Gender Equality and Citizenship

*Perceptions, Experiences, and Performances among Socially Engaged
People in Rabat*

Chiara Thijssen
Anouck Mes

Gender Equality and Citizenship

Perceptions, Experiences, and Performances among Socially Engaged People in Rabat

Author	**Chiara Thijssen**
Student number	**5638712**
E-mail	**c.e.thijssen@students.uu.nl**
Author	**Anouck Mes**
Student number	**5601444**
E-mail	**a.m.mes@students.uu.nl**
Supervisor	**Kees Koonings**
E-mail	**c.g.koonings@uu.nl**
Word count	**21.774**
Date	**26 June 2019**

Who is she?
She's a woman, a powerful person
She walks forward with a fire that burns deeply inside
With absolutely nothing to hide
Her maturity and wisdom make people bend down
Thus, they drown
She doesn't need a light at the end of the tunnel
Because she'll light it herself
This creature is vulnerable, honorable
Her heart leads her down a path that leaves her open to tears
But she won't consider her fears to be a negative
She'll stand up right to twist and turn them to her advantage

Who is she?
She's a lover, that will not be low
Will not bow down to anyone
We're talking about a warrior, not a worrier
That surrounds herself with sisters
A bond that is unbreakable, inside and out
Soul and mind
Her tears are my tears
Her laughs are my memories
Her smiles and dreams chase any shadow away

Who is she?
She's her own sanctuary, an army on her own
Do not mistake her silence for lack of opinions
Do not mistake her kindness for a weakness
She's strong and courageous
Women are an empire, they will all rise as one
And I ask you, what's the queen without a king?
It makes no difference, she'll always be a queen
AND I SALUTE ALL QUEENS.

Written by Anwar[1]

---

[1] English is the original language used by the poet.

Table of Contents

Maps

Map of Morocco

Figure 1 Map of Morocco. https://www.lonelyplanet.com/morocco. Retrieved on 12-06-19.

Map of Rabat
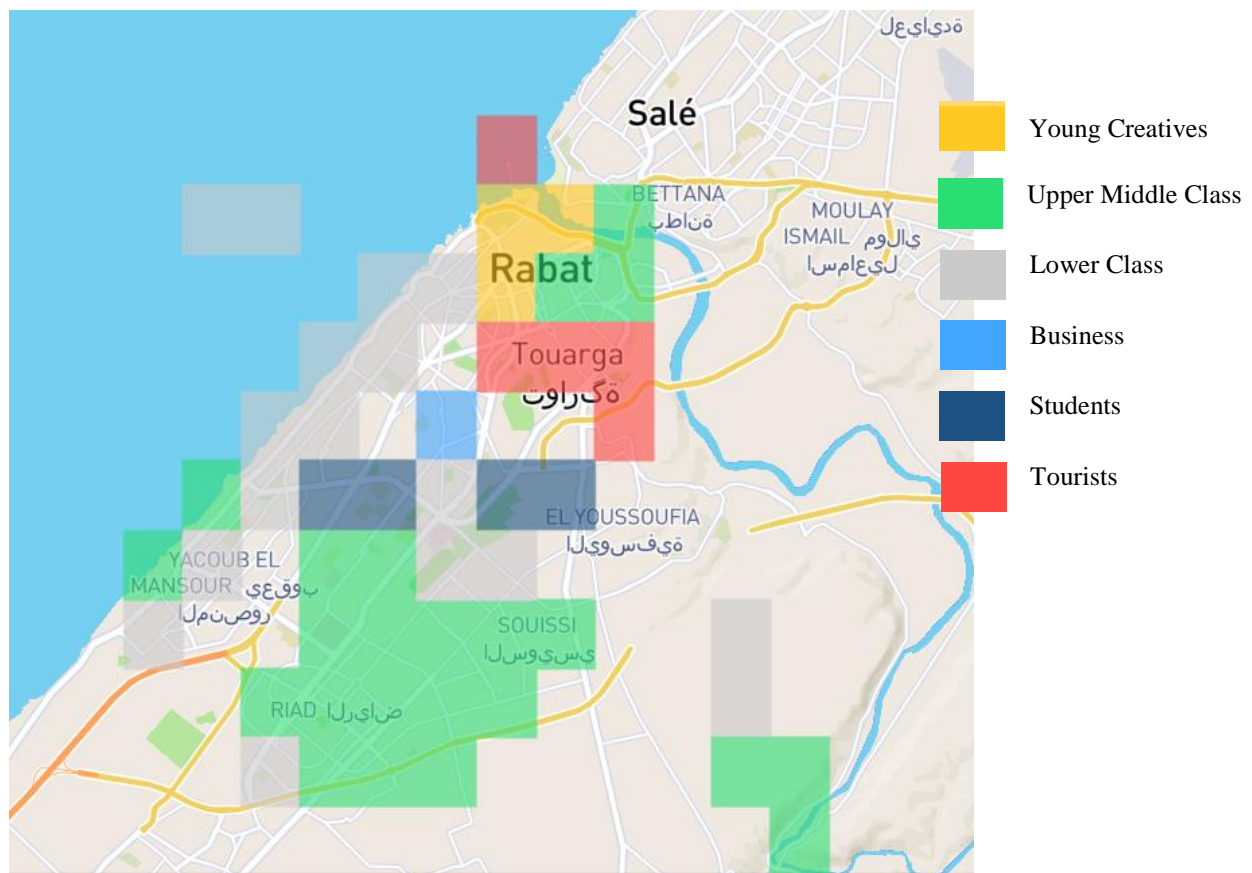
Figure 2 Map of Rabat. Legend classification adapted by authors.
https://hoodmaps.com/rabat. Retrieved on 12-06-19.

Acknowledgements

First and foremost, we would like to express our deepest gratitude to everyone in the field who has made our fieldwork period an unforgettable time in our Bachelor Studies of Cultural Anthropology at Utrecht University.

We want to thank all participants who have so generously and open-heartedly shared their personal stories with us. Their helpfulness and hospitality has been of tremendous value. In particular, we would like to thank Salim and his family for welcoming us so warmly. Their hospitality and generosity has truly made us feel at home in Rabat. We would also like to give special thanks to Kenza for taking us under her wings and showing us the ropes in Rabat. She and her family, too, have shown us endless hospitality. We would like to thank Farida as well, with whom we had our very first meeting in Rabat. She has been immensely helpful in getting our research started and expanding our network in Rabat. Our research would not have been possible without the helpfulness, hospitality and generosity of everyone we have met in the field. For that we are forever grateful.

Last but not least, we would like to thank our thesis supervisor Kees Koonings for his guidance and expertise throughout the entire fieldwork process.

Introduction

On Wednesday September 12th 2018, a new law combating violence against women came into effect in Morocco after years of heated debate and a recent gang-rape incident. According to Families Minister Bassima Hakkaoui, this new law is 'one of the most important texts strengthening the national legal arsenal in the area of equality of the sexes.' (Middle East Eye and Agencies 2018). The foundations for this new law can be found in the 2004 Mudawana[2] Reforms. These reforms brought about more equality between women and men in the private as well as the public realms in Morocco. Leading up to the implementation of the Mudawana Reforms, disagreement between modernists on the one hand and conservatives on the other hand sparked the biggest protest in Moroccan history (Storms and Bartels 2017, 195).

This illustrates the recently increased, yet historically long-lasting attention to issues of gender equality in Morocco. Not only legal changes to promote gender equality and safety for women have been made in recent years. An increasing number of social organizations and civic initiatives has taken up the task of defending gender equality and women's safety too. The above prize winning poem 'Who Is She', written by one of our participants, is an illustration of increasing attention to the subject on a general population level. It is this context in which we have conducted qualitative anthropological research to uncover how notions and experiences of gender and gender equality are intertwined with citizenship as experienced by socially engaged people in Rabat.

Meanings of gender equality can take on different shapes. The concept itself is subject to the cultural and historical circumstances in which it is constantly under construction (Moore 1988, 192). Like gender equality, ideas about citizenship are culturally constructed as well. Inherent to the concept of citizenship are notions of in- and exclusion and feelings of belonging (Nyhagen and Halsaa 2016, 60). The degree to which in- and exclusion and feelings of belonging are experienced are, among other factors, influenced by one's gender. Additionally, one's gender can carry different implications depending on the sphere - public, private or virtual - one is in.

To find out how socially engaged people give meaning to gender equality and citizenship, we have formulated the following main question:

---

[2] The Mudawana entails the Moroccan Family Code and Personal Law.

How is gender equality perceived, experienced and performed by socially engaged people in the public, private and virtual spheres of Rabat and how is this related to their lived experience of citizenship?

We have formulated three sub-questions, each focusing on different aspects of our main question. Firstly, we aimed to form an understanding of how gender equality is perceived by socially engaged people in Rabat. We then went on to explore the different spheres of social life in Rabat - public, private, and virtual - to uncover the ways in which gender relations are experienced and performed in these spheres, paying special attention to (gender) performances as acts of resistance. Lastly, we looked into the relationship between perceptions of gender equality and lived experiences of citizenship by socially engaged people in Rabat.

Relevance

By unraveling lived experiences of gender equality and citizenship of socially engaged people, we hope to transcend orientalist ideas ingrained in western social public debate about gender and (in)equality (Abu-Lughod 2013; Ahmed 1992; Lamphere 2016; Mohanty 1988; Said 1995). Studying this concept in its own specific context not only allows us to provide something approaching a non-western perspective on issues of gender equality, it is also the only way to do justice to the specific culturally and historically constructed meanings of gender. In addition, we want to contribute to feminist anthropological debates (e.g. Moore 1988; Scott 1986) by providing new perspectives on previously studied issues of gender equality and citizenship. Broadening the lens of our research by not only incorporating the public sphere as a site of research, but the private and virtual sphere as well, will allow us to expand the existing body of literature (e.g. Eley 1990; Fraser 1990) mostly focused on implications of gender equality in the public sphere.

Furthermore, with this research we aim to shed light on academically underrepresented male perspectives on gender equality and citizenship (Moore 1988; Spronk 2014; Cornwall and Lindisfarne 2016). According to Cornwall and Lindisfarne (2016), there is a growing body of literature on masculinity studies. However, most of this literature is concerned with white men, or otherwise focused on 'the African Men'. This statement is supported by Spronk (2014), who shows that this masculinity studies mainly focus on economic circumstances, instead of social and

interpersonal relations (Cornwall and Lindisfarne 2016, ix). Moreover, most literature on masculinity studies is written by female authors from a female perspective.

Population

The population among which we have done our research is thus, what we call, socially engaged people of Rabat. This is first of all, a diverse population as to generations. The ages of our participants range from 18 to 55 years old, covering both men and women from different stages of life. The youngest segment of our population, 18-25 years old, mostly consists of students studying at one of Rabat's universities. Participants older than 25 mostly have high-position jobs in companies, universities, social organizations or are in contact with tourists or the international community in Rabat. The population is also diverse with regard to degree of religiosity. While some would consider themselves to be atheist, others see themselves as non-practicing or practicing Muslims.

The binding factor between these people is mostly being of a middle to high social class, enabling them, most of the time, to have enjoyed a high and often French or Spanish education. Making them, one way or the other, aware and affiliated with local and international social issues, and more specifically with the above described gender equality debate going on in Moroccan society and on an international level. As a consequence, these urbanites view themselves implicitly as modern or progressive and as different from the - what they perceive as - more conservative majority of the Moroccan population as a whole.

In the Field

We have conducted our research in Rabat during a period of ten weeks, from February 4th until the 18th of April 2019. Our research is complementary in nature, as this allowed us to somewhat expand our research population, and thus enabling us to paint a more diverse and as accurate as possible picture when talking about socially engaged people in Rabat. During our fieldwork period, we have made use of different qualitative methods, known as methodological triangulation, in order to increase the credibility and validity of our research. Applying several different methods allowed us to approach our subject from multiple angles, in turn allowing us to provide a more detailed and balanced description of our research subject.

First and foremost, we used the method of hanging out. By living in Rabat, doing groceries, meeting with friends and going out for research purposes, one is constantly part of the research setting. We became aware of the daily routines and manners, from which we could benefit when trying to build rapport with our participants. Secondly, we have used participant observation. We gained insight in the private sphere, by eating and sleeping at participants' houses and in the public sphere by observing at terraces, parks and joining dance classes. Since gender equality is difficult to observe directly, we have mostly focused on performances of gender and gender relations when engaging in participant observation. The third method we have used, interviewing, was therefore of great importance and has been our main source of information, as most of our research activities consisted of interviewing, ranging from conversation to semi-structured interviews and life histories.

We have noticed a downside to interviewing, through our position as researchers. As we are white, western, female researchers, it is a possibility that participants have adjusted the expression of their opinions according to what they think would be an acceptable opinion in our view. We have tried to minimize these possible consequences of our position as researchers, by doing follow-up interviews, known to be more credible because of increased rapport, by making clear that we are interested in the point of view of the interviewee and by comparing the data gathered from interviews to the data gathered by participant observation and hanging out. However, despite how well-trained we are as anthropologists, we still think, operate, and analyse within our own framework. As we were aware of this given from the start of the research, we have attempted to approach our data as open-mindedly as possible during the process of analysis. According to a grounded theory approach, we started by individually open coding our data before turning to axial coding to interpret the data. When the phase of writing this thesis started, we compared our code trees to discover similarities and differences and recognized a lot of corresponding themes, which we have used to answer our sub-questions in this thesis.

Throughout our research we have been highly aware of the ethics which apply to doing anthropological research. First of all, by orally obtaining informed consent, we made sure participants voluntarily joined our research and were aware of the main objectives of our research and the possible consequences of taking part in it. To ensure full disclosure about our role as researchers, we have told the people we have met with, as soon as seems appropriate and necessary, what our reason for being in Rabat was. After this initial disclosure of our role as researchers, we

have continuously reminded people of our researchers' identity by openly taking notes during our entire research. To respect our participants' privacy and to protect them, to the best of our ability, against any negative consequences of taking part in our research, we have as adequately as possible guaranteed anonymity for participants by using pseudonyms[3] and handling the data we have gathered confidentially. Since the subject of gender equality and experiences we are interested in could sometimes be rather personal or painful for participants to talk about, we have tried to create an as safe and open environment as possible for them to talk freely and voluntarily by providing a listening ear, which was often perceived to be a relief for participants.

Up Next

In the following chapters, we will first provide an overview of the conceptual framework that forms the basis of our analysis. Next, we will elaborate on the context of Morocco and Rabat in which our research took place. In the three empirical chapters that follow, we will answer our sub-questions by illustrating and analyzing our ethnographic findings. Finally, in the concluding chapter of our thesis, we will discuss and conclude our findings to answer our main question[4].

---

[3] See Attachment 1 for an overview of all participants.

[4] This thesis is written collaboratively unless indicated otherwise. Individually written sections have been revised by both authors.

Chapter 1: Gender, Citizenship, and Resistance

In this chapter, we will provide an overview of the conceptual framework that will form the basis of our analysis in the empirical chapters. We will first look into the concept of gender and its implications in shaping everyday experiences in the different spheres of social life. We will then look into the concept of citizenship through the lens of substantive citizenship and politics of belonging before illustrating the dynamics between gender and citizenship. Finally, we will examine ways in which people can perform resistance and social change as an outcome of citizenship.

1.1 Gender   Chiara

The concept of gender has been present in anthropological research and writings ever since the first forms of participant observation were conducted in the late 19th century. However, the ways in which anthropologists have paid attention to the concept of gender developed greatly, especially from the 1970s onward. Overall attention to power relations and inequality found its way into what would eventually become feminist anthropology.

