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Shifting Symbols: Whiteness in Japan and Blackness in Morocco

This book has shown that framing racism *solely* in terms of whiteness and blackness distorts and limits the topic. However, we have also seen that ideas of whiteness and blackness are globally significant. The scale, severity, and longevity of anti-Black racism and the rise of White supremacism are global processes with many regional variations and particularities, connecting and overlapping different sites of racist modernity. This also suggests that, rather than offer a generalizing global overview of these key terms, it is more useful to focus on particular contexts. In this chapter I explore contemporary constructions of whiteness in Japan (with a focus on the advertising and beauty industries) and blackness in Morocco (with a focus on new challenges to old stereotypes). Each location has a distinct history of racism but each also shows the simultaneous reification and unsetting of the borders and connotations of blackness and whiteness.

The whiteness deployed in advertising, at least in Japan, can appear to be a contradictory ideal: desired, mimicked, but also treated as frivolous and patronized. Blackness in Morocco, as in the rest of North Africa, is a charged and complex topic where centuries-old traditions of anti-Black prejudice are today being reanimated but also challenged in the context of mass migration and anti-racist activism. In terms of their gravity, these two examples could scarcely be more different. Anti-Black racism in North Africa is the cause of immense suffering. The use and subversions of whiteness found in Japanese advertising may appear, by comparison, inconsequential. However, although they make an odd couple, each illustrates the working through of the same paradoxes: how reification is accompanied by

Globalizing Consumerism: Globalizing Whiteness

In some areas of India the Hindu goddess Durga is traditionally depicted astride a tiger – and traditionally she is painted black or brown. However, recent decades have seen her colour change. She has become paler, fairer, much like those many Indians who apply skin-whitening products. A BBC reporter investigating both phenomena was told that 'in this day of TV people want more pleasant images … Indian men today prefer fairer women'.[1] One 2002 study found that almost half of 'Asians aged 25 to 34 years used skin whiteners'.[2]

Colonized peoples have been negotiating whiteness for as long as Europe has been colonizing the non-European world. Over recent decades this process has become bound up with neoliberal globalization and the creation of globally plugged-in consumer societies. What appear, at least to White observers, as clear examples of 'whitening', whether literal or cultural, are refracted through visions of what wealthy, happy, and attractive people should look like. Thus whiteness – and/or 'fairness' – has become a key signifier of a consumer and pleasure-based lifestyle. Echeverría's discussion of the modernity of whiteness frames it as 'constitutive of modern-capitalist human being' yet also as an illusionary destination, its 'pseudo-concrete identitarian quality' being 'destined to fulfill the absence of a concrete human identity in established modernity'.[3] What Echeverría is telling us, I think, is that whiteness has become a kind of shared hallucination. But he goes too far when he frames it as 'destined' by 'established modernity' to 'fulfil' this universal psycho-social role. Not only do different places have different traditions of colour symbolism but what might, to Western eyes, appear to be emulation is often something else. Even products like 'skin whitening' lotions can be misread: to risk a generalization, their users no more want to become White than the White users of tanning creams want to become Black. Moreover, the place of whiteness in the neoliberal global flow of signs and symbols is not straightforward: whiteness is simultaneously coveted and widely distrusted; it is far-reaching, ever-expanding, yet its cultural connotations of materialism and hedonism are easily cast as shallow and unattractive. It is 'ethnicity'

definitional crisis and how who was, or is, White or Black, and what either connotes, is both fluid and fetishized.

that is associated with authenticity, depth, and value. By comparison, the words 'White culture' sound empty and blank. This may appear curious when one considers that advertising, from Buenos Aries to Beijing, makes such extensive use of attractive pale-skinned people. Yet the bright image of modern whiteness contains a deracializing potential: whiteness/fairness becomes available as a lifestyle (or 'look') that can be bought into by everyone, a cultureless and superficial identity that can be adopted and disposed of. Indeed, over the past two decades there has been a significant transition, albeit highly geographically uneven, to multiracial advertising. This transition has been largely seamless because neoliberalism hollows out racial symbols just as surely as it fetishizes them.

