Red Lips

Mai Ghoussoub

The artist’s circular announced:

‘We are building an Installation on the theme of refugees. One part of the installation consists of objects that you could carry along if you had to leave your home, at a short notice, with an unknown future.’ The objects sent to the artists carried mainly memories of survival: keys, deeds, diplomas, radios, purses… One item looked puzzling and defied what it was supposed to be carrying: a tube of the unknown: a red, strong strident lipstick tube! A light and superfluous memory into the future, or was it so?

Not for me. I understood immediately from where the sender’s survival reflex drew its source. She, for it bending a woman, or a man, into a burning red, was ready to move onto a dark road carrying a strong message of life and a defiant energy. I understand now the ritual gestures that are still haunting a corner of my memory, hidden like an explosive dream in a now abandoned convent that stood discreetly on a hill, high up in the Lebanese mountains...

I was a teenager preparing for the Baccalaureat exam with my friends Nada and Joumana; the location was ideal for tranquillity and concentration. Silence and a long dispassionate distance from the city and its attractions, were definitely crucial for our studious goal. A convent run by Italian nuns for young novices secluded like we needed to be (only for two weeks as far as we were concerned) from male presence. ‘Retreat’ was the word we used in those days. Retreating, withdrawing from ordinary life, from our routine but mainly from the lightness of normal being.

The convent was hauntingly silent, for we learned from a somewhat less rigorous Italian nun, that the order was hosting young, very young girls coming from ‘respectable families’ whose fortunes had known better times and who for lack of a dowry were unmarrageable. A convent was the most suitable alternative for these, who would spin off the scene, and this one in particular where only girls from ‘a bonne famille’ were admitted.

The deadly silence that surrounded us was immaculate thanks to the binding oath made by every newcomer - ‘a privileged girl’ as our nun put it - to be mute for six months. The few Italian nuns who run the place spoke as little and as softly as possible out of respect for the novices’ vow and out of love for ‘the tears of Mary and the suffering of her son, Jesus Christ’.

There were tens of novices, rushing silently through the dark corridors. We met them briefly on our way to the dining room and our curious eyes searched eagerly for their faces that always managed to escape our gaze. Their eyes avoided us, fixing incessantly the tiled floor whenever they walked past us. Their bodies looked small and fragile under their neat black tunics. Only the Mother-Superior appeared tall and upright in this convent. Her instructions, uttered through her thin lips, on the first day of our ‘retreat’ Nada, Joumana and I were as stiff as the rules that prevailed over the lives of this community of secluded and hushed women.

We were scheduled to spend two weeks in this haven of perfect isolation, but on the seventh day, the scene that recurs like a dark red dream in my sleepless nights, turned the convent into disarray cutting short our worthy and scholarly endeavour. It is because of this scene, on the seventh day in that remote convent, that I understand how a refugee can proudly hold a lipstick tube in the face of a threatening future.

Red is the Absolute: it is pure. Its dazzling power stands for the warmth of the sun and the mystery of life. Red is transgression, Red is energy. The Mother-Superior’s lips loosened into a delighted smile, when she informed us that today was the Pope’s feast and that the novices would be allowed to roam freely around the convent, to enjoy themselves the way they see fit as long as the vow of silence is respected.

Soon, a few novices stood near the door of the large room that Nada, Joumana and I were sharing. Their steps, first timid and hesitant became more assertive onto our insistent hospitality. They were obviously amazed by our messy and overcrowded room and their faces turned crimson and more candid when Nada produced a large tin full of biscuits. They were suppressing their giggles, hiding their mouths with their hands, as Nada was battling with layers of clothes and books, mingled with some make up kits to free a box packed with sweets and chocolates. A bullet like stick fell away rolling nosily on the bare floor. Joumana picked it up and moved towards the mirror. Joumana could never resist a lipstick; she pulled its golden cover revealing a bright glittering magenta that she spread magnificently over her stretched lips.

Since the ancient Egyptians, women have been staining their lips with everything from berry juice to Henna, from a paste of red rocks to the combo of wax. Ancient Egyptians went to their graves with rouged lips.

I do not have a clear memory of how it all started. All I can see now is a room turned upside down by a bewildering frenzy. The novices were scratching their mouths with their hands, as Nada was battling with layers of clothes and books, mingled with some make up kits to free a box packed with sweets and chocolates. A bullet like stick fell away rolling nosily on the bare floor. Joumana picked it up and moved towards the mirror. Joumana could never resist a lipstick; she pulled its golden cover revealing a bright glittering magenta that she spread magnificently over her stretched lips.

