Linguistics Rights
Irish American Vernacular English
FROM time to time statements have appeared in different quarters, asserting distinctly the existence of the Irish language, at the present day, among certain tribes in the North of Africa. Though these statements bore marks of great improbability, I considered the subject sufficiently curious to induce me to preserve a note of them, with the view of endeavouring at some time to ascertain whether they had any true foundation. The first that attracted my attention was a short notice published in the Dublin Penny Journal in 1834 (vol ii, p. 248), which was as follows:

"About the close of the last century, a gentleman who was superintending the digging out of potatoes in the County of Antrim, was surprised to see some sailors, who had entered the field, in conversation with his labourers, who only spoke Irish. He went to them, and learned that the sailors were from Tunis, and that the vessel to which they belonged had put into port from stress of weather. The sailors and country-people understood each other; the former speaking the language used at Tunis, and the latter speaking Irish. This anecdote was related by a person of credit, and must interest the Irish scholar."

In 1845, I observed in the London Athenaeum a notice of a meeting of the Syro-Egyptian Society, at which the late Mr. J. S. Buckingham was reported to have stated that a person of his acquaintance had actually conversed intelligibly in Irish with some natives of Morocco. Being desirous of ascertaining the precise facts of the case, I wrote for information to one of the members of that Society, who in reply, mentioned that the statement had been made as reported, in a conversation which ensued after a paper on the theory of the Shemitic origin of many European nations; and that he had handed my letter to Mr. Buckingham himself. That gentleman shortly after sent me the following note:
"Dear Sir,

"Mr. Cullimore has sent me your letter to him on the subject of the assertion made by me at the Syro-Egyptian meeting; and I only regret you did not address me direct, as I am always ready and willing to answer any inquiries of this nature".

You know, I presume, enough of the looseness of newspaper reporting, to be aware that it is not always correct. In this instance it is peculiarly so, both in omission and commission. What I really stated, I will here repeat. That when at Dorchester, in England, a few years ago, I received a visit from a native merchant of Morocco, whose name was Saadi Ombacco Benbei. He was then on a visit to a gentleman of the county, whose name I do not know. The London residence of the Morocco merchant was then at Lambeth; but I have not since seen him, so that probably he has returned to his home. He stated to me, in presence of Mrs. Buckingham, that when he was on a visit to a gentleman, near Kilkenny, in Ireland, he went one day to the post-office of that town, and hearing there, for the first time, some of the labouring people speaking Irish, he was surprised to find that he could understand their conversation; as the language had a strong resemblance to the dialect of the mountaineers of Mount Atlas, in Africa, among whom he had travelled and traded in his youth, and learned their language. He addressed the Irish labourers in this language, and their surprise was as great as his own to find that they understood him. The dialogue was very short, and on ordinary topics; but he declared there was no difficulty in understanding each other, on either side. When I was in Dublin about three years ago, I was at the Library and Museum of the Royal Irish Society [Academy], and in conversation with some gentlemen there, (one of whom I understood was the Curator or Secretary, who shewed me many Irish antiquities,) I mentioned this fact about Saadi Ombacco Benbei; to which a gentleman present replied, that he remembered to have heard of a Dublin lady, who came from the west of Ireland originally and spoke Irish fluently, having been married to a gentleman who was consul at one of the ports of Morocco; and that she was surprised to find herself able to converse with the mountaineers of the country (I think near Mogadore), who brought in the poultry, vegetables, and fruit to the market for sale. This is what I stated, and this I repeat. But I did not assert that I knew the Dublin lady, nor indeed did I ask the name of the gentleman who made the statement respecting her. But of the truth of all I did state, you may be assured, and may make any use of it you think proper.

I am, yours truly,
Robert MacAdam, Esq, Belfast.
J. S. BUCKINGHAM."

In Lieut. Colonel Chesney's account of his Expedition to the Euphrates and Tigris, published in 1850, I find the same incident mentioned with a trifling variation, as follows:

"During a visit made to Ireland in 1821 by Sadi Ombacco Benbei, then envoy from Morocco, this individual overheard some people in the market-place, at Kilkenny, making remarks on his person and dress in a dialect which was intelligible by him. He recognized it as one which was spoken in the mountains to the south of Morocco, and with which he had been familiar as a boy. The circumstance was related to Professor Hincks, LL.D., of the Munster College, by the individual himself."
The preceding notes had been laid aside and had nearly escaped my recollection, when the following statement, which appeared in this Journal [vol. vi., p. 185], called my attention to them once more:--

"When passing through the South of Ireland a few years ago, I met a negro gentleman (Mr. Bartels) who had travelled very extensively; in fact there was scarcely any country that he did not appear to have visited. He seemed an admirable linguist; and in conversation mentioned to me that, having travelled across Central Africa, and become acquainted with the dialects there, he was able, when shown some Irish manuscripts in the library of Trinity College, Dublin, from his knowledge of these dialects, to translate several portions of them."

~ THOMAS HENRY PURDON. BELFAST.