1.1.1 Definition of Gender

As the concept of gender is inherent to feminist and feminist anthropology, we first have to establish a definition of gender. One of the many definitions of gender is by Joan Scott, who defines gender as 'a constitutive element of social relationships based on perceived differences between sexes as well as a primary way of signifying relationships of power' (Scott 1986, 1067). She describes gender as a cultural construction, an 'entirely social creation of ideas about appropriate roles for women and men' (Scott 1986, 1056). However, in recent years, scholars have increasingly paid attention to gender identities that may not fit into the male-female binary. They use the term 'gender-queer' to describe 'any type of gender identity which is not always male or female, i.e., a mixture of male and female or no gender' (Monro 2005, 5).

Henrietta Moore (1988) adds to Scott's definition of gender the important note that the cultural construction of gender is specific to the cultural and historical context of a given society,

and thus should be studied with attention to these contexts (Moore 1988, 192). The focus of feminism, thus, lies on the analysis of gender relations and a critical examination of femininity and masculinity as a structuring principle in all human societies (Moore 1988, Spronk 2014; Cornwall and Lindisfarne 2016).

Debates regarding gender relations and the pursuit of gender equality have increasingly been framed as central to the realization of modernization (Squires 2007 in Budgeon 2011, 12). Budgeon (2011) states that 'to become modern is to liberate oneself from traditional sources of authority and relations of dependence, so that one may assume the position of an autonomous, self-constituting subject.' (Budgeon 2011, 49). One of these traditional sources of authority and relations of dependence is gender.

1.1.2 Feminist Critiques

In the early 1970s, feminist scholars began critiquing the male-bias present in anthropology and the consequential misrepresentation of women (Moore 1988, 11). This in turn evolved into a critique on the notion of universality among women and the idea of sameness underlying this notion of a shared women's perspective (Moore 1988, 190). Feminists, thus, pointed out not only a male-bias, but also a western-bias in anthropology (Lamphere 2016, 47), as 'other women' - non-western women - were only able to intervene in debate on the terms of western anthropologists who set the agenda (Moore 1988, 191). Scholars such as Mohanty (1988), Ahmed (1992), and Abu-Lughod (2013), have pointed out the problematic ways in which anthropology has treated 'third world women' in academic writings, exposing harmful colonial discourses of 'the Other'.

Feminist anthropology was also tasked with finding ways to theorize highly variable intersections between various forms of difference (i.e. ethnicity, gender, religion, class, sexuality) (Moore 1988, 197). As Moore points out, gender as signifier of difference has been privileged over all other forms of difference. In order to address this issue, feminist scholars developed the theoretical framework and method of 'intersectionality', a term first coined in 1989 by Kimberlé Crenshaw (Crenshaw 1989, 140). According to Crenshaw (1989), intersectional thinking provides the means for dealing with simultaneous systems of domination and further explores how several 'axes of difference' or identity markers interact to shape the multiple dimensions of structural, political, and representational aspects of people's lives (Bolles in Lewin and Silverstein 2016, 90).

As we have elaborated on above, the aspect of power relationships is inherent to the concept of gender. When looking at ideas of gender equality, this power dimension has to be taken into consideration. We, therefore, define gender equality as a culturally specific construction based upon equal rights, equal opportunities, and equal power relations for and between men and women.

In the next paragraph, we will look into three different spheres of social life in which differences of gender, and other axes of difference, can result in in- and exclusion and inequality.

1.2 Gendered Spheres   Chiara

When looking at the ways in which gender influences everyday life practices and participation in society, we have to look at the spheres in which social life is played out. In doing so, we can distinguish three spheres: the public sphere, the private sphere, and, a more recent phenomenon, the virtual sphere. The gendering of social spheres is a modern phenomenon. Mainly the public/private dichotomy, and ideas of femininity and masculinity it is connected to, is an eminently (neo)liberal, individualistic and modern way of organizing society (Budgeon 2011).

1.2.1 The Public Sphere

One of the most influential authors in theorizing the public sphere is Jürgen Habermas. In the early 1960s, Habermas began theorizing the emergence of a modern 'bourgeois public sphere' in eighteenth and early nineteenth century Europe. Habermas describes the public sphere as 'a realm of our social life in which something approaching public opinion can be formed' with access guaranteed to all citizens (Habermas 1974, 49). The public sphere, thus, is a sphere in which the public organizes itself as the bearer of public opinion (Habermas 1973 in Papacharissi 2008, 5).

Other scholars have contributed to the conceptualization of the public sphere, mainly by critiquing Habermas' definition and theorization of the concept. Here, we will discuss two scholars who did so, Nancy Fraser (1990) and Geoff Eley (1990). Nancy Fraser applies Habermas' concept of the public sphere to modern societies and defines the public sphere as 'a space in which citizens deliberate about their common affairs, hence, an institutionalized arena of discursive interaction' (Fraser 1990, 57). She adds to this that public spheres, note the plural in spheres, are 'arenas for

the formation and enactment of social identities', situated within a culturally specific context (Fraser 1990, 68).

The main critiques on Habermas' theorization of the public sphere are centered around exclusion and supposed singularity of this sphere (Fraser 1990; Eley 1990). Both Fraser and Eley argue that the idea of the official public sphere rests on a number of significant exclusions (Fraser 1990, 59; Eley 1990, 22). One important axis of exclusion is gender. Eley suggests that the formation of the public sphere is based on ideas of masculinity and femininity (Eley 1990, 12-13) constructed via 'a specific, highly gendered male discourse that depended on women's domesticity and the silencing of 'public women' (Landes in Eley 1990, 13). The explicit mentioning of 'guaranteed access to all citizens' in Habermas' definition of the public sphere, thus, implies that women were also excluded from the definition of the universal citizen (Göle 1997, 63). Other grounds for exclusion from the public sphere were race, ethnicity, class, and sexual orientation (Eley 1990, 22; Fraser 1990, 67).

With regards to the supposed singularity of the public sphere, Fraser argues that 'arrangements that accommodate contestation among a plurality of competing publics better promote the ideal of participatory parity than does a single, comprehensive, overarching public' (Fraser 1990, 66). Fraser, thus, proposes the term *subaltern counterpublics* to describe the multiple alternative publics members of subordinate social groups constitute among themselves (Fraser 1990, 67). In order to do justice to the multiplicity of public arenas (Fraser 1990, 68), Eley proposes an alternative definition of the public sphere. He defines the public sphere as: 'The structured setting where cultural and ideological contest or negotiation among a variety of publics takes place' (Eley 1990, 11). Because of the inclusionary quality of this definition, this is the definition we will use moving forward.

1.2.2 The Private Sphere

Specification of a public sphere necessarily implies the existence of another sphere that is private (Eley 1990, 17). These spheres are separated along the lines of the masculine realm of public activity and the feminine realm of the home (Sadiqi and Ennaji 2006, 93). Historically, women were confined to the home and tasks of 'child-bearing, child-rearing, and maintaining the household' (Eley 1990, 13). Women, and the domestic sphere they were confined to, were viewed as inferior to the male-dominated public world of civil society, property, social power and freedom

(Eley 1990, 13). This freedom and the ability to move freely, or lack thereof, often intersect with gendered and ethno-racial hierarchies in society (Jaffe and De Koning 2016, 46). This demonstrates the gendered nature of the public sphere as well as the private sphere and the implications this bears with regards to participation in society.

1.2.3 The Virtual Sphere

The third sphere of social life we can identify is a fairly recent phenomenon, occurring in modernizing societies: the virtual sphere. This sphere arose with the invention and growing popularity of the Internet in the late 1990s. Many scholars have written about whether or not this virtual sphere has the potential to function as a 'new' public sphere (Travers 2003; Langman 2005; Goldberg 2010; Papacharissi 2008). Although scholars are divided on this topic, virtual spheres have proven to be an effective way to facilitate networking and social activism, and for its users to claim public space more broadly (Travers 2003, 232).

Despite the relative degree of anonymity participants in virtual spheres enjoy, these spheres are nonetheless gendered spheres (Travers 2003, 225). Travers argues that gender is usually the one marker that remains visible and stable, despite the option of pretending to be a different sex (Travers 2003, 225-6). Participants of virtual spheres identifying themselves as women take up considerably less conversational space and are less assertive and aggressive - traits usually ascribed to women - whereas participants who identify themselves as men adopt gender-appropriate behaviour and dominate, in both quantity and content (O'Brien 1999 in Travers 2003, 226).

The examination of the three mentioned spheres has clarified the influence of gender on the degree to which one is able and allowed to participate in society. The next paragraph will further elaborate on in- and exclusion through the lens of citizenship.

1.3 Citizenship   Anouck

One of the most widely known definitions of citizenship is developed by Thomas Marshall in 1950. He interprets citizenship as being a full member in a politically defined community (Marshall 1950 in Fenster 2005, 217). This implies that one can either be a citizen or not be a citizen, defined by the state. Bellamy (2008) argues for broadening the focus of citizenship to

encompass the human relations required for people to feel like and perform being a citizen. The anthropology of citizenship needs to recognise the more complex reality in which people in post-colonial societies fight for equality on grounds of gender, ethnicity and state repression (Werbner 1988, 3). In other words, inclusion in or exclusion from citizenship depends on several intersecting identity markers. We will use this intersectional approach as the basis when looking into substantive citizenship and politics of belonging.

1.3.1 Substantive Citizenship

The meaning of citizenship is often not so much dependent on being a formal citizen, but more on the lived experience of substantive citizenship (Kabeer 2005, 4). Substantive citizenship refers to the civil, cultural, political, and socio-economic entitlements of people, and depends on their perception of these entitlements being effective (Holston and Appadurai 1996, 190). Their subjective feeling of being a citizen is what matters and therefore their perspective when looking into the meaning of citizenship has to be taken into account (Kabeer 2005, 1). We will now turn to a few intersecting dimensions of citizenship, after first taking a closer look at the subjective feeling of being a citizen through the lens of politics of belonging.

1.3.2 Politics of Belonging

Politics of belonging are the negotiation of the boundaries in a community to determine who is considered as 'us' and 'them' (Yuval-Davis 2006, 204). People can base their considerations of who does or does not belong to 'us' on several grounds, such as (shared) origin, language, religion or other culturally accepted behaviours (Yuval-Davis, 2006, 207). These different considerations can make oneself feel fitting in, or in a state of well-being, which is, according to Miller (2003), how feelings of belonging can be defined. The question for citizenship is, thus, what is necessary for a citizen to be considered belonging by oneself and others.

1.3.3 Different Scales of Citizenship

Politics of belonging can take place in different scales of community (Yuval-Davis 2006, 204). Some scholars argue that citizenship should not be confined to the nation state, because of the increasing influence of universal human rights. These scholars call for a global/world citizenship, which means being a global citizen delinked from the nation state, based upon universal human

rights (Roy 2005, 21). Feminist scholars, however, argue to look at citizenship as practice or 'lived citizenship'. This entails the (non-)participation and feelings of or absence of belonging in different spheres of the smaller and larger communities in society (Nyhagen and Halsaa 2016, 60). This approach to citizenship as a 'lived' phenomenon recognises and does justice to the process of citizenship in the making by the self and power structures like the nation state, but expands it to different community groups. It furthermore links the different spheres in life, such as private and public, together in the meaning making of citizenship (Nyhagen and Halsaa 2016, 69).

One such an important sphere is the city. Cities are the arena of different opinions of many different people demanding different rights by mobilizing into crowds and creating and influencing the meaning of citizenship (Holston and Appadurai 1996, 188). Urban citizenship can be related to Lefebvre's notion of 'the right to the city'. This notion contains two main rights. First, the right of the inhabitants to use the urban space and while doing so creating the urban space, and second, the right of inhabitants to determine over urban space in political and formal ways (Fenster 2005, 219). By bringing in the concepts of participation and sense of belonging, the city can thus become a meaningful focus as a smaller political community for lived citizenship.

1.3.4 Gendered Citizenship

As became clear through the examination of substantive citizenship and politics of belonging, taking intersectionality into account is of great importance when looking into citizenship. One of these intersections is gender, which we will now turn to.

Gendered citizenship on the global level refers to the universal women's rights by the UN and how these rights are employed by power structures and the self (Maktabi 2013, 2). On the nation state level, gendered citizenship is incorporating women in the formal meaning of citizenship but in many cases not in substantive citizenship, still excluding them from different spheres and rights in society (Nyhagen and Halsaa 2016, 60). At the same time, women might struggle with the politics of belonging or, in other words, the negotiation of meanings of being a citizen (Fenster 2005, 229). This negotiation can take place in all three spheres of social life we have elaborated on above.

At the local level, gendered citizenship can manifest in official access to the public sphere of the city, but being confined, as a woman, to the private sphere (Canning and Rose 2001, 435). In many Middle Eastern countries, for example, citizenship is gendered because of a division

between and within the public and private sphere, giving men and women differentiated access to these spheres (Maktabi 2017, 12). Human rights on a global level can also influence how one gives meaning to being a man or a woman on local level and this may change over time, also by influences of power structures such as the nation state. This illustrates the interrelatedness of the different levels, but also the applicability of gendered citizenship to it. We will define gendered citizenship here as the (non-)participation and feelings of or absence of belonging in the different spheres based on gender, defined by the self and power structures, on the global, nation state and local level in a particular place and time.

Citizenship is not only a political status, but also a social practice. One way of actively exercising citizenship is performing acts of resistance. In the next section will look into ways of resistance and gender as performativity, and examine how these different forms of resistance can take place in the public, private and virtual sphere.

1.4 Resistance and Social Change   Anouck

1.4.1 Two Elements of Resistance

Resistance is an extensively broad term and its definition may differ in terms of scale, target and goals (Hollander and Einwohner 2004, 536). According to Hollander and Einwohner (2004), different forms of resistance have two elements in common: action and a sense of opposition. Action, in this sense, is seen as some form of active behaviour (Hollander and Einwohner 2004, 538). We would like to link action to gender as performativity as stated by Butler (1988). Gender is, in this case, understood as the product of continuing repetition of acts. By performing these acts, meanings of gender are under continuous construction (Butler 1988, 519). As Morris (1995) states, gender as performance can be a means for transformation, negotiation of its meaning, in other words: action. We will later come back to this in our elaboration on different forms of resistance.

Let us first return to the second element of resistance. Opposition can be understood as the aim for social change or being counter to someone or something (Hollander and Einwohner 2004, 538). This can be linked to the concept of gendered citizenship, as this has above been

conceptualised as aiming towards participation and feelings of belonging and as being constantly in the making. According to Werbner (1998), one can add to this that citizenship 'raises its eyes towards to future', towards what you want it to be (Werbner 1998, 5). Gendered citizenship can, therefore, be a site for social change and opposition.

Critique is given to the fact that opposition and action are not always recognised or wanting to be recognised (Hollander and Einwohner 2004, 540). Based on the elements of action and opposition and the critique of recognition, Hollander and Einwohner (2004) have proposed a typology of resistance, containing seven types. We will here elaborate on two types of resistance, namely overt resistance and covert resistance.

1.4.2 Overt Resistance

Overt resistance is oppositional active behaviour recognised by the target as such and wanting to be recognised as such (Hollander and Einwohner 2004, 545). Overt resistance can exist in different forms, such as social movements or activism (Salman and Assies 2017, 215).

The action, or performance, requires two elements in order to be recognised, namely the public space and embodiment. Through public performance, one becomes an instrument of the social change one would like to achieve (Madison 2010, 6). The message is embodied by oneself in the performance (Madison 2010, 7) and can thereby be recognised as opposition. As stated earlier, the virtual sphere is seen as a more broad public space and an effective space for social activism. There are, for example, many feminist movements active on the internet (Megarry 2018). However, the assumption that oppositional performances will automatically lead to social change is also criticized for the so-called 'romance of resistance' (Morris 1995, 586), as performances may not always lead to social change and can even be dangerous (Salman and Assies 2017, 250). The many feminist movements, for example, can be under surveillance by the male-dominated nation state (Megarry 2018, 1070). Therefore, people also employ other forms of resistance, like covert resistance.

