

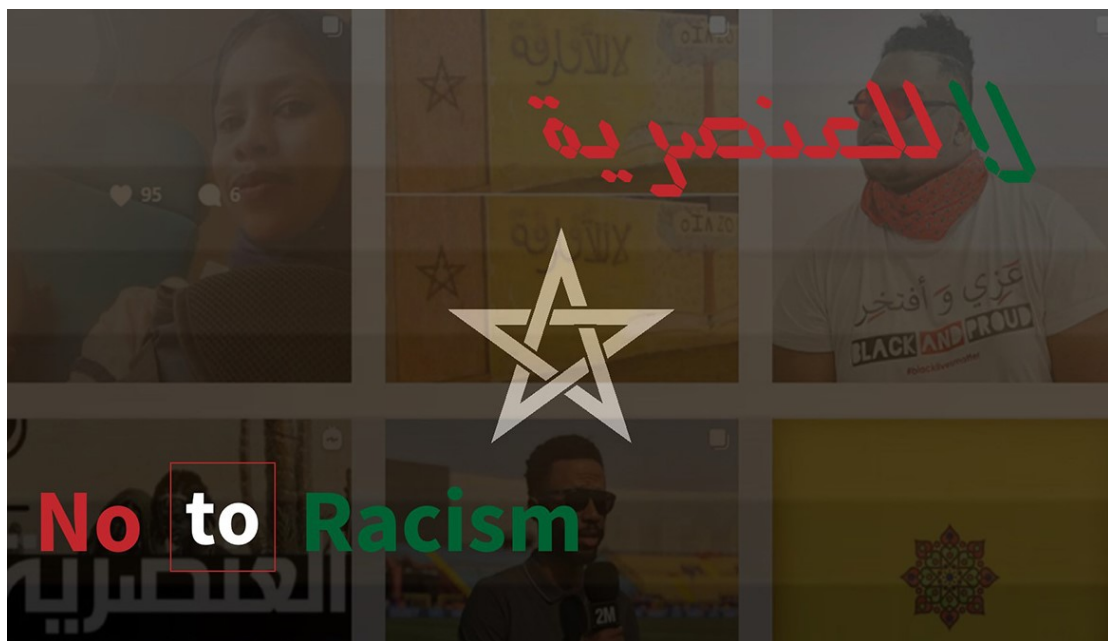


Arab Reform Initiative

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Ending Denial: Anti-Black Racism in Morocco

→ Stephen J. King





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Enough! It's time to end the denial, pierce the taboos, raise consciousness about the problem, and confront and criminalize anti-Black racism and discrimination in Morocco. That is the message young black Moroccan activists are conveying as they organize and commiserate with fellow black Moroccans on social networks: like "Black Moroccans" and "The *Mazeej* project" on Instagram and Facebook.

Racism exists everywhere in the world but varies according to the context. In the Moroccan context, anti-black racism is pronounced, widespread, and largely denied by non-Blacks despite Morocco's participation in the trans-Saharan slave trade for 13 centuries, and the socio-economic marginalization of the country's Black minority until the present day.

At the most basic level of daily life, local activists combatting anti-Black racism in Morocco point out that contempt towards Black Arabs and Black Berbers in Morocco (and towards Black people in general) is casually and prominently manifested in the words "white" or non-Black Moroccans—without reflection—commonly use to refer to Morocco's minority Black population: *Al-Abd* (Slave, pl. *Al-Abeed*), *Al-Khadem* (Servant, pl. *Al-Khadam*), *Al-Hartani* (Freed black slave) and *Al-Azzi* (roughly, somewhere in between Negro and Nigger), *Al-Kahlouch* (Blackie). *Wena Kahlouch?* (And me, am I a Blackie?) said when white Moroccans jest about being asked to do something unpleasant. The animalization of Black people in Morocco is not infrequent (This form of racial mockery seems mostly targeted at migrants from Sub-Saharan Africa): Black people in Morocco can be called *qird* (monkey), *khanzir* (pig), *akil lahmi albashar* (cannibal), and *hayawan* (animal). They may be greeted by the sounds monkeys supposedly make: *guera; guera*. The heritage of black Moroccans is frequently denied and accosted with the veiled attack of the phrase: *M'Nenty* (Where are you from?) said by their fellow citizens, as if "true Moroccans" are all white.