The coincidence of these various statements, derived from totally independent sources of information, seemed so singular, that I felt desirous of obtaining any further particulars that could be procured in this country; and I accordingly addressed an inquiry to a gentleman whom I believed to be the best situated for hearing the opinions or reports of travellers on the subject, ~ Mr. Edward Clibborn, the intelligent Curator of the Royal Irish Academy.

To this he has favoured me with the following reply:

DUBLIN,
26th MARCH, 1859.

"MY DEAR MR. MACADAM,
I could not answer your note, till I saw Mr. Eugene Curry, who, I hoped, might have had some note of the name of the Consul's lady who had said she heard the Irish language spoken in a market-place in Morocco; but I find that Mr. C. had made no record, and had no exact recollection of the fact.

However, in talking over the affair, we both remembered that Mr. Buckingham mentioned the circumstance in his lectures, delivered here in the Rotunda. It appeared to both of us that the same fact had been mentioned before by another person, so that Mr. B. was not only disposed to believe it, but went so far as to say that he knew an African merchant, traveller or native, who had taken up his residence in England, and who had been able, from his knowledge of some language picked up by him in Northern Africa, to converse with Irish harvest-labourers in England.

A French gentleman assured me that he had met an Irish traveller in Northern Africa who had heard people speaking Irish there; so that it really looks as if traces of the language were still to be found somewhere or other, though hitherto I have failed in discovering the locality, notwithstanding that I have made more than one attempt to do so.

Some years since, Col. Rawdon, I believe the heir apparent to the title of Charlemont, who was visiting the Academy, happening to make some remark which led me to infer that he had been in Northern Africa, I at once asked him if he had fallen in with the people there who spoke Irish. He replied that he had not, and I think he gave a decided opinion against the truth of the report. This led to a communication with Mr. Curry, who said that he would not be at all astonished to learn that the Irish language was still in existence in Northern Africa, from the great numbers of the Irish who had been carried off as captives by the Corsairs, in the middle ages, to Africa, and had never been ransomed. According to Mr. Curry's statement, many thousands had thus been carried off from time to time from Ireland; and from a curious old Irish legend, the incidents of which are laid in the third century, it
would appear that the people for whose reading this story was composed had a traditional impression or belief that

African corsairs had from that period paid occasional visits to the coasts of Ireland. The fact of the discovery of the wreck of a very ancient ship on the coast of Wexford, containing two chambered cannons, made of bars of hooped iron, and said to be exactly of the same manufacture as that of guns fished up in the harbour of Constantinople, and the same as some old pieces of ordnance found on the walls of Canton, tends to raise a probability that African pirates or traders, or both of them, did visit this coast as early as the reign of Edward III., and possibly before the time of the Danes, whose visits to the Mediterranean may possibly have been intended to keep the corsairs in check, and cover their own piracies in the open seas.

Several persons visiting the Academy, besides Col. Rawdon, have spoken of the fine grey-hounds (probably of the old Irish breed) which are in Northern Africa, and of one tribe of the population, who are much engaged in the stock feeding of camels, horses, and cows, and who are called by a name or term that we might spell "Schlecht." These people possess this breed of dogs, and take great pleasure in them, though, as these are unclean animals in the eyes of good Mohammedans, such conduct is considered unlawful. Now, this word "Schlecht," or its proper vocal equivalent, is said to mean people without pedigrees, such people, in fact, as might spring from the children of unransomed captives: just the sort of people who, according to Mr. Curry's statement, might retain the Irish language if their ancestors had been prisoners carried away from Ireland.

It is amongst these people that I think an enquiry should be made for traces or remnants of Irish; for it is quite within the limits of a reasonable probability that the language might have been retained even by stealth, for the purpose of secret conversation or correspondence, and that, even now, those who might know it would be careful not to be detected in using it by Mohammedans or others, who would be suspicious on hearing people conversing in a language they did not understand.

Some years ago, the R. I. Academy was visited by several African merchants, both Europeans and natives, and I asked them about the Irish language, and put them in communication with Mr. E. Curry, our noted Irish scholar; the result of that conversation was, that they had never met the Irish language, nor people speaking it, anywhere in northern or western Africa. One of these gentlemen explained that in the Ashantee country, and the country near it, the names of places were all specific or descriptive in the Fantee language, which he believed to be the original local language of a large part of western, and probably of central and northern Africa; but whether that was related or not to the Irish, the African gentleman could not say. It occurred, however, to Mr. Curry to ask the meanings of the names of several places and districts, and it was thought curious at the time that, in several instances, there appeared to be real similitude between the meanings of the names of places in the Irish and Fantee languages. One of the examples, I remember, was the word Fantee itself, as applied to a very hilly district, which peculiarity it was said to imply; the corresponding word in Irish having a like signification.