1.4.3 Covert Resistance

Covert resistance is intentional opposition while the action is unnoticed by the target, but noticed by other third parties (Hollander and Einwohner 2004, 545). Forms of covert resistance are silent protest and everyday resistance. When overt resistance is not allowed, one can use silence as a

form of opposition. Silent protest is, however, not always covert resistance, as silence can be a performative way of overt resistance as well (Salman and Assies 2017, 250). In this sense, silence is a sign of agency rather than powerlessness (Gal 1991, 176).

Agency is strategically used in everyday resistance as well. If women have differential access to the public and private sphere, one may choose to stay in the private sphere. By emphasizing their roles and obligations in the private sphere, women can make themselves indispensable and taken for granted tasks might not seem so natural anymore (Prokhovnik 1998, 88). One can perform their message in such a way that it is aimed towards social change, but not immediately recognised as such. These acts of resistance can become part of everyday customs and habits and thereby changing the structures from within (Sivaramakrishnan 2005, 351).

Resistance can thus be a way to perform social change in the public, virtual and private sphere. Regardless of the form, covert or overt, it can be a way to determine the meaning of (gendered) citizenship and what one aspires it to look like.

1.5 Conclusion

In conclusion, the concepts we elaborated on above form the theoretical framework for the analysis of our fieldwork data. Gender is the basis of our framework. Its implications run through all aspects of social life, as we have demonstrated in the paragraphs on gendered spheres and gendered citizenship. It can influence the degree to which one is able and allowed to participate in society and it informs mechanisms of in- and exclusion. We have defined gender equality as a culturally specific construction based upon equal rights, equal opportunities, and equal power relations for and between men and women.

However, those disadvantaged by mechanisms of in- and exclusion from belonging in the different spheres based on notions of gender, as well as other identity markers, can simultaneously use gender as a form of performativity, which in turn can lead to different forms of resistance. Feelings of belonging and feelings of substantive citizenship are in intertwinement with this performativity, making the different forms of resistance part of gendered citizenship.

Now that we have laid out the theoretical framework of our analysis, we will turn to the context of Morocco and Rabat in which socially engaged people perceive, experience and perform gender relations and gender equality.

Chapter 2: Rabat, City of Many Faces

The context in which we have conducted our fieldwork research is shaped by historico-political developments, several socio-cultural dynamics that exist within the broader Moroccan society, and Rabat being an urban setting. In this chapter, we will provide an overview of the multiple elements that constitute the unique circumstances shaping the lived experiences of gender equality and citizenship of socially engaged people in Rabat.

2.1 Feminist Traditions and the 2004 Mudawana Reforms

First and foremost, when talking about feminist traditions in the Middle East/North Africa (MENA) region, it is important to emphasise that these traditions originated in this very region and to note that the West is not the birthplace of feminism from which all others strands of feminism we see around the world today derive (Badran 2005, 12). This, of course, does not mean these strands of feminism do not intersect with elements of feminisms found elsewhere (Badran 2005, 13; Touaf et al. 2017, 98). However, acknowledging the unique circumstances in which feminism in the MENA region arose allows us to appreciate more deeply its complexity.

The specificity of feminist traditions in Morocco can be found in the fact that they emerged within a postcolonial Islamic context. Contrary to a history of reason that lead to the emergence of Western liberal feminism, Morocco's feminist traditions are 'faith-oriented, both presently and in the future, already modern, exists in the now, and is already feminist' (Sadeet 2013, 40). This context highly influenced the development, focus, and goals of Moroccan feminist traditions.

The beginning of the Moroccan feminist movement can be traced back to sixty years ago, when the *Akhawat al-Safaa* 'Sisters of Purity' Association issued a document stating several legal demands, including more visibility of women in the public sphere (Sadiqi and Ennaji 2006, 95). Urban women of the middle- and upper-classes began to generate a feminist discourse, a critique on 'being held back from accessing the benefits of modernity as openly as their male counterparts' (Badran 2005, 8). Implications of highly gendered spheres were fertile grounds for social change (Sadiqi and Ennaji 2006, 94).

From the 1960s onward, the strict gendered public/private dichotomy that had been in place was significantly disrupted by women entering the workforce and taking jobs outside the home (Sadiqi and Ennaji 2006, 88). During this period, feminist ideas began circulating through

journalistic and academic writings and by the end of the twentieth century, the Moroccan feminist movement started to become very visible in the public sphere of power. It had made itself an indispensable tool of democratization (Sadiqi and Ennaji 2006, 104).

The Mudawana reforms of 2004 are considered to be one of the greatest accomplishments of the feminist movement in Morocco. After gaining independence in 1956, Moroccan King Mohammed V strived to balance his wish for Morocco to become a modern nation state with the nation's Islamic roots. The Mudawana reforms are a prime example of this struggle for balance, as both modernists and religious conservatives agreed that there was a need for change, however religious conservatives regarded the proposed reforms as too Western and modern (Storms and Bartels 2017, 195).

According to the reformed Mudawana, women are equal to men in many areas of life and are considered full citizens, as they are granted fundamental rights and chances in education, work, life, healthcare and security (Rochd 2017, 169). However, the implementation of these reforms is not yet completely accepted and acted upon, especially by the religious conservatives. Even though significant changes have been made, the nation state Morocco is still in the process of trying to balance the 'modern and secular' and 'authentic and Islamic' (Newcomb 2006, 289).

2.2 Social and Cultural Dynamics in the Context of Rabat

Not only is the context of our fieldwork research shaped by historico-political developments, both social and cultural dynamics, too, contribute to forming this specific context. It is first and foremost important to point out that in Moroccan society, community – be it your own circle of family or be it the broader intersecting relational networks you live in – is the cornerstone of society. In order to keep the community intact, society exercises strong social control. Beside this strong sense of community, there are two socio-cultural dynamics that sustain and reinforce each other in shaping everyday interactions between men and women. First we will look into a culture of shame and judgement present in Rabat and then we will look at the role religion plays in shaping Rabat's context.

2.2.1 Culture of Shame and Judgement

The word *7shouma*[5] is a very powerful word in Moroccan culture. Putting shame on others is used to silence, discredit, and, thus, control people who behave in social or gender non-conforming ways. Having someone put *7shouma* on you does not only damage your own reputation, it also extends to your family's reputation. Referring back to the above illustrated importance of family and community, doing or saying something that is considered *7shouma* can have a large impact on how others view and treat you. In the Moroccan context, the word *7shouma,* thus, embodies a certain power dynamic that is used to exercise social control, as illustrated by Touhtouh (2006). He states that, in the Moroccan context, 'all aspects of behaviour are subject to chronic censorship by control strategies involving honour and shame' (Touhtouh 2006, 179).

Closely interwoven with this culture of *7shouma* and the strong sense of community is a culture of judgement. Based on ideas of femininity and masculinity, on which we will elaborate in Chapter 3, and other perceptions of what is 'normal' or 'morally right', judging others and constantly keeping an eye on people in your community is highly ingrained in Moroccan culture. This culture of shame and culture of judgement together form a social apparatus embedded in society that, sometimes more implicit, sometimes more explicit, structures and maintains gender relations. It therefore highly influences perceptions, experiences and performances of gender relations and gender equality, as we will demonstrate in Chapter 3 and Chapter 4.

2.2.2 Religion

Islam is the biggest religion in Morocco, with 99% of Morocco's population officially being Muslim (Central Intelligence Agency, 2019). Islam is also Morocco's state religion, meaning that state and religion are not separated and the constitution and laws are drafted within a religious framework. Majority of the Muslims in Morocco are Sunni and they belong to the Maliki school of jurisprudence, which takes the Qur'an and Hadiths (sayings, customs and actions of Prophet Muhammad) as their primary sources for religious laws (Ramadan 2006, 26-27). This strong position of Islam in Moroccan society leads to religion being used to justify certain behaviours, manners and opinions. Mainly the Qur'anic term *Qiwama* (male guardianship) has a strong

---

[5] Pronounced as *h-shouma*, meaning shame, fear or taboo.

influence on the way gender relations are viewed and experienced. We will elaborate on this concept and its implications in shaping gender relations in Chapter 4.

In recent years, Morocco has dealt with increasing Wahhabist influences coming from Saudi Arabia. This branch of Islam is often associated with ultraconservatism and fundamentalism. Its influence is most obviously noticeable by the growing number of women in working-class neighbourhoods wearing a *niqab*[6] (Baylocq and Hlaoua 2016, 114). We will elaborate on the role this recent religious development plays in experiences of citizenship in Chapter 5.

2.3 Urban Setting of Rabat

Now turning to the specific context of Rabat. Rabat is the capital of Morocco, located along the north-western Atlantic coast of the country. The city has approximately 580.000 inhabitants[7] and is also the political centre of Morocco, making it a popular site for demonstrations and social activism. Rabat also houses many foreign embassies as well as a number of higher education institutes and universities, the Mohammed V University and the International University of Rabat (UIR) being the most notable.

Rabat is a city of many faces. Within a 5-minute walk, surroundings shift from French colonial architecture, palm trees and broad streets, to crowded, narrow winding alleys of the old walled medina. Those who can afford it live in one of the luxurious neighbourhoods located further away from the city centre. Here, large white villas are surrounded by gated gardens and expensive cars are parked in the streets. Social segregation is embedded in the city's architecture. As many of our participants are upper middle class, these wealthier neighbourhoods form the urban habitus of most of our participants. We, too, lived in one of the wealthy neighbourhoods in the north of Rabat during our fieldwork period (see figure 2). Characterizing these neighbourhoods is the mix of French colonial influences and typical Moroccan scenes.

The urban environment of Rabat reflects the globalizing world it exists in. Primarily western cultural influences are apparent in the streetscape. International food and fashion chains are scattered throughout the more wealthy neighbourhoods of Rabat. Mainly the younger

---

[6] Full face veil.
[7] "Population Légale des Régions, Provinces, Préfectures du Royaume d'Après les Résultats du RGPH 2014" Haut-Commissariat au Plan (HCP). Retrieved 01-06-19.

generation makes use of advancing technologies and the virtual sphere that puts them in contact with the rest of the world. The older generation is less so internationally oriented, however, they are not isolated from the tensions between tradition and modernity that are happening all around them. They, too, live in a globalizing city in a globalizing world.

In the next section of this thesis, we will dive into the findings of our fieldwork research, by first and foremost looking into how socially engaged people perceive femininity, masculinity and gender equality.

Chapter 3: Perceptions of Gender Equality Anouck

In this chapter, we will look into the perceptions of gender equality by socially engaged people of Rabat. To understand these perceptions, we will first look into meanings given to gender. Next we will look into the perceptions on the current situation regarding gender equality, the changes people would like to see and lastly give an overview of the perceptions socially engaged people in Rabat have on how the situation on gender equality should be defined and take shape.

3.1 Femininity and Masculinity

Even though in recent years scholars have increasingly paid attention to non-binary gender-identities (Monro 2005, 5), socially engaged people in Rabat identify their gender as either male or female. Ideas of what it means to be or what is expected from a woman or a man are strongly present among the population. First, we will start looking into the meaning given to femininity. We will distinguish between stereotypes on femininity as perceived by both men and women, stereotypes on femininity specifically from a male perspective and expectations by men and women on femininity.

With regard to stereotypes about women Aicha, a professor in feminist theory, refers to stereotypes that exist, according to her, in Moroccan society: "Stereotypes of presumably weak reputation of women. That they need to be protected, they cannot be autonomous, they need to be supported." (Aicha, interview). She, herself, does not agree with these stereotypes, but recognizes that these form the image of what is seen as femininity in society. This is reflected in the male perspective of Hassan, researcher of women's studies in Islam, as well. As he gives an explanation of why there is positive discrimination for women: "Because women, for example, are emotional or weak or whatever, so you have protective measures. We have barriers towards women, because women are fragile." (Hassan, interview). He sketches the stereotype of women being weak, however he too believes this not to be true. Participants add to this other character traits that are believed to be typical for women, such as being gentle, caring, and obedient. Stereotypes of women in general are, thus, mostly character traits which are believed to typify femininity. Specifically male participants often supplement the mentioned stereotypes by other character traits. Mouad, a student at the International University of Rabat, mentions the following stereotypes about women:

"Women are so scary, they are so competitive and they are hard workers. Men should take advantage of women's capabilities." (Mouad, conversation).

While stereotypes about femininity are mostly related to character traits, expectations about femininity are mostly related to having a family. Dounia, a 27 year-old member of an online social movement, tells us: "There is always this idea that women exist to please men and our ambition in life is to find a husband and have kids." (Dounia, interview). Women should, for example, take care of the children, do household chores and having a wish of getting married (while being a virgin). Anwar, an 18 years old law-student at the international university, tells us: "In Morocco, a girl in her 30s who's still single gets asked all the time why she's not married yet, when she's planning on getting married and so on." (Anwar, interview).

Related to ideas about femininity are expectations on what field of study or job is suitable for women. We observed, for instance, in many cafés and restaurants in Rabat and saw a clear division between men working as waiters in the public realm, while female employees could only rarely be seen, because of working in the shielded kitchen. This also applies to other jobs in the public sphere. Rarely you see female police officers, parking guards or taxi drivers. This observation confirms ideas of Eley (1990) that spheres are organized along ideas of masculinity and femininity. As in Rabat, being a woman is associated with domesticity and private spheres, while masculinity is connected to ideas of public spaces.

Now that meanings of femininity is covered, we will turn to ideas of masculinity. Here, we will also distinguish between stereotypes about masculinity perceived by men and women, stereotypes about masculinity specifically from a female perspective and expectations of masculinity. Masculinity, is characterized by both men and women, as being strong, tough and dominant, as Hassan explains: "Masculinity is understood as to be stronger and be able to interfere outside." (Hassan, interview). Here again, one can see the association of

Figure 3 Image of a man on a door in the Old Medina of Rabat. Photograph taken by Chiara Thijssen.

masculinity with the public sphere. Driss, a young student at the UIR, adds to this when talking about stereotypes on masculinity in society: "A real man is considered to be dominant, have the upper hand, have a say in everything, it's all about them." (Driss, conversation).

There are also stereotypes about men, mostly existing among women, that men have many girlfriends, that they do not help in the household and that they are macho. Yassmine, 32 year old head of student associations at the UIR, also says: "They (men) are more simple than we (women) are, we think more. We tend to overthink things. I think it's binary, like right and wrong. And it's easy. You need to communicate to them, because they don't actually hear the things we say. Sometimes you have to be clear, because we're just different." (Yassmine, interview).

The expectations of men partly overlap with the stereotypes, as Dounia explains: "Men are expected to be strong, to not be very emotional, to not talk about their emotions. It's not okay for them to talk about what they're feeling or to cry. Even when they talk about feminism or whatever, they can be called gay or not man enough. I think they're expected to be strong, like alpha men." (Dounia, interview.) Taking a stance against unequal treatment of women is, thus, seen as a sign of weakness, as is showing your emotions.

Since men are expected to be strong, certain tasks, such as being responsible for the women close to them, providing financial security and being the head of the family, are associated with masculinity. This is something men in our population, for instance 20 year old student Zakaria, do not agree with: "Men in Morocco are expected to be financially independent, to get a job, to be good in materialistic ways. This is not the same way for women. A man has to provide for the girl, the girl is the princess. But I disagree with the idea that men should be financial providers. I think the load should be equally shared. Women should also provide their financial part." (Zakaria, interview).

