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Hchouma Alik!: A Look at the Evolution of Hchouma in Contemporary Moroccan Society

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SIT Study Abroad
Morocco: Multiculturalism and Human Rights

Hchouma Alik!: A Look at the Evolution of *Hchouma* in Contemporary
Moroccan Society

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Fall 2011

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Abstract

In this paper, I intend to first explain the Moroccan concept of *hchouma*, or shame, and explore how it has evolved from past to present generations. I will then examine Moroccan television by looking at how it, too, has evolved, and what its impact is on various people's ideas of *hchouma*. I will demonstrate that there has been a devaluation of the word *hchouma* over the generations, and will discuss the implications of that devaluation. I will conclude by arguing that although *hchouma* may hold less importance today than it once did, it is not, as some of my interview subjects predicted, on the verge of extinction from Moroccan culture or vernacular. The primary method used in my research was personal interviews, supplemented by observation and background information obtained from various books and journal articles.

Methodology and Ethics

The majority of my research on *hchouma* was acquired through qualitative interviews; I felt this would be most effective as *hchouma* is a highly personal and subjective topic. In total, seven subjects were interviewed, each for between thirty minutes and an hour. It was important for me to understand the notion of *hchouma* as it varies between generations; therefore, I interviewed a high school student, three university students and two elderly subjects. The final seventh subject was a news reporter from the television station 2M. All of the interviews were conducted in either French or English and recorded on my computer with the consent of all subjects.

Throughout the interview process, I maintained ethical standards by providing each of my interviewees with informed consent forms, which they all read and signed. I received assent from the one subject that was under 18, as well as official consent from his father via an informed consent form. I made sure that all subjects agreed to being recorded, and assured them that they could choose not to answer any question, or stop the interview at any point. I have also changed all of my interviewees' names so as to keep their anonymity intact.

In addition to the qualitative interviews, I kept an observation book for about a week in which I took note of every instance upon which I heard someone saying "hchouma!", and described the behavior that provoked said exclamation. The data I collected is supplemented by a number of anthropological and historical readings (although, as previously mentioned, the existing literature on *hchouma* is sparse) as

well as general observations made in a Moroccan household throughout a three-month period of living with a host family.

Research Challenges

The research process for my study was exciting and rewarding; this was the first time I had engaged in any kind of prolonged fieldwork, and the success that I have had is encouraging. There were, nevertheless, a number of challenges that I encountered, without which I am not sure the experience would have been as rewarding. The biggest obstacle was a lack of sufficient time to conduct my research. *Hchouma* has proven to be an incredibly complex topic, one that I could have dissected more had I formulated my research question a bit earlier. When listening to and transcribing my interviews, I often found myself wishing I could have asked another follow-up question or gotten an opinion from yet another subject, but a three week duration of research was insufficient for this. An additional challenge I faced was the minimal existing literature on both *hchouma* and television in Morocco. While the novelty of my subject was stimulating and intriguing, it meant that I had to rely almost primarily on interviews, which were at times difficult to coordinate. As I was fortunate enough to have conducted all of my interviews in either English or French, language barriers did not pose a problem. I worked as best I could to overcome the obstacles I was presented with, and hope that the end product is reflective of my efforts.

Intriguing Contradictions

“Hchouma est délicat à traduire: tantôt c’est la honte, honte d’avoir commis tel ou tel acte, tantôt c’est la pudeur et la hchouma interdit de se conduire de telle ou telle manière. Mais

hchouma n'est en fait ni un ni l'autre: plus que la honte, plus que la pudeur elle est présente constamment, en tout lieu, en tout circonstance."

(Soumaya Naamane-Guessous 1992: 5-6)