I have never been able to get a vocabulary of Fantee words, to let Mr. Curry examine whether the likeness, real or apparent, in the words picked up at chance, would extend to the language further, nor am I prepared to give an opinion on the matter; still I confess I think there must be some truth at the bottom of the old tradition which brings the "Milesian" population of Ireland from Getulia, in northern Africa, notwithstanding that ethnologists claim the language of Ireland as belonging to the Japhetic class of languages. But, if Japhetic, its elementary sounds appear to be more African than European, for an educated
African can read Irish manuscript with perfect accuracy as to the sounds of the letters; and thus a good ear, listening to people rapidly speaking Irish and Arabic, or that had heard one language here and the other at Morocco, being ignorant of both, might readily assume the two languages to be identical, the radical sounds being the same. In illustration of this fact, I may mention a rather amusing circumstance which occurred some years since, in the old Academy-house in Grafton Street.

Some ladies who took a great interest in Irish antiquities, invited a gentleman then in Dublin, who had been dragoman or interpreter to our Consul at Beyrout, to visit the Academy's Museum of Antiquities, to see if the objects contained in it had any similitude to things now in use in Syria. After carefully looking over the Museum, he stated his opinion that there was nothing in it that could be considered Syrian, except it might be the gold torques; but that things of this kind were made of silver in the East, and not gold, and were now made and used as offerings to churches, where they were called chains, and used as links of the chains by which the numerous lamps in the Eastern churches are suspended. On this occasion, some person present proposed to try if the Eastern stranger could read a very ancient copy of the Arabic Koran, that had belonged to the widow of the Chief of the Wahabees, and which happened, at that moment to be lying on the library table. He at once agreed to do so; and asked if he should read it as if he were alone reading for his own improvement, or whether he should read it as the Imaum did in the Mosque. We preferred the latter mode of reading it; whereupon he sent us all up to the far end of the room, and, after some movements of his body backwards and forwards, he commenced reading with a peculiar sort of cadence or chant, raising and lowering his voice, to the great amusement of the company. While the Syrian was so engaged, Mr. E. Curry came up the stairs and entered the library, and as soon as the reader stopped, Mr. Curry went on with the cadence, and, to our unpractised ears, proceeded fluently with the same story! However, on comparing notes, it turned out that Mr. Curry's cadence or musical chant was not an imitation of what he had heard, but the Irish cry or dirge, sung by women in the south of Ireland when they come near a house in which there is a dead body. This tune or cadence is identical with that now used in the East when solemnly reading the Koran! How is this? Can any one give us the cries or lamentations used by the Jews at their funerals, as for instance, when they sung the psalms of David in Spain? Did the Irish borrow their cries from the Jews? Are the Irish cries remnants of the songs of Sion? Now, in the case here described, the Syrian thought Mr. Curry's words were Arabic, yet he could catch no meaning in them; in the same way the latter gentleman thought the Syrian's words were Irish, yet destitute of meaning. We, who looked on and knew neither language, thought they both used the same! And so it may be that people who do not know more than the sounds of the Irish may have inferred that they have heard Irish spoken in northern Africa, when in fact it was Arabic, or probably Hebrew or Berber, which last has sounds allied to, if not the same as, those of the Arabic.

Yours, very truly,

~ EDWARD CLIBBORN."

The foregoing is all the information I have yet been able to collect on this subject. It is, no doubt, quite possible that persons entirely ignorant of the Irish and Arabic languages, may have confounded the two from the similarity of pronunciation, especially as they both abound in guttural sounds not heard in our cultivated western tongues. But, if the statement of the Morocco merchant can be relied on, that he actually held a short conversation with the
Irish-speaking peasants of Kilkenny, by employing a dialect spoken in the mountains of Morocco, the question assumes sufficient probability to deserve further investigation. In this country we know nothing of the dialects spoken in Northern Africa, farther than that there are such, and that they differ essentially from the Arabic used by the Moors. In all parts of the world, mountain ranges have formed the refuge of broken or vanquished tribes: hence it is that so many totally distinct languages are at present found existing among the recesses of the Caucasus. May the same not be the case in the Atlas mountains? We know that, at some remote and undefined period, the ancestors of the present Irish came from the East. The ancient traditionary history of the people themselves may not be trustworthy as to details, but it uniformly asserts their eastern origin; and modern philology corroborates this by proving the affinity of the Irish language with the Persian and Sanscrit. The old and circumstantial account of a colony established in Ireland from Spain takes us a long way on the road to North Africa; and, if true, would render it very probable that these colonists or their ancestors came previously from that country to Spain. In such case, it would not be at all impossible that some tribe of the same race may have remained and settled in the present Morocco or Tunis, and have been eventually driven to the mountains at the time of the destruction of Carthage, or subsequently by the overwhelming pressure of the Moors. Speculation, however, is useless, until we obtain more definite information regarding the supposed cognate language existing in that country; and the object of the present article is merely to place the preceding facts together on record, and to direct the attention of competent inquirers to a curious subject.

ROBERT MACADAM

ALSO SEE THE FOLLOWING:

Fantee large tribe living south of Ashantee, whose language, also called Fantee, was used widely on the Gold Coast.

