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History project

Anth 345

The ruling class and its creation of Race ideology in North America

The race ideology has been around America for a long time. We have heard and seen too many conflicts between people of different races in TVs and newspapers. We honor Martin Luther King, JR and his motivating fight and speech each year. Most of us are dedicated to the equality of all races. The race ideology is so popular and “real” that we almost forget to ask ourselves a question: where does the race ideology come from?

It has to started with the colonization of America by the Europeans. When the Spanish, French, English and other Europeans arrived North America, they found this land is full of resources that can fulfill their ambition in exploring the new world and make themselves wealthy. The colonizers soon took lands from the indigenous American people. The number of colonizers was small but their ambition and the land they seized was so huge that they needed more working labors. The poor Europeans and Native Americans are soon out of stock soon as the colonizers expand their plantation. As a solution, they brought more working force from Africa as slaves. The poor Europeans, Native Americans and black skinned slaves lived a miserable lives under the control of the wealthy plantation owners. Not too long after, as the ratio between the number

of plantation owners' family and the number of poor working labors drastically got smaller, a revolution was inevitable.

In 1676 Bacon's rebellion, named after the leader Nathaniel Bacon, bursted into the capital of Virginia and burn down the city. The rebellion's strongest demand was the freedom of the oppressed servant class.(Smedley and Smedley, 109) Among the rebellions there were not only black, Native Americans but also the whites. Smedley argued that the truth that black and white fight together in the rebel was a proof that white race did not then exist.(109) Although the rebellion was finally defeated by English troops, the rebellion alarmed the wealthy plantation owners that the number of dissatisfied working class was far greater than theirs.

The ruling class understand that a very small number could hardly rule the large poor without strong support. They carefully designed a strategy that will separate the rebellion force. The ruling class deliberately gave amnesty to the poor white rebellion. White servants in the rebellion could terminate their service after their term is over and probably living a life that owned servants and slaves themselves. While the black rebellions continued suffering their terrible treatment by masters. The poor Europeans were even hired by the colonizers' government to hunted black slaves who ran away. By giving a little candies to the poor European white, the ruling class successfully gained their support. The European white suddenly benefited from their skin color and treated as a higher class than their old friend poor blacks. The ruling class deliberately created a social class between themselves and the poor people as a cushion zone. But the ruling class didn't not feel completely safe yet. They need stronger evidence to support their thesis of separating people by color.

Science became the powerful and undoubtable tool that was perfect for the ruling class to legitimate their scheme. Several famous scientist at the time published works arguing that black people are biologically inferior to white people. Many scientists at that time concluded this by examine the size of human skulls. They argue in their work that black skulls are smaller than the white's skulls, thus they are inferior to the white naturally. Even Thomas Jefferson, later the third president of United States, was the leader in declaring the biological inferiority of the blacks. He states in his work that the black "are inferior to the whites in the endowments both body and mind".(Jefferson [1787]1955,143) His work is used by plantation owners to justify their believes that blacks are inferior than white without hesitation. Thus demonstrate their justice in enslaving the Blacks: blacks are inferior to us naturally, they should be slaved to serve the more civilized humans.

It is shocking to see how science was used by the ruling class to justify their terrible deeds in creating the race ideology. It reminds us not to trust authorities without our own thinking. Authorities can be easily influenced by the social powers. The elites can change whatever they want and deceive most people if most people do not have the ability to exam the ideas themselves. Even Science could be manipulated by the elites if Science helps them in controlling the poor people. What's worse is the scientists may not know that they are mislead by the elites. Their work is used and promoted by the elites regardless of whether they are right or wrong. Our society needs independent voice that dares to challenge the authority. The independent voice requires a strong base of population. Each of us must challenge ourselves in thinking but not believe in the authorities without our own examination.

We cannot trust the authorities without examination. If it was not Thomas Jefferson who spoke out that the blacks are inferior mentally and physically first, there may not be many scientists

publishing their works confirming blacks are inferior just based on skull sizes. This makes me think of the fifth Republican candidate debate I watched the other night. Many candidates, as I noticed, use the words “political correctness” to cover their proposal’s immorality. There is one even abbreviate it with just “PE”. These are not just political correctness, they are the basic requirement of human rights. I was shocked to hear that Dr. Carson said that he would bomb civilians to defeat ISIS. And the death of the civilians are “actually merciful if you go ahead and finish the job, rather than death by a thousand pricks.” (Dr. Ben Carson) Many of these candidates are not responsible leaders. They are saying the really terrible ideas that most of citizens will never speak out. Some, in the danger of themselves, may have terrible ideas that hurt others and suffer the questioning of their conscience. These citizens may once have these ideas but never think it an actually solution until they found the leaders are thinking about the same thing. The leaders in this debate, instead, speak these terrible ideas aloud and make the citizens aware that they are not the only one who has thought of these terrible ideas. Their ideas may be popular and thus right! These actions to gain support of the citizens are considered irresponsible by me. We must exam the nature of our actions and believe the value we believed in but not mislead by irresponsible leaders.

I never thought that the race ideology was deliberately constructed before reading the materials and watching the films. Maybe race ideology is just too popular and “real” now we forget to question where it came from. We can see people that does not look like us every day. We can see conflicts in the newspaper and TVs. The race gap between us just seems to be naturally there. Few of us really exam the reality that our traits are difficult to categorize into a handful of races. We humans are greatly influenced by the society we are living. The scheme plotted by the

colonizers have profound influence in the world. I wonder what those plotters would say seeing their work is still influential today.

Work Cited:

Dr. Ben Carson, Hugh Hewitt Questions Ben Carson If He Was Ruthless Enough to Kill Thousands of Innocent Kids in War, DECEMBER 16, 2015, http://www.democracynow.org/2015/12/16/ben_carson_i_am_ok_with