imagine the position of being both prisoner and exile, both within and without” (Rose 1993: 159). If the public/private model of space represents the divide as one between power and powerlessness, Rose’s paradoxical space acknowledges that

social actors can occupy spaces from a dual positionality of power and privilege. Through her model of gendered spaces, dichotomous categories become blurred.

I will therefore apply a feminist geographic theoretical approach as I interpret the experiences of Moroccan *femmes guides de montagne*. While Mernissi's categories of space will help to inform my understanding of conceptualizations of public and private spaces, I am mindful of the fluid and multiple possibilities of constructed gendered spaces' meanings. By studying the women's experiences and interactions at particular places, I can analyze what the work of *femmes guides de montagne* indicates about Morocco's gendered spaces.

Chapter Three: Hero Women

I. Women at CFAMM

Ayoub and Simo, two men from Marrakech, were sitting in front of a small storefront when I first met them. The windows behind them were covered with pictures of scenic mountain valleys with lush green trees and empty deserts with an occasional camel. These images offered a stark contrast to where we actually were: a busy and narrow street in the winding Marrakech *medina*. All day, they had been trying to convince the thousands of tourists who had passed by to sign up for one of their adventure company's outdoor trips, and they even tried to convince me, too.

I told them I was a student using my limited Arabic, and then I explained my research in my more comfortable French. They were doubtful that I would meet any women who worked as *guides*. “*Les femmes n’aiment pas les montagnes parce qu’elles sont dangereuses et difficiles pour elles,*” they said. (“The women don’t like the mountains because they’re dangerous and difficult for them.”) Perhaps Simo and Ayoub were thinking of *Jebel Toubkal*, which stood out on the window behind them. As North Africa’s highest peak at 4,167 meters (13,670 feet), it beckoned tourists who wanted a challenging hike. The tourists, of course, needed *guides* for this two-day trek (or possibly three if you wanted to acclimatize to the elevation). No, Ayoub and Simo didn’t believe that there were any *femmes guides de montagne*, at all. They were nearly correct.

I had first learned about *femmes guides de montagne* by reading a Lonely Planet guidebook: “Several young Moroccan female guides [...] have succeeded in breaking into the previously all-male world of mountain guiding” (Clammer et al 2014: 36). I never knew the exact number of women who were *guides* because nearly everyone I asked had a different

answer, ranging from none to ten. In Rabat, I spoke a member of the tourist and business support division of the Ministry of Tourism named Yassine. He handed me a list of women who worked as *guides*: there were five names at the top of an otherwise blank page.

There were more women, Yassine assured me, who worked as *guides de ville*. City guides led foreign tourists on guided tours of Morocco's largest cities, especially the imperial ones (Rabat, Casablanca, Fes, and Marrakech). Their job required knowledge of a city's history, architecture, and notable sites, and they often maintained connections with hotel owners and shop owners for tourists to visit. Nine percent of the 1300 official *guides de ville* were women, Yassine said, but the *guide de montagne* profession was not as easy. "It's a profession that needs a lot of time and a lot of energy," he said. The work of *guides de ville*, however, "requires less effort," and thus there were more *femmes guides de villes* than *montagne*.

Simo believed that there were more *femmes guides de ville* because women liked to return to their homes at the end of the day. "*Elle est fatiguée*," he explained. ("She's tired.") The work of a *guide de montagne* certainly didn't permit such a return. Summits of Toubkal usually lasted two days, but other hiking circuits were weeks at length. Karim was a *guide de ville* based in Marrakech, and even he acknowledged that his own profession had "easier" work than its *guide de montagne* counterpart. "In the *villes*," he said, "at least seventy percent of the energy is within the hotels. For the mountain guides, he's responsible for twenty-four hours for their sleeping and cooking. Sometimes he has a staff around him, but he has to control everything." He paused for a moment. "Or she."

Amine, a *guide de montagne* who lived near Toubkal, agreed with the others as to why more women worked as *guides de ville*. "It's easier," he said. He even condemned city guiding as "a part-time job with no big effort." To become a *guide de ville*, it was necessary for

candidates to graduate from a university and pass written and oral government exams in order to receive certification from the Ministry of Tourism. From Hussein's perspective, this was not "big training" in comparison to the required year of rigorous trekking and studies at *Le Centre de Formation aux Métiers de la Montagne* (CFAMM). To become a *guide de montagne*, he thought, required big effort.

Laila was already an experienced hiker when she decided to become a *guide de montagne*. "I started mountains when I was fifteen," she said, "and I did some crazy things in the Pyrenees and Alps." Revealed upon my questioning, the crazy things included bungee jumping and ice climbing. She just shrugged her shoulders. "I was tough, I was crazy, I liked adventure," she said.

After receiving her baccalaureate certification in tourism, she worked as a *cuisinière* (cook). She joined *guides de montagne*, their *muletiers* (men who packed mules with food and water to lead them through narrow mountain pathways), and their tourists on treks through Morocco's Atlas Mountains. Palmer notes in his guidebook, "I have yet to meet a single female muleteer or cook on the trail" (Palmer 2014: 24). Come to think of it, nor had I. "I think, for women, I was the first cook," Laila said. She would soon become one of the first *femmes guides de montagne* in the country, too.

Laila was twenty years old when she applied to *CFAMM* in 1993. She reported to Tabant, Morocco, for the *concours* portion of CFAMM's selection process, and she was one of only four women. The other hundreds of candidates were men, she recalled, and everyone competed for just twenty-five spots.

The running race with a distance of 30 kilometers⁴ (about 18.5 miles) and a time limit of five hours took place through the varied terrain near Tabant, a town with an altitude of approximately 3,000 meters (9,800 feet) (Ministry of Interior: 1). If candidates didn't finish, she said that they were disqualified.

Twenty-one years had passed since Laila had competed in the *concours*, but she still remembered how challenging it was. The men thought it was hard as she did; some of them were crying.

“But I did it,” she told me.

The problem was that she was the only woman to pass, and CFAMM had only ever accepted and trained male students to become *guides de montagne*. Its director at the time, Mehdi, believed that women could be excellent *guides*, but he nonetheless had reservations about a woman studying by herself. He told me, “*On veut pas une seule femme dans la randonnée... deux femmes, pas de problème.*” (“You don't want a woman alone on a hike... two women, not a problem.”)

When it seemed like Laila wouldn't have been allowed to enroll, her experience from her days of working as *cuisinière* paid off. A former male colleague called the Ministry of Interior in Rabat on her behalf and tried to convince them to let her attend. This worked, and she went to CFAMM at last.

“I was the only girl there,” Laila said, and CFAMM's directors didn't want to keep it this way. “They said, ‘We'll do what we can do to bring two girls, not just one, because the boys will be crazy.’”

⁴ I heard many different reports of the distance of the *concours*, but this distance represents the average distance reported.

She tried to assure them that they didn't need to worry about "crazy" male students. "I said, 'Look at me. I'm not Angelina Jolie... The boys, they aren't animals. I can eat with [...] the men who teach us.'"

She slept in her own large room while the boys shared rooms with three or four other students, and there were few interactions between her and the rest of her classmates. "The other students, they didn't touch me, they didn't talk to me," she said. "[CFAMM] would say to them, 'Go away.' Or they'd say 'go away' to me."

Laila remained the only woman at CFAMM for two months until the administrators kept their promise to bring another woman there to join her. Zohra was twenty-eight years old when she arrived, eight years older than Laila. She had previously applied to CFAMM once before her most recent attempt. The first time that she took the exam, she had been the only woman to apply. The administrators, she said, told her, "*Tu es toute seule, non.*" ("You're all alone, no.") The next year, she participated in the *concours* at the same time as Laila and had performed well. The two women became roommates and, in doing so, set a precedent for the next four years that followed at the *guide* school. "Every year, CFAMM always brought two girls," Laila said. "Two girls succeeded, not just one."

Zohra recalled a mixed reaction once she had arrived at CFAMM. She had a better relationship with her fellow classmates than with some of her professors. "*Avec qui est-ce que j'ai trouvé un problème? C'est pas avec les stagiaires, c'est pas avec les gens qui ont fait le stage avec moi. C'est les formateurs, c'est les professeurs. Ils veulent pas voir une femme, ils veulent que le travail de guide soit masculin et pas de féminin.*" ("With whom did I find a problem? It wasn't with the students training, it wasn't with the people who did the training with me. It was the instructors; it was the professors. They didn't want to see a woman there. They wanted the

work of a *guide* to be masculine and not feminine.”) She said, “*Ils m’ont dit que je prenais la place d’un homme.*” (“They told me that I was taking the place of a man.”)

Nouhaila and Fatima attended CFAMM from 1996 to 1997, and Nouhaila told me that this was the last year that women had been accepted to CFAMM. She and Fatima were, by extension, the last women to become official *guides de montagne* through the school for many years. Although I never met the fifth *femme guide de montagne* who was recognized by the Ministry of Tourism, Zohra said she was young. I found an article about her online that indicated that she had worked as a *guide* since at least 2010 and had studied at CFAMM before that (“Khadija Femme Guide” 2013). If this is true, then there was more than a ten-year period from 1997 to about 2009 when no women had studied to become *guides*.

Some members of Morocco’s trekking industry rejected the claim that women were prohibited from studying at CFAMM. One such person, for example, was the Ministry of the Interior’s Director of Rural Affairs, Youssef. (Halfway during our interview, he told me that he had been CFAMM’s Director of study since 2010.) When I told him the reports I had heard that women were prohibited from CFAMM, he was adamant that this wasn’t true. “*Une obstacle n’est pas posée,*” he said. “*Personne n’interdit les femmes.*” (“There isn’t an obstacle. No one forbids the women.”) Hamza, a former instructor at CFAMM, also denied the claims of exclusion. “*C’est dommage. Elles venaient pas.*” (“It’s a shame. The women didn’t come.”) Both Youssef and Hamza agreed that there should be more *femmes guides*, and Youssef hoped that CFAMM could someday have four or five students who were women per training cycle.

However, I soon realized that there was not a consensus among current or former CFAMM administrators regarding the school’s policy towards women’s attendance. Its former

director, Mehdi, confirmed Nouhaila's assertion that the school had once stopped admitting women. In fact, this policy change would have been instituted during the time of his directorship. He emphasized when we first met that he held the personal conviction that women could be very good guides. Even still, he knew that not everyone shared his views: "*Les agences de voyages ne font pas confiance aux femmes.*" ("The travel agencies don't have confidence in women.")

Another reason that CFAMM decided to stop accepting women, he said, concerned the fact that many *femmes guides* eventually stopped working. "*Les femmes guides mariaient leurs clients et elles partaient du Maroc.*" ("The women guides were marrying their clients and they were leaving Morocco.") He paused and switched uncharacteristically from French to English. "They leave," he said. Mehdi told me there had at one time been eight or nine *femmes guides de montagne* in Morocco, but many of them had married their clients and subsequently left the country.

Laila had heard a story like this. "They say that one of the guides—I don't know a name—she fell in love with a young boy, twenty-five. She was twenty-six. They say it was a problem. They found an opportunity to say stop."

Nadia, a *faux guide de montagne* who had never attended CFAMM, said that the relationship between *femmes guides de montagne* and tourists was never a sexual one. "Male tourists are very respectful people, and they never tell me to do something with them because they know that I'm working. Why would I want to do that when I am suffering to go up and down three thousand meters, suffering? Why would I want to do that if *les hommes veulent seulement dormir avec vous?*" ("if the men only want to sleep with you?") Fatima simply chuckled when I told her what Mehdi had told me. She knew that both male and female guides had married foreign tourists. "*Kif kif,*" she said. "*C'est la même chose.*" ("It's the same thing.")

II. Paradoxical Space at CFAMM

Women's participation in both *guide de ville* and *guide de montagne* professions was in itself a subversion of rigid notions of public and private spaces, which Newcomb suggested was an old representation of space in Morocco (Newcomb 2006: 292). These *femmes guides*, whether working in the city or the mountain, "[performed labor] outside of the home, for an employer wholly foreign to the family, and paid for with a wage" (Mernissi 1987: 157). Working with nonfamily members indicated that work was done in public space (Davis 1983: 171). While it was once true that women did not frequently work outside of the home for a wage (Sadiqi and Ennaji 2006: 89), approximately twenty-six percent of women participated in the Morocco's labor force in 2015 ("Data: Morocco" The World Bank 2016). "*C'est pas le Maroc d'avant,*" Nouhaila said. ("This isn't the Morocco of before.") Both professions were public work, and a woman working as either a *guide de ville* or *guide de montagne* was a woman working in public space.