The Irish Funeral Cry (the Ullaloo, Keeners and Keening at Irish Funerals) From The Dublin Penny Journal, Volume 1, Number 31, January 26, 1833

The Starting of the Gaelic Journal, November 1882
From 'For the Tongue of the Gael' by Tomas O Flannghaile, 1896

THIRTY-SIX years after the death of Thomas Davis the first journal devoted to the living Irish language has appeared in Ireland's capital. Though no Gael himself, Davis dearly loved the Gaelic race amongst whom his lot was cast, and thus it is that by all true Irishmen his memory will ever be fondly kept and honoured. The national music, national games, all worthy national customs and institutions found in him a warm sympathizer and an eloquent advocate.

Discover early cultural mergings of African and European currents and their Moorish Legacy by Ted Gioia.

IRISH carried off as captives by the Corsairs in the middles ages to Africa, maybe as early as the third century.

No Quarter Given Time Line
1562 - John Hawkins removes 300 slaves from a Portuguese ship, marking the beginning of English slave trade
1586 - Grania Ni Mhaille (Grace O'Malley) renounces piracy
Corrals and the Spanish Slave Trade 1586

Drake's 1585-6 campaign, in particular the slaves he took from both Cartagena and Santo Domingo which he later supposedly dropped some of them, mostly African and Indian, off at Roanoke Island. According to sources in the Hakluyt editions the slaves were African, Indian, Turkish, and Greek. There were also Europeans (IRISH) who were said to be prisoners and who may have also been slaves.

Genaro Rodriguez's piece on sugar and slavery in 16th-century Santo Domingo in Tropical Babylons ed. Stuart Schwartz for the best recent overview of the subject. Other secondary sources include Carlos Esteban Deive, La esclavitud del negro en Santo Domingo and La Espanola y la esclavitud del indio; Hugh Thomas,

The Slave Trade; and Lynne Guitar,

For accounts on Drake and his cargo of slaves there are a variety of secondary sources. You might consider John Cummins, Francis Drake (New York, St. Martin's: 1997) and, of course, any of the several books by Sir Kenneth Andrews, for starters.

About Sir Francis Drake, see:


Fernandez Guardia (Ricardo).- Un gentilhomme pirate, Drake La Revue de l'Amerique Latine, 1923, pp. 151-158


Sottas (Dr Jules).- An atlas of Drake's last voyage [transl. by Mr. W. G. Perrin], The Mariners Mirror, 1912, pp. 135-142

Hewitt (G. R.).- Drake at San Juan de Puerto Rico, Vol. 50, No. 3, August 1964, Mariners Mirror, 1964, pp. 199-204
The "Persian Millennium"

The Achaemenids' empire - that is the Persian kings' name - extended from India to Ethiopia, as it is also written in the book of Esther, in which there is the only Bible mention of "Hodu", Hebrew name of India. This place-name here means specifically the Indus Valley, that land which Persians called "Sindh" and Arabs "Hind" (it is not indeed a Sanskrit word; India's national name is Bharat). A distinctive feature of Persians and Medes was their religion without temples, whose rites were held by the Magi, a sort of caste appointed for such service (as well as Levites in the Hebrew system). The king Kurush and following monarchs allowed deportees' return to their homeland, but only a minority of them took advantage of such concession: Hebrews in Babylon had achieved a good social and economic position. Those who returned back to Eretz Yisrael belonged mainly to those deportees of the Kingdom of Yehudah by Nebukadnezzar.

The Diaspora caused some changes within Israelite community: in the beginning, Hebrews were recognized according to the tribes to which they belonged, twelve of them besides the priestly tribe of Levi. The Diaspora generated different social and cultural developments, according to the nations were Jewish communities settled, and today Israelis are divided into language/culture groups which have not any link with the ancient tribes: the "Mizrahim" (Easterners), not to mistake with "Mizrayim" (Egyptians), of Aramaic language; the "Sepharadim" (Mediterranean), from Sepharad, Hebrew name of Spain, of Ladino-Spanish language; the "Ashkenazim" (Northerners), of Yiddish language; the "Betha Israel" (Ethiopians); the Yemenite Jews; the Jews of India. About these last ones I would like to mention some historical outlines.

Jews of India are at present distinguished in three groups that, although being excluded from India's caste system because of their Hebrew origin, have developed a code of rules within them by which the three communities and their subgroups cannot intermarry. They are: the Jews of Kochin, the B'ney Yisrael and the Baghdadis. These last ones, whose language is Arabic or Persian, reached India about two centuries ago, coming from the Middle East.

Barbary States

North African empire of Morocco and city-states of Algiers, Tunis, and Tripoli, known collectively as the Barbary States.

Barbary Pirates were pirates that operated out of Tunis, Tripoli, Algiers, Salè and ports in Morocco, preying on shipping in the western Mediterranean Sea from the time of the Crusades as well as on ships on their way to Asia around Africa until the early 19th century. Their stronghold was along the stretch of northern Africa known as the Barbary Coast (a medieval term for the Maghreb after its Berber inhabitants), although their predation was said to extend as far north as Iceland, and south along West Africa's Atlantic seaboard. As well as preying on shipping, raids were often made on European coastal towns. The pirates were responsible for capturing large numbers of Christian slaves from Western Europe, who were sold in slave markets in places such as Morocco. Sultan Moulay Ismail had a very substantial fortified palace built almost entirely by Christian slave labour obtained through the actions of Barbary pirates.

