

PARALLEL YET DISTINCT: SOCIAL AND ETHNIC ANALYSIS AND CRITIQUE
OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN AFRICANS
IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
AND AFRICAN-AMERICANS

by

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THESIS ABSTRACT

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On August 1619, the world changed monumentally. In particular, the idea of the Black identity and worth of human dignity changed significantly. The imperative event that changed humanity was the abduction and forced arrival first 20 Africans to the English Colony of Virginia, the modern day a locale of Hampton, Virginia. This change was the foundation of the ensuing Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade. This research entails an in-depth and critical focus on the history and chronological relationship between African and African-American sub-group. It utilizes the significance of history, identity, community and antipathy to directly connect and thoroughly investigate the African and African-American experience and identity. It also focuses on the cultural similarities and difference and explains how those similarities and difference have affected their interactions and historical relationship. Furthermore, this research focus on the significance of slavery and demonstrates how slavery has become a romanticized historical notion.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Without a doubt, African immigrants and African-Americans currently have a complex relationship. The reason for this complexity, when one views it from a chronological timeline, is not a singular or simple reason; rather, there are many factors for the status of the current relationship. Fundamentally, one of the main reasons of this chronological disconnect is African-Americans' fatally harrowing experience of centuries of slavery and abdicative relocation from their land and country of origin. This thesis is a qualitative based research project. More specifically, I focus on the relationship of Africans that permissively migrated to the United States and African-Americans that were forcibly seized and transported to the United States via the transatlantic slave trade. Of the many foundations of divergence in contemporary American social structure, in-group racial preconception, in particular, is one, which emerges as being principally essential for which to find understanding and necessary resolution to end intra-group conflict. Due to the crux of their root connection to the continent of Africa, African-Americans and African immigrants are perpetually linked. Despondently, African-American and African immigrants also have a historical commonality of being dehumanized and used as an entity (through slavery and colonization) by people of white skin/European ancestry. While African-Americans were at one point rooted and residing in the continent of African, they were indeed henceforth subject to disintegration and forced exodus. This forced exodus, comprised along with their personal and group experience on different continents, led to mental, physical, cultural, and ideological transformation for both Africans and African-Americans. Most importantly, these

historical experiences and a mass geographical repositioning have overshadowed their geographical commonalities and led them to a tense, predominantly distant, ethno-culturally disconnected and generally non-uniform cohesiveness.

This conflict between commonalities among all Black people and the differences based on historical and geographical differences is ultimately reflected and expressed through identity. This, with identity, in terms of Blackness, it is imperative to look into the Black Diaspora in the United States of America. Upon deep analyzation of the intergroup perspective of identity and Blackness in the United States, one will swiftly recognize the differences and appreciate its intricate crux. Hence, the chronological experiences of the chattel vended African-Americans and Africans that have immigrated to the United States via non-chattel voyage have led to the formation of unique identity centered on “Blackness,” an identity that both of these communities, and the United States as a whole, have failed to adequately understand the vast differences within the circulation of Blackness as identity. In this vein, I am compelled by the relation of identity, as it pertains to African and African-Americans because I am the son of an Oromo immigrant (East Africa), an African-American, and I live my daily life as a Black man in the United States.

My lifelong experience and academic journey have naturally led my desire of an afro-centric based identity-based research centered on Black people in the United States of America and their historical experiences yet, also succinctly explores and fully understands that there are connections to Africa. There have been many research projects that focus on the significance of identity, community and antipathy in human nature. However, there has been inadequate scholarly research that utilizes the significance of

identity, community and antipathy and directly connects it within the scope of African and African-American experience and identity.

Though they may be generations and centuries apart, most African and African-Americans have mutual kin and ancestral tradition; and in the United States, a country that is historically built on skin color privilege, African and African-Americans both face pigment-based discrimination and hatred that is based on their ancestral heritage and ethnic connection to the continent of Africa. In the history of the United States, color has been the driving force behind the dignity, racial definition, racial classification, and treatment of its people. This racial distinction, commonly referred to as the “one drop” rule, is a rigid jurisprudence originally named and enacted as the Hypodescent Law¹ The Hypodescent law, which served as a preemptive action to maintain white/European origin “purity” through strict separation of the white race and Black race, traces back to the 1662 Virginia Law.²

According to the 1662 Virginia Assembly “WHEREAS some doubts have arrisen whether children got by any Englishman upon a negro woman should be slave or free, Be it therefore enacted and declared by this present grand assembly, that all children borne in this country shalbe held bond or free only according to the condition of the mother, And that if any christian shall committ ffornication with a negro man or woman, hee or shee so offending shall pay double the ffines imposed by the former act.”³ The Virginia General Assemblies passage of the aforementioned statue created a pathway to pass and enact additional laws that crystalized the separation between Black and White Races.

¹Bhopal, Kalwant. *The Experiences of Black and Minority Ethnic Academics : A Comparative Study of the Unequal Academy*. Routledge Research in Higher Education. London ; New York, NY: Routledge, 2016.

²Ib

³Rose, Willie Lee. *A Documentary History of Slavery in North America*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1976. Pg. 19

Henceforth, In 1667, the Virginia Assembly passed the following statute “Whereas some doubts have risen whether children that are slaves by birth, and by the charity and piety of their owners made pertakers of the blessed sacrament of baptisme, should be by vertue of their baptisme be made free; It is enacted ... that the conferring of baptisme doth not alter the condition of the person as to his bondage or freedom”⁴ This statute mandated that mixed children must identify and be assigned to their African ancestry. Moreover, this statute made clear that one’s African ancestry circumscribed one’s status, controlled one’s role in life, and decided their destiny.

In an effort to draw a direct dividing line between African and European ancestry, the Hypodescent law deviated from long standing English common law which mandated that children follow the status of their father⁵ (at the time mixed children were mostly conceived between a white male and black women).⁶ The Hypodescent Law’s effects continue in today’s society and interethnic relations of African immigrants and African-Americans. In this research, I will explain the historical core of the African and African-American relationship, express the consequence it has on the contemporary African-American and African immigrant social order, and propose intercultural initiatives that outlines solutions and successfully bridges their ideological and physical cultural gaps.

In the early seventeenth century, Africans were treated as an entity, coercively vended and transported to the United States. Upon arrival to America, African slaves were removed of their dignity, forcibly given a new name, group identity, and new

⁴Ib

⁵Hickman, Cb. "The Devil and the One Drop Rule: Racial Categories, African Americans, and the US Census." *Michigan Law Review* 95, no. 5 (1997): 1161-265. Pg. 1175

⁶Ib

culture. The result of this forced cross continental exodus began the amputation of the enslaved African culture, stripped enslaved Africans of their ancestral lineage and ethnic foundation. Furthermore, this physical and cultural transformation has overshadowed the common African root that undeniably exists between African and African-Americans.

The relationship dynamics of these two groups therefore produces a research question that this thesis seeks to address: What is the fundamental core of the African immigrant and African-American relationship? From such an inquiry comes more questions. How do African immigrants and African-Americans view and regard each other? What is the climate and status of their contemporary relationship? What are the lived experiences and the accurate and fictitious differences that have ultimately led to their current relationship? Does the availability of a historically factual education (or lack thereof) play a role in the core of their contemporary status? Is the media at issue (how media portrays Africa and African-Americans)?

To comprehensively address the aforementioned questions and complex relationship between Africans and African-Americans, I will focus on and fundamentally utilize the recurring themes addressed by various researchers. These themes are History, Slavery, Antipathy, Solidarity, Comradery, Pan-Africanism, Black Nationalism, Identity: Complexities of Ethnicity, Education, Opportunity, Myth, Misconception, Media, Educational Colonization, and Apology.

CHAPTER II

HISTORY AND SLAVERY

Cultural larceny and financial precedence is rooted within the makeup of the United States. Historically, the basis of slavery was economic gain. As aforementioned, in the early seventeenth century, Africans were treated as an entity, forcibly vended and transported to the United States. Though the crux of slavery was economic gain, upon arrival to America, the impact of slavery was felt through forced individual and surnames changes, racial group identity, culture, and humanity. Moreover, this forcibly adductive migration stripped enslaved Africans of their ancestral lineage and overall ethnic roots. This cultural and geographical division has overshadowed the common African heritage that exists between African and African-Americans.

1619 is perhaps the most important and consequential year of what is now known as the United States of America. In August 1619, the first documented evidence of African slaves in the Americas arrived on the shore of the English Colony of Virginia, the modern day a locale of Hampton, Virginia.⁷ To be exact, there was a total of 20 Africans that initially arrived in 1619.⁸ The group, deemed upon arrival as "20 and odd Negroes,"⁹ was a fragment populace of a widespread forced (African) human transaction enterprise and overall grander group of West Africans enslaved by Portuguese slave traders. The 20 enslaved Africans were initially aboard a Portuguese ship and headed to Veracruz, Mexico, a port city on the Gulf of Mexican coast in the state of Veracruz, Mexico.¹⁰

⁷United States. Congress. Senate. Committee on Energy Natural Resources, Author. *400 Years of African-American History Commission Act: Report (to Accompany H.R. 4539)*. United States. Congress. Senate. Report ; 114-341. Washington, D.C.: [U.S. Government Publishing Office], 2016.

⁸Ib

⁹Ib

¹⁰Ib

However, their involuntary journey would take an abrupt detour and arrive in Virginia because they were captured off the coast of Mexico by a Dutch flag-flying, labeled marque English warship called the “White Lion”.¹¹ In 1619, Virginia was a secluded area of British settlement populated by thinly scattered settlers.¹² Upon the arrival of the Africans, the settlers did not immediately deem them slaves.¹³ The main reason they were not deemed “slaves” was not because they were not forced to do slave-like hard labor, it is because the definition of “slavery”, as an institution was a languorously evolving one. To put it simply, it began with customs. Thereafter, it evolved from indentured servitude to an economic featured and legal-based lifelong servitude.

Upon their arrival, the white colonist made Africans indentured servants and avowed reciprocation of land and autonomy after seven-year drudge of hard labor.¹⁴ Nevertheless, the once struggling British Colony began to flourish, manly from the labor of the Africans.¹⁵ For this reason, the identity status of an indentured servants and promise of land and freedom were repudiated.¹⁶ Overall, it is estimated that the “human cargo”¹⁷ empire of slavery took off from Africa and arrived in the New World (Caribbean, Brazil, Europe, North America) from 1525-1866.¹⁸ Between 1525-1866, 10.7 million Africans survived the perilous direct shipment to the Americas.¹⁹ Because of the

¹¹Ib

¹²Slavery In America. <http://www.history.com/topics/black-history/slavery> Last visited: January 20, 2018

¹³Ib

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¹⁷Ib

¹⁸Louis Gates Jr. Henry. (2013). *How Many Slaves Landed In The U.S.? 100 Amazing Facts About the Negro*. <http://www.pbs.org/wnet/african-americans-many-rivers-to-cross/history/how-many-slaves-landed-in-the-us/>. Last visited: January 20, 2018.

¹⁹Eltis, Davis and Richardson, David. (2013). Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database. <http://www.slavevoyages.org/> Last visited: January 20, 2018.

immense economic yield of free African labor, Massachusetts, in 1641, officially became the first colony to legalize slavery.²⁰ This legalization created a blueprint to rapid economic opulence and institutionalized slavery as a normality of life. While slavery was a lucrative gain for colonies, it was comprehensively fatal for the forcibly vended Africans. The Africans, whom technically were indentured servants with a fib promise to gain land, morphed into the slave masters' chattel and permanently possessed property.²¹

The events that took place prior to the Africans becoming a property of the settlers is a key reason in the chronological and contemporary African and African-American relationship. One of the causes of the cultural detachment and apprehensive relationship between African and African-Americans is antipathy. There is a sense of emotional revulsion amongst African-American toward Africans because it is largely believed that Africans contributed to the trans-Atlantic slave trade. Even if it is a vague or indistinct understanding, there is a sense of awareness of the principal roles the United States government and colonial settlers such as France and Britain played in the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade. Nevertheless, there is hardly any dialogue, formal education, acknowledgement or understanding of the exact roles Africans played in the slave trade.

According to Henry Louis Gates Jr the Africans role "was a considerable one"²² Gates Jr goes on to explain "especially for the slave-trading kingdoms of western and central Africa...these included the Akan of the kingdom of Asante in what is now Ghana, the Fon of Dahomey (now Benin), the Mbundu of Ndongo in modern Angola and the

²⁰Johnson, Mathew. (2010). Timeline of Events Relating to The End of Slavery. Massachusetts Historical Society. http://www.masshist.org/teaching-history/loc-slavery/essay.php?entry_id=504 Last visited: January 20, 2018.

²¹Slavery In America. <http://www.history.com/topics/black-history/slavery> Last visited: January 20, 2018

²²Gates Jr, Henry Louis. (2010). *Ending the Slavery Blame Game*. <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/04/23/opinion/23gates.html> Last visited: January 20, 2018

Kongo of today's Congo, among several others.”²³ The elite socioeconomic status, legal variance, and adamant pursuit of economic gain was subsumed in the Africans' role of the slave trade.

Gates Jr, historians Linda Heywood and John Thornton's extensive research illuminate that 90 percent of slaves dispatched to the New World between 1501-1866 were captured by African elites and sold to Europeans for the purposes of slavery outside of the African continent.²⁴ According to John Thornton, pre-Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade, the vast majority of the correlations between elite Africans and the non-elite Africans they eventually sold to Europeans was akin to the “functional equivalent to the landlord-tenant relationship in Europe.”²⁵ Absolute superiority, dogmatic economic capitalism, as well as social and legal variance flexible to the predilection of the elite Africans played a pivotal role in the selling of Africans.

According to Thornton:

African law established through taxation and slavery rather than through the fiction of land ownership. The African social system was thus not backward but egalitarian, but only legally divergent. Although the origins and ultimate significance of divergence are a matter of further research, one important result was that it allowed African political and economic elites to sell large numbers of slaves to whoever would pay and thus fueled the Atlantic Slave Trade.²⁶

The assertion of African elite's role in forced captivity and selling of Africans to Europeans are buffered by other preeminent historians and researchers such as Jack P.

Greene and Phillip D. Morgan. According to Greene and Morgan, “by no means were all

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²⁴Gates, Henry Louis. *Life upon These Shores: Looking at African American History, 1513-2008*. 1st ed. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2011. Pg. 3

²⁵Thornton, John K. *Africa and Africans in the Making of the Atlantic World, 1400-1800*. 2nd ed. Studies in Comparative World History. Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998. Pg. 74

²⁶Thornton, John K. *Africa and Africans in the Making of the Atlantic World, 1400-1800*. 2nd ed. Studies in Comparative World History. Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998. Pg. 76

Africans victims or dupes. Indeed, a voluntary partnership best captures the relationship between African traders and rulers and European merchants and ship captains.”²⁷

²⁷Greene, Jack P., and Morgan, Philip D. *Atlantic History: A Critical Appraisal*. Reinterpreting History. Oxford: Oxford University Press: New York, 2009. Pg. 225

CHAPTER III

ANTIPATHY

The role of Africans in slavery has led to chronological revulsion, wariness and antipathy from African-Americans of slave descent. This mistrust, aversion and resentment certainly resonates in the African-American community and has been expressed from the most influential and renowned leaders to the ordinary African-American individual in America. When Jestina Fasasi, a Sierra Leone immigrant and Portland, Oregon, resident inquired why her African-American colleague at Portland Community College was unfriendly towards her, her African-American colleague responded “Africans sold us into slavery.”²⁸ Moreover, Fasasi’s colleague expressed “You can come here today and then back home and have your culture, but all I have is this.”²⁹ Fredrick Douglass, a preeminent leader who was born into and successfully escaped his slavery plantation, and intrepidly became the one of the most significant leaders of American history and forefront leader of the nineteenth-century abolitionist movement, expressed exasperation and lack of fondness for Africans. In particular, he directly expressed his abhorrence for the elite Africans that directly influenced and contribute selling of Africans. In an 1859 speech, Douglas concisely stated the following views:

The savage chiefs on the western coast of Africa, who for ages have been accustomed to selling their captives into bondage, and pocketing the ready cash for them, will not more readily see and accept our moral and economical ideas, than the slave-traders of Maryland and Virginia. We are, therefore, less inclined to go to Africa to work against the slave-traders, than to stay here to work against

²⁸Hannah-Jones, Nikole. (2009). African immigrants help shape Portland's small black community. http://www.oregonlive.com/news/index.ssf/2009/01/african_immigrants_help_shape.html. Last visited: January, 28, 2018.