It should, but doesn't in the Moroccan context, go without saying that using the words slave (*Abd*) and servant (*Khadem*) to refer to Black people is despicable, offensive, and racist. Yet, many Moroccans deny the charge, utilize the words frequently and freely, and claim that racism doesn't exist in Morocco. Black Moroccans also do not experience being called *Azzi*, *Kahlouch*, etcetera as terms of affection or forms of friendly teasing and humour, as their non-black Moroccan friends and acquaintances often claim. Far from it. Black Moroccans also recognize



that when non-Black Moroccans “make fun” of dark skin or tightly curled hair they are participating in racist micro-aggressions that are meant to hurt and subjugate.

Morocco is a diverse country and a post-slave society, yet diversity, the history of slavery in Morocco, and the racism and discrimination that is generally inherent in post-slave societies are not taught in schools, adequately addressed in law, nor discussed within most non-Black Moroccan families. In addition, as if racism and discrimination can only occur within formal institutions and laws designed to segregate and discriminate – Jim Crow, Apartheid –, the Moroccan monarchy and government counter that Moroccan laws criminalize any discrimination between citizens on the basis of colour, and all jobs are open to all groups within the framework of equality. When pressed about racism and racial discrimination beyond that, authorities assert that activists are inventing problems and promoting *fitna* (sedition and dangerous national disunity).¹ In 2012, the Moroccan government denied an application to form an association to combat anti-Black racism by claiming that the concept of race does not apply to Moroccan society so racism could not exist there.² Activists also wonder if the monarchy is concerned about the emergence of a full-throttled anti-Black racism social movement that could bleed into the Western Sahara/Southern Provinces conflict that Morocco has been engaged in since the 1970s as most Black Moroccans live in the southern part of Morocco.

Black Moroccans: An integral part of the country's history

Despite denials, Morocco is clearly a country with an ethnically and racially diverse population whose members experience varying degrees of discrimination.

In a general sense, in a monarchical authoritarian regime in which secret police, intelligence agencies, security sectors, and judicial systems have been used to impose state control in the service of ruling cliques and narrow patronage networks, nearly all Moroccans are discriminated against. In addition, Amazigh (Berbers), who generally consider themselves to be white and to be the only indigenous people in the country, make up a large percentage of the Moroccan population and claim a history of discrimination. Though notably, beginning in the



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1990s, Morocco has made significant progress in recognizing Amazigh identity.

Similar progress has not been made in recognizing Morocco's Black population, including the Black indigenous presence in the south and the impact of the trans-Saharan slave trade. The Moroccan government does not keep demographic statistics by race, so the exact number of Black Moroccans is not known.³ Still, Blacks make up a significant portion of the Moroccan population. Morocco's "white" Arabs and Berbers were heavily involved in the trans-Saharan slave trade for 13 centuries. Deep into the 20th century, owning black slaves in Morocco was a sign of prestige. Women were taken as concubines and domestics and men worked in the fields, herded animals, or served as domestics. These black slaves adopted their masters' last names and tribal allegiance and their children and children's children continued to be part of the household. Famous Moroccans – the feminist scholar Fatima Mernissi and the celebrated author Tahar Ben Jelloun – have written about black slaves brought into their households in the 1950s. Recent DNA analysis has determined that $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ of contemporary Morocco's female gene pool is made of typical Black sub-Saharan lineages.⁴

Morocco's legacy of black slave soldiers is noteworthy as well. The second sultan of the reigning *Alaouite* dynasty, Moulay Ismail (1672-1727), profited from the trans-Saharan slave trade and enslaved all Black Moroccans to create an army and Black Guard of more than 100,000 men, the *Abid al-Bukhari*.⁵ Some descendants of the *Abid al-Bukhari* still live and work within the palace compound.⁶