The discourses surrounding *guides de ville* and *guides de montagne*, however, reveal that constructions of gendered spaces also inform the type of work that men and women perform and, as a result, whether the work is ascribed to a particular gender. Harriet Bradley writes that sex-typing is "the process by which jobs are 'gendered', ascribed to one sex or the other" (Bradley 1989: 345). Gender-typing, the term I will use in place of sex-typing, leads to a process of segregation. Catherine Hakim writes, "Occupation segregation by gender exists when men and women do different kinds of work, so that one can speak of two separate labour forces, one male and one female, which are not in competition with each other for the same jobs" (Hakim 1979: 1). Gender-typing and occupation segregation are therefore informed by each other: if a profession is gender-typed, then men and women perform different kinds of work in separated

labor forces. These separated labor forces then perpetuate the construction of certain professions as gender-typed.

In discussing the differences between *guides de ville* and *guides de montagne*, some people presented the *guide de ville* profession as one that was more suitable for women in comparison to the work of *guides de montagne*. Considering scholarly discourses of public versus private spaces in Morocco, the *guide de montagne* profession aligned with constructions of public space while the *guide de ville* profession more closely aligned with constructions of women's private space.

Firstly, city guiding was marked by its interiority and its compatibility with "the home." Karim, a *guide de ville*, suggested that most of the work in his profession happened in hotels (an indoor space). This sharply contrasted the outdoor work of *guides de montagne*. Ayoub and Simo noted that *guides de ville* returned to their homes at the end of the day. When *guides de montagne* trekked in Morocco's Atlas Mountains, however, they left behind their families, their homes, and their "domestic associations" (if they had them, all) for days or weeks at a time. *Guides de montagne* were outdoors and away from the home, which was more characteristic of male public space (Sadiqi and Ennaji 2006: 88). Some people represented the work of *guides de ville* as more interior and close to the home, characteristic of women's private space (Sadiqi and Ennaji 2006: 88).

The participation rates and discourses that distinguish each profession are worthy of attention. Given that one percent of *guides de montagne* were women, this profession was an example of occupational segregation. It was indeed possible to speak of it as a male labor force. City guiding, however, was less gender-typed than its mountain counterpart. Ten percent of *guides de ville* were women, and many people deemed it to be more acceptable work for women.

I therefore conclude that notions of acceptable women's work in contemporary Morocco were partly constructed by how closely the work aligned with the spaces that women historically occupied: indoors and close to the family.

Furthermore, the discourse that the *guide de ville* profession was "easier" than its mountain counterpart, a "hard" profession, indicates a culturally-constructed belief of male physical superiority. While Mernissi writes that the "male universe" represented "world religion and power" (Mernissi 1987: 138), *guides de montagne* represented men's *physical* power. Gender-typed as masculine, the *guide de montagne* profession served to reflect and perpetuate ideas of men's physical strength.

I frequently heard claims in Imlil by men and women alike that the mountain guiding profession was too physically challenging for women. Sometimes called "Petite Chamonix" in reference to the French ski resort, Imlil was the base from which many hikers and their *guides* began their treks of Toubkal. Salma, a receptionist for a trekking company based there, was familiar with the *guide de montagne* profession. She had only ever seen one *femme guide* pass through Imlil (it was Nadia, a *faux guide*), and suspected that there were not more *femmes guides* because of the physical demands of the job. "The training [at CFAMM] is very hard, like military." When I spoke to a group of three male *guides* who led trips for Salma's trekking company, they told me that they had only ever heard of Nouhaila and Laila, and they thought that the mountains were "*trop dures*" ("too hard") for most women to lead trips there. Hind, another woman I met in Imlil, sold argan oil at a co-op. While she was not directly involved in the hiking industry, she saw *guides* regularly pass the co-op with their hiking groups. She told me there were not many *femmes guides* because "*c'est pas facile pour marcher Toubkal.*" ("It isn't easy to climb Toubkal.")

“The mountains” thus emerged as a gendered space. McDowell and Sharp write that “spaces themselves... are constructed and given meaning through the social practices that define men and women as different and unequal” (McDowell and Sharp 1997: 3). Given the widespread (although by no means unanimous) discourse that the Atlas Mountains were to be “too hard” for women, these discourses perpetuated the idea that *guides de montagne* should have been men because of men’s superior physical strength. The distinction between men’s and women’s physical capabilities constructed “the mountains” as a male space and, by extension, the *guide de montagne* profession as a masculine one.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, the *femmes guides de montagne* rejected claims that the guiding profession was “*trop dure*” for them and that the mountains were not a place for women. After all, they themselves proved that women were capable of the physical demands of the work. Zohra told me, “*C’est l’homme qui [le] pensait, pas nous.*” (“It’s men who thought this, not us.”) She suggested that men constructed their beliefs of their physical superiority as a means of asserting their power. Some women (like Hind and Selma) internalized the culturally constructed belief that women were not physically strong enough to hike in the Atlas Mountains, and this contributed to the fact that they did not become *guides de montagne*.

Laila suspected that constructions of male physical strength were the reason that some men resisted the women’s participation in the guiding profession:

They’re jealous. Men are jealous of all women who do this job. They were jealous of Zohra, and they were jealous of me. The men think that they are stronger and if women do this work, she is strong too. ‘She will make me [less] like a man... She is not good because she is like me.’ There are some guys who say, ‘You can run, but you can never be like me.’ I never said that I wanted to be like you. Ok, you’re strong. You’re really stronger than me. We never said that we want to be the same as you. I like this job and I like to be in the mountains. But I never said I wanted to be stronger than you or cleverer than you. No!

Some men who worked as *guides de montagne* or who were involved in Morocco's hiking industry vocalized their opposition to her participation because they believed it diminished their own strength. Mountains had been represented as "hard" spaces where only men could work, with the accompanying belief that men were strong and women were weak. If women accessed the gender-typed *guide de montagne* profession, then some men feared that this signaled that the mountains were not as "hard" as once represented. If "weak" women were able to hike, then male *guides'* physical strength would have been cast into doubt.

It is important to note that there were men who supported women's participation in the industry, and they believed that women could be capable of the physical demands of the profession. Mehdi, who had once worried about Laila being the only woman at CFAMM, said, "*Pour moi par conviction, il n'y a pas de métier pour femmes et il n'y a pas de métier pour hommes.*" ("For me by conviction, there is not a women's profession and there is not a men's profession.") Omar, the Director of Study at ISTAHT and a former instructor at CFAMM, said, "Because we have equality now, there is no distinctions in all jobs... with guides, why not?" Perhaps he referred to Morocco's revised Labor Code that was adopted in 2004, which prohibited "gender discrimination in employment, salaries, and promotion" ("Morocco" UN Women).

However, these affirmations of women's participation in the mountain guiding profession were not reflected in all discourses about the work. While Mehdi may have believed that there should not have been "women's professions" and "men's professions," the *guide de montagne* profession was, nevertheless, nearly all-male: statistics supported this claim, but so, too, did the discourses surrounding it that constructed the profession as one that was supposed to be for men. A law against gendered discrimination in employment had been adopted thirteen years before I

conducted my fieldwork, but the law had not altered culturally constructed beliefs that some people held that women were not physically strong enough to become *guides*.

Furthermore, competing discourses of opposition to and support for women working as *guides de montagne* extended beyond the fact that some considered the mountains (and, by extension, the guiding profession) to be too physically challenging for women. Even when they had proved they were physically capable of completing demanding treks by passing CFAMM's notoriously challenging *concours*, women who studied at CFAMM often experienced different treatment than men did on the basis of their gender.

Laila was not at first welcomed to CFAMM despite the fact that she succeeded in passing its entrance requirements. CFAMM's administrators feared having only one woman at the school because, as they told Laila, "the boys will be crazy." Laila interpreted this "craziness" to mean that the men would have sexually desired her. In responding she did not look like Angelina Jolie, she contrasted her own physical appearance to an American movie star, thus dismissing the suggestion that men would have wanted a sexual relationship with her.

Administrators' opposition to Laila's presence at the school on the basis that the male students would have become sexually attracted to her reflects what Mernissi writes in *Beyond the Veil*. She writes, "Individuals of both sexes [are] primarily sexual beings. But because men are not supposed to spend their time in the domestic unit, we may assume that the members are in fact women only" (Mernissi 1987: 138). Mernissi claims that women's sexuality is expected remain in the domestic space of the home, given that sex was only acceptable between married couples: "Islam socializes sexual intercourse through the institution of marriage within the framework of the family. The only legitimate sexual intercourse is between married people" (Mernissi 1987: 59). The discourse that women were kept from CFAMM because they would

excite men's sexual desires aligns with Mernissi's assertion that "seclusion in Islam is a device to protect the passive male who cannot control himself sexually in the presence of the lust-inducing female" (Mernissi 1987: 142). Attempting to keep Laila from attending CFAMM, in addition to limiting interactions between her and the other students, was a way to "seclude" her and separate her from the male students as a preventative measure against taboo sexual relationships.

I should note, however, that neither CFAMM administrators nor *femmes guides de montagne* explicitly said that religion was the reason that more women were not *guides*. In fact, Zohra credited religion to be the reason that she ultimately became a *guide*; when her parents had arranged a marriage between her and her cousin, her father consulted the Quran and came to the conclusion that he would not "meddle in her life": his religion informed his decision to break the engagement, allowing Zohra to continue her studies and ultimately become a *guide de montagne*. Likewise, another interpretation of the faith might have prompted another father to believe that women's interactions with men ought to have been limited.

Therefore, I do not intend to use Mernissi's frameworks for Islam and sexuality to suggest that Islam has prevented women from becoming *guides*. However, CFAMM's discourses about women's interactions with men reflect what Mernissi had written about, and thus these discourses raise important questions. While women interacted with men who were nonfamily when they worked as *guides de ville* (thus making the work public), I never met anyone who questioned their participation in the profession. Why were interactions between men and women at CFAMM regarded as more problematic and why did administrators seek to prevent them?

In *Gender on the Market*, Deborah Kapchan's ethnography of women's expressive forms and speech as they worked in the *suqs* (marketplaces) of Beni Mellal, she classifies certain

situations, like weddings or naming ceremonies, as “semi-private” and “semi-public” (Kapchan 1996: 222). I, too, propose that CFAMM was both public and private: students were there for job training for work outside of the home (rendering it public), but they also lived there and slept there (domestic/private).

Fatima told me that, if her father was alive, she would not have become a *guide*. “*Mon père était comme un homme un peu direct, pas dormir une nuit à l’extérieur parce que aujourd’hui au Maroc, ça existe toujours. Une femme qui dort une nuit à l’extérieur de la maison, non, c’est pas possible.*” (“My father was a direct man and he wouldn’t have let me sleep a night outside of the house. In Morocco, this still exists today. A woman who sleeps at night away from the home, no, it’s not possible.”) There were negative associations that accompanied women in public spaces at night. I once heard a *femme guide de ville* refer to prostitutes as “*femmes qui travaillent de nuit*” (women who work the night). According to Sadiqi and Ennaji, “One or more women alone on the street at night are generally thought to be prostitutes and may be sexually harassed” (Sadiqi and Ennaji 2006: 92). If women’s presence in a city’s public spaces at night (therefore, away from the family) had associations of prostitution, then guiding work might have had the same taboo. Women attending CFAMM were sleeping in a semi-public and semi-private space on the basis of the fact that they were not with their family members. Unmarried male and female students’ interactions in this space may have been regarded as a cultural transgression to some of CFAMM’s administrators. Therefore, women’s presence at CFAMM meant that men and women were living together in a simultaneously a public and private space; any sexual relationship would have been forbidden. These discourses, of course, betray a double standard whereby meant women (not men) were punished for their sexuality and discouraged from accessing the school.

There were still other types of marginalization that women experienced when they studied at CFAMM. Zohra's professors, for example, told her that she had taken the place of a man, further reinforcing that Zohra was "out of place" because CFAMM was men's public space (McDowell and Sharp 1997: 20). Nouhaila remembered a range of responses from her fellow classmates:

Entre nous, on vit comme une famille. Temps en temps il y a des guides qui disent des choses c'est pas bien de le dire, mais c'est normal parce qu'un homme de voir une femme entre les hommes, toujours il y a des mauvaises choses temps en temps. Mais on va pas les écouter parce qu'on est tous dans le centre pour passer un stage. On est pareille que les hommes quand on fait un examen pareil, quand on fait le marche pareil. Il y a pas de différence entre hommes et femmes. On est tous pareil. Il y a des gens qui te respecte parce que, de faire ce métier, il faut être capable, courageuse, et forte. Et d'être entre vingt-six guide hommes, c'est pas facile.

("We lived like a family. Time to time there were guides who said things not good to say, but this is normal because, when a man sees a woman among men, there are always bad things from time to time. But you don't listen to them because we're all in the Center to pass the training. You're equal to the men when you do an equal exam and when you trek the same routes. There isn't a difference between men and women. We're all equals. There are men who respect you because, to do this profession, you must be capable, courageous, and strong. Being a woman among twenty-six male guides isn't easy.")