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³⁰Douglas, Fredrick. (1859). African Civilization Society. TeachingAmericanHistory.org.
<http://teachingamericanhistory.org/library/document/african-civilization-society/> Last visited: January 29, 2018

CHAPTER IV

SOLIDARITY AND COMRADERY

Though many prominent and archetypal descendants of slaves have a level antipathy towards Africans, there are also abundant African-Americans descends of slaves that have been highly encouraging interconnection, partnership and solidarity with Africans. The bedrock principle behind receptiveness and solidarity is the value of the common geographical crux and pride of same pigmentation. In particular, it is the pigmentation, the strength of being Black (and therefore connected to Africa), is an important driving force of the willingness and welcoming of solidarity. In a 1945 speech, El-Hajj Malik El-Shabazz, prominently known as Malcolm X directly asked the following question “Why should the Black man in America concern himself since he's been away from the African continent for three or four hundred years? Why should we concern ourselves?”³¹ Subsequently, Malcolm X elucidates “In hating Africa and in hating the Africans, we ended up hating ourselves, without even realizing it. Because you can't hate the roots of a tree, and not hate the tree. You can't hate your origin and not end up hating yourself. You can't hate Africa and not hate yourself.”³²

In 1964, at the primarily unveiling of the United States of America locale of the OAAU, X addressed the aforementioned question of why African-Americans should concern themselves about Africans and explained the fundamental necessity of continued status of solidarity between African and African-Americans. According to X, “There are more Africans in Harlem than exist in any city on the African continent. Because that's

³¹X, Malcolm, and Breitman, George. *Malcolm X Speaks: Selected Speeches and Statements*. Evergreen Black Cat Book; B-351-D. New York: Grove Press, 1966. Pg. 3. Last visited: January 29, 2018.

³²Ib

what you and I are Africans.”³³ Furthermore, X compares the differences and privileges of identification between those of African and European ancestry by elucidating the following “You catch any white man off guard in here right now, you catch him off guard and ask him what he is, he doesn't say he's an American. He either tells you he's Irish, or he's Italian, or he's German, if you catch him off guard and he doesn't know what you're up to”.³⁴ X goes on to explain, “even though he was born here, he'll tell you he's Italian. Well, if he's Italian, you and I are African even though we were born here.”³⁵

To demonstrate his belief in the importance of the African and African-American comradery and “open participation to all Negroes”³⁶, Malcolm X closely studied the foundational makeup of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), which is the modern day Africa Union (AU), and founded the The Organization of Afro-American Unity (OAAU).³⁷ The fundamental rational of the OAAU are the following two principle branches:

1. Welcomes all persons of African origin to come together and dedicate their ideas, skills, and lives to free our people from oppression.³⁸
2. Branches of the Organization of Afro-American Unity may be established by people of African descent wherever they may be and whatever their ideology -- as long as they be descendants of Africa and dedicated to our one goal: freedom from oppression.³⁹

³³Okolo, Amechu. *The State of the American Mind: Stupor and Pathetic Docility: Volume One*. Xlibris Corporation LLC, 2010. Pg. 1109. Last visited: January 29, 2018.

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³⁵Ib

³⁶Byrd, Dustin. *Malcolm X: From Political Eschatology to Religious Revolutionary*. Studies in Critical Social Sciences; v. 88. Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2016. Pg. 358

³⁷Ib

³⁸Van Deburg, William L. *Modern Black Nationalism: From Marcus Garvey to Louis Farrakhan*. New York: New York University Press, 1997. Pg. 108

³⁹Ib

Prior to Malcolm X, African-American leaders such as Booker T. Washington and W.E.B. Du Bois emphasized the importance of solidarity between Africans and African-Americans. Africans involvement in the slave trade initially did cause Booker T. Washington to have reticence and apprehensions towards Africans. Nevertheless, Booker T. Washington certainly believed that camaraderie and indissoluble unanimity between African-Americans and Africans will lead to strength, unanimity resilience, and highest chance of cohesive and comprehensive success. In the story of the Negro, Washington elucidates this perspective in a following manner:

There is, however, a tie which few white men can understand, which binds the American Negro to the African Negro; which unites the black man of Brazil and the black of Liberia; which is constantly drawing into closer relations all the scattered African peoples whether they are in the old world or the new. There is not only the tie of race, which is strong in any case, but there is the bond of colour, which is [specially] important in the case of the black man. It is this common badge of colour, for instance, which is responsible for the fact that whatever contributes, in any degree to the progress of the American Negro, contributes to the progress of the African Negro, and to the Negro in South America and the West Indies. When African Negro succeeds, it helps the American Negro. When the African Negro fails, it hurts the reputation and the standing of the Negro in every other part of the world.⁴⁰

Booker T. Washington also explains that African and African-American solidarity is not only critical between Africans and African-Americans, it is an innate characteristic that is a binding part of being Black. According to Washington, “there is a peculiar and scarcely definable bond that binds one black man to another black men whether in Africa, Jamaica, Haiti or the United States.”⁴¹ The abovementioned remarks demonstrate that

⁴⁰Washington, Booker T. *The Story of the Negro: The Rise of the Race from Slavery*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2005. Pg. 33-34. Last visited: January 29, 2018.

⁴¹Washington, Booker T. *The Story of the Negro: The Rise of the Race from Slavery*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2005. Pg. 34. Last visited: January 29, 2018.

solidarity within the African and African-American community, whether they understand or acknowledge it, is a natural and binding trait that both African and African-Americans are born with. This trait is derived from the strength and commonality of their Blackness.

In addition to Booker T. Washington, prominent African-Americans leaders such as William Edward Burghardt (W.E.B) Du Bois believed in the importance of African and African-American unanimity and comprehensive comradery. Du Bois, Born in Great Barrington Massachusetts in 1868 and died in 1963 in Accra, Ghana, was an Harvard educated, superlative African-American rights leader, sociologist, founding officer of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), a leading advocate of Black Nationalism and Pan-Africanism. In a sense of self reflection and ancestral connective experiences of Black people in the continent of Africa, Du Bois brilliantly studied and reflect on the concept of race and how the racial history of African-Americans explains his contemporary experiences. According to Du Bois, “the concept of race has so changed and presented so much contradiction that as I face Africa: I ask myself what is it is between us that constitute a tie which I can feel better than I can explain.”⁴² Moreover, Du Bois explains how the notion of race, genealogy, and skin color, interconnects Africans and African-Americans at a personal level and comprehensively as a group. In his 1940 autobiographical literature, *Dusk of Dawn: An Essay Toward an Autobiography of a Race Concept*, Du Bois utilizes his familial history and experience to explain the fundamental interconnection and importance of kinship and comradery between African and African-Americans.

⁴²Du Bois, W. E. B. *Dusk of Dawn: An Essay toward an Autobiography of a Race Concept*. Du Bois, W. E. B. (William Edward Burghardt), 1868-1963. Works. Selections. 2007. New York: Oxford University Press, 2007. Pg. 117. Last visited: January 29, 2018.

According to Du Bois:

“Since the concept of race has changed and presented so much of a contradiction that as I face Africa I ask myself: what is it between us that constitutes a tie which I can feel better than explain? Africa is of course my fatherland. Yet neither my father nor my father’s father ever saw Africa or cared over-much for it. My mother’s folk were closer and yet their direct connection, in culture and race, became tenuous; still, my tie to Africa is strong. On this vast continent were born and lived a large portion of my direct ancestors going back a thousand years or more. But one thing is sure and that is the fact that since the fifteenth century these ancestors of mine and their other descendants have had a common history; have suffered a common disaster and have one long memory.”⁴³

The aforementioned comments demonstrate Du Bois views of African and African experiences, perseverance, and kinship. Moreover, it explains Du Bois beliefs that the remedy for the ample and comprehensive prosperity of the African and African-American community is based on the chronological realities on the ground. The realities on the ground, Du Bois explains, are derived from the African and African-American race and skin color. To adequately achieve cohesiveness and remedy, Du Bois emphasized a sense of global Black togetherness through Black Nationalism and Pan-Africanism. Black Nationalism and Pan-Africanism is “the belief that all people of African descent have common interest and should work together in the struggle for their freedom”⁴⁴

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⁴⁴Meier, August, and Rudwick, Elliott M. *From Plantation to Ghetto*. Third ed. American Century Series. New York: Hill and Wang, 1976. Pg. 5. Last visited: January 29, 2018.

CHAPTER V

PAN-AFRICANISM

Pan-Africanism is a principle of belief and Black progress interest group and comprehensive community that promotes camaraderie and unity of the worldwide African diaspora. Pan-Africanism is a credence that Black unity is extremely critical to the social political, and economic strengthening and overall advancement of the Black diasporas. One of the main assertions Pan-Africanism is that all Black Diasporas, due to pigmentation and African ancestry, share similar history, present experience and overall future. For this reason, Pan-Africanism views unity to be the key reason behind the potential attainment of the fortune of Black fate. In the African continent, Pan-Africanism primitive association with Africa began with the arrival of the Europeans, specifically, the Portuguese in West African, and henceforth, set the crux for slavery and the “triangle trade”. The triangle trade was the root for exploitation and regional capital profit. According to Walter Rodney “the Portuguese government was the first in Europe to ship captives from Africa and the last and the last to let go of the slave trade.”⁴⁵

In regards to the interconnection of economics, gain of those with European and African ancestry, Rodney asserts “much of the profit slipped out of the Portuguese hands and went instead to Britain and Germany: but Portuguese slave trade nevertheless helped the Portuguese themselves to finance later colonial ventures, such as joint capitalist participation in agricultural and mining companies in Angola and Mozambique.”⁴⁶ This comment demonstrates that the triangle trade profit from slavery became regional capital for Europeans and European people and the exact opposite for Africans and African

⁴⁵Rodney, Walter. *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa*. London: Bogle-L'Ouverture Publications, 1972. Pg. 329. Last visited: January 29, 2018.

⁴⁶Ib

diaspora. For this reason, Rodney insists that Pan-Africanism is a key necessity to counteract this inequity.

In addition to counteracting inequality and prioritizing unity, Pan-Africanism seeks to help the African diaspora maintain their resources and avoid further carnage of its people. According to Tunde Adeleke, “Pan-African ethos urges Black Americans and Africans to revive the old strength-in-unity philosophy that once shaped their mutual struggle, in consequence of shared historical and cultural experiences.”⁴⁷ Moreover, Pan-Africanism seeks to break down cultural, geographical, and lingual hurdles and build cross-continental unity that entails equitable opportunity for economic, social, and comprehensive success. According to Minkah Makalani, Pan-Africanism “is a belief that African peoples, both on the African continent and in the Diaspora, share not merely the common history, but a common destiny”⁴⁸ Additionally, Pan-Africanism, which goes back to the beginning of the twentieth century,⁴⁹ was not only built to encourage a mutual understanding between African and African-Americans, it was started to combat the notion that those of African descent were the inferior race.⁵⁰ Though Pan-Africanism goes back to the beginning of the twentieth century, the apex focus of self-governance as the main way to combat discrimination began after World War I.⁵¹

Inspired by Alexander Crummell, Du Bois, who is widely considered to be the

⁴⁷Adeleke, Tunde. *Black Americans, Africa and History: A Reassessment of the Pan African and identity paradigms*. The Western Journal of Black Studies, vol. 22, No. 3, 1998, Pg. 183. Last visited: January 29, 2018.

⁴⁸Makalani, Minkah. Pan-Africanism. *African and African Diasporan Transformations in the 20th Century*. The Schomburg Center For Black Research in Black Culture. New York Public Library and the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. 2011. Retrieved from: <http://exhibitions.nypl.org/africanaage/essay-pan-africanism.html> Last visited: January 29, 2018.

⁴⁹Logan, W. Rayford. “*The Historical Aspects of Pan-Africanism: A Personal Chronicle*.” *African Forum 1 (1)* Summer 1965, Pages 90-104. Retrieved from: <https://www.freedomarchives.org/Documents/Finder/Black%20Liberation%20Disk/Black%20Power!/SugarData/Essays/Logan.S.pdf> Last visited: January 29, 2018.

⁵⁰Ib

⁵¹Ib

“god father”⁵² of Pan-Africanism not only believed in the bedrock idea of togetherness of Pan-Africanism and Black Nationalism, he work hard and brought this idea to life by organizing and representing African-Americans at the first Pan-African congress. In this conference, Du Bois stated “the problem of the twentieth century is the problem of the color-line”.⁵³ Moreover, Du Bois explained that “the question as to how far differences of race which show themselves chiefly in the color of the skin”.⁵⁴ Du Bois believes that individuals of African descent, whether in the United States or the African continent, suffer from the problem of the color line. Furthermore, this comment also demonstrates Du Bois’ central beliefs in the unity that Pan-Africanism provides, because of the crux problem of the color of the African skin.

In addition to universal Black unity, one of the main aims of the first Pan-African congress was to “advocate for the greater participation of Africans in their governments”.⁵⁵ Located in the Grand Hotel of Paris, France, 57 delegates representing fifteen countries and colonies were present at this congress.⁵⁶ Led by Du Bois, the United States had 15 delegates.⁵⁷ The remainder of 14 countries and delegates are as follows:

⁵²Reiland, Rabaka. *Du Bois's Dialectics: Black Radical Politics and the Reconstruction of Critical Social Theory*. 1st Pbk. ed. Lanham: Lexington Books, 2009. Pg. 162. Last visited: January 29, 2018.

⁵³Appiah, Anthony , Kwame. *Race in the Modern World. The Problem of the Color Line*. Council of Foreign Affairs. 2015. Retrieved From: <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/united-states/2015-03-01/race-modern-world> Last visited: January 29, 2018.

⁵⁴Ib

⁵⁵Jenkins, Everett. *Pan-African Chronology: A Comprehensive Reference to the Black Quest for Freedom in Africa, the Americas, Europe, and Asia*. Jefferson, N.C.: McFarland &, 1996. Pg. 204. Last visited: January 29, 2018.