Perhaps the best-known was Barbarossa (meaning red beard) the nickname of Khair ad Din, who after having been invited to defend the city of Algiers from the Spaniards killed its ruler.
and seized it in 1510, making it into a major base for privateering, as well as a regent for the sultan of the Ottoman Empire. Some of them were renegades or Moriscos. Their usual ship was the galley with slaves or prisoners at the oars. Two examples of these renegades are Süleyman Reis "De Veenboer" who became admiral of the Algerian corsair fleet in 1617, and his quartermaster Murad Reis, born Jan Janszoon van Haarlem. Both worked for the notorious corsair (privateer) Simon the Dancer, who owned a palace. These pirates were all originally Dutch. The Dutch admiral Michiel de Ruyter unsuccessfully tried to end their piracy. Raids by Barbary pirates on Western Europe did not cease until 1816, when a Royal Navy raid, assisted by six Dutch vessels, destroyed the port of Algiers and its fleet of Barbary ships.

The First Barbary War (1801–1805)
The First Barbary War (1801–1805, also known as the Barbary Coast War or the Tripolitan War) was one of two wars fought between the United States of America and the Barbary States. Since the sixteenth century, corsairs from the Muslim states of North Africa had controlled the Mediterranean sea lanes by force. At the time the United States won its independence, the states of the Barbary Coast—Tripoli, Algiers, Morocco, and Tunis—had been preying on the world's merchant ships for three hundred years. The Barbary pirates' methods were fairly simple: cruising the Mediterranean in small, fast ships, they boarded merchant ships, overwhelmed the crew, and took them captive. The crews were held in captivity until their home countries agreed to pay ransoms for their release. If no ransom was forthcoming, the crews were sold into slavery. Over time, most countries found it expedient simply to pay a yearly tribute to the sultans, thereby buying their ships free passage through the Mediterranean.

British Slaves on the Barbary Coast By Robert Davis
The fishermen and coastal dwellers of 17th-century Britain lived in terror of being kidnapped by pirates and sold into slavery in North Africa. Hundreds of thousands across Europe met wretched deaths on the Barbary Coast in this way. But before we had lost sight of land, we were captured by Algerine pirates, who put all the men in irons.'...the corsairs plundered British shipping pretty much at will...'

In the first half of the 1600s,
Barbary corsairs - pirates from the Barbary Coast of North Africa, authorised by their governments to attack the shipping of Christian countries - ranged all around Britain's shores and sold the sailors into slavery. Admiralty records show that during this time the corsairs plundered British shipping pretty much at will, taking no fewer than 466 vessels between 1609 and 1616, and 27 more vessels from near Plymouth in 1625. As 18th-century historian Joseph Morgan put it, 'this I take to be the Time when those Corsairs were in their Zenith'.

London 1682'
160 British ships captured by Algerians between 1677 and 1680. Probably 7,000 to 9,000 able-bodied British men and women taken into slavery in those years. It is thought that around 8,500 new slaves were needed annually to replenish numbers - about 850,000 captives over the century from 1580 to 1680. By extension, for the 250 years between 1530 and 1780, the figure could easily have been as high as 1,250,000 - this is only just over a tenth of the Africans taken as slaves to the Americas from 1500 to 1800, but a considerable figure nevertheless. White slaves in Barbary were
generally from impoverished families, and had almost as little hope of buying back their freedom as the Africans taken to the Americas: most would end their days as slaves in North Africa, dying of starvation, disease, or maltreatment.

**Gypsies are people from Barbary** –
http://www.globusz.com/ebooks/Zincali/00000026.htm
"The Zincali - An Account of The Gypsies of Spain By George Borrow (1843)

Nevertheless, I repeat that I am inclined to believe that Gypsies virtually exist in Barbary, and my reasons I shall presently adduce; but I will here observe, that if these strange outcasts did indeed contrive to penetrate into the heart of that savage and inhospitable region, they could only have succeeded after having become well acquainted with the Moorish language, and when, after a considerable sojourn on the coast, they had raised for themselves a name, and were regarded with superstitious fear; in a word, if they walked this land of peril untouched and unscathed, it was not that they were considered as harmless and inoffensive people, which, indeed, would not have protected them, and which assuredly they were not; it was not that they were mistaken for wandering Moors and Bedouins, from whom they differed in feature and complexion, but because, wherever they went, they were dreaded as the possessors of supernatural powers, and as mighty sorcerers.

There is in Barbary more than one sect of wanderers, which, to the cursory observer, might easily appear, and perhaps have appeared, in the right of legitimate Gypsies. For example, there are the **Beni Aros**. The proper home of these people is in certain high mountains in the neighbourhood of Tetuan, but they are to be found roving about the whole kingdom of Fez. Perhaps it would be impossible to find, in the whole of Northern Africa, a more detestable caste. They are beggars by profession, but are exceedingly addicted to robbery and murder; they are notorious drunkards, and are infamous, even in Barbary, for their unnatural lusts. They are, for the most part, well made and of comely features. I have occasionally spoken with them; they are Moors, and speak no language but the Arabic.