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The tail and dark figure of the Mother-Superior stood straight putting a sudden end to the uncontrollable vitality of the room. She must have been there unnoticed for a while… one of the two was lustfully offering her neck, full of red lip marks, to the passionate kisses of the other.

Red, the colour of fire and blood. It is the fire which burns inside the individual… Below the green of the Earth’s surface and the blackness of the soil, lies the redness, pre-eminently holy and secret. It is the colour of the soul, the libido and of the heart. It is the colour of esoteric lore forbidden to the uninstructed.

A novice, short and wilful looking with her flushed baby face went onto wild intoxicating motions. She kept bending her torso throwing her shaved head downwards, then springing her body upright flinging her arms in all directions. She performed an angry and discursive dance, oblivious of the uproar and chaos surrounding her. Noises emerged from the red faces that twisted and rushed around filling the room with a buzzing mad clatter. Sounds like shrieking laughter came out of red candy throats and brown glitter tongues. Screams like warriors seeking a desperate victory emerged from the now revealed and shaved heads of the frantic novices. Patches of hair scattered over their scull like a badly tended lawn. I suddenly realised that more novices joined in the frenzied feast, turning our room into a threatening sight of violet and wine-dark surfaces.

Red embodies the ardour and enthusiasm of youth. It is the colour of blood, the heat of the temper, it gives energy to excitement and to inflamed physical passion. With its warmth it will always be the spoils of the war or of the dialectics between Heaven and Earth. It is the colour of Dionysus, the liberator and Orgiast.

The tall and dark figure of the Mother-Superior stood straight putting a sudden end to the uncontrollable vitality of the room. She must have been there unnoticed for a while until silence fell upon the space that looked like an abandoned and desolate battlefield. A heavy and long silence that emphasized the languid embrace of two novices oblivious to the sudden change of mood around them. Her eyes half closed, her head leaning on the wall, one of the two lustfully offering her neck, full of red lip marks, to the passionate kisses of the other.

Rage, like red burning arrows, tensed the lips of the Mother-Superior, intensifying the paleness of her complexion. She appeared like a centuries onwards inked one with an umbrella black inside her black tunic, rigid like a rope-walker immobilised in a snapshot. ‘Stop it’ she finally managed to scream. Her cry had the effect of a slap hitting the two novices on the face. They disentangled their bodies furtively and rushed out of the room.

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Premarital Female Sexuality in Morocco

Dr. Abdessamad Dialmy

In the Arab world, the study of “illegal” and/or “anomalous” sexualities has disturbed the political powers. Indeed, studying these sexualities as social phenomena is a way to recognize their existence and the difficulties faced by the religious authorities to limit sex to the marriage institutions. Therefore the study of these sexualities could become an ideological weapon to contest the Arab/Islamo political power legitimacy.

This situation explains difficulties that researchers may encounter in the field of sexuality. Indeed, it was the apparition of AIDS in the Arab world that weakened this resistance by the states that have begun to see the need for sexual studies. Indeed, the threat of AIDS has obliged some Arab states to study sexual behaviors independently of their legality and normality in order to understand their logic and to produce adapted messages of prevention.

Premarital female sexuality is at the heart of what is considered “illegal” sexuality. Virginity remains the incontestable condition and proof of the general intolerance to premarital female sexuality. Let’s signal here the patriarchal reduction of sexuality to genital activity and to defloweration. In fact, it is this view of sexuality that imports to the functioning of such a system since it determines fertilization and inheritance. The other shapes of premarital female sexuality, non-genital or without defloweration, are not menacing. And in the setting of an incomplete modernity, an explicit consensus settled progressively around the definition of a virgin as some one who has not been deflowered. Such consensus means an effective recognition of the other forms of premarital female sexuality. In the context of this incomplete modernity, medicine makes itself paradoxically an accomplice of both the girl and the patriarchal system while preventing pregnancy and proceeding to the suture of the hymen. To the girl, medicine provides the possibility of a sexual activity without risk of pregnancy and of recovering “virginity”, and to the patriarchal system it saves the male honor and guarantees the purity of lineage.

This paper that intends to synthesize results of studies on premarital female sexuality in Morocco structures itself into three parts. In the first, it is about showing how premarital female sexuality is the indispensable sexual activity with the age at the first marriage and describe it as a sexual substitutive practice because of the taboo of the virginity.

