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Tales of Magic

An Online-Encounter with a Moroccan Ontology

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1. Introduction

Last Semester, in WS 2019/20, when I started the first seminar about research of Morocco, I stumbled about an article online that talked about magic and witchcraft in Morocco, and I was drawn in by it. I decided to try to research about this topic. After I already did a bit of theoretical research for the paper of WS 2019/20, I reached out to find and speak to the author of that said article, and found a great enthusiast about the topic in her as an outsider to the country, just as myself. The first talk with her was characterized by finding a similar approach to the topic, which was, that we thought about the topic from an outside perspective (she is a liberally Hindu-raised Indian, living in the UAE in a muslim surrounding) that was categorized by a fresh and quite naive fascination for the topic, imagining it more in a playful and empowering way than the research itself later on presented it to me. We were both imagining it less „dark“ than it later on turned out to (probably) be. It was great to hear her perspective and descriptions of the Middle East: the UAE and Saudi Arabia, in comparison to Morocco, regarding magic. She inspired me to what I could inquire about in my research. After the theoretical work I had already done and the talk with her, I was even more curious to get to know how magic in Morocco works. What people have in mind when they talk about it, when they use it, when they fear it. Why do they use it, why do they fear it? My research question therefore for this paper is:

„How does Magic work in Morocco?“

Additional to that, I was curious about questions such as: *What factors make people use magic? What are the ideas of magic in the Moroccan common sense? And: How does a Moroccan magical ontology look like?* In this paper, I am trying to enquire these questions and I will look for answers to them. I am not aiming for a full picture since I think it would require a lot more research options than this paper is given, but I will try to give a little bit of an insight into the answers to these questions.

In the introduction section I will explain the methods and introduce my interview partners, as well as give a short insight into the theory. In section two I will look into what I call a perspective towards an external and an internal worldview: the external world as the social structures in which magic is happening, and the internal perspective as of what emotions

magical procedures are based on. The social surrounding of magic will be an insight into gender structures as well as connections to religion. The chapter about the internal world is an exploration of the emotional states that cause magical procedures. In the third section I will look deeper into the Moroccan magical ontology. I will give examples of how persons are becoming magicians and give an overview of black and white magic, as well as show an example of Jinn eviction. Ultimately I will show a basic overview of how the magician hierarchy of forces is structured.

1.1. Methodology

The fieldwork was due to Covid19 executed online instead of traveling to Morocco for three weeks, which was initially scheduled. The search of communication partners was done through contacts that we received through our Professors, additionally to which we should ask people we know as well as search online through mediums such as facebook or instagram. For me, it was in the end a combination of all these methods, which lead me to a variety of communication partners, that I will introduce in the next section. The otherwise very common methodological approach of participant observation was due to the limitations of online research not at all possible. We were quite limited to formal interviews and informal conversations, which is what this paper is entirely based on. For me it mostly consisted of WhattsApp-audio-messages for the most part, and some additional WhattsApp-calls.

Since the beginning, the question was very present, how and if I could address the topic and if the Moroccan interview partners would be open to talk about it. In the beginning, I was very shy, because I heard that people are not willing to talk about it, it is a topic that is taboo or not to be talked about. I was scared to be open about it myself. I started with talking about it to Elisa and watched the short film, but since I always heard it was something that people don't want to talk openly about, I also tried to think and ask my way around it, without directly addressing it, and got nowhere with that. But everything changed when I overcame my shyness and started to directly and openly address it. I would ask very shy about it, and got responses like this: *„Oh that is an interesting topic! Yeah it's not a problem I will help you! And if there is something I don't know I may ask my friends.“ (Hamza) „I don't think there will be a problem and I believe It's not weird at all to talk about that matter. Its a matter*

of studying why would it be weird.“ (Zackaria) „It doesn’t disturb me to talk to you about this subject, I will tell you everything I know.“ (Mohamed) „No, no, it’s fine, it’s fine. And good to talk about this, to understand a lot of things, and many things, it’s ok, I will explain to you, yeah, it’s too weird (laughs). You know, I get abroad, and I met a few people that were talking about these things, and yeah you’re right, this is a famous thing in Morocco. It’s very famous. And I will explain to you (laughs) it’s alright! It’s no problem.“ (Hicham) „Great topic! If There is anything you need about this subject just ask.“ (Hiba) Or as B.P. would put it: „He is a liar who says that magic is non-existent. It’s existing. Until now, it’s existing.“

1.2. Field of Research

Even though I briefly talked to eight different Moroccans (additional to the source of information of the short film and the talk with Alisa who was just half a year in Morocco but also researched on the same topic for her article), I realized that five of these eight communication partners were open to the topic but not really knowledgeable or particularly interested in it as a person. I was therefore mainly focusing on talking to the three people, who were really personally interested in the topic and had more to say about it.

External Insight: Elisa Sachdev was the author of the online article who initially brought me to the idea to write about magic in Morocco. Reading her article and talking to her made me fascinated for the topic. It was very much her approach that drew me into getting further into the topic of magic. It might have needed an external insight into the country and the topic to really make me be fascinated about it. It was interesting for me to talk with her about a different view of an outsider visiting the country and finding people there to talk about magic with, more than only reading anthropologists’ fieldwork. Years ago, Alisa was studying journalism in Morocco and stayed there for half a year, and wrote a short article about magic: „Love and Witchcraft in Morocco“, in Riveter Magazin in Sept 19, 2014. He is originally from India, grew up in a Hindu but very liberal household, and is now working in the UAE in digital marketing. She was my first Interview partner, and gave me a good start to ask someone who did try to get into the topic of magic in Morocco as an outsider.

Video material: At first I saw a trailer of a short film, of which I contacted the film maker who sent me the link in private since the full movie was not published back then. The film is made by Ashtar Al Khirsan in 2019. It was a movie about a woman who visits a *shawafa* in London. She goes with an intimate problem, and it shows the visit and how the *shawafa* deals with her situation, and takes a very unpredicted ending. It was a very interesting visual entry into the topic. Even though it is playing in London and not in Morocco, it was interesting to have a visual representation of what might happen at a visit of a *shawafa*. Since we could not participate in the fieldwork in Morocco, it was somehow good to have a short movie to open up a little bit more the senses and imagination of how it might be there. Additionally to the short film I also got some youtube videos to watch in Arabic that showed me a little bit more of how it might be in Morocco and how the magical procedures would possibly look like.