Although Nouhaila represented the relationship between men and women at CFAMM as equal because they did "the same" work, the rest of her statement indicates that men and women were *not* equal at CFAMM. While they studied the same things and hiked the same routes, their presence at CFAMM had different meanings. The male students were studying at a school that had always been a male space in order to join a profession that had always been male-dominated. For the women who trained to join a previously all-male profession by studying in a previously all-male space, they were contesting the maleness of the profession: studying at CFAMM was counterhegemonic. Some men supported women's presence at the school ("there are men who respect you," Nouhaila said), there were still others who opposed it, "[said] bad things" to the women, or told them that they had taken a man's place. While Nouhaila believed that women

and men were equals and that there should not have been discrimination within the profession, men and women were not equals in the profession.

In this way, women who attended CFAMM occupied a paradoxical space, which represents “centre and margin, inside and outside” (Rose 1993: 141). Collins’ concept of “outside-within” highlights the positionality of women who trained at CFAMM to become *guides de montagne*. These women had access to a previously all-male profession, thus shattering notions of strict occupational gendered separation maintained through the construction of the mountains as a gendered space. Even as women challenged the school’s exclusively masculine spatiality by entering the exclusive school, their position within the mostly-male space ensured that they remained outsiders on the margin.

At CFAMM, the women recognized that they were outsiders through the underlying discourses that women had taken men’s spots and, particularly for Laila, that her presence was unwelcome at CFAMM because men sexually desired her. The treatment of the women by some students and administrators served to emphasize their position of marginality. Laila recognized her dual positionality of privilege and marginality:

There are a few women [who do this job], and they must fight to show to these men that they are jealous of us, just some of them. And the women say, ‘Ok. You don’t like us? You don’t want it? But we hang on and we do it and we are here. [...] I say hero, but I don’t feel like a hero. I say this word to show that if someone wants something, they can have it. These women fight and they have it.

Given that CFAMM itself was both public and private, the *femmes guides de montagne* occupied a space that was neither public nor private. In CFAMM, they were “outsiders-within”: although they joined an exclusively male-gendered school, the women remained marginalized while they were there.

III. CFAMM's Policy: *Pas de femmes guides?*

I never conclusively determined whether CFAMM had adopted a policy after 1997 that prohibited women from studying there. The former director reported as such, while other former administrators denied it. Yassine of the Ministry of Tourism said, "It's more a choice of women," believing that most had simply chosen to pursue other professions. If this was indeed the case, then it is necessary to analyze what enables and inhibits women from pursuing certain professions, which I will do in the next chapters. If, however, it is true that CFAMM stopped accepting women, then this decision had effects lasting far beyond 1997. Nouhaila and Fatima were the last women to become official *guides de montagne* through training at CFAMM for possibly over a decade. What does it mean if the school had, in fact, stopped accepting women?

Rachid, a male *guide de montagne* and the president of Imlil's *bureau des guides*, told me that women were no longer accepted to CFAMM after 1997 because of relationships between men and women at the school. "To mix with girls, [...] people wanted to have relationships with her," he said. "Sometimes this created some problems." The opposite of "mixing" men and women was separating them, which he claims the school did by preventing women from studying there altogether. This once again highlights school administrators' opposition to or fear of romantic or sexual relationships between students. Forbidding women from attending the school served as a way to protect men from sexual temptation and simultaneously maintain women's sexual purity.

Mehdi, however, reported that *femmes guides de montagne* left the country after marrying tourists, and it was *this* that prompted CFAMM to enact a policy prohibiting women from attending the school. I did, in fact, hear examples of women who stopped working as *guides de montagne*. Mehdi told me that there had been eight or nine women who had studied at CFAMM

(not counting Nadia, a *faux guide*). Given CFAMM's policy of accepting two women per training cycle, I believe the most likely number is eight women. I personally met Laila, Zohra, Nouhaila, and Fatima, and these women were four out of a total of eight officially recognized *guides de montagne*. Nouhaila had also told me that two women, Faiza and Aya, had left Morocco and lived in Switzerland and France, respectively. I do not know if these women stopped working as *guides de montagne* because they married tourists, nor do I know the motivations behind their decisions to stop working as *guides*. Their names were unwritten on the Ministry of Tourism's already nearly empty list of *femmes guides*.

The idea of sexual relationships between *femme guides de montagne* and tourists, however, was undoubtedly taboo. Laila had heard of a rumor that a *femme guide* fell in love with a male tourist, and as a result "they found an opportunity to say stop." If the person with whom the unmarried *femme guide* had fallen in love with was a tourist, then this incident would have happened after she had finished studying at CFAMM. Laila suggested that CFAMM administrators had heard of what had happened between the woman and the tourist. This catalyzed a policy change in order to prevent such a situation from happening again. Nadia, too, told me that a sexual relationship between a tourist and a *femme guide* was a "bad [thing]." Nouhaila said, "*Ma religion m'interdit que je marie avec un étranger, et je respecte ma religion.*" ("My religion forbids me from marrying a foreigner, and I respect my religion.") A sexual relationship with a tourist would have been a sexual relationship outside of marriage and outside the home; depending upon someone's interpretation of Islam, it was forbidden, too. (I should note, however, that Laila, Zohra, and Fatima were married to people who were neither Moroccan nor Muslim.)

However, underlying fears of sexual relationships between *femmes guides* and other men, either student or tourist, were not reflective of the experiences of many of the women with whom I spoke. Like Nadia, Fatima said that the relationship between *femmes guides* and the tourists accompanying them on hikes was not sexual: “*La plupart des clients qui viennent pour la randonnée, qui aiment la nature, ne viennent pas pour draguer les femmes guides.*” (“Most of the clients who come for hiking, who love nature, don’t come to make a move on *femmes guides*.”)

Having worked in both mountains and deserts of Morocco, Zohra noted, “*Depuis quatre-vingt ans que j’ai fait ce métier, j’ai jamais des problèmes avec des hommes, ni avec les muliers ni avec les chameliers, jamais, jamais, jamais. Les gens me considèrent comme leur mère, comme leur soeur.*” (“In the twenty-four years that I have done this job, I have never had problems with men, neither the mule-men nor the camel drivers— *never*. They consider me like their mother, like their sister.”) In fact, I participated on a trek with Zohra which had been accompanied by a male assistant. (He helped to cook food and to lead the mule, so perhaps he was both a *cuisinier* and *muletier*.) I observed their relationship to be a professional one. Zohra was married, as was he. She was also his employer and could have chosen to hire another assistant if they did not have a good working relationship. *Guides de montagne* were in a position of authority over muleteers and cooks, as they usually chose the assistants with whom they wanted to work. When women worked as *guides*, this means that, as Mehdi said, “*les femmes donnent les ordres.*” (“the women give the orders.”) Some men did not want to be directed by women, he said, but the *femmes guides* likely chose to work with whom they had a positive working relationship

In fact, all five of the *femmes guides* whom I met reported a familial relationship between them and their male colleagues or tourists, just as Zohra did. Nouhaila described working relationships with men during hikes in this way:

J'étais avec un groupe que des hommes et j'étais la seule femme. Les clients, les cuisiniers, les muletiers—tous les hommes. J'étais la seule femme. Est-ce que à ce moment là je dois dire, 'Non, je veux partir parce que je suis avec hommes?' Non. Moi, je pense que les hommes est comme des amis, la famille. Je suis la soeur.

(I was with a group of only men and I was the only woman. The clients, the cooks, the muleteers—all men. I was the only woman. At this moment, should I say, 'No, I want to leave because I'm with men?' No. Me, I think that men are like friends, family. I am the sister.)

Nadia, unmarried and without children, told me, “I think all the people who are coming from other countries, they are my children. Different colors, and I love them. Once they get into my country, they are like my family,” she said.

The *femmes guides*' usage of family metaphors to describe their relationships with male colleagues and tourists is a strategic choice. Newcomb writes, “Imbuing public spaces with aspects of the domestic sphere is one tactic by which [...] women make their presence in urban public spaces more acceptable” (Newcomb 2006: 305). The usage of family metaphors suggests that *femmes guides* acknowledged the potentially shameful associations of men and women interacting at night in a semi-public and semi-private space. They employed the metaphors as a strategy to subvert shameful suspicions by presenting their relationships as familial. If acceptable women's work, like being a *guide de ville*, had “domestic associations” on the basis of its interiority and proximity to the home, then hiking among “brothers” and “children” was a means of representing their work as one with domestic ties, thus making it culturally acceptable; the women transformed from public into both public *and* private. Through this, we see that *femmes guides* contested the meaning of the space “through individual [...] action” (Nagel 2005: 4).

Finally, it should be noted that the claim that *femmes guides* commonly married foreign male tourists betrays a double standard. By many accounts, male *guides de montagne* regularly married female tourists. While Nouhaila told me that her religion forbade her marriage to foreigners, Nadia, on the other hand, was indignant towards a standard that she considered to be unfair: “*Les hommes, la plupart ils sont mariés avec les Européens.*” (“The men, most of them married Europeans.”) She said, “It’s good for them, but for women it’s no good. There is no balance, always. Yes for them, no for us. They’re crazy. Why they can get married with these tourists, but for women, no?” While women were possibly prohibited from attending CFAMM because of alleged relationships with male tourists, men received no such punishment.

Newcomb writes that Mernissi’s representation of the public and private spatial dichotomy “[locates] this divide within Islam and the idea that mixing between the sexes will lead to social chaos” (Newcomb 2006: 294). CFAMM’s administrators feared that women who attended the school would have caused men to become “crazy” because of their sexual attraction to female students, and some suspected that women who eventually became *guides* would desert the profession to marry tourists. However, these fears of illicit interaction between men and women were not reflective of the experiences of *femmes guides*. Working in a male-dominated profession and with many male tourists had *not* led to “social chaos.” In fact, some of the *femmes guides* remembered their time at CFAMM as more problematic than their on-the-job interactions with colleagues or tourists, given that some of their professors and fellow classmates resisted their presence at CFAMM on the basis of their gender. If it is true that CFAMM did enact a policy to prohibit women from studying there, then it contributed to the maintenance of the *guide de montagne* profession as a masculine one.

When women studied at CFAMM, it was a counterhegemonic act because they gained access to an exclusive and formerly all-male school. Their treatment at the school, however, confirmed their marginality within the profession. Furthermore, we see that work was more widely regarded to be acceptable for women if it aligned or was compatible with constructions of private space. Although discourses about men and women “mixing” may have generated suspicions of illicit sexual relationships and may have contributed to CFAMM’s possible policy of women’s exclusion, the *femmes guides* employed strategies like the usage of family metaphors in order to claim their work, and their presence in a previously all-male public space, as acceptable.

Chapter Four: *Femmes et les montagnes*

I. *Femmes guides de montagne et femmes de la montagne*

What makes a good *guide de montagne*? According to *guides* and others involved in the profession, the list of traits includes physical competence, pride in Morocco, and an extensive knowledge of safety and security. The most common answer of all was knowledge of the mountains and their conditions. Hassan, a male *guide* in Imlil, told me that the most important quality was “[*habiter*] *ici*” (“living here”). Ayoub and Simo said, “*Il doit être de la région pour connaître les chemins.*” (“He must be from the region to know the paths.”)

I, too, had noticed the importance of a well-practiced knowledge of the Atlas Mountains. When I and other hikers set off from a campsite at 4:00 in the morning, we followed our male *guide* towards Toubkal’s summit. The sky was entirely dark besides the uncountable stars, and there was no light pollution because there was no light; only our headlamps exposed the winding path in front of us. The *guide*, of course, knew where to go, but I would have been quite literally lost without him. Although Issam was a twenty-six year old *faux guide* and had never officially trained at CFAMM, he had regularly hiked with his father (an official *guide de montagne*) since he was a teenager.

Femmes guides de montagne were exceptions to the general rule, as all five of the women whom I interviewed were from cities or their suburbs. Fatima, Zohra, and Laila had been born in Marrakech, which was Morocco’s fourth largest city in 2015 with over one million people (“Morocco” Central Intelligence Agency 2016). Nouhaila was born twelve kilometers (7.5 miles) from Beni Mellal, a city with 190,000 people as of 2014 (“Beni-Mellal”).

Nadia’s story was a bit different. She was the only *femme guide* who did not attend CFAMM, and, of the five, she was born in the smallest town. Three times during my research I

travelled from Marrakech to Amizmiz, a town with a population of about 14,000 people in 2014 (“Amizmiz”). While the trip between the two was no more than an hour-long bus ride each way, the commute had not always been a convenient, affordable, and very popular bus ride. King Mohammed VI improved the roads and further developed the bus system, but Nadia said that these changes were instituted only after he became king in 1999. Travel had been more difficult before this. Even still, Nadia categorized Amizmiz as “suburban” in comparison to the “villages” in the High Atlas Mountains that bordered her town. Wherever I stood in Amizmiz, they were visible.