We will expose some problems relative to this sexuality such as multi-partnership, homosexuality, virginity and prostitution.

Feminist Struggle
My interest in sexuality emerged after writing a bibliography that covers the notions of family, woman and sexuality (from 1912 to 1996). Owing to the emergence of AIDS, the subject of sexuality has currently shifted toward a kind of epidemiological autonomy in the sense that it has begun to be studied independently of the subject of family and woman, and without being cautioned by the “morality” of family or woman.

At the quantitative level, the pure sexual themes occu-
Figure 1: Distribution of Writings on Family-Women-Sexuality

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>1912-1955 %</th>
<th>1956-1975 %</th>
<th>1976-1996 %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Family</td>
<td>41.2</td>
<td>31.3</td>
<td>15.6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Woman</td>
<td>41.0</td>
<td>47.3</td>
<td>58.4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexuality</td>
<td>17.8</td>
<td>21.4</td>
<td>25.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 2: Distribution of Writings on Sexuality

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>1912-1955 %</th>
<th>1956-1975 %</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Family</td>
<td>41.0</td>
<td>47.3</td>
<td>58.4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Woman</td>
<td>41.2</td>
<td>31.3</td>
<td>15.6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Body</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Virgin</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STD/AIDS</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>17.8</td>
<td>21.4</td>
<td>25.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As one notices through these two figures, sexual themes have recently acquired a relative statistical importance. Initially (1912 - 1975) sexuality was presented mainly through the demographic perspective (fertility and contraception). It is only in the third period that the demographic prism relatively fades away so that notions of sexual behavior and risky sexuality attract more and more interest among the academic community. The phenomenon of the veiling movement is a phenomenon that has been highly concentrated attention on the family meaning studying sexuality only through its institutional demonstrations. Variables of social studies of family overlook behaviors and sexual practices outside marriage.

Women studies took precedence during the last two periods, after independence (1956-1975) and the neo-national era (1976-1996). These studies are mainly focused on themes like the veil, education, employment, the use of contraceptives and virginity. Consequently, the object woman was a stage in the progressive discovery of sexuality as “object” by social studies.

The emergence of the object “woman” is indeed correlated to the public production of the female body in a society that had to break with one of its ideological foundations, the public eclipse of female body. Education and employment particularly raise the question of the veil while the absence of contraceptive use reinforces in the same sense the female body as a purely reproductive entity devoted to pregnancies. The veil is in fact the socio-religious mechanism that serves to eclipse the female body from the traditional urban public space. And it was quite normal that, after Independence, Moroccan society had to deal with this issue of the veil when facing the question of female education and employment. The construction of a modern Moroccan could not be effectively carried out without a claim on the issue of the veil in a setting divided into two hierarchical worlds, one public and male and the other private and female. National powers anxious to give woman a role in the process of development were in conflict with the veiling of the veil and the seclusion of women. In this context, and as early as 1952, Allal el Fassi wrote that “the veiled woman is not less exposed than the unveiled one to the danger of prostitution.” He went a step further to assert that “homosexual practices” are related to the separation of spheres. In doing so, Allal el Fassi was clearly under the influence of Egyptian reformists like Mohammed Abou) or Egyptian feminists like Hoda Shaarawi. But there was also the idea of the western family model on the Moroccan family. Consequently, after Independence, the veil was no longer recognized as a sign of resistance to coloniza- tion. The battle of the veil is highly symbolic because it translated the historical necessity of the emergence of woman as a productive body in the productive space. The liberation from the veil was a kind of liberation from submission, from the patriarchal image of the home as the domain of public space and the veiling of the female body, reinforced by progressively extended contraceptive use, challenged the earlier definition of the female body as “a trunk of productions and nances”, as D Chraiibis refers to it, “to an instrument of erotic pleasure.” Indeed, the recurrent theme of virginity indicates the will of the modern woman to enjoy premarital sex that challenges the patriarchal institutions.

This public production of the female body began with the battle against the veil and is continuing through the battle against virginity. A. Boushidha’s asserts that Arab feminism went through two main stages: the liberation from the veil between the two world wars, and the right to vote and to sex (critique of chastity and virginity). But according to J. Berque, the Moorish reformer Allal el Fassi addressed a petition to the town council of Fes in which he demanded that the exposition of the bride’s lineage on the wedding day be prohibited. The petition reveals that Moroccan reform is precocious, having adopted a proto-feminist critique of the taboo of virginity since the 1920s.