Hicham (*m*) – „*the contra-magic position*“: Hicham’s contact comes through a relative of mine. He is 38 years old, living in Marrakech, and originally from Casablanca, where he studied art and literature. After that he moved to Montpellier in France to do his master in Economy there. After that, he worked for Thomas Cook in Greece and in Antalya. He then came back to Morocco and worked in banking for seven more years. His mother died in 2017 and he is staying with his father. He speaks Dutch, English, French and Arabic. He doesn’t believe in magic but has experiences with it, that he cannot explain.

Mohamed (*m*) – „*The pro-and-con position*“: Mohamed’s contact comes through a friend of mine. He is Berber Moroccan, 24 years old, living in Cutragos (?). He works in his father’s restaurant and has studied economics and management in University for two years, but wasn’t interested enough in it to finish it. He is married to a french woman who at the time of the interview was in France. He says he was interested in magic and likes to try anything and to learn about anything, so he was also interested in what he cannot see, and he learned how it works and how to stop it, and that’s what he does now, stopping it. He tried how to make the Jinns work for him, he says he talked to Jinns, and saw them, the Jinn stayed inside his body even, and it hurt him a lot. So now he is stopping all kinds of magic. He learned the things he knows on the one hand through the internet but also through a friend, an old man living in Agadir, who does magic.

B.P. (*f.*) – „*The pro-magic position*“: B.P.’s contact comes through the Moroccan-Austrian

society in Vienna. She is living in Vienna since 30 years. Originally she comes from Casablanca, where she studied electronic techniques, afterwards she shortly lived in Florence and then moved to Vienna, where she continued studying at TU Wien, and had a son. She speaks Arabic (high Arabic and Moroccan), French, Italian, English, German, and a little bit Spanish. She worked for Siemens, later on at a law firm, and is now leading a Spa.

I had asked in several groups of facebook if people were willing to talk to me for the project. In the end I was talking with two people that I met through facebook: Zackaria (*m.*), and Lacher (*m.*). Other than that I was talking with the students from the Moroccan group, in particular with: Hiba (*f.*), Oumayma (*f.*), Ayoub (*m.*), Kenza (*f.*). The interviews were all quite short, but in general they were easily willing to talk about the topic and give me as much help as they possibly could.

1.3. Theoretical Structure

The Theory is based on the paper of WS 2019/20. In that paper I was exploring authors such as Carey, Crapanzano, Drieskens, Sadiqi and Zillinger, to get a first insight into Moroccan magic. Crapanzano and Zillinger are writing about Sufi-brotherhoods and the magical practices that happen within those. Barbara Drieskens is researching about Jinn in Cairo, Egypt. Sadiqi is writing about gender and women in Moroccan society. I want to include great parts of that paper, which I wrote in German, into this one, because I want to have people who are not German-speaking to be able to understand what I said in that first paper too. Also, for this paper the work by Johanna Schott was very helpful. She is describing an economy of fear that surrounds magic in North and West Africa. Mohamed Maarouf is researching about a pilgrimage center that treats illnesses through Jinn eviction in Morocco. Kraus' descriptions of the economy in the High Atlas were also great sources of information.

2. External & Internal Perspectives

Socially, North Africa is facing economical insecurity, high unemployment rates, political instability and social change. The unemployment rate in 2019 was at 9.02 percent

(statista.com). Nevertheless there is very secured social structures, that are showing every individual their very stable place in society, which oftentimes doesn't allow people to openly deal with conflicts and tensions. This is one of many reasons, why magic is used, especially by women who are using magic to gain more money and influence. For women the reputation oftentimes plays a major role, which leads to using magic for love purposes, as well as the fear of being harmed by magic is very high. (Schott 2019: 506f.) I want to shed a little bit of light both on the social structure and the pressure that might be on a person due to gender rules and traditions, religious aspects, and economical structures that magic is based on, as well as showcase the internal pressure by giving examples on what emotions lie underneath magical use.

2.1. External World – Social Structure

Many factors would theoretically be important to describe a social context in which magic is happening, and of which magic is a part. Due to the narrowed possibilities of the research for this paper, as well as to its length, I will only shortly describe three factors, which are gender, religion and economy. It would have been interesting also to look at cultural and regional differences, for example between Arabs, Berbers, and Jews, since the differences between their forms of magical powers are oftentimes mentioned. Also the state and its influence on society as well as its laws regarding to magic would have been very interesting to further explore. But it hasn't been central to my research, so I will focus here on gender issues, religion, which is Islam, and economical structures.

2.1.1. Gender

The aspect of gender is one that I tried to explain in my paper of WS 2019/20 when I was focusing on female magic and witchcraft. In my empirical research it was also mentioned by many of my interview partners, that it is more women who use magic, but also men who use it. One aspect of this could be illiteracy, lack of education and possibilities in labour and career opportunities, who are forcing women to reach out for a different source of power. In 2018 the literacy rate at between 15 and 65 year old women was at 64,59%, men at 83,3%

and in total at 73,75% (unesco.org).

„So, most of the women, in the past are illiterate. We can say, 60% or more, of women, are illiterate in Morocco, so they don't know how to read and how to write. And that's what makes them feel somehow ignored by society. They are passive in society. And they believe that by black magic they can change something. And also they can make things better. For them it's a way to achieve their goals and make their dreams true. Because they believe that can change something. I think that the only way that women use less black magic, is that they get good education, and in the whole idea also: they are ignored by society. That's why they try to express themselves by these things. But now there is a lot of organizations, that try to use women in the rural area, and I think that's good.“ (Hamza)

When we will look at emotions that motivate people to use black magic later in this paper, we see that it is almost always emotional states of a lack of power or feelings of helplessness and desperation that drive people to the use of magical practices. The Moroccan society is strongly hierarchical and dualistic, and consists of a high gender-dichotomy. Positive aspects of girls and women are characterized by terms such as *mahkuma* “disciplined”, *mziyyra* “controlled”, *taht lahkam* “under control”, *mrat rrajel* “wife of a man”, as well as the Berber-term *ddaw ufus* „controlled“ – as opposed to the term *bent zzenqa* “girl of the streets” – which are forming a collective idea that women have to be controlled. This also has a political component, since women are in society the bearers of values for future generations, to control society in itself. (Sadiqi: 174). Zillinger is describing this social order as *'aql* and the right way to behave in it as *hešma*. A woman has *'aql* if she acts wise by adjusting to her serving role appropriately and stays modest, and if she possesses the ability, to rightly estimate the consequences of social acts within the social network. (Zillinger 1973: 54)

Another aspect that should be considered is the possibility of a tradition that historically is giving women a source of power regardless of what other possibilities historically were permitted to men and women. In the talks with B.P., it is often mentioned that the visit of the *shawafa* is a form of therapy and it is like visiting a psychiatrist, the visit at the *shawafa* itself and also the sitting together with other women when they wait together before it's their turn to see the *shawafa*. It might just be an opportunity to connect in between women and within a female community.