Whiteness in Japan

Japan is regarded by all the coloured peoples as their logical leader, as the one non-white nation which has escaped for ever the dominance and exploitation of the white world. (W. E. B. Du Bois, 1935)[4]

Auto-photo machines often exaggerate Caucasian features, whitening skin color, and enlarging eyes. The features of many manga (comicbook) Japanese characters appear Caucasian. Store mannequins are always white, as are models in many advertisements for beauty, leisure, or luxury products. (Dagmar Rita Myslinska, 2014)[5]

By the time the notion of the 'Third World' emerged in the 1950s, Japan's economy and culture were so thoroughly enmeshed in the ambitions and networks of Western capitalism that earlier hopes that the country had 'escaped for ever' the 'white world' appeared irrelevant. From the late nineteenth century and early twentieth, Japan's indigenous traditions of valuing pale skin colour had already become integrated with a wider turn to the West and modern theories of race and human difference. Positive attitudes towards whiteness thus became mixed up with positive attitudes towards Europeans as 'the white race'. In a seminal article, published in 1967, the anthropologist Hiroshi Wagatsuma examined the prevalence and changing nature of the 'white/beautiful versus black/ugly' dichotomy in Japan. For Wagatsuma, this binary was rooted in Japanese aesthetic values rather than Westernization. Yet Wagatsuma also noted that 'Japanese eyes, despite cases of plastic surgery, may keep their Oriental look, but through these eyes Japanese see themselves as part of the modern

Western world conceptualized in Western terms.'[6] In 1995 Ashikari undertook a similar survey and found that while 'white skin represented multiple meanings', it remained a key referent and point of comparison. Ashikari notes that, although her respondents 'insisted that Japanese skin was "superior" to Caucasian skin', nevertheless 'many images of *haku-jin* (literally, white people; Caucasians) women are used in advertisements for whitening cosmetics as well as other make-up products'.[7] One 2004 study showed that 73 per cent of foreigners in Japanese commercials were White, 11 per cent were Asian, Middle Eastern or Central/South American, and 4 per cent were Black.[8]

Many recent studies have emphasized the paradoxical nature of whiteness in Japan. Myslinska, drawing on her personal experiences as a European-heritage Japanese resident, writes that although 'admired and arguably privileged over other outsiders, Caucasians are nevertheless mocked and discriminated against – openly, frequently, and with impunity'. She continues:

Despite all the Western celebrities glorified by the media here, portrayals of everyday *gaijin* [foreign/white person] are not as glowing. Advertisements often feature Westerners as boorish rude clowns, in awe of Japanese technology and beauty, and confounded by its sophisticated culture.[9]

White Westerners in Japanese advertising tend to be used in roles considered unacceptably daring for Japanese models, and as symbols of hedonistic excitement. Thus, for example, while naked and seminaked *gaijin* women have been relatively common in poster and television campaigns, the same cannot be said of Japanese women. As explained by an advertising employee, 'ads can't use Japanese women for nude scenes because it is too realistic, so gaijin are used'.[10] As Creighton explains:

Gaijin are much more likely to be shown overtly breaking the conventional rules of Japanese society, or as individuals who struggle incompetently with the habits and customs of Japanese life. Nude representation of gaijin, particularly naked shots of the upper bodies of both men and women, are common in advertisements for products and services where naked depictions of Japanese would be inappropriate.[11]

Torigoe argues that White women are constructed as sexualized 'Others' in Japanese media: 'emphasizing white women's sexuality

creates "morally good" Japanese women in contrast to sexually Others [sic], thus creating 'a racial ladder that places Japanese people on top'.[12] A related point is offered by Creighton:

> Colonialism has involved the white gaze viewing the bare-breasted women of societies lower down the political and economic hierarchy. Modern Japanese advertising inverts this hierarchy and shifts the gaze; now it is bare-breasted white women on view for an economically advanced Japanese consuming public.[13]

Foreigners may provide a safe mechanism for expressing selfish sentiments in a culture which has long frowned on self-centredness. Pellicanò develops this idea in relation to the Japanese fashion for ash-brown-coloured hair products which, she says, appropriate whiteness rather than emulate it. Far from 'overriding one's natural features', this fashion, she writes, 'is instrumental in accentuating and valorizing them':

> this desire for 'Westernness' does not entail adopting whiteness in its essentialized 'purest' form, as that would have negative implications in the context of Japanese society. Rather, Japanese trendsetters have operated a selection and chosen the variant of whiteness that would be different enough to allow the creation of the 'latest' while minimizing its more threatening aspects.[14]

Thus a kind of knowing game is enacted that allows the pleasures of self-centred consumerism to become all the more tantalizing by being cast as simultaneously foreign, transgressive, and entirely available. This process finds echoes in many societies around the world but the strength of the Japanese economy and its place – albeit ambivalent – within the West appears to accentuate it. Thus the creative deployment of images of Whites may be said to enact Japanese power through the manipulation and re-inscription of global identity clichés.[15]

To many Western observers, Japanese racism appears particularly explicit in those cases where whiteness is co-opted against blackness. Creighton addresses this dynamic through the example of a Japanese newspaper cartoon portraying an encounter between a Japanese woman and African Americans. In the cartoon, the African Americans are aggressively remonstrating with the woman, presumably because her clothes feature prints of Sambo figures. The

Japanese woman is represented 'with stereotypical white features and hair coloring' and Creighton uses the cartoon to claim that the 'Japanese have entered the symbolic space of "white"', a space 'suggesting privilege, economic and political prominence'.[16] However, 'whiteness' in Japanese popular culture can itself be reductively Eurocentric. In a discussion on why people in the West see manga cartoon characters as looking White, Kawashima argues that it says more about Western racial taxonomies than the intent of the cartoons.[17] As we have seen so often in this book, understanding racism requires an interest in specific histories as well as an appreciation of the complexities and ambivalences of representational traditions. It is also important to appreciate the rapidity of change that can take place in popular culture. The studies by Creighton cited here are from the 1990s, but they already register a shift away from a 'gaijin complex', burdened with the knowledge that 'it's a white world', towards a more assertive sense of Japan's cultural prestige.[18] The past two decades have reinforced this shift and witnessed an uneven but worldwide swing towards 'diversity' – often symbolized through Black skin and culture – becoming a key branding trope. Examining this shift in Japan, McNeil explains that 'Blackness is extraordinarily profitable, and many the world over are cashing in on it in a variety of ways.'[19] Russell has also explored the commercialization of blackness in Japan and consumption practices that 'appropriate blackness as a celebratory object'. He uses the 'brand concept' of the Japanese online 'black fashion' retailer 'baby Shoop' as an example. Its 'brand concept', cited by Russell, runs as follows:

> Black They say is Unique, Pretty and the Basic ... The foundation of baby Shoop starts with 'Black is Beautiful'. It is a Brand, Fashion created for the beautiful Black race (Black Girl / Black Woman). Consequently, baby Shoop is Black Race Style. Even if fashion trends change around the world, the concept remains unchanged. ... BLACK FOR LIFE = BLACK FOREVER.[20]

Given the continued importance of whiteness within global consumerism, some will see such statements as superficial exoticisms, merely substituting, in Russell's terms, 'one chromatic racial fetish for another'. However, the realignment and diversification of the 'racial fetish' is not unimportant. Racial codes and racist representations are fluid and appear to be becoming more so. In this fast-changing

landscape 'the future of whiteness' becomes uncertain. It can still appear to be omnipresent, a global signifier of the ideal consumer lifestyle. But, at least in the cultural spheres of advertising and beauty, neither its role nor its power is set in stone.