I began to understand the pervasiveness of *hchouma* in Moroccan society before even setting foot in the Rabat-Salé Airport. Various guidebooks touched upon a specifically Moroccan notion of shame – a word that is used when one has behaved inappropriately, one that could generate discomfort, embarrassment and even loss of dignity (Hargraves 2006). Upon eventually arriving in Morocco, I quickly understood why a mere word was significant enough to be mentioned in a guidebook. *Hchouma* was all around me: a girl's bare shoulders were *hchouma*, the man that harassed her was *hchouma*, the clumps in the Friday couscous were *hchouma*, the bad call that the referee made in the FC Barcelona-Real Madrid game was *hchouma*, the neighbor who drank too much was *hchouma*. I quickly became enthralled by *hchouma*; it struck me as a concept deeply embedded in Moroccan society, but it was never questioned or investigated. The only literature to be found on the topic is the introduction to Guessous's *Au-delà de toute pudeur* and the aforementioned guidebooks. In fact, when I began to discuss my plan to research *hchouma*, many Moroccans found the idea strange, even amusing: "It's funny to hear *you* say it. It is a word that we say just like all the time". As strange an idea as it may have been to some, I wanted to discover what *hchouma* meant. When is it used? Why is it used? Do all Moroccans use it in the same ways, or in the same situations?

As I was becoming increasingly interested with *hchouma*, another pervasive element of Moroccan daily life caught my attention: television. I was concerned after the first few days of living with a Moroccan host family that they had taken a serious

disliking to me – the television was on whenever I was present, displaying programs ranging from the news, to sports, to movies, to soap operas. Was I that boring? Luckily my fears were quelled, as I soon learned that the majority of my colleagues staying with Moroccan families were experiencing the same phenomenon; TV seemed to be an integral feature of most households, on before, during and after meals, even when no one was watching. Still more surprising to me than the amount of television watched was the content of the television watched. The shows that accompanied our tagine every night exhibited immodest dress, drinking, smoking and sexual intimacy – behaviors that were all so very *hchouma*! There is a stark contradiction between the behaviors that are condoned, even admired, on the television screen, and the chastising “*hchouma*” that those same behaviors receive off-screen.

Perhaps this is not surprising given the state of transition that Morocco is currently in. The country is today experiencing a shift towards democratization and westernization. Moroccan consumption of and interaction with international culture is growing, and as a result, Moroccan values and mindsets are shifting. A freer, more open media is one of many forces that are driving such changes. What I am therefore interested in exploring is how the notion of *hchouma* is evolving in light of this process of westernization. What are the various ideas that people of different ages and upbringings hold about *hchouma*? Are they changing from one generation to the next? How, if at all, is the television that Moroccans watch influencing the meaning and significance of *hchouma*?

This research experience has been incredibly rewarding, both for me, and, I hope and believe, for my interview subjects, who rarely consider or question this concept so common to their everyday lives. I am excited to share my findings on the various ideas that the Moroccans I spoke with have about *hchouma*, ideas that I found differ based on age, gender and education. Given the short amount of time that I've spent researching *hchouma*, I feel that it would not be right for me to draw any kind of conclusive or straightforward answer to my above-proposed question. However, I can confidently say that I have exhibited a trend of decreasing importance, value and usage of the word *hchouma* among younger generations, a trend that coincides with the arrival and proliferation of foreign television and a freer media.

In the following pages, using the information I have gathered, I intend to first explain the Moroccan concept of *hchouma* and explore how it has evolved from past to present generations. I will then examine Moroccan television by looking at how it, too, has evolved, and what its impact is on various people's ideas of *hchouma*. I will demonstrate that there has been a devaluation of the word *hchouma* over the generations, and will then discuss the implications of that devaluation. I will conclude by arguing that although *hchouma* may hold less importance today than it once did, it is not, as some of my interview subjects predicted, on the verge of extinction from Moroccan culture or vernacular.

Defining *Hchouma*

Literally translated, *hchouma* means shame, although it holds far more weight than does its English equivalent. It is an element of everyday Moroccan life that is entrenched in society but never discussed or defined; as such, it has become one word that encompasses myriad meanings and beliefs. According to *CultureShock! Morocco*, it is the response to behavior that “contravenes social norms, breaks Islamic precepts, and abrogates personal obligations inside or outside of the family” (Hargraves 2006: 53); it is a tool of socialization and control that teaches people not to engage in such kind of behavior. Some see *hchouma* as a force that preserves one’s public image. Others believe it is no more than a question of respect for yourself and others. Soumaya Naamane-Guessous, the feminist author of *Au-delà de toute pudeur*, sums up the multifaceted nature of *hchouma* quite simply: “La hchouma de l’un n’est-elle pas la hchouma de l’autre” (Guessous 1992: 6). *Hchouma* means something different depending on your gender, upbringing and age.