Not only do women commission the use of magic, they often are magicians themselves. The word for a female witch in arabic is *shawafa* which means „seer“. *The Qur'an speaks of witches as "those who blow on knots"* (Carey 2017: 101) A woman is according to the Quran a woman who is influencing social ties (knots) and is changing them. Several questions are omnipresent for women in society: “What is your origin (*hasab*) and where is your binding (*nasab*)?” (Zillinger 1973: 60) Women possess the ability, to astray men through *fitna* (temptation), to bring them under their control and dissolve them from the family order; as well as to improve the place of an individual in its social surrounding through magic, and to reward men through *nagah* (success). In this sense women have often similar attributes as do Jinns, especially the moroccan main Jinn woman, *Aisa Qandisa*. Women do generally have a special connection to *'alam ahur*, the other world. (Zillinger 1973: 62).

2.1.2. Religion

The relation between Islam and magic is generally ambivalent and contradictory. The online article quotes Dr. Khalid Saqi, the associate director of *Islamic School Dar Al Hadith Al Hassina* who says that in Sunni Islam, to which contribute 99,9% of muslims in Marokko, it is forbidden to convey between god and humans, since according to the Quran nobody except prophet Mohammed is able to see into the future. Apparently it is illegal under islamic law to practice witchcraft and sorcery, and there can be high penalty fees on practicing it. Nevertheless shawafas and khfrer are omnipresent in Moroccan society. (Sachdev) According to B.P., magical practices and Islam is not compatible. For her, many muslims are the least religious people, since they are hiding in a cave that they call religion, but are evil people and lack human character traits. She says, Islam in Morocco is a cliché. When we look at the ways of how becoming a black or a white magician is described, we learn that religious elements like the Quran are figuratively made dirty, and is put in waste, whereas also only the Quran as the word of god is seen as the cure to illness through magic. In this sense, religion and magical practices act as two counterparts or counter-forces who play with and against each other in use.

„From the point of view of Islam, sorcery is Haram (illegal). The prophet also fell victim to

sorcery, we know that from a Hadith. Magic as a sin and the practices don't cease to consider them selves Muslims, praying, fasting in the month of Ramadan, and turning to God for help and erase their sins." (Oumayma)

Magic is recognized in Islam, and in the Maliki school of Sunni islam, which is dominant in Morocco, the existence of magic and its ability to alter the personality and the behavior of its victims, was acknowledged through al-Qarafi. (Carey 2017: 101) In the collective consciousness Islam and magic are recognized as existing, but not necessarily compatible with each other. In my interviews people do either defend Islam or magic, but they are not speaking positively about the other. Also the existence of Jinns (*gnūn, jnun*), is acknowledged in the Quran, they are next to angels, who are beings made from light, and humans, who are made from clay, a third identity of intelligent beings, and are made from fire (Drieskens 2006: 13). In the Quran, Allah says: "*and created jinns from the white-hot flame of fire*" (*surat Arraman, aya: 15*) In the Quran Jinns are generally described as quite similar to human beings. They are divided into two types: believer jinns, which are Muslim and Jewish, and infidel ones. As well as humans, they are created to worship God, but they don't have their own prophets but follow the human ones. (Maarouf 2007: 96f.). They are not inherently evil and can be both good and bad, are social, can work and do miracles like traverse time and space and carry great weights, but are unpredictable and give explanations for unexplainable happenings, sicknesses or accidents. (Drieskens 2006, Crapanzano 1973, Zillinger 1973, Maarouf 2007) Jinns seem to be the great connecting link between the two contradictory philosophies of magic and religion.

2.1.3. Economy

Economical acting is embedded in specific social forms, and models of social relations, moral concepts and ideas. The cultural-ideological layer of the social is not only reproduced in acting, but also in discourse, two things that oftentimes act individually and disconnected from each other. Economical acting is therefore embedded in local social concepts and values (Kraus 2017: 258) Economy is not limited onto the very materialistic aspect, even if the means are short, they can be invested in aims, that are possible to lie in a religious, spiritual or magical area. People often invest their resources, if they may even be scarce, into the goals

that they expect the highest benefit of. (Schott 2019: 479f.) Black magic is based on certain economical structures, as we will see also when we look at emotions in the next chapter. The economical structure of magic might be connected to the factors fear on the one hand, and trust on the other. One important element is that the source of people's problems is supposed to be in an invisible world instead of looking for them in visible social or economical structures. As we will see more clearly in the chapter about emotions is that in an economy of fear there is often reasons for envy, jealousy, fear and revenge, which all together might create a climate of mistrust. The magicians who are taking care of issues of on the one hand creating magic or on the other hand, undoing magic, always have to be paid (Schott 2019). In my own research, this last notion is partly disproven by mentions of un-doing black magic through white magicians without payments, since they are not evil and therefore do not want any payment. According to Schott, this economy of fear is formed by a material benefit in form of money as well as an immaterial use of power, that is based on the fear of magic (Schott 2019: 487).