Then there is the sect of **Sidi Hamed au Muza**, a very roving people, companies of whom are generally to be found in all the principal towns of Barbary. The men are expert vaulters and tumblers, and perform wonderful feats of address with swords and daggers, to the sound of wild music, which the women, seated on the ground, produce from uncouth instruments; by these means they obtain a livelihood. Their dress is picturesque, scarlet vest and white drawers. In many respects they not a little resemble the Gypsies; but they are not an evil people, and are looked upon with much respect by the **Moors, who call them Santons**. Their patron saint is Hamed au Muza, and from him they derive their name. Their country is on the confines of the Sahara, or great desert, and their language is the Shilhah, or a dialect thereof. They speak but little Arabic. When I saw them for the first time, I believed them to be of the Gypsy caste, but was soon undeceived. A more wandering race does not exist than the children of Sidi Hamed au Muza. They have even visited France, and exhibited their dexterity and agility at Paris and Marseilles.

I will now say a few words concerning another sect which exists in Barbary, and will here premise, that if those who compose it are not Gypsies, such people are not to be found in North Africa, and the assertion, hitherto believed, that they abound there, is devoid of foundation. I allude to certain men and women, generally termed by the Moors 'Those of the **Dar-bushi-fal,'** which word is equivalent to prophesying or fortune-telling. They are great wanderers, but have also their fixed dwellings or villages, and such a place is called 'Char Seharra,' or witch-hamlet. Their manner of life, in every respect, resembles that of
the Gypsies of other countries; they are wanderers during the greatest part of the year, and subsist principally by pilfering and fortune-telling. They deal much in mules and donkeys, and it is believed, in Barbary, that they can change the colour of any animal by means of sorcery, and so disguise him as to sell him to his very proprietor, without fear of his being recognised. This latter trait is quite characteristic of the Gypsy race, by whom the same thing is practised in most parts of the world. But the Moors assert, that the children of the Dar-bushi-fal can not only change the colour of a horse or a mule, but likewise of a human being, in one night, transforming a white into a black, after which they sell him for a slave; on which account the superstitious Moors regard them with the utmost dread, and in general prefer passing the night in the open fields to sleeping in their hamlets. They are said to possess a particular language, which is neither Shilhah nor Arabic, and which none but themselves understand; from all which circumstances I am led to believe, that the children of the Dar-bushi-fal are legitimate Gypsies, descendants of those who passed over to Barbary from Spain. Nevertheless, as it has never been my fortune to meet or to converse with any of this caste, though they are tolerably numerous in Barbary, I am far from asserting that they are of Gypsy race. More enterprising individuals than myself may, perhaps, establish the fact. Any particular language or jargon which they speak amongst themselves will be the best criterion. The word which they employ for 'water' would decide the point; for the Dar-bushi-fal are not Gypsies, if, in their peculiar speech, they designate that blessed element and article most necessary to human existence by aught else than the Sanscrit term 'Pani,' a word brought by the race from sunny Ind, and esteemed so holy that they have never even presumed to modify it.

The following is an account of the Dar-bushi-fal, given me by a Jew of Fez, who had travelled much in Barbary, and which I insert almost literally as I heard it from his mouth. Various other individuals, Moors, have spoken of them in much the same manner.

'In one of my journeys I passed the night in a place called Mulai- Jacub Munsur.

'Not far from this place is a Char Seharra, or witch-hamlet, where dwell those of the Dar-bushi-fal. These are very evil people, and powerful enchanters; for it is well known that if any traveller stop to sleep in their Char, they will with their sorceries, if he be a white man, turn him as black as a coal, and will afterwards sell him as a negro. Horses and mules they serve in the same manner, for if they are black, they will turn them red, or any other colour which best may please them; and although the owners demand justice of the authorities, the sorcerers always come off best. They have a language which they use among themselves, very different from all other languages, so much so that it is impossible to understand them. They are very swarthy, quite as much so as mulattos, and their faces are exceedingly lean. As for their legs, they are like reeds; and when they run, the devil himself cannot overtake them. They tell Dar-bushi-fal with flour; they fill a plate, and then they are able to tell you anything you ask them. They likewise tell it with a shoe; they put it in their mouth, and then they will recall to your memory every action of your life. They likewise tell Dar-bushi-fal with oil; and indeed are, in every respect, most powerful sorcerers.

Gypsies of Spain 1843
ON THE LANGUAGE OF THE GITANOS -- Shillah or Tarmazeght, language or dialect.
http://www.globusz.com/ebooks/Zincali/00000043.htm
The Gitanos of Spain are not the descendants of the Arabs and Moriscos, or people from India. Amongst themselves they have three words to distinguish them and their race in general: Zincalo, Romano, and Chai; of the first two of which something has been already said.