Slavery, concubinage, and relatively widespread miscegenation has produced a contemporary Moroccan population on a colour continuum as opposed to sharp breaks between black and white. Yet, there are national and family silences about slavery and its aftermath – racism – in Morocco. The topics are taboo. The denial, the silence (including in the educational curriculum) is part of a larger national discourse that does not acknowledge the magnitude of the trans-Saharan slave trade and the existence of Morocco's marginalized minority black community whose stories have not been told.⁷ This reflects a country defined by colour lines and strict social hierarchy. Moroccans distance themselves from blackness by all means: whitening creams, facial scrubs, hair straighteners, and a careful construction of ethnic and cultural identity that excludes a large number of [their] descent: the tens of thousands of sub-Saharan Africans brought to Morocco



through the trans-Saharan slave trade.⁸

The lives of black Moroccans in recent decades have been complicated by the presence of tens of thousands of sub-Saharan African black migrants who have come to Morocco seeking clandestine passage to Europe, an education, or possible better life opportunities within Morocco. They have experienced virulent racism and violence in Morocco.

Recent efforts to tell their stories

Recently, on social networks, black Moroccans – both descendants of enslaved Black people and indigenous black Moroccans – have begun to tell their own stories. While important, to date, this has been limited to elite circles on Instagram and Facebook. These efforts have yet to yield a civil rights’ social movement devoted to ending anti-Black racism in Morocco, nor even formal civil society associations to advance the same cause. In contrast, a handful of formal associations have emerged to combat racism in Morocco against Black migrants from Sub-Saharan Africa. King Mohamed VI even passed a law to assist a minority of them in obtaining working papers in the Kingdom. Reasons for the disparity are unclear. Though, as noted, in 2012, the Moroccan government denied an application to form an association to combat anti-Black racism by claiming that the concept of race does not apply to Moroccan society so racism could not exist there.⁹ In addition, a few high-profile acts of violence – including murder – against Sub-Saharan Africans in Morocco prompted the emergence of campaigns and organizations combatting this form of virulent racism.

Black Moroccans

Anti-racism activist, Fatima-Zahra Quatabou, recently established “[Black Moroccans](#)” on Instagram as a platform to advance eight goals:

- Share the talents of Moroccans of colour
- Break down preconceived ideas about race in Morocco
- Highlight the slave trade that took place in Morocco through books, reports, and images.



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- Share the beauty of the genetic diversity of the Moroccan people
- Denounce any form of racial discrimination on Moroccan territory
- Open the debate about slave legacies and current discrimination
- Raise awareness, raise awareness, and further raise awareness about Negrophobia (anti-Black racism) in Morocco
- Help establish a formal civil society association to combat anti-Black racism in Morocco¹⁰

Well-educated, relatively dark-skinned and in her twenties, Ms. Quatabou is partly animated by a desire to question and challenge Moroccan beauty standards, which amount to “the whiter you are the prettier you are.” Curly/kinky hair is especially reviled in Morocco.

For Ms. Quatabou, anti-Black racism in Morocco feels like it began at the dawn of time and it will be difficult to change. She notes how non-black Moroccans casually utilize the offensive term – to her and other black Moroccans – *Azzi* (again, somewhere between Negro and Nigger) to identify a black person. Collectively, non-Black Moroccans consider the word not to be insulting and they believe that black Moroccans take it well, which justifies its use. ‘*Abd, Khadam, Kahlouch*, and the other derogatory terms for Black Moroccans are equally offensive to Ms. Quatabou:

“Of course, those words offend me. There are even Berber words that are still used today by that community to verbally insult Blacks. I think the education system needs to include lessons on all forms of slavery that have taken place in Morocco in order to raise awareness (We don’t learn this in history lessons). To stop these verbal assaults, we must break the taboos. We need campaigns against Negrophobia (anti-Black racism). We need seminars, TEDx, books, podcasts, reports. We must also highlight the experiences of black Moroccans so that people understand that words hurt and can hinder the healthy construction of Moroccan adults. We need to see more diversity on screen; highlight the beauty of the genetic diversity of Moroccans. We have to teach people to question themselves. Show off successful black Moroccans; display the reality that we are just as smart and bright as the rest of society. Make us more visible. Show that we are here; that we exist. That our future is not mapped out as only workers in the fields or sellers



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of knick-knacks. There is a HUGE educational gap, and as long as it is there, received ideas about slavery and black inferiority will continue to take hold in Morocco.”

