



AAC Publications

Akka'n Tazarte, New Routes

Morocco, Taghia

Bernard Marnette and I have visited Taghia several times, aiming to climb classic routes or to open new ones. When we first came in November 2011, motivated by the Arnaud Petit's film *Babel* and by his book *Paroix de Légende*, Mohamed Amil was a goatkeeper, porter, and hiking guide. After a few years of training, he became one of the best young climbers in Taghia, now able to teach locals and guide foreign climbers; he also runs a local *gite* (guesthouse) called Casa Taghia. Together with his friend Mohamed Mesaudi, also a climbing guide, Amil, Marnette, and I have opened various new routes. The first six of these are described in the new edition to Christian Ravier's guidebook to Taghia, published in the spring of 2019.

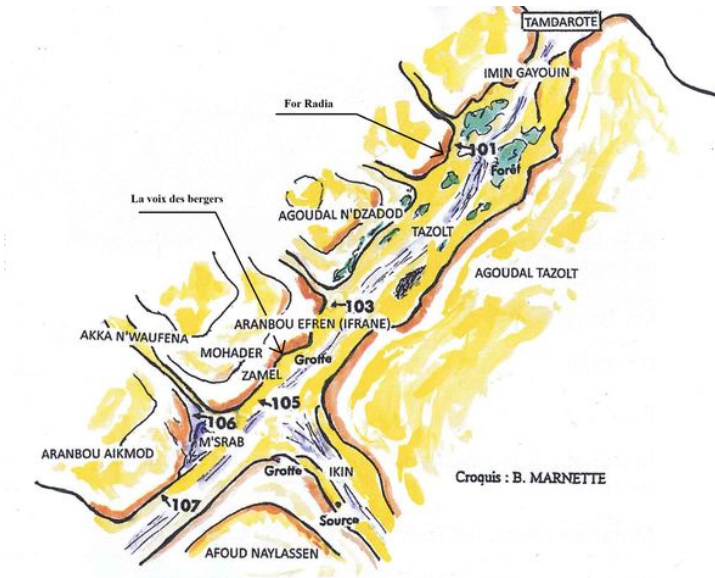
In 2018, we opened two more routes, in May and October: For Radia, by Amil, Marnette, and myself, and La Voix des Bergers ("the shepherds' voice"), by Amil and Marnette. Both routes are in the Akka'n Tazarte canyon, which requires a walk of one hour and 40 minutes from the village of Taghia to the Radia route and some 30 minutes more for the Bergers route. Both lines are on the right side when walking up the canyon; the entire cliff faces southeast.

For Radia, named in honor of Mohamed Amil's latest child, was opened over two days and offers 350m (nine pitches) of climbing on excellent orange limestone, mainly corners and short vertical walls, with some overhangs and slabs in the middle and last section. All belay anchors are equipped for abseil, and a few bolts were placed on the final slabby pitches. Difficulty is moderate in the first half and more sustained above (most pitches having some UIAA VI or VII crux). The route starts and finishes just left of *Soyez Cool, Mangez des Moules* (route 101 in the current Ravier guidebook).

La Voix des Bergers is a less challenging, 300m route (eight pitches), with difficulties up to VI+. Bernard and Mohamed opened this route on October 17. The climbing begins with an easy alpine-like ridge (three pitches), then continues with chimneys and gullies (V to VI+). Above the sixth belay, a traverse pitch to the left leads to the final cracks (VI+). The route is not bolted, but some pitons have been left in place. From the top of this route, you can either walk down and abseil the Zamel Canyon (one 60m rappel) or walk back from the top of the plateau to the village of Tamdarote (two hours) using the rock and wood "berbere via ferrata" described in the Ravier guidebook, although some passages are difficult to find.

– Christian Fontaine, Belgian Alpine Club

Images



Map of Akka'n Tazarte canyon, showing the location of new routes in 2018.



Christian Fontaine, Bernard Marnette, and Mohamed Amil (left to right).



Mohamed Mesaudi and Mohamed Amil in the Taghia area.



Photo-topo of the new route For Radia.



Photo-topo of the new route La Voix des Bergers.

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