In fact, all of the *femmes guides* noted a difference between life in the cities (*villes*) and the mountains, particularly in regards to the experiences of women. “The woman doesn’t exist in the mountains,” Laila said. “There’s no equality at all. Women at home and men outside. The men find all the arguments to [support] this. [...] [He’ll say], ‘Yeah, but my wife likes it.’” Fatima said, “*Je suis née à Marrakech [...] Ici la medina, la ville, c’est moins difficile. C’est pas pire que les montagnes...la mentalité d’un autre monde.*” (“I was born in Marrakech. [...] Here in the *medina*, the city, it’s less difficult. It isn’t as bad as the mountains [...] where’s there is a mentality of another world.”)

Nouhaila once told me that *femmes de la montagne*, women of the mountain, “*travaillent comme esclaves*” (“work like slaves.”) She described their daily routines in this way:

Dans la montagne, il n’y a pas une profession. Elles font que leur travail. [...] Je parle de montagne que j’ai déjà visité. Elles font manger le matin, elles vont chercher les herbes, elles vont garder les vaches jusqu’à midi, elles reviennent, elles font manger, à midi elles mangent. À une heure elles font une sieste demi-heure ou une heure, et après vers trois heures et demie ou quatre heures, elles ramènent les bêtes pour manger à l’extérieur, elles retournent à cinq heures ou cinq heures et demie pour faire le thé. Après, elles vont s’occuper du dîner de choix, sauf les saisons de moissonner le blé [...].
(In the mountain, women don’t have professions. They do only their work. [...] I speak of the mountain that I have visited before. They make food in the morning, they go to search for herbs, they go to watch the cows until noon, they return, they cook food, at noon they

eat. At one o'clock they take a half-hour or hour nap, around three-thirty or four o'clock they bring back the animals to eat outside, and they return at five or five-thirty to make the tea. After that, they're busy with the dinner, except in the seasons of harvesting the grain[...].)

When I hiked through Aït Bougguemmez with Zohra and a group of French women, I saw women doing work just as Nouhaila had described. A group of women crouched next to a tiny stream, scrubbing their clothes clean. When one of the French women in the hiking group tried to take a photo of them, they asked Zohra to tell her to stop. Other women hunched their backs as they carried bundles of wood the size of overgrown bushes. They walked along a field that was parallel to the hiking path where I and the other tourists shuffled along, hunching our own backs from our backpacks.

Zohra's mother noticed the parallels between her own experiences and her daughter's work as a *guide*. She had been a nomad in her youth, moving to the desert in the winter and then the Atlas Mountains during the summer. When Zohra became a *guide* and began trekking in the mountains, her mother said to her, "*Ah, ma fille, tu es vraiment stupide. Moi, quand j'étais petite [...] tout ce que tu fais maintenant avec les touristes, moi j'ai fait avec les moutons et les chèvres. C'était ma vie difficile.*" ("Ah, my daughter, you're quite foolish. When I was small, [...] all that you do now with the tourists was what I did with the sheep and the goats. This was my difficult life.")

During treks with tourists, Zohra often met women who lived in the Atlas Mountains. In fact, she even organized these interactions. After I first met her in April 2015, she invited me to join a group of French women on a trek that would take place in June. She annually led this trip, called "*Rencontre avec les femmes des hautes vallées de l'Atlas,*" and its purpose was quite literally reflected in the title: "Meeting with women of the high valleys of the Atlas." For the past

thirteen years, she hiked with female tourists (usually French) through the Aït Bouguemmez and Aït Bouli mountain valleys. Each night, her tourist group stayed with families who lived in the valleys.

Zohra remembered that many young women whom she met after becoming a *guide* twenty-one years ago had been surprised to see her doing this work. “*Les filles n’ont pas l’habitude de voir une femme guide,*” she said. (“The girls don’t usually see a *femme guide*.”) When I hiked with Zohra during what was her thirteenth year of leading this particular “*Rencontre,*” both women and men greeted her by name and an accompanying smile or nod of the head. When I told her, “*Vous êtes très populaire,*” (“You’re very popular,”) she just laughed.

Fatima encountered similarly surprised reactions:

Les premières années quand on passe les femmes, [elles disaient], ‘Ohh! ‘Et vous êtes de quelle origine? Est-ce que c’est pas un métier difficile?’ Toutes les questions que vous voulez poser, Carly, les femmes de montagne aussi, elles ont posé. ‘Est-ce que vous êtes mariée? Et vos enfants? Qu’est-ce que vous faites en semaine dans la montagne?’
(The first years when I passed the women, [they said], ‘Ohh! Where are you from? Isn’t this a difficult job?’ All the questions that you ask, Carly, the women of the mountain also asked. ‘Are you married? And your children? What do you do during the week in the mountain?’)

While Fatima was not a mother, Zohra had two children. They had since grown up and attended universities in France, but she remembered that women had once criticized her for participating in weeklong treks that meant she spent time away from her family. When she was leading a group near the Drâa Valley, located south of the High Atlas Mountains, the women were shocked to see a *femme guide*. Some of the women told her, “*Tu n’es pas une bonne mère et tu n’es pas une bonne femme. [...] Une femme ne laisse pas les enfants tous seuls. Une femme ne laisse pas son mari à la maison.*” (“You’re not a good mother and you’re not a good woman. [...] A woman doesn’t leave her children all alone. A woman doesn’t leave her husband at the house.”) Zohra also recalled meeting a woman near Zagora, a town near Morocco’s southeastern

desert, who similarly criticized her. She said to Zohra, “*Madame, vous êtes une mauvaise mère. [...] Ta place, c’est chez toi à la maison pour garder les enfants.*” (“Madame, you’re a bad mother. Your place is at home to watch the children.”)

Nouhaila recognized that she had “*une vie un peu différente que les autres femmes*” (“a life a bit different from other women”), but she believed that she was helping *femmes de la montagne* through her work. She started a co-op in the Aït Bouguemmez valley, “*Coopérative des soeurs*” (“Co-op of sisters”), which gave participating women a way to earn a small income by selling tapestries that they had weaved. Nouhaila said, “*La guide, c’est le complément de la coopérative.*” (“Being a *guide* is a complement to a co-op.”) Her guiding work allowed her to connect the craftswomen in her co-op with tourists who might purchase their products. She also asked other *guides de montagne* to visit the co-op with their own hiking groups.

Zohra, too, believed that she was an advocate for *femmes de la montagne* by connecting them with tourists. *Guides de montagne*, she asserted, “*ramenent l’argent pour aider l’économie.*” (“bring money for the economy.”) For her trek, “*Rencontre avec les femmes,*” she asked participants to bring books, notebooks, pens, and toys for the children in homes where we slept. Each family was compensated for giving tourists a place to sleep, as well. Furthermore, Zohra knew that tourists were potential buyers for women’s tapestries. With money of their own, Zohra said, “*Les femmes ne doivent pas demander aux maris pour l’argent.*” (“The women don’t need to ask their husbands for money.”)

Nouhaila considered herself, as a working woman, to be an example to the women she met during treks. “*C’est le courage. C’est une aventure. C’est un exemple d’une femme qui aime une grand changement. Une femme peut changer si elle veut.*” (“It’s courage. It’s adventure. I’m

an example of a woman who likes a big change. A woman can change if she wants.”) Laila also thought that women and girls who lived in the mountains found a source of inspiration from her. “*Elles me voient passer et elles voient un exemple. Elles peuvent être capable de marcher en montagne. Elles sont capables de porter pantalons sans peur de leurs pères. Elles savaient qu’il y a quelqu’un comme moi.*” (“They see me pass and they see an example. They can walk in the mountain. They wear pants without fear of their fathers. They know that there is someone like me.”)

II. Gendered Spaces in the Mountains

CFAMM’s former director, Mehdi, said that ninety-eight percent of students at the school had been “*gens de la montagne*” (“people of the mountain”). By extension, this means that ninety-eight percent of *guides de montagne* were from the mountains, too. People who were born in the Atlas Mountains had the requisite familiarity of the Atlas’ conditions and the physical ability necessary to lead tourists on treks (let alone to pass their *concours*). Many of them were probably Amazigh, as well.

Members of the Amazigh ethnic group (commonly called “Berbers”) have lived in Morocco’s mountain ranges and deserts since the eleventh century (“Berber” Britannica). Zohra, too, told me that the Amazigh were “*gens de la montagne.*” There were estimates that forty to forty-five percent of Moroccans spoke one of the three “Berberophone” variants (Maddy-Weitzman 2011: 1-2).

All of the *femmes guides* identified themselves as Amazigh and were thus able to communicate with the people whom they met during their treks. However, none of the women had been born in a mountain village, while nearly all of the male *guides* whom I met were from

rural or mountain villages. Charbonnier writes, “*La majorité des stagiaires du [CFAMM] étaient et sont toujours originaires de la vallée*” (Charbonnier 2011: 9). (“The majority of CFAMM’s students were and are originally from the valley [of Aït Bouguemmez].”) After all, the original purpose of opening CFAMM had been to expand the rural economy through tourism and the inclusion of “*les jeunes montagnards*” (“young people of the mountain”) into the project (Charbonnier 2011: 9). With the exception of Nadia who lived in a small “suburban” town, all of the *femmes guides de montagne* whom I met were *femmes des villes* (city women).

Laila had hiking experience before attending CFAMM. Zohra first hiked when she was twenty-five when worked as a translator for a French woman doing research in Aït Bouguemmez. The other three *femmes guides* described themselves as athletic children, but they did not have extensive hiking experience. Nadia began hiking when she was thirty-six years old after the owners of an English hiking company asked her to join them for a hike. Nouhaila’s first time hiking was the day that she arrived to CFAMM as a twenty-year old. “*J’étais peur [...] Aucune idée sur la montagne. Mes parents, ils sont d’origine de montagne, mais [...]. On voit de temps en temps mais pas de montagne de quatre mille. [...] La première fois que j’ai fait la marche, j’ai trouvé pas dur.*” (“I was afraid [...]. I had no idea what the mountains were like. My parents, they’re from the mountain [...]. We went to the mountains from time to time, but not mountains of [13,000 feet]. The first time that I hiked, I didn’t find it hard.” She was proof of the fact that people could learn to hike even if they did not had extensive experience like many male *guides* had.

Even still, most *guides de montagne* were born near the Atlas Mountains, particularly near Aït Bouguemmez. The five *femmes guides* whom I met were from cities or their suburbs.

Why did five women with urban ties become *guides de montagne* while the women who actually lived in the mountains, *les femmes de la montagne*, did not?

Since the 1960s, Morocco's constitution mandated that education was compulsory for all children from ages nine to fifteen (Clark 2006), but rural girls have historically attended primary school and subsequent grades less frequently than their urban counterparts (Tawil 2000: 66-67; "Maintaining Momentum" 2013). Both anthropological scholarship and amateur ethnography supports this. In 1983 her ethnography, *Patience and Power: Women's Lives in a Moroccan Village*, anthropologist Susan Shaefer Davis discusses the role of women in an unnamed village in "the Middle Atlas mountain range" (Davis 1983: 46): "Few [girls] attend school, not because their parents object to classes that include boys, but because they are so useful to their mothers at home" (Davis 1983: 21). An undergraduate student, Stéphanie Peschard, and a photojournalist, Emmanuel Brossier, published a piece in *L'Ethnographie* journal in 1994, "*Femmes Berbères du Haut-Atlas Marocain*." While they were not trained anthropologists, they lived in three different valleys of the High Atlas (Aït Bouguemmez, Aït Bouli, and the M'Goun valley) during a six-month period. They write, "*Les fillettes sont moins nombreuses que les garçons à y aller [à l'école]. Celles qui y vont arrêteront à la fin du primaire pour aider leur mère dans ses différents tâches*" (Brossier and Peschard 1994: 38). ("Less girls go to school than boys. Those who go there will stop at the end of primary school to help their mother with different tasks.")

Zohra confirmed that low school attendance for girls had remained a persistent issue in the mountains, even at the time of my research in 2015. Zohra told me that girls of the Aït Bouguemmez valley often received only six years of primary schooling: "*Quand la fille va à l'école, collègue, ou bien lycée, on lui dit, 'Non, tu restes dans la maison.'*" ("When the girl goes to

primary school, middle school, or even high school, someone tells her, ‘No, you stay in the home.’”)