As Ms. Quatabou notes, progress will require piercing the Moroccan social taboo against discussing slavery and racism:

“Slavery and anti-Black racism are taboo subjects in Morocco. Moroccans are in huge denial and feel that racism does not exist in Morocco because one, we are all Muslims and Muslims are all brothers; and two, they only acknowledge regional prejudices while minimizing the legacy of slavery and anti-Black racism. Non-black Moroccans are convinced that the whole universe is racist except them.”

This attitude holds, she notes, when most non-Black Moroccans denigrate their fellow black citizens for their skin colour in their own country; consider them to be descendants of slaves and inferiors and render them, through discrimination, virtually invisible in the media, in films, and in any high-status job. She added, “there was a recent AJ+France [Webinar](#) on Negrophobia in North Africa: The majority reaction to it was deafening denial. Non-Black Moroccans are not ready for this kind of debate, but we must have it and it’s time they realized that! At a minimum, we need a law criminalizing anti-Black racism in Morocco.”

Ms. Quatabou is especially and understandably agitated by the fate of Blacks in Morocco’s South-East Draa Valley, the Sahrawis, for whom the racial insult, *Harratine* – freed slave/Nigger – was originally attached. In response to a question about the lack of mobilization and organizations in Morocco battling against anti-Black racism towards indigenous Black Moroccans, Ms. Quatabou responded, “I think that when a person has been discriminated against all his life, he does not dare to put himself forward in the public eye and this is perhaps the case with the Moroccan black community. However, since the Black Lives Matter movement some black Moroccans have begun to speak out against anti-Black racism in Morocco. I am one of them. It’s a very good start. Over time, I hope to create a formal association.”

On Ms. Quatabou’s Instagram site “[Black Moroccans](#)” she shares media stories of well-known black Moroccans; others share their own stories. The Moroccan



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Comedian, writer, and actor Mohamed Bassou, at times, has had to deal with abhorrent racism. In a dispute with a non-Black female Moroccan social media influencer, he was assailed with: “Ah, face of a Gorilla, if you want media buzz, don’t do it at my expense. I respect you, so let’s respect each other...Ah, one more thing. Don’t forget to go to the hammam for a bath and try to wash until your skin becomes white. Then, you will have the millions of subscribers that I have.”¹¹

The renowned Moroccan visual artist M’barek Bouchichi is from an oasis in southeast Morocco, and a proud son of the South. Despite his high profile in Morocco and in Europe, he mostly feels invisible in his home country:

“Black Moroccans are invisible to the rest of society. Our skin colour itself is a sign of non-existence, of non-belonging. Oftentimes in the streets, people get excited when they hear me speak Darija (Moroccan vernacular). At the airport, police officers mistake me for a tourist or a migrant and ask me to join the line for non-Moroccan passport holders. I learned that I was an outsider from the rest of Moroccan society when my parents moved us from Akka (a town in the south east Tata province) to Agadir. In Agadir, explaining where I’m from and justifying my origins became part of my daily routine. Black Moroccans are outcasts, and it’s very difficult for us to gain visibility or climb the social ladder... For a debate about anti-Black racism to begin in Morocco, there must be a recognition of the extent of the problem. State and society must recognize the existence of black Moroccans and then work to end racism. For example, there needs to be statistics on the number of black Moroccans in positions of authority. How many black gynaecologists are there? How many Imams? I have not heard of one. Blacks continue to occupy lowly positions that are designed specifically for them. This is yet another form of the silent violence that black Moroccans experience.”