2.2. Internal World – Emotional perceptions

The use of magic in the High Atlas is based on fear and mistrust (Schott 2019, Carey 2017). Infrastructures of intimacy, as they are found in relationships with relatives or friends, or in living together or nearby, are stirring up several fears. The fear of being betrayed by the trusted other is one of them. (Carey 2017: 85) Intimacy is the central terminus for the magical imagination. Family connections and relations are often connected to arguments and hate. Paranoia and fear of betrayal are often not far from intimate connections between family members and neighbors. (Carey 2017: 100f.f.). In this chapter I want to tell some personal stories and look at why magic is used, based on what emotions people decide to do magic. My own question was, are people driven by their (negative) emotional state, to reach out to magic, or are they choosing to use magic anyway, no matter how they feel? As this paper originated initially out of merely fascination for the topic, I would have originally imagined that also people in Morocco who use magic would do that out of fascination, or tradition. This might be the case sometimes, but as well as the literature is stating (Schott 2019, Carey 2017) also my research states that mostly there are nevertheless underlining feelings of desperation, jealousy, envy, or fear. There is a few notions of magic that is used for therapy

(Crapanzano 1973, B.P.), which is an exception to the use of magic to harm people or when people would have a fear of being harmed by magic, but as well therapy is used when we are somehow not having positive emotions.

„When I was child my family was very poor and we were living in a very poor neighborhood. Where almost 1/3 of the neighborhood was practicing it. I actually wanted talk about it, because I have seen how magic destroyed families and torn them apart. Prostitute was using magic to win customers hearts, other neighbors use it to get wealth, shop owners did it to receive more clients. I have seen it worked almost twice. One of the neighbors use against another one and it was working until they figure it out.“ (Zackaria)

„I was once ripped off, where I paid about 350€ or 400€. Because I wanted to do something (magic) for my business.“ (B.P. ~ 52:00) The said business is not running since many years, as she later in the interview explains in more detail.

What is mentioned in these examples is various aspects of poverty, lack of success and money in order to survive and to make a living, in which people try to gain clients, to make their businesses more successful, who are desperate because of their lack of money. If we do look at this in a negative way there could be emotional states of greed as well, even though the here mentioned people are mostly suffering poverty. The actions are the will to become wealthier and have more successful businesses, whilst the emotions underneath are helplessness and desperation.

„And nowadays, most of the people who use the black magic, are women. As an example, a woman may use it with her boyfriend as an example to get him into marriage. And they believe in that. Most of the people who believe in the black magic are women.“ (Hamza)

„For example I am older than you, 3 years or two years, and I am totally unhappy about you marrying a man and I am not. And this hate on my inside is making me so crazy that I do these things and I take parts of your dress or your hair and I go to a Voodoo woman, or a Voodoo man, and I am also ready to pay a sum X, to destroy your wedding, or to make you separate, or so. Yes, this is up until today, it's existing.“ (B.P. 35:24)

„It is for example when I ... my husband is not loving me. And I want him to be crazy about me. Then I will come to yo and I say I will give you everything and I want him to be crazy about me. And I say ok you have to bring me this and this, and it costs this and this, and you have to do this donation and this donation, and this ritual. But you are not doing this at your home, I do it at my home.“ (B.P. 40:22)

What is described in these explanations of why people use magic, is manipulation. The force of manipulation which is used when somebody is envious or jealous of somebody else. Manipulation and forcing one's will onto others are the actions, the emotions that lie underneath are envy, jealousy, hate or resentment. Also according to Carey the most used forms of magic are the magic of Separation and love magic. (Carey 2017: 101)

„... the funny thing is, also in Vienna, where I opened my Spa, I have three stairs, I have also photographed it, I show you, two times, a stain of water, where something was in it. And I was sure, somebody did something. I was hundred percent sure. Because, in this period, where I found this, we had a dead time. Nothing worked! Nothing worked! And I thought: Either some Moroccan, or an employee, who was from Thailand. This Thai was a travesty. And in the moment where I realized that, I said, I have to quit your job, because the women don't want you, because they realized that. And she, i always called him ,he-she', he hated me. He really hated me. And it was always in my head: he did something. Because they can also do something, people from Thailand, they also have that in their religion.“ (B.P. 53:25)

When there is the possibility of being a victim of magic, there is a lot of fear, suspicion, mistrust with an active action to blame. There is a very good chance of having stains of water in a spa without somebody doing magic. But when the feeling of desperation is already there due to not enough customers to run the business, as well as somebody who is not on the best terms with the business, the emotions are going towards fear, suspicion and mistrust. The active emotions I can detect here are behaviors such as manipulation, forcing one's will onto others, blaming, and trying to become more rich and successful. The passive emotional states underneath that, are desperation, helplessness, envy, greed, jealousy, hate, resentment, fear, suspicion and mistrust.

3. The Moroccan Magical Ontology

„Concerning what I think about magic, magic is something supernatural. I guess that it's something psychological. I will tell you an example; if someone believe of magic, he will be afraid for the rest of his life to get something through magic. I know a lot of people who believe in magic, they can't eat with people and can't drink, they don't trust anyone. But finally, I concluded that people who are scared to be hurt by harm are the same people who use magic to harm people.“ (Oumayma)

According to Khān, Magic in the Islamic regions is *„the art which claims to produce effects by the assistance of supernatural beings or by a mastery of secret forces in nature.“* (Khān 20003 in Schott 2019: 478) He asks, if magic is credible, and affirms with the Quran, when it speaks about magic as affirming but not admitting to the use of other powers than the power of god. Leach is in her definition speaking of magic as a complex of belief and action that are aiming to control their environment to achieve their ends (Leach 1964 in Schott 2019: 478) According to Zillinger, practices and imaginations that form a microcosms of individual actions are causing or removing disturbances in public behavior. (Zillinger 1973: 70)

Zillinger is mentioning Geertz when he sets magic in the context of a *common sense*. Magic in this sense is a helper of the daily use of reason, and functions as a method to understand the world and to provide knowledge to orientate. He also mentions Evens-Pritchard and the contingent entanglement of the individual with causal chains. In cases of misfortune, not the misfortune itself would be a sign of magical influence, but when it would be an uncommon situation of misfortune. Magic would in that explanation a part of social sanctioned practices and discourses in a society, which are helping to deal with everyday problems in a socially acceptable and efficient manner (Zillinger 1973: 70). The question that Zillinger asks when he is referring to Malinowski, Evans-Pritchard and Lévy-Bruhl, is in what situations and contexts do people change their perceptions from everyday-life to a magical perception. He is mentioning Stanley Tambiah when he says that the different modes of orientating, behavior, and interpretation are behaving between each other in a continuum of different mediums of communication and systems of signs. There is a „code-switching“ going on between a logical, referential pole of information and causal connections on the one hand, and a sensory, polyvalent pole of immediate experience on the other, that includes magic (Zillinger 1973:

68).