These ideas about femininity and masculinity are perceived to exist in Moroccan society as a whole. Most of the socially engaged people we have spoken to do not agree with these stereotypes and expectations. Most of our participants believe that men and women are able to do the same things, if only they were taught to do so. This can be illustrated by our observations during a Thursday afternoon in the city centre of Rabat.

At Mohammed V Avenue, we sit in the middle of a square on a small wall in front of an old white French colonial house. In the late afternoon, this is the place to be for young creative

inhabitants of Rabat. On the stairs leading up to the house there is a small platform where teenage boys and a few girls gather to loudly play American hip hop through their speakers and dance to the beat. It is a group of approximately eight boys and two girls. One of the boys is making most of the moves and spectators start to gather to watch their performances. The dancers wear clothes ranging from jeans to sweatpants. Girls wearing lots of makeup and boyish clothing do not participate in dancing, but watch from the side together with some other boys and all laugh very loud when the one dancing comes up with a funny new move when the beat drops. When another female friends joins, they exchange hugs and kisses on the cheeks.

In this illustration, boys and girls form a mixed group, wearing the same type of clothing, being in the public space in front of an audience, thus not conforming to society's stereotypes. In this way, the performers as a part of the socially engaged people in Rabat give their own meaning to what it means to be a man or a woman. Their meaning is different from the described stereotypes and assumptions society in general holds on to. To further understand this difference, it is first important to turn to the perceptions of socially engaged people on the current situation of gender equality in Morocco.

3.2 Perceptions of Current Situation Regarding Gender Equality

The perceptions of the current situation regarding gender equality among socially engaged people in Rabat can roughly be divided into improving or getting worse. Seeing the current situation as unequal is a shared opinion among our population and is underlying the perceptions of improvement or getting worse. We will therefore start by explaining the shared opinion of inequality, before turning to improvement and getting worse.

"Morocco is a man's world." (Dounia, interview), is how the perception of inequality is often defined by women among the population. They often see the current situation in Rabat as unfair for women. Fitting into ideas of femininity means being confined to mostly the private sphere. Women therefore point out that the public space is owned by men, as there are much more men on the street and most cafés are occupied by men only. We also observed this when being in the parks and cafés in the busy main square of Rabat, often counting twice less women than men

around. When a woman does visit a terrace, she is almost always accompanied by a man. Jamila thinks this is unfair: "People don't think we have to change people who are sitting in the cafe, no, they say just don't walk in front of the cafe or change the way you dress. Just put the burqa and go out." (Jamila, interview).

Many women find this gendered division of public and private and often being the one responsible for household tasks unfair, as Oumayma, 49 year old director at the Ministry of Industry, explains: "We are not equal, we are equal in responsibilities, but not in rights or opportunities." (Oumayma, interview). This opinion is shared by men, although sometimes to a lesser degree, presumably because of not directly experiencing inequality themselves. Ahmad, a 21 year old law student, makes this clear when talking about sexual harassment of girls on the street: "I'm not a girl, but when I know things like this happen, I feel raped. It's crazy." (Ahmad, interview). Since femininity is associated with the domestic sphere, the streets are often mentioned not to be safe for women. There is perceived to be a constant alertness for harassment on the streets and that women there are not able to wear what they want. We will turn to this more in-depth in the next chapter.

Socially engaged people often have, one way or the other, come in contact with western ideas, they compare the current situation in Morocco with western countries. They base their perception of inequality often on lagging behind Europe or the United States. "We will reach a point where gender equality laws are in place and we will reach gender equality, like in Europe. In Europe, some issues still not really equal, but most important laws are equal. Morocco will get there also eventually, will take a lot of time, but I'm optimistic." (Aicha, interview). Many socially engaged people think the perceived inequality is an obstacle for development of Morocco as a whole and describe the current situation as 'retarded' or 'underdeveloped'.

However, what also becomes clear from Aicha's last quote, is that some participants do believe in improvement of the situation. These participants are often still young, perceived by themselves and older participants to be more open-minded than older Moroccans, as Dounia explains: "I think it's changing a lot. I love seeing men, young men being very conscious. I'm lucky to have friends who think like that and that things change. And I think this generation is aware of this problem and they find as absurd as we do. I think it can change, but we have to discuss it." (Dounia, interview). Many mention that young people should educate their children on their ideas to keep the improvements going. As Samir describes his opinion: "You can change

people younger than you. You should educate them and then it will change step by step, because maybe it sounds mean, but the old people will die." (Samir, conversation). The older generation of people is, thus, perceived to have another mindset than the younger generation and is perceived to be hard to change.

Even though the mindset of older people is believed to be hard to change, older people cannot deny that things have changed. Salim, 29 year old entrepreneur, talks about his father and changes in the situation for his mother: "In the past, my mom didn't have the right to go out without my dad's permission. He can't say that she can't go out anymore. He recognises things have changed." (Salim, interview). Ongoing improvements regarding the position of women are mentioned by the participants to illustrate their perception of improvement too. Dounia talks about improvements for herself and women in general: "I think today, the situation has changed a lot, we have a lot of freedom. We can study now, thank God for that!" (Dounia, interview).

People who describe the current situation as improving or getting worse, both recognize a tension in society between what they call tradition or religion versus modernity. Participants who see improvement perceive this tension as a constant struggle that is being worked on, as Hassan explains: "There was a heated debate between modernity and Islam. What happened is that the king, as referee and commander of the faithful, consolidated between the two. He appointed a committee consisting of scholars and civil society activists. They tried to make concessions from both sides and they developed a family code that can satisfy both sides." (Hassan, interview).

Lastly, let us turn to socially engaged people who see the situation only getting worse. These people are mostly middle-aged and have fought for equality, but are discouraged by what they perceive as no change or the situation getting even worse: "When me and my husband were in our twenties, were confident about things going better, things evolving and going towards democracy, towards human rights, towards development. And suddenly we have this religion, this 'new' religion coming from Saudi-Arabia and all these extremist countries and everything changed." (Farida, interview). Farida, 49 year old architect and life coach, thinks that the just mentioned tension between tradition or religion and modernity creates a gap in society between radicalized Islamist and open-minded people, in which the radicalists are perceived to worsen the situation for women.

Adilah, middle-aged choreographer and performer, agrees with Farida. While interviewing her in the busy main square of Rabat, she points towards a woman wearing a burqa coming our

way and says: "The burqa is not at all Moroccan. At all! I have problem with burqa and hijab and it comes, and it comes and it comes, and the mentalities slowly changing. They become more and more fanatic. Now it's dangerous, what's happening now, it's dangerous for my country. I feel that the mentality is going down." (Adilah, interview). Other participants, such as Hassan, have another opinion on the situation getting worse and has trust in the light at the end of the tunnel: "You can see the situation in Morocco getting worse and worse. But for me, that's not negative. It only means that we will reach a point from which we can rise again. We are going down in many things. But when things get so dark, light will come again. I don't get sad about things getting worse." (Hassan, interview).

3.3 Perceptions of Change

Since none of our participants describes the current situation as equal, a lot of socially engaged people mention the importance of change of the current situation. We will first look into the different motivations for change among the population and then turn to what the goals for change are. Since all participants, both men and women, agree that the current situation is unfair for women, they do find it important to change the situation, for different reasons. These reasons are diverse and not ordered along gendered lines, but there are three main themes recognizable, namely development, religion and humanity or naturality.

Regarding development, a small portion of the participants thinks improving the situation regarding gender equality is not the top priority, as they perceive addressing other issues, such as illiteracy and the healthcare system, as being of greater importance. A great amount of participants, on the other hand, say instead that improving the current situation between men and women is necessary in order to solve other problems, as Imane, researcher on women studies in Islam, explains: "Equality is necessary for society, because it helps for sustainable development. 51% of our population is female, which means it's not going to be equal, there is no balanced development if women are not involved." (Imane, interview). As Badran (2005) argues, the importance of female perspectives on social issues have set feminist ideas in motion since the end of the nineteenth century. This motivation is still relevant today.

Others base their motivation for pursuing societal change on the importance of having a balance in life in the form of a fair division of tasks between men and women. For these people,

religion is a driving force behind their wish for change of the current situation. Hassan illustrates this connection between his beliefs in Islam and the need of equal status between men and women: "We are just two creatures, God has given us the same value. We have been created from one soul, not one that is superior or inferior, we are the same." (Hassan, interview). Here, Hassan talks about God creating men and women from one soul, a religious notion on which Islamic feminism is based (Leo 2005). Also, according to some of the participants' interpretations of Islam, the relationships between men and women should be based on mercy and compassion, which is currently lacking in their opinion. Acting according to these beliefs is for these people living their true religion.

The motivation for change of socially engaged people can also be found in their understanding of humanity. They see equal relations between men and women as the basis for humanity and to sustain dignity. These ideas can be both based on religious notions, as well as secular ones. This understanding of humanity is perceived to be something that should be natural. In their opinion, ideas of gender equality should be ingrained in society, as Ahmad describes: "There should be no inequality. It's like something you don't think about because it's just normal. It's like air. In the air we have CO_2 and H_2O and it's just mixed and we don't see it. Just the way gender equality should be." (Ahmad, interview).

As illustrated above, many people would like to see the current situation regarding gender equality change. But that leaves us with the question, change in what way? The goals of socially engaged people can be divided into changes regarding women, changes regarding men and changes regarding society as a whole. Noticeable, is that the changes for women are all aimed towards changes in the public sphere whereas men aim for change in the private sphere. This, again, confirms Sadiqi and Ennaji's (2006) theory on women being associated with the private sphere, while men are associated with the public sphere. For women, these changes contain breaking with stereotypes or expectations, such as being able to work or study whatever they want, being able to wear whatever they want regardless of where they are going and being able to smoke if they want to. A lot of people put being able to smoke forward as an illustration of inequality in society, as Dounia did as well: "If you're a woman you want to smoke in the streets, everyone is looking at you like you're doing something really bad against the rules of the city. But if a man is smoking, it's totally normal, nothing there to see." (Dounia, interview). Another goal for change

regarding women is to eliminate the sexual harassment going on in the public sphere on which we will expand in the next chapter.

For men, goals regarding changes for men are aimed at being able to show emotions, to raise the children and to do their part in the household chores without being judged for it. Imane gives her opinion on the role of fathers in raising children: "I am against the idea of maternal leave only. Men should also have a responsibility in raising the children. When she is working, the men should bring the nanny." (Imane, interview). Participants, thus, would like to see a more active role for fathers in raising children, even if it is in the form of arranging a nanny to come.

Goals for changes in society as a whole are for a lot of people aimed at changes in laws and advocacy. Many people see laws regarding women as not effective, in need of change or not enough, on which we will expand in Chapter 5. Also, a few people express the wish to see a separation between religion and laws, while others see educating people on religion to avoid misconceptions as an important goal. As Ahmad explains his opinion: "When you're an imam, you're a respected guy in our culture, it's so important. And it's not like this now. You spend three years in this school and you're an imam, that's it." (Ahmad, interview). He thinks some imams are not able to explain the context in which the Qur'an should be understood and people take the text too literally, using it to justify inequality once again.

3.4 The Continuum of Gender Equality

As illustrated above, the goals regarding gender equality differ and can therefore be best illustrated on a continuum regarding gender equality. We can identify three main stages on this continuum: inequality, equity and full equality. As stated before, a lot of people describe the current situation on gender equality as unequal. This inequality exists within society, among people who are perceived as conservatives by most of our participants. As mentioned before, conservatives view equality as not compatible with religion or making a family. Socially engaged people can be divided into the other stages of equity or full equality, however most of them bring up the term equity, as they prefer this term over equality.

"Gender equality is maybe to do the same things, in the same places, without being judged. Without anybody telling you, you can't do it. But I have a problem with the word equality,

because I think we're very different too. There is a term in French, I think it's equity. Equality is not equity. For instance, there are things that are told for women and not for men. So that is not equal, you see? For instance, about pregnancy, it's a big difference! There are many cases that show that we are different. But I think equality is important for the basis. For studies, for work, for big questions, health, freedom, things like that." (Farida, interview)

While gender equality is perceived to be about complete equality between men and women in all aspects of life, gender equity is more about perceptions and opinions on what constitutes fair relations, opportunities and responsibilities for men and women (McDonald 2013, 983). The participants who prefer gender equity as ideal situation perceive men and women to be different in their biological characteristics. Apart from these differences, men and women should be equal in basic rights, opportunities, and treatment. That does not, however, mean that they are the same, as Yassmine explains: "I believe we're not equals, we're different. We should have equal rights, but we are not the same, we are complementary. We have to interact and have equal rights of course." (Yassmine, interview). She prefers, as do other participants, to see men and women as complementary, with each having their own ways of thinking and capabilities. Socially engaged people believe these different perspectives and capabilities can be used to live in harmony and to create a family together, which, thus, illustrates their perception of what is a fair relation between men and women. By many people, this is seen as compatible with their interpretation of Islam. Or how Hassan said it: "It is to strive towards satisfactory relations between the two genders." (Hassan, interview).

A division can be observed between people who see the situation regarding gender equality in Europe or Western countries as a goal to strive towards and people who do not. People who prefer equity over equality often think gender equality should be formed with taking into account Morocco's own context and Muslim culture. This can be illustrated by the fact that they came up with the term gender equity themselves, instead of using gender equality, like we as researchers, did. This is in line with the critique of the 'western-bias', which anthropology of gender has dealt with, as described in Chapter 1.

The portion of people who see the West as an example often perceive the West as being higher in development than Morocco. Participants who agree on this often believe that men and women are completely equal. Chaima, a 21 year old student at the UIR, explains that gender equality to her means: "Men and women are able to do the exact same things, because we are all human and we were all born the same." (Chaima, conversation). They see equality as a form of justice and not judging one another.

3.5 Conclusion

In conclusion, socially engaged people of Rabat view the current situation on gender equality as unequal, based on stereotypes and expectations of men and women, which they do not agree with. They would rather see equity or equality between men and women and have arguments backing up these perceptions ranging from religion to development. Although some view that change is on its way, others see the future from a less optimistic point of view. In the next chapter, we will expand on the perceptions of socially engaged people by looking into their experiences and performances of gender in Rabat.

Chapter 4: Experiences and Performances of Gender Relations Chiara

In this chapter, we will expand on the above illustrated perceptions of gender equality among socially engaged people by looking into how these perceptions translate into experiences and performances of gender relations and gender equality in the different spheres of Rabat. When looking at these experiences and performances, we can differentiate between three main spheres: the public sphere, the private sphere, and the virtual sphere. The public sphere can in turn be subdivided into three domains: the learning environment, the work environment, and public space.

4.1 The Learning Environment

The learning environment, for example the campus of the International University of Rabat (UIR), is generally experienced, by both students as well as employees, as a space of mutual respect between men and women. The fact that the university campus is a space of learning and intellectual enrichment is thought to create an open mindset among students and professors. However, some male students say they do experience a difference in treatment from professors, as some male professors tend to favour girls over boys, giving them higher grades for example.

It is noteworthy to point out, however, that the campus of the UIR is almost its own little village within the public sphere of Rabat. The remote location of the university campus, the state's involvement in its creation and the relative high tuition costs have created a space with its own (gendered) norms, values, and rules within the broader public sphere of Rabat.