They likewise call themselves 'Caless,' by which appellation indeed they are tolerably well known by the Spaniards, and which is merely the plural termination of the compound word Zincalo, and signifies, The black men. Chai is a modification of the word Chal, which, by the Gitanos of Estremadura, is applied to Egypt, and in many parts of Spain is equivalent to 'Heaven,' and which is perhaps a modification of 'Cheros,' the word for heaven in other dialects of the Gypsy language. Thus Chai may denote, The men of Egypt, or, The sons of Heaven. It is, however, right to observe, that amongst the Gitanos, the word Chai has frequently no other signification than the simple one of 'children.'

It is impossible to state for certainty the exact year of their first appearance in Spain; but it is reasonable to presume that it was early in the fifteenth century; as in the year 1417 numerous bands entered France from the north-east of Europe, and speedily spread themselves over the greatest part of that country. Of these wanderers a French author has left the following graphic description: (16)

'On the 17th of April 1427, appeared in Paris twelve penitents of Egypt, driven from thence by the Saracens; they brought in their company one hundred and twenty persons; they took up their quarters in La Chapelle, whither the people flocked in crowds to visit them. They had their ears pierced, from which depended a ring of silver; their hair was black and crispy, and their women were filthy to a degree, and were sorceresses who told fortunes.'

'Zincali,' a term by which these people, especially those of Spain, sometimes designate themselves, and the meaning of which is believed to be, THE BLACK MEN OF ZEND OR IND. In England and Spain they are commonly known as Gypsies and Gitanos, from a general belief that they were originally Egyptians, to which the two words are tantamount; and in France as Bohemians, from the circumstance that Bohemia was one of the first countries in civilised Europe where they made their appearance. They speak, Rommany, which, is of Sanscrit origin, and signifies, The Husbands, or that which pertaineth unto them. From whatever motive this appellation may have originated, it is perhaps more applicable than any other to a sect or caste like them, who have no love and no affection beyond their own race; who are capable of making great sacrifices for each other, and who gladly prey upon all the rest of the human species, whom they detest, and by whom they are hated and despised. It will perhaps not be out of place to observe here, that there is no reason for supposing that the word Roma or Rommany is derived from the Arabic word which signifies Greece or Grecians, as some people not much acquainted with the language of the race in question have imagined. The early Gypsies of the West, and also those of Russia, came from Roumouni-land, is easily proved, as in all the western Gypsy dialects, and also in the Russian, are to be found words belonging to the Roumouni speech.

The English Gypsies are constant attendants at the racecourse; what jockey is not? Perhaps jockeyism originated with them, and even racing, at least in England. Jockeyism properly implies THE MANAGEMENT OF A WHIP, and the word jockey is neither more nor less than the term slightly modified, by which they designate the formidable whips which they usually carry, and which are at present in general use amongst horse-traffickers, under the title of jockey whips. It would appear that they were always divided into clans or tribes, each bearing a particular
name, and to which a particular district more especially belonged, though occasionally they would exchange districts for a period, and, incited by their characteristic love of wandering, would travel far and wide. Of these families each had a sher-engro, or head man, but that they were ever united under one Rommany Krallis, or Gypsy King, as some people have insisted, there is not the slightest ground for supposing.

The principal Gypsy tribes at present in existence are the Stanleys, whose grand haunt is the New Forest; the Lovells, who are fond of London and its vicinity; the Coopers, who call Windsor Castle their home; the Hernes, to whom the north country, more especially Yorkshire, belongeth; and lastly, my brethren, the Smiths, - to whom East Anglia appears to have been allotted from the beginning.

All these families have Gypsy names, which seem, however, to be little more than attempts at translation of the English ones: thus the Stanleys are called Bar-engres, which means stony-fellows, or stony-hearts; the Coopers, Wardo-engres, or wheelwrights; the Lovells, Camomesres, or amorous fellows the Hernes [German Haaren] Balors, hairs, or hairy men; while the Smiths are called Petul-engres, signifying horseshoe fellows, or blacksmiths. See Gypsy Law and also see Irish Traveler Law

Gypsy law divides itself into the following heads or precepts:-
Separate not from THE HUSBANDS.
Be faithful to THE HUSBANDS.
Pay your debts to THE HUSBANDS.

By the first section the Rom or Gypsy is enjoined to live with his brethren, the husbands, and not with the gorgios or gentiles; he is to live in a tent, as is befitting a Rom and a wanderer, and not in a house, which ties him to one spot; in a word, he is in every respect to conform to the ways of his own people, and to eschew those of gorgios, with whom he is not to mix, save to tell them HOQUEPENES [lies], and to chore them.

Rommany arts, by no means an agreeable one, I will take the present opportunity of saying a few words about a practice of theirs, highly characteristic of a wandering people, and which is only extant amongst those of the race who still continue to wander much; for example, the Russian Gypsies and those of the Hungarian family, who stroll through Italy on plundering expeditions: I allude to the PATTERAN or TRAIL.

THERE is no portion of the world so little known as Africa in general; and perhaps of all Africa there is no corner with which Europeans are so little acquainted as Barbary, which nevertheless is only separated from the continent of Europe by a narrow strait of four leagues across.