Fatima, a 24 year-old university graduate, heard the word *hchouma* often during her childhood. Her parents supported her in most of her decisions, including an eventual career as a belly-dancing teacher, but insisted that she receive an education and demonstrate to her community that she is an educated woman. To Fatima, *hchouma* is a force used to ensure that people behave properly in public and create a positive image of themselves for others; therefore, it is *hchouma* to use vulgar language, to burp in front of others, to pick your nose, or to laugh at or whisper in front of people. These behaviors are especially *hchouma* for women, for whom it is of the utmost importance to show politeness and modesty.

Ismail, another university student, sees *hchouma* as an issue related to respect. With a smile, he recalled to me an incident from his youth when he was scolded:

“One day I was sitting with my big family and my grandma was saying some things, and for me she was lying, and I was like, ‘No you should not say that, this is wrong’. My mom was next to me and she said ‘Hchouma, you should not interrupt’. And I started crying. You should not interrupt someone when they talk, this is so hchouma”.

Ismail’s upbringing had a strong impact on his concept of *hchouma*; as a young boy Mohamed was reprimanded upon interrupting his elders, and today still, he sees *hchouma* as a question of respect for those around him. The behaviors that stand out most to him as *hchouma* include lying, disrespecting your elders, raising your voice and letting a woman pay for a man’s meal.

Hassan, a proud chef, husband and father, is also of the belief that *hchouma* is a question of respect. For him, it is not only about respect for others, but for yourself and your community at large. According to Hassan, “If there is one person in the world that thinks what you are doing is *hchouma*, you must stop it; if one person says something is not good, there is something there” (Hassan, Personal Interview, Nov 29 2011). *Hchouma* means respecting the values of everyone around you, be they personal, familial, societal, national or global. He also explains that there is an important link in Morocco between family and society. If there is something going on within your family that is *hchouma*, it brings shame to your community. If you witness something on the street that is *hchouma*, it brings shame to your community as well, which in turn brings shame to your family. It is therefore important to respect and look out for your family and community to ensure that nothing *hchouma*

is taking place. Hassan stresses that at the core of these ideas is religious education. If you have a religious education (Muslim or otherwise), he maintains, you have respect for yourself and your community, and do not behave in ways that are *hchouma*.

Depending on whom you speak to, *hchouma* may be a matter of public image, respect, religion or something else. Despite diverse ideas among different people about what it signifies, one thing holds true in all cases: “Hchouma is a social control, the most common means of control of behavior” (Bowen and Early 2002: 30). What is a tool for Fatima to maintain a positive public image stops her from using vulgar words; what is a matter of respect for Ismail keeps him from interrupting others; what is the essence of respect for oneself, one’s community and one’s religion reminds Hassan to say *b’ism Allah* (in the name of God) and *hamdoulillah* (praise to God) before and after every meal. *Hchouma* is used as a behavioral control, employed in order to end a behavior that is occurring or prevent a past behavior from recurring – everyone agreed on this point, whether young or old, liberal or conservative, male or female.

***Hchouma* Evolving**

Hchouma as a behavioral control has existed for a long time in Morocco. It is a word that every child has grown up with. Redouan, a 23 year-old university student, claims he heard the word *hchouma* “since the time I felt that I’m human” (Redouan, Personal Interview, Nov 21 2011). Despite its longevity in Moroccan society, the meaning and value of *hchouma* is evolving from generation to

generation due to both internal and external factors. Internally, Morocco is undergoing democratization and westernization under the hands of King Mohammed VI. Under his reign, Moroccans have seen improved women's rights, freer media and a reformed constitution. In terms of external factors, Moroccans today are presented with greater exposure to foreign media and culture due to the ever increasing pace and impact of globalization. This combination of factors is producing a climate of changing practices, beliefs and mindsets in Morocco – and attitudes towards *hchouma* are a part of that climate of change.

Hatim, an older man with whom I spoke, explained to me that when he was young, he listened to everything his parents said. He respected them and followed their orders, for it was *hchouma* not to. Being outside of the house late at night was *hchouma*. Smoking was *hchouma*. Going out with girls was *hchouma*. Talking to your parents about romantic relationships was *hchouma*. When I asked him about *hchouma* today, he asserted that there is “very little *hchouma*” left in Morocco. Today, smoking is no longer *hchouma*, “not even for women” (Hatim, Personal Interview, Nov 23 2001), he added. Children can speak to their parents about their relationships. The way he sees it, *hchouma* is disappearing.