⁵⁶Ib

⁵⁷Ib

French West Indies had: 13 delegates
Haiti: 7 delegates,
France: 7 delegates.
Liberia: 3 delegates
Spanish Colonies: 2 delegates
Portuguese Colonies: 1 delegate
San Domingo: 1 delegate
England: 1 delegate
British Africa: 1 delegate
French Africa: 1 delegate
Algeria: 1 delegate
Egypt: 1 delegate
Belgium Congo: 1 delegate
Abyssinia: 1 delegate
Total: 57⁵⁸

⁵⁸Ib

CHAPTER VI

BLACK NATIONALISM

The ideological crux of Black Nationalism is solidarity, comprehensive sovereignty, economic autonomy, and overall unity of people of African descent. Though the exact date of its formation is difficult to definitively identify, the preliminary basis of Black Nationalism can be traced back to as early as nineteenth century United States. One of the “founding fathers”⁵⁹ of the Black Nationalism ideology is Martin Delaney of the United States Abolitionist movement.⁶⁰ Delany’s pride in being Black as well as his belief in Black nationalism is not lost upon his fellow Black abolitionist leaders. Fredrick Douglass, the ideological opposite of Delaney’s back to Africa proposition, affectionately described Delaney’s pride in being Black and his belief in Black Nationalism by dutifully elucidating the following "I thank God for making me a man, but Delany thanks Him for making him a Black man."⁶¹

Delaney, a willful and prudent supporter of the African-American community, championed the unity of the Black Diaspora by imploring African-Americans to repatriate to Africa. One of Delaney’s main reason’s for the urgency to emigrate to Africa was the passage of the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850.⁶² The Fugitive Slave Act of, which was referred to as the “Bloodhound Laws”⁶³ by Black Abolitionists, (due to its similarities to the dogs that used to patrol and track down runaway slaves) was a key

⁵⁹Stories from PA History, “Martin R. Delany Historical Marker: Behind The Marker Chapter Three, Changes in Rural Life,” ExplorePAhistory.com, <http://explorepahistory.com/hmarker.php?markerId=1-A-3EA> Last visited: April 25, 2018

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⁶¹Hudson, J. Blaine. *Encyclopedia of the Underground Railroad*. Jefferson, N.C.: McFarland &, 2006. Pg. 78.

⁶²Fugitive Slave Act of 1850. Cornell University Law School, Legal Information Institute. https://www.law.cornell.edu/topn/fugitive_slave_act_of_1850 Last visited: April 25, 2018.

⁶³Cutter, Martha J. *The Illustrated Slave : Empathy, Graphic Narrative, and the Visual Culture of the Transatlantic Abolition Movement, 1800-1852*. Athens, Georgia: University of Georgia Press, 2017. Pg.179

component of the compromise of 1850.⁶⁴ It was a compromise between slave-owning southern states and non-slave owning northern states. This act permitted slave owners a nationwide (federal) right not only to hunt and capture runaway slaves (or any African-American they suspected is a slave) but also penalize local and or state law enforcement that failed to partake in capturing and arresting such individuals.⁶⁵ Recognizing the searing discrimination of this bill and the continued mountain of difficulties that African-American community will face Delaney responding with the following declaration:

"Let no visionary nonsense about habeas corpus, or a fair trial, deceive us; there are no such rights granted in this bill, and except where the commissioner is too ignorant to understand, when reading it, or too stupid to enforce it when he does understand, there is no earthly chance, no hope under heaven for the colored person who is brought before one of these officers of the law. We are slaves in the midst of freedom, waiting patiently and unconcernedly, indifferently, and stupidly, for masters to come and lay claim to us, trusting to their generosity, whether or not they will own us and carry us into endless bondage."⁶⁶

The aforementioned statement did not only play apart in Delany's support and fundamental belief in emigrating to Africa, it articulates the desire for Delany to travel to northern states and urge the northern African-Americans to go to Africa before they are inevitably captured and become victim to the Fugitive Slave Act law. According to Delaney "We are a nation within a nation; as the Poles in Russia, the Hungarians in Austria, the Welsh, Irish, and Scotch in the British dominions."⁶⁷ Hence, Delaney continues "Being distinguished by complexion, we are still singled out although having merged in the habits and customs of our oppressors as a distinct nation of people; as the

⁶⁴Ib

⁶⁵Fugitive Slave Act of 1850. Cornell University Law School, Legal Information Institute. https://www.law.cornell.edu/topn/fugitive_slave_act_of_1850 Last visited: April 25, 2018.

⁶⁶Delany, Martin Robison. *The Condition, Elevation, Emigration, and Destiny of the Colored People of the United States*. American Negro, His History and Literature. New York: Arno Press, 1968. Pg. XVI

⁶⁷Ib

Poles, Hungarians, Irish, and others, who still retain their native peculiarities, of language, habits, and various other traits.”⁶⁸

Having seen the equality those of non-African descent are given, Delany advocates a formation of a council to “go on an expedition to the EASTERN COAST of AFRICA, to make researches for a suitable location on that section of the coast, for the settlement of colored adventurers from the United States.”⁶⁹ While this comment is certainly aimed at all African-Americans, it is especially intended to northern residing African-Americans because they were technically in a non-slave state and therefore theoretically had more freedom than southern African-Americans and because they could contribute to the prosperity of the Black Diaspora by directly helping native Africans in nation building.⁷⁰ Principally, Delaney views of Black nationalism, by means of moving to Africa, entailed a virtuous belief that it would not only help Africans on the African continent, it would immensely bolster the comprehensive condition of the African-American people.

Raymond Hall utilizes the value of total independence and separatism as the hub of Black Nationalism. While separatism is the root of Black Nationalism, Hall explains that, the critical branches of separatism (and there therefore, Black Nationalism) are, cultural nationalism, economic nationalism, bourgeois reformism, revolutionary Black Nationalism and territorial separatism. According to Hall “Black separatism is a subcategory of Black Nationalism, Black Nationalism, stemming from the idea of racial solidarity, implies that Black should organize themselves on the basis of their common

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⁷⁰Bates, Christopher G. *The Early Republic and Antebellum America: An Encyclopedia of Social, Political, Cultural, and Economic History*. Armonk, N.Y.: Sharpe Reference, 2010. Pg. 290

experience of oppression as a result of their blackness, culture, and African heritage.”⁷¹ Moreover, Hall explains, “separatist dimensions ma be measured at the or community level, later encompassing the concept of a back nation or nation-within-a-nation, and finally embracing Pan-Africanism as the ultimate expression of Black Nationalism/separatism.”⁷² This comment explains that the fundamental function of American based ideology of Black Nationalism, does not only include idea of ally ship with the everyone of the African Diaspora, it entails ancestral veneration to the African continent and the residents of the African continent.

⁷¹Hall, Raymond L. *Black Separatism and Social Reality: Rhetoric and Reason*. New York: Pergamon Press, 1977. Pg.1

⁷²Ib

CHAPTER VII

IDENTITY: COMPLEXITIES OF ETHNICITY

The identity of African immigrants and African-Americans is extremely important to their views on life and most importantly their views on themselves. African immigrants self-description of their ethnic and racial identity can be traced back to the specific country and or tribe they emigrate from. Nevertheless, in the context of the African-American and African immigrants' relationship in the United States, it is critical to understand the definition of an immigrant. The Merriam Webster Dictionary defines immigrant as “a person who comes to a country to take up permanent residence”.⁷³ Similarly, the American Heritage Dictionary defines immigrant as “a person who leaves one country to settle permanently in another”.⁷⁴ On the other hand, the usage note section of the American Heritage Dictionary elucidates that “everyone agrees that the word immigrant can be applied to someone who moves voluntarily to a given country or region intending to settle there”.⁷⁵ While the reasons for Africans' emigrations to the United States varies from political unrest, economic instability, medical needs, fear of imminent persecution and social trepidations.

According to April Gordon, the critical reasons behind Africans emigration to the United States are “(1) Globalization and integration of the world economy (2) Economic and political development failures in Africa (3) Immigration and refugee policies in Europe and the United States (4) Anglophone background (5) Historic ties of sending

⁷³Merriam Webster Online, Merriam Webster (2018). Definition of Immigrant. <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/immigrant> Last visited: April 25, 2018.

⁷⁴The American Heritage® Dictionary of the English Language, Fifth Edition copyright ©2018 by Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Publishing Company. <https://ahdictionary.com/word/search.html?q=immigrant> Last visited: April 25, 2018

⁷⁵Ib

countries to the United States.”⁷⁶ While each of the reasons behind African emigration to the United States is respectable, noble, life saving and legitimate, when one looks at the term immigrant, it is easy to pinpoint that there was a voluntary will for that person to immigrate to the United States. On the other hand, this is not the case for African-Americans, as they were forcibly brought and enslaved in the United States. Essentially, while Africans can and do come to the United States seeking the American dream of economic success, African-Americans, did not voluntarily come to the United States and are still struggling to fully recover from the pervasive effects of slavery and anti-blackness. Because of this fundamental difference in arrival to the United States, there is certainly trepidation and disconnect within these two communities.

While the ethnic membership and crux of their specific country and tribe plays a role in their self identification, African immigrants connection to African-Americans, and experience is greatly influenced by their racial identity. Ethnicity, as explained in the American Heritage Dictionary, is a membership of a particular ethnic group, especially belonging to a national group by heritage or culture but residing outside its national boundaries.⁷⁷ According to R.A. Shermehorne, an ethnic group is "collectivity within a larger society having real or putative common ancestry, memories of a shared historical past and a cultural focus on one or more symbolic elements defined as the epitome of their peoplehood"⁷⁸ On the other hand, race is a symbolic category, based on phenotype

⁷⁶Gordon, April. *New Diaspora-African immigration to the United States*. Journal of Third World Studies, 1998 Pg. 1. Last visited: April 25, 2018.

⁷⁷The American Heritage® Dictionary of the English Language, Fifth Edition copyright ©2018 by Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Publishing Company. <https://ahdictionary.com/word/search.html?q=ethnicity> Last visited: April 25, 2018

⁷⁸Eller, Jack David. *Culture and Diversity in the United States: So Many Ways to Be American*. London: Routledge/Taylor & Francis Group, 2015. Pg.63

or ancestry and constructed according to a specific social and historical context, that is misrecognized as a natural (category).⁷⁹

While ethnic identification is important, in the context of assimilation and treatment in the United States, race is more prevalent in the daily experiences of African-Americans and African immigrants. As I mentioned in the introduction, the United States was created as a country that gave power and privilege based on skin color. Hence, one's skin color is subsumed in the historical crux of racial categorization of the United States. For this reason, while African-American and African immigrants may have different ethnic backgrounds, due to their black pigment, they are categorized within the same racial category. As a result, they are treated likewise by the dominant White American society. An example of the prioritization of pigment in the white dominant American society's treatment can be seen in two controversial incidents in Portland, Oregon, and New York City, New York. On November 13, 1988, Mulugeta Seraw, a hard working Ethiopian immigrant, who was studying Business at Portland Community and working two jobs to care for his family in Ethiopia, was ambushed and beaten to death by white supremacists that were seeking revenge for white society by killing the first Black person they saw that fatal morning.⁸⁰

On early morning of February 4, 1999, New York City police officers fired 41 shots and killed Amadou Diallo.⁸¹ Prior to the unfortunate hail of bullets and fatality, Diallo, who immigrated from Guinea to New York two years earlier, was harmlessly

⁷⁹Emirbayer, Mustafa, and Desmond, Matthew. *The Racial Order*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2015. Pg. 51

⁸⁰Denson, Bryan. (2014). *1998 story: Legacy of a hate crime: Mulugeta Seraw's death a decade ago avenged* http://www.oregonlive.com/portland/index.ssf/2014/11/1998_story_legacy_of_a_hate_cr.html Last visited: April 25, 2018.

⁸¹Cooper, Michael (1999). *Officers in Bronx Fire 41 Shots, And an Unarmed Man Is Killed*. <https://www.nytimes.com/1999/02/05/nyregion/officers-in-bronx-fire-41-shots-and-an-unarmed-man-is-killed.html> Last visited: April 25, 2018.

reaching in his pocket to get his wallet and show his identification.⁸² The aforementioned examples are certainly not the only pigment-based violent attack that African immigrants have been subjugated. However, they are certainly an erudite example that the white American dominant society, even those ranging from an ordinary resident to government agents, will ignore an African immigrant's ethnic background and subsequently view African immigrants through an anti-Black racial and pigment based lens. This lens, which began during slavery, propagates the viewpoint that Black-pigment is a symbol of crime and danger and hence is deleterious to American society. In a deciphering response to the murder of Mr. Diallo and cruel sodomizing of New York resident and Black-Haitian immigrant Abner Louima,⁸³ George Yancy elucidates that "While it is important to recognize the differences in points of geographical origin, and how the meaning of Blackness is inflected by those points of origin, at the end of the day, those two bodies suffered a fate whose narrative is all too familiar to Black bodies regardless of place of origin."⁸⁴ This comment demonstrates that experiences Black people in America is derived from the vessel of slavery. Hence, while identity and ethnic pride is important, African immigrants face the stringent reality that their pigment based racial identity plays a critical role in their treatment as immigrants in America. On the other hand, immigrants from Europe can certainly assimilate into U.S. society and garner the benefits of their white racial identity. However, the racial benefits that European immigrants reap do not

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⁸³K.C. Baker, Goodman, Lawrence, Marzulli, John (1997). *Two cops charged for torturing Abner Louima with a broomstick* <http://beta.nydailynews.com/new-york/nyc-crime/2-cops-eyed-sex-assault-70th-pct-suspect-brutalized-article-1.785482> Last viewed: April 25, 2018

⁸⁴Yancy, George, Del Guadalupe Davidson, Maria. *Thinking About Race, History, and Identity: An Interview with George Yancy*. *The Western Journal of Black Studies*, Vol. 40, No. 1, 2016. Pg. 10. Retrieved from: <https://education.wsu.edu/documents/2017/02/wjbs-george-yancy-interview.pdf/> Last visited: April 25, 2018.

necessarily exist for African immigrants because they are in the same pigment based and racial category as African-American, whom were involuntarily brought to America.

While ethnic affinity, identity kinship and pride are significant, upon comprehensively seaming through research, exploring and learning about the precise chronicle foundation and sequential record of the United States' pigment-based privilege allocation, it is certainly clear that rigid ethnic membership, exclusive racial identity proclamation, and lack of ally ship subsumed definition of ethnicity, do not override the United States deleterious nuance of Blackness. Furthermore, it does not supersede the importance Black pigment entails on the perception and overall treatment of the entire African Diaspora. Contextually, while the racial, ethnic pride, and overall claiming of one's in-group is noble, in the framework of African and African-American relationship, it assumes the danger of adopting and lethally strengthening America's liberalized colorblind narrative and landscape, while ignoring the social, legal and overall anti-Black system that begun during slavery, continues to rapidly burden and unremittingly inflict harm on both African immigrants and African-Americans.

CHAPTER VIII

EDUCATION OPPORTUNITY

In the United States, education is a platform that gives one the greatest opportunity for success and acceptance into the opportunity based mainstream American society. The better one's access is to education, the greater their opportunity is for economic stability and overall success in life. However, due to their differing upbringings, educational opportunities of African immigrants and African-American have come at the expense of divergent historical experiences. While African immigrants and African-Americans certainly seek success and concede to the significance of education, they have differing generational experiences and perspectives on education, particularly, the historical sacrifices that have paved the way for the privilege gains that education provides. One of the main reasons for their differing understanding is America's historical parallel of race, income, and socioeconomic status.

In the United States, one's economic status class is predicated on one's racial status. In particular, for African-Americans, their racial status has always been a primary influence on their economic status. For this reason, African-Americans have always had to work extremely hard to get access to a modicum of equitable and inclusive economic gain. Their race has always been the main catalyst object for their struggle. Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. elucidates that African-Americans have been chronologically subjugated and inordinately monopolized to create a pecking order based on economic exploitation. Dr. King elucidated that African-American's unique chronological maltreatment and overall experiences in the United States, mandated a remedy that is unique and specific to African-Americans.