Shilhenses – Berber people and languages

Z. Jones, "Dissertatio de lingua shilhense" in J. Chamberlayne, Oratio dominica in diversas omnium fere linguas versas (Amsterdam 1715), pp. 150-156. south-western Barbary Sousis are well-known throughout the Maghrib. Many of the shopkeepers in the cities and towns of northern Morocco are Sousis.

The inhabitants of the Sous are known in Moroccan Arabic as the chluh’ (sg. chelh or chelhi) 'Berbers' or more specifically as the swasa (sg. Susi) 'Sousis'. Except for some isolated arabophone tribes, (4) the majority of the inhabitants of the Sous speak a Berber language. In modern Moroccan Arabic, this language is called selha. In Berber, the language is most often referred to as taselhiyt. In French literature the language is usually called ‘tachelhit’, ‘tachelhaït’ or ‘chelha’. In the older Arabic sources, any Berber language, including the Berber of the Sous, is referred to as lisan al-barbar 'the Berber tongue' or al-lisan
al-âjami ‘the non-Arabic tongue’. In recent times, the names tamazigt and al-luga al-
amâzighiya ‘the Berber language’ have become popular among modern intellectuals of the Sous, but these names are not in current use among the common population. De Slane says: ‘lorsqu’ils veulent s’exprimer avec élégance, ils le désignent par le nom tamazight’. In manuscript texts, tamazight is used frequently to refer to the Berber language of the Sous.

Both the names tachlhit (or chelha) and tamazight are ambiguous, because they are used to refer to more than one specific Berber language. Thus, in French literature, the name ‘tamazight’ refers to the dialects of the Middle Atlas, while in Morocco the name selha is also used for the Berber language of the Rif. In recent times, the more precise name tasusiyt ‘the language of the Sous’ has gained some currency and in order to avoid ambiguity, its English equivalent ‘Sous Berber’ will be used in the present book.

Together with dialects of the Middle Atlas and, possibly, the dialect of the Senhadja du Sraïr of the Rif, Sous Berber forms a subgroup of the Berber branch of the Afro-Asiatic language family. The total number of speakers of all Berber languages may be estimated at fifteen million. The majority of berberophone men are bilingual in Arabic.

PREVIOUS RESEARCH On SOUS BERBER

Sous Berber is distinguished by being the first Berber language that became the subject of study by a European scholar: In 1715 Zachariah Jones published his ‘dissertation’ in Latin on the Sous Berber language, which included a Latin-Sous Berber vocabulary and some translated phrases. The most useful descriptions of Sous-Berber dialects that have been published to date are Handbuch des Schilhsichen von Tazerwalt by the German linguist Hans Stumme (dialect of Tazeroualt, Leipzig 1899), Apprenons le berbere, initiation aux dialectes chleuhs by the French lieutenant-colonel Robert Aspinion (dialect of the Achtouken, Rabat 1953) and Lionel Galand’s sketch of the dialect of the Ighchan in ‘La langue berbere’ (Paris 1988). Stumme’s description is very detailed, but unfortunately dates from the pre-phonemic era. Nevertheless it is still the most complete grammar of a Sous Berber dialect we have. Galand’s sketch is the only description of a Sous Berber dialect that meets modern scientific requirements. The sketch by Joseph Applegate (New York is uninformative and highly unreliable. The teaching grammars of L. V. Justinard (Paris 1914) and Émile Laoust (Paris 1936) are outdated, but the latter contains some interesting texts. Three concise Sous Berber dictionaries have appeared to date. They are:

Antoine Jordan, Dictionnaire berbere-français (Rabat 1934);

Esteban Ibánez, Diccionario Espanol-Baamarani (Madrid 1954);


A large amount of Sous Berber vocabulary is also found in Émile Laoust, Mots et choses berberes (Paris 1920, without index). An extensive Dictionnaire tachelhit-français is being prepared by Harry Stroomer (Leiden University). Numerous modern Sous Berber texts have been published in transcription, many of them are taken from the oral tradition. The more important text collections are (in chronological order):

Stumme, ‘Elf Stucke im Chilha-dialekt von Tázerwalt’ (ZDMG 1894);
id., Marchen der Schluh von Tazerwalt (Leipzig 1895);
id., Dichtkunst und Gedichte der Schluh (Leipzig 1895);

Jordan, Textes berberes, dialecte Tachelhait (Rabat 1935);

Destaing, Textes berberes en parler des Chleuhs du Sous (Paris 1940);

Roux, Récits, contes et légendes berberes en Tachelhait (Rabat 1942);

Laoust, Contes berberes du Maroc (Paris 1949);

Roux, La vie berbere par les textes (Paris 1955);

Galand-Pernet, Recueil de poemes chleuhs (Paris 1972);

Leguil, Contes berberes du Grand Atlas (Paris 1985);

Nakano, Ethnographical Texts in Moroccan Berber (2 vols, Tokyo 1994-5);


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NOTES:

Karen Ellis
in St. Stephens Greens
Linguistics Rights Irish
American Vernacular English

Jazz is Irish.
Jazz is St. Brighid’s Fire

May the fire light our way to knowing . . .

All my best,
Karen Ellis

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