Redouan, the university student, would agree with the above statement. Redouan grew up in a traditional, religious family. Everything was *hchouma* when he was growing up: spitting, watching people kissing, offending someone, smoking, going out late at night, going out with girls – *hchouma* was heard “from the time you wake up until the time you go to bed”. Today, in contrast, Redouan says that he and his friends have been exposed to other cultures, and as a result, have adopted a

western mentality. They prefer to be “easy going”. In his opinion, *hchouma* is funny, more of a joke than something to be taken seriously. He expresses the inconsistency between his views on *hchouma* and those of his parents:

“Today, when hchouma is said you must stop, but you can do it later. It’s just a temporary behavioral control. It’s like ‘Okay mom, whatever, you believe like this, and deep inside of me I don’t believe like that”.

Redouan and his friends smoke, drink and stay out late; to them these behaviors are not *hchouma*, as they once were. Redouan believes that the majority of his generation rarely uses the word, and that “in the following generation, the word *hchouma* will be annihilated” (Redouan, Personal Interview, Nov 21 2011).

Hassan, the proud chef, would disagree with the above opinions. As he believes that the community must show respect and be respected, he makes sure to point out *hchouma* behavior to all those around him, and is passing on his own notions of *hchouma* to his son. *Hchouma* behaviors, according to Hassan, include eating without washing your hands, talking while eating, beginning a meal before your mother and father, serving food without water, not offering food to guests, not saying *Allah akbar* when the call to prayer is heard, not fasting, smoking and eavesdropping. Hassan is convinced that people today still adhere to the above code. He does add, however, that the wealthy do not always maintain these ideas. He finds that “there is something *hchouma* about modern life”. In his perspective, the wealthy, modern lifestyle is characterized by a loss of tradition, religion and respect. Some people in these communities dress immodestly, eat nontraditional foods and behave according to their desires without caring for those around them, and this is shameful. Nevertheless, Hassan continues to pass his thoughts on *hchouma* down to

younger generations, and does not believe it is fading anywhere but within wealthy Moroccan communities. “Young people still know *hchouma*”, he asserts (Hassan, Personal Interview, Nov 29 2011).

While opinions are mixed on the extent to which it is changing, it is clear from the responses of my interviewees, as well as general observation, that there exists a degree of devaluation in the significance of *hchouma* from past to present generations. The behavior of people is noticeably changing. Men and women are smoking. Couples are publicly displaying their affection. Women are wearing more revealing clothing. Tableside manners are disappearing. Some say the word *hchouma* is actually being heard less frequently. The democratization and westernization underway in Morocco are clearly impacting people’s notions of *hchouma* today. One of the key forces in this process of transition, one that affects over %90 of the Moroccan population (Pennell 2001), is television.

A Look at Moroccan Television

Television was introduced to Morocco in March 1963, primarily as a means for the government to reach the large illiterate population. By the early 1990s, %89 of the population had a television set. Television stations were all owned by the government, until 2M, the first privately owned television company, was founded in 1989 (Pennell 2001). The philosophy of the creators of 2M was to encourage debate, transparency and openness in the media, creating a break from the government controlled, censored media of the past. 2M aired documentaries and debates about taboo subjects and controversial ideas. The station established a reputation for itself

as a symbol of freedom of speech in Morocco (Ben Cherif 2010). However, as satellite dishes and pirated videos that were introduced to the country in the 1980s became more widespread, Moroccans were less and less willing to pay for access to the private television station (Pennell 2001), and in 1996, 2M, too, was taken over by the government as part of the Moroccan Broadcasting Network (Ben Cherif 2010). Nevertheless, the liberal nature of the TV station remains the same. 2M today offers a 24-hour lineup of news, documentaries, cultural shows, sporting events, children's programs, recurring series and films.