According to Dr. King:

“But one hundred years later [after the Emancipation Proclamation] the life of the Negro is still sadly crippled by the manacles of segregation and the chains of discrimination; one hundred years later the Negro lives on a lonely island of poverty in the midst of a vast ocean of material prosperity; one hundred years later, the Negro is still languished in the corners of American society and finds himself an exile in his own land.”⁸⁵

As aforementioned, these exploitative experiences were specific to African-Americans. To indubitably and suitably alleviating these inequities, Dr. King suggested “Negroes have to acquire a share of power so that they can act in their own interests as an independent social force.”⁸⁶ These remarks explain Dr. King's true goals and demands for American society. Moreover, Dr. King's remarks demonstrate the underlying truth that education access and economic success is subsumed in the United States historical hierarchy of race relations. Importantly, these remarks illuminate, In the United States, education is the central driving force to acquiring power and positive hope for generations.

With the history of the United States, in particular, the historical maltreatment of the African-American community unbeknown to them, many Africans immigrate to the United States with the noble purposes of educational and economic success. For the most part, Africans tend to keep to themselves and seek to take advantage of the available economic and education opportunities. While many Africans are certainly not advocating against African-Americans, there is also a perception that they do not want to get involved and help address the racial, political, and economic shortcomings of the African-American community. Certainly, many Africans suffered mistreatment and

⁸⁵The Avalon Project At the Yale Law School: Documents in Law, History and Diplomacy. *I have a Dream by Martin Luther King, Jr; August 28, 1963* http://avalon.law.yale.edu/20th_century/mlk01.asp New Haven, Conn. :The Avalon Project, 2008. Last viewed: April 25, 2008

⁸⁶The King Center: Since – 1968. *IT IS NOT ENOUGH TO CONDEMN BLACK POWER*. <http://www.thekingcenter.org/archive/document/it-not-enough-condemn-black-power> Atlanta, GA. 2018. Last viewed: April 25, 2018.

lacked equitable opportunity for success in their country. For this reason, their move to the United States is one that is based on hope for a better prospect of success, both for present and for future generations. However, this perspective, while noble, can and has created a disconnect within the African and African-American community. Moreover, it has created a perplexity in addressing the important subject-matter of discrimination that has affected African-Americans for centuries.

One of the perplexities that has been formed is the subject-matter of affirmative action. Though it was officially enacted and implemented as a policy of President John F. Kennedy's administration, the rumination and essence of affirmative action, to address the inequities faced by African-American, began during the began during Richard Nixon's presidency. To remedy historical inequities that African-Americans faced, the Nixon administration enacted the 1969 Philadelphia Plan.⁸⁷ The Philadelphia Plan required a comparative and fairly equilibrium amount of African-American populace representation in the government contractor's jobs.⁸⁸ In addition to populace representation, the Philadelphia Plan required an equitable staffing strategy and stable retention of employment for African-Americans plan opportunity at employment prospects comparative and fairly equilibrium amount of African-American community's representation in the government contractor's jobs Plan.⁸⁹

⁸⁷Richard Nixon: "Statement About Congressional Action on the Philadelphia Plan," December 23, 1969. Online by Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, *The American Presidency Project*. <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=2382>. Last visited: April 25, 2018.

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Thereafter, Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964,⁹⁰ a legislative proposal that was enacted through the hard work of African-Americans, not only gave reference to significance of affirmative action, it authorized voluntary affirmative action programs to be implemented in the work sector.⁹¹ Subsequently, this voluntary-based affirmative action plans began to be implemented on independent and private businesses and college campus. Nevertheless, due to the indistinct language and non-direct reference to rectifying the historical prejudice and modern inequities of African-Americans, affirmative action policies began to broaden and ultimately shift to helping non-white minority community. The broadening of affirmative action included immigrants of Latin, Asian, and African descent. According to Christian Jobbke, “the colour-blind logic of civil-rights law did not name its main addressee-instead, it spoke abstractly of ‘citizens’, ‘individuals’, or ‘persons’ who were to be protected from discrimination on the ground of ‘race, color, religion or national origin’”.⁹² This comment demonstrates that the lack of ambiguity in the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which was created to address historical inequities, protect and create an equitable opportunity for African-Americans, created a pathway to include immigrants of non-slave descent. This unambiguous language did not only influence the significance of what it meant to be historically and contemporarily marginalized, it directly influenced who should receive affirmative action by adopting broad and inclusive language and perspective. Accordingly, Affirmative action programs on college campuses deviated from its principle designation of addressing the

⁹⁰2 U.S. Code § 1311 - Rights and protections under title VII of Civil Rights Act of 1964. Cornell University Law School, Legal Information Institute. <https://www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/text/2/1311>. Last visited: April 25, 2018.

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⁹²Joppke, Christian. *Immigration and the Nation-state: The United States, Germany, and Great Britain*. Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 1999. Pg. 156. Last viewed: April 25, 2018.

chronological inequities of African-Americans, and broadened their demography and original mission by including African immigrants and other underrepresented population, including and especially white women.⁹³ This expansion has played an implicit, direct and tacit role in the divergence between African and African-Americans. Fundamentally, the aforementioned expansion has led to many African-Americans believe that Africans (and other minorities racial groups in America) have taken advantage of the hard work of African-Americans and benefited of the policy that was intended for African-Americans, while simultaneously lacking an understanding and dissociating themselves from African-American concerns. In 2016 the African immigrant population increased to 4.3%, a quintuple growth from the 1980 total population of 816,000.⁹⁴ In 1990, African-American median household income was \$19,533⁹⁵, while African immigrant median was significantly higher, \$30,907.⁹⁶ Moreover, in 1990, 47% of African immigrants had a four year degree while only a 14% of African-Americans had a four year degree.⁹⁷ In 2000, the median income for African-American households was \$33,790 while the median income for African immigrant's descents was \$42,900.⁹⁸ Furthermore, in 2013, the median income for African-American households was \$33, 500 while the median

⁹³Crenshaw, W Kimberlé W. 2006. "Framing Affirmative Action." *Michigan Law Review First Impressions* 105(1): 123-33. 2006. Retrieved from: https://repository.law.umich.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1093&context=mlr_fi Last visited: April 29, 2019.

⁹⁴Anderson, Monica, Lopez, Gustavo. (2018). *Key facts about black immigrants in the U.S.* Pew Research Center. <http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2018/01/24/key-facts-about-black-immigrants-in-the-u-s/> Last viewed: April 25, 2018.

⁹⁵Mwakikagile, Godfrey. *Relations between Africans and African Americans: Misconceptions, Myths and Realities*. 3rd ed. Dar Es Salaam, Tanzania: New Africa Press, 2007. Pg. 184.

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⁹⁸Frazier, John W., Darden, Joe T, and Henry, Norah F. *The African Diaspora in the U.S. and Canada at the Dawn of the 21st Century*. Global Academic Publishing Book. Albany: State University of New York Press, 2010. Pg.330.

income for households with foreign born African immigrants was \$43,500.⁹⁹ In regards to overall attainment number of educational years, in 2000, Africa-Americans had a 12.4 years average of educational attainment while Africans had 14.0 year average.¹⁰⁰ The aforementioned lower educational attainment (and hence economic success) has resulted in a 12.2% unemployment for African-Americans, a 7.2% unemployment rate for Africans, an overall poverty rate of 30.4% for African-Americans and a 22.1 percent poverty rate for Africans.¹⁰¹ These propitious statistics, in particular, the upward fruitful trajectory statistics of Africans are undoubtedly a testament of the hard work and success of Africans.¹⁰² Nevertheless, there is a sense of belief in the African-American community that the success of African immigrants has been greatly influenced by affirmative action programs¹⁰³ that were fought for and originally intended to redress the systematic oppression and discrimination faced by the African-American community. According to Indiana University Law Professor Kevin Brown "experiences are different and we never really addressed this question of whether foreign born or mixed race blacks were subject to the same forms of discrimination as African Americans."¹⁰⁴ Moreover,

⁹⁹Anderson, Monica. (2015). *Chapter 1: Statistical Portrait of the U.S. Black Immigrant Population*. Pew Research Center. <http://www.pewsocialtrends.org/2015/04/09/chapter-1-statistical-portrait-of-the-u-s-black-immigrant-population/> Last viewed: April 25, 2018.

¹⁰⁰Frazier, John W., Darden, Joe T, and Henry, Norah F. *The African Diaspora in the U.S. and Canada at the Dawn of the 21st Century*. Global Academic Publishing Book. Albany: State University of New York Press, 2010. Pg.330.

¹⁰¹Frazier, John W., Darden, Joe T, and Henry, Norah F. *The African Diaspora in the U.S. and Canada at the Dawn of the 21st Century*. Global Academic Publishing Book. Albany: State University of New York Press, 2010. Pg.331.

¹⁰²Arenson W, Karen, Rimer, Sara. (2004). *Top Colleges Take More Blacks, but Which Ones?* <https://www.nytimes.com/2004/06/24/us/top-colleges-take-more-blacks-but-which-ones.html> Last visited: April 25, 2018

¹⁰³Hsieh, Evelyn. Following Obama, Students Define "Black" on Ivy League Campuses. https://www.huffingtonpost.com/evelyn-hsieh/barack-obama-has-broken-r_b_217965.html 2011. Last viewed: April 25, 2018.

¹⁰⁴David E, Javier. How immigration distorts affirmative action policy: Academic. <https://www.cnbc.com/2015/02/14/tion-distorts-affirmative-action-policy-academic.html> 2015. Last Viewed: April 25, 2018

Brown explains that the fundamental expansion of affirmative action will result in African-Americans being “almost completely cut out”¹⁰⁵ of its key benefits.

At a 2004 Harvard University Black Alumni event, two esteemed Professors illustrated the difference among Black students and pointed out the stark disparity in education attainment. Drs. Guinier, a law professor, and Dr. Gates Jr, the chairman of Harvard's African and African-American Studies department, utilized the Harvard student populace and stated clearly and in detail, leaving no room for confusion or doubt, that affirmative action has inadequately benefited the descendants majority of the Black students at Harvard were not the descendants of Black American slaves.¹⁰⁶ In 2004, 8% of Harvard’s undergraduates (about 580) were Black.¹⁰⁷ However, Gates Jr, and Guinier, maintained that “the majority of them, perhaps as many as two-thirds, were West Indian and African immigrants or their children.”¹⁰⁸ Moreover “only about a third of the students were from families in which all four grandparents were born in this country, descendants of slaves.”¹⁰⁹ Along with Dr. Gates Jr and Drs. Guiner, various historians, academic researchers, policy makers, and legal professionals, contend that it is the descendants of slaves, who are post traumatically affected by slavery, deleteriously hindered by the failed promise of 40 acres and mule,¹¹⁰ severely injured by the legacy of Jim Crow laws, segregation, red lining. Ironically, university affirmative action programs were intended to support these descendants. Dr. Gates Jr, and Guinier’s willingness to speak about this intricate and difficult subject-matter was not meant to exclude Africans

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¹⁰⁶Rimer, Sara, Arenson W. Karen. “Top Colleges Take More Blacks, but Which Ones?” *The New York Times*, The New York Times. June 24, 2004. Retrieved from: www.nytimes.com/2004/06/24/us/top-colleges-take-more-blacks-but-which-ones.html. Last viewed: April 11, 2019.

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(or children of African immigrants), but rather, to elucidate what being Black in America has meant historically, and illustrate how “the high-stakes world of admissions to the most selective colleges and with it, entry into the country's inner circles of power, wealth and influence African-American students whose families have been in America for generations were being left behind.”¹¹¹

While Dr. Gates Jr and Guinier expressed their concern about the Harvard Black Alumni reunion event, on the campus itself, the disparity between Black students of African immigrant descent and Black American slave descent was certainly felt. Essentially, Harvard’s unwillingness to consider one’s family background has played a role in Black student recruitment and minoritizing Black American of slave descent, and consequently creating an environment that does not provide historical connective bonds and reinforce academic pursuits through shared experiences and needs. According to Harvard senior, Sheila Adams, Harvard’s growing number of Black students, yet scarce amount of Black American students of slave descent have caused divergence and led the numerically marginal Black American students to overtly refer to themselves as “the descendants.”¹¹²

Thirteen years after Dr. Gates Jr and Drs. Guiner articulated their concern at the Harvard Black Alumni reunion event, Cornell University’s Black Student United publically released a List of Demands and submitted it to University President Martha Pollack, Vice President Ryan Lombardi, and other members of the Cornell University Administration.¹¹³ In their list of demand’s, Black Student United entailed precise

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¹¹³Jaschik, Scott. Inside Higher Ed. “Black Students at Cornell Reconsider Demand on Admissions Priorities”. October 16, 2017. Retrieved from:

demands that called on their university's leadership to make an assertive effort by taking United States history of slavery into account and increasing their university's current inadequate number of Black American student of slave descent. Their demand challenged their administration to disaggregate the ethnic/racial data of their student recruitment and retention system.¹¹⁴ Essentially, Black Student United declared that their university had a good intent in recruitment of Black student. However, they stated their university's good intent was the iniquitous tactic to increasing and retaining Black American students of slave descent.

Black Student United Demand stated:

“We demand that Cornell Admissions to come up with a plan to actively increase the presence of underrepresented Black students on this campus. We define underrepresented Black students as Black Americans who have several generations (more than two) in this country. The Black student population at Cornell disproportionately represents international or first-generation African or Caribbean students. While these students have a right to flourish at Cornell, there is a lack of investment in Black students whose families were affected directly by the African Holocaust in America. Cornell must work to actively support students whose families have been impacted for generations by white supremacy and American fascism.”¹¹⁵

While Dr. Gates Jr, Drs. Guiner, and Cornell University's Black Student United led to copious yet difficult conversations, it is clear that they meant no harm in scope and impact to the success of African students, or anyone of African immigrant descent.

According to Dr. Gates Jr, it was important for him to bring up this underdiscussed subject-matter because it is important for people, especially when it is at a place like a

<https://www.insidehighered.com/admissions/article/2017/10/16/black-students-cornell-reconsider-demand-admissions-priorities>. Last viewed: April 11, 2019.

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Harvard Black Alumni meeting, to “be honest enough to talk about it.”¹¹⁶ Moreover, the fundamental crux behind Dr. Gates Jr, and Drs. Guiner was not to constrain the prospect of African students, it was rather, to have honest dialogue and deeply deliberate about the following question “what are the implications of this [disproportion]?”¹¹⁷ Cornell University’s Black Student United expressed the similar sentiment as Dr. Gates Jr, and Drs. Guiner. Their demand did not criticize or question any component of the recruitment and retention of African students. According to their demand students of African immigrant descent have the right to not only attend Cornell, they have the “right to flourish”¹¹⁸ at Cornell.

While the aforementioned subject-matter may be excruciating to dissect and equally difficult to address, it is still an extremely important subject-matter because it illuminates the fact that American education system, especially postsecondary education, is no longer linked to slavery, *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka*, 347 U.S. 483¹¹⁹ and U.S. Civil Rights movement.

As I mentioned earlier, the capitalistic based labor of slavery essentially built the United States of America. Historically, prior to the termination of slavery, the United States of America did not have any public schools. Thus, upon the termination of slavery, one of the primary demands of the Black American slaves was access to education.

¹¹⁶Rimer, Sara, Arenson W. Karen. “Top Colleges Take More Blacks, but Which Ones?” *The New York Times*, The New York Times. June 24, 2004. Retrieved from: www.nytimes.com/2004/06/24/us/top-colleges-take-more-blacks-but-which-ones.html. Last viewed: April 11, 2019.