> *A twenty-five minute drive in a private 'International University of Rabat' shuttle bus takes us from the city centre of Rabat to the campus of the UIR, located fifteen kilometres away from Rabat's city centre. As we approach the campus, four identical solemn, tall white buildings are looming in the distance, surrounded by slowly swaying palm trees and well-kept gardens. Separating these buildings are a restaurant, an indoor swimming pool, student housing, a large sports field and a cafeteria. Along the side lines of the sports field, mixed groups of students are sitting on the grandstand, talking and laughing enthusiastically. In the cafeteria too, mixed groups of students are enjoying their lunch break together. Three boys and two girls walk by us as we sit down underneath a colourfully blossoming tree by the sports field. One of the girls, dressed in a black cropped*

top, a bright red skirt and sneakers, puts her hand on the shoulders of one of the boys as she laughs lavishly. Her long, black hair falls playfully over her bare shoulders. The boy, dressed in denim jeans, a white Ralph Lauren polo shirt, shiny black sneakers and sunglasses, leans towards her as they share a laugh. The group continues its way to the cafeteria, where they too sit down to have lunch.

Mainly the interactions between boys and girls and the physical appearance of girls on the UIR campus is unlike in other public spaces in Rabat. As Karim, 18 year-old architecture student at UIR, explains: ''There is no dress code in here, no rules on how girls and boys should interact. So girls are more free to dress however they want.'' (Karim, interview). The UIR campus can therefore best be characterized as a private public space, a both physically and culturally clearly demarcated space within the public space of Rabat, as illustrated by Nemeth (2011). He states that 'privately owned public spaces frequently diminish the publicness of public space by restricting social interaction, constraining individual liberties, and excluding undesirable populations' (Nemeth 2011, 5).

4.2 The Work Environment

In the work environment, gender relations are experienced differently. Most women experience a certain degree of hierarchy topped by men, then married women, and at the bottom single women. Farida and Oumayma both experience being surrounded by men in their work environment. "The higher your position, the less women you will see around you." (Oumayma, interview). The hurdles women face as a result of unequal power relations between men and women are highly influenced by cultural constructions of femininity. In Oumayma's experience, women are either not deemed capable, not trusted with important positions by men or they do not get equal opportunities to work their way up. For her, it was a struggle to get to the position she is in now. "In order to climb the ladder, you have to be in a network of people. And women often are not part of these networks. It's not normal for women to talk business, they are expected to talk about superficial topics only. Building a professional network is very difficult for women." (Oumayma, interview).

Recently, a new quota for women in government committees has been issued at the ministry Oumayma works at to promote gender diversity in the workspace. To Oumayma, this kind of positive discrimination still reduces her to 'being a woman' instead of being seen for her capabilities. Men, too, experience negative consequences of positive discrimination towards women. "Nowadays, increasingly more professional trainings and workshops are for women only. Positive discrimination has now flipped the unequal treatment onto men", says Ismail, 19 year old student at UIR.

Women who do manage to work their way up the hierarchical ladder say they behave in masculine ways, such as being firm, being direct, or wearing clothes that are deemed more masculine, in order to be taken seriously by their male colleagues. Farida once experienced being skipped accidentally when it was her turn to talk at a meeting with only men. "Should I have worn a suit and tie, like the other men, in order to be seen by them?" she asks herself. This showcases the way in which gender functions in signifying relationships of power. Women such as Farida and Oumayma, who selectively choose to perform in masculine ways, are contributing to the creation of a hybrid femininity/masculinity in which appearance and behaviour do not both correspond to cultural gender norms.

This hierarchy in the workspace is also experienced through the feeling of being taken less seriously as a woman. Illustrating this feeling is an experience of Farah, 25 year old head of international relations at the UIR. Because of the sheer fact of being a woman, at work Farah is often asked if she has a supervisor, despite the fact that she herself is in charge. "Once, a new colleague was hired, a man. All of a sudden I stopped receiving work emails. They were sent to him instead of me. They started asking him to transfer information to me or ask me to do tasks, instead of telling me or asking me directly. Other colleagues assumed he was higher level than me, but we were at the exact same level." (Farah, interview). This experience left her feeling shocked, disturbed and angry. But eventually, she stood up for herself. According to Farah, women not speaking up for themselves out of fear of being shamed or silenced is one of the problems that lead to unequal treatment of women.

On top of that, women deal with (sexual) harassment from their male superiors in the workspace. A not that unusual way women resort to in order to work their way up the hierarchical ladder in the workspace is by performing sexual acts with their male superiors. Yassmine recalls this happening at one of her previous jobs. "There was a lot of sexual harassment. I had to wear

heels and a dress. Every day, male colleagues were saying to me that I looked sexy. They said to me: 'Oh, I can take you home', and I couldn't say no. Unfortunately, the women who had good positions were having sex with their bosses, because it was the only way. Even if you're very brilliant, you will stay behind." (Yassmine, interview).

4.3 Public Space

(Sexual) harassment is not confined to the workspace. In public spaces, too, mainly women experience (sexual) harassment frequently, to the point that they cannot go outside without being harassed. In this domain, harassment, almost always committed by men towards women, can come in the form of catcalling, being followed, or being touched unwantedly. However, men, too, experience harassment on the street. "People here in Morocco don't take personal space seriously. If you say 'you can't touch me', they think you just say it, but don't mean it. I get touched by girls a lot. They actually laugh at me when I tell them not to. People think I should be proud when girls want to touch me." (Karim, interview). Most men, however, say to experience harassment only rarely.

The frequency of harassment some women experience causes them to feel uncomfortable and unsafe in the streets. "Constant harassment makes me feel powerless, embarrassed and angry." (Naima, interview). "I feel like it's not my place to be in the street. Like 'Sorry, I'll go home quickly'. Even if men don't do anything, I still don't feel comfortable on the street." (Jamila, interview). Other women, on the other hand, are not faced by harassment as much. Some ignore it, as they are afraid of the reaction they will get if they talk back, but others do talk back, hoping the perpetrator will realise the same could happen to their sister or mother. Some women avoid being on the street altogether by staying home, while others adapt to the situation by dressing differently to attract less attention from men.

Many women do point out that their experience of harassment differs depending on several factors: what part of town they are in, what time of day it is, and what social class they are from. In more wealthy neighbourhoods women experience less harassment. Also, during daytime, women experience less harassment. In poorer neighbourhoods and at night time, it is the other way around. This also ties in to experience of harassment depending on social class. Being able to afford living in a safe neighbourhood and having your own car or taking a taxi drastically impacts

the way harassment is experienced. From an intersectional standpoint, gender and social class highly influence how harassment in the street is experienced.

In general, many women feel as if they are not welcome in certain public spaces. Even though there are no official rules excluding women from, for example, cafés, they still feel excluded because these spaces are usually dominated by men. This male domination of public spaces makes women feel out of place. Women, thus, do not feel free to use the entirety of the urban space, one of the important rights described in Lefebvre's notion of 'the right to the city', as described in the theoretical framework. Eley's (1990) idea of gendered exclusion from the public sphere does not only correspond with our findings on perceptions of gender equality, as illustrated previously, it also corresponds with our findings regarding experiences of gender relations in this sphere.

From a male perspective, committing harassment is used as a way of showing masculinity. "Many guys are not confident in their masculinity. They feel like they have to prove it by doing things like harassing girls, bragging about girls. It's a way of showing masculinity. The way they behave is kind of a performance for other people's view of them." (Karim, interview). Another perspective on harassment, coming from both men and women, is that it is an innocent act, a way of meeting new people and expanding your network for either romantic or professional opportunities.

4.4 The Private Sphere

In the private sphere, many participants experience one basic division between men and women: the father or husband is responsible for going to work and providing financial stability and security, whereas the mother or wife is responsible for raising the children and maintaining the household. However, increasingly more women are combining domestic duties with working a part-time or full-time job. "Men and women are sharing the cost of life nowadays, as providing for the necessities of
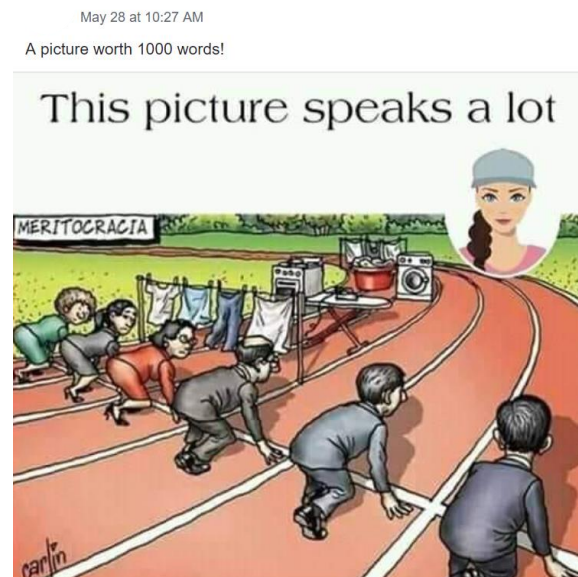

Figure 4 Cartoon shared on Facebook page of online movement. Retrieved on 12-06-19.

living is getting more and more expensive." (Dounia, interview). Women are thereby contesting gender stereotypes, as they, sometimes perforce, break away from traditional public-private divisions by entering the public realm of the job market. This evolving public-private division is, thus, still arranged along highly gendered lines, as women do increasingly partake in 'masculine' responsibilities, however men are not partaking in 'feminine' responsibilities in the same rate.

This gendered task division also creates a certain hierarchy in the private sphere, as work outside the house is valued higher than work inside the house. However, the main factor that creates a hierarchy within the family is the Qur'anic term *Qiwama*. This term is a highly debated topic among religious scholars. Most often, it is interpreted in the way that the man is the chief of the family (El Hajjami in Mir-Hosseini et al. 2013, 84), giving him the full privilege of presiding over and supporting the family in return for their women's obedience' (Bouzghaia 2014, 34). This idea of male guardianship over the family, and especially over the women in the family, is also visible in ideas surrounding responsibility:

> Jamila: Men don't even listen to me, I can't say anything.
>
> Chiara: So you're not taken seriously as a girl?
>
> Jamila: No! I'm not… When I lost my father, I wasn't anything. I didn't have a father anymore and I don't have any brothers. Back then I didn't have a boyfriend either. I didn't have any men in my life. I asked myself: 'Who am I? I don't have anyone.' Okay, I have uncles, I have cousins and when I'm with them, okay, I live, I'm here. But when you don't have your father, you don't have any brothers and you're not married, you're not….
>
> Anouck: You need to have a man in your life to be a person?
>
> Jamila: Exactly!

This dialogue showcases how women's personhood is measured by the men in their lives, rather than being their own human being.

Of course, the above illustrated dynamics and division of tasks in the household is not that black and white, and sometimes men do help with household chores. However, for some women, having men help around the house is not (yet) a matter of course. For Farida it took having to fake incapability of certain tasks in order for her husband to step in and help. Kenza, 29 year old English teacher, on the other hand, experiences her younger brother as being very helpful. Whenever she

needs help or asks him to do something, he always does so. However when a visitor, even a family member or friend, enters the private sphere, men conform to - and perform according to - cultural gender norms, afraid of being seen as weak for helping in the household.

An example of the tension that arises because of this semi-forced culturally conforming gender performance is living a double life inside the home and outside the home. Yassmine has many friends who live a double life. "In front of their families, they act according to the rules, according to what is expected of them. But outside the home, they act differently, in a way that would not be accepted by their families. They hide their true thoughts and behaviours, because you can get excluded from your community if you don't conform to cultural gender norms." (Yassmine, interview).

Both men and women get judged - by their family members, but also by neighbours or their broader community - for their behaviour and appearances, however women experience being judged more harshly. "My sister can't do things that are not allowed, it will damage my family's reputation. She has to respect me and my father. In another city, she can do whatever she wants. Nobody knows our family there. But here in Rabat, no." (Aziz, interview). In other words, the behaviour of women has the potential to bring *7shouma* onto the family. This idea of women having the capability of bringing shame onto the family strongly reflects Douglas' (1966) idea of women symbolizing the boundaries of a community. The moral well-being of the community is measured by women's behaviour, as 'the (female) body is a model which can stand for any bounded system' (Douglas 1966, 116).

These cultural gender norms are (implicitly) taught to children from a very young age. In upbringing, sometimes girls and boys get treated differently by their parents, along the lines of the previously described different expectations of and rules for men and women. Yassmine recalls noticing a difference in upbringing between her and her brothers growing up. "I was raised like the perfect girl. You know, sewing, being in the kitchen by the age of three. I was actually taught to be the perfect wife. My brothers used to play football outside while I had to help hosting parties. So yes, I was raised this way. My brothers were raised muscular. I was taught to be neat." (Yassmine, interview).

Another frequently experienced difference in upbringing is that many participants say girls have to be home before sundown, whereas boys are allowed to stay out until late at night, mostly because the outside is perceived as a dangerous place, especially late at night. "Growing up, my

parents taught me to always protect my sister. It's in our culture and tradition. The world is kind of dangerous, so she should be protected. A boy can defend himself, but my sister, even though she is older than I am, is still seen as this little girl. And it's my job to protect her." (Zakaria, interview). This dynamic reflects Jaffe's and De Koning's (2016) notion of gendered hierarchies of mobility related to perceived danger (Jaffe and De Koning 2016, 46).

However, despite being allowed to come home later at night than their sisters, sons, too, have to obey the rules set by their parents:

> *It is half past eleven in the evening when the front door of the narrow, yet tall house Kenza lives in with her family opens. Mustafa, Kenza's youngest brother, enters through the door. After taking off his shoes, Mustafa directly approaches his mother Zaynab, who is sitting on one of the small couches in the living room. Mustafa gently grasps his mother's hand and tries to kiss her on the forehead. However, Zaynab frowns, pulls back her hand and pushes him away as she walks into the bedroom next to the living room. Angry mumbles escape her lips quietly. Mustafa laughs and follows his mother into the bedroom. Kenza explains: "Mom is mad at him for coming home late and he is asking her for forgiveness by kissing her forehead." A few seconds later, Mustafa and Zaynab emerge from the bedroom, both smiling. Now that Zaynab seems to have forgiven him, Mustafa turns to greet us.*

Not only is this an illustration of gendered rules in the private sphere, it also illustrates the authority a mother has in this sphere. Although sometimes women might be primarily operating in the private sphere and this (feminine) sphere is usually associated with inferiority to the (masculine) public sphere, the above illustrated interaction demonstrates the authority women and mothers do have in this sphere. "Power relations between men and women are complicated, it's not all black and white. Women are very discrete. Even though it might not seem that way, women do have power in Morocco. They have power, but inside the home. They have power inside the home as a mother who organizes life, who makes the decisions." (Adilah, interview). This example, thus, shows the intricate ways in which (gendered) power dynamics are constructed in everyday life in Rabat.

4.5 The Virtual Sphere

With regards to virtual environment, in this context consisting of social media platforms such as Facebook, many participants feel this environment provides a space for like-minded people, both men and women, to connect about topics such as gender equality. According to Dounia, the virtual space has proven to be an effective way to facilitate networking and social activism: ''The idea is to reach out to everyone. I think Facebook is where you can speak to a vast audience. Doing it online makes it more accessible to everyone. I can see it from Morocco, maybe another girl from Nigeria or Kenya sees it as well and she might be inspired to start her own movement in her own country. I think the internet can be a great tool for that if we use it well for the subjects that matter.'' (Dounia, interview).

Both personal pages as well as group pages and forums focused on gender issues in the virtual environment of Facebook provide a space for voices to be heard and opinions to be expressed that is more open and less moderated than the traditional public sphere. One of the main ways in which Facebook is used is by the sharing and discussing of (international) articles on political developments or incidents of gender based violence. Opinions or experiences that would be expressed not at all or more carefully in the traditional public sphere are related more openly in the virtual sphere, mainly because of the anonymity this virtual sphere provides. In this sense, the virtual environment of Facebook is utilised as an alternative to other, more moderated public spheres. This illustrates Langman's (2005) statement that the virtual sphere enables interpersonal networks of discussion and fosters spaces for democratic construction, negotiation and articulation of public opinions (Langman 2005, 57).