Anti-Black Racism in North Africa

In the summer of 1994, when I was in Nouakchott, Mauritania ... I met a local Arab scholar at the archives who graciously invited me to his home. He wanted to share some primary source documents in exchange for some books I had brought with me. As I enjoyed his hospitality, sipping mint tea, a little girl of dark complexion appeared at the door. I called for her to come in, but she did not move or speak. I again called to her and asked, 'I have a camera. Do you want to take a picture?' Still she did not react. The scholar's wife then entered the room and said: 'Don't bother with her; she is just a slave [*abda*].' (Chouki El Hamel, 2013)[21]

Gaddaf used to say to me. 'Bring me that black slave' in reference to the president of an African state who was preparing to visit him ... And when the president would leave, he would say: 'The slave is gone.' (Nuri al-Mismari, Colonel Gaddafi's former Chief of Protocol)[22]

Racial and ethnic discrimination against Black Africans in North Africa is a multi-layered but urgent issue. Not only did significant racialized slavery persist in some parts of North Africa well into the last century but it has not altogether disappeared. Moreover, the maltreatment of Black Africans in the North is widespread. In 2017, CNN aired footage of Black African migrants being auctioned as slave-labourers in a clandestine market outside of Tripoli for as little as \$400.[23] The quotations with which I lead this section reflect the commonplace and casual racism that can be found even amongst political and intellectual leaders.

However shocking such stories, anti-Black racism in North Africa is neither simple nor static. Across North Africa the meaning of 'blackness' and 'non-blackness' is context-dependent and colour is often trumped by other factors, such as religion and heritage. As the quotes I led on hint, it is slavery, as a slur and as a reality, that shapes attitudes, creating a form of caste prejudice that is bound up with, but not reducible to, skin colour. Recent years have seen a

new critical sensibility begin to challenge some of the silences that surround this topic. Both civil activists and academics, like Chouki El Hamel in his path-breaking *Black Morocco*, are demystifying the Black–Arab continuum, in part by applying to it the international and political language of racism. El Hamel and other scholars show that North African patterns of racism do not simply mirror Euro-American racism, nor map readily onto the kind of 'Islamic racism' thesis associated with the work of Bernard Lewis.[24] Yet their interventions also take issue with the defensiveness and evasion that have marked work in this area, in which the severity or importance of anti-Black racism in North Africa is downplayed and a myth of a benign Islamic form of slavery recycled. The telling title of a report on anti-Black racism in Morocco published in 2020 by the Arab Reform Initiative is *Ending Denial*.[25]

In 1961 Fanon wrote that 'Africa is divided into Black and White, and the names that are substituted – Africa south of the Sahara, Africa north of the Sahara – do not manage to hide this latent racism.'[26] North Africa is usually understood to comprise the seven countries of Egypt, Sudan, Tunisia, Morocco, Algeria, Libya, and Western Sahara, which together contain about 20 per cent of the continent's population. But countries on the periphery of this group (such as Mauritania, Mali, Niger, Chad, and Eritrea) also have substantial Arab and Berber populations and histories of Black slavery. That the wounds of slavery remain open is evident from the suspicion that some Black governments have shown towards their 'Arab' or 'northern' citizens. Thus, for example, the first president of Mali, Modibo Keïta, although describing his country as a 'melting pot of African, Berber and Arab cultures', went on to insist that it was the 'Africans' who should be in charge: 'Cultural decolonization can only be accomplished', he proclaimed, 'through an unshakeable resolve to affirm ourselves as Africans.'[27] Thus, as Hall notes, 'to be Malian was to be African, and to be African was to be black'.[28] Recent bouts of northern separatism and Islamist insurgency in Mali take place against a background of a continuing struggle over the legitimacy of the 'African' government in the 'Arab' and 'Berber'[29] north.