Of course, the veil and virginity are two main themes directly related to the body and sexuality, which raises the general question of compatibility between women’s liberation (modernity) and Islam. For current Moroccan feminism that is expressed essentially through reformist female associations, there is no contradiction between women’s liberation and Islam. For the modernist Moroccan feminism never has claimed sex- ist ideas. Nevertheless, some feminist claims are unacceptable for fundamentalists - the latter insisting that the veil does not mean that Muslim women have reject- ed modernity. One of these points shows the possibility of an Islam defined as a possible component of sexual rights and egalitarian family, is both excluded by Muslim scholars and the legal age of marriage to eighteen years for girls, the suppression of the maternal tutor, the suppression of polygamy, the transformation of repudiation into divorce, the allotment of conjugal wealth after divorce between spouses, the installation of condom distributors, and the protection of abortion outside marriage. Nevertheless, the general Islamic rejection of these points shows the limitations of an Islamic feminism in Morocco and the resistance of juridical Islam to sexual and reproductive rights for women, revealing an unbalanced definition of moral, sexual and family. Facing this resistance, Moroccan femi- nists cannot claim clearly the right to free sexuality for non married people. Perhaps, Islam’s book entitled Toward an Islamic Sexual Democracy is the only work that demonstrates that the necessity to protect premarital sexuality against STD/HIV risk is not incompatible with Islamic laws and with the spirit of Islam. In the chapter entitled “Sexual Health and Ijihad”, Dialmy argues that Ijihad with both the available sacred texts and beyond the texts is neces- sary to protect sexual health as a central dimension of public health. Since premarital abstinence is unrealis- tic, it is less dangerous to use condoms, particularly that premarital sex is practiced in secret with or without a condom.

The religious resistance to the seven main feminist Moroccan claims shows that there is no difference between official Islam (ministry of Islamic affairs and Oulema) and Islamic fundamentalism as far as women and sexuality are concerned. One Islamic group that took the decision to struggle against gender liberation asserts that these seven points have already received a definitive Islamic answer: sexuality is dependent on marriage, and woman is dependent on man. This double dependency is supposed to be an Invariable according to juridical dominant Islam. Mystic Islam, which shows the possibility of an Islam defined as a possible component of sexual rights and egalitarian family, is both excluded by Muslim scholars and funda- mentalists.

Premarital Sexual Activity

Sociologically, the increase in pre-marital sexual activity is bound to dissociate sex from marriage. This activity is characterized by sexual substitutive prac- tices that reconcile the modern principle of pleasure with the Islamic-patriarchal principle of non-deflor- ation.

The Rise of Marriage at Middle Age

Moroccan social traditions make of a girl’s marriage a major element in the sexual and procreative strategy inspired by a patriarchal reading of Islam. Nevertheless, the early marriage has several advantages. It is a month less to feed and to avoid the risk of premarital de- floration of the image and the female body. Consequently the rate of single women is lower than that of single men, masculine celibacy is, in fact, more accepted socially. Less than 11% of single remain bachelors at the end of their reproductive lives.

But some social and economical factors have lead to
the rise in the number of women who marry at a later age. Indeed, urbanization and schooling, though still incomplete, are gradually undermining the patriarchal paradigm of marriage at an early age. A tendency towards delayed marriages has been illustrated by the different socio-demographic investigations since the 1960s. According to the last National Investigation on the Health of the Mother and the Child (ENSME/PAECH Child 1999) the percentage of women that married before reaching 26 years fell from 863 to one thousand among women aged 25-29 years. In the same way, this proportion fell further among married women at the age of 20 years, from 638 to one thousand among those of the cohort of 20-24 year women. Marriage among teenagers is decreasing at a fast rate. Investigation has revealed that marriage age varies according to different generations of women: Marriage at the age of 18 concerns 45% of women; between 45 and 49% among those who are between 25-29; and only 16% for those aged between 20 and 24 years. The rate of those who marry earlier than 15 years is only 8.4%.