The liberalization of various Moroccan television stations has been accompanied by the growth and proliferation of foreign television throughout Moroccan homes. Satellite relays, optical cables, dish systems, and digital equipment now bring Arab, European, and American television programming into every region of the country (Langlois 2009). Television sets are swamped with Egyptian, Turkish, Mexican and Korean soap operas, and American sitcoms and movies. Fox and NBC films are common favorites among youth (Adnan, Personal Interview, Nov 23 2011). Even national television such as 2M airs numerous foreign programs; national production is estimated at less than 25% of the total output of Moroccan television stations (Ben Cherif 2010). International culture is being domesticated as Moroccans from big cities to remote villages transfix their eyes on the same foreign shows dubbed over in Darija – everyone knows, for example, of the trials, triumphs and outfits of the lead female protagonist in *Estrella*, the Mexican soap opera that airs every night at seven.

What is equally as striking as the abundance and popularity of foreign films and television is the content of this media, in many ways at odds with Moroccan culture and values. I vividly remember my surprise upon returning to my host family's home one night to find my mother and sister, modestly dressed in *djellabas* and headscarves, in front of a TV screen displaying a near-nude woman with an alcoholic beverage in hand. My surprise quickly faded as time passed and I saw that this pursuit took place almost every night. Through these foreign films and television shows, my host family and other Moroccans are being exposed to a culture very different from their own. Morocco, while is certainly one of the more westernized Arab, Islamic nations, is still a country in which a majority of women are veiled, alcohol is largely abstained from and sex is taboo; the foreign media that Moroccans are consuming is clearly characterized by alien practices, attitudes and beliefs.

The combination of freer, more transparent national television including political debates and controversial documentaries (Ben Cherif 2010), and the influx of foreign media exposing Moroccans to alien cultures, is undoubtedly affecting change on the mentalities of people across the country. The specific question I now seek to answer is: what is the role that this media is playing in the changing Moroccan perceptions of *hchouma*?

***Hchouma* On-screen, *Hchouma* Off-screen**

Rachid, a reporter who has been working with 2M for the last twenty years, had a lot to share with me on the subject of television and its impact on the

Moroccan people. Throughout his time with 2M, he has seen firsthand the evolution of television: the increasing liberalization of television stations, the proliferation of foreign media, the obstacles faced in trying to create an open, informative television station that is accessible to everyone, and the effect of all this on Moroccan mentalities. Rachid shared with me in detail the philosophy behind 2M:

“2M was created in order to create a space of debate, to break taboos, as Moroccans in the past were not allowed to do so; it was a source of fear. In the context of new freedoms, 2M displayed to the country how Moroccans were thinking and transforming. It was the first step towards truth”.

He continued by explaining the influence of these changes in television, and why television is so influential in Morocco:

“The street adopted the transformation of television... In a society where there is not a strong system of education, it is normal that the image plays a very important role. A large part of Moroccan society suffers from illiteracy, so it is completely normal that television replaces education, and this is why [television] was such a remarkable influence. Many young, many old, many women, many men changed their behavior greatly, maybe not because of, but with the help of television”.

Television is a source of information and entertainment available to over 90% of the population, young or old, urban or rural, literate or illiterate. It is a force that transcends diversities and socioeconomic barriers, filling a widespread void of formal education and unifying the Moroccan people as they watch the same news, movies and soap operas. According to Rachid, this force has granted Moroccans greater awareness and power of speech. Partially due to television, Moroccans' perceptions of subjects such as the royal family, religion and women's rights have changed. Regardless of level of education, increasingly more people are engaging in

debate and discussion – “everyone can know what the word democracy is” (Rachid, Personal Interview, Nov 28 2011).

Rachid rightfully gloats over the positive influence of more liberal news reportage and documentaries. On a less positive note, he complains about the effect that foreign soap operas and sitcoms that surfaced in 1992 have had on Moroccan society. He claims that foreign television series reflect the absence of a Moroccan identity. The shows are brought in only because they are less expensive, and are driving down the level of national production. They are dubbed over in Darija, creating a “fantasy” culture and transmitting to people an identity that is not Moroccan (Rachid, Personal Interview, Nov 28 2011) – and there are signs indicating that elements of this “fantasy” culture are being adopted by the spectators who observe it on their television screens every night.