When it comes to the uses of magic, in the context of the African sub-Saharan, magic (*shur*) is according to Radi typically used to harm its victims, or to withhold something against their will. Magic is supposed to alter the physical or psychological state of the victim. This is held against intimate contacts such as family, neighbors, friends, or colleagues. This magic can be separated in several kinds of use, such as magic of separation, of love, of hallucinations, shaming magic, magic that makes a person crazy, magic that makes a person lose blood, and magic that makes a person sick. In bigger households, including many male patrilineal relatives and their married-in-wives, dynamics like preferential treatment, divisions and family conflicts are directly connected to witchcraft. Misfortune is also often associated with witchcraft, oftentimes in correlation to sick animals. Also a plurality of misfortunes and accidents is connected to the evil eye, that functions apparently without any intentions, but still acts as a form of magical deed and is usually happening within a community. (Carey 2017: 101f.)

3. 1. Black & White Magicians

I am solely repeating here, what I learned from my informants. There is both male and female magicians, and both black and white magicians. The black magicians are working in different ways than the white magicians, who can often be Imams. „*The women, who do that, she's called Shawafa. And the man, he say Khfrer. So, Shawafa and Khfrer, the same. So, these people, you go there, for Shawafa or Khfrer, the man, in his house, or small place, it's far. I told you, its not in the city, of course.*“ (Hicham 10:40) I will here describe the black magicians, since they are referred to when talked about magic. The white magicians are somehow the rescuer when black magic already happened, so the black magicians are the ones who do the first magic actively, while the white magician is then in a second step saving the person who is trapped in the magic. They are called *Imam* or *Fakher*, or *Lwali*. The black magician is the active doer of magic, the white magician is the un-doer of it. The black magicians are often found outside of society, hidden in the countryside. It could have many reasons such as the illegality of the practices, or just the desire of the magician to be separated from society. But they are not only hidden in the periphery, there is an island in

Casablanca where lots of *Shawafa* and *Khfrer* can be openly accessed. To become a black magician there is several things to do, according to one of my informants.

I want to re-tell the story of what I have been told: „*So, the magic. To do the black magic, you need many stuffs. You need to stop saying that god is the big power in the world, and that god is the lord, instead you should say, that satan is, the devil is big power, and is the lord. Stop believing in God and believe in Satan, now in the devil. And, it takes a lot of time, and a lot of work, just to take the attention of the satan. You need for example to be dirty, to live in a dirty place, eating dirty stuffs, you know. To be, or to take the holy Quran, or the holy book, to the toilet, for example, and put it in, you know, this is disgusting a little bit. And, you need to smell bad, to your room, to smell bad, and everything, you need to be like an animal. The second step is that you need to go to the mountains or somewhere away, like this you can be alone, and by the night of the full moon, then you taking gifts like a black cat, or something like that, an animal, or something black, a black animal, and its not always about if its not a cat its a dog, so you kill it and you slaughter it, and you give it like, you give her blood to the devil as a gift. And you should do some stuffs like some practices, to take the attention of the devil. You should try and try and try and try, and some day, you will get like an answer. It's not like you will see the devil, but you will see something different, you will see something bad, or something like this. And it means, that the devil want to meet you. This day also again, you should go to meet the devil, If you can see him, or cannot see him, I can't tell you, but you go, you meet him, and you give him another gift like this, he asked you the gift, and he give you the power. To be a magician. Black magic. And black magic it's always dirty, and it's always about blood, blood, blood. Animals, animal bones, everything like this. It's always dirty. (3100) So, when the devil give you the power, how is this power. This power is like we have many devils, that works for him, he give you one or some of them to work for you. So, you stop believing in god, you believe in me, and I give you the power. I give you some devils to work for you. And they start doing anything you want, like destroying people, and and and. There is always a contract, you sign a contract between you and the devil. (31:45) And you should read about their language, because there is a lot about the language, but it's not really important their language, because their can speak your language for example, they can talk to you, tell you what you want, and then they can do everything for you. For example, if you practice the language, so then it's easy. You can just write for them and do some stuffs like this. And then they understand what you show them to do. It's like you*

write an order to them, or a contract to them, and you tell them you should do this and this, if they didn't do, it will not be good between them and the big devil. Or Lucifer as they call him in another language. So, someone who do's black magic, we call him magician. His job is always to destroy everything. It's always to make bad stuffs. Destroy life of someone.“ (Mohamed 28:13 - XX32)

A different story of how to become a black magician, is that „They say, they dreamt of it, or most of them say, they have seen them (Jinns). For example they came to them and tell them, you do what we want you to do, or we make your life like hell. And they say, who do that, that they were there. For example one says, he has seen a Jinn, who told him, if you don't do this, i will destroy your life, and if you do it, you will only get the best from me. And most of them say, they got it. Some also say they have it from their parents. (B.P. 38:55-39:35)

As opposed to that, there is also the description of how to become a white magician as well: „Ok, the white magic is a little bit different. It's to take the opposite of this one. How. But god says, magic is not allowed. Even it's black or it's white, you should not use magic. Why, because, when you use magic, you use the satans, or the devils, in black one, and in white one, you use the jiennies. Or the spirits. But the good ones. The muslims, and that. So, it's also a contract, between you, or between the magician, and the jiennies, or the spirits. How you do it, you should always be clean, you should always eat only healthy food, but not from the animals, neither meat, neither eggs, neither animal, neither what comes from the animal. So you eat only what is vegetarian. And you should like, do, like, ramadan. (40:42) So, you should do like ramadan, and for sundays, I don't know how much exactly, because it depends, and you should always do your prayer, your bed should be clean, your room should be clean, and you should stop doing bad things, and saying bad words, and and and. You know, it's like, no cheat on people, don't say for example bad words, don't say lies, you should try to be a perfect person. A human, a real human. And also, you should not drink alcohol, you should not steal, you should be a nice person. You should stop doing stuffs like that. You should stop hurting people. You should stop, because everyone of us, he has two sides. black side, and white side. You should deny, or you should stop your black side. For ever and forever. That's it. This is what you should do. Then, it's like, there are some things, you read, to call them, to come to you, and to do a contract with them. And the contract, how is it. You help me, and I promise that I will help people, and I will stop doing bad things, and