Contrary to what O'Brien (1999) and Travers (2003) state with regard to gender-appropriate behaviour in the virtual spheres, we have observed mainly women posting and sharing personal thoughts, news articles, videos, drawings and other types of content that pose a critical view on gender relations and gender equality issues, thereby taking up considerably more space in the virtual sphere than men, and thus performing in gender non-conforming ways in this sphere.

May 7

Couvre toi, n'aguiche pas, baisse les yeux, ne répond pas, ne te retourne pas, ne sors pas! Jusqu'à quand serons nous punies pour être nées femmes? Quelle est cette malédiction qui voudrait que nous, qui représentons la moitié du genre humain, n'ayons que le droit de subir, toujours coupables même quand nous sommes innocentes et/ou victimes? Assez! Nous étouffons, nous suffoquons... Vite, de l'air! Par pitié laissez nous respirer!

Cette respiration, nous l'offrons chaque jour à tous ces enfants que nous mettons au monde et qui demain deviendront pour certains les bourreaux de nos filles. Cette respiration, nous l'offrons chaque jour à nos compagnons lorsqu'ils rentrent éreintés de leur journée de travail et que nous prenons à notre charge l'ensemble des tâches qui font vivre notre foyer!

Oui, parce que nous sommes des femmes, nous méritons plus que quiconque de respirer. Alors, dégonflez chers représentants de la gente masculine. Dégonflez pour nous faire de la place afin que nous puissions respirer. Nous vous en serons gré.

👍❤️😢 84   13 Comments

👍 Like   💬 Comment

Figure 5 Post shared on Facebook page of online movement. Retrieved on 12-06-19. Translation of Facebook post: Cover yourself, do not hesitate, look down, do not answer, do not look back, do not go out! For how long will we be punished for being born female? What is this curse that requires us, who represent half of the human race, to only have the right to suffer? We are always guilty, even when we are innocent and/or victims. Enough! We suffocate, we suffocate… Quick, air! For pity let us breath! This breathing, we offer it every day to all the children we gave birth to. Tomorrow, some of them they will become the executioners of our daughters. This breathing, we offer it every day to our partners when they come home exhausted from their working day and we take on all the tasks that make our home live! Because we are women, we deserve more than anyone to breath. So, dear representatives of the male gender, deflate. Deflate to make room for us to breath. We will be grateful.

According to Farida, the previously mentioned degree of anonymity that the virtual environment provides has a downside. "Women get harassed online too. Women get insulted, they get judged for the things they say or the pictures they post. Because people are behind their computer, they don't think there is another human being on the other side. But it's not just men against women, it's also women against women. It's horrible.'' (Farida, interview). In this regard, gender dynamics in the virtual sphere are not too different from gender dynamics in the public or private spheres. Something that stands out to Farida is that she sees men are more engaged in the topic of gender equality in the virtual sphere compared to the public or private sphere. She thinks this is, again, because of anonymity. In the virtual space, there is not as much judgement towards men speaking up about women's rights as there is in other spheres of social life.

4.6 Performance of Resistance

"Do you know the legend of the hummingbird? It goes like this. One day, a big fire broke out in a forest. All the animals of the forest fled their home, scared and helpless, except for one small bird. The little hummingbird flew to a nearby creek and swept into the stream to collect a few drops of water in its beak. Quickly, the bird flew back to the fire and released the drops of water onto the fire. It flew back and forth between the creek and the fire again and again, carrying just a few drops of water each time. In disbelief, the other animals of the forest watched and said to the hummingbird: 'You will never put out the fire, you are too small, the fire is too big!' The hummingbird, however, kept flying and said: 'I am doing what I can.' Just like the hummingbird in this story, I am doing what I can. It might be small, but I am helping." (Farida, conversation).

People who do not agree with the way culture, tradition, and society structure gender relations and are discontent with the way issues regarding gender equality are handled perform acts of resistance in different ways, some more covert, some more overt. For Farida, this legend of the hummingbird resonates with her own view on achieving social change. "One day, when I was looking at all the horrible things happening in the streets of Morocco, I said 'we have to do something'. The only

thing I know, the only thing I can do is write. So I wrote a piece and posted it on Facebook. I wrote that it was not okay with what was happening and we can't stay like this forever. Everybody can do something. I don't know what. But everybody can do something at their own level." (Farida, interview).

In the public sphere, covert as well as overt acts of resistance are, among other forms, performed in silent protests. An example of such a silent protest is told by Adilah. In collaboration with an online movement that addresses women's place in the public space, Adilah choreographed a silent performance in which approximately 30 women took part.

''The most important thing for me was the silence. It was not meant to be a manifestation with a lot of noise. It was just walking, without any words and with our eyes straight forward. 30 women as one social body. So we walked in a long line behind each other, slowly, silently, but confident. It was very strong. We chose a central street in Rabat to do this performance. Unwittingly, we chose the street next to the parliament. We walked up and down this street once. Afterwards, we gave all the women a small piece of blue rope. They were free to put this piece of rope wherever they wanted. One decided to tie it on a pole, someone else put in a tree, on a bench. The goal was just to leave a mark, leave a trace behind. To let people know that women are in the public space, that the street is also our place to live. Women are also citizens. Many of the women that participated never walk on the street, they are always in their car. So for them, walking on the street, taking up space, it was a big deal.'' (Adilah, interview).

As Jaffe and De Koning (2016) illustrate, the mere practice of walking enables people to contribute to structuring urban space (Jaffe and De Koning 2016, 44). Walking the city, as Michel de Certeau (1984) calls it, is 'a routine that is often bounded by certain rules but simultaneously able to transgress them. Taking detours, creating new paths, connecting different places. It can therefore be a creative way of subverting the urban system and its intended uses, and in doing so 'remap' the urban order over time' (Jaffe and De Koning 2016, 44).

In the case of the above illustrated silence performance, the act these women were performing was of course not merely walking. It was walking with the intention of disrupting the urban order by taking up space that is generally not considered appropriate for women to take up.

As Salman and Assies (2017) state, silence can be a performative way of overt resistance. In this sense, silence is a sign of agency rather than powerlessness (Gal 1991, 176). Through this public performance, the women that participated became an instrument of social change, as they women embodied their message that women, too, belong in the public space.

Overt acts of resistance that are performed in the public sphere by both men and women are, for example, dressing differently or behaving differently than cultural gender norms. As a woman, the mere act of sitting at a café and smoking a cigarette is an overt act of resistance, as these activities are considered inappropriate according to cultural gender norms. As a man, treating women with respect or telling people in your direct circle off for catcalling women can be seen as acts of resistance against societal norms of how women should be treated. As Morris (1995) states, gender as performance can be a means for transformation, negotiation of its meaning, in other words: action. However, men tend to perform overt acts of resistance less explicitly, as there is a negative stigma surrounding men being feminists.

In the private sphere, resisting what is considered a 'normal way of raising kids' can be a form of covert resistance. Some parents make a very conscious decision to not raise their children along gendered lines. "I raise my kids just as humans, not as boys or girls", says Meryam, 42 years old, founding member of an organisation aimed at women's empowerment in Morocco. By not raising her kids along gendered lines, Meryam is making this covert resistance part of her - and her kids' - everyday customs and habits, thereby contributing to raising a generation that one day will not be limited by cultural gender norms, changing this cultural structure from within. However, despite her efforts, Meryam says it is difficult to protect her children against societal influences and mentalities that still reinforce gender norms on people.

A similar form of resistance that is performed by some people is acting obedient in the public sphere, but still try to bring about change in the private sphere among their personal circle of family and friends. "I try not to be too explicit about wanting to change people's minds. I do not want to provoke people or be a teacher. So sometimes I just ask my mom a rhetorical question and leave her to think about it." (Hassan, interview). Jamila, too, tries to focus on changing her own personal circle. "The situation of women's rights and gender equality is evolving very slowly, but still, it is evolving. If everybody would try to change just their own small circle, the bigger issues will change too. We have many other problems, not just women's rights, but if you try to do something small, even if the issue is very big and you can't change everything, you can do

something just at your own small environment." (Jamila, interview). This practice illustrates both Prokhovnik's (1998) and Sivaramakrishnan's (2005) ideas on covert resistance, as it showcases how people can strategically use their agency to aim for change without their actions directly being recognized as resistance (Prokhovnik 1998, 88; Sivaramakrishnan 2005, 351).

4.7 Conclusion

In conclusion, socially engaged people experience a certain hierarchy in gender relations in the public and private spheres of Rabat, highly informed by ideas of femininity and masculinity. (Sexual) harassment is an important theme that comes up time and again in several environments, causing both men and women to feel uncomfortable. The virtual sphere seems to facilitate different gender relations to some degree, as this sphere is less obviously gendered. Participants who do not agree with current gender dynamics choose to perform in gender non-conforming ways or perform other acts of targeted resistance, be it overt or covert, in order to achieve social change.

Chapter 5: Gender Equality and Citizenship

The way socially engaged people perceive, experience, and perform gender relations and gender equality in the above described spheres of Rabat has, among other factors, great influence on how they experience citizenship in their daily life. When looking at the relationship between perceptions, experiences and performances of gender equality and lived experiences of citizenship, we can identify two main dynamics at play: feelings of belonging and substantive citizenship.

5.1 Feelings of Belonging   Anouck

Feelings of belonging are related to different experiences of participants in different places. Some participants connect their feeling of belonging to the Moroccan state, to their perception of the real Moroccan identity, to Rabat as a city or another international community. In the theoretical framework, we stressed the importance of including feelings of belonging in a definition of citizenship, as it recognizes citizenship as a lived phenomenon on different scales and determines who belongs and who does not belong (Nyhagen and Halsaa 2016, 69). Yassmine, for example, says: "I feel like a Moroccan. I was lucky to travel a lot, I had the chance to go abroad. I am very multicultural. My stepsisters are foreigners. We're very multicultural." (Yassmine, interview). Her feeling of belonging in Morocco, thus, comes from the multicultural environment in which she lives and she enjoys to be in. This can be related to French influences present in post-colonial Morocco. Many participants, like Yassmine, say to feel both French and Moroccan at the same time. "I have these two cultures, I am very French in many things, but I am very a Moroccan. That's why I feel citizenship, because I belong yes. I see the beauty of it." (Yassmine, interview).

Other participants connect their feeling of belonging to their perception of a real Moroccan identity. They love Moroccan architecture, certain traditions such as Ramadan, handmade crafts or storytelling. "Being born here, the traditions, such as Ramadan, *3id*[8], when you hear the adhan[9]. You just feel at home." (Zakaria, interview). Some participants also compare Morocco to Middle Eastern countries, to point out their own relative liberty concerning women's rights, which makes them feel like they belong in Morocco. Despite having the choice to stay in, for example, France

---

[8] Pronounced *Eid,* meaning Feast of Sacrifice.
[9] Meaning: call for prayer.

- where many Moroccan people who can afford it go to study - almost all of them make a conscious choice to come back to Morocco. Many participants mention to feel a duty to serve their country, to stay in Morocco and to contribute to positive change and development, as Salim explains: "I do feel the duty to serve my country, help development, the government, the economy. If I were in a position to do so, I'd create jobs and bring value to the country. I wanna be a role model, so I change myself first." (Salim, interview). Many socially engaged people say, in addition, to feel homesick when they are abroad: "I feel very homesick when I leave more than a month." (Yassmine, interview) In these moments, feelings of belonging even intensify. When not in Morocco, people first of all miss the delicious food of which many are very proud of.

Also, the practicality of Morocco being cheap to live in contributes to people's feeling of belonging, as becomes clear from Badr's explanation for example: "After I finished high school, my parents wanted to send me to Canada, but I wanted to stay here. Canada is so far away from Morocco, so I decided to go to the south of France. It's similar to Morocco, same climate. But I got tired of it. I missed Morocco, I missed my friends, having my own car, I have everything here, life is wáy less expensive. I feel like I belong here." (Badr, interview). Lastly, most socially engaged people say the hospitality of Moroccans makes them feel at home. Zakaria summed it up nicely: "In Morocco, the food and the weather is better, and no one can beat Moroccan hospitality." (Zakaria, interview).

The fact that family and friends live close in Rabat or Morocco is also a cause for many participants' feelings of belonging, like for Younes, a young student: "I do feel at home in Morocco when I'm part of my family, I feel protected, I feel warmth" (Younes, interview). Despite many people's view that Morocco is in need of improvements, they find feelings of belonging in their community. This can be linked to the importance given to family and community, as described in Chapter 2.

What becomes clear, is that people can lend feelings of belonging to a wide array of factors, places or persons. As Yuval-Davis (2006) states, feelings of belonging are always dynamic and under construction, but at the same time determine how one identifies the self and others (Yuval-Davis 2006, 199).

5.2 Feelings of Not Belonging Anouck

It will be clear now that feelings of belonging exist among socially engaged people in Rabat. We came, on the other hand, across a lot of feelings of not belonging as well and will expand on them here.

Socially engaged people often relate feelings of not belonging to Morocco in general rather than Rabat specifically. ''I feel like I am a subject, not a citizen. A citizen has rights, but a subject has to obey rules.'' (Farida, interview). In other words, Farida does not feel to be a true citizen, because in her view, a citizen enjoys certain rights and freedoms. To illustrate this, many point to the bad circumstances in education and healthcare, like Salim: "When you experience injustice, you never feel at home, you feel imprisoned. I think we all experience injustice in Morocco. In a public hospital, at school. For a period of time I was so proud of Morocco, I was crazy proud. But when I started to get more open minded... I care about this country, but my home is simply where I have freedom, wherever that is. I don't experience this freedom in Morocco." (Salim, interview).

Besides the bad circumstances in education and healthcare, the lack of perceived freedom makes some feel like not belonging too, just like some mention the political climate: "When I go to Europe I see what democracy is like and then when I come back I see that we have a lot of work to do here. But it does not depend on us, it depends on politics. In Morocco, we say: when you clean your stairs at home, you start at the top. It's the same with politics, if you want to clean the politics, you have to start at the top. The people in the street are just a consequence of politics and so it won't change." (Adilah, interview).

These circumstances make Morocco not an environment where one would want to raise their children in, according to Farida for example:

> "I have chosen for my own studies and the studies of my children to study in a foreign country, because I don't think that studies here in Morocco are good quality. If I have a problem, I'm going to go to a private clinic, I'm not going to go to a public hospital. I don't have faith in Moroccan justice, I don't have faith in Moroccan political parties, I don't feel well in the street, I don't feel well in my society. So I don't think I can feel my citizenship anywhere here. When I go to another country like Spain or France or your country[10] I feel

---

[10] Referring to The Netherlands

I'm free. I know that if something happens there, I will have my rights. But here, no. I don't feel that. I haven't got any trust in the system." (Farida, interview).

Furthermore, where many point to the above mentioned Moroccan identity as making them feel like they belong, many also feel it is changing, which makes them feel not belonging in Morocco, as Yassmine explains: "What is funny is that our grandmothers had more rights back then than what we have today. And that's sad, we have become something that is not Moroccan. We have become something in the Eastern, and we're not Eastern, we're very different. We're Arabs yes, we're Muslims, but the Middle East and us are very different, in so many ways. We're so different, we have imported so many things. It's has gotten just lost, our identities." (Yassmine, interview). They feel that what they perceive as more conservative Middle Eastern influences change this Moroccan identity and the relative freedom for women is decreasing because of this. "Until maybe ten years ago, I could go to the beach wearing a bathing suit, a normal bathing suit. Now there are more people with the burqa, this didn't exist ten years ago. We've never seen this, you had a djellaba[11] and a normal bathing suit. Now people put on shorts and burqa and so many things. And when you go in a bathing suit, you feel you're the only one who is left." (Farida, interview).