A visitor to “Black Moroccans”, Hasna from Casablanca, tells her story:

“I need to share my experiences and suffering in the face of Moroccan Negrophobia. Since I was a toddler, I have faced racial insults by non-Black Moroccan friends and acquaintances, sometimes without bad intentions, that have deeply hurt me. I was nicknamed *Azzia*, incense, baguette of sushi, and many others...I kept my pain to myself, pretended to smile, but was deeply hurt. I cried alone looking at my face in the mirror wondering why I was made ugly. My mother



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always told me that I was pretty, but if I irritated her, she also would insult my skin colour, saying that I'm a charcoal-coloured *Azzia*. I learned to survive with the pain, but I felt psychologically destroyed and became aggressive in the face of racial insults. Now, I refuse to tolerate these words. Once, I threw a rock that hit the head of a boy who uttered them. Another boy, to mock me said, 'I heard that you escaped from the Tindouf encampments (the Sahrawi refugee camps in the Algerian desert).' A group of non-Black Moroccan girls during gym class made fun of me by saying they heard that I was dying. I have many stories like that. Things changed for the better when I met a teacher of French, Siham El Berrak, the sister of the artist Leila El Berrak. One day Ms. El Berrak looked at me closely and said I was magnificent with a beauty similar to Afro-Americans; that my hair was beautiful and I had pretty eyes. That day was indescribable for me. I couldn't sleep. I was with the angels. I looked at myself in the mirror and loosened my hair while dancing. I was so happy. I began to say to myself: It's true I have beautiful eyes... I began to take better care of myself; to reconcile with myself. At the urging of my sister, I wore colourful clothes and stopped wearing the sombre outfits that were my custom. That teacher was a type of psychologist for me and due to her I began to like myself. My advice: Love yourself as you are."

On "Black Moroccans", Jad introduces himself and shares his story. He is a strongly built, young graphic designer from Casablanca:

"I am an *Azzi*. In school, that's what they called me instead of my name. I was known to be very sociable and jovial. In the beginning, I accepted being called *Azzi*. However, overtime I felt that the word began to weigh heavily on me, that it was placing me in the margins of society and I began to feel like a stranger in my own country. Despite all that, I learned to live with it and convinced myself that the word was used affectionately to mean the appreciated, the precious, the cherished, the loved, etc., until the day I was insulted in front of the class by a professor after I had not done my homework the night before: 'Get out *Azzi*, son of a slave.' That day, I understood that there was nothing affectionate about the word and I rebelled. Anybody who called me anything other than Jad had to be prepared to fight me. Gradually, my life began to change and people began to respect my point of view about utilizing that word around me; until the day when I met a nice and beautiful girl and we fell in love and wanted to get married.



Unfortunately, her mother absolutely refused by saying to her daughter, her words exactly, ‘You are white and beautiful, but you are going to marry a Black and make me little grandchildren that look like cockroaches.’ I could not believe that the colour of my skin was going to be a handicap in my life to this degree. All of that made me stronger and gave me the capacity to face a racist society that does not want to admit me in. ‘I am *Azzi* and Proud.’”

Black Arabism: The *Mazeej* (Mixed) Project

“Black Arabism: *The Mazeej (Mixed) Project*” was launched in January 2020 by Sophia Griss-Bembe, a mixed-race young woman born and raised in France by a Moroccan mother and father from the Central African Republic. Racism has been a constant obstacle to harmony within her family, so much so that her mother was cut off from her family back in Morocco for over three decades for making the decision to marry a black man. On her visits to Morocco, Ms. Griss-Bembe was shocked and traumatized by the vividness of racism in Morocco:

“My first visit there, was the first time I had been subjected to racial (verbal) violence, in spite of being of Moroccan descent and having a Moroccan mother. I was not prepared for it, and quickly understood that my skin colour would be an obstacle to my integration within Moroccan society. Even compliments could be derogatory, such as, ‘It is your Arab side that made you so beautiful.’”

On the other hand, Ms. Griss-Bembe also had positive culture shock through Moroccan folklore, Gnawa culture in particular. She gradually became exposed to the many facets of Moroccan culture, and the ethnic patchwork of which it is made. She found people that looked like her in her Arab-ness and Africa-ness. That experience led her to create *Mazeej* to unite people influenced by these identities, who were having trouble navigating them on their own. Her hope is to simply give a voice and some visibility to Afro-Amazigh and Afro-Arab communities. Her platform on Instagram has taken off since the recent Black Lives Matter protests.