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¹¹⁸Jaschik, Scott. Inside Higher Ed. “Black Students at Cornell Reconsider Demand on Admissions Priorities”. October 16, 2017. Retrieved from: <https://www.insidehighered.com/admissions/article/2017/10/16/black-students-cornell-reconsider-demand-admissions-priorities>. Last viewed: April 11, 2019.

¹¹⁹*Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka*, 347 U.S. 483 (1954). Cornell University Law School, Legal Information Institute. Retrieved from: <https://www.law.cornell.edu/supremecourt/text/347/483>. Last Visited: April 11, 2019.

Basically, Black slave descents were saying that the least the United States government could do and owe to them is to give them access to education. They did not just demand access to education, between 1865-1867, the Black Americans of slave descent made strategic alliance with their former incumbent politicians (some of whom were there former slave-masters) to create state based constitutional changes guaranteeing public education.¹²⁰ As a result, many different states began to build schools and create an education system.¹²¹ In other words, the United States public education system was created by the hard work and demand of Black American slaves and slave decedents.¹²² Essentially, even at that time, every youth in America, including white ones, got access to formal public education system because of the on the people they had held on bondage for centuries.

Though public schools were originally fought for and established by the demands of the Black American slave descendants, in reality, access to education was actually little-to-none for Black Americans. After many centuries of anti-Black racial discrimination, the US Supreme court heard *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka*, 347 U.S. 483,¹²³ ended segregation and legally granted African-Americans access to education. In 1954, Oliver Brown, sued the Topeka, Kansas Board of Education. In his lawsuit, Mr. Brown contends that his daughter Linda Brown was denied admission to the

¹²⁰Race Forward. The Center for Racial Justice Innovation. "Historical Timeline of Public Education in the US." Race Forward. October 08, 2015. Retrieved from: <https://www.raceforward.org/research/reports/historical-timeline-public-education-us>. Last viewed: April 11, 2019.

¹²¹ib

¹²²Butchart E. Ronald. "Freedmen's Education during Reconstruction." History & Archeology. Civil War & Reconstruction, 1861-1877. New Georgia Encyclopedia. April 13, 2016. Retrieved from: <https://www.georgiaencyclopedia.org/articles/history-archaeology/freedmens-education-during-reconstruction>. Last viewed: April 11, 2019.

¹²³*Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka*, 347 U.S. 483 (1954). Cornell University Law School, Legal Information Institute. Retrieved from: <https://www.law.cornell.edu/supremecourt/text/347/483>. Last Visited: April 11, 2019.

local all white elementary school on the sole base of her race.¹²⁴ Mr. Brown asserts that this denial violates the Equal Protection Clause of the 14th Amendment.¹²⁵ In addition to the violation of the Equal Protection Clause, this lawsuit's critical foundation was focused on overturning the 1879 Kansas state legislation, which permitted segregation.

The aforementioned historical details elucidate that public schools were birthed based on the perseverance and demands of the community that were previously held in bondage centuries, the Black Americans. Hitherto to the 1965 *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka*, 347 U.S. 483¹²⁶ case, Black Americans did not have equal access to the same education system they were instrumental in starting. Hence, affirmative action was implemented as a policy to give Black Americans of slave descent an opportunity to redress centuries of racial oppression through equitable and confirmatory access to postsecondary education. Nevertheless, in actuality, the postsecondary admissions officers have pivoted from affirmative action's original intent.

The university admissions officers' pivot from its original intent has led to focusing on attaining diversity and thus counting children of non-Black American slave descent as comparable to recruitment of children of Black-American slave descent. As a result, university's admissions process is disconnected from the US Civil Right movement, affirmative action, and *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka*, 347 U.S. 483.¹²⁷ According to Anthony Carnevale "the higher-education community is no longer

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¹²⁵Equal Protection Clause. Definition. Cornell University Law School, Legal Information Institute. 2019. Retrieved from: https://www.law.cornell.edu/wex/equal_protection Last visited: April 11, 2019.

¹²⁶*Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka*, 347 U.S. 483 (1954). Cornell University Law School, Legal Information Institute. Retrieved from: <https://www.law.cornell.edu/supremecourt/text/347/483>. Last Visited: April 11, 2019.

¹²⁷*Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka*, 347 U.S. 483 (1954). Cornell University Law School, Legal Information Institute. Retrieved from: <https://www.law.cornell.edu/supremecourt/text/347/483>. Last Visited: April 11, 2019.

connected to the civil rights movement.”¹²⁸ Carnevale, the former vice president of the Educational Testing Service (ETS) and current Director of the Georgetown University’s Center on Education and the Workforce, candidly stated “these immigrants represent Horatio Alger, not *Brown v. Board of Education* and America's race history.”¹²⁹ Dr. Carnevale’s comments explains that college admissions officers deviation from affirmative action policy’s original intent, and broadening of recruitment of Black students, has equated to dealing with racial issues as something to be overcome by individual initiative. Therefore, any problem a Black student might have can be overcome by hard work and not collective action. Nevertheless, the admissions officers’ deviation from affirmative actions original intent have influenced the growth of Black/non-slave descendent students, led to the diminishing populace of Black American students of slave descent and consequently created a divergence between students of African immigrant Black American slave descent.

¹²⁸Rooks, Noliwe M. *White Money/Black Power: The Surprising History of African American Studies and the Crisis of Race in Higher Education*. Boston: Beacon Press, 2006. Pg. 164

¹²⁹Ib

CHAPTER IX

MYTH AND MISCONCEPTION

One of the critical factors of the disconnect between the African and African-American community's chronological relationship is the fact that misperception and preemptive reservation is deeply engrained in the makeup of black American society. Nevertheless, it is a topic that continues to lack priority, dialogue, and formal understanding within the African, African-American community, and the entire American social order. According to LaBaron and Pillay "Conflicts are always cultural, since we are cultural beings, yet the very definition of conflict is different because of our cultural way of seeing".¹³⁰ This statement clearly defines the cultural divergence between two social groups that have similar foundations yet different definitions and outlook on life.

Due to the different societal experiences and environmental emigration of African and African-Americans, this resistance and social conflict is common within both groups. One of the main reason's there continues to be a disconnect between African and African-Americans is because there is a sense of mythical understanding and ignorance within both of these communities. Cultural stereotypes, ethnic misconception, and lack of value for each other's indigenous principles have overshadowed their ancestral foundation. According to Somalian migrant and Massachusetts resident Martin Mohammed, "Values and upbringings lie at the center of the cultures' misunderstanding"¹³¹ Mohammed, who is the president of the U.S. African Chamber of Commerce, goes on to say that "many Africans come to the U.S. to escape dire conditions such as poverty or civil war, their

¹³⁰LeBaron, Michelle, and Pillay, Venashri. *Conflict across Cultures: A Unique Experience of Bridging Differences*. Boston: Intercultural Press, 2006. Pg. 5

¹³¹Robbins, Richard H. *Global Problems and the Culture of Capitalism*. 2nd ed. Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon, 2001. Pg. 161

objectives are often advancing their education or finding good jobs... however, African immigrants find that education and good jobs elude their African-American brethren, and there is a perception that many African-American men aren't committed to supporting their families”¹³² This categorization, negative perception, and lack of cultural education have all led to a culturally intrinsic disconnects and continued to affect the imminent relationship between the African and African-American collective groups.

¹³²Ib

CHAPTER X

MEDIA

Since time immemorial, the Fourth Estate has had an immense effect on societies perception and interpretation of the government, community, culture, and overall civilization. Hence, In the case of African and African-Americans relationship the role of the Fourth Estate has certainly played a critical factor. Despite having the resources and ability to disseminate accurate and edifying narrative, the media has chiefly propagated a largely ostensible, hackneyed, and subterfuge messages about Africans and African-Americans. As a result, the media has been a consistent nocuous conduit recipe in the African and African-American community's misgivings, incertitude and largely repudiated relationship. Whether it is acknowledged or not, the media plays an integral role in the way we think, feel, and perceive everything. Stereotypical portrayals of African and African-Americans has been a common part of the majority of the mainstream media. As a result, that stereotypical depictions has led to stereotypical discernment. Due to the influence of the media, many African and African-Americans view each other through the same formulaic lens that the media disseminates.

While some media stereotypes are certainly unintended, some are outright intentional. Nevertheless, the outcome of both intended and unintentional stereotypes is a fetal one. According to Bosah Ebo "the negative portrayal of Africa by American media is deliberate and systematic process that is created and sustained by the bias in the way American media select foreign news stories."¹³³ While stereotypes of African-Americans are certainly wide-ranging, omnipresent, and fatal in scope and impact, the persistent and

¹³³Ebo, Bosah (1992): "American Media and African Culture" in Beverly Hawk (ed): *Africa's Media Image*. Westport, Praeger Publishers (1992): 15-25.

commonly enduring stereotype is that African-Americans are inferior, obtusely thickheaded, and or dangerous. Typically, powerful actors get to enjoy what is taught, disseminated, and chronologically learned. Hence, the populace of those powerful actors are often times not the populous that are being type-casted, rigidly dissected, and perpetually stereotyped. In this case, African-Americans are the not the powerful actors and or populace that are creating and labeling these stereotypes on themselves.

Since the inception of the United States, African-Americans have stereotypically depicted and wickedly type-casted. According to S. Plous² and Tyrone Williams, since the inception of slavery, African-Americans were stereotyped as inferior, unresolved, and apelike.¹³⁴ Furthermore, S. Plous² and Tyrone Williams explain that this stereotypical depiction was normalized and generally accepted to the point that the *Encyclopedia Britannica* of 1884 defined the word Negro as “the lowest position in the evolutionary scale, thus affording the best material for the comparative study of the highest anthropoid and the human species”.¹³⁵ The “anthropoid”¹³⁶ attribute consisted of "short flat snub nose, thick protruding lips, and exceedingly thick cranium"¹³⁷ The aforementioned examples of racially defamatory and ardently anti-African history demonstrates that the powerful actors and populace, is the white dominant society. Consequently, it is the African-American community that is and has been dealing with the repercussions of the stereotypes that was forcibly bestowed on them. Corollary, such chronologically persistent stereotypes have been so ingrained into the American societies psyche, it has

¹³⁴Plous, S., and Tyrone Williams. "Racial Stereotypes From the Days of American Slavery: A Continuing Legacy 1." *Journal of Applied Social Psychology* 25, no. 9 (1995): 795-817.

¹³⁵Ib

¹³⁶Ib

¹³⁷Ib

infiltrated many American subgroups, and effected the psyche and viewpoints of many African immigrants.

At the fundamental facet, it is facilely viable and commonly undertaken that one of the main causes of disconnects between African and African-Americans is the influence of the media. The vast majority of the media coverage of Africa and African-Americans has been impartial, anemic, fallacy, insipid and stereotypical. On one hand, the vast majority of television exposure regarding the historical and contemporary experiences of African-Americans has been negative. Similarly, Africa is often portrayed through an undesirable lens. While the historical and chronological media stereotypes have certainly ended up negatively portraying and wounding the image of both African and African-Americans. Those media depictions have certainly not been rigid to the level of the media, it has permeated and affected the day to day realities of both African and African-Americans. South African native Gaddafi Nkos explains that African media depicts African-Americans “as if they were these aggressive people that did nothing constructive with their lives except occupy prison space.”¹³⁸

When a group of African-American students were asked to explain the images of Africa and Africans they have learned from the media, they replied “They’re savages, they don’t know anything. They’re not schooled”.¹³⁹ These students went on to explain that they have gained their educational history about Africa from movies and media outlets such as *The Roots* and Discovery Channel.¹⁴⁰ These stereotypical train of thought explains that both of these groups have ethnically sensitive formidable education and

¹³⁸Robbins, Richard H. *Global Problems and the Culture of Capitalism*. 2nd ed. Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon, 2001. Pg. 157

¹³⁹Traoré, Rosemary Lukens. "Colonialism Continued: African Students in an Urban High School in America." *Journal of Black Studies* 34, no. 3 (2004): 348-69

¹⁴⁰Ib

entrusted themselves unorthodox views. According to Rosemary Lukens Traoré “To the African Americans, the Africans were primitive and ignorant; to the Africans, the African Americans were lazy and rude. These misconceptions and negative stereotypes clearly indicate the infiltration of colonialist ideas that have been perpetuated by the media and by the American educational system”.¹⁴¹ This description further strengthens the fact that negative perceptions by the media has defined the African and African-American relationship. Furthermore, Traoré’s outlook cogently demonstrates the lack of culturally and historically-accredited education as well as dialogue between both African and African-American. As aforementioned, the media has had a critical role in not only disseminating stereotypes of both African and African-Americans, it has certainly kept it alive. The conclusive result of the media’s lead role has certainly been ahistorical, wrong in theory, and conclusively harmful in consequence.

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CHAPTER XI

EDUCATIONAL COLONIZATION

A consequential and critical role in the discrepancy and divide between African and African-Americans is the lack of veracious education. Due to the lack of accurate education, there has certainly been misgivings scarce proportion of constructive dialogue. A critical factor in the infinitesimal totality of constructive and historically forthright education is power and authority. It is not Africans or African-American's that govern the American education system. Rather, the authority of education is and has always has been in the hands of the white American majority leaders. According to Traoré “when European historians compiled the story of Africa they told it from their own perspective, filtered it through the lens of the long standing colonial domination of the African nation”¹⁴² Traoré goes on to state “the Euro centric lens that was the principle vehicle of my understanding about African had long since been clouded over with distortion and misrepresentation”¹⁴³ While it is certainly disquieting, the aforementioned experience is not limited to Traoré because the story, fundamental narrative, research, and overall teaching of history of the continent of Africa and African-Americans has been conveyed through a white-American based Eurocentric lens.

Eurocentric-derived decimation of fallacy educative information and overall pedagogy has had a deleterious effect on the both the African and African-American communities outlook on each other. To have an intimate and first hand understanding of

¹⁴²Traore, R. Implementing Afrocentricity: Connecting Students of African Descent to Their Cultural Heritage. *The Journal of Pan African Studies*, vol.1, no.10 (2007): 62-78.

¹⁴³Ib

the impact of the Eurocentric-based education system, Rosemary Traoré conducted an in-depth study at a predominantly African-American student inner-city high school in a large metropolitan city of the United States. For the purposes of her research, Traoré keenly focused on nine African students and eight African-American students. The core of Traoré's research entailed definitively identifying the effect (or lack thereof) that their education (and educational setting) has had on their perception, understanding and knowledge of their counterpart African and African-American brethren. As aforementioned, Traoré research concludes that there is an overall disconnected yet hostile relationship between African and African-Americans.¹⁴⁴ The hostility, Traoré reports, derives from a combination of stereotypes and scarce knowledge about the basic history and lived experiences of African and African Americans.¹⁴⁵ Traoré's study also elucidates that the African and African-American students hostility is directly influenced and "promoted"¹⁴⁶ by the leadership of the school.¹⁴⁷ For instance, when Traoré asked about the availability of or breadth of African curriculum and or teachings at the school, African American studies teacher responded he "doesn't cover the subjects of Africa or Africans much in his classes because "they sold us into slavery."¹⁴⁸

In her 2010 published research, *African Students in America: Reconstructing new meanings of "African American" in urban education*, a ancillary research focused primarily on nine recently immigrated African students and eight African-American

¹⁴⁴Traore, Rosemary. "Voices of African Students in America: "We're Not from the Jungle"." *Multicultural Perspectives* 8, no. 2 (2006): 29-34.