The recession of marriage is confirmed by the female average age at the first marriage:

**Figure 4: Evolution of the female age at the first marriage**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Average Age</td>
<td>17.3</td>
<td>23.4</td>
<td>25.8</td>
<td>26.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

During 1996-97, the average age of the urban women at the first marriage was 27.8 years (against 24.7 years in rural areas). Between 1994 and 1997, the rate of bachelor women increased: out of 10 women reaching approximately 30 years, 4 are single. The number of married women who prefer celibacy to polygamy is systematically increasing. The proportion of women living in polygamous unions regressed from 5.1% in 1992 to 3.6% in 1996-97. Polygamy is particularly decreasing among educated women.

One of the main consequences of the rise in the female average age at the first marriage is the emergence of female premariital sexuality, which is sometimes precarious, beginning at 14 years. By the late 1970s the first survey on sexuality in Morocco by Dalmay revealed that only 8.7% adopted the Islamic legal premarital intercourse (2.2% among males and 18.3% among females). Moreover, premarital intercourse does not necessarily presuppose a marriage project and is practiced for itself, for pleasure (67.7% among men and 45% among women). In the 1980s, according to Naumme-Guessous, “the majority of young girls (65.3%) have had one intercourse at least.”

However, sexuality is a highly problematic issue. Legally, sex is prohibited for males and females before marriage, but, traditional standards are more unfavorable to females. Females are more submitted to familial and social coercion when it comes to the strict relation between sexuality and marriage. Usually, the males in the family lead this coercion, and, these males’ manhood is evaluated according to the extent of their control over and coercion of “their” women.

Yet, some men are adopting feminist attitudes to sex.

**Figure 3: Matrimonial statute according to the sex**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statute</th>
<th>Bachelor</th>
<th>Married</th>
<th>Widowed</th>
<th>Divorced</th>
<th>Indeterminate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Men</td>
<td>44,1</td>
<td>54,2</td>
<td>1,0</td>
<td>0,6</td>
<td>0,1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women</td>
<td>39,0</td>
<td>53,8</td>
<td>5,5</td>
<td>1,6</td>
<td>0,0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For this minority of men, premarital female sexuality is seen as the woman’s right. In fact that has to be admitted. The girl who makes love in “a reasonable and respectable” manner is considered to be as virtuous as the one who does not make love. Sexual stabilty outside marriage can decrease the extent of social condemnation if sex is the result of love.

**Sexual Practices**

The practices described below mainly concern the sexual activity of teenagers and youngsters.

**Masturbation**

Among boys, masturbation begins long before puberty, starting from the age of eight, and takes place without ejaculation. Collective masturbation is also a game, “the challenge to determine who can last longer than others.”

Girls speak less of their masturbation, but more of rubbing themselves against objects such as the cushion, the pillow or the table. The factors that arouse the desire for masturbation are varied enough. The two main sources are watching sex movies, and the small size of the parental lodging. Indeed, many boys and girls feel a strong sexual arousal when they either see or hear their parents making love.

**The Brush Stroke**

It is a common expression by Moroccan youngsters to say that the penis operates like a brush between the big lips of the vagina or between the girl’s thighs, penetration often being refused and feared. In this case, one could say that both females and males are convinced of the value of virginity as a non-defloration.

Girls find in the brush stroke a means that allows them to pass with success the test of “the good premarital sexual behavior”, which means having sexual pleasure without defloration. By refusing the temptation of penetration, girls feel a kind of pride and forget the shame and guilt that are socially associated with premarital sexual activity.

**Sodomy**

Among males, heterosexual sodomy is common, but a large majority of females regret sodomy. The main reason for this originates in the social and religious vision of “the sexually correct” according to which sodomy is condemned. But females often have to let themselves sodomized since sodomy is a surrogate to vaginal penetration. It is a substitute that helps them to keep the loved men and allows the man to ejaculate inside, in an inside. Some females admit to have experienced it and express remorse and disgust in general.

**The Multi-Partnership Model**

For the majority of young people, the multi-partner relationships seem to be the norm. However, one can distinguish between a successive multi-partner relationship, that is change of the partner, and a simultaneous multi-relationship, which is some times precocious, beginning at 14 years.

Four sexual problems related to premarital sexuality seem very important: multi-partnership, homosexuality and prostitution.

Yet, some men are adopting feminist attitudes to sex. Indeed, she is compared to a prostitute even though she doesn’t accumulate partners to accumulate money. She is said to be a prostitute because of her conduct. Sometimes the family, unable to face the accusing gaze of others, has to move out of the district. The girl’s loose behavior “offends the masculine pride of the men in the family and reduces them to powerless males.”