Ismail, the 24 year-old university student, is unhappy with the recent developments in Moroccan television. He says that those in charge of the television stations today do not care about national culture, and that children, teenagers and illiterate people get the “wrong idea” about their culture and identity from foreign shows. Ismail believes that today’s television is negatively affecting people’s behaviors. He has a fourteen year-old brother who frequently watches TV, and believes that because of this constant exposure, “hchouma does not exist” (Ismail, Personal Interview, Nov 22 2011) for him; he is spoiled and behaves as he pleases. There are similarities between Ismail’s younger brother and another of my interviewees, a 15 year-old high school student also named Adnan. Like Ismail’s younger brother, Adnan watches a lot of TV, primarily sports and movies on NBC

and Fox Films. He makes sure not to watch these movies around his family, for he knows that his family members see them as *hchouma*. Adnan and his friends, however, think these movies are cool and exciting. When asked about *hchouma*, Adnan responds that it is disappearing, and that young people today “don’t know *hchouma*” (Adnan, Personal Interview, Nov 23 2011). In the future, he says, there will be no *hchouma*.

Redouan agrees that television is diminishing the value of *hchouma*, although unlike Ismail, for him this is not something to complain about. When Redouan was younger, there were no foreign television series with “hot, barely dressed women...this is a new thing for Moroccan culture” (Redouan, Personal Interview, Nov 21 2011). He explains that his parents’ generation is infuriated by today’s television; they see it as combating Moroccan culture, and therefore as *hchouma*. In Redouan’s opinion, however, the American movies that he watches are not *hchouma*, and it is important that people today be open-minded in order to capitalize on the current climate of transformation and reform. Fatima would agree with Redouan on this point; she encourages open-mindedness. Growing up, Fatima was not allowed to watch any television that was *hchouma*. She explains that being forbidden to watch television relating to intimacy and relationships prevented her education about love and sex, so she and her friends would secretly buy foreign movies and watch them together. In her opinion, children’s perceptions of what it and what is not *hchouma* are certainly affected by the movies and television they watch, but not negatively. From the movies she watched in hiding with her friends, she learned about intimacy, and that it is not something to be ashamed or

embarrassed of. She adds that children also learn and imitate from television new manners of dress and forms of interaction with others.

Whether positively or negatively, television is unmistakably affecting change on perceptions of *hchouma*, primarily those of the youth. According to Rachid, what we are witnessing in the mentalities of younger generations is a “rupture with the former world” (Rachid, Personal Interview, Nov 28 2011). Which behaviors are and are not *hchouma*, whether or not *hchouma* is at all important and whether or not it is here to stay are all in debate, partially due to the new ideas, practices and values that Moroccans are being exposed to via contemporary television. What does this “rupture” imply for the future role of *hchouma* in Morocco? Is *hchouma* bound to disappear? What would its extinction mean for Moroccan society at large?

Here to Stay

As proved to be the case with most questions I asked, my interviewees had differing thoughts about what the loss of *hchouma* means for Moroccan culture and society. Some see this loss as harmful, some see it as liberating, and others harbor mixed feelings.

Hassan and Ismail are intent on the fact that a loss of *hchouma* equals a loss of respect. The fading of *hchouma* means the fading of people’s respect for themselves, others and their communities. Fatima, on the other hand, believes that a diminishment of *hchouma* means more freedom, greater openness and less embarrassment for children growing up. As a child, she experienced a long period of timidity and awkwardness regarding her body, love and intimacy; she feels that this is because her knowledge of these matters was stifled, for *hchouma* was said

whenever they were mentioned or encountered. In the future, she hopes that her children will come to her with all of their problems and feel no shame in asking any questions; therefore, she will rarely use the word *hchouma*.

Rachid believes the devaluation of *hchouma* means greater independence in society today – women can now live and travel independently of men; people can formulate their own opinions independently of what the government tells them. Mohamed, the son of Hatim, the older man with whom I spoke, interjected as I was asking his father about the fading of *hchouma*:

“There is less and less hchouma today; but this all depends on education. If you are raised in a good family with good education, you know hchouma and you will be good; if you are raised in a bad family, you don’t have respect, you do not behave well, you do not know hchouma. Knowing hchouma is a good thing, but there is a good and bad side of it. It is good that there is more freedom now, that people are more open to other cultures and ideas...[but] in the past there was a lot of respect in Moroccan language and tradition; now, there is less respect”.