¹⁴⁵Ib

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students relationship at the predominantly African-American (88%)¹⁴⁹ Jackson High School (the pseudonym name used for research purposes),¹⁵⁰ Traoré reiterated her position of the continued existence of hostility.¹⁵¹ While Traoré ascribed the stereotypical views of Africans towards African-American students (violent, rude, and welfare recipients)¹⁵² and African-American views of Africans (Wild, Tarzan, from dark continent)¹⁵³ on the “debilitating”¹⁵⁴ media-birthered stereotypes,¹⁵⁵ Traoré strongly indicates that educators have played an integral role in not only keeping these stereotypes alive but allowing them to percolate and strengthen.

As opposed to adhering to the major academia and school function of being a place that fosters intelligent exchange of ideas and cultures, Traoré explains that educators have played an vital role in the miseducation and tolerating the persisting existence hostility between African and African-American students by wittingly not implementing an welcoming image and dialogue of the continent of Africa through an equitable, Afrocentric, and factual African continent-educative curriculum.¹⁵⁶ Moreover, Traoré explains, educators have unwittingly played a integral role in permitting the existence of hostility, stereotypes and miseducation between African and African-American students by failing to utilize the tremendous opportunity of the presence of both African and African-American students as an incredible opportunity to bring them together, create an educative dialogue, highlight their shared heritage, and restore the

¹⁴⁹Traoreé, Rosemary Lukens. "African Students in America: Reconstructing New Meanings of "African American" in Urban Education." *Intercultural Education* 14, no. 3 (2003): 243-54.

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connections that were forcibly detached by the wicked exploits of slavery.¹⁵⁷

The Eurocentric educational pedagogy has not only kept African-Americans from learning about Africans and the African continent, it has largely kept African-Americans and the entire American populace from adequately learning and having equitable opportunity to access academic courses and teachings of African-American history and impact on American society. In 2011, the Southern Law Poverty Center (SLPC) conducted an in-depth review of the teachings of African-American history in the entire United States education system. The SPLC thoroughly reviewed the entire 50 states education curriculum and found that 18 states require coverage of the Civil Right Movement/Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr, 6 states require the teaching of Jim Crow policies, 11 states require teaching about the March on Washington (where Dr. King delivered his ‘I have a dream’ speech).¹⁵⁸ Furthermore, this research found that 16 states require no coverage and instruction “at all” on the Civil Rights Movement.¹⁵⁹

Akin to the African-American lack of equitable access to teaching of the imperative history and impact of African-Americans, African immigrants also do not have an adequate understanding of the African-American history and overall chronological experience. In addition to insufficient access to formidable education and teachings of the African-American history, Africans lack of understanding about the chronological experience of anti-black racism is due to their demographic-based lived experiences. While Majority of American immigrating Africans have a lack of physical

¹⁵⁷Ib

¹⁵⁸Southern Poverty Law Center. Teaching Tolerance Program. *The State of Civil Rights Education In The United States 2011*. Retrieved from:

https://www.dropbox.com/s/qf9qxrrbicuijby/Teaching_the_Movement.pdf Pg.19. Last viewed: August 17, 2018

¹⁵⁹Ib

experience, societal familiarity and overall understanding of the minority status-based discrimination because they are often in the majority of the racial hierarchy of the country they emigrate from. According to Josephine Moraa Moikobu “black Africans come from backgrounds where a traditional African way of life predominates and where Africans were and are in the majority for the most part”.¹⁶⁰ As a result, Moikobu continues “most black Africans, except in places like South Africa, have been less affected by racial discrimination than black Americans”.¹⁶¹ While Africans have not historically experienced the same type (and level) of minority-based anti-Black racial discrimination, they have not escaped the infliction that a Eurocentric education system can have on a society.

Similar to the experiences of African-Americans, the education system was originally designed to distort and inaccurately edify the African populace. Traoré eruditely elucidates that that the education system in the continent of Africa was “originally set up by the colonial masters, have not been educating the African students about their heritage either”¹⁶² Moreover, Traoré explains, “Schools in America for the most part are not designed to educate Africans or Africans Americans about Africa, their historical and cultural heritage”¹⁶³ This comment further strengthens the fact that generationally imposed-ignorance, ahistorical indoctrination and overall misperception has overshadowed their fundamental kinship and led to sunder contemporary status.

¹⁶⁰Moikobu, Josephine Moraa. *Blood and Flesh: Black American and African Identifications*. Contributions in Afro-American and African Studies; No. 59. Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1981. Pg. 118

¹⁶¹Ib

¹⁶²Traoré, Rosemary Lukens. "African Students in America: Reconstructing New Meanings of "African American" in Urban Education." *Intercultural Education* 14, no. 3 (2003): 243-54. Pg. 15

¹⁶³Ib

CHAPTER XII

APOLOGY

At the social, ethnic, national and overall communal level, one critical issue that has not been satisfactorily addressed, yet has seemed to play a fundamental role in keeping the African and African-American community apart is the lack of apology and formal acknowledgment of the palpability Africans had in slavery. In 1994, Benin, the French-speaking West African country, three years removed from their countries monumental shifted from a dictatorship to democratic society, officially addressed the thorny issues of slavery by holding a United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) sponsored international conference that conducted a historical investigation on the crux of slavery.¹⁶⁴ Five years later, Benin President Mathieu Kérékou made a formative trip to Baltimore, Maryland's Church of the Great Commission and formally apologized to African-Americans. According to Henry Louis Gates Jr, "President Kérékou apologize on his knees to African-Americans for the African role in the slave trade."¹⁶⁵

In 1999, Benin hosted the inaugural International Leaders Conference for Reconciliation and Development. At this conference, which including two US Congressmen¹⁶⁶ former Ghanaian President Jerry Rawlings,¹⁶⁷ and various other world

¹⁶⁴United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization/Slaver Route Project. *The UNESCO Promotion of common heritage through the Slave Route Project*. 20th Anniversary Slave Route: Resistance, Liberty, Heritage Assume the past, Understand the present, Build the future together. Retrieved from: https://en.unesco.org/system/files/Promotion%20of%20common%20heritage%20through%20the%20Slave%20Route%20Project_0.pdf. Last viewed: April 1, 2019

¹⁶⁵Gates Jr, Henry Louis. (2001). *The Future of Slavery's Past*. <https://www.nytimes.com/2001/07/29/opinion/the-future-of-slavery-s-past.html>. Last visited: April 1, 2019

¹⁶⁶Johnson, Theodore R. "How to Apologize for Slavery." *The Atlantic*, Atlantic Media Company. Retrieved from: www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2014/08/how-to-apologize-for-slavery/375650/. Last viewed: April 9, 2019

leaders. President Kérékou give a powerful speech and vividly point out that Africans “were thrown as food to sharks, families parted forever, those men and women sold in shameful trade markets, enslaved and turned into mere chattel on hostile plantation.”¹⁶⁸ Moreover, President Kérékou elucidates “our collective memories also remember our guilty complicities in this hedious act.”¹⁶⁹ To put a final point on his stance on repention, President Kérékou stated “we need to confess our responsibility before history in order to hear from the past to be able to build for the future.”¹⁷⁰ President Kérékou’s call for acceptance of responsibility and apology was not only monumental for his country, it is monumental for the entire world. He challenged every culprit, the kidnappers, sellers, buyers, and chronological tribal and governmental representatives to admit culpability and apologize to African-Americans. After this speech, President Kérékou, along with several leaders of his government, traveled to various states in America to apologize to African-Americans.¹⁷¹

While Benin’s apology has not led to widespread acknowledgment and apology, it has sparked many leaders into having a dialogue about this difficult subject-matter and played a critical role in another prominent African countries issuance of a formal apology. In 2006, the Republic of Ghana officially apologized to African-American. In

¹⁶⁷Gates Jr, Henry Louis. (2001). *The Future of Slavery’s Past*. Retrieved from: <https://www.nytimes.com/2001/07/29/opinion/the-future-of-slavery-s-past.html>. Last visited: April 1, 2019

¹⁶⁸Hatch, John B. *Race and Reconciliation: Redressing Wounds of Injustice*. 1st Pbk. ed. Race, Rites, and Rhetoric. Lanham: Lexington Books, 2010. Pg. 268

¹⁶⁹Ib

¹⁷⁰Ib

¹⁷¹Tribune News Services. “BENIN OFFICIALS APOLOGIZE FOR ROLE IN U.S. SLAVE TRADE.” Retrieved from: www.chicagotribune.com/news/ct-xpm-2000-05-01-0005010158-story.html. Last viewed: April 9, 2019

addition to formally apologizing, Ghana created “Project Joseph”,¹⁷² a government-led campaign that is aimed at attracting African-American visitors and specifically entailing tours that demonstrates “how Africans aided European slavers.”¹⁷³

While this business-like approach can diminish the sincerity of Ghana’s apology, the leadership of Ghana believes this approach is appropriate because it is permanently institutionalized in their educational and tourist system and will continually acknowledge their countries culpability in slavery. Emmanuel Hagan, the Director of Research and Statistics at Ghana’s Ministry of Tourism and Diaspora Relations, elucidates “The reason why we wanted to do some formal thing is that we want – even if it’s just for the surface of it, for the cosmetic of it – to be seen to be saying ‘sorry’ to those who feel very strongly and who we believe have distorted history, because they get the impression that it was people here who just took them and sold them.”¹⁷⁴ Furthermore, Ghana’s goal of increasing the African-American tourist numbers has certainly worked. As of 2014, about 3,000 African-Americans live in Ghana.¹⁷⁵ Additionally, between 2007-2014 an estimate of 10,000 African-Americans visit Ghana each year.¹⁷⁶

The Republic of Uganda acknowledged that African’s certainly played a role in the slave trade. However, Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni stressed that an apology must come from the direct perpetrators, the tribal chiefs, not the governmental leaders. In

¹⁷²Modern Ghana. “Ghana Apologizes to Slaves' Descendants.” *Modern Ghana*, Modern Ghana. Retrieved from: www.modernghana.com/news/102692/1/ghana-apologizes-to-slaves-descendants.html. Last viewed: April 9, 2019

¹⁷³Ib

¹⁷⁴Modern Ghana. “Ghana Apologizes For Its Role In Slave Trade: Country's 50th Anniversary Includes Tourism Campaign.” *Modern Ghana*, Modern Ghana. Retrieved from: www.modernghana.com/news/102821/ghana-apologizes-for-its-role-in-slave-trade-countrys-50th.html. Last viewed: April 9, 2019

¹⁷⁵Johnson, Theodore R. “How to Apologize for Slavery.” *The Atlantic*, Atlantic Media Company. Retrieved from: www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2014/08/how-to-apologize-for-slavery/375650/. Last viewed: April 11, 2019

¹⁷⁶Ib

a 1998 speech, President Museveni, with US President Bill Clinton in attendance, stated ““African chiefs were the ones waging war on each other and capturing their own people and selling them. If anyone should apologize it should be the African chiefs.”¹⁷⁷

While President Museveni’s comment does make sense in theory, one can retort that his perspective is a bit narrow-minded because those chiefs have an enormous influence on their community and society. Moreover, the chiefs are also a significant part and overall representatives of their country. As a governmental representative of their country, those that are pro-apology issuance contend that it not impracticable for a country’s leadership (or non-government affiliated citizen) to apologize on behalf of the heinous actions of the chiefs. If one is seeking to truly acknowledge and apologize about Africa’s culpability in slavery, the conversation must be sensitive to the experiences of the victims (African-Americans). In this vein, it is essential for President Museveni to move beyond the “blame the chiefs” approach. In essence, it is misleading to say one can have a true conversation about “an apology for Africans role in slavery” only among few African chiefs and the African-American populace. Even if those that are culpable are only the chiefs, the chiefs are still Africans. Overall, this is still African history, after all.

In 2013, Kpoto-Zounme Hakpon III, the king of Porto-Novo, the capital city of the Republic of Benin and one of the prominent port cities of West Africa, traveled to Hobson City, Alabama to apologize for his ancestor's role in the trans-Atlantic slave trade. Hobson City, the town that was incorporated in 1899 as Alabama’s first all-black city was perhaps the most ideal place an Africa king (or any representative of Africa)

¹⁷⁷Smith, David. “African Chiefs Urged to Apologise for Slave Trade.” *The Guardian*, Guardian News and Media, November 19, 2009. Retrieved from: www.theguardian.com/world/2009/nov/18/africans-apologise-slave-trade. Last viewed: April 11, 2019

can address African-Americans.¹⁷⁸ King Hakpon III, a direct descendant of King Te-Agbanlin, who in the 16th century founded Porto-Novo,¹⁷⁹ acknowledged his ancestors facilitation of the slave trade and apologized to his American Black “brothers and sisters.”¹⁸⁰ Sitting in front of a large group of African-Americans of slave descent, Hakpon III stated “I want to apologize for the role my ancestors played in the slave trade.”¹⁸¹ Additionally, King Hakpon III affirmed that his visit to Hobson City was one he was thinking about taking on for a long time. Through his translator, King Hakpon III explained Hakpon III “I knew one day I wanted to come to this land and ask forgiveness of my black brothers and sisters.”¹⁸² King Hakpon III also explain “I wanted to cross the ocean to see the land where my ancestors suffered.”¹⁸³ These comments led to a round of applause by the African-Americans in attendance. More importantly, these comments demonstrated a sincere apology and acknowledged the generational pain Africans role in slavery has caused African-Americans.