All of the *femmes guides* had attended school through the secondary level and thus received the requisite baccalaureate to apply to CFAMM. (Although she had not attended CFAMM, Nadia did continue her education through the baccalaureate level.) Applying to study at CFAMM required submission of baccalaureate test scores upon which students were assessed. The profession was thus limited to those who had completed secondary education. Given that fewer girls than boys attended secondary school in rural areas (Hoel 2012), then those who had not achieved their baccalaureates would have been immediately disqualified from the application process. Even if they *were* familiar with the conditions of the High Atlas Mountains (which, as I shall discuss in this chapter, they were), women could not have become *guides* if they had not received completed the requisite schooling.

Fatima was optimistic that rural girls’ educational access had been “*énormément amélioré*” (“enormously improved”). She credited Mohamed VI with these improvements. “*Il encourage les filles. Partout les villages il y a une école,*” she said. (“He encourages the daughters. There’s a school in all the villages.”) Nouhaila, too, had noticed a shift. She told me that, in previous generations, “*Une fille qui va à l’école a une mauvaise réputation.*” (“A daughter who went to school had a bad reputation.”) (Perhaps she spoke particularly of the city where she had grown up, as Davis’ 1983 ethnography said that parents in the Middle Atlas did not object to their daughters “mixing” with boys, if their daughters attended school at all.) Nevertheless, when I spoke with Nouhaila in 2015, she believed that there was no longer a stigma attached to rural girls going to school.

Fatima's claim that educational disparities in rural regions had improved in recent years was also supported by statistics from the World Bank. In 1993 (the year that Zohra and Laila trained at CFAMM), about one million girls in Morocco were not enrolled in primary schools ("Data: Morocco" The World Bank). By 2012, however, rural girls attended primary school at nearly the same rates as urban boys (Hoel 2012).

Nadia offered a possible explanation for the increase in rural girls' primary school attendance. She noticed a recent trend that some men who lived in the mountains preferred their wives to be educated:

Many husbands want their wives to finish school just to get a degree. They want their wives to help their children with homework. *Ils préfèrent une femme qui a étudié un peu. Tu es mariée à un homme, tu vas voir les enfants. C'est la maman, c'est la plus importante de rester avec les enfants. Même en Amérique, toujours proche aux enfants.* (They prefer a wife who has studied a bit. If you're married to a man, you're going to see the children. The mother is the most important person to stay with the children. Even in America, she's always close to the children.)

This explanation of women's expanded educational access offers two possible interpretations of gendered spaces in rural regions.

In "Rethinking Public and Private Space: Religion and Women in Muslim Society," Shampa and Sanjoy Mazumdar call attention to the significance and importance of the home as a private space: "Unfortunately, the role of home in Muslim societies (evaluated and judged by western biases) has largely been misunderstood and misrepresented. Home is treated as 'private' and relegated a secondary and unimportant status. Life in the home is characterized as an isolating experience for women who are portrayed as voiceless 'non-persons' leading routinized domestic lives" (Mazumdar and Mazumdar 2001: 311). Much like Mazumdar and Mazumdar assert that women have an important status within the home, Nadia suggested that *femmes de la montagne* have important agency through their proximity to children, as they helped to shape

their children's education through tutoring. Additionally, Nadia's observation corresponded to Fatima's claims of improvement for girls' access to education. If husbands in the mountains wanted their wives to study in order to tutor their children, then this means that fathers wanted children to attend schools, too.

However, Nadia's claim also implies that *femmes de la montagne*'s education served to further supplement their domestic responsibilities as mothers. Receiving primary school education might have been a way for some women to continue to secondary school and eventually obtain professions outside of the home. (With their baccalaureates, for example, young women could have attempted to become *guides de montagne*). However, only twenty-six percent of rural girls were enrolled in secondary school in 2012 (Hoel 2012). Nadia's claim suggests that, in the mountains, education enhanced women's roles as domestic caretakers rather than expanding access to waged labor opportunities.

Nouhaila, too, emphasized the importance of women's role in childcare in Morocco's mountain villages: "*Elle doit rester avec ses enfants à la maison. Si on respecte notre coutume, c'est le mari qui a la charge. La femme reste avec la maison, elle travaille.*" ("She must stay with the children in the house. If one respects our custom, it's the husband who's in charge. The wife stays with the house, she works.") In discussing women who lived in the Middle Atlas Mountains, Davis writes, "Within the home, a woman's presence is absolutely essential. It is a full-time job to care for the house and the children and to prepare meals; a man could not possibly do these things in addition to working" (Davis 1983: 66). Both Nouhaila and Davis emphasize women's interiority in regards to domestic obligations like childcare and cooking, which indicate domestic and private spaces.

However, women's work in mountain villages *did* in fact take them outside of their houses and through mountainous terrain. Even though Nouhaila had told me that "the wife stays in the house," her long description of *femmes de la montagne*'s daily routines included tasks like watching the cows, collecting tea, and harvesting grains. Brossier and Peschard similarly observed that "*Une femme n'est jamais seule à travailler dans la maison*" ("a woman is never to work only in the house") (Brossier and Peschard 1994: 36):

Elle commence sa journée en se levant tôt le matin pour aller chercher du bois, parfois très loin car les alentours du village sont aujourd'hui déboisés. Il faut ensuite donner à manger aux bêtes, s'occuper des enfants [...].

(She begins her day by waking early in the morning to search for wood, sometimes very far away because the surroundings of the village are now deforested today. She must then give food to the animals and keep busy with the children [...].) (Brossier and Peschard 1994: 36)

From this account, *femmes de la montagne* performed labor for their household that required working outside. Even though they were primary caretakers, they did not necessarily stay in the "interior."

In the acknowledgments section of *Gender on the Market*, Kapchan shares a story of a seeing a woman near Toubkal. This woman was going to a saint's tomb for a blessing, but I particularly focus on Kapchan's description of the woman's movements:

"It was June 1982, and we stood facing Toubkal, the highest mountain in North Africa. [...] Well into our climb we noticed a sprightly woman, perhaps in her mid-thirties, approaching us from below. She was not following the dirt road that curved around the mountainside, but energetically cut her own path, scaling rocks and shrubs. We had already come across young girls out shepherding and groups of women collecting wood, but this woman was alone. [...] As she got closer she called out to us, and we saw that she was climbing bare-footed. [...] We watched her as she continued up the mountain with the ease and speed of a bobcat." (Kapchan xiii-xiv)

Kapchan observed this just four years before the *guide de montagne* profession was formalized under the Ministry of the Interior. Not only does the anecdote confirm that women performed tasks for their families like gathering wood, but it also demonstrates that this particular *femme de*

la montagne hiked the paths of Toubkal easily. (I must admit that neither I nor the other tourists with whom I trekked had advanced towards Toubkal's summit resembling a bobcat's speed.) Issam and Abdel, two male *guides* whom I joined for a trek of Toubkal, told me, "Girls from the can walk in the mountain, but they're illiterate."

Therefore, *femmes de la montagne* were capable of physical tasks that were often performed beyond the physical walls of their homes. The claim discussed in the previous chapter that women were not *guides de montagne* because the mountains were "*trop dure*" can thus be further scrutinized. The *guide de montagne* profession had been constructed as masculine work through the discourse that only men were physically strong enough to hike in the high altitudes and challenging conditions of the Atlas Mountains. *Femmes de la montagne* were indeed capable of performing physical labor, as they walked far from their villages to find wood or herd animals. They were not biologically inhibited from walking through challenging terrain. These women performed work both outdoors and visible. As Issam and Abdel noted, however, they could not have become *guides de montagne* if they did not attend school.

When Zohra walked on a hiking path through Aït Bouguemmez while women who lived nearby walked parallel to her, Zohra and the women were in the same place and performed the same physical action: they were walking in a high altitude through a valley of the Atlas Mountains. The difference, of course, is that Zohra was earning money to lead tourists through the mountain valley while the other women with wood on their backs were likely not being paid for their work. In the same place, they occupied different spaces. Zohra was performing waged labor outside of the home, thus meaning that her work was "public." The other women were also outdoors, but they probably did not earn money for gathering the wood.

The work of *guides de montagne* and *femmes de la montagne* thus highlights the difference between paid and unpaid work. Nouhaila spoke of *femmes de la montagne* in general:

Elles travaillent chez elles. [...] Pour elles, c'est un devoir et [...] une obligation de garder les enfants, de faire manger aux enfants, et faire chercher les vaches. [...] Et la nuit, elles font de tissage [...] et elles travaillent dans la nuit. Et après, si l'homme a bien sûr besoin du sexe, elle est obligée de rendre le service à son mari.

(They work at their houses. [...] For them, it's a duty and [...] an obligation to watch the children, make food for the children, and search for the cows. ...And at night, they weave tapestries and work at night. After, if the man needs sex, she's obliged to render the service to her husband.)

Through her language choices like “duty,” “obligation,” and “service,” Nouhaila emphasized domestic labor was an expectation. Statistics from the survey project, “Status of Women in The Middle East and North Africa” (SWMENA), support her claim. Of the rural women who were surveyed, ninety-five percent responded that they had not performed “any compensated work in last week” (“Data Tools” 2010). When these women were asked why they had not performed compensated work, nine percent of respondents answered that “household/family duties” was the “main reason” and seventy-three percent answered, “housewife” (“Data Tools” 2010).

Obligatory work for women in the mountains therefore incorporated both interior and exterior tasks. Interior work included childcare and cooking. They also “rendered service” to their husbands, meaning that women had sex with their husbands. (Women’s sexuality, Mernissi suggests, is acceptable in the domestic space (Mernissi 1987: 138).) Beyond the walls of the home and in the “exterior,” *femmes de la montagne* had other domestic responsibilities: they searched for wood, collected water, found mint to make tea, fed animals, and washed clothes.

Domestic labor, therefore, did not always involve being in a private interior, for *femmes de la montagne* performed obligatory work in outdoor places that were highly visible to passing tourists and hikers. The experiences of women who lived in Morocco’s mountains thus challenge the dichotomous narrative of gendered spaces in Morocco in which women solely occupied the

interior private space. Domestic obligations meant that *femmes de la montagne* usually accessed both “inside” and “outside.” Their work was often visible and outdoors, and it was usually associated with “domestic” responsibilities related to their household and family.

As discussed in the previous chapter, some people constructed “the mountains” as a gendered space that only men occupied. Through this analysis of gendered work in mountain villages of the Atlas, however, we see that the mountains were a space that both men and women occupied for often physically intensive labor. Their work, however, had differentiated meanings based on gender: men earned incomes while women performed domestic duties. While the outdoor public space in the mountains was not exclusively male, the distinction between the meanings of the work did indeed have consequences that served to “produce and reproduce asymmetrical gender relations of power and authority” (Low and Lawrence-Zúñia 2003: 7). Nadia told me, “All of the women in the mountains work hard. They are very good mothers for their children. ...They need money. How do they get money? ...They get money from their husbands.”

III. Privilege and Paradoxical Space

I asked Nadia what the women whom she met during her treks thought of her job, and she told me this:

Elles pensent que c'est facile et que je gagne beaucoup d'argent, je suis riche. [Elle disent], 'Ohhhh, tu as la chance! Tu as beaucoup d'argent! Tu ne fais rien. Tu marches et tu souris et tu gagnes l'argent.' Toujours j'explique et je ris, mais elles pensent que le travail de maison est difficile, c'est ça qui est dur. [...] La maison est difficile, mon travail est difficile, chaque travail est difficile.

(They think that it's easy and that I earn a lot of money and that I'm rich. [They say], 'Oh, you're lucky! You have a lot of money! You don't do anything. You walk and you smile and you earn money.' I always explain and I laugh, but they think that the work of the house is difficult, it's their work that is hard. [...]The house is difficult, my work is difficult, each type of work is difficult.)

If these women thought that Nadia did easy work (“you don’t do anything”), then they would have also said that male *guides de montagne* did easy work, too (especially given that men constituted ninety-nine percent of the *guide de montagne* profession.) These particular women considered her work to be nothing more than laughing with tourists, but they worked hard both at their homes and for their homes without earning an income. They considered her to be lucky that she earned a wage even though she did what they considered to be easy. By defending their work as “difficult,” the women emphasized the significance and importance of their domestic labor, thus reflecting Mazumdar and Mazaumdar’s claims. They also simultaneously signaled their discontent that they were not financially compensated for what they believed to be difficult domestic labor. These women took note of the fact that the work that men and women did and, by extension, that the spaces that they occupied, had been defined as “different and unequal”: the domestic space usually did not offer opportunities for wage-earning, but the public space did.

When I was a participant on Zohra’s trip, I observed yet another perspective of unpaid domestic work. When the group of five French women (aged 54 to 67) and I (an American anthropology student, aged 21) gathered in the dark kitchen of a house in Aït Bouli, a woman wearing a pink caftan was there, too: this was her home. Zohra spoke about the condition of women in Aït Bouli and translated between the French-speaking tourists and the Amazigh woman who spoke Tashelhit.