Another reason to not feel belonging in Morocco is feeling different from the 'more conservative' majority. Many socially engaged people have had French education and say to not have 'a Moroccan house' with their unconventional ideas about gender equality. Farida talks about what this situation is like for her children: "We live in a house that is not a Moroccan house. With French education, with the revolutionary concepts, parents who discuss about everything. Even now my kids ask me: 'What are we exactly? Are we Moroccan?' No, we're not Moroccans. We live in an upper social class, but in our minds we are socialists, you see? So we're not like the others. It's very disturbing for my kids." (Farida, interview).

Feeling different than the majority is sometimes linked to feeling excluded from Moroccan society. As Jamila says: "I think a lot of young Moroccans feel like a foreigner in their own country. It's weird, I get a lot of like 'Oohh you don't sound and you don't seem and you don't look like a real Moroccan.' Because I like things that they think are for tourists or foreigners. So if you're not considered a real Moroccan, you don't fit in." (Jamila, interview). They are sometimes

---

[11] Moroccan loose fitting overcoat worn by many men and women on the street.

called *'kili mini'*. "Kili mini means a small guy, not a real guy, someone who has had a European education. I get called sometimes like that, because I have lived more in foreign countries than I lived in Morocco." (Badr, interview). Jamila adds to this: "All people who don't speak Arabic or didn't go to a Moroccan school, are considered not to be one of them." (Jamila, interview).

5.3 Substantive Citizenship   Chiara

The other main factor influencing people's perception of citizenship is substantive citizenship. Many people feel as though there are not enough laws in place to promote equal treatment between men and women. Laws regarding gender equality that are in place are perceived as being not effective in daily life. This experienced ineffectiveness of laws is, however, not solely due to a lack of laws protecting gender equality, but also partly because the system that is supposed to maintain laws is experienced as being ineffective. Aicha, however, recognizes that it is not all about laws. "No law can ever be only tool to change mentalities, to make minds evolve in such a way that people will behave in every way towards gender equality or holding this idea of gender equality in their actions every day. I don't know any perfect tool to make this happen." (Aicha, interview).

Central to the experience of substantive citizenship (or lack thereof) is Article 19 of the Moroccan Constitution. This article states that:

> 'Men and women have equal civil, political, economic, social, cultural and environmental rights and freedoms as listed in this article and in the rest of the constitution as well as the conventions and international treaties duly ratified by Morocco in conformity with the constitution's provisions and the kingdom's constants and its laws. The state shall work towards the establishment of parity between men and women. Therefore, it has assigned a specialized authority to ensure parity between men and women and fight against all forms of discrimination' (Rubio-Marin and Irving 2019, 54).

Many people feel as if this theoretical equality is not maintained effectively, as they still experience unequal treatment and a lack of freedom in their everyday life. Oumayma notices a discrepancy between a strive for gender equality in the Moroccan Constitution on the one hand, yet there are

laws that do not facilitate the maintenance of gender equality on the other hand: "The constitution is good. You will find that men and women are equal, but on the field, you don't find this. The constitution says we are equal, but the laws are opposite. For example, even though the law says it's equal, the official tutor of the kids is the father. Mother and father are equal in responsibilities, but not in rights. Women do not have the same authority as men." (Oumayma, interview).

On top of that, many women experience not being taken seriously when reporting an issue or incident to authorities. "Police officers will just laugh at you and say it's normal to get harassed. They will tell you to just not go in the streets. If you wear a dress, it is absolutely considered your own fault if you're sexually harassed." (Jamila, interview) As described previously, demonization of victims, both by authorities and family, is not an uncommon response when reporting an issue. In many people's view, inequality is rooted in society and this issue is not being tackled effectively.

There are people, however, who do see a change happening in the system that is supposed to maintain laws. They do experience being taken more seriously and police officers on the street acting more effectively. Recently, in an effort to tackle the issue of sexual harassment in the streets, a new law against harassment on the street has been issued. However, this law too is experienced as being ineffective by some. "It's really difficult to prove that someone harassed you, and to remember who it was, because it always happens in a split second. This law is really not effective" says Selma, 21 year old student at UIR.

Despite increased attention and ongoing efforts to promote gender equality, it is yet to be implemented effectively in society.

5.4 Other Factors Influencing Experience of Citizenship   Chiara

As mentioned before, gender is but one factor that influences people's experience of citizenship. One of the other factors that influence people's sense of belonging in Morocco is religion. Religion influences the experience of citizenship in several ways.

First of all, despite 99% of the Moroccan population officially being Muslim (Central Intelligence Agency, 2019), many of them do not practice this religion in daily life. Not being a practising Muslim makes some people feel less at home in Morocco, as religious practices are an inherent part of Moroccan daily life and the Moroccan Arabic language. There are also people who are not just neutral non-practicing Muslims, but strongly disagree with Islamic religion altogether,

feeling that it is a sexist religion that limits the freedom of women. To these people, the fact that religion is the foundation of Moroccan society makes them feel like they do not belong in their country. On the other hand, as illustrated above, religion also has the capability of making people feel at home, especially during certain religious events, such as Ramadan or *3id*.

Furthermore, being able to find like-minded people and sharing a mentality with the majority of the population also impacts people's experience of citizenship. Hassan was born in Fez, but feels like his personality is more compatible with Rabat. "My character is pragmatic, practical, active. The stereotype about Rabat is that it is so pragmatic and administrative, because it's the capital. When I came to Rabat, I found my character. The way I think and behave is more related to Rabat rather than Fez. Rabat is more metropolitan. I belong here in Rabat, this city is more compatible with my personality. And I decided to get married to a woman from Rabat instead of Fez. So, you seek what you like."

5.5 Influence of Gender on the Experience of Citizenship   Anouck

Feelings of belonging and feelings of not belonging as a part of citizenship are often experienced at the same time by the same person. Despite feeling a certain love for Morocco, the majority of participants say to want to leave Morocco, either permanently or at least for a period of time. These feelings are influenced by different identity intersections, of which gender is one, as illustrated by the examples given above. When both men and women experience relative freedom in Morocco, it can cause feelings of belonging. On the other hand, not experiencing this relative freedom causes some women to want to leave. They do not feel free, because of constantly getting harassed on the streets or at work. They say to feel judged by others - men and women - which also causes these feelings of not being free as a woman, like Yassmine

Figure 6 Illustration shared on Facebook group of online movement. Retrieved on 12-06-19. Translation of illustration: I wear my birth country in my heart and I defend it at all times. On the other hand, I will not go back to settle there permanently. The exile is more clement than the daily cavalry of the bleeding, you see?

explains: "Women are put in boxes, and there are a lot of criteria. If we don't belong to a box, we get excluded." (Yassmine, interview).

Women say to not fit in the stereotype of being a woman and thus experience feelings of exclusion. This is often complemented by the lack of substantive citizenship as described in the previous paragraph. Most women say to want to go to countries in the West or the United States, where they believe this inequality does not exist and they will have more freedom. Layla, a law student, says the treatment of women is a reason why she would want to leave the country: "European guys are loyal, they love a girl right. While here, a Moroccan guy can have several girlfriends at a time, he could be cheating on a girl, behind her back." (Layla, interview). One can see here the interrelatedness of the different levels to which feelings of belonging apply to as described in the conceptual framework. The ideas of freedom or rights for women which are perceived to exist in other countries, thus on the global level, determine the feelings of belonging of many women on the nation state level of Morocco.

Men also sometimes say to want to leave Morocco, but less so because of their gender. This becomes clear when looking into substantive citizenship for men. They sometimes perceive their rights to not be effective, but not because of being a man specifically, but just because it is the situation. There is, on the other hand, a relation observable between being a man and citizenship in the word 'kili mini'. Since it can only be used for name calling Moroccan men who do not belong because of having a French education. Beside this, men base their wish on leaving the country on the feeling of not having enough career prospects in Morocco. The relation between experiencing citizenship and being a socially engaged man in Rabat is summed up nicely by Zakaria: "The country I live in, there's not a good quality of life like there is in Europe or in America. There, the mentality is better, people are more educated. I just like being abroad, I prefer to be with international people." (Zakaria, interview).

Although the relation between citizenship and being a man might be less clear, there can be argued that the wish to leave Morocco for better career prospects is still gender based. As we have demonstrated in Chapter 3 and 4, men experience the pressure of having to live up to the expectation of being financial providers. Wanting to leave Morocco for better career prospects might, thus, be linked to wanting to be a better 'man'. In conclusion, the link between citizenship for women is strongly related to their gender, while for men it is to a lesser degree.

5.6 Resistance and Citizenship

<div style="text-align: right">Chiara</div>

Expanding on performances of resistance illustrated in Chapter 4, these acts of resistance can also be an outcome of a lack of experienced citizenship. The example of the silent performance choreographed by Adilah showcases how such acts of resistance can bear a political message. Part of Adilah's silent performance was to make a political statement: "Women are citizens too." (Adilah, interview). As Jaffe and De Koning (2016) state, 'urban mobility can have a strong political dimension … as various forms of urban mobility have the capacity to be transgressive or emancipatory' (Jaffe and De Koning 2016, 50). In this sense, movements can become meaningful and politicized.

Another expression of resistance as act of active citizenship is a spontaneous online movement started by an interdisciplinary group of socially engaged men and women. Using the hashtag #Masaktach[12] on Twitter and other online platforms, these people are trying to raise online awareness about and tackle various types of violence against women. "We want to address professional violence in the workspace, violence in domestic and public sphere, tackle issues of harassment at work, sexual harassment, marital rape and to address laws." (Fatima, interview).

Unlike the American #MeToo movement, this Moroccan online movement does not aim to share personal stories, but rather tries to get the debate about gender based violence going in Moroccan society. "We want to make women's voices be heard in a society that asks women to shut up." (Fatima, interview). Now trying to shift online awareness into offline action, founding members of #Masaktach are trying to tackle the gap regarding gender equality in education by going to high schools and doing workshops with students to sensitize kids from a young age about the topic.

Figure 7 Banner of social organization Jossour. Photograph by Chiara Thijssen.

The work carried out by several associations concerned with gender equality in Rabat is a more organized form resistance in response to limited feelings of citizenship. In

---

[12] Meaning "I will not keep silent".

Rabat, social organizations and associations, among other activities, organize workshops to educate women and their husbands on women's rights and entitlements they have. As Salman and Assies (2017) state, social movements, be it informal or formalized groups or organizations, have the power to change the dominant culture in society (Salman and Assies 2017, 215). These associations have enabled Moroccan women to start forming *subaltern counterpublics*, by means of public organization of their demands and public articulation of their resources (Sadiqi and Ennaji 2006, 98).

5.7 Conclusion

Socially engaged people in Rabat can feel both like belonging and not belonging in their city and country at the same time. These feelings of belonging are not always gender based, but are more so for women as became clear from experiencing a(n) (increasing) lack of freedom. This lack of freedom is accompanied by the lack of appropriate or effective rights that should make this freedom possible. Citizen initiatives, off- and online, and more organized associations fight against this in different forms of resistance. For men, feeling not belonging is mostly based on the bad living circumstances and thus not effective citizens' rights, which limits them in being a 'good man'.

Conclusion and Discussion

In this final part of our thesis, we will wrap up our findings and discuss them by using the theoretical concepts of Chapter 1. We aim here to answer our main question of how gender equality is perceived, experienced and performed by socially engaged people in the public, private and virtual spheres of Rabat and how is this related to their lived experience of citizenship. We will work our way up to this by using the themes of the empirical chapters and thus to look into perceptions first, experiences and performances next and lastly, at the relation with lived citizenship.

Perceptions of Gender Equality

Socially engaged people view the current situation regarding gender relations in Rabat as unequal. Perceived to be underlying this inequality are stereotypes and expectations of femininity and masculinity. Femininity is associated with being gentle, weak and with family matters, whereas masculinity is characterized by traits such as being tough, strong, dominant and taking care of the family financially. This is in accordance with theory on gendered spheres of Eley (1990) and Sadiqi and Ennaji (2006), both stating that historically, women have been associated with the private sphere, whereas the public sphere is linked to masculinity. However, socially engaged people do not agree with this gendered division of spheres. Objectives of change for women are therefore aimed at the public sphere whereas objectives of change for men are aimed at the private sphere. These objectives are, thus, nonetheless related to ideas of femininity and masculinity. Participants go against gendered stereotypes and expectations by viewing men and women as being to do the same if only they are raised the same way. Still, many participants perceive the majority of the Moroccan population to adhere to gendered stereotypes and one can see here the power of gender in structuring society, which is in line with the underlying principles of feminist anthropology according to Moore (1988).

The perception of socially engaged people that women and men can do the same things shape their perception of what gender relations should look like. Most often, gender equity is mentioned as ideal situation, however some would prefer full gender equality. Even though we have outlined gender equality as a cultural construction in our theoretical framework based on

theoretical perspectives of Scott (1986) and Moore (1990), gender equity has not come forward as a theoretical concept in the reviewed literature. However, gender equity is the cultural construction of gender equality by socially engaged people in Rabat, meaning the relations between men and women should be based on their notions of fairness in tasks and responsibilities.

Experiences and Performances of Gender Relations

Our findings regarding experiences of gender relations in the public and private spheres of Rabat illustrate Sadiqi and Ennaji's (2006) above mentioned idea of gendered spheres as well as Eley's statement that women and the domestic sphere they are confined to are viewed as inferior to the male-dominated public world (Eley 1990, 13), as tasks inside the house and outside the house, related to ideas about femininity and masculinity, are valued differently. However, as we have seen, female domesticity does not equal powerlessness. Despite experiences of a gender hierarchy in the private sphere related to the Qur'anic term *Qiwama*, it is precisely this private sphere in which women are able to exercise their authority and agency.

Furthermore, women are contesting the existing public/private dichotomy by increasingly taking on responsibilities that have been considered masculine. By incorporating both feminine and masculine aspects into their gender performance, socially engaged people are challenging and changing meanings of femininity and masculinity, confirming Butler's (1988) ideas about gender performativity and the continuous construction and malleability of meanings of gender identities (Butler 1988; Morris, 1995). However, women that perform their gender partly in masculine ways with the aim of being taken seriously still adhere to cultural gender norms, as this practice reinforces the idea that mainly masculine gender performances are to be taken seriously. Women performing in masculine ways, thus, in a way reaffirm hegemonic social gender norms.

Contrary to O'Brien's (1999) statement with regard to gender-appropriate behaviour in virtual spheres, women are considerably more vocal about issues of gender equality in the virtual sphere than men, and thus do not conform to cultural gender norms. However, this might have to do with the existing stigma about men speaking up about women's rights. In this sense, men do perform according to cultural gender norms in the virtual sphere by remaining relatively silent about this topic. This shows, corresponding with Travers' (2003) statement, that even in a less obviously gendered sphere, ideas of femininity and masculinity are still inform gender relations.

Even though scholars are sceptical about the potential of the virtual sphere to act as a new public sphere (Travers 2003; Langman 2005; Goldberg 2010; Papacharissi 2008), the less obviously gendered character of the virtual sphere, and therefore the less gender based exclusion in this sphere, makes this sphere more accessible for women to participate in the formation of public opinion. Therefore, the virtual sphere can be regarded as a subaltern counterpublic, as conceptualised by Fraser (1990).

With regards to acts of resistance in response to current gender dynamics, mainly subtle acts of resistance that can be typified as covert resistance (Hollander and Einwohner, 2004) are carried out, as this way of resistance is experienced to be more effective in Moroccan society. Masculine gender performances are also carried out by women as acts of resistance. The fact that feminine gender performance by men is not considered an act of resistance reflects ideas about gender hierarchy in Morocco.