The idea that Arab and, as Keïta's remarks indicated, even 'Berber' people are, in some way, *in* but not *of* Africa, is a distorted echo of the legacy of Islamic invasion and racial slavery that continues to haunt 'north–south' relations. In his overview of 'the African in Arab culture', the Egyptian scholar Helmi Sharawi writes that

the position of 'the Black/Negro/Abyssinian/slave', through a long history', ranges 'between the "inner other" and the "outer other" in the central consciousness of the Arabs'. Sharawi points to the semi-colonial vision of Black Africa amongst Egyptian leaders, such as Nasser's vision of Egypt's 'mission' in Africa as 'transferring civilization into the remote dark parts of the continent'.[30] A more politically charged response can be found in an essay by Muhammad Jala Hashim, which responds to what he calls 'the massacre of the [Black] Sudanese refugees committed by the Egyptian army and police' in Cairo in 2005, and attacks Egypt's 'racist pro-Arab policies' and 'de-Nubianization' of its southern territories.[31]

European colonial racism legitimized and codified anti-Black racism in North Africa. In *Sudan's Southern Problem*, Manoeli recounts its legacies in Sudan, notably the long post-colonial struggle between the Arab north and Black south, a struggle which led, in 2011, to the independence of South Sudan. Manoeli sets this conflict in the context of British colonial control enforcing and racializing ethnic divisions, a policy that 'was unequivocally racialist'. Thus Manoeli notes that the 'colonial government created categories based on each region's "racial stock"' and 'institutionalised these identities based on a racial hierarchy that deemed those categorised as African as different and inferior to those categorised as Arab'.[32] To illustrate her point Manoeli quotes the British Governor General of Sudan in 1945, Sir Hubert Huddleston, explaining his regional policy as based 'upon the fact'

that the peoples of the Southern Sudan are distinctively African and Negroid, and that our obvious duty to them is therefore to push ahead as fast as we can with their economic and educational development on African and Negroid lines, and not upon the Middle Eastern and Arab lines of progress which are suitable for the Northern Sudan.[33]

After independence, the racial identities and demarcations created and managed under British rule became part of the rhetoric of resistance amongst 'African' (i.e., Black) Sudanese. In 1963, two of the founders of the Sudan African National Union, Joseph Oduho and William Deng, framed the problem as follows: 'Here is a clear case of Africans being oppressed for no other reason than because their skin pigment differs, slightly in some cases, and because they belong to a different race, from that of the people who at present

are wielding power.'[34] As Manoeli shows, post-independence racism in Sudan reworks and politicizes 'indigenous', colonial, and newly evolving patterns of prejudice into a nation-building process. Sudan can thus be framed as a disputed national site of racist modernity, in which the idea and aspiration of 'independence' becomes fractured and compromised by the violence of multiple and continuous ethni-cizations and racializations. A range of recent scholarly interventions, including those of Manoeli, El Hamel, and Hall, make it clear that this process cannot be understood merely as a fading repetition of foreign, European, ideas. Hall, writing of the West African Sahel, explains how European and Arab racisms encountered each other and mixed. Indeed, Hall points out that 'a long history of racial language is evident in the writings of Muslim intellectuals well before the arrival of Europeans'. Thus, for example,

Sahelian writers made a fundamental distinction between 'whites' (Ar. *biḍān*), for those who claimed Arab pedigrees, and 'blacks' (Ar. *sūdān*). In these texts, 'blackness' worked as a marker of inferiority that created significant legal disability for people who could be labelled in this way. When the Sahel was colonized by France beginning in the late nineteenth century, the colonial administration used these existing local conceptions of racial difference in the organization of people and part because they corresponded to European denigrations of people defined as black.[35]

El Hamel's epigraph for his book *Black Morocco* – 'The executioner kills twice, the second time [by silence]. Elie Wiesel' – is a telling indictment of the absence of interest in anti-Black racism in North Africa. However, there are signs that this is changing. In Morocco, for example, a new anti-racist sensibility appears to be in motion. Yet Wiesel's words are worth bearing in mind: the fact that racism in Morocco is now being discussed does not mean that Morocco is 'where the problem is'. It is where the silence endures that racism is likely to be taking its heaviest toll.