Ms. Griss-Bembe adds an interesting perspective on the denial of anti-Black racism in Morocco, finding it at times within black and brown Moroccan communities:



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“Again, a root cause of racism is ignorance and the denial of historical processes that made nations what they have become. Denial is in fact even more present among black and brown communities, I found out through *Mazeej*. Through my work, I was truly hoping to connect communities together, but many black Moroccans deny the very existence of racism or the importance of dealing with racism as an existing and prevailing issue in Morocco. A lot of them still believe that race is only a matter of economic status rather than something to do with blackness. I believe that black Moroccans have a big responsibility in downplaying the racism they experience every day. It is the most frustrating part of my job – it might also be my subjectivity speaking – but I do believe that there should be more consciousness and solidarity among blacks throughout North Africa.”

A visitor to the *Mazeej* Project posted this:

“I consider myself to be an Afro-Arab/ Berber because my mother is Moroccan, a Sahrawi from Ouarzazate of Métis / Black skin colour. All her family is too. My father is fairly white in colour, belonging to the Abda tribe, an Arab tribe that came to Morocco during the era of the Almohad Empire (1130-1269). According to Ibn Khaldoun (a very great Muslim scholar), the Abda are from Yemen. However, I only grew up with my mother, so I consider myself to be a pure Sahrawi, at least more Sahrawi than Abda. My culture, my religion, my values and my country made me what I am today. And I can add my DNA test to that, which shows that I am a beautiful and proud product of Africa, I have genes from North Africa (Morocco, Algeria and a little bit of Egypt) but also from Sub-Saharan Africa (Ghana, Liberia, Senegal, Guinea ...). Since we are all Africans here, we should start talking about a negative phenomenon which has lasted for a long time across all of North Africa. That scourge is racism. To say that there is no racism in Morocco, would be lying to ourselves. I think it is important to talk about it and put everything you have to say on the table.”

On the same platform, Ismail added a comment about “Whiteness” in North Africa made by a former professor:

"The problem with racists in North Africa is that they're confused. They think they're white and then they go to Europe and only then they realize they're Africans." It's a huge identity crisis due to European colonization of the Maghreb



decades ago.”

From stories to activism: The missing link

Black Moroccans want more than to tell their stories (for the first time in the country’s long history). They want to reform their society, confront and end anti-Black racism in Morocco. As noted above, an effort to formally establish an anti-Black racism association was denied by the Moroccan government in 2012. In 2013, the Moroccan parliament, for the first time, raised the issue of racism on the floor. The royalist Party of Authenticity and Modernity (PAM), a party started by a childhood friend of the king, proposed a measure that would punish “racist acts” with a prison sentence spanning between three months to a year and/or a fine between ten thousand to one hundred thousand dirhams. On the surface, it appeared to be a goodwill measure that has drawn support from several human rights organizations. However, the issue of racism toward black Moroccans and black African migrants risks being used as a measure of political opportunism and a smokescreen, a process familiar to the powerful actors of the Moroccan regime.”¹² In 2018, the Istiqlal party made a similar effort.¹³ Thus, between 2013 and 2018 two political parties proposed legislation aimed at penalizing racial discrimination to no avail.

The Moroccan monarchy and government have never officially acknowledged that anti-Black racism exists and something must be done about it. As speculated above, the reluctance may be linked to the Kingdom’s Sahrawi problem in the “Southern Provinces.”

A number of reform suggestions emerge from “Black Moroccans” and “The *Mazeej* Project:”

- Racist language in Morocco has to be reformed. The government could take the lead with a national campaign to counter the banalization of verbal assaults by reflexively referring to Black people with terms such as, again: ‘*Abd* (slave), *Khadam* (servant), *Azzi*, *Kahlouch*, The words hurt and they are meant to hurt and oppress. They are not jokes or light-hearted



banter. The same with the mockery of black skin and curly/kinky hair. Civil society attempted to reform racist language several years ago with the *Ana Massmiytich Azzi* (My name is not Nigger) campaign, which has died out.