**Sexual Satisfaction**

As a result of the rapid increase in female literacy and the spread of TV since the 1970s, young women have more access to the themes of romantic love and sexual consumption. In the same way, the expansion of video shops in the 1980s encouraged the consumption of pornographic movies that play a pedagogic role in the erotic domain, and in the discovery of sexual pleasure by Moroccan girls. A girl relates one night of love: “All my family was sleeping. I left the house and I rejoined the driver of the truck. We descended toward the river, 500 m. away from our house. I told him that I drink wine... He went up then in the truck and fetched a lot of bottles of it... He also took out a mattress. We began to drink, then we fucked in all positions. It was a magnificent night of love. All ingredients were there, the moon, the river, screaming of animals, wine, music, sex... It was romantic, in spite of the absence of love... We enjoyed each other four times... We didn’t suck each other, my partner was only a countryman.”

For the “new” young woman, a lover or a potential husband is appreciated for both his sexual and economic potency. Furthermore, some young unmarried women go as far as to seek consultation for frigidity.

**Homosexuality**

Girls are discreet and allusive on this topic. For them, homosexuality is not considered a safer substitute for heterosexual love (even though there is no risk of defloration or pregnancy in comparison with the het-
Sexuality without penetration is therefore a construction of the consensual virginity by the girl. A worker of Fez maintains that “when I was young, my mother taught me that sex is shameful, illicit, painful... she especially taught me the importance of virginity and the fear of the man”. This type of education considers “the man as the real enemy of the woman” because “the girl is often the victim of the lasting sexual relation... Men are wolves... Virginity is the girl’s most important weapon... Thanks to virginity, the girl can prove her femininity, her chastity, her purity. And it is the only criterion that allows the man to distinguish between the prostitute and the girl of good family” (Law student, Fez).

The consensual virginity reconciles the demand for premarital sex and the demand of the neo-patriarchal man and the Islamic requirement for virginity. It is a compromise-test, an indication of social virtue, and a proof of restraint with the beloved man. Nevertheless, girls remain victims of a neo-patriarchal social order. The active homosexual (lesbian) makes love to women and men without defining himself as a bi-sexual person. For this reason, the Moroccan male prostitute will report his first homosexual relationship only if he had the active role, the pene-trating role. No one speaks about his first homosexual experience where his partner has penetrated him.66 Indeed, the situation of the hasass (who likes to be penetrated) and the zamel (the homosexual male prostitute), the two figures of “passive” homosexuality, is different. Their sexual practices are not taken into consideration because they are socially depreciated.67 The hasass is more depreciated because he likes to be penetrated. The zamel on the other hand, is considered more as a worker, a prostitute. For some homosexuals, prostitution can be a stratagem to live their homosexuality in a less dangerous way.

**Virginity and Artificial Virginity**

Toleration and fatalistic attitude in the need to distinguish between Koranic virginity and consensual virginity68 in order to understand the evolution of sexuality as a socio-historical phenomenon. Virginity in the Koran means that the girl has no sexual experience, while consensual virginity is one way to keep the hymen intact. In the setting of consensual virginity, sexual activity without defloweration has many advantages for the woman. She proves to her partner and the society that she is master of herself, worthy of confidence, able to conform to requirements of her social environment, and respectful of taboos. Paradoxically, therefore, sexuality without defloweration is a proof of the good conduct of the girl, an element in her strategy of marriage. It is about giving to the partner a foretaste of delights that awaits him, to enjoy oneself if possible without losing the hymen-capital.

Sexuality without penetration is therefore a construction of the consensual virginity by the girl. A worker of Fez maintains that “when I was young, my mother taught me that sex is shameful, illicit, painful... she especially taught me the importance of virginity and the fear of the man”. This type of education considers “the man as the real enemy of the woman” because “the girl is often the victim of the lasting sexual relation... Men are wolves... Virginity is the girl’s most important weapon... Thanks to virginity, the girl can prove her femininity, her chastity, her purity. And it is the only criterion that allows the man to distinguish between the prostitute and the girl of good family” (Law student, Fez).