I will be against people who do bad things. So, like this you can for example, you can help people who have black magic, to stop all this, for example, because if someone have black magic, he can use this way, because you have, like, mini-spirits, mini-good-spirits, mini-muslims, they follow you all the time, anywhere you go, and they give you, like, people when they see you, even they talk to you, they respect you. Because even you are a nice person they give this one, they give a nice picture about you. When people see you, they just respect you, They help you to do what you want, they help you to have what you want, every time it's easy for you. Why, because you are doing something nice. Even, if you see a magician, who does black magic, this kind of magic, we don't call it black magic, but we call it Imam or Fakher, Imam is really nice, or Lwali, or there is many names, but they are always positive names. So, this one, if someone for example have black magic, they go to this kind of people and they ask them to stop it. To make, for example: you hate your husband, because of black magic, when you go to this people you will start loving your husband, but more. But it's not evil of him, more than you loved him before, you know. It's always positive. But not everybody can have this, not everybody can do this, yeah, this one can not work with everybody. It works only with the nice person.“ (Mohamed: 44:40)

The solution to black magic seems to be the Quran. „Yes the only thing it's taking away it's Quran. Because the Quran it's like („sugar“??) you know, because it's names of the God, so... he's the Jinnie is afraid for the word of the God. So, you know, this is coming from the God, if you know the story, about, you have to know about Quran. (Hicham 25:40) (...)
Quran it's getting out this Gennie but with specialized people. This honest people. Like they read in Quran by heart, you know. So it's not easy, someone reading Quran by heart it's a few people. There is most of Morocco they do that and you know we do education in school because we are Islamic countries, so, yeah, people they use Quran they read in Quran they don't happen anything for them.“ (Hicham)

3. 2. Jinn eviction

Jinn, or as they are sometimes called in their plural form: *Gnūn* (Drieskens 2006) or *jnun* (Maarouf 2007), have a common meaning as well as a specific meaning. They are commonly known as a plurality of ghosts or spirits, which are described in the Quran as created of a

mixture of fire, as opposed to humans who are created of clay. In Morocco there is many kinds of Jinns, for some, this label is used to not call them by their names, which would be already necromancy. These spirits have a different ontological state than the things in the visible world. There is also other spirits existing such as angels; or *šīyātīn*, which can be compared with Satan and are generally connected to sexual misdeeds; *'afārīt*, giant cannibalistic ghosts, who are not mentioned in the Quran, as opposed to Jinn and *šītān*; or *gwāl*, that live in the desert and confuse travelers in the form of a woman. (Crapanzano 1973: 165f.f.). *Gnūn* live in certain areas such as under the earth or close to waters, in swampy areas, wells or rivers, in caves or at special trees or rocks. Moroccans, who are getting close to such areas, usually speak the words *bismillāh ar-rahmān ar rahīm*, to free the place of the presence of the *gnūn*. Other than that, salt can be sprinkled out, since Jinns particularly do not like salt, or alternatively a special kind of incense, as well as they dislike iron, steel, silver, or tar. (Crapanzano 1973: 168f.). According to the Quran, Jinns are families: the infidel (*kafīr*), the Jew (*yhudi*), and the believer (*mumen*). When the origin of a Jinn is unknown, the word *raht* is used. (Maarouf 2007: 94f.)

Hicham is telling me more than one stories of how he had encounters with Jinns. It's stories about Jinns that inhabit the bodies of humans. According to him, only the words of the Quran is making the Jinn leave the body. It is often a difficult process to make the Jinn leave the body of the person. It may be through magical influence that the Jinn went into the person's body in the first place, but as I understood, it can also just happen by accident. One of the stories he told me I want to recall here:

„We (were) starting about my sister, she is very nice, she has two daughter, very nice daughter. You know, we talking about this thing, we have to do movie about this (laughing). She wedding, she go to a friend of her, another city, it's name Sidat. This wedding, they starting the wedding, you know the wedding tradition in Morocco, something its not like wedding there in Europe, I will send you a picture, I will explain to you the future of this country. Anyway, she gone to the house, and she will speak with the wife and husband, she give them the gift, and then and she find something next to door, or I don't know what she say, and she moved something for somewhere else in the house, this is something, you know, she didn't know. She didn't know these things she moved she has this problem. And after she come back, like two weeks, three weeks, she stopped like someone die. You know. Me and

daughter we don't know. I took her to hospital, to doctor, you know. They give her space, medicament, relax, sleep and, that's it, you know. She don't talk, she's like open eye, she don't sleep you know. So the situation is very bad, this has happened for two years, you know. And friend of mine, he work with me, and he stay at the house and my sister she is like bad situation, she has two daughter and you know, so she has to take care for them. Anyway, shortly, he show me someone he know, it's like a Kfrer, you know, the guy has Baraka, he read the Quran. And she start to do listen with him, like two times in the week, and after she's feel very good. This what I say to you, Anna, its strange. Because it's first time, in my life. Me I don't believe this, you know, I can't but, you know, it's so difficult, I can't forget this time. When the guy is speaking, my sister, she is like huge. When he read her the Quran, she's change, you know. Like someone strong. It's not like my sister. She is sick, she's very bad, she's hurting, she's like sleeping all the time, she can't talk, she can't do anything, and when he read, in a second, she's changed... like. Yeah, I see that in the movie, some movie, American movie like this situation yeah. And she started moving, she say some words, and her voice is changed, also, so don't scare. Her voice is changed, and there is a man inside her, you know, is Ginnie. And the guy speak with him, he told him, where do you go, he told him, I met her in the wedding, she move something, bla bla, and these things, for the wife, and you know story about these things. And he speak with him. And then he's told him like go go go, if I find you next time, I will kill you, I will bring you to fire, because they are afraid of fire, because they are born in the fire, this Ginnie. You know, anyway, and two time, my sister, she's feel very good. Since that day, she is very good. That's the story, I told you. (Hicham 2020)

Jinn eviction is a form of exorcism. The healers are negotiating with the Jinn in doing the Jinn eviction or exorcism: the *sri'*. They need to have permission for the exorcism by the Jinn. There is certain rules for the exorcism, such as not practicing it at night, and the healers often inherit the abilities from their parents by observing what they do since childhood, like a craftmanship, whilst oftentimes staying illiterate. (Maarouf 2007: 159f.f.)