- Some teachers in Morocco are the vectors of some of the most virulent anti-Black racism in the country.¹⁴ Beginning in primary school, racist non-Black Moroccan teachers embarrass black kids in their classes by suggesting that they smell. They refer to Black students as *Azzi* and children of slaves. They imply that they are ignorant or unteachable. The ministry of education needs to get involved to reform and train Moroccan teachers in this regard.
- Laws need to be passed that criminalize anti-Black racism in Morocco.
- Moroccan slavery and anti-black racism need to be taught in schools and discussed within society.
- Morocco's diversity needs to be acknowledged in state and society and taught in schools. Black Moroccans need more visibility in the media, the Arts, and in upper-level government and business positions. Despite formal equality under the law for all Moroccan citizens, this will probably take affirmative actions by the government to limit structural and institutional racism and over-come slave legacies.
- Pierce the taboos and silence. Raise awareness, raise awareness, and further raise awareness about anti-Black Racism in Morocco.

Finally, as a final note of encouragement for non-Black Moroccans to abandon anti-Black racism, it is worth mentioning that psychologically, “white” Moroccans, who practice racism, at least in part because it feels good to look down on the “other,” may suffer from it as much as their black victims: “When a person is deeply invested in his group’s dominance, he has a euphoric ‘on top of the world’ feeling, while in reality he is in a state of self-inflation. This leads to a severe distortion of his capacity to think and to judge. He and his are over-evaluated. Everybody outside is under-evaluated. And underneath may lie the fear that he cannot live up to the constructed ideal of his own perfection.”¹⁵



Endnotes

1. This comment was made in a Zoom interview with the Moroccan visual artist, M'barek Bouhchichi on 8-6-2020.
2. Stephanie Pouessel, *Noir Au Maghreb* (Tunis: IRMC, 2012).
3. This comment was made in a Zoom interview with the Moroccan visual artist, M'barek Bouhchichi on 8-6-2020.
4. Harich, Nourdin, Marta D. Costa, Verónica Fernandes, Mostafa Kandil, Joana B. Pereira, Nuno M. Silva, and Luísa Pereira. 2010. "The Trans-Saharan Slave Trade – Clues from Interpolation Analyses And High-Resolution Characterization Of Mitochondrial DNA Lineages." *BMC Evolutionary Biology* 10 (1): 138. DOI:10.1186/1471-2148-10-138.
5. Chouki El Hamel, *Black Morocco: A History of Slavery, Race, and Islam*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013).
6. Ibid.
7. Marouan, Maha. 2016. "Incomplete Forgetting: Race and Slavery in Morocco." *Islamic Africa* 7 (2): 267–271. doi:10.1163/21540993-00702002.
8. Ibid.
9. Stephanie Pouessel, *Noir Au Maghreb* (Tunis: IRMC, 2012).
10. This last goal was conveyed to me in an online interview, 8-1-2020.
11. <https://bit.ly/2YC3AFN>
12. <https://www.jadaliyya.com/Details/29222>
13. Alessandra Bajec, "As Tunisia Makes Racism Illegal, Where are Morocco and Algeria?" 29 October 2018, <https://www.trtworld.com/magazine/as-tunisia-makes-racism-illegal-where-are-morocco-and-algeria-21157>
14. Stephen J. King, "Black Arabs and African Migrants: between slavery and racism in North Africa," *The Journal of North African Studies* 2019/10/04 DOI: [10.1080/13629387.2019.1670645](https://doi.org/10.1080/13629387.2019.1670645)
15. Eric Fromm, quoted in Isabel Wilkerson, "America's Enduring Caste System." *New York Times*, July 1, 2020.



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About Arab Reform Initiative

The Arab Reform Initiative is the leading independent Arab think tank working with expert partners in the Middle East and North Africa and beyond to articulate a home-grown agenda for democratic change. It conducts research and policy analysis and provides a platform for inspirational voices based on the principles of diversity, impartiality and social justice.

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