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The killing of George Floyd, as cruel as it was, finds poetic meaning in all of the events in 2020. For 400 years and counting, Black people have felt and continue to feel the same in-dominatable force that weighed on George's neck. Six centuries since the Portuguese arrived on the continent of Africa, its children are still seen as dispensable. White society has always sought to fuel its furnace of domination with Black bodies, seen no differently than coal nuggets. For in the eyes of a colonizer just like that of a miner, Black people are a commodity that serves one purpose: to be extracted and utilized to keep white society running. This raises the issue of the effect colonization had on the psyche of Black people, both in the past and present. In *Black Skin, White Masks*, Frantz Fanon, provides a unique analysis of the inferiority complex that he believes germinated from the juxtaposition of Black and white races.¹

To begin, Africans were petrified upon their first encounters with white people. As Congolese, oral historian, Mukunzo Kioko, recounts they were called *vumbi*, ancestral ghosts from the land of the dead. He continues "from that time to our days now, the whites have brought us nothing but wars and miseries"². These associations made by Africans bring up Fanon's idea of sensitizing. A process that occurs when Black individuals engage with the white world. This sen-

¹Frantz Fanon, Charles Lam Markmann, and Paul Gilroy, *Black Skin, White Masks* (New York: Grove Press, 2008).

² Hochschild, Adam, and Barbara Kingsolver. "The Traders Are Kidnapping Our People." Essay. In *King Leopold's Ghost: a Story of Greed, Terror, and Heroism in Colonial Africa*, 15-16. Boston, MA: Mariner Books/Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 1998.

sitizing equates to a collapse of the ego, and ultimately immobilization.³ Leaving a Black person at the mercy of white validation. Consequently, this psyche cracking leads to the onset of an inferiority complex. As Fanon states “inferiorization is the native correlative to the European’s feeling of superiority. Let us have the courage to say: It is the racist who creates the inferiorized.”⁴

Following, colonial administration policies were the epitome of European feelings of superiority. The French embraced assimilation as an ideal for all Africans, granting the best Antillean full legal and political rights of French citizenship.⁵ Fanon points out that “the more the Black Antillean assimilates the French language, the whiter he becomes - i.e., the closer he gets to the becoming a true human being.” Colonial racism didn’t stop. Britain’s model of indirect rule and tribalism inoculation inflicted further damage on the black psyche. Appointed chiefs dealt with their people’s bitterness by enforcing their colonizer’s laws. This method of an indirect rule made African people enemies amongst themselves. Imagine the turmoil that arises in the mind of an enslaved African when they must discipline their fellow brother or sister, as if they themselves were immune to such suffering.. You begin not only to hate your enslaver but your skin. For it inflicts just as much pain.

Consequently, colonial powers aimed to widen the division between Africans by granting only certain individuals an elite education overseas. Mass education was out of the question with fears of anti-colonial revolts.⁶ This underserving of education was strategically carried out to

³ Frantz Fanon, Charles Lam Markmann, and Paul Gilroy, *Black Skin, White Masks* (New York: Grove Press, 2008).pp 132-132

⁴ *Ibid.*, 73-73

⁵ Kevin Shillington, “Africa between the Wars: the High Tide of Colonial Rule,” in *History of Africa* (London: Red Globe Press, 2019), pp. 395-401.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 395-397

deepen the dependency and inferiority in the minds of Black individuals. Fanon states, "understand something new requires us to be inclined to be prepared, and demands a new state of mind." Therefore, a rudimentary education also lacking African history and culture in addition to the white power structure were all primers to help destabilize the identity and intellect of the African.

In conclusion, the most profound ailment is the one invisible on the surface. Self-diagnosis only leads to a neurotic adventure of medical terms which exacerbates the anxiety of "something is wrong with me". The "white gaze"⁷ as Fanon calls it, corroborates this sentiment and thus paves the way for the plight of the Black man in white society. Our minds are tattooed by the trauma of colonization, slavery, segregation, Jim Crow, genocide, and most recently the Cinemax of police brutality right from the comfort of our phones. Fanon reminds us that "color is the most obvious outward manifestation of [a] race it has been made the criterion by which men are judged, irrespective of their social or education[al] attainments."⁸ Not only have Black people been detached, losing their unity, but so has humanity. Fanon asks, "Is there any difference between one racism and another? Don't we encounter the same downfall, the same failure of man?"⁹ Our failure as a society to recognize this is why so many Black people live with inferior notions. "In 2012, former NBA player Charles Barkley, explaining why he felt he had to carry a gun, said, "You know, we as Black people always, we don't have respect for one another. You

⁷ Frantz Fanon, Charles Lam Markmann, and Paul Gilroy, *Black Skin, White Masks* (New York: Grove Press, 2008).pp 90-90

⁸ Ibid., 97-97

⁹Ibid., 67-67

know, we've got more Black men in prison than we do in college, and crime in our neighborhoods is running rampant."¹⁰

¹⁰Jenée Desmond-Harris, "The Myth That There Are More Black Men in Prison than in College, Debunked in One Chart," Vox (Vox, February 12, 2015), <https://www.vox.com/2015/2/12/8020959/Black-men-prison-college>.