Anti-Black racism in Morocco

[C]ontempt 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. (Stephen King, 2020)[36]

As the topic of racism against Black people has come into focus in Morocco a debate has arisen on its roots. El Hamel's interest in the subject appears, in part, to be provoked by hearing the family stories of other Moroccans. 'The majority of African people who were enslaved were Muslims, including my own grandfather and the "guard" slaves in my village', one of his informants tells him, adding 'One of my uncles still remembers the names of twenty-five slaves still owned by rich white Berbers.'[37] El Hamel's historical focus is on the creation of a Black slave army during the reign of Sultan Mawlay Isma'il (1672–1727). Isma'il 'forcibly conscript[ed] all black people into his army', writes El Hamel, a process that demonstrated both 'the exploitation of blacks and the ideological foundation for a society divided by skin color'.[38] The Islamic prohibition on Muslims enslaving other Muslims, says El Hamel, was 'substituted by racial concepts and a racist ideology in order to establish and preserve the social boundaries that demarcate the identities and privileges of the Arabs and the Berbers'.[39] The 'slave army' codified and made more rigid patterns of prejudice which were already in circulation; codifications that drew on lineage traditions rather than 'scientific' race theory. To illustrate this point El Hamel notes that Sultan Isma'il's mother was a Black slave but he 'nonetheless perceived himself a descendant of Muhammad and therefore not black'. El Hamel explains that 'Morocco is a patrilineal and patriarchal society, the father gives to his son his *nasab* (ethnic kinship) and his religion regardless of the mother's status, whether non-Muslim, Berber, black, or slave'.[40] He also suggests that colour prejudice was 'embedded in the Hamitic myth', which was 'used to justify and extend Arab and Berber cultural prejudices about race' and which pre-existed Islam. 'Racial difference, discrimination, and violence followed as a consequence of the deeply entrenched cultural mores evident in the time of the Prophet and that resurfaced without much hindrance after his death.'[41] In some ways, El Hamel's work can be aligned with that of historians who have challenged the 'racism is modern' thesis and tried to push back the history of racism into the pre-modern

past. Yet El Hamel also points to a period of change in the eighteenth century, during and following the reign of Sultan Isma'il, in which the diffuse prejudices of the past were reified through an early modern process of mass state-led racialization. In this sense his work can be read as redrawing rather than disputing racism's modern context. Throughout this book I have shown that past traditions of discrimination shape diverse sites of modern racism. This approach encourages a view of modern and contemporary racism in Morocco as linked to but reworking past practices and ideologies.

Anti-Black prejudice in Morocco is today entangled with geopolitics and the popular media. The European Union uses Morocco as a buffer state to stem sub-Saharan migration, a geopolitical role that appears to exacerbate both everyday racism and the tendency of the Moroccan media to construct a 'Black threat'.[42] For example, a 2012 issue of *MarocHebdo* was dedicated to *Le péril noir* and focused on drugs, crime, and disease.[43] However, the fact that these racist discourses are coming to appear noteworthy is also indicative of the presence of anti-racist activism. As this implies, although anti-Black racism is threaded through Moroccan society, recent years have seen it turning from an unremarked 'common sense' into a point of controversy, even into a 'problem' to be tackled. In 2014 the anti-racist network *Papiers pour tous* organized a national campaign using the slogan *Je ne m'appelle pas 'azzi*,[44] which followed in the wake of the murder of two sub-Saharan migrants and sought to raise public awareness of racism. In 2016 a cross-border campaign adopting the slogan 'Neither slave nor negro: enough is enough' was launched in Morocco, Tunisia, Algeria, and Mauritania.[45] Migrant organizations, such as the *Conseil des Migrants Subsahariens au Maroc* and the *Collectif des Communautés Subsahariennes au Maroc*, are also gaining visibility. Some political steps have followed. A 2014 new immigration policy, informed by the *Conseil national des droits de l'Homme*, allowed limited regularization of undocumented migrants. 'Growing public attention to the difficult situation of sub-Saharan African migrants in Morocco', writes Menin,

has recently opened a debate on the issue of 'anti-black racism' ... Both racism and slavery, previously taboo topics ... in Moroccan society, have come to be discussed and debated (in conjunction with each other as well as separately), in the independent press (including online platforms).[46]