The consensual virginity reconciles the demand for premarital sex and the demand of the neo-patriarchal man and the Islamic requirement for virginity. It is a compromise-test, an indication of social virtue, and a proof of restraint with the beloved man. Nevertheless, girls remain victims of a neo-patriarchal social order. The active homosexual (lesbian) makes love to women and men without defining himself as a bi-sexual person. For this reason, the Moroccan male prostitute will report his first homosexual relationship only if he had the active role, the penetrating role. No one speaks about his first homosexual experience where his partner has penetrated him.66 Indeed, the situation of the hasass (who likes to be penetrated) and the zamel (the homosexual male prostitute), the two figures of “passive” homosexuality, is different. Their sexual practices are not taken into consideration because they are socially depreciated.67 The hasass is more depreciated because he likes to be penetrated. The zamel on the other hand, is considered more as a worker, a prostitute. For some homosexuals, prostitution can be a stratagem to live their homosexuality in a less dangerous way.

**Virginity and Artificial Virginity**

Toleration and fatalistic attitude in the need to distinguish between Koranic virginity and consensual virginity68 in order to understand the evolution of sexuality as a socio-historical phenomenon. Virginity in the Koran means that the girl has no sexual experience, while consensual virginity is one way to keep the hymen intact. In the setting of consensual virginity, sexual activity without defloweration has many advantages for the woman. She proves to her partner and the society that she is master of herself, worthy of confidence, able to conform to requirements of her social environment, and respectful of taboos. Paradoxically, therefore, sexuality without defloweration is a proof of the good conduct of the girl, an element in her strategy of marriage. It is about giving to the partner a foretaste of delights that awaits him, to enjoy oneself if possible without losing the hymen-capital.

Sexuality without penetration is therefore a construction of the consensual virginity by the girl. A worker of Fez maintains that “when I was young, my mother taught me that sex is shameful, illicit, painful... she especially taught me the importance of virginity and the fear of the man”. This type of education considers “the man as the real enemy of the woman” because “the girl is often the victim of the lasting sexual relation... Men are wolves... Virginity is the girl’s most important weapon... Thanks to virginity, the girl can prove her femininity, her chastity, her purity. And it is the only criterion that allows the man to distinguish between the prostitute and the girl of good family” (Law student, Fez).

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have no alternative but to turn their children to prostitutes. Sometimes, children (including the males) are even encouraged overtly by their families.

The main lesson that has to be learned from this paper is that the traditional hierarchical relationship of sex is currently in transition. The traditional dichotomy between two hierarchical sexual identities is problematized by the evolution of the Moroccan society, and more precisely by the evolution of sexuality and reproduction. Female sexuality has been able to affirm itself outside the institution of marriage, and a sexuality that is de-institutionalized and that is beginning to claim the right to auto-determination and independence.

ENDNOTES


17. Ibid, p. 56.


20. The refusal was both expressed by the Ministry of Religious Affairs, Oulema, fundamentalists and some political parties. This refusal expressed itself essentially in the Casablanca with held march 12, 2000.

21. A. Dialmy: *Toward an Islamic Sexual Democracy*, Fez, Info-Print, 2000 (in Arabic). Let’s signal that fundamentalists stopped the book impression and only 400 copies could be impressed and sought.


27. S. Naamae Guessous: *Au-delà de toute pudicité*, p. 44.


29. Ibid, p. 113-114.


32. Ibid, p. 73.

33. Ibid, p. 74.

34. Ibid, p. 86.


36. Ibid, p. 89.

37. Ibid, p. 87.


44. Ibid, p. 104-110.


46. Ibid, p. 117.

47. A. Dialmy: *Jeunesse, Sida et Islam au Maroc*, pp. 75-76.


49. Ibid, p. 78.


51. Ibid, pp. 96 et 220.


53. A. Dialmy: *Sexualité et politique au Maroc*, pp. 17, 18, 35.


55. Ibid, p. 43.

56. Ibid, p. 43.

57. Ibid, p. 44.


60. According to many interviews with some mothers in the newspaper Al Ahdath al Maghribiya.


63. Ibid, p. 35.

64. Ibid, p. 36.


68. Ibid, p. 38.


70. I refer here to A. Dialmy’s books *La femme et la sexualité au Maroc* (Casablanca, Editions Maghrébines, 1985, in Arabic) and *Logement, sexualité et Islam* (Casablanca, Ediff, 1995) and to Naamae-Guessous’s book *Au-delà de toute pudicité* I refer also to Dialmy’s study *Identité masculine et santé reproductive au Maroc*.


73. The sexologist A. Harakat was the consultant of La Banque mondiale’s project *Enquête Nationale sur la santé de la mère et de l'enfant*, Ministry of Health/Macro International Inc, Calverton, 1996.