

An invitation to a conversation  
with each other

# The Theory of 'the 1 or 2'

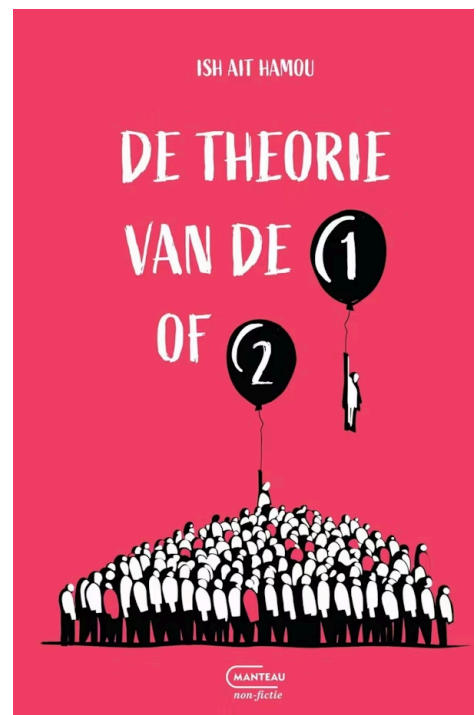
ISH AIT HAMOU

In this unguarded, open, relatable but also confrontational essay, Ish Ait Hamou seeks explanations and answers to life-defining questions from the starting point of personal experience. He focuses first on his own Moroccan community, but the theory of 'the 1 or 2' that he develops is at once unique and universal, making his essay potentially important to any reader.

These are the questions with which he starts out: Why are we Moroccans fearful when anyone from our community occupies a position we dreamed of for ourselves? Why is the success of our brother or sister not a success for us all, instead of making us anxious and creating a difficult relationship between us?

With his theory of 'the 1 or 2', Ish Ait Hamou has developed a model that exposes patterns that introduce anxiety and jealousy into our dealings with each other. The theory is based on the prevailing belief that for people of other ethnicities there is room for only one or two people to make it onto the top rungs of the society in which they live. The theory of 'the 1 or 2' is kept alive by echoes from the past and by closed doors in the present.

With this essay, Ait Hamou issues an invitation to his community, and by extension to every reader, to enter into a conversation.



## AUTHOR



Ish Ait Hamou (b. 1987) is known to the general public as a dancer, choreographer and jury member on 'So You Think You Can Dance'. His love of dance and choreography is more than matched by his love of words. Having written stories from an early age, he made his debut in 2014. He has also written and directed a short film. Ait Hamou sees it as his task to build bridges between divided communities and for this he was awarded the Equality Award in 2016. His accessible style and topical stories appeal to a broad readership. *Photo © Shed Mojahid*

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