An aesthetic reappraisal of blackness in Morocco can also be detected, in part led by a growing interest in the slave-heritage music called Gnawa, which some commentators have called a Moroccan blues.[47]

The debate on anti-Black racism in Morocco is noteworthy but it remains nascent. Whilst the Black Lives Matters movement was being picked up, employed, and deployed by anti-racist activists across the world, it largely bypassed Morocco. However, anti-Black racism in Morocco is no longer entirely invisible. And with this visibility comes a set of questions about the intersection of history and contemporary politics and our understanding of 'modern Morocco'.

Conclusion

Racism does not require ideologies of whiteness or blackness. Yet these two symbols stalk across many sites of modern racism, feeding into a racist spectacle of neoliberal globalization in which idealized images of the 'White consumer' offer a promised land that must be defended against what the *MarocHebdo* called '*le péril noir*'. The relationship between economy, identity, and racism explored in this chapter is not just skin-deep. The reasons why, overnight, whiteness won't be dethroned in Japan or blackness embraced in Morocco, are woven into layers of regional history, as well as complex patterns of contemporary global culture and economy. A 'European model' is at work in both countries, providing a template of beauty and, at least in Morocco, a magnetic pole of socioeconomic attraction. But we cannot understand whiteness or blackness in either country by looking at them as by-products of Western agency. Japan and Morocco have their 'own' racisms just as surely, and just as transnationally, as Canada or Germany.

Racism in both Japan and Morocco is a significant problem, and anti-Black racism across North Africa more generally, although it receives little attention from the outside world, is a source of enormous suffering. Yet there are reasons to think that racism is changing in both countries. We have seen that the meaning of whiteness and blackness is neither permanent nor universal but fluid and context-dependent. Whiteness is not valorized in the same way in Japanese advertising today as it was in the recent past, and there are plenty of people in Morocco who are questioning anti-Black

racism. These are positive signs but it is not possible to know if they will persist or where these trends will lead. Given that so many of this book's examples of violent racism are from the last few decades, there is no room for complacency.

Further Reading

Bolívar Echeverría, *Modernity and 'Whiteness'* (Cambridge: Polity, 2019).
Echeverría unpacks the paradoxes of the Enlightenment in the tradition of the Frankfurt School and does so in the context of the racialized politics and representational traditions of Latin America.

John Russell, 'Replicating the White Self and Other: Skin Color, Racelessness, Gynoids, and the Construction of Whiteness in Japan', *Japanese Studies*, 37, 1 (2017), 23–48.
Drawing on a study of Japanese popular media – including of representations of female cyborgs or 'gynoids' – this paper dissects the place of whiteness in Japan, with a focus on the ambivalences and function of images of an 'idealized, fetishized, cosmopolitan westernness'.

Alastair Bonnett, *White Identities: Historical and International Perspectives* (Harlow: Prentice Hall, 2000).
This international and historical overview of racial whiteness focuses on Britain, the USA, Japan, China, and Latin America and demonstrates how whiteness was racialized and captured as a symbol of difference and superiority by Europeans.

Chouki El Hamel, *Black Morocco: A History of Slavery, Race, and Islam* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013).
A landmark historical study that carefully unpacks the complex story of anti-Black prejudice in Morocco, with particular attention to the racialization of slavery and the raising of a 'Black Army' by Sultan Mawlay Isma'il. A work of historical but also considerable contemporary significance.