“*Les femmes n’ont pas de pouvoir parce qu’elles ne gagnent pas l’argent,*” Zohra told us. (“The women don’t have power because they don’t earn money.”)

One of the French women, looking for confirmation, pointed to the woman in pink and asked, “*Qu’est-ce qu’elle pense?*” (“What does she think?”)

Zohra spoke in Tashelhatt to ask the question, and the woman responded in the same language. After two minutes, Zohra said to us, “*Elle est d’accord.*” (“She agrees.”)

From this perspective, money was power. While *femmes de la montagne* occupied both outdoor and indoor spaces, both public and private, their responsibilities were often domestic because their obligatory yet unpaid work related to the family.

Given the expectations of domestic obligations for *femmes de la montagne*, it would have been challenging for them to have left these responsibilities for days and nights in order lead treks with tourists. When I asked a man who was both a *guide* and father who watched his children when he led groups, he answered without hesitation, “My wife.” In her ethnography, Davis writes, “A man could not possibly do [housework] in addition to working” (Davis 1983: 66). If men “could not possibly” perform domestic tasks in addition to working for money, perhaps the opposite was true for women. Could *femmes de la montagne* have had paid professions in addition to performing domestic obligations?

It is noteworthy that I and the women whom Fatima met during her first treks with tourists asked her similar questions concerning the balance between her work and her personal life: “‘Isn’t this a difficult job?’... ‘Are you married? And your children, what do you do in the week in the mountain?’” While their question about the job’s difficulty may have alluded to the physical components of trekking, the other questions related to domestic concerns. They wondered with incredulity how Fatima would have taken care of her children and (as one of the question hinted) what her husband thought about her work. Would *he* have become the children’s caretaker? Given the established cultural convention that men who lived in the mountains earned money for families, it was not likely that he could have watched the children. Nouhaila told me, “*Elle a son endroit, il a son endroit. L’homme s’occupe de son travail. [...]*

C'est rarement de trouver [un homme] qui changait la couche que c'est faire la toilette pour la petite. [...] On peut dire deux percent, les marocains, qui faire ça. ("She has a place, he has a place. The man is busy at his work. [...] It's rare to find a man who changes the diaper for the little one. [...] One can say two percent of Moroccan men do this.")

The ambiguous discourses about CFAMM's opposition to women studying there concerned potential sexual relationships between *femmes guides* and their male colleagues and tourists. When women who lived in the mountains responded to the work of *femmes guides de montagne*, however, they indicated that the more surprising aspect of women performing this work was its apparent incompatibility with domestic obligations. The woman who had been critical of Zohra ("You're not a good mother. [...] Your place is at home to watch the children") did not criticize her on the grounds that she sometimes interacted with nonfamily men at night. Rather, the woman viewed Zohra's participation in a profession that demanded weeks away from her home as a marker of her shirked domestic responsibilities.⁵

Being a *guide de montagne* was thus much different from walking in the mountains to find wood for the family: women were outside and visible in both situations, but the mountains were often a space of domestic labor for *femmes de la montagne* and a space for wage-earning labor for *guides de montagne*. Zohra's was public because she was working away from the home with nonfamily members. A woman carrying wood was working away home, but it was still for the family; her work was semi-public (visible and outside of the home) and semi-private (domestic work for the home).

However, I do not intend to devalue the importance of domestic work. Sadiqi and Ennaji write, "Moroccan women are conscious that housework valorizes them inside the house, that is,

⁵ The woman who told Zohra she was not a good mother was a rural woman who lived near the Drâa Valley, which was closer to the desert than the High Atlas. I have nonetheless included her view of Zohra's work because this woman likely did not go to secondary school or perform waged labor, similar to many women in Aït Bouguemez.

in the eyes of their husband and children; they generally cling to their status as ‘homemakers’” (Sadiqi and Ennaji 2006: 91). Nadia, for example, believed that it was “most important” for women to take care of their children, thus reflecting Mazumdar and Mazumdar’s emphasis on the cultural importance of the space of the home. Nadia did not represent domestic work as “subordinate”; in fact, she expressed a sense of loss on account of the fact that she was unmarried and had no children. “I and [other women] finished school [...] but we don’t have families and we don’t have children,” she said. “I can go to the mountains [...] but I will never have a baby or house or someone to think about me.” For Nadia, domestic responsibilities were not a marker of inferiority, but instead had associations of love and care. For some women in the mountains, pursuing the profession of *guide de montagne* might not have been possible even excepting the fact that many had not studied to the baccalaureate level. If women valued their roles as mothers and caretakers, pursuing the *guide de montagne* profession would have meant that they had to sacrifice some of their caretaking responsibilities. Some of the *femmes guides de montagne*, as well, had to negotiate a balance between careers and caretaking, which I will discuss in the next chapter.

Femmes guides de montagne, all of whom who had been born in and had lived in cities or their suburbs, knew that young girls were less likely to go to school and that women less frequently had paid professions if they lived in valleys of the Morocco’s Atlas Mountains. When *femmes guides* left “the city” in order to work in “the mountains,” they entered a space, and a part of their own country, that was quite different from the one they had left. On the basis of their educational and economic privileges, *femmes guides de montagne* represented what Rose calls the “centre.” Women who lived in the mountains were the “margin,” economically,

geographically and educationally. Many of the *femmes guides*, however, noted these power differentials.

Nadia, for example, believed that her work was a way to offer financial assistance to people who live in Morocco's poorer mountain regions. "The government doesn't know about this," she said, "but they help people from us, through us. For that I like this work. We help people." She noted, for example, that she brought clients to family's houses for tea, and clients often gave money in exchange.

Some of the *femmes guides* identified their work as a way to specifically help *femmes de la montagne*. Nouhaila started *Coopérative des soeurs* to give women in the Aït Bouggomez valley the resources to make tapestries. (Davis notes in her ethnography, "While of course women are not paid for their running of the household, they do have some chance to earn money at home. [...] A woman can [...] earn a modest amount during her limited spare time by selling products of her sewing, weaving, or embroidery" (Davis 1983: 66).) Similarly, Zohra used her trek, *Rencontre avec les femmes des haut valleys d'Atlas*, as a way to offer financial assistance to the families at whose homes her group stayed. In doing so, Zohra also connected *femmes de la montagne* with potential clients for their tapestries. She believed that, if tourists purchased tapestry from craftswomen, then "*les femmes ne doivent pas demander aux maris pour l'argent.*" (... "the women don't need to ask husbands for money.") If money was power, as Zohra had told us, then she intended to give power to other women through her work as a *guide de montagne*.

By the time that I first met Fatima in April 2015, she had reduced the number of treks that she led. She had owned a Riad in Marrakech since 2002 and had since developed her love of cooking. ("*Je suis Cordon Bleu.*") Fatima's focus had also become her communications work as a *femme politique* (politician) in the arrondissement of Gueliz, Marrakech. When I visited her in

January 2016, she brought me to the government building of her arrondissement where she discussed the intersection between guiding and politics:

La plupart des femmes ne savent pas que je fais la politique. [...] Si je le dis, toutes les femmes disent, 'Fatima, fais quelque chose pour nous, défends les femmes de la montagne, parle des femmes de la montagne.' Et elles disent avec les mots exacts comme ça, 'On est ici oubliée. Il faut parler de nous.'

(Most of the women don't know that I'm in politics. [...] If I say so, all them say, 'Fatima, do something for us, defend the women of the mountain, talk about the women in the mountain.' And they say with these exact words, 'We're forgotten here. You must talk about us.')

According to Sadiqi and Ennaji write, “rural women are relatively absent from the mosque and the administration” (Sadiqi and Ennaji 2006: 91). While the *femmes de la montagne* told Fatima that they were forgotten, Fatima believed that her work as a *guide* prepared her to advocate on their behalf, given that they did not have access to political spaces.

Interestingly, what allowed *femmes guides* to be advocates was exactly what had made them “the margin” of the *guide de montagne* profession: their gender. Fatima told me that *femmes guides* more easily accessed families' homes than their male counterparts:

Un homme guide en montagne dans un village, il peut pas accéder et entrer dans une famille s'il y a pas le chef, l'homme de famille. [...] Une femme peut entrer dans la famille. ...Je parle de la montagne, pas les villes...s'il y a pas le chef de la famille, un étranger n'a pas le droit d'entrer dans la famille. Une femme avec les hommes, pas de problème.

(For a male *guide* in a mountain village, he cannot access and enter into a family's house if the head of the family isn't there. [...] A woman can enter the family. I speak of the mountain, not the cities. If there isn't the head of the family, a stranger doesn't have the right to enter the family. A woman, and a woman with men, isn't a problem.)

Similarly, Sadiqi and Ennaji note that rigid constructions of space affect men, too: “[Men] generally do not spend any time in the kitchen, for example, so the taboo applies to them, too” (Sadiqi and Ennaji 2006: 88). In the mountains, Fatima suggested that nonfamily and unfamiliar men did not have access to private spaces. Women did. It was thus acceptable for *femmes guides*

de montagne to enter the family homes mountains even if the male head of the family was not present. A man, *guide* or otherwise, did not have the same access that women had.

Women who were *guides de montagne* thus occupied a paradoxical space. Although they were outsiders of the *guide de montagne* profession of the basis of their gender, the *femmes guides de montagne* occupied a privileged positionality that allowed them to access the private home spaces of *femmes de la montagne*. They represented a position of privilege or “the center” in relation to the women whom they met during treks in Morocco’s Atlas Mountains, and some of them, particularly Zohra and Nouhaila, used this position to act as interfaces between *femmes de la montagne* and tourists. During Zohra’s “*Rencontre*” trek, women’s homes became semi-public through the presence of tourists who were nonfamily members; these tourists accessed the space because Zohra, as a woman, gave them access. Zohra knew that foreign tourists could be prospective buyers of their tapestries and could have offered financial assistance to the women.⁶

The fact that *femmes guides de montagne* were simultaneously insiders (educated professionals and connected with wealthier tourists) and outsiders (women in a male-dominated profession) was, in this case, advantageous: as women, they occupied a paradoxical space and some used their spatial positionality in order to be advocates for *femmes de la montagne*.

In articulating their approach to feminist geography, Blunt and Rose write that “the politics of difference with which many feminists are now concerned is not only the politics of difference *between* two genders, but also the politics of diversity *among* women” (Blunt and

⁶ I recognize that some of these topics could be theses, in themselves. Did woman’s earnings from selling tapestries *really* give them power? What does it mean for tourists to go to a house in Ait Bouguemmez for three months to have a “meeting” with the women there? I considered it to be exoticizing, while Zohra believed it was empowering and built understanding. While the economics and politics of tourism are linked to my subject, I have chosen to focus my study on the ways that the *femmes guides* construct and negotiate spaces.

Rose 1994: 7). By analyzing the interactions between *femmes guides de montagne* and *femmes de la montagne*, it becomes clear that women experienced space differently throughout Morocco.

The work of *femmes guides de montagne* regularly put them into contact with women who lived in Morocco's mountain valleys. These women did perform outdoor labor and walked on the same paths as *guides de montagne*, but their work was often unpaid and for the home. While this labor was public in the sense that it took place outdoors in a visible space, its connection to domestic tasks rendered it private, as well.

Housework did have important value and cultural meaning in the mountains and throughout other parts of Morocco. However, I have highlighted that women who lived in Morocco's mountains did not often have the opportunities to become *guides de montagne* because they did not often advance past primary school. This was partly related to cultural expectations of domestic obligations. Some women in the mountains recognized that they had less power than men because of it, but this does not necessarily mean that these women did not find value in their domestic obligations both "inside" and "outside."

Rose's concept of paradoxical space recognizes the meaning of spaces in relation to power and privilege (Rose 1993: 140). While *femmes guides de montagne* were on the margins of the profession because of their gender (as discussed in the last chapter), they had access to the private spaces of women throughout the mountains. In relation to these other women, the *femmes guides* were in a privileged position and some of them attempted to use their access to women's private spaces in order to bring tourists with them and help women have access to money of their own.

Chapter Five: Mobility—Limitation and Liberation

I. Professional and Domestic Balance

Fatima was married to a French man (who, she emphasized, had never been her client) and she did not have any children. When she invited me to join her and her family at her house in Marrakech for an Iftar meal during Ramadan, I saw that she was a loving aunt to her nieces and nephews. It was there that she explained what she imagined to be the difficulties of being both a mother and a *guide*:

Une femme guide...comment est-ce qu'on pourra organiser [...] les enfants et la randonnée? Vous êtes absente et les enfants ont besoin de maman d'être côte de lui. [...] Je pense qu'il faut choisir. Faire la randonnée et s'absenter une semaine ou deux et laisser ton mari seule avec les enfants... c'est difficile. [...] Il faut avoir beaucoup de moyen pour trouver une nounou pour les enfants. [...] Moi, je parle de tourisme dans la montagne parce que vous êtes absente une semaine ou vingt jours. Une autre profession, il y a des limites mais pas de problème.

