



A Critical Overview on 'Racism' from the American African Literature and its after effects.

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Abstract: The concept of 'Race' corresponds to occupy a highly argumentative area of academic debate. This word is always associated with the superiority, inferiority, hierarchy and supremacy. As we see Racism is a social construct to dominate and rule the others in the most reliable way. The systematic marginalization or oppression of people on the basis of skin color is a socially constructed racial hierarchy that privileges people who identify as white. People of white coloured skin were considered as pure, superior, and God like figure. But on the other side Black were treated as evil and it's their (Whites') duty to redeem others.

Key Terms: Racism, White Supremacy, The Jim Crow Law, Hegemony, Slavery.

Introduction:

As we define 'Racism' concept, it is relatively modern concept, arising in the European age of imperialism, the subsequent growth of capitalism and especially the Atlantic Slave Trade. Black people have no Legal Rights and they were forced to do the work for no money in return. White trades them like animals from one place to another. From the colonialism period to the late twentieth century, Black people were ignored on every level and maltreated during the slavery period. The 'White Supremacy' refers to a belief that white people are genetically superior to the other races and they dominated the society. Most people think of race in biological terms and for more than three hundred years or ever since, Europeans begins to colonizing nations filled with people of colour, they are identified as belonging to one race to another based on certain biological features. In the south during the time of slavery, the skin tone of slave lightened over the years as their babies were born from the union, often in the form of rape of slave owners and other white with slaves. These women were treated as mere objects by their owners. Black women faced the hardest period in the time of slavery.

Definition of Race and Racism:

Race is a science, Race is pseudo science, Race is a social construct, whether the manner in which the term is used to implies. It is now widely accepted that this classification system was in fact created only for the social and political reasons. There are actually more genetic and biological differences within the racial groups defined by society to control and empower the supremacy of single race. During the progression and the colonizing period

there arouse a term ‘White Supremacy’. The term refers to a systematic marginalization or oppression of people on the basis of colour of skin. The ‘White Supremacy’ is a marginalized mindset of people who believed that the white colour is the sign of purity, goodness, peace and divinity. On the contrary, black colour is always considered as evil, gloomy, devilish and despair. When White people arrived in Africa, they were seen as the messenger of God, native seems themselves inferior to White. During the course of time White people make their authority and grab the lands, raped their women and colonized the Black race throughout the country only by the Hegemony of ‘White Supremacy’.

Desmond Tutu, who was a South African Angelical Bishop and theologian, known for his work as an Anti-apartheid and human Rights activist said,

“When the missionaries first came to Africa, they had Bible and we had land. They said, “let us pray”. We closed our eyes. When we opened them, we had the Bible and they had the land!”

In America Racism spread around the country especially in south and black people were treated rudely. It is certainly easy to see that people in the United States and around the world differ physically in some obvious ways. Racism is a form of prejudice that generally includes negative emotional reactions to the members of a group; they accepted the negative stereotypes and racial discrimination against some selected individuals. This sometimes leads to hate and violence in the area. The most notable difference is skin tone: some groups of people have very dark skin while others have very light skin. Using such physical differences as their criteria, scientists at one point considered it as Race. When slaves were first brought to America almost four hundred years ago, many more were taken to Brazil, where slavery was not then abolished until 1888 then to the land that eventually became the United States. These slaves had no legal rights, and even these slaves were thrown behind the bars without any crime and the political system was so Racist, so these people suffers without any crime.

The treatment of Black women in the American African works:

As we see in the American Literature, Black people were treated like objects, so just think about the male dominant Black society. In the colonial works Black women were given no voice. They were portrayed only as a decorative item in the literary works. Her rugged clothes, wrinkled face and bare feet show how she was pictured to the society as feeble, helpless and useless thing. It is obvious that being Black was hard at the time of colonization, but being a black and women is like a wood which was first burn to coal and the coal is burn again to ashes. The male patriarchy was common at that time, even the white women were abandoned by any rights. They were only allowed to do the household works. We see very few women writers who dare to break the shackles of male dominant society.

Toni Morrison, born *Phillis wheatley* was the first published African American poet and one of the widely read poets in pre nineteenth century America. Born in Gambia, West Africa, she was seized by slave traders at age seven and transported to Boston aboard a slave ship called The Phillis. She was purchased by a wealthy Wheatley family “for a trifle”, who taught her to read and write. She won many awards for her works including Pulitzer Prize for **Beloved** (1987) and she was also awarded the Noble Prize in Literature in 1993.

Beloved, explores the physical, emotional and spiritual, devastation wrought by slavery and the unthinkable cruelty of slavery.

Maya Angelou, born *Marguerite Annie Johnson*; was an American memoirist, poet and civil Rights Activist. Her book **I Know Why the Cage Bird Sings** (1969), tell of her life up to the age of seventeen and brought her international recognition and acclaim.

White supremacy:

Many American and African writers put a light on the slavery and racism in their works. They also unfold the hypocrisy behind the 'White Supremacy' and show how they are robbing the naïve natives. The superiority on the basis of skin colour dominated the whole Black race.

The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn by *Mark Twain* is a very fine example of slave traders, racism and white supremacy. The main character named *Huck Finn* is a teenager, who fakes his death to escape from his drunkard father encounters to a slave named *Jim*, who ran from his master to be free and their journey starts on the Mississippi river. This work is a satire on the Racism and freedom.

Richard Wright's Black Boy (1945): Wright is oppressed by white Racism but he is also repressed by many of the black people in his life, including his family. This book is an autobiography of Richard Wright. The Black Boy is the book of the real life events of Wright's. His cultural sense and judgment is based on the basis of their collective identities.

William Edward Burghardt Du Bois' The Souls of Black Folk (1903): This work unfolds the conflict between Black people, white supremacy and racism. Du Bois does a great job to show that despite emancipation, black people are not free and do not experience liberty in American society. Du Bois greatest desire is for Black people to receive equal treatment and for the divide between the races, a divide that refers to as the veil, to disappear. *The Jim Crow law* (a law where black and white people are granted different legal assistance and discriminated accordingly) was the main obstacle and I must be revoked. He thought that if white and black people work together there must be a communal harmony and cultural uplift and the nation will prosper even faster.

Conclusion: From the colonialism to the late twentieth century Black people were seen as inferior to the White people. They were ignored on every level and maltreated during the slavery period. Even after getting freedom and citizenship, in most of the places they were seen as the low grade by whites' and it created a dent in the minds and soul of the Black people throughout their life. Their life and freedom controlled by the Whites and they feel alienated in their own country.

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