In addition to King Hakpon III, Hector Posset, the ambassador of the Republic of Benin, traveled to Mobile, Alabama, apologized to African-Americans, offered libations and performed Benin’s deity-based traditional ritual.¹⁸⁴ Ambassador Posset arrived in Mobile exactly two days after it became publicized in breaking news that the

¹⁷⁸Burkhalter, Eddie. “Hobson City to Get Visit from West African King.” *The Anniston Star*. July 1, 2013, Retrieved from: www.annistonstar.com/news/hobson-city-to-get-visit-from-west-african-king/article_f0481f48-cef5-5b6b-8299-ba0149419415.html. Last viewed: April 11, 2019

¹⁷⁹Ballou, Brian R. Call From a King. African icon visits women's homeless shelter on US trip to restore ties. *The Boston Globe*. April 30, 2008. Retrieved from: http://archive.boston.com/news/local/articles/2008/04/30/call_from_a_king/ Last viewed: April 11, 2019

¹⁸⁰Burkhalter, Eddie. “Hobson City to Get Visit from West African King.” *The Anniston Star*. July 1, 2013, Retrieved from: www.annistonstar.com/news/hobson-city-to-get-visit-from-west-african-king/article_f0481f48-cef5-5b6b-8299-ba0149419415.html. Last viewed: April 11, 2019

¹⁸¹Ib

¹⁸²Ib

¹⁸³Ib

¹⁸⁴Raines, Ben. “Forgive Us, Because We Sold Them,' Says African Ambassador on Possible Slave Ship Find.” *Al.com*, Al.com. February 18, 2018. Retrieved from: www.al.com/news/mobile/2018/02/i_am_just_begging_them_to_forg.html. Last viewed: April 11, 2019

Clotilda ship was found. A burnt ship the size and age of the Clotilda had been found in the Mobile–Tensaw River Delta.¹⁸⁵ The Clotilda ship is the last know slave ship that brought forcibly captive Africans to the shores of Mobile Bay.¹⁸⁶ Arriving on July 9, 1860, the Clotilda carried a cargo of approximately 110 to 160 enslaved Africans.¹⁸⁷ Ambassador Posset’s visit to Alabama and apology was significant on a personal, professional, and national level. Similar to other slave transactions, the Clotilda captives were first captured by fellow Africans and then sold to the white Americans.¹⁸⁸ The African capturers were either descendants of the local royal family and or the loyal workers for the royal family. In this instance, the Clotilda ship solely held captives from Benin, a country that was known as the Kingdom of Dahomey.¹⁸⁹ On a personal level, an apology and acknowledgement of culpability in the slave trade is important to Ambassador Posset because he is descendent of Benin’s royal family. It was Ambassador Posset’s royal family descendants that played a forefront role in forced selling on the captive on the Clotilda ship.¹⁹⁰ According to Ben Raines “By the 1800s, the King of Dahomey was making about a quarter of a million dollars a year selling Africans to Europeans”. Raines, an investigative reporter in Alabama,

¹⁸⁵Ib

¹⁸⁶Pilgrim, David. “Cudjo Lewis: Last African Slave in the U.S.? - July 2005.” *Cudjo Lewis: Last African Slave in the U.S.? - 2005 - Question of the Month - Jim Crow Museum - Ferris State University*. 2005. Retrieved from: www.ferris.edu/HTMLS/news/jimcrow/question/2005/july.htm. Last viewed: April 11, 2019

¹⁸⁷Ib

¹⁸⁸Raines, Ben. “Forgive Us, Because We Sold Them,’ Says African Ambassador on Possible Slave Ship Find.” *Al.com*, Al.com. February 18, 2018. Retrieved from: www.al.com/news/mobile/2018/02/i_am_just_begging_them_to_forg.html. Last viewed: April 11, 2019

¹⁸⁹Ib

¹⁹⁰Ib

elucidates “a quarter of a million dollars in 1860 would be worth roughly \$50 million today (2018)”.¹⁹¹

On his visit, Ambassador Posset’s main agenda included going to the shore of Mobile Bay, conducting cultural ritual and expressing his remorse. The ritual ambassador Posset performed was called Vodun.¹⁹² Benin's premier traditional religious ritual, Vodun, is a precursor to various forms of voodoo that is practiced in the African diaspora communities of historically slave owning countries. Vodun assigns significant importance on the veneration of ancestors, who are believed to linger alongside the living. After performing the Vodun ritual, Ambassador Posset, overcome with emotions, explained "It was my ancestors who did this. We have ancestors who came here to this country forced. Forcibly, they didn't choose, I will always beg them for forgiveness."¹⁹³ As it pertains to the resentment some African-American may feel towards Africans, ambassador Posset explained “I am not insulting those who came here who were forced to come, because they were forced. I am insulting those who sold them back home. No means, no money, no articles, no stuff can buy life, but we sold our people. Brothers sold brothers and sisters. Fathers sold kids and wife. I will never blame those who came here.”¹⁹⁴

In 2009, Nigerian tribal chiefs sought an official amendment to their country’s constitution, thus effectively formalizing their influential role in their country’s government. In light of this attempt, the Nigerian Civil Rights Congress wrote an open letter and implored the chieftains to apologize for their descendant’s role in the trans-

¹⁹¹Ib

¹⁹²Ib

¹⁹³Ib

¹⁹⁴Ib

Atlantic slave trade. Authored by the Civil Rights Congress President Shehu Sani, the letter elucidated “we cannot continue to blame the white men, as Africans, particularly the traditional rulers, are not blameless.”¹⁹⁵ Moreover, the congress wrote “In view of the fact that the Americans and Europe have accepted the cruelty of their roles and have forcefully apologized, it would be logical, reasonable and humbling if African traditional rulers ... [could] accept blame and formally apologise to the descendants of the victims.”¹⁹⁶ In an interview with British Broadcasting Corporation, Congressional President Sani stated “to have moral standing to be part of our constitutional arrangement there are some historical issues for them to address...one part of which is the involvement of their institutions in the slave trade.”¹⁹⁷ Congressional President Sani’s comments along with the apology statement from the Civil Rights Congress demonstrates the thorny complexity of an apology. While the intent of the Civil Rights Congress, a human rights-based organization, should not be questioned, one cannot fail to wonder if their call of apology was in spite (or despite) Nigerian chieftains wish for constitutional inclusion as well as American and European nation’s apology.

The response to the Nigerian Civil Rights appeal was multifarious. According to Henry Bonsu “People aren't milling around Lagos ... moaning about why chiefs don't apologise.”¹⁹⁸ Bonsu, a British born former BBC journalist stated “some chiefs had

¹⁹⁵Smith, David. “African Chiefs Urged to Apologise for Slave Trade.” *The Guardian*, Guardian News and Media, November 19, 2009. Retrieved from: www.theguardian.com/world/2009/nov/18/africans-apologise-slave-trade. Last viewed: April 11, 2019

¹⁹⁶ib

¹⁹⁷African Slavery Apology 'Needed'.” *BBC News*, BBC. November 12, 2009. Retrieved from: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/8356357.stm>. Last viewed: April 11, 2019.

¹⁹⁸Smith, David. “African Chiefs Urged to Apologise for Slave Trade.” *The Guardian*, Guardian News and Media, November 19, 2009. Retrieved from: www.theguardian.com/world/2009/nov/18/africans-apologise-slave-trade. Last viewed: April 11, 2019

accepted responsibility and sought atonement.”¹⁹⁹ After researching various African apologies and conducting numerous interviews in Nigeria, Bonsu concluded that many Nigerians are “more concerned about the everyday and why they still have bad governance.”²⁰⁰

In 2018, Abdulrosheed Adewale Akanbi, fully acknowledged and apologized for the Monarchs participation in slavery. Akenbi, formally recognized as the “Oluwo of Iwo”²⁰¹ is the ruler of the Yorùbá Kingdom and forefront monarchial leader of the Yorùbá people.²⁰² The Yorùbá people are an African ethnic group that primarily reside in West Africa. According to the CIA World Factbook, the Yorùbá ethnic community comprise about 44 million people in total.²⁰³ While the vast majority of the Yorùbá populace reside in West Africa, the single largest number reside in Nigeria. Out of Nigeria’s 203,452,505, population, 13.9% are from the Yorùbá ethnic group.²⁰⁴ In his apology, Akenbi, bemoaned the actions of his ancestors, admitted to the Monarchy’s forefront role in the capture and selling of many Africans, and sincerely apologized for the generational pain and destruction their actions have inflicted on African-Americans. In a lengthy statement, Akenbi stated “Monarchs are one of the stakeholders that promoted slavery. We sold our children for a wall clock, tobacco, alcohol, guns, glass cup, wine, necklace, food plate, sweet and other unmerited peanuts...I take the bull by the horns to apologise for the role kingship played in slave

¹⁹⁹Ib

²⁰⁰Ib

²⁰¹Oluwole, Josiah. “Nigeria: Monarch Apologises for Traditional Rulers' Participation in Slave Trade.” *AllAfrica.com*. June 15, 2018. Retrieved from: <https://allafrica.com/stories/201806150011.html> Last viewed: April 11, 2019

²⁰²Ib

²⁰³“The World Factbook: Nigeria.” *Central Intelligence Agency*, Central Intelligence Agency. February 1, 2018. Retrieved from: <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ni.html>. Last viewed: April 11, 2019

²⁰⁴Ib

trading because of material life. Many black Americans are yet to recover from the wound of slavery.”²⁰⁵ Additionally, Akenbi addressed the importance of being transparent and teaching Nigerian children the guilty role the Monarch had in capturing, selling, and enslaving and institutionalizing the transatlantic slave trade.²⁰⁶

While the internal Nigerian reaction to the Nigerian Civil Rights Congress call for an apology varied, in the African continent, the topic of the need of accountability and apology has also varied. According to Fred Swaniker, “I’m not sure whether an apology is needed.”²⁰⁷ Swaniker, the founder of the South African based African Leadership Academy, goes on to explain “it would be worth looking at and acknowledging the role Africa did play in the slave trade. Someone had to find the slaves and bring them before the Europeans.”²⁰⁸ Mr. Swaniker’s “acknowledgement” approving yet uncertain about “the need of apology” outlook is an example of the mixed perspectives many African’s have about the need for an apology to African-Americans. While the aforementioned perspectives and approaches to apology are mainly from those that are in government or kingdom hierarchy, there has certainly been important dialogues between the non-government representing African citizens and African-Americans. Theodore R. Johnson III, a United States Navy veteran and George University Professor visited the Republic of Senegal and got an unexpected apology from a local Senegalese resident. During his trip,

²⁰⁵Oluwole, Josiah. “Nigeria: Monarch Apologises for Traditional Rulers’ Participation in Slave Trade.” *AllAfrica.com*. June 15, 2018. Retrieved from: <https://allafrica.com/stories/201806150011.html> Last viewed: April 11, 2019

²⁰⁶Ib

²⁰⁷Smith, David. “African Chiefs Urged to Apologise for Slave Trade.” *The Guardian*, Guardian News and Media, November 19, 2009. Retrieved from: www.theguardian.com/world/2009/nov/18/africans-apologise-slave-trade. Last viewed: April 11, 2019

²⁰⁸Ib

Mr. Johnson III visited the immemorial “door of no return”.²⁰⁹ The door of no return is the final door that millions of Africans would go through to permanently leave Africa.²¹⁰ The door of no return opens directly into the shores of the Atlantic Ocean, where ships are ready to cage, forcibly vend and enslave Africans.²¹¹ During his trip, Mr. Johnson III visited the modern day slave castle and saw the door that many Africans forcibly went through and were gone forever.²¹² As he was standing on the slave castle, looking at the door of no return, and listening to his tour guides explanation of the horrid history of the door of no return, Mr. Johnson III was approached by a local Senegalese resident.²¹³ Upon approaching him, the Senegalese man asked Mr. Johnson III if he was African-American, to which Mr. Johnson III responded and told him that he is African-American. Subsequently, Mr. Johnson explains “he put his hand on my shoulder and, with his voice cracking with emotion, said, ‘I’m sorry, brother’.”²¹⁴ The man’s genuine emotion and apology had a significant impact on Johnson III. It also caused him to think about the United States lack of apology. Most importantly, this interaction is a great example that there are many Africans that feel it is the duty and will of their people to apology to African-Americans.

While there may not be abundant research or documentations of singular citizen-to-citizen or non-government-led apologies, Mr. Johnson III’s chance encounter and singularly addressed apology is certainly not the only one. In 2013, William Holland, an African-American businessman from Georgia, traced his ancestry to Cameroon. After a

²⁰⁹III, Theodore R. Johnson. “Africans Have Apologized for Slavery, So Why Won't the US?” *The Root*, The Root. January 12, 2017. Retrieved from: <https://www.theroot.com/africans-have-apologized-for-slavery-so-why-won-t-the-1790876029>. Last viewed: April 11, 2019

²¹⁰Ib

²¹¹Ib

²¹²Ib

²¹³Ib

²¹⁴Ib

thorough genealogy research, Holland found out that his ancestors were forcibly given to white slave masters, vended to Virginia, and subjected to slavery.²¹⁵ Moreover, Holland's genealogy search led identified that he has direct roots with the Bailack Patriarchy and the Oku clan of Cameroon's northwest region.²¹⁶ During the 1770's the Oku clan, including Holland's great-great-great-great-grandfather were forcibly sold to white slavers by rival clans.²¹⁷ After he discovered his ancestral history, Holland visited Cameroon, formed a relationship with the royalties of the clans, and engaged in conversations with them about the thorny history of slavery. During one of their dialogues, Holland explained the crux of slavery in America and even revealed the chains and shackles that slaves are confined too during the horrid transatlantic trip and in America.²¹⁸ According to Holland the Cameroonians were "shocked and said, 'It's time to make amends with the gods. It's time to do something with the families and re-establish a relationship'".²¹⁹ Additionally, Holland received a written letter of apology from Ngako Ngalatchui, Cameroon's Fon of Bakou.²²⁰

The letter of apology is unique because it specifically mentions Holland's family. However, Holland explains "It also represents thousands of other people who have an ancestral tie to Cameroon, one way or another"²²¹ In the text of the apology it is eloquently and powerfully stated "We, the local Fons from the Bafang subdivision of

²¹⁵Boyle, Alan. "Genetic Quest Leads to African Apology for Role in Slave Trade." *NBCNews.com*, NBC Universal News Group. October 27, 2013. Retrieved from: www.nbcnews.com/sciencemain/genetic-quest-leads-african-apology-role-slave-trade-8C11467842 Last viewed: April 11, 2019

²¹⁶Ib

²¹⁷Ib

²¹⁸Ib

²¹⁹Ib

²²⁰News, NBC. "Text of Cameroon Apology: 'Powerful and Meaningful Atonement'." *NBCNews.com*, NBC Universal News Group. October 25 2013. Retrieved from: www.nbcnews.com/sciencemain/text-cameroon-apology-powerful-meaningful-atonement-8C11469352. Last viewed: April 11, 2019

²²¹Ib

Bakou, Cameroon, would like to formally state that we are sorry and issue an official apology for our involvement and the involvement of our ancestors in the horrible institution of transatlantic slavery. The United States of America”²²² This written apology demonstrates the variety of ways one can learn about the true history of slavery, address everyone groups culpability, and apologize to the African-American community, they were, after all, the one’s that endured centuries of enslavement.

During his first term in office, Donald Trump, the 45th President of the United States, utilized his presidential executive powers institute a travel ban on selected countries. The travel ban, which included three revised versions, barred foreign nationals from Iran, Libya, Somalia, Sudan, Syria, Yemen, Chad, Venezuela, and North Korea from entering the United States. In various political rallies (prior to and after he was elected) President Trump deemed this to be a “Muslim travel ban.”²²³ However, during numerous court proceedings, the Trump administration argued that it is not a “Muslim travel ban.”²²⁴ Many critics argue that this executive action was a subterfuge to hide the president’s racial, ethnic, and religious animus. Internationally, this travel ban elicited various responses. In particular, the African Union publically criticized President Trump’s decisions to include Chad, Somalia and Sudan on his list of countries he would cease travel to and from the United States. In their publication rebuke, the African Union invoked the United States’ history of slavery. After a two day summit, the 53 member African Union countries elucidated that the United States and the African Union are in

²²²Ib

²²³Vogue, Ariane de, and Saba Hamedy. “Kennedy, Conservatives Appear to Back Trump on Travel Ban.” *CNN*, Cable News Network. April 25, 2018. Retrieved from: www.cnn.com/2018/04/25/politics/supreme-court-travel-ban/index.html. Last viewed: April 11, 2019

²²⁴Ib

“very turbulent times.”²²⁵ Moreover, the African Union explained “The very country to which many of our people were taken as slaves during the transatlantic slave trade has now decided to ban refugees from some of our countries.”²²⁶ This condemnation of President Trumps travel plan, and acknowledgement of the United States historical transgression in slavery, is powerful on many levels. Moreover, it is an example that African Union can come together as a 53-country member entity to not only acknowledge the Africa’s culpability in slavery, but also apologize and welcome back African-Americans.