(A *femme guide*... how will she organize [...] the children and the hike? You're absent and the children need the mother to be close. [...] I think you must choose. It's difficult to hike and to make yourself absent a week or two and to leave your husband alone with the children. You must have the financial means to find a nanny for the children. [...] I speak of tourism in the mountain because you're absent for a week or twenty days. In another profession, there are some limits for women but it's not a problem.)

Women in contemporary Morocco (particularly in urban areas) did indeed balance both paid work and motherhood. According to Sadiqi and Ennaji, "Most women who work have not given up their domestic duties. [...] Working women have to accommodate two types of work: domestic and production" (Sadiqi and Ennaji 2006: 91). Domestic work included family responsibilities connected to the home (childcare, cooking, etc.) and, as such, it aligned with notions of private space. Productive work was "[labor] performed outside the home, for an employer wholly foreign to the family, and paid for with a wage" (Mernissi 1987: 157-158). This work corresponded to public space because it was not done with family members and it often

meant that women worked away from the home. Women who balanced “domestic” and “production” therefore occupied both public and private spaces.

Fatima recognized that the guiding profession was not particularly compatible with domestic responsibilities, as she explained that it would have been difficult to leave for weeks at a time while being a wife and mother. When women were *guides de montagne*, Fatima believed they would have had to choose between motherhood and a professional life.

Urban women negotiated domestic and waged work, as they more frequently pursued schooling and earned wages than rural women (Data Tools 2010). However, it was necessary for their waged work to be of such a type that permitted them to maintain their domestic duties of the private space. As Sadiqi and Ennaji note, working women did not “give up” domestic responsibilities when they got jobs. Instead, they had a different set of responsibilities pertaining to their occupation.

As discussed in Chapter Three, the *guide de ville* profession was considered to be more acceptable women’s work because it more closely aligned with ideas of private space. It had associations of interiority and indoor work, and it allowed women to return to their homes at night; this allowed women to both avoid suspicions of prostitution and attend to their families. Furthermore, given cultural constructions that women were primary caretakers, acceptable women’s work allowed women to maintain both professional and domestic obligations. Nouhaila concluded it would have been impossible to be both a mother and a *guide de montagne*. “*C’est pas possible,*” she said. “*Une femme celibataire, elle peut être une guide.*” (“It’s not possible. A single woman can be a guide.”)

However, this might not have been true, either, as single women were sometimes discouraged from pursuing the profession on the basis of the fact that it had been gender-typed as

masculine. In Chapter Three, I discussed the fact that Fatima believed her father would have opposed her entry into profession had he been alive, as the profession involved the possibly shameful associations of being away from the home at night. Nadia asserted that being a *guide de montagne* made women less desirable marriage prospects. She said, “I am always traveling and I’m always with men.” When we met again five months later, she asked, “If you’re a *guide*, who can marry you?” A job involving traveling, she believed, would hinder caretaking. Working only with men and spending nights away from the home may have also given women poor reputations.

Considering the contradictory responses from CFAMM’s administrators, I was unable to determine whether the school adopted a policy that excluded women from studying there. Yassine from the Ministry of Tourism had said that the profession was accessible to women, but that women had simply chosen other professions and they were not interested in becoming *guides de montagne*. Perhaps women’s chosen professions (like *guides de ville*) might have more easily accommodated the responsibilities of motherhood.

II. Working Mothers

Laila and Zohra did what Nouhaila thought was impossible: they were mothers and *guides de montagne*. How did they maintain a balance between motherhood and professional careers? Laila acknowledged its difficulty:

It’s very hard to be a mother and a mountain guide. That’s why I just have one son. ... When I first started, I was hiking every week. ...It was very hard to have children. That’s why I just had one, and no more. ...You need to be with them everywhere until they’re eighteen. It’s not good for the children to be with them one week and then go for two months. Men can do that. For many years, the men always go out, and the women stay home. It’s still in our heads. I was lucky because my husband said to me, “Ok, you do a trip, and I will be mom for a while.” It’s very hard for children. My son said to me, “Mom, you left me for many years.” That hurt. All the women I know who did guiding—

not just Moroccan women—like Aya, she had children and then she stopped working. [...] She has a husband, and they chose between children and... now she has three children. She said, ‘I must be with my children.’ Women normally spend more time with children. This is what’s hard for me. Now with my son, it’s ok. I took him with me sometimes to the desert and the mountains, and he understands my work. Before it was very hard. [...] I decided, no more children. [...] It’s like going to the war and coming back for a while. “Oh, he’s tall!” I left [for a hike] and he didn’t talk. I came back after four months and then he talked. That makes me bad because I didn’t hear the first words of my son.

Laila, like Fatima, said that most *femmes guides de montagne* had to choose between having children and working as *guides*. Aya, for example, had been one of eight women who studied at CFAMM. She had since left the profession in order to be with her children.

Laila’s own circumstances seemed to be particularly uncommon. Her husband, a Spanish *guide de montagne*, assumed the role of “mom for a while” when Laila was trekking with tour groups. Some husbands might not have done this under the belief that it was a woman’s responsibility to take care of children in line with the responsibilities of private family spaces. Other fathers probably could not have done so. Seventy-six percent of men in Morocco participated in the workforce at the time of my research (“Data: Morocco” The World Bank 2016). If working men were also fathers, their professions may not have allowed them to assume full childcare responsibilities while their potential *femme guide* wives were hiking. The fact that Laila’s husband was also a *guide* allowed him the flexibility to stay with their child when Laila was leading treks. There were few, if any, “stay at home fathers” in Morocco. When I had learned the word for “stay at home mother” in my Arabic classes based in Rabat, a classmate asked if there was a word for stay at home father. Our teacher, a twenty-seven year old Moroccan woman from Rabat-Salé, had never heard of the concept before and told us the word did not exist.

Laila also experienced sadness and guilt because she had missed milestones in her son's life when she was leading treks. Just as women in the mountains had told Zohra that she was a bad mother because she was not at home with her children, Laila had internalized that she was "bad" for leaving her son, whether or not other people had overtly criticized her. Men who were *guides* did not consider themselves to be bad fathers for leaving their children for daylong or weeklong treks. While Sadiqi and Ennaji wrote that working women accommodated domestic and waged responsibilities (Sadiqi and Ennaji 2006: 91), Laila experienced guilt when she felt that she had not, in fact, maintained her domestic duty of being with her son. Therefore, Laila's reflections upon her own work suggest that she internalized a cultural expectation of earning wages without having her professional responsibilities come at the expense of domestic responsibilities and childcare. Culturally acceptable women's work, like being a *guide de ville*, for example, allowed for the two responsibilities to be negotiated.

Zohra had two children, and, like Laila, her French-born husband was also a *guide de montagne* through his training in France. Their two children stayed with their father during Zohra's treks. If both Zohra and her husband were hiking with tourists, then Zohra's sister watched the children. Therefore, it was possible for Laila and Zohra to work as *guides de montagne* because they had husbands who were willing and able to assist with childcare. Even still, Zohra's children had since grown by the time that I first met her. It had been years since she had to consider who would watch the children during her hikes, but she still remembered, "*C'était difficile de partir.*" ("It was difficult to leave.") I should note that the issues about "work-life" balance are not exclusive to Morocco. When Zohra and Laila shared their stories with me, I understood that these are not challenges that only Moroccan women face. American

parents, particularly mothers, balance childcare with professional life, as evidence by ongoing conversations to expand paid maternity and paternity leave (“Department of Labor” 2016).

III. Caretakers

Nadia lived with her mother who had Parkinson’s disease. Her mother could no longer walk or speak, and thus Nadia was her mother’s caretaker. Nadia admitted that it was often difficult to negotiate the responsibilities of her career while also taking care of her mother:

It’s a very hard balance. If I have a client at 10 o’clock and [the girl who comes to watch my mother] hasn’t come yet, sometimes I cry. [...] I wake up at 6, and I cook for her and do everything. They don’t know how to do that, I don’t trust them. [...] My mom is my baby now. For six years, it is difficult now.

Nadia compared her mother to a baby. Given that her mother was dependent upon her care, Nadia’s caretaking was in many ways akin to the responsibilities of motherhood. Clearly, Nadia’s domestic and wage-earning responsibilities were not easily separated from each other and the line between public and private became blurry. She adjusted her work in order to accommodate her caretaking, mostly abandoning longer treks in favor of shorter day trips.

When Nadia gave me a tour of Amizmiz, a man who passed us told me that many people in her town respected Nadia because she took good care of her mother. There were others, however, who criticized her choice to lead treks. She told me, “People ask, ‘Why do you leave your Mom? Are you leaving your Mom by yourself?’ They are crazy. I will never leave my Mom by herself.” Just as some women near Zagora told Zohra that a “good mother doesn’t leave her children,” Nadia’s experiences show that some people in the suburbs of Amizmiz thought that a good daughter should not have left her mother to work, despite the fact that Nadia always arranged for someone else to take care of her mother during her absence for treks. Cultural

expectations of domestic responsibilities therefore extended beyond women taking care of children, but also included obligations to elderly parents.

Nouhaila, unmarried and without children, had reduced the number of trips she led by the time that I met her in April 2015. Her sister had died of cancer less than a year before, and she had become the guardian for her two-year old twin nephews and her four-year old niece. When I visited her house in Marrakech in January 2016, the children called her “*Mama*.” She reflected upon the changes in her life since becoming their guardian:

Avec les enfants de voyager c'est pas possible. [...] Il y a un grand changement. C'est difficile parce que j'ai pas l'habitude d'être une mère et pas l'habitude de prendre d'une responsabilité de faire le ménage et faire le manger. C'est pas mon habitude. C'est fatigant. Tu dors pas très bien. [...] Je dors trois heures, deux heures et demie. Une femme seule, c'est pas possible pour travailler. La guide de ville, tu peux la faire, tu peux les laisser à la creche le matin. [...] L'année prochaine je vais recommencer parce que ma mère va prendre ma place. C'est pas un devoir, c'est une promesse que j'ai donné à ma soeur.

(With the children it's not possible to travel. [...] It's difficult because I'm not used to being a mother and taking responsibility to do the housework and cooking the food. It's not my habit. It's tiring. You don't sleep very well. [...] I sleep three hours, two and a half hours. For a woman alone, it's not possible to work. *La guide de ville* can do it, you can leave the children at the daycare in the morning. [...] Next year I'm going to begin working again because my mother will take my place. This isn't an obligation, it's a promise that I gave to my sister.)

Nouhaila had once told me that only a single woman would have been able to become a *guide*, and she had been thinking of her own experiences: she was unmarried and previously did not have any children to take care of. When her sister passed away, she assumed childcare responsibilities akin to motherhood. Her experiences therefore present a fascinating case study. With no children, she worked as a *guide*. With children, she was not able to. She barely had enough time to sleep, let alone lead treks through the mountains.

From these examples, it should be clear that working women in Morocco negotiated both domestic and waged responsibilities. The balance between private and public work, beyond the

home and with the family, was a negotiation not easily reconciled when someone's work demanded weeklong trips away from the family.

It is important to note, however, that Nouhaila did not view her new caretaking as burdensome, nor do I wish to present it as such. Nouhaila told me that she was happy to take care of her nephews and niece because she had made a promise to her sister to do so. Just as her experiences demonstrate the difficulty of working as a *guide* when a woman was also a caretaker, her story also shows the strength of family bonds and the emotional importance of familial obligations, which were certainly not “secondary” or “unimportant” (Mazumdar and Mazumdar 2001).

IV. Freedom and Mobility

Despite the challenges of accommodating their profession with other domestic obligations, many of the *femmes guides de montagne* described their work as a form of liberation. They believed that their lives were different from other Moroccan women, both urban and rural, and that they were free women.

Fatima

Pour moi, la montagne, la randonnée, et les voyages, c'est l'air, c'est la liberté. Je me sens vraiment libre. Quand je dis le mot de guide de montagne, pour moi, c'est wow! C'est la liberté morale dans ma tête et dans mon coeur aussi au meme temps [...]. On se sent comme des oiseaux qui voyagent. La liberté, c'est comme un oiseau.

(For me, the mountains, the hiking, and the trips, it's air, it's liberty. I feel truly free. When I say the word, *guide de montagne*, for me, it's wow! It's moral liberty in my head and in my heart at the same time [...]. You feel like birds that travel. Liberty is like a bird.)