Gender Equality and Citizenship

As we have seen, our participants experience feelings of belonging and feelings of not belonging at the same time. Feelings of belonging are often not related to gender, while feelings of not belonging are less so. Men and women position themselves as the 'other' on a nation-state level by their unconventional ideas on gender equality, not conforming to the mainstream more 'conservative' images of femininity or masculinity. In this way they can be considered as 'them' both by themselves and others, not fitting in the boundaries of the community, which is in accordance with the concept of politics of belonging of Yuval-Davis (2006). Women oftentimes do not want to fit into the picture of femininity, because of relating their rights to the basic women's rights on the global level, as Roy (2005) has argued as well. The different levels of citizenship are thus interrelated. For men, not fitting in the image of masculinity has to do with the feelings of themselves to be a more successful financial provider in other, especially western, countries.

For women, there is another relationship between gender and citizenship observable on the level of the nation-state. According to the constitution, women have the same rights as men in Morocco, but many socially engaged women perceive these entitlements as not being effective. Their subjective feeling, thus, tells them they are not full citizens of the Moroccan state, or in the words of Holston and Appadurai (1996) and Kabeer (2005), they do not experience substantive

citizenship. This is especially felt by women in the public sphere, due to the lack of perceived freedom, officially having access to this sphere, but subjectively not. This links theory of Canning and Rose (2001) together with substantive citizenship of Holston and Appadurai (1996). While Canning and Rose (2001) talk about the lack of official entrance to the public sphere, for the socially engaged people it is about the subjective feeling of not having the effective entitlement to have access to this sphere.

Wrapping up our findings to come back to our research question, we can conclude that gender is an important structuring principle in Rabat's urban society. Perceptions of what femininity and masculinity entails shape everyday lived experiences and performances of gender and gender relations. These experiences may in turn lead to performances of resistance which continuously construct and contest meanings of citizenship. This showcases the interrelatedness of perceptions, experiences, and performances of gender equality in the different spheres of Rabat and its relation to lived experiences of citizenship.

Limitations and Recommendations

We will conclude this thesis with some important notes on the research, discussing limitations to our research and recommendations for future research. In the introduction of this thesis, we have set out a few goals. One of these goals was to transcend orientalist ideas about gender (in)equality in non-western parts of the world. By doing bottom-up research, trying to grasp the perspectives, meaning-making and experiences of socially engaged people in Rabat, we have tried to approach the subject of gender from the point of view of our participants. However, given both our inescapable framework as white, western female researchers, as well as the internationally - mainly western - oriented framework of most of our participants, we believe that these two factors have had considerable influence on the outcome of our research. We, as researchers, have determined what questions to ask, to whom we ask these questions and in what ways to process the information. Even though we have always tried to conform to the situations and participants in question, we recognize our position and background as well as our participants' position and background are a noteworthy matter.

Furthermore, since we have noticed there is a gap in the literature on gender relations the virtual sphere, we have tried to include this sphere as an area of analytical focus in this research.

We have done so by engaging in online participant observation and asking questions about this sphere in interviews. Due to lack of time - the public and private sphere are major spheres on their own – and lack of appropriate training in online research methods, we figured the virtual sphere has not received the amount of attention it deserved in order to do justice to the specificity and complexity of this sphere. We therefore recommend future research focused on this specific sphere. Since it is a highly vivid way of expressing ideas about gender relations and currently a popular way of interacting with one another among the socially engaged people in Rabat, This sphere is not just a very interesting but also a relevant subject of research.

Concerning the methods of our research, we have tried to triangulate our methods whenever possible. Since gender equality is hard to observe by itself, we were mostly confined to doing interviews. Places or activities to do participant observation were limited, but could have made our findings more trustworthy. Another factor that could have enriched our insights academically is the perspective of more male participants. We have included male participants in our research, but the amount is not equally shared with women. This could have to do with us being women ourselves or the stigma attached to men talking about gender equality. We think it would be very interesting to expand on our findings from male participants by focussing on men specifically.

Lastly, we have come across many interesting social dynamics related to gender relations in Rabat, a few of them described in the context chapter. Especially noticeable is the religious notion of *Qiwama.* We would recommend future research to look into the meaning people give to this notion and how they live up to this in their daily lives as a family. We believe this could give interesting insights in the interplay between lived gender relations and lived religion.

Bibliography

Abu-Lughod, L. 2013. *Do Muslim Women Need Saving?* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Ahmed, L. 1992. *Women and Gender in Islam.* New Haven: Yale University Press.

Badran, M. 2005. 'Between Secular and Islamic Feminism/s: Reflections on the Middle East and Beyond.' *Journal of Middle East Women's Studies* 1 (1): 6-28.

Baylocq, C. and A. Hlaoua. 2016. 'Spreading a 'Moderate Islam'? Morocco's New African Religious Policy.' *Afrique Contemporaine* 257 (1): 113-128.

Bellamy, R. 2008. *Citizenship: A very Short Introduction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Bouzghaia, I. 2014. "The Feminist Movement, Equality and Qiwama in Morocco: Perspectives and Prospects" in *Promoting Women's Rights and Gender Equality in the Middle East and North Africa,* 32-41. Brussels: Foundation For European Progressive Studies.

Budgeon, S. 2011. *Third Wave Feminism and the Politics of Gender in Late Modernity.* Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan.

Butler, J. 1988. 'Performative Acts and Gender Constitution: An Essay in Phenomenology and Feminist Theory.' *Theatre journal* 40 (4): 519-531.

Canning, K., and S. Rose. 2001. 'Gender, Citizenship and Subjectivity: Some Historical and Theoretical Considerations.' *Gender & History* 13 (3): 427-443.

Central Intelligence Agency. 2019. 'The World Factbook: Africa, Morocco.' Last modified May 10, 2019. https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/mo.html

Cornwall, A., and N. Lindisfarne. 2016. *Dislocating Masculinity: Comparative Ethnographies*. Abingdon: Taylor & Francis.

Crenshaw, K. 1989. 'Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory and Antiracist Politics.' *University of Chicago Legal Forum* 1989: 139-168.

De Certeau, M. 1984. *The Practice of Everyday Life.* Translated by Steven Rendall. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Douglas, M. 1966. *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of Concepts of Pollution and Taboo.* London: Routledge.

Eley, G. 1990. 'Nations, Publics and Political Cultures: Placing Habermas in the Nineteenth Century.' In *Culture/Power/History: A Reader in Contemporary Social Theory,* edited by N. Dirks, G. Eley, and S. Ortner, 297-335. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

El Hajjami, A. 2013. 'The Religious Arguments in the Debate on the Reform of the Moroccan Family Code.' In *Gender and Equality in Muslim Family Law,* edited by Z. Mir-Hosseini, K. Vogt, L. Larsen and C. Moe, 81-106. New York: I.B. Tauris.

Fenster, T. 2005. 'The Right to the Gendered City: Different Formations of Belonging in Everyday Life.' *Journal of Gender Studies* 14 (3): 217-231.

Fraser, N. 1990. 'Rethinking the Public Sphere: A Contribution to the Critique of Actually Existing Democracy.' *Social Text* 25/26: 56-80.

Gal, S. 1991. 'Between Speech and Silence.' In *Gender at the Crossroads of Knowledge: Feminist Anthropology in the Postmodern Era*, 175-203. Los Angeles: University of California Press.

Goldberg, G. 2010. 'Rethinking the Public/Virtual Sphere: The Problem with Participation.' *New Media & Society* 13 (5): 739-754.

Göle, N. 1997. 'The Gendered Nature of the Public Sphere.' *Public Culture* 10 (1): 61-81.

Habermas, J. 1974. 'The Public Sphere: An Encyclopedia Article (1964).' *New German Critique* 3: 49-55.

Hollander, J. A., and R. L. Einwohner. 2004. 'Conceptualizing Resistance.' *Sociological forum* 19 (4): 533-554.

Holston, J., and A. Appadurai. 1996. 'Cities and Citizenship.' *Public Culture* 8: 187-204.

Jaffe, R. and A. de Koning. 2016. *Introducing Urban Anthropology.* London: Routledge.

Kabeer, N. 2005. 'Introduction: The Search for Inclusive Citizenship: Meanings and Expressions in an Interconnected World.' *Inclusive Citizenship: Meanings and Expressions.* London: Zed, 05.

Lamphere, L. 2016. 'Feminist Anthropology Engages Social Movements: Theory, Ethnography, and Activism.' In *Mapping Feminist Anthropology in the Twenty-First Century,* edited by E. Lewin and L. Silverstein, 41-64. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press.

Langman, L. 2005. 'From Virtual Public Spheres to Global Justice: A Critical Theory of Internetworked Social Movements.' *Sociological Theory* 23 (1): 42-74.

Leo, E. S. 2005. "Islamic Female Sexuality and Gender in Modern Feminist Interpretation." *Islam and Christian–Muslim Relations*, *16* (2): 129-140.

Lewin, E., and L. Silverstein. 2016. *Mapping Feminist Anthropology in the Twenty-First Century.* New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press.

Lutz, H. 2015. 'Intersectionality as Method.' *DiGeSt. Journal of Diversity and Gender Studies* 2 (1-2): 39-44.

Madison, D. S. 2010. *Acts of Activism: Human Rights as Radical Performance*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Maktabi, R. 2013. 'Female Citizenship in the Middle East: Comparing Family Law Reform in Morocco, Egypt, Syria and Lebanon.' *Middle East Law and Governance* 5 (3): 280-307.

Maktabi, R. 2017. 'Post-2011 Pressures for Expanded Female Citizenship and Family Law Reform in Mena: Theorizing on Change amidst Political Transition.' In *North African Women After the Arab Spring*, 11-51. London: Palgrave Macmillan

McDonald, P. 2013. "Societal Foundations for Explaining Low Fertility." *Demographic Research* 28 (34): 981-994.

Megarry, J. 2018. 'Under the Watchful Eyes of Men: Theorising the Implications of Male Surveillance Practices for Feminist Activism on Social Media.' *Feminist Media Studies* 18 (6): 1070-1085.

Middle East Eye and Agencies. 2018. 'Morocco Gender Equality Law Goes into Effect.' *Middle East Eye,* September 12, 2018.
https://www.middleeasteye.net/news/morocco-gender-equality-law-goes-effect-922215261

Miller, L. 2003. "Belonging to Country — A Philosophical Anthropology." *Journal of Australian Studies 27* (76): 215-223.

Mohanty, C. 1988. 'Under Western Eyes: Feminist Scholarship and Colonial Discourses.' *Feminist Review* 30: 61-82.

Monro, S. 2005. 'Beyond Male and Female: Poststructuralism and the Spectrum of Gender.' *International Journal of Transgenderism* 8 (1): 3-22.

Moore, H. 1988. *Feminism and Anthropology.* Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Morris, R. C. 1995. 'All Made Up: Performance Theory and the New Anthropology of Sex and Gender.' *Annual review of anthropology* 24 (1): 567-592.

Nemeth, J. 2011. 'The privatization of Public Space: Modeling and Measuring Publicness.' *Environment and Planning B: Planning and Design* 38: 5-23.

Newcomb, R. 2006. 'Gendering the City, Gendering the Nation: Contesting Urban Space in Fes, Morocco.' *City & Society* 18 (2): 288-311.

Nyhagen, L., and B. Halsaa. 2016. *Religion, Gender and Citizenship: Women of Faith, Gender Equality and Feminism*. New York: Springer.

Papacharissi, Z. 2008. 'The Virtual Sphere 2.0: The Internet, the Public Sphere and Beyond.' In *Routledge Handbook of Internet Politics,* edited by A. Chadwick and P. Howard, 246-261. London: Routledge.

Prokhovnik, R. 1998. 'Public and Private Citizenship: From Gender Invisibility to Feminist Inclusiveness.' *Feminist review* 60 (1): 84-104.

Ramadan, H. 2006. *Understanding Islamic Law: From Classical to Contemporary.* Oxford: AltaMira Press.

Rochd, S. B. 2017. 'Mediated Femininity and Female Citizenship in Moroccan Electronic News Sites–Hespress.com as a Case Study.' In *North African Women after the Arab Spring,* 169-189. London: Palgrave Macmillan.

Roy, A. 2005. *Gendered Citizenship: Historical and Conceptual Explorations*. Haiderabad: Orient Blackswan.

Rubio-Marin, R. and H. Irving. 2019. *Women as Constitution-Makers: Case Studies from the New Democratic Era.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Sadeet, F. 2013. 'Islam, Feminism, and Islamic Feminism: Between Inadequacy and Inevitability.' *Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion* 29 (2): 25-45.

Sadiqi, F., and M. Ennaji. 2006. 'The Feminization of Public Space: Women's Activism, the Family Law, and Social Change in Morocco.' *Journal of Middle East Women's Studies* 2 (2): 86-114.

Said, E. W. 1995. *Orientalism: Western Conceptions of the Orient.* Harmondsworth: Penguin.

Salman, T., and W. Assies. 2017. 'Anthropology and the Study of Social Movements.' In *Handbook of Social Movements Across Disciplines*, 57-101. Cham: Springer.

Scott, J. 1986. 'Gender: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis.' *The American Historical Review* 91 (5): 1053-1075.

Sivaramakrishnan, K. 2005. 'Some Intellectual Genealogies for the Concept of Everyday Resistance.' *American Anthropologist* 107 (3): 346-355.

Spronk, R. 2014. "The Idea of African Men: Dealing with the Cultural Contradictions of Sex in Academia and in Kenya." *Culture, Health & Sexuality* 16 (5): 504-517.

Storms, O., and E. Bartels. 2017. 'The Reform of the Moroccan Family Law and Women's Daily Lives: Navigating Between Structural Constraints and Personal Agency.' In *North African Women after the Arab Spring*, 191-209. London: Palgrave Macmillan.

Touaf L., S. Boutkhil, and C. Nasri. 2017. *North African Women after the Arab Spring: In the Eye of the Storm.* Cham: Springer Nature.

Touhtouh, R. 'Gender Identity in a High School in the North of Morocco: Resistance to Hshouma Culture.' In *Morocco and the Netherlands: Society, Economy, Culture,* edited by P. Bos and W. Fritschy, 177-187. Amsterdam: VU University Press, 2006.

Travers, A. 2003. 'Parallel Subaltern Feminist Counterpublics in Cyberspace.' *Sociological Perspectives* 46 (2): 223-237.

Werbner, P. 1998. 'Exoticising Citizenship: Anthropology and the New Citizenship Debate.' *Canberra Anthropology* 21 (2): 1-27.

Yuval-Davis, N. 2006. 'Belonging and the politics of belonging.' *Patterns of Prejudice* 40 (3): 197-214.

Attachment 1: List of Participants

Adilah	Choreographer and performer
Ahmad	Student
Aicha	Professor of feminist theory
Amina	Dancer and member of online movement
Anwar	Student
Aziz	Student
Badr	Student
Chaima	Student
Dalal	Member of online movement
Dounia	Member of online movement
Driss	Student
Farah	Employee at UIR
Farida	Architect and life coach
Fatima	Co-Founder of online movement
Hassan	Researcher at religious institute
Imane	Researcher at religious institute
Jamila	Student
Karim	Student
Kenza	English and Moroccan Arabic Teacher
Layla	Student
Mouad	Student
Meryam	Vice-president at social organization
Mustafa	Brother of Kenza
Naima	Student
Oumayma	Director at Ministry of Industry
Salim	Entrepreneur
Samir	Student
Yassmine	Employee at UIR
Younes	Student
Zakaria	Student