3. 3. Magical Hierarchy

„In Islam we have been told about it in the Quran (the holy book of muslims) and we believe

that it's a kind of pact between human being and demons to fulfill some purposes. Generally it's an evil thing. Used to tear apart families, hurting people.. And all other bad thing you can do to harm anyone. The problem is even though it's 1 of the 7 deadly sins, people still practicing in it.“ (Zacharia)

I want to describe what I perceive as the „magical hierarchy“ of forces. This is an attempt of a description of the magical moroccan cosmology. I must point out, that i will definitely not be able to describe the full specter of it. I hope though, to give an insight in the most basic structure of the Moroccan magical cosmology and hierarchy of magical forces. The magical hierarchy is supposed to describe a system of magical thoughts and emotions, actions, oppression, and solutions. The logic and common knowledge structures that are inherently thought when talking about magic, as well as the connections and correlations between the single steps of a magical process.

Devil: The most willfully powerful force (except for god) is the devil. It is used by contract or the will to become a black magician, and is active through Jinns or Demons and black magicians to do certain things.

Jinns (evil) / Demons: Jinns can not only be good and bad, they can also have different religious backgrounds. It is often mentioned that Jewish Jinns are the most powerful and also the most evil. According to Marouf, in the Quran Jinns are described as the following families: the infidel (*kafir*), the Jew (*yhudi*), and the believer (*mumen*). Jinns can have good and bad characters just as humans, but demons are inherently evil. No matter if you choose to become a black magician by giving up your life to demonic forces, or if Jinns and demons make you a black magician by telling you: either you do what we say or we make your life a living hell, its both ways an control of action through oppression, fear and threat, by the demons, to the magicians. The choice is to obey the parts that are forced on them, in order to gain the positive aspects, very similarly to a legal system of laws and orders or a religious system of commandments and prohibitions.

Magicians: Magicians can be both male (*khfrer*) and female (*shawafa*). They are believed to be working with Jinns as well as being in a contracted collaborative situation with the devil. They are using the powers that Jinns give to them mainly to do harm. When a client comes

and gives them the sum they expect, the Jinns give them any kind of power to fulfill any task they wish to be done. The magician basically conveys the intentions of the client to the Jinn who is fulfilling them, through rituals, offerings and sacrifices.

Payments: It is not only a monetary exchange happening between the magician and his or her client, but also between the magician and the spirits. First, the client needs to pay the black magician, then the black magician needs to pay the Jinn, demon or devil. While on the one hand there is the notion of poverty and bad education, also it is mentioned, that all kinds of people with different financial backgrounds are going to take the services of magicians. For simple services like reading the cards like tarot, it can cost between 5€ and 10€. It is affordable for all income categories to use the services, and can go up to 1000€, 2000€, or more. (B.P. 51:30) When it comes to payment of the Jinn, they can be a chicken, a sheep, blood, candles, henna, Gnawa music, or other things. „*This is why, for example, I am your Jinn, and you ask me questions, what will she have today, and I answer you this. She will be dressed like this, she has this and that. And I say, ok, I will make a ritual for you, they a sheep or a chicken is slaughtered, and I will make this ritual for a few days for you, with Gnawa and music. You give something to me, I change something for you. They give this as a thank you to their Jinn. With blood sacrifice, with ... I am not a master, I am just saying what I have seen, what I have done, my own experience. I don't say that I didn't do it, I also did it. Just recently I was in Morocco. It has to be, it would be a lie if I said no. For example, you have a Jinn, and he can do things for you that I just don't see, but you say ok, if you want this thing done, then you have to do this and that, and of course you are also paying a fee. And I say yes. And you are offering to your Jinn with blood, candles, henna, ritual music and and and.*“ (B.P. 41:55)

Doer: The client usually wants to have something according to their own will, to control somebody, harm somebody, gain wealth or success, or wants to influence interpersonal relationships. A client is also somebody who is suspecting to be the victim of magic and wants to undo it or wants to do magic back to the other person he suspects.

Receiver: The Receiver or the victim of magic is somebody who suspects to have received the effects of magical practices through somebody else. He or she has two options: To counter-do magic to get rid of the magical effects by the other person, or to un-do magic by a

white magician who is using the force of the Quran and god.

Protection: Protection is objects or rituals that are precaution of being a victim of magic. They are connected to the emotion of fear, as well as to tradition and just common knowledge. Aspects of protection can be Milk, Salt, Amulets, Incense or other possessions. For example in the visit of the hammam before marriage, the bride is only taking her most intimate family members, to not have anybody with her who would take some of the hair or dead skin and do a magical spell on the bride. The chains are spilled with milk for protection of evil spirits who might get in from there. It is possible to stick a form of incense into one's shoes, and salt is something that is always carried with (B.P.).

„Good“ Khfref / Imam: They are the white magicians, who are un-doing the black magic. *„This white magic, someone he goes there and he has this black magic that is hurt, and these people like Musulman people, they study Quran very good, you know, they going to them for free, and make you like again new one. Who reading just things. This is white magic. Because without money, they don't do these bad things, about chicken, sheep, you know sacrifice, no. They just going to the guy, and hurting things, because everything has happened.“* (Hicham 18:22) The white magician is oftentimes a holy man who is not charging any payment, and can also be accompanied by good spirits or good Jinns. The good magician is not always using the force of god or the Quran for un-doing black magic. It may oftentimes just be a form of craft that is given within families over generations from fathers to sons who just continue doing the craft of for example Jinn eviction without any specific knowledge of the Quran needed (Maarouf: 159f.).