In “The Mission of Metaphor in Expressive Culture,” James Fernandez writes that “the inchoate pronouns of social life—the ‘I,’ ‘you,’ ‘he,’ ‘it’—gain identity by predicating some

sign–image, some metaphor upon themselves” (Fernandez 1947: 122). Metaphor, which he defines as “predication of a sign-image upon any of the set of inchoate pronouns—the essential social subjects,” gives meaning and identity to inchoate pronouns (Fernandez 1974: 133). “Liberty is like a bird” is a simile that acts as a metaphor. Fatima gives the “social subject” of liberty (particularly women’s liberty) the image of the bird. If a *guide de montagne* represents a bird and a bird represents liberty, then a *guide de montagne* becomes the symbol of liberty, too. Fatima felt that the qualities that make birds free, like the ability to travel, also made her free. Just as a bird is free from spatial restrictions and can fly anywhere, she used the metaphor to convey that a free woman had freedom of movement.

Laila

I like this job, and I like to be in the mountains. I like to prove to *myself* that I’m good at this sport [...]. It’s also good that I can earn money from being in the mountains, being in the desert, and traveling. I want to travel. I want to be free. [...] I like to be free so I never feel that the tradition of the religion and that the government can take this from me. In my house, I do what I like. In Marrakech, I do what like. [...] I can say I’m different from the women in the city. My job is different. My life is different from the Moroccan modern woman. She is a teacher, she wakes up at 8:00 [...]. Me, I go out of my house. I have my life like a city girl. I think this is the difference. I can be a city woman in the city, a mountain woman in the mountains, and a European in Europe. [...] I’m like a chameleon. I can be in every situation.

Laila “liked to be free,” but she suggested that the government and religious traditions served to restrict her freedom. While Zohra’s father had an interpretation of Islam that accommodated his belief that women could make their own decisions without their fathers “meddling,” Laila had clearly encountered an interpretation of the religion that she regarded to be restrictive upon her personal freedom.

Further, Laila said that “the government” played a role in the limitation of her freedom. Although she and I did not discuss this topic further, I wonder whether Laila believed that the 2004 Moudawana had done enough to promote the “liberty of women.” UNICEF called the

Moudawana “one of the most progressive [family codes] in the Arab world” in regards to women’s rights (“Morocco: MENA Gender” 2011), but Laila’s condemnation of the government as restrictive casts doubts upon the law’s translation to lived experience. According to surveys conducted for the Status of Women in the Middle East and North Africa project (SWMENA), three percent of urban women in the survey said that they opposed the law; of that group, seventeen percent believed that the Moudawana was “just a theory [and] there is no concrete action” (“Data Tools” 2010).

For Laila, freedom was being able to do what she liked in both her house and in Marrakech. When she told me this, I thought of her earlier description of women’s experiences in mountainous areas of Morocco: “There’s no equality at all,” she said. “Women at home and men outside.” While I have discussed in the last chapter that many *femmes de la montagne* did work outdoors and outside of the home, I believe that Laila regarded obligatory domestic responsibilities as restrictive for those women. Laila’s definition of freedom meant that she had the agency to do what she liked in private spaces (the house) and public ones (in Marrakech); she considered the expectation that women only performed domestically related responsibilities to be a marker of gender inequality.

Through her simile that she was like a chameleon, she assigned the metaphor of a chameleon onto her profession. The fact that Laila was able to travel freely to cities, mountains, and Europe allowed her to imagine herself as a *femme de ville*, a *femme de la montagne*, and a European. She felt that she could be in the city, the mountains, and even beyond Morocco’s borders, and her profession allowed her construct her own identity. Interestingly, Laila noted that she was different from other women at the same time that she claimed that she could *become* another woman based on where she was. Other professions did not have the adaptability that

working as a *guide de montagne* had given her, just as other women did not have the financial means or ability to travel and move as she did.

Nouhaila

Moi, j'étais contre le mariage. [...] J'ai pris une décision où j'ai décidé de ne me marier pas parce que d'être mariée et d'avoir les enfants, c'est comme tu mets dans une cage, et tu ne peux pas sortir parce que le mari au Maroc il ne comprends pas le métier... Le moment que j'étais guide, c'est le moment je suis vraiment libre. Je peux aller où je veux, mais un homme qui va comprendre mon métier, j'ai pas le trouvé. [...] Je suis très attaché à mon travail, et c'est pour ça que j'ai décidé de ne pas me marier." [During a different interview:] *[Comme une guide] vous travaillez dans tout le Maroc. C'est comme un oiseau. Tu vas comme tu veux, tu changes les endroits [...] Le métier de guide est tout à fait différent que les travaux de bureau. C'est pas mon jeu.*

Me, I was against marriage. [...] I decided not to get married because being married and having children is like you're put in a cage, and you can't leave because the husband in Morocco doesn't understand the profession. [...] The moment that I became a guide is the moment I was free. I can go where I want, but the man who will understand my profession, I haven't found him. I'm very attached to my work, and it's for this reason that I decided not to get married. [During a different interview:] [As a *guide*] you work in all of Morocco. It's like a bird. You go where you want, you change places. [...] The work of a guide is very different from jobs in an office. That's not for me.

Through this anecdote, Nouhaila uses a simile to give marriage and childcare the image of a cage. Cages restrict mobility and movement, serving to confine. Whatever has been placed in a cage has been put there by someone else. Through this simile, Nouhaila asserted her conviction that domestic responsibilities were restrictive for women's movement, as if women were caged. Furthermore, she implied that husbands put women in these cages when she said that she had never found a man who "[understood] her profession." Both Nadia and Nouhaila believed that Moroccan men preferred wives who could have accommodated domestic responsibilities, and they did not trust a profession for which a woman frequently worked with men. Therefore, Nouhaila used this simile to suggest that married women's marriage and childcare responsibilities were restrictive to women's movement. Considering her usage of both

cage and bird similes in dialogue, Nouhaila implied that other caged birds (i.e. other women) *could* have done the work that she did, but someone had put them in the cages and prevented them from doing so.

When Nouhaila said that “the moment [she] became a guide is the moment [she] was really free,” she attributed her profession to be the cause of her freedom. Nouhaila’s articulation of “liberty” meant that women had spatial mobility and the ability to move through and between different spaces. Free from a cage, women had personal agency to make their own decisions.

The perspectives and experiences of the *femmes guides de montagne* suggest that the profession was simultaneously challenging and liberating for the same reason. The profession demanded mobility and movement away from “the home” and through the mountains, quite literally from the interior to the exterior, for extended periods of time. Other forms of work in Morocco, whether paid or unpaid, meant that women left their homes and entered an outdoor space. A *femme guide de ville* left her home to lead tourists on guided tours of Morocco’s imperial cities. A *femme de la montagne*, while not paid for her labor, might have carried wood through the fields of mountain valleys. These forms of work, quite different in meaning, were similar in that they allowed women to accommodate (or focus upon) the responsibilities of childcare and the domestic space.

The *guide de montagne* profession was often difficult to accommodate with domestic responsibilities, as *guides* left their families for days to weeks at a time. Laila believed she was a bad mother because she had missed milestones in her son’s life when she was out on a hike. Nouhaila stopped working as a *guide* when she began taking care of her nephews and niece, as

she could not leave them for an extended period. Nadia found it difficult to balance being her mother's caretaker and being a *guide*.

However, many of the *femmes guides* valued their profession *because* of its mobility. They noted their freedom to move from cities to the mountains and to choose where they wanted to go, and they recognized that not all women in Morocco had the same opportunities. From previous chapters, I have suggested that they recognized these power differentials and sought to be either an example or a means of financial empowerment to *femmes de la montagne*. In any case, many of the *femmes guides de montagne* regarded themselves as free women. The spaces that they occupied as a result of their profession were not exclusively public or private, exterior or interior, productive or domestic. They claimed spaces that were fluid, adaptable, and ever-shifting.

Conclusion

In Chapter Three, I argue that *femmes guides de montagne* occupied a paradoxical space, which Rose defines as “centre-margin” (Rose 1993: 140), while studying at CFAMM. They had access to an exclusive and previously all-male profession even as they were simultaneously marginalized on the basis of the fact that they were women.

The *guide de montagne* profession had been constructed as masculine work, for it aligned with historical notions of men’s public space on the basis of the profession’s exteriority. Furthermore, the construction of “the mountains” as a male gendered space reflected and perpetuated ideas of superior male physical strength. Some men believed that women’s participation in the profession diminished their own strength and masculinity.

When women ultimately did gain access to the all-male school, CFAMM’s administrators feared sexual relationships between its female and male students. Although it is uncertain whether CFAMM enacted a policy to exclude women from the school, the persistence of discourses about sexual relationships between *femmes guides* and male colleagues or tourists indicated a cultural taboo about unmarried men’s and women’s interactions in specific spaces, particularly when women were away from the private space of the home at night.

All of the *femmes guides* used family metaphors to suggest that their male colleagues and tourists were like “children” and “brothers.” Newcomb writes that “imbuing public spaces with aspects of the domestic sphere is one tactic by which [...] women make their presence in urban public spaces more acceptable” (Newcomb 2006: 205). Through the use of these metaphors, the *femmes guides* indicated that they recognized the suspicions and shameful associations of women working in the profession. They employed this particular rhetorical strategy in order to

desexualize their work and present their interactions as if they were familial and thus part of a domestic and private space.

While men and women who were *guides de montagne* performed the same physical work, the meaning of the work was different because women's participation in the profession was counterhegemonic. Women had contested a gendered place (CFAMM) and gendered profession (*guide de montagne*) to occupy a paradoxical space wherein they were both "insiders" and "outsiders."

In Chapter Four, I consider Blunt and Rose's notion that "the politics of difference with which many feminists are now concerned is not only the politics of difference *between* two genders, but also the politics of diversity *among* women" (Blunt and Rose 1994: 7). When *femmes guides* were "on the job," they interacted with *femmes de la montagne*, women who lived in the valleys of the Atlas Mountains. The relationship between *femmes guides* and *femmes de la montagne* revealed that women in Morocco experienced gendered spaces differently. A singular public/private spatial distinction to account for the experiences of all women is reductionist.

Femmes guides de montagne and *femmes de la montagne* often performed similar physical actions (one carried a hiking backpack, for example, while another carried wood). Although these occurred at the same place (a mountain valley in the Atlas), their meaning was different because they occupied different spaces. *Femmes guides de montagne* worked with tourists who were nonfamily members and earned wages for their work, thus they occupied a public space. *Femmes de la montagne* performed outdoor work (its exteriority rendering it public), but this was done for the family without a wage (its domestic associations rendering it private). The work of *femmes de la montagne* was therefore both public in its visibility and private through its associations with the home.

Therefore, while *femmes de la montagne* often performed physical and outdoor labor (further challenging constructions of the mountains as a space that was “too hard” for women), these women could not have accessed the profession because many had not attended secondary school (Hoel 2012). While it seems clear that some *femmes de la montagne* valued their domestic roles, others acknowledged that they had less power than men because they did not often earn wages. On the basis of educational differences and access to employment, *femmes guides de montagne* were the “centre” while the *femmes de la montagne* were on the margins.

While the *femmes guides de montagne* had been “outsiders” at CFAMM because they were women, their gender was advantageous for their aims to help *femmes de la montagne*. Women, not men, were able to access women’s homes, their private spaces, in the mountains. As such, Nouhaila and Zohra used their access to connect women with tourists, transforming the private space into semi-public (non-family) and semi-private (the home). While *femmes guides* were on the margins of the profession as women, they occupied a position to help women through their gender. This was yet another example of paradoxical space.

Finally, in Chapter Five, I analyze the women’s accounts of the challenges of balancing professional and domestic responsibilities. Four of the five *femmes guides* whom I met either had been or were caretakers for children, parents, or nieces and nephews. Given the fact that *guides de montagne* were away from home for extended treks in the Atlas, working as a *guide* imposed limitations upon caregiving. While it was not a problem for men who were fathers and *guides* to be away from the home, it was constructed as problematic for women given their constructed roles as primary caregivers.

Some people criticized Zohra for being a bad mother and Nadia a bad daughter when they left their children or mother for hikes, despite the fact that they had arranged care for them.

Laila believed that she was “bad” because she had missed important milestones in her son’s life. Their work made them vulnerable to criticism, and these examples indicated a cultural impetus for mothers or caretakers to choose professions that allowed them to maintain family responsibilities. Women, particularly in cities, occupied public spaces for their professions, but these professions did not often come at the expense of private space responsibilities.

The mobility of the *guide de montagne* profession imposed difficulties upon accommodating both domestic and production, but its mobility was also one of the reasons that many of the *femmes guides* valued their work: through their mobility, they felt that they were not confined to one space or another. Some of the *femmes guides* used metaphor to compare themselves to birds free of their cages or chameleons who could shift identities as they moved through and negotiated the complex and nondichotomous spaces of Morocco.

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