²²⁵Withnall, Adam. “African Union Condemns US for 'Taking Our People as Slaves' but Not as Refugees.” *The Independent*, Independent Digital News and Media. January 30. 2017. Retrieved from: www.independent.co.uk/news/world/africa/donald-trump-muslim-ban-african-union-refugees-slaves-immigration-a7553041.html. Last viewed: April 11, 2019

²²⁶Ib

CHAPTER XIII

APOLOGY ISSUANCE QUANDARY

While apologizing for their involvement of slavery is a significant matter, it is essential to make it clear that it does not exonerate white Americans, the Portuguese, France, England or any other country's, person's, or communities' involvement. Moreover, though the necessity of an apology may seem like it is for the clear-cut reason for the guilt of Africans selling other Africans, it is certainly not cut and dry. While it may be easy to say that it was Africans selling other Africans, the truth is, during that time (and even now) there was not a monolithic "African slave capturer" and "African captive" identity that existed during that time. In essence, two of the main reasons Africans played a role in slavery was because of tribalism and lack of loyalty. According to Theodore R. Johnson III "different tribes saw themselves as completely distinct and held no inherent loyalties to one another."²²⁷ This comment demonstrates that it is essential to be vigilant in addressing the subject of apology as an amalgamated "African" matter.

The critics of an apology for slavery assert that it is simply a symbolic gesture that is intended to absolve guilt from the moral conscience of those that legitimized it. Moreover, many assert that it is trivial action that will ultimately end up indicting current Africans, or specifically, the descendants of the alleged African perpetrators, for the wicked wrongdoing of their forebear's. Nevertheless, an apology, even if it is to the descendants of slaves, is not a pre-requisite to a guilt-trip or punitive result. It is to address and empathize with the survivors of an atrocity. An apology is not a packaged

²²⁷III, Theodore R. Johnson. "Africans Have Apologized for Slavery, So Why Won't the US?" *The Root*, The Root. January 12, 2017. Retrieved from: <https://www.theroot.com/africans-have-apologized-for-slavery-so-why-won-t-the-1790876029>. Last viewed: April 11, 2019

part of an ethnic condemnation, ethnic castigation or societal punishment initiative.

Rather, it is intended to teach and liberate one from the chains that slavery's nefarious history has created.

CHAPTER XIV

CONCLUSION

The crux of this research was to thoroughly examine and analyze the chronological experience and comparative relationship between non-slave descending Africans in America and African-American. The result of my research essentially pinpointed that the United States history has affected their relationship and effectively situated their relationship to be lost in the intersection of race and identity. Yes, they both also have rich cultural histories and connections to the geographical continent of Africa. Nevertheless, there is certainly a misunderstanding, conflict, ignorance and long-standing grudges between the two groups. Because of their independent and non-independent way of coming to the United States, one group mainly connects to their Africanness while the other connects to their Blackness.

As I sieve through the outcomes of this research's themes, it is evident that both African and African-Americans are predominantly religious (occidental and indigenous religion) groups. However, despite their deep adherence to a higher religious belief, one of the key element that continues to create barriers between them is the United States education system, mainstream media and lack of opportunity to explore and create an open dialogue about their transatlantic disconnection and pain that slavery has caused both groups.

While having a robust understanding of the issues that have led to the strained relationship between Africans and African-Americans it is also important to not only envisage but also implement resolutions that will combat and repair their strained relationship. The media has certainly played an integral role in straining the African and

African-American community's relationship. Nevertheless, it can also be a platform that can bring them together. A key way that the media can help bridge the African and African-American imagery is through positive imagery and reciprocally constructive and candid media content. As opposed to the Eurocentric-based historically deleterious yet normalized imagery that has been bestowed to them African and African-Americans should both take proactive approach to generating imagery that explains the accurate and inspirational imagery of their culturally rich history and immensely important contributions to society.

In contrast to the media typical imagery of being dangerous or lazy (African-Americans) and/or economically deprived and wild (Africans), Africa-Americans should take a proactive approach and disseminate a positive imagery that symbolizes their enormous contributions to society and demonstrates their rich culture and continued contribution to their countries. Moreover, they should utilize positive imagery to emphasize their commonalities. Through this approach, they can develop cohesion and create a strong Pan-African correlation.

In the United States, one's skin color plays an essential role in how they are treated and viewed. During a 60 Minute Profile, reporter Steve Kroft inquired to then candidate Barack Obama "There are African-Americans who don't think that you're black enough, who don't think that you have had the required experience."²²⁸ Obama responded "the truth of the matter is when I'm walking down the south side of Chicago and visiting my barbershop and playing basketball in some of these neighborhoods, those

²²⁸The Long-Shot Candidate. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F8MxP9adPO8&t=487s>. Last visited: April 11, 2019.

aren't questions I get asked."²²⁹ Obama went on to state "I also notice when I'm catching a cab nobody's confused about that, either."²³⁰ Obama's response did not reject the importance of ethnic pride or cultural distinctiveness. However, it did point to a fact that Africans and African-Americans are primarily viewed through the lenses of their skin color and treated accordingly. Thus, Obama's comment also explains that African and African-Americans can find commonality and develop a bond of allship with one another. That commonality is their skin color and significance of being Black in America. While African and African-American's should unite and celebrate their shared Blackness, they must also embrace their distinct cultures and unique ethnic lineage background. It is economically, socially, and politically beneficial for African and African-Americans to turn the negative perception of their Blackness into a positive one and unite with one another on the basis of their skin color. Nevertheless, they must simultaneously prioritize and embrace differences that are critical to their in-group ethnic identity and lineage.

In the United States, especially in the African and African American community, slavery is dealt with and or described in an idealized and or not totally realistic manner. For various reasons, it is certainly easier (and politically correct) to look at white European-Americans and denounce them for slavery. However, that would play into the unrealistic notion of the foundation of slavery. As a matter of transparency and non-ahistorical perspective, the foundation of and culpability of slavery is the equal responsibility of elite Africans (mostly kings and government leaders) and white European-Americans. To rectify and strengthen the relationship between African and African-Americans, the historical narrative of slavery, especially around culpability,

²²⁹Ib

²³⁰Ib

should be conducted in a manner that is free of deceit, untruthfulness and political correction. Moreover, Africa should apologize to descendants of slaves. While apology is metaphorical in a sense, it is still important because it comes directly with candid acknowledgement of Africans' role in slavery. A metaphoric gesture of apology can not only strengthen the African and African-American relationship, it can lead to other forms of reparations for African-Americans. An apology without addressing the disinformation of their respective histories in educational texts is inadequate. The same poison pill will linger on with future generations of students. As opposed to keeping the status quo, an apology can help lead to acceptance and love. It will also strengthen Malcom X's belief in loving your root and accepting each other's Africanness. As noted earlier, Malcolm X powerfully stated "hating the Africans, we ended up hating ourselves, without even realizing it. Because you can't hate the roots of a tree, and not hate the tree. You can't hate your origin and not end up hating yourself. You can't hate Africa and not hate yourself"²³¹ Additionally, an honest dialogue and apology will be an eternally teachable gesticulation that will liberate African and African-Americans. Surely, any road to liberation will entail painful moments. Nevertheless, that is a critical part of reconciliation, deviation from historical obliviousness and acknowledgment of the pain of the past.

To build a peaceful and understanding future, one must first look back and acknowledge history. Subsequently, one must respectfully communicate and acknowledge the mental distress and physical harm that many have endured as a subgroup. As representatives of a large populace, Africans and African-Americans have

²³¹X, Malcolm, and Breitman, George. *Malcolm X Speaks: Selected Speeches and Statements*. Evergreen Black Cat Book; B-351-D. New York: Grove Press, 1966. Pg. 3. Last visited: January 29, 2018.

robust tradition along with basic needs and interests that makes them diverse in many ways. Thus, it is up to them to use their inner diversity and educational awareness to find a satisfactory way to engage with those that are concerned about their complex relationship. Though it may be uncomfortable, it is vital to have a factual, well-informed, and solution-based discussion about slavery and other important subject matter that has historically affected not only African and African-American's but also changed the course of this world's geographical human representation. According to Barbara Tint "the intergenerational transfer of nationalistic identities, replete with mental representation that depict past glories and humiliations constitutes a kind of maintenance of collective traumas; when not properly mourned, feelings of victimization are passed on from generation to generation."²³² This statement illustrates that a sense of dialogue will lead to newfound understanding and help build a constructive foundation for the future. As it peculiarly pertains to African and African-Americans and the human race in general, we must understand that one of the core elements to healthy development is healthy attachment and healthy separation because we are responsible for both causing and resolving our societal divergence.

Throughout the existence of African-Americans in the United States, their cultural identity has always been defined for them by the dominant racial group. In essence, the same has been done for Africans who have willingly immigrated to the United States. When an individual of African descent is born in America, they are generally considered to be African-American. On the other hand, an individual of Caucasian descent does not generally identify themselves as European-American, they generally identify with one

²³²Tint, Barbara. "History, Memory, and Intractable Conflict." *Conflict Resolution Quarterly* 27, no. 3 (2010): 239-56. Pg. 8

ancestral lineage or social group such as Irish-American or Italian-American. In addition to slavery and forced shedding of their identity, a main cause for this ancestral identification difference is education. Individual African countries and cultures were not prioritized in the US education and government structure. According to Norman Harris “freedom is the ability to conceptualize the world in ways continuous with one’s history, and literacy is the application of historical knowledge as the confluence between personality and situation dictate”.²³³ Moreover, Harris explains, “freedom therefore encourages research which seeks to distinguish between an appearance of change and the reality of change”.²³⁴ This comment illustrates the importance of self-autonomy and unrestricted education. To connect the cultural gap between each other, African and African-Americans must research and learn about their own values, shed the identity that was given to them by the dominant society, and define their own cultural ethnicity.

One of the most important phases of a successful cultural cohesion is psychological consciousness. Before dialogue can begin, it is important to be conscience of one’s relationship with self and other.²³⁵ Psychological conscience leads to curiosity and the urge to learn. In order to learn about another person/group’s culture, it is important to be willing to become educated about the other groups cultural norms.²³⁶ Subsequently, one’s psychological consciousness, curiosity, and knowledge of the attribution and bias of each others’ cultural styles can pave the pathway to successful cross-cultural dialogue.

²³³Hamlet, Janice D. *Afrocentric Visions: Studies in Culture and Communication*. Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Sage Publications, 1998. Pg. 16.

²³⁴Ib

²³⁵Hamlet, Janice D. *Afrocentric Visions: Studies in Culture and Communication*. Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Sage Publications, 1998. Pg. 18.

²³⁶Ting-Toomey, Stella, and Leeva C Chung. *Understanding Intercultural Communication*. Los Angeles, CA: Roxbury Publishing, 2005. Pg. 283

To construct an accepting and congruent relationship, African and African-American's must first look back and acknowledge the history of the United States and then define who they are by carrying out a formal dialogue and collectively educating each other. Furthermore, they must be civil, willing to exchange cultural practices, discuss the perception they have of one another, and acknowledge the mental and physical suffering that has made them into the individuals and subgroup that they are. Moreover, they should also acknowledge and embrace their inner strength and perseverance. In particular, African-Americans are the epitome of perseverance and what it means to be survivors, despite generations of victimization, African Americans persevere and continue to work towards equality.

Due to personal and ethnic characteristics such as language, family structure, the environment one grows up in, choice of food, and religious values, both African and African-American have essential traditions, ethnic values, and interests that make them culturally diverse. However, African and African-American also have similar struggles, values, and geographic foundation that will always link them to each other. To strengthen their cultural relationship, Africans and African-American must be honest about their history, prioritize their similarities, embrace their differences and find a culturally satisfactory way to educate and engage with one another.

Because of the length of time they have been separated from one another along with the chronological experiences they have went through, it is not wrong to think that African and African-Americans will have perfect co-existence or even a universally mutual definition of what the Black identity is. Due to this fact, it is not inconceivable to imagine the eradication of conflict and misunderstanding in the African and African-American

relationship. Nevertheless, if Africans and African-Americans intend to give each other a chance to flourish and embrace one another the important subgroup of the African Diaspora they both are, it is important for them understand that their historical breach and (to a less extent) conflict can be resolved without a unanimous agreement and or common ground. Without unanimous common grounds, our way of solving identity-influenced conflict may root down to the fundamental needs such as children, school, economic stability, and freedom of religion. As a human race, often times, in conflict, misunderstanding or ignorance, we result to binaries and polarities. And these binaries and polarities become more extinct and polarized. This in turn leads us to see and embellish our perceived differences. Rather than seeing and exaggerating our perceived differences, we must accept our differences, embrace our diversity and common humanity. If we buy into why we think identity is important, it's up to us to evoke those things in our mental thought and overall lived process.

As I conclude this research, I have consistently found myself reflecting on where my research has led me to concerning the current status (or close to it) of African and African-American relationships. Additionally, I have also engaged in continued self-deliberation and penultimately asked myself *where should we aim to go from here?* As I grappled with the current status and future prospect of African and African-American relationships, I have to first grapple with the fact that it is rare to find a completely flawless and united society. Therefore, it is exceedingly unlikely to find a past, present and future society where the entire population agrees and truly believe in one identity. Due to skin color and geographical root connections, one would surmise that such a disagreement with African and African does not exist, that the perfect utopia did exist or could exist in the

future. However, that is simply not the case. Similar to African and African-Americans, most humans' self-chronological and communal experience will lead to the creation of a culture and, ultimately, an identity. For African and African-Americans their identity stems from their traits and experiences. Their African roots are their common traits. Their connection to slavery is the critical component of their experiences. These same personal trait and experiences *both* unite *and* bifurcate them.

Once my research findings identified the identity formation process of African and African-Americans, my research pivoted to illuminate the current status of their relationship. Their current relation status is complex. There are certainly interpersonal, social, and stereotypical disagreement between them. However, the main reason behind their continued complex relationship is, and always comes back to, slavery. The true crux of slavery is still not addressed. Both African and African-Americans will agree that slavery is awful and wicked. They would also agree that white people are the perpetrators of slavery. However, the truth is, it is not only white people that were the guilty culprits of slavery. The truth is, slavery was a business, a business that Africans, specifically, elite Africans were culpable of and preponderantly accountable for. It was a cut throat business that was driven by the economic bottom line. In other words, self-serving gluttony. Certainly, white people were also guilty. However, it is injustice to ignore the immensely equal and important part that Africans played in slavery.

The African involvement in slavery is either readily romanticized and or ignored. This has been a critical component to the current thorny and complex relationship between African and African-Americans. In order to fix the currently thorny and complex relationship between these two communities, it is critical to candidly address the deeply

wounding truth of the elite African's culpability of slavery. If the truth is told, it is easier for African's to confront the wrongdoing they committed. The wrongdoing that resulted in centuries of slavery and decades of racial terrorism. If this truth is told about slavery, it should be sought without the intent to penalize. Instead, it should be sought with the intent to unshackle centuries of pain and (hopefully) reconcile. Truth about slavery, highlighting African's culpability, should be told at governmental, academic, and overall societal levels.

Subsequent to unequivocally continuing to truthfully address the elite African role in slavery, Africa should take confirmatory steps to acknowledge and humanize African-Americans. Acknowledgment and humanization can be achieved through figurative actions. A simple, yet extremely important figurative act of apology from and invitation to the same continent they were once forcibly vended from. Being truthful about slavery, taking figurative actions to acknowledge and humanize African-Americans can alleviate the current thorny relationship and (hopefully) lead to literal reparations. Such literal reparations would mean genuine reconciliation, citizenship and or land ownership. Certainly, there are many more figurative and literal actions that can be taken to help improve the current relationship between African and African-Americans. However, the act of oblivion and willful ignorance (which are the actions that are currently being practiced) to the truth about slavery should not be one. Africa is beautiful, it is absolutely rich in culture and history. Nevertheless, the forceful vending of Africans by Africans, to their white business accomplice, is an enormous dirty mark on the chronological history of the picturesque African people and overall great African continent.

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