Quran: *„And now, what I do, is that, to stop all this, black magic or white magic, if you can call it white. The solution always is the Quran. If there is someone who does magic, you start reading the Quran, they cannot do anything. The devils they just hear the Quran, or the spirits, they just go away. They don't stay with you. Except if they are muslims, they stay with you, and you read, you read, you read, you read the Quran to them, if someone did something like magic, you read the Quran, and muslim spirits they comes to you, they talk to you, they tell you all the truth. The problem for example with this lady you are reading the Quran for her, is that she have a spirit, a bad spirit or a devil, and because of the black magic, and a lady did it, or a man, and they did this and this and this and this, and if you want to stop this,*

you should ask the devil, or you should punish the devils, to go away. How you punish the devil, there is something in the Quran, if you read, you read, you read, it's like if you are putting them in fire, they suffer, they suffer, they cannot support this, so by the end they just ask you, leave us, stop reading the Quran, we will stop what we did, and the lady, or the man, who have the problems, because of the magic, the magic will be ok and will just leave him. It's like this.“ (Mohamed 39:00)

God: The highest power and the only power that is able to undo black magic through the Quran is the power of god. It is transferred by reading the Quran for example at Jinn evictions or to un-do magical attacks.

These aspects form a hierarchy and stand in constant interaction between each other, within the magical procedures. It is not a linear hierarchy in which there is always every aspect included, but it is possible that some aspects may be excluded. Even though god is the last force mentioned here, it is the highest of powers in the mentioned hierarchy, but in the process of black magic even up to un-doing black magic through white magic and Jinn evictions, god might be excluded, except if the Quran and god's power is explicitly used for un-doing black magic.

4. Conclusio

I again have to point out, though, that the here described aspects are not at all a description of the full picture, since I have not even been in the country, but could only talk with people in Morocco through Whatsapp, as well as meet people who are living in Vienna and not in Morocco. I could not proceed any participant observation or have my own experiences with magic in Morocco, I was only asking about the topic and have to rely on the answers. However, this paper should work as an attempt to go deeper into the topic and have a better understanding of it, in order to hopefully later on be able to really visit the country and do proper fieldwork in Morocco.

What I found important, was to point out the two perspectives towards a social surrounding of the people who use and are affected by magic, as well as the perspective towards their

inside and in particular their emotions. It seems to me, that both these perspectives are together creating forms of pressure, that both lead to the use as well as the fear of magic. They are affecting and causing each other, social rules and behaviors generate emotions and vice versa. Societies' influences can be found in gender hierarchies and social gender roles, as well as religious dogma and ideas, as well as in economical structures and pressures, which all include magical practices. Moreover there would certainly be a lot more factors to consider in social influences, but these were the three factors I shortly focused for reasons of this paper.

Gender structures are generally rating men higher than women, with a higher literacy rate in men than in women, and generally spoken it is more women who are using magic, even though this might not be a correlation and might be coincidental, the literature as well as my research suggests it is very probable of correlating, due to feelings of lack of power and magic being a source of power that stands contrary to social rules and structures. What I mean by that, is that for example one social structure is that the woman is hierarchically underneath the man - whereas in magic she can have a lot more power than him. Or, when Islam is giving the rule that magic is haram - magic is forming a counter-force that still acts against that. I find these dichotomies of male – female and Islam – magic quite present in my research, to confirm them I would have to do a lot more fieldwork in the country though.

In the section about gender, I am again, as in my other paper, mostly talking about women. There is more than once in my interviews the notion of women's illiteracy and worse opportunities to education in comparison to men, and generally low probability to reach success in labour and financial independency. It is mentioned that women are ignored and passive in society and are linguistically needed to be controlled and to behave disciplined and serving to men. It is important that they get married and they are generally bound to their family of heritage or to the marriage tie, they do not stand as independent beings. Nevertheless the connection to the other world is thought as stronger in women, and they often make a living as shawafas. It might often be feelings of powerlessness that make women to use magic, to use it as their more hidden source of power maybe. When it comes to women, I am still asking myself if they historically are using magic, because they are suppressed, or if they are suppressed, because they use magic.

In Islam, sorcery and witchcraft are haram, which means illegal, since the prophet Mohamed is the only person who is able to see in the future, and no power is supposed to be higher than the power of god. There can even be high penalties for practicing it. Nevertheless, it is recognized in Quran as existent, as well as magical forces are, such as Jinns. When it comes to the people, they might be believing in the Quran and Islam, or they believe in magic, or even do both. To better understand the behaviors when it comes to islam and magic, I would have to be in the country, but so far it seems to me that magic and Islam are two counter-forces who play a game with each other and as a person you can either play for one or the other or be neutral or appreciate both. Islam as well as magical believe might have personal benefits for people, as well as they both might be heard or seen critical, which then forms the behaviors with both as well as the communication about them.

When it comes to economic factors and magic, the economy is not only in which people are living their lives, work their professions and achieve their wealth in, a structure that often generates the wish to use magic, but also magic itself is found within an economic structure. Magic costs money. When there is a problem regarding wealth people are oftentimes willing to pay for a magical procedure that is supposed to help them with their financial problem. But additionally, all other reasons for practicing magic, are contributing to the economic gain of magicians. Lots of these reasons are based on feelings of lack and powerlessness, as well as fear and mistrust. The economic structure itself may create these feelings of lack, fear and powerlessness, but also other problems can create these emotions and make people economically contribute to magic. Even within magical practices there is economical structures that exceed the mere payment of the magician, even the magical force needs to receive their proper payment.

The question about emotions was, if people are driven by their own (negative) emotional state, or if they use magic without having negative emotions. The research into the underlying emotions and the social structures suggests, that the use of magic is a question of power. It seems probable, that the use of magic is a tool of help against negative emotions, that generally are an indication of helplessness and trying to gain power over a situation that is otherwise out of one's own influence. Even if the uses of magic might be a form of just a wish of getting what someone wants, or a real pain, sickness or distress may it psychologically or physically, there are always negative emotions involved. They form a

second form of pressure to start the engine to the use of magic, next to, and additional to, and in combination with the various social pressures.

According to my questions of how a Moroccan magical ontology would look like, I further discovered, how magic works. I was given answers about how magicians are becoming who they are, and how Jinn possessions and evictions can possibly look like. I discovered the already mentioned components of a hierarchy of magical activists and forces, that are intertwined with each other, work together and give power to or take power of each other. For me, this paper was a great first step towards an insight into the country's magical ontology, but I would very much want to research further in Morocco about this topic.

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