Mohammed here captures the multifaceted nature of *hchouma*. It is an element of Moroccan society that remains vital for some yet is amusing for others, a notion that limits behavioral freedoms as it creates a culture of respect and decency, a code of social conduct whose disappearance comes with both benefits and repercussions.

While it is important to discuss the implications of a devaluating *hchouma*, I think it is unnecessary to consider the meanings of its extinction from Moroccan culture and vernacular; in spite of comments from some of my interviewees foreseeing such an erasure in the future, I would argue that multiple signs indicate the continuing use and prevalence of *hchouma* today and in the future. Hassan, for one, assures me that his son maintains the same notions of *hchouma* as himself, and

that he continues to call the attention of those around him to behaviors that are *hchouma*. Fatima, who swears that she will not use *hchouma* to stunt her childrens' social and sexual education, maintains that she will still *hchouma* them if they behave inappropriately in public, primarily as a behavioral control. Mohammed, who enjoys the television that his family deems *hchouma*, cannot bring himself to describe the content of said television out loud. Mohammed insists that while the importance of *hchouma* has lessened and Moroccans are losing some sense of respect, "The Muslim, Moroccan tradition always remains" (Mohammed, Nov 23 2011).

Even Redouan, who claims he has adopted the western mentality and sees *hchouma* as a joke, mentioned during my interview with him that *hchouma* is "in his blood", something he will live with for the rest of his life. As trivial as he may declare *hchouma* to be in his life, he still pays mind to "family beliefs and society as a whole" (Redouan, Personal Interview, Nov 21 2011). The future continuity of *hchouma* is only further supported by my day-to-day observations. Had I not heard *hchouma* repeatedly immediately upon arriving in Morocco, I would not have been inspired to conduct research on the subject to begin with. But I did, and still do, hear it all the time: When a girl walks down the street with bare shoulders, when a man persistently harasses a woman, when there are clumps in the Friday couscous, when a referee makes a bad call in the FC Barcelona-Real Madrid game, when the neighbor continues to drink too much.

Hchouma clearly remains a powerful presence in Moroccan culture today. Due to the impact of multiple forces, such as a freer media, exposure to foreign films

and television, the introduction and expansion of the Internet and a king who seeks to democratize, the mentalities of Moroccans are continuously evolving. A part of that evolution is a decrease in the employment and significance of *hchouma*. In some ways, this means a loss of respect for tradition, religion and community. In others, it means an increase in education, freedom and independence. Regardless of such developments, be they beneficial or destructive, *hchouma* is not on the verge of extinction; its meaning and value in Moroccan society are merely changing. *Hchouma* is “in the blood” of Moroccans both old and young, and from what I have gathered, it is here to stay.

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Déclaration de consentement

L'objectif d'étude

L'objectif de l'étude est de comprendre la notion marocaine de *hchouma* dans la vie urbaine : ce que le mot signifie, quelles actions sont *hchouma*, comment ces idées changent entre des générations différentes et comment la télévision et avertissements que les marocains regardent changent tous cela.

La durée et les éléments d'étude

Cette étude sera dirigée pendant une période de trois semaines, et ce à partir du 19 Novembre jusqu'au 10 Décembre 2011. L'étude inclura les observations et les interventions des participants en incluant leur travail sur terrain.

Les risques

L'étude n'a aucun risque prévisible pour les participants. Cependant, si vous ne vous sentez pas confortable avec le procédé d'observation ou d'interview, vous êtes libre de terminer votre participation.

Compensation

La participation à cette étude ne sera pas compensée, financièrement ou autrement. Cependant, votre aide est considérablement appréciée par notre équipe de recherche.

Confidentialité

Tout effort de maintenir votre information personnelle confidentielle sera fait dans ce projet. Vos noms et toute autre information d'identification seront changés dans la description finale, et seulement connue à l'équipe de recherche.

Participation

Je soussigné,, confirme avoir lu les rapports ci-dessus et compris que ma participation à cette étude est volontaire tout en ayant la liberté de retirer mon consentement à tout moment sans pénalité.

Signature

Date

J'ai pris conscience que cette étude puisse comporter les entrevues et/ou les observations qui peuvent être enregistrées et transcrites.

Signature

Date

Team de recherche

Les chercheurs peuvent être contactés par E-mail ou téléphone pour n'importe quelle raison : edotan@skidmore.edu ou 0648396257